

# **Strongest Necromancer Of Heaven's Gate**

## **- Chapter 545: - 558**

### **The Meaning Of Life |**

#### **Chapter 545: The Meaning Of Life**

A few hours later, Lux's party of three, became a party of seven.

Lux was extremely generous and gave his Master, Randolph, Grandpa Annie, Laura, and Livia one Griffin each.

At first, the two old Dwarfs were reluctant to accept such High-Ranking mounts as their own, but after Lux said he had more, they no longer hesitated and thanked him for his generosity.

As for Laura and Livia, although Lux had already given them two Wargs as their land mounts, since Sid had performed extremely well on their previous mission, he decided to give both of the girls a Griffin to serve as their air mounts and protectors as well.

The two girls were extremely delighted by the gifts they received from Lux and promised to take good care of them. They were the only dwarves among the young generation in Leaf Village to ever have such High-Ranking Mounts at their disposal.

After bidding goodbye to Leaf Village, the seven of them went to the Stronghold of Norria to use their teleportation gates in order to quicken their journey to reach the borders of the Kingdom of Gweliven.

Since the commander of Norria, Thoram, was one of Lux's Guild Members, he gave them a letter stamped with his seal. This allowed the Half-Elf and his fellow Guild Members to use the gateways that were used exclusively by the High-Ranking Military officers of the Kingdom to make their travel faster.

Several hours later, the group arrived at the Westernmost Town of the Kingdom of Gweliven.

All they needed to do was to cross the border, and they would finally step into the Wanid Kingdom, whom the Dwarves had a good relationship with.

"Wow, that's a very large forest," Lux stated as he gazed at the sea of trees that stretched as far as his eyes could see.

Currently, the Half-Elf was riding on top of his Thunder Warg King, Jed, and flying alongside the Griffins. However, even from high up in the air, the forest seemed unending, making him wonder about how enormous the forest was.

Suddenly, Jed and the Griffins stopped flying forward and hovered in the air. Lux could feel that his mount was all tensed up, as if ready to run away at any given moment.

Before he could even ask the Thunder Warg King what was happening, a gigantic Elder Elemental appeared before them.

This Elemental was like a giant cloud that took the shape of a Dragon without wings. Its body crackled with lightning and exuded powerful gusts of winds that were strong enough to blow them away.

"M-My God," Cethus stuttered. "An Elder Tempest. Everyone, don't do anything rash, or we're goners!"

Lux immediately opened his Soul Book to better understand the monster that was growling at them and made no move to attack.

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< Tempest Elemental >

- Fusion Elemental Monster
- Argonaut-Ranked World Boss
- Forest of Beginnings Guardian Beast

Health: ????????????/ ????????????

Mana: ????????????/ ????????????

Strength: ???????

Intelligence: ??????

Vitality: ??????

Agility: ??????????

Dexterity: ??????

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Lux's expression turned grim after he saw the stats of the monster in front of him.

There had only been a few instances when he was unable to check the stats of his enemies, and every time it happened, it meant that he was facing a monster that was way beyond his league.

"If you wish to enter the Wanid Kingdom, you must do so on land," the Elemental Tempest stated. "The next time you break this rule, I will not show you any mercy. Go, before I change my mind!"

The Elemental Tempest roared, blowing away Lux's Thunder Warg King, as well as the Griffins who were hovering beside him.

Perhaps it was intended, but the moment everyone recovered their bearings, they were hovering just beyond the outskirts of the forest, with the Giant Elemental glaring at them from thousands of meters away.

"Go ahead and land," Lux said as he patted his Thunder Warg King. "We'll travel that way for the time being."

Jed obeyed and descended to the ground. The other Griffins did the same because there was no telling what the Elemental Tempest would do if they tried to challenge its orders.

"I guess we just have to follow the rules of this kingdom," Gerhart commented as he glanced in Lux's direction. "You said that following you was dangerous, but I didn't expect that it would be THIS dangerous."

Cethus also glanced at the red-headed teenager with a calm expression. However, deep inside he was feeling extremely excited.

'This is what I've been looking for!' Cethus thought as he clenched his fists. 'With this, I think I will be able to increase my rank again. I knew that coming with him was the right choice.'

The Dragon Born had been surprised by Lux's explosive growth. Now that he had seen the Elemental Tempest, he was certain that he would uncover the secrets he needed in order to raise his Rank faster.

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Karhsvar Draconis...

Valerie finally arrived at the Capital City of Rex Lapis.

Ever since the incident back in the Outer Reaches, the Princess of the Dragon Race was filled with anxiety.

'I know that he only did that to help me, but he still held my hand,' Valerie blushed as she remembered what it felt like to have Lux's strong arm wrapped around her body, holding her in place, while his hand locked with her own in a firm grip.

Ali and Ari, who were walking behind their Mistress, were unaware of what happened to her and were busy preparing her bath for the night.

The Royal Family used secret passageways within the city to navigate their way around, and only those that had been permitted by the Dragon King would be able to use them.

Since Ali and Ari were given permission by Valerie to accompany her, they were also able to use these passages any time they wanted to.

"Your Highness, this is not the path going to the Inner Palace," Ali said as soon as she noticed that Valerie had veered off the path that they usually use to return to Valerie's personal residence.

"Ali, Ari, the two of you should wait for me in my room," Valerie replied without even bothering to turn her head to look at her handmaidens. "I have something to discuss with my Father."

""As you command, Your Highness.""

The two handmaidens bowed their heads respectfully before turning around to head back to the Inner Palace.

Valerie, on the other hand, continued to walk the pathway that would lead her to her Father's throne room without being detected by others.

Knowing that her father usually had guests in the throne room, she first took a peek outside to check if her father was dealing with something.

After seeing that the Dragon King was alone in the throne room, Valerie no longer hesitated and opened the pathway directly behind her Father's throne.

"Valerie. How are you, my daughter?" the Dragon King asked with a voice filled with affection as he gazed at his daughter who had bowed to him to show her respect.

"Father, I have a very important thing to tell you," Valerie said with a solemn expression on her face.

The Dragon King smiled and made a gesture for her to continue.

"Go on," the Dragon King stated. "What is this important thing that you must tell me?"

Valerie hesitated for a bit, but since this was something that had something to do with her future, she gritted her teeth as she made her confession.

"Father, I am pregnant," Valerie declared. "I'm sorry, but it happened so suddenly that I didn't have time to prevent it from happening."

Dark clouds immediately covered the skies of Rex Lapis as the Dragon King's killing intent rose towards the heavens. Naturally, this killing intent wasn't felt by Valerie because the Dragon King made sure that his daughter wouldn't be affected by his bad mood, which was strong enough to split the sky apart.

"Who?" the Dragon King asked through gritted teeth. "Who did this to you?"

Although he tried to ask these questions as calmly as possible, the roar of thunder reverberated in the heavens as lightning snaked across the skies.

"Father, please spare him," Valerie pleaded. "For the sake of your future grandchildren, please spare him. He didn't do it on purpose. I was shocked as well, but when I regained my senses, the deed had already been done."

"... Who is it?" the Dragon King repeated his question. "Don't worry. I will not do anything to him. I'll just ask him to go fishing with me."

Valerie sighed in relief after hearing her father's words. Going to fish together wasn't such a terrible thing. In fact, it was a very fun thing to do!

"Father, the one who got me pregnant is the Half-Elf that built his Guild Headquarters in the Outer Reaches," Valerie replied. "He is none other than Lux Von Kaizer."

Lightning descended from the sky, and thunder boomed ceaselessly as if heralding the end of the world.

The Dragon King then extended his senses to search for the bastard Half-Elf who dared to lay his hands on his treasured daughter. Unfortunately for him, Lux had already left the Outer Reaches and had just entered the Wanid Kingdom, where the power of the Spirits reigned.

Even if the Dragon King was a Supreme Being, he was still unable to find the Half-Elf's whereabouts because the latter was on the other side of the world.

Because of this, he could only roar in his heart as he looked at his innocent daughter, who was stained by the Half-Elf that he had allowed to stay in his kingdom.

While all Hell was breaking loose in Karshvar Draconis, the Dragon Token in Lux's hand glowed faintly.

A faint chuckle could be heard in the surroundings as the Crystal Dragon laughed at the scene that was happening in Rex Lapis. Although he was far away from the Kingdom of Dragons, he was still able to see what was happening in the throne room.

'Lux, I knew you were good, but I didn't expect you to be this good!' Keoza said in a teasing tone. 'It seems that you will receive some good news when you return to Karhsvar Draconis.'

'Really, Sir Keoza?' Lux asked.

'Yes, definitely,' Keoza chuckled. 'In fact, the first thing you must do when you return to the Dragon Kingdom is visit the Dragon King. He plans to go fishing with you!'

Lux didn't understand what Keoza meant when he said that the Dragon King wanted to go fishing with him. However, if what the Crystal Dragon said was true, then the Half-Elf would be more than willing to accompany the Dragon King, and talk with him about the meaning of life.

A talk that would make him understand that the Dragon King's definition of going fishing was very different from the fishing he had in his mind.

## **Chapter 546: Creating A New Path Of Escape**

"Achoo!" Lux rubbed his nose.

He and his party were currently traveling through the dense forest.

'A beautiful lady must be thinking about me, Eiko,' Lux said telepathically to the Baby Slime perched on top of his head. 'Do you think it's your Mama?

'Pa!'

'Mmm. I think you're right.'

After being blown away by the Elemental Tempest, none of them dared to use their flying mounts to travel in the sky.

Even Cethus, who prided himself on his flight speed, had no choice but to travel on the land, while mounted on one of Lux's Wargs.

An hour had passed since they entered the forest, and so far, none had barred their path—at least, not at the moment.

The explanation for this was simple. Lux had opened his Soul Book and was paying close attention to the map.

Several red blinking dots and yellow dots could be seen everywhere, but the most eye-catching indicator among them was the BIG red dots. The Half-Elf assumed that they were Deimos-Ranked Monsters and above, and he also noticed that they seemed to be moving in their direction.

Unfortunately for them, the Half-Elf could see their movements, so he guided his party into the forest with the intention of avoiding these powerful Monsters, who clearly disliked his party's intrusion into their domain.

Cethus and Gerhart were both on edge because they could feel the presence of these strong Monsters approaching their location.

Although weaker than the two Initiates, Randolph and Grandma Annie could sense them as well. The only ones that were oblivious to the true danger they were facing were Laura and Livia, who were riding on the Wargs and following behind the old lady, their Master.

Lux didn't say anything except for the words "Go left" and "Go right."

As they continued their journey, the Elemental Tempest, who was observing them somewhere within the Forest of the Beginnings narrowed its eyes.

It didn't know how Lux was effectively evading the dangers that were moving in their direction, but the fact that the Monsters were unable to corner them despite their ever-growing numbers remained.

Suddenly, a loud explosion erupted in the forest as countless number of trees were destroyed in a straight line.

White smoke escaped Lux's lips after unleashing a Dragon's Breath, which created a straight path in the dense forest.

"Let's go!" Lux shouted. "Increase the pace!"

After looking at the map in his Soul Book, the Half-Elf came to the conclusion that if they continued to evade the monsters by repeatedly veering off course, they would still be encircled in the long run.

Since that was the case, the only thing he could do was not follow the path that was laid out in front of him and create a new path to escape their current situation.

Loud roars suddenly erupted within the forest as the High-Ranked Monsters began to head straight to the location where the explosion had erupted.

"Laura, Livia, move to the center of our formation!" Lux ordered. "Cethus, Gerhart, protect our left side. Master, Grandma Annie, protect our right side.



Eiko, who was on top of Lux's head, opened up her mouth and unleashed a Dragon Breath of her own, destroying the trees in front of them, and creating a straight pathway through the dense layer of trees.

