

Mana 41

Chapter 41 - Entering a new phase

With the destruction of [Lion's Den], a new chapter was opening for humans and hunters that had been playing a game of catch up with constantly increasing dungeons.

Magnar and a few of the officials that watched the implosion of the dungeon firsthand were broadcasting what they were watching to someplace and others were making phone calls

After Elizabeth had collected herself, I went to the center of the destroyed monolith and picked up another crystal that looked exactly the same as the one I already had, even to the unreadable mess of words

In the 27 successful times we dived in [Lion's Den] we received many rank B [Item]s and [Skill]s, but there was no luck in anything rank A dropping. I was able to find another useful skill to add to my collection while busily running around that was called [Critical Strike-When active, skills cast thereafter have a chance to deal double the damage]. I didn't know the percentage chance of a critical strike occurring while this was active, but I was looking forward to seeing just how much I could continue to increase my damage output. I was going to look through the rest of the skills when we had some time later and choose the ones to exchange with the military

After completely destroying another rank B dungeon, there was only one more left in Star City. We went toward this last dungeon called [Bullish Arena] where even more squads led by rank A hunters were repeatedly diving in.

When we arrived we were met with another empty space where a monolith used to stand, with hunters cheering in the clearing. My mind grew calm at this site. It seemed like we were finally heading in the right direction. Things would get better from here.

In an unknown location

A being dr.a.p.ed in black was overlooking multiple transparent screens that showed complex data. The being had a sharp horn protruding from the center of its head, giving its humanoid appearance an imposing look

It noticed a change on one of the screens that quickly grabbed its attention, making a motion to the underling sitting right behind the screen using a glistening three-point tipped weapon.

"What happened there?"

The aide behind the screen shot to attention and replied, "We began losing some of the major connections that were already established on Planet 90X in close succession"

The sharp horned being looked at the screen as his eyes flashed with a piercing light as he read the data on this target and asked the aide "How many pieces do we have on standby?"

There was a ruffling of some doc.u.ments before a reply came, "We currently have the optimum volume ready for the descent on the next planned target"

A second passed as the sharp horned man seemed to think, before a decisive command came out, "Divert the entire volume towards Planet 90X"

A shocked expression rose on the aide's face when it heard this, and asked to make sure. "Sir, is that necessary? We will be extremely restricted in our actions towards that target should anything change in the future, and redirecting this much traffic would use a lot of essence"

There was a momentary silence as the screens of data in the room fluctuated, before the commanding voice came out once again, "It is abnormal to start losing connections at this stage, and in rapid succession at that. Abnormalities have to be fully eliminated. I do not want any possibility of hope for those backward natives. Do it while also accelerating the release process."

A serious nod came from the aide as they adjusted parameters and redirected the coordinates. Directions were soon passed down as pieces moved into their respective positions. At another location not too far from them, there was a huge field that held beasts of all shapes and sizes as far as the eyes could see. There was an eerie quietness at the sight of these countless beasts as multiple small crystals in the field began emanating light barriers that sectioned them off into multiple groups

In a short period of time, everything was assembled and ready to go. With a nod from the aide, the sharp horned man crossed his legs and sat down while closing his eyes, seemingly putting in all his focus for what was about to happen.

I was watching the cheerful hunters when I suddenly felt a change. Even though I was still high in the sky, it felt as if the earth was vibrating. The vibrations only increased as seconds passed and everyone caught on and looked around them

The earth was shaking, the air was shaking, and a strange energy filled the surroundings. An old memory resurfaced in my mind as my face began to drain of all color. This...this was what happened a year ago. Extreme unease began settling in as I recalled what I felt back then and what I was feeling now. It felt much stronger

The faces of hunters soon turned into despair as they saw a familiar light cover the entirety of their sight, and explosions followed right after

BOOM! BOOOM! BOOM!

As if nails were being hammered onto a board, multiple monoliths smashed into the ground and took root. Noises and screams began to be heard as multiple impacts were felt around the city, with a huge one very near to where we are

I opened my eyes in shock to find another dungeon monolith more than two times bigger than the ones I had been clearing smash down onto the area of the dungeon that the hunter squads just destroyed. Some hunters that were still standing nearby were crushed, not even getting a second to let out dying screams

The impact blasted away those that were near as the new dungeon monolith stood erect and proud. Shocks soon turned into despair when hunters got their bearings and saw the bloody site in front of them, as well as the continuous screams that began resounding from the city

The most terrifying thing of all was the fact that the huge monolith that had just struck down was blinking red. Elizabeth had slumped down on top of the black eagle, her eyes showing pits of despair as she looked at the monolith ahead of us

My heart was about to lurch out of my chest as I looked at this monolith and observed the area around me. I was flying high up and had a good view of the city, but I couldn't believe what I saw. Monoliths that seemed to represent rank B dungeons had increased by more than 6, and besides this much larger monolith that appeared near us, there was another one just like it on the periphery of the city

Thoughts began to churn in my head as I didn't even know where to move to. The blinking red monolith near us began vibrating, not even giving a second of rest. I snapped out of my stupor and rushed towards the monolith with my right hand outstretched, hoping to make it in time before what was about to happen

My speed increased as I passed the hunters that were despondently looking forward on the ground as my arms neared the monolith...

BOOM!

I was knocked back by a huge impact while I watched with shock as the monolith in front of me began to bloom like a flower. Terrifying beasts soon began to fill the surroundings as one even larger grew out

ROAAAR!!!

A gruttal roar resounded out as a beast shining in white fur popped out. It had the general outline of a gorilla, yet its size defied normal conventions. It's piercing eyes opened and looked around as its mouth curled upwards and sharp teeth could be seen.

There were hundreds of beasts all around that looked toward this white gorilla that held a devilish smile on its face. Its smart eyes darted around as it looked at the hunters surrounded by beasts and roared out once more. This roar acted like a signal as the beasts jumped to the nearest hunter they could find.

My eyes felt like they were seeing blood as I found my body to already be rushing towards the huge TITAN. It's dark eyes met mine, and it's figure soon disappeared from the ground. [Danger Sense] began ringing as I turned my direction to the sky, only to be met with the newly appeared TITAN smashing its huge palm towards me

PAH!!!

...

Chapter 42 - Death and Destruction

It felt like I couldn't breathe as my figure was forced down to the ground like a missile.

BOOM!

The impact stole the air from my lungs as I felt multiple parts of my body ache in excruciating pain. I had no time to think as I saw the gorilla now diving down with a fist outstretched. My body was covered in a golden glow as I cast [Guardian's Light] and pulled away from the deep pit, the fist smashing down missing me by a second

I wasted no time as I retaliated, casting [Frigid Impermanence] multiple times towards the huge beast. It seemed to instinctively evade the 5 meter cold blasts as the first two hit air, with only the third catching it while it was dodging and making contact

ROAR!

