

Master 201

Chapter 201 - 201. Bet

Midnight had been keeping low to the ground using the shorter grass to camouflage herself while she followed the scent of the horned rabbit. She had yet to come in to contact with any other horned rabbits but had a feeling she was quickly approaching her target. More moments of crouched stalking passed until she saw an upheaved spot of dirt. This was a dig up den the horned rabbit had come from. Prowling around the edges she could find a slightly different smell, one more related to a predator. She saw the claw marks around the edges of the dug out den and knew she was on the right trail. Moving in to the taller grass that poked through the snow she followed the new scent.

Gil had tracked the footprints in circles, he was almost convinced the horned rabbits had intentionally moved in such a way to confuse anyone trying to track them. What proved this theory false however was the small drops of blood showing bright on the white snow. With a strong smile Gil followed the tracks in their erratic pattern now picking up something new, a paw print slightly like a wolf's but smaller. They would cut off here and there with what Gil thought was the place the speckled fox used its air step skill. Knowing he was getting closer he increased his speed keeping an arrow in his teeth and one in his hand, he wanted to snag his prize as soon as he saw it.

Midnight had been weaving through the grass using her shadow wrapping ability to blend in even more. Her tail was lifted as she did not want to scrape up the snow or ice alerting the prey she had in sight. There was a white and grey speckled fox sniffing and digging at a slightly raised spot on the ground. It would claw at the spot here and there trying to break through the ice and in to the dirt below. Completely focused on the prey it wanted to eat, the speckled fox had no idea of the approaching danger. Midnight waited at the edge of the grass refusing to rush in and scare it away, she was a hunter waiting for her prey to turn its back, all she needed was that right moment to pounce.

Gil was in a similar position, he had speedily followed the tracks finding that there were more drops of blood, it would seem that the speckled fox he was after was the one injured and not a horned rabbit. Seeing a larger boulder half in the ground Gil noticed that the grass around it had been bent around, something seemed to have fallen against the taller grass to cause this. There was a small smear of blood on the rock itself and Gil could hear loud panting coming from around the edge of it. He had readied his first arrow so he could let it loose at a moment's notice.

The speckled fox circled the raised ground digging away the icy snow on top, it soon rounded the hump enough to have it back facing Midnight completely. This was the chance she was waiting for, with all her might she leaped forward using her wings to slow her fall just a bit. The more she used them in this way

the more she felt that it was an instinctual action. She landed dead center on the speckled foxes back with her claws and teeth piercing its neck. The fox let out a terrible whine out of pain and surprise. Unknown to Midnight there were four young horned rabbits that had become extremely terrified hearing the whine from within their den. Midnight did not let up even for a second, she knew if she let it escape her grip it could run away escaping in to the grass. Twisting her mouth so her teeth would dig in to the fox more she felt the toughness of bone, the fox had collapsed under her weight and struggled slightly in death's grip. With a sharp twist of her head Midnight felt the life of the speckled fox flee, she had defeated it, now to drag back her prey and show off her victory.

Gil rounded the boulder seeing a speckled fox with a sizable gash in its side most definitely from the horn of a horned rabbit. His breath drew in sharply as he tried to aim for its eyes, he wanted to preserve the pelt. However he underestimated the heightened awareness of the speckled fox by being on the edge of death. Noticing Gil it used its strength to jump up and on to the boulder. Gil reacted instantly changing his aim, however the fox jumped up again and stepped in the air landing behind Gil. Feeling the threat Gil dove to the side as the fox leapt toward him. It crashed in to the boulder face first unable to stop its motion. Gil did not waste this chance and let his arrow fly, piercing the same spot it was already injured. The arrow dug in to it much more than it normally would have due to the fox's already opened wound. Flailing about in pain the fox was desperately trying to stand and run, Gil was not allowing it though. The second arrow had left his teeth and been notched in to the bow, with a flick of his hand Gil had sent the arrow in to the same spot as the other causing the movements of the fox to cease. He had bagged his own prey, Gil took a moment to jump a bit in victory before he realized he needed to get back and officially win his bet.

'Two speckled fox defeated

50exp gained multiplied to 500exp.'

Walker saw these notifications happy to see that two speckled fox had been defeated, as much as he was annoyed the two had rushed off on their own he was proud that they were able to do so well. "So who do you guys thing will get back first?" Walker figured that a little fun was needed since they were left out of Gil and Midnight's bet.

"Sister will be back first, she has a better set of skills to sneak up on her prey." Onyx was definitely biased even though he made a good point.

"Gil has more experience hunting and has learned a lot for the rabbit tribe warriors, I believe he can use his skills in tandem and find his target first." Su had drawn her conclusions using her normal logic. She was by far the most logical of the party and having her insight was always the most refreshing.

"Hmmm I think that Midnight will be back first, but that's only because I want Gil to taste defeat." Remey brandished her fists wanting to see Gil who had teased her earlier get what was coming to him. She had forgotten she had already punched him in revenge earlier.

The three were looking at Walker for his answer, he paused slightly knowing that he could check his system for their locations but knew that would be unfair to the others. That didn't relieve the desire to do so however. "I would say Gil will show up then Midnight a few minutes later. Gil has the edge in tracking so he could have found one first. Midnight is a bit faster so she could have caught up carrying the fox back." Walker based things purely on stats and experience, however as he said this two figures had begun to approach.

Gil had a speckled fox hung over his shoulders as he trudged through the snow and Ice, where Midnight was dragging hers behind her. The two saw each other and pushed themselves to move faster under the additional weight of their prey. Maria who had fallen asleep on Su's lap was pushed awake by the noise the two made and made an oh shaped face seeing the two with their speckled fox. "The fur is so pretty..." She had whispered it more to herself than the others but it was loud enough for Walker to hear.

"Well I will tell you this then, when we get them back to the adventurers guild I will ask for them to skin it and return the pelt to us. I can take them to Lisa and see if she can make you something nice and fluffy to wear." Maria was overjoyed hearing this, letting a hint of a smile show on her face. She had still been fairly quiet around everyone since she was not used to being allowed to speak but the nicer they seemed to be to her the more she believed that they were actually looking out for her well being. This was a major step in her life to learn to trust. Maria scooted over to Walker holding on to the edge of his cloak, Walker knew this was just a small gesture but for Maria this was a very large action.

"Ha! I'm back first!" Gil shouted but was immediately greeted with a growl from Midnight who had dropped her own speckled fox next to his in unison. The two glared at each other before turning to the others. "Who was first!" Gil asked and Midnight mirrored with a huff.

"Huh? You two tied, don't worry as a reward you will both be taking the full night's watch yourselves and letting us all sleep." Walker laid down his verdict causing both Gil and Midnight's jaws to drop.

"That's what you two get for rushing off alone, it's only fair." Su closed up any path for argument as the two joined the rest around the fire, defeated.

Soon the smell of roasting Horned rabbit legs filled the air, Walker was extra vigilant since he was worried it would attract other predators, however as it cooked he found none had come. Gil and Midnight were sulking since they did not want to be stuck with the watch all by themselves, however Walker refused to budge. Maria was visibly drooling, not a single person had realized just how underfed she must have been while with Vincent, they should have stopped sooner or given her some bread to snack on as they walked. This was something they would remedy when they returned to their travels in the morning.

The horned rabbit had been fully cooked, the crispy smoky flavors brought them all to heaven. The meat may have been a bit tough but the flavor was much better than any of them expected. Hilda would have a field day with this when they returned to the mansion, Walker would definitely be hunting a few more and asking the guild to dissect them for their meat. He also wondered what the horns were for, he knew that there was a paralyzing poison in the females horns and this gave Walker an idea. He had received the throwing needles from Rodney as an extra when he enhanced Remey's knuckles and crafted sewing needles. Walker had been letting the throwing needles waste away in his inventory for too long and felt that if the poison could be properly extracted he could coat the needles with them to give him a good way to subdue monsters. This was yet another thing added to the to do list for when they got back.

