

Master 331

Chapter 331 - 331. Iron Vines

"So you took the entire night sleeping to realize that goblins didn't really smell that bad?" Gil immediately saw the opportunity to tease Remey a little.

"Psss I should have just made you take my watch too. You were like a fan girl who couldn't help but talk about al arrows more and more. That poor goblin is traumatized." Her words cut in to him pretty hard. It was true that he had gone on pretty heavily about arrows but by no means did he think he could cause trauma.

"You at least gained some information. I tried to learn more about the monsters we needed to avoid in the forest but I didn't understand any of the names that the goblins use. Even with Onyx helping us it was very tough to make the proper connections. The only monster I gained information on is the monstrous mushrooms." Su was just disappointed since she couldn't put the face to the names when it came to the forest monsters the goblin spider rider spoke on.

"Well something is better than nothing, I hope it is good news?" Walker had some small hope that this year the monstrous mushroom species were by chance slow growing and would not be around much.

"Apparently the purples slimes have been eating the mushrooms too. Well most of them, apparently the black spotted poison mushrooms are left alone. I am thinking it is because their poisonous spores cause decay just like the purple slimes. Pretty much they cause the same kind of damage to the forest." This was not what any of them wanted to hear. Knowing that there was another species of monster that would usually be kept in check by others of its species causing chaos was very bad. Especially with the decay effect they caused.

"So two monsters that need to be dealt with. The slimes are still the focus but if we see one of the black spotted monstrous mushrooms we should safely take it out and make sure the spores do not spread." Walker looked like he was shaken by this knowledge. It would normally be tough to deal with one monster causing decay. Now to learn of the second that would be growing unhindered he wasn't sure how the forest would last the spring and summer.

A small cracking sound to the party's side caused them all to stop in their tracks. The rain had let up as they slept but the ground was still soaking wet and muddy. Walker was easily able to form a frost whip whale they all looked for the source of the sound.

"There!" Gil released a normal arrow at a greenish grey fur shot away from a bush. The arrow was too slow to catch the running monster as the blur escaped.

"What was that thing? It moved through the forest like it was walking through the trees." Remey was surprised at the speed she had just seen. She knew that if she needed to compete in a battle of speed with such a creature then she would most likely lose.

"It was wearing a small gold collar. I didn't see much else but it was definitely not a normal monster." Su had seen the motion and picked out the defining detail as it had fled. She was not able to gain a lot but her new vision skill was really paying off.

"Why would it have a collar? Is it a tamed monster do you think?" Gil was looking at the tracks it had left behind and found they were incredibly faint. "It looks like this is a track from a moss wolf. They only live in the deepest parts of forests. It should not be here at all. This is still too far out. We might call this the deep sun hollow forest but that's our name. I think the eleven kingdom still calls this the outskirts."

"So a monster that shouldn't be here and it was also wearing a collar" Walker was putting the pieces together while Midnight gave the slight tracks a smell. She could give them a hand in tracking it since Gil could have more trouble following the minsters tracks.

"Are we going after it? It might be someone spying on us." Su had reached a similar conclusion as Walker. He also thought this was someone's monster that was scouting the area or watching them. It had run away because it accidentally let the party know it was watching.

"If it is good news or bad, I don't know, but it went that way, the decay is leading us." The un-surety in Gil's voice was enough to tell that he was thinking this was an enemy. The intensity in the party jumped to a higher level at that moment.

"We can stay on guard and look about for trouble. But we need to keep following the slime trail. If the monster's path goes away from the slime then we will ignore it." Walker felt the pressure of the massive slime threat of other's lives. He did not want to waste any more time.

With this, the party kept a watchful eye on their surroundings while they followed the decay. There were small puddles of slimes without cores developed on the ground that they kicked dirt on to keep

from being exposed. If the slime puddle was exposed and gather the mana from the decay around it, then, it would definitely become a small purple slime.

They were not seeing any active slimes which was very worrying. The decay, however, had increased in intensity showing that there was an increased amount of the minster there recently. The large trees that had begun to rot and fall made the party worry more and more about the real size of the slime they had started to pursue.

"Ah, stupid vines. I keep tripping on this thing." Remey was walking a little behind Su and had been caught up by the same vines they were passing three times now."

"Just watch where you are going. It's not that hard." Gil wanted to get mess with Remey a little since he knew she would find an excuse to hit his arm later anyways.

"Ugh, I am watching but they somehow keep getting tangled on my boot." Her annoyance was stronger and stronger as she struggled to shake off the thin vines.

"Where are these vines even coming from? They are darker than the other vines around." Su's notice of this detail prompted some worry in Walker.

He looked at the very dark brown vines that looked like they should be a tough solid bark instead of a flexible vine. He felt like something was off especially since Remey was having trouble getting the vines off of her boot. Using his all around appraisal skill he decided to give it a look.

'Iron vine trap

The iron vine trap is a carnivorous plant based monster. It uses the sunlight as a heat source to speedily break down the bodies of its prey. It is known to slowly ensnare its prey with its vines before coming out of the ground to swallow it whole. The vines are as tough as iron so most animals and weak monsters can not escape and are slowly crushed. The vines are a very sought after forging material for healing gear due to their strength and natural mana.'

"Remey stay still!" Walker grabbed the vines on her boot and started to pull. "This is a monster, if we can pull it up out of the ground we can beat it!" His shout was enough to get the entire party to grab the vines.

Remey was still tangled by the vine but after hearing that it was a monster, she slid off her boot. She was not happy to have a wet foot but helped them pull the vine. The dark brown vine was soon under tension and a few feet away it dipped in to the ground.

Walker saw soft mud around where the vine was in the ground and knew that they could easily pull it out. Midnight gave a harsh growl as she put in all her efforts to pulling out the vine. The ground around where the vine dipped in to it started to rise up. There was a large bulb looking shape being pulled out as the party tugged with all their might.

There were other vines that were being pulled up from other directions that were visibly moving towards the party. However, their speed was extremely slow and they did not worry about them while they finished pulling the large bulb out of the ground. The large bulb had an opening at the top that revealed a stomach like inside. There was acid inside that definitely caused the prey it caught to break down and become nutrients. "Now that it is out we can chop off these vines!"

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Chapter 332 - 332. Small Slime Terror

Walker pulled out the two smaller hammers the wandering blacksmith had made him. He turned the bladed side so he could use his double chop skill to cut the entangling vines from the plant. Gil pulled his dagger out and soon found that he was having a lot of trouble cutting through even the thinnest of the vines.

"Remey and Su saw this and focused on the bulb shaped body. They were able to cause some damage and make the vines of the plant slow even more. Remey was throwing combos of punches at the bulb causing it to crack and start to fall apart. Su was using her shields to bash it and causing the bulb body to break even more. The iron vine trap was pretty much defenseless against them even though it had such strong defenses.

Midnight was using her sharp claws to easily rend the vines. She shredded them at the base leaving the long iron vines for Walker to take away later. She had seen that Walker looked interested in the monster as soon as he called for them to pull it up. She knew that they could have easily cut the vines and been on their way but Walker stopped and had them pull it up.

' Iron vine trap defeated.

30 exp multiplied to 300 exp'

"I can't believe a monster tried to steal my shoe. That's what you get for making me get my sock wet." Remey berated the now defeated iron vine trap as she pulled her boot from it and motioned for Walker to give her a back up pair of socks.

"Leader, is there any reason we pulled up the monster instead of just cutting the vine and leaving it?" Su had reached a similar conclusion as Midnight had but she still wanted to hear the benefits the monster had.

"The vines that it has are really strong and great for forging equipment. My appraisal skill also said that they are really good for healers since they had a lot of natural mana in them."