It called out with a furious expression as its left hand had deep red gashes with a blue freezing flame dancing on it. Fury took control of me as I kept on hearing the screams around me as more and more [Frigid Imparmanance] was cast towards the huge gorilla. It was able to evade less and less after the first hit, the cold flames permeating in its bones as more of the skills smashed onto its body

The fur and skin that seemed to provide it tremendous defense were tattered and bleeding, it's smiling expression completely gone as it looked at me in fear. My only response was more freezing blasts that smashed its body further down into the ground. I only watched as its body become more and more mangled, and soon enough there was no sound coming from the beast

The area around it was still decimated from the cold explosions, but as it cleared I saw a shining [Skill Book] and glistening [Core]s on the ground. I dived down to grab what I saw as I began turning my attention to the hunters fighting the slightly smaller beasts in the background

I checked the information on the skill book as I began casting [Doom Bolt] multiple times towards the monsters clashing with the hunters. It was a rank A skill called [Instant Transfer- Move to any location you can see in an instant]. It was a very straight forward skill that I learned right away while furiously flying across the skies and continuing to shoot down red lightning to any monsters I saw

I couldn't cast [Frigid Impermanence] as they would destroy the surrounding hunters too, and could only strike down with the highest damage single target skill I held. Elizabeth was already on the move along with other rank A hunters that had been clearing the rank B dungeon. They had been taking down the monsters while saving as many lower level hunters and soldiers they could

I saw a hunter about to be eaten at a far off distance where I definitely wouldn't make it there by flying. [Instant Transfer] was used for the first time as my body disappeared and reappeared next to the man about to have his head devoured. My defense skills knocked the monster back as another red streak of lightning struck its chest and blew it away

The hunter thanked me while roughly breathing and I disappeared once more for another location, moving across the battlefield and taking down as many of the beasts as I could. There were mixtures of gorillas, apes, and orangutans that were 3 meters in size running around the field. Their numbers quickly dwindled as they were taken down by rank A hunters, with rank B hunters putting up a fight as well

The area was soon coming to a standstill as mostly hunters remained, many injured and dead as they looked around them in fear and anguish. Friends they were talking to just a moment ago laid dead in their surroundings.

After blasting remaining monsters with [Doom Bolt] I flew around casting [Guardian's Light] to all the hunters that were badly injured and still breathing. All reservations were out the window. I cast as many skills as I could, minimizing much of the damage. I already saw the looks of hope and wonder from the gazes of high ranked hunters as I finished healing the people in the surrounding

I took a second to stop in the air as I looked into the city where smoke could be seen and explosions continued to resound. The battle was still going on there, and even more casualties were occurring. I looked at the hunters below me that were either almost out of energy or looking towards the city in anger.

I was already flying towards the center of the city as my voice rang out powerfully while using [War Cry], "Snap out of it and stick together, save as many as you can!"

My words trailed behind me as I rushed towards the city even faster, with my brain quickly churning and giving me the idea to use [Eagle Eye] in conjunction with [Instant Transfer]. My eyes focused and moved to a position a bit over a mile away in the city where hunters were about to be overwhelmed by monsters, and my figure quickly disappeared from my current position as [Instant Transfer] was used

Magnar was looking at the sight in front of him with fear and trepidation. Just minutes after they watched the complete breakdown of the monolith that used to be [Lion's Den], the world began shaking...and it happened again

The same as before, dungeons appeared. The newly appeared dungeons quickly flashed red and a dungeon break occurred. Monsters rushed out and he was now fighting on the front lines while trying to mitigate the damage as much as possible

"PULL BACK!"

He was screaming commands towards his soldiers as he saw them being overwhelmed. A large number of rank B monsters were running amok, with a huge TITAN upfront being held back by a rank A hunter that stayed behind

Apprehension continued to grow in his heart as he saw more and more soldiers fall. His own power wasn't enough to protect those he cared for. Screams continued to ring out as blood and gore followed from the claws or teeth of the beasts

His breathing got rougher as he felt the low energy that remained in his body. He spent the majority of his time in the office, never exerting himself this much before. He looked at the despondent faces of his soldiers that were pushed far back, trying their best to hold on. No, he wouldn't let it end like this

"Find a chance to break through!"

He screamed out another command as he moved to the front of the defense line and his body blazed in a colorful light. He absorbed the blows of two monsters as he grabbed a soldier and threw them to the back. He would save as many as he could with the strength he had left

THUCK!

He then felt a deep impact as something heavy pierced the armor wrapping his chest, and a metallic taste filled his lips. His soldiers screamed and tried to move in, but could come no closer as his body was surrounded by monsters, the defense line pushed further back.

Magnar looked at the distorted face of the beast that had its arm in his chest as memories of a different time flashed through his mind. He felt his body slump onto the ground as the beast pulled out the hand piercing his chest and formed it into a fist before smashing down again

Memories and expectations of hope for the powerful hunter that had gone towards the other side of the city some time back were repeating in his head as his clear eyes began closing. The fist rushing down was abruptly stopped as golden swords, red lightning, and a golden light began descending from the skies

His eyes that were about to shut opened a bit more for the last time as he saw the hazy figure of a man materializing above them. Relief passed through him as he hoped this wasn't an illusion, and his eyes snapped shut. The lightning and swords struck down to meet the monsters, and the light went towards him

The golden light began descending on his body, but his eyes stayed shut. A second. A third. A fourth light descended down, but his eyes remained closed. The destructive lightning and golden swords had reached their target on time, but the golden light did not

A frenzied howl rang out in the surrounding as more golden swords and lightning flew at the bounteous groups of monsters that still surrounded the hunters

Chapter 43 - Dissolution

In the capital of the Blessed Empire

A fast-paced battle was taking place between a burly man holding a sharp spear and a large armadillo-like beast that moved at a speed not matching its body size. Around them lay shattered buildings in flames, with a huge mansion standing majestically in the background

Beasts of all shapes and sizes were abundant in the surroundings as they fought with hunters to their last breath. The ferocity of the fights around the burly hunter and armadillo was at another level

The sharp spear in the man's hand shone a white light as it expanded to five meters and struck down on the hard armor of the beast.

CRACK!

A horrid sound was heard as the hard shell broke and meat flew out. The attacks weren't over as the man rose up before bringing his shining spear down once more, nailing the armadillo to the ground.

An instant later, an exquisite battle armor along with [Core]s appeared beside the huge beast. The man bent down and grabbed the battle armor, fitting it on his body as if it were meant for him. He stood proud with an impassive expression as he looked at the battles happening around him. The grand building behind him had been protected, and would stay that way until his last breath. There were too many important people bunkered down in that place

His figure vibrated as the muscles wrapping all over his body like steel cables constricted. Only a flash could be seen as he moved and cut down any monsters that neared. He was the most famous hunter known around the world. He was Steel Mikhail

In one of the allied countries of the United Federation.

A man with glistening dark hair had his katana stabbed into the skull of a beast. All around him was a bloody mess of bodies and bones. The hunters that survived the dungeon breaks were looking at this man fearfully as he yawned and pulled the katana up

He looked to the distance and saw another TITAN that was rampaging. A dark light shone from his body as he suddenly began to grow larger, until reaching 5 meters in height. He pushed on the ground with a disinterested expression as he flew towards the TITAN with the katana in hand.

His large figure was wrapped in the dark light as it streaked across the sky. This was the most powerful rank A hunter in all the countries of the United Federation, The Dark Sword, Kazuhiko.

