

Strongest Necromancer Of Heaven's Gate

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Everything He Ever Wanted In His Life |

Chapter 129: Everything He Ever Wanted In His Life

After dinner ended, all of them went to the living room to drink some tea and relax.

Iris noticed that Eiko had grown more lively in the short time that the baby Slime had been in Elysium.

"Big Brother, can you let me see Eiko's stats?" Iris asked.

"Sure," Lux replied as he summoned his Soul Book. he then gave Iris permission to only check Eiko's Status Page, while preventing her from seeing the others.

Although he didn't mind sharing his full information to her brocon-stepsister, he wanted to wait until the tournament began.

Only Vera had full access to Lux's Soulbook, because for the Half-Elf, his grandmother who raised him was the most important person in his life.

"Wow! You managed to upgrade Eiko three times?!" Iris exclaimed after seeing Eiko's Personal Page. "Big Brother, thank you for loving our baby! You must have spent a lot of resources on her. I knew that you would be a good father, but I didn't know that you were going to be this good!"

"You exaggerate too much," Lux replied as he casually waved his hand. "This was all due to Eiko's effort. I didn't do much."

Lux didn't know if he should tell Iris that Eiko ranked up three times due to the reward she received from a Hidden Quest.

"Eiko, did you make many friends in Elysium?" Iris asked the baby Slime that was on her lap.

"Ma!" Eiko nodded her head.

"Can you tell me who they are?" Iris asked. She was using speech training on Eiko in order for her to be able to communicate properly after ranking up a few more times. This was something very basic, and all Monster Breeders, Beast Tamers, and similar professions did this to train their monsters at an early stage.

Iris was a Beast Tamer, and her subclass was a Monster Breeder. She specialized in raising monsters as well as taming them to fight for her in battle.

Eiko nodded as she attempted to name the friends she had made in Elysium.

"Sis Colette! Sis Helen! Bro Axel! Bro Andy! Simp Matty!"

Lux chuckled after hearing Eiko say Simp Matty. He gave his baby Slime two thumbs up in his heart for getting Matty's title right.

Iris giggled as she lightly patted the peppy Slime that was jumping up and down on her lap.

The scene was so endearing that Lux and Vera felt as though their hearts were melting.

'I'll ask Iris my questions later,' Lux thought as he picked the cup of tea on the table. 'Eiko is happy, so I'll let them bond for the time being.'

Iris thought that this was a good opportunity to learn more about what Eiko did in Elysium so she decided to ask her more questions.

"You're now very good at talking, Eiko." Iris praised the baby Slime whose smile became wider. "Did you learn many words in Elysium?"

"Ma!"

"You did? Then can you tell me what words you learned?"

Eiko nodded her head happily before opening her mouth to tell Iris what words he learned in Elysium.

"F*cker," Eiko said and looked up at Iris waiting for her praise.

"Pffft! Keho! Keho!"

Lux spat a mouthful of tea that he had just drank after listening to Eiko and coughed repeatedly, while pounding his chest.

Iris tilted her head to the side as she held up the baby Slime in her hands.

"Sorry, Eiko, can you repeat what you said earlier?" Iris inquired. "I didn't hear you properly."

"F*cker." Eiko repeated as she once again looked at Iris in anticipation. She wanted to be praised for learning new words.

The corner of Iris' lips twitched. She lightly squeezed Eiko's cheeks, making the baby Slime giggle.

"Eiko, don't say those words again, okay?" Iris said with a serious expression on her face. "They are bad words. Little girls shouldn't say them."

"Bad?"

"Yes. Bad words. Only bad girls say them. Eiko is a good girl, so she shouldn't say bad words, okay?"

Eiko nodded. "Eiko, good girl!"

"Yes, you are a good girl, so don't say that word again, okay?" Iris said as she patted Eiko's head.

"Un! No bad words!"

"That's right."

Iris then glanced at Lux's direction and gave her beloved stepbrother a glare that said "What have you been teaching our daughter in Elysium?!"

Lux could only raise his hands in surrender. Although he wasn't at fault, he should have made sure that Eiko understood that she shouldn't say such words because she was young.

Iris shifted her attention to the baby Slime in her hands and smiled.

"What are the things that Papa taught you in Elysium?" Iris asked. "He must have taught you a lot of things, right?"

"Un!" Eiko lightly jumped on top of Iris palms.

"Then what did he teach you?"

"Stealing!"

"Excuse me?" Iris blinked as she looked at Eiko in a dumbfounded manner. "Stealing?"

"Un! Stealing things!" Eiko replied. As if thinking that she didn't explain it properly, she added another word, which made Lux feel a strong urge to leave the room. "Steal many things! Steal Here! Steal there! Steal everywhere!"

Vera covered her lips and chuckled. Although she knew that Lux would never really teach Eiko these things, she found her grandson's reaction very funny, and decided to just observe from the side.

"Papa, I think you better start talking," Iris glanced at Lux with a smile that didn't reach her eyes. "What are you teaching Eiko in Elysium?"

Lux knew that he needed to correct the misunderstanding so he decided to explain the entire mission to his step-sister.

Vera, who was also very curious about Lux's progress in Elysium, listened patiently to his explanation. She could tell that Lux had somehow gotten stronger, but she didn't know to what extent.

Although she could easily look at his Soul Book to check his stats, she wanted to give her grandson some privacy. She appreciated Lux's love for her, but she wanted to let him know that she trusted him completely.

When Lux's story ended, Iris had a dumbfounded expression on her face. Although she knew that Lux could now go to Elysium, she thought that he was somewhere in the Empire where the Barbatos Academy faction was located.

Since the territory that the Humans controlled was vast, she thought that Lux was just in one of the hundreds of Beginner Villages that could be found in the Human empires. She had no idea that Lux's starting point was in a Dwarven Kingdom, whose location she hadn't heard of.

Iris was very curious and asked more about Leaf Village.

Lux answered her questions, but made sure to omit Colette's intention of getting him to marry her Big Sister. The red-headed teenager knew that if Iris got wind of this, she would definitely want to meet the girl personally, which was currently impossible due to the vast distances that separated their Domains.

"I see, so that explains it," Iris nodded in understanding as she lightly patted Eiko's head. "The resources to raise Eiko to her current rank are enough to bring someone to the Apostle Rank. Since Big Brother still hasn't stepped into that stage, it is impossible for you to collect that many resources to upgrade Eiko three times."

"Right," Lux had no choice but to agree to Iris' deduction because it was true. Eiko's upgrade requirement was enough to bankrupt him three times over. So, he didn't really have the resources to raise her up to her current rank.

Just as Iris was about to ask more questions, a knock was heard on the door.

Vera stood up in order to see who it was, leaving Lux, Iris, and Eiko in the living room. A few minutes later, a beautiful lady entered the living room with an apologetic smile on her face.

When Iris saw the familiar face, she hurriedly stood up and sat beside Lux, burying her head in his chest, and pretended that she didn't see her father's secretary, Alicia.

"Lady Iris, it's time to go back," Alicia said with a sigh. "Your father promised that he would not scold you if you returned with me."

It was also at that moment when a handsome boy with light-brown hair and hazel eyes appeared beside Alicia.

Lux frowned as he gazed at Nero, who was looking at him with a calm expression on his face. The red-headed teenager knew that the handsome boy who liked Iris was doing his best to restrain himself from ridiculing him in front of Iris and Vera, who was Iris' grandmother.

Nero had always been well-behaved in their presence and hid his disdain for Lux, whom he hated to the core.

"Lady Iris, the Hundred-Men Dungeon that our guilds are targeting will open soon," Nero said. "If you don't return in time, the other guilds might take the first clear in Nightmare Mode. We can't allow that to happen. We need your power to ensure that no one will look down on our two guilds' positions in Elysium."

Iris didn't even bother to reply to Nero and only hugged Lux tighter.

The Half-Elf smiled and lightly patted Iris' head, while wrapping his arm around her.

"You can go back," Lux stated. "My Grandma and I will escort Iris back to Barbatos Academy. You can just wait for her in Elysium."

A flash of hatred passed through Nero's eyes, but it disappeared just as quickly. Over the years, he had learned to control his emotions better for the sake of his ambition. He knew that if he said anything to Lux, he would offend Iris and Vera.

In order to prevent that from happening, he decided to not move from where he stood and to keep his silence.

Alicia knew that Nero was aiming to become Iris' fiance and become one of the Top Contenders in the Grand Tournament that would be held in Barbatos Academy. All the eligible members of the young generation that were ages eighteen and below and from the six kingdoms that made up the Alliance would be participating.

So, it was not only Nero who was aiming to become Iris' fiance.

Alexander was one of the strongest human Saints in existence. More than anything else, forming a connection with him would ensure that their own kingdoms would prosper.

This meant that the tournament that was going to be held in Barbatos Academy would be the highlight of the year. It was a once in a lifetime chance for them to form a strong connection with Alexander through his daughter, Iris.

The funny thing was that the championship match would be held on the same day as Iris' birthday. It was the day where she would turn sixteen, and finally be eligible for marriage.

Alexander had planned this tournament very well, even going as far as to announce that Iris would become the fiancée of the tournament's champion. Vera opposed this plan, but Alexander was firm in his decision.

This made Iris want to rebel, so she decided to run away from home and hide in her Grandma's house.

Unfortunately, her father didn't have to be a genius to know where she went. He could have gone personally, but since he didn't want to offend his daughter and his mother to the point of no return, he decided to send Alicia as a proxy to bring his daughter home.

Since Nero refused to budge, Lux decided to stand up, and carried Iris to his room in a princess carry.

Eiko felt that her Mama and Papa didn't like Nero, so she looked at him and mouthed the word "F*cker" without giving it any voice.

A crack resounded inside the living room, as Nero clenched his fist. Sparks of lightning pulsed around his fist, but he didn't do anything else. He simply stood and watched Lux take away Iris in his arms.

If looks could kill, the Half-Elf would have already died a thousand times over due to his bone-deep hatred towards the red-headed teenager, who had everything he ever wanted in this life.

Chapter 130: Sealed With A Kiss

After firmly closing the door behind her, Lux gently put Iris on his bed and kissed her forehead.

"Don't worry, he can't get inside this room," Lux said as he sat beside her and held her hand.

"Un," Iris nodded as she lightly squeezed Lux's hand. "Actually, I planned on sleeping in your room tonight, Big Brother. I just didn't expect that you would also return from Elysium today. It seems that the Gods have blessed me with the opportunity to see you, before I am taken back to the academy."

Eiko slid down from Lux's head and crawled towards her Mama who was feeling depressed.

The baby slime kissed Iris' cheek before resting her head on her Mama's neck, as if to assure her that everything was going to be fine.

"Then stay here for the night," Lux replied. "Grandma Vera will accompany you back to the academy tomorrow. I'm sure that she's already negotiating with Alicia right now."

"You won't come with us, Big Brother?" Iris inquired.

Lux shook his head. "No. I plan to return to Elysium when morning comes."

Iris became teary-eyed as she looked up at her stepbrother who had taken good care of her while growing up.

"The reason why I can't go with you is not because I don't want to," Lux explained himself because he felt that Iris misunderstood him. "The reason why I want to go back to Elysium is because I don't want you to get married to someone you don't like. Iris, I promise you this, I will win that tournament for sure, and protect your happiness."

"Big Brother, have you decided?"

"Mmm."

Lux smiled as he squeezed Iris' hand back. The red-headed teenager and the blue-haired beauty stared at each other for a long time and smiled. There was no need to say anything, because the warmth that was spreading in their intertwined hands was enough to tell Iris what she wanted to know.

The Half-Elf laid beside Iris and held her in a protective embrace.

"Sleep," Lux said as he kissed her forehead for the second time. "You'll be safe here."

"Un." Iris closed her eyes and hugged Lux back.

Eiko, who was sandwiched comfortably between her Papa and Mama, closed her eyes to sleep. The beating of Lux's and Iris' hearts were like a lullaby to her, making her feel safe and loved.

A few minutes later, Iris' and Eiko's soft breathing echoed inside the room as Lux stared at their peaceful sleeping faces.

'Nero...', Lux thought as the image of the teenager that always looked for trouble for him flashed inside his head. 'The pain and suffering I endured back then... I will make sure to repay it in full!'

After silently vowing to himself, Lux closed his eyes to rest. Although he would be returning to Elysium a little earlier than scheduled, he decided to use that extra time as an opportunity to head inside the Bronze Crypt so he could get a better understanding of what its Hell Mode looked like.

Dungeons inside Elysium usually had two levels of difficulty.

Normal and Nightmare.

However, there were dungeons who had three, which were Normal, Nightmare, and Hell Mode.

The Bronze Crypt only had two difficulties and they were Normal and Hell Mode.

An hour later, the door of the room creaked open as Vera peeked at her two grandchildren who were sleeping in each other's arms.

A smile appeared on her face as she closed the door quietly to return to her room to rest. Just as Lux had anticipated, Vera successfully convinced Alicia to let her personally escort her granddaughter back to Elysium the next day.

However, in order to not make things difficult for her son's secretary, she proposed that she accompany them on the return trip.

Nero was planning to say that he also wanted to escort Iris back to Barbatos Academy, but Vera's stare made him shut up.

He felt like he was a little mouse staring at a viper who was looking down on it with its predatory eyes. In the end, he made the right decision and stepped down, telling Alicia that he would return to Elysium first and wait for Iris to rendezvous with their guild at the Dungeon's entrance.

In truth, Vera didn't dislike Nero. She could tell that the boy truly wished to reach greater heights by relying on his ability, resources, as well as the

connections he had built over the years. The Elders of Wildgarde Stronghold were not stupid.

Since they knew Nero's desire to claw his way up to the top, they would support him because they needed people like him to usher in a new era and bring the members of their young generation to greatness.

But, there were things that Vera wouldn't allow no matter what. Lux and Iris were her reverse scales. She didn't care if she was up against a Saint or not. Anyone who dared to harm them, would be ripped apart by her hands, even if she had to sell her soul to the devil to make it happen.

"Alex," Vera muttered her son's nickname with a sad expression on her face. "You should know better than to get in the way of your daughter's happiness."

Iris slowly opened her eyes and gazed sleepily at the handsome face that was right in front of her.

As the cogs in her brain started to turn, the memory of what happened a few hours ago flashed inside her head.

Soon, the beautiful young lady was fully awake and looking at her Big Brother's sleeping face with an infatuated look on her face.

She didn't know when exactly she had started to feel a strong attraction to her step brother who had been with her almost all her life. The only thing she knew was that her world seemed to be more colorful whenever Lux was around.

Her heart would beat wildly inside her chest and she would feel like she was walking on clouds. That was how intense her feelings for Lux were, and even when they were separated by a great distance, her feelings for him didn't wane.

In fact, they even grew stronger. The saying, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder," fit her feelings perfectly. This was why she wasn't able to stop herself from kissing Lux when he appeared in Barbatos Academy to visit her after a long time.

Iris gulped as she gathered all of her courage in her heart.

'Now is the perfect time to do this while Brother is asleep,' Iris thought. 'If I miss this opportunity, who knows how long it will be till I see him again.'

Iris then moved closer to Lux and kissed his lips.

The kiss only lasted for a brief moment because she was afraid that he was going to wake up.

Iris' heart was beating wildly inside her chest as her breaths grew ragged. She was painfully waiting to see if Lux would wake up after she had kissed him, but after a minute had passed, her raging emotions finally calmed down.

As if emboldened by her first success. Iris once again raised her lips and kissed the sleeping Lux for the second time. This time, the kiss lasted longer, as she pressed her soft lips over his.

In the middle of kissing her Big Brother, she felt his lips move to kiss her back. It was an unconscious move on Lux's part, because he was still truly asleep. The Half-Elf didn't know that what he did almost turned Iris' mind to mush as her mind turned blank, after getting kissed by him.

When the kiss ended, Iris felt as if her heart was about to jump out of her chest from its rapid beating. Although the kiss didn't last long, it was long enough for Iris to ingrain it in her heart.

'I really like you, Lux,' Iris said in her heart as a tear fell down at the corner of her eyes. 'I like you so much that it hurts.'

Eiko, opened her eyes because she felt something warm and wet fall on top of her head. When she saw Iris crying, the baby slime moved to wipe her tears away, which made the young beauty cry more.

"Eiko, your Papa is bullying me," Iris said as she lightly pinched the baby slime's cheeks. "How can my step brother be this handsome?"

"Ma?"

Eiko tilted her head in confusion. She didn't know why her Mama was unreasonably pinching her cheeks, while crying with a smile on her face.

"Just look at your papa, doesn't he look amazing," Iris whispered in Eiko's ears as she turned the baby Slime to look at the sleeping Half-Elf beside them.

"Pa," Eiko replied in agreement. Her Papa was indeed amazing.

"Eiko, if you find any girl who is pestering your Papa, make sure to report it to me at once, okay?"

"Ma!"

"You're such a good girl, Eiko. I love you."

"Ma!"

Eiko giggled after Iris kissed her cheeks. The two then spent half an hour more looking at Lux's sleeping face, before the Half-Elf opened his eyes to look at them in a daze.

"Good morning, Brother!"

"Pa!"

Lux smiled as he greeted the two girls who were looking at him with smiles on their faces.

"Good morning, Eiko, Iris," Lux replied as he yawned and propped himself up on the bed. "Let's go, Iris. I'm sure Grandma is awake by now."

Lux reached out to offer his hand to the young lady who was looking up at him with a reddened face.

"Un." Iris nodded as she offered her hand to Lux, which the latter held firmly.

Eiko moved on top of her Mama's head as the three of them left Lux's room. Although the two of them would part ways after breakfast, the promise that was sealed by a kiss, would bind them for the rest of their lives.

Chapter 131: The Ghoul Beast Of Leaf Village Cemetery

"Grandma, I'm going."

"Take care."

"Manma!"

"Take care as well, Eiko," Vera said as she lightly patted the baby Slime, who was on top of Lux's head, while looking at the latter with tender eyes.

"Iris, I'm going," Lux said to the blue-haired beauty who couldn't look at him straight in the eye.

"Un. Be careful, Big Brother," Iris said as she raised her head to look at Lux. Her face was beet-red, which made the Half-Elf wonder if she were having a fever.

"Are you okay?"

"Yes. I'm just sad because Big Brother is going away."

Lux thought that Iris was feeling lonely so she moved towards her and gave her a hug, which made the young beauty's face turn a shade redder.

"Ma!" Eiko said as she slid down from Lux's head and kissed her Mama's forehead to say goodbye.

"Be safe, Eiko," Iris replied as she kissed Eiko back. "Make sure your papa doesn't cheat on me."

"Ma?"

The red-headed teenager lightly pinched Iris' cheeks before taking a few steps back.

"Don't worry, Iris," Lux said as he placed his closed fist over his chest. "Just trust me."

Iris smiled as she nodded her head. "I trust you, Big Brother."

"Let's go, Eiko," Lux lightly patted the slime on his head to tell her that they were about to leave for Elysium.

As if understanding what his Papa was trying to say, Eiko smiled before readying herself for departure.

"Open! Heaven's Gate!"

A brief flash of light enveloped Lux's and Eiko's body before they disappeared completely, leaving only Vera and Iris behind.

Vera then rested her hand on Iris' shoulder and gave her a smile.

"Don't worry, Lux never breaks a promise," Vera said. "If he said that he will win the tournament, he will win the tournament."

"I know, Grandma," Iris replied. "I trust him."

When Lux appeared in Leaf Village, the first thing he did was look for his Master, Randolph, before stopping by at Grandma Annie's candy shop. He left both elders a message to tell Colette and the others, if they looked for him, that he would be waiting for them at the Bronze Crypt at the promised time.

Since Lux had returned a day early in Elysium, he planned to go to the Bronze Crypt to check what Hell Mode was like, so he could prepare a detailed plan for how he and his friends could challenge it a second time.

Since he had returned early, he arrived an hour just before the sun was about to set. The Bronze Crypt would only open at night due to the peculiarities of the dungeon.

As Lux made his way towards the graveyard, he saw a three-meter tall monster prowling the area. Its blue eyes glowed eerily in the darkness as it walked on its hind legs. The long tail coming from its backside was similar to that of a scorpion's that was always posed to strike.

It was none other than the Rank 2 Alpha Monster of the Leaf Village Cemetery that went by the name, Ghoul Beast.

Lux didn't move from his spot because he noticed a group of Dwarves approaching the Alpha Beast. They were the same group that had fought alongside them against the Mutated Golden-Eyed Crimson Mantis back in the Figaro Gardens.

'This must be part of their graduation ceremony,' Lux thought as he rubbed his chin. 'I guess I'll just watch. I'm also curious to see how they are going to challenge this monster together.'

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< Ghoul Beast >

– Leaf Village Cemetery Apex Creature

– Rank 2 Alpha Monster

Health: 60,000 / 60,000

Mana: 8,000 / 8,000

Strength: 150

Intelligence: 40

Vitality: 150

Agility: 150

Dexterity: 100

Active Skills: Venomous Leap, Terror Howl, Ghoul Frenzy, Summon Draugr

Passive Skills: Lifesteal, Stoneskin.

Lux knew that even though the Ghoul Beast was weaker when compared to the Mutated Golden-Eyed Crimson Mantis that they had fought in the Figaro Garden, that didn't mean that the former was any less threatening.

He knew that one small mishap could wipe out the entire party and their bodies would remain here in the graveyard of Leaf Village for eternity.

Of course, that would only happen if the Ghoul Beast didn't feast on their corpses after killing them.

"Everyone, get ready!"

The Shield Warrior, who was also the leader of the party, slapped his sword over his shield, activating his defensive buffs. "No matter what happens, stay behind me. If it summons Draugrs, the swordsmen will engage them separately. Mages, just focus fire on the Ghoul Beast, the heal should be focused on me!"

"Yes!"

Lux watched as the party of one Shield Warrior, two Swordsmen, two Mages, and one Healer engaged the Ghoul Beast in combat.

"A balanced team," Lux muttered as he eyed the battle that was about to happen. "Pazuzu, come."

The Demonic Defender appeared beside Lux and waited for his orders.

"Interfere if you deem that they are in mortal danger," Lux ordered. "If not, don't do anything."

Pazuzu nodded as it narrowed its eyes to look at the Ghoul Beast that had now engaged the Dwarf party that challenged it.

With a furious roar, the Ghoul Beast summoned two Draugr's to fight by his side as it leaped at the Shield Warrior with its razor sharp claws extended.

The Shield Warrior didn't back away and used his Shield Charge, to meet the enemy head-on. This was a standard opener for Shield Warriors in order for them to close the distance and keep the opponent at bay.

When the two collided, a screeching sound similar to metal clashing against each other reverberated in the night.

The two swordsmen engaged the Draugrs in one-on-one combat, preventing them from attacking the Shield Warrior, as well as their magicians and healer who were at the rear.

Their teamwork was good and Lux couldn't stop himself from admiring their battle style, which seemed to be specially designed to fight against the Ghoul Beast. After defeating the Draugrs, the two swordsmen drank a bottle of health potion to recover their health before helping their Shield Warrior engage the Alpha Monster.

'They made the necessary preparations and arrangements for this battle,' Lux nodded his head in admiration. 'If nothing goes wrong, they should be able to defeat the Ghoule Beast without any problems.'

Spells constantly flew towards the Ghoule Beast, which pushed it back whenever it was about to overpower the three vanguards, who were preventing the monster from attacking their ranged attackers. Little by little, its health declined.

However, the Ghoule Beast was still an Alpha Beast, so there were a few occasions when it managed to send one of the vanguards flying with its powerful attacks.

The Healer did his job well and helped his allies recover as fast as they could so that the Ghoule Beast wouldn't be able to get the upper hand.

Lux observed the battle with a serious expression on his face as he memorized the Ghoule Beast's attack patterns. If the Apostle Grade Party was able to defeat it, he and his friends would have to wait until it respawned again.

It was very common for those that had reached the Apostle Grade to challenge the Carbuncle, Red-Eyed Terror Mantis, as well as the Ghoule Beast as their Last Hurrah before leaving the Beginner's Zone.

They left the Forest Wolf King alone, since it was something that none of them could defeat, unless several Apostle Grade Parties worked together to challenge it.

According to Lux's estimate, it would take at least a fifty-men team of Apostle Grades to defeat the Field Boss of the Heartwood Forest. Anything lower than that was just plain suicide.

The battle lasted for half an hour and the Apostle Grade Party emerged victorious. Lux smiled as he watched the Dwarves share high-fives with each other with big smiles on their faces.

"I'm really gonna miss them," Lux muttered as he thought of Colette and the others. He knew that when he finally passed the qualification to go to Elysium in the Wildgarde Stronghold, he would be teleported to the Human Territories, where their faction belonged.

It was tens of thousands of miles away from Leaf Village, and Lux didn't know if he would ever see his friends again after he chose to transfer to the Human lands.

'I'll cross that bridge when I get there,' Lux thought as he walked towards the Bronze Crypt, which was his original destination. 'In any case, I still have the Arondight Ring with me, so I can look for them when I have the time.'

Lux understood that everyone had their own paths in life. If they were fated to meet, then he and his Dwarf friends would definitely cross paths again, one way or the other.

Chapter 132.1: Bronze Crypt Hell Mode [Part 1]

Lux stopped in front of the familiar bronze gate and looked at the name that shone in bold gold letters at the very top of the ranking list.

"Aina Van Goldenslayer," Lux said softly. "Colette is always urging me to marry her so that I can officially become her Big Brother. I wonder, is she the same as Colette?"

Lux tried to imagine a more mature version of Colette and ended up laughing. He just picture the blonde and adorable little Dwarf with an elegant and dignified expression on her face.

"I promised her that I'll meet her sister, so I guess I'll do that before I go to the Human territories," Lux muttered. "I'm sure that after Colette brings up the possibility of marriage, her sister will immediately reject me, leaving her perfect plan in tatters. But, this is for the best. I do not belong in the Dwarven lands of the Gweliven Kingdom."

Lux sighed as he shifted his attention to the entrance of the Dungeon. He then chose Hell Mode and disappeared from where he stood.

The next time Lux opened his eyes, he found himself in what seemed like a creepy forest, illuminated by a red full moon.

"This is a good place to shoot a horror film," Lux commented as he scanned his surroundings.

"Pa?" Eiko tilted her head in confusion because she didn't understand what Lux had just said.

"Don't mind, Eiko. Just keep your eyes peeled for trouble."

"Pa!"

The Elysium Compendium had already activated its exploration mode, showing the map at the upper right corner of Lux's vision.

Lux waved his hand and summoned Diablo, Ishtar, Pazuzu, as well as all of his Skeleton Warriors.

Eiko also summoned her Skeleton warriors, as well as Blackie and Whitey, who hovered beside Lux and were looking at their surroundings with vigilance.

The baby Slime was feeling scared because of the ambiance of the place, so she hid inside Lux's robes, and only peeked out to look at the path they were walking. Although she was already used to having skeletons and the scary Pazuzu around her, she was still afraid of foreign undead monsters, which amused Lux.

The path was quite narrow, and the sides were blocked by towering ash-colored trees that forced the group to move in a tight formation.

Diablo and Pazuzu were at the front, serving as the vanguard, while the Skeletal Fighters were behind them. Lux and Eiko were at the center. Ishtar and the Skeleton Grand Archers were right behind them.

After experiencing the Hell-Mode of the Orc Dominion, Lux no longer underestimated anything with the Hell Mode label. Even though the Bronze Crypt was only an E-Ranked Dungeon and merely served as a training ground for newbies, he still took it seriously.

When Lux took his hundredth step. The ground that was several meters away from him rose up, toppling the Skeletal Fighters that were standing in that position.

Soon, Six Elder Ghouls emerged from the ground and attacked the nearest monster beside them. All of them were peak Rank 1 Monsters, and were only a step away from Rank 2. However, Lux's skeletons were not pushovers

either. All of them were Rank 1 Monsters, and they had the advantage when it came to numbers.

Although the surprise attack managed to damage a few of them, the moment the Elder Ghouls appeared, all the Skeleton Fighters dealt with them as if they were in a gang fight.

The pitiful ghouls were immediately neutralized until they collapsed into a pile of dirt, leaving nothing else behind.

The Skeleton Fighters used their sword to disperse the dirt, but they found nothing inside it.

