

Master 1781

Chapter 1781 1781. Resistance Buffs?

The methods of learning buff skills had been simple for Walker so far. He had been lucky to learn how to use the multi buff skill and heal skills through simple actions. The focuses on them were mostly to help others. But using elemental mana to specifically resist something was a newer endeavor.

So far, the entire party had been gaining skills to resist certain elemental manas. That was mostly because they had been in environments dense with them. The snow helped them gain resistance to water elemental mana in the form of cold resistance or ice resistance. The hot temperatures of Ignus's home had greatly helped some of them gain resistance to fire. Not to mention all of their time in the forges.

These resistances would greatly help any adventurer let alone any person. That is just a fact of life. The stronger resistances someone had, the better they would be able to resist the unpredictability of life. Whether it was weather or the changing conditions of nature's landscapes. Even The attacks of others would be better resisted when there was a natural resistance skill built up.

This was different from the resistance buff skills though. The personal resistance were built over time. It was the same way that someone pushing themselves in training would gradually be able to increase their levels and bring themselves to a tougher defensive nature. They were getting stronger as a whole permanently. The buff skills were temporary.

This was why Walker made a point to speak with the life mages. He had found that when they focused on the life mana within someone to try and buff them, that they were pushing their will on to the person's life mana. Their natural life mana inside their body.

Now this wasn't negative because it was easily resisted. However, when it was not resisted, then the result was the life mana taking form to create a specific result. It was the same as healing skills that were used with personal mana, light mana, or otherwise. There was a specified result that the affected body would react to.

The healing would then take place using the body's nutrients as the key to make that happen. Furthermore, there was the fact that the skill would come at a cost. That was why the life mages knew that the cost for certain buff skills would be more energy or higher mana cost. Whether the mana was provided by the one Beijing buffed or the one giving the buff mattered.

The idea to resist fire would require the body to take in water elemental mana around them. This would allow the body to cool itself with less of its own natural moisture. The cost was normally from the person giving the fire resistance buff. Therefore the secret to a fire resistance buff was having the ability to manipulate water if the person wanted a stronger buff.

An odd theory to be sure, many people would wonder if it was just adding water veils to protect the person or if it was stimulated in the body of the target to produce more water and guard the skin from the fire. Both could be true depending on the type of buff. It made Walker's head hurt a little to think about the different forms of buffs and how he would make his own focus on creating a wind resistance buff for everyone so that they could handle the much faster flying speed of dragons.

This left Walker with the idea that he would try to stimulate the earth mana that was within everyone to temporarily boost their wind resistance with earth. The manas within everyone were there because of natural mana or life mana. Both were there since everything had to be made up of the core elemental manas in the world.

While there were other manas around that also played parts within a being's body, the main were the four elemental manas. This meant that when Walker looked at someone and sensed their mana, he could sense the small bits of mana that were not attached to affinity but just naturally part of someone's body. The fine control was just harder to grasp than most other things.

Many of the life mages watched as they saw Walker working through this problem. They had openly volunteered while they waited to see what he could do. Their researching mentality was fueled by the very basic curiosity when someone met someone new. They had to see what this person could do besides the fact that Walker could stand next to dragons casually.

The life mage that felt Walker sensing mana within his body was surprised when he felt that the multi buff skill had been used. Walker had done this to enhance the buff of the life mage and be able to sense where his mana went. A smart move to figure out how mana affected another being.

Many mages and healers had skills to diagnose injuries. Similar methods were used but using a buff to do it was very surprising to the life mages. They all agreed that it was a nice alternative for someone like Walker who had the skills to sense mana but not the skills to be able to directly diagnose things.

When Walker had done so, he was able to pick up the basic pieces of earth mana within the life mage's wings. Luckily he was an earth affinity angel in general. This would help immensely in developing a wind resistance skill.

The moment that Walker mixed natural mana and sent it to the earth mana within the life mage's body, the earth mana started to pull toward more earth mana around them. Small layers of dust were attracted to the hand that Walker held while using his skills.

In a quick test, Walker used the air around him to push on the hand from different angles. Each pushed off layers of dust causing the mage to wonder what the point was. He was making a resistance skill but instead had caused the mage to become covered in dust. Yet when Walker released his hand, the dust didn't fall. It was an odd experience since he had no skill to make this happen and had not used any skill at all.

'The skill dust veil has been taken from the snow shaman system. The skill dust veil has been learned through attempts to enhance the elemental resistances of a single being with natural earth affinity.

Dust veil- 2 mana cost

By using mana to stimulate the natural affinity or the small amounts of earth mana within a person, the dust and earth mana around will form over the being. This will allow for resistance against wind, sun, and heat for a short time. The buff can be extended by the one with the buff providing their mana through stationary movement. The multiple layers of dust can easily be removed with water or stronger earth.'

While it wasn't a pure resistance buff, it was a skill that served the purpose that Walker needed. He was sure that he would have been able to make a resistance buff if he stayed with this theory and worked harder. However, time was of the essence. He just had to manage everyone that might need a boost with this skill.

The sudden use of a new buff that the angels had not seen made them want to push Walker right in to their research labs. Any palace where they could continue this method to learn new buffs that they had just witnessed. Unfortunately for them, Walker stopped this instantly.

"I promise we can work more later. But we have bigger goals. Or would you prefer that the Fel empire be gone along with all the research done by your empire by the time we get back?" It was a sharp reprimand but one that worked. Keeping the focus here was the best bet Walker had to make sure that everyone complied.

"Good, you can help everyone move faster." Ventus had understood why Walker had stopped them from immediately leaving. She appreciated that with this buff that they could fly faster. But she also appreciated that he had thought more about the strength of the soldiers when they landed. If they had to go right in to battle then it would be a much better state of being for them.

"I didn't notice you watching. But maybe I can make other skills like this to resist earth or fire or water. I need to spend a lot of time just learning about buffs. I think that every single time I look around a corner there is a mountain of things I could never have the time to learn." Ventus heard him then generated to everything around them. Her point was clear. They had all found a literal mountain of things to learn from. It was a funny moment but Walker hadn't even meant to make that pun.

Chapter 1782 1782. Talk In The Sky

The soldiers were quick to come around and revived their dust veil buffs. The ones that had experienced the pressure of the wind before knew the dangers of traveling so fast. The only ones that did not come were the dragonkin directly under Ventus. They were few in number but they were extremely resistant to the wind already.

The angels had not fully understood the degree of wind they would be put through. However, they saw the other soldiers and followed suit right away. Especially since the Fel empire mages wanted to experience the buff and learn more about it for their own reasons.

The moment that every single one of them had been buffed was the moment that the royal dragons began to get a little more forceful. They started to push everyone in to their spots with orders. The splitting of forces was not an issue, however, Mordant had made a point to take his dragonkin and the party. Not the anyone was unhappy with this. The only one that appeared a little annoyed was Midnight who wanted to fly herself. Unfortunately, she was not strong enough to keep up with them and fly for that long. Walker had also accepted this fact. He wouldn't be able to keep up either.

The sight of the royal dragons taking full form and carrying massive stone baskets with soldiers in them would forever be ingrained within the Rize empire angel's minds. They could see the power and strength that came with lifting massive stones and soldiers like it was nothing. Seran himself was mumbling about how good it was that the dragons had not used their full strength and followed the non aggressive approach. He understood that if they had been violent, that they would have taken over a massive area with battle.

"I made sure to have you all with me for a reason." Mordant was able to freely speak with the party while flying. Onyx was ensuring that they could all easily communicate mentally. It was very useful. It

was hard to hear over the rush of wind. Luckily, Walker's dust veil buff was helping keep everyone free from any abrasive pressure due to wind.