"Don't tell me you want to give it to your girlfriend." Gil was giving Walker a disappointed look since he thought that Walker had just had them all put in work for a gift for Alice.

"First she is not my girlfriend yet. Second, if I make a staff that can boost my affinity with every element it is better to have materials that have natural mana in them. That would make it easier to use all elements." Walker looked smug as he said this and started to gather up the vines.

"Ohhhh so not your girlfriend yet? You have plans then?" Gil had heard only the first party giving him plenty of ammunition to tease Walker as payback for the extra work of pulling the iron vine trap from the ground.

Midnight was huffing a little seemingly laughing at the jokes Gil was making. "I wonder when my scales will be stronger than those vines." Onyx suddenly spoke up after resting the majority of the morning since he had been asleep.

"Sorry if we woke you up. We were just dealing with a small monster. It was not ideal for you to bind." Walker felt bad after putting Onyx to work all night and wanted to let him sleep as long as possible. As the youngest in the group, Walker was becoming prone to babying Onyx.

"I just felt the commotion and wanted to see if I could help. When I saw Gil struggle to cut the vines I wondered if I would be that tough." Onyx was blunt with his desires and worries.

"Well I can already feel you grew a few more inches, so give it some more time. You will be just as big as Midnight is now soon. Not that you will catch up." Walker tried to act more light hearted since he knew that Midnight's growth was always going to be ahead due to her hero title. But this still seemed to make Onyx happy.

"Then I will try to grow more and more." Onyx said this as he returned to his tattoo form and quickly fell back to sleep. He was still exhausted after using his skill to translate all night and it was too hard for him to fight off the chill in the air since he was cold blooded.

"Do you think this part of its body is useful?" Remey kicked the large bulb and saw that some of the inner acids were dripping out.

"I would say no, but maybe the guild will know something when we bring it back with us." Walker stored the vines separately then store the bulb. He was starting to think about how useful the iron vines might be if he could have them to bind multiple crystals to a staff. The real question would be how well it would work when the darkness element was added since it was a decaying element and the vines were not. How questions would need to wait since Gil stopped them from moving again.

They had only made it a few minutes farther when Gil was pointing out some small purple slimes moving ahead of them. They were systematically absorbing the small plants on their path in to their bodies and decaying them into more of the purple slime.

"We should try to get the cores out of those ones. They can be useful for the research since they are newly formed." Walker's plan was simple, they could easily pull the small cores from the slimes and even use some of the containers Walker brought to store the bodies. The purple slime could be kept for the research as well and hopefully act as a catalyst for an antidote against decay.

Using slime's bodies for potions was not new but the different slimes in the different environments would cause the potions to have different effects each time. Since this was the case they were a popular topic of research and often hunted for by alchemists. It was still surprising that Remey did not get excited over them.

"They would be the best ones to catch. They are the closest to the massive slime. If we bypass the massive slime and head to the elven city then we might be able to give it to them." Remey came out of nowhere with this idea.

"You might be losing your mind. We aren't even supposed to travel in to elven territory since they do not like other races moving through it. And you just want to walk in to their city and say, hey I brought you some slime that is killing your forest. You're welcome." Gil's tone was a little mocking but what he said was still true. If the party went too deep in to the forest from where they could be seen as an enemy of the elven instead of an ally.

"But it could save lives if we head to the city. We have no idea on what they do or don't know about the massive slime." Su was thinking that Remey's idea was not so bad. They could easily reach the city before a very slow moving slime and potentially warn those who do not know of the danger.

"I really think we should keep following the trail for now. If we find that something changes or becomes more dangerous we can consider heading to the elven city. Now we should deal with those slimes though." Walker brought them back to focus on the small slimes that were still consuming the small plants on the ground.

"Oh no..." Remey was cracking her knuckles and moving toward the slimes. She had seen something that pushed her in to motion faster than the others.

"Follow Remey I guess." Walker did not see this as a bad thing since there were inky four small purple slimes. They could split the work and force their cores from their bodies easily.

Remey was the first to a slime and using her gloved hand thrust it in to the small slime and forcefully pulled the core out. This brutality was something no one had expected. They were stopped in their tracks for a moment drawing Remey's attention.

"Well don't just stand there, they are eating crystal ginger plants!" no one knew what the plants were but hearing the stress in Remey's voice they knew it could not be a simple weed growing on the forest floor.

They jumped in to motions getting in to the best position to get the slime cores out of the slimes without causing themselves harm. Gil used an old arrow to push the core out of the body of a slime without piercing it. He frowned as he saw his old arrow decay.

Su was able to split the slime body and grab the core before the slime covered it again. Walker used his frost whip skill to grab the core as he had before. The party didn't gain experience from this but it was still a good way to train their precision.

"So what is crystal ginger?" The question drew Remey's full attention.

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Chapter 333 - 333. Crystal Ginger

"What is crystal ginger? You really need to ask?" Remey was shocked that Walker had not heard of it before. She knew he had read a lot of the books in the library, especially the ones that were left from the previous alchemist owner of the mansion.

Walker's look said that he wasn't going to deal with the sarcasm as he took the small slime cores from the others. "Pssh, Crystal ginger is a species of ginger that absorbed too much mana while it grew. It stops being a cooking ingredient and instead develops a special property for unique mana potions."

So it just makes better mana potions? If that's it then why did you run so fast? We could just buy it then." Gil was completely lost in why having one better ingredient was so amazing. Remey could already make high mana potions without this crystal ginger and they worked fine. They didn't need rare and fancy ingredients when they could make do with what they had.

"If you listened and let me finish you wouldn't sound sooo dumb now." Gil managed to tick off Remey by interrupting her with his opinion.

"Please just ignore Gil. I have never seen you rush so fast. What makes it a unique mana potion?" Su stepped in as the mediator for this situation. She had no problem pushing aside any tension to find the facts in the situation.

"Crystal ginger is unique because it basically formed super small mana crystals out of plant material. Meaning that the potions it is made in to have a chance to permanently increase the consumers' mana. It is also one of the only medicines for someone with mana bleeding disease." Remey had only even heard of this herb since it was so rare.

"When I was little I saw the old man explaining that if his apprentices ever see any of this to spend their entire life's earning on it then whatever they have in them. The fact that these slimes uncovered some is enough to cause a stampede of alchemists to come digging. They even ate some."

Remey looked like she was ready to shed tears seeing that some crystal ginger roots had started to decay. Her hands began to swiftly harvest the roots that were still undamaged. "Can we save pieces by cutting off the decay?" Walker now understood the rarity and reaction Remey had when she realized what it was. He could only think of trying to get as much as possible.

"Well you can but if you do that you are going to cause the mana to bleed out. It pretty much makes it useless anyway. Just dig up the roots that are here. Leave the regular ginger, they might become crystal ginger in a few years." Remey was still digging up roots looking for remaining crystal ginger roots.

Walker joined her along with Gil and Su. Midnight prowled around keeping watch for more enemies. Onyx seemed to be staying in his tattoo form resting more and not coming out. Walker had half a mind to wake him and as for help but realized that onyx would have trouble digging for the roots so he shook the thought from his head.

"Oh, I found one." Gil held up a shiny tan root the size of his thumb and quickly buried a regular ginger root back in to the ground. Remey grabbed it and gave it a hard look while turning it in her fingers.

"Walker, store this and this." She tossed the two roots she had to Walker revealing that she had found one the size of her open palm.

Unfortunately, they started to dig around but only found some decayed pieces and regular ginger. If Remey had not seen the crystal ginger when she did it was sure to have been completely dissolved by the small purple slimes. "I am going to store the purple slime bodies not. I will use an old coin bag for the cores, I feel like our collection is going to get bigger and bigger as we get closer to the massive slime.