Having stuffed themselves everyone was ready to sleep. Walker created a flame doll in the shape of the speckled fox that Gil and Midnight had brought back. This was his trick to add another guard to their night watch and also keep a fire unkempt. The wind had not been too brutal and the fire had been easily sustained. Gil took the first half of the night being unable to resist Midnight's sad look wanting to sleep after dinner.

The sun started to break the horizon bringing the plains back to life. The sparkling Ice was enough to push everyone back to the world of the awake. Maria had not had the chance to ever sit and watch the sunrise, Su sat with her as the two did so, Maria was having trouble understanding that this was actually real and not a dream, her life so far had been a dull grey. Now it was suddenly starting to show colors she had never been able to imagine before. Walker had warmed some bread on the fire that the flame doll fox had kept going, he was very proud of his idea to use it in this way.

With a warm breakfast and an easy camp clean up they were all on the move yet again. Gil seemed a bit more tired than the others, his excitement to run ahead and scout had been slightly diminished. He had definitely learned his lesson after running off on his own. Midnight seemed to lag behind a bit as well but she was able to pick herself back up in energy once she had eaten, there didn't seem to be anything that food could not solve for her.

The morning was still early and lucky for them the wind had almost died down to stillness. The peaceful plains were only brought sound by the party's crunching steps. Gil was able to lead them off the path

they strode a few times to avoid some horned rabbit tracks but that did not seem to stop the party from seeing one in the distance, the number of horned rabbits coming out of hibernation was increasing. The one in the distance seemed to be snacking on the dried grass that was above the snow. Since the green grasses were yet to be unearthed this was all there was for them to eat.

Gil held up a hand to the party wanting to take a long range shot at the stationary rabbit, he wanted the practice on a real target to keep improving his long range. Walker understood this and had everyone else prepare themselves while Gil took his aim, they had learned that the horned rabbits could use their speed to easily make up the distance to them the day before.

The arrow Gil released flew in a large arc in the air, it curved downward toward the horned rabbit. The arrow landed right along the rabbits back, the sudden pain caused it to jump high in to the air and roll a bit when it fell. The horned rabbit was panicked and quickly found the attackers. Su had already settled in to her ready position and Midnight was by her side. Onyx was watching from Walker's shoulders as Walker shot a long range fire bolt. He wanted to see how well he could aim from long distance. The fire bolt went much further than he expected, missing the charging horned rabbit by a significant distance, however it was well within the area to hit if the distance was adjusted. With this knowledge Walker sent a second fire bolt at the horned rabbit that had now covered a third of the distance between them.

Once adjusted, the second fire bolt was much better on course than the previous, it landed head first on the horned rabbit causing it to stumble and fall in shock. The tumble seemed to push Gil's arrow deeper causing it to be much slower getting up. The timing was perfect for Gil to land yet another arrow. The plains were really an advantageous hunting ground for them as long range attackers. The rabbit was still not done, Walker realized that while he had been too focused on the second fire bolt Onyx had left his shoulders and was furiously closing the gap between him and the rabbit. The stunned rabbit was struggling to stand after the long ranged attacks and was just about to continue its aggravated sprint. Onyx rose from the grass and snow around the horned rabbits feet rapidly entangling it.

Onyx was using his bind skill to its full ability to try and subdue the rabbit, however Onyx was still too small to fully wrap all four of its legs. The rabbit could not get Onyx off of it and was now under increasing pressure pushing on its back and ribs. With less and less ability to breath it struggles to attack the serpent coiled around it. Watching this Walker said a silent prayer that Onyx would never do that to him as he was almost always wrapped around his shoulders. Bleeding and losing oxygen the Rabbit soon felt its bones crush, the damage done it could not survive much longer. Just seconds later the party was notified by their systems that the Horned rabbit was defeated. It was another two hundred experiences on the pile they needed.

Onyx unwrapped himself from the bind, slithering over to Walker he waited for him to speak. "That was very good timing, but don't forget you are still a bit small. You couldn't fully wrap around the horned rabbit."

"Yes brother, I know, but if i get bigger I won't be able to ride on your shoulders or sister's back." Walker shook his head as how shameless Onyx was, he would keep small just so he wouldn't need to slither around himself.

Gil was retrieving his arrows when he glanced up out of habit to survey the area. He immediately hit the ground flat, this caused everyone else to stop cold. Gil was motioning for them all to get down. Walker slowly crawled along the snow to get next to Gil. He used the chance when he got there to store away the horned rabbit body in case they needed to make a speedy escape and couldn't take it with them. "There are at least fifty of them over there. They dug away a ton of snow and are eating all the grass. It's crazy, I thought they would fight each other for territory."

Walker slowly pushed himself up just enough to see over the grass ahead. Gil was right, just ahead of them there was a huge torn up area, the ground looked like it had constantly been trampled and dug at. There was no grass alive or dried remaining. The horned rabbits easily numbered over fifty, they were scratching at the ground moving snow in search of more grass. When one would find some the others around it would jump at it trying to swallow it up first.

Lowering himself back down he gave Gil a dangerous look, should they retreat and hope none of the horned rabbits see them, or should they fortify some defenses and start unleashing some dangerous attacks. "Gil, do you feel like making a dent in the last of the experience we need to get to level fifteen?"

Chapter 203 - 203. Set Em Up

The question Walker posed was a risky one for sure. The theory was that if they managed to set up a bit of defense and launch some big attacks then they could gain much more experience than they would have otherwise. Or they had the option of retreating, the problem with that though was if even one horned rabbit spotted them they would need to fight too many all at once without any preparation.

Remey and Su had crawled up to them and heard the last bit. They shared a nice look with each other debating whether or not the two boys had lost their minds. However the more they thought about it the more dangerous it seemed to risk retreating. The worst case would be all of them crawling slowly away and being spotted while completely defenseless. Maria seemed frozen to the spot unable to crawl to meet them, Midnight was belly down on the ground next to her making sure she was safe. Maria was even snuggling in to Midnight which showed just how afraid she was to see the party members that seemed so powerful hiding.

"Leader, if we can not retreat what do you have in mind?" Su wanted to run through the plan to make sure not a single thing was rushed.

"Well first thing," Walker started to crawl backwards slowly. "We get back a bit more so I can raise some earth walls and give myself and Gil to stand on and also protect us." following his lead they start to move farther and farther back. Once they had returned to where Maria and Midnight waited Walker continued. "Gil can fire his wind arrows, those can probably pierce through a few of them in a row. I can try and condense some fire flower spells to send seeds all around. We might be able to get three or four send off before the horned rabbits charge. They rush towards us and the flowers bloom and explode. From there we get in to formation and hopefully take down any that didn't run away."

"Leader, you should make earth spikes on the wall or around it, any of the rabbits running at us will be deterred from trying to get in." Su made a good point, adding a little extra defense was always good.

"Well what are we going to do? Just sit and watch?" Remey was very unhappy with the lack of close combat in this plan.

"Well no, after the explosion you and Midnight get to be the first out to attack what horned rabbits are left." Walker's promise seemed to appease Remey just by a bit.

"You won't leave me alone?" Maria's small voice spoke up, it was nice to see her more confident to ask them a question. No

"No of course not, Leader left me out of the plan right? That means I'm lucky enough to stay with you and Onyx to keep those mean horned rabbits away." Su gave Maria's cheek a playful poke, for someone without younger siblings Su was really taking on a big sister role.

With a small nod Maria seemed to feel more at ease. Now that things were in line Walker began to imagine the tower-like shape he wanted to create. The four earth walls would have sharp spikes on each outer side of the wall. The walls would rise up a foot taller than him and be topped with an easy to stand on platform. Walker could feel this would consume a bit more mana if he did not imagine everything more carefully. He could not rush this. He fell deeper in to his thoughts, he imagined every bit of earth moving to change shape and alter their own shape using the natural earth elemental mana as a catalyst for push more to conform to the shape. The more he relied on the naturally existing mana the less of his own he seemed to need to put forward.