"So stingy," Lux muttered. "Not even leaving a Beast Core behind."

"Pa!" Eiko was also dissatisfied as she looked at the dirt on the ground with beady eyes.

Clearly, she was in the mood to eat some Beast Cores, even if they came from a bunch of zombies.

After the first clash against the monster inside the dungeon, everyone became more alert as they headed deeper in the creepy forest.

Suddenly, the trees around them started to shake, which made Eiko scream in fright before burying herself inside her Papa's robes.

The trees around them suddenly unearthed their roots from the ground and attacked Lux, who was the only living creature inside the dungeon.

'Corrupted Treants,' Lux thought as his Summons formed a defensive encirclement with Lux at the center. "And one Hungering Treant. This dungeon really doesn't pull any punches for newbies."

Corrupted treants were similar to Elder Ghouls, but were more sturdy than them. They were Rank 1 Monsters that were weak against elemental attacks, especially fire, which dealt great damage to them.

The Hungering Treant, on the other hand, was a Rank 2 Monster that was almost as strong as an Orc Berserker. If it was alone, it would take an entire party to bring it down, but with seven Corrupted Treants backing it, it definitely spelled trouble to those who had just stepped into the Apostle Rank.

However, just like the Corrupted Treants were weakest against fire, the Hungering Treant was weak to elemental attacks, making it vulnerable against mages.

Airon, the Nightmare Horse, hurled several fire lances at the Hungering Treant that was trying to reach out to Lux, setting it ablaze.

Blackie and Whitey also unleashed their elemental attacks, dealing significant damage, especially Whitey whose Holy Attacks were very deadly against undead and corrupted creatures.

Once again, the monsters were easily dealt with, as they collapsed in a pile of rotting wood, leaving nothing behind.

"Again?" Lux scratched his head after finding out that no Beast Cores were found from the monsters' remains. "Is this just a coincidence or does my luck just suck?"

Just as Lux was wondering if Iris absorbed all of his luck when they slept together, a terrifying roar echoed through the creepy forest, making the baby Slime inside his robes shudder.

Lux narrowed his eyes as he stared at the North, where a giant black tree was located. It was the place where he needed to go, and the location of the Boss of the Dungeon that was waiting for them.

Chapter 133.2: Bronze Crypt Hell Mode [Part 2]

"This place is like a maze," Lux thought as he gazed at the map in front of him.

After exploring the dungeon for nearly an hour, he ended up in several dead-ends, which only confirmed his suspicion.

'There's only one path that leads to the boss and it is hidden inside this maze.' Lux rubbed his chin as he looked at the places that they had already explored. More than half of the map was now visible to him, and it was only a matter of time before he had it completely mapped.

Sounds of explosions sounded around him, but he didn't bother looking at his surroundings, putting all his attention on the map in front of him.

Six Bone Wraiths that were Rank 2 Monsters were currently engaging in close combat with Lux's forces, but after encountering them on more than one occasion, he and his Summons had already memorized their fight patterns, making them easier to deal with.

'Colette's sister managed to beat this dungeon within 39 minutes,' Lux mused. 'But, I've already been here for three hours...'

The corner of Lux's lips raised after finally knowing the reason why Colette's sister managed to set the record for the fastest run in the Bronze Crypt.

'There's no doubt about it, she challenged this dungeon several times with her party and memorized the maze.' Lux concluded. 'Only after knowing the right path can you clear this dungeon without wasting any time. Even so, I admit that she is indeed quite capable of setting that record.'

Lux gave the monsters that were attacking him with a side-long glance. The monsters that he had encountered inside the dungeon were all Rank 1 and Rank 2 Monsters. Even for an Apostle Grade Party, they would have to be strong enough to fight against such a lineup.

Another hour passed, and after several more monster battles, Lux finally arrived at his destination.

"So, you are the Last Boss of this dungeon," Lux muttered as he gazed at the three-meter tall zombie with bone spikes protruding from its back and arms.

—

< Plague Monstrosity >

—Final Boss of Bronze Crypt (Hell Mode)

— Rank 3 Boss Monster (Initial Stages)

Health: 90,000 / 90,000

Mana: 6,000 / 6,000

Strength: 150

Intelligence: 20

Vitality: 150

Agility: 100

Dexterity: 100

Skills: Poison Smog, Jackhammer, Rampage,

Passive Skills: Heavy Handed

Title: Plague Bearer

< Poison Smog >

- Unleash a breath of Poisonous Smog at your enemies.
- Have a medium chance to inflict poison or disease.

< Jackhammer >

- unleash a full powered punch at your target dealing 300% melee damage.
- Has a knockback effect.

< Rampage >

- Go on a rampage and deal a flurry of deadly blows to your enemies that become stronger with each strike.
- Deals five blows with each blow increasing melee damage by 50%, 100%, 150%, 200%, and 250% respectively.

< Heavy Handed >

- Raise your Melee attacks by 20%

< Plague Bearer >

- All attacks of the Plague Bearer have a chance to inflict poison or diseases.

"This is one tough cookie," Lux thought as he looked at the stats of his enemy. "It is almost as strong as the Alpha Monster, Ghoul Beast."

For the first time, Lux decided to take the battle seriously. Eiko also prepared herself for battle.

"Let's finish this quickly before Colette and the others show up," Lux ordered. "Everyone, battle formations!"

Lux came out of the dungeon with his clothes torn in different places. His face was a bit pale due to the effect of poison and diseases that he was infected with during the battle.

Fortunately, Eiko had the skill "Cure-All", which removed these status effects in her Papa's body.

Unfortunately, after repeatedly being subjected to debilitating status ailments, Lux still felt sick even after his body had been cured from any kinds of poisons and diseases.

For some reason, Eiko was completely immune to poison and negative status effects, which surprised Lux.

Since his minions were also Undead, they were not affected by poison and diseases, so they ended up being a perfect counter to their enemy.

'Whenever the Plague Monstrosity unleashes its Poisonous Smog, the entire battlefield is covered by it,' Lux mused as he walked towards Leaf Village. 'There's no escape, so we should bring Panaceas to counter the negative buffs.'

'Rampage and Jackhammer are also very annoying skills. If Colette tanked either of these attacks, she would definitely be sent flying by that monster.'

Colette was a Paladin, so she was always at the front during battle. Although her profession wasn't a Shield Warrior, her class was still an all-rounder that functioned well in a party. Capable of tanking damage, healing, and casting spells, Paladins were well received in any party.

Some Paladins focused purely on defense, which made them as strong as Shield Warriors. Colette's fighting style was balanced, so she could attack and defend at the same time.

Lux's plan was to let the Dwarf children experience the difficulty of the Bronze Crypt Hell mode in the first run, without using any of his Summons. He also didn't plan to contend with Colette for the position as the leader of the group, so he would just listen to her commands during their Dungeon expedition.

"Eiko, when we are with Colette and the others later, you can summon Blackie and Whitey, but don't summon anyone else, okay?"

"Pa!"

As Lux entered Leaf Village, he immediately headed to his room in the inn to rest. His dungeon expedition was a very traumatic one, and the boss was pretty stingy with its loot.

He only got its Rank 3 Beast Core after defeating it and nothing else, which almost made Lux curse out loud. It turned out that the suffering he had experienced when fighting against it was just worth that much.

Although the Half-Elf's dungeon experience wasn't the best, he didn't regret it. Now, he had the information he needed in order to help his friends clear the dungeon, and beat Colette's sister's record.

Of course, Lux didn't plan to break Colette's record with their group's first attempt to challenge it.

He planned to do a speedrun after his friends experienced what the dungeon had to offer. This was to ensure that they would also be able to experience the suffering he had.

'I'm doing this for your own good, guys,' Lux mused as he closed his eyes to sleep. 'I'm sure this experience will help you in the future after you leave Leaf Village.'

Eiko snuck inside Lux's shirt, because she was still feeling the after effects of fighting scary monsters. She also liked to sleep hearing her Papa's heart, because it put her at ease.

Soon, the Half-Elf and the baby slime were sound asleep.

They knew that when morning came, their friends would once again be in Elysium, and they would be able to continue their journey together, even if it was only for a little while longer.

Chapter 134: The Journey Itself Has Meaning

"Good morning, Big Brother!"

"Good morning, Colette. Have you eaten?"

"I ate before I came here, so I'm good."

The adorable blonde Dwarf sat beside Lux as the latter ate the ham and eggs that were served to him inside the tavern.

Eiko, on the other hand, was munching on bacon.

Since Colette had nothing to do, she decided to hand feed the baby Slime who liked to be spoiled by the people she knew and cared about.

Half an hour later, Helen arrived at the inn and also sat at the table to join her friends. She was wearing a golden pin on her head, which was an artifact that her family gave her as a reward after becoming an Apostle in Elysium.

"Big Brother, I bragged about our achievements to my Big Sister, and she was very surprised about it," Colette said with a smug expression on her face.

"Also, I told her that our party will beat the record she had set in the Bronze Crypt and she only smiled and told me 'Good luck!'

"It seems like she doesn't believe that we can beat her. Big Brother, you better help me prove that we beat her record, okay? I even bought a recording crystal just to show her the change in the rankings."

Lux chuckled but he firmly nodded his head. Although he admired Aina's strategy when she set the fastest record in clearing the Hell Mode of the Bronze Crypt, their group had something that her group didn't have when they were still in Leaf Village.

"Don't worry, we will leave your sister in the dust and she will have no choice but to acknowledge that you had surpassed her record." Lux gave Colette a reassuring smile, which made the latter feel giddy.

Colette was a very competitive person, and her sister was her idol. Aina was someone who was considered a top prodigy in Solais as well as in Elysium. Her achievements were such that when she created a guild separate from her family's main guild, many dwarfs still gathered under her banner.

This was proof that she was capable enough to stand on her own, and Colette had long considered her sister as the perfect role model to aspire to.

Colette knew that beating her sister's record was a daunting task, but as long as there was a possibility, she would use everything in her power to make it happen.

"Big Brother, it is still morning, and the Bronze Crypt only opens at night," said as she rested her chin over the palm of her hands. "What are we going to do while we wait for sunset?"

"Let's visit Grandma Annie's place and buy some Panaceas, Healing potion, and Mana Potion," Lus replied. "Even if we have Eiko, Helen, as well as your pet Clover (Mutated Carbuncle), we still need those things just in case they are not in the right state to cure us from status ailments."

Colette and Helen nodded in understanding.

Fifteen minutes later, the group of three were having tea, and snacks in Grandma Annie's candy shop as she prepared the things that they needed for their dungeon expedition.

"So, you girls will be leaving soon," Grandma Annie said as she sat beside Colette and Helen. "Time surely flies. I can't remember the number of times I've seen Foreigners come and leave this place. Of course, there are some people who have stood out from among the crowd, and left a very good impression on me."

Lux lightly coughed and said "Ahem Ahem" several times, but Grandma Annie, as well as the two Dwarven girls, ignored him.

"Grandma, do you know any outstanding Dwarves that appeared here several years ago?" Colette asked. "Do you know someone named Aina?"

"Aina? Of course I know her." Grandma Annie looked in the distance as if remembering a very good memory. "Not only is she a wonderful Dwarf, she's also very strong, and kind. Although her face always looked cold on the surface, she was a very warm person. If I only had a grandson, I would have definitely urged him to approach her and ask her hand for marriage."

Colette puffed up her chest with pride as she gave Lux a side-long glance that said, "Isn't my sister awesome?".

The adorable dwarf then told Grandma Annie that she was Aina's sister, but the latter didn't express any shock after this revelation.

"I know," Grandma Annie said.

Colette blinked her eyes in confusion. "You know?"

"Yes. Before your sister left, she told me that a few years from now, her sister will also come to Leaf Village, and asked me to look after you," Grandma Annie said with a mischievous smile on her face. "Perhaps this is also fate. Who would think that the one and only Half-Elf to appear in this village arrived at the same time as you did?"

The old Dwarf chuckled and sipped some tea before she continued her narration.

"Then, all of you went through all sorts of trouble." Grandma Annie lightly patted Colette's and Helen's heads. "Getting caught up in a Monster Outbreak, Kidnapped by Kobold Bandits, and clearing a Hidden Dungeon."

"When all of you leave Leaf Village, and set off on your journey once again, you must remember that the journey itself has meaning. The songs of the cities, the smiles of the people, and the Monsters you face, all of them are part of your journey."

"Although the destination is good, it is not everything. So, before you reach the end, keep your eyes open and use those chances to take in the world around you. I'm sure that you will fondly remember these things when you sit back and reminisce about how your journey started."

Grandma Annie sighed as she pulled the two Dwarves into her embrace and gave both of them a hug.

"It is such a pity that Foreigners can't return to the place where they started." Grandma Annie sighed. "I would love to hear your stories after you have all traveled the world, and seen places I have never seen before."

Colette, and Helen became teary-eyed as they hugged back Grandma Annie who had always been kind to them.

Lux no longer sulked and simply stared at this sad parting with a solemn gaze.

Just like Grandma Annie said, those who stepped into the Apostle Rank are fated to leave Leaf Village and never step foot in it again. Such were the rules of the world, and there was nothing they could do about it.

Chapter 135.1: Playing Dirty [Part 1]

"Are all of you ready?" Colette asked as she looked at her party members who were raring to challenge the Hell Mode of the Bronze Crypt.

""Yes!""

"Okay. Let's go."

The little blonde Dwarf decisively chose the Hell Mode of the Bronze Crypt, teleporting them inside the Dungeon.

The Dwarves found themselves standing in front of a creepy forest. It even made Helen subconsciously shudder.

Lux and Eiko stood behind the Dwarves as they looked at the familiar scene with confident expressions on their faces.

After a good night's sleep, Eiko was no longer afraid of challenging the Bronze Crypt again. The fact that she was now perched on top of Lux's head showed that she had already overcome her fears after eating a plate full of bacon.

"Vanguards at the front, Mages flank our healer," Colette ordered as she, Lux, and Matty stood at the front of the formation.

Lux had already informed his friends that he didn't plan on summoning any of his minions to fight inside the Bronze Crypt. To his surprise, the Dwarves liked

this idea and even asked him not to summon Diablo, Ishtar, and Pazuzu, no matter how the expedition fared.

Although the Dwarf children didn't want to admit it, they had become accustomed to being surrounded by Lux's skeletons, which had given them a sense of security. This was something bad for their development, so they supported their Big Brother's request with a unanimous vote.

Only Eiko was allowed to summon her Devil Slime and Angel Slime to battle.

Lux held the sword Oathbreaker, as well as the shield Dawne, in his hands. Because he had become so accustomed to standing in the rear with the protection of his Summons, his close combat abilities had not been used for a long time.

Now that the tournament in Barbatos Academy was drawing near, the red-headed teenager decided to get serious and once again refine his sword and melee combat techniques in order to prepare for the battle that was to come.

His current role in the party was a Magic Swordsman, so he walked two meters away from Colette's left side, giving them some space to maneuver, just in case something unexpected happened.

Matty kept the same distance as well while he walked on Colette's right side. He had his guard raised to its peak as he warily scanned his surroundings for any surprise attacks.

Eiko, on the other hand, was perched on top of Helen's head. Her Papa had told her that he planned to fight solo for the time being, and ordered Eiko to act as Support for Helen, Andy, and Axel, just in case they were attacked by monsters.

Blackie and Whitey hovered above the mages, ready to fight at any given moment.

Just as Lux predicted, after moving a hundred steps inside the dungeon, several Elder Ghoul rose from the ground and attacked their party.

Helen let out an ear-piercing scream as her legs were grabbed by a pair of rotting hands that had come up from beneath the earth.

Andy and Axel hurriedly swatted the rotting hands with their staff, forgetting the fact that they were mages.

Fortunately, Whitey reacted in time and cast Holy Blast on the Zombie's hands, making them let go of the Cleric's legs, who had almost peed herself from fright.

Andy fired two consecutive fire bullets at the ground, forcing the Elder Ghoul to surface. Axel, on the other hand, cast a water blade to slice off the Zombie's hands, preventing it from using its hands against them again.

Although they had been caught by surprise by the Zombie's ambush, all of them had been baptized by the Nightmare Mode of Orc Dominion. Fighting against Rank 1 Monsters was no longer an issue for them.

Lux battled the Elder Ghoul in front of him, while paying close attention to his friends behind him. When Helen had been freed from the ghoul's clutches, he focused all of his attention on the enemy that was in front of him.

The Half-Elf unleashed the techniques that Vera had taught him when he was still a child. He had practiced these movements thousands of times in the past, until he fainted.

As Lux executed move after move, he realized just how strong his body had become. Now that fainting was no longer an issue, he can exert all his strength in his attacks. Lux's blade cleanly hacked the Elder Ghoul's limbs from their sockets, rendering it helpless.

"Kaizer Sword Art First Form," Lux said as he thrust his sword forward. "Piercing the Heavens!"

The sword instantly pierced through the Elder Ghoul's head, killing it instantly. Soon, the monster crumbled into pieces, leaving only dirt behind.

Colette and Matty had also finished dealing with the monsters in front of them. The little blonde Dwarf looked at her friends with a critical gaze. After seeing that no one was seriously hurt during the skirmish, she ordered the group to advance deeper into the maze.

With every battle they fought, the Dwarves were slowly getting the hang of fighting the monsters that would sneak attack them from the side, under the ground, and in the air above them.

The Half-Elf chuckled internally as he watched Colette's frustrated expression deepen whenever they came to a dead end. He had no intention of guiding them towards the Boss Monster's location this time though.

For him, this was an experience that his friends needed to experience so that when they encountered a similar incident in the future, they would be able to deal with it calmly and keep their wits about them.

One and a half hours later, Colette's group finally arrived at the end of the maze where the Final Boss was waiting for them.

Lux sneakily placed a pill inside his mouth, but he didn't bite on it. He only planned to use it once he had been affected by the Poison Cloud of the Plague Monstrosity.

Having a pill in his mouth would save him precious seconds of experiencing excruciating pain from the effect of the poison cloud, which the Plague Monstrosity unleash whenever it was cornered.

This was a very painful experience that would soon be experienced by his friends, who were fighting the boss for the very first time.

Lux hoped that after this boss fight, his friends would not overly rely on their healer when they needed to be cured from negative status effects. Why? The answer was very simple. Although Clerics and other healing classes were able to cure these negative buffs on their comrades, things would be different when they were also subjected to the same negative buffs.

'Fortunately, Eiko is immune to poison and diseases,' Lux thought as he held his weapon, and shield firmly as the boss Monster roared at them. 'She'll take care of Helen and the others, while Colette, Matty, and I deal with this monster.'

As soon as Lux took a fighting stance, Colette's determined voice reverberated in the surroundings.

"Shield Charge!" Colette shouted as the round shield in her hand glowed brightly.

The little blonde Dwarf, charged forward, followed by Lux and Matty, who were only a few steps behind her.

The Plague Monstrosity summoned two Elder Ghouls to fight with it, as it gave another resounding roar of outrage.

Soon the sounds of weapons clashing, and spells exploding, spread across the Boss Room as Colette and her friends fought with everything they had against a monster that took the meaning of "playing dirty" to the next level.

Chapter 136.2: Playing Dirty [Part 2]

Five minutes had passed since Colette's group started to engage the Boss Monster, Plague Monstrosity.

The Monster was being pushed back by the group's teamwork, as well as Colette's outstanding commands. However, when Lux saw the monster jump backwards, he knew that it was about to start "Playing Dirty", and he looked forward to his friends' suffering.

'I'm not doing this because I want to see you guys suffer,' Lux thought as he readied to bite the pill (Panacea) inside his mouth. 'I just want you guys to experience this kind of hardship, so that it won't bite you guys back in the future.'

Just like Lux expected, the Boss Monster unleashed its Poisonous Smog which immediately incapacitated the Dwarves that were fighting against it.

The Plague Monstrosity bore the title "Plague Bearer", which meant that 10 out of 10, the effect of its Poisonous Smog would activate, dealing poison or disease status to everyone in the vicinity.

"Gah!"

"D-dammit!"

"It hurts!"

"Urk..."

"Blergh!"

Lux had immediately bitten the Panacea in his mouth, preventing any status effects from affecting him.

Eiko, on the other hand, was immune to the status effect from the Plague Monstrosity, so she was still feeling peppy after the Boss Monster's attack. The baby Slime calmly healed Blackie's and Whitey's status, allowing the two Summoned Slimes to resume their attacks on the Boss Monster, who just used its skill, Jackhammer, to send the poisoned Colette flying to the back of their formation.

Just as the Boss was about to unleash its other skill, Rampage, on Matty, Lux used the skill, Shield Bash, to cancel the Boss Monster's attack.

Since the Half-Elf had equipped Dawne, he was able to use the shield's two abilities, which were Shield Bash and Shield Throw.

"H-Helen, quickly, use Cure!" Colette ordered as she shakily propped herself off from the ground.

When the Plague Monstrosity attacked her, she still had enough wits in her to use her shield to block the attack, which mitigated the damage she received from it.

Helen coughed repeatedly, as she tried to chant the Cure Spell to cure herself from her disoriented state, but she couldn't seem to muster her wits, as if she had entered a confused state of mind.

Fortunately, Andy had remembered that they were carrying Panacea's with them and immediately ate one. After recovering, he made Helen eat one, allowing her to recover from the negative buffs that plagued her.

When Colette saw this, she hurriedly took out a pill from her storage ring and ate it. A few seconds later, the pain in her chest disappeared.

'I had completely forgotten that we brought Panaceas with us,' Colette thought as she ran towards the Boss Monster that was being held at bay by her Big Brother. 'We've relied so much on Helen that we forget this simple fact. I failed as a leader.'

After learning from her mistake, she immediately gave an order to anyone to use the Panaceas they had whenever the boss monster activated its AOE Plague Skill.

Lux smiled after hearing Colette's orders as he continued to attack the Monster, alongside the now recovered Colette.

A few seconds later, Matty once again joined the fight after he, too, used his Panacea, rather than waiting for Helen to cure him.

After a few minutes of intense fighting, the Boss once again jumped back and unleashed its Poisonous Smog. This time, however, everyone was prepared and had already taken out a pill from their storage ring, chewing on it with vengeance.

The Plague Monstrosity would always use its skill, Jackhammer, after using its Poisonous Smog in order to take advantage of its enemies weakened state to deal them devastating damage.

However, since its skill didn't work, it found itself being attacked by an angry Dwarf Paladin who smashed her round shield against its body.

"Shield Charge!" Colette shouted as she jumped after her sprint to smash her shield on the Boss Monster's chest, pushing it back.

Once they had gotten used to the Boss' attack patterns, the rest of the battle went smoothly.

Ten minutes later, the Plague Monstrosity finally died, leaving behind a chest as a reward for defeating it.

Everyone's faces, with the exception of Lux and Eiko, were pale after experiencing such a disgusting enemy.

They had eaten five Panaceas each because the Monster had used its Poisonous Smog five times as well.

Lux watched them with a calm expression on his face. In truth, he was doing his best to prevent himself from chuckling after seeing his friends' nauseous faces.

Matty looked like he had eaten a fly, while the three magic classes were leaning on their staffs and seemed to be on the verge of puking.

Colette was the only one who had a better complexion, but her face was still pale as she gazed at her friends who were suffering in front of her.

"Big Brother, are you feeling uncomfortable somewhere?" Colette asked after looking at Lux who looked fine compared to them.

"I'm good," Lux answered. "You did well, Colette."

Lux was quite impressed when he saw how much Colette's leadership and command skills had improved during the battle. If not for the fact that they had been taken by surprise by the Poisonous Smog at the beginning, they would have beaten the boss sooner without fail.

Colette flashed a smile after being praised by Lux before walking towards the treasure chest and opening it with both of her hands.

Lux was also quite curious to see what the treasure box contained because he only got a Beast Core during his dungeon run.

To his surprise, there were three items inside the Treasure Chest.

The first item was a bone shield, which was made from the Plague Monstrosities hard bones.

The second item was a necklace that increased Poison Resistance.

The third item was a Rank 3 Beast Core, which belonged to the Boss Monster.

Overall, it wasn't a bad haul after nearly fifteen minutes of suffering.

Lux wasn't interested in any of the items, so he didn't ask Colette to share them with him. A few minutes later, the group exited the Bronze Crypt and appeared at its entrance.

Their Clear Time was 1 hour and 48 minutes, which was a far cry from Aina's record of 39 minutes.

"Big Sister is truly amazing," Colette said as she looked up at her sister's rank in the Leaderboards. "She was able to beat this dungeon with only that much time. Truly incredible."

Matty and the others nodded their heads, while Lux only smiled with his arms crossed over his chest. Now that the Dwarves had experienced what the Bronze Crypt Hell Mode had to offer, it was now time for him to step in and keep his promise with Colette.

A Promise on which he would help her beat her sister's record before leaving the Leaf Village.

"Are you guys feeling better?" Lux asked.

The Dwarf children all looked at him and nodded their heads.

"Good." Lux smirked. "Let's go challenge it again. I will teach you guys how to do a Speedrun."

"Speedrun?" Colette tilted her head in confusion. "Big Brother, what is a speedrun?"

Lux chuckled as he patted Colette's head with a devilish smile on his face. "The reason why your sister managed to beat this dungeon in that much time is because she focused on killing the boss monster, instead of clearing the dungeon.

"Earlier, you guys focused on clearing the dungeon, instead of trying to beat her record. This time around, we will ignore clearing the dungeon and just focus on getting to the boss in the fastest time possible."

As if the last puzzle had fallen in place, all the Dwarf children's eyes widened in realization. They immediately understood what Lux was trying to tell them.

Seeing their reactions, the Half-Elf grinned as he summoned his mount, Jed in front of his friends.

"Your sister might be good, but she never acquired a mount while she was still here in Leaf Village," Lux said as he mounted his Rank 3 Warg. "Now, are you guys ready for Round 2?"

All the Dwarves nodded their heads with determination. The thought of having their names immortalized in Leaf Village's Bronze Crypt was an honor that they would fight to achieve.

Fifteen minutes later...

Congratulations! You have beaten the current record of Bronze Crypt Hell Mode!

Your names will be added to the Hall of Fame!"

—

Bronze Crypt Hell Mode

Date: 7th Day of the Month of the Chariot 1648 AD

Clear Time: 14 minutes, 28 seconds.

Challengers:

Lux Von Kaizer

Colette Van Goldenslayer

Eiko

Matty...

Andy...

Axel...

Helen...

—

The moment they reached the boss room, Lux and Eiko didn't hold back, summoning all of their forces to gangbang the Boss Monster senselessly.

The Boss Monster died a pitiful death in just five minutes, and it wasn't even able to cast its Poisonous Cloud even once due to Diablo's and Pazuzu's Duel [EX], which canceled all of its attempts, making the battle end faster.

Chapter 137: Pinky Promise

"Cheers!"

""Cheers!""

After successfully beating Aina's record, Lux and his friends partied inside the Tavern and ordered a lot of food.

Everyone was in a good mood, including Matty, who even called Lux Big Brother as he exchanged a toast with him.

The red-headed teenager knew well that Matty was just in an incredibly happy mood since the Dwarf boy had done something that he would never have done if he had been sober.

Eiko was being hand fed by Colette and Helen, who took turns feeding the baby Slime. Andy and Axel were also drinking a lot of mead, which made Lux worry for the two Dwarfs, who were bound to have a hangover when they woke up in the morning.

Although he knew that Dwarfs were strong drinkers, that was only true for adults, and not for Dwarf children that were only twelve years old.

The other Dwarves inside the tavern looked at this happy scene with amused expressions on their faces. They didn't know the reason why Lux and his friends were celebrating since the result of their Dungeon expedition wasn't announced like their clear of the Hidden Quest in the Stronghold of Norria had been.

They just thought that the rowdy group had fought an Alpha Monster somewhere and were celebrating a job well done, which was a very common occurrence among Apostle Grade Parties that were about to leave Leaf Village in a few days.

"Big Brother, what are your plans tomorrow?" Colette asked while feeding Eiko a chicken drumstick.

"Good question," Lux answered. "To be honest. I haven't made any plans for tomorrow."

Usually when a Dwarf becomes Grade D Apostles, they would either fight the Alpha Monsters as part of their graduation ceremony, or just leave Leaf Village and transfer to an Intermediate Town.