A moment later, Lux summoned Diablo, Ishtar, Asmodeus, Lazarus, and Zagan.

"Spread out and delay them," Lux declared as he, Eiko, and Asmodeus began to summon their Undead Army.

Hundreds of Skeletons emerged around them, which Lux had summoned to block the path of the monsters headed in their direction.

"Boomer!" Eiko shouted.

Immediately, the Crimson Monkey Kong Skeleton Bombardier appeared and jumped to one of the trees in order to help the Skeletons create a diversion, giving them time to escape.

Ishtar merged with the shadows of the forest and reappeared where the Deimos-Ranked monsters were coming from. She didn't hesitate and unleashed a barrage of frost arrows, slowing their movement speed by a little bit, which greatly annoyed the Deimo-Ranked Alpha Monsters that were trying to encircle Lux and his party.

Lazarus also appeared a short distance away and began to unleash a barrage of magical attacks. His main role was to act as a Magical Turret and deal as much damage as possible to their foes, pulling their attention onto him.

Fortunately, it worked, and these Monsters began to target the two slippery Undead Creatures, who could appear, and disappear, at their leisure.

"Ithaqua!" Asmodeus raised his hand and summoned the Creature of the Cold White Silence, who immediately conjured a blizzard when he made his appearance, decreasing the visibility in the surroundings.

Due to its mastery over Ice and Snow, the newest member of Asmodeus' Undead Army was able to manipulate the blizzard so that it wouldn't affect Lux and his party.

Undeads were never affected by the extreme changes in temperature. Since they were Undead, they could care less if their surroundings were hot or cold.

Unfortunately for their enemies, they cared, and after seeing that a blizzard had suddenly appeared out of nowhere, they lost track of the targets they were planning to attack.

In a tunnel made of ice and snow, Lux and the others made their speedy retreat.

As usual, Gerhart and Cethus were amazed by the Half-Elf's ingenuity, making them wonder if they would be able to act just as calm if they were faced with the same situation.

This game of Cat and Mouse went on for several hours until the monsters gave up and turned to hunt weaker foes that couldn't use such underhanded means in order to stop them from being eaten by them.

Also, they knew that Undead didn't taste good, so they thought that the effort was not worth their time.

When Lux finally deemed that they were now safe, he ordered everyone to stop and rest for an hour.

The Wargs had overexerted themselves, and the two little girls, Laura and Livia, were also exhausted from the thrilling chase that they experienced just a few minutes ago.

Randolph and Grandma Annie weren't faring any better. The two of them had stayed in Leaf Village and, aside from the occasional Beast Outbreaks, they never had the chance to leave the Village and come across near-death adventures like the one they had just now.

Seeing that everyone was resting properly, Lux also sat down to lean against the tree in order to rest. He had exhausted himself mentally after formulating the best method to evade the Monsters.

If he had been traveling alone, he would have had plenty of ways to escape such a predicament. Unfortunately for him, he was with other people, so he had no choice but to use every means at his disposal to ensure their safety.

'Eiko, do you sense any treasures nearby?' Lux asked the Baby Slime that was resting on top of his head.

'... Pa!'

'I see. They are being guarded by monsters. Let's just return to collect them when we're stronger.'

'Pa!'

Lux had already anticipated that the forest that was being guarded by a Powerful Elemental was a treasure trove of resources. If not for the fact that there were strong monsters guarding them, Lux might have attempted to collect them along the way.

However, since he didn't know how the Elemental Tempest would react once he took these treasures, he decided to play it safe and not touch them for the time being.

His priority was to get the Transcendent Flames for his Master Randolph and Grandma Annie. As for the rest of the treasures... he would just come back to get them when he became stronger.

'It will take us at least two to three days in order to break out of this forest,' Lux thought as he looked at the map in his Soul Book. 'After that, we will reach the open plains. From there, it will take another four-day trip to reach the mountains, where the first city of the Wanid Kingdom can be found.'

Lux sighed because there were very few teleportation gates in the Wanid Kingdom, and most of these were controlled by the Tribe Elders of each group. Meaning, no one could use the gates without their permission.

'I just hope that they let us use those teleportation gates when we arrive at the city,' Lux sighed internally.

He knew that if they were unable to use the Teleportation Gates, they would have to spend almost a month just to reach the location where one of the Transcendent Flames could be found, according to Keoza's memory.

## **Chapter 547: The Organization of Transcendent Blacksmiths**

Two hours later, the group had finally recovered their bearings and were once again ready to continue their journey.

Originally, Lux only wanted to let everyone rest for an hour. But, after seeing that there were no signs that the Monsters were targeting them, he decided to extend their rest by one more hour, so that everyone could fully recover.

No one talked to Lux during the journey because they didn't want to interrupt his concentration. They only followed behind him as he chose the best paths in the forest that would ensure their safety.

An hour before sunset, Lux decided that they should rest for the night and continue their journey the next day. He didn't know what kind of Monsters were on the prowl at night, so he planned to summon all of his Named Creatures, as well as Skeleton Soldiers, to guard the perimeter of their temporary campsite.

Grandma Annie had bought a tent with her because she didn't want her two disciples to freeze from the coldness of the night.

Lux also had brought tents with him that he shared with Gerhart and Cethus. However, the Dragon Born didn't know how to set up his tent, so Lux ordered the Skeleton Gang Bangers to do it for him.

For some reason, Cethus flinched the moment the Skeletons approached him. Clearly, the memory of the one-sided beating he received from them was enough for Cethus to put them on his "must not provoke" list.

"Thanks," Cethus replied after the Skeleton Gang Bangers finished fixing his tent, which earned him a brief nod from the Undead, whose sole purpose was to make their opponents feel as if they had been screwed a hundred times over.

Randolph was staying inside Lux's tent, so the old Dwarf did not need to set up a tent of his own.

After dinner, everyone went back to their tents to rest, while the Undead Army guarded their camp from potential threats during the night.

Eiko fell asleep as soon as she laid on top of the soft pillow that Iris had made just for her.

Lux and Randolph, on the other hand, weren't able to sleep right away. Because of this, the two decided to chat with each other about random things in order to kill some time.

"There is this organization of Blacksmiths that called themselves, Hephaestus," Randolph said. "All of their members have Transcendent Flames, and according to the information I heard, there are only around twenty members in the group."

"This organization isn't bound by race, so the Blacksmiths from different cultures gather to share smithing techniques, as well as unique recipes with their members every three years. It is every Blacksmith's dream to be part of this organization. I felt the same way in the past, but not anymore."

"Oh? Why did you have a sudden change of heart, Master?" Lux asked.

Randolph sighed as he told his disciple that this illustrious organization wasn't the same one he idolized when he was younger.

"They have become too greedy," Randolph replied. "Also, almost all of their members approve of their respective Kingdoms going to war, so they can gather more resources and increase their Ranks through forging."

"It's a heartless practice, and I for one didn't want to forge Legendary Equipment for the sake of wars. True, I did make equipment for profit, but I will never stoop as low as them. I'm not fond of wars. Never was, never will be. Even if I grow old in a piss-poor village, I would rather remain true to my ideals than let them be tainted by greed."

Lux remained silent as he digested his Master's Words. Right now, he had one Legendary Artifact, and this was given to him by Great General Sherlock after the war ended.

The Artifact that Lux received was called the Elemental Heart.

This Legendary Artifact had the ability to summon Greater Elementals.

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(A/N: This is the Hierarchy of Elementals)

- Lesser Elemental
- Elemental
- Greater Elemental (Deimos)

- Elder Elementals (Argonaut)
  - Ancient Elementals (Dreadnought)
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The Tempest Elemental was a Fusion Elemental that combined the powers of Lightning and Air. Its rank was an Elder Elemental, whose strength was at the Argonaut Rank.

Lux's artifact could summon a Deimos-Ranked Alpha Elemental of any of the elements he wanted. However, he could only summon one of them at any point in time.

If the Half-Elf were to summon an ordinary Elemental, he could summon four Elementals at any given time.

If Lux summoned a Lesser Elemental, the Half-Elf could summon eight of them at the same time.

This artifact would enter a cooldown period of three days each time it was used, so it was more of a Trump Card that would allow the Half-Elf to reverse situations in a pinch.

Of course, this artifact was crafted by a Transcendent Jewel Smith of the Highest Caliber. Great General Sherlock even told Lux that there was a possibility of upgrading the Legendary item into a Demigod-Ranked Item if he could fuse the hearts of Ten Argonaut-Ranked Elder Elementals to the Elemental Heart.

The Elemental Tempest was one example of an Argonaut Ranked Elder Elemental, and with Lux's current strength, defeating it was only a pipedream.

"Don't worry, Master," Lux said. "You don't need to join such an organization. After all, our Guild is a hundred times better than them."

Randolph chuckled after hearing Lux's words.

Indeed.

His guild was the only Mythical Guild in the world, and when compared to Hephaestus, the Transcendent Organization of Blacksmiths was nothing.

Also, the Guild, Heaven's Gate, had a 20% Bonus Success Rate when crafting items. This meant that there was a higher chance for Randolph and Grandma Annie to create Legendary-Ranked Equipment, Pills, and Potions.

"Lux, if there comes a time when these Transcendent Blacksmiths wish to join our Guild, what will you do?" Randolph asked as he eyed his Disciple with a solemn gaze. "Adding them to our Guild will surely boost its strength by leaps and bounds.

"I'm sure that they will do everything in their power to get into your good graces. When that happens, you don't need to think about my opinion. You can accept them if you wish."

Lux wanted to tell Randolph that the only Blacksmith he needed was him. However, the Dwarf's strong and steady gaze made him feel that saying these words might not be the best reply that he could give to his Master.

"I don't mind letting them join," Lux replied after careful consideration. "However, they must first pass your approval, Master. If they are guilty of using their skills to instigate wars, then they have no place in our Guild. Just like you, I am not fond of wars. Never was, and never will be."

The corner of Randolph's lips rose up after hearing Lux's answer. Truth be told, he wanted his Disciple's Guild to become powerful. Because of this, he didn't shy away from the idea of having more than one Transcendent Blacksmith working to equip their Guild Members to the teeth.

"Aye." Randolph nodded. "I'll make sure to pick only those who meet our Guild's requirements. Thank you, Lux. Because of your answer, I have overcome the bias in my heart."

Randolph knew that not all Transcendent Blacksmiths wished for war to happen. If there were those within the group that shared the same ideology as him, he would definitely do his best to poach them from Hephaestus.

As a crafter himself, he knew that the Guild Buffs were simply too good to be ignored. Also, the status of the one and only Mythical Guild in the world was more than enough to tempt anyone to jump ship if they were given a chance to hug Lux's thigh.

An hour later, Lux and Randolph finally went to sleep.

Neither of them knew that the Elemental Tempest, who had observed them for the past few hours, was busy communicating with the other Guardians, who had protected the Wanid Kingdom from all outside interference for the past hundreds of years.

## **Chapter 548: May The Spirits Of The Wanid Kingdom Watch Over All Of You**

"I thought we were going to get attacked last night, but nothing happened." Gerhart yawned. "Well, it's why I got a good sleep, so I have no complaints."

Lux smirked after hearing Gerhart's comment. In fact, he was thinking the same thing. Because of this, he was mostly in a half-asleep state, ready to wake up at a moment's notice when danger arrived.

Just as the red-headed teenager was about to comment about the other Half Elf's words, Ishtar and Lazarus warned him that there were people mounted on what seemed to be Reindeer, approaching their location at a leisurely pace.

'Master, the way I see it, it's like they're just taking a stroll in the forest,' Ishtar reported. 'But there is no doubt that they are headed in your direction.'

