

Strongest Necromancer Of Heaven's Gate

- Chapter 201 - 224

Chapter 201: I Don't Want To Be Bound By Such A Feeling

Only a week remained before the Guild Wars commenced in Whitebridge City.

Lux had already created a perfect plan, which would make use of this event as an advantage, in order to make the Dark Guild, Twilight Rain, stop targeting him completely.

However, his plan was wasted when the long-awaited event was canceled due to an unforeseen calamity that threatened not only the Whitebridge City, but several towns and cities in the Southern Regions of the Kingdom of Gweliven.

Because of this emergency, all of the Guild Masters, as well as the people responsible for the safety of the city, were hastily gathered by the City's Mayor, Garth Feron, for a discussion about the countermeasures towards one of the natural calamities of the world.

"A Beast Tide was sighted hundreds of miles away from the Southwest of the city," Garth stated. "Because of this, the Guild Wars will be canceled, and all guilds will be drafted to protect the city from getting destroyed."

"Don't worry. After a long meeting with the officials, we decided to make this Beast Tide the deciding factor for who will become the Protector Guild of this city. In short, all of you will compete and the guild who gains the most merit points will gain the title of Protector of Whitebridge City."

Aina and the other guild leaders nodded their heads in understanding. They all read the documents distributed to each of them. It stated the detailed terms and conditions of the competition.

It was a simple point system, which allowed the guilds to kill as many monsters as they could in a manner that was suitable for them.

The special artifact that would be used in the Guild Wars could also compute the number of kills of each guild, allowing automatic tallying.

During this battle, members of each guild were not allowed to kill each other, or deliberately sabotage the defense operation to protect the city. Any offenders would immediately be sent to prison. However, the punishment wouldn't end there.

The offender's guild would get demerit points, which would drastically lower their overall points due to the action of their members. In order to prevent deliberate sabotage, the Guild Leader would get to choose who would participate in the city's defense, along the outer perimeter.

The rest of their guild members, who were not chosen to be part of the vanguards, would be stationed inside the city to protect the citizens in case the outer defenses were breached.

After much discussion, the officials of each city agreed that at least a thousand members from each guild would be stationed along the city's outer perimeter, alongside the army of the Kingdom of Gweliven for the city's first line of defense.

The Guild Leaders found this arrangement acceptable, especially the Bronze-Ranked Guilds, whose members were not as many as the Silver-Ranked Guilds like Eternal.

After reading the conditions, the attention of the guild leaders zoned in on the point system that would determine the rankings.

Beast Tide Merit Points Computation

Killing Rank 1 Monsters = 10 Merit Point

Killing Rank 2 Monsters = 100 Merit Points.

Killing Rank 3 Monsters = 500 Merit Points

Killing Rank 4 Monsters = 5,000 Merit Points

Killing Rank 5 Monsters = 20,000 Merit Points

Killing Deimos Ranked Monsters = 500,000 Merit Points

Killing Rank 1 Alpha Monsters = 1,000 Merit Points

Killing Rank 2 Alpha Monsters = 10,000 Merit Points

Killing Rank 3 Alpha Monsters = 20,000 Merit Points

Killing Rank 4 Alpha Monasters = 50,000 Merit Points

Killing Rank 5 Alpha Monsters Monsters = 200,000 Merit Points

Killing Deimos Alpha Monsters = 5,000,000 Merit Points

Important Notice: In the case that an Argonaut Ranked Monster appears on the battlefield, the Rankers that were assigned to guard the city would personally deal with them. Do not get in their way or join them in battle unless you are confident in your strength.

The Kingdom will not be held responsible for the deaths of anyone in this endeavor. To those who don't want to die, feel free to evacuate and seek shelter inside the city.

'This is a bit tricky,' Aina looked at the document with the same indifferent expression on her face. 'Focusing on the small fries will not yield many points, but biting off more than we can chew will cost many lives.'

Unlike other Guild Masters, Aina cared for each member of her guild, so she naturally would not allow them to throw their lives away just for the sake of short-lived glory.

Only a few guild leaders shared the doll-like beauty's line of thought. The other Guild Masters didn't mind sacrificing their members as long as they won the competition. For them, weaklings deserved to die and had no place in their guilds.

This was especially true for the two guilds, Twisted Destiny and Arcadian Lords.

While all the Guild Masters were digesting the information they received from the officials of the city, Lux sat not far from them and was reading the same document in his hands.

Nevreal had passed along a few words to the Mayor, telling him of the Half-Elf's importance. Because of this, Garth decided to give Lux the VIP treatment and allowed him to join the meeting for the defense of Whitebridge City.

'Hmm... I can use this,' Lux mused as he looked at the information in front of him. 'Although I will have to make revisions for my plan, the end game is still the same. In fact it is even better!'

The Half-Elf was secretly pleased about this new arrangement and hatched a new plan in his mind.

'I'll ask Aina later if I can temporarily join Eternal,' Lux thought as she glanced at Colette's sister, who had the same expression as she always had. 'This is like hitting two birds with one stone.'

Eiko, who was perched on top of Lux's head, yawned out of boredom because she didn't understand what was being discussed around her. If not for the fact that Lux had promised to buy her some candies after the meeting, she would have stayed at the inn and slept.

An hour later, the meeting was adjourned and the Guild Masters returned to their respective guilds to discuss the details of their new mission to their members.

On the way back, Lux joined Aina's carriage and told her his proposal.

"You want to temporarily join my guild?" Aina asked as she gazed at Lux.

Lux nodded. "I am strong, you know? You won't be missing out. I can accumulate a lot of points for you."

Aina closed her eyes for a few minutes before gazing back at the Half-Elf who was lightly patting the head of the baby slime that was sleeping on his lap.

"I have a feeling that you have another agenda aside from helping my guild accumulate points," Aina stated.

"Don't worry, I don't have any malicious intentions nor agenda," Lux replied.

"I believe you."

"Then you'll allow me to join?"

"On one condition." Aina stared at Lux's as if she was trying to see through his very soul. "You have to tell me the real reason behind why you want to join my guild. Even if you don't plan to harm my guild, there might be some outside factors that may. I want to know these unknown variables."

"Lux, you have to understand that I am a Guild Master, and my Guild comes first. I need to know if allowing you to join will have a negative impact on us in the long run."

The Half-Elf sighed before reluctantly nodding his head.

"Let's talk somewhere private," Lux replied. "I promise to tell you everything, but you have to promise me that you won't tell a soul about it."

Aina nodded her head in understanding. Lux was her sister's benefactor, so she trusted him to a certain extent. She knew that the Half-Elf must have a good reason for requesting her help to let him temporarily join her guild.

In regards to Lux's strength, Aina was convinced that the latter was indeed strong. She was a person who had a good head on her shoulders and was able to determine if someone had good intentions or not.

Overall, she didn't have qualms with Lux joining her guild. However, she still needed to know his reasons in order to create countermeasures if something unforeseen happened in the future.

An hour later...

"And that's why I want to join your guild," Lux said with a serious expression on his face. "Will this create trouble for you in the long run?"

Aina's expression remained the same, but deep inside she was shocked by Lux's revelation.

She couldn't believe that the Half-Elf in front of her had been targeted by not just one, but two Reapers of Twilight Rain, yet managed to survive their assassination attempt.

What was more surprising was that the red-headed teenager was able to make them join his side and become his subordinates. Aina didn't ask for the specifics on how Lux managed to convince two Initiate Ranked Assassins to become his collaborators and betray their guild.

Because of his revelation, her impression of the Half-Elf was raised to a higher level, making her finally understand why Colette boasted about her dependable "Big Brother" every opportunity she got.

"Very well, on behalf of Eternal, I welcome you as a temporary member of our guild," Aina stood up from her chair and extended her hand towards the Half-Elf. "Please, lend us your strength and help us win the competition."

"Of course." Lux smiled as he stared at the perfect beauty in front of him that resembled the lady he idolized back on Earth. 'She really looks like a younger version of Luna. It's quite unfortunate that she will not grow to be as tall as her because she is a Dwarf.'

"I have a feeling that you are thinking of something rude right now," Aina said.

"Nonsense!" Lux replied. "I'm just thinking about how you have made the right choice today. Relax, I'll make sure that Eternal becomes the Protector Guild of Whitebridge City."

"Thank you. I look forward to your results."

"You can count on it."

After Lux left the Guild Master's office, Aina pulled out a document from her drawer and skimmed through its contents.

On the document was Lux's information, which had been gathered by one of the Information Guilds in the city.

It listed the achievements that the Half-Elf had accomplished in Leaf Village. Aina had received this document just before the meeting regarding the Beast Tide was held, so she didn't have time to look over it.

However, a rare trace of appreciation could be seen in her eyes as she finished reading the last entry of the document.

"So, this is the person you are trying to matchmake me to, Colette," Aina said as she thought about how her little sister had been dropping subtle hints here and there like, "Big Brother is still single," or "You know, even though he's not a Dwarf, Big Brother and Big Sister look good when the two of you stand by side. It's like a match made in heaven!"

Aina sighed as she returned the document inside the drawer. She had already told her little sister that she didn't plan to have any relationship at the moment because her priority was to raise Eternal to be a Gold-Ranked Guild.

Love was not something that she needed at the moment, even though she had already received countless marriage proposals in both Elysium and Solais.

'Love is unnecessary,' Aina thought. 'I don't want to be bound by such a feeling.'

The doll-like beauty stood up and stared at the emblem of her guild that she had built from scratch. Through great hardships, she had managed to raise Eternal from a Bronze-Ranked Guild to a Silver-Ranked Guild in record time, which had earned her the nickname, Warrior Princess.

'Lux Von Kaizer,' Aina thought of the Half-Elf that just left her office a few minutes ago. 'I hope that there will not come a time when the two of us become enemies. For your sake, and mine as well.'

Chapter 202: Twilight Rain's Next Target

"A vacation to play with your sisters?"

"Yes, Master. However, if it is too presumptuous of me to request such a thing, feel free to ignore it."

"It's fine," Lux said with a smile. "You can have a week off after we deal with the Beast Tide. Until then, please do your best to assist me."

Sid respectfully bowed as he firmly knocked his fist against his chest. "Thank you, Master. I am very grateful for your mercy."

Lux nodded. "How are your sisters doing in Leaf Village?"

After hearing about Sid's and his sisters' circumstances, Lux decided to do his new servant a favor and allow him to take his sisters to Leaf Village, where they would be properly cared for by the brave and caring Grandma Annie, who had helped Lux several times in the past.

"Grandma Annie was very happy to have them, and my sisters were also very happy to have a kind Grandma as their guardian," Sid replied with a relaxed smile on his face. "I'm just a bit worried that they will eat all the candies in Grandma Annie's shop because they said that they taste good."

Lux chuckled after hearing Sid's report. "Don't worry. Knowing Grandma Annie, she would teach your sisters the recipe for making the candies. Perhaps, she might even teach them how to become Alchemists like her."

"That will be wonderful. Both of my sisters have good memories and are fast learners."

"Looks like their future is bright then."

Lux then shifted his attention to Emma, who was also seated on the table in front of them. The pretty Dwarf gradually turned into the Half-Elf's secretary, instead of a bodyguard, which made things easier for him.

Right now, Emma was busy placing colored beads on the map, showing Lux the locations of where the various guilds would be deployed during the Beast Tide.

Scarlet, who was also in the same room as them, looked at the map with a serious expression.

"Twilight Rain has two guilds that are collaborating with them here in Whitebridge City," Scarlet said as she pointed at the two beads that represented the guilds of Twisted Destiny and Arcadian Lords. The roles they play are very subtle, so only the higher ups are aware of their existence.

"I am only able to learn this information through my grandfather, who told me that if I ever needed help in Whitebridge City to assassinate you, I can come to these two guilds for help."

Lux nodded in understanding. This was also why he had decided to choose Scarlet to become the Slayer Candidate instead of Sid. As long as she was

the mole he planted inside Twilight Rain, even the secrets known only to the Elders would pass through her ears.

"Master's plan is brilliant and, if executed well, would definitely work wonders," Scarlet said with a smile. "However, the problem is executing the plan. We can't do it too early because you intend to help Eternal, so you need points in order to make that happen.

"Also, we can't do it too late. I'm afraid that we might miss the right opportunity to carry out the mission."

"Exactly," Lux commented. "Although the plan is good, there's a lot of variables on the battlefield. So I want you to improvise to the best of your ability."

"I will do my best, Master."

"Mmm."

Emma looked at Lux with admiration. She never expected that he could even turn two outstanding Reapers from Twilight Rain as his subordinates. Because of this, she became more confident that staying with Lux was the best choice that she had made in her life.

"Master, two days from now, the vanguard of the Beast Tide will appear," Emma explained after she finished arranging the beads on the map. "I don't know if the arrangements were decided at random, but the Eternal Guild is stuck between Twisted Destiny and Arcadian Lords."

"The two other Silver-Ranked Guilds, Crescent Vanguard and Thunder Oath, are located on the outer perimeter. If these two Twilight Rain affiliate guilds were to sabotage Eternal, no one would notice their attempts."

Lux rubbed his chin as he stared at the map.

Aina's guild, Eternal, was at the very center of the defensive perimeter. This was an ideal location in order to allow them to kill as many monsters as possible, but it also had its drawbacks.

For example, since they are at the very center of the formation, it also meant that it was highly possible that they would have to face the main bulk of the Beast Tide, as well as the strong monsters leading the pack.

Also, at the heat of the battle, it would not be impossible for the two collaborators of Twilight Guild to play some dirty tricks during the siege.

Although rules and other precautions were set, it was still possible for loopholes to be exploited, which could spell bad news for the guild of the doll-like beauty, who cared for the lives of her guild members.

'I need to tell Aina about Twisted Destiny and Arcadian Lords,' Lux thought. 'Eternal is the only ally I have in Whitebridge City, so it's best to keep them as safe as possible.'

While Lux was deep in his thoughts, Sid lightly tapped the table, pointing at the bead that represented Eternal.

"According to the person that recruited me to Twilight Rain, after your assassination, the next high-profile target is Aina Van GoldenSlayer," Sid said. "It is highly possible that Twilight Rain will use this opportunity to send someone to assassinate her during this Beast Tide."

"Seriously?"

"Seriously."

Lux frowned after hearing this report. Aina was Colette's sister, and, if something happened to her, the adorable little Dwarf girl would be devastated.

"Understood," Lux said after a minute of thinking. "I was only going to assign you to help kill some monsters during the Beast Tide to rack up points, but if her life is really in danger, you are to silently protect her from the side."

"Yes, Master," Sid nodded. "I will do my best to accomplish my mission."

"Good." Lux gave him a brief nod of acknowledgement.

Scarlet didn't participate in the discussion because she didn't care whether Aina lived or died. The only thing she cared about was becoming a Slayer Candidate by following Lux's brilliant plan to make her name known to the upper echelons of Twilight Rain.

"Sid and Scarlet, before the start of the defense against the Beast Tide, I want you to scour this place and look for suspicious individuals," Lux ordered. "If you see any of the Reapers..."

Lux paused, which made everyone inside the room look at him with their undivided attention.

"Kill them, and leave no traces behind."

""Yes, Master!""

Lux would not allow anyone to make the little Dwarf, whom he treated like a little sister, cry because of the schemes of Twilight Rain.

If only he had the strength to uproot this threat by himself, he would have taken action already.

Sadly, he was still an insignificant Apostle in the grand scheme of things. The only thing he could do was tell Aina about the dangers that lurked around her, and hope that the Warrior Princess would make the necessary preparations to protect her life, against those who wished her dead.

Chapter 203.1: The Lord Of Destruction [Part 1]

Several banners fluttered in the breeze as the united army of both the guilds and the Kingdom of Gweliven stood side by side.

Aina stood at the forefront of her guild, clutching the grip of her sword with both hands with its tip embedded in the ground.

At that moment, Lux realized why she was given the title of War Princess. Her beauty, as well as her charisma, could be seen and felt by everyone in the surroundings.

'Although the feeling is very similar, it is also very different,' Lux thought as he glanced at the Dwarf in front of him.

Luna, the star that the Half-Elf idolized back on earth, had a certain presence that would make everyone want to cheer for her. Her songs would uplift people, and her smile would make one feel as if they were gazing at an angel that descended to earth.

Also, her fans gave her the nickname, Angel of Death.

Why? Because a wink from her was enough to send someone to the hospital due to a heart attack. Fortunately, no deaths were confirmed. Even so, ever since then, she had been banned from winking on the stage whenever she was performing.

Aina gave off the same feeling, but it was different from the merry atmosphere that idols and stars had. Perhaps, this was the same feeling of those who served under Jeanne of Arc during the Hundred-Year Wars that happened in the distant past.

She was like a shining beacon that chased away the darkness and ensured that victory would fall upon her side.

'Sid, make sure to protect her at all cost,' Lux ordered via telepathy.

'Yes, Master,' Sid replied. 'As long as this body of mine still moves, I will not allow any harm to come to her.'

Lux then shifted his attention to the black swarm that was slowly making its way towards the city from beyond the horizon.

The only experience he had when fighting many monsters was during the Monster Outbreak and the attack on the Kobold's Nest.

This time, he would be facing a Beast Tide that numbered in the tens of thousands. This was a grand-scale battle that usually happened once every three to five years.

"Everyone prepare," Aina ordered as the sword in her hand glowed brightly.
"Everyone, buff up."

"Bless!"

"Heroism!"

"Inspire Courage!"

"Shield of Faith!"

Several buffs fell upon Aina's Guild as they prepared for the battles ahead.

Diablo and Lux also used their Battlecry and Warcry to further enhance the damage of Aina's entire guild, which surprised not only the doll-like beauty, but also her entire guild.

Diablo's passive skill, Warlord Presence, further enhanced their attack, which allowed the Eternal Guild to increase their combat power by a great margin.

"Are you sure you only want to become a temporary guild member?" Aina asked in a volume that only Lux could hear.

"Yes," Lux replied.

"It's a shame."

"I think so as well."

Aina's expression remained the same, but she now understood why Colette liked to always go on adventures with Lux. With someone who had skills that could boost your team's attack and defense, clearing dungeons would be a lot easier, not to mention monster subjugations.

"Brace yourselves," Aina said and the sword in her hand shone brightly.

A moment later, several angelic feathers descended upon everyone, adding a layer of protection to everyone who was under the Warrior Princess' command.

The other guilds, as well as the Army of Whitebridge City, had also finished their preparations.

"Archers Aim!" Aina ordered. "Magicians, prepare your spells!"

Lux didn't summon his Skeleton Archers, because he didn't want to let everyone see the aces under his command. For this mission, he only summoned Diablo and all thirty Skeleton Fighters to assist him in this battle.

Eiko had a determined look on her face as Blackie, Whitey, Rocky, and Mara stood at the ready.

She had only given her Named Creatures one order, and that was to... get as many Beast Cores as they could!

Lux had told Eiko that she was not allowed to participate in the battle, because he didn't want to expose her strength. This made the baby slime pout. But, after hearing her Papa's plan to steal the Beast Cores, Eiko's mood had a 90 degree turn, which made her feel motivated about the battle that was about to come.

The Half-Elf chuckled because he could already see his baby slime happily eating Beast Cores at the end of the day. Eiko was a simple minded baby. As long as she could get stronger, she didn't mind staying on the side and watching the entire world burn around her.

'Eiko, don't tell your Mama about stealing stuff, okay?'

'Pa!'

The baby slime nodded her head. She had never seen so many monsters before. In her eyes, all of them were just Beast Cores that were meant to make her stronger.

"Brace!" Aina ordered and several shield warriors lined up beside her as they raised their shields in preparation to block the first wave that was almost upon them.

Aina gazed fearlessly at the upcoming Beast Tide. She then raised her hand to signal for everyone to standby and wait for her orders.

The moment the monsters stepped into the attack range of the arrows and magical spells, Aina decisively lowered her hand and shouted.

"Open Fire!"

Thousands of arrows, as well as magical spells rained down on the Monster Army, and decimated the cannon fodder that acted as their vanguards.

"Diablo, show them what we're made of!" Lux ordered.

Diablo nodded his head and raised the sword in his hand. It was none other than the Mythical Weapon, Blood Moon, that Randolph had bestowed upon Lux after he successfully saved Leaf Village from destruction.

The eyes of the Skeletal Rider glowed brightly as he sat on the back of his mount, Airon, who was also raring to fight by his side.

On this day, Lux would realize just how overpowered Diablo's abilities could become as long as he stood on the battlefield where the numbers of both allies and enemies numbered in the tens of thousands.

Chapter 204.2: The Lord Of Destruction [Part 2]

The screams of monsters reverberated in the air, as the first wave found themselves beneath a rain of deadly arrows and devastating spells, both of which were meant to wipe them off the face of the world.

Lux, with a calm expression on his face, watched this with his arms crossed over his chest. However, something unexpected happened, catching his attention, nearly causing the Half-Elf's jaw to drop to the ground due to his surprise.

A notification appeared in front of him, which read that Diablo's passive skill, Bloody Fervor, had activated.

Numbers of enemy slain: 2,535

Diablo's Bonus Attack: 12,675

Diablo's Bonus Defense: 12,675

'T-This...', Lux wasn't able to stop himself from gawking. All this time, he had completely forgotten the passive ability of Diablo's Armor, the Blackrock Legacy Armor Set, which contained bonuses that allowed its wearer to become stronger, the more dead bodies there were on the battlefield.

Blackrock Legacy Armor (Set)

Rating: Pseudo Legendary

Requirements: 100 to all stats

The Legendary Armor of the Blackrock Clan's first Orc Chieftain.