Ventus was also using her skills to push them all faster. The added boost from wind was easily known as a slipstream skill. A very powerful wind skill that was often used by pack monsters of avian species. Walker had heard about it since the harpies used it to travel around. That was also why they were able to become the best mail carriers for the genesis alliance so quickly. They saved the mana that would be used on communication crystals. Especially since there were not many communication crystals that could be used many times.

"I thought you would have a reason to ask us all to get together, is it about the undead we are going to face?" Walker had a feeling that it would come up. A private conversation with just Mordant meant that he had some worries.

"Yes. about the dragon ruins as well." Mordant appeared to have thought this through but didn't want to leave this with the other royal dragons. "I believe that the ruins may be within this ancient civilization's ruins. That they may be combined or near one another." the idea had not just passed through the party's minds. They had also thought that this would be a possibility.

The idea that the dragon ruins had played a large part in deem of these events was clear. The only question is which ones? The earth wyverns had found the residual earth mana from the ancient earth dragons. Therefore, they had almost worshiped them and followed the strength they believed in. This had pushed them to be able to take on the greater strength to push themselves to their own species. That Was what the wyvern queen had done.

If this was the same as the wyverns, then the mummified worshippers that were in the desert were worshipping something powerful. A being that had used powerful skills to make itself in to whatever it was now. But if it used the dragon's knowledge of darkness then pushed in to death mana, that would make a lot more sense. The energy would be different, but it would be powerful.

The fearful thing for Mordant was that he may lose the darkness dominator ruins or even find that they were no more. That they had been destroyed or broken down in to something else. It could mean years and years of history and knowledge lost forever or at least shattered in to just pieces of what it should be.

If they were lucky, then the ruins might just be nearby and have had a small influence on everything. But that was nothing to bet on. There was also the chances that the light dominator dragon ruins were there or the sky dominator dragon's ruins were there. It was too up in the air to know for sure.

An expansive desert that could hold the underground darkness mana, the powerful and unyielding light mana, or the powerful wind mana that swept across the entire desert causing sandstorms. The only thing that everyone hoped was not there were the fire elemental ruins. If the flame dominator dragon ruins were there then the chance of using fire to burn away the undead would be gone. Flame resistances would make them much tougher to any light and fire fused flames the party and soldiers might use.

"If that's the case then Onyx will help you. Midnight can also go looking. They have the closest relationship with darkness mana. They might be able to sneak in to ruins and find things for you. A scouting team." Gil's positive addition made Midnight and Onyx both a little surprised. Gil normally took on scouting but leaving it to them did make a lot of sense. It also showed his clear trust in them.

"I was also thinking that they would work independently from us. Their ability to hide away would be easier than I could use. They may enter and find things for us before the undead notice them. Only one is truly intelligent. They just have to avoid the leader." Mordant's plan for gaining information while everyone else held off the undead became very clear.

"I can work on making potions against them. If they live in the desert and look like that one, they are dried and worn out. Maybe a potion with fire and light affinity, well, an explosive fire and light potion will be useful. We can search for more herbs when we get close." Remey could only think of this other than wielding her light affinity knuckles for the battle. She would be able to do a lot with all of this.

"I can defend Remey while she uses these potions. Explosive potions may not be anything these soldiers are used to. Damages from our own attacks would be worthless while carving a path to any ruins or buildings in the desert." Su understood the dangers of this. Many potential risks were around while using these means.

"Good. I wanted the support to discover this as soon as possible. There are too many unknowns." Mordant lapsed in to silence while he thought more. The journey through the sky seemed full of unspoken stress even though many other things could have captured their attention.

While many of the soldiers felt better with the buff, the speed of traveling only increased. Ventus led the way and had memorized the maps she has been shown. Knowing where she was is a high priority

since she could end up flying everyone to the wrong place. That would cause more issues than good with the situation only getting worse without their intervention.

For Walker, the wind had become a secondary thought. He was now focused on what they could find due to the dragon's ruins being part of the Fel empire's undead problem.

There was already the issue that the slime breeder had stolen powerful wyverns' bodies. Adding that to the immortal undead in the Fel empire and tension could only grow.

If the key to these undead was stolen and used by the demon king to bring about undead dragons and wyverns... problems would be too small a word for it.

Having the benefit of Mordant and Rise with them made things better. Control over darkness mana and light mana could help a lot. It could clear the sight of these death mana using monsters. The light could then purify them more easily without darkness interference. Two valuable tactics to use together.

While it sounded simple, this required the dragons to work together causing fusion attacks. That was the wall they would be overcome here. Challenging to say the least. Especially for those that butt heads more often than not.

Chapter 1783 1783. Border Stand Off

The air was filled with the normal weather of a day, Walker was sure that it should have been night, but with the fact that they were all resting for some time in the earth dominator dragon's ruins before flying, and training, they had managed to pass through the nights and in to the daytime again. It was odd since it threw off his processing of time, not that time mattered since they were moving so fast.

The issue was that when Walker started to pay attention again, he noticed that there were easily a hundred angels ahead and the royal dragons were slowing down to approach them. The angels were wearing the same armors as the Rize Empire, proving that they were soldiers sent from the Rize Empire to hold the border in some fashion.

"Mordant, stop here, and let's see what's going on." Walker felt that this would not be good since there was the chance that the Rize empire would be wanting them to stop and remain in their empire. Or they would want more explanation as to why the wyvern queen had been left alive. There were also the ruins and a few other matters that could catch the group up on their way.

"The border shall not be crossed! You are asked to land and remain here until soldier-"

The soldier with the most armor almost got out a full sentence before Ignus released a roar that sent many of the angels falling through the air toward the ground. The look of fear was extremely clear on the soldier's faces. It was said and done at that point. Instead of figuring out what to do, it appeared that the next move was to give them their own speech.

"We are the genesis alliance. We are carrying members of the Fel empire after saving the Rize empire from the encroachment of the wyverns before the world recognized them. We will not be stopped as we have full ability to move through your and the Fel empire. If you stop us we will take it as an act of aggression. Remove yourselves or face the consequences of your actions." Walker used the wind manipulation to push his voice around the area as loudly as possible.

The firm tone was enough to make the angels look around and become very uneasy. They were not planning to make this a big event but they had their orders. "We are required to stop anyone from invad-"

"There is no invasion, this is the last warning before we force through without any respect!" Walker was warning them mostly because he saw that Ignus was done with the angels' drama. None of the royal dragons could care that the angels did or did not want their enemies to be helped. They had no choice since Genesis had their own goals to achieve.

When the angels saw that flames had appeared around Ignus's mouth, they followed suit and started to lower themselves from the air in front of them. It was enough for the flight to start again toward a second further group of angels wearing darker armor. Clearly, there had been a standoff between the Rize and Fel empires knowing that Genesis would be on its way to the border soon.

The moment that the darker armored angels saw the group, there were some that waves them on to come to the ground in a clearing. Some small homes were built around the edges of the forest in the clearing but mostly, there was space to land. Before they had even set down, the life mages, healers, and crystal mage from the Fel empire jumped up and sped toward three of the more heavily armored Fel empire soldiers.

They seemed to have known something like this would happen and a little bit of annoyance showed on Walker's face. It was inconvenient after all. "You made it safely, that we are very happy for." the Fel angel that approached made it clear that he was trying to show respect. However, his eyes were hungry. He had a lot of curiosity.

"Well, you are lucky that we did. It appears that you and the Rize empire have had some meetings. If you start a war again, there will be issues. Genesis will not support either side and we will take away any races allied with us. That includes the wyverns and whoever else we find." Walker made a point to say this very clearly. He was not happy that there was almost an issue as soon as they started to head to the Fel empire.