Rage was bubbling throughout every inch of my body as [Doom Bolt]s and [Smite]s continued to be repeatedly cast. Light upon light of my greatest rank A healing skill went down towards the body of a person I had grown familiar with these past few days, and yet nothing changed

I looked at the relieved expression apparent on Magnar's face as I shook my head in sadness and disappointment. Just a second longer and...

I rose up with complex feelings as the soldiers that were freed from the beasts' relentless attacks circled Magnar's body. There was sorrow in the air as people collected themselves, but I didn't have the time to stay. I tried to put the matter behind me for now and keep on moving. Even seconds were precious, and I couldn't waste them wallowing. There were many more scenes in the city repeating just like this

My body disappeared from this location and I continued scouring throughout the city, helping other hunters that were about to be overwhelmed and saving as many normal humans as I could.

With the advent of explosions and destruction, most people had stayed in their buildings or gone underground to fearfully hide, hoping all the monsters would be gone when they came out. Some were lucky, others were killed as buildings collapsed from the beasts.

Because many of the monoliths that appeared and had dungeon breaks were rank B, their bosses weren't too much of a hassle for me to take down. In a few minutes, I was transferring in and out all over the city, following explosions and screams as I took down the BOSSes and smaller beasts, giving hunters defending the city some breathing room

All they saw was a figure flash by, red lightning and golden swords descending, as well as a golden light that healed those badly injured. A moment later that figure was gone.

This process carried on for another half an hour, with hunters more effectively working together to move people away from the battlefield while protecting themselves from beasts. With a majority of the rank B BOSSes taken down, I rose high above the city to check what was happening and which areas needed the most support

On the south side of the City, the huge wall erected to protect it was broken down and I could see droves of beasts rushing out, with a huge TITAN standing beside the path where the monsters were

leaving from. [Danger Sense] was letting me know that this beast was of the same caliber as the huge white gorilla.

I defeated one, and I can definitely defeat another. My mind was still blazing with anger as I continued to use [Instant Transfer] with [Eagle Eyes] and moved closer and closer to where the monsters were leaving the city

Sharp eyes seemed to have noticed me as the TITAN looked up and their body grew to become even larger. It had the shape of something that had long gone extinct and could only be learned about in history. It had large strong legs and tiny arms that were still multiple times bigger than me, while boasting a gargantuan head that held rows of sharp teeth. It seemed to resemble very closely the archaic Tyrannosaurus Rex

An intelligent light flashed through its eyes as its large legs acted like a spring, pushing it off the ground and its opened jaws nearing me in an instant. [Instant Transfer] was quickly cast as I escaped before the jaws could snap down. I reappeared where its body used to be as I began spamming [Frigid Impermanence]

The large body wasn't able to dodge in the air, and two blasts hit it before it reached the ground.

ROAAR!!

It moved at extreme speeds as it ignored the freezing flames on its body and zigzagged towards me, evading the skills as if it knew where they would land before they were cast.

The moment it neared me again I disappeared into the sky, its terrifying teeth biting nothing but air. It let out another frustrated roar as it didn't jump this time around, its large jaws opening as a red light began to condense and palpitate in the center of its mouth

Oh, f.u.c.k you. I didn't let it complete its skill as another cold blast smashed onto its face, interrupting whatever it was trying to do and causing a huge explosion. The beasts that continued to leave through the broken wall in the city were not looking back, as if they were possessed or heeding a command.

The huge Tyrannosaurus Rex had its gigantic head mangled, a few of its teeth shattered on the ground. It would get no respite from me as [Doom Bolt]s and [Frigid Impermanence] smashed onto its injured body. Each strike of red lighting left deep gashes and each explosive cold blast left freezing flames with entire areas of its body missing

Its tremendous life force could not continue supporting it as it slumped down and was finally killed. [Core]s and another rank A [Skill Book] dropped, the skill being [Infernal Purge- Searing flames descend from the skies in an area of 5 meters].

I learned the skill without a thought and looked to the monsters completely ignoring me and rushing out of the city. There was much less noise and explosions as hunters continued to bring order to the city with the deaths of the TITANs, the only beasts roaming free being stranglers left behind

I tested [Infernal Purge] for the first time towards the tens of monsters still rushing out the city. Dark red flames manifested in the skies and rushed down, melting anything they came in contact with. I didn't care who was commanding the monsters to leave the city, I would just kill as many as I could.

Chapter 44 - Reverence

I floated in the middle of the broken wall leading to the desolate Barrens that the monsters continued to rush to. [Infernal Purge] and [Frigid Impermanence] continued to fall onto them, but not a single one turned around to face me as they escaped with all their might

Things began settling down until only one or two could be observed running here and there, with most of them already deep in the Barrens. I couldn't leave the city now as I didn't know what else would occur, and there were still rank B dungeons that were red and nearing another dungeon break

Movements could be heard behind me as hunters began appearing, the first one being Elizabeth. She stood on her injured eagle that was licking the wounds all over its body as she looked at me with a complicated expression.

Elizabeth approached from behind as she said, "The city is gradually being stabilized, with some teams already clearing the dungeons in the high-risk category that haven't had a dungeon break."

She was looking at me differently and speaking in a much more reserved tone than usual. I nodded as she continued, "We're trying to get in contact with other cities of the empire, but we don't have an estimate of deaths and which cities are still standing." She held back the pain as she said this, and I thought about her new tone towards me and the looks I had been receiving

Ever since I had begun moving around the city destroying the monsters relentlessly, people began looking at me differently. This was even more so for the rank A hunters and higher-ups that saw my power first hand when I handled the TITAN and its minions from the rank A dungeon break

I took the change with a calm mind as there were too many things to think about for me to worry about what other people were thinking. We waited at the portion of the destroyed wall until more hunters came and were stationed to rebuild and protect the hole leading out into the Barrens, and we went back into the city

In the military sector, there was significant damage done to many areas, but there was still functionality as people in their respective positions got things going again. I knew nothing besides being a hunter, so I continued to fly over the city while using [Eagle Eyes] to catch anything I missed

Four rank B dungeon monoliths were now in the city, with two in the high-risk category shining red, and two shining orange. There were already teams set up and clearing the two that were high risk, but they were still red. I thought for a bit and chose to quickly clear them a few times so that another dungeon break doesn't occur if the clear rate was too slow

In the next two hours, I dived into each of the two high-risk category dungeons three times before their color changed to light orange, gaining more [Core]s and [Skill]s. Nothing disastrous had happened while I was going in and out of the dungeon

Once there were no dungeons that would have any immediate dungeon breaks, I went back to the military sector where there would be a debriefing. I ignored the thankful and reverent looks from the soldiers and hunters that I had either healed or saved and went into a huge conference room, finding the only open seat at the front center of the room, with everyone else waiting

I sighed and sat down as the debriefing began. The discussion was somber this time around. We had lost much of the connections with surrounding cities and were not able to get in touch even with Blessed City.

The consensus was that this occurred throughout the world, and we didn't know the extent of the damage yet. But one thing was clear, there were now many more monsters roaming the desolate Barrens.