Colette and her group had already defeated the Mutated Golden-Eyed Crimson Mantis, as well as beat her sister's record in the Bronze Crypt. They

had also beaten the Carbuncle, as well as cleared a Hidden Quest in a Rank-C Dungeon.

Truth be told, Colette's group had already done many things, and could leave Leaf Village at any time, but she was reluctant to do so because of her Big Brother, Lux, who had no intention of leaving the Beginner's Zone for the time being.

As if guessing her thoughts, Lux smiled and placed his mug of fruit juice on the table.

"This will not be our last time seeing each other, Colette," Lux said. "Didn't I promise you that I would meet your sister? I don't want to brag, but I am someone that keeps my promise."

"Although it might take a while, I promise that I'll find you, so that you can introduce me to your amazing Big Sister."

Colette looked at Lux with a serious expression on her face before giving a reply. "I still feel anxious, Big Brother. I feel like I really won't see you again once I leave Leaf Village."

"Hahaha, you think too much," Lux stated. "Don't you trust me?"

"I trust you."

"Then, continue to trust me. I will keep my promise. Let's pinky promise on it?"

"P-Pinky promise?" Colette looked at Lux with confusion. "What's a pinky promise?"

Lux raised his right little finger and wiggled it in front of Colette. "This is the pinky finger. Now use your own pinky finger to intertwine with mine."

Colette was still unsure about what Lux was trying to do, but she obeyed until both of their little fingers were intertwined with each other.

"This is how you pinky swear," Lux said. "I promise that I will come to find you and your sister. It may take a while, but I swear that I will look for the two of you. If I break my promise, I will lose all the hair on my head and become bald forever."

Colette and Helen giggled after hearing the contents of Lux's promise. They just couldn't imagine what the Half-Elf would look like if he became bald.

Lux then shook his intertwined finger with Colette, sealing the promise he made to her.

"There," Lux said as he gave Colette a wink. "Now, do you feel any better?"

Colette nodded. Although her Big Brother's way of assuring her was unexpected, she now believed that he wouldn't break his promise to meet her and her sister after they had left Leaf Village.

"Big Brother, I have an idea!" Colette said with sparkling eyes. "Let's fight the Forest Wolf King!"

Matty, who was having a drinking contest with Andy and Axel, spat the mead out of his mouth and coughed repeatedly.

Even the Dwarves who were sitting at the tables near the group turned their heads to look at Colette after hearing her proposal.

"No." Lux shook his head firmly. "That's just suicide."

This thought had already crossed his mind, but he decisively shot it down because it was too dangerous. When they fought against Orobak, he knew back then that they were no match for him.

This was why he decided to fight him using trickery. Although he got the results he wanted, he knew that it wouldn't work against the Forest Wolf King, who was stronger than Orobak. If they really went there to fight it with just their party, there was a high chance that they would suffer casualties, even if they managed to defeat it.

This was something that Lux wanted to avoid at all costs.

Colette was also aware that her proposal was unreasonable, and had gotten carried away because of the drinks that she had earlier. In the end, everyone just treated it as a joke and the discussion about hunting the Forest Wolf King ended.

An hour later, their celebration ended and everyone went back to their own rooms to rest.

Lux, who didn't drink any alcohol, sat beside the window of his room and looked at the full moon in the sky.

The baby Slime on his lap was sleeping peacefully after she'd had her fill of food and drinks from their party. Eiko had grown very fond of Colette and the others, and he was sure that she would miss them once they left Leaf Village to go to the Intermediate Town.

Although Lux could break past the Apostle Grade at any moment if he allocated his free stat points, he didn't do that. Just like he told Colette earlier, he was someone who kept his promises, and until his promise in Leaf Village was kept, he would not leave it anytime soon.

'Aside from the Ghoul Beast, only the Forest Wolf King is left,' Lux thought as he gazed at the moon. 'All the Beginner Villages have a Mythical Quest in them... I need to complete them all before the tournament starts.'

Mythical Ranked Items were extremely rare because they were the highest tier before reaching Legendary Rank.

He already had the Pseudo-Legendary Armor, the Blackrock Legacy Armor Set, but it was currently equipped by Diablo.

His Master, Randolph hadn't even started crafting his Faunus Battle Armor because he was prioritizing Andy's and Axel's armor sets.

In truth, there was a connection between the Mythical Quests of each Village around the Stronghold of Norria.

All of the mythical rewards from each of them comprised the entirety of the Mythical Faunus Battle Regalia Set.

Lux opened his Elysium Compendium as he read the passage that was written there.

"In Leaf Village, a special armor is made, its toughness is as resilient as adamantium.

In Lindow Village, a shield stands proud, waiting for the day its new owner arrives.

In Sunflower Village, where the sun rises in the east, a blade that has slain a dragon is hidden.

Lastly, in Millwood Village, where secrets are kept, a mask with many faces smiles at the ignorant."

Four Villages,

Four Battle Regalias that made up the Mythical Faunus Set.

Once the full set had been gathered, it would forever be bound to its owner. According to the Elysium Compendium, if the right conditions and requirements are met, the Mythical Armor Set could evolve into a Legendary Set.

This was why Lux had no plans of leaving the Beginner's Zone anytime soon. As long as he could acquire the complete Faunus Battle Regalia Set, he was confident that he would be able to win against anyone in the tournament, even if the participants were backed by the Royal Families that supported Barbatos Academy.

Chapter 138: Colette Is Such A Sinful Child

Several Dwarves, who had just arrived in Elysium, were running away from the center of the Aspiration Plains.

They accidentally ventured too far while hunting horned rabbits and didn't notice that they had entered the territory of the Berserked Horned Rabbits, which were Rank 2 Monsters.

One of the Dwarves accidentally tripped over the ground while running away, making the Berserked Horned Rabbits lock onto his small body.

"No! Save me!" The Dwarf boy cried out in fear, but no one paid attention to him.

It was not that the other Dwarves didn't want to help him, but that there was nothing they could do. They were just beginners and they were already hard pressed fighting against Rank 1 Monsters, let alone Rank 2 Monsters, who were known for their speed and mobility.

The Dwarf boy watched in horror as one of the Berserked Horned Rabbits lunged at him with its sharp horn posed to impale his body.

He could only close his eyes and brace himself for the inevitable pain and death that would befall upon him shortly. However, it was at this moment when a metallic ring reached his ears.

When the Dwarf boy opened his eyes, he saw an adorable blonde Dwarf girl, colliding with the Horned Rabbit using her shield.

Time seemed to have stopped at that moment, as the boy looked at his savior with a flushed expression on his face.

"Smite!" Colette shouted as she smashed her mythical mace against the Berserked Horned Rabbit's body, making it take a few steps back.

Before the Dwarf boy could even thank his savior, Colette raised her mace and cried out to her teammates.

"Arrowhead Formation!" Colette ordered before charging at the enemies with Matty and Lux by her side.

There were Four Berserked Horned Rabbits, but the Goldenslayer Party was now more than capable of dealing with them after everything that they had been through.

"Diablo, take care of the fourth one," Lux ordered as he summoned his dependable Firstborn to battle.

Diablo appeared riding Airon, and the two immediately entangled with the Berserked Horned Rabbit that was planning to attack the mages at the back of the formation.

Colette used her all-rounder abilities to fight the horned rabbit in front of her. Berserked Horned Rabbits were known for their bursts of speed, instead of their strength.

As long as they were stopped from gaining momentum when they started to sprint, their horned attacks were not much of a threat to the little Paladin whose mythical weapon, shield, and armor, could easily defend against its normal attacks.

Matty, on the other hand, was an expert in parrying. Now that he was wearing mythical armor, and wielding two mythical short swords, his counterattacks were deadlier than ever.

As for Lux... he was just like Colette, an all rounder. But, having a baby slime who was a battle junkie, who had no qualms firing a barrage of spells at her target in addition to copying her Papa's Doppelganger skill, was like a magical turret that spits random spells in a span of a few seconds, turning the Berserked Horned Rabbit in front of them into a punching bag.

Because of this, Andy, Axel, and Helen, focused on supporting Colette and Matty. Lux, Eiko, and Diablo obviously didn't need any support.

They even pitied the Berserked Horned Rabbits that were unlucky enough to be targeted by them.

"Eyah!" Eiko ordered Blackie and Whitey, making the Devil and Angel Slime use their combination attack called, Starfire Tempest, which allowed the two slimes to combine the power of Shadow and Holy into a single, concentrated beam of light.

A loud explosion ensued followed by a shriek of pain. A few seconds later the Berserked Horned Rabbit collapsed on the ground, with a charred, basketball-sized hole in its chest.

"Great job, Eiko."

"Pa!"

Lux then glanced at the others and found them almost finished with their respective targets as well. For the time being, the Half-Elf moved towards the Dwarf boy, whose eyes never left Colette.

The red-headed teenager didn't fail to notice the look of admiration in the boy's eyes which made him pray for his poor soul.

'Hah, Colette is such a sinful child,' Lux mused as he stared at the love-struck Dwarf boy who seemed to have fallen in love at first sight. 'It seems that Matty will have a lot of love rivals in the future. Colette is simply too good.'

Lux was looking forward to Matty's future hardships in trying to secure Colette's hand in marriage after their party moved to the Intermediate Town where Apostle Grade Solaia's numbered in the thousands.

After all the Berserked Horned Rabbits had been dealt with, the party focused on collecting their Beast Cores, as well as storing the corpses inside their Enchanted Beast Rings.

Horned Rabbit Meat was a delicacy in Leaf Village, especially Rank 2 Horned Rabbits, fetching a good price in the market.

Lux didn't even need to bother taking the Beast Core of the Berserked Horned Rabbit that he had slain because his baby Slime would be the one who would deal with it. After the battle, Eiko jumped off his head and ordered Blackie and Whitey to retrieve the Beast Core from the Horned Rabbit's body, so that she could eat it.

Just as he expected, a series of notifications appeared in front of him after Eiko finished absorbing the Beast Core.

Eiko has learned the skill Sprint

Eiko activated the skill Mimicry [EX]!

- Target Lux Von Kaizer.
- Successfully copied Skill Evolution [EX]!

< Skill Evolution [EX] detected a new Skill. >

Sprint will be upgraded into Mad Sprint once the requirements have been met.

< Mad Sprint >

- Increase speed by 100%
- Requirements to upgrade: Use Sprint 20x

– Progress (0 / 20)

Half a minute later, Lux chuckled as he watched his baby Slime run all over the place using her Sprint Skill, followed by Blackie and Whitey as if they were playing tag.

"Are you alright?" Colette asked the Dwarf boy who had fallen on the ground with a smile on her face, making the poor Dwarf have a nosebleed.

"Y-Yes, I am fine," the Dwarf Boy replied as he tried to reach out for Colette's outstretched hand.

However, before he could even touch the rugged hands of his savior, a much rougher hand grabbed him and pulled him off the ground.

"Hi, my name is Matty," Matty said. "I am Colette's future fiance. Nice to meet you," Matty added in an intimidating tone, which made the Dwarf look at Colette with a heartbroken gaze.

Surprisingly, Colette didn't correct Matty's words because she didn't want to entangle herself with a stranger that she had just saved. It would be better to turn a blind eye to Matty's declaration than deal with a Dwarf who was looking at her with puppy eyes.

This was not the first time that this had happened, so she was already used to it.

As the Dwarf boy looked at Colette every ten steps he took away from her, Matty got annoyed so he used his body to block the Dwarf boy's vision, making the latter pout.

Lux just watched this funny scene with his arms crossed over his chest. He could already tell that in a few more years, Colette would grow up to become a very beautiful young lady, which would gather many suitors.

As for whether Matty would be able to win her heart or not, even Lux didn't know. All he wanted for his friends was to find happiness in life.

"Well then, let's go hunt a Carbuncle!" Colette declared as she summoned her Warg Mount.

After their night of celebration, the Dwarf children decided to stay for three more days before leaving for Intermediate Town.

Lux's promise had eased Colette's and the others' hearts, which made them look forward to seeing him again when he traveled to the Intermediate Towns, where they could once again continue their journey together.

Chapter 139: All For The Sake Of The Promises He Made

"I'll miss you, Eiko."

"Eiko, make sure to remember us okay?"

"Sis Colette, Sis Helen!"

The baby Slime cried as she was hugged by Colette and Helen. The two Dwarves were also teary-eyed as they tried to pacify Eiko, who was already bawling her eyes out within their embrace.

Lux could only look at this scene bitterly because he knew that exchanging goodbyes was a difficult thing to do. His friends were about to leave Leaf Village and set out on a new adventure to the Intermediate Towns where Colette's sister, Aina, was waiting for her.

"Take care of yourselves in the intermediate Towns, okay?" Lux smiled as he rested his hands on Andy's and Axel's shoulders. "Things will be more difficult there, so always be on your toes and never let your guard down."

"We will, Big Brother," Andy replied.

"Big Brother, we'll be waiting for you." Axel nodded.

Matty had his arms crossed around his chest, but he was standing right beside Lux. Till the end, he refused to take the initiative to say goodbye, so the Half-Elf decided to do the Simp Dwarf a favor and patted his head.

"Colette will definitely attract many handsome boys," Lux commented. "If you don't step up your game, someone is going to sweep her off her feet."

Matty snorted. "I'd kill them before they could do that."

Surprisingly, he didn't swat Lux's hand away and allowed the red-headed teenager to continue patting his head.

Five minutes later, the two little girls managed to calm Eiko down and returned her to Lux with tears in their eyes.

"Big Brother, come see us soon," Colette said as she hugged Lux's waist. "I'll make sure that you'll get married to my sister as soon as possible."

"Big Brother, don't make us wait too long, okay?" Helen pleaded as she also hugged the Half-Elf, sandwiching him between her and Colette.

Lux smiled as he patted their heads. "Don't worry, I will come to find you guys, and when I do, we will go into an adventure together."

"Okay!"

"Un!"

Colette gestured to Lux as if she wanted to whisper something to him. The Half-Elf thought that she was going to tell her about her sister again, so he lowered his head and waited for Colette to say what she wanted to say.

As if waiting for that moment, Colette and Helen exchanged a glance and kissed Lux's left and right cheeks simultaneously.

Matty immediately reacted and was about to drag Colette away, but Andy and Axel both grabbed his arms, preventing him from ruining Colette's and Helen's goodbye.

"Thank you," Lux said as he held Eiko in his hand and kissed the baby slime's cheeks. "Go on, Eiko, kiss them back for me."

Eiko happily puckered her lips and kissed Colette and Helen, making the two girls giggle. After that farewell ended, all the Dwarves stared at the Half-Elf who gave them all a nod of assurance.

"Goodbyes are not forever," Lux said softly. "Goodbyes are not the end. It simply means Eiko and I will miss all of you until we meet again."

"Yes!" Eiko echoed as she looked at her first friends in Elysium with teary eyes. "Bye bye!"

"Bye bye, Big Brother, Eiko!" Colette said before turning around to summon her Warg.

She immediately climbed on top of it and ordered it to run away, because she was afraid that if she stayed a minute longer, her resolve would shatter like a crystal glass.

Helen sobbed before summoning her own Warg and ordering it to follow Colette.

Unlike her leader, Helen wasn't able to stop the tears from falling from her eyes as her Warg passed through the entrance of Leaf Village.

"I will wait for you, remember that," Matty declared as he also summoned his Warg and followed the two girls who had now put a good distance between them.

Andy and Axel both bowed their heads before summoning their mounts and rejoining their partymates.

Eiko buried her little head into Lux's chest as she cried sadly. She had also tried her best not to cry, but the sadness was too much for a baby like her.

Lux lightly patted the baby Slime on his chest, as his eyes blurred due to the tears that he had held back for so long.

As everyone's Big Brother, he knew that he couldn't cry in front of Colette and the others because it would make their parting more difficult. He resolved himself and forcibly acted like a mature, collected, and dependable Big Brother who was seeing his little brothers and sisters off as they left on their new journey.

Colette and her friends had been Lux's first friends in Elysium and he treasured all of them in his heart. Now that they were no longer here, the Half-Elf stopped holding back his tears and allowed them to fall freely.

The red-headed teenager and the baby Slime cried in each other's arms, until they no longer had tears to shed.

—

Randolph and Grandma Annie looked at the Half-Elf that was standing by the West Gate of Leaf Village that led to the Heartwood Forest. This was the path that everyone took whenever they left for the Stronghold of Norria, which allowed them to use the teleportation gates to go to the different Intermediate Towns in the Kingdom of Gweliven.

"Although they are foreigners, seeing them go still makes my heart ache," Grandma Annie said softly.

"That is just the cycle of life," Randolph commented from the side. "One of these days, Lux will also leave us, and a new batch of foreigners will arrive to continue the cycle."

Grandma Annie nodded. "Yes. The legacy is passed on from those who come before, to those who come after, letting this Village, that is located in the outskirts of the kingdom, have a breath of fresh air."

Randolph chuckled. "Still, I have high hopes for Lux. The Only Half-Elf that has appeared here for hundreds of years. I'm sure that he will become something great in the future."

"Funny." Grandma Annie smiled. "I feel the same way myself."

The two old people exchanged a knowing glance at each other before returning to their shops.

Back at the gate, Lux wiped the tears from his eyes, as he walked back to the inn, carrying Eiko in his arms. Today, he planned to take it easy, resting his body and mind.

Tomorrow, he would leave Leaf Village, and venture to the other villages in the territory of Norria. All for the sake of the promises he made, and the friends who were now waiting for him beyond the gate.

Chapter 140: But, I'm Only A Half-Elf

Lux and Eiko were abruptly woken up by a series of loud knocks on the door.

The Tavern Owner personally went to his room to wake him up because there was something going on at the entrance of the village, and the village guards had sent someone to his Tavern to have Lux woken up.

The disgruntled Half-Elf, and Baby Slime, looked outside of the window, and realized that it was still dark outside. After doing a few stretches, he walked towards the door to see what the commotion was about.

"The Guard Captain wants to see you at the East Gate of the Village," the Tavern Owner reported. "According to the guard on duty, a Kobold Wyrmling named Cadmus demands your presence."

"Cadmus?" Lux frowned. It took him a few seconds to register the name inside his sleepy brain, but when he did, the drowsiness he felt disappeared completely. "Did the Draconic Kobold say why he is looking for me?"

"No. The guard that came here only told me that you need to go there as soon as possible. He is waiting to escort you outside."

"Give me a few minutes. I'll just wash my face and change my clothes."

The Tavern Owner nodded and left Lux alone. He was also quite annoyed that he was woken up from his sleep, but there was nothing he could do about it.

Five minutes later, Lux left the inn alongside the guard that was ordered to escort him to the East Gate of the village.

As they neared their location, they noticed several armed guards, as well as members of the Riders of Norria gathered near the gate.

Even from a distance, he could see the arrogant Draconic Kobold with his arms crossed over his chest, when he noticed Lux's presence.

"What do you want?" Lux asked in a grumpy tone. "Last time I checked, I didn't do anything bad to the Kobolds for you to personally come here to find me."

The Kobolds and the Dwarves now had a non-aggression pact, which meant that both sides would do their best to avoid stirring up conflicts on both sides. Even now, Lux couldn't think of any reason why Cadmus came to find him.

"What are you talking about?" Cadmus replied. "Are you not one of those that had cleared the Hidden Quest in the Stronghold of Norria?"

"I was one of them, but what does that have to do with you?"

"In regards to the Hidden Mission, it has nothing to do with me. But, since you are one of the people that completed it, you're coming with me."

"Huh?" Lux blinked in confusion. "Excuse me? Why do I need to come with you?"

Cadmus glared at the Half-Elf as he placed both of his hands to the side, as if itching to grab him and take him away by force.

The guards, as well as the Riders of Norria saw this, and immediately stood between the Draconic Kobold and Lux. None of them were afraid of the Rank 5 Alpha Monster because if Cadmus really went to attack them, the Kingdom of Gweliven would send its Rankers to hunt it down, as well as exterminate the Kobold's entire clan.

"Just come with me! I will explain it to you later!"

"Hah? Are you stupid? Why would I come with you if you don't explain anything to me?"

Cadmus growled as his Draconic Eyes locked into Lux's body. He was clenching and unclenching his clawed hands, as if he was fighting an internal battle inside of himself. After a few minutes of tension, the Draconic Kobold sighed as it tossed a leather pouch to Lux.

The Half-Elf subconsciously caught it, but was surprised because the pouch was quite heavy. After checking its contents, he realized that it was filled with gold coins.

After a rough estimate, the red-headed teenager guessed that there were at least five hundred gold coins in the pouch, which made him even more confused.

"I am hiring you for a quest," Cadmus stated. "Isn't this what the Dwarves do in that... Adventure Guild or something."

"Adventurer's Guild," Lux corrected.

"Yes. Now, come! I already paid you!"

"... Dafuk?"

The guards look at the exchange with frowns on their faces, but all of them understood the general gist of what the Draconic Kobold was trying to say. He planned to hire Lux for a quest, so he came to Leaf Village in order to look for him.

"But, why me?" Lux asked. "You're already this strong, and you still need my help?"

"Yes," Cadmus answered. "Because what I am about to face is stronger than me. This is why I need your help!"

Lux was very tempted to spit on the Draconic Kobold for trying to drag him to something troublesome. If a Rank 5 Alpha Monster like Cadmus couldn't do it on his own, adding him would not make much of a difference. At least, that was what Lux thought at the moment.

"Tell me the specifics of the mission," Lux replied. "I need to know the details before I accept this quest of yours."

Cadmus glanced at Lux and the Dwarves that were guarding him.

"Let's talk, just the two of us."

"... Fine."

Looking at how serious Cadmus' expression was, the Half-Elf had a feeling that if he rejected his request, the chances of the Draconic Kobold tearing him to pieces was high.

'At the very least, I should hear him out first,' Lux thought as he followed Cadmus to a spot within a hundred meters away from the gate's entrance. He didn't trust the Draconic Kobold enough to follow him without the guards, as well as the Riders of Norria, looking at him for support.

"Three days ago, we encountered the ruins of what seemed to be an ancient city, buried underground," Cadmus said as he glanced at the Dwarves that were in the distance as if he was afraid that they would hear him. "After doing

some investigation, we came to the conclusion that it was built by gnomes, but they weren't the only ones living in the city."

After hearing Cadmus' explanation, he now understood why the Draconic Kobold didn't want to discuss this in front of the Dwarves. There was a high possibility that their discovery would brute force their way into the ruins, and claim that it was something that belonged to the Gweliven Kingdom.

By doing so, they would not be breaking the oath they made with the Kobolds, as they seized the opportunity to study, and perhaps unearth some treasures within the Ancient Ruins buried deep underground.

"I understand why you don't want to involve the Dwarves in this quest of yours, but why do I need to go with you?" Lux asked. "Can't you Kobolds do this on your own?"

"Excavating the ancient city as we look for treasures is fine," Cadmus snorted. "However, we found a Dungeon at the back of the city, and we were unable to access it because there is some kind of restriction."

Lux arched an eyebrow. "What restriction?"

"Only ten individuals may enter it, and among those ten people, there must be an elf."

"But, I'm only a Half-Elf."

Cadmus nodded. "Yes. But, we have no other choice. You are the only Elf-like creature that we know, and I'm hoping that the Elven blood inside you, no matter how diluted, will be enough to open the dungeon's entrance."

Lux rubbed his chin. "What is the grade of this Dungeon?"

The Draconic Kobold looked at Lux long and hard before giving him an answer.

"According to our Shaman, it is a C-Ranked Dungeon, and there is only one difficulty setting."

"Let me guess, it's Hell Mode?"

Cadmus nodded, which made Lux feel his liver ache.

Right after Cadmus finished his explanation, Lux heard a ringing sound in his head, followed by several rows of text appearing in front of him, which made the Half-Elf pinch the bridge of his nose, and close his eyes. He wanted to confirm if he was just hallucinating things or not because the mission that appeared in front of him made him want to go back to the inn to continue sleeping.

—

Ding!

- You have received the Hidden Quest "A Touch of Dragons".
- Would you like to accept this quest?

< Yes / No >

Lux had a feeling that if he accepted this quest, he would find himself in a situation that was similar to Barca's Quest, when he entered the Dungeon of the Orc Dominion.

Chapter 141: A Touch Of Dragons

—

Ding!

- You have received the Hidden Quest "A Touch of Dragons".
- Would you like to accept this quest?

< Yes / No >

Lux stared at the prompt in front of him before shifting his gaze at Cadmus whose eyes had locked unto his body.

"If I help you, aside from these gold coins, what other benefits can I get?" Lux asked.

"You're too greedy, Half-Elf," Cadmus replied.

"Then, go find another Elf that will help you," Lux scoffed. "I'm not interested. You can take your gold back."

Lux didn't even bat an eye as he threw the pouch filled with gold coins back at the Draconic Kobold whose eyes had turned bloodshot.

The Half-Elf had acquired the title, Negotiator, after clearing the Hidden Quest of Orc Dominion. This allowed him to have a higher chance of winning when negotiating with anyone, especially those that were members of the Nobility or Royal Family.

Although he was dealing with a Draconic Kobold, who was neither noble nor royal, this was still a negotiation, so he was hoping that he would gain more by accepting this mission that was thrown at his face without prior notice.

"What more do you want?" Cadmus growled. Clearly, he was feeling frustrated because he couldn't use brute force to get his way in this situation. He knew that Lux was now an Honorary Knight of the Kingdom of Gweliven, and killing a Noble would spell out, not only his doom, but his entire clan's future as well.

"I want a share of everything that will be acquired in the dungeon," Lux replied. "I want a third of whatever treasures, Beast Cores, or any other useful items that are found inside it."

Cadmus growled and a streak of flame burst out from his mouth, as he spat on the ground beside him.

"Fine," Cadmus agreed through gritted teeth.

"Ah. Can I also have that pouch back? I'm short on gold coins right now." Lux smiled at the Draconic Kobold, which almost pushed the latter to slash the Half-Elf's face with his claws.

"Take it!" Cadmus tossed the pouch back to the red-headed teenager using all the willpower it could muster. If not for the requirement of the Dungeon to

have an Elf be part of the group, he would never, ever, go as far as to negotiate with the Half-Elf who was trying to extort him.

After receiving the pouch of gold coins, Lux finally accepted the mission. A few seconds later, several rows of text appeared in front of him, which made him drop the gold pouch, and his jaw practically fell off his face.

'Oh sh*t...', Lux thought as he read the information in front of him.

Hidden Quest: A Touch of Dragons

Difficulty Rating: S

Quest Location: Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian

Dungeon Rating: C

Dungeon Mode: Hell Mode

< A Touch of Dragons >

(Chain Quest)

Deep within the earth, an ancient city was unearthed. Find out the secret that was buried along its demise within the Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian.

Bonus Rewards will be calculated depending on the choices you make in this mission.

Primary Rewards upon mission completion.

– Potion of Intelligence

This potion adds +50 permanent Intelligence Points to the one who consumes it. You can only consume one Potion of Intelligence in your lifetime.

– Rank 2 Skill Book of your choice.

You will be able to choose any Skill that is Rank 2 and below from the Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian.

1,000 Gold Coins

+2,000 Hazeback Kobold Clan Reputation Points

Lux didn't expect that the difficulty rating of the mission would be S, which made him wonder if he could still back out from the mission he had just accepted.

"Um, can I back out?" Lux asked the grumpy Draconic Kobold.

Instead of answering, Cadmus placed its clawed hand on Lux's shoulder, preventing him from moving from where he stood.

"Do you want to?" Cadmus asked. Although his clawed hand that was keeping Lux in place wasn't exerting any kind of pressure, the Half-Elf understood that the Draconic Kobold wouldn't allow him to go, not after being told the secrets of the Ancient Ruins.

"I don't want to."

"Good. You made the right choice."

Cadmus glanced at the guards at the gate, who had unsheathed their weapons after seeing him seize the Half-Elf who was under their protection.

"You have two hours to prepare." Cadmus growled as he released his hold on Lux's shoulder. "We'll be leaving before sunrise. Now, go."

Lux reluctantly nodded his head as he went back to the inn to gather his things. He also asked Aron, who was the Head of the Leaf Village guards to pass a message to his Master, Randolph, that he would be leaving Leaf Village for a week or two.