'That's not all,' Lazarus commented. 'I'm pretty certain that they also detected Ishtar's and my presence, but they don't seem to mind it. One of them even playfully waved in my direction.'

The awkwardness in Lazarus' voice made the Half-Elf ponder.

'Continue observing them,' Lux ordered. 'From what I can see, they are giving us plenty of time to prepare for their arrival. If they are not showing an aggressive attitude, maybe their purpose is to have a conversation with us. Also, I think they waited until we woke up before they marched to our camp. This alone is a sign that they are not hostile—at least, not on the surface.'

Ishtar and Lazarus both agreed with Lux's comment and continued to monitor the mounted warriors who numbered more than a hundred.



Lux, on the other hand, informed his comrades that they were about to make contact with people who seemed to live in the Forest and shared the description that Ishtar and Lazarus gave him.

Half an hour later, several men and women, wearing dark green light-weight armor that gave them almost near-perfect camouflage in the forest, appeared in front of Lux and his party.

"Greetings, travelers," a pretty woman riding the biggest Reindeer said with a smile. "It is very rare for people to wander so deep inside the Forest of the Beginnings without going through the proper channels of our kingdom. Do you know? Emissaries from the Kingdom of Gweliven must first gain our approval before they are allowed to traverse our Domain?"

Lux and the others couldn't tell how old the woman was because, in their eyes, she seemed to be in her late twenties. However, the people of the Wanid Kingdom had long lives because they had all made contracts with the Spirits of their Kingdom.

After the lady took a long hard look at Lux and his comrades, the corner of her lips rose up by a tiny margin.

"Two Half-Elves, a Dragon Born, and four dwarves," the pretty woman said. "Such a strange combination, and yet, all of you are here standing before me. Tell me, strangers, what brings you to our lands?"

Gerhart, Cethus, Randolph, Grandma Annie, Laura, and Livia all looked at the red-headed teenager who was the leader of their party.

"I came here to look for the Transcendent Flames," Lux replied. "If the Spirits of the Wanid Kingdom wish for it to happen, then it will happen according to their wishes."

"My my my... you're quite bold to say that you came here to look for Transcendent Flames," the woman commented. "Do you think that we will allow you to do as you please?"

The men and women behind their leader all unsheathed their weapons, ready to attack the moment their leader gave them the order.

Gerhart, Cethus, Randolph, and Grandma Annie took a fighting stance, while Laura and Livia hid behind Grandma Annie's back.

Lux raised his right hand, signaling his party to not do anything rash.

Although the people in front of them had drawn their weapons, he didn't feel any kind of hostility from them, which made him wonder if they were only testing their reaction.

Earlier, he planned to lie and tell them that they were merely sightseeing, but Keoza spoke to him first before he could answer the pretty woman's question.

'The Forest and Mountain Dwellers hate liars the most,' Keoza cautioned. 'Once you lie to them, they will not put their trust in you regardless of how good your intentions are. It is best that you state your true reason for coming here. Although they might get confrontational, they won't attack unless you take the initiative to attack first.'

Lux decided to trust Keoza's advice and told the Forest People their true reason for visiting their kingdom. However, that didn't mean that he wasn't prepared to strike back if they really wanted to harm their group.

"I apologize that we didn't use the proper channels and gain your permission to enter your Domain," Lux stated. "I know that ignorance of the rules is not an excuse, but we came here in good faith. If there is something that we can do to gain your trust, we will do it as long as it doesn't touch our bottom lines."

The pretty woman nodded her head as a gesture of acknowledging Lux's statement.

"It's good to know that you are someone who doesn't use ignorance as an excuse to break the rules of our Domain," the pretty woman replied. "However, the fact still remains that you broke it, so a punishment is in order."

The pretty woman then closed her eyes as if she was pondering on what kind of punishment she would give Lux and his party for trespassing into their territory.

A few minutes later, the pretty woman opened her eyes and made a gesture for her subordinates to sheathe their weapons, which they all obeyed at the same time.

"We will allow you to pass through the Forest of the Beginnings on one condition," the pretty woman raised a finger with a smile. "When you reach the Shaufell Plains, you will help the inhabitants of the town of Abingdon with their

dilemma. As for the specifics, it will be best if you meet the Town Mayor to better understand their situation.

"Of course, you are also free to ignore this condition and continue your travels. However, I assure you that if you do that, you will regret it."

The pretty woman's smile widened, making Gerhart and Cethus subconsciously shudder. The veiled threat in the pretty woman's words was like a sharp knife about to pierce their chest, stopping only a centimeter away from their hearts.

"Understood," Lux replied. "This is our first time in the Wanid Kingdom, and we would greatly appreciate it if you can provide us with a map, so we can find Abingdon Town after leaving the forest."

The woman laughed when he heard Lux's reply. "Interesting. You take a step back and then take two steps forward. Very well, I will be generous enough to give you a map of the Eastern Regions of our Kingdom. Consider this you taking advantage of me and succeeding in the process."

Without another word, the pretty woman took a scroll out of her storage ring and tossed it to Lux, who caught it with his right hand.

"I don't know if you are stupid, or brave for hoping to gain a Transcendent Flame from right under our noses," the pretty woman said. "However, the Spirits will be the ones to decide if you and your people are worthy of the miracles that you seek in our Domain. Go, and may the Spirits of the Wanid Kingdom watch over all of you."

After saying those words, the pretty woman and her entourage left without even looking back at them. Clearly, their purpose for coming was to ascertain Lux and his party's reason for coming to their Kingdom.

Now that they gained the answers they wanted, they would pass the message to their Mountain brethren, who would oversee the second phase of Lux's journey within the mysterious Kingdom that had remained unconquered since time immemorial.

## **Chapter 549: Underground Menace**

The sound of intense fighting reverberated inside the forest as a Pack of Rank 5 Gray Wolves attacked Lux and his party during their travel.

The Half-Elf was always paying attention to the map, so when these red blinking dots approached them, he purposely didn't change course and engaged them in battle.

The reason he did this was simple.

Deimos-Ranked Monsters and above were almost always alone. At most, there would be two to three of them together, signifying that they were a family or life-long partners.

Having dozens of small, red blinking dots working together meant that they were monsters that moved in packs, which meant that they were inherently weaker.

For Lux, he wasn't afraid of facing Monsters below the Deimos Rank, so he didn't evade them and even took the initiative to intercept them.

"Kill them cleanly if possible," Lux ordered. "I will either use them as Fusion Materials or cannon fodder for my Necromancer Skills."

Although Gerhart and Cethus didn't know what Lux was talking about, they obeyed his orders and initiated one-hit kills that targeted the Gray Wolves' hearts or heads, killing them in one blow.

The two of them were Initiates, so Rank 5 Monsters weren't that hard for them to deal with.

Lux, on the other hand, didn't attack and simply ordered his Named Creatures to engage the enemy. He was there to ensure that the Dwarves' lives wouldn't be in danger.

As an added precaution, Lux summoned Pazuzu and Orion, who stood in front of Randolph, Grandma Annie, Laura, and Livia as their protectors just in case one of the wolves decided to target the weakest members of their party.

After killing over a dozen wolves, the Alpha of the Pack decided that enough was enough, so it howled and ordered his brethren to make a hasty retreat.

'I should probably feed the Wargs some of the Gray Wolves' meat and beast cores,' Lux thought. 'They have stayed at Rank 3 long enough.'

Aside from Jed, who was a Rank 4 Monster, the rest of the Wargs that Lux received as a reward in the Dungeon hadn't made any progress in their Rank.

Truth be told, the Half-Elf had neglected them and only used them as mounts for his Guild Members. Most of his resources were used in fusing and upgrading his Undead Army, so the Wargs' growth came to a standstill.

Even Jed, Lux's Thunder Warg King, was still a Rank 4 Monster.

Back then, it was the strongest Monster in his team. But now, it had been left behind by the others and was only summoned by Lux whenever he needed a ride.

Having remembered this, the Half-Elf felt a bit guilty, so he decided to give the Wolf Cores to the Wargs as compensation for his negligence.

After collecting the spoils of over thirty Wolves, the group continued their journey to leave the Forest of Beginnings.

No Deimos-Ranked Monsters and above tried to block their path, and they were able to leave the Forest smoothly after three days of traveling.

"Finally, we're out of the forest." Cethus snorted as he unfurled his wings to fly. "I felt like I was a caged bird the whole time."

The Dragon Born then soared toward the sky and did a few aerial maneuvers, as if he had just been freed from his cage.

As a creature who was used to always flying in the sky, Cethus' mood had always been stormy since they entered the forest.

"Scout for us from above," Lux shouted. "Just make sure you don't provoke any Deimos-Ranked Flying Monsters and lure it in our direction."

"Do you think I'm stupid?" Cethus scoffed. "I would never do such an idiotic thing."

Although Cethus' words still sounded a bit arrogant, he still performed his duty well and looked down on his surroundings from the sky, making sure that his group wouldn't find themselves walking into a herd of monsters in the plains.

The Shaufell Plains was a vast expanse of land that was almost double the size of the Forest of Beginnings.

The Forest Folk had told them that they should head to Abingdon Town in order to help the residents deal with a serious problem. As for what that problem was, the Forest Folk only told Lux to talk to the Town's Mayor to get a better idea of what was happening.

"It will take us a day to reach Abingdon Town if we pace ourselves normally," Lux said as he guided his party in the Northwest direction where the town was located.

After traveling for half a day, the Half-Elf ordered everyone to stop their advance, not because they were going to take a break, but because they could no longer take another step forward.

Lux was frowning as he looked at the Map in his Soul Book.

In front of him, thousands of red blinking dots were moving non-stop as if they were holding some kind of procession.

However, he couldn't see any monsters in front of him. While they were traveling, Lux saw herds of monsters grouped together, but they had stayed a good distance away from them.

But now, he couldn't see even a single monster, which made him feel that something wasn't right.

Cethus, who was in the sky, was wondering why his group stopped, so he landed beside Lux to inquire what was happening.

"What's wrong?" Cethus asked. "There's nothing but open plains in front of us. Why did you stop?"

"Monsters," Lux replied. "Thousands of Monsters are in front of us."

"Hah? What nonsense are you talking about?" Cethus frowned. "There's no sign of monsters on the land and in the sky. Are you sure you didn't just imagine things?"

Lux shook his head firmly before summoning one of his Skeleton Gang Bangers.

He then ordered the Skeleton to run ahead of them, which the latter did obediently.

Everyone watched as the Skeleton Gangbanger ran for nearly four hundred meters before the ground under its feet erupted.

A four-meter-long Iron Ant captured the Skeleton Gang Banger's body in its mouth and dragged it under the ground, which made Laura and Livia cry out in shock.

Cethus, who had just told Lux that there was no monster in sight, almost choked on his saliva after seeing such a scene.

Although it was only a brief moment, the Half-Elf was able to identify the attacker, and it made his skin crawl.

-----

< Iron Tetramorium Ant >

- Colony Worker
- Rank 4 Monster

Active Skills: Iron Bullet, Crunch, Acid Spray

Passive Skills: Iron Body.

Special Ability: One with the Colony.

-----

< Iron Bullet >

- Spits an iron ball projectile, similar to a cannonball, at targets that are 500 meters away.

-----

< Crunch >

- A bite that is strong enough to crush a human in half.

-----  
< Iron Body >

– The body of this creature is as hard as Iron.

-----  
< One with the Colony >

– A Tetramorium Ant can communicate with its entire colony, and call for backup even though it is three miles away from its nest.

– The Queen Ant can also use its connection with its brood to see, hear, and order them, regardless of how far they are from the colony.

