

Master 341

Chapter 341 - 341. Detour

"What about you? What system and role do you play?" Wade had seen how the party could fit together well. Onyx help communication, they had a guardian, front line fighter, scout and ranged damage, and finally an assassin type. The only one left was Walker who he knew could use some water to make ice.

"Walker can do anything, not mastery skills, but everything." Gil summed it up in such a simple way trying to brush off his jealousy.

"Anything?" Wade and the other two elves were all stopped in confusion when they heard Gil say this.

"I have a jack of all trades system. Currently, I have been focused on elemental . I also know some sword skills, hammer skills, cooking skills support skills, healing skills..." Walker would have continued but the jaws of the elves would have hit the floor. The rumor spreading at the moment was that the leader of the human party was just a water mage and nothing more.

"I thought it was the start of a children's story book that was sent to us..." Alma was nearly at a whisper when she spoke.

"And enhanced senses so I can easily say, no, I am not just a story book sent to you." Alma turned red with embarrassment and needed to stop herself from sending her vines to terrorize Walker next.

"Honestly I thought your kingdom would have more information on our systems by now. We have made a lot of waves by getting the hero titles." Walker was plenty confused about how they were so in the dark.

"The kingdom may know of aspects of your systems, but they tend not to pry in to the exact details. Most kingdoms would see that as a threat, including ours." Wade made a good point. It was better to pass on rumors and share small details than full out investigation and cause allies annoyance.

Midnight was puffing up her chest due to the attention Walker was getting. She was proud to show off her family and all that they could do. "Sister says that you should use some as a way to show off your skill."

"I don't need to show off my . They can see enough of it when we go hunting for that massive slime. It is more important than fooling around." Walker was a little annoyed that Midnight wanted to waste time on that but more so embarrassed that she had said that he should show off immediately after meeting someone new.

"I would like to see it. Literally anything." Calen was in front of Walker with an eager expression. She enjoyed watching the mages practice and seeing was always amazing to her. She lacked the most elves had with their systems in change for being able to learn speed skills. She also learned some close combat skills which made her stand out in comparison to other elves.

"I will get Walker to show you his if you give me some of those blue ivy seeds." Remey was analyzing the blue ivy the entire time and couldn't control herself. She wanted to know what it could do in a potion or when made in to poison. It was crossbred by an elf and was dangerous enough to be used for battle.

"That's all you want? Sure, you can have a hundred if you want. I can make as many as I need as long as I feed it enough mana. But don't think you can grow it so easily. You don't have the skills to feed it your mana, so you will need mana crystals and about twenty years." Alma smiled knowing that it would be years before they figured such things out properly.

"I can make Walker learn some skills. It's fine." Remey accepted some of the seeds from Alm and didn't even consult with him for a moment.

"What am I, just a circus act for you to sell off?" Walker tried to snatch some of the seeds from Remey so he could store them away and use his all around appraisal skill to study them but she was too quick to steal from.

"I already made the deal so I guess you need to show off now." Remey was goaded on more by Midnight who was almost purring at the victory.

"Fine then how about this." Walker used the lure orb and avoided looking at the blue orb that was formed. He carefully looked at everyone's faces to find that they were completely absorbed in the beautiful blue color. "Wanted to see huh?" He laughed in his own trick but realized he had fallen in to the trap of wasting time.

Walker released the skill and watched as the attention was again on him. "Sorry, we should get going and figure out where the massive slime has moved on to." He felt a little bad but also shot an extra glare at Remey who had caused him to fall in to the distraction.

Su looked like she wanted to speak up, but when she noticed Walker had already seen his error she did not speak. "Wade, we will rely on you to guide us out in to the forest since you should know it better. But you and Gil should stay behind Su. Remey is fine next or in front of Su and Midnight will do her own thing. Calen, you are a little fast, please stay near in case we need to support you. Alma, with your system I think it will be best if you focus on the decay in the forest. You are the only one that can mitigate the damage."

Alma appeared to already know this. She more than anyone knew of the adverse health effects the decay had on the queen. She would do her best to weed out the infected parts of the forest so that it could begin to heal.

"I think it will be better if you stay close to Calen. The last time you ran off alone you were lost for three days. Luckily you ran around enough to find the enforcers, but what if you had become exhausted and been found by goblins? You would be nothing but a head on a pike." Wade shook his head while Calen looked red faced and embarrassed to have her faults brought out to them.

"The goblins wouldn't do that to anyone. But just in case you can't shake the stereotypes you should know that the goblins won't bother us. We are their friends." Walker said this making all of the elves look more confused, but he decided to drop the subject for now. The odds of running in to other straggling goblins were low since the last of them were with Barry and protected.

"Well, in any case, we should get moving. The longer we wait the more that slime grows and eats. If it makes it here I do not expect a good result." Wade decided to push on and guide the party out of the room and back out in to the branches of the giant tree. "Keep up, we are going to take a little detour." Wade started jogging on the branches and hopping from one to the other.

Walker and the rest of the party watched as Alma and Calen followed easily. They knew that there was a used to keep their grip on the branches but that did not stop them from fearing the fall down to the ground. However, they were heroes and they needed courage.

They followed along being as careful as possible. Midnight looked to be enjoying the experience since she was able to use it to practice using her wings to glide a little. She had been getting much stronger lately and with this as practice, she could get used to being higher up in the sky.

Walker hesitated as he was about to hop to another branch. He could see that the three elves were running and jumping freely from branch to branch and sliding down vines. He was jealous of them for having the ability to do so easily. "Walker, come on. We are going to fall behind." Gil gave a shout since he saw that Walker had gotten stuck thinking yet again.

Walker got back on the move and tried to focus himself on his movements. He needed better awareness of where he was stepping. Unlike the dance of the wild rabbit skill, this was a more active use of movement. The dance of the wild rabbit used instincts to dodge and avoid a predator. This used the body to consciously move and find the next place to jump.

Wade was leading them higher in the tree towards a branch devoid of foliage. The party could only wonder why they were on their way there instead of downwards to the forest floor to find the trail of decay and hunt the massive slime.

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Chapter 342 - 342. Running Through The Trees

Walker was trying to get ahead to ask Wade but this but his balance and speed were lacking. This was too unfamiliar to him. Gil was fairing better since he was used to walking through the uneven terrains of the forest while hunting.

Su was the slowest but she had a much better grip on the situation because of her sight. She was able to see the best places to jump to that would hold her weight and give her the most efficient footing.