To Walker it had only been a minute at most, but for the party an entire twenty minutes had passed, they were worried to see that nothing had happened but after poking Walker a few times he did not respond. After a few more moments, they could all feel something vibrating. The earth under them began to rise up piece by piece. Four walls slowly climbed around them. Gil and Walker started to be raised up as earth became part of a roof leaving the others behind. Even a door formed in one of the walls which seemed like it could fall away with the proper amount of pressure from their side.

The outside was much more intimidating, there were sharp dark brown earth spikes all over the walls as if someone had taken them from a giant porcupine. The walls seemed almost as tough as steel. Walker rapidly stood up as he had finished raising the structure. He completely ignored the system telling him of a new learned skill. The Horned rabbits were all standing on their hind legs staring at the strange new earth tower that was just a few hundred feet away.

"Gil start on your wind arrows, I am going to make a few fire flower spells." Gil didn't need to be told and had already started to make his first wind elemental arrow using the skill of his bow. He was aiming for the largest gathering of horned rabbits, he wanted to at least harm as many as possible.

Walker had already began creating and condensing flames. The first fire flower seed had easily been created. However as Gil released his first arrow the horned rabbits seemed to feel that danger was approaching. They all turned and started their sprint towards the party. The army of white fur and horns would have terrified many adventurers but the pair had already steeled their will.

Walker released his first fire flower spell which landed in the ground a bit far from the rabbits. The second was already starting to take shape, as was Gil's second arrow. While they focused on their next attacks the first arrow Gil had fired pierced one running rabbit, it went straight through and in to four more. The arrow embedded itself in to the ground tearing at the ground with wind. The wind coming off it caused even nearby horned rabbits to gain scratches and cuts to their feet. Only three of the rabbits hit were defeated, the others that were hit were in no shape to continue attacking.

Walker let fly his second fire flower near the first. The first was not yet growing as it was still preparing to bloom. The horned rabbits had already covered a third of the distance to them. Walker forced himself to move faster, the only thing on his mind condensing fire for a flame flower seed.

Gil had sent his second arrow in much the same way taking out eight rabbits this time. His third arrow was already being fired as Walker was only half way through making his third spell but Gil was already sending off his third elemental arrow. He was using his mana recklessly but the results were well worth

the mana used. His third arrow was a bit unsteady from Gil's haste and slammed in to the ground too short, this however actually worked very well. The arrow had much more force landing short causing dirt and ice to fly in to the air. The wind pushed even more in to a swirl blinding a large number of horned rabbits. Gil had never considered using the elemental arrow to do such things. "Walker I am switching to regular arrows, I will save just enough mana for one more big elemental arrow." Walker barely acknowledged Gil.

Walker condensed much more fire than he had before. He was using his understanding of elemental manipulation to this highest capacity to force more mana in to the spell. The result was a flame flower seed almost double the size. After he released it to the same area as the previous two he fell to his knees, unable to breath. He had taxed his body too much these last moments. Desperately he gulped down air while trying to see how the first flame flower spell would bloom.

Gil was sending long shots at decent accuracy causing every horned rabbit struck to slow in to line with another. He was expertly firing his arrows in a way to not only guide more of the rabbits toward walkers spells but also slowing them to group them up. This was the absolute height of Gil's skills and practice. The term sniper seemed too small for him. These skills were above and beyond what one would expect of a ranger. Walker wished he could capture this moment, luckily his mental archive was doing that for him.

The majority of the horned rabbits had started to group up aiming for the tower, they were all only about a hundred feet from the tower, for the horned rabbits this was a very short distance, However they were just about to step in to area of Walkers fire flowers.

Chapter 204 - 204. Knock Them Down

The second the First horned rabbit's foot landed near the first fire flower seed Walker had sent off was the moment it burst in to bloom. The fire flower had been taking its time to incubate as it normally did when used. Walker had tried to plan it perfectly so that when the rabbits would reach them the first spell would burst and capture them. The flaming vines were doing just that, easily twenty horned rabbits were trapped within the expanding vines as buds began to form. The hair on them was burning off and the vines wrapped around them more and more. The buds on the first spell were getting ready to bloom when the second spell burst as well. The rabbits that had avoided the first spell were quickly snared by flaming vines. The squealing of the rabbits was deafening. Su and Remey gave each other a look knowing that these enemies were too close.

The first spell's buds burst in to bloom. The heat and light from the explosion shook the ground and blinded them. This was soon followed up by a symphony of explosions from the second spell as well. Many notifications flew across their systems but they couldn't even keep their eyes open to view them. The wind was whipping astound them as the flames sucked it in greedily.

Then it all stopped. There was a large group of stunned horned rabbits that had stopped dead in front of the explosions. They had been moving too fast to keep a distance and ended up right where the explosion had just been. The first two had only cleared out thirty rabbits. There were still many more that had not been dealt with, some injured were struggling to stand and start forward to keep the fight. The dazed ones soon started to move again as they realized there was not another attack on its way.

They had vastly underestimated the sheer numbers of the rabbits, there were much more than fifty just standing in front of them. There had been many horned rabbits resting on the ground which made them seem to be patches of snow, even Gil with his sharp eyes had not noticed this. This massive group of horned rabbits had emerged from the dens and gathered to find mates and fight for dominance. They had been doing just that, attracting each other and tearing up the ground so that they could get to the small amounts of grass that had hopes of reaching the light to grow. This was plight on the plains, these excessive monsters should be thinned out!

Walker felt the earth trembling more...it was the last fire flower spell, it hadn't gone off with the other two. Walker quickly manipulated the earth roof he made while taking in deep breaths, this was going to be dangerous. Him and Gil fell through the ceiling on to the ground. Remey and Su had barely pulled Maria out of the way. "What in the holy heavens were you thinking?! Why are you back inside? Is it time to go out?" Remey let fly her reprimands and questions out of adrenaline but soon was answered by a deeper rumbling in the ground.

Looking at them Walker gave Su directions, "Stand in front of that wall with your shield, Everyone behind her. I don't know how big this explosion will be, I used almost all my mana in that last fire flower to make it bigger." Gil turned even more pale hearing this. Maria hid under Midnight who was direct;y behind Su bracing her back. Walker, Gil, Remey and Onyx all fell in line behind Su as well.

The terrifying sounds of earth and ice cracking along with the terrified screeching of horned rabbits filled the air. The party could feel the heat penetrating the walls causing them to burst in to sweat. The temperature seemed to rise much higher than it should. Walker had his eyes tightly closed but if he had been outside the walls and had his eyes open her would have seen a truly amazing sight.

The mana filled flame flower had been stuffed so densely that it was able to take up three times the space of a normal fire flower. The flame vines extended much hither and stronger than the two previous spells combined. They were so formidable that some horned rabbits had been defeated from being snared alone. The buds that grew were double the size of the normal fire flower spell. The spell seemed to thirst for the air around it taking in so much that the horned rabbits couldn't even breath. This brought them to a standstill allowing the vines to trap even more.

Nearly every rabbit was trapped now, the ones that were not were struggling to breathe and force themselves away from the terror they felt. Their instincts screamed for them to escape this death by fire. The air seemed to suddenly stand still, no sound was made. Even the horned rabbits felt that this was it, the peace of death. The deep roar of the flower buds blooming into massive flaming flowers rocked the ground. The explosion tore up the earth below it and incinerated the rabbits the vines had trapped.

The party held closely to each other as the shock wave from Walker's forced attack broke away the spikes and walls. Su felt herself being pushed back and only had hope that the walls and her shield would hold together long enough. Flames brushed the party just slightly, not enough to burn them but enough to show its strength. Su could feel her hands beginning to blister but held fast. They had no hearing due to the explosions and their balance was off, if anything remained and did not run they would not be able to defend themselves at all.