+50 to all stats

+400 to Defense

30% decrease in physical and magical damage

– This Armor is bound to Lux Von Ainsworth

– Any creature under Lux's Von Ainsworth's command is capable of equipping this armor.

Active Skills: Warlord's War Cry

Passive Skills: Warlord's Presence, Bloody Fervor, Auto-Fit, Indestructible.

< Warlord's Warcry >

– Increase the Physical and Magical Damage of all allied creatures by 200 Points.

< Warlord's Presence >

Your presence in the battlefield inspires your allies and makes them do well in battle.

– 10% Increase to Physical and Magical attack to the Warlord and its allies.

< Bloody Fervor >

Your physical and defensive abilities increase with each slain creature in the battlefield.

– For every slain creature in the battlefield, your attack and defense points will increase by five.

Bloody Fervor's cheat-like ability was now active, and it was boosting Diablo's attack and defense to unimaginable levels.

For every minute that passed, countless monsters were being killed at a very fast rate, further boosting Diablo's strength in battle.

'Oh... my... God,' Lux thought. 'I completely forgot about this!'

Diablo, who was standing behind the Shield Warrior, sat like a general watching his troops do battle. The armor on his body had now turned crimson red, and the Aura of Death he projected was gradually increasing, making the Dwarfs that were behind him feel a little uneasy.

Numbers of enemy slain: 5,896

Diablo's Bonus Attack: 29,480

Diablo's Bonus Defense: 29,480

Lux's breathing became ragged as he looked at the rapidly increasing damage and defense boost that his first named creature was getting. This damage boost was still unaffected by the armor's other passive ability, Warlord's Presence, which further increased Diablo's attack damage by 10%.

"Aina, when the monsters reach us, let my skeletons stand on the frontlines," Lux said. "This will reduce casualties for your guild."

Lux was desperately trying to contain the excitement in his voice as he waited for Aina's reply to his proposal.

"Are you sure that your skeletons can handle it?" Aina asked. "Most of them aren't even Rank 2 Monsters. Only the Skeleton Rider riding on a Nightmare Horse has a high rank."

"Trust me, Diablo is strong." Lux said in a confident tone. "He can handle it. He can give your guild a lot of Merit Points without endangering the lives of your members."

Aina stared at Lux with the same expressionless face for a few seconds before nodding her head.

"Okay," Aina replied. "But once he dies, we will advance."

Lux nodded. "Okay."

Aina nodded again before shifting her gaze back to the approaching Monsters.

"Let them pass," Aina ordered, and the Shield Warriors turned their bodies to the side, to allow Diablo, and the Skeleton Fighters to pass through them.

Aina was still quite doubtful about Lux's words, but she didn't think much about it. She wouldn't lose anything by letting the Skeletons deal with the wave of Monsters that was quickly approaching their location.

Once the Skeletons were destroyed, they could still use the strategy that they had planned beforehand. In the end, Lux's proposal wouldn't change the bigger picture.

The two guilds beside Eternal had also started to take action. The Guild Leaders of Twisted Destiny, and Arcadian Lords, glanced at each other, as they sat on top of their War Mounts.

Both nodded their heads before signaling their members to proceed with the strategy they had in mind.

Twilight Rain had tried to merge the three guilds, Crescent Vanguard, Thunder Oath, and Eternal. However, none of them agreed. This in turn made the Elders of Twilight Rain angry, so they ordered the Reapers to Eliminate the Guild Leaders of the three guilds during the Beast Tide, and make it look like an accident.

The one on the top of their list was none other than Aina, who had gained a lot of popularity as of late and was favored by one of the Dwarf Princesses of the Gweliven Kingdom.

Twilight Rain didn't want a guild to gain that much power and authority, especially if it wasn't under their control, so they decided to cut the flower off its stem before it could even bloom fully.

The members of Twisted Destiny and Arcadian Lord formed a formation that would force the monsters to concentrate on Guild Eternal.

Just like creating a man-made river that forcefully controlled the flow of water in the direction they chose, the two guilds were forcing Eternal to fight a great number of beasts that exceeded their fighting force.

(A/N: the formation looked like this ___/ the ___ represents the guild Eternal.)

Aina, who stood at the center, surrounded by her guild members, didn't fail to notice these sudden changes, but she wasn't bothered by it. She had already been warned by Lux, so she knew that the two guilds beside her were planning to harm her and her guild members.

She had already made preparations in advance, and when the right moment came, she would counterattack and let them know that they were messing with the wrong person.

However, Aina, as well as the two guild leaders of Twisted Destiny and Arcadian Lords, could only stare in shock at the unbelievable scene in front of them.

Diablo's Nightmare Horse, Airon, walked steadily towards the approaching monsters, with the Skeleton Fighters by his side.

When the hundreds of monsters came within striking range, Diablo raised Blood Moon above his head and casually slashed in front of him as if he was just cutting grass.

The Skeletal Rider used its AOE attack, Whirlwind Slash, and what happened next made everyone's eyes widen in shock.

A blood mist appeared in front of them as the monsters in front of Diablo were all cut in half, instantly killing hundreds with one blow. However, it didn't end there, as more monsters rushed past their fallen comrades, the Skeleton Rider once again slashed in front of him, repeating the same scene that happened earlier.

With every slash, the fires on Diablo's eye sockets burned brighter.

The more he killed, the stronger he became.

A minute later, Diablo's armor was now covered with blood, but the latter paid it no mind.

Everyone who watched this felt their scalp tingle and wondered what would happen if Diablo was fighting against them, and not for them.

"M-Monster," the Guild Master of Twisted Destiny gasped in shock as he looked at the one-sided massacre that was still happening in front of him.

"J-Just what is going on?!" The Guild Master of Arcadian Lords could feel his hands turn sweaty. They never expected that their plan to crush Eternal would only benefit them instead.

< Merit Point Rankings >

Eternal - 154,800

Twisted Destiny - 12,256

Thunder Oath - 11,879

Arcadian Lords - 10,875

Crescent Vanguard - 10,572

Blood Legion - 9,854

Jade Skulls - 8,756

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Diablo had single-handedly raised Eternal Guild's Ranking to the number one spot as he continued his one-sided massacre.

Anything below a Rank 2 Monster would die the moment they came within Diablo's attack range. As an Undead, Lux's first Named Creature didn't know the meaning of exhaustion, swinging his sword repeatedly as more dead bodies piled up in front of him.

Blood flowed like a river, dyeing the ground under Airon's feet, but the killing didn't stop.

No one dared to step forward and stop the Skeleton Rider from killing the monsters in front of him. Only the Slimes that were under Eiko's command, were busy moving around on the battlefield.

Their goal was to collect all the Beast Cores for their baby Slime Master, whose eyes were already sparkling in anticipation.

Aina turned her head to look at the Half-Elf who was currently patting her little sister's head and was looking at her with a confident smile on his face.

She never thought that the Half-Elf's sudden proposal would bring such results, which made her feel that this person was something she needed to recruit in her guild no matter what.

Chapter 205.3: The Lord Of Destruction [Part 3]

Numbers of enemy slain: 12,856

Diablo's Bonus Attack: 64,280

Diablo's Bonus Defense: 64,280

Only half an hour had passed since the battle started, and yet, the number of dead monsters had already surpassed ten thousand.

Aside from Eternal, who was basically unscathed by the Beast Tide, the other guilds were now starting to feel the pressure since the Rank 1 Monsters were almost entirely eliminated. The rest that remained were Rank 2 Monsters, and above.

There had also been several Alpha Beasts whose rank ranged from Rank 1 to Rank 3, which now made defending the city a lot harder.

It was not only the Monsters that were dying, the defenders were the same as well. Just as the stronger Monsters were about to enter the fray, several blow horns sounded across the battlefield.

It was the signal for everyone to retreat to the second defensive perimeter, where makeshift walls, made from Earth, were prepared to hold back the stronger Monsters that had now joined the siege.

Aina ordered her guild to retreat in an orderly manner. Right now, her guild was taking things at an easy pace since not a single Monster had been able to get past the Skeletal Rider who was massacring everyone within his range.

On the contrary, the other guilds didn't have it easy, and were forced to retreat at a slower pace. The very last to retreat were Twisted Destiny and Arcadian Lords, who had stretched out their forces in order to guide the Beast Tide to the location that the Eternal Guild was defending.

In short, their plan backfired on them, and the number of their casualties numbered in the hundreds.

Diablo also slowly retreated while shooting Bone Spears at the Rank 1 and Rank 2 Alpha Monsters, which were easily killed by him with one hit.

Eiko, who was perched on top of Lux's head, frowned, because the Alpha Monsters' Beast Cores were being eaten by the other monsters, who had taken advantage of the situation.

"Muu!" the baby slime pouted, while her Papa could only chuckle at her current mood.

"Don't worry, there are still more where they came from," Lux assured the pouting Eiko on his head. "These monsters numbered nearly a million, so there are still plenty of Monsters left."

"Pa!"

"Okay, you can get some Alpha Cores as well. But, you shouldn't take them all. The others need to get stronger too."

Eiko nodded her head in understanding and stopped pouting. Currently, her Slimes had managed to get hundreds of Rank 1 and Rank 2 Beast Cores. Although they were just low-ranked beast cores, the baby slime knew that more would come as the Beast Tide continued.

After all the guilds were safely stationed at the second line of defense, they felt a lot safer because they now stood on five-meter tall walls.

The reason why they engaged the lower-ranked monsters outside their defensive perimeters was due to the fact that they didn't want the lower-ranked monster bodies to pile up and render their walls useless.

If that happened, the stronger monsters could easily climb over the bodies of their dead comrades and overwhelm the defenders behind the walls.

In order to prevent this, they decided to kill the weak monsters out on the outskirts, and just move to the second line of defense once the main bulk of the Beast Tide had arrived.

"Are you sure you only want to become a temporary member of our guild?" Aina asked.

"Yes," Lux replied. "You've asked me this question five times. My answer will remain the same even if you ask me again."

The officers of Eternal sighed after hearing Lux's reply. After seeing Diablo's performance, they wanted to bring Lux into their guild even more in order to strengthen their ranks and compete with the other guilds in clearing dungeons and difficult quests.

Having heard Lux's answer, Aina motioned for her sister to come close to her. Naturally, Colette happily obliged as her Big Sister whispered something in her ears.

A minute later, Colette held onto Lux's arm and lightly swung it from side to side acting all cute and adorable, which made Matty, and the rest of her friends, cover their faces in embarrassment.

"Big Brother, please join our guild," Colette said sweetly. "If you do, you will be given the rank of Elder, as well as 5,000 Gold Coins monthly allowance. Not only that, you will be given priority to item and equipment loot when clearing dungeons. Also, you can go out on dates with my Big Sister once a week."

Aina expressionlessly stared at her little sister who was doing her best to convince Lux to join her guild.

Colette had told Lux everything Aina wanted her to say to him. However, the adorable little girl had one-sidedly added the condition that she would go out on a date with the Half-Elf once a week. That was something that she had never said to her.

The officers of Eternal all looked at Aina in askance, and the latter only shook her head to deny Colette's additional condition to bribe the Half-Elf into becoming part of their guild.

The officers of Eternal knew what their Guild Master was like, and knew that she didn't have any interest in having a relationship with anyone.

"Sorry, but I can't," Lux replied while Colette swung his arm from side to side. "Don't worry. I will still go on adventures with you guys even if I didn't join your guild."

"Promise?"

"Promise."

Colette could only accept Lux's decision and no longer pestered him.

Aina could only shake her head in her sister's failed attempt to recruit a strong addition to their guild. The Guild Master of Eternal stared at the approaching tide of monsters with a fearless gaze.

However, just like her, everyone's eyes were looking at the Skeleton Rider who was standing two hundred meters away from them.

People from other guilds had never seen such a strong Monster before and envied Eternal for having a Necromancer of Lux's caliber in their ranks.

Eternal's ranking in the leaderboards seemed unshakeable because the gap was simply too wide for them to catch up.

Even so, the Guild Masters of Twisted Destiny and Arcadian Lords were still calm despite their first setback.

Since they couldn't decrease the number of Eternal's Guild Members on the battlefield, they could still proceed to the next phase of their plan now, which was to sabotage them from within.

Everyone had a price, and even some of the most loyal members of Eternal could be bought as long as the price was high enough.

It didn't matter whether they had to use money, threats, or intimidation to make it happen. As long as they could achieve their goal, Twilight Rain was

more than happy to move in the shadows to help their collaborators shine in the spotlight.

Chapter 206.4: The Lord Of Destruction [Part 4]

"Hehehe."

"Big Brother, is there something funny?"

"Yes, but I'm not going to tell you."

"Booo!"

Lux chuckled as he patted the adorable little Dwarf, who decided to stick with him while they helped with the defense of Whitebridge City. Matty and the others were also nearby Lux, since they had requested for this beforehand from Aina.

For them, it felt a lot safer when they were around their Big Brother, and the latter was more than happy to have his friends around him.

"They're here," Aina said. "Everyone, prepare yourselves!"

The first wave of the Beast Tide were merely cannon fodders. There were plenty of Rank 1 and Rank 2 Alpha Beasts mixed in the first wave, but they were not really such a big deal against those who had already stepped on the Apostle Ranks.

The only troublesome thing about them so far was their huge numbers. A Beast Tide was not like a simple monster outbreak. The number of monsters within it numbered in the millions.

If they were lucky, there would only be only a little over a million, but if they weren't, and the Beast Tide was severe, the numbers could reach up to ten million, which would be enough to destroy an entire city if the defenders were overwhelmed.

Colette and her friends turned serious as their grip on their weapons became firmer. Lux smiled as he crossed his arms over his chest. He was not worried

about the monsters breaking through Eternal's defenses, especially with Diablo holding the frontlines.

If only Aina could see Diablo's current stats. She would definitely think that going out on a date with Lux once a week would be worth it.

Numbers of enemy slain: 28,458

Diablo's Bonus Attack: 142,290

Diablo's Bonus Defense: 142,290

Right now, Lux was confident that even if a group consisting of the Carbuncle, Red-Eyed Terror Mantis, and Ghoul Beast appeared in front of Diablo, a single slap from the Skeleton Rider would be enough to instantly kill them.

As for the Mutated Thunder Wolf King?

Perhaps Diablo would need to slash it six to eight times before the powerful Mutated Monster died in his hands. The current Skeletal Rider also wouldn't have any trouble standing toe-to-toe with Rank 5 Alpha Monsters of similar strength.

Just as Lux expected, the moment the second wave of monsters reached their defensive line, Diablo massacred them without fail.

< Merit Point Rankings >

Eternal - 785,600

Twisted Destiny - 225,845

Thunder Oath - 223,842

Arcadian Lords - 218,357

Crescent Vanguard - 216,568

Blood Legion - 157,854

Jade Skulls - 146,782

Aina and the officers of Eternal were quite happy, seeing the lead they currently had over the other guilds. Even those who held grudges about Aina's decision to let Lux join their guild in this important event had completely changed their views and were even secretly happy that the Half-Elf was on their side.

If he joined another guild aside from them, wouldn't that be a pity?

Just as the officers of the guild were feeling smug about their current lead, a fireball flew from behind their ranks and hit Diablo's back, which made him stagger, allowing the Rank 3 Alpha Monster, Monkey Kong, to smash his chest, and send him flying off Airon's back.

"Who did that?" Aina asked as she turned around to look at her subordinates.

It was quite obvious that the attack came from her own people, infuriating the doll-like beauty. Although her face was calm and expressionless like usual, her eyes stared daggers at the Guild Member who had cast the Fireball while Diablo was in the midst of fighting a strong Alpha Monster.

"G-Guild Master, it was a mistake," a mage stuttered as he looked apologetically at Aina, as well as the officers who were glaring at him. "I didn't mean to hit the Skeleton. I was just trying to help him kill that Monkey Kong."

"Does he look like he needs your help?" Aina asked in a voice that was colder than ice, making the mage shudder.

"I-It won't happen again, Guild Master!" the mage promised. "I-I will look for other targets to attack."

"There's no need for you to do anything," Aina replied. "Leave the formation and return to the city. You will be punished according to our Guild's Laws after the Beast Tide is over. Valerie, escort him to the city gates."

Aina's voice was filled with authority and wouldn't take no for an answer.

"Yes, Guild Master!" Valerie replied as she walked towards the mage who had lowered his head out of shame, and dragged him away from the formation.

The doll-like beauty then scanned the faces of her guild members before making an announcement.

"The next person who attacks Diablo will be expelled from the guild," Aina declared. "I don't care if it's an accident, or you aimed poorly. I will not listen to any excuses. Do I make myself clear?"

""Yes, Guild Master!""

Lux nodded his head in satisfaction. Aina did the right thing. There was a saying that you need to kill the chicken to scare the monkeys. This was a great way of setting an example to deter or threaten others from committing the same mistake.

Aina knew that the other guilds had planted spies inside Eternal, but there was nothing she could do about it. Even though their process for recruitment was strict, there would always be a possibility that one of the rival guilds' moles had infiltrated her organization despite the safeguards that they had set in place.

Her threat to expel any member who attacked the Skeletal Rider, who was currently amassing a great number of merit points for them, was the only thing she could do in order to deter them from doing it.

Unfortunately, a dozen more of her guild members attempted to sneak attack the Skeleton Rider, whose back was facing them, using skills that were near impossible to detect.

Unfortunately for them, they were messing with the wrong Half-Elf. The moment someone attacked Diablo from behind, they would immediately turn red on Lux's map, labeling them as hostile forces.

The Half-Elf would then tell Aina who attacked Diablo, and she in turn would summon her Guild's Roster from her Soul Book and expel that member instantly.

The moment they were expelled from the Guild, the officers took custody of them and dragged them back to the city. Their names were also reported to

the General of the Army of Gweliven, preventing them from returning to the front lines.

"I'm ashamed," Aina said. "I'm sorry. I didn't expect that there were this many spies planted inside Eternal. I will make sure to become stricter in our selection of guild members in the future."

Lux chuckled after he heard Aina's apology. He knew that managing a big organization was difficult and it would be near impossible not to have spies infiltrate her guild. Even Twilight Rain and the Kingdom of Gweliven had planted spies on each other's sides, allowing them to gather information on the other side's movements.

If a Kingdom managed by the Dwarves were suffering from this problem, it was only natural for a guild like Aina's to encounter the same.

"It's fine," Lux replied. "It will take more than killing Diablo to kill him."

In truth, the attacks dealt by the guild members of Eternal, in addition to those of the Monsters in the current wave were laughable.

Diablo's current Physical and Magical Defense had already surpassed 150,000. So, even if he was attacked by a dozen fireballs, it would not deal any significant damage to him. Even the attack of the Alpha Monster, Monkey Kong, couldn't damage the Skeleton Rider, who was just pretending to be hurt.

The damage that was being dealt to Diablo was only a series of 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1.

Blood Moon had a passive skill that was called lifesteal, which allowed Diablo to regenerate his health, based on his attack damage.

< Life Steal >

– Each attack heals the user with 10% of the damage they deal to their enemies.

A single slash would instantly allow Diablo to recover over 10,000 health points. With such a high-regeneration rate, no one in the current wave of monsters could possibly threaten his life.

Right now, the Skeleton Rider was the personification of the Lord of Destruction, who instantly obliterated everything and anything, that stood in his way.

'I think only Deimos Ranked Monsters can threaten Diablo at this point,' Lux thought. 'Still, I wonder if it would be possible for Diablo to fight against one after more Monsters die on the battlefield.'

While Lux was pondering these things, he wasn't aware that somewhere in the distance, a Dwarf Sniper was aiming for his head.

The Half-Elf was so preoccupied with what was happening in front of him, that he was completely unaware that a hidden threat was about to bare its fangs at him from his blindspot.

'If I kill him, I will become the next Slayer Candidate,' a Reaper from Twilight Rain thought. 'I don't care if the mission was given to Sid and Scarlet. It's their fault for being slow.'

This particular Reaper was tasked to Assassinate Aina during the Beast Tide. The Eternal Guild was an eyesore in Twilight Rain's eyes. After seeing that Eternal was leading the rankings, the Reaper thought that it would be a good idea to Assassinate the Warrior Princess, in order to reduce the morale of her Guild Members.

However, after using his sniping skills, he discovered Lux, who was standing not far from his target. After a brief internal struggle, the Reaper decided to change his target and kill the Half-Elf, who had a higher bounty on his head than the Guild Master of Eternal.

'Why would I settle for leftovers, when I can eat the main dish?' the Reaper mused as he channeled his strongest attack into the tip of his arrow.

In his eyes, the allure of becoming the Slayer Candidate and stealing the glory from Sid's and Scarlet's hands, was worth the risk of stealing their prey.

Chapter 207: I'll Get Back At You Someday For This

The Reaper narrowed his eyes as he took his aim at the Half-Elf who was unaware of his upcoming demise. He had a good vantage point since he was located in one of the watchtowers that overlooked the battlefield.

He had first disguised himself as one of the Dwarves responsible for bringing food and water to the defenders before infiltrating the watchtower. The food and water he had given the unsuspecting guards were drugged, which caught them off guard.

It was nothing poisonous, but it was a special sleep serum that was enough to make those that had ingested it sleep for five hours straight.

He carefully knocked the arrow on his bow and aimed at his target that was over six hundred meters away from him. The Reaper had no problems targeting anyone from this distance because of his sniping skills.

The arrow that was knocked on the assassin's bow was dipped in the venom of the Ravenous Saw-Scaled Viper. It was a Deimos-Ranked Monster, which could be found in the Burning Basin that stood between the Gweliven Kingdom and the various Orc Tribes.