After looking for a short while more Remey was finally satisfied that they had found the only crystal ginger there was to be found here. She was already going over potion recipes and thinking about the possibilities the party could have if they drank a unique potion.

Su had been curious about something since Remey said it in the first place. "Remey, what is mana bleeding disease? I have never heard of it and we had many healers try and diagnose my mother's illness. Not one ever brought that up."

"Well, I am not surprised. Mana bleeding disease is where a person's body can't hold on to the mana they produce. Those that have it will have their mana bleed from their body at all times. If they don't live stationary life they will end up low on mana and never come out of a coma."

"Wait so they would need mana potions at all times?" Gil heard Remey's explanation and started to add up how much gold it could cause to afford to fight such a disease.

"Something only they very rich could survive. Not to mention the people who don't have a system and can't even control their mana." All Walker could hear was that this was a disease that could easily end a life. Not only that, but if someone wanted to function they needed to constantly throw gold around for mana potions which was a whole mess in itself.

"Exactly. It is very rare though. The odds of meeting someone with it are less than once in a lifetime. I am sure we will never meet someone with it." Remey brushed it off making it seem like a complete impossibility.

"I guess it's good that such a terrible disease is rare. If it was common then it would be a huge problem for a kingdom." Gil could only imagine how many people could fall to this disease. Even nobles would eventually turn out of potions of gold to buy potions.

"Ugh, we are a huge mess after digging around in the dirt looking for all of that crystal ginger." Su was just noticing all the much she had gotten on her armor and shields.

"When we find a place to rest later we can try and clean up. There is plenty of water to use my grand elemental manipulation to make some water balls for cleaning." Walker thought it would be a worthwhile use of his if they could get a little cleaner at some point.

Wow, the trees are really affected in this area." Reme realized that the path that the decay was leading through was bringing the party in to a scraped area. The trees were much closer together but the problem was that the passing massive slime had infected many of them with decay. The branches were starting to rot off and if they were not cut from the main tree then the decay would destroy it.

"We should start to cut the decaying branches to try and save the trees. If we leave it like this the forest could lose thousands of trees. Look how close they are." Su made very good points. By slowing their pursuit they could take the time

Not a single one argued with what she thought they should do, it was the right thing. If the forest continues to take damage as it was then many would lose their lives. Even more so than the goblins, they had just befriended would end up extinct regardless of being hunted or not.

The party brandished any blades they had to cut away the branches that were going to spread the decay. The smaller branches and sapling had already gone too far but the party still had the time to save the larger trees.

Walker saw that the decay was so powerful that it was infecting the very center of the branches. The decay was working from the inside out. He realized that some of the smaller trees were also too far gone and went in to chop them down completely. This took the party some time but they were still able to make slow progress forward.

Looking back after a few hours their path had a strip of decaying branches and trees neatly piled up away from the edges where the healthy trees grew. They had made a big difference in a short time. The worrying part was that the decay was very intense for the small number of slimes that had been there. "You guys don't think another party has come through where and hunted any larger slimes?" Gil spoke these words as he kicked some mud in front of him. He had found what seemed to be tracks, and they were not from a monster.

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This looks like a hunting party of maybe six or seven have been through here recently. It is really weird though because the tracks look like they had heavy weight in their heels." Gil could see the heavy indents in the heel of the foot prints and the light toe prints. This was strange for a hunter trying to travel carefully.

"Maybe they just caught a good prey. It would make sense if it is a hunting party." Remey chimed in thinking it was all so simple, but Gil's face showed that he doubted this.

"The way it looks is they put their heels in then moved backwards. The only time a hunter does this is if they feel they are being followed and want to throw off an enemy or predator from tracking them." The second Gil said this the forest around them became erratic. Branches were cracking and the sound of some soft shouts.

The party tried to tighten their formation but before they even knew what happened arrows were flying toward them. They trailed white ropes that exuded a smothering mana. "Dodge the arrows, they are trying to tie us up!" Walker's yell of warning was too late.

Midnight and Su were already being bound by the ropes as more arrows flew from all directions. Midnight tried to break them but found that her energy was being drained. Her strength had decreased. Walker desperately used his all around appraisal skill to try and find a way to break them and free his friends.

'Pure spirit rope

Unique rope braided with the mana of a hundred year old elf's hair. It has the unique spell to constrain mana and siphon strength for a short time after activation. It is most commonly used by the elf enforcers of the elven kingdom.'

"Everyone stop resisting and raise your hands. It is the elves!" Walker knew that fighting would prove to be a disaster and tried to stop the situation from escalating. They were not here to fight elves but instead to research and gather information on the purple slimes."

The ropes continued to be shot from unseen bows until every member of the party was totally bound. The tight binding sapped away Walker's strength and he could not even bring himself to try and struggle.

"Humans, you are trespassing on the territory of the elven kingdom. You have continuously cut branches from trees for now reason. You have spread poison to the roots of the forest and shall pay dearly." This voice came from a very tall man wearing a perfectly camouflaged green cloak. There was a pure white bow in his hands that matched his pure white hair. The look of disgust on his face made it seem like he would have been happier seeing trash on the ground than the party.

"We are not here to cause the forest harm. The branches are decaying from the slimes invadi-" Walker's attempt to speak out was silenced by another rope being bound around his mouth. The other enforcer showed up out of the forest totaling to eight.

"You have no right to speak after doing such harm. You and your little pet here will be brought to our prisons directly. The elders will have their words for you but do not expect to be coddled. You should know the laws of where you travel." The words dripped with venom as the enforcer motioned for the others to start dragging the party members in to the forest.

Walker's eye lay on the trail of decay they had been following getting farther and farther away. He could feel that the pressure of the massive purple slime would only increase as they wasted the time. But he had no choice, they were not listening to what he had to say and it would need to be done the hard way.

Remey was the only one that seemed to be struggling while the others just heeded what Walker had said and waited calmly. Remey was looking more and more agitated due to being bound and unable to speak. Walker could only imagine the things she would say to the elves in anger if she was able to speak. The others tried to send calming glances at Remey but he was too roiled up to be calmed by them.

The watershed at the forest grew thicker and the elven enforcers dragged them through. Their movements were similar to Gil's. They were able to easily traverse the forest without causing much harm or even leaving much trace. Gil looked to be watching carefully and trying to learn even in the bound state.

"Take them to the general prison and start up the mana absorption process. I will report this." The one that had first spoken walked toward what seemed to be a normal part of the forest. However, when the other elves brought the party through there was a ripple in the air. In front of them was revealed to be a massive tree with roots bigger than the largest of homes in their kingdom. The branches seemed to reach in to the sky and touch the heavens themselves.

There were groups of elves around doing business, walking, and just generally going about their lives. Walker knew that had been taken all the way to the elven city. The branches were strong enough to hold massive tree house structures that seemed to be the center of their city. The party was dragged all the way to a small building that revealed a staircase heading downward. There were many ally made gates that caused roots to block their way. These moved away as the elves pulled them down the stair eventually revealing more of the path downward.

After walking down the steps for some time they came to a very large underground space with massive crystal structures. There were more of the white ropes coming off of the structures. The flow of mana from the ropes to the structures made it look like the very life of the people attached to them was being extracted.

"More prisoners today? You already caught ten poachers this morning. Bring them to the empty pillar over there and tie them up. I will go over and evaluate them." There was another elf sitting in a chair by the entrance to this massive prison basement. He had a few log books and some ropes with him but otherwise, he looked like he was not a form of guard at all.

Walker eyed the man with curiosity and realized that he was waving his hand every so often. His gaze moved to the ropes that appeared to be moving every time the elven man moved his hands. Walker was amazed to come to the conclusion that the man was manipulating the rope with his own mana from such a distance. It was a skill, he had never heard of.