The smell of burned meat and hair was the only thing any of them could sense. They felt as if they had been baked in the sun all day. Su knew her hands were burned from holding her shield but she had thrown it away as soon as the pressure faded. Lucky or unlucky the nerves in her hands were not able to send the signal for pain. She grabbed the shoulder of who she thought to be Walker and tried to yell for healing. Feeling that someone was in turn grabbing her own shoulders she could feel energy flowing in to her, the feelings returning to her hands. She had found the right person luckily.

The breeze picked back up, blowing away smoke in the air and letting the normal light of the sun shine through. Walker was still in a state of deafness but had opened his eyes. Su had grasped around and found his shoulder which allowed him to in turn hold her shoulders in place. He knew he was about to exhaust his mana but he healed her anyways. Remey and Midnight had opened their eyes ready for a fight but were instead staring at the scene before them.

There was a huge scorched crater when Walker had sent his spells. The charred ground looked like it had been struck by a dragon's breath. The burning or charred bodies of horned rabbits were strewn about here and there. Some were severely burned and falling in to death having been just out of range of the flame vines. The system was still sending notifications to each of them as Remey and Midnight started to come back to the reality of things. It was their turn to get to work. Walker saw the two run off and he fell in to his mana deficient slumber. Gil was sitting next to him feeling just as drained. Su and Onyx were still there watching over the two and Maria. Maria had crouched in to a ball with her hands over her ears. The light seemed to flutter around her trying to hide her away from their eyes.

Su was very vigilant even though there was no sign of any enemy approaching, she refused to relax until she knew, The rubble that had been their little tower was basically a pile of cracked and burned dirt, if

Su did not have her shield they all would have been very badly burned. Even after Walker's healing Su still felt the burns in her hands, they would need more time and more healing.

Midnight and Remey quickly finished off the remaining horned rabbits, those that had been slightly harmed or completely unharmed were still running in fear. The massive explosion had been so terrifying that they would not stop running for at least an hour. The fear of fire would greatly shape every single surviving horned rabbit's life to come. Taking about an hour to check the immediate area Midnight and Remey had finished off and dragged back many bodies. There were partially cooked, burned, charred, so many variations of damaged horned rabbits. The system had finally finished notifying them leaving everyone but Walker who was still unconscious amazed. They had gained a massive chunk of experience they needed to get much closer to level fifteen and unlocking the heroic leveling system.

'73 horned rabbits defeated.

1460 exp gained multiplies to 14600 exp' Chapter 205 - 205. Ashamed

Walker's eyes slowly lifted, the sun in the sky had fallen low to the horizon, orange and pink hues seemingly drifting away with the breeze. Feeling the weight in his head accompanied by the fog after using all his mana he was a bit unsteady. He could hear a fire crackling nearby and looked around to find that Gil was asleep nearby. Su and Remey were sitting with Midnight by the fire, Maria was curled up asleep on Su's leg. Lifting his hands to wipe away the sleep from his eyes he found that Onyx was in tattoo form sleeping himself. "Aauuhh" He yawned a bit more loudly to let them know he was up. "How long have I been asleep?"

Su looked ready to stand up and move to him but she stopped in place remembering Maria on her lap. Remey smiled at that and headed to Walker herself. "Well since you used all your mana like an idiot Midnight and I cleaned up your mess a few hours ago. We even set up camp, so you owe us." Making a fist and hitting him on the shoulder much softer than she normally would have. Walker had begun to realize she only did this when she was happy that someone was looking better, especially when she had been worried about them.

"Thanks..." Walker was not very happy with his obvious lack for mana and really wanted to get to a place where he could use spells more efficiently. Thinking of this he remembered that as he focused on imagining the shape the earth would take using his elemental manipulation skill the system had notified him.

' Through vigorous use of elemental manipulation on earth elemental mana the user has gained the skill, High earth sculpting from the prospector system.

High earth sculpting- mana 0+ cost

The user can more finely sculpt the earth as they want it to. The more efficient and clear their methods the less mana is taken in the manipulation skill. Additional mana can be used to increase speed of manipulation or to create larger sculpted sections.'

This explained why he was able to make everything move so well, he had never tried to move earth around people and to lift himself up while also building walls and spikes. The multitasking was something that took all of his focus. "Seriously you get yourself awake and then space out!? Seriously first you left us sitting there in the cold forever when you said you were building walls and now you're doing it again."

Remey had turned a bit red with anger and looked like she was about to turn her last soft punch in to a flurry of tough love. "What do you mean forever? It only took me like a minute to build the defenses before?"

Su was listening and watching the exchange making sure the noise wouldn't wake Maria. "Leader you were laying flat with your hands on the ground for a very long period of time. We had gotten worried you were frozen." Walker was wide eyed, was it really that long? To him it had only been a minute or two at most. Could he have been fully absorbed in to his meditative state while imagining how the defenses would take shape?

"I see...I'm sorry..." Walker was still not sure how to make sense of this, he knew he should apologize for causing them stress. What if a horned rabbit had approached them while it was unguarded? They would all have been forced to defend him while he did not even move a muscle to hello. As the leader of his party he felt great shame being the weak link for them. His actions had the potential to get them all killed and the increased realization of this made him reaffirm his will to train his elemental manipulation. It was clear that there were skills that he needed to gain to better use his elemental manipulation, he only needed to spend time and energy to comprehend them.

The flame flower spell was a perfect example of this, if he had understood more on how compressing more mana would affect the spell itself he could have held more back. The system had notified him as well when he did so, remembering this Walker checked things out.

'The over charge skill has been taken from the spell crackers system due to the user's actions in forcing mana in to a spell.

Overcharge- mana 1+ cost

The user can force more mana in to any spell. This is controlled by how much mana the user wishes to add, however this skill has a high chance of causing the spell it is used in tandem with to break down. The breakdown can forcibly break lock, circle, and other spells but often will cause a large knock back effect.'

The damage he had done to Su's hands was a major factor in the regret he now felt. He could still see some redness on Su's hands from holding her metal shield. The over charging of the flame flower spell had forced it to grow much more powerful but that also put him and his party members within the range of damage. If he had been slightly less lucky then Su could have been completely incapacitated or even killed. Not to mention this sounded like a small knock back effect, what if the spell had blown up in his face, that would have been the end. The entire party would have been wiped off the face of the world without anyone knowing.

"Leader, my hands are fine, you can still rest more." Su had seen Walker's eyes on her hands and wanted to reassure him she was fine and not to worry too much. Walker refused that answer and stood himself up, he made it over to the fire and used his light heal skill two more times on Su. The green light faded away showing her hands had returned to their undamaged state. "Thank you, that feels much better."

"Don't thank me it was my fault, I forced the spell to get bigger and risked everyone's life for more experience. I was rushing us to get to level fifteen, I should be more patient." He hung his head low.

"Hmpf, at least you know." Remey gave him another hit to the shoulder as she sat back down around the fire. Su was just smiling at him and Remey knowing that there was no ill intentions between the two.

Walker looked around from his spot by the fire realizing there was a large pile just behind their tents. "Umm guys, what is all that?" His finger pointed to the black and white pile, he was struggling to make sense of it due to the fading light.

" Those are the remains of all the horned rabbits you burned away. Also the ones Midnight and Remey finished off. They spent over an hour dragging all the defeated ones back." Su's words were a small

shock to Walker, he had completely forgotten that there would be horned rabbit bodies left for them to collect.

Not wanting them to sit out and attract predators Walker got up again and tried to store them all away. He had no clue if any of them could have any value at all. Some had no fur and severe burns all over. Others were charred to a crisp and for lack of a better word, cooked. However something kind of unusual about them was that the horns seemed to have resisted the flames the best and looked only a bit soot covered. This made him wonder if the poisons could still, be extracted or if that would have burned off too.