-----  
"I think it's time for us to fly," Lux stated after looking at the information of the monsters hiding underground. "Make sure to fly at least a thousand meters above the ground, so you won't get hit by long-range attacks."

The others all nodded their heads and felt grateful that they didn't suffer the same fate as the Skeleton Gang Banger, who didn't even stand a chance against the sneak attack that came from under its feet.

This once again reminded them that they were no longer in the Kingdom of Gweliven, and they needed to be more aware of their surroundings, or else they would become easy prey for an entire Ant Colony.

## **Chapter 550: Flying Terrors**

Originally, Lux just wanted to take it easy after they reached Abingdon Town.

However after checking the map, he was surprised to know that the number of Tetramorium Ant far exceeded his expectations.

There was no safe place, and the only thing they could do was to continue to fly high in the sky to prevent themselves from getting sniped by the underground colony, whose numbers were enough to make Lux very wary of them.



Finally after a few hours they finally arrived at their destination.

"Halt! And state your business!" the Guard Captain that stood up on the town walls shouted. All of them had aimed their crossbows at the Griffins who were hovering two hundred meters away from them.

"We are travelers that have come from the Forest of Beginnings," Lux replied. "The Forest Folk asked us to come here to meet with your Mayor. They said that you guys are having some kind of problem and are in need of assistance?"

The Guards looked at their Captain, whose eyes locked in on the Half-Elf who answered his question.

The Guard Captain replied right away as if he was having an internal battle inside his head. Five minutes passed before he finally opened his mouth to give his reply.

"All of you may enter, but you guys will dismount and enter through the gate," the Guard Captain replied before telling one of his men to go to the Mayor to inform them of the visitors that had come to help them with their current circumstance.

After gaining permission to enter the Town, Lux and the others entered through the Towns Gate, and what they saw made the red-headed teenager frown.

There was no one on the streets, and people peeked through the windows of their houses to look at them. It was as if they were scared of something, and they only felt safe inside their homes.

Laura and Livia, who hadn't visited other towns outside of the Kingdom of Gweliven, held onto Grandma Annie's hand as they looked around their surroundings. Clearly, the two little girls also felt that something was terribly wrong, and it made them feel anxious.

"Grandma, why are all the people inside their homes?" Laura asked. "Are they scared of something?"

"I'm not really sure," Grandma Annie. "We'll probably find out the reason once we meet with the Mayor."

However, just as Lux and the others reached the Plaza, the sound of bells ringing reverberated in the surroundings.

All the people watching them from the windows all disappeared as if they went somewhere to hide.

A moment later, the sound of buzzing reached their ears, which made all of them turn around to see where it was coming from.

It was at that moment when they saw over a dozen Red Giant Hornets headed towards the town.

"Peak Rank 5 Monsters," Cethus frowned after seeing the Hornets that were approaching them.

Peak Rank 5 Monsters, would require a party of Initiates to fight. Even the Dragon Born who prided himself of his fighting ability wouldn't attack such dangerous opponents alone.

Lux, who knew the danger they were in, immediately summoned his Doppelgangers. He then summoned his Named Creatures, as well as his Undead Army to give them time to find a safe place to hide.

Even from a distance away, they could see the Guards desperately firing their crossbows at their targets.

Although some of their crossbow bolts landed on the Giant Hornet's bodies, it seemed that the damage the flying insects received was very minimal, and not enough to deter them from targeting the Guards as their food supply.

Screams of pain, desperation, anger, and fear spread throughout the surroundings as the Giant Hornets claimed their first victims.

While some feasted on the guards, the others flew past the town walls and headed straight to the town, looking for juicy morsels to eat.

""Dragon's Breath!""

Suddenly, seven beams of blazing red light collided with one of the Giant Hornets, making it screech in pain before crashing towards the ground.

A moment later, hundreds of Skeleton Gang Bangers swarmed over it like ants, preventing it from making a comeback.

Seeing that one of their comrades had fallen, Six of the Giant Red Hornets emitted a resounding screech before flying in Lux's and his party's direction.

The Half-Elf, Eiko, and their clones, both activated their skills, Skeleton Make, at the same time in order to intercept the flying insects which threatened their safety.

"Skeleton Make... Skeleton Titan!"

With a mighty roar of defiance, a Giant Skeleton that was over fifteen meters tall, appeared in front of Lux's party and smashed its skeletal fist at the lead Giant Hornet, sending it flying in the opposite direction.

At the same time the Skeleton Titan was summoned, the Archlich, Asmodeus, raised his hand into the air.

"Ithaqua!" he yelled, summoning the Creature of the Cold White Silence, which created a blizzard as soon as he appeared behind him on the battlefield.

Asmodeus' newest summon intensified the power of the blizzard, turning the visibility to zero.

Lux and his party members weren't affected by the sheer cold that buffeted the surroundings because Ithaqua had created a dome that was unaffected by the power of his blizzard, allowing the others to see their enemies, without being seen.

It was this moment when Lux finally realized how impressive Ithaqua was in battle. Although he couldn't see the Red Giant Hornets, the Skeletons were very perceptive of body heat and any other signs of life within the blizzard.

This allowed them to pinpoint their target's location, even if there was nearly zero visibility around them.

The Red Giant Hornets that were caught inside the blizzard, hastily tried to flee, but since they lost their sense of direction, they didn't know where to go.

These insects thrived in both dry and humid environments like the plains. However, they would never survive in extremely cold temperatures.

While the Giant Hornets struggled to flee, the effect of the blizzard was starting to slow their movements, nearly paralyzing their bodies.

It didn't help that the Skeleton Archers, and Mages, were attacking them non-stop, making them suffer.

The Skeleton Titan, Ithaqua, Ishtar, Asmodeus, Lazarus, and Zagan, didn't hold back either and attacked their foes, using the blizzard to their advantage.

A few minutes later, the Giant Hornets could no longer continue flying, and fell on the ground. The Skeleton Gang Bangers, the Rock Golems, Diablo, Pazuzu, Orion, and Revon, didn't miss this opportunity to deal devastating blows to their targets.

Although they were much stronger than them, the Red Giant Hornets' movement, and attack speed had decreased significantly. They were completely outmatched by the Skeleton Army that swarmed them like ants, stabbing their eyes, their abdomens, and any other place that they could think of.

The Blizzard had also extended up to the Town's Wall, which pushed the other Giant Hornets back.

Seeing that they could no longer advance, the Giant Hornets retreated, carrying some of the guards they killed away as their prize.

Only when the last hornet had been dealt with did Ithaqua disperse his blizzard. Abingdon Town was covered in white snow, but the residents were protected from the cold that it brought due to Ithaqua's control over his ice domain.

"These are good specimens," Asmodeus said as he asked Lux for permission to take two of the Giant Hornets to add to his collections.

The Half-Elf readily agreed to his Archlich's request, because there were six more Hornets that they had killed in the battle that just ended.

Lux had a feeling that sooner or later, Asmodeus would create a Chimera made from the bodies of the different monsters he was collecting. Although he didn't know what diabolical creation his Archlich would create, a part of him was looking forward to the results of Asmodeus' experiments.

Just as the Half-Elf was collecting the dead bodies of the Giant Hornets, a group of people mounted on horses approached their location.

Just a glance was enough to tell Lux that the middle-aged man at the center of the guards' formation was the most important person in Abingdon Town, the Mayor whom they planned to meet.

"Friends that came from far away, I thank you for extending your hand to help our humble Town of Abingdon," the middle-aged man said. "My name is Pietro, and I am the Mayor of this town. Please, can I invite you all to my residence to talk? One of my men informed me that you planned to meet me, yes?"

Lux smiled before nodding his head.

"Well met, Sir Pietro," Lux replied. "We humbly accept your invitation."

Pietro returned Lux's smile as he made a gesture for the Half-Elf to follow him and his entourage back to their residence. After seeing how Lux dealt with the Red Giant Hornets in order to help save his Town, Pietro's first impression of them was extremely good.

Because of this, he planned to give them the VIP treatment during their stay in his territory.

Lux didn't know if the Forest Folk was referring to the Red Giant Hornets when they asked him, and his comrades, to go to Abingdon Town to see their Mayor.

However, something was telling him that the town had more troubling concerns than the recent attack they faced just now.

'I just hope that it's nothing too serious,' Lux thought as he rode his Thunder Warg King, Jed, to follow the Mayor back to his residence.

And Lux wasn't the one that was thinking that way.

Randolph, Grandma Annie, Gerhart, and Cethus were the same.

Although they had managed to drive off the Red Giant Hornets from the town, they weren't too keen in fighting against an entire nest.

Once that happened, although the Giant Hornets would be at a great disadvantage with Ithaqua's help, they were sure that those terrifying monsters would definitely fight them to the bitter end.

Besides, they had just fought Rank 5 Monsters.

It was highly possible that there were stronger hornets inside the nest that could take them by surprise.

Also, they had no doubt in their minds that the Queen, who stood above these flying terrors, was a Deimos-Ranked Beast that was way too dangerous for their current party to deal with.

## **Chapter 551: Abingdon Town's Dire Circumstances**

"It may come as a surprise to you, but the Red Giant Hornets aren't really the main reason why people refuse to leave their houses," the Mayor of Abingdon Town, Pietro, said with a bitter smile.

"In fact, this is the first time that our town has been attacked by those Giant Hornets. However, the fact remains that we have one more threat stacked against our ability to survive in this town."

Pietro sighed before closing his eyes.

"Truth be told, everything started four months ago when our former Mayor died of old age," Pietro stated. "When he was still alive, Abingdon Town prospered and thrived through trade. But after his death, the beasts in the Shaufell Plains started wandering near our town on an increasing frequency.

"At first, we didn't see this as a problem because our Town's Guards were able to repel them. However, as the weeks went by, their numbers grew and grew, which made things difficult for the travelers, as well as the Merchants from other towns in the Wanid Kingdom.

"I don't know if you encountered them along the way, but a colony of Tetramorium Ants has made their home in the plains and is terrorizing any unwary creature who is unfortunate enough to come across their nest.

"Their underground tunnels are expanding by the day, and because of this, we are now cut off from the other towns—they no longer dare to travel the Shaufell Plains in fear of getting ambushed by them."

The Mayor paused for a bit before continuing his tale.

"To make matters worse, a week ago, we were attacked by a Mosquito swarm, led by a Diabolical Doom Mosquito," Pietro stated. "It was the worst thing that happened to our town since it was founded. Hundreds of people died that day, including visitors from the nearby towns."

Lux shuddered because he had a bad history with mosquitoes. When he was still in Leaf Village, there was a Mosquito Outbreak that threatened not only the entirety of the Figaro Gardens but also the territories surrounding Leaf Village.

Fortunately, Lux was able to put a stop to them before the Abomination was successfully born. If not, Leaf Village wouldn't be standing today, and all of its residents would have turned into dried husks, deprived of all the blood in their bodies.

Unaware of Lux's inner thoughts, Pietro continued his tale.

"Before the former Mayor died, he left me some parting words," Pietro said. "He said that if the Town were to come into any great danger, we should send someone to go to the Isoptera Mountain in the West to ask an old friend of his to lend us a hand."

"I don't know who this old friend of his was because he never mentioned a name. However, he said that it was a Deimos-Ranked Alpha Beast, and it would lend our town aid once. We have already sent a contingent to go to the said mountain, but none of them have returned."

"Just now, the Town's Guards informed me that the Red Giant Hornets came from the West. It is possible that my soldiers have fallen prey to this new threat. It is also highly possible that the Giant Hornets followed the trail of my men and made their way to our town, which resulted in them attacking us."

Lux and his comrades, who were listening to the Mayor's story, felt sorry for them, but there was no way they could possibly challenge a hornet's nest on their own.