Remey was more or less just running around having a blast. She was enjoying the rush from jumping above the larger gaps and not stopping at all. It was a rare opportunity for her to run free so high above the world. Of all the people to be enjoying it so much Walker was surprised that it was Remey. He would have bet that she was unhappy to be off the solid ground where she could burst in to punches or kicks.

The three elves reached the branch without the foliage and the party slowly made it t them. "So any reason we just rushed up here?" Gil was the first to ask what the entire party was thinking.

Wade gazed at the view for a few moments before responding. "We three were kind of forced together when we started to learn the ways of the titles. I might be the oldest of us but our people always tiptoe around us, we share the same feeling of being kept on display. So when we finally got sick of things and came up here we made a deal to be a party ourselves and use their own influences against them. Not much they can do to manipulate three possible title holders..or well, one title holder and two potential."

Wade laughed a little thinking about the control they had gained just by meeting in this spot. "The crazy part is, lightning struck this branch the day after we made the deal. Now we come up here every time we leave. It was lucky enough to be struck by lightning you know."

Walker thought it strange, but if that was what connected them as a party then so be it. His party may have come together through the adventurers guild but there were many ways to meet your party. Some have a party with their family. Other meet traveling. Some retire with friends and create an adventuring party. Things just happened.

"Well whatever the reason to come up here, it's worth the view." Remey looked out at the vast sea of green in front of them. The forest could be said to go on forever from up here.

"It is an amazing view. We could never see something like this from our kingdom" Su was right there with Remey wishing they could bring this view home with them.

"Ready to do what we usually do?" Wade looked at the other two elves.

"Remember Calen, no using your skills for speed. Just using what we have as elves." Alma gave her friend a knowing look.

Midnight turned her head to the side trying to figure out what the three elves were talking about. She was asking Onyx but he didn't know either. "Since you three like to keep us in the dark, I might as well ask. What do you usually do when you are up here?" Walker had the feeling he already knew but he had hope that he would be wrong.

"We run down full speed of course. It's our send off to the city, like a goodbye to the stress and hello to the freedom." Wade just smiled and immediately crouched down. "Go!" The three elves rushed

downwards hopping from branches and sliding down "Well, I really had hoped we weren't doing this." Gil sounded like he had a chore thrust upon him, but jumped in to action anyways.

"Yes! This is going to be fun, come on Su let's go!" Remey dragged Su along behind her trying to rush down the tree as fast as possible.

Walker turned to look at Midnight but realized that she was already on the move. She had jumped in to action well ahead of the others leaving Walker alone on the lighting stricken branch.

Walker was hesitant to rush down from such dangerous heights but he knew that there was no other way if he wanted to stay with the group. Walker gave in and started running on the largest branch downwards. His steps got bigger and bigger as he realized that he was so far behind. Staying on the safer path was leaving him farther behind.

Biting his lip he picked up his pace and made a large jump. His feet fell through the air with nothing below him. Walker's heart started to pump blood through his veins at double the speed. When his feet touched the next giant branch his body seemed to burn, before he could understand the feeling he was already gaining momentum for the next jump. The fear of falling was all but erased.

'The unique skill tree dashing from the elven bloodline has been taken from the pure elf system. Due to the user action, the skill tree dashing has been automatically learned.

Tree dashing- passive

The elven people have the natural skill to jump through the vines and branches of the forest. Dashing through the trees and jumping from branch to branch is the same as walking through the forest to them. Pathways through the trees are clear as the sky to an elf.'

Walker was able to feel the difference in his ability to move. The jumps were second nature to him. The rounded branches no longer looked tough to stand on but instead were perfect foot holds. A great smile spread out on his face while he picked up the speed even more.

Walker's daring jumps and slides down branches and vines made him surpass Remey and Su in just seconds. Gil was barely able to recognize that the blur going past him was Walker. Midnight gave a small

whine as Walker passed her since she was unhappy to be outdone in such a simple looking way. Onyx was just enjoying the ride while coiled around Walker's shoulders. He felt he had won out in this deal, never had he imagined Walker would have a burst of speed like this and fly through the trees like a real elf.

"You're right! This is a lot of fun!" Walker caught up to the three elves and gave them the surprise of their lives. "Try to keep up!" Walker passed the three leaving them dumbfounded. The fact that he didn't know where he was going didn't even occur to him. This intense feeling was not fading even as he neared the base of the tree. He could keep running like this all day of the tree was endless.

Upon reaching the bottom he felt as if all the fire from within his body was suddenly quenched by icy water. He looked up at the branch he had come from while trying to catch his breath. The sheer height of where he had come from was too much to believe, even though he had just run from the very spot.

"What in the spirit of the forest was that?" Wade landed down next to Walker with Alma and Calen in tow.

Walker smiled devilishly, "just a skill I learned. Tree dashing or something like that. Just the usual." His nonchalant attitude added more to the blow the three elves were feeling.

Unlike his party, the three elves were not desensitized to the shock that came from hearing about the skills Walker would learn. They had been hit with so many bombs like this that they were nearly immune to the effect.

"Oh, just the tree dashing skill." Alma waved it off before looking at Walker with hard eyes, "You mean the tree dashing skills that is unique to elves!?" Her shout made Calen cover his ears and Wade shake his head. He was cursing her out in his mind for acting so much like a brute than in elegance as a future queen should.

"With reactions like that, I don't think you will be the queen for another seventy years or so." Wade's words bit in to Alma hard but she still refused to remove her eyes from Walker.

"Wait so are you a half elf half human?" Calen could only understand this if Walker was somehow a cross between the two species.

"Nope, as far as I know, I am all human. If it helios I also have a skill used by the demi-human rabbit tribe; dance of the wild rabbit." Walker felt that this was not enough for them to understand and realized he would need to tell them more details.

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Chapter 343 - 343. Going After The Slimes

"As I said before, I have the jack of all trades system. I can learn any skill. I am not limited to racial skills like everyone else. Therefore, I know tree dashing now as a passive skill." Walker sounded so casual saying all of this the elves thought that it might be a daily occurrence.

"You know that the elven race likes to keep their skills to themselves. I recommend you avoid learning any others." Wade sounded serious while Calen and Alma actually appeared to be excited to know that someone other than an elf could use a skill they had. For them, it was a wild new idea.