With a sigh he got to work storing away every single one, He had seen in the system his massive experience gain from the party defeating seventy three of the horned rabbits but all that was left when he checked his storage were, twenty eight bodies. This added on to the ones that had already gathered but then at an even thirty one horned rabbits to have the guild dissect.

Hilda will be busy making jerky for days, was the only thing Walker could really gather from this. However he knew his mother would be more than just a little excited to do so. She had books and books of recipes she had never been able to try, spice combinations that she knew she couldn't sell to the average adventurer due to the fact that they only had the funds for the most basic provisions. At the very least he knew he would be making one person happy due to his poor choices as a leader. Remey and Su saw that he was a bit more dejected as he returned to the fire, but did not want to pry knowing it would take him more time to accept what had occurred and the consequences from his actions as leader.

Chapter 206 - 206. Guild Wide

Gil was the only one that had slept through the night, Walker had tried to take first watch but was threatened by Remey to sleep first. As much as he tried to resist the second his head hit the pillow he was out cold. Later he was woken up by Midnight who had been raking watch and he realized he would have the last watch of the night. Having the time to watch the sun rise while he walked idly around their camp Walker began to see more and more of the damage he had caused.

The crater that had been made from his attacks had devastated the grass that had previously grown here. The earth that had been cooked from defending the party from the flames was almost like sand now. He had not intended this kind of damage at all, even worse were the small drifts of ash that the wind had played with through the night. He knew that these were the bodies of the horned rabbits they had wanted to defeat. The horde of rabbits was definitely a plight on the plains but in his actions he had destroyed a spot in the plains as well, was it really better than what the rabbits would have done as they grew?

Walker was staring at the crater and the sandy soil all around, he sarcastically thought it was like a messed up beach just instead of water there was ash everywhere. However this sarcastic thought may have held merit.

Walker raised a hand and ,manipulated a gust of air to blow away a large portion of the ash around. He looked about seeing a lot of the snow that had melted from the flames and been frozen again by the chilling winds. The ice looked rather beautiful in the rising oranges of the sun, however Walker needed it to melt again. Using his elemental manipulation he channeled mana in to the ice causing it to turn back in to water and flow toward the crater he had created.

The small streams of water moved in to the crater easily filling it up and showing off the bits of green grass that had survived the flames due to heavier snow coverage than other spots. The sandy solid and the small pond that had just been a crater reflected in the sun. This was a view perfect for a painting, now the damage had not been undone but through his efforts Walker had hope that as the grass grew back the animals and monsters in the plains could stop her to drink. There was even a chance that some traveling merchants would make this a regular stop on the way between the two kingdoms. That was all he could hope for.

"Well I would say that looks much better." Gil's voice surprised him from behind. He had been the next wake up and found that Walker was staring sadly at the damage. But when Walker had gained a bit more sternness to his face and used his elemental manipulation Gil knew things were about to change.

He had seen the wind blowing the ashes away and scattering them in to the plains, this was often something those in the fields would do with ash from their fireplace to add some nutrients to their soil, however he wasn't sure if Walker knew this or was just cleaning up a bit. The sight of the water then trickling in to the crater put a smile on his face knowing that even though the spells had harmed the area it may end up better for it in the long term. "Looks pretty great to me, sorry about the whole sleeping all night thing. I guess those wind elemental arrows take more mana out of me than I thought. I'm pretty sure Remey is going to try and beat me up pretty hard for it." Laughing a bit he gave Walker a bump on the arm as a greeting.

"Well she did hit me twice, but not as hard as I think she will hit you." Walker's sideways smile made Gil wrinkle his forehead in worry. " We may have bitten off more than we could chew with this one. We were too reckless, we may have been better off risking a retreat. It was a miracle we didn't alert them as we got near in the first place."

Seeing him shake his head Gil wanted to hit Walker himself. "Was it reckless? Yes, but we made the choice together and we did the best we could. At the very least we choose how we would fight instead

of running away and potentially being beaten while literally laying down on the ground." Gil was adamant in his words, he believed that even though things looked bad now they were better off making their own chives and sticking to them. "You know those horned rabbits would have eaten much more of the plains before someone got to them, do you think the adventurer's guild would have just left them be? We found them early but there are sure to be more groups like this out here. Hopefully we just made a difference." This was much stronger insight from Gil than he was used to and it sounded very viable.

What if there were more hordes of the horned rabbits that were destroying the grasses before they could even start to grow? What if they were left to breed more in the warming weather? The adventurers guild would be forced to action to send large groups of adventures to get rid of them or trim the population. How many travelers or merchants would die or be harmed before the guild learned of what was happening. All these questions were flooding Walker's mind and only went to make him realize how dangerous large groups of monsters suddenly expanding could be.

Unknown to all of them Clara had seen the notifications of all the horned rabbits being defeated and looked back in to the records for past instances of such things. She had come up with documents from fifteen years ago about an early spring which had given the horned rabbits the chances to breed more and grow faster. This had led to hordes of horned rabbits leaving the plains and devastating crops for all surrounding kingdoms. These reasons in particular caused her to push off to the Guild master immediately.

Three sharp knocks rang on the guild master's office door before Clara burst in with the documents she had found, Ibis was far from surprised since he was getting used to Clara being the only one with such a habit. Out of all the managers in the guild Clara was the only one with the courage enough to burst in to his office and start throwing some of the most outrageous sounding things at him, he loved it. "Master Ibis we may have a horned rabbit outbreak on our hands!" Ibis dropped his quill to the desk, his eyes locked on to Clara.

"What do you mean we might have a horned rabbit outbreak again? Do you know how bad that was fifteen years ago? Even I was out in the plains trying to cull the numbers from those pests." Ibis remembered the weeks he spent roaming around constantly harassed by horned rabbits at every turn.

"The omnipotent party defeated seventy four of them all at once just a few hours ago. I went through the archived documents and found that an outbreak had occurred before. With the warming weather and the number that they defeated I believe it is safe to say are facing a similar occurrence. What would you like to do?" Clara's entrance had made the air thick with tension, Ibis was not going to struggle with this decision in the least.

"I have faced this before and I know how bad the kingdom hurt for years after this. I never wish to see those in the lower tier deprived of food over such a matter as not being prepared to defend the farms. The people were failed last time, but this time we will rise to the challenge. I am about to issue a guild wide extermination quest, get every first floor employee awake and ready, it will be a long few days." Ibis had relayed his orders and within the next second almost every guild employee was being woken. The dissection employees were on the list as well rushing to clear the basement to make way for a massive amount of horned rabbits to show themselves.

' Guild wide extermination quest- emergency quest

The guild has gathered information from the plains that the horned rabbit population is facing an outbreak. Every adventurer is required to register and begin patrolling the areas around the farmlands. Silver tier and above will be allowed to move out in to the plains to hunt larger groups of horned rabbits. Each defeated horned rabbit will be registered and rewarded with three gold. Parties that go above and beyond will be considered for a tier advancement test. Protect our kingdom's livelihood and prosperity!

requirement :

Exterminate Horned rabbits

Reward:

3G each horned rabbit defeated.'

Chapter 207 - 207. Chance Encounter

Walker saw this notification as well and immediately pushed in to motion waking up the others. Once everyone was awake he frantically started to break down the camp, there were more horned rabbits around like before and he did not want to be caught up in the chaos. Remey and Su read their own systems seeing this and had not even questioned what was going on. They started to break the camp down even faster. Walker almost missed the notification from Clara.

"I saw what had happened and found that those numbers of horned rabbits were unusual. The records showed that it may be an outbreak. Please return to the kingdom immediately." Walker headed this message and set his sights on moving the entire day without rest.

"Maria today may be a bit tough, when you get tired let us know and you can ride on our shoulders to keep watch for us ok?" Maria nodded unsure of what was going on since she was not a member of the adventurers guild and had not received this notification.

"All cleaned up here." Gil had just dropped the tent in front of Walker so it could be stored.

"Fire is out leader." Su and remey had gotten the fire out and cleaned up along with the food scraps from their meal the night before.