Even a graze from this venom was enough to kill a person within five minutes. Only a specific antidote, native to the Orc Tribes, could cure this poison, which had claimed countless lives, including those of E-Rankers.

(A/N: E-Rankers are the next rank after Initiate. They are the lowest rank of Rankers, but they are Rankers nevertheless.)

After imbuing his arrow with improved penetration and swift wind, the Reaper estimated that it should be enough to eliminate his target.

'Goodbye.' The Reaper sneered as he released the string of his bow.

However, just as the arrow was about to take flight, a whip wrapped around its tip, preventing it from flying towards its target.

The sneer on the Assassin's face instantly disappeared as he took out a dagger from his belt and looked at the person who had prevented him from claiming his kill.

Unfortunately, the person was wearing a mask, so it was impossible for him to identify his enemy. The first thought that came to his mind was to run, so that was exactly what he did.

As one of the Reapers of Twilight Rain, he made sure to prepare an escape route in case his assassination attempt failed.

The assassin jumped from the watch tower and extended his robe, imitating a flying squirrel in flight.

Just as the Reaper thought that he had gotten away from his pursuer, he heard a teasing voice in his ears.

"So you can fly," Scarlet said as she glided beside the assassin. As a Cambion, she had the ability to fly using the wings that she could extend from her back.

"It's you!" the assassin exclaimed. "Don't kill me, Scarlet! I swear I will never steal your prey again!"

Although she was wearing a mask, he had talked to Scarlet in the past, and the long red hair that fluttered out of her robe, was clear evidence of her identity.

"Too late," Scarlet replied, as she thrust her dagger towards the Assassin's neck and twisted it, similar to what Sid had done to Lux when he had stabbed him in the chest.

A gaping hole appeared on the Reaper's neck, as he looked at Scarlet in disbelief. Even though he had attempted to steal her prey, killing him was simply too much. Afterall, the two of them were in the same organization.

Scarlet sneered before changing her path flight as she landed near the walls of the city. Lux had tasked her to be on the lookout for possible Assassins that would target Aina. At first, Scarlet didn't want to obey him, but when he said that he would be sticking close to the Guild Master, the red-haired Dwarf beauty understood what the Half-Elf was planning.

He was using himself as bait to lure the other Reapers into attacking him instead of Aina, forcing Scarlet to hunt them down before they killed him.

Her life was bound to Lux, so, if Lux died, she would also die. For someone as ambitious as Scarlet, she wouldn't allow herself to die a second time, especially through the hands of other assassins like herself.

"Such a devious Master I have." Scarlet clicked her tongue as she prepared to scout for other possible assassins in the area. "I'll get back at you for this someday."

This was the second assassin she had killed, and she hoped that the organization hadn't assigned more than two Reapers to dispose of the doll-like beauty who led the Eternal Guild.

—

"Achooo!"

"Achoo?"

"Eiko, don't imitate me," Lux said as he lightly patted the giggling baby slime on his head. The Half-Elf had seen the red mark that briefly appeared on his map, and saw a green mark pursue it.

He knew that it was Scarlet who had eliminated the assassin, and he was quite impressed by how efficient she was when it came to cleaning up those of her own kind.

Meanwhile, the other guilds were gradually losing ground against the Beast Tide that had overwhelmed the places that they were currently defending.

At this point, there had been a few monsters that slipped past Diablo's line of defense, but they were no match against the Guild Members of Eternal, who were quite happy to have something to do to pass the time.

The Guild Leaders of Twisted Destiny and Arcadian Lords no longer had time to deal with the Eternal Guild, since they were having problems on their own end.

Unlike their rival guild, Eternal, who had Diablo, they didn't have such a powerhouse in their ranks. Because of this, their frontline was breached by

Rank 3 and Rank 4 Alpha Monsters, who were working alongside Rank 3 and Rank 4 Monsters.

The spies that they had planted in Eternal were also gone, so they could no longer continue their goal to pressure them into submission.

"Dammit!" The Guild Leader of Twisted Destiny cursed as he personally faced a Rank 4 Alpha Monster, alongside his Elite Guild Members that specialized in dealing with creatures of this rank.

Aina gave her rivals a side-long glance to see their current conditions.

If one were to look closely, they would see that the corner of her lips was raised slightly, forming a smirk on her doll-like face that was usually devoid of emotion.

'Serves you right,' Aina thought as she gave her rival guilds a look of contempt.

However, she also knew that her guild, Eternal, wouldn't have their current peaceful circumstance if she had rejected Lux's proposal to temporarily become her Guild Member.

Just as she was gloating internally at the two guilds' hardships, a resounding horn spread across the battlefield, which made her eyes widen in shock.

That was the Signal that a Deimos Ranked Monster was sighted on the battlefield. Although they didn't know if it was a regular Deimos Monster or an Alpha Beast, either one was bad news for all of them.

The Kingdom of Gweliven had dispatched an Elite Team of Initiates to deal with this kind of threat, so Aina wasn't too worried. According to the briefing they had with the City's Mayor and the General commanding the Gweliven Army, there were three special teams composed of Initiates that would deal with Deimos-Ranked threats.

But, Aina's composure changed when more horns were blown consecutively, signaling them that more than one Deimos-Ranked Monster had appeared on the battlefield. Although she had already expected this to happen sooner or later, the number of strong monsters exceeded her expectations.

"F-Five blow horns," Valerie, Aina's second in command, stuttered as she looked at the dense army of monsters in front of her. "Guild Master, one Deimos Beast at two o'clock!"

Aina immediately glanced in the direction where Valerie was pointing at. Within the mass of monsters that seemed unending, a four-meter tall Warthog was running in their direction.

"Ivory Killer Warthog!" one of the officers of Eternal shouted. "Be careful. That monster can go berserk at any time!"

The Warthog let out a deafening squeal as it charged straight towards the Eternal Guild with its two-meter long Ivory tusks that were strong enough to pierce through steel without any problems.

"Shield Warriors, hold the line!" Aina ordered. "When the Deimos is near, use your strongest defensive skill to block its attack!"

""Yes!""

Right now, they were standing on the ramparts of the Earthen Wall that was five meters tall. Even so, they didn't feel safe when facing a Deimos Ranked Monster that was known for its relentless charge that could destroy the walls of a city.

When the monster was only a dozen meters away from Eternal's defensive perimeter, its charge suddenly swerved away from its intended target as it changed direction.

The officers of Eternal sighed in relief when the monster shifted its charge away from them.

However, Aina, who was paying attention to the Monster, noticed that not only did it change direction, it was also headed towards Diablo, who had dismounted from his Nightmare Horse, and was running towards the Deimos-Monster, with his eyes burning brightly with his fighting spirit.

Chapter 208.1: The Will Of Eternal [Part 1]

"Five Deimos-Ranked Beasts this early in the Beast Tide doesn't bode well," the Mayor of Whitebridge City, Garth muttered as he rubbed his chin.

"Indeed," a middle-aged Dwarf wearing a peculiar set of armor replied. "But, it is still within the acceptable grounds."

The middle-aged dwarf smiled as he drank a mug of mead, while paying close attention to the battles that were happening outside the city.

Although he was making sure to keep watch on their surroundings to ensure that nothing escaped his eyes, most of his attention was directed towards the Deimos-Ranked Monster, Ivory Killer Warthog, who was now charging towards a Skeleton, who had performed well at the beginning of the Beast Tide.

Two out of the five Deimos-Ranked Monsters that the scouts had sighted were Alpha Monsters. This was bad news for the defenders, but as long as the two Alpha Monsters were defeated, they would be able to handle the rest.

The Deimos-Ranked Monster that was charging towards Diablo was not an Alpha Monster, but the threat it posed was something that couldn't be ignored either.

"Sir, will you not make a move to stop at least one of the Alpha Deimos Monsters on the battlefield?" Garth asked in a polite tone. "I am afraid that the Elite Teams will not be able to handle them by themselves."

The middle-aged Dwarf drank his mug of mead until it was empty before standing up.

"I guess it can't be helped," the middle-aged Dwarf said. "We can't have too many casualties in this war. I'll handle one of the Alpha Deimos Monsters, you take command of the rest while I am away."

"Yes, Your Excellency," Garth bowed respectfully.

The middle-aged Dwarf smirked before jumping off the ramparts and flying straight towards a ten-meter tall mammoth in the distance.

As a Ranker, it was his duty to ensure that Whitebridge City didn't fall to the Beast Tide. Even so, he was feeling a bit worried because if Deimos-Ranked Monsters had appeared in this stage, it could only mean one thing.

'An Argonaut, and possibly a Dreadnaught-Ranked Monster, is pulling the strings from behind,' the middle-aged Dwarf thought as he smashed his fist on the Mammoth's head, sending it rolling across the ground, screaming in pain.

While the Ranker of the Kingdom was dealing with one of the Alpha-Ranked Deimos Monsters at the center of the Beast Tide, a certain Skeleton Rider and a Warthog clashed for the first time.

Diablo's feet skidded on the ground as he blocked the Ivory Killer Warthog's full charge by himself. The reason why he dismounted from Airon was because he was worried that his Nightmare Horse would be unable to handle the collision and perish instantly.

Airon was only a Rank 2 Monster, and didn't share Diablo's ridiculous buffs. Although he was able to fight alongside his trusted Nightmare against Rank 5 Alpha Monsters, a Deimos-Ranked Monster was a different kind of beast.

One mistake and Airon would be grievously injured, and possibly even killed on the spot, if one of the Warthog's deadly tusks pierced any part of its body.

Due to Diablo's boosted defense, he was barely able to block the Deimos' Monster attack without taking too much damage.

Lux, who was paying close attention to Diablo's health points, breathed a sigh of relief. The damage that Diablo received was minimal, and although it would take him some time to whittle away the Deimos-Ranked Monster's enormous health, the Half-Elf had no reason to worry.

Why?

Because with every second that passed, Monsters and, to a certain extent, Dwarves continued to die in battle.

This unending cycle continued to increase Diablo's attack and defense that allowed him to fight against Deimos-Ranked Monsters.

"Mr. Diablo is amazing!" Colette said as she looked at the Skeleton Rider with sparkling eyes. "Big Brother, was Diablo always that strong?"

"I-It depends on his mood," Lux replied. "Sometimes when he is in the mood, Diablo can be many times stronger than he usually is."

"Wow! That's incredible!"

"I know, right?"

"But, since Diablo is Big Brother's Summon, that only means that Big Brother is even more awesome!"

"Isn't that obvious?"

Matty, as well as the rest of the Dwarves who were listening to Colette's and Lux's conversation, felt that something wasn't right.

However, since Diablo was on their side, they decided to just appreciate the Skeleton Rider's incredible battle against a Deimos-Ranked Monster, that usually had to be dealt with by over a thousand elite members of Aina's Guild.

That was how strong a Deimos-Ranked Monster was. One-on-one battles against them wouldn't work, and only by great numbers would they be able to overcome such a monster, which was considered a Field Boss Monster that could be found in the Apostle Grade Areas of the Kingdom of Gweliven.

After breaking the Warthog's momentum, Diablo fired two bone spears in quick succession, aiming for the monster's eye, but his opponent used its tusks to deflect his attacks with relative ease.

'Now I understand why monsters like these need to be fought by thousands of people,' Lux thought. 'Since its whole attention is on Diablo, it can easily react to his attacks without any problems.'

While Lux was thinking of ways to fight the Deimos Monster, the thirty Skeleton Fighters charged at the Warthog's side and slashed its body.

The sound of metal hitting a hard object spread in the surroundings, but after checking the monster's life, the damage couldn't even be considered a scratch since the skeleton fighter's combined assault only did a measly thirty damage.

What did this mean? It means that the only damage they were able to deal to their opponent was only one point.

The Half-Elf sighed as he looked at the Monster's stats, which made him realize that unless Diablo was able to land a clean hit on its body, its health

would remain high even if all the skeletons were to continuously attack its body at the same time.

< Ivory Killer Warthog >

- Overlord of the Forest
- Wandering Field Boss
- Deimos-Ranked Monster

Health: 4,799,970 / 4,800,000

Mana: 300,000 / 300,000

Strength: ????

Intelligence: ????

Vitality: ????

Agility: ????

Dexterity: ????

Defense: 2000

– The Ivory Killer Warthog is an Overlord of the forest. It is usually found in the lush green forests where it forages for food three times a week. Its main diet is composed of tubers and roots. However, when it feels threatened, this monster will not hesitate to attack anyone that it sets its eyes on.

– Its hide is quite thick and most attacks will bounce off its body unless it was imbued by the power of the elements.

– There is a saying that when the Ivory Killer Warthog had set its sights on its target, the poor creature will only have a few seconds to escape before the Warthog's tusk impaled their bodies.

"Aina, Diablo can't fight that beast alone," Lux said with a serious expression on his face. "The best he can do is fight the Ivory Killer Warthog into a stalemate. If you are fine with that, we can continue to remain here in the walls and just focus on attacking the monsters that have broken past their battle."

Lux didn't tell Aina that Diablo could probably defeat the Warthog if he was given more time. What the Half-Elf wanted to know was how Aina would deal with this kind of situation. Depending on her answer, he would change his strategy to match her decision.

"I appreciate the efforts that you and Diablo had done for our guild," Aina answered as she gazed at Lux with the same calm expression on her face. However, her eyes were anything but calm.

Lux could feel the burning determination in them, which made him realize that the doll-like beauty in front of him wasn't a herbivore.

"Do not underestimate us too much," Aina stated. "My guild isn't weak."

After saying her words to Lux, the Warrior Princess faced her guild members and gave her orders.

"Battle Formation!" Aina ordered. "Arrowhead Formation!"

""Yes!""

The temporary gates of the Earthen Wall opened allowing Eternal's melee fighters to charge towards the Warthog that was busy exchanging blows with Diablo.

Just like an arrow that was released from the bow, the warriors formed four arrow heads as they charged at their target.

This was a purely offensive battle strategy that Aina had created in order to fight against Deimos-Ranked Beasts that could also be found inside Dungeons. The purpose of this formation was to deal as much damage as possible to a monster, while it was being tanked by the Shield Warriors in front.

Since Diablo was holding the beast for them, they could now attack it without any worries.

"Shield Warriors, follow up with the Tower Formation!" Aina ordered. "Make sure to deploy your Shield Walls as soon as possible and block the other monsters from attacking our warriors! Mages, use Ray Type spells and focus on targeting the monster's eyes.

"Healers, place your buffs on the Shield Warriors! Do not, under any circumstance, use heal on the Skeleton. Anyone who uses Heal on Diablo will be immediately expelled from the guild. Do I make myself clear?!"

""Yes!""

Lux was amazed because in just a short period of time, the entirety of Eternal was mobilized to attack the Deimos Ranked Monster in front of them.

He almost laughed out loud when Aina reminded the Healers to not heal Diablo under any circumstances. He had completely forgotten that his Skeleton Rider was weak against Life, Fire, and Holy Magic.

If not for Aina's reminder, he believed that some of the healers would accidentally heal Diablo, which would make his Named Creature curse them under his breath.

Chapter 209.2: The Will Of Eternal [Part 2]

The Ivory Killer Warthog squealed in anger as it got swarmed by hundreds of Dwarves that had taken advantage of its battle against Diablo.

Although the damage of the Dwarves was just a tiny bit higher than Lux's skeletons, their numbers made up for it. Lux smiled because with Aina's Guild joining the fray, the Warthog would finally divert its attention away from Diablo.

Warriors slashed their weapons at its body without mercy, Magicians fired ray-spells at its head, specifically targeting its eyes in an attempt to blind it.

When the Deimos Monster diverted its attention to the Dwarves, wanting to teach them a lesson, Diablo managed to land two solid blows on its body, dealing over two-hundred-thousand ethereal damage, making the Warthog squeal in pain.

Diablo's attacks ignored defense. Whether the Deimos-Ranked Warthog had a tough carapace or not, it didn't even matter. The named creature only cared about getting a clean hit on his opponent since it could deal a devastating amount of Ethereal Damage that could make anyone writhe in pain.

"Mana Drain!"

"Mana!"

Lux and Eiko didn't stand idle and started absorbing the mana of the Field Boss. Most powerful skills required mana, and they wanted to eliminate any chances the Warthog had to make a comeback.

Mana Drain [EX] would drain the mana of its target by 5% of its maximum Mana. Since Eiko was using the same spell as Lux, that single round of Mana Drain was able to shave off 10% of the Deimos' Monster's mana.

They would need to do it nine to ten more times before the Warthog completely ran out of mana. This was the strategy that they had developed when dealing with strong monsters.

The sooner the monster ran out of mana, the sooner it would find itself helpless against the combined assault of Lux, and the Eternal Guild.

"Grand Cross!" Aina shouted as she delivered a strike to the Warthog's back leg, in order to destroy its balance.

It was her strongest attack, but the monster's defense was simply too high for her to break its stance. Even so, she wasn't depressed about it.

"Everyone, continue attacking!" Aina ordered. "The moment it changes its target, Shield Warriors, prepare to intercept and use your strongest defensive skills!"

""Yes!""

Lux, who was not far from Aina, smirked internally. He already knew that the Warthog wouldn't dare change its target from Diablo because it knew that the moment it did, Diablo would unleash a sneak attack on its body, dealing damage that surpassed the attack of all of Aina's guild members combined.

< Ivory Killer Warthog >

Health: 4,331,285 / 4,800,000

Mana: 262,354 / 300,000

Seeing that it had no way out of its predicament, the Ivory Killer Warthog's body immediately changed to crimson-red, which meant that it had activated its Berserk Skill.

"Brace!" Aina immediately ordered.

After hearing her command, the Warriors all pulled away from engaging the Berserked Deimos-Monster because its attack would certainly deal enormous damage.

The Shield Warriors stepped forward and deployed their strongest defense, Shield Wall, which grew stronger the more Shield Warriors activated it at the same time. One could even say that this was the "team-ability" that was unique among Shield Warriors, regardless of their rank.

When more than one Shield Warrior deployed this ability, their combined defense would stack up, forming a united defensive barrier that would mitigate most attacks.

The Ivory Killer Warthog raised both of its front legs and slammed them on the ground, creating a shockwave that sent the Shield Warriors on the front lines flying backwards.

"Healers, heal the wounded!" Aina ordered. "Second Defender Team, step forward!"

The second team of Shield Warriors took the place of their fallen comrades and activated their Shield Wall in order to keep the Warthog's berserked-rampage at bay.

Even so, they were once again sent flying after the Warthog swung its massive tusks at them, sending the defenders flying like dried leaves being swept away by a broom.

At that exact moment, Diablo snuck under the Warthog's neck and leapt high into the air, activating its strongest single target attack, Hellfire Annihilation Slash.

< Hellfire Annihilation Slash >

(Mana: 200)

Cooldown: 5 Minutes.

- Coat your weapon with the Hellish Flames and deal massive damage to your enemy.
- Deals 500% of your maximum damage to your enemy.
- This skill has a moderate chance of dealing critical damage.
- When the attack becomes a critical hit, decrease your target's physical, and magical defenses by 20%
- Has a moderate chance to inflict Burn status on your target.
- If the attack dealt both critical damage and Burn status at the same time, the duration of Burn would extend to a full minute. During this time, any regeneration abilities by the target, or any skill that restores its health will not take effect.

< Burn >

- Enemies inflicted with Burn will have their health decreased by 1% of their maximum health every 2 seconds.
- Burn effect lasts for thirty seconds.
- While under the Burn effect, the monster's physical attacks are decreased by 20%

The attack landed perfectly on the Warthog's blindspot, searing its skin with hellish flames, making it squeal in pain as it flailed its tusks around in an attempt to ward off the Skeleton Rider who had dealt it a devastating blow.

Diablo's attack was a critical hit and, at the same time, it activated the Burn effect on the Deimos Monster, making its health decrease every two seconds, as well as lower its physical attacks by 20%.

"Everyone attack and don't hold back!" Aina ordered as the sword in her hand radiated a golden light. "Full Throttle!"

Aina coated her weapon with the Holy Property before increasing her physical prowess by 300%. Full Throttle was a skill that allowed her to increase her strength for a few seconds, in order to strengthen the next skill that she was about to unleash.

After boosting her attack that could last for a short period of time, Aina raised the golden sword in her hand and swung at the rear leg of the Warthog, who had just received Diablo's Hellish Strike.

"Ignition Burst!" Aina roared as her blow penetrated the Warthog's tough skin, and pierced through its bone.

< Ignition Break >

– Deals 300% Physical damage and has a small chance to shatter your target's armor, or weapon.

Due to Diablo's and Aina's combined assault, the Warthog lost its balance and fell on the ground. Immediately, the monster was mobbed by a bunch of crazed Dwarfs who seemed to have been injected with steroids.

Even Lux who was watching the scene couldn't help but feel goosebumps, thinking that Aina's Guild seemed to be too excited as they mercilessly hacked, stabbed, and pounded the Warthog, whose skin color had reverted back to its normal color.

Clearly, the effect of its Berserk ability had ended, and it temporarily entered a weakened state, allowing the Dwarves to attack without holding anything back.

The Guild Leader of Twisted Destiny scowled when he saw the current status of Aina's Guild. He thought that with the Deimos Ranked-Monster would be enough to decimate the Eternal Guild and allow his guild to catch up.

But seeing that Aina's Guild had everything under control, he knew that the gap would only widen once again when the Deimos Monster was defeated.

Killing Deimos Ranked Monsters = 500,000 Merit Points

The Guild Leader of Twisted Destiny clenched his fist when he saw the number of merit points that Eternal would gain after they had killed the Ivory Killer Warthog, which made him want to sabotage them at any cost.