"I am aware that it is taboo for certain skills from certain systems to be used outside of your race. There is a lot of pride in them. But I can't control the system and I have a title that allows me a little more freedom when it comes to these things." Walker knew that with the true hero title he had more wiggle room when he learned unique skills. If someone was angered by it then it was on them, if they acted against him it could be seen as going against the heroes. This idea could start wars if done improperly.

Wade thought for a moment that there was a little more meaning in Walker's words, however, he couldn't narrow it down. He just had a feeling. After some time he nodded and accepted that he would be seeing Walker running through the trees like an elf. It was easier for him to pretend Walker was a half elf and report that to anyone asking too many questions.

"Really? You got a new skill and you just left us in the dust?" Gil came up to Walker huffing to catch his breath. He was not too out of breath to give Walker a soft punch to the shoulder.

"Keep greeting people like that and I'll change your name to Remey." Gil's response was yet another hit to the shoulder. When Su and Remey made it down with Midnight They found the boys were wrestling like fools.

"We go all the way to an elven city and what do you two do? You wrestle right by the exit instead of focusing on the reason we are here." Su stared at Remey like she was seeing a ghost. It was like the roles

had been revered. Remey was acting like a mom, Gil was fooling around punching people. And Su was the one thinking too hard.

"Wade, how well do you do with scouting? I want you to pair up with Gil and get out bearings as we leave." Walker had not failed to notice that there were still no other elves around other than enforcers. It was clear that the elves had been ordered inside somewhere to avoid the eyes of the party. It was a very cautious action to protect their unique systems in case of war.

"No problem. We will move out first then." Wade sured up his grip on his bow and smirked at Gil who was doing the same. "We might even see a good target to test your archer's eyes.

"My eyes? You're the one who claims to have a title, I'm not sure about anyone else, but I don't think you do." Gil was feeding the small rivalry that was starting.

"Leader, are you sure we should send them off together?" Su was worried they would compete and get in to trouble.

"You don't need to worry about Wade. He is pretty much an adult now. He was almost going to join as an enforcer but instead, he pursued sharpshooting and ended up with a title. He still has the strong sense of duty though." Alma looked at Wade like Lisa would look at him.

"You guys are pretty close huh?" Alma didn't even flinch at the question. She had always been close with Wade since she was little. Now that they were in the same party it was an amazing coincidence.

"I plan to make him my right hand when I become queen. I will need someone like him to make decisions with me. I won't have the same benefits as speaking to the spirits of the other elves so easily as the queen does now." her face became slightly darker.

Calen umped Alma's side slightly, "We will fix this problem, don't worry." She managed to get Alma to smile after poking her a few times but was then threatened with the blue ivy poison again.

"I have been wondering, why are we going to deal with the massive slimes than the elven army? Of the enforcers around?" Su was confused as to why it was so easily accepted that they were to defeat the

massive slime. It was clear that the elves were put off by having humans around. But even with the hero titles, there should have been more pushback.

"I know the answer to that!" Calen was quick on her feet and was standing behind Walker and Su before they had even noticed. "We have a lot of elves off at the borders. So we can't spare the manpower to send out our guards." She looked proud to know the answer, but Alma looked horrified.

"I knew you were slower, but you just told someone from another country that we don't have enough troops in our city to defend it" She looked ready to let the blue ivy loose on them at the slightest provocation.

"You and I both know that the hero title is just that, the hero title. Not hero of the humans, or hero of the elves. You can believe that we would help even if your kingdom was at war with yours." Walker was quick to calm Alma down. She was already catching on that Alma was not the most elegant person and could take things the wrong way too easily.

"Pssh, I wanted to see the two of you fight while we walked. I need to see what that blue ivy can do." Remey grumbled while walking with Midnight. She wanted more information on what she would need to avoid if fighting next to them. Even more so what the poison could do to an enemy. There could be limits to the antidote potion she had made and if it didn't work on the poison it was much more dangerous.

Midnight was looking expectantly at Walker and Alma as well. She was also waiting for a good fight since they were just stuck slowly walking out of the elven city while Gil and Wade had already left to narrow down the start of their path.

"Sorry, you all needed to wait. Gil is at the entrance we will be using. I met with an enforcer and found that they have reports of small purple slimes only a few hours walk away. The massive slime still has not been sighted." Wade had run up and pointed toward the edge of the road they were on.

"As much as I want to say I am sad to be leaving, we aren't seeing the real elf city. So this is the same as the ruins as far as I'm concerned." Walker's words were part truth and part hidden message. He really was disappointed that he was not able to see the real beauty of the city with all its people out and about. But the mention of the ruins was to make it seem like the elves were weakening in the human perspective.

Just saying these things would be enough to possibly change the way the elves worked. If he was lucky the little seed of idea might let the party walk through the proud elf city and meet its ever day people.

"I want to argue with you but..." Wade looked at the empty streets and headed towards Gil. He was not in the mood to talk about the fact that the elves hid away everything for fear that their knowledge would spread.

Alma had a pained look on her face again which prompted Calen to bug her more. By the time they walked through the illusion that hid the city the three elves were all back in to a serious mood and ready to head off in to the forest.

"The reports said that small slimes had just started to form in this direction. The decay was minimal but got much worse as the enforcers followed it. Unfortunately, they needed to turn back since they were ambushed by one of the slimes and infected." This was bad news, if there were so many small slimes that they were able to harm the patrolling enforcers, it might be a challenge for them to get through. "I think just destroying the cores from a distance will be our best means to stay safe."

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Chapter 344 - 344. Purple Cap Mushrooms

"If it is a solitary slime and we can manage it I want to try and gather more of the slime cores for research. That is one of our main goals for coming here." Walker was still trying to stick to the quest for the kingdom. Especially since they had not received another quest to actually defeat the massive slime with the elves. It was something he didn't understand from the system.

"I am not opposed to that. As long as we are in a safe position. The slimes are too slow to usually get someone unless they are surprised or surrounded. Well, and if they are just fooling around." Wade said this more of a precaution, the forest was no stranger to the mud slimes that ate rotting vegetation.

They were also common in the nearby swamps. Many young elves thought them good training partners, unfortunately, there were too many that would relax and try out new moves on the mud slimes. The result could be injuries or the slime swallowing the foolish elf whole. Just because they usually ate the rotting vegetation of the forest or swamp floor, did not mean that they would not attack something living.