It would be much more dangerous to pass through from one city to another, with not much hope for the people stationed on guard posts along the roads leading to and from the cities

The next step was what we would do from here. When we got to this point, the room quieted and many people turned in my direction. This was what I was thinking about how to deal with before coming here. In the cities, those who held the most power would be the ones in high positions and have a large influence on the direction and lives of all the people living in it. Currently, they had seen with their own eyes that I was the strongest, and by a large gap at that, so more influence was pushed onto me.

I knew my strengths and weaknesses though, and leading people was not something I was confident in. I thought for a bit and said, "All I can do is hunt down the beasts, so I will rely on the help and ideas from everyone else on matters I am not knowledgeable on."

The hunters in the conference room nodded as they waited for my opinion about what we would do from now on. I continued, "The first thing is information. We need to find out which cities are still with us, and which cities still need a helping hand that haven't already been overwhelmed."

The officials in the room nodded as they began moving around busily, The issues after that were logistics about the city, its people, food and water, and many more things I didn't know or have an ounce of knowledge on that I left to the relevant departments to take care of.

After the direction was decided and the officials began to act, I went towards the melancholic Elizabeth who was standing in the corner of the conference room. I looked at the sight of this person that I didn't know how to feel about and said, "Are you doing alright?"

She looked at me and put a smile on her face as she replied, "Yeah. I just thought we were close to being done, but it looks like things are just beginning"

I looked at the tired woman that seemed to be trying her best. She had lost another friend today, someone she knew much longer than I did. Magnar's face flashed in my thoughts as I observed the sad expression on her face and replied, "Get some rest, it'll be a new day tomorrow."

She nodded her head as she looked around the room and went towards the living quarters. No other thoughts passed through my mind as I went out of the building and flew to the skies of the city once more. I looked to the destroyed buildings and people that were moving about and mourning for the losses of those they knew. My thoughts moved to something I didn't want to imagine right now, which was the people of Outer Bank X. With the highest ranker there being rank B...I shuddered as I thought at the possible number of deaths that had occurred there and in other similar cities

I continued to fly higher and higher up until the buildings seemed tiny and the outline of the city could be viewed fully by me. I would wait for the information to come out after what remains of the military

acts to move their drones and other things to obtain intel, but I could still move myself and be ready for whatever might occur

The immediate surrounding of the city's walls were clear, and I couldn't see much else in the darkness this high up even with [Eagle Eyes]. But I instinctively felt that there was something in that darkness. I stayed in the air, watching and waiting for dawn to break to see what was waiting for us in this darkness

Chapter 45 - Raining Flames

I floated in the night sky as thoughts continued to churn in my mind. Hours went by as nothing out of the ordinary happened. When the light began to appear on the horizon, I had made a monumental decision for my actions from here on out

The cover of the night was pulled away as the walled city and desolate Barrens revealed themselves to me. Far from the city, there were many moving dots that made for a terrifying sight. At the forefront of these dots were three large TITANS that moved around menacingly. More and more beasts were coming from all around to join this larger crowd as the dots kept on increasing

The scene reminded me of the pictures of the horde of beasts with the large turtle in the middle that were also making its way towards the Empire, albeit the sight in front was at a smaller scale.

The monumental decision I had made while I was floating in the night sky this past night was to start moving independently. As great as it was to mix around with others, it was also limiting me. I was planning on going all over the Empire to clear out the dungeons and beasts that have popped out, before going ahead and facing the incoming horde of enemies after

This was me moving faster. I would start with the collection of beasts amassing themselves around this city first. My eyes were on the three moving TITANS whose figures became even clearer with the sun breaking through the horizon.

One was a large bear with claws drenched in black, another was an arctic fox with white flowing fur, and the last was a white panda hoisting a sizable tree trunk on its back.

I began acting while staying in the skies, starting off with multiple casts of [Infernal Purge]. The dark red flames that were terrifyingly hot rushed down towards the gathering of beasts below.

Elizabeth was watching an alarming image of collections of monsters outside the city. What alarmed her the most was the droves of flames that were now falling down and burning everything on site

She had not been able to get a wink of sleep last night, and she doubted anyone would have. They had received signals about the gathering of beasts outside the city a few hours ago and were already moving the tired hunters to fight as soon as dawn broke

She came to the forefront at the destroyed portion of the wall, only for the sight in front of her to present itself. The dark flames were the first thing she saw, when she looked to where they were coming from, she saw the hazy figure of a man she soon recognized in the sky

Her mind was much calmer as she saw this, and she thought about the incomprehensible power that Noah seemed to have. She had thought he was a better than average rank A and chose to let loose with

him for a night just to forget about the grimness she had been dealing with all this while. It was a great time, but she felt like she really couldn't approach this man that same way again. He just seemed too strong and intimidating currently, becoming a different person overnight

She also knew herself and she didn't think she was the type of woman that deserved someone like him. Looking at the destruction he was bringing down on beasts that they would have to spend hours fighting, she knew someone like him wouldn't stay in one place for too long. A person of his caliber deserved somebody that wasn't damaged, and was meant for much greater things. A sad expression passed by her face as she depreciatingly thought about this

She thought of the attack yesterday as she watched the monsters outside the city howl as flames kept on falling onto them and melting their ranks clean through. That attack had occurred the moment they began destroying dungeons. Anger rose in her as she thought about this. That attack was deliberate. Their enemy was much stronger than they were, and they knew nothing about them

She looked to the skies once more as she hoped. She just hoped they now had someone just as strong that would stand by their side. She was planning on staying in Star City for quite a while to take care of things that might fall apart because of the absence of a great friend of hers.

He had saved her once in the past and owed a great deal to him, and yet she wasn't even there when he died. Her wrathful heart was getting some relief as she watched three TITANs angrily rushing around the other beasts avoiding flames. They had tried jumping to reach the target in the sky, but this resulted in even more gruesome injuries as patches of their body were melted from the continued rushing flames

Elizabeth looked at this ridiculous sight of three rank A BOSSes that effectively could not do a single thing to the man in the skies and thought maybe, just maybe, they would be alright.

The monsters began dispersing as they couldn't deal with the attacks coming down, and this was when another attack was introduced. Circular explosive blasts of cold elements wrecked the area where the monsters were in, blowing them to smithereens and only leaving behind blue flames

With the combination of flames and these cold blasts, a majority of the beasts were destroyed or sent running. The three TITANs did not make it out alive as their bodies lay burnt and frozen in the chaotic Barrens

She, along with the other hunters placed on the broken walls looked up to the figure in the sky in reverence and fear. He hadn't come down even once, but the horde of beasts lay dead around him.

After watching the unbelievable show of the decimation of beasts, hope rose in the hearts of many as they looked to the future. Communications were properly established and they were able to get a better grasp of the situation around them. The Empire's capital was damaged, but still standing because of the strength of Steel Mikhail. Other cities that had rank A hunters and a multitude of rank B's were able to bring things under control, but the deaths were in the millions for many cities, with others completely destroyed

News from the United Federation was just as grim, with some countries destroyed and others turning lawless. People from all sides were living in fear as this scene from some time ago repeated itself.