After exiting the gate, Cadmus grabbed Lux's body before taking off to the skies. He didn't plan on letting the Dwarves follow him, so he decided to cover his tracks by flying to the North for a few minutes before changing direction by turning towards the West.

Lux understood why the Draconic Kobold was being secretive of the Ancient Ruin's location because it could attract the attention of the Dwarves, who would not pass up the chance to gain more treasures.

After an hour of flying, Cadmus descended towards the ground, in a valley that was several miles away from the Stronghold of Norria.

There, he made a beeline towards a giant boulder that was surrounded by vines. As soon as the Draconic Kobold landed, he released Lux and pushed the boulder to the side, revealing a narrow entrance.

"Go in," Cadmus ordered.

Lux nodded as he entered the narrow cave, which was big enough for Cadmus to traverse only if he crouched on the ground.

There were several glowing crystals along the way, so Lux didn't have any trouble seeing what was in front of him. The minutes passed by in silence, as the Half-Elf, as well as the Draconic Kobold, walked at a steady pace.

After walking for almost half an hour, the two finally arrived in a spacious cavern, where an underground lake had formed.

Cadmus walked along the side of the lake, until he arrived at another tunnel, leading deeper into the ground.

The Half-Elf followed behind the Draconic Kobold as he secretly mapped the pathways that they took. Deep inside, he sniggered after discovering Cadmus' attempt to confuse his sense of direction, in order to prevent him from memorizing the path that they were taking.

'He is too cautious,' Lux thought as he followed the Draconic Kobold who was leading him in circles around the underground labyrinth.

Finally, after three hours, Cadmus finally took the right path, and led Lux to the real location where the Ancient Ruins were discovered.

When they arrived at their destination, Lux couldn't help but whistle at the sheer size of the underground city. According to his estimate, even if ten Leaf Villages were stuffed inside, it would fit and still have room to spare.

Kobolds could be seen everywhere and most of them were digging into the ground, trying to unearth the entire city from its buried state.

"Come, the Dungeon is at the very back of the city," Cadmus said as he dragged Lux forward. "You can go sightseeing when we get back."

Lux didn't reply and simply allowed Cadmus to lead him to the Dungeon's entrance, while his eyes wandered around the place.

All the Kobolds were giving him unfriendly gazes as if he was a thief that had come to steal their treasures.

'Well, in a way, I did come to steal their treasures,' Lux thought as he ignored the steely gazes of the Kobolds who had stopped their work to observe him.

Eiko, who was perched on top of Lux's head, was looking around as well. This was something new to her, and she looked at this scene with genuine curiosity.

After walking for twenty minutes, they finally arrived at the entrance of the Dungeon.

Lux marveled at the design on the gates, which had the head of a dragon carved in it. In truth, he was both afraid of and excited about what he was going to find inside the Dungeon.

Although he didn't know if another Story-Mode would activate once he entered, since he was with the Kobold explorers, he had a feeling that if he played his cards right, he would gain unimaginable rewards, which would be similar to the ones he gained inside the Orc Dominion, making him look forward to the secrets that were buried deep within the Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian.

Chapter 142: Actions Will Speak Louder Than Words

Barbatos Academy...

Alexander was signing documents in his office, when a knock was heard on the door.

"Come in," Alexander said without even bothering to raise his head as he continued to sign the documents that were on top of his table.

"If you keep forcing Iris, you'll end up pushing her away and she will run somewhere far from you," Vera said as she walked towards her son who was busy with work. "You know who she loves and yet you still push other young men to become her fiance. Did you lose your heart after stepping into the Ranks of a Saint?"

"Love won't keep her safe when the sky falls down above her head," Alexander replied. "What she needs is someone that can take care of her, and not a good looking Half-Elf who faints at the first sign of danger."

Vera chuckled as she shook her head. She knew that her son didn't really dislike Lux. In fact, he liked the young man to a certain extent. His only concern was that he didn't think of Lux as someone who could take care of Iris because of his weak body.

For someone that stood at the peak of the world, they knew that only strength mattered. Without it, you will just get trampled on by those who were stronger than you. It didn't matter if you were right or wrong. All that mattered was whether you were strong enough to make all those who oppose you, shut up.

"You've already made a declaration that whoever wins the tournament would become Iris' fiance," Vera stated. "What if the one who won mistreats her in the future? What then?"

"Impossible."

"Impossible?"

For the first time since Vera entered the room, Alexander raised his head to look at his aged-mother with a serious expression on his face.

"Anyone who dares to harm my daughter will be erased from the face of this world," Alexander declared. "Even if a prince does it, I would kill him, as well as the rest of his entire family. If he's from an influential clan, I will wipe them all out until none is left. Mother, do you really think that anyone would dare to harm Iris, knowing the Fate that awaits them?"

Vera leaned forward in her chair and lightly tapped her fingers on top of the table.

"You think too much, Alex," Vera replied. "Since you've already declared that whoever wins the tournament will become Iris' fiancée then so be it. Just don't regret your decision later."

Alexander frowned. He thought that his mother would openly oppose his decision to have the champion of the tournament become Iris' fiancée. Since Vera didn't come to his office to dissuade him, it only meant one thing.

"So, you plan to let Lux join the tournament," Alexander narrowed his eyes. "Aren't you afraid that he will become a laughingstock because of your whims?"

The corner of Vera's lips rose as she listened to her son's words. She knew that Alexander had no faith in Lux when it came to fighting in the tournament, so she just kept her mouth shut.

'Actions will speak louder than words,' Vera mused as she allowed the smile to spread across her weathered face.

Her reaction made Alexander feel that something was off, but he didn't pay much attention. He knew that if Vera really wished to renege his earlier declaration, his mother would have already done it, even if it meant that the two of them would end up fighting against each other.

"I'm going back to Wildgarde Stronghold," Vera said as she stood up. "If I hear that my granddaughter is getting bullied again, I will return to bring her back with me. You can come and pick her up when the tournament starts."

The old woman walked towards the door without even looking back at her son. No more words needed to be spoken, for this was not her fight. She believed her grandson, and knew that no matter how high the hurdle he faced, he would never give up, even if the entire world were to turn its back against him.

"I give up!" Lux shouted. "No more! I quit!"

Cadmus, as well as the other Kobolds who accompanied him inside the dungeon glared at the Half-Elf who was throwing a tantrum. As soon as they entered the dungeon, the Half-Elf had almost been swallowed whole by two Rank 4 Basilisks that were over two hundred meters long.

If not for Cadmus' quick rescue, the Half-Elf might have spent the rest of his days inside the stomach of the Giant Black Serpents.

The two Basilisks weren't slain because they retreated quite quickly after discovering that one of their opponents had a higher rank than them. Unfortunately, even as a Rank 5 Alpha Monster, it was quite difficult for Cadmus to kill both Basilisks at the same time.

"Just stick close to me if you don't want to die," Cadmus stated as he picked the Half-Elf up like a kitten by grabbing onto his clothes.

If not for the fact that almost all the passages inside the dungeon required someone with Elven blood in them, he would have long abandoned the red-headed teenager who was getting on his nerves.

Lux stopped struggling and simply looked at the map in the upper right corner of his vision. He could see that the two basilisks were stealthily following them in the distance, and just waiting for the right opportunity to strike.

In truth, if Lux really wished it, he could have gotten out of that situation alive. He just wanted to know if Cadmus would really go and save him if his life were ever threatened inside the Dungeon.

The Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian was a labyrinth style Dungeon. Unlike the Orc Dominion which had an "open world" setting, this particular Dungeon was similar to the Kobold's Nest which had many underground pathways.

Even with the Elysium Compendium, Lux couldn't fathom how big and deep the dungeon was. If there were already two Rank 4 Monsters near the entrance of the dungeon, he was afraid to find out what lurked in its depths.

'Orobak had jumped to the Initial Stages of a Rank 5 Monster near the end of Story Mode,' Lux thought. 'Back then I thought that having a Rank 4 Alpha Monster (Barca) with me guaranteed smooth sailing, but I was terribly wrong in my assumption.'

Right now, he was under the protection of a Rank 5 Alpha Monster. Hell Mode Dungeons were known to adjust their settings, depending on their challengers. If their group had one Rank 5 Alpha Monster in their party then the Dungeon would definitely make things difficult for them.

'I sure hope that a Deimos Ranked monster will not appear here,' Lux thought. 'If that happens, I'll take Eiko and run as far away as possible. There is simply no way we are going to defeat something of that rank.'

In the world of Elysium, there were Five Primary Stages. They were Rank 1 up to Rank 5 Monsters.

For the Elysians, as well as Solains, there were Grade D Apostles, up to the Initiate Rank. Initiates were what people referred to as those that had the strength equivalent to Rank 5 Monsters. They were called Initiates, because it was the stage before being a Ranker.

A Deimos Monster was equivalent to E-Rankers and F-Rankers.

A Rank 5 Monster was simply food to a monster of that rank. Even though Cadmus could walk unhindered in the Beginner's Zone, once it stepped into the Intermediate Territories, it was just another Boss Monster that was slightly harder to kill.

In the Intermediate Territories, Deimos Monsters were the Apex Creatures. They were the threat that many Apostles avoided fighting because they were simply too powerful if not fought with hundreds of people at a time, or by a strong Guild.

They were the "World Bosses" that dropped Unique up to Mythical items, and any guild would be willing to pay just about any price for any of those items to fall into their hands.

'I hope I'm just overthinking things,' Lux thought as Cadmus and the Rank 3 Kobolds that had accompanied him in this endeavor, scanned their surroundings with vigilance.

They had no destination in mind, and were simply trying to find out what this particular Dungeon had to offer.

Unknown to them, a pair of golden eyes were watching them in the darkness. It was simply waiting for the perfect opportunity to grab the Half-Elf, whose blood was calling out to it.

Chapter 143: I Need To Catch Up To Them Soon

Unlike the Kobolds, who were used to living underground, Lux was having trouble adapting to the environment.

Everywhere he looked, there was just dirt. The smell of soil also permeated the surroundings. Eiko, on the other hand, seemed at ease, and just stayed on top of Lux's head for the duration of the expedition.

For her, anywhere was good as long as she was with her Papa.

"Let's camp here for now," Cadmus said after they arrived in a small enclosed cavern. "Did you bring food with you, Half-Elf?"

"The name is Lux, and yes, I brought food with me," Lux replied as he summoned a basket of sandwiches that he had asked the Tavern Cook to make on short notice.

Eiko happily took a bite of the sandwich that was handed to her by her Papa. She hadn't eaten anything yet, and she was starving. Lux felt sorry for his baby Slime and fed her five sandwiches, so Eiko would feel satisfied.

After eating, Eiko went inside Lux's robe to sleep. It was now her most favorite spot for sleeping after experiencing the horrors of the Goblin Crypt Hell Mode.

Lux, on the other hand, glanced at his map to check for the Monsters that were wandering around the underground labyrinth.

Along the way, they had met several Worm type Monsters, as well as Centipedes. All of them were Rank 2 and 3, but they were of no match for the Kobold Lineup that accompanied Lux and Cadmus on this Dungeon exploration.

2 Kobold Shamans, 2 Kobold Mages, and 4 Kobold Raiders.

All of these Kobolds were Rank 3 Monsters, while Cadmus was the only Alpha Monster who was Rank 5. Lux still hadn't increased his stat points, so he was just skirting along the boundaries of the Apostle Grade.

While resting, Lux looked at the two Beast Cores in his possession that he got from the Golden-Eyed Crimson Mantis. He still hadn't used them because the primary skill he wanted from it was the Doppelganger, but then he had managed to acquire it from the quest reward.

Originally, he planned to let Eiko absorb them, so that she had a chance to gain the Doppelganger ability on her own, but he decided against it.

The baby Slime could mimic up to four skills that he possessed. Since they were always together, Lux decided to just consume the two beast cores so that he would gain a chance to acquire two of the Alpha Monster's precious skills.

Skills: Crimson Slash, Double Fury Slash, Berserk, Air Steps, Quick Assault, Hunter's Mark, Doppelganger, Coup de Grace.

Passive Skills: Intimidate, Razor Wind.

Lux eyed the skills that belonged to the Golden-Eyed Crimson Mantis, and found all of them were to his liking, especially Coup de Grace and Berserk.

The Half-Elf had always wanted to acquire the Berserk Skill since it was a crucial skill that could be used when pushed into a corner. Getting an explosive burst of strength to turn the situation around was common among Boss Monsters, and this was what made them extremely difficult to beat.

Do you wish to absorb a Rank 3 Beast Core?

< Yes / No >

Lux chose yes and the familiar two options appeared in front of him.

< Upgrade Stat Points >

< Upgrade Skills>

Obtained 30 Free Stats Points

Obtained 60 Body Constitution Points

You have acquired the passive skill Razor Wind.

< Skill Evolution [EX] detected a new Skill. >

– Since the skill, Razor Wind, is a passive skill, it will automatically be upgraded to the passive skill Tempest Fury

< Tempest Fury >

(Can be switched On and Off at any given time)

– Any weapon that the user wields will be enchanted by the wind element, making it sharper, and able to deal additional Wind Elemental Damage.

– This Skill is applied to unarmed combat as well. Punches and kicks will be imbued by the power of wind, and deal additional Wind Elemental Damage.

– This Skill is also applied to range attacks, including arrows, throwing knives, throwing axes, darts, or any projectile weapons that the user wields.

– Adds +100 Wind Elemental Damage to all attacks by the user.

'Nice!' Lux almost did a fist pump because the Skill he got was simply too awesome. Having all of his attacks imbued by an elemental attack would drastically increase his damage potential, as well as deal double damage to enemies that had a weakness to the wind element.

It even allowed the Half-Elf to imbue projectile weapons like arrows with this elemental attack, giving Lux flexibility in battle.

The skill could also be toggled On and Off depending on the situation, which was a handy feature, just in case his opponents were resistant to the Wind Element.

Lux had plenty of unused stat points on his Character Page. If the Half-Elf were to use them all, he would immediately jump ranks up to a Grade B Apostle, which was equivalent to a Rank 3 Monster.

'Nero and the others are nearing the peak of Grade A Apostle,' Lux thought. 'This is still not enough. I need to catch up to them soon.'

The tournament was only a couple months away, leaving Lux with only half a year left in Elysium to get the points that he needed in order to reach the rank he wanted.

'Now, for the second one,' Lux wished that he got either Coup de Grace or Berserk for his last attempt. Although the other skills were good, he needed either of these two to get an edge over his opponents.

After consuming the Beast Core, a series of texts appeared in front of Lux, which made the smile on the Half-Elf's face stiffen.

—

Obtained 30 Free Stats Points

Obtained 60 Body Constitution Points

You have acquired the skill, Air Steps.

< Skill Evolution [EX] detected a new Skill. >

The skill, Air Steps, will be upgraded into Air Strider [EX] once the requirements have been met.

< Air Strider [EX] >

– Aside from traversing on air, this skill also gives the user the ability to fly for a short period of time.

– This skill consumes fifty Mana Points every thirty seconds, up to a maximum of five minutes while flying in the air.

– Requirement to upgrade: Use Air Steps 50x

– Progress (0 / 50)

—

Lux scratched his head since he didn't get the two skills he was aiming for.

'Air Strider [EX] is also good,' Lux mused. 'It's a very flexible ability. Although I didn't get what I wanted, I got an all-rounder ability in exchange. I guess this isn't a bad tradeoff.'

The reason why Lux wasn't really thrilled in getting the Air Strider [EX] skill was due to the fact that there were flying mounts, as well as several flying abilities in Elysium.

Air Strider [EX] was just one of those skills that allowed the user to fly for a short period of time. It wasn't bad, but it wasn't good either. It was just as Lux said, it was an all-rounder skill that could be used if there were neither flying mounts nor other flying abilities.

While Lux was upgrading his skill, Cadmus was paying close attention to him out of the corner of his eyes. He was still holding a grudge against Lux, but due to the fact that he was now an Honorary Knight of the Gweliven Kingdom, the Draconic Kobold was forced to stay his hand in attacking the Half-Elf in fear of the Kingdom's retaliation.

Cadmus knew that he was still a frog in the well. Unlike real Dragons that could threaten an entire Kingdom with its overpowering might, the Draconic Kobold was just a lizard with wings.

The moment he left the territory of Norria, the chances of him getting attacked by the foreigners in the Intermediate town was quite high. This was also why he didn't plan to leave his nest until he'd stepped into the Deimos Rank.

Then, and only then, would he gain sufficient strength to intimidate those who wished to attack him because of his race.

After paying close attention to Lux, he noticed the subtle changes in the Half-Elf's expression which made him wonder if Lux was feeling constipated.

Just as he was about to continue his observation, the Half-Elf abruptly stood up and glanced at the entrance of their camping site with a shocked expression on his face.

"Everyone, we need to find a safe place to hide!" Lux shouted. "A Dungeon Outbreak is about to happen, and if we don't leave here soon, we will be caught in the crossfire!"

Chapter 144: Fancy Meeting You Guys Here

"What nonsense are you talking about?" Cadmus asked as he glared at the Half-Elf who was panicking after receiving a Quest out of the blue.

Lux didn't know how to explain their current situation to the Draconic Kobold because he knew that no matter what he said, Cadmus wouldn't believe him. He just stared helplessly at the Quest information in front of him, while thinking about his next course of action.

—

Survival Quest!

Difficulty Rating: A

< Dungeon Outbreak >

– The Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian has regular dungeon outbreaks to cull the spawned Monsters that have reached their maximum capacity.

– However, since the entrance of the Dungeon was sealed by a powerful spell to prevent the Monsters from emerging from the dungeon, the Monsters have nowhere to go. Because of this, they are forced into a maddened state where they would start killing each other in order to decrease their numbers.

But, if there are any intruders inside the Dungeon during this period of time, all the Monsters will focus their attention towards disposing of the invaders first, before they start killing each other.

(Quest Clear Conditions)

– Survive the Dungeon Outbreak for one hour.

(Quest Failing Conditions)

– Lux Von Kaizer dies or more than half of his party members die.

Failing this Quest will automatically expel the survivors out of the dungeon and prevent them from entering it again for the duration of two years.

(Rewards for Quest Completion)

100 Rank 2 Beast Cores

20 Rank 3 Beast Cores

2 Rank 4 Beast Core

Title: Outbreak Survivor

Bonus Reward: ???

Time before Dungeon Outbreak Begins: 18 minutes 38 seconds

"Okay, listen to me," Lux said as he stared at Cadmus with a serious expression on his face. "You know that I cleared the Hidden Mission in the Stronghold of Norria, right?"

"Yes," Cadmus replied.

Lux took a deep breath as he prepared to spout some random bullsh*t in order to convince the Draconic Kobold, as well as his brethren to listen to believe his words.

"The truth is, I was able to clear it because I have a special ability," Lux stated with an expression that would put con artists to shame. "This is an ability that is exclusive only to a handful of Foreigners. Not many have this, and those who do are known to have an easier time in clearing dungeons. Do you guys understand what I'm trying to say?"

Cadmus reluctantly nodded his head, while the other Kobolds just exchanged glances with each other. Doubt was written on their faces. Clearly, they didn't believe what Lux was trying to tell them.

"Okay, so this ability activated right now, and gave me a warning that a Monster Outbreak would be happening soon," Lux said. "We need t—"

"What you're talking about is impossible," one of the Kobold Mages interjected Lux's speech. "The entrance of this dungeon is sealed, and can only be opened with the blood of an Elf. You barely meet this requirement, so unless your blood is used, the Monsters inside this dungeon can't esca—"

The Kobold Mage wasn't able to finish his explanation because he, too, realized that the possibility of the gate opening was quite high since they had Lux with them.

"If the monsters are able to capture you then they could leave the dungeon and escape to the surface!" one of the Kobold Shaman's exclaimed as he pointed at Lux. "Our brethren outside will be annihilated and overrun by these beasts! We must stop them at once!"

All the Kobolds now fully understood what could happen, but a few of them were still in doubt about whether Lux was telling the truth or not.

"Do you have any proof to back your claims?" one of the Kobold Raiders asked. "This is a serious matter, and if you're lying, we will make you understand what the meaning of pain is!"

Lux snorted as he headed towards the wall of the cavern they were staying at.

"I don't need to explain anything to you guys," Lux said as Eiko jumped off his head and used her digging ability to burrow to the ground. "Fifteen minutes from now, the Dungeon Outbreak will happen. All of you can die if you want, but I'm not planning on dying here."

Lux then turned around to look at the Kobolds who were glaring at him.

"I have promises I need to keep, and I won't allow myself to die inside a Dungeon I was forced to enter because I was threatened!" Lux glared back at the Kobolds, and glared more at Cadmus, who left him with no other choice, but to accept the quest that was forced into him.

Eiko tunneled deep underground, but the hole she made was only big enough for her to enter. She hurriedly dug back to the surface, in order to widen the hole, and allow her Papa to hide with her.

"You can do it, Eiko!"

"Pa!"

"Just a little more!"

"Pa!"

The baby slime was like a bulldozer that shoveled dirt, in and out of the hole that she was creating. After ten minutes of digging, and chugging a few bottles of Mana Potions, the hole Eiko created was now big and deep enough to allow Lux and the other Kobolds to enter.

However, it wasn't big enough to allow Cadmus to squeeze inside because of the Draconic Kobold's hulking figure.

The exhausted baby Slime then looked up at her Papa with a proud smile on her face. Lux didn't forget to praise Eiko to the high heavens before entering the hole that she had created.

The Half-Elf didn't bother inviting the Kobolds to follow him because he was sure that they would be able to sense the sudden changes that would happen in a few minutes.

'Once they realize that I was telling the truth, they will be more likely to listen to me in the future,' Lux thought as he settled down at the farthest corner of the hole Eiko had dug for him. 'I don't know what kind of Monster Outbreak is going to happen, but I'm sure that it is going to be a messy one.'

Outside of the hole where Lux was hiding at, the Kobolds were discussing the Half-Elf's words.

"He might just be trying to trick us so that he can escape," one of the Kobold Raiders said. "He's a land-dweller. He isn't as sturdy as under-dwellers like us."

"That may be true, but I am more inclined to believe him," one of the Goblin Shamans commented. "He is the weakest among us, and if he tries to leave

without our protection, he will just be food to the Monsters that wander around this labyrinth."

The Kobold Raider wasn't able to refute this fact, so he didn't say anything else and merely looked at the other Kobolds, asking for their opinions with his gaze.

"He said that the Dungeon Outbreak will be happening in a few minutes," the oldest among the Kobold Mages stated. "Let's just wait for a while to see if what he is saying is true or not. It won't be too late to punish him later if he was just making a fool of us."

"I agree."

"This makes sense."

"It doesn't hurt to have a second opinion."

The oldest Kobold Mage then glanced at Cadmus who was just listening to all of them talk.

"What do you think, Cadmus?" the Kobold Mage asked. "Do you think he is telling the truth?"

Cadmus shook his head.

"I don't know if he is telling the truth or not," Cadmus replied. "All I know is that we need him alive or else we won't be able to leave this Dungeon. The gate requires someone with Elven blood flowing in their veins to open and close it. Without him, all of us will be trapped here, forever unable to leave."

The Kobolds all simultaneously glanced into the hole where the Half-Elf was currently hiding.

"Understood. We just need to wai—" the oldest Kobold Mage froze as he, and every other Kobold around him, felt the vibrations coming off the ground.

As a race that spent most of their time mining underground, they were well aware what this vibration meant, especially since they had experienced stumbling upon the denizens of creatures that lived under the earth.

Usually, when Kobolds, gnomes, dwarves, and underground monsters met during one of their digging sessions, both sides would immediately start attacking the other without any questions asked.

This was a normal occurrence in Elysium, so the Kobolds were quite aware of the tremors that were slowly getting stronger. Cadmus' strong hearing had caught onto the sounds of hundreds of monsters crawling in their direction, which made the back of his spine tingle.

"Everyone go inside the hole!" Cadmus ordered. Do it now!"

The Kobolds hurriedly followed his command and squeezed themselves inside the hole that Eiko had created.

Soon, they met the Half-Elf who was seated in a small cavern that Eiko had specially made for him in the farthest side of the hole.

"Yo," Lux said with a smile. "Fancy meeting you guys here."

The Kobolds looked at him with flushed faces, feeling embarrassed, and didn't know how to react to the Half-Elf's greeting.

—

Outside the hole...

The two Kobold Shamans chanted and cast a spell over Cadmus to make him shrink to the size of a normal Kobold Warrior, so that he could enter the hole alongside them.

After the spell had taken effect, the two Shamans hurriedly went inside the hole, with Cadmus following last.

Although his size had shrunk to that of a normal Kobold, his strength remained intact.

The Draconic Kobold summoned its sword as he faced the entrance of the hole with a determined gaze.

No matter what happened, he wouldn't allow any of the Monsters to make it past him. That was the only thing he could think of doing to prevent his comrades from being massacred, as well as to survive this Dungeon Outbreak that was now starting to fall upon their heads.

Chapter 145: Remember The Time You Thought You Could Never Survive?

"How did you know about this?" the Kobold Mage, who entered the hole first, asked the Half-Elf, who refused to let them enter the comfortable small space that Eiko made, hogging it to lie down on the ground properly.

"Half-Elf secrets," Lux replied as he casually fed Eiko a sandwich as a reward for her hard work in digging the hole. "Also, don't talk to me. All of you refused to believe me earlier, so why are you now all here in my hole? Why don't you play with the monsters outside instead? I'm sure they would be more than happy to play Whack-a-Kobold with you guys."

The Kobold Mage's face reddened as he glared at the irritating Half-Elf who caused his cheeks to burn in anger and embarrassment.

Lux sneered at the Kobold as he continued to feed his baby slime. He wasn't afraid even if the monsters were able to enter the hole. Anyway, even if the other Kobolds died, he would be teleported outside of the dungeon before the monsters could even get to him.

The vibrations coming through the ground were getting stronger, and the Half-Elf knew that the Monster Army was near their location.

Cadmus, who was vigilantly facing at the entrance of the hole, narrowed his gaze and gripped his weapon firmly in his hand.

He was a Rank 5 Alpha Monster, and only a handful of existences in the Beginner's Zone were capable of matching his strength. However, the Dungeon was different.

It was a completely unknown territory and even he didn't know how strong the Monsters inside it were. Even so, he was confident that none of them would get past him.

The reason?

Because he was strong.

Cadmus sincerely believed in his strength, for he was a Draconic Kobold. He was someone meant to reach greater heights once he stepped into the Deimos Rank and had to leave the Territory of Norria behind to see the world.

Suddenly, a Crimson Centipede gazed into the hole with its red-beady eyes which glowed faintly in the darkness.

Cadmus arrogantly activated his Dragon's Fear, which made the centipede back away in fright, crashing into the Monsters behind it. Soon, more Monsters tried to enter the hole, but Cadmus Dragon's Fear made them unable to approach more than a meter inside the hole.

Loud hisses, screeches, as well as roars of frustration spread in the surroundings, making the Kobolds, with the exception of Cadmus, tremble.

After a few minutes of repeated attempts, the Monsters finally reached the limit of their patience and immediately raided the hole. Although they were too scared to do it, the compelling influence of the Dungeon to attack all intruders overrode their senses, making them rabid killing machines whose single purpose was to kill.

Cadmus opened his mouth and unleashed a concentrated beam of Dragon's Breath, which instantly incinerated the monsters that entered the hole.

The smell of burning flesh permeated the air, reaching Lux who was in the very back, causing his nose to twitch.

Cadmus' angry roar reverberated within the hole as he stabbed, hacked, and smashed the monsters that were foolish enough to force themselves inside the hole he was guarding.

Bodies upon bodies of monsters piled up in front of him, blocking the view. But, Cadmus didn't allow those bodies to block the entrance and incinerated them using a Dragon's Breath, effectively killing those who had tried to use this opportunity to get inside the hole that Lux created.

'Looks like my plan worked,' Lux thought.

When he ordered Eiko to dig, he had already imagined how things might go and expected this scenario to happen. Since the entrance was narrow, the monsters didn't have any choice but to enter the hole one by one, completely disregarding their advantage in numbers.