"Of course! We will not be battling at all. We had a small meeting and the Rize Empire desire you to stay for a longer time. They are in some disarray. Luckily, you have made it here with our healers and we are grateful. We can provide you with anything you need while in our empire. Even if you decide only to stay here on the edge." The respect felt surface deep. The angel's eyes showed a hungry curiosity that was trying to learn as much as possible just from being near the dragons and Walker's group.

"We came to handle the issues with the undead. We have reason to believe that the criminals we are chasing are heading there to have a wyvern corpse brought back to life or even to steal the knowledge to create immortal undead. We will be heading there to battle sooner than later. We expect help in any form. Especially since you should already be fighting them. Also, allow ten of the Rize Empire light mages in. They will be a great help to you. You also sent ten healers with us to the wyverns. It will be fair and start a bonding of friendship instead of war. Genesis will not compromise on this."

This was all already set up from the time that they had met and decided to go to the Rize Empire from the embassy. But making sure that it was said all over again was very important. It really drove home the focus on creating bonds and respect between them. Especially the fact that they did not want the two empires fighting at all!

Hearing that there was absolutely no room to push or pull, the Fel empire angels halted their thoughts on pushing the Rize empire in to a corner. "We can send a delegation to the border immediately then. I assure you we will welcome them the exact same way that we were welcomed."

"Good, since it is light affinity soldiers coming then Rise will go with you to make sure they are up to the task and you all meet properly." Walker looked at Rise and saw an approving glance in his direction.

It wasn't just that Rise would have the best opinion on anyone with light affinity. It was also because she had no intention of giving room to anyone or anything that would stop their progress. Her strictness would be ideal for this situation where tension was high and the two empires needed to be held in check. She also had no qualms with using her power to enforce that precedence.

The tense atmosphere slowly started to break away as the life mages came back to stand near Alice's side. Some were looking toward Su as well. It appeared that they had gained a significant respect for the two of them due to their healing knowledge. The feeling that they would rather learn beside them than go back to their usual tasks was almost comical. Especially since they clearly cared a great deal about research.

That was the thing though. Genesis was new. A bunch of new skills, systems, races, and so much more. Any researcher could get swept away in the wonder of something new that they had never known. It would clearly be a major facet in making the Fel empire relax and stop any negative intentions.

"We will need the most in depth maps that all of the scouts have created of the desert area. I understand that it may change based on sandstorms and shifting sands." Walker made sure that he didn't ignore the fact that nature couldn't be controlled here. Nature did what nature wanted. No one could stop a desert from changing shape and form with the sandstorms.

"We have compiled a few. Those you sent to scout around greatly assisted before they went off to hunt for signs of your criminal. It was very impressive since they used methods that tracked monsters. They even memorized some tracks faster than most would without taking any copies of our journals." It appeared that a positive impression of Genesis had already been created. A good way to change the emotions in the air and work towards some progress.

This just left them to actually begin planning and then head toward the desert. The main goals were to make a solid plan and be prepared for when they reached the tough environment that could easily hold the soldiers back. Especially Current and his water affinity dragonkin.

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Chapter 1784 1784. Two Way Road

Knowing that the royal dragons and the other soldiers had heard and understood the situation at the border, the Fel angels did not hesitate to make way for them and go to speak with the Rize empire archangels. Under the careful watch of Rise, they followed what needed to be done. Meanwhile, the angel that had been speaking to Walker finally introduced himself.

"While I am not the highest ranking of the researchers here, I am one of the few that enjoys the travel. I am Ethan, the wandering researcher." The introduction was short and sweet but told a lot.

Since the Fel empire was focused on research, many of them had systems that were focused on one thing or were research systems to start with. The fact that their angel in charge of moving around with forces as a soldier would be a wandering research made sense. While broad, the system would allow Ethan to be able to learn many things at all times about the world around him.

"I know that might sound odd. A wanderer taking the position of a soldier, but I assure you, that I am up to the task." The attempt at comedy was enough to show that just because the Fel empire was focused on research did not mean they forgot to have some personality. Many researchers were known for forgetting their emotional roots unless their research topic was a hand. But Ethan appeared to still be somewhat focused on people.

"I wouldn't say it's odd. More that you are a wandering researcher and not some soldier though. I wonder what you like to study?" Walker focused on this to be nice. But he also understood that he would need to know much more about the Fel empire to keep moving forward. The Fel empire was a mystery in terms of what they did overall.

"Of course, I prefer to research the changes in the world around me. I recently completed a study on the growth cycle of the black cap smoke shroom. A very odd mushroom that only grows in the shadows of burned wood. It sprouts white but absorbs the smokey remains of trees. Then it turns dark black before exploding to release more spores. Years later it will evenly sprout upon the next forest fire. A very odd mushroom with both darkness and fire elemental manas within."

"And what if it's harvested?" Remey heard everything. She had been somewhat unfocused because she was waiting to see what the plans would be. She wanted to see the maps so that she could be ready to make a move. Especially since she had less experience using her light affinity knuckles. The better prepared she was the more she would be able to fight. Especially if she had Alice boosting her attacks with a song that helped light elemental mana gather.

"It is often used to create some interesting effects within health potions. It can actually make the normal health potion in to a long lasting poison! It will cause a burning decay within the veins of anyone that consumes the health potion. It also causes the red potion to become a deeper scarlet. But I believe it can be used for food for flame salamanders or red magma salamanders as well." Ethan appeared to be the same as anyone who wanted to share knowledge. A researcher didn't research to hoard their knowledge but often to share it in some way.

"I'm going to need more information about it and some of them. I should be able to use them pretty well to make a dual affinity of fire and darkness. Not many people have fire and darkness dual affinity

but who cares? I haven't made one of those yet." Remey was very interested. A new path in alchemy? Great. A new chance to show off her favorite set of skills that weren't fighting? Perfect!

"I have heard of these affinity potions. Some were brought for research and they are still causing commotion. I was wondering if I should change my method of study to the reactions alchemists were having to something new. It was very interesting." Ethan seemed to lean forward toward Remey waiting to hear more.

"You should have also heard about the alchemy guild. If they are that interested, then they will join. We have tests for entry and can allow entry to classes that study many different potions. That is, if you are a member. Genesis is all about learning about one another. Your researchers would have a place there." Remey seemed to be taking over Walker's job. Not that he disliked it. He would rather hear Remey doing this than stealing away more herb knowledge right away.

"Yes, I have also heard of that. Guilds are not that popular here due to the nature of our empires. Elemental halls are popular in the Rize empire but here, we call our groups laboratories. The alchemy laboratory, the monster anatomy laboratory, history laboratory, and many more. Unique, right? I once studied the creation of the history laboratory. It was founded because someone gained the first recorded archeology recording system. Oddly specific but they have recorded multiple archaeological discoveries with a very tough team of diggers."

More tangents seemed to appear that made Walker curious. But that also made everyone else wonder what other odd things the Fel empire studied. One thing had become very clear though, it was a very divided empire. That was the reason for the lesser population and battle forces. Sure, those of this smaller population were powerful.

A focused mage on one focused learning could definitely rival many with their attacks in their best practice. Unfortunately, that would not mean that they would always be the best option. Therefore, there needed to be many varied mages of different affinities. It meant that the Fel empire was like a spear. Perfect for piercing shields but would fail in overall defense due to lack of coverage. They had managed to rival the Rize Empire because of their devastating strength and the Rize Empire kept them at bay with their large population in defenses.