However, just before he could think of a plan to make their guild suffer, something unexpected happened.

From within the dense Beast Tide, something silver flew straight at him.

It was none other than Lux's Demonic Defender, Pazuzu.

Right behind him was a four-meter tall Flying Tiger, which the Guild Master of Twisted Destiny had seen in the past.

How could he possibly forget the exact same creature that had wiped out their entire guild after they entered the S-Ranked Dungeon that they had discovered by accident a month ago.

The creature that was chasing Pazuzu was not just an ordinary Deimos-Ranked Monster, but an Alpha-Ranked Deimos Monster that went by the name, Diabolical Demon Flying Tiger.

Lux, fed up with Twisted Destiny's repeated attacks on Eternal by using dirty tricks, made a move. He decided to teach them a lesson which would not only eliminate one of Aina's rivals, but also exterminate one of the collaborators of Twilight Rain, who was after his life.

Chapter 210.3: The Will Of Eternal [Part 3]

When Pazuzu was several hundred meters away from the defensive line of Twisted Destiny, the Demonic Defender stopped and faced the Alpha-Ranked Deimos Monster with his shield raised high.

Lux wasn't afraid of getting any demerits, but he still had to make it seem like everything that would happen from this point on was merely an accident.

The Alpha Monster was originally fighting against the Guild, Thunder Oath, which was one of the Top 5 Guilds in Whitebridge City.

When the Diabolical Demon Flying Tiger descended on the battlefield, the Guild's defenses instantly broke apart. They were simply no match against the Alpha-Ranked Deimos Monster, who was supposed to be handled by one of the Elite Teams from the Kingdom of Gweliven.

However, since five Deimos-Ranked Monsters appeared at the same time, they didn't have enough manpower to come to their aid.

Just as the monster was about to start a one-sided massacre, Pazuzu appeared and used Duel [EX] to force the Alpha Monster to follow him.

This allowed the Thunder Oath Guild to escape a calamity, and all of them, including their Guild Master, watched with bated breath as the Flying Tiger was lured away from their location.

Since Thunder Oath's defensive lines weren't far away from Twisted Destiny's, Pazuzu was able to reach them before the duration of his skill, Madlad Rush, ended.

With a single swipe from the Flying Tiger's claws, Pazuzu smashed into Twisted Destiny's defensive lines, and turned into particles of light.

"Damn you!" the Guild Master of Twisted Destiny roared in anger at the disappearing Pazuzu before giving out his order. "Everyone, retreat! Don't bother to face it. Just run!"

The members of Twisted Destiny didn't need to be told twice as they turned tail and ran with all of their might. They had seen how powerful this monster was when it had wiped them all off from the face of the Dungeon.

When people died in the Dungeon, they would respawn and lose a quarter of their combined stat points. But even if it wasn't real death, the pain and fear that they had experienced back then was still fresh in their memories.

Right now, they weren't inside a Dungeon, but in the open world.

If they died here, their deaths would be permanent.

Lux had summoned all of his Named Creatures, and placed them in different locations on the map. Ishtar and Orion were within the defensive lines of the Arcadian Lords, simply hiding underground and waiting for Lux's orders before striking.

The Half-Elf would gladly gain demerit points from their attack. Anyway, he could easily gain them back by allowing Diablo to fight as many monsters as he could. However, there were many ways to take advantage of the conditions that had been drafted by the City Officials.

In short, the red-headed teenager was exploiting the loopholes of the rules, which allowed him to sabotage his opponents legally.

Take for example, Pazuzu. What the Demonic Defender did was to save the Guild of Thunder Oath from being wiped out by the Alpha Monster. Because of this, his action couldn't be seen as a demerit as it was considered as an act of helping others.

The Half-Elf chuckled internally as he watched the Alpha Monster devastate the defensive lines of Twisted Destiny in a matter of seconds.

Aina, who was also paying attention to the chaos that was happening to her rival guild, urged her guild members to finish the Ivory Killer Warthog while they still had time.

Although they were taking it easy right now, it would be no laughing matter if the two Deimos Monsters joined hands and attacked them together.

'We should wrap this up,' Lux thought as he continued to use his Mana Drain to prevent the Deimos-Ranked Warthog from staging a comeback.

As if sensing its impending doom, the Ivory Killer Warthog gathered its strength and... ran away!

This development made the Eternal Guild cry out in surprise, never expecting that their opponent would flee the moment it regained its strength. Fortunately, Diablo was there so, before the Warthog could even run more than a hundred-meters, it was forced to turn back and face the Skeleton Rider, whose physical damage had now crossed over three hundred thousand.

Airon ran towards Diablo, and the Skeleton Rider leapt on its back, allowing him to use his mounted abilities. After understanding his opponent, Diablo deemed that he would now be able to fight it, alongside his mount Airon, due to the boost in attack and defense that he currently possessed.

Since he was a Skeleton Rider, the moment he gained access to his mount, his Rider Skills, as well as his Charge Skills had all become available to him.

Diablo had temporarily changed his weapon to a spear, which Randolph had crafted for him.

Although it was only a Unique Weapon, and only had one single ability inside it, which was Indestructible, it was still the best weapon that the Skeleton Rider could use in this scenario.

Airon's body was enveloped in flames, as he ran towards the charging Warthog like a fireball. Diablo was about to use one of his strongest mounted abilities, which he had acquired from the medallion that Lux had found in Barca's possession when they went to the Dungeon of Orc Dominion.

Avetia Kingdom's Elite Cavalry Medallion.

Rarity: Mythical

Requirement: Only for Professions that specialize in mounted combat.

– When wielding a spear, you will be able to use the skill Hero's Charge.

+20 to All Stats for any classes that allows you to fight while mounted on a beast.

+10% increase to mobility, and physical attack.

+100 to Physical Attack.

< 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, it deals an additional 100% damage to your target. Can only be used when mounted on a beast.

With Diablo's Physical damage amounting to over three hundred thousand, the skill, Hero's Charge, was no laughing matter.

Just as Lux expected, the moment the two forces clashed, the Ivory Killer Warthog uttered a blood-curdling roar before collapsing on the ground.

Airon, and Diablo, were blown away by the impact of the collision.

The Skeleton Rider was mostly safe, but Airon only had a quarter of its health remaining. If Diablo hadn't taken the brunt of the damage, the Nightmare Horse would have certainly perished after that single collision.

"Aina, please heal the Nightmare Horse," Lux said and the doll-like beauty nodded her head in understanding.

A moment later, a healing light descended upon the fallen Nightmare Horse, which allowed it to regain a third of its Health.

The Guild Members of Eternal raised their weapons high up in the air and shouted their victory cries, which spread across the battlefield.

Lux and Aina glanced at each other and smiled.

The Half-Elf was dumbfounded. Although Aina's smile only consisted of the corner of her lips rising by a fraction, it was still enough for the red-headed teenager to receive a critical hit to his heart due to how beautiful it was.

However, the brief smile on Aina's face disappeared when the body of the Ivory Killer Warthog disappeared in front of her eyes

A moment later, Diablo walked towards Lux holding the enchanted Beast Ring in his hand. The Skeleton Rider had taken the corpse of the Deimos-Ranked Monster for safekeeping, making Aina, as well as the members of Eternal look at the Half-Elf with a face filled with injustice.

"I-I'm just going to hold onto it for safekeeping," Lux stuttered. "Relax. Everyone fought hard, so it is normal that we should split the rewards 50/50. I will take the Beast Core, and your Guild Leader will have the Warthog's body. That way, she can commission skilled blacksmiths to craft weapons, and armors, for your entire guild."

Lux's explanation made the Dwarves regain the smile on their faces and nodded their heads amicably.

Although Lux was the one that would get the beast core, none of them had any qualms about it. Aina and her guild members weren't stupid. They knew that they wouldn't have been able to defeat the Deimos-Ranked Warthog as quickly as they did without Diablo's help.

Their only concern was whether or not the Half-Elf would be taking everything with him and not give them anything for their hard work.

Suddenly, a thunderous roar erupted not far from them.

The Diabolical Demon Flying Tiger was finally pushed back by the concentrated barrage of the Gweliven Kingdom's Army, and had shifted its sights in their direction.

With a single glance, Aina knew that the Beast Monster was too strong, so she immediately ordered the retreat of her forces

< Diabolical Demon Flying Tiger >

- Apex Predator of the Mountains
- Wandering Field Boss
- Alpha-Ranked Deimos Monster

Health: 26,264,531 / 28,000,000

Mana: 489,365 / 600,000

Strength: ????

Intelligence: ????

Vitality: ????

Agility: ????

Dexterity: ????

Lux stared at the Monster with a grim expression on his face. The Elysium Compendium had given him some information about this new opponent. He instantly knew then and there that the Deimos-Ranked Warthog that they had just killed was nothing compared to the foe that was now currently headed in their direction.

"Diablo, buy us some time to retreat," Lux ordered

The Skeleton Rider nodded his head in understanding as he ran towards the Flying Tiger.

Lux only hoped that his Named Creature would be able to buy them enough time so that the Eternal Guild could distance themselves away from the Flying Monster that had marked them all as its next target.

Chapter 211: My New Master Sure Is Willful

"Should I help those kids or not?" The middle-aged dwarf played with his beard as he watched the Flying Tiger head towards one of the Silver-Ranked Guilds in the Kingdom.

He was seated on top of an Alpha-Ranked Deimos Mammoth that he had defeated in less than a minute.

"Well, our newest rookie is over there, so I guess I'll let him handle this?" the middle-aged dwarf, who went by the name Nikola Einstein muttered.

He was one of the twelve original members of the Order of the Griffin. Just like everyone else, he was looking forward to the performance of the newcomer, whom the King had decided to add to their organization.

Nikola then glanced at the rear of the Beast Tide and narrowed his eyes.

"So, that is where you are hiding...", Nikola frowned. "This is one tricky bugger. I don't think I can beat this guy alone."

A pair of ancient eyes met Nikola's gaze. It was the leader of the Beast Tide, and unless it was defeated, Whitebridge City would not be safe.

"Colette! Aina! Run as fast as you ca—" Lux almost choked back his words when he turned his head and saw that Colette and her sister, Aina, were already hundreds of meters away from him.

In fact, the two sisters were in front of the retreating guild, which proved how fast the two of them were running.

Lux had completely forgotten how fast Colette could run, but he didn't know that Aina shared the same trait.

"At least, the two of them are decisive." Lux didn't know if he should laugh and cry at his current predicament.

Right now, the Half-Elf was at the rear of the fleeing Dwarves as all of them were fast runners.

Perhaps it was because of their small statures, or perhaps they were just built differently, but Dwarves in the World of Solais and Elysium could put even the Olympic sprinters to shame.

Diablo, as well as the Skeleton Fighters, guarded the red-headed teenager's retreat as they tried to get the attention of the Flying Tiger. However, the Alpha-Ranked Deimos Monster was very intelligent.

It knew that Diablo and the Skeletons were merely summons, so it didn't pay attention to them.

With a mighty roar, it increased its speed in preparation to descend onto the fleeing Dwarves, who were running with their lives on the line.

It was at this moment when the Flying Tiger felt a strong pull, forcing it to change its direction mid-air.

With a roar of annoyance, the Alpha-Ranked Deimos monster descended on the Skeleton Rider, who was waiting for its arrival.

Diablo had ordered the Skeleton Fighters to scatter because they would just die against the Alpha Monster, aware that even he didn't have a chance of defeating it on his own.

Raising Blood Moon high in the air, Diablo planted his feet firmly in the ground as he used his skill, Cross Slash, which was similar to Lux's, Double Fury Slash, to deal as much damage as he could to his enemy.

The moment the Flying Tiger's razor sharp claws met Diablo's sword, a metallic sound reverberated in the battlefield. A second later, the Skeleton Rider was sent flying due to the force behind the Flying Tiger's attack.

The Skeleton Rider crashed hundreds of meters from where it stood earlier, and rolled on the ground repeatedly.

The Monsters mercilessly stomped on Diablo's body as they headed towards Whitebridge City, since it was blocking their path.

Lux's face sank when he saw that Diablo's HP was reduced by half due to the Flying Tiger's blow. Right now, Diablo had an unimaginable defensive stat, thanks to the constant deaths that were happening around him.

For him to take that much damage from the Flying Tiger could only mean one thing. The Alpha-Ranked Deimos Monster managed to deal a critical hit on the Skeleton Rider, bypassing its powerful defense.

However, before Lux could panic, Diablo used its skill, Whirlwind Strike, instantly annihilating all the Monsters around him.

Since Blood Moon had the passive skill, Life Steal, the Skeleton Rider's health became full again after reaping the lives of the Monsters that were about to stomp on his body.

Diablo fired three Bone Spears at the Flying Tiger, but the latter dodged them with ease. It was the only ranged attack that Diablo had in his arsenal, so

even if the enemy was able to evade them all, he just kept on shooting the spears at his target in order to gain its attention.

Lux felt that he should look for suitable Beast Cores for his Skeleton Rider so that his range abilities could have some kind of variation.

"Jed, come!" Lux ordered and his Thunder Warg King appeared in front of him.

Without another thought, Lux jumped on its back and urged it to run faster. A moment later, the Half-Elf had caught up with the rest of the Dwarves that were nearing the defensive walls of Whitebridge City.

Suddenly, a ferocious roar resonated in the sky. The Flying Tiger flapped its mighty wings, creating several tornadoes that spun around its body, razing everything that was on the ground to shreds.

The Skeleton Fighters who got caught up in the tornado all shattered, turning into ashes due to the Flying Tiger's overwhelming strength. Of course, it was not only the Skeleton Fighters that were ripped apart by the tornadoes.

None of the other Monsters escaped the onslaught as a shower of blood mist gaved the tornadoes a crimson hue.

Eiko, who was perched on top of Lux's head, was constantly muttering.

"Mumumumumu."

She felt her heart break when she saw the hundreds of Beast Cores her Slime Summons couldn't take due to how dangerous the situation was.

Diablo managed to escape the suction of the tornadoes because he didn't hesitate to use his skill, Leap, to distance himself from his enemy. Of course, he didn't forget to fire Bone Spears at the Flying Tiger while doing so, but it was of no use.

The Bone Spears were sucked up by the tornadoes, preventing him from even grazing his target.

'Finally, that damned Skeleton has met his match!' The Leader of Twisted Destiny managed to escape the slaughter that had come upon his guild

because he had retreated as soon as he saw the Flying Tiger flying towards their direction.

Of the thousand men that he had brought to the frontlines with him, more than half were killed by the Diabolical Demon Flying Tiger. If not for the Kingdom of Gweliven's cover fire, more of his guild members might have died.

He had brought the Elite Members of his guild with him in order to gain as many points in the rankings as possible. However, instead of gaining points, he had lost his members that specialized in raiding A-Ranked and S-Ranked Dungeons.

The Guild Master of Twisted Destiny knew that thanks to this incident, his guild would weaken considerably and might even fall off from its position as one of the Top 5 Guilds in Whitebridge City.

'Once I find the owner of that blasted defender, I will definitely make him pay with blood.' The Guild Master of Twisted Destiny gnashed his teeth in anger as he tried to salvage the situation he was in.

Just as he was about to order his right-hand man to check how many members he still had left in his command, he felt a stinging pain on the back of his neck.

A moment later, the Guild Master of Twisted Destiny collapsed on the ground and twitched a few times.

"Guild Master!" The Vice-Guild Master of Twisted Destiny cried out in alarm when he saw the arrow that was embedded in the Guild Master's neck.

It was the same poison-tipped arrow that the Assassin, who tried to assassinate Lux, had used earlier. For some reason, this same arrow landed in the neck of the Dwarf that managed the Guild which was one of Twilight Rain's collaborators.

"Someone! Help!" the Vice-Guild Master shouted, and several clerics rushed to come to their aid.

Unfortunately, the poison that was used was very rare, and, unless a specific antidote was used, it was impossible to cure it.

"My new Master sure is willful," Scarlet grumbled as she returned her bow to her storage ring. "Why must I do these menial chores?"

Lux had ordered her to assassinate the Guild Masters of the two collaborator Guilds of Twilight Rain, while the battle was at its fiercest. This way, she would be able to catch her targets by surprise, and complete her Master's orders.

Scarlet gave Lux one last glance before the grumbling Dwarf made herself scarce by heading to where the members of the Arcadian Lords were located.

For now, the death of Twisted Destiny's Guild Master would be overshadowed by the Beast Tide that had broken through the main defensive lines of the city.

Scarlet was confident that before the Guild Master of the Arcadian Lords got wind of what happened to his comrade, he would have already fallen into her hands, accompanying the Guild Master of Twisted Destiny to the afterlife.

Chapter 212.1: A Gift From A Senior [Part 1]

"Don't let them break past the walls!" The General who was in charge of the army ordered, "Fire!"

Several catapults that were inside Whitebridge city hurled the burning steel balls towards the Beast Tide that had broken past the first and second lines of defense.

Only the location around where Eternal was stationed wasn't completely broken through since they had Diablo on their side, using his Whirlwind Slash to eliminate all the enemies within his strike range.

The Demonic Flying Tiger had decided to ignore the Skeleton Rider and attacked the city alongside the horde of monsters that numbered in the hundreds of thousands.

Eternal, as well as the other guilds, had safely entered the city thanks to the coverfire of the Army of Gweliven. However, there were two guilds that suffered a great loss in this battle. The first one was Twisted Destiny, who lost more than half of its Elite Members due to the Demonic Flying Tiger that had rampaged in the location that they were guarding. Aside from that, their Guild

Master was assassinated, which lowered the morale of the entire guild. The Vice Guild Master immediately rallied the survivors to return to the city to regroup with the main bulk of their forces.

The Arcadian Lords suffered a similar fate, but not as harsh as what happened to Twisted Destiny. They were faring quite well during the battle, but after their Guild Master was assassinated, the chain of command broke apart, allowing Rank 3 up to Rank 5 Alpha Monsters to wreak havoc on their forces.

Left with no other choice, the Vice Guild Master of the Arcadian Lords also ordered an immediate retreat.

Now that all the guilds had retreated behind the last defensive wall of the city, the atmosphere had turned tense.

Everyone knew that if the monsters managed to scale the city walls, the tide would spill into the city center, making the battlefield more chaotic. This was something they didn't want to happen, so everyone was gritting their teeth in preparation for the intense battle, including Garth, the mayor of Whitebridge City.

The flaming steel balls descended on the horde of monsters, annihilating everything in their path. They were one of the main defensive methods of the Dwarven cities, and each ball was created to inflict as much damage as possible, even to Deimos and Argonaut Ranked Monsters that couldn't be defeated by normal means.

Several Wind Blades descended from the sky as the Demonic Flying Tiger flew above the city and unleashed a barrage of attacks aimed at the catapults that were attacking its comrades.

"Not on my watch!"

A confident declaration echoed inside the city as Nikola blocked the Deimos' Monster's attack, using over a dozen Elemental Shields that hovered in front of the catapults, keeping them safe.

"Come down here!" Nikola shouted at the Flying Tiger in the sky. "I dare you!"

He was a ranker that specialized in land battles, and flying enemies weren't his forte. Even so, he still activated several Earth Spears and hurled them at the flying tiger, but the latter evaded them with ease.

Lux frowned when he saw this scene. He could tell with a glance that the middle-aged man who was shouting at the Flying Tiger was very strong. However, his strength was useless because his attack couldn't reach his target.

It was at that moment when a plan appeared inside his head.

"Colette, stay with your sister," Lux said with a serious expression on his face. "I'll help deal with the Flying Tiger."

"Okay!" Colette nodded her head in understanding. "Goodluck, Big Brother!"

The little girl had so much faith in Lux. If the Half-Elf told her that he would defeat an Argonaut Monster on his own, Colette would definitely believe it without fail.

Aina gave Lux a sidelong glance before shifting her attention to the Flying Tiger that was attacking them from the air. There were other flying monsters within the Beast Tide, but they were easily taken down by the Archers and the Mages who specialized in dealing with flying monsters.

The only problem was that the Alpha-Ranked Deimos Monster's movement was so erratic, that neither their arrows or magic spells could land on its body.

Two minutes later, Lux arrived at the location where the catapults were stationed.

"Sir, if I can bring that flying monster down from the sky, will you be able to do anything about it?" Lux asked as he looked at the middle-aged man whom he was seeing for the first time.

"Of course," Nikola flashed Lux a wide grin. "Rookie, we have high hopes for you. Do you have a plan in mind?"

"Rookie?"

"Ah. I forgot to tell you that we are on the same team."

Nikola showed the token of the Order of the Griffin to Lux, making the Half-Elf understand why the middle-aged Dwarf addressed him in a familiar manner.

"Sir, may I know your name?" Lux asked.

"Nikola," Nikola replied. "Nikola Einstein. I am a C-Ranker, and specialize in close combat and Earth Magic."

Nikola had a smug expression on his face as he looked at Lux. He thought that the Half-Elf would be surprised with his declaration, but the latter only said, "Oh", and gave a brief nod of understanding.

What Nikola didn't know was that Lux had been living with a C-Ranker for most of his life, so he wasn't too surprised about the middle-aged Dwarf's statement.

Although his Grandma Vera looked like a friendly old granny on the surface, she could be quite scary whenever someone crossed her bottom line. Lux had seen that side a few times during his childhood.

"Sir Nikola, I can bring that Monster down from the sky. However, you will only have one window of opportunity to deal it a devastating blow that will prevent it from flying ever again."

"Relax. As long as that little kitty comes within my strike range, it is as good as dead."

Lux could feel the confidence of a Ranker oozing from Nikola's words, so he decided to thicken his face and use this as an opportunity to get some benefits.