Doing so would be suicide. The power of a Deimos-Ranked Queen Hornet, which could range from an Alpha to a Field Boss Monster, was no laughing matter. Even with Ithaqua summoning a blizzard, it was highly likely that it wouldn't work.

"Let me get this straight," Cethus commented after the Mayor finished his explanation. "The favor you want to ask of us is to go to Isoptera Mountain and meet with the friend of the now-deceased Mayor of this town, correct?"

The Mayor nodded. "I know it is too much to ask, so I won't force you to go. However, if you have the ability to do so, please, I beg of you to help us. We have no one else to turn to."

The Mayor of Abingdon Town bowed his head until it touched the top of his office table.

While Lux was in the middle of coming up with a reply to the Mayor's desperate pleas for help, he and his party members heard a ringing sound inside their heads.

A moment later, several rows of text appeared in front of them, informing them of a mission that made Gerhart's, Cethus', Randolph's, Grandma Annie's, Laura's, and Livia's eyes widen in shock.

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< Abingdon Town's Great Escape >

Mission Rating: SSS

Several Insect-Type Beasts are slowly but surely taking over the entirety of the Shaufell Plains. Because of this, Abingdon Town has been closed off from the outside world and is in dire need of help.

The way things are, the only way for the people of Abingdon Town to survive is for them to evacuate. However, by doing so, there is a high chance that they would be attacked by the Insect-Type Beasts that have made the Shaufell Plains their breeding grounds.

Find a way for the residents of Abingdon Town to survive their current predicament, by leading the people to safety!



-----  
< Abingdon Town's Great Escape >

- 1,000 Residents of Abingdon Town must survive.
- Quest Duration: 13 days.
- Quest will automatically be cleared if the townspeople safely reached the Town of Broughton.
- Quest will automatically fail if the number of evacuees drops below 1,000.

-----  
< Rewards >

+200 Wanid Kingdom Reputation Points

5,000,000 Gold Coins

500 Free Stat Points.

One Rank 5 Skill Book that matches your profession.

You will obtain the Title: Insect Slayer

-----  
< Bonus Rewards >

- Bonus Rewards will be calculated depending on your performance in this mission. The bigger the role you play, the higher the rewards will be.

-----  
< Insect Slayer >

< Deals 100% increase damage against Insect-Type Monsters >

-----  
< Will you accept this Mission? >

< Yes / No >

(Take Note that only the Party Leader can decide whether to accept this mission or not.)

-----

After reading the details of the mission, everyone in the room glanced at the red-headed teenager who had a frown on his face.

The rating of the mission was so high, so Lux was worried that the quest was too difficult for them to clear.

However, after giving it some thought, he realized that the Forest Folk might have been aware of the threat that had befallen Abingdon Town. Because of this, they had tasked Lux to go there in order to help them survive their predicament.

'This is too much,' Lux thought. 'It's like they are sending us here to die.'

The Half-Elf closed his eyes as he pondered whether he should accept the quest or not. Even Gerhart and Cethus, who were eager to fight strong opponents, hesitated after understanding the situation they found themselves in.

Even though they were Initiates, fighting against a swarm of Mosquitoes, dozens of Red Giant Hornets, and countless Ants was too high of a hurdle, even for them.

Currently, they were thinking that they should just ditch Abingdon Town and continue their journey toward the center of the Wanid Kingdom.

## **Chapter 552: Ants Are My Best Friends**

Although the Forest Folk warned them about the consequences of not doing the task they had assigned to them, Gerhart and Cethus didn't give a f\*ck and were even dying to give them all the middle finger for trying to send them to their deaths.

After several minutes, a sigh escaped Lux's lips before he opened his eyes to look at Pietro, who was looking at him with desperation.

"I'll go and see what I can do," Lux stated. "For the time being, tell the residents to prepare for an evacuation. Abingdon Town is no longer a safe place to live in. Your safest bet is to migrate to the nearest town in order to survive the terrors that surround this town on all sides."

Pietro nodded his head in understanding. In fact, he had already thought that staying in their town was no longer a possibility. He knew that if he waited for help to arrive, the insect colonies around them would just simply grow day by day.

The Mayor was certain that if they delayed their evacuation, they would not have the chance to survive the inevitable calamity that was about to fall on their heads.

An hour later...

Lux and Cethus landed on the ground.

The Half-Elf decided to have a dialogue with the Tetramorium Ants because he was able to befriend the Ants in the Figaro Gardens back in Leaf Village.

"Are you sure you know what you're doing?" Cethus asked with a frown.

"Trust me. I got this," Lux answered with a confident smile. "Ants are my best friends."

The Dragon Born crossed his arms over his chest as he watched Lux slowly approach the entrance of the Ant Nest, which two Rank 5 Alpha Steel-Tetramorium Ants were guarding.

"My Friends, today is a good day, eh?" Lux said with a smile. "Do you mind if we all have a chat about the meaning of life?"

The two Alpha Steel-Tetramorium Ants glanced at each other before motioning for the Half-Elf to come closer to them.

Lux turned his head to look at the Dragon-Born with a smug expression on his face before shifting his attention back to his new-found friends.

However, the Half-Elf only managed to take six steps forward when the ground surrounding him and Cethus burst upwards, revealing dozens of Alpha Steel-Tetramorium Ants, who immediately proceeded to attack them with Acid Spray.

Lux and Cethus immediately flew up in the sky, in order to avoid the sudden aggression from the Tetramorium Ants.

After a desperate struggle to escape, the two finally managed to gain a good distance from the Ants who had started to attack them with their skills, Steel Bullet, which were the size of cannonballs.

This forced Lux and Cethus to fly as high as they could until the lethal balls made of steel no longer posed a threat to them.

"Didn't you say you and the Ants are best friends?" Cethus sneered at the Half-Elf who had coated his entire body with the Favonius Legacy, allowing him the power of flight. "How come your Best Friends attacked you?"

"I did say that Ants are my best friends," Lux lightly coughed before giving his reply. "I didn't say that all Ants are my best friends."

Cethus snorted as he looked at the red-headed teenager in disdain. Clearly, he found the Half-Elf's attempt at negotiation extremely silly and secretly ridiculed Lux in his heart.

"Now what?" Cethus asked a few minutes later as they headed back to Abingdon Town.

Lux sighed as he looked at the Western Regions of the Shaufell Plains.

"I guess we should attempt visiting Isoptera Mountain to see the deceased Mayor's friend," Lux replied. "Maybe that friend will honor his promise to help Abingdon Town once."

Cethus narrowed his eyes as he also looked at the West. Judging by the distance of the mountain, it would take them an entire day for them to arrive at their destination.

The others were going to stay in Abingdon Town in order to protect it. Lux even left Eiko, Orion, Asmodeus, Lazarus, Zagan, and Revon behind to protect the town while he was away.

"Let's go, Cethus," Lux ordered as he summoned Jed mid-air. "The sooner we arrive at our destination, the sooner we can come back."

The Half-Elf didn't wait for the Dragon Born's reply as he urged his Thunder Warg King to fly towards the mountain where the deceased Mayor's friend lived.

The Dragon Born let out a light snort before flapping his wings to follow behind his Party Leader, who was looking for ways to help clear the mission that he had accepted not long ago.

Cethus was aware that trying to help evacuate the townspeople to safety was a gargantuan undertaking.

If they were attacked by a swarm of mosquitoes along the way, they were already lucky even if only hundreds of people managed to survive.

Currently, Abingdon Town has three thousand people. Their mission only required them to ensure the survival of at least a thousand. However, the journey toward the nearest town, on foot, would take at least 10 days--this was an estimate that Pietro had made after careful calculations on the speed of their evacuation.

Since their quest only lasted thirteen days, the Dragon Born believed that the mission required them to hasten their pace.

'I still think the odds are stacked against us,' Cethus frowned as he flew behind the red-headed teenager, whom he had reluctantly accepted as someone stronger than him. 'Anyway, I'll just escape if it gets too dangerous. There's no way I'm going to die while I'm away from Karshvar Draconis.'

The Dragon Born had wanted to accompany Lux in order to find out why he was able to increase his Rank at a rapid pace.

Now that he had seen the appearance of this mysterious mission, which was something he was experiencing for the first time, he firmly believed that he had found the Half-Elf's secret regarding how he was able to increase his Rank in such a short period of time.

## **Chapter 553: Nameless Vagabond**

While Lux was away, Eiko, Laura, and Livia explored the town under Asmodeus' and Zagan's supervision.

The state of the town was so desolate and depressing that even the two cheerful little Dwarves found themselves unable to smile at the current state of things.

Eiko had a frown on her face as she looked around from the top of Asmodeus' head. Lux had asked her to stay and guard everyone. Since her abilities allowed her to copy the ability of his Papa's Named Creatures, she was very flexible when it came to attack and defense.

Asmodeus had summoned his Skeletons and sent them outside the town to explore the surroundings. Lazarus also personally went to scout the surrounding areas to check if there were any monster groups that could potentially attack Abingdon Town while his Master was away.

An hour later, Eiko, Laura, Livia, Asmodeus, and Zagan returned to the Mayor's Residence to rest.

"Evacuation is the only way for the residents of this town to survive," Asmodeus said to Pietro. "Make sure to let everyone prepare for a long journey through monster-infested areas. Tell them that if they don't want to leave, they can stay in this place to die."

The Archlich's words were firm, and as cold as the dead. Clearly, he didn't care whether the residents wanted to leave or not. Those who don't feel like going could just die. His only regret was that he wouldn't be able to collect their corpses to be used as fuel for his Corpse Explosion skill.

"I've already talked to the guards and had them inform the residents about the planned evacuation," Pietro replied. "At most, we will need three days to prepare for this mass migration. I hope you can wait for us till then."

Asmodeus reluctantly nodded his head because there was nothing he could do about it. If it were up to him, he would force Pietro to hasten the evacuation preparation to two days. However, knowing his Master, the Archlich knew that Lux would empathize with the townspeople and give them up to three days.

'Master is too kind,' Asmodeus thought. 'Well, I guess I should make contingency plans for the worst-case scenario.'

After learning how dire their situation was, Asmodeus was certain that within three days, they would face some kind of attack from one of the Insect-Type Beasts that had claimed the Shaufell Plains as their home.

It was not only the Archlich who felt this way.

Gerhart also shared the same sentiments as the Archlich. However, after witnessing Asmodeus' Summoned Creature, Ithaqua, in action, he felt that they still stood a chance due to the Ice Giant's control over the blizzard.

Naturally, Asmodeus had long thought of this as well, but in the face of a Deimos-Ranked Creature, even Ithaqua's territorial advantage would not be able to overcome the disparity in Rank.

The only way they would be able to win was when their entire party was complete. With Lux's, Eiko's, and Asmodeus' Doppelgangers, they would easily bring the power of Nine Initiates into battle.

If one were to add Lux's Named Creatures, it would allow them to take control of the aggro of the Deimos Monster, allowing everyone to attack it without holding back.

Of course, those were all in theory. Even if they had the firepower to deal serious injuries to a Deimos-Ranked Monster, there was one problem.

The monsters that they would face fought in groups or swarms. If they were going to fight a Deimos-Ranked Monster with its minions acting as its bodyguards, it would become an uphill battle.

Meanwhile, while Asmodeus was drawing up a battle plan in his head, Lux and Cethus were busy trying to avoid monsters as they made their way to the Isoptera Mountain in the west of the Shaufell Plains.

To his surprise, the Nest of the Red Giant Hornets was along the way, so they had to be extra careful not to provoke their ire.

"This place is infested with bugs," Cethus grumbled as he flew close to the Half-Elf, who was now riding on his Thunder Warg King, Jed. "Red Giant Hornets, Tetramorium Ants, Mosquitoes, Beetles... just how many bugs are in this place?"