That also raised the question, how many hidden researchers were there? How many angels had hidden away to research some extremely specific things that yielded unheard of results? How many had delved in to unspoken or dangerous topics? These questions couldn't be answered right away but would easily weigh on Walker's mind while he met more and more of the Fel empire's people. He just had to figure

out who was the good and the bad. Some research topics would easily be seen as evil if they were not careful.

"I will need to see some of those when I am free. It would be very good for both empires to share more knowledge instead of fighting all the time." Walker made the casual comment before he noticed that Rise was coming back. Ten angels were flying behind her and immediately stood in line to report to the other royal dragons.

"Gil, do you want to go and make introductions with the tent that came with us? Su too?" Walker knew that between Gil and Su, things would be handled. The ten angels from the Rize empire appeared to be uneasy since they were across the border. This would normally be putting everything at risk. Especially if they did the wrong thing while here.

"Done and done." Gil moved toward the new additions to their ranks while Su followed beyond. The two appeared serious enough but when Walker looked toward Ethan, he noticed that there was also a growing unsettled expression.

"Those Rize angels are part of the same army that will be helping you. The same as when your healers helped them. It's a two way street." Walker made sure to put more force in his words so that every angel heard it around him. None of them dared to say a word in response since the royal dragons also looked at them with sternness. "Now, we have to check out the current maps." Walker lightened his tone to ask for this.

The dragons had already made the moves to change in to their dragonkin forms which amazed the Fel angels the same as it had the Rize angels. Not that this stopped the Genesis soldiers from finding it just as amusing since they had already adapted to such changes.

The angels that heard this rushed forward and began to set up a table right in front of them. Upon doing so, four more angels poured dirt on it. They started to shape the dirt created a map of earth that was very detailed. Even two places showed that sandstorms were moving over it. "This is the last known map we have of the desert area. This is where the ruins we have issues with undead are."

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Chapter 1785 1785. Earth Maps

"This is a great use of the earth elemental mana and mapping skills. What are their systems?" Walker looked at the Fel empire angels and saw that they were glad to be praised. It was ideal for them to be making a show here for the Genesis forces since they were certain that they would be able to explore a new land if they managed to impress them enough.

"They are called land mappers. It was an odd system when we first discovered it. The first one was able to make detailed carved maps. After ten years of study it was found that the earth sculpting skill could be used. Soon they began to discover the combination of earth mapping, earth sculpting, and earth's vision skill. Now they can be taken to the air higher using skills from wind mages. Afterward, they can show everything they have seen in the desert."

"While the range is limited, they are able to give us the best possible maps accurately while they use their skills." Ethan was sure that he was able to show off some of the best research potential in this map compared to other maps. The water diving mappers were harder to show off since they had to use large amounts of water to show things. They also weren't able to travel to the hottest parts of the desert easily due to their water affinity needing more water around to use their skills.

Ethan watched as Walker started to examine the map more closely. The royal dragons were more or less silent but clearly had an interest in the details. Especially Ventus who would normally fly higher in the sky to scout an area. She had done so when they invaded the demon territory back home. This was a welcome change that allowed her to continue to save her mana for another time.

"As all of you can see, the sandstorms will limit the routes we can take. They go higher in to the sky, which means flying a very dangerous endeavor. When a sand tornado forms, we will also be limited. That is when the two storms will collide. The wind currents are bringing them toward one another to meet here." the angels making the map began to use their skills more.

As they did, the sculpted sand storms moved to collide halfway between the edge of the desert and the ruins. The result was a large swirling tornado of sand that blocked a large section of the desert. "We can not travel through this area. If we risk doing so we will definitely lose soldiers and the mana we have stored up." Ethan made it clear that this was also stopping some supplies from reaching the soldiers that were already there. Especially those that had been fighting for a long time against the undead to hold them off.

"You are in the presence of someone with greater strength than you believe. Do not underestimate a royal wind dragon. I can make this sandstorm move on in this direction. You have already told me of the existing wind currents." Ventus knew that the projected collision of storms to make this sand tornado was based on very good information. Therefore, she just had to alter the direction it moved afterwards.

"Then we are going to leave it to you, Ventus. That will let everyone move quickly through the sands. I should assume that the storms will make the monsters in the area burrow deeper in the sand or avoid the area altogether?" Walker was hoping that this would be the case but saw that the angels all were shaking their heads.

"The storms will draw more monsters toward them. This is to hunt what the storms dig from the sand or to be able to attack the prey monsters running from the storm. We will have to catch the running saw tooth sandworms, the camel spiders, yellow back scorpions, and many other monsters. We may even need to deal with the red sand ant colonies that may be in the dunes destroyed by the sandstorms. They will often swarm when a storm destroyed their nest and they need to relocate to a new sand dune." Ethan had a grave expression.

"That means the area will be dangerous no matter what. How can there be paths through all of this ever?" Remey was sure that traveling through the desert was annoying. But it didn't sound like the Fel empire lacked information about the area at all. Instead, it appeared they had researched these things so often enough to have working understandings of what will happen during these natural events.

"We are able to predict which monsters are around from many signs and time of year. It has taken a lot of time to discover this along with many tamers and unique puppet builders sending in their creations to explore. The cacti puppets are a very interesting creation from a desert puppeteer that can explore the terrain." Walker held himself back from asking about this kind of system user and their skills. He had not thought about the fire puppet or the earth puppets he could make. They were always less usable in real battles and better for training. It made him tempted to explore the ideas here. He didn't have the time though.

"I know you may have noticed it too, but the shifting sands are somehow held back by the ruins. There shouldn't be so much of these structures showing, but the undead are clearing the sand somehow with or else." Ethan looked troubled. Some of the angels around him appeared to have theories but their frowns and shaking heads proved that they were nothing that could actually work.

"So the undead are not just attacking but also reclaiming their ruins. If they stay this way they may uncover more strength or they will create a greater territory that is harder to attack. But why are they digging." Current leaned over the map and looked at some of the structures.

Although this was detailed, it was definitely different now than what it was when the mages had seen it. These earth mappers were sure to have not seen any runes or complicated structures either. That didn't

even go in to what might be underground. There could be much more than just the small portions of what was seen.

"That is actually part of a theory." another angle stood up to the map. "There are forests and evidence of forests around the desert. We found evidence of a dried river outside the desert. We believe that this was once a jungle. There may be a very large set of ruins. A ruined city underneath the sand stretched the entirety of the desert. There is some proof here and here. There are desert towers that stretch up. They are stone lookouts from what we have gathered. We can not move the sand to check them. But some of them are crumbled while others still have stone pillars tough enough to prove that they had been used often many years ago."

The additional theory was enough to make everyone wonder just what had happened. A jungle turned in to a desert could not be a small event. Especially if there was a large body of moving water that had dried up. The theory that this massive group may have caused it could be the case. But it also made the question arise, what were these undead before they were worshippers or they were undead in the first place? What made them what they were? How could this all happen?

"Regardless of whether this is a city under the sand or not. We have a clear destination. We will go there and begin exploration. Those we have with the ability will sneak inside and find some key bits of information. The rest will join the defensive operations to keep the undead within a single area. They will not expand before we have solutions to our issues." Mordant made it clear that this was the method they were taking. It would be better to push this way than keep theorizing.

"That is agreed. We will take a path through the collision point of the sandstorms. Then we will wait for Lady Ventus to clear the way. The monsters will be battled on a need only basis. We need to avoid hunting them and causing more issues. If we run in to sand giants, we will retreat." the angels all nodded but the fact that sand giants had been brought up stopped all of those paying attention from Genesis. They had not heard of such a monster or race or anything. It was a mystery to them.