"I can do this for you, Sir Nikola, but it will not be for free," Lux commented. "I want the Monster's corpse as well as its Beast Core."

"That's it?" Nikola chuckled as he patted Lux's shoulder. "Such a trivial thing. Okay, you can have it. Consider it a gift from one of your seniors."

"Thank you very much!"

"Don't thank me yet. Let's bring down that kitty cat first."

Lux didn't expect the negotiations to go so smoothly. However, he didn't realize that the Beast Core of a Deimos Monster, as well as its corpse, although good, was no longer appealing to a Dwarf of Nikola's rank.

C-Rankers often hunted Argonaut-Ranked Monsters and even Dreadnaught-Ranked Beasts in order to increase their rank, gather monster parts, and gain Beast Cores.

Also, Nikola specialized in land battles. None of the Flying Tiger's body parts or skills interested him.

"Let's go, Rookie!" Nikola pounded his two fists together activating his personal buffs to increase his defense, and attack to the next stage. "Show me what you're made of!"

None of the members of the Order of the Griffin were useless. Although not all of them were fighters like Nikola, each of them had a specialty that allowed them to rise above the others.

Although Nikola didn't know what Lux's specialty was, he believed that the King wouldn't recruit someone, especially not a Half-Elf, to his personal Elite Unit that safeguarded the peace of the Kingdom of Gweliven, if there wasn't some skill present.

"It's time to shine!" Lux shouted while pointing at the Flying Tiger in the air. "Bring it down, Orion!"

Lux's fourth Named Creature, the Rock Golem Orion, appeared behind the Half-Elf and roared towards the sky.

Immediately, as if a kite was being pulled towards the ground, the Flying Tiger's body made a sharp turn in the sky and descended towards the ground with a frustrated roar.

Nikola grinned evilly as he concentrated his strength in his right arm.

"Come to daddy!" Nikola shouted as he stomped his left foot forward, preparing to unleash his strongest attack. The moment the Flying Tiger appeared within his ability's strike range, the middle-aged Dwarf blinked in front of the Deimos-Ranked Alpha Monster and unleashed a deadly punch that could shatter boulders into hundreds of pieces.

"Earth Dragon Smash!"

Immediately, a cry of pain reverberated in the surroundings before the ground trembled violently.

The Flying Tiger that terrorized the Dwarven Army was smashed towards the ground, creating a hundred-wide crater.

"Amazing!" Lux stared in awe at the middle-aged Dwarf who was now standing on the body of the Deimos Monster that suffered from serious injuries with just a single punch from the C-Ranked Dwarf.

Although Nikola was less than five feet tall, the power that was radiating from his small body was the same power that Lux had coveted all his life.

The Half-Elf had always wanted to become a Ranker, like his Grandma Vera. Now that he was fighting alongside someone whom he had aspired to become, Lux felt that the dream that he had in the past, was slowly, but surely, becoming a reality.

Chapter 213.2: A Gift From A Senior [Part 2]

The ground trembled, as Nikola unleashed a barrage of punches that buried the Flying Tiger deeper into the ground with every punch that he unleashed.

Several earth spikes had jutted out of the ground and shredded the Alpha-Ranked Deimos Monster's wings, preventing it from flying away.

The monster was unable to mount any counterattack and was forced to endure Nikola's one-sided blows that brought it closer to death.

"Die!" Nikola shouted as his right hand flashed for a brief moment before he smashed it into the Flying Tiger's head, shattering its skull.

The monster gave one last unwilling roar of frustration before it completely stopped moving.

Nikola faced Lux and gave him a thumbs up, which the Half-Elf returned with a thumbs up of his own. A moment later, the giant body of the Flying Tiger disappeared.

The middle-aged Dwarf looked down on a baby, blue Slime that was jumping happily on the ground, looking very pleased.

After Eiko took the body of the Deimos Monster using the Enchanted Beast Ring in her possession, she hurried back to her Papa, and crawled up on his body, until she was snugly perched on top of his head.

"Eiko, you're too excited," Lux said softly. "The monster was already ours. It was not going anywhere."

"Pa." Eiko nodded her head in understanding.

"The Beast Core is yours, but the monster parts are mine, okay?"

"Pa!"

"Good."

Nikola watched the exchange between Lux and the baby Slime with great interest. At first glance, the baby Slime was just an ordinary Slime that could be seen anywhere in the Kingdom of Gweliven. But, he believed that Eiko was different from the other Slimes that he had seen in the past.

As someone who had achieved his rank, he trusted his gut instincts very much. And his gut was telling him that the baby Slime that was perched on the Half-Elf's head was a creature that could perhaps one day, rival a dragon.

"Thanks for your help, Rookie," Nikola said as he walked towards Lux.
"Although the Flying Tiger had been dealt with, the battle is far from over. You can return to the ramparts, but be wary of the Monster that leads the horde. It is something that even I will not be able to fight alone."

Lux could sense the trace of concern in Nikola's voice which had surprised him. If a C-Ranker was feeling weary, it only meant that the opponent was stronger than him.

"An Argonaut Ranked Monster?" Lux inquired in a voice so low that only Nikola was able to hear.

Nikola nodded. "Close, but not quite. The Monster leading the Horde is an Alpha-Ranked Argonaut Monster that is known to us Rankers as a Lesser Demogorgon. If this was a full-fledged Demogorgon, I would have already ran

away because that monster is simply too powerful for someone like me to handle.

"But, even though I say it's a Lesser Demogorgon, it is still a Demogorgon. Only Holy, Life, and Divine Magic can pierce its defenses. Right now, we don't have someone like that here in the city. The best thing I can do is fight it to a stalemate and prevent it from advancing towards the city."

Lux could see the worry on Nikola's face, which told him that the monster was not as simple as he described it to be. Even so, this was something that was far from his reach.

Deep inside, he wondered if Keoza was stronger than the Lesser Demogorgon that the middle-aged Dwarf told him about. He could only summon the Crystal Dragon two more times, and it was his life saving trump card.

Unless he was pushed in a corner, Lux wouldn't use the Dragon Token to fight against the Lesser Demogorgon if he could help it.

"Don't worry, even though I can't beat it, I am confident that I can keep it at bay," Nikola said after seeing the trace of anxiousness in the Half-Elf's face. "Also, it is the only Argonaut-Ranked Monster in this Beast Tide. all the other threats haVE been dealt with, so as long as we endure thIS last wave of attacks, we can count this as a victory."

Lux nodded his head in agreement. Thinking about these things that were outside of his control was just a waste of time. If push came to shove, he would just retreat alongside his friends, as well as the Eternal Guild.

"I'm going back to my friends, Sir Nikola," Lux stated.

"Go," Nikola replied. "Leave the troublesome things to the adults. We are old enough to handle these things."

Lux gave the middle-aged Dwarf a brief nod before heading towards the City Walls.

Nikola watched him go with a sigh before looking towards the sky.

"I should have asked his Majesty to bring one more ranker with me," Nikola said with resignation. "If there are two of us here, we might find a way to beat the Lesser Demogorgon."

What Nikola didn't tell Lux was that the Demogorgons were not only as strong as dragons themselves, but were capable of casting magic, in addition to being able to fight in close combat. It was proficient at both, and deadly on both fronts.

Having two heads, one that specialize in magic casting, and one in physical fighting, it is one of the opponents that even Rankers like him found to be too troublesome to fight.

Nikola had fought one in the past, but he wasn't alone. There were two more rankers with him, but even with the three of them combined, the only thing that they managed to do was to make the monster flee.

It was simply too powerful for C-Rankers to handle, and only A-Rankers and above could effectively deal with these beasts that had come from the Abyss.

"I just hope it goes away on its own," Nikola muttered as he made his way back to the Mayor's side, who was also on the ramparts, commanding the city guards. "If not, may the Gods help us all."

Chapter 214: Visitor From The Abyss

Three hours had passed ever since the start of the defensive battle of Whitebridge City.

The defenders were about to get tired in fighting against the seemingly unending horde of monsters that were now doing their best to climb up the city walls, even if it meant using each other as a stepping stone to breakthrough the line of defense, which all the Dwarves were painstakingly trying to maintain.

Aina panted, catching her breath, as she swung her sword to cut off a monster's claw, sending it falling from the wall, crushing its comrades down below.

Although her guild, Eternal, had now taken the lead in the rankings, the doll-like beauty was more concerned about the welfare of her guild members.

The mages were exhausted after continuously casting spell, after spell, after spell. The archers had already run out of arrows, and those who could use their own magical energy to create elemental arrows, were suffering from mana exhaustion just like the mages.

The warriors, who boasted great physical strength, could only barely lift the weapons in their hands and swing them at the enemies that were now scaling the walls of the city.

There was also the issue of flying monsters that would harass them from the sky. It wasn't easy for the archers and the mages to shoot them down. However, after running out of ammunition and mana, the hundreds of flying monsters that remained posed a serious risk to the struggling defenders, who were now on the verge of collapse.

'Not good,' Aina thought as she swung her sword to save one of her Shield Warriors who could no longer lift his shield to defend himself from a wolf-type monster that had jumped over the wall.

Just after Aina successfully blocked the wolf's attack, a six-meter-long serpent appeared behind her and lunged at her blindspot.

"Sister!" Colette shouted as she smashed her mace against the underside of the serpent's jaw, giving it an uppercut, and changing the trajectory of its attack.

The Serpent was a Rank 3 Monster called Blue-Scaled Mamba, so the only thing that Colette had done was make it angrier. When the monster was about to launch another attack against the two Dwarf girls, an energy ball composed of light and dark magic smashed into its head, which pushed its serpentine body off the wall, making it fall down on the other side of the wall.

"Thank you, Whitey, Blackie!" Colette shouted as the Angel and Devil Slime flew above their heads to continue helping the defenders fend off the monster army.

"To those who are no longer able to fight, retreat to the plaza of the city!" Aina ordered. "Those who can still wield their weapons and cast spells, rally to me!"

""Yes!""

Aina's call was answered by her loyal guild members. Those who were unable to fight any longer had to force themselves to follow the order because they knew that they would just burden their Guild Master, who had already stepped up many times to save their lives.

Those who could still fight, gritted their teeth as they fought with everything they had.

'Everyone is nearing their limit,' Lux frowned as he scanned the surroundings.

He had already summoned Ishtar, and his Skeleton Grand Archers to attack the flying monsters that were doing sneak attacks from the sky.

The Skeleton Fighters were assisting the retreating members of the Eternal Guild, and protecting them from harm.

In order to lessen the burden that the Eternal Guild was facing, he even ordered Diablo to stand directly under the wall where Aina's Guild was defending. Unfortunately, the other guilds didn't have the inexhaustible Undead Warriors to help them protect their stations, which were now being overrun by monsters.

'Scarlet, are you sure that no Reapers are left in Whitebridge City?,' Lux asked through telepathy. All the creatures under his command could be talked to in this matter, as long as they were within a two-mile radius from Lux.

'I am not entirely sure,' Scarlet replied. 'But, I already killed four Reapers. I don't think they would send more of them, knowing that Sid and I are the ones that are supposed to kill you.'

Lux could only take a gamble right now because he needed all the help he could get at the moment.

'Scarlet, for now, continue to monitor if there are any Reapers around,' Lux ordered. 'Also, your priority is to protect Aina. As for you, Sid, stop defending Aina and just focus on eliminating as many monsters as you can in this location.'

'I understand, Master,' Sid replied. 'I will do my best.'

The two Assassins were Initiates, so they were more than capable when it came to dealing with small fries that were scaling the walls. However, since there was still a threat of assassination, he could only order Sid to go deal with the offense, leaving Scarlet with the defense.

Just as Lux was about to summon Orion to help with the defense, he heard a loud shout come from behind him.

"Everyone, brace yourselves for impact!" Nikola shouted.

As soon as this warning reached everyone's ears, a loud explosion took place, sending Aina and her guild members, who were near her, flying off the wall of the city.

Lux, who was dozens of meters away from the point of impact, could only gasp in shock upon seeing a three-meter-tall hole on the wall where Aina and her defenders stood a minute ago.

The Half-Elf's sixth sense screamed for him to get off the wall as soon as he could, so he immediately jumped off the wall, just in time for a second explosion that hit where he was standing just a few seconds ago.

A rocky hand reached out and caught the Half-Elf as he was about to fall on the ground.

"Thank you, Orion," Lux said as he glanced at the ramparts that were now partially destroyed due to the explosion.

A minute later, he saw a long tentacle-like arm grab hold of the rampart. What happened next made the Half-Elf shudder.

A creature, which he was seeing for the first time, appeared in front of his eyes. It had a humanoid appearance, with the exception of its two heads, which didn't even look like heads. They were more like one of those carnivorous plants with razor sharp teeth in its maw. However, instead of one head, there were two of them, making Lux subconsciously shudder.

Out of reflex, Lux activated his Elysium Compendium to appraise the monster above him. The information before his eyes made him draw cold breath.

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< Lesser Demogorgon >

- Abomination from the Abyss
- Wandering Field Boss
- Alpha-Ranked Argonaut Monster

Health: 70,000,000 / 70,000,000

Mana: 17,500,000 / 17,500,000

Strength: ?????

Intelligence: ?????

Vitality: ?????

Agility: ????

Dexterity:????

– A Lesser Demogorgon is a monster born from the abyss. It has incredible strength, and is proficient in close and magical combat. Anyone below the rank of a Rankers are just prey to this beast. If you happen to see one during your journeys, it will be best to run as far away as you can before it sets its sights on you.

– If you stare into the abyss the abyss will stare back at you.

"S-Sh*t." Lux could feel the color draining from his face as he stared at the Monster that had come from the abyss.

He had long heard about these Abyssal Monsters from his Grandma, and she said that they were the natural enemies of both Elysians and Solaians alike. Now that he was staring at one of them, he now understood why they were considered a universal threat to every living creature in the world.

Chapter 215: This Is Payback. Enjoy Your Trip To Hell

"Everyone get back!"

Nikola's shout reverberated in the city before a giant hand, made up of rock, smashed into the Lesser Demogorgon's body, sending it flying back out of the city.

However, the middle-aged Dwarf didn't end his counterattack there. Nikola raised his hands and several earth spikes jutted upwards from the ramparts of the city wall, annihilating all the monsters on top of it.

These spikes then moved like a saw, continuously shredding the rest of the monsters that were still climbing over the city walls.

"Are you alright?" Lux ran towards Aina, who was currently being supported by Colette.

Aina shook her head, "I just sprained my ankle. But I already applied healing magic on it. It will recover in a minute or two, but I'm very exhausted and can no longer fight."

"Looking at your expressionless face, I find it hard to believe that you are exhausted," Lux commented.

"How rude. I get tired like everyone else."

"Well, I guess you do have a point. Let's retreat for now. Sir Nikola will handle the rest."

Lux then summoned his Skeleton Fighters and Skeleton Grand Archers. He then ordered them to pick up Aina, Colette, and the rest of the Dwarves that had fallen from the explosion earlier.

The Skeletons had only taken a dozen steps when Lux suddenly frowned before looking at the walls of the city. As if waiting for him to do that, Diablo's body was hurled over the walls, crashing a few meters away from where Lux was standing.

A few seconds later, the Skeleton Rider turned into particles of light. Diablo's attack and defense had increased to over three hundred thousand, and yet, the Lesser Demogorgon was able to defeat him easily due to one of its unique Skills called "Abyss Touch".

Similar to Diablo's Ethereal Damage, this ability ignored all defenses, and dealt true damage to the Lesser Demogorgon's enemy.

Without batting an eye, Lux once again summoned Diablo. The earlier boosts in attack and defense that he had accumulated had been reset. But, the effect of Bloody Fervor started to activate once again, increasing Diablo's damage and defense at a rapid pace.

"Fall back!" Nikola shouted. "I will not be able to block it for long!"

Lux, Aina, and Colette knew that they would only hinder Nikola if they stayed, so they immediately evacuated the scene, leaving the Ranker to deal with the Monster from the Abyss alone.

Suddenly, a loud explosion took place. When the dust settled, the city gates of Whitebridge City lay in rubble, and the Lesser Demogorgon walked past it, with an intimidating aura.

Nikola pressed his hands together before slamming it full force on the ground. A few seconds later, a thirty-meter tall boulder materialized in front of him and was hurled at the Abyssal Creature, whose body had turned a shade darker.

The Lesser Demogorgon let out an ear-piercing shriek before using its tentacle-like hand to cut the boulder in half.

Nikola clicked his tongue when he saw that his attack didn't work. Just as he was about to follow up his attack, a giant wind blade descended from the sky, which cut off the tentacle arm of the Abyssal Monster, making it shriek in pain.

"What took you so long?!" Nikola shouted. "If you didn't come sooner, I might have died, you know?"

"Hahaha, sorry," a Dwarf who looked to be in his early twenties with silver-white hair said in a carefree manner. "I didn't know that you couldn't even handle a weak Lesser Gorgon by yourself."

"Bastard, give me a hundred more years and I'll wipe the floor with that Lesser Gorgon and you at the same time!"

"Tsk. If I knew that you would be this ungrateful, then I wouldn't have come. Okay, fine. I'll leave. You handle this yourself."

Nikola almost choked after hearing the Dwarf's words. He knew that if his comrade left now, he would be hard pressed to resist the Lesser Demogorgon on his own.

"I was just joking, you know?" Nikola laughed in a carefree manner. "I'll treat you to a mug of your favorite drink in the Capital. Can you help me deal with this rascal first?"

"Well, since you begged me nicely, I guess I have no choice," the silver-haired Dwarf said with a smile. "But, I want two mugs, okay?"

"Just one mug!"

"Ohh... I no longer feel motivated to fight. Only three cups of my favorite drink will restore my mood."

"Y-You bastard! Are you planning to take my entire month's salary in one sitting?"

The silver-haired Dwarf gave Nikola the "if you don't like it then I'll leave" gaze, which made the latter feel his liver ache from frustration and anger.

"Fine! Three mugs then!"

"Now we're talking!"

The silver-haired Dwarf was about to say more, but the Lesser Demogorgon had unleashed a giant fireball in his direction, making the Dwarf frown.

"Don't interrupt us, fiend," the silver-haired Dwarf waved his hand in a casual manner and dispersed the fireball using his wind magic.

The Dwarf then glared at the screaming monster, who was conjuring another spell on its left hand.

"I guess you're eager to be put in your place that badly," the silver-haired Dwarf stated. "Fine, I'll play with you for a bit. I just hope that you won't break that easily."

On that day, Lux and the other defenders of Whitebridge City witnessed a scene which made them feel both fear and excitement at the same time.

Fear, because an Elder Wind Elemental appeared above Whitebridge City and conjured three Living Hurricanes which were strong enough to wipe them all from the face of the world.

Excitement, because the Elder Wind Elemental was fighting on their side, and commanded his Summons to suck up all the Monsters in the vicinity, and shred them to bits.

The Lesser Demogorgon roared in anger as the Elder Wind Elemental trapped it in a whirlwind, allowing the silver-haired Dwarf to attack it without any means to defend itself.

"Time to end this," the silver-haired Dwarf said as he raised his hand forming a gigantic crackling spear made up of the element of wind and lightning.

"Ultima Spear!"

The wind howled as the spear flew straight towards its target, who had erected a barrier to protect itself. However, this barrier lasted only for a few seconds before it broke apart, allowing the Ultima Spear to pierce through its body, disintegrating it until only its Beast Core was left.

The silver-haired Dwarf waved his hand, and the Beast Core flew in his direction.

"Say, Nikola, that is the rumored Half-Elf, right?" the silver-haired Dwarf asked before glancing at the Half-Elf who was looking at him in awe. "Our latest member?"

"Aye, that he is," Nikola replied.

The silver-haired Dwarf hummed before playing with the obsidian colored Beast-Core in his hand.

"Here," the silver-haired Dwarf said as he tossed the Argonaut-Ranked Beast Core towards Nikola. "Tell him that this is a gift from one of his seniors."

Nikola caught the Beast Core. He grumpily looked at the silver-haired Dwarf who was also the strongest member of the Order of the Griffon. "Why don't you give it to him yourself?"

"Now is not the right time," the silver-haired Dwarf answered. "If he becomes strong enough to travel to the Capital City, then I will personally meet him. But now, he's still not ready."

Nikola snorted, but he could also understand what their leader was saying. "Fine. I'll give this to him later."

The silver-haired Dwarf nodded. "Don't forget your promise. I will wait for your return to the Capital."

Without saying another word, the silver-haired Dwarf flew upwards and disappeared in a matter of seconds. He couldn't leave the Capital City for long, since his duty was to always be by the King's side.

He only came to Whitebridge City because Nikola had sent him an urgent request for help. As the leader of the Order of the Griffin, he just couldn't ignore the request of one of the pillars that ensured the safety of the Kingdom of Gweliven.

After the great battle ended, cheers rang out from the city as all the Dwarves celebrated their victory. Now that the Beast Tide was over, everyone could only feel happy that they had survived such a calamity.

"Big Brother, let's eat dinner together!" Colette said with a smile. "My treat!"

"Very well," Lux replied. "I'll be happy to have dinner—"

Colette, who was standing in front of her Big Brother screamed when he saw a blade pierce through the Half-Elf's chest.

A second later, the blade was pulled out and a hooded figure immediately ran away, leaving the Half-Elf, clutching his chest that was now soaked with his blood. Everything happened so fast that no one was able to react to the assailant, who had chosen the moment, when they had relaxed their guard because the battle was over, to attack.

"Big Brother!"

"Pa!"

"I-I'm alri..." Lux wasn't able to finish his words before he collapsed on the ground.