He desperately wanted to ask a million questions but found that he still couldn't get rid of the ropes silencing him. Instead, he just settled for silently using his all around appraisal skill in hopes that he could get some form of an answer.

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Arcane string master system

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Hold justice over everything and will strive for the ultimate protection of the elven way of life.'

Walker was amazed that the skill had given him so little. But from what he could see the arcane string master system was something that could have exponential use. The level of this elf must be too high to let me see too much of what he is all about. Walker came to this conclusion since he could see the amount of control in the elf's skills. It would also make sense that only someone very powerful would be guarding prisoners.

The elves tied the rope ends to the pillar and the party could feel their mana slowly being drained in to the rope. This was a good method for not only harvesting mana but also to suppress criminals in their kingdom. The elven enforcers left the party and headed out of the prison now that they had finished what was ordered to them. They still had man acres of forest to patrol in the day.

The arcane string master moved in to look over the party. He saw that they were all very dirty being covered in much and small body of wood shavings from trees. He made small hmmms and oh sounds as he evaluated their possible motivations in harming the forest.

"You all look to be naive children. Naive children with a youngling dragon but still children. Why are you in our forest?" He had seen no proper value in them and was not sure why they would venture s far in to the elven kingdom.

The ropes around Walker's mouth slowly unfurled as the man spoke. "We were projecting it and researching the decay. Those branches were affected by the purple slime sand would have killed the trees if we did not cut them. We need to research those slimes and stop them." Walker spilled this out of his mouth as fast as possible for fear that he would be bound again.

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Chapter 335 - 335. Mistaken

"Well, kids shouldn't worry over those matters. You may be lying to me. But I do agree that you don't look like those poachers over there." The elf pointed to the poacher's ties up on another pillar. They were much older and looked to be in a worse state. They had scars from various monsters and looked

like shady individuals. Walker could not think but feel he would avoid them if he was walking down the market and saw them coming.

"We really did not mean any harm. We even have the cores of the slimes we gave fought in my cloak as proof. If you need more proof I have some of the slime bodies saved in my inventory. But with my body this weak I'm not sure I can use it right now." Walker could feel the resistance when he tried to get the slime bodies to come out of his inventory. It seemed like the rope was binding all of his skills as well.

The elf looked at him for a little before accepting Walker's words and searching the dirty cloak Walker wore. He easily found the small slime cores and the large slime core. But he also felt the metal on the cloak that was covered by dirt. While he looked at the slime cores he used his other hand to brush the drying mud from the medal affixed to the cloak.

"What are these you have here..." The words trailed off as the elf dropped the slime cores and started to clean all of the symbols attached to the cloak. "Silver adventurers plaque...insignia from the demi-human kingdom...and the ambassador I medal from the human kingdom..." The elf was losing his will to look further in to the party that had been caught.

Seeing these identifications he ran to each party member finding the same identifications all covered up from the mud. The rains had been strong and made the forest a rather dirty place, but he knew that these kids must have somehow managed to dig something up to get this muddy. "Did you all jump in a mud puddle for camouflage?" This was the only logical explanation for them to be this dirty and hide their medals.

"We pulled up a few ginger roots for medicinal teas and also fought against an iron vine trap." Walker added a little white lie to his words about the ginger. Remey threw him a thankful glance having calmed down now that her mana was being taken by the crystal pillar. She would lose herself again if they had to give up the extremely valuable crystal ginger. It was one of an alchemist's greatest treasures and dreams to possess.

"And what are you to your kingdom..." The voice of the elf trembles slightly knowing that if he was not swift in understanding these so called prisoners, then not only could he lose all of his standings but also cause a war in his kingdom. Matters involving ambassadors were never simple.

"Well we are adventurer's but if you really need the details of why we got this far, I guess I should just tell you the blunt way..." Walker was afraid he would drop too much at once and cause the elf a heart attack. He also was afraid that he would start some conflict by admitting the details of the titles. But

instead of worrying he only could think of getting his party members free of the rope and looking healthier.

After a deep breath, Walker spoke with a steady voice, "My name is Walker and I am the leader of the Omnipotent party. We are silver tier adventurers, ambassadors of the crystal kingdom, and friends to the demi-human kingdom. We all hold the title of hero and I hold the title of true hero. We would like an audience with your ruler."

'The user has gained access to the skill royal aura from the king system. The user has met the hidden requirements to use and learn this skill.

Royal aura- passive skill

The aura of royalty is unique to any royal system. The mana the user has will send out pulses that influence the mana of sentient races. This pulse will slightly deter and intimidate sentient beings.'

Walker saw that the elf flinched as he received this system notification. His party members did not, they appeared immune to the effects of the royal aura. Walker wanted to think of what the hidden requirements were but instead, he knew that he was better off focusing on the situation at hand.

"Of course, I see that our enforcers have made a grave mistake. Please allow me to apologize. I am a simple guardsman allow me to call for the proper elders to greet you." The fear in the elf's eyes showed that he believed this to be one of the biggest mistakes one of the enforcers had ever made. Not only were they offending two kingdoms but they were also offending the entire adventurers guild. What was worse was that those prisoners in question had titles. Titles that would not allow them to be criminals at all, it was common knowledge for elves that if a user betrayed the title they were given it would come with massive consequences.

The elf waved a hand and the ropes instantly unbound them. Walker was already on the move picking up the slime cores that had been dropped on the ground by the elf. He handed out mana potions to his party so they could recover along with adjusting his own clothing. Remey was cracking her knuckles and stretching out after being uncomfortably bound.

Midnight was making an intimidating show of things, her wings were fully out flexing and flapping. Walker saw this and felt that Midnight could take her first flight any day now. The power in her wings had drastically increased over the last few weeks.

Su was adjusting the shields that had been forcefully stuck to her sides when she was bound by rope, Walker quickly used a light heal skill on her since she was definitely bruised from the force used. Gil was a little more relaxed. He was watching the ropes around the party ally wrap themselves up and move in to a pile across the room. He was visibly nervous but only Walker could tell.

"Gil, I will hold on to your arrows, for now, let me give you the back ups to wear." Walker knew that the wither spike arrows would attract attention so he made sure to hand Gil a quiver full of steel arrows that he had gotten just for this kind of event. Now if any of the elves inquired about his arrows he could say that these were it, or there was his bow's skill. None would be the wiser about his system unless one of the elves could look at his system or appraise him.

Walker did not see the elf that had unbound them go anywhere or communicate with anyone but in a second there was a sound of steps rushing down the stairs toward them. The creaking of the alvine gates was easily heard. After a few more moments a disheveled looking man in a yellow cloak was standing before them. There were lines on his face from serious thinking for years and he had many green runes tattooed on his head instead of hair. His ears were longer than the other elves the party had seen.

"I apologize for your unfortunate encounter with the enforcers. They will be judged at the meeting with our elders and our almighty queen. If you would allow me, I would like to personally escort you to a more fitting chamber. The court is being prepared to greet you properly." The elf was much more eloquent than the party expected of someone who had just run down so many stairs.

"You will not be wary of us if we remain on our guard, my party is naturally on edge right now." Walker used his harsh sturdy tone to show his disapproval for how they were treated. The effect was more than he desired as the elf staggered a little at the passive skill he had just received, Walker decided to hold back a little when speaking.

"Of course. I would not expect you to trust us after our poor showing. We will naturally compensate you for any damage your party suffered. We elves are known as gracious hosts after all." The elf was wise and knew that he had to try and smooth things over before he brought the party before the elders. The enforcers had brought them on to a huge political mess.