"I have no idea, and I have no intention of finding out," Lux replied as he continued to monitor his map for Monsters that could ambush them from the air or under the ground.

After what happened with the Tetramorium Ants, the Half-Elf had been extra careful in choosing his route towards the Isoptera Mountain because the last thing he wanted was to get encircled by a group of territorial insects that would attack them when given the chance.

After several hours of traveling, they finally arrived at the base of the mountain. When they neared their destination, the Half-Elf noticed that there was not a single creature within a two-mile Radius of the Mountain, except for one.

'This is certainly a Deimos-Ranked Monster,' Lux thought as he made a gesture for Cethus to slow down their advance.

He didn't know how the Monster would react to their intrusion into its territory, so he decided to play it safe and decrease their speed in order to give them enough leeway, just in case the Monster decided to launch a sneak attack on them.

"That should be the place where the monster is located,' Cethus pointed at a giant cave in the middle of the mountain that could easily fit a fifteen-meter-tall beast.

"Ishtar, come," Lux ordered as soon as he landed near the entrance of the cave. "Take a look at what kind of monster it is."

Ishtar bowed and immediately melded with the shadows in order to check what was inside the cave.

A few minutes later, the mountain trembled, making Lux and Cethus immediately rise into the sky to distance themselves from the entrance of the cave. Seconds later, Ishtar, materialized in front of the entrance, before turning into a black mist, headed towards her Master's location.

Suddenly, a loud and piercing screech reverberated in the surroundings as a ten-meter-tall monster emerged from the cave and locked its eyes on the Nightwalker who had intruded in its home.



"An Ant?" Lux frowned as he summoned his Soul Book in order to better understand the Monster that had appeared in front of him.

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< Malevolent Blaze Coned Termite >

- Nameless Vagabond
- Deimos-Ranked Alpha Monster
- The Last Member Of A Destroyed Colony

Health: 16,200,000 / 16,200,000

Mana: 8,400,000 / 8,400,000

Strength: 500

Intelligence: 7,000

Vitality: 3,000

Agility: 4,000

Dexterity: 500

Active Skills: Flamethrower, Fireball, Firewall, Fire Storm, Dig, Fire Crunch

Passive Skills: Thermal Vision, Lava Walk

Special Ability: Immolation

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< Immolation >

- Coats its body with searing flames, burning those who make physical contact with it.

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"Not an Ant, but a Termite," Lux muttered.

Its titles, Nameless Vagabond and The Last Member Of A Destroyed Colony, made the Half-Elf understand why the Termite was all alone in the mountain.

While he was deep in thought about how to handle the current situation, the Termite on the ground opened its gigantic mandibles, which were now coated with flames.

"Who are you, and why have you come to my Domain?"

A sharp and intimidating voice sounded in Lux's, Ishtar's, and Cethus' ears, making them realize that the monster was intelligent enough to know how to communicate through telepathy.

Since communication was possible, Lux decided to have a proper talk with the Deimos-Ranked Alpha Termite, and tell it why he had come to meet with him.

"We came here from Abingdon Town upon the request of the current Mayor, Pietro," Lux replied. "It is currently being besieged by groups of Inse-Monsters, and the people need to evacuate in order to survive.

"Mr. Pietro said that the former Mayor told him on his deathbed that, if Abingdon Town were to need your help, you would offer your assistance once."

The flames on the mandibles of the Giant Termite slowly vanished after hearing Lux's words.

It then lowered its head as if deep in thought. Lux didn't disturb it because he could tell that it was no longer hostile to them. The proof of it was in his Soul Book. Instead of a big, red, blinking dot, the dot was now yellow, which meant that the Monster was now in a Neutral State.

Neither an enemy nor a friend.

"Go back," the Giant Termite stated. "My ties with humans died when my friend died."

Just as the monster was about to turn around to head back to its nest, Lux immediately shouted to stop it in its tracks.

"Please wait!" Lux shouted. "Would you really ignore the former Mayor's hometown and its residents? You are the only one they can turn to during this time of hardship. Without your help, the evacuation will be filled with dangers."

The Termite's body remained still for an entire minute before continuing to crawl back inside its nest.

"Leave," the Giant Termite replied. "Whatever fate awaits the residents of Abingdon Town is none of my concern. I never made a promise that I would help them if they were to face a threat that they are unable to overcome. I already told you that my ties with humans died the moment my friend died. Do not trouble me again or else I will attack you."

The Giant Termite no longer bothered with the Half-Elf and went back inside its nest, leaving Lux, Ishtar, and Cethus to look at its retreating back until it blended with the shadows.

"Now what?" Cethus asked the Half-Elf who was still looking at the entrance of the cave with a disappointed expression on his face.

"We'll do what we have to do," Lux sighed. "Let's return to Abingdon Town."

The Half-Elf patted Jed's back, and the latter let out a low growl before turning back to return to the pitiful town that had been abandoned by the Former Mayor's friend.

When the Half-Elf and the Dragon Born were a good distance away from the Isoptera Mountain, the Giant Termite emerged from its nest once again to look at the East, where Abingdon Town was located.

"Sorry, Drystan," the Giant Termite muttered softly. "I am unable to grant your dying wish. Forgive me, old friend."

The Giant Termite lowered its head as if it was feeling very guilty about something.

Even so, it still decided to not offer its help to the people, whom his closest friend loved with all of his heart.

## Chapter 554.1: Happy Days That Would No Longer Return [Part 1]

It all started fifty years ago.

In a region that was a good distance away from the Shaufell Valley, a colony of Blaze Coned Termites thrived.

This particular colony was fairly young and only numbered tens of thousands.

It was also the place where I was born.

The moment I hatched from the egg, my destiny had already been laid out for me. Unlike the Worker Termites, my role was to guard and protect our colony from any kind of threat.

Our territory was near a volcano, so our bodies had evolved to adapt to it, making us very resistant to fire.

As our numbers grew, my comrades expanded our area of influence. Because of this, we encountered our fair share of powerful Beasts who mercilessly killed our kind.

Of course, I'm not saying that we were free from fault because Blaze Coned Termites were very aggressive and very territorial. Every single encounter we faced automatically led to a confrontation.

When Worker Termites died in the field, if their bodies were not consumed by the one that killed them, it would release a scent, informing us that one of our comrades had died.

This in turn would signal soldiers, like me, to investigate what happened, and we would deal with whatever Creature dared to kill one of our brethren.

Back then, I was only a newly born Rank 3 Monster, but since I was a Soldier Termite, I joined a scouting party to investigate the cause of death of one of our members that had traveled outside our borders.

This was a very common thing since our nest was expanding, and the Worker Termites were always looking for food and other resources to provide for the entire colony.

Back then, I thought we were going to face some Fire Beetles, whom we usually found in our territory. These creatures were stronger than us, but we had the advantage when it came to numbers, so a battle between Quality and Quantity was a daily occurrence.

Unfortunately, what we found weren't beetles...

They were Ants...

Fire Ants to be exact.

Just like my comrade who perished under their hands, they were also expanding their territories, and our workers just happened to meet each other, which led to a confrontation.

I could still remember that day very clearly, for it was the day that everything that I cared for in the world... perished.

The moment our two sides met, war was inevitable.

Ants and Termites simply couldn't co-exist under the same sun. Unfortunately, our Nest was fairly young. The Ant Colony that took the initiative to attack us numbered in the Hundreds of Thousands, which put us at a great disadvantage.

Our race heavily relied on Fire Attacks to incinerate our foes to ashes, but our opponents were resistant to fire just like us.

The Fire Ants were too similar to us—they could also use Fire Attacks. However, they didn't fight with that. Instead, they used brute force and numbers to overwhelm our Colony.

Back then, our Sole Deimos-Ranked comrade fought against three Deimos-Ranked Ants to death.

I could still remember how he fought with everything he had, with his entire body burning like molten lava, illuminating that dark and nightmarish night.

All of us fought bravely. Soldiers and Workers fought with everything we had to protect our Colony and our Queen.

However, no matter how many of my brethren sacrificed their lives, we couldn't change the inevitable.

The moment our Deimos-Ranked Fighter fell, everything went downhill.

My comrades died right before my eyes, and I was among those that fell, or at least that was what I thought at that time.

I didn't know what happened after I lost consciousness, but when I opened my eyes, our nest was already destroyed.

Countless bodies of Ants and Termites were scattered across the ground. It was a scene of complete and utter carnage.

A scene that I will never forget till I draw my last breath.

Originally, our bodies should have been collected by the victors and used as food to nourish their colonies. However, for some reason, it didn't happen.

It was then that I saw it...

A fifteen-meter-tall Monster, whose mere presence was enough to make my body uncontrollably shudder.

Back then, I didn't know what it was. Later, my friend Drystan told me the name of the monster that was considered to be the Bane of the Ants' and Termites' existence.

It was none other than an Adamantium-Scaled Anteater.

Its powerful aura was said to reduce the strength of all Ants and Termites to only a tenth of their original strength, making them unable to launch an effective counterattack against it.

Even the Ants, who emerged victorious in the war against us, were all slain by it, making it the true winner of the war that we had fought against each other.

Perhaps it was a sick joke from Fate, but I woke up at the moment when the monster was about to eat our Queen.

The Spiritual Leader of our Colony whom we tried to protect with everything we had. As if sensing my gaze, the Anteater glanced in my direction and looked at me with a teasing glint in its eyes.

It then ate my helpless Queen in front of me, watching my anguished expression as it ate with relish.

I had no choice but to watch it from beginning to end because I couldn't move any part of my body. I was paralyzed by both fear and grief. Even if the Anteater had decided to kill me back then, I would have thought of it as a form of release.

A release from the nightmare that I just witnessed.

However, after eating my Queen, it didn't eat me. It only laughed.

A sickening and maddening laugh that made me wish that it had killed me instead. But, it didn't do that.

Perhaps, in its eyes, a mere Rank 3 Monster like me wasn't worthy of being eaten by an Argonaut Ranked Creature like him.

After seeing my agony and pain, it finally left and headed in the direction of the Fire Ant Colony.

Perhaps, it would feast on their Queen as well, just like it did to mine. But, I was beyond caring at that point.

I didn't know how long I stayed frozen in that spot. But since I was seriously injured, I couldn't move even if I wanted to.

That was when he appeared.

A Human, and my one and only friend in the world. Drystan.

"Fate has allowed you to live, so you must live."

That was how the two of us met, and that was how I was given a second chance at life.

## Chapter 555.2: Happy Days That Would No Longer Return [Part 2]

"Fate has allowed you to live, so you must live."

Those were the words that he said to me back then, and without even caring that I was a Monster, he treated my injury.

There were many times when I wished that he had just killed me and taken my Beast Core. The war that happened that night haunted me to the present day, always making me wonder why I lived when my entire colony perished.

The first thing I did the day after I recovered was to scavenge the battlefield, looking for Beast Cores to eat.

My Natural Instinct urged me to rummage through the countless dead, looking for the cores that would allow me to become stronger. Although tens of thousands of corpses were all over the place, I was only able to get over a hundred cores in total.

Whenever we killed a monster, the first thing we target is our opponent's Beast Core, so we can eat it.

Perhaps, the appearance of the Anteater forced the Ants to stop their feeding frenzy and make a hasty retreat back to their nest, to warn their Queen that their mortal enemy had arrived.

So, I ate what cores were left and increased my Rank from Rank 3 to Rank 4.

Drystan didn't say anything back then and simply observed me from a distance. Since he was my savior, I didn't attack him--was what I'd like to say.

I knew that if I did attack him, the one who would end up dying was me.