This allowed Cadmus to freely kill his opponents without too much trouble. As long as he was blocking the way, none of the monsters could dream of getting past him.

After nearly twenty minutes of repeated failures, the monsters all gave a resounding cry of anger before they started killing each other.

The Dungeon Outbreak happened because the Dungeon was unable to contain the big surplus of Monsters. Since they were unable to get past Cadmus who was a Rank 5 Alpha Monster, they resorted to killing each other in order to cull the number of the Monsters inside the Dungeon.

By doing so, they would have a better chance at survival instead of committing suicide by entering the hole where a ferocious Draconic Kobold was waiting to kill them.

As the battle raged on, Lux and the other Kobolds were finally able to sigh in relief because the worst case scenario was over.

All they needed to do was wait until the number of Monsters decreased before they came out of the hole to kill the remaining survivors.

The two Rank 4 Basilisks that had tried to eat Lux earlier were among the Rank 4 Monsters that had entered the chaotic battlefield, killing everything in their surroundings.

Naturally, there were other Rank 4 Monsters, like the Earth Golem, Earth Trolls, as well as Earth Mawler, who were among the strongest Rank 4 Monsters in the Dungeon.

All the Rank 4 Monsters were so big that their bodies couldn't possibly enter the hole that Eiko had created. Because of this, they had no choice but to face each other, while the weaker monsters massacred those around them.

It was complete and total pandemonium, and Lux was quite thankful that he was safe and snug under the ground with his baby Slime in his arms.

Minutes passed, and dirt started to fall inside the hole as the tremors intensified.

Eiko had dug a hundred-meters into the ground, so Lux was confident that they were down far enough not to be implicated in the battle that was going on

above ground. However, the constant rumblings in the surroundings made him anxious that a cave-in might happen if the battle didn't end soon.

'I'm really glad I have Eiko with me,' Lux thought. 'If not, we would be forced to repel so many monsters at once.'

The Half-Elf was sure that their chances of surviving such an onslaught if they were aboveground was non-existent. He didn't know how many monsters were currently killing each other on the surface, but one thing was clear. He would rather stay underground than mingle with them on the surface.

The minutes moved ever so slowly and painfully, for those in the hole who were feeling anxious. Each minute was feeling more and more like the passing of a year.

Suddenly, the monstrous head of a Giant Black Basilisk appeared in the hole. It opened its jaw and was about to unleash some kind of acid attack, but Cadmus was faster than it.

Before the Basilisk could even unleash its attack, a Dragon Breath passed through its opened mouth, making it shriek in pain.

Since it had forced itself inside the hole, it was unable to get out quickly, so Cadmus Dragon's Breath continued to raze its head, burning it to a crisp.

Soon, the Giant Basilisk stopped moving after its head and body erupted in flames from the Draconic Kobold's powerful attack.

A minute later, its body was pulled out of the hole, followed by a deafening roar that Lux believed came from a troll. A moment later, the sound of chewing reached their ears.

It seemed that whatever had pulled the Basilisk's body from the hole was enjoying the toasted, and headless black serpent that had tried to attack the Kobolds that were hiding in the hole.

Several minutes had passed. Lux patted his chest in relief when he saw the series of text that appeared in front of him.

—

Survive the Dungeon Outbreak for one hour. (Cleared!)

Rewards:

100 Rank 2 Beast Cores

20 Rank 3 Beast Cores

2 Rank 4 Beast Core

Title: Outbreak Survivor

Bonus Reward: Key of the Inner Grotto.

< Outbreak Survivor >

"Remember the time you thought you could never survive? You did it, and you can do it again."

+10,000 Health Points

—

Lux looked at the Outbreak Survivor title and chuckled after reading its information. However, what he was most curious about was the Bonus Reward that he received, which was the Key of the Inner Grotto.

The Half-Elf didn't know where the Inner Grotto was, but now that the key was in his hands, he believed that it was only a matter of time before they found it and put the reward he got to good use.

Chapter 146: It's Impossible To Win!

The battle aboveground quieted down, but Lux and the other Kobolds didn't move from their location.

They only kept their senses at their highest state as they listened to their surroundings. Cadmus waited for fifteen more minutes before slowly crawling out of the hole with his weapon at the ready.

The Draconic Kobold poked his head outside the hole and scanned the surroundings with a critical eye. Only after making sure that the coast was

clear, did he make a gesture for his comrades to come out of the hole, and see for themselves the outcome of the battle that had lasted for an hour.

Lux frowned after leaving the hole. The ground was dyed in blood, and nothing else was left behind. Usually, when Dungeon Monsters died, their bodies would turn into particles of light, leaving only their Beast Cores, as well as their Monster drops, behind.

The stench of blood was so strong that it was making Lux and Eiko feel uncomfortable. They had been into battlefields before, but this incredibly thick scent of blood was strong enough to make Lux gag.

"Come, Diablo," Lux ordered and his Named Creature appeared wearing the Blackrock Legacy armor.

The Skeleton Rider looked at his surroundings before his armor glowed crimson. Diablo had activated the skill of his armor, Blood Fervor.

The blood that littered the ground was all being sucked by Diablo's armor, giving it an eerie crimson hue. It was as if the Harbinger of Death had ascended from Hell, in order to collect the souls of the fallen.

Cadmus as well as the other Kobolds frowned after seeing this scene. Diablo's strength that was originally only at the Rank 2 Monster Rank, was starting to feel like something that belonged to a Rank 3 Monster.

Although it wasn't a threat to most of them, they found this discovery rather interesting, making them look at the Skeletal Rider, whose entire body was covered from head to toe with a black-plated armor that had suddenly turned crimson due to the blood around it.

As the blood disappeared, so did the scent it left behind. Lux wasn't new to battles, but too much blood was still too much blood. He may be able to endure it to a certain extent, but it still made him feel uncomfortable.

The Two Goblin Shamans chanted and summoned their spirit animals. One of the spirit animals that appeared was a black crow, while the other was a ferret.

A minute after they appeared, the two Monsters moved towards the Labyrinth, in search of a safe path that they could travel.

"Eiko, summon Blackie and Whitey," Lux ordered before summoning his Skeleton Monsters. "Go and explore this place."

The Skeletons nodded and headed in different directions as well. Diablo stayed behind in order to guard Lux because the Half-Elf felt that his Skeleton Fighters, and Skeleton Grand Archers were more than enough to investigate the surroundings.

Cadmus, and the other Kobolds frowned, but they didn't say anything.

"Undead Magic is such foul magic," one of the Kobold Shamans said. "I haven't seen a Necromancer since the day I was born."

"There's a first for everything," Lux replied while shrugging. "Ah, to be fair, I'd never seen any Kobolds until I met you guys. The world is such a big place. The more we know, the more we know we don't know."

The Kobold Shaman nodded. "True. The world is a big place."

The discussion came to an end, and everyone remained inside the cavern where they had made camp. After what had happened, they were not in the mood to randomly wander around the labyrinth.

They didn't really have a destination in mind, and were just wandering around aimlessly. Because of this, they were fine with Lux sending his Skeletons to help scout for them.

Suddenly, while the other Kobolds were discussing what they were going to do next, a powerful and deafening roar made them turn their heads to one of the entrances of the cavern they were staying in.

"Get behind me!" Cadmus roared as he reverted to his original size. His primal instinct told him that the monster that was approaching them was stronger than him.

It was then when they saw the Monster, holding several Skeleton Fighters in his hands.

Lux's expression instantly became grim as another notification appeared in front of him.

< Indus Death Worm >

- Monstrous Giant Worm
- Wandering Boss Monster of the Outer Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian
- Rank 5 Boss Monster (Pseudo-Deimos Rank)

Health: 1,600,000 / 1,600,000

Mana: 200,000 / 200,000

Strength: ???

Intelligence: ???

Vitality: ???

Agility: ???

Dexterity: ???

Defense: 1000

Skills: Corrosive Acid Spray, Rending Jaws, Tail Smash, Crunch, Bind, Bull Rush, Dig

Passive: Double Life, Jade Skin, Tough Carapace, Guts, Regeneration

Title: Tunneler, All-Hearing.

– The Indus Death Worm was one of the two monsters that destroyed the ancient civilization that had once thrived underground for hundreds of years.

– Usually, it stays dormant and spends its days in hibernation. However, when a Dungeon Outbreak breaks loose, it wakes up from its slumber and devours all the Monsters that dared to wake it from its sleep.

– It will, also, mercilessly attack any intruders that dare to intrude upon its Domain. It was said that only Rankers were able to defeat this Beast, due to its incredible strength.

'What the F*ck?!' Lux cursed internally after seeing the monstrous stats of the giant Monster that was in front of him. Although it still hadn't stepped into the Deimos Rank, its level was very close to it.

The red-headed teenager didn't expect there to be a Wandering Boss Monster inside the dungeon, and it filled him with dread.

The Half-Elf knew then and there that it was impossible to defeat the Monster due to its overwhelming strength. Even with Cadmus by their side, fighting against it was pure suicide. Perhaps, Cadmus knew this as well, which explained the grim expression on his face.

In front of a Deimos, a Rank 5 Monster was merely food.

This was the thought that passed through Cadmus' head as he remembered the words that the scholar of the Kobolds had told him. Although he knew that this was true, the Monster that he was facing against was only at the Pseudo-Deimos Rank.

He believed that as long as the enemy wasn't of the Deimos Rank, he could beat it. But his belief shattered because he was certain that even before he managed to decrease the monster's life by half, he would definitely be dead.

"Run!" Lux shouted. "It's impossible to win!"

As soon as Lux shouted, the head of the monster turned in his direction. The Indus Death Worm was blind and only relied on sounds and strong vibrations on the ground. Since the Half-Elf's shout caught its attention, it decided to make Lux its target instead.

'Oh f*ck!' Lux thought as the monster's enormous head charged in his direction.

Although he wanted to evade, the monster's speed far exceeded his. He could only watch helplessly as the giant maws of the monster came crashing down, while the Kobolds, that were supposed to protect him, stood rooted in their place.

Chapter 147: The Moment Lux F*cked Up

The labyrinth trembled as the Indus Death Worm's gaping mouth slammed against the ground, sending rocks and dirt flying in every direction.

Cadmus looked in despair as he knew that Lux was the only one that could help them maneuver inside the dungeon. Without the Half-Elf they would all be stuck inside the dungeon and would be unable to leave.

'Why did this happen?!' Cadmus screamed internally as he gazed helplessly at the Giant Worm that had eaten up the Half-Elf who was supposed to be their key to unlock the mysteries of the Dungeon.

Just as the Draconic Kobold was about to attack the Giant Worm in despair, he saw something move from the dust cloud that had obscured his vision.

A fat demon was running away from the point of impact, carrying a Half-Elf in his arms.

Seeing the Half-Elf alive, Cadmus was overjoyed and was about to shout at the red-headed teenager when the latter beat him to it.

"This monster is blind!" Lux shouted. "As long as you don't make any noises, it will take some time for it to find you guys! No matter what happens, don't speak, and don't move! I have a plan!"

The Giant Worm raised its head and once again shifted its attention to the place where the voice was coming from. Pazuzu had used his Madlad Rush after Lux had summoned him in order to escape the Boss Monster's attack.

Lux waved his hands and Ishtar appeared in the distance. Pazuzu then threw Lux towards the Skeleton Hunter, before turning in the direction of the Giant Worm.

"Pazuzu is here!" Pazuzu shouted. "Come, you little worm!"

After shouting with all of his might, Pazuzu ran away while his Madlad Rush was still active, luring the Giant Worm away from his Master.

Ishtar easily caught Lux and held him in place as the Giant Worm wiggled past them. Eiko, who was still perched on her Papa's head, sighed in relief. They were safe now, at least for the time being.

Ishtar then stealthily ran towards Cadmus and the other Kobolds, creating as little sound as possible. When they were only a few meters away from the Draconic Kobold, Ishtar supported Lux to stand on his own before bowing her head and running in the direction of the Giant Worm.

Lux looked at his Skeleton Hunter with a grim expression on his face before shifting his head towards the Kobolds, who were still visibly shaken by the appearance of the Indus Death Worm.

"Okay, listen to me," Lux said in a hushed voice. "We need to find a gate or any type of entrance that will lead us to the Inner Grotto. I have the key to open it, so our priority would be escaping through that door while evading that monster's pursuit."

"If we don't make any noise, will that monster be unable to find us?" Cadmus asked.

Although he was curious about how Lux obtained the key to the so-called Inner Grotto of the Dungeon, he knew that staying here even for just a minute longer was dangerous. After what had happened during the Dungeon Outbreak, he was now more inclined to believe the Half-Elf's words and didn't bother questioning him further.

"It still can find us through the sound of our breath and heartbeats," Lux answered. "However, if we make a louder noise, the monster will focus its attention to the direction of that noise."

"It can even hear our heartbeats? That's impossible!" one of the Kobold Mages replied in hushed tones. "Wouldn't that leave us no way out of this situation?"

"Are you deaf?" Lux asked back in irritation. "I said that if there is a noise that is louder than our breath and heartbeats, that thing wouldn't be able to find us. Also, stop doubting everything that I say. If you want to die, I can leave you here!"

Lux knew that the Kobolds still held a grudge against him, so they would always second guess whatever plan he had in mind. Since that was the case, he would not tolerate them any further and move at his own discretion if they kept on making things difficult for him.

The Kobold Mage was about to argue, but after it saw Cadmus' glare, it held back the words it wanted to say and just averted its gaze in frustration.

"Okay, here is the plan," Lux said. "We need to separate and look for the entrance individually. Now, before any of you whine, or voice a complaint, just let me finish first—"

"Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!"

Lux wasn't able to finish his words because Pazuzu's loud scream echoed within the entire labyrinth. He also felt that his connection with his Demonic Protector had been cut, which meant that the latter was already dead.

The Half-Elf had instructed Pazuzu to shout if it was about to die, to allow him some time to prepare for his next move.

'Eiko, contact Blackie and Whitey,' Lux talked to the baby slime via telepathy. 'Tell them to go as far away as they can from our location and start making noises.'

'Pa!' Eiko nodded as she gave out a suicide order to her two Named Creatures.

The Kobolds who heard the Pazuzu's blood curdling scream all quieted down as they gave Lux their undivided attention.

"All of us will separate from each other, but there is no need to worry," Lux said. "My summons will keep on making sounds in order to draw the Giant Worm in their location. Once any of you has found the gate, or any kind of entrance that requires a key, come back and look for me here. I will focus on drawing the monster's attention.

"Also, there's no need to worry about any other monsters in this labyrinth. The Giant Worm has eaten them all, and it would take some time before they respawn again. During this crucial period, we just need to find the entrance as soon as possible. If we don't, all of us will become worm food, so keep that in mind."

All the Kobolds nodded their heads at the same time and dispersed in different directions. Cadmus chose to stay by Lux's side, so the earlier incident wouldn't happen again. Even if they found the entrance, everything

would be in vain if the Indus Death Worm ate the Half-Elf who held the key to their survival.

Lux glanced at the Draconic Kobold but didn't say anything else. Having Cadmus as a bodyguard was better than staying alone.

The sounds of rattling bones could be heard from time to time within the Labyrinth. Lux had ordered his skeletons to lure the Giant Worm away from him.

The Indus Death Worm had the title "All-Hearing."

This title allowed it to hear even the smallest sound within its Domain, making it a very accomplished hunter. Its giant body could maneuver over and under the ground, allowing instant access to its designated targets before it ate them whole without any mercy.

Every time a Skeleton died, Lux would summon it right away and command it to head in a direction far from them.

Blackie and Whitey, the Devil and Angel Slime, also used their skills to create noises to get the attention of the Boss Monster.

Explosions rang inside the dungeon, as the two slimes attacked the floor and walls of the labyrinth.

Since the Indus Death Worm had a strong sense of hearing, Lux decided to make all of his minions make noise, in order to prevent the Monster from sensing their breaths and beating hearts.

Two hours passed, and Lux could feel his sweaty clothes sticking to his skin. Just as he was thinking of fanning himself with his hand, the Head of the Giant Worm appeared out of the ground, only a few meters away from him.

The Half-Elf as well as the Draconic Kobold stopped everything they were doing and became completely still. Both of them even held their breath in order to make as little noise as possible.

The Giant Monster's head turned to its left and right side as if trying to choose who among the noisy trespassers it was about to target next.

Just as it was about to leave, it heard a long and diabolic fart that made it turn its giant head around to where the sound came from.

It was at this moment when Lux knew that he f*cked up.

"You f*cking bastard!" Cadmus growled in anger.

"Sorry," Lux replied out of embarrassment. It just happened out of the blue, and there was no way he could have stopped it.

Cadmus glared at the Half-Elf who just farted with an irritated expression on his face, while the latter looked back at him with an apologetic one.

The Indus Death Worm turned its head towards Lux and Cadmus and let out a deafening roar. However, before it could even charge at the two individuals.

Several spells flew towards its head, creating elemental explosions that made it shift its attention to the creature that attacked it. The baby Slime might not be a match against the Boss Monster, but she wouldn't allow the latter to eat her Papa without a fight.

Eiko had teleported more than a hundred meter away from Lux and bombarded the Giant Worm with everything she had, completely gaining the latter's anger.

After seeing that the monster had shifted its attention to her, Eiko immediately dug into the ground and hurriedly escaped the scene. She had the skill Dig [EX], which allowed her to burrow through the dungeon's floor, which was normally impossible to do.

Naturally, the Indus Death Worm wouldn't allow the disrespectful baby Slime to get away that easily and followed her underground.

Both monsters were expert diggers. One was the hunter, the other was the hunted. Soon, the entire Labyrinth trembled as the Giant Worm tunneled underground.

Lux could only stand rooted on the spot as he looked at the giant hole in front of him with a grim expression on his face.

Chapter 148: How Confident Are You Guys In Running?

The ground shook as if there was an earthquake inside the dungeon.

Eiko had zigzagged across the underground Labyrinth, with the angry Giant Worm hot on her heels. Her Dig [EX] skill allowed her to keep digging as long as she had Mana, and that was what the baby Slime was doing at the moment.

However, just as she was running away from the Indus Death Worm, she felt some kind of attraction that pulled at her from the Eastern Part of the Labyrinth.

Following her instinct, Eiko headed in that direction in a straight line as she pushed through the ground like a hot knife cutting through butter.

Five hundred meters...

Three hundred meters...

A Hundred meters...

Finally, after almost running out of Mana, Eiko's body came to a complete stop as she bumped into something that was radiating a silver light.

Eiko didn't know what it was that she bumped into. All she knew was that she couldn't dig through it.

Suddenly, the ground under her body rose as the Giant Worm closed its massive jaws in an attempt to eat her.

"Pa!" Eiko shouted and her body glowed before the Indus Death Worm swallowed her whole.

After triumphantly eating its opponent, the Indus Death Worm tunneled towards the surface. Behind it, a silver gate that was buried deep underground glowed faintly in the darkness.

—

"Pa!"

"Sorry, Eiko. Were you scared?"

The baby Slime shook her head before smiling at her Papa. She had the skill, Family Bond [EX], which allowed her to instantly teleport to Lux's or Iris' location, wherever they may be. This was also the reason why she was confident she could escape the Boss Monster, even if it chased her to the far end of the Labyrinth.

Lux knew this as well, but he still couldn't help but feel guilty about what had happened earlier. It was an unexpected bodily reaction, possibly from anxiety due to the sudden appearance of the Boss Monster that he thought was busy chasing his Summons around the Outer Grotto of the dungeon.

"None of this would have happened if you held it in!" Cadmus growled in anger, but he kept his voice very low. "Can't you even do something so simple?"

The red-headed teenager wanted to argue that it just happened out of the blue and had been completely out of his control. Everyone farts, which was a perfectly normal thing.

Unfortunately, it happened at the wrong moment, which almost caused their demise. Even so, he knew that he was in the wrong, so he didn't bother arguing with the Draconic Kobold. He just busied himself with comforting his baby Slime, who was happily chugging a bottle of Mana Potion.

After drinking two bottles of Mana Potion, Eiko telepathically told Lux about the thing that she found underground.

The Half-Elf then expanded the map that was located on the upper right side of his vision. Earlier, he had been looking at the map in order to follow Eiko's escape underground. His heart had almost jumped out of his chest when he saw Eiko's green dot get swallowed by the giant red dot that was chasing her earlier.

It was also at that moment when Eiko suddenly landed on top of Lux's head, after she had used her skill to teleport to his location. Because of this, Lux had completely forgotten about the silver blinking dot on the map that was accidentally unearthed by his baby Slime, while she tried to escape from her pursuer.

The Half-Elf clicked on the silver blinking dot to check its information.

—

Entrance of the Inner Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian.

Requires a key to enter.

—

Lux wanted to curse out loud due to the absurdity of the situation. The gate that they were looking for had been buried deep underground. If not for the fact that Eiko had done what she did, they might be trapped in the Outer Grotto forever since they wouldn't have been able to find the exit.

What he didn't know was that after the Ancient Civilization perished, the Dungeon Core of The Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian was damaged as well. This prevented it from adding more floors to the Dungeon or fixing its damaged parts. The only function that it had retained was spawning monsters.

Due to this uncontrollable cycle of death and rebirth, the Indus Death Worm ended up changing the topography of the Outer Grotto, burying the entrance to the Inner Grotto deep underground.

The cycle repeated over and over during the past hundreds of years, and if it weren't for Lux's appearance, the cycle would have continued indefinitely.

After calming down, Lux praised Eiko for doing a wonderful job in finding the entrance, which made the baby Slime very happy. He then ordered his skeletons to look for the other Kobolds, and told them to bring them back to where he and Cadmus were staying.

An hour later, all the Kobolds had returned, while the rest of the Skeletons were still busy luring the Giant Worm to the far corners of the labyrinth.

Lux informed them about Eiko's discovery and told the Kobolds that they needed to reach the gate in order to escape the Indus Death Worm's looming threat upon their heads. However, there was one problem.

The Gate of the Inner Grotto was located at the very center of the dungeon. It was highly possible that during their journey, they would meet with the Giant Worm along the way.

"How about you let that slime lure that Monster away again?" the oldest of the Kobold Mages proposed.

"How about you do it instead?" Lux angrily replied. "I'm not sacrificing Eiko for you guys."

"But she can instantly appear by your side, no?"

"So? No is still no."

The oldest Kobold Mage glared at the Half-Elf who couldn't understand the situation they were in. "You fool. Doing this would ensure that all of us will be able to pass safely. Why don't you let her do it?"

"Because I don't want to," Lux answered. "If you have a problem with that, I'll just leave you guys here and go to the gate myself. Let's see how you escape that giant worm on your own."

Lux would never tell anyone that Eiko could only use this skill twice. Since she had already used it once, she could only use it one more time. The Half-Elf had no intention of letting the baby Slime use her life saving skill another time because he didn't know what lied in the Inner Grotto of the Dungeon.

If Eiko were to lose her only means of survival when her life was truly in danger, Lux wouldn't be able to forgive himself for letting such a thing happen.

"Tell us your plan then," Cadmus said with his arms crossed over his chest. "Since we can't use her to lure away the Giant Worm, we need a major distraction that will prevent the worm from sensing our presence."

Lux nodded. "Actually there is no other way than to head towards the gate as fast as we can. Thanks to the tunnels that the Indus Death Worm made, we can reach our destination in ten minutes if we all run at full speed. However, we are bound to get noticed if we do that."

"Then, why don't we travel slowly?" one of the Kobold Shamans asked. "That way, we won't be noticed."

Lux shook his head as he summoned two Skeleton Fighters and ordered them to go to the corners of the Dungeon and create noise. "We can't do it slowly. The Indus Death Worm moves very fast, and my Summons will all die before

we can reach our destination. If we want to survive, we must make a run for it."

All the Kobolds had troubled expressions on their faces. Lux's plan was too risky. Even though Lux could summon his Skeletons underground, the chances of them getting buried had a high possibility if the Indus Death Worm started to chase them underground.

"So, it's an all or nothing sprint?" Cadmus asked. "Either we do it, or we die?"

"Yes," Lux replied. "How confident are you guys in running?"

The Kobold Shamans, and Mages glanced at each other with bitter smiles on their faces. They weren't built for running, and they would definitely drag everyone down if they did. This was why they felt very reluctant upon hearing Lux's idea of running non-stop for ten minutes and suggested if they could do it slowly.

"I can carry the Kobold Shamans, but I cannot carry the Mages," Cadmus admitted. "The Raiders are good at running, but if they carried the Mages, they would be encumbered."

Lux then looked at the older mage with disdain, and gave him the "You're just baggage" glare, which made the latter avert its gaze.

"If it's only the two of them, I can take them with me," Lux said. "However, we only have one chance. If any of you lag behind and the Indus Death Worm is upon us, I will not hesitate to open the gate and leave you guys behind. Do I make myself clear?"

"Talk about yourself, Half-Elf," one of the Kobold Raiders replied. "Do you really think your puny legs can take you that fast?"

"No," Lux answered. "My puny legs can't take me that fast. But, he can."

Lux then summoned his mount, Jed, before glancing at the Kobold Raider. "Problem?"

The Kobold Raider's jaw hung wide as he looked up at the Rank 3 Warg which was stronger than it.

"Enough," Cadmus stated. "We only have one chance. If anyone lags behind, you will have no one to blame but yourself. Do I make myself clear?"

The four Kobold Raiders nodded with serious expressions on their faces.

Lux then commanded Jed to allow the two Kobold Mages to mount his back, so that they could safely reach their destination with one death-defying sprint.

Lux and Eiko then summoned their Skeleton Fighters and ordered them to go to the farthest corner of the map in groups of four. They only had one shot at this, and no matter what happened, they had to make it count.

Or die trying.

Chapter 149: The Great Escape

"Are you guys ready?" Lux asked as he scanned the faces of the Kobolds around him.

All the Kobolds nodded their heads. They had determined expressions on their faces, which gave Lux the feeling that they were planning to put their lives on the line for this mad sprint.

Lux had also summoned Pazuzu to make noise and lure the Giant Worm away as a last resort and ordered him to fly behind their group.

Just as Lux was about to signal the start of the operation, the oldest Kobold Mage who was mounted on top of Jed said something that made the Half-Elf want to slap him silly.

"If the Giant Worm discovers us then we'll just fight it to the death like true Kobolds," the Kobold Mage said. "Our God, Ross, will definitely send our souls to the next batch of eggs in the nursery."

All the Kobolds nodded their heads with the exception of Cadmus. He had no intention of dying in the dungeon, and it was evident in his eyes.

Lux cursed the old Kobold internally because he was setting up a death flag. The red-headed teenager was very tempted to toss the old fogey behind as a

sacrifice to the Indus Death Worm, so that he could bring his cynical attitude to the afterlife.

"Ready," Lux said. "Go!"

As soon as Lux gave the order, several clanging sounds resounded in the dungeon as the Skeleton Fighters bash their metallic swords into their shields to make noise. The Skeleton Archers on the other hand aimed a barrage of arrows at the walls or ground of the Labyrinth, creating vibrations for the Giant Worm to detect.

Blackey and Whitey casted spells in different directions and made explosions that resounded in the surroundings. Ishtar was doing the same as she fired ice arrows at the walls and the ground, creating a crackling sound as the ice spread out.

The ground trembled as the Indus Death Worm charged to the eastern side of the Labyrinth where Blackie and Whitey were creating a ruckus. Since the explosive spells created more sounds than anyone, it easily caught the Giant Worm's attention.

The Half-Elf and the Kobolds entered the giant hole that the Indus Worm had created when it chased Eiko and ran in the direction of the gate. Pazuzu flew behind them, and kept its senses on guard just in case the Indus Deathworm were to head in their direction.

Dirt fell down from the ceiling of the tunnel as Lux led the way while mounted on Jed. Cadmus was only a few steps away from the Warg, while the Kobold Raiders were a dozen steps away from Cadmus.

Around the three minute mark, the Giant Worm's body broke through the wall behind them, missing one of the Kobold Raiders by only a few meters.

Pazuzu, who was behind the group, immediately shouted and lured the giant worm away using his madlad rush.

A minute later, Lux felt his connection with his Demonic Defender disappear, which meant that Pazuzu had been slain.

Another minute passed, and several more Skeletons died as the Indus Death Worm charged in their direction.