"Calen, if we run in to a giant slime can you distract it with your speed? They can't really see you, but they will feel your mana around so it will still try and attack you. Especially if you are running around it and appearing in different positions. It might think it is surrounded by food."

"Annoy the giant slimes if we find one, got it." She held a thumbs up and smiled. She loved annoying people with her speed, it was like this job was made for her.

"Didn't Wade say there are only small slimes reported ahead? Do you think the report was wrong?" Remey was curious why Walker seemed to doubt the elves scouting.

"Not that they are wrong, that the small slimes might have merged together." Alma frowned hearing Walker's reasoning. If the slimes were forming together they could have another massive slime before they knew it. Her thoughts on the matter were becoming much more negative, especially since this problem could be dealt with if they had more enforcers present.

"I will be happy to have them as research materials for your kingdom as long as more information is shared with our kingdom," Alma spoke up, she wanted to make sure that there were bonds being formed. The last few months she had felt that the elves were letting themselves become weak by folding in on themselves when other kingdoms were involved.

"I would be more than happy to negotiate that when I return to our kingdom." Walker saw that this could be an available step in the future. Start now with an agreement to share information and in time it might become something more. He could only hope that it would lead to a more trusting relationship.

With their planned formation decided the group headed deeper in to the forest. They were seeing the untouched greenery that the first should be. When the party was walking and following the path of decay they had missed out on the beauty of the forest. There were vines that hung from treetops and small plants pushing toward the light of the sun. countless small flowers or insects were moving around exploring their own little world.

"That's going to be a problem." Wade was the first to stop and look farther away in to the forest.

Gil and Su were able to lock on to the thing he was looking at. "That's a large spot of decay."

"And a lot of mushrooms...all with purple caps." The two of them knew from talking with Walker that these were definitely going to be monstrous mushrooms.

"Usually I would say I can run and deal with them then run back. But by the time the first one bursts I wouldn't even be stabbing the fifth." Calen looked disappointed that she couldn't just run up and deal with the problem before anyone was able to get in range.

"How many can you count?" Walker was already putting a plan in to action. His frost whip skill was already being created.

I can see seven from here, but who knows what is behind some of the trees." Wade had an arrow in his hand ready to fire at the signal.

"You and Gil can snipe them. I will use this to deal with the spores." Walker flexed the frost whip in his hand while another started to form in his opposite hand.

"How is the ice going to stop the spores? They will be in the air, the ice will be too big to catch them." Alma could not believe that ice was somehow going to just solve a problem the elves always had with this monster.

"I will just turn the ice in to a fine mist of water. That should make the spores sink back to the ground so you don't breathe them in. Actually, can you influence mushrooms and fungus with your system? Or just plants?" This question had come to his mind while he was speaking. If Alma could manipulate mushrooms then what about the monstrous mushroom species.

"If they were normal mushrooms I do have a skill that makes them grow in different shapes. But I haven't unlocked many of the skills like that, I am too low level, the queen said that one day I would be able to whisper to any of the creatures in the forest that weren't monsters too." She looked a little sad saying this because she knew that she was not as helpful in the current situation.

"I won't send you vines over there wither. They have purple caps, so they will just kill the ivy vines." Walker was interested in the possibilities of Alma's system but realized that it was useless to harp on what she could do if she was more experienced. "Just try and get the area around them pruned. You're still the best person for that role."

Hearing that she was the best for the tole made Alma happier. She did not want to deal with the purple cap monstrous mushrooms in the first place. "Remey, Su, Midnight. Keep an eye for the spores escaping us. If they do I will use some wind to push them away.

Walker didn't want to use wind , but if he had to he would try and make a little wind tornado to capture the spores and attempt to deal with them. If things really looked to be going poorly he could burn them, but that was not his desired option. The forest may be wet from the rains, but if a single spark caught then it could be a huge problem.

"Let's go." Walker gave Gil and Wade the approval to start their arrows firing while he moved forward toward the purple cap mushrooms.

When the first arrow hit the nearest mushroom Walker saw that the other mushrooms started to tremble. They had been still at first but that was their desired hunting strategy. They would stay still like real mushrooms then jump out and latch on to anything that let down its guard around them.

The arrow that hit the mushroom went clean through it and the mushroom looked like it had started to deflate. The defense of the monstrous mushrooms was notoriously low and even a baby could defeat one. If this was all they and then it would be much safer. Unfortunately, Walker could already see the body starting to release little purple fog.

He started to swing the whips out and use his grand elemental manipulation to make more water gather. The water that was pooled together flowed down the whip and made it much longer. It wrapped around the hit mushroom and started to freeze it. The other whip was still in motion towards the other purple cap mushrooms that had started to rise from the ground and move towards the defeated mushroom.

There were small beady eyes that had blended in with the stalk of the mushrooms until they had sprung to life. Walker was sure that if he looked close enough he would find a mouth but decided that this idea was not a good one at all.

The second arrow tore through another mushroom and Walker was already in action to start freezing it too. The water he had moved to the first mushroom to freeze it was slowly melting and soaking the purple cap mushroom body. Steam started to flow around it and any of the purple spores drifting from the purple cap started to be saturated and fall to the ground. Walker broke off the first frost whip and created another while he froze the second mushroom.

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Chapter 345 - 345. Hidden Enemy

The arrows pierced and tore through the purple cap mushrooms much faster than Walker was able to freeze them. Luckily there was water still in puddles around the ground due to the shade of the forest keeping the partly cloudy sunlight from drying them up. While he let another newly created frost whip fly out to land on two of the purple cap mushrooms bodies, Walker channeled his mana to draw in even more of the water elemental mana around.

The water reacted and started to freeze on the ground. His mana was being used up much faster than he expected but he knew that he had enough to do what he was trying for. Thankfully the area was devoid of other plants due to the purple slimes moving through so his use of water would not harm the forest.

"Come on and Freeze!" He gave this shout as a warning to Gil and Wade who were advancing behind him. The rest of the group was holding back in case the spore spread out due to the three boys missing a purple cap mushroom.

Gil motioned for Wade to stop since he knew that Walker would not shout out unless it was a warning. He was proven right as the temperature decreased and Walker poured more of his mana in to the frost whips.

The frost whips snaked out across the ground almost like tree roots. Walker had this idea while observing the forest and had used it in the spur of the moment. The frost whip spread and covered the purple cap mushrooms and caused layers of frost and ice to cover the entire ground.