"We will need to know what sand giants are." Su rejoined the conversation and calmly asked for the information. She had a very bad feeling about what she was going to get back in an answer.

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Chapter 1786 1786. Sand Giant Plans

"Think of a golem made of sand. Falling apart and reforming itself. Now imagine if they could also get stronger and solidify their bodies with some intelligence. Sandstone and other things. They have a core made of jewels. Often they live in groups and will often pool their energy together to make other sand

giants when they find valuable gems. They are dangerous. Hard to kill. And they will hoard valuable treasures they find within the stones and lands beneath the desert or from those that travel it."

The group looked at Ethan as he looked around at them. It was clear that the sand giants were a fairly hated monster by the Fel empire angels as a whole. The simple reason would be that they had caused a lot of issues since this desert fiasco started. The undead were one thing, but very tough monsters that could form their body over and over were an issue.

"The longer they live the harder they are to handle. Some of the oldest will have bodies made of the toughest sandstone hardened by their constant gathering of earth elemental mana. They also are unaffected by sandstorms once they reach over a year of age because of the tougher sandstone bodies."

"The worst is that when we damage them, they can fall nearly to pieces and reform. Their limbs can be remade from sand using their mana. They can just start over with a fresh body if the gems that they use to house their mana is not handled. It is ridiculous and deadly." Ethan had shown a little more emotion than clearly intended. But that was fine. He had to make sure that he got the danger across. Without this point he could send all these soldiers to death.

"It is a worthless endeavor to escape from them as well. They have the potential to be able to melt their bodies back in to sand. They move through it close to the speed of the saw tooth sandworms. If they are able to remain below you, then they may drag you down like quicksand. Naturally, this is different for the older sand giants. They will not be able to break their body apart so easily because of the toughness they created."

There was a lot of information to absorb. But when the earth mappers created an image of one of the sand giants then proceeded to show multiple forms that they had witnessed, every soldier knew the dangers. Whether they wanted to fight or not would be ignored. The sand giants would be an issue no matter what.

"If we have Terron here he could cause them issues when reforming their bodies. But now we are limited because he is still with the wyverns. It appears we have left the wrong dragon behind." Current was a little surprised. He spoke but it was more of a surprising, oh no, feeling towards himself. He felt he had made a mistake. It was a rare feeling for him.

"If Terron were here we would have let him handle it all." Ignus mocked Current then grabbed a pile of sand from the map and heated it. "I will melt it in to glass. They can not reform from that, can they?" This was a good point.

Ignus was a dragon and had the hottest head out of all of them. He could surely lose his focus and go on a rampage against the undead with little repercussions until he ran out of mana. But using his head, he brought out a vital weakness that he could exploit. Glass.

Sand was sometimes able to be melted. As a fire dragon, Ignus had lived in a volcano, lava lands, and many other places with temperatures that could melt ores and rocks easily. Now his flames could do the same after his studies. Therefore, why would he not be able to melt the entire sand giant in to a solid piece of sand glass?

Furthermore, the sand glass could work to trap the body parts that did not melt inside it. It could trap sand giants completely for a long time if not forever. A way to trap them for the study of the Fel empire while also allowing the soldiers to safely pass through.

"If things get worse, then we can fly in to the sky and attempt to attack from there too. No need to worry about underground quicksand attacks." Ventus added more to the strategy, she didn't mind having to bring the soldiers in to the air again. It would save lives and make sure they were still a strong army to fight the undead.

The last benefit would be restoring the supply chain to the soldiers that the Fel empire already sent in to the desert. They had been cut off while fighting the undead. To them, even seeing one flask of water would be enough to send them to the moon and back. The morale of hearing that they had a solid way to get back and forth food and water was enough to push them to greater heights.

"First we work with fire then we work with light. That will be the goal. We can start traveling. Ventus will cause the sand tornado that should form to travel away from us. Then Ignus will handle the sand giants and make sure that they stay trapped. Ventus will be our safety net. She can save us if young sand giants try to trap us underground."

Walker was sure that all the soldiers were agreeing. Even the Fel angels were massively impressed by the speed that their plans were coming together with the addition of the Genesis soldiers. "From there we will meet the Fel empire forces and resupply, heal, and prepare them. That leaves Mordant, Midnight, and Onyx to go exploring in to the shadows with the dragonkin under Mordant. If any Fel empire darkness affinity soldiers can sneak, they will fall under him."

"Of course, We can make sure that the scouting is done together and with perfect skill usage." Ethan agreed wholly with this. He did not see any negative to this. Only benefits.

"From there, we will let Rise prepare the light attacks to break down large groups of undead. That will be the way inside wherever we need to be so that we can handle the thing causing all this. Meanwhile, everyone else will be guarding and watching for intruders. For thieves trying to steal away knowledge they want to use for evil. Slime breeder, demon king, or whatever the last ally he has is; sloth."

Walker was not foolish. He knew that the last remaining mysterious sin title holder had to be Sloth. How could he not? Every other sin was accounted for. The slime bread had already proven himself to be Envy. he had partially said it in everything he did through slimes and in stealing things away.

Furthermore, Walker was sure that they would see some sign of the demon king's intervention. This place had too much to not do so. Immortal undead would make to be the most powerful army something evil could ever have. A deadly force that would stop at nothing while continuing whatever it was ordered to do. Something that could haunt the nightmares of every living thing in existence.

"That only means that we have one thing left." Su looked around at everyone and motioned to the supplies and the other items prepared. "We need to gather whatever we need in an orderly and organized manner. Walker can store it away with his storage skill but we should not leave it all to him. What would happen if he was injured?"

The Fel empire's angels had known of Walker's amazing skills and were ready to rely on it after offering him more of a payment. It was a very useful skill they had seen before and had data on. But they lacked it right at the moment. Therefore, they had been presented with a great opportunity. Yet, Su raised a great point and the many backpacks that were set up for supplies were pointed out by Ethan.

"And I will need to see what else I can prepare before we leave. Explosive potions can make a big difference right now, right?" Remey looked at the image of sand giants. She saw that they could be broken with her alchemical strength. So what if she wouldn't be able to break the tough stone bodies? She had other means of attacking that could use her defenses and alchemy to make work.

"Then the plans are set. We will leave in ten hours. Preparation will begin. I will send my healers and alchemy experts to meet with yours. I will let you handle the light soldiers from Rize, it appears they are more comfortable with you anyways." Ethan had sharp eyes and Walker didn't reprimand him. This was still a tough situation for the two empires.

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Chapter 1787 1787. Keeping Covered

The preparations appeared to be moving swiftly. The supplies were easier to split in to manageable portions because of the amount of angel soldiers that had joined them. There was also the fact that the dragonkin did not flinch at having larger backpacks added to what they needed to move through the desert with. The only ones that seemed to be showing signs of suffering were the water affinity dragonkin.

"Current, what can we do to get your dragonkin through this? They are going to suffer more and more just like the amphibious demi humans with us." Walker had immediately started to address the issues. But unlike the demi-humans who had been able to look for ways to solve this issue, the dragonkin were less prepared. They rarely pushed in to extremely hot areas to battle. They stayed in their own territory.

"I was looking in to that as well. I want the water you store away to use water easier." Current had thought about it and saw that Walker had a much better solution than he did. Was this really true? No, Walker had no idea that he was carrying a solution to this issue at all. He just knew that he would be able to help Current.

"What do you need it for?" Walker was originally planning on storing the water and saving it for the chance that he might use it. He didn't have it purified in any manner to be used for drinking but in a pinch, he could use it for or even forcefully purify it with someone else's skills to be able to use it for cleaning wounds or drinking. There were also many other things it could be used for. Camp items would need water since they would need to put out fires, wash away blood from monsters, or even just to protect something from the heat of the sun. water was a valuable thing in the desert.