Soon, the plaza suddenly became chaotic as the Dwarves, who were celebrating with Lux only minutes ago, scrambled to help the fallen Half-Elf, as well as pursue the attacker that had stabbed him in the back.

Before Lux's vision failed him, the words that the assassin had said to him replayed inside his mind.

"This is payback. Enjoy your trip to hell."

That was the last thing that the Half-Elf thought before Colette's and Eiko's screams were silenced by the darkness that came crashing over him without any shred of mercy.

Chapter 216: This Is What You Get For Going Against Twilight Rain

"Big Brother!"

"Paaaaaaaaaaa!"

Colette and Eiko held onto Lux as Aina and the Clerics of her guild tried to heal his injury.

"Guild Master, the blade that the attacker used missed his heart by a centimeter," One of the Cleric reported. "However, it has a very potent poison. As we speak, it is rapidly spreading inside his body. At this rate, he won't last for more than a few minutes."

"Do you have the antidote or any mean to stop the spread of the poison?" Aina asked. Her expression remained the same, but her eyes betrayed the anxiety in her heart.

The Cleric and her comrades shook their heads. "This is a new type of poison, and I've only seen for the first time today. I'm afraid..."

"Pa!" Eiko's body glowed as she used her skill "Cure" to cure the poison that was spreading inside her Papa's body.

"Pa!"

"Pa!"

"Pa!"

Eiko repeatedly used her ability as her tears streamed down the side of her face. However, the only thing she was able to do was delay the spread of the poison for a few seconds before it continued its invasion on the Half-Elf's body.

"Wuwuwu." Eiko knew that her skill wasn't working, but she still desperately continued using her Cure ability over and over again.

"Can I have a look at him?" a dwarf who was wearing a noble's robe knelt down beside the Half-Elf whose face was slowly growing pale. "I have knowledge about medicine. Maybe I can help him."

"You are..." Aina frowned after recognizing the man. "The personal bodyguard of the Head of the Merchant Guild, Ferron."

"It is an honor to be recognized by the Warrior Princess," Ferron replied with a smile. "Is it possible for me to check his condition?"

"Yes," Aina nodded. "Please, help him."

"I will do my best." Ferron placed his hand over the injury on Lux's chest and activated his diagnostic skill.

He didn't lie when he said that he was proficient when it came to medicine because he was an alchemist that dabbled in the use of drugs and poisons. However, his hand shook when he saw the poison that was spreading inside the Half-Elf's body because he had instantly recognized it.

"Jade World Dragon!" Ferron exclaimed. "The poison is from the blood of the Jade World Dragon!"

Aina's body shuddered after hearing Ferron's words. The Jade World Dragon was an Empyrean Ranked creature, which was two ranks higher than an Argonaut-Ranked Monster.

It was a monster that could only be found at the Jade Forest, which even High-Rankers dare not explore. That was how dangerous the forest was. There were few occasions when the blood of the Jade World Dragon was placed on auction houses, and, every time, its final price was astronomical due to how rare it was.

The blood of this type of dragon could cure almost any kind of poisons, as well as other serious illnesses that couldn't be cured through the use of abilities. However, if the blood of this dragon was mixed with the blood of a Hydra, it would create a poison that could only be cured using the untainted blood of the Jade World Dragon.

"Guild Master, I'm sorry," Ferron shook his head. "There's nothing more that I can do."

"No! That can't be!" Colette held Lux's hand and squeezed it tightly. "Big Brother! You promised that we will still go on adventures together! Please! Don't die!"

"Paaaa!" Eiko nudged her head on Lux's cheeks, who had grown as pale as a candle. "Wuwuwuwu!"

Aina looked at the Half-Elf with a complicated look on her face before closing her eyes. She was clenching her fist so hard, that if it weren't for the gauntlets she was wearing, she would have already drawn blood on the palm of her hands.

Ferron stood up and glanced at his Employer before shaking his head. The Head of the Merchant Guild nodded his head in understanding before glancing at the Half-Elf who was as good as dead.

A minute later, a long and deep sigh escaped Lux's lips as his heart finally stopped beating.

Sid, who was standing not far away, turned into particles of light.

Scarlet, who had hidden herself inside a house, looked at her hands that were slowly turning into particles of light. A sigh then escaped her lips before her

entire body shattered into hundreds of glowing orbs that disappeared a few seconds later.

Diablo, Ishtar, Orion, as well as the other Skeletons under Lux's command, turned to ashes, and disintegrated completely.

Such was the fate of summoned creatures when their Master died. It was a law that no summoned creature could escape from.

"Paaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!" Eiko's sad shout reverberated in the plaza when she felt that her Papa's heart had stopped beating.

The Clerics beside Lux shook their heads as they made the sign of the Goddess of Life over Lux's body to give him their blessings for his journey to the afterlife.

"Make way!" Nikola shouted as he rushed towards Lux, who had breathed his last.

After placing his hand on the Half-Elf's neck the C-Ranker closed his eyes with a regretful look on his face.

"Is there anyone here his relative?" Nikola asked. "Is there anyone here who can take him back to his hometown?"

Usually, when Foreigners die, those who live in the same hometown would take their bodies back to Solais to be buried. That had been the custom since the Solaians gained the means to travel to Elysium.

"Big Brother came here in Elysium alone," Colette answered as she fought the tears that were falling from her eyes. "He doesn't have anyone to bring him back home."

"... What a pity." Nikola sighed. "Very well. In behalf of the bravery that he had presented today, I will ask his Majesty to bury him in this kingdom. Although he is a foreigner, he fought for us with everything he had. This is the only thing we can do for him."

Nikola picked up the Half-Elf from the ground, and looked at the Baby Slime who was still crying her heart out.

"I will now take my leave," Nikola declared. "Take care, everyone."

Colette wanted to go with Nikola to give Lux her final farewell, but Aina held onto her and prevented her from following them. Even though Colette tried to escape from her hold, her sister's hand wouldn't budge.

Aina even ordered her Officers to ensure that Matty, as well as Colette's other friends, wouldn't follow Nikola and create a scene.

Just as Nikola was about to arrive at the Teleportation Gate, he saw a dwarf wearing very expensive clothing blocking his way.

"Is there something you need, Sir Lucius?" Nikola asked. "I didn't know that the Head of the Merchant Guild of Whitebridge City is interested in the dead?"

"Sir Nikola, it has been a while since we saw each other," Lucius replied as he walked towards the C-Ranker who was carrying the Half-Elf in his arms. "I just came to give my final respect to one of the unsung heroes of our kingdom. It's truly a pity, the one and only Half-Elf in the Dwarven Kingdom had died tragically."

Lucius didn't hesitate to place his hand over Lux's hand that was resting over his chest. A moment later, he pulled his hand back and gave an exaggerated sigh that grated on Nikola's ears.

"Truly a pity," Lucius said. "I hope his majesty gives him a proper burial. That is the least that we can do for him."

"You don't have to tell me that," Nikola snorted. "That is what I am planning to do."

Without another word, Nikola entered the Teleportation Gate, leaving Lucius, who was looking at his back with a sneer.

'This is what you get for going against Twilight Rain,' Lucius gloated inside his heart. 'No matter how strong an Apostle is, it is still an Apostle. I'm sure that the Guild Master will be pleased after hearing this news. Scarlet had done well.'

Although the red-haired assassin was wearing a robe, Lucius had been able to get a glimpse of the long red hair that she was well-known for.

The Head of the Merchant Guild chuckled as he thought of the profits that he would make by offering his services to help the city rebuild.

For him, this was a great day. Not only was the pest that almost shut down his operation in Whitebridge City dead, but he would also be able to profit from the Gweliven Kingdom.

For a merchant like him, this was a win-win situation that benefited him in more ways than one.

Chapter 217: I Hope You Return This Favor In The Future

After taking an exclusive Teleportation Gate that would instantly send him to the Capital City of the Dwarven Kingdom, Nikola headed to the Headquarters of the Order of the Griffin under the cover of darkness.

"Wuwuwu."

"Don't cry, little one. Just wait a little bit longer."

Eiko's tears had already covered Lux's face as she kept on nudging the Half-Elf's forehead with her own. The baby Slime was heartbroken due to Lux's sudden death, and she couldn't stop herself from crying.

Nikola sighed as he looked at the baby Slime, who influenced him to also feel depressed. He never thought that he would be affected by a Monster crying for its Master, just like the baby Blue Slime did for Lux.

After entering a mansion at the outskirts of the capital, Nikola used his right foot to open the secret passage that led underground.

Several minutes passed as he walked down the secret path that led directly to their Headquarters.

The moment he opened the door, four Dwarves turned their heads to look at him.

"So you're finally here," Nevreal said as he glanced at the dead Half-Elf in Nikola's arms. "Lay him down on the table."

Nikola nodded and gently laid Lux's body on the table that the others had prepared for him.

"Charles, do the honors," Nevreal made a gesture for one of his comrades whom he had forced to become one of their collaborators in the Whitebridge City's operation.

Charles nodded and took out a metal syringe from his storage ring. Inside it was a purplish liquid that he had created a year ago.

"All this trouble for a rookie," Charles grumbled. "I just hope he doesn't disappoint us."

As soon as the serum was completely injected inside Lux's body, the Half-Elf's body jolted as if it was given an electric shock.

A moment later, the Half-Elf inhaled deeply as if taking his first breath in the world.

"Still, I can't believe that someone was able to gain an immunity against the Jade World Dragon's Poison," Charles muttered as he placed his fingers over the Half-Elf's wrist to check his condition. "I'm very tempted to open him up and study what makes him tick."

"Don't do that," Nikola said. "That Baby Slime had been crying non-stop since he died. It is best to limit yourself to the prisoners we captured from Twilight Rain."

Charles snorted. "Fine."

Eiko, who had been crying earlier, suddenly stopped crying when she felt her Papa's heart start beating again. To make sure that she wasn't hearing things, she crawled towards Lux's chest and closed her eyes in order to feel, and hear, his heartbeat.

When she confirmed that Lux's heart had indeed started beating again, the Baby Slime was overjoyed and hastily crawled back to Lux's forehead. After that, she spat a blob of water on the Half-Elf's face, which made the latter open his eyes in shock.

"E-Eiko?"

"Wuwuwu!"

The Half-Elf struggled to raise his hand to lightly pat the crying baby Elime on his forehead. He had already told Eiko about the plan, and even made sure that she understood that Scarlet would assassinate him in front of everyone, so the news of his death would reach the ears of Twilight Rain as soon as possible.

What he didn't know was that Eiko thought that he was just joking.

When he died in front of her, the Baby Slime had completely forgotten what Lux had told her a day ago and felt heartbroken by his death.

In truth, Lux didn't die from the Poison of the Jade World Dragon. He "died" from a different kind of poison, which would temporarily stop his heartbeat and make him appear to be dead. As long as he was given the antidote within the next 24 hours, he would wake up instantly.

If not, then he would remain dead forever.

This was a poison that Charles had invented just in case some of the members of the Order of the Griffin needed to play dead for a short period of time.

The funny thing about this poison was that when a diagnostic spell was used, it would appear as if the victim had been poisoned by the blood of the Empyrean Dragon, whose blood could fetch a price into the tens of millions.

"I hate to interrupt your reunion. But, now that you are dead, what do you plan to do next?" Nevreal said as he walked beside Lux who was coaxing the baby slime to stop spitting water on his head.

Eiko was relieved but also very angry at Lux for doing something so reckless, so she kept on spitting water on him as payback for making her cry.

Lux held the baby slime with both of his hands and placed her on his chest, so that he could talk to the middle-aged Dwarf who had set this whole plan into motion.

"I will return to my hometown and will stay there for two to three months," Lux replied. "That way, Twilight Rain will not doubt that I am dead."

Nevreal nodded his head in understanding. "What about your friends? Those kids are sure to be feeling depressed right now."

Lux sighed as he thought of Colette and her friends, who were sure to be devastated because of his death. Even so, he made sure that Aina would handle the rest and tell them that he was safe and sound.

"Truth be told, I'm a little scared to meet them right now," Lux said before a blob of water landed on his face, making him wince.

After shaking his head side to side like a dog, Eiko giggled in his hands, which allowed Lux to continue the things he wanted to say to Nevreal.

"If Eiko is already reacting like this, I'm sure they will want to have a piece of me when I appear in front of them," Lux stated. "It will be best if I lie low for a bit."

Nevreal nodded. "We will assign an Initiate to serve as a bodyguard to the Guild Master of Eternal. I don't know if they will send Reapers to end her life, just as they did for you, but it is in the Kingdom's interest that she remains alive to serve as Whitebridge City's Protector."

"That is for the best. Thank you, Sir Nevreal."

"You owe us a lot from this, boy. I hope you return this favor in the future."

The fourth Dwarf inside the room turned around and left without another word. It was too soon for him to talk to Lux, and he only stayed because he wanted to make sure that he was fine.

Nikola then approached Lux and gave him the Beast Core of the Lesser Demogorgon which instantly caught Eiko's eye.

However, to his surprise, Eiko only crawled towards the Beast Core in Lux's hand before reluctantly giving it a lick.

As if having tasted something extremely bitter, the Baby Slime's started to spit water on the floor as if trying to cleanse her mouth from something very foul.

Nikola chuckled after seeing this scene before glancing at Lux.

"Beast Cores extracted from Abyssal Monsters are usually not liked by other Monsters," Nikola stated. "However, they contain very potent skills that are exclusive to Abyss Type Monsters. I hope that you get lucky and get a decent Skill from it. Who knows? It might come in handy in the future."

Lux gazed at the black Beast Core in his hand before giving the middle-aged dwarf a grateful look. "Thank you, Sir Nikola. I will not forget this favor."

"No." Nikola shook his head. "That Beast Core didn't come from me, but from our Leader. When you get stronger, you will have the opportunity to meet him in the future. You can thank him then."

Lux smiled as he once again looked at the black Beast Core in his hand. He would never forget his encounter with the Lesser Demogorgon.

'That monster was stronger than Keoza,' Lux mused as he gazed at the Beast Core in his hand. 'If that silver-haired Dwarf hadn't come to our rescue, we might have all died in Whitebridge City.'

While Lux was deep in thought, Nikola, and Charles left the room, leaving only Nevreal behind.

"There is something important that I need to take care of in the next couple of months," Nevreal stated. "It might be possible that you will not be able to contact me, or any member of the Order of the Griffin at that time. Just in case that happens, do not do anything remotely dangerous like you did today. You only have one life. Make sure that you treasure it."

Lux nodded and thanked Nevreal.

After giving him a few more reminders, Nevreal left the room and proceeded to return to the Royal Palace.

Since Lux could return to Solais with the power of the Arondight Ring in his hand, he didn't need to leave their Headquarters to go to the Teleportation Gate in the Capital City.

Several agents of Twilight Rain were stationed in the city and it would be very easy for them to identify Lux since he was the only Half-Elf in the Kingdom of Gweliven.

Great lengths had been taken in order to orchestrate his death, and he was not stupid enough to put all of those efforts to waste.

"Aina, I hope that you explain it properly to Colette and the others," Lux muttered as he placed the still pouting Eiko on top of his head. "I will

apologize to them the next time we see each other. Although it pains me to part in this manner, it is the only way that I can protect them as well."

Lux took a deep breath as he stood in the center of the room.

"Sid, Scarlet, come," Lux ordered as he summoned the Coffin that housed his two loyal subordinates.

"Welcome back, Master," Sid bowed respectfully.

"Since you are alive, it means that we have succeeded," Scarlet commented from the side.

Lux smiled as he looked at the two assassins that were now serving under him. Although they tried to hide it, he was able to trace the anxiety in their voice.

As long as Lux was alive, they could live.

If Lux died, they would be sealed in the coffin for eternity.

"Sid, I will be away for a few months," Lux said as he looked at the Dhampir who was looking at him with a serious expression on his face. "You can stay with your sisters in Leaf Village for a month. Emma is going to stay in Whitebridge City and work with Aina in order to become stronger.

"Until I return, you are free to do whatever you want so you won't feel left behind by Scarlet, who is now going to become a Slayer Candidate."

Sid nodded his head in understanding. "As you command, Master."

Lux then shifted his attention to Scarlet, who was looking at him with anticipation.

"Return to Twilight Rain," Lux ordered. "Do not make contact with me and just focus on becoming a Ranker. I don't care how long it takes, but the moment you become a Ranker, you will come to find me. That is an order."

"Very well," Scarlet replied. "I will do my end of the bargain."

"Both of you may go. I hope that next time we meet, both of you will become stronger than ever before."

"Yes! Master!"

"That's a given."

Lux waved his hand and sent the two Assassins on the Save Point he had created using the Blackfire Coffin in Oakwood Town. This was to ensure that the location of their Headquarters would remain a secret.

Even though he trusted his two subordinates, it was still better to keep the location a secret to ensure the safety of the other members of the order.

"Are you ready to go, Eiko?"

"Pa!"

Lux then placed his right hand over his chest. He had already done everything he needed to do in Elysium, and it was now time to go back home and focus on the tournament that was about to take place.

"Open! Heaven's Gate!"

Chapter 218: Those Who Dwell In The Abyss

"Eiko, hey... Eiko, look! It's your favorite Beast Core," Lux shook a Rank 4 Beast Core in front of the pouting baby Slime, but Eiko just ignored him.

After returning to Solais, the baby Slime stuck herself to Great Grandma Vera's side like glue, refusing to take even a single step away from the latter, completely ignoring her Papa.

Vera could only smile at the baby Slime's antics, because she knew why Eiko was acting this way.

Lux had told her about everything that had transpired in Elysium, and even the mild mannered Vera hadn't been able to stop herself from flicking her beloved grandson's forehead for doing what he did.

Although the plan worked, and he had completely hoodwinked the organization known as Twilight Rain, Lux had hurt many people's feelings in the process.

Vera understood that what her grandson did was the best solution he could think of, and even she found that—during the time that her adoptive grandson had been in Elysium—he had become quite resourceful.

"When you return to Elysium after the tournament, make sure to apologize to those poor kids properly. I'm sure that they felt heartbroken after your fake death, and they might hate you for doing such a thing." That was what Vera had told him a day ago, after he had finished telling her everything that he had done in the Dwarven Kingdom of Gweliven.

The Half-Elf already planned on doing just that when he returned. However, he decided to bring some souvenirs to his little brothers and sisters, with the hope that it would lessen their anger towards him.

'If Eiko is already like this, I wonder how Colette will react when I return,' Lux thought as he kept on sharking the Beast Core in front of the baby Slime who was ignoring his existence.

Vera lightly patted Eiko's head as she looked at her grandson's attempts to pacify his daughter.

"Lux, I was unable to tell you this yesterday because I knew you were tired, and I decided to let you rest," Vera said. "However, since you are rested now, it's time to talk to you about the monsters from the Abyss."

When Vera heard that Lux had fought against an Abyssal Being, a deep frown appeared on her face, and she immediately used a diagnostic spell to check Lux's and Eiko's bodies for signs of corruption.

After making sure that the two of them were okay, she decided to tell them everything she knew about the Abyssal Beasts to ensure that her grandson and her great granddaughter were aware of what they were fighting against.

"When the Solains first ventured into Elysium, we tried to adapt to the similar yet unique world that we found ourselves in," Vera explained. "Over the years, some managed to form partnerships with the ruling families of the land, while others looked for unexplored lands and built their home there.

"After living in Elysium for several years, we had learned from the Elysians, as well as from personal experience, about the existence of creatures that had come from the Abyss. Hence, we have given them the name Abyssal Monsters."

Vera paused to make sure that Lux and Eiko were listening to her explanation before she continued her tale.

"These Abyssal Creatures are more powerful than the creatures in both Solais and Elysium. For example, a Deimos-Ranked Dragon will always be stronger than another Deimos-Ranked creature because of their superior race, and bloodline. The Abyssal Monsters are the same. In fact, if the Dragons and an Abyssal Monster of the same rank fought, more often than not, it will be the Abyssal Creature that will be victorious. The reason why they are able to beat even the strongest of Beasts is their race's specialties which are the Abyss Touch, Abyss Charm, and Abyss Corruption."

"Abyss Touch ignores any kind of defense, allowing Abyssal Creatures to deal True Damage to their enemies. This means that even the sturdiest of Dragon Scales is only as good as a sheet of paper to them. In their eyes, we are just defenseless creatures that they can kill easily."

Very's expression became serious as she mentioned the Abyssal Creature's next ability.

"Their next ability is the Abyss Charm," Vera replied. "This ability works in almost all kinds of Monsters. Even Dragons can fall prey to this ability, making them mere puppets of the Abyssal Creature. The Beast Tide that you encountered, might have been orchestrated by this Abyssal Beast, making them the embodiment of mass destruction."

Lux's and Eiko's expressions also became serious as they listened to Vera's explanation. This was the first time they heard about these things, and it made them realize how terrible these monsters were.

"Last, but not the least, is their Abyss Corruption," Vera stated. "Some Abyssal Monsters have the inherent ability to corrupt anything they touch. Those who are infected by their miasma must be purified as soon as possible in order to stop the corruption from spreading completely. If the infected person isn't able to get treatment after four to five days, the miasma will drive them crazy."

"They will no longer be able to tell friend from foe and will attack any living creature within their sight. The scary part about this was, once they have been taken over by the miasma, they become carriers of corruption. Meaning, they can infect other creatures and spread the corruption like wildfire."

"Several settlements have been destroyed because those who have been infected kept their situation a secret until it was too late. Only High-Ranking Class Priests, Clerics, and other similar professions would be able to purify the miasma from the bodies of the infected. For this same reason, parties that were formed to fight against these creatures would always have a High-Ranking Cleric, or Priest, to prevent such a scenario from happening."