Walker was feeling the draw on his mana more heavily but this technique was working. It was not what he intended to do but since he underestimated the speed of two archers taking down the weak defense of the mushrooms he needed to give it his all. The ice on the ground and mushrooms covered them keeping the purple spores from spilling out and instead of freezing them in to the bodies of the purple cap mushrooms.

"OK, come on up. I think I got them all." Walker was panting as he released the now frozen in place frost whips. They started to melt in to water as he let go of his control over the ice.

'The user has learned the skill frost ring from the snow spites system through user action.

Frost ring- 5 mana cost

When the user is casting a al skill of water element they are able to form a ring of frost around them. This skill can only be used when the user is already using another water elemental skill that causes water to form in to ice. Targets in the user's ring of frost will suffer debuffs of; -3agi, -2def, -1h per minute within the frost ring. The frost ring consumes less mana for the user during colder climate.'

' nine purple cap mushrooms defeated

18 exp multiplied to 180 exp.'

"What? So little experience points?" Gil saw the amount of experience and was looking at how much effort he had put in compared to the reward.

"Well, they do have almost no defense. They can be killed with a falling branch. The only danger is the way they spread their spores. We pretty much just helped them grow if we didn't freeze them. Their bodies are useful though. A lot of different poison or potion uses." Wade was looking at the frozen purple cap mushrooms. He was compressed by the control of the water element.

"It was definitely worth it. I think we can deal with them without having to fire arrows from a distance now." Walke was all smiles while looking at his first debuff skill. The he could use would have been great for the winter, but as long as he is in the cool shade of the forest and there are puddles he will have a great way to restrain opponents.

"Ugh, you learned another skill didn't you?" Remey was not surprised but instead wanted to hit Walker out of jealousy, but held herself back since she knew it would not make her feel any better.

"Wait, is this really so common for him? How do you deal with it. I thought he just had water manipulation and made it freeze with those whips." Calen was trying to decipher the skills Walker could have learned. This was becoming an interesting game for her.

"It could have been from the snow elf system. I have seen them use a frost whip and frost ring skills." Alma had met the snow elves when they visited from the north. They lived farther away past the desert but still remained close with their forest elf brethren.

"The skill was from the snow sprite system, but it is pretty good to know snow elves can use the skills too. I would like to meet them one day." Walker kept this information for another time. Having another skill that a different elf people could use would make the bond with elves stronger. It could also earn him more respect overall from the elves.

"I see, snow sprites are very rare around these parts. I believe they are even considered rare at the top of the mountains. You would need to go to the tundra to find them. The paintings I have seen of them are adorable." Calen had seen many of the paintings in the elven libraries as part of their

"I am going to start to have the trees around her drop the decaying branches. While you all gather up those mushrooms. Don't touch any purple ice or water, those spores are still able to grow." Alma gave them the warning before she started whispering to the trees. Her voice was not speaking any recognizable words but sounded more like wind passing through trees.

The trees nearby started to wilt and drop leaves and small twigs that showed decay, the skills Alma used may not be huge for combat but they were ideal for growing and protecting the forest. Walker could only imagine the effect she could have on the younger growth or even the growth of herbs in the forest. When she reached a high enough level she would not be surprised to hear that she could grow massive trees like Hilda's mastery skill.

Midnight used her claws to break away some of the ice and drag one of the first purple cap mushrooms that Walker had frozen towards him. He was able to easily store it and found that it would be fine to store them away frozen. "Well, that was cool."

Wade watched as Walker placed the purple cap mushrooms in to his inventory. The spatial was not something he was used to but had seen before. "My master had a spatial skill that allowed him to only store arrows. It was a pair with his mastery skill infinite arrow rain. He could fire arrows directly from his arrow storage. I only saw him use it once but it got rid of an entire giant ant colony."

"I hope I can get an arrow storage skill. Walker has to carry all my arrows and it is such a pain. Actually, pass me one of my paralyzing arrows please." Gil reached out a hand as he caught some movement in the corner of his eye while they worked to get the purple cap mushrooms cleaned up.

Gil pulled back the arrow that Walker handed to him. It was one of the wither spike arrows full of the horned rabbit poison. He pulled it back and let the arrow fly through the green leaves a distance away. "Midnight got after what Gil shot please." Walker knew that Midnight could move and get the monster Gil saw more easily than the others.

"Nice catch, those things are a pain. But we are pretty high in number. I doubt it would have attacked."

"I just didn't want to risk it. I actually have seen one before so I knew about its color change ability. They make their way in to a lot of different places because of it."

"True, that's why they are so good for rogue type systems though. Lot's of personal guards also use the materials for their jobs."

Wade and Gil were having a full on debate of what he had shot with his arrow. The problem was the rest of the group was completely lost because they were not able to see what the two archers had seen.

"Are you two planning gon letting us in on what you two saw?" Walker was a little miffed since they seemed to intentionally hide it even though Walker had just asked Midnight to go help since she would be excited to do so.

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Chapter 346 - 346. Slime Cannibalism

"Me too, I want to know what you saw." Calen was bouncing with excitement since she wanted to solve the muster. It was surprising that she had resisted the urge to run after the arrow and look for herself.

Su and Remey held their curiosity in while they looked towards the direction Midnight was coming back from. She was huffing slightly while the sounds of dragging were made on the forest floor. The leaves were pushed apart and Midnight's tail broke through the brush.

"Yousaw a chameleon!?" Alma shroud in delight. She had only seen them a few times because they were so hard to spot in the forest.

"We need to deal with it before the poison wears off." Gil pulled his dagger and brought it down with an even force on the neck of the green creature. The knife pierced through it and after a short moment it revealed its full form.

The chameleon was about half the size of Midnight. It has scaly skin that was fading from grey without its mana flowing through its body to change its color. The curled tail was tough and used to hold on to trees while it waited for prey to pass by and catch with its quick moving tongue. The skin was a very valuable material for any system user that needed to sneak and the meat was considered a delicacy for its incredible tenderness.

"Thanks for getting this for me Midnight." Gil gave her a pat on the head before returning to the field dressing the chameleon so Walker could more easily store it. Midnight just raised her head higher, she was very proud of her easy job to grab the prey hunted by Gil. Her excitement was evident in her eyes as she wanted to dig in to the future meal now.

"We should save some of that for Mrs. Hilda. She would find it very interesting to cook." Su had instantly thought of Walker's mother. She most likely had never cooked with such a rare ingredient.