Lux and Eiko summoned their Skeletons and ordered them to stand their ground and hold the line as they continued their journey.

Six Minutes...

Seven Minutes...

On the eighth minute mark, an angry roar resounded behind the group as the Giant Worm annihilated all the Monsters that were hiding on the surface. It then turned its massive head from side to side, trying to detect the location of the invaders of its Domain.

Half a minute later, it charged towards the direction of Lux's group, after hearing the vibrations of their advance underground.

Lux and Eiko ordered the Skeletons that they had summoned underground to make some noises, in order to buy them as much time as possible.

Finally, after nine minutes, the location of the gate appeared in front of their eyes.

"There it is!" the old Kobold shouted. "We're almost there!"

Lux, as well as the other Kobolds glared at the old mage as if telling him "Can't you f*cking shut your trap, old man?"

As if waiting for that cue, the ground trembled, and the head of the Giant Indus Worm smashed through the wall behind them.

At that exact moment, Lux and the other Kobolds looked at the old Kobold with serious expressions on their faces.

All of them were very tempted to let their pig teammate be sacrificed in order to buy them a few seconds of precious time to reach the gate.

As if sensing the intention of his comrades, the Old Kobold Mage grabbed hold of Jed's fur, with the intention of not letting go no matter what.

At that moment of life and death, Eiko's body glowed and two more baby Slimes appeared beside her.

These two Slimes then jumped off the back of the Warg and fired several spells in the Giant Worm's direction. After that, they dug through the left and right sides of the tunnel while creating as much noise as they could.

""Pa!""

""Pa!""

""Pa!""

""Pa!""

""Pa!""

""Pa!""

The Giant Death Worm turned its head to the right side and followed one of Eiko's doppelgangers with a thunderous roar that caused the tunnels around it to collapse.

The Kobold Raiders increased their speed because the ground behind them was collapsing at a fast rate, similar to a domino effect. They knew that if they didn't reach the gate in time, all of them would be buried underground.

Lux summoned the key and held it firmly in his hand. The moment the key appeared within a dozen meters away from the Silver Gate, the barrier surrounding it disappeared, and the gate opened.

Lux passed through it safely, alongside Cadmus who was carrying the two Kobold Shamans like sacks of rice in his arms.

Just as the four Raiders were about to pass through the gate, a giant mouth closed in on them, and successfully gobbled up two of the Kobold Raiders.

A loud explosion resounded as the head of the Indus Death Worm tried to dash through the Silver Gate. Fortunately, it wasn't able to pass through because the silver barrier activated, preventing it from entering.

Lux and the others watched as the silver gate slowly closed, while the Giant Worm continued to ram the barrier with its head. After a few tension-filled seconds passed, the gate closed fully, completely barring the Indus Death Worm from entering the Inner Grotto.

The Half-Elf sighed in relief, while the Kobolds looked at the closed gate with grim expressions on their faces.

They had a close relationship with the members of the expedition, and the deaths of their comrades made their hearts ache.

The Half-Elf didn't have a close relationship with the Kobolds, so he just kept his silence. Right now, he was thankful that they managed to escape the Pseudo-Deimos Boss Monster, but he was feeling anxious about what they would find inside the Inner Grotto.

Since the Boss Monster outside was already that strong, he was afraid that the boss they would be facing was much stronger than it, which made the Half-Elf feel like they had jumped out of the frying pan and into the fire.

Chapter 150: The Guardian Of The Inner Grotto

After their harrowing escape, everyone decided to rest for the time being. Lux had unsummoned Jed, and lightly patted the Baby Slime that was resting on his chest, in order to calm her down.

Eiko was forced to copy Lux's Doppelganger [EX] skill in order to create a distraction to allow everyone to escape.

Unfortunately, the Giant Worm changed its decision half-way and decided to pursue the group that was headed to the Silver Gate that led to the Inner Grotto of the Labyrinth. This resulted in the death of the two Kobold Warriors, which made the atmosphere of the expedition tense.

Half an hour later, Cadmus stood up and faced his comrades.

"All of us here knew that we were going to be risking our lives to explore this dungeon," Cadmus said. "They both died for the greater good, and Ross would definitely allow them to be reborn again as soon as possible.

"What we need to do is continue our journey in order to solve the mystery of why the Ancient Civilization got destroyed. This is to ensure that the same fate does not happen to us, should we chose to inhabit the legacy that they left behind."

All the Kobolds nodded their heads in agreement, as they, too, stood up one by one, and faced Cadmus with determined faces. Clearly, the Kobolds wanted to make the ancient city their new home, but due to the mystery of how it got destroyed, they were reluctant to do it.

All of them hoped that they would get the answers inside the dungeon.

Lux kept his silence, but he already knew half of the reason why the Ancient Civilization was destroyed. When he read the information of the Ignus Death Worm, it clearly stated that it was one of the two monsters that was responsible for its destruction.

This meant that there was one more monster, and Lux guessed that this monster could be found inside the Inner Grotto where they were currently at.

'Perhaps, a Dungeon Outbreak happened and the Indus Death Worm and that other Monster left the dungeon,' Lux thought. 'Due to its having the power of the Pseudo-Deimos Rank, it could easily overpower anyone in the Beginner's Zone.'

However, there was one thing that puzzled Lux. The Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian was a C-Ranked Dungeon, so it was impossible for it to produce a monster that was as powerful as the Indus Death Worm.

Creatures of that rank could be found in B-Ranked and A-Ranked Dungeons as a Boss Monster for its Hell Mode. For it to appear in a C-Ranked dungeon, it only meant that they may be missing something important.

'It couldn't possibly be that, right?' Lux thought as his body subconsciously shuddered at the absurd idea that passed through his mind.

Lux didn't even want to consider the thought that appeared in his head because it was simply too crazy. However, if the off-chance that he was right, that would easily explain the presence of the Indus Death Worm, in addition to the other Monster that might even be stronger than it here inside the Inner Grotto.

The Half-Elf followed Cadmus as they walked into the single tunnel that led to something bright in front of them.

"Just... how?" Lux muttered as he gazed at the unbelievable scene in front of him.

A fantasy-like scenery that could easily become a postcard appeared in his vision.

A Majestic Mountain range served as a backdrop for the dozens of floating islands that hovered around it. Some of these islands had water falling from their bodies like waterfalls, catching the sunlight and creating stunning rainbows.

This was vastly different from the underground labyrinth that they had exited just a while ago.

Cadmus frowned, because he shared the same thought as Lux. this scene shouldn't be here, which made him unable to understand what was happening.

"You've finally arrived."

A majestic voice resounded from the heavens, which made everyone look up at the biggest floating island above them.

Soon, they saw a giant beast flying in their direction, and its presence made Lux, Eiko, Cadmus, and the rest of the Kobolds feel an incredible pressure pressing on their bodies.

The giant creature landed dozens of meters away from them, which allowed everyone to look at it at close range.

A creature that was over twenty six meters long, and had a wingspan of twelve meters stood in front of them, with an amused expression on its face.

Its glossy-white body sparkled in the sun, and its ancient golden eyes scanned the faces of its visitors before stopping on the red-headed teenager, whose green eyes were locked onto its body.

All the Kobolds dropped down on their knees as a sign of respect to the majestic creature in front of them. They were a race that worshiped their God, Ross, as well as the Dragon God, Bahamut, whom all Kobolds revered as the perfect being.

"A Crystal Dragon." Lux gulped as the Dragon looked at him with great curiosity.

Although the Dragon wasn't showing any signs of aggression, its mere presence was enough to make his breath ragged.

Lux activated the Elysium Compendium to see what kind of monster he was facing, and the information that he saw almost made his knees buckle in fright.

< Keoza the Forbidden Guardian >

- Crystal Dragon
- The Guardian of the Inner Grotto
- Argonaut Ranked Monster

Health: 21,000,000 / 21,000,000

Mana: 4,200,000 / 4,200,000

Strength: ????

Intelligence: ????

Vitality: ????

Agility: ????

Dexterity: ????

– The Crystal Dragon, Keoza, was the one of the two monsters that were responsible for the destruction of the Ancient Civilization that thrived underground.

– this Dragon is usually very friendly, and would not attack anyone unless they tried to attack it first, or rob him of his treasures. The Ancient Civilization's greedy ruler thought that since Keoza wasn't an aggressive Dragon, he could take advantage of its kindness and steal one of the Legendary Items in its possession.

However, the ruler failed to understand that no matter how amiable a Crystal Dragon was, it was still a Dragon. Fools who didn't have the strength to back

up their greed, would simply end up dying from its sharp claws, while being blinded by its dazzling dragon breath that could pulverize those that it hit directly.

– Tread wisely upon dealing with Keoza, for it is a creature who can see the greed in people's hearts.

'A-Argonaut Rank?!' Lux's eyes widened in shock because the stats of the Dragon had surpassed the Deimos Rank, leaving it on equal footing with those who reached the level of a C-Ranker.

This was a creature that didn't belong to the Beginner Zone, nor in the Intermediate Zone. This was a creature that could only be seen in the Advance Zone of Elysium, where massive cities—that spanned for several miles—could be found.

Simply put, this was a creature that could destroy the entirety of the Territory of Norria, if it wished for it.

"Salutations, to all of you," Keoza said in a friendly manner, which made Lux, as well as the Kobolds, jump up in fright.

The Crystal Dragon chuckled after seeing their reactions and a mischievous smile appeared on its friendly face.

"Worry not, as long as you don't try anything funny, all of you may leave this place alive," Keoza stated. "However, if you are planning to do something wicked then I assure you that all of you will stay in this place forever as crystal statues that I will be adding to my collection. Do I make myself clear?"

Lux as well as the rest of the Kobolds nodded their heads like hens pecking rice. The creature in front of them was simply too powerful, and only fools would dare to defy it in its own Domain.

The Half-Elf's heart shuddered as his earlier hunch became a reality. They had made a grave mistake when they tried to evaluate the rank of the Dungeon.

It was not a C-Ranked Dungeon, but an S-Ranked Dungeon that had degraded due to the damage that the Dungeon Core had received after the great battle that happened inside its depths, hundreds of years ago.

However, although its rank had degraded, the monsters that lived inside it remained the same, especially the two Boss Monsters that retained their strength, even after the Ancient Civilization had perished under their overwhelming might.

Chapter 151: I Guess It's Time To Beat Up Some Noobs

"Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Keoza," Keoza said in a teasing tone. "I am the Guardian of the Inner Grotto. All of you should be fighting me together in order to gain the treasures that I possess. But, looking at all of you... none of you seemed to have the strength to do that."

Cadmus and the rest of the Kobolds shuddered. All of them worship Dragons, so there was simply no way for them to attack Keoza as it would be considered a sin on their part to even think of it. Also, even if they did, the Dragon could easily kill them with a snort.

Cadmus would probably die after a slap or two if Keoza really intended to kill him.

"Um, would you believe us if we said that we are just passing through here?" Lux asked with a hopeful tone.

Keoza chuckled and nodded its head. "Indeed. All of you were just doing your best to escape Indus' from the Outer Grotto. It had been hundreds of years since anyone has entered the dungeon, so I'm guessing that the city of Eshouvell had been discovered, right?"

Lux nodded his head in acknowledgement. 'So the name of the Ancient City is Eshouvell...'

Keoza gazed at his guests as a bestial smile appeared on its Draconic face.

"Since you came all the way here, I can't let you go empty handed," Keoza said. "How about we play a game?"

"A game?" Lux inquired. "What kind of game, Lord Keoza?"

"Lord Keoza? Not bad. I like you, Half-Elf."

"T-Thank you, Sir."

Keoza chuckled, but in spite of his amiable attitude, Lux could still sense a foreboding feeling that made him raise his guard.

"Let's play a siege battle," Keoza replied. "However, we need to split your team into two. All the Kobolds, including you, the Draconic one, are on one team. As for you, Half-Elf, you will be fighting alone, without that baby slime on your head."

"Eh?"

"Pa?"

Keoza didn't bother to reply as its body shone brilliantly, momentarily blinding everyone.

When the light receded, they found themselves staring at what seemed to be a table made up of crystals. On top of the table was a forest, where three paths could be seen. One on top, one at the center, and one at the bottom.

"Let me explain the rules," Keoza said. "At regular intervals, crystal soldiers will spawn in the two strongholds that are located in the corners of the map. One side belongs to the Kobolds, while the other belongs to you, Half-Elf."

As Keoza explained, several miniature soldiers moved along the paths and headed towards the center of the map where several watchtowers were standing. Both sides fought after they ran into each other.

But since their forces were equal, no one got the upper hand.

"Your goal is to break the crystal that is inside each of the fortresses," Keoza replied as he pointed at the two crystals inside the two strongholds. "The first one to break their opponent's crystal wins the game. However, you can only break it once all the watchtowers are destroyed."

Lux pinched the bridge of his nose because no matter how much he looked at the map, it still resembled the game called "Doh Tah" he played on Earth when he was still alive.

"There are monsters inside the forest, so if you go there, be prepared to fight them," Keoza stated. "Well then, Goodluck to both combatants and... how may I help you... what's your name?"

"Lux, Lord Keoza," Lux replied.

"So, what's the problem? Why are you raising your hand?"

"Aren't I at a great disadvantage in this battle?"

Keoza smiled as it nodded its head. "Of course how could I forget that you still haven't reached the strength of a Rank 1 monster, while your opponents are all Rank 3, and one of them is even Rank 5. Very well, how about this? You Draconic Kobold over there, what is your name?"

Cadmus respectfully bowed before answering Keoza's question. "My name is Cadmus, Your Excellency."

"I see. Well then, Cadmus, you are not allowed to fly. If you fly even once, you will be kicked out of the battlefield, do you understand?"

"Yes, Your Excellency."

"Very good. I like smart Kobolds."

The red-headed teenager wanted to curse internally because he thought that Keoza would at least prevent Cadmus from joining the battle because it was simply too much. Fighting against a Rank 5 Alpha Monster in Doh Tah was like fighting a Level 20 hero when you were still Level 1.

It was a completely unfair matchup and Lux wanted to protest about it. However, before he could even do that, Keoza glanced at him with a devilish expression on its Draconic face.

"I hate Elves, you know," Keoza replied. "But, since you are a Half-Elf, I only hate you half as much. Don't worry, if in the off-chance that you win, I promise that I will not be stingy with the rewards, so, please do your best!"

Just as Lux was about to argue, he was covered in a dazzling light and teleported to the artificial battlefield that Keoza created.

When Lux opened his eyes, he found himself inside a stronghold. He immediately went to the Fountain of Life, and checked the stores to see if

there were any items that he could use to fight against the Kobolds who had a great advantage over him.

Just as the Half-Elf expected, there were indeed weapons, armors, and artifacts that could be purchased in order to increase a person's stats, as well as increase their fighting capabilities.

'There is still some time before the battle starts,' Lux thought as he gazed at the giant hourglass whose sand was still at its halfway point,' Lux thought. 'Keoza didn't explain the mechanics in detail, even about something as important as how to gain gold in this siege battle, and this is probably my only advantage.'

Lux also looked at the temple near the Fountain of Life and saw his picture, Diablo's, Ishtar's, as well as Pazuzu's.

'I guess it is safe to say that the four of us are the heroes of our team...,' Lux mused. 'I see... so this is why Keoza decided to make me fight the entire Kobold Team alone. It must have also seen Eiko's capabilities, so it decided that having her with me was too unbalanced.'

The Half-Elf had to agree that his baby Slime was way too overpowered if it became one of the heroes that were to join him in battle.

The red-headed teenager then opened the match-ups and saw Cadmus, One Kobold Shaman, One Kobold Mage, as well as One Kobold Raider on the opponent's side. The rest of the Kobolds were treated as ordinary warriors to assist them in battle.

The Half-Elf closed his eyes as he took several deep breaths to calm his senses before opening it again.

He then stared at the trickling Hourglass as he summoned all of his Named Creatures as well as Skeletons to fight for his side. He was no longer feeling anxious because he knew that even though the Kobolds were stronger than him, he was more experienced in the mechanics of the game.

Lux was an avid Doh Tah player in his past life. Although he wasn't a professional player, he was someone that had the skills to reach a high rank.

"I guess it's time to beat up some noobs," Lux said with a devilish smile on his face.

Chapter 152: First Blood!

"That bratty Half-Elf is no match against us," the eldest Kobold Mage said with a smirk. "Poor child. It seems that his Excellency Keoza really hated Elves. His chances of winning are almost non-existent."

"I agree," the Kobold Raider replied. "Such a weakling, who is not even a Rank 1, thinks he can beat us? How laughable."

"Without that Slime accompanying him, he will have a hard time," the Kobold Shaman commented. "However, we shouldn't be too overconfident. He might win if we let our guards down."

Cadmus nodded his head. "That's right. Do not let your guard down. Although he is at a disadvantage, this is our first time participating in this kind of siege battle. Perhaps we can use this as well if we ever fought against other races."

All the Kobolds agreed with Cadmus' explanation. They had also seen the shops, and understood that the items inside it could be bought by gold. However, they didn't know how to obtain this currency. In the end, they decided that they could still beat the Half-Elf without the weapons, so they didn't think much about it.

"It's starting," Cadmus said as he looked at the Hourglass that had disappeared from the sky. Several crystal warriors then spawned at the three gates that led to the Top, Middle, and Bottom Lanes of the map. "Let's end this battle quickly. All of us go to the middle!"

""Yes!""

Lux stood at the middle of the map, and right by his side was Pazuzu. Behind him, several Skeleton Grand Archers stood at the ready.

"They're here," Lux muttered and the Demonic Defender by his side tapped his shield with his mace.

"Have no Fear! Pazuzu is here!" Pazuzu declared as he stood in front of Lux.

"Keep me safe, Pazuzu."

"Yes, My Lord."

Cadmus fearlessly charged towards Lux with the intention to kill him. Although the Half-Elf was standing in the middle of two watchtowers, the Draconic Kobold thought that he could easily kill the Half-Elf and his minions with one Dragon Breath.

However, just as he was about to unleash his strongest attack, Pazuzu pointed his mace at the Draconic Kobold, which made the latter's body move against his will.

'What sorcery is this?!' Cadmus thought as his body lunged towards the Demonic Fighter, whose shield was firmly planted on the ground.

When the Draconic Kobold came within the watchtower's range, the two towers fired blue giant orbs of light that hit Cadmus' body directly.

The Draconic Kobold almost spat blood from how painful the attack was, which made him feel that he had clearly underestimated the damage that the two towers could bring. The two towers fired in rapid succession, immediately taking a third of Cadmus' health in the span of a few seconds.

Naturally Lux and the Skeleton Archers weren't being idle and unleashed their attacks at the Draconic Kobold, decreasing his health further.

When Cadmus was only a few meters away from the Demonic Defender, an Ankle Snare trap sprang on his feet, stopping his charge for three seconds.

This allowed the Towers, as well as Lux forces to take more than half of the Draconic Kobold's health, making the latter feel regretful for his recklessness.

After the duration of the trap ended, Cadmus once again continued his charge, but another trap stopped his advance. This continued three more times, making the Draconic Kobold spit blood due to the injuries he received.

When his health was just a trickle away from disappearing completely, Lux appeared in front of him and raised his sword over his head.

"Double Fury Slash!" Lux roared as he used his strongest attack skill against the arrogant Draconic Kobold who thought that it could fight him head-on.

< First Blood! >

An announcement rang inside the battlefield as Cadmus' body turned into particles of light and returned to the Stronghold where he belonged.

The Half-Elf glanced at the respawn timer for the Draconic Kobold and snickered when he saw that it would take Cadmus a full minute before he respawned.

"Being strong also has its downsides," Lux thought as he felt a temporary surge of strength in his body. All of his stats had increased by ten, which was enough for him to step to the Apostle Rank for the remainder of the Siege Battle against the Kobolds.

He also received 500 Gold Coins after killing Cadmus, which made him very happy.

"You bastard! I will kill you!" the Raider that had been chosen as a champion charged at Lux out of anger.

However, the moment the two towers on Lux's side hit its body, a quarter of the Kobold Raider's health disappeared just like that.

To Lux's surprise, the Kobold ignored his injuries as it raised its Saber to continue its charge.

"For the Nest!" the Kobold Raider shouted as its body was peppered with arrows.

Lux chuckled after seeing Kobold's reckless attack. He had already seen the way Kobolds fight. They often relied on great numbers in order to overcome their opponents. The other surviving Kobold Raider also followed its comrade, as the Kobold Mage and Kobold Shaman chanted their spells.

Lux didn't bat an eye and took out a fist-sized rock from his storage ring and threw it at the Kobold Raider's whose life was hanging by a thread.

"Power Shot!" Lux roared as he imbued the rock with his ranged attack.

When the rock smashed against the Kobold Raider's head, the Monster staggered before two orbs of light engulfed it completely, turning it into particles of light.

< Double Kill! >

Before Lux could even celebrate killing another noob, a fireball and a Wind Blade flew in his direction.

Pazuzu raised its shield and tanked the damages of the two attacks, decreasing his health by half.

All the Kobolds were Rank 3 Monsters, so they were very powerful. However, Lux wasn't afraid because he wasn't fighting alone.

Diablo emerged from the forest and pointed at the Kobold Mage who had raised a death flag when they were still in the Outer Grotto.

It was at that moment when the Kobold Mage felt shock as his body ran towards the Skeleton Rider, who was standing near the two towers that had killed two of his comrades.

"Nooooo!" the Kobold Mage shouted as his body was bombarded by arrows, as well as the attacks of the two watchtowers.

"Yes~" Lux sneered as he watched Diablo throw a Bone Spear at the Kobold Mage's head, killing it completely.

Lux could have killed the Kobold Mage and had a Triple Kill, but he allowed Diablo to get the last hit in order for the latter to get the gold coins for the kill.

After the Kobold Mage died, Diablo returned to the forest. It was busy killing monsters in the jungle to get gold, as well as increase its rank, alongside Ishtar.

The Skeleton Hunter sneakily planted traps several meters behind Lux before following Diablo inside the forest.

Lux had explicitly told his Skeleton Rider and Skeleton Hunter to buy certain items as soon as they acquired the gold for it. Right now, Diablo was headed towards the side of the map where a blue rune had appeared, which increased his damage by 100%.

Keoza took pity on Lux and gave him 500 gold coins before the battle even started. Lux used this to buy a courier animal, and upgraded it into a raven that could carry items for him.

Soon a screech resounded from the sky as Lux retreated to the back in order to gain the item that he had bought from the shop.

Although he had anticipated that the Kobolds would all charge to the center of the map to take advantage of their numbers, they greatly underestimated the damage that the two towers beside the path could dish out on their enemies.

The Kobold Mages and the Kobold Shamans hurriedly retreated after seeing three of their comrades die under Lux's forces. They thought that they would be the next target of his minion's taunting spell, forcing them to die a pitiful death, just like their comrades.

Lux chuckled when he saw the retreating Kobolds.

"Sorry, but in order to win, I need to bully you newbies," Lux thought as he ordered his Skeleton Archers to attack his opponent's twin towers. He made sure that before the last crystal soldier and ballista were destroyed, his forces would retreat so they wouldn't be attacked by the towers.

The first thing that Lux bought were boots that increased his movement speed. His plan was to run away if Cadmus had the intention to attack him. Although the Draconic Kobold was stronger than him, it would be impossible to catch him if the Kobold wasn't wearing any items that increased his movement speed.

—

Kobold's Side of the Battlefield...

"Dammit!" Cadmus shouted as soon as he respawned in the Fountain of Life. He didn't expect that he would die a dog's death under the Half-Elf's elaborate tactics.

When he respawned, the Kobold Raider and Kobold Mage appeared beside him as well. The three Kobolds glanced at each other and immediately formed a plan.

"Both of you go to the lower lane and help the crystal soldiers destroy the towers there," Cadmus ordered. I will hold the middle, and distract the Half-Elf. I will also send the rest of our comrades to your location. Make sure to destroy them as fast as possible, do I make myself clear?"

"Yes!"

The two Kobolds replied in unison and immediately headed to the lower lane to help their forces advance.

Cadmus watched them go before running down the middle lane to fight against the Half-Elf who had killed him so easily.

"You just got lucky!" Cadmus growled. He believed that after knowing the Half-Elf's strategy, he would have an easier time dealing with him.

The Draconic Kobold vowed that he would make Lux pay dearly for the humiliation he suffered in front of his subordinates with a painful death. What he didn't know was that the Half-Elf was already waiting for him to arrive, so he could farm gold to buy the items he needed in order to teach the Kobolds not to underestimate their enemy.

Chapter 153: Is He Cheating?

"Your name is Eiko, right?" Keoza watched the baby Slime who was munching on berries beside him, as they watched the battle unfold.

"Un!" Eiko replied before taking a red berry in her mouth.

"Who do you think will win?"

"Pa!"

"Oh? So you think your Papa will win?"

"Un!" Eiko nodded as she looked at the projection of the battlefield which showed her Papa looking at his enemies with a confident smile on his face.

Keoza chuckled as he shifted his attention back to the battle. The battlefield where Lux and the others were currently fighting was gifted to him by someone who had suddenly appeared inside the dungeon several years ago.

That person said that if there ever came a time when someone entered the dungeon and managed to reach the Inner Grotto, to have them play the game to relieve him of his boredom.

After seeing how the Half-Elf fought against the Kobolds, the Crystal Dragon found it quite amusing.

'That person didn't lie,' Keoza thought. 'This Siege Warfare indeed is good entertainment.'

When Cadmus returned to the middle-lane of the battlefield, he saw Lux standing beside his twin towers with his arms crossed over his chest.

The moment Lux saw the Draconic Kobold, the Half-Elf waved his hand in a teasing manner. Cadmus snorted as he kept his distance. He had learned from his earlier mistake and decided to not blindly charge towards the red-headed teenager who was hiding behind the watchtowers.

'Those watchtowers need to go,' Cadmus thought as he eyed the two towers with a serious expression on his face.

His own middle lane towers were halfway damaged, but he didn't know what to do about it.

'If I get too close, that fatso will use that trick again to force me to charge in their direction,' Cadmus thought with a grim expression on his face. 'Although the two of them are weaklings, the towers hurt a lot. I won't be able to last long if I come within their range.'

The Draconic Kobold felt frustrated because he couldn't do the things he usually did in the Beginner's Zone. In his own home turf, he could move unhindered and kill anyone he liked. However, when it came to the battlefield he was on, there were things that couldn't be solved by brute force alone.

Lux snickered inwardly after seeing the cautious Cadmus in the distance. He was quite a ways out of the range of Pazuzu's Duel [EX], so they couldn't force him into their towers' attack range.

'Well it doesn't matter,' Lux thought as he casually threw a rock at one of the crystal soldiers, dealing the last hit, and earning gold coins. 'I'll just destroy this tower first.'

Five minutes later, one of the two towers in the middle lane that belonged to the Kobolds fell. This gave Lux an additional 500 Gold, which brought him

closer to being able to purchase the recipe he needed to transform his boots into teleportation boots.

The Teleportation Boots allowed him to freely teleport to any location in the map, as long as his allies were there. It was one of the most indispensable items in the game he played back then, and he planned to use it to the fullest in order to deal with the Kobolds.

As the Half-Elf threw rocks at his enemies, taking the last hit, the gold in his possession increased once again. This was something that the Kobolds still hadn't discovered yet, and they were simply earning one gold coin every second.

When the last tower of the middle lane fell, Lux gained another 500 gold, which was enough to buy the recipe for the item that he needed.

Cadmus watched as the crystal soldiers pushed through the middle lane and headed in his direction.

"You won't get past me!" Cadmus roared as he fired a Dragon Breath at the crystal soldiers, leaving them with only a small fraction of their health.

Lux then immediately threw several rocks at his allies, killing them, in order to prevent Cadmus from being able to gain any more gold once he killed them.

The Draconic Kobold was confused by Lux's behavior and simply thought that the Half-Elf had turned crazy. It was at that moment when Cadmus heard a screech in the distance.

A Raven descended from the sky and landed on Lux's arms. A few seconds later, a golden radiance erupted around Lux's body before the Raven flew towards the sky once again, and headed back in the direction of their Stronghold.

"Pazuzu, you know what to do, right?" Lux asked.