Vera lightly patted Eiko's head as she stared at Lux.

"If you ever got infected by an Abyssal Creature, return here at once," Vera ordered. "Natasha is a High-Ranking Cleric. She will be able to help purify the miasma in your body."

"Manma!"

"Of course, Eiko. If you get infected, you must return here at once as well."

"Mmm!"

Lux scratched his head before taking out the Abyssal Beast Core that was given to him by Nikola.

Vera froze after seeing the Obsidian-colored Beast Core in her grandson's hand, and looked at him askance.

"This was given to me by Sir Nikola," Lux replied. "Should I use it, Grandma?"

"... You can," Vera replied after a brief internal struggle. "There have been Rankers who managed to gain the skills of Abyssal Creatures and used them to fight against them. However, once you gain an Abyssal Ability, you will be required to register this skill with the Adventurer's Guild.

"After that, you will be given a Black Adventurer's Card, which is given only to those who possessed an Abyssal Skill. The holders of these Black Cards will be given priority when it comes to missions or quests involving Abyssal Beings."

"Will I also gain an Abyssal Slayer title after getting the Black Card?"

"Silly boy." Vera gave Lux a disapproving look. "Once you personally kill an Abyssal, you will gain that title automatically in your Soul Book."

Lux took a deep breath before focusing his attention on the Abyssal Beast Core in his hand.

"I'm going to use it now, Grandma," Lux said.

Vera nodded. "Tell me if you gain any kind of skill afterward."

Lux summoned his Soul Book and checked his stats.

Name: Lux Von Kaizer

Age: 16

Race: Half-Elf

Rank: Grade A Apostle

Health: 33,000 / 33,000

Mana: 22,500 / 22,500

Strength: 200

Intelligence: 250

Vitality: 260

Agility: 200

Dexterity: 150

Special Abilities: Skill Evolution [EX], Mana Drain [EX], Item Transmutation [EX], Warrior's Luck [EX], Doppelganger [EX], Air Strider [EX], Dragon's Fear [EX], Elemental Shield [EX], Guardian's Call

Special Body Constitution: Immortal Dragon Conqueror's Legacy

Summoning Skills. Summon Diablo, Summon Ishtar, Summon Pazuzu, Summon Orion, Summon Skeleton Fighters, Summon Skeleton Grand Archers.

Active Skills: Power Shot, Dark Arrow, Void Arrow, Fury Slash, Double Fury Slash, Battle Cry, Improved Jade Body (Mass Buff), Spinning Blades, Bone Wall, Barbed Bones, Sky-High Rush, Gale Storm.

Passive Skills: Enhanced Fortitude, Expert Parry, Tempest Fury, Last Stand, Sticky Foot, Very Tough

Title: Apprentice Blacksmith, Negotiator, Outbreak Survivor, Eternal Guardian

Lux held the Beast Core in his hands as several rows of text appeared in front of him.

< Do you wish to consume Argonaut-Ranked Abyssal Beast Core? >

< Yes / No >

Lux chose Yes and two more options appeared in front of him.

< Upgrade Stat Points >

< Upgrade Skills>

Lux decisively chose to upgrade Stat Points and a series of notifications appeared in front of him.

Obtained 100 Free Stats Points

Obtained 100 Body Constitution Points

You have learned the Passive Skill, Abyss Touch

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

The skill, Abyss Touch, is a Passive Skill, it will be automatically upgraded into Abyss Touch [EX].

< Abyss Touch [EX] >

– The touch of the Abyss ignores all kinds of defenses whether it be physical or magical.

– Any attack you deal to your foes will deal True Damage, regardless if it is physical, or magical in nature.

– This ability allows you to deal 200% Bonus True Damage against Abyssal Creatures of any Rank.

– This skill has a very small chance to inflict Abyss Charm on any monster (including Abyssal monsters) that is similar to your Rank or Below. The condition that must be met in order to trigger this skill is that your target must have less than 10% of its Max Health remaining.

– Charmed creatures will obey your every command for thirty minutes, regardless of what it is. Once the Charm effect's duration has ended, you will be unable to charm that creature again.

– This skill has a very small chance to inflict Fear Status on your opponent.

– This skill has a very small chance to inflict Paralyze Status on your opponent.

– This skill has a very small chance to inflict Diseased Status on your opponent.

– This skill has a very small chance to inflict Weakened Status on your opponent.

Lux's eyes widened in shock after reading the information of his newly acquired passive skill. He then passed his Soul Book to his Grandma to allow

her to read it. Surprisingly, Vera also had the same reaction as the Half-Elf, which made Eiko look at the grandmother and grandson pair with amusement.

"Lux."

"Grandma?"

"I think you should not register this skill in the Adventurer's Guild for the time being," Vera replied. "I'm afraid that once my son finds out about this, your cover will be blown."

Lux scratched his head because he felt that this skill would indeed cause his Step-Father to become suspicious of his abilities. He wanted to give Alexander a surprise, so keeping this a secret for now was the best option at this point in time.

"Understood," Lux replied. "Let's keep this as a secret for now, Grandma."

Vera nodded. "This is for the best. It is good to have the Element of Surprise on your side."

Vera looked at her grandson with a complicated gaze. Now that Lux had also become a Grade A Apostle, as well as having acquired an Abyssal Skill, it wouldn't be long before he surpassed his friends who had gone to Elysium years before him.

'Alex, I can't wait to see the look on your face after Lux wins the tournament,' Vera smiled as she thought of her son who had orchestrated the tournament to look for her granddaughter's fiance. 'By then, you will have no choice but to acknowledge him.'

Vera knew that, although Alexander didn't hate Lux, he still thought of the Half-Elf as someone lacking due to his weak constitution when he was very young. In Alexander's eyes, the young man was not worthy of his daughter's love and affection.

Right now, Vera couldn't wait for the tournament to start. She was looking forward to seeing her grandson shine on the stage that he had been dreaming about all of his life.

Chapter 219: Return To Barbatos Academy

Two weeks had passed ever since Lux's return from Elysium.

He and his Grandma Vera left Wildgarde Stronghold, so the Half-Elf could undertake an intense training session which pushed him to the limits.

With her granddaughter's happiness at stake, Vera had been very strict with the training. It was because she loved Lux with all of her heart that she didn't show him any mercy during their sparring sessions.

It made the Half-Elf understand that even though the kind, old lady, who had raised him since he was a baby, had lowered her rank to match him, his battle experience was lacking, so much that he wasn't able to even touch a strand of her hair.

During the first week, Vera made sure to drill the weaknesses he possessed into him, allowing the Half-Elf to understand his shortcomings better.

Eiko was also undergoing training with Vera. It was not only Lux who wanted to become stronger. As usual, the Baby Slime's motivation was to defeat her archenemy, the Unicorn, Astra, who had defeated her in their last rematch.

Although Lux thought that it was still too early for Eiko to beat Astra, he allowed her to do as she pleased since he understood that having a rival allowed someone to push themselves to the limit.

On the thirteenth day, Vera and Lux stopped their training to allow the Half-Elf to rest properly. Although their training session was rather short, Vera was still quite pleased with how strong Lux had become compared to how he was a year ago.

"Are you ready?" Vera asked as she glanced at her grandson, who was staring at the Academy that was slowly getting closer with each passing minute.

"Yes," Lux replied. "Thank you, Grandma, for everything."

"No need to thank me. I just want you and Iris to be happy."

"Mmm."

As Sophie climbed the banks of the river, a young lady with long, light blue hair, that was fluttering in the breeze, was waving at them from a distance.

Right beside her was a mature beauty, who also served as the Headmaster of Barbatos Academy's personal secretary.

Both ladies had been waiting for Vera's and Lux's arrival. The moment Iris' Guardian Beast had sensed the Half-Elf's presence, it immediately notified its master, who in turn hurried towards the Riverbank to meet them.

If it weren't for the fact that Alicia was walking down the hallway, inadvertently noticing Iris' happy expression, she wouldn't have known that Vera and Lux had entered the territory of Barbatos Academy.

"Grandma, Big Brother, Eiko!" Iris shouted as she ran towards them. "I missed the three of you."

"Ma!"

Eiko immediately perked up after seeing Iris, and happily jumped off of Lux's head, and used her skill, Air Strider [EX], to fly towards her.

Vera chuckled after she saw this scene, while Lux only sighed helplessly as he watched the mother and daughter pair finally reunite, showering each other with kisses.

"It's good to see you look happy and healthy, Iris," Vera said as she hugged her beloved granddaughter in a warm embrace. "Is your father well?"

Iris nodded. "Father has been busy, making sure that nothing would go wrong with the tournament. Even so, he is still a Saint, so this amount of work is nothing to him."

"Indeed, but don't forget that Saints are still people who get tired. My son is just a bit stubborn, but he truly loves you, Iris."

"I know, Grandma, but he's so strict at times. If he really loves me, then he wouldn't come up with the idea of using this tournament to look for my fiancée. I already have Big Brother, I don't need anyone else!"

Alicia, who was standing a few meters away from Iris, could only smile bitterly as the young beauty scolded her father behind his back.

Her boss, Alexander, had indeed been quite busy as of late that he didn't even have time to spare to eat meals together with Iris. Because of this, the young lady, who was treated by everyone as the princess of Barbatos Academy, was not in a good mood.

While she was looking at the Grandma and Granddaughter pair who were still stuck to each other like glue, she turned her head to the Half-Elf who was just smiling from the side. Using her ability as a ranker, she tried to gauge Lux's strength, but to her surprise, she was unable to appraise how strong the red-headed teenager was.

As if sensing her gaze, Lux shifted his attention to her and smiled.

"Have you been well, Alicia?" Lux asked. "If you don't take care of yourself, you will not be able to get married even after you become 40 years old."

"Lux, it seems that you've grown quite bold since the last time we saw each other," Alicia replied as she locked the Half-Elf's head into a headlock. "Don't worry, this Big Sister will make sure that you won't die during the tournament."

Lux, whose face was now buried in Alicia's voluptuous chest, felt embarrassed. Clearly, the mature beauty didn't think of him as a man, but as a boy who was still unaware of the intricacies of a woman's body.

Iris, who saw this scene immediately pulled Lux away from Alicia, and wiped his face using her handkerchief. She was doing her best to remove any trace of Alicia's scent from her beloved brother's face, whom she hadn't seen for more than a month.

"Big Brother, you're too careless," Iris said in a reprimanding tone. "Do you let girls grab your head like that? If you have that kind of fetish, I am more than willing to do it for you. So, come!"

The beautiful young lady spread her arms wide in an inviting gesture. Although Iris was only sixteen years old, her body was already showing great promise, which made almost all the boys in the academy look at her with infatuated gazes.

'Unbelievable, she's only sixteen and she's almost a C-Cup,' Lux thought. 'A year or two from now, she will definitely be one of the most outstanding ladies in the Eastern Lands.'

Although he didn't want to admit it, Lux didn't want another young man to become Iris' fiancé. This was why he decided to join the tournament and ensure that his step-sister would be able to continue living her life the way she wanted to.

"Big Brother, the tournament will begin in three days," Iris said as she walked towards the red-headed teenager and gave him a hug. "Please, do your best."

Lux patted Iris' head and assured her that she had nothing to worry about.

"Don't worry, no one will beat me," Lux replied in a firm tone. "I am afraid that Eiko will drench me with water everyday if I lose the tournament. Do you know how cheeky she has become since we last saw each other? Iris, our daughter has entered her rebellious phase.

"Pa?" Eiko, who was perched on Iris' head, tilted her head in confusion. She didn't understand what a rebellious phase was, so she decided to just not think about it!

"Big Brother, let's go," Iris said as she held Lux's hand firmly. "Tell me about the things that happened to you in the time we haven't seen each other."

"Ma!"

"Of course, you tell me your story as well, Eiko."

"Ma!"

As the blue-haired young lady pulled the smiling Half-Elf towards Barbatos Academy, a pair of eyes looked at them from a distance.

Alexander had his arms behind his back as he gazed at the Half-Elf who was going to participate in the tournament. A few moments later, he disappeared from where he stood, leaving only a fleeting breeze that also disappeared without a trace.

Chapter 220: Past And Present Grudges

Teenagers from all over the six Kingdoms, as well as the adjacent lands, made their way to Barbatos Academy in order to join the tournament whose name had spread far and wide.

It was none other than the Lionheart's Tournament.

The rewards for the tournament were simply too good, that even those above the age of twenty were tempted to join. Unfortunately, an age limit was set, and only those who were aged twenty-two or below were allowed to participate in the tournament.

"Is he already here?" Nero asked one of his subordinates who was also a student in Barbatos Academy.

"I saw him walking hand in hand with Lady Iris yesterday in the gardens," a blonde-haired boy said in a flattering tone. "I don't know if he registered in the tournament or not, but I didn't see his name in the official roster."

"Understood," Nero replied. "Continue to keep your eyes and ears open. I will give you your rewards in Elysium."

"Thank you very much!"

"No need to thank me. As long as you remain loyal to me, I will take care of you in Elysium."

After the blonde-haired boy left Nero's room, the latter clenched his fist in anger.

"Walking hand in hand?" Nero muttered. "You are really pushing your luck, you worthless piece of trash!"

Lightning crackled on Nero's closed fist as he did his best to reign in his anger. A few minutes later, he finally regained his calm as he stared at the mirror in front of him.

"Aside from the Four Kings and Five Overlords, no one else will reach the Semi-Finals." Nero gazed at his reflection on the mirror. "I've worked hard

over the past few years and sacrificed many things in order to reach what I am today. I will not allow a spoiled Half-Elf, who only got lucky to be picked up by a Ranker in the river, step over my head."

Nero's gaze sharpened as the image of the beautiful young lady with long blue hair, and eyes as beautiful as sapphires, flashed across his mind.

"Lady Iris is only the beginning," Nero stated. "Soon, I will be known by everyone as the Champion of this tournament. Everyone will know my name, and I will no longer be ridiculed because of my lowly commoner's background."

As if Fate was playing a trick on him, the moment he looked outside the window of the room he was staying at inside the Academy, he saw the Half-Elf walking alone, headed towards the Training Grounds.

Nero sneered at the red-headed teenager whom he had hated all his life inside his head.

"I hope you joined the tournament," Nero said with ridicule. "You're fortunate that I am willing to waste my precious time to watch your face get beaten to a pulp by one of the participants in the tournament."

Nero, as well as the Four Kings, and the other Four Overlords of the Young Generation were treated as Seeded Contestants, who no longer needed to join the early elimination rounds.

They would instantly be among the top thirty-two contestants, who would battle it out until eight of them remained. Those eight would then battle and the victors would proceed into the semi-finals, where the final four would be chosen.

Aside from the recognized geniuses of the young generation, Nero didn't fear anyone. For him, as long as he used the Trump Cards in his possession, becoming the Champion had a high possibility.

"Just you wait, Lux Von Kaizer," Nero pledged. "I will take away the things that are important to you, and you will understand that you only achieved the things that you have right now because you got lucky in life.

"Someone like you doesn't deserve to live a happy life.

"Someone like you... does not deserve to be Lady Iris' partner for life."

Nero gave the Half-Elf one last glare before closing the window of his room. He then stared at his rough hands that had been stained by blood and clenched them tightly.

No matter what happened, he would be the one to win the tournament, and, above all else, prove to the world that his lowly background would not hinder him from soaring high in the sky like a dragon in flight.

'Not bad,' Lux thought as he looked at the countless young men and women who had come to participate in the most prestigious tournament that happened once every four years.

The Gathering of Heroes.

This was what this grand gathering was called.

The young heroes from all over the Six Kingdoms, as well as the surrounding territories, would send the strongest members of the young generation to participate in the Lionsheart Tournament that would commence in two days' time.

Lux had seen the previous tournament, and he vowed to himself that the next time it was hosted, he would participate and show how strong he was to everyone.

Although he was now about to realize his aspiration, the method he was going to use to join the tournament was different from the one he envisioned. Even so, he had already decided to join the tournament on his own terms, and stand on the stage that he had dreamed about in the past.

It was not only the brown-haired teenager that held a strong grudge against the Half-Elf. Lux also held a grudge against him too.

Both of them wanted to face each other in the tournament. However, Nero was unaware that Lux had joined the tournament using a different persona.

The Half-Elf needed to win the qualifying rounds without losing once in order to reach the top 32 participants, where the Four Kings and the Five Overlords were waiting for him.

'Lionsheart Tournament,' Lux recalled with a smile. 'Don't lose before I face you, Nero. I will make you understand that the useless Half-Elf, who you disdain so much, is going to use your face to sweep the arena of the tournament.'

The Half-Elf chuckled internally because he believed that, as long as he took the battles seriously, it was very hard for him to not reach the Semi-Finals where the true monsters of the young generation were waiting for him.

Chapter 221.1: Lionheart Tournament Qualifying Matches [Part 1]

"Grandma, Iris, Eiko, I'm going," Lux said after he finished giving each of his family members a kiss on the cheek.

"Do your best, Lux," Vera said as she rested her hand on Lux's shoulder.

"Goodluck, Big Brother!" Iris said before kissing Lux's right cheek with a blush on her face.

"Pa!" Eiko jumped on Lux's left shoulder and kissed his left cheek as a way to wish him good luck.

A smile was on Lux's face as he gave Iris and Eiko one last hug before leaving the room to head towards the Grand Coliseum where the qualifying matches would be held.

Alicia was already waiting for him in the secret passage that led to an area near the venue of the tournament without being seen by anyone.

"I've already made the necessary preparations," Alicia said as she gave Lux a badge. "Just show this to the organizer, and he will already know what to do."

"Thank you, Alicia," Lux replied as he accepted the badge and entered the passageway alone. Alicia was not going to accompany him in order to prevent anyone from becoming suspicious of his identity.

Everyone in the academy knew that Alicia was Alexander's secretary. They also knew that she had a good relationship with Lux, so if there was someone being personally escorted by her, it would immediately catch the attention of the influential people who were staying in Barbatos Academy for the duration of the tournament.

The moment the door of the passageway closed, Lux steadily walked in the dimly lit corridor.

He took a mask out of his storage ring and placed it over his face. A moment later, the color of his hair changed to black. His lean and toned body became chubby, and the handsome face that Lux had always been proud of became less good looking.

Right now, he didn't look like Lux the Half-Elf.

He looked like Lucien. The chubby boy who was chosen to participate in the Heaven's Gate Project to save a dying world from destruction.

A few minutes later, he arrived at the end of the passageway. Without any delays, he pulled on the torch that hung beside the wall.

Suddenly, a grating sound was heard and the stone wall in front of him parted, opening just enough space for a single person to pass through.

Lux squeezed himself in that narrow passage, and safely arrived at a room that was also one of the storage areas in Barbatos Academy.

Patting the dust off his clothes, the chubby boy walked towards the door with a hint of anticipation in his light-brown eyes. Now that the tournament was about to start, he could feel his blood boiling inside his veins as he opened the door that would lead him to the new battlefield that he was about to face.

"Show me your ticket number."

"Okay, head to Arena 4. Next!"

"You go to Arena 5. Next person please!"

The organizers of the event were busy sending the contestants to their respective arenas where the grand qualifying matches were about to take place.

More than fifty thousand applicants had wanted to join this year's tournament, and the staggering numbers made the organizers busy as hell. As this was happening, a chubby boy quietly queued in one of the lines, specifically the one that led to the organizer that Alicia had told him about.

Lux was also familiar with the person who was going to be in charge of him since the other party was one of Alicia's personal subordinates that handled the logistics of the supplies of Barbatos Academy.

His name was Bruno and was one of the people who were assigned to ensure that Lux didn't die in the tournament.

The organizer was over six feet tall, and he had blonde hair and blue eyes. He looked like a pro wrestler with his bulging muscles that could be seen under his sleeveless shirt. Although Lux couldn't see his rank, he assumed that the man in front of him was a Ranker.

"Go to Arena number 2. Next please!" Bruno said after sending the person in front of Lux to the arena where he belonged.

Lux handed the badge over to Bruno and the latter's reaction after seeing the badge almost made him laugh out loud.

"Um, Sir, please go to Arena 4," Bruno said in a respectful tone. "Oi! Please bring this lad to Arena 4. Make sure he doesn't get lost or I'll ensure that you will lose your job, got it?"

"Yes Sir!" Bruno's subordinate replied as he looked at the chubby boy in front of him. "Sir, please follow me."

Lux just nodded his head as he followed the guard towards one of the pathways that led to the fourth of the five arenas that were prepared for the tournament.

As the two of them walked, the guard would glance at his side to appraise the chubby boy walking beside him

'This might be the son of some Big Shot,' the Guard thought. 'I better not mess this up or I might get kicked out of the academy.'

Surprisingly, It only took them four minutes to arrive at their destination. After safely leading Lux to the right arena, the guard bowed respectfully before

leaving, which caught the attention of some of the participants who were already standing inside Arena 4.

Some of the contestants chuckled, while some eyed Lux with great curiosity.

'Interesting. An Oriental is participating in this match,' one of the contestants thought. 'Still, he looks like a spoiled brat. I wonder if his family secretly brought in some people to help him pass the qualifiers.'

'I bet this guy will be targeted by everyone. He looks like someone that is easy to bully.'

'Pfft! This fatso sure knows how to make an entrance. Does he really think that he will be able to pass the qualifiers? Many people here hate those that used the backdoor to enter. I'm sure that he will be kicked out as soon as the battle starts.'

'Just another weakling to add to the loser group later. This place sure has a lot of wannabees.'

Lux may not have the ability to read the minds of the people that looked at him, but he had a vague idea about what they were thinking.