"I will be using my mana to cover myself and my dragonkin in a thin layer of water for when it is needed. It will be the best method to prevent them from falling. If there is really lands underneath this desert sand and sun, I can manage to find it when we get to the excavated ruins." This seemed to be very viable.

The ruins would be the deepest underneath the desert. Current was a water dragon. Out of everyone, he had the sharpest sense when it came to sensing the water that would be hidden under the ground. Especially if it was a river, pool, or well. It would be best to leave it to Current and allow him to take the lead. It could also mean that Current could make a temporary pond or even lake in the middle of a desert.

This could have many good ramifications that would be able to save the soldiers from suffering. There was the simple fact that a temporary water source that didn't require travel would save lives from the heat. It would also allow the research and battle in top quality for those that have access. Basically, it would keep them able to use their minds without the fog of dehydration.,

Further, it could be the start of a well and permanent source of water for those that remained at the ruins after. It would be foolish to believe that the Fel empire would just stop researching and leave the ruins after the undead were handled. Even if the history was proven to be useless, it was a history that should be recorded. Everything was valuable. Even The smallest of details.

"You can use that as a buff to block the heat in a way. But I only have a few barrels of water. Wouldn't it all evaporate? Or can you keep it from doing so?" This was where Walker found a flaw in the plan. Wrapping the dragonkin and himself in water would just cause the water that Current used to evaporate quickly and leave them weaker than before. It would be very temporary for the traveling portion of their journey. Not to mention what would happen if they were to fight and get attacked. Battles could just increase the evaporation and losses of water.

"I have already considered this. I will use what the little water and earth dragon affinity dragons do while they grow. I will create mud." Current was annoyed at himself for having to do this. It would cover his beautiful scales and ruin his appearance. Not to mention that his dragonkin would also appear weaker and nothing like themselves.

However, he had seen the dual affinity dragons between some elder water and elder earth dragons. The mud dragons were often ignored because they literally lived in the mud or even swamps. A disgusting idea to many pure elemental dragons.

Yet, when the fact that they used the cover of mud to both blend in to their surroundings and also to be able to cover themselves from the environment, it had stuck with Current. It was a great idea right now. The heat would be blocked by the water and earth mud mixture. Current could easily hold the water from evaporating because the earth would actually work with him to trap the water close to their scales.

"Oh! That's actually a great idea. I didn't think of that. I can have the soldiers do this too. We have some water mages that can help everyone keep themselves from being burned and losing the mud off their bodies. Then the earth mages that are still with us can help too. It will be a heavier mana cost but a worthwhile one." Walker felt that Current was a genius.

If Current had known what Walker was thinking, he would have let his pride swell. While Current thought that Walker was just trying to be nice in the moment, he was actually thinking that Current was using some better dragon wisdom than he had imagined. The two were a little off the same page but had good intentions.

When the order to start making mud had gone out, the Fel angels thought that the human, demi human, and the other soldiers were a little foolish. The dragonkin with better resistances also saw this as a bit foolish. However, when the idea had been explained, the Fel angels embraced it over their cloaks and other equipment. In their minds, they could remove some heavier armor and be able to move much faster.

This was a sacrifice using a little of the defenses they lost as a price. Their dignity was not that important. Researchers were only that prideful over their subjects and not their own pride in this way. If they managed to make a result with this sort of action, then they would take it. The result they found here in this mud covering theory was simple. Speed. They would travel faster and be able to reach where the two sandstorms were soon to collide faster. That also meant that they would be able to run from the sand giants and make it to the ruins even faster than planned. It radically influenced the plan.

The water and earth mages were joined by many of the Fel empire angels with applicable skills. Mixing the mud was a drastically more important task that was proven to need more control. Current also joined in wishing that he could have Teron there. If he did, then the mixture would have contained more clay instead of the average dirt. In his eyes, it would be safer.

That aside, Ignus made sure to let everyone know their weakness while Rise pretended not to see it. The only ones that also backed the idea were Mordant who saw the benefit of having the soldiers in better conditions and Ventus who was more motherly than the other dragons put together. She liked the added protection from the surrounding environment. She did choose not to be covered in mud though. She would lose control of her flight if she did so. She had to be able to get in to the air with the currents and change the flow of the tornado that would form.

Midnight and also showed disdain for this. She liked her scales clean and shiny. But when Walker showed her that the scales she had cleaned were making her more visible to a monster, she realized her dangers. She would be putting everyone in danger from any airborne monsters that wanted to attack something shiny. Even if Midnight killed that monster, she would attract it and others to them. A dangerous risk for those she was trying to protect and help. It was a good enough reason to change her mind. Not that it stopped her from fighting Walker along the way a little. She was a younger sister and she had a job to do in that regard.

Chapter 1788 1788. Unnatural Growth

"Why couldn't you use the dust veil again?" wouldn't that just work the same?" Gil was complaining but he was still going along with the mud idea. It seemed that he was just more annoyed that they had to slowly make the mud and cover themselves in it to help.

"I could try and make a skill that does the same thing but with mud. If I use too much mana I might just crush you with tough mud balls though. Do you want to be my test dummy?" Walker casually asked and looked at Gil while holding a mud ball. The villainous smirk showing a little more evil than intended.

"And Now you aren't allowed to buff me at all. I can't trust that evil in you. The hero that turned villain. I knew it would happen eventually. I just thought it would be Remey since she likes to beat people up and make poisons now." the resounding smack sound that came as a mud ball hit Gil in the side of the head was more than fair. Remey was not having any of this.

"Otherwise, we are able to keep ourselves better covered with this. I did learn the mud ball skill though. It literally just uses a single mana to shape mud in to a ball though. Not a bad earth and water fusion skill though. I can use it as a base for study." Walker was not surprised that such a skill appeared. But he barely looked in to it except for the fact that it said water and earth fusion skill. That was the best part.

As much as Walker had focused on the fusion of elemental manas, he had taken a pause from that focus of research and growth. The single reason being because he had been too focused on the fact that they had a criminal to stop. He also had just discovered new manas to focus on, specifically life mana that seemed to be an even deeper key to understanding the world and how everything worked than he had expected.

"Oh, there's really a skill like that? I was just messing around when I was saying that you should get a new skill from this." Gil had made sure that the mud was covering him better than before. Now he was looking at the mud balls that Walker was forming and passing it to other soldiers. It was a very quick use skill that was definitely using less than one mana because of Walker's familiarity with earth and water mana.

"I think it would be a basic skill for some swamp monsters. We already know that some of them make mud balls to the fire from their mouths or to throw at one another in battle. Why can't we learn it and use it similarly? Earth and water function can make other skills like a mud slide on a mountain. This is just something similar but in different context." Walker's point was a good one and even a few of the Fel angels took a mental note to retrace their steps in fusion elemental skills.

It was always easy to see a fusion elemental skill as something of its own kind. It was more complicated and definitely cost more mana. But if using the base for a larger skill with one that cost significantly lesser mana, they could draw costs of larger skills down. The saved mana could go to altering the secondary skill needed.

While this was used by some mages already, the idea was often forgotten since the skills would just happen out of instinct or basic progression. Not that they weren't always planned out. Some of the more powerful earth mages had to gather earth and greatly prepare themselves for the larger earthquake or earth pit skills they could use. It just mattered how fast they could do so to set up their traps.