Pazuzu nodded. "Yes, My Lord!"

The Demonic Defender ran into the forest using his madlad rush to go to the Bottom Lanes, so he could help the crystal soldiers on their side to destroy the Kobold's lower towers.

Lux, on the other hand, waved at Cadmus with a smile as he ran behind one of the two Guard Towers that belonged to him.

The Half-Elf immediately activated his Boots of Teleportation and teleported to the Top Lanes to help his allies destroy the tower there.

Cadmus stared at the tower Lux stepped behind and frowned.

'Is he perhaps hiding from me?' Cadmus thought. 'That must be it. He knew that he couldn't beat me in a direct confrontation so he is depending on those two towers to defeat me. As expected of a weakling.'

The Draconic Kobold sneered internally as he held his ground. He believed that as long as he stayed in the middle lane, none of Lux's forces would be able to pass by him.

Meanwhile at the Top Lanes of the Battlefield...

Lux saw one Kobold Mage and One Kobold Shaman in the Top Lanes which had greatly helped their forces damage his towers. Right now, one of the towers only had a third of its health remaining, and was on the brink of collapse.

Even so, Lux wasn't worried because he already had a plan in mind.

"Let's go, Diablo!" Lux ordered and his named creature emerged from the forest and used his Duel [EX] skill to pull the Kobold Mage towards their tower.

"Dammit!" the Kobold Mage shouted in anger as it was forced to head towards the Skeleton Rider who was standing near the two deadly towers that had killed Cadmus and its other comrades.

"Sorry, not sorry," Lux chuckled as the Kobold Mage was bombarded by the towers' concentrated attacks.

"Curse you, Half-Elf!" the Kobold Mage shouted in anger before Diablo's sword stabbed his chest, taking his life and the last hit reward.

Lux's plan was to let Diablo gain experience points, so his rank would increase, as well as get enough gold to buy the items he needed.

The red-headed teenager was more of a support character, while the end-game damage dealer, or what gamers refer to as "Carries", would be Diablo and Ishtar. The Half-Elf knew that once his two Carries had been properly equipped, the Kobolds wouldn't stand a chance against them.

After killing the Kobold Mage, the Kobold Shaman hastily retreated, but an ice arrow hit him in the back, slowing his movement speed.

Ishtar released several arrows to not only whittle the Kobold Shaman's life away, but also reduce its movement speed, making it move very slowly.

"Filthy undead!" the Kobold Shaman hatefully cursed as it summoned several wind blades to attack the Skeleton Hunter who was treating him like a shooting practice target.

Ishtar casually evaded the Kobold Shaman's attack before continuing her range attacks. A few seconds later, a Bone Spear pierced through the Kobold Shaman's chest, ending its life.

< Double Kill! >

As the Kobold turned into particles of light, its eyes filled with unwillingness landed on the Skeleton Rider whose body was glowing crimson.

For now, every slain creature in the battlefield, whether it be foes or allies, strengthened Diablo. The red-headed teenager chuckled evilly when he saw that Diablo had already gained +100 Bonus to Physical and Magical Damage, as well as +100 to Defense due to the Skill Blood Fervor, which was an ability of Diablo's Blackrock Legacy Set.

'Cadmus, oh, Cadmus, you're in for a surprise later,' Lux chuckled inwardly as Diablo's damage and defense. With every minute that passed, Diablo's strength grew as both allies, and enemies, supplied him with additional damage and defense.

"Diablo, let's do this!" Lux said as he raised his hand to activate the skill Battlecry, which added 100 Bonus Physical and Magical Damage to him and his allies.

Diablo also raised his sword and activated his own skill, Warlord's Warcy, which added another 200 Bonus Physical and Magical Damage to all of his allies.

The combined +300 to attack and defense made all the Crystal Soldier's bodies turn crimson red as their attacks increased drastically.

"Break the towers!" Lux ordered and their combined forces easily broke the two towers, giving them bonus gold points.

After the two towers were destroyed, Lux charged alongside Diablo and the others and destroyed the two towers that were three hundred meters away from the two towers that they had just destroyed. Due to their increase in strength, the two towers fell helplessly.

< Your Towers on the Top Lanes have been destroyed! >

Cadmus gasped in shock after hearing the words that resounded inside his head. He watched as his two towers in the Middle Lanes were destroyed a few minutes ago, and now, the towers belonging to the Top Lanes had been destroyed as well, which greatly shocked him.

Just as the Draconic Kobold was thinking of what to do next, another notification reached his ears which made his blood turn cold.

< Your Towers on the Top Lanes have been destroyed! >

With an angry roar, Cadmus ran towards the Top Lanes in order to prevent Lux from destroying the Guard Towers that were located at the entrance of their stronghold.

'Just what in Bahamut's name is happening?!' Cadmus shouted internally as he ran with all of his might. 'Don't let me catch you, Half-Elf! I will make sure you die a very slow and painful death!'

After destroying the two sets of towers on the Top Lanes, Diablo and Ishtar returned to the forest, while Lux teleported to the Bottom Lanes to reunite with Pazuzu.

He was chuckling inwardly as he bought an item from the store in his Stronghold, and ordered the Raven to deliver it to him.

Just like the game in his world, each "Hero" was only allowed to equip six items from the store. Right now, the only thing he had were the Boots of Teleportation, but one more item was on the way.

With this item, the red-headed teenager was sure that even if Cadmus were to cross his path, he would be able to escape from the Draconic Kobold without any problems.

The Kobolds were starting to get frustrated because they couldn't believe that the Half-Elf and his Skeletons had been able to overpower them fifteen minutes after their battle started.

Sometimes, Diablo would come charging at them out of nowhere without being detected. Other times, they would see the Skeletal Rider with his body turned completely blue, and his attack damage doubled, which easily reduced their health to zero after they encountered him.

The worst part was when they saw three Diablos at the same time, which made them feel their livers ache.

"This bastard always knows where we are," the eldest Kobold Mage said. "Is he cheating? It's as if he knows where we are hiding when we are about to ambush him, and he goes in the other direction."

"This might be the reason for that." One of the Kobold Shamans took out an item from his bag. "This is called Spy Wards. You can place them on the ground which allows you to see certain areas of the battlefield. He might be using these things to know our location."

"Petty tricks!" one of the Kobold Raiders hissed in anger. "He thought that he was so smart? Then let's fill the entire place with these Spy Wards! Let's see if he can hide from us."

Cadmus felt that it was beneath him to rely on such tactics, but he was out of options at this point in time. The Half-Elf was destroying their towers left and right, and his Skeletons were ambushing his subordinates and killing them.

If they didn't counter his methods, all of them would be forced to just camp in their Stronghold and wait for the Half-Elf to come knocking on their door.

"All of you go to the store and buy these Spy Wards," Cadmus ordered. "Make sure to place them across the entirety of the map, so we can see where this Half-Elf is going."

"Yes!"

Lux snickered as he opened his eyes. "Fools, why are you discussing your plans right beside my Spy Ward? Isn't that just asking for trouble?"

The Half-Elf smiled as he gave an order to Ishtar to return to the Fortress to buy a certain item that would make the Kobolds regret their decision.

'All of you might be stronger than me in the outside world, but here, you're just noobs,' Lux summoned his Skeletons as he prepared to assist Pazuzu in taking down the towers on the Bottom Lanes of the map.

He was already looking forward to the items Diablo and Ishtar were building, to deal with the Draconic Kobold, who was the greatest threat in the battlefield at this point in time.

Chapter 154: Who Is Kong Kong?

< Your Towers on the Bottom Lanes have been Destroyed! >

The Kobolds exchanged glances at each other before looking at Cadmus whose face had already turned beet red from anger.

The Draconic Kobold simply couldn't accept how they were being one-sidedly beaten by the Half-Elf whom they thought was a weakling.

"Maybe he is really cheating," the oldest Kobold Mage said. "There is just no way that we can lose against him. That has to be it, right?"

Before the other Kobolds could voice their opinions, a proud, yet teasing voice reached their ears.

< He is not cheating. >

Keoza's voice made all the Kobolds shudder as they all subconsciously went down on their knees to show their respect for the Crystal Dragon.

< As much as I appreciate the gesture, the more you delay, the more the Half-Elf is going to win this game. I will only give you one piece of advice and one piece only. Do not rely on your brute strength and buy items from the store before it's too late. >

"Your Excellency, can you please tell us what items we should buy from the store?" the Kobold Shaman respectfully asked with his head still bowed.

However, Keoza no longer replied, and the Kobolds no longer felt his presence, making them feel lost.

"You, and you, come with me to the Bottom Lanes to protect our last tower," Cadmus ordered. "The rest, plant those Spy Wards so we will know where the Half-Elf is."

"Should we also plant them inside the forest?" the eldest Kobold Mage asked. "His Skeleton Rider ambushes us from there, so I think it is a good idea to place some Spy Wards over there as well."

"Do what you must," Cadmus replied before turning towards one of the stores to purchase a boot to increase his movement speed. "His Excellency has already spoken. Make sure to check the stores for any useful items that we can use. We will beat that Half-Elf with his own strategy."

—

"Remember, when Cadmus attacks you, activate the ability of that armor, okay?" Lux said.

"Pazuzu understands."

Lux had patiently explained to Pazuzu the items he should get in order to fight against their opponents. Since the Demonic Defender was a tank, the red-headed teenager would dress him up as a monstrous tank that would make Cadmus feel like he was fighting the wrong person.

Just as Lux was about to give an order, he saw four Kobolds enter the forest. Two of them were Kobold Mages, while the other two were Kobold Raiders. The red-headed teenager sneered because he already knew what they were

planning to do, so he decided to make a detour towards the forest, alongside all of his minions, so they could earn some easy gold coins.

"Okay, I planted all the Spy Wards in my possession," the Kobold Raider said. "How about you guys?"

"I'm done."

"Me, too."

"I've already finished setting mine."

The Kobold Raider nodded. "Very well, let's go bac—"

Before he could even finish his words, he saw Lux, and Ishtar, riding on a Warg, alongside the Skeletal Rider, Diablo. He was not only him who saw this scene, his entire team did as well."

"They're here!" the Kobold Raider shouted. "The Spy Wards are working! Now, let's hurry back to the fortress!"

All the Kobolds ran away, but there was one big problem. None of them were wearing any boots, or other items that increased their movement speed.

It only took Lux and Diablo a minute to overtake them, and a battle immediately broke out between the Half-Elf's forces and the four kobolds.

"I will take your head, Half-Elf!" the Kobold Raider declared as he charged towards Lux.

"Well, you need to catch him first," Lux sneered as Diablo charged towards the Kobold Raider using its skill, Hero's Charge.

< Hero's Charge >

– A full powered charge attack that deals 300% of your overall physical damage to your target. Can only be used when mounted on a beast.

– If your enemy is bigger than you, deal an additional 100% damage to your target. Can only be used when mounted on a beast.

Right now, Diablo had an attack buff of +1000 points due to the combined Warcries as well as the effect of the Blackrock Legacy Armor. This was a very terrifying number, because Diablo's normal attack damage, plus the damage of the items he had equipped, as well as other passive skills that increased his damage, were excluded from that attack buff.

Now that the Skeleton Rider had used its most powerful mounted attack, his damage was further increased to a terrifying 300%

As soon Diablo collided with the Kobold Raider, the Kobold's reaction instantly changed as it spat blood from the injury it received from Diablo's attack.

It only took Diablo one more slash at the Kobold Warrior's head to kill it completely.

"By the Kobold Gods!" the Kobold Shaman exclaimed. "A monster has appeared!"

The morale of the Kobolds were instantly shattered as Lux's forces bulldozed through them, turning them into gold coins.

"Ishtar, do it," Lux ordered and the Skeleton Hunter immediately ran through the forest and destroyed all the Spy Wards that had been placed on the ground. She had equipped an item called the All-Seeing Gem, which allowed her to see invisible things.

Cadmus had originally planned to reinforce his comrades, but before he was even halfway to his destination, the Kobolds were already dead.

He stopped his advance and hesitated whether he should continue or not.

'Is this the effect of the items in the store?' Cadmus thought before clenching his fists. 'No. I should kill them now while I can. If I let this continue, they might get stronger. Who cares if they outnumber me? They have no towers to save them here!'

The Draconic Kobold then ran into the forest with determination. He believed in his strength, and he knew that even if Lux was able to easily deal with his comrades, he would have a hard time dealing with him.

Forty minutes had passed since the start of the battle, and Lux's forces were now better equipped. Diablo's and Ishtar's level had already increased to Level 15, while Lux and Pazuzu were at Level 12.

Cadmus was at level 23, which made him the stronger creature on the battlefield.

When Lux saw the Draconic Kobold appear in the forest, the smile on his face widened.

'He wants a direct battle?' Lux thought. 'Good decision. Unfortunately, now is not the time.'

Lux used his Boots of Teleportation and teleported to the Bottom Lanes, alongside all of his named Creatures.

Diablo, Ishtar, and Pazuzu, were all equipped with Boots of Teleportation to allow them to coordinate with Lux's strategy.

Cadmus, who had just arrived at the location where his friends had died, scanned his surroundings with caution.

"Come out!" Cadmus shouted. "Fight me you cowards!"

No one replied to his challenge. Instead, he heard a notification that made him roar in frustration.

< Your Towers on the Bottom Lanes have been destroyed. >

Cadmus was about to run to the Bottom Lanes when he heard another notification.

< Your Stronghold Towers on the Bottom Lanes have been destroyed >

< Barracks have been destroyed! >

< Enemy's Crystal Warriors have grown stronger! >

Cadmus had no time to think and used the teleportation scroll that he had bought at the store located near the forest.

When Lux saw the shining light in the distance, he immediately ordered his forces to retreat.

"Let's go back to the Fortress to do some shopping," Lux ordered as he urged his Warg, Jed, to return to their base.

All the Kobolds had congregated at the bottom entrance of their Stronghold, which had been breached by the enemies.

Although the opponent's crystal soldiers had indeed grown stronger, they were still able to defend it to a certain degree.

Now that the Kobolds had learned the importance of the Store, all of them started to buy items that they thought would be useful to them, allowing them to patch up the cracks in their defenses.

After buying the equipment they needed, Lux led his forces to fight against "Kong Kong", which dropped a certain item that would be useful in their attack on the Kobold's Stronghold.

Now that the battle was inside the Kobolds' base, the Half-Elf knew that they would have no choice but to face Cadmus head-on. In order to prepare for any mishaps, he decided to kill Kong Kong first, as insurance against their clash against the Rank 5 Alpha Monster.

< Kong Kong has been Slain! >

Cadmus and the Kobolds glanced at each other in confusion.

"Who is Kong Kong?"

"No idea. Is he someone important?"

"I don't know. Maybe he's just a nobody?"

"Stop talking and start killing you bastards!" the oldest Kobold Mage shouted. "We are being overrun here and you idiots still have time for idle chat!"

The Kobolds hurriedly returned to their duty of defending their base from the Crystal Warriors that had grown in strength.

It was also at that moment when one of the Kobolds shouted.

"They are attacking the gates at the Top Lane!"

Cadmus didn't think twice and ran towards the gates where Lux and his forces had appeared. He would not allow the Half-Elf the opportunity to destroy another gate, which would make their defense crumble.

"You shall not pass!" Cadmus shouted before he unleashed his Dragon's Breath towards the Half-Elf who was busy hacking at the base of the Guard Tower.

Lux, continued his attack, and ignored the Dragon's Breath because he wasn't fighting alone.

Pazuzu appeared in front of him, and raised his shield. However, that was not the only thing that the Demonic Defender did. Steel Spikes jutted out of his body, making him look like a metallic porcupine

When the Dragon Breath hit Pazuzu's shield, Cadmus gasped in pain because he also received the full brunt of his damage. It was as if the one that got hit by the Dragon's Breath was him instead of the Demonic Defender, whose body had been pushed back several meters, until he hit the guard tower.

Only fifty points remained in the Demonic Defender's health, showing how powerful the Dragon's Breath was.

Cadmus health, on the other hand, had been reduced by a third after he had unleashed his strongest attack.

Pazuzu hastily retreated behind the formation as his health regenerated at a rapid rate. Lux had equipped Pazuzu with a Heart of Behemoth, which increased his health regeneration, as well as provided him with the spiked armor which returned any damage he received back to his enemy. This ability lasted for five seconds, making it one of the most optimal items for the Demonic Defender.

Cadmus roared in anger as he charged towards Lux, but his charge slowed down after he was repeatedly hit by Ice Arrows.

Ishtar fearlessly fired arrow after arrow at the Draconic Kobold who could easily snap her in two in the outside world. But here, things were different. Although Ishtar couldn't beat Cadmus one-on-one, she could beat him if she had backup.

The Nightmare charged at Cadmus as Diablo's eyes shone brightly from under his metallic helmet.

"You mere insect!" Cadmus hatefully shouted as he raised his sword to attack the Skeleton, who was charging at him with flames blazing behind his mount.

Diablo had activated his skill, Hero's Charge, and planned to deal with the hateful Draconic Kobold who looked down on his Master.

The Skeleton Rider was Lux's First Born, and for him, anyone who dared to look down on his Master deserved to be punished severely.

The moment Cadmus' sword, and Diablo's Oathbreaker collided, a metallic rang spread across the surroundings, followed by a minor shockwave.

The two strongest heroes on both sides of the battlefield had clashed, and only one of them would remain once this clash was over.

Lux continued to hack away at the Guard Tower with all of his might. He had full faith in Diablo, so he would perform his role well, and ensure that this siege of theirs would succeed no matter what.

Chapter 155: Croak For Me!

Airon skidded a few meters across the ground with its rider, Diablo, after their first clash against the Alpha Monster.

Cadmus couldn't hide the shock on his face when he felt the unexpected force behind Diablo's strike which made his arm numb. Although he won the initial exchange, the Skeleton Rider's blow made him treat his opponent more seriously.

The Kobolds, who were watching the battle from afar, were also shocked at the performance of their enemy. Because of this, the oldest Kobold Mage

ordered the rest of the Kobolds to support Cadmus, while he held back the opponent's strengthened Crystal Warriors.

"Kill the Half-Elf!" the oldest Kobold Mage ordered. "Don't let him destroy our Guard Towers!"

The other Kobolds nodded their heads and hurriedly charged towards the Half-Elf who had just finished destroying one of the two Towers beside their Stronghold's main gate.

"Hack away, boys!" Lux ordered his Skeletons to focus fire on the remaining Towers. "Ishtar, deal with those small fry Kobolds! Show them the power of the Forgotten Queen!"

The battlefield was quite special since it also had a day and night setting. The sun had just set, and because of Ishtar's title of Forgotten Queen, all of her stats increased by 50% during the night.

What did that mean? It meant that the Skeleton Hunter had become 50% more deadly. Just like Diablo, Ishtar was overgeared and was more than a match for the Rank 3 Kobolds, who weren't even wearing any kind of special equipment on their bodies.

The moment Ishtar's Icy Arrow hit one of the Kobold Raiders, the latter immediately felt a world of pain, making it gasp in shock.

Ishtar carried four Pseudo-Legendary Items in her possession. One of them was none other than the Windbow, which increased her agility, attack damage, evasion, and attack speed.

Her second item was the Critical Shard, which increased her damage, as well as the chances of landing critical hits on her enemies.

The third item was the Boots of Teleportation which allowed her to teleport anywhere around the map, alongside Lux, allowing them to bulldoze their way through their opponents with ease.

The last item on her arsenal was the Thunder Shard, which Ishtar immediately activated, surrounding herself with five orbs of lightning. This item imbued her attacks with lightning, in addition to increasing her attack speed, making her a moving turret that could decimate anything and everything she hit.

When the Kobold Raider was about to flee, a bolt of lightning hit its head, making it explode. The Kobold then turned into particles of light, making the rest of the small fry Kobolds look at Ishtar in horror.

However, before the other Kobold Raider could flee, Ishtar's ice arrow hit it, slowing its movement speed.

"Help me!" the Kobold Raider screamed in fear as his health decreased at an incredibly fast rate, while Ishtar fired arrow after arrow as if there was no tomorrow.

The Kobold Mage then pointed its staff at the Skeleton Hunter, but soon found itself running towards the fat Demonic Defender, who had appeared behind Ishtar.

"Hateful Land Dwellers!" the Kobold Mage shouted in anger, as he found himself moving helplessly towards the enemy's vanguard.

Lux and his Skeletons focused fire on the Kobold Mage, killing it in a matter of seconds. After the Kobold Mage died, they once again focused their attacks on the Stronghold's Guard Tower, destroying it completely.

Cadmus, who was fighting against Diablo, roared in anger when he saw the last tower collapse under Lux's determined assault.

< Your Stronghold Towers on the Top Lanes have been destroyed >

Cadmus immediately bashed Diablo to the side as he prepared to unleash his Dragon Breath to kill the Half-Elf who was madly hitting the Barracks of their Stronghold.

Just as Cadmus was about to unleash his powerful attack, he halted midway as Diablo used his Duel [EX] skill to force the Draconic Kobold to attack him.

A hate-filled growl escaped Cadmus lips as he was forced to exchange a blow with the Skeleton Rider whose attacks had been raised to a frightening level due to the constant death that was happening around him.

With every slain ally or foe, the Blood Fervor ability grew, raising his attack and defense to a level that even Cadmus found hard to deal with.

Just as the Draconic Kobold sent Diablo and his Nightmare Mount flying a few meters away with a backhand blow, an announcement sounded in his ears, which made his eyes turn bloodshot.

< Barracks have been destroyed! >

< Enemy's Crystal Warriors have grown stronger! >

"Damn you!" Cadmus charged towards Lux with only one thing in mind and that was to end his life.

Just as he was about to cleave the hateful Half-Elf in two, Lux sneered at him as he raised a staff pointed in the Draconic Kobold's direction.

"Croak for me!" Lux roared.

Lux had three Pseudo-Legendary Equipments in his possession. One of them was the Boots of Teleportation, another was the Polytoad Staff. This staff increased the Intelligence Stat, as well as the user's Mana regeneration. But those aside, it also had one annoying ability and that was transforming its target into a small toad for three seconds.

The hulking Draconic Kobold instantly transformed into a toad, which Lux happily kicked like a soccer ball, sending it flying dozens of meters in the air. Cadmus reverted back to his Draconic form and subconsciously flapped his wings to break his fall.

< You broke the rule. Time for you to be evicted. Truly a pity. >

Keoza's sigh reverberated in the surroundings as Cadmus turned into particles of light, causing the remaining Kobolds inside the Stronghold to despair.

Lux had hoped for this scenario to happen, since there was only a small chance that Cadmus would break the rule that Keoza had given him as his handicap.

After seeing the biggest threat in the battlefield disappear, Lux shifted his attention to the oldest Kobold Mage, as well as the two Kobold Shamans, who were frantically defending the last two towers that protected their Stronghold's Core.

"Kill!" Lux ordered as his forces charged at the last three Kobolds whose faces had turned grim.

They knew that the battle was over the moment Cadmus was kicked out of the battle, and the only thing they could do was accept their fate as Diablo, Ishtar, and Pazuzu charged in their direction with their eyes glowing with excitement.

Chapter 156: Keoza's Last Gift

Despite their desperate efforts, the three Kobolds were powerless against Lux's two powerful Named Creatures, who specialized in dealing massive damage to their enemies.

Lux didn't even feel a shred of guilt as the three Kobolds died one after the other. This Siege Battle could only have one winner in the end, and he decided that it would be himself.

The moment the Stronghold Core got destroyed, Lux found himself standing on one of the floating islands inside the Inner Grotto.

The Kobolds were also on one of the islands, and all of them glared towards Lux's direction, especially Cadmus, who kept clenching and unclenching his fists out of anger.

Just as Lux was thinking about how he could fix the tension between him and the Kobolds, an adorable voice reached his ears which made him look up in the sky.

"Pa!"

Eiko, who was perched on top of Keoza's head, jumped towards Lux while giggling.

The Half-Elf immediately used his Air Strider [EX] Skill to catch the naughty baby, who dared to sit on top of a Crystal Dragon's head.

"That was a most... excellent performance," Keoza said as he gazed at Lux. "Truly amusing."

The Half-Elf only smiled because he didn't know how to reply to the Crystal Dragon's praise. All he wanted was to leave the Dungeon as soon as possible before Keoza forced him to play another one of his "amusing" games.

"Your name is Lux, right?" Keoza asked.

"Yes, Your Excellency," Lux replied.

Keoza nodded. "Good. Now, follow me."

The Crystal Dragon flapped its wings and rose in the air. A few seconds later, a powerful breeze sucked Lux up towards the sky, making Eiko, who was in his arms, giggle. The baby Slime thought that they were going to play another game and that, this time, she would be joining her Papa in battle.

As the red-headed teenager floated in the sky, he noticed that he was headed towards the highest floating island in the Inner Grotto, which seemed to be the one where Keoza lived. Instead of feeling happiness like the baby Slime in his hands, the Half-Elf's expression became more grim as he neared the island.

Truth be told, he would rather stay with Cadmus and the Kobolds who were mad at him, than stay with Keoza whose rank made him anxious.

"You think too much, Half-Elf," Keoza said as soon as Lux landed on his island. "Like I said earlier, as long as you don't attack me first, or steal my treasures, I will allow you to leave this place... alive."

"Um. There was a slight pause in your words, Your Excellency," Lux replied.

The Crystal Dragon eyed Lux as he gave the latter a mischievous smile. "You're just imagining things."

Lux zipped his lips and no longer said anything. His behavior caused Keoza chuckle. The dragon invited the Half-Elf to follow behind him.

At the center of the floating Island was a grand temple that was at least the size of two football stadiums.

The moment Lux entered the interior of the temple, he found himself staring at a sea of precious gems that littered the floor. It was as if he was looking at a rainbow colored sea that sparkled in the sunlight.

Eiko looked at this scene with great interest. She was even planning to jump over to the hoard of gems to play, but Lux made sure to hold her firmly in his hands. He was afraid that Eiko's next move might anger Keoza, so he decided to reign in his playful daughter, just to be on the safe side.

"Long ago, the city of Eshouvell flourished alongside my Dungeon," Keoza said. "However, as the city grew, so did the greed of the rulers that managed it. Did you know? This Dungeon used to have fifty floors. Now, it only has the Outer and Inner Grotto."

Keoza narrated as he laid in the center of its treasure horde while gazing at Lux, who stayed outside the sea of gems that belonged to the Crystal Dragon.

"Because of the ruler's greed, they tried to take my treasures, and a battle ensued. Truth be told, they were no match against us, but they called for outside help."

Keoza scoffed as he remembered the foul memory of his past.

"Do you know whose help they asked for?" Keoza inquired.

Lux hesitated for a bit before giving his answer. "Elves?"

"Right. They asked help from Elves. Unfortunately, the Elves they invited were just as greedy as the ruler. While Indus (the Giant Worm) and I were fighting against the King and his subordinates, the Elves broke into the Dungeon Core Room and used their magic to gain authority over it.

"The first thing they did was place a condition that no one could enter the Dungeon unless they were accompanied by someone with Elven Blood," Cadmus explained. "This was to ensure that the King of Eshouvell would have no choice but to cooperate with their race if they wished to gain the treasures inside the Dungeon."

"Their plan almost succeeded, but thanks to Indus' overbearing attitude, they had no choice but to leave the Dungeon Core before they could corrupt it further. At least, that was what Indus and I planned."

"Unfortunately, they were in the middle of performing a high-ranking magic spell when Indus went after them, so the spell went haywire. The spell permanently damaged the Dungeon Core and slowly led to this Dungeon's decay."

Keoza paused before closing its eyes.

"Today is the last day that this Dungeon will exist," Keoza stated. "The Dungeon Core has reached its limit, so it can no longer support its functions. You and the Kobolds will be the last visitors of the Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian."

"The moment Keoza finished talking. Several artifacts flew from his treasure trove and floated in front of Lux."

"You may choose three items from my treasury," Keoza declared. "This will be the last gift I will bestow upon mortals before this Dungeon vanishes from the face of the world. So, choose wisely."

< Choose 3 items from Keoza's Treasure Vault >

- Golden Dragon Token
- Boots of Teleportation
- Spear of Azrael (Replica)
- Dragon Mythic Path Quest
- Argonaut Rank Beast Core (Crystal Dragon).