Something even more disastrous was a new threat that had just appeared. Besides the large horde of beasts coming towards the Empire, another had formed and was targeting the United Federation. This horde had something that made many people tremble in fear, it was a mythical beast they hadn't seen before, a dragon. News from those that saw this beast and were still alive said it had come out of a monolith larger than any of the currently documented ones, and that it spelled destruction for the entire world

When the images were first seen, the officials did not want to believe it. The dragon was not carrying out indiscriminate destruction, but occupied a few countries and declared himself King. Any hunters that dared to defy him would be killed without question. Something even more startling was that this was the first beast that was able to communicate with the humans, making commands and reformations that the occupied countries had to follow

This threat was something they did not know how they could possibly deal with. Leaders were panicking with no options in sight as at this sudden development. Were their lands about to be taken over by foreign invaders?

Amidst all of this, a new hero was rising above the destruction to bring a semblance of hope towards the people. Because of him, one particular city in the Empire faced the lowest number of casualties. He was a versatile mage that fought in the front lines tirelessly casting skill after skill with boundless energy. He was the peak rank A Hunter known as Noah Osmont.

Chapter 46 - Unshackled

I observed the burning lands beneath me as the screams of beasts rang out. Whatever plans the three TITANS had to besiege the city were out of the window as every beast in their ranks fell, and eventually they themselves met their end.

My defenses were a notch below these rank A BOSSes, as can be seen by how the first one I took down yesterday broke a few bones with a slap. My offensive skills could not be matched though, as the damage of rank A skills that were further boosted by support skills ravaged their defenses after just one attack.

I floated down to the burning ground to pick up the [Core]s. Similar to yesterday, many of them were rank A cores as the beasts came from a rank A dungeon break. I left lower level cores aside when I was flying through the city yesterday, only grabbing and absorbing the higher-ranked ones when I stood guard in the sky the last few hours.

With the death of many beasts here, as well as the large piles of cores I could see besides the three dead TITANS, I should be able to absorb enough until I reach the cap of 300 for my attributes. With the skills that provided additional attributes, mine had already broken through to the next rank after A. What was this rank? Maybe I'd be the pioneer to find out

Besides the cores, I found two rank A skills and an item from the three BOSSes, the two skills being [Spear of Destiny- Dark energy manifests in the form of a spear that aims at the hearts of your enemies] and [Ultra Regeneration- As long as your heart beats and your brain is still functioning, you will not meet death]. The item was a purple armor that looked extremely sturdy called [Armament of the

Commander]. I learned the skills and equipped the armor, enjoying the new feeling of safety after the hard material covered the entirety of my body.

I went back towards the city after that and met many hunters that were prepared for a fight that was finished. I nodded at Elizabeth and went back with her into the military sector to listen to the updates they had received so far.

The news was grim, with many deaths and some cities that couldn't be reached. A monster that exceeded rank A had taken over countries in the United Federation, and the threat of the horde of beasts with the terrifyingly large turtle that was most likely of the same rank as the one appearing in the United Federation had its horde increased in size and was accelerating towards the Empire.

I listened to all of these pieces of information and knew what I would be doing from now on. There was no time to waste, so I used my newly formed influence in the city to get many things in order. The first thing was to procure more storage rings, and I was able to find two more rank B and 3 rank C rings from the military inventory, bringing my total collection of storage rings to 5 rank c, and 3 rank B.

Half of these rings would be filled with food and daily necessities as I was planning to leave the city, roam the Barrens, and give aid to any other existing cities while going towards the monster horde heading towards us. Specialized hunters from the Empire would be doing this within the next few days, but I would move out first. This responsibility did not feel that heavy on me, as the strength I had more than made up for it. I knew that my [Focus] was blank for a reason, and it wasn't to waste it away just clearing dungeons in cities and being entertained.

I made this clear to the rankers that were standing atop this city, and their expressions turned somber as they heard. Elizabeth looked at me and spoke, "We will reinforce and meet you at the outer perimeters of the Empire as things are being settled. The information shows that the horde will reach the outer perimeters in around a week"

She spoke with conviction, looking straight into my eyes for the first time in a while. I nodded at her and moved along to secure other matters before I began moving. I knew the remaining hunters wouldn't sit still as their Empire faced this enemy, but I also didn't want to see more deaths. They would make their own choices though, and I couldn't change that. They would focus on stabilizing the surrounding cities and making sure no more dungeon breaks occur.

The consensus seemed to be that destroying dungeons completely was good, but it was to be regulated. They were horrific designs that brought them much death and pain, but they also allowed for more people to grow stronger when they were repeatedly cleared. Some would be destroyed, while others that can be comfortably cleared would be left behind.

It took an entire 3 hours after this until I was ready to leave. During that time I had chosen more rank B skills from the military inventory and the ones that had dropped that I hadn't learned yet. The newly gained skills mostly augmented my damage and defense further.

They were [Greater Flame Penetration],[Burning Soul], and [Elementalist] that respectively reduced the flame resistance of enemies, seared their core with flames and caused more damage when using element-based skills. [Hard Body], [Diamond Skin], and [Elemental Mirror] all boosted my defenses even

further, making my body seem out of this world with the colors and textures if I had not been keeping active skills like [Stealth] and [Shadow Veil] that hid all the iridescent colors and effects

The remaining time was spent stuffing the storage rings with all sorts of meals that I had prepared, from the steaks I liked to nonperishable foods that could last me more than two weeks.

After that was the somber military burial for the death of many soldiers and Vice Admirals across the city that put their lives on the line. One particular soldier being honored was Vice Admiral Magnar, his death causing a large gap that would not be filled any time soon.

Once all of this was done and I was ready to go, I was met with a row of soldiers and hunters sending me off. I would meet them all again soon enough when they begin moving towards the beast horde, and didn't know who would be lucky to come out alive from that fight

Elizabeth stood at the forefront while I flew away, only telling me to be safe and wait for them before facing off against the enemy. I couldn't begin to understand what she was thinking, and I myself didn't have the luxury of getting emotionally sidetracked right now. Who knows, maybe after everything was over I would put in the time.

I flew away from Star City and went towards the desolate Barrens where monsters roamed free. Dungeons didn't only appear in cities, and they would be all over the land. The ones appearing outside of cities would have dungeon breaks and allow monsters to roam free. There were specialized hunter squads made to regularly hunt down monsters in the Barrens before they made their way to the walled-off cities. I would be acting as a one-man squad this time around and take down anything I come across

The ultimate goal at the end of this journey was the death and loot from the ridiculously huge turtle in the middle of hundreds of thousands of beasts. All I had with me were rank A skills that were boosted multiple times with support skills being kept active at all times. Would they be enough to take down something a level higher?

Chapter 47 - A terrible beast

Hunters all over the Empire were bracing themselves for a fight that determined their future. A horde of beasts was on their way, and Admirals scrambled to get their regiments in order after the latest attack that left many dead and injured. Enough hunters had to be moved to face the oncoming threat while also leaving enough behind to clear the newly appeared dungeons around the cities

There were enemies all around, with not enough people on hand. Higher-ups of the Empire had slightly less despondent thoughts as intel regarding a particularly powerful hunter made its way to the top. The hunter had faced crowds of monsters that were about to besiege Star City and took them all down single-handedly. With the addition of top hunters like Steel Mikhail, they felt like they could still come out of this predicament in one piece

Commands were quickly given as pieces began being moved. They were tired and fearful, but they would not give in. They would fight until their last breath if they had to. Cities gradually became stabilized as hunters began moving to the periphery of the Empire to meet the coming enemy

The United Federation was in a dire state after the recent attacks. Three of its countries had already fallen into the hands of a powerful black dragon that killed anyone that defied it. The terror of this dragon was just beginning as it began making movements. It had many underlings beneath it that looked like a mixture of humans and lizards, as well as smaller reptiles that looked similar to it but had no wings.