"Good idea, there is only so much we can do with it here in the forest. If we save some it will be a delicacy when we get home." Walker's mouth was already watering at the thought.

"It was a great shot. I wish I had noticed it. I would earn a decent amount of favors from some cuts of that meat." Wade lamented his poor luck in not seeing the chameleon move before Gil had. If only he had his head turned more to the side.

"We can share some. I doubt we will need all of it. Food tastes better with more people anyways." Remey volunteered some of the food to be given to their new elven companions.

"We aren't that greedy, we would have shared it even if you didn't want it." Gil laughed a little as he set some of the meat aside for the elves. Walker took the cuts and stored them away making sure he would remember to hand them over when they were done with what they needed to do.

"Yessssss" Calen ran in a circle full of energy when she heard they would have it for themselves as well.

"Now that we have this all cleaned up, let's see where the slime was heading." Wade looked at the trail of decay that Alma had started to straighten up. The damage seemed to be strange shaped. Some places had large circular areas of decay that suddenly shrank down then expanded again. The trail did not make any sense at all.

"This trail is like the slime is growing and shrinking randomly. Or like something is dropping from the sky and infecting the trail then flying away and dropping something smaller." Calen had run a little ways ahead and found that the trail was more or less like this the entire way.

"Why does that make me feel more anxious?" Remey was looking at the decaying branches Alma was pushing to the center of the trail while trying to make heads or tails of the path they were walking down.

The group was going to try and debate the reason the path might look like this but before they could they started to come upon some small slimes that were slowly building cores. They were not able to do any damage yet but if they were left for a few more hours they would become small purple slimes capable of spreading decay. "Cover these up with dirt to suffocate their rotting. They won't form cores." Walker said this but the elves were already doing so. He realized he had said something too basic for them.

"So since we are finding these soon to be slimes, we should be close to the massive slime right?" Calen was poking Wade to get him to spill how close they were, she was eager to deal with the problem and get back to her normal running about.

"It could have passed through here yesterday and those slime puddles are just now starting to gather their own cores. You can't tell how long it takes for them to begin to form until you actually see it. We still don't even know how these slimes were created in the first place.

"That's where we come in. We are here to research and gather the materials. If we can find the massive slime and gather some of its body we can bring it back to our kingdom to learn exactly that." Walker kicked more dirt over a slime trying to form a core before following the path more.

"The slower it takes them to form a core the better. There is a lot more decay the longer we follow the path the slimes have carved out of the forest." Alma was visibly annoyed at the fact that things did not look to be improving. She hated that the forest was so easily taking damage.

"The faster we move the faster we can find the problem." Wade gave Alma a firm look, he was going to make sure that the forest she was whispering to would not be in pain.

"Well, we are on the right trail." Remey pointed out a medium sized slime eating away at a tree stump ahead of them. Calen had not run ahead to check out this portion of the trail yet and they had not realized there would be an enemy.

"Wait. there are more." Alma held up a hand to the group who was about to jump in to action. She had whispered to some of the trees nearby and gathered that they had felt multiple slimes nibbling on their roots.

While they were stopped the group witnessed a small slime move toward the medium slime. The medium sized slime reached out part of its body and snagged the small slime. The medium slime completely encompassed the small slime body and spit out its core. The cores went dormant immediately and the medium slime had gained a larger body. The core looked to glow with a denser amount of mana.

"Leader, are slimes supposed to cannibalize each other like that?" Su had never heard of this happening in the slime species she had read about.

"Not that I have read."

"I've never heard of slimes doing that either."

"I have been told that the slimes kept as pets by alchemists will fuse together but they would take in the core of another slime and combine it to grow. They wouldn't completely throw out the core." Remey

was the only one with some form of knowledge on this since the old master alchemist had once kept a pet slime during an experiment.

With Remey's input, they were all put on edge, if they were acting differently than any other slime it made them all think that there was an outside force controlling them. "I think we should proceed much more carefully." Calen had lost a lot of her energetic bouncing after seeing this.

While they watched there were more and more little slimes drawn to the medium slime and many more cores thrown out in to a dormant state. Before their eyes, a medium slime had become a much darker purple giant slime. It proceeded to consume the entire tree stump in a few minutes before starting to move towards a sapling nearby.

"That was not good." Alma looked at the newly grown giant slime in their way. Every single one of them was wearing faces of distress. If they were able to grow in such a way then the massive slime had the potential to grow similarly.

"We need to get rid of that thing. I don't know how many more slimes it needs to consume before it becomes another massive slime." Wade tested his bow string and looked ahead. He didn't care about the core of that slime or the research, he wanted to end this problem as fast as possible. There was no more time to move slowly, they had witnessed the largest threat in this purple decaying slime problem.

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Wade notched an arrow and shot it directly trying to pierce the giant slime's core. His arrow was quick and covered the distance with perfect accuracy. However, when it pierced the slime's body it slowed and was trapped within the slime. The party just watched it dissolve in to food for the lime as it started to roll towards them.

The slime whipped out part of its body like a tentacle trying to grab at them. "Su." Walker gave a shout to the already in motion Su. She raised her shield and clocked the slime tentacle that was coming towards them. Walker was glad the equipment had decay resistance because he could see the slime that spilled on to the ground start to dissolve some of the dead leaves.

"Alma have the trees pull back their branches so we can fight freely. "Calen, go annoy that thing." Wade was already setting up his group in to motion. Alma was frantically whispering. The sound was similar to a torrent of wind ruffling the leaves on a tree. The branches were creaking and twisting away widening the path around them.

Walker had only a moment to witness the small vines that spread from the blue ivy seeds Alma threw on to the ground. They sprang to life and encompassed the trees protecting them from any slime body that would come off the giant slime. This made the fighting area tighter but would protect the forest from damage.

Alma fell back behind everyone when the vines had grown, there was a pale hue to her face and she was visibly exhausted from the amount of mana she had just expended on the skills she used. "Nice job!" Walker gave a shout as he started to form a frost whip in one hand. "Remey, you join Calen and make life hard for that slime, when I freeze parts of its body move them away so it can't combine with them again."

Remey was already in motion, Midnight followed her knowing that she was also suited for this role. The giant slime would have a tough time keeping focus on the three since it was not a naturally intelligent creature. Walker left Gil with Su and Wade since they needed the protection to safely fire off arrows. The sooner they managed to pierce the core the better.