You can only absorb this Beast Core once you become a Ranker.

- Rank 5 Beast Core (Indus Death Worm).
- Martial Arts Skillbook (Dragon War Art)
- A Vial of Dragon's Blood

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There were over twenty items to choose from, and all of them were amazing in their own right. Earlier, Lux thought that Keoza was quite generous when it had given him the option of choosing three items from his treasury.

However, after seeing everything that it had to offer, he realized that three was not enough to get the items he truly wanted!

For example, the Martial Arts Skill Book (Dragon War Art). There were several martial arts in the world and some of them were exclusive to a Family's bloodline.

The Kaizer War Art that Lux practiced was a Martial Art that was exclusive to the Kaizer Family, and only those with their bloodline would be able to use it.

Vera had to host a special ceremony in order to allow Lux to use their Family's War Art without receiving a backlash. This was the only way for the Half-Elf to use a Bloodline Art that he couldn't possibly use normally.

The Dragon War Art required the user to have a bit of Dragon Blood running through their veins. But even if Lux didn't have any Draconic Bloodline in him, there was a method he could use which was taking the Vial of Dragon's blood.

Once he drank it, a small amount of Dragon Blood would flow inside his body, giving him the ability to use the Dragon War Art without any problem.

Then there was the Boots of Teleportation. It could allow Lux to instantly teleport, up to five miles from his location, to an ally's location. Meaning, he could send Diablo or any of his other skeletons somewhere, and teleport to them with the help of the boots.

Although Argonaut Rank Beast Core wasn't rare when you reached the Advance Zones of Elysium, the Beast Core that belonged to a Crystal Dragon was very rare. This was why Lux decided to take it no matter what.

Any skill that belonged to a Dragon was bound to be powerful. If Lux could upgrade it to a higher form with his evolution skill, it would become more deadly in his hands.

The Golden Dragon Token allowed Lux to create a guild. There were several Guild Ranks and they were known as the Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum, Diamond, and Legendary Heaven-Ranked Guilds.

The Wildgarde Guild in Elysium was Silver-Ranked, while The Barbatos Guild in Elysium was a Gold Ranked Guild. This just showed how difficult it was to acquire a Platinum-Ranked and Diamond-Ranked Guild in Elysium.

They had to complete many outstanding feats, before their respective Kingdoms or Empires gave them the approval to raise their Guild's Rank.

The Golden Dragon Token also gave Lux the ability to summon an Argonaut Ranked Crystal Dragon three times. This was something quite unexpected and a trump card that he could use as a last resort, so he also planned to get the Golden Dragon Token as well, as one of the three items he would choose from the treasury.

The Dragon Mythic Part Quest, on the other hand, was a mystery. The Elysium Compendium only described the Quest as the Path to Understanding the ways of the Dragon. It was such a vague description, and Lux wasn't sure if it was worth choosing.

In the end, Lux could only sigh in his heart because he could only choose three of them.

'I wish I could choose more, but I guess this is the limit,' Lux thought as he picked the three items that he wanted from the list. It was a very hard decision to make, but the Half-Elf knew that he had chosen the things that he needed in order to grow stronger in the world of Elysium.

Chapter 157: Immortal Dragon Conqueror's Legacy

C

"Are you sure that these are the three items that you want?" Keoza asked.

Lux nodded. "Yes."

It was not easy, but after deliberating for a long time, the Half-Elf settled for the three items that were currently floating in front of him.

The first item he chose was the Golden Dragon Token, which allowed him to create a Guild, as well as summon an Argonaut Ranked Crystal Dragon to help him.

The second one was the Argonaut Ranked Beast Core, although he could only use it after he became a Ranker.

Choosing the last item was the hardest part since there were many other items that Lux wanted to have. However, it was not possible, so he settled for something that allowed him to travel to places without too much hassle.

Yes. The last item that Lux chose was none other than the Boots of Teleportation. He felt that as long as he had this artifact, he would be able to come and go wherever he pleased as long as the destination was within five miles around him.

"Since this Dungeon will disappear the moment you leave this place, I decided to add some freebies to your rewards." Keoza grinned. "I noticed earlier that you wanted the Dragon War Art, but you were unable to wield it because you don't have the blood of dragons flowing in your veins."

"Since that is the case, I will bestow upon you the Dragon War Art, as well as the vial of Dragon's Blood. This will be my last gift to you. Please, take it."

A worn out book as well as a vial that contained a dark-red liquid, which Lux assumed to be Dragon's Blood, floated in front of him.

"Thank you, Your Excellency," Lux bowed his head respectfully in order to thank the generous Crystal Dragon who had just given him an unexpected surprise.

"Don't thank me yet," Keoza said. "You need to drink that Dragon's Blood here and use the Skill Book in my presence. This is to ensure that you will be the only one to use it. I'd hate it if you were to suddenly auction these items just to get some gold coins. I don't care what you do with the other items you handpicked, but this gift that I have given you must be used here."

Lux nodded his head in understanding and drank the Dragon's Blood in front of Keoza's watchful eyes.

Suddenly, a burning sensation erupted from inside his chest, as his body heated up, turning his skin red.

"Pa!" Eiko, who was perched on top of Lux's head, cried out in alarm as the Half-Elf collapsed on the ground and writhed in pain.

"Don't worry, little one," Keoza assured the Slime who started to cry after seeing her Papa's condition. "He will be fine... maybe."

"Wuwuwu!" the baby Slime cried as she pressed her head against Lux's forehead that was as hot as coal.

It was at that moment when a series of notifications appeared in front of Lux, but he was in too much pain to pay any attention to them.

< Detected the Blood of the Red Dragon! >

< Initializing synchronization with Special Body Physique! >

< Preparing Integration... >

< Synchronization Starting! >

< Synchronization Rate: 1% >

< Synchronization Rate: 18% >

< Synchronization Rate: 39% >

< Synchronization Rate: 78% >

< Synchronization Rate: 100% >

< Synchronization Successful! >

< Immortal Conqueror's Legacy has been upgraded to Immortal Dragon Conqueror's Legacy! >

< Special Body Physique will be upgraded by one Rank! >

< Immortal Dragon Conqueror's Legacy >

Rating: E

Progress: (0 /4,000)

< Bonus Rewards >

+10,000 Health Points

+10,000 Mana Points

+ 3 to all Summon Skeleton Skills

– Complete Immunity to Fire

– Learned Skill, Dragon's Fear

– Learned Draconic Language

– Once a day, you can use Dragon's Breath

Conquest is not all about claiming lands and expanding your Domain. True conquest is conquering the hearts of people. Once you gain their loyalty, the path to Dominion will open its doors for you.

Note: Boost! Boost! Boost!

—

< Skill Evolution [EX] detected a new Skill. >

– Since the skill Dragon's Fear is not learned from a Beast Core, it will automatically be upgraded to Dragon's Fear [EX].

< Dragon's Fear [EX] >

(Enemies below your rank.)

– Any enemy below your current rank will find themselves paralyzed in fear and unable to fight effectively.

– Decrease enemy's movement and attack speed by 80%

– Decrease enemy's physical and magical damage by 80%

(Enemies one rank above you.)

– Any enemy that is one rank above you would find themselves unable to fight effectively.

– Decrease enemy's movement and attack speed by 50%

– Decrease enemy's physical and magical damage by 50%

Dragon's Fear [EX] will have no effect on enemies that are two ranks and above your current rank.

Lux kept panting even after the pain he felt subsided. His skin had already returned to its normal color, and the paleness in his expression gradually starting to fade away.

"I'm fine, Eiko," Lux said as he lay on the ground, while trying to regain his composure.

Eiko had stopped crying and jumped on Lux's chest. She could tell that her Papa was recovering, so there was no need for her to be worried anymore.

"Congratulations," Keoza nodded in satisfaction. "The Dragon's Blood has successfully integrated with your body. Although it is only a few drops of blood, it is more than enough for you to learn the Dragon War Art. The blood will also strengthen your body, and make it tougher when compared to normal mortals."

"I don't really know the specifics, so you will have to find the changes that have happened in your body by yourself. Also, don't worry. The blood you gained will not be enough for you to transform into a dragon or grow dragon wings behind your back, but that could change in the future if you happen to gain the blood of a Red Dragon to further refine your bloodline."

Lux slowly propped himself up from the ground before grabbing the Dragon War Art Skill book and opening it.

A moment later, the book transformed into particles of light and flew inside Lux's body.

Knowledge of the Dragon Wart Art appeared inside his mind. The Half-Elf knew that it would take some time before he fully understood the information that was planted inside his head, so he decided to fully study his new Martial Art after he left the Dungeon.

"See you later, Lux," Keoza said as the Crystal Dragon turned into particles of light and merged with the Golden Dragon Token that floated in front of the Half-Elf.

Lux subconsciously reached out to hold the Golden Token in his hand and observed it.

The image of a Crystal Dragon with its wings spread wide could be seen embedded on its surface, making the Half-Elf understand why Keoza said "See you later, Lux", instead of "Goodbye, Lux".

Lux then grabbed the Teleportation Boots and equipped them. Lastly, he took the floating Argonaut Beast Core and placed it inside his storage ring.

As soon as Lux took all of his rewards, a light descended from above his head, and covered him completely in its blinding radiance.

A moment later, the entire dungeon shook as the Dungeon Core shattered into hundreds of pieces. A few seconds later, the Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian vanished from the face of the world, never to be seen again.

Chapter 158: From This Day Onwards, All Grudges Between Us Are Over

After the light receded, Lux found himself standing by the entrance of the Dungeon.

At least, that was where he was supposed to be. Unfortunately, the structure in front of him had collapsed. The S-Ranked Dungeon that had degraded over the years finally met its end, and Keoza had given Lux the final gift it was capable of giving before the Dungeon disappeared from the world.

Cadmus, as well as the other Kobolds were standing behind Lux. None of them knew what happened between Keoza and the Half-Elf. However, one thing was clear. The mysterious Dungeon within the Ancient Ruins was no more.

Just as Lux was thinking of what to do next, the ground shook as a resounding roar reverberated in the surroundings. The Indus Death Worm appeared in front of Lux and the Kobolds behind him.

Its powerful cry alarmed the Kobold Race who were in the midst of unearthing the secrets of the Ancient Ruins. All of them could only stare helplessly at the Monster who clearly didn't belong to the Beginner's Zone, and had the power to wipe them all from the face of the earth.

The Indus Deathworm lowered its massive head until it was only a few meters away from the Half-Elf, who currently held the Golden Dragon Token in his hand.

Eiko, who was perched on top of Lux's head, had a serious expression on her face, as she prepared to fight against the Indus Death Worm in order to give her Papa some time to escape.

"It's fine, Eiko," Lux said in order to stop the baby Slime from provoking the Giant Death Worm. "Indus won't hurt me."

The reason he said that was due to the fact that he wasn't sensing any killing intent coming from the Monster in front of him.

Indus had no eyes, but it was capable of hearing even the faintest vibrations in its surroundings. From within the Golden Token in Lux's hands, it could tell that an old friend resided. A minute later, the Giant Worm roared one last time before burrowing in the ground.

It had taken the opportunity to escape the Dungeon the moment the Dungeon Core shattered.

Since its connection with the Dungeon no longer bound it, Indus was finally able to break free from its prison and come to the outside world, like it did long ago to destroy the Ancient Civilization, alongside Keoza.

The Beginner's Zone was no place for it, so it decided to leave. Its instincts were telling it that if it stayed in the territory of Norria, something very bad would happen to it.

When the tremors in the ground finally subsided, Lux was finally able to breathe a sigh of relief. This particular Dungeon expedition was truly too dangerous. If their timing had been wrong, Indus would have killed them.

If Keoza hadn't been kind, none of them would have survived the moment they entered the Inner Grotto. It was truly worthy of having an S-Ranked Difficulty rating, and Lux was thankful that it was finally over.

He had received many rewards from this trip and he really liked them all, especially the last two gifts that Keoza had bestowed him.

Just as the Half-Elf regained his composure, a clawed hand rested on his shoulders, and held it in a firm grip.

"You, what happened back there?" Cadmus asked.

Lux turned around to look at the Draconic Kobold and saw the latter's complicated look across his face. The Half-Elf decided to tell the Kobolds the truth about the Dungeon. He naturally omitted the parts about the rewards he received from Keoza, knowing that it might breed resentment between him and the Kobolds.

The last thing the Half-Elf wanted was for all the Kobolds to turn against him while he was miles deep under the Earth. Not to mention that there was still a Rank 5 Alpha Monster holding his shoulder to keep him from moving.

"The Dungeon reached the limit of its lifespan," Lux explained. "So, the moment I finished talking with Keoza, he kicked us out of the Dungeon before it was destroyed. This token I have with me is a reward that he gave me for winning the battle against you guys."

Lux showed them the Golden Dragon Token in his hand. Since Kobolds revered Dragons, he hoped that it would be enough to calm all of them down and forget all of their grudges against him.

Cadmus eyed the golden token that was the size of an adult man's fist. The Draconic Kobold could faintly feel the power of a Dragon inside it, so he decided to believe Lux's story.

"Since it is a gift given to you by the Great One, you may keep it," Cadmus said. "Rest assured. No Kobold will take it from you."

The Kobolds behind Cadmus nodded their heads in agreement. Although they didn't like Lux, they had no choice but to admit that he had bested them fair and square.

Suddenly, the hands holding Lux's shoulder trembled as Cadmus looked at him in shock.

"Y-You! Why do you have the presence of a Dragon?!" Cadmus couldn't believe it when he sensed the power of Dragons inside Lux's body. Although it was very faint, it was impossible for him to mistake it for something else.

"Ah, the Keoza bestowed upon me some Dragon's Blood," Lux answered as he scratched his head. "He was so adamant that I have it, so I had no choice but to take it."

The Kobolds hissed at Lux, not because of anger, but out of jealousy. Every Kobold wished to become a Dragon, and treated it as the highest honor to become one. Now that Lux had acquired some Dragon's Blood, they had no choice but to let go of all of their grudges.

No Kobold would willingly raise its arms to hurt those who had Dragon Blood flowing in their veins, no matter how little it was.

Cadmus sighed internally as he released the grip he had on Lux's shoulder. Originally, he planned to teach the Half-Elf a lesson in order to vent his frustration, but now that the other party had Dragon's Blood, he had no other choice but to recognize him as one of his comrades who shared the same roots.

"From this day onwards, all grudges between us are over," Cadmus declared as he reached his hand towards Lux in the form of a handshake. "Would you like to be the friend of the Hazeback Kobold Clan?"

Lux smiled as he took Cadmus' hand, and shook twice. "Gladly."

A series of notifications then appeared in front of Lux telling him about his current relationship with the Kobold Clan, which made him sigh in relief.

+2,000 Hazeback Kobold Clan Reputation Points

Hazeback Kobold Clan Reputation Points: 2000

Relationship: Friends

- The Hazeback Kobold Clan will treat you as a friend from this day onwards.
- Interaction with the Hazeback Kobold Clan is now possible.
- Cadmus will lend his aid to you once.

Now that the Kobolds no longer treated him as an enemy, he didn't need to worry about a certain Rank 5 Alpha Monster ambushing him when he least expected it.

After staying with the Kobolds for a day to participate in the feast they threw to celebrate their newly founded friendship, Lux left the underground city in order to return to Leaf Village. He planned to tell his Master, Randolph, as well as his Grandma Annie, that he would be away from the village for several months, and the two shouldn't worry about him.

After encountering the Indus Worm and Keoza, Lux decided to start the Mythical Missions in each village of the Beginner's Zone. That way, he would be able to complete the Faunus Mythical Regalia, while increasing his chances of winning against strong opponents in the upcoming tournament that would be held in Barbatos Academy.

Chapter 159: Here Goes Nothing

As Lux journeyed towards Leaf Village on top of his mount, Jed, he checked the rewards he received from his latest expedition in his Soul Book.

Hidden Quest: A Touch of Dragons (Completed!)

Difficulty Rating: S

Quest Location: Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian

Dungeon Rating: C

Dungeon Mode: Hell Mode

< A Touch of Dragons >

(Chain Quest)

Deep within the earth, an ancient city was unearthed. Find out the secret that was buried along its demise within the Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian.

Bonus Rewards will be calculated depending on the choices you make in this mission.

Rewards:

– Potion of Intelligence

This potion adds +50 permanent Intelligence Points to the one who consumes it. You can only consume one Potion of Intelligence in your lifetime.

– Rank 2 Skill Book of your choice.

You will be able to choose any Skill that is Rank 2 or below from the Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian.

1,000 Gold Coins

+2,000 Hazeback Kobold Clan Reputation Points

– Boots of Teleportation

– Argonaut Beast Core (Crystal Dragon)

– Golden Dragon Token

< Bonus Rewards >

- Vial of Dragon's Blood
- Dragon War Art Skillbook

< Grotto Survivor Reward >

(Received in the Outer Grotto)

100 Rank 2 Beast Cores

20 Rank 3 Beast Cores

2 Rank 4 Beast Core

'Not bad.' Lux thought as he skimmed through the things he gained after finishing the S-Ranked Quest.

He was quite excited about trying out the Dragon War Art that was currently inside his head, but he held back against the temptation since he still needed to return to the Leaf Village first to make sure that the Dwarves, who cared about him, knew that he was safe.

His plan was to stay in Leaf Village for one more day before traveling to Lindow Village, where the Shield of the Faunus Battle Regalia was said to be hidden. Completing a Mythical Quest wasn't an easy thing to do, but Lux was determined to carry it through until the end.

He didn't know how long the entire quest line would take to finish, but he had no intention of leaving the Beginner's Zone until he had completed it.

Sure, he could probably get some Mythical or even Legendary Armor sets from his Grandma Vera, but Lux wanted to become independent. He wanted to advance in Elysium with his own power, so he decided that he would no longer ask his grandma for equipment that could help him get stronger.

Also, he wanted to prove to Iris' father, Alexander, that he was no longer the useless and weak Half-Elf that he knew in the past. More than anything else,

Lux wanted to show everyone, whether they had ridiculed or supported him in the past, what he managed to achieve using his own strength.

'Now, let's see what this Rank 2 skill book has to offer...', Lux clicked the skill book inside his Soul Book and it materialized in front of him.

"Here goes nothing."

Lux didn't have any high expectations as he activated the Skill Book but he was amazed after he saw over fifty skills that appeared in front of him.

< Skills available in the Grotto of the Forbidden Guardian >

- Acid Spray
- Earth Tremor
- Entangle
- Heroism
- Earth Bind
- Detect Traps
- Summon Creature
- Detect invisible
- Enchant Weapon with Fire
- Armor of Death
- Jade Body
- Beam of Frost
- Acid Spray
- Whip of thorns

– Death Ray

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The Half-Elf almost got a headache after reading them all. The problem was, he could only choose one among the many skills available to him.

Lux didn't plan to choose the Summon Creature since he already had many Summons. Adding a few more wouldn't make a difference. What he needed was something that would increase his strength, as well as the strength of his minions, making them more powerful.

After almost half an hour of thinking, the Half-Elf finally decided to choose the skill, Jade Body. This skill boosted the target's defense by giving it an additional +200 to defense, which would make his Summoned Creatures more sturdy.

Although an additional 200 points to defense might seem lackluster, it was still an amazing Rank 2 Skill, and Lux was looking forward to how its evolved version would be.

After taking a few deep breaths, Lux chose the Jade Body Skill. Immediately several rows of text appeared in front of him, telling him that his chosen Skill had been automatically upgraded.

You have learned the skill, Jade Body.

< Skill Evolution [EX] detected a new Skill. >

– Since the skill, Jade Body, is not learned from a Beast Core, it will automatically be upgraded to Improved Jade Body (Mass Buff).

< Improved Jade Body >

(Mana: 10)

– This skill adds +300 to defense.

– This skill will automatically buff all allied units present in the battlefield.

Skill Duration: 30 Minutes

Skill Cooldown: 10 Minutes

Lux did a fist pump after seeing the improved version of the skill. Not only did it give an additional +300 to defense, it was also a Mass Buff, which saved the Half-Elf the trouble of manually buffing all of his units one at a time.

"Very nice," Lux said with a smile.

With this buff, only Alpha Monsters or Monsters with similar strength could threaten his Skeleton Summons in the Beginner's Zone due to how sturdy they were. One could even say that Lux's minions were on their way to becoming "overgeared and overbuffed", in the Territory of Norria, making them the local bullies in town.

Right now, only Rank 3 creatures and above could potentially break past his Skeletons' defenses, making Lux very happy.

"As long as I don't meet someone as strong as Cadmus and the Indus Deathworm, I shouldn't have any problem finishing the Mythical Quests from each village," Lux mused as he closed his Soul Book. "My Body Physique also got an upgrade."

Lux was confident that with his current strength, he could easily beat all the Alpha Monsters in the Territory of Norria with the exceptions of its Field Bosses, who still posed a significant threat to his current rank and forces.

'Once I gather the Faunus Battle Regalia and master the Dragon War Art, will I be able to beat them?' Lux thought as the familiar scenery of Leaf Village appeared in the distance. 'I'll just cross that bridge when I get there.'

Chapter 160: May The Gods Have Mercy On Us All

Randolph sipped some tea as he gazed in the distance. From time to time, he would casually pick up a cookie from the plate beside him and eat it while thinking of his Disciple who had disappeared for several months.

Lux had told him in advance that he planned to go sight-seeing in the territory of Norria, but the blacksmith of Leaf Village didn't buy his bullsh*t.

"I'd greatly appreciate it if you don't scowl while eating in front of my shop," Grandma Annie said in a reprimanding voice. "You are scaring away my customers."

Randolph gave the old lady Dwarf a side-long glance before snorting.

"I am not scowling," Randolph replied. "I was born with this face."

Grandma Annie chuckled as she sat on the chair beside the Dwarf Smith, who was always looking in the direction of the village's entrance.

"It has been almost six months since Lux left the village," Grandma Annie said softly. Many foreigners have already left for the other towns after they stepped into the Apostle Rank, but that Half-Elf was still staying in the land of Norria.

"Sometimes, I wonder if there is something that is holding him back. Are you perhaps blackmailing him to prevent him from leaving this place?"

Randolph shot an angry glare towards the old woman, who had been one of his party members when he was still young and foolish. Together with Cedwyn and a few others, they traveled the Kingdom of Gweliven, facing dangers together while watching each other's backs.

Even if Annie and him bickered from time to time, it was at most a playful banter and nothing too serious.

"I'm not blackmailing him, okay?" Randolph answered. "Even I feel that his stay in the Territory of Norria is long overdue. He had already mastered the basics of Smithing, and it is now time for him to set out on a new journey to see the world. When I see him next time, I'll make sure to clobber him and talk some sense into him."

"Violence is never the answer. How many times should I tell you that?"

"And I'm sick and tired of you telling me to stop being violent!"

Grandma Annie chuckled as she bit into one of the cookies she baked earlier. For her, Lux was a fascinating young man. She often wondered if Fate had brought him to Leaf Village in order to bring a change that the local populace had never seen before.

"Well, if you see Lux, tell him that he should pack up and leave," Grandma Annie said softly. "Although I will miss him, the territory of Norria is too small a place for him to spread his wings."

"I will do that even if you don't tell me to!" Randolph replied grumpily.

The old Smith was about to pick up another cookie when the bells located on the watchtower near the entrances of the village started to make noise.

Grandma Annie and him exchanged a glance of surprise before the two of them summoned their weapons.

The guards of the village were already shouting and telling everyone, including the Foreigners, to evacuate to the underground shelters.

The adults herded the children to a safe place as they prepared themselves to fight.

"We will stay and fight!" a dwarf boy said as he held his mace with both hands. "We can beat them!"

""Yes!""

His party members shouted in unison as they prepared to help the villagers to fight the Monster Outbreak that was upon them.

"Oi! You dumb kids! What do you think you are doing?!" Cedwyn, the Village Head of Leaf Village grabbed the Dwarf boy and pulled him back. "Go to the shelters! Even if you are a foreigner, you are no match against what we are about to face!"

"No! We can beat them," the Dwarf boy struggled as he tried to break free from Cedwyn's grip. "I have come to Elysium to fight, and not to hide in some underground shelter!"

"Foolish boy!" Cedwyn smacked the boy's head making the Dwarf boy cry out in pain. "You've just arrived here for a week and you're already mumbling a bunch of crap! Go to the shelter now, or I'll kick you until you get there!"

"Waaaaah! Mommy! This old man is bullying me!" the Dwarf boy cried out as Cedwyn kicked his bum several times to make him go away.

The boy's party members could only watch helplessly. In the end, they followed their leader to the Shelter, but they had only taken a dozen steps when a giant Mantis descended from the sky and eyed the Dwarf children as if they were food.

"Red-Eyed Terror Mantis," Cedwyn said as he stood between the Dwarf children and the Alpha Monster. "So, it's an insect monster outbreak this time?"

However, before Cedwyn could even chant a spell to fight against the Alpha Monster, he heard a scream behind him.

As the Village Head turned his head to where the scream came from, he saw several Berserked Horned Rabbits charging towards the children, who were quickly put under the protection of the adults. Not far from the rabbits was the Alpha Monster, Carbuncle, which made Cedwyn's expression turn grim.

"You brats, run in that direction, now!" Cedwyn ordered as he cast a barrier around him and the Dwarf children. He quickly herded them to the narrow passages between the Dwarves' houses.

The houses were built this way in order to serve as a strategic path for escape in case of pursuit by big monsters, who couldn't fit through narrow places.

As soon as they emerged on the other side of the street, he saw a scene that made him wonder if he was just seeing things.

"By the Gods, Undead Monsters in broad daylight!" Cedwyn cried out in shock when he saw several Skeletons, Ghouls, and Draugrs in the surroundings.

Just as the Village Head thought that things couldn't get any worse, he saw a three-meter tall monster in the distance. It had a long tail coming from its backside which was similar to that of a scorpion, which made Cedwyn slap himself to make sure that he wasn't dreaming.

"Ghoul Beast!" Cedwyn cried out in alarm. "Just what in the world is happening?!"

Usually during Monster Outbreaks, Leaf Village would just be fighting against one type of enemy. It would either be an Insect Outbreak, Undead Outbreak, or a Beast Outbreak. But right now, all three outbreaks were happening at the same time, which made the old Dwarf wonder if he was just having a nightmare.

Just as Cedwyn was wondering on how to get out of this desperate situation, he heard a loud and dominating wolf howl that made all the hairs on the back of his neck stand on end.

The Village Head then looked in the distance and saw a five-meter tall monster, whom he had only seen once in his life.

The first time he saw the Monster, he, along with Grandma Annie and Randolph, almost lost their lives.

Now, he was seeing the same creature again, and this time, Cedwyn had a feeling that he wouldn't be able to survive this second encounter against a creature whose strength was only a step away from the Deimos Rank.

"Mutated Thunder Wolf King!" Cedwyn's face had been drained of all color when he looked at the Monster who could single-handedly destroy the entirety of Leaf Village.

The foreigner Dwarves that he had saved earlier all started crying out of fear of the strong monsters that had appeared out of nowhere. They thought that they were just going to fight normal monsters, so they weren't too afraid earlier.

However, right now, they wished they had listened to Cedwyn right away and hid themselves in the underground shelters. If they did, perhaps they would have been able to live another day.

But they no longer had this opportunity.

It was far too late.

"May the Gods have mercy on us all," Cedwyn muttered as he tried his best to keep standing, despite the fact that his legs felt like they could collapse under him at any given moment.

Cedwyn knew that even before this day was over, there would no longer be a Leaf Village in the Territory of Norria. Although the bells of the village continued to ring endlessly, telling the Stronghold of Norria to send reinforcements, Cedwyn knew that it would be of no use.

Perhaps, not even their corpses would be spared, leaving nothing behind but a faint memory that their village had once existed in the world of Elysium.

Even if by some great miracle the reinforcements arrived in time, they would still have to pay a hefty price to win against an opponent this powerful. Only by sacrificing hundreds of lives could the Mutated Thunder Wolf King be slain.

Cedwyn had no idea if the Riders of Norria would be willing to pay such a price just to kill the Mutated Thunder Wolf King. The monster was leagues above the rank of their strongest fighter