Walker nodded and started to follow the elf. Midnight was softly growling as they walked behind him, she was still unhappy to have been weakened and dragged around. She was a proud dragon and did not deserve such terrible treatment. In her thoughts, the elves should be bowing to apologize to her in all her greatness.

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Chapter 336 - 336. Fair Punishment

The bright sun nearly blinded them as they came back out on top. There were already visible differences from when they entered the prison just an hour or so before. The streets were more or less empty, but there were multiple elven guards standing along the path the party was taking. It seemed they were getting a very different welcome now.

"We took the liberty to bring out our most decorated guards to ensure the clearest path to the meeting." The elf smiled like it had done something amazing. However, Walker felt it was a way to hide some of their way of life from the party.

"What a shame we can not see the beauty of a bustling city. This baron city seems so sad." Su unexpectedly spoke up with this sounding fairly bitter. She knew this would throw a little salt in the elves' wound after treating them the way they had. She was not happy at all with the fact that she had been injured but even more, that the elves had not listened to them until they realized their status. It was unacceptable to her.

The elf just smiled a little harder. He definitely felt that one but was strong enough to hide it. The guards around their path were staring straight on and did not flinch at all. They were very well trained. The path they tread was put together stone and had obviously been done by hand. The market they traveled through was very basic but from where they walked they could see a high amount of potion stalls and very few armor stalls.

Walker took note that this kingdom might be a treasure trove for alchemical knowledge. He also knew that if it was acetable he should get some special arrows for Gil. On Su and Midnight's side, he knew there was almost nothing of value. The elves were more invested in mana and archery to have heavy armor or materials that would be beneficial to monsters. At most he thought they could have some high mana crystals or duel elemental mana crystals.

"Please follow me this way. The main hall of the elders is up this way." The elf lead them to a very large branch that dipped in to the earth. Walker could tell it was part of the massive towering tree that made up the majority of the city.

Their footing was much better than expected in the giant tree limbs and Walker had a suspicion that there was a spell at work. They were even keeping a firm footing on the slippery looking moss that was on most of the branches.

The large hall that seemed to be part of the tree itself had an intricate design. The vines from the tree had long been guided creating massive columns and murals. Only someone with extreme skill could build and design such a thing. The entire party stood in awe for a few moments before realizing they had fallen behind and should instead keep their serious mannerism.

The moment they entered the elder hall any voices stopped and instead a silent intimidating feeling took over the room. There were the enforcers kneeling in the center of the room that had captured the party. On the sides were older looking elves that wore different colored robes. The ones that wore multiple colors appeared to be high ranked and those that wore gold embroidered robes an even higher rank.

In front of the enforcers was a massive vine hammock that seemed to be swaying without a breeze. Walker started to notice that it was not swaying but the vines making it up were moving and changing. Upon this vine hammock was a pristine looking elven woman. She wore perfectly white robes and had many flower patterns embroidered upon them.

The elf woman was there with closed eyes not moving a muscle. There was an aura about her that made it seem like her mana was infinite. Walker could clearly sense the high amount of mana that was coming from her and had the impression that if she were to channel it in to a spell it would destroy the entire city.

"Queen, elders, I have brought the guests of our kingdom." The elf that had guided them introduced them then scurried away anxious to be away from the trouble that was about to ensue.

One of the elders with the gold robes stood up and looked at the party. "Before we proceed with a proper welcome we would like to inquire about the incident that happened out in the forest. We have been sent details from the guard that recognized you standing and we would like to hear it from you. We have also heard the story from our enforcers and would like to hear your thoughts on them." The elder's words held a lot of weight and the enforcers were visibly shaken by them.

"My party has been following and hunting the purple slimes causing decay in the forest. After saving some of the last remaining forest goblins we gained information that there is a massive slime on a path toward your city. We followed the signs of decay and have gathered some slime cores. Unfortunately, the damage has already been done to the forest. We saw that the decay would spread if we did not prune the branches and decaying saplings." Walker spoke with as much firmness as possible under the gaze of every elder. The queen still did not react to anything said.

Walker continued on knowing that he still needed to stress the danger this massive slime had. "We were attempting to follow the massive slime and in hopes stop it before it grows larger, Sadly these enforcers saw out pruning and blames us for destroying the forest. We did attempt to speak to them but they stopped us. On top of this, we did not fight back out of respect for your kingdom's laws. Unfortunately, this did not seem to matter since we were treated like worthless trash. If it were not for your guardsman we would be down in your prison waiting for a chance to cause an escape."

The elders all murmured slightly at this. The human that was standing in the court was saying that they would have been able to escape the prison if they needed to. It was something they believed impossible with the mana draining crystal pillars they used along with the ropes.

"As far as I am concerned that guardsman deserves some form of reward for using their intellect before just throwing someone to the wolves. So far they seem to be the only respectable elf we have met." This was enough to hurt the elves' pride. They knew that the party was not in a good mood from this instance and that the news of this would be brought back to their kingdom without fail.

"We understand how you must feel having such a rude greeting when you were attempting to help. We also know of the decay in the forest and have increased patrols for such reasons. These enforcers are on edge and have let the weeks of missed sleep catch up to them. We are willing to dole out any punishment you see necessary."

This was the elder's way to ensure that the party would be happy with whatever punishment was given. They needed to retain their political standing with the other kingdoms while they focused on their long battle with the demons. The two kingdoms had never seen eye to eye just in cultural differences. Unlike the demi-humans and demons' hate based off of war the elves had hatred based off of the forms of they used.

The elves were a nature based society that used natural mana and focused on elegance. The demons used brutal mana that they formed from various ill intentions and malevolent tendencies. The two were more or less opposites in every way. The tales of the two races butting heads were endless and went on longer than the record of the demi-humans and demon's wars.

"You want us to decide the punishment? Well, what if I were to kill them here in the hall?" Walker knew that saying this was a risky move but he needed to test just how important their standing was to the elves. The fact that they had been thrown in a prison was a huge effect and could greatly change the relationship with their kingdom.

"We of course would not object. If that is what is needed to make things right, then go about it swiftly." The elder looked a little pained and so did the enforcers. None of them had expected such an answer from the young ambassador.

"Then it is made up. I have the perfect punishment for them." Walker knew that the tree was still damp from the nearly constant rain. He used his grand elemental manipulation skill to control the water around and condense it in to a binding form. He imagined the ice wrapping the enforcers the same way as the ropes had bound them. "I want them to stay bound by my ice for the same amount of time my party was bound by their ropes."

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Chapter 337 - 337. The Queen Speaks

There was a noticeable twitch in the woman's eye who was resting on the hammock of vines. She managed to notice this due to her skill, this confirmed that the woman was not asleep but in some form of listening meditations.

The enforcers felt the ice take their bodies over and start to decrease their body temperature. They were shivering in mere moments since they were not prepared for the chill of ice. "Is this the only punishment you wish to dole out?" The elven elder was afraid that the human party would push forward more. They had always been wary of those from other kingdoms.

"No, that is all. We weren't badly hurt. I am sure Midnight might want to cause a little trouble and drag them around but she is a dragon. Dragons are better than that, right Midnight?"

Walker played to Midnight like a professional. She raised her head and puffed up her chest showing off her stature. She was going to make sure every elder saw how upstanding she was.

"It is a breath of fresh air to see the young of another kingdom being so fair." Another elder wearing gold stood up and took over the conversation. They had a few green lines on their cloak which radiated a mixture of earth and water elemental mana. Walker was keen to understand why this was but had the sneaking suspicion that the elder had a system that dealt with plants.

"Now that we have taken care of the unfortunate meeting we hope that you would be willing to share your reasoning for being here. As you already have gathered your party has strayed pretty far in to the forest. Not many are allowed in this city." The elder had become much more serious and his face showed it.