His approach was swift and he sent a pulse through the frost whip hitting the giant slime and freezing a small part of its body. Calen had picked up a small stick and was poking the slime on the opposite side. The slime tentacles whipped out toward her but she had already moved to the left.

Remey was the next to get to the slime and jumped in to the air. She used a hammer fist in her descent to the ground shattering the ice and forcing it to spread away from the giant slime. Midnight dashed around kicking dirt up on to the shards to cover them as they would melt. The two were perfectly in sync with Calen who was already poking the slime with a dead twig to get its full attention.

Walker sent his frost whip at the slime coming in to contact with its body. He knew he didn't have the mana pool to freeze it but he could still take a chunk off of it first. With a sizeable amount of mana, he sent a large pulse through the frost whip. The water elemental mana was drawn to the spot the first whip had contacted the giant slime and quickly froze a large chunk of its body.

The chunk of ice was too heavy for the slime to keep attached and dropped to the ground. The slime sent out a tentacle towards Walker but he had already released the frost whip and was ten steps ahead. His draconic crusher was pulled out of the inventory and gathering the water element.

With a swift swing, Walker came down with an elemental smash which crashed in to the giant slime's body. It had almost no resistance but became lodged in side the body. However, Walker knew that the attack was not done. The gathered water elemental mana spread and caused another large chunk deeper in the body of the giant slime to freeze and fall from its body. Walker easily freed the draconic crusher and put it in his inventory. The weight couldn't affect him if it was in his inventory and with his fighting style evolving it was the practical maneuver.

He backed off as the next slime tentacle came towards him and narrowly missed his arm. If he had been too slow he would have been affected by the decay and needed to use an antidote potion.

While Walker backed off and prepared another frost whip he watched as Remey and Midnight each pursue one of the large chunks of frozen slime body. They were able to get near them without worry due to Calen's distractions. Midnight and Remeuy had been training together in secret and had become a much better tag team of front line fighters. Unknown to Walker the two would train in the night to enhance their ability to see in the dimmer areas like the forest.

Midnight made a large leap and swung out with her tail. The skeletal armor skill she had made her tail a much sharper and deadlier weapon. Walker nearly stopped in his preparations due to his surprise as Midnight's tail seemed to gather a grey skeletal flow and shatter the chunk of ice. The shards were sent far from the giant slime so that it had no chance to recover them as they melted.

Remey was right with Midnight and stepped hard with her foot. She twisted and shouted out loud. "Round House!" No one knew why she had shouted but in the next movement her speed seemed to double and he heel crashed in to the large chunk of ice. It shattered and flew far from the slime. With their attacks done the two retreated tandem returning to a safe distance.

"Don't think I won't be asking about you two later," Walker yelled this at the two who had kept new skills hidden from him. Walker may believe in allowing his party the privacy of not going through their skills constantly, but he was very surprised by these new skills.

His frost whip was sending another three ice needles at the giant slime and Calen was already getting it to send a tentacle in the same direction as the needles. The needles his and froze the base of the

tentacle causing it to fall to the ground in a narrow slime puddle. The giant slime had become unbalanced and lost a significant amount of its mass.

Gil and Wade had been waiting for this chance to fire their next arrow. The two arrows they released flew side by side at the thinnest part of the slime's body aiming for the core. The dark purple core was thrumming with its mana as it tried to pull its body back together on instinct. The two arrows had less resistance and easily pierced through the body cracking the slime core. The built up darkness mana that caused the slime to have the decay properties was released and dissipated while the slime itself started to slowly melt in to a large slime puddle.

"We aren't done, let's get that puddle buried so we can prevent small slimes from forming." Walker was already in motion using his grande elemental manipulation to create a hole for the slime to pour in to. The rest of the group started to kick dirt down on top of it while Remey, Calen, and Midnight were covering up the melting ice shards. They had it all taken care of in less than an hour. The group was visibly tired but happy to have dealt with a quick growing enemy.

'Giant decaying slime defeated.

75 exp multiplied to 750 exp.'

Gil looked unhappy with this but he couldn't argue since he knew the system was taking in to account the fact that it had a massive weak point; its core. The only reason he expected more experience points was the fact that it had decaying effects in its slime body.

Walker looked at Remey and Midnight who looked to be talking each other up after using their new skills to show off. When the pair felt that Walker had his gaze on them, they were instantly caught in a silent state. Su and Gil joined Walker in his hard gaze making the two look very embarrassed. Onyx had been facilitating the conversation between Midnight and Remey was also joining the staring contest finding it very amusing. "Fine fine fine. We will tell you about the skills. We didn't want to make a big deal over it."

Chapter 348 - 348. Explanations

"Well since you both came out of nowhere in that fight with skills I had never seen before, I would hope you two will share." Walker looked at them keeping his harsh gaze to make sure they knew he was serious. "I make sure I respect your boundaries and don't pry in to each of your skills like a mad king, but those were pretty great and I think they will be very beneficial in the future." He decided to lighten up a bit since he had been impressed.

Remey saw his slightly relaxed face and knew that she was able to explain the things she and Midnight have been practicing. "Well, when we have finished at the forge or the alchemy lab at night Midnight and I have had some sparring matches to test out some skills we noticed after the event we had." Remey looked at the elves knowing she should keep some things held back.

"I see, but both of you should already have skills from your systems that use your tail or kicks." Walker motioned to Midnight's tail and Remey's legs.

"We do, but Midnight realized that she had a better skill when she wore her skeletal armor skill. It became bone tail whip. She used it on a training dummy and it looked more aged and older after a few minutes. I am pretty sure it eats away at the health points of the skills target." Remey was patting Midnight on the head while she spoke. Midnight was loving every moment of attention, her pride was swelling.

"Wait, so if I got hit with that bone tail whip I could look older." Gil was holding his face in fear.

"Oh no, It would make me look older?" Alma had joined in his fear and the two were almost mirror images of each other.

Wade just shook his head while watching the two be over dramatic together. "Not even a full day of traveling together and you two are already this close." He had long dealt with Alma being a little extra dramatic, but having another person feed her corny drama was going to make it worse.

While the two giggled at their comedy Su had an idea, "That attack sounds like it is made to combat a defender like me. If it caused health points to drain it most likely also causes an armor or shield's durability to wane." Walker was even more impressed with the skill after Su said this. She had seen an amazing quality he had missed.