Midnight came up and pushed her nose against Walker showing that she was happy he was up and moving, however she knew that they were about to get on their way. Luckily she understood the system notifications as well as they had. Walker gave her a pat on the head appreciating the action and stored away the last of their camping gear. It was time to make haste.

They moved at a much faster pace than usual, there seemed to only be tracks from horned rabbits leaving the area due to the terrifying explosions from the day before. These had done well to scare off them and any other monsters around. Gil even pointed out some snow imp tracks that had made a very straight line away from where the party had been camping. It would seem they had their usual night watch for nothing since the noise they had made was enough to scare away any danger.

The grass was long enough for it to be above the melting snow and ice. As they walked they could swear more strands of dried grass were popping up out of the ground, the ice was releasing them from its grip. After some time the sun had reached the highest point in the sky paving the way for tougher travel in the mud of the paths.

Small birds seemed to flit and flutter around them looking for anything the party had kicked up while trudging through the mud. Maria had quickly become tired and took a spot on Su's shoulders. Walker noticed Maria tug on Su's hair a bit to get her attention, she was pointing forwards with a serious expression. She was taking the joke about watching out from up high very seriously. This was good for them however because Gil took this as a sign to move ahead quietly to see what was up ahead.

Returning took just a few moments, Gil's face said everything. "There are way more horned rabbits up there than before. Even an army would have trouble with them." This was not an overstatement at the least, Gil had spotted over two hundred of the horned rabbits lounging about in the sun, napping. "We

should head back and skirt far around them, they seem to mostly be asleep so I think we should be able to get far away without any noticing us."

Walker nodded and everyone followed Gil's suggestion. Fighting one horde of horned rabbits was more than enough for them until they had gained more strength. Taking the same path backwards the party then got off the path and on to the grassy un-tread land. They made a very large arc around where the horned rabbits were resting avoiding them without trouble. Once they were safe enough away almost everyone let out a sigh of relief.

This lucky dodge gave them more incentive to move faster, their past became almost jogging as they wanted to reach home as soon as possible, or at the very least reach more adventurers to team up with. Maria was having a rough time bouncing on Su's armor so she chose to jump on to Walker's back enjoying some time with Onyx who was quickly becoming a close friend. While mid jog Gil pulled up his bow, "Front left, we can take it down while moving it looks like a single." He had aimed at a horned rabbit that was covered in dirt, it seemed to just have come out of its own hibernation.

When Gil released his arrow Walker had also sent a fire bolt. They had changed direction slightly moving towards the horned rabbit. The arrow and fire bolt hit at the same time completely knocking the horned rabbit on its side. With their target down Remey used her speed to sprint forward, the rabbit struggled to stand but as it started to rise it was beaten down again by Remey. The horned rabbit had no chance, it hadn't even seen its defeat coming.

Walker ran up storing it away before everyone gave themselves a quick check and kept on their way. No other horned rabbits seemed to be around which made them all much happier. Their pace was much more than they were used to but it was paying off greatly. The sun had just started to sink in the sky when some shapes started to form in the distance. This was something they were all warning to see, a tent.

"Looks like there is at least one person up there making camp for the night, Leader do we want to stop?" Walker was a bit put off by a solo adventurer or merchant being out but it made more sense to camp with at least one more person, more eyes to spot danger were always welcome.

"Walker nodded and gave a shout, "Hello there, anyone home?" The tent rustled a bit before a large person opened the flaps.

"Ha! Who would have expected me to run in to you scamps here. I was out for an errand when that quest showed up. Now I will roam about the plains for a few days." It was Barry, of all people they had

encountered it was their vice guild leader. This was better than running in to a camp of ten adventurers, if any horned rabbits even looked this way the party was sure that Barry could deal with them in an instant.

"Barry! We were just looking for a spot to camp and noticed your tent, of all the people to see!" All of them were equally surprised, the only one that was confused was Maria who had never seen this man in her life.

"I take it you all were the cause of the guild wide quest? I would be a fool not to put two and two together. Hero title holders travel through the plains and all the sudden there is a horned rabbit outbreak? It seems too coincidental not to be related." Barry was much more relaxed than he had been when they met. Walker had his suspicion that the meeting in the castle had added just enough stress for him to be a bit more rigid.

"Funny story about that one," Gil was scratching his head looking away as he spoke, "We kind of ran in to a large horde and tried to take them out....It was a bit rough" Barry heard this and started examining every one of them for injuries and damage but only noticed some scorch marks on their clothing and the obvious tiredness from jogging most of the day.

"I can see that, Is that where this little lady came from?" He gestured to Maria on Walker's back.

"Oh, this is Maria. She joined us while we were in the demi-human kingdom. That's another long story, isn't she the cutest though!" Remey made the introduction but Maria shrank behind Walker a bit more seeing the attention on her.

"Well it is nice to meet you little demon girl, I am Barry the vice guild master of the adventurers guild in the city of Diamond. I look forward to you joining one day." How sly he was trying to recruit her before she was even a citizen of the kingdom. Just the fact that she was with the party made him try this.

In response the light seemed to bend around Maria making it hard to make her out on Walker's back. "Ah it looks like I scared her, I know I am a bit large but I promise I am nice enough." Barry's voice got a little high pitched which made them all want to laugh. Having a lot to talk about the party started to set up camp finding that Barry didn't have any materials to start fire with and had planned just to sleep without one. The party did not agree to this and started one themselves, Walker and the others had diligently stocked up on some wood and dried grass while at the tamers guild.

Chapter 208 - 208. Barry Leads The Way

"Well I could have told you the king would give you travel medals that made you emissaries. Royalty is a sneaky lot. Even the king of Ordist gave you a sigil now, you are all going to be very tangled up if you keep traveling far and wide." Barry almost seemed a bit sad saying this knowing that the politics of kingdoms could complicate any situation one was in. "Seeing that you were dragged in to a tournament, the king must really have liked you all. Now that you helped out with the demons it is sure that they will send some of their own emissaries to visit in the coming months. I would not be surprised if he sent one of his generals, I have heard he only does that when he wishes to send a strong message." Walker was imagining general Scylla showing up in the castle and putting all the nobles and attendants in to a state of shock. He almost had hope it would happen just as such. "It does worry me that a demon was intentionally cursing gear to sell however...We may have to recruit a few more appraisers just to be safe." Barry fiddled with his system most likely sending a message to the guild master to do such a thing. It was a good precaution to take just in case there were more items that had made their way outside the Kingdom of Ordist.

"We also managed to learn a bunch of things about crafting from the tamers guild master, Midnight and I have some experiments we want to try out when we get home." Walker was not in the least bit afraid to let Barry in on some of the ideas he had, Barry seemed like the kind of person that would not tell a soul unless asked to. Not only that but Barry also seemed to want to help them more than he let on.

"Ohho you met that old guy too? I would expect him to have some good forging tips seeing that he grew up in the dwarven kingdom. Even if he doesn't have a system they like there he would have picked up some knowledge just by growing up there. Whatever he showed you or told you should be very useful, make sure to heed his words." Walker and the others gave a nod, Midnight even seemed to be listening intently. "So that little snake there still hasn't been introduced to me, when are you going to get to that?" Barry had been polite so far but his curiosity had finally caught up to him.

"Forgive me, I did not want to interrupt the reunion. My name is Onyx." Barry did not show a single ounce of surprise when Onyx spoke in his head, it was the years of poker face experience he had.

"So this little one can already speak, how unique. With you working overtime I don't think any of you will need to learn hand signals like the other adventurer parties do, how lucky." Barry had always been the one who distributed basic hand signal books to younger parties as part of his role in the guild, but seeing that the party would completely communicate without the need to speak he was relieved to have one less party to give a speech to at his monthly lecture.

"Actually I still hope to attend a class on them, It may be useful when we interact with other groups." Gil was the one to speak up, as he often scouted ahead he was most likely the one who would work together with other scouts and be required to be silent. Onyx would not always be going with him so if anyone needed to learn hand signals it was him.