"As you know, the decaying purple slimes are causing huge harm to the forest. We also know you should have heard of the yellow slimes wreaking havoc in the dwarven mines. Our kingdom believes they are connected by a demon causing trouble. So here we are, researching." Walker held firm in his resolve and reasoning.

"We are aware of the two problems. The problem in the forest began small and has become a little larger. The problem for the dwarves started more recently and seems to be escalating exponentially. We should be able to combat the problem here easily." The elder looked calm and unaffected by what Walker had said. It was clear the elves did not want any assistance.

"Well, it is good to know that it is all covered. I am very interested in how you plan to deal with the massive slime heading for the city. We were able to collect some slime cores and slime bodies that split from it as it carved a path in the forest." This froze the elder's face in to a calm smile. This was obviously news to them.

Su gave a slight nudge to Walker prompting him to continue since they had some momentum. "My party happened to come across some goblins and grey haired spiders. This may sound off topic but follow me for a moment." The confusion on the elder's face was clear. They did not attempt to hide it since showing it would be their way to tell the party that they did not see the connection.

"We did not decide to hunt them like most of you would. Instead, we joined them in battle and took care of the purple slimes that were about to cause the forest goblins to extinction." The looks of confusion were changed to surprise and anger. Some even showed disgust.

"The elven people have long had a distaste for goblins, we know this. They were once minions of demons but are now scattered monsters. Since they are no longer minions we saw no reason to just let them all die, especially since one of them was a rare breed with a rare system. The goblin spider rider

greeted us like a respected friend and took us to their camps. After some events, we were able to gain an understanding. My younger brother Onyx was able to have a nice conversation, we even slept there."

Su saw the woman's eye twitch a few times and even a small smirk form. To anyone else she had made no movements at all and had just been resting there listening, but to Su, she saw it all. Su leaned forward to Walker, "Address the queen, she's listening." The whisper was only loud enough for Walker to hear with his enhanced hearing. No one else would be able to pick up on it.

Onyx was curling around Walker's shoulders wanting to join the conversation when ready. "Onyx please translate for me and the elven queen please, or should I say," Walker used his all around appraisal skill in the hope that he could gather the name of the woman in front of them.

'User is blocked by incredible mana'

'User is blocked by incredible mana'

'User is blocked by incredible mana'

Walker gave it one more shot.

'User has been partially blocked. The user has been allowed a portion of the appraisal.

Title: Queen of the elven spirit forest.'

"Title holder of the elven spirit forest? My party and I greet you officially. Now Onyx, you're up." The name queen of the elven forest was widely known, but the addition of spirit was the true name of the title never shared with any but the elders.

While the elders struggled over their own moral dilemmas in calling in enforcers to deal with the human party that had just called out their queen's title Walker had Onyx translate a direct conversation in the privacy of their minds. No elder interruptions and purely business between title holders.

"As you may have heard my party and I have titles as well. I have the true hero title and recently gained the friend of the goblins title. They would not lie to us. The massive slime they spotted is coming for the city and we would like to help. Just let us know how we can help. We have some personal ties to the future of the forest."

The words went from Walker to the queen with Onyx's help. Walker was able to see the vines of the hammock stop completely as Onyx spoke to her. The elders all became silent knowing that this could be one of the very rare moments the queen spoke. "Brother, she will speak out loud." This was exactly what Waker wanted to hear.

The vine hammock started to twist and turn slowly taking the shape of a solid vine throne. The queen sat within it still with her eyes closed. There was no movement yet, the only real change was that the elders all stood tall with their hands clasped behind their backs.

The queen of the elves' eyes shot open and looked upon the party. They were a fierce emerald green color that radiated multiple forms of natural mana. Walker was having a hard time with all of the different elemental manas overwhelming his sense.

"I have heard the information you have gathered. I respect the protection of two species on the brink of extinction in our homeland. The grey haired spider is not the same as the one you believe it to be. They have been evolving recently and have shown new characteristics. The children of the spiders you encountered will most likely be a breed we call, moss spiders. They are a unique species that use moss as a cover for hunting. The goblins are hated, yes. But they are necessary for the forest cycle to spin. Thank you for befriending them." This was an honor for them and the elders could not believe their ears.

The queen did not stop there and continued her speech. "My eyes can see much more now that I know what to look for. I have had my enforcers out looking for the root of the problem. This massive slime has finally been narrowed down. I can also see more humans on their way to your goblin friends. I will promise you three things. The goblins will survive and the elves in this forest will learn from the past. The humans on their way will be allowed to go to the goblins but no further, my enforcers will make sure of this. The massive purple slime that is currently consuming a fairy deer will have its core torn from its body and its creator slain."

The final promise from the queen held an air of pure rage. Her words made the vines shift again and Walker was finally able to see that the vines were connected to the queen. She was not just an elf but she was one with the forest completely. The amount of mana that overwhelmed Walker was coming directly from the forest itself. The entire hall was silent seeing and hearing these things. This was a declaration made by the queen of the elves, it would be followed.

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Chapter 338 - 338. History

It was clear that having a close connection with the forest was making her more agitated. The strange part was that it seemed that more than one voice was speaking with the queen of the elves. There was a soft harmony behind the tone she used. Walker began to become more and more curious as to what the title means and why she would be connected to the forest physically as well as spiritually. His thoughts were quickly pushed aside what the queen spoke again.

"The human party will join our highest ranked enforcers to pursue this massive slime. This will be a moment of bonding between our kingdoms in the pursuit of natural life in the forest." This was another moment that surprised the elders. They were not able to understand why the queen was pushing it this far. The elves had taken care of their own problems in the past with no outside help.

"Brother the queen wishes to tell you more." Onyx began to relay the message from the queen word for word.

"You may wonder what is going on here, I will gladly explain to the true hero, the memories shared with me give me hope and trust in you young one. The title I hold is usually only known of the relation to the elven forest, not to the spirits. The spirits of every elf have long remained dormant in the trees, the soil, and the very air of the forest. But when I gained the title of queen it changed to fit my unique system. The forest spirit system. I am now connected to the very forest and the spirits that have rested within. Every memory of my people is open to me, but at the cost that my body is forced to always be one with the forest. I need to deal with the massive flow of natural mana and spend most of my days in meditation."

The words that Onyx brought to him were a lot to take in. Having a unique title that no other queens of the elves had ever had was a lot for one person to take in. The scary part was that it connected her to every elves' memories, this massive boon could help her make the best judgments for their people at all times.

The drawback was heavy though, she was unable to move freely and go to protect her people herself. There was also the natural mana that would overwhelm her making it hard for her to act. Walker only felt the mana from her when she opened her eyes, but he knew that actually having a huge amount of mana would be much harder to process.

"Brother she has more to say." Onyx was still translating perfectly.

"You must not look burdened by my title, I gained the gift to watch my people grow for generations. As long as this forest stands I will live as well. I have seen two hundred years of elves grow as queen. I shall have a hundred more after we deal with this problem. I also have memories from our long ago ancestors, the true hero title that you speak of is very rare and only recorded a few times. I believe you truly have such a title and will show the proof of it and your drive to my people. After all, in my memories, a true hero is one that stands for all."

The queen was showing her aptitude for the memories she had access to and drawing on them to understand the title Walker and his party had, more specifically she was able to use this knowledge and mana to guide her people in the best possible way.

