

My Infinite Mana System

Chapter 13: Team Dynamics

The path ahead was narrow, forcing us to walk single file.

The air grew colder, carrying a damp, metallic scent that clung to my nostrils.

My heart was still pounding from the fight, my fingers tingling from the lingering traces of lightning.

Tobias took the lead, his broad shoulders cutting an imposing figure in the flickering light of the torches.

Behind him was Lily, her bow at the ready, her eyes darting from shadow to shadow.

Marcus walked next, his movements as fluid and quiet as the darkness itself.

Evelyn stayed close to me, her staff glowing faintly, the only warmth in the oppressive chill.

The silence was heavy, broken only by the soft sound of our footsteps.

"That went better than I expected," Marcus said, his voice light but carrying an edge of fatigue.

Lily smirked, not looking back.

"Speak for yourself. I wasn't the one who almost got skewered."

"I was luring it in," Marcus retorted, feigning indignation. "It's called strategy."

"Sure it is," Lily said, her tone dripping with amusement.

Evelyn sighed.

"Can we not do this right now? We're still in enemy territory."

Tobias glanced over his shoulder, his expression stern.

“She’s right. Save the banter for when we’re safe.”

Marcus muttered something under his breath but fell silent.

I stayed quiet, focusing on the path ahead.

My mind was racing, replaying the battle over and over.

Every mistake, every hesitation, felt magnified.

The goblins weren’t particularly strong, but they had been relentless.

To me, that was a very good lesson learnt.

It's what I was taught when I was younger, to always observe everything around you, there is a lesson to learn from it.

“You’re awfully quiet, newbie,” Marcus said, falling back to walk beside me. “Something on your mind?”

I briefly hesitated thinking of what to say.

Then I said.

“Just thinking about the fight.”

“Don’t overthink it,” he said, his tone surprisingly gentle. “First fights are always messy. You’ll get the hang of it.”

Lily chimed in from up ahead.

“He’s right. You did better than most rookies. I’ve seen newbies freeze up completely or run at the first sign of blood.”

“My father was a Hunter, so I think what he thought me helped alot” I said.

"Your father was a Hunter!" Lily seemed surprised.

"Yeah" I said.

"I knew it, something was off, you knew how to use your ability and weapon so well" Lily said.

Evelyn glanced at me, her silver hair catching the faint light.

"You'll learn more from experience, Allen. Just don't forget why you became a hunter."

Her words were something I have asked myself ever since.

I had many reasons, but what was a specific one that stands out.

Why did I become a Hunter?

To prove myself?

No.

Just for fun?

No.

I became a hunter to learn and earn survival, to me, it means more than just staying alive, it means I would claw my way up from nothing, turning every lesson into leverage, every scar into strength.

Ever since I was young, I never survived because I was lucky.

I observed, I adapted, I took what I needed and made sure no one could ever take it back.

I sighed.

Power?

It's not given.

It's seized, by proving I am stronger, smarter, or more ruthless than those who stand in my way.

Strength isn't just muscle, it's endurance, the will to keep going when others break.

Wealth?

That's the reward for outthinking, outworking, or outright stealing from those too weak to keep it.

Connections are the threads that pull the world's strings, and when I weave them right, they become my net when i fall.

Survival isn't passive.

It's not just breathing, it's dominating.

I won't beg for my place in this world.

I would take it.

And once i have it?

I would make damn sure no one can rip it from my hands.

And that is exactly why I became a hunter.

It was selfish, but I didn't care, it was what I ever wanted.

Without all of it I won't be able to survive in this world, no one can.

We reached another chamber, smaller than the last but no less foreboding.

The walls were covered in strange markings, crude and jagged, as if carved by claws.

The air was thick with tension, every shadow seeming to pulse with unseen movement.

"Scout it," Tobias ordered, nodding to Marcus.

Marcus slipped into the darkness, his form melting into the shadows like smoke.

The rest of us waited, weapons ready, every muscle tensed.

Minutes felt like hours before Marcus returned, his expression grim.

"Five goblins, heavily armored. Looks like they're guarding something."

"Another leader?" Lily asked.

“No,” Marcus replied. “Something different. They’re too organized for regular grunts.”

Tobias frowned, his hand tightening around his claymore.

“We take them out quickly and quietly. Same formation as before.”

We moved into position, the tension thick enough to cut with a blade.

My palms were slick with sweat, my heartbeat thundering in my ears.

Lily’s first arrow struck true, embedding itself in the throat of one of the goblins.

Marcus was a blur of motion, his daggers finding gaps in the goblins’ armor with surgical precision.

Tobias charged into the fray, his claymore cleaving through one goblin and slamming into another.

Evelyn stayed back, her magic weaving through the air, enhancing Tobias’s strength and Marcus’s speed.

I hung back, waiting for an opening.

“Allen!” Tobias shouted, his voice cutting through the chaos.

I didn’t hesitate.

Concentrating my Mana, I unleashed a bolt of lightning at a goblin trying to flank Tobias.

The energy struck true, the goblin collapsing with a pained shriek.

The fight was over quickly, the goblins no match for our coordinated attack.

As the last body hit the ground, the tension eased, replaced by a heavy silence.

“Good work,” Tobias said, his voice steady but low.

Marcus wiped his blades on a fallen goblin, his expression neutral.

“Too easy. Something’s off.”

“What do you mean?” I asked.

He gestured to the chamber around us.

“These markings. The way they were guarding this spot. It’s like they were protecting something.”

Lily knelt by one of the goblins, inspecting its armor.

“These aren’t regular grunts. They’re stronger, better equipped. This isn’t normal.”

Evelyn moved to the center of the chamber, her staff glowing brighter as she examined the strange markings.

“This is ancient,” she murmured. “These symbols... they’re a warning.”

“A warning for what?” I asked, my stomach tightening.

She turned to face us, her expression grim.

“For whatever’s deeper in this dungeon.”

Tobias’s jaw tightened, his grip on his claymore firm.

“We move carefully from here on out. No more mistakes.”

We regrouped and pressed on, the unease in the air growing with every step.

I felt the weight of the dungeon pressing down on me, not just the physical danger but the sense of something malevolent.