"I also would like a copy of your notes and knowledge, if I memorize them I can teach them to others." Walker would use his mental archive skill to the fullest just so he would not need to practice them. He could also potentially be in the scouting position and thought Gil's idea to be wise.

"Well maybe I will just be asking you two to give a lecture on it one day in my place." Barry laughed at this but it did not seem to be a joke as much as it was a way for him to avoid having to work more.

The time went on like this until it was well past sunset. They all decided to get some rest for the night so they would be refreshed for the morning. If the party kept up their pace they could make it home the next day before the sun set again. Barry even offered to travel with them since he was just told to roam around the plains to find a horde to take out if he could.

Once they had all started to get up the party spent some time roasting the most recently caught horned rabbits legs to share with Barry who for some reason had not brought any food with him. It seemed he traveled very light only taking the most basic gear to sleep and his two double bladed axes. These two weapons seemed to scream death just looking at them, Barry however was not deterred at all casually lifting the obviously heavy weapons with one hand.

"That seems to be some pretty good catch there, and here I thought you all had roasted them to ashes based on your story." Barry had tried to lighten things up when he noticed how hard Walker had put the event on himself. Although it seemed his words weren't really needed since the party already was developing solutions to the problems that had and wanted to improve upon.

"Well that's enough sitting around let's get on the move, I will head with you all until the fields." Barry pushed them to be on their way, he knew that with the outbreak of horned rabbits happening there could be a large group passing them by at any time. Not that he was afraid of them, in fact he was excited to get a little exercise in.

Cleaning things up as fast as they could, the party broke down camp and get ready to follow Barry who took the lead. They followed nearly at a jog pace even though they were fairly sore from the other day, however knowing that they could reach home before sunset only seemed to motivate them further. The winds on the plains were a bit stronger today making them all bundle up extra carefully. The sun may be stronger and melting the snow slowly but that did not make it too much warmer.

The entire morning passed uneventful, they had yet to see a monster at all, even Gil had not spotted any tracks along the way. Barry seemed a bit unhappy with this since he was out to wander around and hunt some horned rabbits based on the orders for the guild master. However in contradiction Walker was more than happy for the uninterrupted pace, he knew that every second saved when they did not need to fight an opponent was time they used to get nearer to home.

Gil picked up his pace to try to scout ahead a bit but was matched by Barry who went ahead with him, it seemed Barry did not want to be left out of any potential battles. Although he was met with disappointment when Gil returned having found no signs of any monsters around. Barry had begun to believe that the break out had been false, he was soon to be proved wrong on that account though.

Midnight had slowed sniffing the air, "Sister says she smells more rabbits." Midnight was definitely more sensitive than any of the others when it came to smell since she was a dragon, the wind was also bringing many smells from across the plains to them.

"Little Onyx, which way is your sister smelling them?" Barry did not even hesitate before asking, it was clear he was aiming to find them.

"To our right they should be near." With this Barry started to shift to the right while picking up his pace. Walker was not sure if he should head that way too but decided since he would be with Barry the party would not have too much to worry about.

Passing through some higher dried grass, the party soon saw a large amount of shapes in the distance, they were too white to be snow and moved around way too much. The sun was showing high in the sky at this point and the group of horned rabbits was doing much of the same the Gil had witnessed before. The only difference was that this group may only have consisted of a little over a hundred. "Hm a small group but it will be enough to practice on. Walker after I deal with them I will expect you to carry them back for me." What Barry sped up way ahead of the party.

Chapter 209 - 209. Strength

They were a bit put off seeing Barry take his two axes in his hands and rush towards such a large group. Walker immediately stopped and started to make earth walls. He made a very similar tower that he used before, however his high earth sculpting allowed for it to come together much faster and lifted up the whole party to the top. They were all looking at Barry who seemed to be charging to the center of the horned rabbit horde. They had noticed him and most were on their hind legs watching, some had even started to run at him as well. Through out the group many were waking up a bit sluggish from sunbathing for the afternoon. "So should we help him?" Remey was the only one to speak, everyone had been so surprised that he had just rushed in.

"I don't know, it seems like he can take care of it himself, but..." Su shared their feelings of wonder and curiosity with how Barry acted.

"Isn't his nickname something along the lines of berserker? Should we really risk being too close to someone with a fighting style that sounds dangerous like that? Plus Walker and I are long range attackers, we can help from here if he needs it." Gil spoke with reason but he reminded them that Barry was well known for his brutality in combat, something they would most definitely be witnessing here.

The first horned rabbit to reach him was sliced cleanly in half with a single swing of his ax. This was much more impressive than they had expected, yet the rabbits reacted violently seeing their brethren destroyed so easily. The screeching echoed around waking up any other horned rabbits that had yet to sense the incoming enemy.

Walker could swear he saw Barry smiling. The man was really getting in to the more horned rabbits that reached him. His axes were able to cleave through two or three in one swing, any rabbit too close to him had already been taken by death to the afterlife. The scene was one that not many would witness, a high ranking adventurer using pure strength to dispatch over a hundred weak monsters. This was the goal any adventurer dreamed on, to have the strength and fortitude to follow a cause start to finish.

The larger amount of horned rabbits had gotten near Barry, the first part had just been a warm up for him. Now that he had his blood pumping he let out a yell, halfway between a growl and a shout it struck fear in to every horned rabbit and even the party when they heard it. "I can't believe that's Barry, he's so nice but now he's so brutal." Gil was lost, the disparity was just too great here.

The fear had frozen most of the rabbits which seemed to make Barry move faster and faster, he ran slicing rabbits up more and more. Some had been so afraid of his yell that they ran away heading toward the party's tower. "Gil you take that one on the right, Remey you take it out when he stops it. Midnight you will do the same to the rabbit fleeing on the left, I will be sending some fire bolts at it." Walker knew that this was an extermination quest and as much as he did not want to be sidetracked making it home he thought it better that the less rabbits escaped.

Working in their pairs, Midnight and Remey ran off toward the two opposite side. Gil had already sent an arrow using a quick shot at the rabbits back leg. It landed perfectly at the closer distance causing the rabbit to tumble and squeal. Gil fired another arrow aiming for the front leg to incapacitate it more. By the time the second arrow had landed Remey was already there. Her spiked knuckles brandished in a heavy right hook. The horned rabbit took the blow directly to its head causing it to slam in to the ground

with equal force to Remey's punch. Since the first hit had not finished it Remey tried her newer combo, using her left hand her defense breaking palm was striking down on the horned rabbits ribs. The palm landed causing three ribs to shatter and fly in to the internal organs of the rabbit. The system showed her victory, making Remey grab the leg of the rabbit and start dragging it back.

Midnight was moving furiously as she watched two fire bolts hit the horned rabbit in the face. Walker had really improved his aim and judge of distance while they had been on the plains. The attacks singed the rabbits fur and stunned it. While it tried to recover from the burns it felt in it's eyes the rabbit was instead greeted by Midnight claws. She shredded in to the rabbit which had left its soft side belly open. Upon feeling the pain it reared up trying to kick but instead gave Midnight the perfect chance to bite down on its throat. The Rabbit's high pitch squeal was cut off instantly as it lost the ability to breath and died almost instantly. Midnight started to drag back her prey as well.

Walker was very proud of their efficiency and of how well Barry was drawing the attention of the large group of rabbits. He had already defeated forty of them easily, however it was very hard to count since so many were cut in to pieces. There were some other rabbits running away from Barry at this point due to sheer terror but they were heading away from the party so they would not pursue them.

Watching as Barry gained more and more red spots on his clothing and armors the party saw not the king vice guild master but a brutal beast. Barry continued to show this side of himself when he threw his axes toward a cluster of rabbits and they slid through them like butter. Miraculously the axes then turned like boomerangs and came back, that was one amazing skill that made everyone's jaws drop. Before they returned Barry used his fists and kicks to continue his absolute extermination of the horned rabbits.