Onyx was not done speaking for the queen, he still had more for Walker to hear. "You must be interested in the goblin friends you have made too right? The elves have long had a hatred for them due to the demon lord centuries ago. The goblins were a species on the brink of proper sentience, but they were conquered by a young demon lord and made in to his minions. The title the demon lord gained was master of the goblins. In that title, the goblins were stripped of free will and only allowed their instincts. Their years of evolution were stripped from them and their lords were slain. I can remember this tragedy but those around now can not. They know only of the story book takes on evil goblins that tortured elven prisoners and fought against heroes."

Walker was stunned that a title existed. It was disgusting to him that a title could remove so much evolution from a species. This was the first time he felt hate for the world he lived in. It may have been an effect of the friend of the goblins title absorbed by the true hero title, but it was still there.

"Now that the particular demon lord has been long dead the goblin race scattered and has developed again. If they truly are able to flourish they may become another strong sentient race in our world. The spirits I can feel, weak as they may be from resting for hundreds of years, wish to see this come to be. I will gladly write it in to law if you and the adventurers guild can assist them. The elven people will not harm them."

This was too much for Walker to take in. There were so many possibilities if there was another sentient race added to the world. The elven queen seemed to speak on these things like they were just the same as flowing wind. Onyx was doing his best not to react and to properly pass on the grand words. He was also feeling the same amazement as Walker.

The queen suddenly spoke out loud again, this time the force of natural mana was less because her eyes had again closed, but the fluctuations were still felt. "Bring the group of promising elves. Especially the one who studied under our elven pride." This made the elders scramble. One ran from the hall to do exactly as she ordered. "I need my scribe to write new things in to law. I expect that you elders can take care of the rest while I confer with the ancestors on the growth that shall come to the forest."

The natural mana seemed to fade as if a cover was placed on it. One elder went to the queen's side with a stack of papers and the one in gold robes with green patters faced the party. "Please come with me, our queen has recognized you as guests. We rarely have guests that are not from other elven kingdoms so pardon us for any strange actions."

The attitude was wildly different from before. The elder was now acting incredibly polite, it seemed that more had been said to him than the party had noticed. While Walker was having his own private conversation it was very possible that other orders were being passed to the elders through some form of that the queen could use.

Su was still right beside Walker as the elder guided them to a side hall. She leaned in to him again while her eyes drifted from the queen to the hall in front of them. "Did you see the small dots of decay on those vines she controlled? I think this is a much bigger problem than they let on."

Walker had not noticed any decay on the vines, but after hearing that she was connected to the forest entirely it made sense that she would also be affected by the decay. If she was not active in stopping the massive slime she would also end up rotting away with the forest. In certain terms, she was the reflection of the health of the forest.

"Please rest here while we wait for the elves that stand above the others of our race to come. The three you are about to meet are apprentices of the three great elven title holders. One has managed to gain a title their master had while the other two are thought to be closer than any other elf in the last two hundred years."

The entire party became focused on the elder as they heard that another title holder would be coming to join them. They had met the royalty that held titles but those titles were passed down. Walker was still trying to understand the unique title that the elven queen had. It may be different because of her unique system but these elves were going to have titles given by the world just the title of hero the party had gained. It was even more interesting to hear that they had trained under the previous title holders. This was something that the party did not think to be possible, that someone could be trained to gain a title.

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Chapter 339 - 339. Smell Of Poison

"So what do you think they will be like? The queen said one already had a title like us right?" Remey was a little nervous but much more excited to meet another title holder. The party had only met royalty so far. The elf queen was different since she had a unique title compared to other elf queens, but it was still one acquired through their becoming royalty.

"I would bet one of them should be after the speedster title. That is the most popular of the story books children read about elves." Su was recalling the story of the elf who had lost their family to a fire because they were too slow to warn the others for help. After the elf's loss, they tried to be faster and faster so that they would never be too late again. In their pursuit of this, they became the fastest creature on the planet and was given the speedster title.

"Oh yeah, that should be nice. They can distract the small slimes while we deal with the massive one." Remey could only imagine a speedy elf jumping around poking slimes then disappearing in a gust of wind.

"I hope one is training for an archery title. I would like to try and learn a few things." Gil knew that he would be limited in the skills he could use since the elves still had yet to figure out his system. He wanted to keep it under wraps so he would not put the party at risk.

Walker heard the hope and worry in Gil's voice and wanted to try and cheer him up. But he knew that this would go on until they either were completely trusted by the elves or they bound themselves to certain rules about Gil's arcane marksman system.

"Maybe one of them will be able to hide in the forest like an assassin. It would make sense that an elf who lived and trained in the forest would be able to somehow hide themselves to sneak attack." Walker was operating off of the fact that the enforcers had cloaks that helped them camouflage in to the forest while they patrolled. There was surely an elf that specialized in this.

The door opened while the party was chatting about their theories. Midnight looked at the female elf that entered and stepped back a little ways. She could smell poisonous plants and knew that it was best to keep her distance. "Sister says that the woman has something poisonous on her." Onyx let the others know what Midnight had smelled.

"Hello, It appears I am the first here. My name is Alma and I will be traveling with you to take care of the queen's request." Walker couldn't help but wonder why someone so polite would have poisonous things on her, especially ones that made Midnight back away. "I have heard that you all spoke with the queen on a few matters, but I am not sure how she came to her conclusions. May I ask you to clarify for me?"

Her eyes were locked on Walker, she had not seen the party speak because the hall had been restricted to the elders and the queen, but she had been watching as the party entered. "That would depend on why you want to know. The queen and I had a rather private conversation to reach our agreement." This surprised Alma since she had already read the spoken words of the meeting.

She had rushed to meet the scribe as soon as the meeting ended and read the entire encounter before it even reached the documents room. "I shall be the next queen trained by the current queen. I have a right to know any and all information pertaining to the elven people I shall protect." Her arrogance was not easily hidden in her words. She was standing tall announcing her position without shame.

"So we are going to be joined by future elven royalty? That's kind of cool." Gil smiled and nudged Walker.

"I would agree, a future queen...should I take it you are training under the queen then? That must be a lot of hard work. She has a lot of natural mana at her disposal." Walker did not want to say anything insulting, but with what he had learned from the queen unless the first completely died she would live forever. This meant that the queen could stay queen forever. This elf girl could never ascend to the throne if the current queen did not want it which it to be so.

"Of course, I was chosen for my system and began training at the young age of fifty." She sounded even more proud to throw around the high age she had begun. For humans, fifty was half their life, but for an elf, it was nothing but a moment.

"Well If you would like to enlighten us on your system and abilities we can start to strategize. We will be working together of course." Walker saw that Su and Gil were waiting to jump in to the different strategies they could use together with their new addition. Gil wanted to figure out what skills he should or should not use and Su wanted to decide on how she would position herself to protect all of them.

Alma looked like she was filled with even more pride seeing the humans before her being so eager to learn about her and the system she boasted. She did not hold back in the least, I am the user of the

Forest whisperer system. I can make any plant I whisper to bend to my will. The vines that the queen controls will even listen to me if I am polite." She said this like it was a world breaking achievement.

"That would explain the smell then. I take it you use poisonous plants with you to slowly defeat your opponents?" Su saw the connection immediately. There was no other way to connect the dots.

"I smell?.." Alma looked like she had been slapped, this human immediately insulted her.

"Don't be surprised that Midnight sniffed out the poisonous plants you have with you. A dragon has an incredible sense of smell. Actually I can smell it too, not as well though." Walker sniffed a little picking up a toxic bitter smell wafting from Alma.

"I had hopes of surprising you with my new blue ivy. "Come out my friend." a blue green vine slithered from under her robes wrapping around her arms. "I have grown and crossbred this ivy for the last five years and created my blue ivy. It only poisons people when I tell it to." She cuddled a leaf like it was her pet.

Seeing the poisonous plant treated this way put the entire party on edge. They all made a mental note not to accidentally bump in to her when they were out in the forest. This future queen could be a terrifying enemy to have, they would be defeated with just a touch and not even know it.