'So many people,' Lux thought as he walked at the farthest corner of the arena. 'I have a hunch that the method they will use to thin the numbers of the participants is a Royal Rumble with only a few people passing through the next qualifying rounds.'

With over fifty thousand participants, it was a no-brainer to use this strategy to reduce the numbers in a short amount of time.

The giant floating numbers that hung at the center of the arena showed the number "892", and it was still continuously rising with every passing minute.

Lux assumed that this was the number of people present in Arena 4.

Of course, it was not only Lux who thought of the possibility of a Royal Rumble. These people had also placed themselves at the far end of the arena, hoping that they wouldn't get caught up in the initial clash that would happen once the battle officially started.

When the number of people reached 1,283, the barriers of the arena activated, and a loud booming voice spread in the surroundings.

"Good day everyone! My name is Bruno, and I will be the one officiating the Qualifying Matches," Bruno's words reverberated in the arena as he used an artifact to magnify the volume of his voice. "Before anything else, I would like to Welcome all of you to the Lionheart Tournament!"

Cheers rose up from the contestants as well as those who were watching them from the stands.

"I will now explain the rules of the Qualifying rounds," Bruno said in a steady voice. "Right now, there are 1,283 contestants inside Arena 4. Because of this, we decided to hold a Royal Rumble match, and the last twenty people standing until the end will move on to the second round of the qualifying matches!"

"Take note that there is a time limit of one hour. After an hour has passed, if the number still exceeds the quota of the qualifiers, we will release an Alpha-Ranked Deimos Monster inside the arena. The monster will remain in the arena until the numbers reach our target.

"Killing in any form will not be allowed. Those who are caught doing it will immediately be disqualified from the tournament. However, you are allowed to seriously injure or incapacitate your opponents if you like to make them surrender."

"Feel free to cut their limbs as well, but refrain from damaging the body parts, so that it can be reattached later. Don't worry, we have High-Ranking Clerics that are on standby to patch you up and return you to good health."

Bruno's gaze lingered on Lux's location for a brief moment before continuing his speech.

"If you wish to surrender, just shout 'I concede', and the mages monitoring the battleground will immediately teleport you out of the arena. Lastly, I wish all of you good luck! We will be starting the tournament in exactly thirty seconds. Everybody, make your final preparations!"

After he finished talking, a giant timer appeared at the center of the arena, displaying the countdown which had begun.

Those at the center warily looked at each other. Some even backed away as they unsheathed the weapons to wards of any potential attackers in their surroundings.

Lux remained calm as he stared at the timer. He had already made his preparations the moment he entered the arena, so there was no need for him to do anything but wait.

The crowd began to shout as the final seconds of the countdown took place.

"Five!"

"Four!"

"Three!"

"Two!"

"One!"

"Battle Start!"

As soon as the start of the battle was announced, the sounds of explosions spread inside the arena.

"Good luck, Big Brother!" Iris, who was watching the battle inside her room through a projection, clenched her fist tightly. Her gaze never left the chubby boy, who was calmly observing the battles that were happening around him with a confident smile on his face.

Chapter 222.2: Lionheart Tournament Qualifying Matches [Part 2]

Just as everyone expected, the most intense battles were happening in the center of the Arena.

With no place to run or hide, they had no choice but to wipe out the people around them to ensure that no one would stab them in the back.

Lux arched an eyebrow when he noticed several people forming groups, fighting as a united front. He assumed that while some of them teamed up because they knew each other, there were also others who formed teams on the spot.

The chubby boy thought that this was a very sensible idea since the battle would end only when twenty people were left in the arena. As the number of participants dwindled, some groups started to target those that were staying on the sidelines.

They weren't stupid and knew that those who were on the sides were just waiting for everyone to get tired or destroy each other before fishing in troubled waters. Because of this, the groups were able to reduce the number of their rivals, one at a time, as they swept the edges of the battlefield, while others continued to fight at the center.

Among the contestants in Arena 4, a skinny young man caught Lux's eye.

The contestant wore ragged clothing, and the only thing that looked new in his possession was the bamboo straw hat covering his head.

He was standing at the very center of the arena with several young men and women lying on the ground around him, their limbs cut off from their bodies.

The Mages who were standing outside of the arena deemed that everyone that the young man had attacked was no longer capable of fighting, so they decisively teleported them out along with their body parts, so that they could receive medical attention as soon as possible.

'This person is dangerous,' Lux thought as he eyed the skinny young man in the distance.

To his surprise, the skinny young man turned his head to look in his direction.

Lux and the young man held each other's gaze for a few seconds before giving each other a brief nod of acknowledgement.

The skinny young man then closed his eyes as he remained standing at the center of the arena. No one dared to approach him after they had seen him dismember a group of ten people who assumed that they could beat the young man easily using their numbers.

Suddenly, a loud shout reached Lux's ears, which made him frown.

"Get rid of that chubby pig!"

Lux thought that the people were referring to him, but to his surprise, they were not talking about him but an actual pig!

A two-meter tall Boar had appeared in the arena, and it was busy charging at everyone it had set its sights on.

Lux immediately appraised the Boar using his Elysium Compendium but the information that he received surprised him.

The target creature is Shape Shifter. Its information cannot be appraised.

'I see, so that Boar is a shapeshifter. Makes sense.' Lux knew that his Elysium Compendium could not see the stats of people.

It could only see the stats and information of the Monsters that could be seen or had appeared in Elysium.

Suddenly the Boar stopped running and shifted its attention to the person that said get rid of that chubby pig!

"Who are you calling a pig?!" the Boar roared in anger. "You dare call me a Pig? I'll kill you!"

"What's wrong with calling a pig a pig?!" The person that had called out to the Boar didn't cower and raised his weapon high. "I'm going to roast you!"

The reason why he didn't back down was because he was with a group of exactly twenty people. He believed that with their numbers, defeating the Boar that was charging at them with bloodshot eyes could be done easily.

The group clashed with the Boar, and an intense battle broke out. Shouts of anger, pain, and the Boar's squealing reverberated in the arena as blood splattered in the surroundings.

The Boar's body was bleeding heavily from the numerous stabs and slashes it had received from its opponents.

However, the Boar's opponents weren't doing well either. Five of them had already suffered fatal injuries, and were immediately ejected from the arena to receive emergency treatment. The others had also received varying levels of injury ranging from minor ones to serious ones.

"Die!" the young man, who had called out to the Boar earlier, yelled as he smashed his steel hammer on the side of the Boar's body, sending it skidding across the ground.

Everyone moved out of the way as the Boar's body skidded until it reached the edges of the arena. It only stopped moving when it was about to hit Lux, who had stepped aside to prevent himself from getting hit.

The Boar's snout was bleeding, and gave off a deep, and heavy snorting sound as it tried to catch its breath.

It tried to prop itself up, but the injuries it received had taken its toll on its body and depleted most of its stamina.

"I can't... lose here...", the Boar mumbled as it struggled to stand up. "Everyone... everyone is waiting for me... back in the village. I can't... lose here."

It made huffing and squealing sounds as it repeatedly tried to stand up, but it fell each and every time. The group that it had fought earlier were drinking health potions to recover their injuries while they laughed at the struggling Boar, who seemed to have run out of steam.

There were no rules that forbade the use of Health and Mana Potions during the qualifying matches, so the referees observing the battle from the side didn't say anything and merely continued to monitor the battles around them.

After falling back on its side for the umpteenth time, the Boar stopped trying to stand up and just panted for breath. A pool of blood had already dyed half of its body red, and made it look like a bloody Monster that had come from a horror story.

Just as the Boar was starting to feel that its legs were starting to go numb, it felt something cool and refreshing wash over its body.

A chubby boy, who was standing by its side was pouring two health potions on its body.

The Boar looked at the black-haired boy in surprise, because it didn't expect that someone would help it during its time of need.

"Drink up," Lux said as he placed a potion near the snout of the boar.

"Why?" the Boar asked as it looked at Lux. "Why are you helping me?"

"For my own self satisfaction," Lux replied. "Don't worry. You don't owe me anything. I just feel like helping you this once."

Lux didn't want to admit it, but he somehow saw his old self in the struggling Boar that was lying in a pool of its own blood on the ground.

His old, weak, and pitiful self which no person even bothered to help during his last moments on Earth. Even though he had no obligation to help anyone in the tournament, the determination, and unwillingness in the Boar's eyes, and voice, reached his heart.

Because of this, he decided to do the unthinkable and lend aid to a complete stranger, who was also doing their best to struggle until the bitter end.

Chapter 223.3: Lionheart Tournament Qualifying Matches [Part 3]

"Oi! What do you think you're doing?!" The young man who had smashed the Boar with his hammer shouted in anger after seeing Lux's actions. "Do you want us to target you as well?"

"Very funny," Lux replied. "You're talking as if we are friends. Also, do you think I can't count? Your group had twenty people in the beginning, but five were eliminated. Now that all of you have drunk your potions, you think you can just resume eliminating all of us, right?"

The young man was unable to refute Lux's words since what the latter said was the truth. Several other solo players warily looked in their direction since they had noticed how this particular group had picked off contestants without any groups or backings one by one.

After drinking the two bottles of Health Potion that Lux had given it, the Boar finally regained its strength and stood up from the ground.

"I'll remember this favor," the Boar said. "What is your name?"

"I told you that you don't need to repay this favor," Lux replied. "As for my name, you will know it eventually once you succeed in passing the Qualifying Rounds."

"Very well. I'll just remember your face."

"Suit yourself."

Lux glanced towards the direction of the group of people who was now eyeing him and the Boar with hateful glares. He didn't plan on fighting at the start, but since he had extended his help on an underdog, rather, an underboar, he had now become a target of the group that was aiming to eliminate it.

"Get them!" the young man wielding the hammer shouted as he charged at Lux, alongside his teammates.

The Boar squealed as its eyes turned crimson red. It had activated its Berserk Skill, making his strength grow by leaps and bounds.

"Wild Charge!" The boar stomped its right hoof, embedding itself deep on the ground before shooting towards its opponents like a speeding truck.

"Evade hi—" the young man wielding the hammer wasn't able to finish his words as he felt a tremendous pressure wash over his entire body, making it freeze in place.

Lux's eyes glowed faintly as he looked at his opponents, releasing the power of his Dragon's Fear [EX], immobilizing his opponents in place.

They were like helpless bowling pins that were waiting for the bowling ball to send them flying.

The bowling ball, in the form of a raging Boar, bulldozed its way towards the center of the arena, sending its opponents flying in several directions. The referees immediately took them out of the arena as they all suffered critical injuries after being impaled by the boar's mighty tusks.

Lux immediately deactivated Dragon's Fear to prevent others from knowing about it. Fortunately, almost everyone's attention was on the berserked Boar, so they weren't able to see the subtle change in the color of Lux's eyes.

Of course, there was one exception and that was none other than the skinny young man who was standing at the center of the arena wearing a bamboo straw hat.

After eliminating its targets from the arena, the Boar returned to Lux's side and panted for breath. It had deactivated its Berserk Skill and was currently at a weakened state.

"Why did you return here?" Lux asked as he eyed the panting Boar beside him.

"Um, so you can protect me until I recover," the Boar replied.

"Wow. Your face sure is thick."

"I get that a lot."

Lux shook his head as he sighed internally. Right now, the battles around the arena had paused for a bit after the Boar had shown its strength to everyone.

The contestants eyed Lux and the Boar warily, but they still believed that they could defeat the two of them.

Only the skinny young man at the center of the arena remained undisturbed by the other contestants who were eyeing each other with a wary gaze. None of them wanted to have their limbs cut off from their bodies, so they made sure to not antagonize the young man who didn't hesitate to slice people up.

"T-The Boar is not a threat anymore, but if we let it recover we will have problems later," a brown-haired teenager shouted. "I suggest we dispose of them first before we decide who the final twenty will be, what do you guys think?"

"I agree! If we don't eliminate that boar now, we will lose our chance after it recovers."

"I second this proposal!"

"Me, too!"

"I also agree."

Lux smiled as dozens of people encircled him and the Boar that was panting by his side. At first, he wanted to hide his strength as long as he could, but it was impossible to do that.

'I guess I need to kill the chicken to scare the monkeys,' Lux thought. 'Well, I guess it's time to let them know who they are dealing with.'

"Attack!" the brown-haired teenager shouted as he summoned several flame lances and hurled it at Lux and the boar beside me.

To Lux's surprise, the Boar stood in front of him and used its body to shield him from the incoming magical attacks, despite its weakened state.

"Do you want to be a roasted pig that badly?"

"My Grandpa said that boys should act cool to impress the ladies. It's not like I'm doing this to return the earlier favor, don't get the wrong idea."

Lux grinned before patting the side of the boar's body as he stepped forward.

"I appreciate the intention," Lux replied. "But, I can handle these guys. You just rest there and recover your strength."

When the flaming lances were only two meters away from the chubby boy, a rocky hand jutted off the ground and blocked it.

"Clean up the trash for me, Orion," Lux ordered as he placed his hands behind his back like a Martial Arts Master. "Don't hold back."

Immediately the ground shook, catching everyone in the arena off guard.

A moment later a four-meter-tall Rock Golem, jumped off of the ground and landed a few meters away from the brown-haired magician who had cast fire lances at his Master.

"It's Clobberin Time!" Orion roared as he smashed his fists against the ground, creating a powerful shockwave, sending giant rocks and dirt flying in every direction, causing those that got caught up in the attack scream in pain.

The skinny young man lightly pulled his sword out of its sheath creating a clinking sound.

Immediately, the giant boulders that were flying in his direction were cut in half, passing harmlessly by his sides, and landing on the people behind his back.

Orion thrust his right hand into the ground. A moment later, he lifted it back up, but this time, he was lifting a giant boulder above his head.

"Rock throw!" Orion roared as he threw the boulder in his hands towards the group of people that had gathered together in one spot.

"I surrender!"

"I concede!"

"I don't want to die!"

The people that had surrendered were instantly taken out of the arena by the mages who were keeping a close eye on the chaotic battlefield where a Rock Golem was performing a one-sided pounding.

"W-Wow!" the Boar exclaimed. "You are a summoner?!"

"Um, something like that," Lux replied. 'Still, Orion can be quite devastating when he just attacks recklessly like this.'

The Half-Elf had long decided that in this tournament, he would only summon Orion to fight for him. He had decided to wear the mask of a "Summoner," hiding his identity as a "Necromancer" to conceal his true abilities from people.

This would make his opponents have a false estimate of his capabilities, so that when they decided to target him instead of the Rock Golem, he could give them a nasty surprise that would make them regret their decision.

Chapter 224.4: Lionheart Tournament Qualifying Matches [Part 4]

"That's enough," Lux ordered. "Return."

Orion nodded as he walked towards his Master and stood right in front of him with an intimidating stance.

After seeing his performance, the remaining contestants, which only numbered less than two hundred now, glanced at each other with fearful looks on their faces.

Now, there were three people they couldn't afford to mess with inside the Arena. First, there was just the skinny young man. Now, there was the Boar, as well as the Chubby boy who commanded a Rank 3 Rock Golem that had a feisty personality.

The standoff lasted for several minutes and it was only broken after Bruno announced an update.

"Last 30 minutes!" Bruno said through the artifact that magnified his voice. "If the remaining number of participants exceeds the quota, we will release an Alpha-Ranked Deimos Monster inside the arena. Goodluck to all of you!"

As if injected by chickenblood, the remaining participants with the exception of Lux, the Boar, and the skinny young man, fought against each other in order to decrease the number of people in the arena.

Lux watched this scene with a calm expression on his face. With Orion standing in front of him, only exceptionally strong Apostles would be able to break past his defenses.

In just fifteen minutes, the number of contestants had dwindled to fifty.

Ten minutes later, this number went down to thirty.

With five minute remaining on the clock, the last thirty participants eyed each other warily.

The other contestants had varying stages of injury, preventing them from fighting each other, in fear that others would use this opportunity to eliminate them.

Just as everyone was thinking of what to do next, a crisp, clinking sound reached everyone's ears.

Suddenly, screams of pain erupted in the arena as ten people collapsed on the ground. Their legs had been cleanly sliced in half, and none of them had been able to see how this happened.

The mages promptly ejected them off the arena, and the Countdown Timer disappeared because they had reached their quota.

"Congratulations to the survivors of Arena 4!" Bruno's voice spread across the arena. "All of you are going to the next round of the tournament!"

The people watching the battle from the audience seats cheered and applauded the young men and women who were going to the next Qualifying Round.

Iris hugged Vera after seeing that Lux had safely passed the first hurdle of the tournament. Even Eiko was quite happy as she joined her Mama in hugging the old lady who had a very satisfied smile on her face.

"Well, it is good to be happy, but this is just the beginning," Vera said as she tried to calm the beautiful young lady and the baby slime who were in a festive mood. "The Qualifying matches lasts for three days. We can celebrate after Lux has succeeded in passing the Qualifying Rounds."

While the three people that loved Lux very much huddled inside Iris' Room, Alicia, who was watching the battles in Arena 4, was still in shock after witnessing the battle that had just transpired.

It never crossed her mind that Lux would become a Summoner, during the time that they hadn't seen each other. In fact, the moment the mage had hurled fire lances in Lux's direction, she felt as if her heart was being squeezed inside her chest.

If not for the fact that Bruno was there to ensure Lux's safety, she might have already rushed to the arena in order to forcefully eject the chubby young man from the arena to save his life.

'Goodness, is this really the Lux I know?' Alicia mused as she watched the chubby teenager walk out of the arena while waving at the audience with a smile on his face. 'So this must be the reason why Lady Vera was confident that he would do well in the tournament.'

Alicia smiled, but a second later that smile disappeared as she shook her head.

'Although he is a Summoner, and that Rock Golem looks strong, it will not be enough to win this tournament,' Alicia thought. 'The Four Kings and Five Overlords could easily defeat Lux and his golem even if they fought together. At most, he will be lucky to win the Qualifying rounds.'

Alicia might like Lux, but she was someone who always thought realistically. Knowing how strong the opponents the Half-Elf was going to face, she already knew that his journey would come at an abrupt end the moment he faced one of those prodigies.

—

In Arena 4....

While Lux was walking towards the exit, he sensed a presence appear behind his back.

"You did something unnecessary."

Lux turned his head and arched an eyebrow at the skinny young man who had caught up to him from behind. The chubby teenager didn't say anything because he felt that the mysterious young man still had something to tell him.

"Do you think that helping the Boar earlier was the right thing to do?" the skinny young man asked. "No, you just prolonged his suffering. He just got lucky because you decided to help him, but, in the end, isn't he still unqualified to get far in this tournament."

"So?" Lux asked back. He didn't feel any killing intent from the young man in front of him, but he still raised his guard to protect himself just in case the person talking to him had evil intentions.

"Like I said, you did something unnecessary."

"What I do is none of your business."

The skinny young man was about to say more, but seeing Lux's firm expression, he decided that it was not worth it.

"Unnecessary kindness doesn't help anyone," the skinny young man stated as he walked past Lux. "Goodluck in the tournament."

Lux watched the back of the mysterious teenager as he walked away from him. He admired the young man's steady steps, as well as the raw confidence that emanated from his skinny body. The moment the Half-Elf laid his eyes on the swordsman, he knew right away that the latter was a very powerful individual.

'I'm sure there will be more people like him in the tournament,' Lux thought as he resumed walking towards the exit. 'Even so, it doesn't matter.'

The Half-Elf clenched his fist as he reigned in the blood boiling inside his chest. This feeling of wanting to give everything he had was something he rarely felt. In the past, he had only fought against Monsters and the Dwarves that belonged to Twilight Rain.

But now, he was fighting against Humans and other Demihumans that were of similar age to him.

'Just how many prodigies will I meet in this tournament?' Lux mused as he reached the exit of the arena. 'Well, I guess I'll find out soon enough.'

The Half-Elf chuckled internally as he headed straight to the accommodations that were prepared for the contestants that had won the first round.

He had decided not to meet his Grandma, Iris, and Eiko, for the duration of the tournament so that no one would be suspicious of his identity.

The three of them had been informed about Lux's plan beforehand, and they all supported his plan.

Right now, Nero was looking through the names of the contestants that had won the first round. Something was telling him that Lux had joined the tournament, so he was trying to look up the names of people that the Half-Elf might have used as his Alias.

Several unique names popped up, so he listed them down one by one. He planned to watch the matches of these individuals to see whether or not Lux was one of them.

He was more than willing to bribe a few strong contestants to ensure that the Half-Elf received a good beating inside the arena. However, before he could put this plan to motion, he must first know Lux's new persona.

'I think I need to borrow THAT artifact from the Guild Treasury,' Nero thought as he looked at the names that he had listed down. There were over a hundred of them, and it would be difficult to watch their battles one by one.

Since that was the case, he would need to use an artifact that allowed him to see through disguises to find the Half-Elf that was hiding among the contestants.

'Just you wait you slippery little Half-Elf.' Nero sneered. 'I will make sure that your pitiful journey comes to an untimely end.'

What Nero didn't know was that there were other individuals who were doing the same thing. Since their goal was to become Iris' fiance, they knew that the first person they needed to get rid of was none other than the Half-Elf whom the blue-haired beauty kissed in front of everyone several months ago.

This news had spread far and wide into the Six Kingdoms, making Iris' suitors seethe in anger. Lux was unaware of the diabolical plans that these people were concocting on the side. For him, it didn't matter who his opponent was.

As long as they stood in the way of his step-sister's happiness, he would beat the crap out of them until they decided to surrender and no longer aimed to be with the blue-haired beauty, who loved him with all of her heart.