The party watched the battle for another half hour, in that time Barry had single handedly taken out the entire horde, it was an amazing feat to say the least. Not only that but once he started to walk back to the party the blood on him seemed to start to evaporate. Another amazing skill.

The ferociousness that Barry had just demonstrated was long gone and replaced by a refreshed look. He was walking away as if all the stress in the world had just left him. "Ah sorry for taking so long, I was being a bit lazy since I wanted to train a bit more." His greeting put them to shame, He was being lazy? His moves and strength were well above what any of them even imagined yet he insisted he was just being lazy? This was too much for the party to handle and instead moved to start gathering and storing away the defeated horned rabbits. They refused to even think on how much experience this battle had just brought Barry, mostly since it wouldn't even be considered a drop in the bucket for him at his level.

Barry watched as the party left him without saying a word, he felt a little bad that he may have put them off but he hoped more so that he had encouraged them to push for more strength. Sending a quick notification to the guild master, his system had counted that Barry had defeated one hundred and fifteen horned rabbits, this was most certainly and outbreak worth their attention.

Realizing that he was being rude Barry started bringing Walker the horned rabbit pieces, "That tower over there is really something, did you add stairs of anything on the inside?"

Changing the subject gave them a chance to get back in to the swing of things. "Well I made something similar to this and unlocked a high earth sculpting skill that works with my elemental manipulation skill. So as long as I can spend some time learning about the elements I should be able to make better things. There may be stairs in it next time, I will have to think about it. I am even considering memorizing a few blueprints so I can copy simple structures."

"That sounds like a pretty good idea, I can have some battle towers and defensive wall designs sent to your mansion, I have a decent few that are long since retired from the army. They still should give you good use though, you are battling monsters most of the time." It was strange that Barry would have blueprints from past army tactics.

"Were you once part of the army? If you don't want me to pry I will let it be." Walker was worried he was being too forward and interrupting Barry's privacy.

Chapter 210 - 210. Dissection Frenzy

"Eh I don't mind, when I was a kid I first joined the army. My father was a knight so it was in my blood to follow him. I unlocked my system in one of my first fist fights with a group of people who insulted my father. Naturally I got my butt kicked." Barry laughed at the memory from so many years ago. "They said my father would never survive a single battle let alone a war, so in my anger i threw a few punches and lost my mind. Next thing I knew an instructor was kicking me across the courtyard and I was on the way to a healer. I Can tell you they never spoke bad about me or my family again." Barry seemed rather happy to speak about his family like this. " Naturally when I learned I had a berserker system I volunteered to become one of the specialized forces with unique systems, it went pretty well for a few years but eventually the flame died away. I was only following orders and doing exactly what I was told. I was reprimanded for letting my skills take over, so I left and joined as an adventurer. Almost twenty years later I am the vice guild master and I get to travel around the entire continent without restriction." This was why he smiled so much telling Walker the story, he had made it to the epitome of his dream. The path he traveled was the path he belonged to.

"That is really inspiring, Vice master Barry, I hope that my party can achieve the same feeling." Barry smiled patting Walker on the shoulder. He really did hope that every single one of them found the exact

same feeling of belonging he felt every day of his life. The constant errands from the guild master were frustrating yes, but he got to do them his way without anyone stopping him.

With a bit more pushing they had all the defeated rabbits stored away in an hour or so. Barry started the pace and pushed the party to move faster than they had before. He had a taste for the battles to come and wanted to find a larger group. Walker and the party struggled to keep pace. Maria was most definitely hating the bumping around, however she had no choice but to bear it since she would have been left in the dust if she was on her own two feet.

Hours passed them by and they started to feel the effects of the rigorous travel. Barry looked cool as a cucumber in comparison making them all that much more jealous of his level. The fields and farm houses started to show in the distance. There were groups of adventurers roaming about here and there along with evidence of battles. There had definitely been a few horned rabbits that had made it this far, there were also many adventurers leaving toward the plains. They saw that the vice guild master was there and waved or nodded in greeting, "Well this will be where I leave you all, I still have much more to do." Barry did not even wait for a reply, he was gone that instant not even waiting for the group's farewell.

Looking at the walls past the fields they were a bit disheartened by the fact that they still had to walk. They had no choice though and moved on. The more adventurers they saw the more they realized that they were being watched. It would seem that the additional insignia from the king of Ordist was enough to draw the gaze of those that had stubbornly ignored the party known for having a title. Adding to their quickly spread gossip almost every adventurer now knew them along with most nobles.

When they finally approached the gates they found that the guards welcomed them readily, Walker had expected to have to explain their new companion Maria but instead was ushered through. It would seem that due to the outbreak adventurers were given the fast pass in and out of the walls. This made things much easier for them since they just wanted to get home to rest. Reporting in at the guild and going to the castle to deliver the documents would wait, it would be a huge insult to show up in a half asleep and filthy state to the castle.

Their final walk through the inner walls and to the mansion were blurred out as they were all too tired to fully focus. Besides bathing and making their way to their rooms the only other memorable part was setting up Maria with a guest room right next to where Su's room was.

Not a single member of the party was immune to the small nightmares of horned rabbit hordes, the only exception was Midnight who only seemed to dream of eating them roasted.

After waking up early so many days in a row every member of the party naturally woke up just as early. It was easy for them to hunt out breakfast and find that Maria had snuck in to Su's room to sleep due to her nightmares. While they waited for breakfast to be cooked Su and Remey took Maria around the mansion showing off the training grounds and library. They found that Maria was able to read at a ferocious pace. Having discovered this they asked if she would like to stay there which was a resounding yes. Su had already introduced Maria to her mother and was very comfortable leaving the two in the library. Her mother had found it the best place to sip tea and relax.

Having gotten their new guest settled the party adorned themselves with their gear and made way for the adventurers guild. They left easily enough to make it there before many people. The sounds of adventurers trying to make way to the front desk were rather loud, so much so that it could be heard from down the street. Walker and party got to the front doors without much trouble pushing past many groups also trying to get inside. "Su can you lead the way? I know it may be rude but we need to get to the front." Su gave him a nod and removed her shield from her back. She braced herself and started forward down the middle of the room.

There were shouts at the, to wait their turn and to stop pushing but when they saw the plaques and medals the party wore they quickly shut their mouths. Clara was looking deathly tired at the counter and was very happy to see her party return. "Welcome back to the kingdom, what is your plan, leader of the Omnipotent party?" Clara still seemed to have a bit of energy to tease them.

"We would like to turn in some horned rabbit bodies from vice guild master Barry. We would also like to turn in some from our party, however we would like the meat, poison, and horns from them returned to us. We also have a large body of a greater Ice imp dissected and the usable parts returned. Lastly we would like an escort to the castle for an audience with the king." Walker had a hefty request, Clara had been prepared for every word of it though. She had suspected royalty to play some cards and the audience with the king was an obvious result of this.

"Please follow me to the basement, we will drop off the defeated monsters there and then I will let the Guild master travel with you to the Castle." Clara was all professional which actually seemed to relax the party as it felt like home.

Following her to the basement the party found that most staff was very occupied with breaking down horned rabbits the second they would be brought in. The even more surprising part was the massive amount of space cleared. "I have asked for space to be cleared for you and Barry since they consist of the largest possible influx." That was all Walker needed, he started to first pull out of his storage all of

the horned rabbits that Barry had defeated. The dissection staff took them almost as fast as he could put them on the ground.

"The next rabbits were hunted by our party and also the greater ice imp." At those words a larger group of staff came over lured by the rare monster. The moment the greater Ice imp body touched the ground they pounced on to it like wolves on prey. They started measuring and recording as much as possible to add to their records. This gave Walker time to pull out the remaining rabbits. Once this was done he felt a great deal of weight had been removed since he now just needed to wait for the results to be brought to him ready for whatever he decided to do with them.