The Black Dragon's first movement made many despair, as it commanded the human hunters that heeled under its strength to form into a force that attacked the surrounding countries. It had many beasts under its command to use, but it was mostly using humans to fight other humans for its dominion. Scenes of hunters facing each other in battles had already started, causing a sense of defeat from any parties that came out alive in these battles

Both were fighting to defend the lives of the people in their countries, with one side trying to protect the millions that were already subjugated under the Black Dragon's forces. Any dissent from them could cause the death of millions of people with just a word from the terrible beast.

Leaders in the Blessed Empire were observing this situation while providing support to the United Federation for the first time in a while. Resources were spread thin as hunters had to be sent towards an impending horde to the south, others to remain to protect the Empire itself, and some to be sent towards the United Federation. If the countries there all fell under the command of the Black Dragon, the Empire would be next.

The Dark Sword, Kazuhiko, was feeling a different emotion for the first time in a while. It wasn't the usual apathy and disinterest that he felt even after the apocalypse occurred. He had naturally awakened and risen to become the most powerful hunter of the United Federation as time passed

He had cleared dungeons, faced rank A TITANs, and done everything his teenage mind had ever dreamed of. But he was quickly bored again. Even after dungeons appeared en masse again, the rank A BOSSes from the dungeon breaks quickly fell under his sword

But now, something different was occurring. His blood boiled as he saw the images of the huge Black Dragon that was making its way to the center of the United Federation. He felt like this huge beast would be a sufficient opponent for him, but he also knew his limitations. Even though he was a battle junkie, he still wanted to keep his life. The beast they were going against was a rank above his, with thousands of beasts surrounding it. This was why he was leading the hunters of the federation that would be standing against the Black Dragon and his forces

He looked down on the humans that submitted to the beast's power. Where was their pride for them to stand down so easily? A man should fight to their last breath! Even if the entire team he was leading was to be overpowered, he would not submit under the rule of beasts. He didn't want that possibility though, as he wanted to live longer and fight many more grand battles, so he was waiting.

He waited for the hunters around the nation to gather and band together. He waited for the reinforcements from the neighboring Empire. He waited for all the pieces to be moved in place before he faced off against the huge beast and its army. His heart was pounding as he stared at the image of the dragon. He couldn't wait for the battle to start!

Steel Mikhail laid his trusted spear down as he absorbed the information he was receiving. Their Blessed Empire had borne another powerful hunter called Noah Osmont. The information put him on top of the charts just from the exploits he had done so far. He thought about the described scene where this hunter stood against droves of beasts and took down three rank A BOSSes all by himself. Would he be able to do something similar?

He required the help of other hunters stationed in the capital to take down the rank A BOSSes that had appeared because of multiple dungeon breaks. He had mages healing him and other hunters contributing to keep them busy while he dealt killing blows. Yet Noah seemed to be doing the work of multiple hunters all by himself. He withstood the attacks of a TITAN and came out alive, used highly offensive spells to take it down while also healing injured hunters he came across. He was truly powerful

Mikhail wasn't feeling any form of jealousy or envy from his title as the strongest hunter of the Empire going to someone else. He loved the land he was in and would do anything for it. Having stronger hunters was naturally a good thing.

They had already received news that Noah was making his way towards the monster horde south of the Empire. This showed the man's confidence in his strength. The Empire was also continuing to send its forces and resources to the outer perimeters to meet the beasts and reinforce this hunter.

A majority of the high ranking hunters would either be going in the same direction as Noah or towards the United Federation to help with the newly risen threat that would point itself towards the Empire the moment it was left to run rampant.

He would stay in the capital as its protector. He and a few other hunters would clear the rank A dungeon here, and the newly appeared ones in surrounding cities so that no dungeon breaks would continue occurring. He would be the last line of defense for the millions of people living in the Empire. That was his role. He was the protector.

Chapter 48 - Destroyed cities

Scenes of something you wished were only in your nightmares were making themselves prevalent as I flew across the skies of the desolate Barrens. A semblance of society lay destroyed on the ground, with patches of monsters roaming free.

Many of these monsters were either being led by a TITAN, or you could occasionally find a few traveling alone. Many of them were cleared after the appearance of dungeons the first time, with the occasional teams being sent whenever a dungeon appeared and a dungeon break occurred in the Barren lands

After the stabilization of the cities, more hunting squads that handled these monsters would have to be sent out so that they don't form into larger groups and begin targeting the walled-off cities.

I had passed by two cities so far, cities that I had seen while driving to Star City not too long ago. Their serene atmosphere was broken as you could see destroyed buildings and smoke, but they were still standing. There were significantly more casualties in other cities that were not lucky enough to have strong hunters stationed

I was forcing myself to not prioritize a city that I couldn't keep out of my mind, as there were more cities near me where I could save more people in time. I would move at the fastest pace towards the place I awakened in, Outer Bank X

The two cities I passed were still trying to clear any monsters running around inside, with a few patches of monsters slowly getting together outside the city walls. I began with the inside of the cities and sniped the monsters with [Doom Bolt]. Hunters would be chasing the beasts only to see of a flash of lightning and a charred corpse right after, looking to the skies to see my figure flashing away with [Instant Transfer] to my next target

When I was met with any TITANs grouping monsters together, I cast [Spear of Destiny] towards them. A dark palpitating spear more than twice my size would form and strike down towards these large beasts, nailing them to the ground. Rank B BOSSes required two or three hits of this spear that always aimed at their chest before a bloody hole appeared, where their hearts used to be ruptured.

Rank A BOSSes required well over multiple casts of [Spear of Destiny], as they instinctively felt the deadly spears headings towards them and either tried to evade or block. After their arms became a mess of flesh and bones and their mobility was reduced, the dark spears dug through the tight chest muscles until they reached their hearts.

I only came across two other rank A BOSSes, adding to my collection another rank A skill and item. The skill was [Arc Lightning- A terrifying lightning that chains onto other nearby enemies strikes down] and the item was [Fairy's Wings].

This was the first item I found that wasn't a generic armor or weapon, but it's effectiveness was low when it came to me. When equipped, it looked like white glowing wings of light spread out from my back. The wings allowed you to float as long as mana was supplied, and having them on increased your maneuverability and speed in the air. I didn't need the floating function because of [Flight], but I would have them on for the boost they provide while I was flying. My speed became even faster, allowing me to reach the third city today before night fell

This city was even more desolate than the last two, with a majority of it in ruins and hunters still holding off monsters. I tried [Arc Lightning] for the first time here and watched a streak of blue lightning pierce into one monster, and then it continued flying and chaining towards multiple others. In larger groups of monsters, the skill was able to chain more than 8 times to take down multiple beasts

I flew around this city and cast [Guardian's Light] towards the injured. My figure that was flying through the skies releasing golden lights while having glowing wings outstretched behind only made me stand out even more. The city and its surrounding area was cleared of monsters in no time, and I chose to spend the night here as I realized I couldn't hunt effectively at night with the low visibility.