"This feeling is horrendous." Current growled out but was glad that he was in his dragonkin form. He could use less mud and easily clean it off wight he water had held from what Walker had shared with him. He was actually very glad he had the ability to be able to control water and keep it clean aside. It meant that he would suffer from this feeling for a much shorter time than the others. But that was just his pride talking.

"Are you done yet? You have been wasting time complaining about the heat for too long." Ignus continued the same grumbling as before. Whereas Rise had already found a spot to absorb extra light elemental mana due to higher light in the air around them. They were still relatively far from the desert but it was just a short span of land away. The trees and the plant life ahead of them was few and far between showing that the desert was not remaining the same size.

What made all of the group wonder was this fact. Even where they were, small piles of sand existed here and there. As if it was being dropped in to the holes of the ground or the sports where water had once pooled. It meant that the desert was more than just expanding to take over a larger and larger area over time. It couldn't be naturally doing this.

When Walker had reached this thought he had looked over at Ethan who had followed the idea to cover their skin in mud to protect from the heat and drastically reduce their water consumption. Overall, Ethan was glad to save mana that would have gone to the life mages for reducing the strain of heat, sun, and other desert effects. This also helped them protect from the winds of the desert that would cause the sandstorms. Not that they wanted to deal with a sandstorm any more than what they were dealing with already.

"The desert has expanded a single foot in radius each year we have begun to measure it. We assume that this has stopped but is increasing again due to the increasing storms in the area." The idea was just a theory. The sandstorms definitely contribute to the sands being moved around, but that would not mean that the heat, Light influence, and the drying effect would also increase in the areas with normal soil and plant life. Something had to be taking away those important factors.

"You don't expect that this is an effect of the awakening undead? They might have been active in the underground longer than you realize." Mordant found his own theory. One that clearly had a base here. But a few of the Fel empire angels nodded along with it quickly. This clearly proved that they had similar ideas the entire time of what might be happening around them.

'The theory is not new. There was one that said the ruins could possess certain runes, al items, or even cursed objects that drew the life mana toward them or even the elemental mana in general. If that is the case, then it could have been why the entire area has become like this." Ethan was not happy to follow this theory. If it was the case, then it meant there was more than just defeating one undead to do. There was finding the cause of everything and working on it.

Furthermore, it meant that there would be an entire massive effort to reclaim the desert. The changes would lose a large portion of land after reclaiming it. There would be many displaced monsters that might go crazy because of the forceful changes. And furthermore, there would be a power struggle over the research of whatever caused all this or was left behind under the sands.

All of this together was nothing that anyone wanted to deal with right away. "We can work on that as we go. If we beat the undead we have to, then we can search. I would not be surprised if we don't find something. Runes were used a lot more in the past than what we think. Especially by the angels that made the floating cities we have yet to see. And we do want to see one eventually." Walker made sure to add in his own curious opinion. He wanted the Fel and the Rize angels to know that he was curious about the great floating cities that they bragged about constantly.

"We can visit that desire after we have handled the current events. But if there is more to this, I hope the same help can be asked of." Ethan saw a chance to let the curiosity strengthen the relationships between the Fel empire and the Genesis alliance. It was a chance and he gave it a shot willingly before the conversation died down and the soldiers started to line up for the march toward the desert.

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Chapter 1789 1789. White Sands

The march toward the desert was going to be a short one. The sun had clearly begun to feel hotter now that everyone had it on their minds. This wasn't really true though. It was the illusion in their heads because of where they were going. But just because of that, many of the water mages had gone out of their way to add in a frost spell to the mud covering of those that wore it. This sudden addition was wise since it also helped maintain the body temperatures and morale of everyone moving.

The party was a little different though. They were less focused on the fact that they were covered in mud to resist the brutal heat that they were walking toward. Instead, their eyes were on the surroundings as they marched toward the front.

"There are piles of sand everywhere. Not just here and there but every small spot with rocks or where puddles would be. It's like the sand is attracted where the water would normally flow." Su made this theory and everyone agreed. Alice wondered what might happen and opened her flask of water.

"What are you trying? Isn't that for you to drink?" As much as Gil wanted to grab Alice's hand and stop her, his curiosity made the best of him. He watched carefully as the dribble of water fell on to the pile of sand around where a bush was slowly but surely dying.

The result was that the water hitting the sand soaked in and dried up in just a few breaths. The sun was not directly on the sand and to the touch, the sand was not actually that hot. The entire party had just witnessed something extremely odd.

'White sand

This is white sand from the nearby desert of Sigil. It is spread through storms and strong winds. It is not ideal for growing anything.'

"The all around appraisal is not that detailed. It just said it was white sand. But it definitely has something else going on with it. Remey, I am going to use one of your vials." Walker had an idea. They could watch what happens to the sand and water when it was mixed through the glass. The idea should be enough for them to be able to use the information to find out if there is anything else going on here.

No one seemed to notice that the party was moving a little slower. The royal dragons were prepared to handle what needed to be handled and knew that it was better to allow the party more freedom. As

much as they had begun to trust the party and learn from them, what they knew best was that the party was odd.

The party had already proven multiple times to exceed any expectations the royal dragons had of them. Perfect fact was about the hatchlings and rogue dragons. Even the wyvern incident proved that the dragon's view would have been wrong in the grand scheme of things. Instead of killing the wyvern queen, the dragons had helped save her and welcomed a new world race under their guidance. A mighty and high honor from the world itself.

As Remey watched Walker fill the small potion vial with sand, she prepared to try her own experiments. She had a few herbs she could put inside that were able to help someone from getting a dry mouth. It was made to make people stop their lips from drying and other small medicinal effects. If the water stayed in the sand, she wanted to see what the effects of the herbs in the sand would have. It was just curiosity but she was an alchemist, of course she would have a few herbs that were medicinal for those that suffered from dehydration or harsh temperatures. The forge masters needed these herbs constantly.

Alice helped Walker by adding water to the vial. Before Walker could even cap off the vial, they saw the sand start to dry again. Once Walker capped it, the sand was still seemingly drying. It was a very off thing that he was sure that no one had yet to notice. "Ethan, have any of you researched the reactions of sand and water from the desert?"

The simple question stopped five of the Fel empire angels in their tracks. Their faces showed clear despair as they clearly understood why Walker was asking. "We were unsure if you would discover it, but yes. We noticed that the water would evaporate instantly. We believe that the sand has drying effects for some reason. A higher concentration of minuscule mana that we can not study due to our lack of proper instruments or skills."

"So it's not the first time you have seen this. That means this had been doing that to the puddles and everything too. But if the sand is somehow ending up where the water flows, then that has to mean more." Gil felt that he had just uncovered a large part of the mystery. But when they started to get to the cusp of the hill they climbed, he was forced to become silent.

The sight in front of them was the blinding white of endless sand. Dunes and dunes of white sand that stretched as far as they could see. There was also the sudden hit of heat that radiated off of the sand from the sun.

The reaction of most were that this was too much. But for Rise and her light elemental dragonkin, it was a welcome sight. The sunlight that was reflected was a great source of mana for them to draw on. Rise was sure that she was going to have a lot of mana to be able to deal with the undead. But that was where she realized an issue.

"This sunlight is powerful. She is plenty enough to stop undead from properly forming. Why would they be weaker to light if they endure this during the day?" The sudden question of hers carried a dominant tone that made everyone wonder what she meant and how she could ask this. But the Fel angels all stopped yet again.

"It is odd, we have no explanation. We just have documentation when it comes to what the undead do and the fact that they are ten times more active in the night. Almost every battle to keep them isolated happens at night because of this." Ethan was sure that this had something to do with the immortal effect that the undead had. They could easily return to their previous form and keep battling.