The door swung open again, this time a taller elf man walked in dragging another shorter elf girl. "Sorry for being late, this girl just can't help but run away every time someone calls on her. It's like some foolish game." The man was still shaking his head as the shorter girl tried to pry herself from his grip.

"I swear Wade when I get free I am going to run all the way to the ocean. Then when you walk all the way to get me I will run back." Her threat just made the elf holding her shake his head more.

"As she said, my name is Wade. I am glad to see Alma has made it here ahead of us. Have you told them of our systems yet?" The elf by the name of Wade was ready to jump in to the main topic and get in the way after the massive slime. His can do attitude blew away the slightly creepy feeling from Alma and her blue ivy.

"I was just showing off my blue ivy. It looks really cute right Wade? What do you think Calen?" Alma let the ivy slither towards the shorter elf girl.

"No way are you touching me with any plants! The last time you made me paralyzed for a week!." Wade released his grip and the girl named Calen.

In the moment Calen was free she started to flit about the room with amazing speed. She was not quite a blur but keeping up with her was a tiring endeavor. "Now that stupid blue ivy can't touch me." Alma's reaction to Calen's words were horror inducing to say the least. The blue ivy began to grow from under her robes. Small yellow flowers bloomed and dropped seeds as they wilted.

"Who is worried you will run? You are still in the forest, are you not?"

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Chapter 340 - 340. Dead Eye

While the blue ivy burst in to life and stretched itself out to try and catch Calen who was busy running about the room to avoid it Wade came up to Walker and Gil. "You must be the leader I have heard about. You made a big splash when you bound the enforcers with ice. I have never seen them all so angry. They are still running around telling people you were cutting the forest. It's hysterical." Wade patted Walker on the shoulder enjoying the annoyed looks on the party's faces.

"Well, I would prefer that they didn't do that, especially since they bound us first." The bitterness in Walker's voice was enough to remove the sweetness from sugar.

I am sure that is the case. So you're the archer in the group, right? What kind of bow is that? It doesn't look elven or human. Did you get it from those little monster dwarves?" The slight tone of Wade's voice gave away the general disagreements the elves always had for the dwarves, Their temperaments had rarely aligned since the two cultures preferred to stay to themselves.

The stubborn dwarves and the stubborn elves had reached many stalemates over materials. The elves making al equipment that often used natural mana. And the dwarves making weapons often using the mana produced by a user. The similar but different ideals were enough to cause the gears to grind.

"Ancient ruins. It is pretty useful. She'll be my partner for the rest of my life." Walker nearly smacked himself hearing that Gil referred to his bow as a she and that he would spend his life with it.

"Gil, you need a girl friend." Remey paid enough attention to what the boys were saying to throw an insult at Gil, but returned to watching Calen run about the room. It was more entertaining to her.

"Ouch, your party is rough." Wade looked at Remey wondering how a human girl could be so mean to her party members.

"Eh, she grows on you. Sorta." Gil just glanced at her and showed off his bow more. He quickly fell in to a deep conversation about the strong tension and how he preferred to use silent shot over quick shot since he had good aim and a decent ability to sneak in the forest.

"If you haven't caught on I am an archer as well. More specifically a sniper." Wade opened his hand and a green bow appeared out of nowhere. "This is my partner, I was lucky enough to have it passed down from my master. It's a living spirit oak bow. It has been with the elven people for the entirety of our existence." The bow seemed to pulse with natural mana while being shown off in its glory.

"I can use its unique ability to create living arrows. They are basically just wood splinters, but when they land they expand to three times their size. Just like the steel cedar trees tough branches. Pair them with Alma's skills and I have a very serious attack." Wade was proud of his bow and hard practiced strategy.

"I have to ask, what title are you trying to get?" Walker joined the conversation a little afraid that Gil would start talking about arrows and let slip his wither spike arrows.

"I already had the dead eye title. I earned it from my master who trained me in archery since the day I was born. I want to say after hitting a target for the millionth time in a row dead center I was given the title. I can't remember though. My system is the arcane sniper. My focuses on distance and physical attack boost. Sadly I won't be letting elemental arrows fly. Sorry to disappoint." Wade looked a little sad but the things he could do were already amazing.

"No way you are a better shot than I am. I can hit whatever you can hit." Gil sensed a challenging rival and couldn't stop himself from picking a little competition.

"You talk big for a human. You know that archery is born to us right? Most of our race unlock or archery systems. Don't get too far ahead of yourself here." Wade tapped his bow with the opposite hand and a spike of mossy wood pulled from the bow and spun in his hands.

"I have some tricks too you know." Gil pulled back his bow slightly and a small wind elemental arrow started to form. "My bow can take my natural wind affinity and make an arrow out of it, jealous?"

"Gil I swear if you let an arrow fly in here I will deflect it back at you," Su said this without even looking at them. She had seen the curtains move slightly and knew that Gil was fooling around with his bow indoors.

Gil released the arrow back in to the nothing it came from before he got in trouble. Su may not have been scary, but he did respect her ability to do just what she said she would do.

"Calen over there thinks she will be able to steal the speedster title from the old man. But he had been retired for seventy years now and still refuses to give it up. She even tries to out speed him every day. You could say she forced him to be her master."

Calen heard this and was right next to them a second later. "Who said I forced who to be my master? I would never take someone so slow to be my master. There would be nothing for me to learn, I would just get slower." She just humphed as she went back to her game of blue ivy dodging.

"Calen will deal with those I snipe from long range after Alma has the arrows grow and bind them. It is a very good partnership, how does your party operate?" Wade was done giving up more information and was now interested to see how well the two would be able to cooperate.

"It is definitely impressive that you have a title. Nice to meet you, Wade, holder of the dead eye title. I am Walker, holder of the true hero title." Walker held out his hand and Wade shook it. He was sure that this was the start of a nice partnership since Wade acted fairly straight forward.

"Su is our main defender. She has dual wielded shields for bashing, deflecting, and blocking. She has a special skill as part of her draconic guardian system which allows her to see tiny details in an opponent's movements. Odds are she will block for you before you even know an attack is coming. Su gave a nod to them hearing her name brought up.

Remey is an alchemical brawler. She has a unique system that no other has. She can make potions and act as a front line fighter. Basically, she can heal you but also break you. Just be nice and she won't punch you too many times.

Midnight is a dragon, she was born with a skeletal dragon bloodline as you can see from her wings. She is tough defensively and can sneak around taking out an opponent from their blind spot." Walker left out Midnight's new class title and species for fear that the information might spread too much while here in the elven kingdom.

"Gil is a ranger. He is more at home in the forest than any other human you will meet. He can travel through it pretty well and excels in tracking. He also is a very good shot, so you can feel free to compete." Gil gave Wade a wink since he wanted to make sure the elf knew he would be gunning for the title of dead eye.

"Around my neck here is Onyx, Alma was just about to learn about his skills as an abyssal serpent." Walker left Onyx to surprise them.

"Welcome to our party. I hope to spend a lot of time chatting." Alma heard Onyx's voice in her head and realized that this was how the queen and Walker had spoken.

"That's the best means of communication. You are never at risk to have things overheard with you around. How lucky!" She was so amazed by the skill Onyx had that he tightened himself on Walker's shoulders out of embarrassment. Calen was able to get close and tag Alma while she was distracted.

"Victory! Stupid vines will never get me." Before Alma could send out more vines, Calen was already on the opposite side of the room. Walker had been watching the two play their game out of the corner of his eye. He had made sure to familiarize himself with Calen's speed, if he lost track of her in a fight he could hit her with a spell or his weapons.

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