When I took the journey to Star City last time, it had taken us the entire day from Outer Bank X to get there. Yet now, I was only halfway through to Outer Bank X as I worked to take down groups of monsters and aid the struggling cities I came across. At the same time I was clearing any dungeons that were high risk so that another dungeon break didn't occur. After seeing the state of most hunters in the city, I also gave out the many rank B skill books, items, and cores I didn't have need of to raise multiple rank B hunters in the past three cities that could effectively handle the new dungeons that arose

I would reach Outer Bank X tomorrow, but my head was aching from what I might see when I get there. More than a day had passed since dungeons appeared en masse again, if a city was faced with strong monsters, its outcome would already be decided by now. I hoped for the best, but I prepared myself for the more than likely scenario of destruction that I might see tomorrow.

I wanted to keep to myself tonight, so after flying around this third city and healing any that were badly injured, I found a destroyed building to get into to sleep for the night. I went into a high rise building that was badly damaged and found an enclosed room to stay in where I took out some of the food in my storage rings and finally ate something today while thinking about the future

Early in the morning when dawn broke, I rose from the destroyed building and continued my way towards Outer Bank X. There was a long-distance with only the Barrens to look at before I reached the next city. The clusters of monsters were becoming more frequent as I went further out of the Empire, leaving me with a heavy heart as more of my conjectures were turning out to be true. The groups of beasts in the Barrens were only met with death as dark flames, explosive cold blasts, or chaining lightning decimated their ranks. I was releasing all of my anger onto them, but it seemed to be ever so increasing.

I passed through another city that I recalled was right before Outer Bank X, and the sight did not bode well for what I would be seeing from now on. All around me was carnage, with beasts running rampant and very few survivors in sight. I looked at the city below me in anger and sadness as the bloody sight laid itself bare

Lightning rained down as it chained from beast to beast, destroying anything it came across as my rage continued to build up. I was angry at the beasts, but I was also angry at myself and many others in the empire.

The most powerful hunters were stationed and concentrated in the cities further inland. It seemed only natural as they held higher-ranked dungeons and they were required to clear them. Even I left Outer Bank X to go to a core defense city that held higher ranking dungeons. But this natural thing meant there were very few powerful hunters in the outer cities of the empire

Nobody had ever expected dungeons to appear en masse again, but they did. With these cities having a few rank B hunters and many more lower-ranking ones, how could they handle it if a rank A dungeon appeared and a dungeon break occurred?

Unless they were lucky enough for more powerful hunters to naturally awaken and take the lead in defending them, some cities faced complete destruction. Similar to the first advent of the apocalypse, many deaths will occur throughout the world until those truly powerful begin to fully mobilize.

The only sliver of hope was people hiding in underground bunkers as the monsters roamed above them, only left to wait for a chance of survival. I looked at the destroyed city while taking down the beasts in the most excruciating ways possible, hoping many people were able to hide themselves and bunker down in some of the purposefully created shelters.

Chapter 49 - Rage against an unknown enemy

The process didn't take too long as extremely terrifying rank A skills rained down on the beasts until all that was left was charred or mangled bodies. I repeatedly used [War Cry] while flying across the skies to see if there were any people lucky enough to evade the rampage of the beasts

I already observed some underground structures broken through and the people huddled inside killed, but expected some to be luckier in such a large city. A few hunters and people began rising out minutes after I began using [War Cry], fear and despair on their faces as they looked at the city they used to know

The city was very large and widespread with collections of people far apart, so I gave them all a singular message. The path towards the inner cities of the empire was cleared, and they should start making their way there.

I continued to increase the number of [Core]s, [Skill Book]s, and [Item]s from the many BOSSes I had been taking down on the way here, so I used my gut and chose people and hunters that seemed to hold another emotion besides fear for the beasts that did this to them. I looked for any people with rage on their faces and handed out many of the cores, skills, and items that were useless to me. This would strengthen them and make them strive to do even more

I spent a few hours in this city, trying to quickly wrap up the rescue and strengthen process so I could head towards Outer Bank X. I flew with apprehension towards the old city I used to live in as I knew I would be subjected to a similar scene

I reached the broken walls of Outer Bank X after another hour of killing groups of beasts roaming the Barrens, and even though I was prepared for the scenes of destruction, I still felt a pain in my chest. Similar to the city before, monsters roamed free with many people brutally dead across the city

My heart felt the growing rage that I had nowhere to aim to besides the mindless beasts that continued their destruction. I wanted to find those responsible for this. I wanted to find the enemy that continued to play with us and the lives of billions. But they were nowhere to be found, only mindless beasts continuing their destruction

I repeated what I did in the previous city with a heavy heart as the monsters fell to a variety of my destructive skills as I looked for any survivors in the city. The process repeated itself similarly, with thousands of people being lucky enough to hide in underground bunkers all over the city and not be found by the pursuing beasts

None of the hunters I knew in this city were anywhere to be found. The confident face of the female hunter that spoke without regard passed through my mind. She was nowhere to be found. I flew around the city as I located the destroyed structure of the dilapidated apartment I used to live in. The building was half destroyed with no signs of life. Where my lodging used to be was now just air, with rubble on the ground being all that was left of it. Emptiness that I didn't think I could feel pervaded my body as I took my time and watched this scene

I had watched so many of these scenes of death and misery that I thought I couldn't get anymore enraged, but I was wrong. I reigned in my emotions as I passed out skill books, items, and cores to the many people remaining alive in the city while telling a similar message as before, for them to head towards the standing cities of the Empire

I rose to the skies and looked at the destroyed Outer Bank X for the last time as I moved even faster, making it my goal to comb through the periphery of the Empire and destroy as many groups of beasts as I could.

Another day passed and I was able to pass by a few hunter groups led by rank A hunters that were carrying out a similar mission to mine. It took a few days for the hunters to stabilize their cities and start sending out more squads to purge the beasts populating the Barrens and give aid to other cities. I could also see regiments of soldiers in huge lines of trucks carrying supplies heading straight to the defense line where the collision with the horde of monsters would soon occur

I helped any hunters and people that required aid while giving out skill books to awaken even more hunters that still had the will to fight. I was killing so many monsters of lower ranks that the many rings I had were nearly filling up, making me very generous in giving away the resources I held. I would give more than half away whenever I came across regiments of soldiers led by Vice Admirals or Admirals. They would be putting their lives on the line soon enough, strengthening their ranks before this fight would still be beneficial

The Blessed Empire was large, with many cities populating it, but I wasn't moving alone in the Empire. The cities and people that could be saved were saved in the next few days, with more and more hunters congregating to the last defense line getting ready for the brutal fight

I was able to take down five more rank A BOSSes while moving these past few days, providing me with an abundance of cores that brought my attributes all the way to 300 for [Vitality] and [Strength] even without putting the attributes from the support skills into account. The rank A [Focus] attributes were given to the military as I still had no use for them, the blank attribute not changing the slightest no matter how many I absorbed

Three skills and two items also dropped from these rank A BOSSes, the skills being [Void Slash- Cut the area in front of you with a swing of your sword], [Expansion- Burn your energy to expand your body to its limits], and [Pain Resistance- The perception of pain in your body is dulled]. I learned the [Expansion] and [Pain Resistance] in a blink and put away [Void Slash] that I wouldn't be using for now. I could use both of the items, one being a rank A storage ring and the other was [Emperor's Boots], granting me a boost in speed that further enhanced my already fast [Flight]

The time was quickly approaching as the horde neared the Empire, and I went towards the defense line to meet the coming enemies head-on while trying to minimize the deaths of hunters as much as possible. They had erected a wall and trenches that stretched for miles left and right where many hunter soldiers were stationed.