"So they are weakened but not stopped by such intense light. We saw that they were wrapped in cloth of some form. Mummified worshippers. Maybe that is the key. The process. That they became undead protects them." Mordant had thought of this after only seeing one. That enough was a show of his wisdom and flexible mind.

"Then we will need to weaken them by removing such parts. Even if they are considered their body parts now as undead, we remove them and show them the purifying light I can muster." Rise cooperate with mordant. The two almost seemed to be in their own world and not actually talking to the groups around them. Even Ethan's addition seemed more like they had just read it off a paper and not actually heard him.

"We have two more mysteries to solve brother, but I will use the light here to strengthen me before we get to the ruins." Onyx made a promise for his strength and Walker had no issue seeing that Onyx was curling up on his shoulders to absorb more light and save every single little bit of energy possible.

"That's fine. We can study as we go. There has to be a curse or in this palace. Even if the desert should be here, then it shouldn't be expanding. I think that nature has this desert here naturally but there is a reason that it expands." Walker stated his theory and knew it might be a stretch to prove anything. For now, everyone just accepted their own ideas while the Fel empire angels pushed away their desire for answers.

Taking the lead in to the sand dunes from the hill made them wish that they could solve the issues sooner. They had been through this journey before. The challenge was not small and they were heading right toward two sandstorms that would be colliding. To say that they were unsettled was too small of a feeling for the things that they would encounter.

"I would like to say that we will be fine, but just in case, everyone should have a healing potion on their hip." Remey had the same unsettled feeling and made sure her party was ready. It was odd for Remey to act this way which made them take it much more seriously.

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Chapter 1790 1790. Nature In The Desert

With the sudden addition of mysteries to worry about, no one had anything they wanted to add. Not to mention that they were now all feeling the heat coming from the sands and sun. While some of them enjoyed it, the rest were not as happy. This was mainly because any of the frost that had been used by the water mages was instantly forgotten. The mud had to be held in place and they were not able to keep it all working like that.

Current had quickly realized just how hard this would be. He noticed that the water was being stolen from around him by the sand and it made him struggle to keep the water in the mud on people's bodies. This was causing him to utilize more of the mana he had stored which in turn made his need to focus more. The only good thing was that in his dragonkin form he was not losing the same amount of energy from moving as he would.

Every dragon was grateful for their muller dragonkin form. They also were glad they had not brought their elder dragons with them. If they had, then there would have been a massive issue with the sun. That was simply because they would have been covering more area without the ability to transform their form at all. They would have had to turn back and lose their elder dragons for the battles that would happen.

Ventus took the chance to take to the sky but returned shortly, "I believe that the wind currents above us are much worse than I expected. I can still alter and use them but we will not be flying." The Fel Empire angels nodded along. They were trying to speak less since they introduced the theory that speaking caused more water to evaporate from a body.

Onyx had taken over conversations as a side job while he focused on absorbing as much light as possible. Multi tasking was not that hard for him since he was able to sit on Walker's shoulders safely. It also helped them all get the message across faster. This could help since they were all moving very

slowly now through the dunes. The very first they had crossed had taken much more time making every soldier understand why the Fel empire struggled so much.

"The wind will stop us from flying and will also halt us from being able to handle any monsters that can fly. It means we will have to rely on you Ventus." Walker made sure to let Ventus know of his trust in the matter. Playing to a dragon's pride was always a benefit.

"I will have to take my full form to handle the winds. But this area should have avian species that specialize in battling the desert beasts on the sand." This wasn't Ventus being negative but just honest. She liked that Walker was letting her have free reign of the sky here. It put her one foot up when it came to the freedom to fight those incoming in the sky. But it also made her think of what monsters might reign over the desert in general.

"The heat isn't that bad. It is cooler than my last territory. I hate the light though. The warm heat of magma or flames is better." Ignus was still grumbling to himself about the bright light. However, everyone could tell he was more than happy to have the sun on his body. He was definitely siphoning out the fire elemental mana from the sun and taking it as his own. Not to mention that his dragonkin were clearly more energetic now that they were moving around the army as the unhindered protectors. Not that they weren't burdened by the soft sand.

"Hey, that sand dune ahead just shifted slightly. It was only a little sand hut that has to be bad. Should we skit it or face it?" Gil and the elves were watching the sands with their sharp eyes. One of the elves had noticed and drew the attention of the others. That was how Gil managed to spot the next slight movement ahead.

While the entire dune did not shift, it was more of the top. Upon looking carefully without moving, Walker saw a small amount of sand start to shift from the top and fall down. "I agree, we should skirt it and avoid whatever is there. If it starts to move we can fight but I would prefer to let it pass by." This seemed like the best move in Walker's Opinion. Time was already a harder subject right now.

Before they could keep moving though, the dune shifted more and the entire army at the top of the dune flattened themselves along the sand. The Fel empire angels knew the dangers and had relayed this warning right away.

As they hid themselves, the sand ahead moved and showed what had been hiding just beneath the sand. The monster buried was waiting for prey but had clearly been in the process of shifting itself to move to another due to the right for a new hunting spot.

'Camel spider

The camel spider is very similar to many other trap spider monster species. It is developed to have longer limbs so that it can hide itself below the sand better, it is thin so that it can more easily cool itself under the sand. Normally, it will move three to five times a day to find better hunting spots. While nearly blind from the sun, it has sensitive hairs that will sense the sand moving around or above it.

Normally people will avoid the camel spiders if they see them, but if they fall in to the trap the long sharp fangs will erase their life from their body. While the camel spider lacks venom, it is quicker than anyone may expect. It needs to be to avoid burning up or being hunted by the black jewel wasps that dig holes to hunt them.'

The all around appraisal presented some very good information. Walker had never heard of the black jewel wasp but was sure that if it was large enough to hunt a camel spider the size of a small shed, then it would be very dangerous.

What they were all glad for was that the Fel angels had been quick with their movements and orders. There was a clear level of experience when it came to surviving this desert. One that should be respected regardless of the opinions one had. That was why the light affinity Rize empire angels did not hesitate to follow the order as well. They too had heard of the Fel healers acting on the orders of their empire and needed to act the same as not to damage the genesis opinion of the Rize empire.

As if wanting to prove itself to Walker, naturally allowed the normal process of things to take place. He heard a soft flapping of wings before a shiny black shape dove down and stabbed in to the body of the moving camel spider.

'Black jewel wasp

The shiny body that it grows to protect it from the sun is often coveted by some traders since the armor is always good looking no matter the shape. The venom within the wasp's sting is very potent and will paralyze anything it stabs in to. This is used to paralyze the camel spider's body as it is dragged back to the nest of the black jewel wasp.

The black jewel wasp hunts the camel spiders because they are the best food for the young larvae to consume so that they can grow faster. The black jewel wasp will often ignore anything that is not their prey unless they are attacked or their nest is disturbed. Many have accidentally collapsed the entrance to their nest causing an attack on themselves.'

"So we have all seen nature take its course here. But we should avoid wherever that black jewel wasp is taking that camel spider." Walker made sure to point out the direction the large wasp carried the spider off to. It was not a beast they should fight.

"I believed there would be avian m monsters that flew higher. Maybe the ones lower to the sands are more dangerous." Ventus was sure that the sharpened stinger could easily break through basic armor. She was impressed with how different the monsters on the Sigil continent were. But the small dragon pride in her wanted its body for herself. The dragon's greed was truly there for every dragon. But they could easily break it away with logic.

"I have to get some of the wasp bodies for antidotes. Not that I can make them here. The sand will ruin it all." Remey sighed as she realized the new danger of a poison she couldn't perfectly counter.