The man who saved me was an Initiate, and if he wished, he could have killed me anytime he wanted.

But he wanted me to live, and so I did.



"Your Colony is gone," Drystan said after I finished eating all the cores that I could find on the battlefield. "How about you come with me and follow me on my adventures?"

As a Soldier Termite, the only thing I knew how to do was to fight, so I agreed to his proposal.

He made me his Beast Companion, and he gave me a new purpose in life. Everything was fine and we both increased our Ranks exponentially during our travels.

I became a Deimos-Ranked Monster, while he became a Ranker. Unfortunately, during one of our adventures, Drystan was heavily poisoned by a Poisonous Tree Frog. This poison didn't have a cure, and he had only been able to suppress it for a short time because he was a Ranker.

Even so, as the years passed, the poison's effects gradually spread inside his body, making his Rank Degrade from Ranker, to Initiate, to Apostle.

His once powerful body slowly weakened, but even in that state, he didn't feel down.

Drystan returned to his town and became a Mayor, using the remaining years of his life to make Abingdon Town the center of commerce.

For my part, I did my best to protect the town he had built from the shadows and eliminated anything that could pose a threat to it.

I also made Isoptera Mountain my home.

It was far enough from Abingdon Town so that people wouldn't be threatened by my existence, but near enough to lend my aid if my dear friend needed it.

Drystan would visit me from time to time every time he wasn't busy with work and would stay with me for a few days to make sure that I was doing well.

He was the only man I truly cared for, and perhaps, I even treated him as a member of my own Colony.

The Humans call this term Family, and I'm sure that deep in his heart, Drystan also thought of me that way.

But, just like how our nest was destroyed, the inevitable happened. My friend succumbed to the poison's effect and died, leaving me and his beloved town behind.

Perhaps, knowing that his time was near, he visited me one last time.

Back then, I didn't know how he was feeling because he was laughing and smiling despite the pain, and called me the Unsung Hero of Abingdon Town.

The term Hero was new to me, so I asked him what a Hero was.

"Heroes are ordinary people who make themselves extraordinary," Drystan answered. "A Hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself."

"But I'm a termite," I replied back then. "I'm not Human like you."

"Termite, Ants, Monsters, Humans, Dwarves, Elves? What's the difference? Anyone can be a Hero."

"Can I really be a Hero too?"

"Yes. You can be a Hero too."

That was the last time I saw my friend, and I only knew he died because his contract with me disappeared on the day of his death.

Since then, I stayed on Isoptera Mountain, waiting for the day when I would be reunited with him in the afterlife.

On the day Drystan died, I didn't only lose my one and only friend and family member, but also my reason for living.

He was the one that saved me and gave meaning to my life. Without him, the hole that had been covered up in my heart opened once again, making me feel that life was no longer worth living.

The days were long, and the nights were cold. There were times when I contemplated whether I should just kill myself to end my suffering.

But whenever this thought passed through my head, the words he told me when we first met would resonate inside my heart, forcing me to cancel my thoughts of self-harm.

"Fate has allowed you to live, so you must live."

I sighed as I looked at the setting sun in the distance.

"It seems like Fate must really hate me then," I said softly. "How long do I have to wait until the end of my suffering?"

After the Half-Elf and the Dragon Born left, I reminisced on the happy days of my life, just as I always did every day.

My recollection would always end with the last time my friend visited me. The fleeting warmth and happiness that I would feel after that kept the thoughts of killing myself at bay, at least until the sun rose the next day.

"Since you are no longer here, I stopped repelling the monsters that have started to thrive in the Shaufell Plains," I said as I looked at the burning sun in the distance, which reminded me of the happy days that would no longer return.

"An Abingdon Town without you will never be the same. I might be vain, selfish, and ungrateful, but since you left me all alone, I decided to abandon the town that you have built as well.

"I'm sorry, Drystan. I guess not anyone can be a Hero like you said. I am no Hero. I am just the last survivor of a Colony that has long been buried by the sands of time, never to return again and will only linger as faint traces in my memory."

I survived alone, and I will die alone. That was what I had already decided.

Although this ending was not the one I envisioned when I became your Beast Companion, the years that I spent with you were still the happiest years of my life.

## **Chapter 556: Leaving Abingdon Town**

When Lux and Cethus returned to Abingdon Town, the townspeople were preparing for the upcoming evacuation.

Naturally, some of them didn't want to leave because the town was their birthplace. However, the Guards said that if they didn't want to leave, they would need to fend for themselves when the Monsters attacked.

This argument easily convinced them to reconsider their decision to stay. In the end, those who didn't want to leave reluctantly started packing their belongings.

They knew that if they stayed in Abingdon Town, all of them would die without the protection of the Town's Guards, whose numbers had decreased to less than half their original size before the Beast Attacks started.

"Did the Deimos-Ranked Beast agree to help us?" Pietro asked as soon as Lux landed inside his residence.

"No," Lux replied. "He said his ties with Humans died when the former Mayor died. We won't be getting any assistance from him."

Pietro was noticeably disappointed after hearing Lux's reply. However, since the Beast refused to help them, there was nothing they could do about it. A Deimos-Ranked Monster wasn't something that they dared to annoy.

"Master, we will only be able to leave on the third day" Asmodeus reported. "The chances of us getting attacked during that time is very high."

Lux nodded in understanding.

Since Asmodeus was the one that took the initiative to talk to him, the Half-Elf was sure that his trusted strategist had already formulated a plan that would allow them to survive the attacks of the Insects that lived in the Shaufell Plains.

"It will be difficult, Master," Asmodeus said through telepathy. "Regardless of who we face, casualties are inevitable. I just want you to understand that you can't save everyone."

"I understand," Lux replied. "Tell me the plan you have in mind for the evacuation."

"Very well. But, it will be best if we add Pietro and the Captain of the Guards in the discussion, so we can coordinate our strategy effectively."

"Good idea. Let's make that happen."

That night, Lux, Asmodeus, Pietro, and the Captain of the Guards, Marco, discussed the countermeasures that they will take when facing the Insect-Type Beasts.

Only when they fully grasped the strategy in their mind did they end their meeting, and retired for the night.

The Next Day...

Lux, and the others had a simple breakfast with Pietro. After it ended, the Half-Elf discussed with his group the battle plan for the evacuation.

Randolph, Grandma Annie, Laura, and Livia would stay in one group, and they would travel alongside the residents of Abingdon Town to evacuate.

Lux and the others would position themselves at the front, the rear, and the middle of the formation, so that they could react right away if any threats were to target the residents during their evacuation.

Randolph, and Grandma Annie both understood that the danger they were facing was greater than the one they had faced in Leaf Village. They didn't want to make things difficult for Lux and the others, so they didn't have any objections to the plan.

"Regardless of who we face, Ithaqua's role is indispensable," Gerhart commented. "So we need to protect it at all times."

Cethus stated "I'll play that role. Although I am not confident in fighting groups of monsters on my own, I will do my best to prevent any of the Monsters from killing Ithaqua."

Lux gave Cethus a brief nod. They were simply stretched too thin to protect everyone. Asmodeus would be guarding the center of procession where Randolph, Grandma Annie, Laura, and Livia would be stationed.

Gerhart would be guarding the rear of the formation, while Lux would be at the front. The Town Guards would move in groups, and position themselves accordingly to assist the defense of the people when the Monsters attacked.

The rest of the third day passed smoothly, and the evacuation procedures were nearly completed. That night, the residents all prayed to the Spirits of the Wanid Kingdom to give them a safe journey to their next destination.

They knew that when morning came, all of them would leave Abingdon Town behind. Even though they were reluctant to part, there was nothing they could do about it.

Either stay and die, or leave and have a chance of survival.

For most people, the choice was easy. As for the rest, they had no choice but to do it.

Just as the sun was rising the following morning, the gates of Abingdon Town opened wide.

"Forward!" Marco ordered.

A dozen Guards accompanied him at the lead of the formation to act as the Vanguard of the evacuation.

Half a minute later, wooden wagons, and carriages passed through the gates. The residents had spent the entirety of the second day creating as many wagons as possible for their evacuation.

Of course, it was never enough for everyone, so only the women, children, those with disabilities, and the old people were allowed to ride them.

Those who weren't riding the wagons, marched alongside them, creating a long line of evacuees.

Regardless if they were ordinary people, Apostles, or Initiates, All the men and women who were able to fight carried weapons, and prepared themselves for the battle that they would be fighting soon.

None of them were delusional enough to think that they wouldn't get attacked by the Monsters of the Shaufell Plains, so they had already made peace with themselves that they had no choice but to fight.

The first few hours of traveling put people on edge. The tension was at an all time high as they traveled the plains at a steady pace.

Pietro had estimated that the journey would take ten days due to the sheer numbers of evacuees.

Although he may look like an ordinary person in the eyes of others, the newly elected Mayor was actually a Battle Mage at the peak of the Initiate Rank.

Battle Mages were proficient in wielding magic, as well as using Magic Staffs, Canes, and Quarterstaff as melee weapons.

The Captain of the Guards, Marco, was a Magic Swordsman. Just like Pietro, he was a Peak Initiate.

He mostly used his magical powers to enhance his strength, speed, stamina, and vitality, boosting his fighting abilities to the limits.

Marco could also coat his sword with the magic of the different elements, allowing him to deal attacks that take advantage of his opponent's elemental weakness.

Finally, when the sun was at its peak, the first signs of trouble appeared on the horizon.

"Giant Ground Beetles!" Pietro gasped after seeing over twenty ground beetles, who were all Rank 5 Monsters, headed in their direction. "Marco, intercept them!"

Among the group of beetles, Lux noticed that one of them was slightly bigger than the rest, and had faint red stripes on its legs.

"Field Boss Monster," Lux muttered as he raised his hand to summon his Named Creatures, and his Undead Army to fight alongside the Towns Guards, who had already prepared themselves for the worst case scenario.

Lux knew that this was only the beginning of their journey, and if they couldn't even survive these Giant Ground Beetles then they had no hope of surviving the rest of the Insect-Type Beasts they would encounter along the way.

## **Chapter 557.1: Bug Wars [Part 1]**

< Viscous Carabus Ground Beetle >

- Giant Ground Beetle
- Rank 5 Field Boss Monster
- Hunter of the Plains

Health: 8,000,000 / 8,000,000

Mana: 250,000 / 250,000

Strength: 2,000

Intelligence: 500

Vitality: 4,000

Agility: 1,000

Dexterity: 1,000

Active Skills: Earth Spikes, Earth Wall, Crunch, Deadly Slash.

Passive Skills: Health Regeneration, Mana Regeneration, Stamina Regeneration, Sturdy Body.

Special Ability: Herculean Strength

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< Herculean Strength >

– When engaging in combat, the strength of this monster is multiplied by 300%

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Lux covered his body with the Favonius Legacy Armor and flew in the air. He would handle the Field Boss Monster, while his subordinates handled the rest.

Summoning his Doppelgangers, he immediately unleashed a Dragon's Breath with the intention of pushing the Giant Ground Beetle backwards.



His priority was the safety of the people. For that to happen, he needed to prevent the Field Boss Monster from nearing the procession of evacuees, who had all stopped in their tracks with grim expressions on their faces.

Eiko, who was sitting on top of Asmodeus' head, wanted to head off into battle, but Lux had asked her to protect Grandma Annie, Laura, and Livia alongside Asmodeus.

The Baby Slime might be a battle junkie, but she cared for the kind grandma, and the two little girls who were taking good care of their own baby slimes, Cora and Nora.

Eiko would not allow them to get hurt, so she simply cheered her Papa on from a distance.

"Pa!"

"Fight!"

"Pa!"

"Fight!"