The Empire was preparing for this horde for a while now, and the sudden appearance of new dungeons and beasts had only damaged parts of the defense line that were repaired as soon as the hunters took back control.

I placed the colorful [Fairy's Wings] into my ring as I flew towards one of the command centers. My figure put the already tense hunters on high alert, but ecstatic expressions rose on their faces as soon as they saw it was me. I had been moving across the Empire rapidly these past few days, becoming widely known as more and more of the hunters I saved moved around. I had also met with the military

regiments multiple times and provided them with the loot that was filling my rings, making many of the hunters in the military excited when I neared

I landed on top of the wall lined up with soldiers as I looked out to the wide expanse of Barrens before us. A horde of hundreds of thousands of beast would soon be upon us from this quiet stretch of land

Chapter 50 - Collision between opposing forces

As hunters prepared to face the monsters with the moving landmass of a turtle at the lead in the Blessed Empire, other hunters were banding together to stand against the tyranny of the black dragon in the United Federation.

With the continued aid from the Empire, a coalition of forces was created consisting of hunters from each of the nearby countries and the Empire. The person leading this coalition of hunters was the Dark Sword, Kazuhiko. His power was renowned in the United Federation and he was among the strongest hunters to take the lead against the terror of the dragon.

The Black Dragon continued to propagate its forces, increasing its influence towards the surrounding countries in the span of the week. The hunters from the overtaken countries had no choice but to listen to the commands of the beast that held the lives of their loved ones in its hands.

The beast would not act a majority of the time, staying behind the ranks of its crowds of monsters and only stepping in whenever a powerful hunter was making a stand. Its power was destructive and nobody could stand against it. The combination of The Dark Sword, along with other peak rank A hunters was what the forces were hoping to stand against the power of the dragon. Only time will tell, as the two forces neared one another. A collision between the coalition of hunters and beasts was imminent.

On the defense line at the outer periphery of the empire. A hunter was holding a long staff as he looked at the scene around him. To his left and right were rows of hunters holding mage staffs similar to his and even more holding exquisite bows in their hands.

Below him were even more hunters holding a variety of shields, swords, and other close combat weapons. They were ready to put their lives on the line for the beasts that were coming. His hand that was holding the staff was trembling as he began to feel the ground beneath him to do the same.

Dust was quickly rising on the horizon, signaling the coming of the monsters. The trembling hunter turned his head towards one of the command centers where he could see the powerful hunters of the empire congregating. Standing on the lead of these hunters was a man with dark hair and a radiant fair complexion. His body donned an ethereal purple armor that vaunted strength. He stood at the forefront, overlooking the walls and the people with an expression that seemed to give off conviction.

The trembling weapon in the hunter's hands settled just a little at this scene. He knew this hunter that assured the fears of many of the people here. His regiment was about to be overtaken by a pack of beasts led by a rank A TITAN on their way here, and this man appeared out of nowhere with powerful skills that took care of the beasts that were about to take their lives as if it was nothing. It was this strength that gave many hunters hope of seeing the next day in one piece

The dust on the horizon continued to grow larger as more small dots could be seen with the n.a.k.e.d eye. As time passed, the small dots could be seen getting larger and larger at every step. The hunters were prepared, those with long-ranged weapons and spells protected on top of the makeshift walls, with hunters hoisting large shields and broadswords moving forward to meet the incoming enemy.

The horde of beasts was becoming clear in the eyes of the hunters as a conglomeration of all types of beasts became apparent. From apes to lions, all the way to extremely oversized poisonous toads, they were all rushing towards them with eyes filled with blood! u.s.t.

Their hearts became firm as they prepared to clash with the waves of monsters. Noah Osmont, the hunter that many people were placing their hopes on, rose in the air as the beasts neared. Other hunters with flying summons also filled the skies as a huge black eagle could be seen not too far away, a famous hunter was also seen with their signature white pegasus, and even more hunters with bats or other winged beasts appeared

Skills were prepared as everybody felt their energy bubbling at full capacity. Much of the horde was now visible, and to the far back was a hideously misshapen turtle that had green pulsating spikes poking out of its hard shell. Its size seemed larger than 20 meters as it took world-shaking steps towards the crowd of humans in front of it, each of its steps shaking the land

Noah acted first as a cry rang out from him, invigorating the hunters all around and easing their fears. His hand rose to the skies as a long staff appeared pointing forward. Multiple five-meter circles came to light in the air, dark red flames spurting out towards the incoming beasts as [Infernal Purge] was cast. The circles increased exponentially as time passed, making the skies above the beasts look hellish as the flames flew down towards them

Hunters saw this destructive power coming from their side and cheered, their spirits lifted as they prepared skills of their own.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Chaos had begun as the flames reached down and burnt everything they touched. At the same time, blue streaks of lightning were shooting down, traveling through ranks of monsters as if they were connected by a rope. [Arc Lightning] was also being continuously cast towards the coming beasts as they began falling in droves from the skills of just one hunter

ROAAAR!

A thundering sound was heard as the TITAN of a turtle spread its wide jaws open...and a green pillar of energy shot out towards the hunter causing such destruction.

ZOOM!

The green pillar of energy hit the air as hunters scrambled to move aside, Noah's figure disappearing from where it was and appearing even closer to the horde of beasts as other skills were cast. Immense dark spears began to form around him as [Spear of Destiny] was also used, when a drastic change occurred!

An alarmed expression rose from Noah's face as people began to feel another source of power that wasn't coming from the turtle come to light. Something shot through the skies at extreme speeds towards the figure of Noah, smashing into him in less than a second.

BOOM!

It felt like the skies had cracked as multiple defense skills were destroyed. Noah's body was knocked quite a distance back as it came to stabilize in the air. A grisly wound was on his body as only a mass of wriggling flesh could be seen protruding from his right shoulder. His entire right arm was gone!

A pained expression rose from him as multiple golden lights began to descend and [Ultra Regeneration] was cast multiple times. The beast that had appeared in front of Noah had a humanoid appearance, but with wings and a stinger that shone in a piercing light coming from its body. It seemed like a grotesque mixture of a humanoid mosquito as it raised its sharp stinger upwards in an unnatural manner and licked the blood and flesh coming off of it. It was only two meters in size, but its power felt no less than the turtle moving on the ground