Asmodeus chuckled as the Baby Slime on top of his head jumped up and down, while calling out to his Master, who was taking on the Field Boss Monster by himself.

With two Doppelgangers by his side, although the enemy was stronger, and more sturdy than he was, the Half-Elf was confident that he would be able to chip away its life little by little.

Magical arrows rained down upon the Giant Ground Beetles, as Lux's newly evolved, Skeleton Arcane Hunters, joined the fray.

Upon clearing the Gate of Conquest, the Skeleton Grand Archers had gotten a free profession upgrade, which made Lux very happy.

The unique abilities of the Skeleton Arcane Hunters was a welcome addition to the Half-Elf's growing Army.

These ranged attackers had the power to imbue their arrows with elemental magic, which allowed them to increase their damage significantly. Not only

that, they had the skill, Wild Focus, allowing them to imitate the abilities of certain creatures.

For example, they could imitate the sharp sightedness of Eagles and Hawks, allowing them to see farther and clearer. They could also imitate the agility and dexterity of monkeys, giving them the ability to climb trees and mountains faster.

Of course, these boosts in abilities weren't permanent, and only lasted for half an hour. Even so, it was a great skill that allowed them to be more flexible on the battlefield.

Also, the Skeleton Arcane Hunters could summon Skeleton Beast Companions to assist them in battle.

Currently, they could only summon Skeleton Forest Wolves that served as Bodyguards, as well as Mounts, if necessary, making them very flexible fighters.

With the Mythical Gauntlet in his hand, Orion smashed his fists against the Ground Beetle's head, making it shriek in pain.

Diablo was doing hit and run attacks, wielding his weapon with great mastery. Since his sword strikes were imbued with the Ethereal Element, it bypassed the sturdy defenses of the Ground Beetles, making them feel a world of pain.

Pazuzu smashed his spiked mace on the head of one of the Ground Beetles who managed to break away from their defensive formation, making a sprint towards the residents of Abingdon Town with blood-shot eyes.

After repeated attempts, the Fortress Defender's passive ability activated, which paralyzed the Beetle for a short period of time. Naturally, the Town's Guards, as well as the Skeleton Gang Bangers didn't miss this opportunity and unleashed a concentrated attack on the Beetle's head, targeting its eyes.

Their efforts were not wasted as the Beetle uttered a pain-filled screech as it lost its vision in both eyes.

Zagan, and Lazarus teamed up to devastate their foes with magical bombardments. The Strategist of Lux's Necromancer Covenants called upon Black Lightning Bolts, imbued with the Power of the Abyss, against the Ground Beetles.

Similar to Diablo's ability, Abyss Touch bypassed defenses and dealt direct damage to the Soul. no matter how tough the Ground Beetles were, they weren't able to endure the intense pain that coursed through every fiber of their being.

Lazarus, on the other hand, had the Unique Ability Cold Flames. All of his attacks lowered his enemies' resistances to cold and fire attacks, making them feel the chilling cold of ice, and the burning sensation of blazing flames.

Long exposures to such attacks was enough to drive someone crazy, making the Great Flame Skull a menacing Magical Turret that could unleash deadly spells in quick intervals.

Ishtar was also making things difficult for the Giant Ground Beetles by shooting arrows imbued by Ice Magic, decreasing their mobility and attack speed.

Pietro, who was observing the battle from afar breathed a sigh of relief.

"Fortunately they decided to help us," Pietro muttered. "If not, I don't know how we would be able to live through this."

The battle between the Field Boss Monster and Lux was getting more intense.

Loud explosions reverberated in the surroundings as the Half-Elf unleashed his Draco Meteor Skill, giving the Viscous Carabus Ground Beetle no opportunity to mount an effective counter-offensive against him.

Out of desperation, the Field Boss Monster erected walls of Earth in order to protect itself from Lux's merciless bombardment.

Layers upon Layers of Earth crumbled as Lux, and his clones, continued to unleash their strongest attacks in order to exterminate the Giant Ground Beetle as soon as possible.

Because he was too focused on dealing with the monster in front of him, he didn't notice the scouts of the various Insect-Type Beasts that were watching the battle from afar.

All of them were paying close attention to the battle, as well as the thousands of Humans, who were valuable food resources in their eyes.

## Chapter 558.2: Bug Wars [Part 2]

Gerhart and Cethus observed the ongoing battles in the distance and were quite surprised by how Lux, his Summons, and the Town's Guards were keeping the Monsters at bay.

Unlike the Half-Elf who was too focused on his battles, the two had sensed the presence of other creatures in the surroundings.

Asmodeus had sensed them as well, but he didn't tell Lux about his discovery right away because his Master was fighting against a dangerous opponent.

Although the Field Boss was unable to effectively mount a counterattack, all of that would change once the Half-Elf concerned himself with the Monsters that were gathering near the evacuees.

"Eiko, summon Boomer and your Slimes," Asmodeus said. "We got company."

The Baby Slime nodded and summoned her subordinates in order to protect the people that they were escorting. Eiko would do everything in her power that was important to her and her Papa.

Even though the scouts of the Ants, Giant Hornets, Mosquitoes, and other Insect-Type Beasts were simply observing from afar, that didn't mean that they were idle. Everything that was happening was reported to their comrades who were back in their respective colonies.

Because of this, Asmodeus, Gerhart, Cethus, Marco, and Pietro prepared themselves for the worst-case scenario. They knew that things could go wrong at any given moment, but the only option left for them was to face these challenges with everything they had.

The residents who were also capable of fighting were holding their weapons in their hands and were also preparing to engage any enemies that would dare to attack them.

Randolph and Grandma Annie also took out their weapons in preparation for the inevitable.

Behind the two little Dwarves, a black coffin hovered above their heads. Lux had set it to automatically summon Sid and Scarlet if the Dwarves' lives were being threatened as a safety precaution.

As if waiting for that cue, a loud buzzing sound came from the North, which momentarily made Lux look away.

The Field Boss didn't miss this opportunity and executed a well-aimed Earth Spike, which sent the Half-Elf spiraling toward the ground after getting a direct hit.

The Half-Elf clutched his chest with his right hand, enduring the pain as his vision locked on a dark swarm in the distance, which was all too familiar to him.

"Asmodeus!" Lux roared as Asmodeus summoned Ithaqua, who immediately conjured a blizzard, coating the surroundings in snow and ice.

Countless mosquitoes blotted the sky with their numbers, making the Half-Elf's skin crawl.

Regardless of Rank, all Mosquito Type Monsters had a passive ability to inflict poison, weakness, and paralysis on the people that they had bitten.

However, if one were to come across a mosquito swarm, suffering status conditions was the least of their problems. It was highly possible that it would only take a few seconds for them to become a dried husk when the Mosquitoes were done sucking up all of their blood.

Countless Obsidian Spite Mosquitoes (Rank 1), Iron-Scaled Torment Mosquitoes (Rank 2), Ruthless Venom Mosquitoes (Rank 3), and Horned Harlequin Mosquitoes (Rank 4) covered the sky like a thick blanket, casting a shadow upon them.

The scariest part about this formation was that three Diabolical Doom Mosquitos (Rank 5 Field Monster) were commanding this deadly army.

Even after Ithaqua summoned a blizzard to cover everyone and to decrease the enemies' field of vision, the Mosquitoes simply hovered outside the blizzard, looking for any gaps that they could break through.

Although they liked to suck blood, Mosquitoes were cold-blooded creatures that didn't like the cold because it made them lethargic. Their body functions slow down and, if they were to be exposed to extreme cold, they could die in a matter of minutes.

Lux, who saw this, managed to breathe a sigh of relief. However, his expression immediately changed when he saw the three Diabolical Doom Mosquito's eyes turned bright red, making the Half-Elf feel as if something bad was going to happen.

Suddenly, the three Rank 5 Field Boss Monsters, unleashed a barrage of crimson crescent blades, piercing through the cloak of snow and ice, and fly toward Ithaqua's location.

"Not on my watch!" Cethus shouted and immediately unleashed a Dragon Breath, which collided with the Crescent Blades that threatened their Trump Card's life.

The Dragon Breath managed to disperse a few of the Crescent Blades, but not all of them.

""Breath!""

Eiko and her clones shouted, and unleashed three Dragon Breaths blocking the Field Boss Monster's attack. However, the four Dragon Breath's attacks combined, managed to temporarily disperse a portion of the blizzard, giving the Mosquito Swarm a path to worm their way in.

"Sh\*t!" Cethus cursed loudly as he prepared to unleash another Dragon's Breath. However, firing consecutive Dragon Breaths wasn't an easy matter. At most, he would still need a full minute to recover before he could unleash another wave of attacks.

Just as the Dragon Born was thinking of ways to stop the Mosquito Swarm that had taken a gamble to take down the Creature of Cold White Silence, Ithaqua, a bombardment of Magical Spells and Elemental Imbued Arrows flew towards the incoming Mosquitoes, decimating them at a rapid pace.

The majority of the mosquitoes were Rank 1 and Rank 2 Monsters, so they easily died under the cover fire of the Skeleton Arcane Hunters and the Skeleton Mages which numbered in the hundreds.

All of Lux's and Asmodeus' Skeleton Summons, as well as Rock Golems, were all Rank 4 Monsters, making them superior to the lower-ranking mosquitoes.

However, there was one thing that the mosquitoes had that the Skeleton Army didn't—that was their numbers.

They were simply too many of them!

The Mosquito swarm numbered in the millions, which made things difficult for the defenders.

One of the Diabolical Doom Mosquitoes had also entered the gap in the blizzard and flew straight towards Ithaqua, using his comrades as shields to block all the incoming attacks in front of it.

Left with no other choice, Cethus gritted his teeth as he flew into the air in order to intercept the Rank 5 Field Boss Monster.

"I will support you," Asmodeus stated as he conjured spinning blades that flew around Cethus' body, annihilating all the lower-ranked Mosquitoes who tried to attack him.

With one mighty roar, the Dragon Born opened his mouth and unleashed an acid spray, aiming at the Field Monster's eyes in an attempt to blind it. However, his opponent had very high agility and dexterity, allowing it to dodge Cethus' attack with relative ease.

Before the Dragon Born could even follow up with his attack, the Diabolical Doom Mosquito made a U-Turn and attempted to pierce the Dragon Born's back with its needle-like mouth, aiming for its heart.

However, before it could succeed in its attempt, a crystallized monkey fist smashed the side of its face.

A second later, a loud explosion followed as the Diabolical Doom Mosquito's attack narrowly missed Cethus' body due to Boomer's Dynamite Punch.

"I owe you one, Monkey!" Cethus shouted as he kicked the air, using it as a stepping stone to unleash a dropkick on the Giant Mosquito's head.

His attack connected, but it didn't deal as much damage as he intended. The difference in Ranks allowed the Diabolical Doom Mosquito to survive one of Cethus' full-powered strikes with ease.

As the battle between the Mosquitoes and Lux's allies intensified, another round of collective buzzing sounded, and this time, it came from the West.

Dozens of Red Giant Hornets flew in a formation and were about to join the fray. They only came to the battlefield for one reason and one reason only and that was to capture as many Humans as possible.

Their Queen had tasked them to collect as much food as they could so that she could birth more Red Giant Hornets to further increase their numbers.

Gerhart, who was at the rear of the formation, clicked his tongue as he unsheathed the dagger on his waist.

The Giant Hornets had decided to try their luck at the rear of the procession of evacuees, hoping that they would get less resistance if they did that.

"Here goes nothing..." Gerhart muttered as he summoned a tornado to rotate around his body. The Snow and Ice fused with his attack, creating a tornado of extreme cold and sharpness that could easily shred any Monster that was unlucky enough to get trapped within one of his strongest special attacks.

What can I do?