"What I don't get is why you yelled round house when you kicked? Was some big explosion supposed to happen?" Calen was more caught up in Remey's skill due to her shout. Calen had retreated a little farther just in case something would happen since when someone shouts a skill it was usually the warning for the party.

"Uhh, not really. But shouting it gives it more speed and strength. I don't really like kicking since I feel off balanced when I use them. But since Walker said I should use my palm strike more when I fight I wanted to try my kicks. I noticed the round house kick had changed and well, I needed a partner to help." Remey was a little red faced since she had forgotten how embarrassing it was to shout that skill allowed.

"You did seem to be faster and hit pretty hard. I wish I had a skill that boosted my agility when I yelled." Calen was in a sour mood hearing that Remey had such a nice bonus just from shouting her kick.

"So what would happen if you didn't shout it out loud?" Su had a mystery on her hands and needed the answer, it was something that would annoy her all day if she did not hear it now.

"If I don't shout it out then my attack is halved. Same with my agility. It's super lame, but if I use it right it is a huge surprise." Remey looked a little disheartened when she started but as she remembered how cool the shattering ice was she smiled.

"In the future please try to share the skills you two practice. I know you wanted to surprise us and we were very surprised, but it might be a little offputting." Walker needed to give them the speech his mom would give them. It was his duty as party leader to act as a parent at times.

"But they were cool. They get a perfect ten out of ten from me." Gil was there giving his support.

"I am very impressed as well. The two of you must have worked very hard." The elves just watched as the party had its moment. However, after Su said her part and Onyx made his actions in the sparring practice known, they needed to get moving.

Wade stopped and examined the shard of giant slime core. "This had a lot of darkness elemental mana condensed. It must have been force fed the mana by someone so it could grow this fast. The forest might have natural darkness elemental mana but not in such concentration." Wade's face was showing the perry of what kind of enemy was making these slimes act.

"I really did have hope that it was a very strange twist of nature, but it is for certain that someone is controlling these slimes now." Walker has still held a small hope that they were not going to deal with some villain trying to kill the forest.

Alma who had just finished a low tier mana potion from a small bag she had carried with her was busy gathering seeds from the blue ivy she had grown to protect the trees. Her whispers made the trees slowly revert to their original shape and it appeared that she was using much less mana. "You know, just because I am not looking at you it doesn't mean I can't feel you watching me."

Sorry, I just think it is really cool how you can ask the trees to change shape like that. My mother is a farmer and I have seen her guide plants and even use her mastery skill to make them grow in minutes. But this is a whole different level." Gil was more than caught up in the skill Alma used. He was having a lot of trouble finding the differences between a forest whisper system and a farmers system until now. This was perfect evidence of how the two were far from the same.

"Well, a farmer nurtures plants in the way they should grow naturally. I as a forest whisperer, ask them to change and grow a certain way. If my mana isn't enough to stimulate the natural mana they have then they don't listen. I am actually very bad at growing plants their natural way, I always end up whispering for them to change." Alma looked a little sheepish as she explained her planting tendencies.

"So you can bring out the certain qualities already in a plant where a farmer can just grow them over many cycles. You pretty much have a sped up version of cross breeding." Gil summed it up making it sound a lot less simple.

"I guess if you want to be lame and call it that sure. But before I started playing with my blue ivy it only had poison in its roots. Now I can make it circulate through the entire plant. Not that I get to use it, we rarely run in to goblins anymore." Alma had wanted to show this off but seeing that the purples slimes were all immune to poisons it was a pointless hope.

"Hey, did you two hear us? We are heading out!." Remey shouted at the two who were still talking away and had not even noticed the others calling for them.

Gil jogged up to Walker. "Did you hear that? Alma can make the blue ivy circulate its poison through its whole plant body instead of just roots. Think you could learn a skill like that for the garden?" Gil was in full on gardening mode wanting to get home and tell his mother all about it. He was certain she would be amazed to hear about a skill like this.

'How could I not? We were all trying to get your attention, it was like you two were up on the moon and not down here on earth." Walker gave Gil a soft punch to the shoulder.

"I was just learning about our fellow hunting group's skills. It is natural for me to do this so I can better use my own skills." Gil sounded like he was trying to convince himself more than the others. Su broke her serious character and smiled a little while using one of her shields to hide her face.

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Chapter 349 - 349. Slime Evolution

"If the medium slime became a giant slime in just a few minutes, what do you think would happen to a massive slime if it eats a bunch of giant slimes?" Remey was trying to think of the worst case scenario. She knew that she was not very useful against the slime because of its decaying slime body.

"If it does that we are going to be in for a much worse time. I know the brown mud slimes become a monster called a swamp thing. It basically lets water plants live on its body so it can absorb nutrients. They can be the size of a house and are nearly impossible to destroy since they can heal by making the plants grow faster. Not sure what would happen to a purple decaying slime though."

Wade had studied up in the elven libraries before he went out. His main focus was the evolution of slimes over time. He wanted to be sure that he directed Calen and Alma properly to keep the slime from forming again. He also needed to hold himself to a higher standard since he was the only title holder in the group.

"If we are going to deal with something like that we might need to retreat and figure out a better method." Walker could only want to air on the side of caution if the purple slime evolved in to a new type of monster. It was definitely not going to be turning in to a swamp thing.

"I do have some special arrows my master gave years ago. They are made by dwarves and rarely make their way in to our hands. But if it is the worst case I will fire my last three at it." Wade was going to hold these cards until they needed them but had decided it was worth giving the trust to the heroic party.

"I won't go in to detail, but we do have our own trump cards. If worst comes to worst we will use them." Walker gave a look to Gil who nodded. They both knew that if things were dire Gil would throw caution to the wind and use his arcane marksman system to the fullest.

"I have been thinking about something," Su spoke up from a deep in thought state. "Remey made those antidote potions and they can heal decay. What if we coated our gear and weapons in it? Would it damage the slimes?"

"It would be like water slimes and poisonous plants. If a water slime accidentally absorbs the oils from a poisonous plant it will slowly lose control over its body unless it is purified." Alma had become much more animated having this frame of reference to share with them.

"Have you seen water slimes before? I read they are very rare because they can only form from very pure springs and will eventually become a water sprite." Walker was using his mental archive skill to reread the books he had found in the mansion's library before they left. He had read a small passage on the water slimes but found that they were so rare that almost no information on them.

Wade gave a harsh look at Alma making her smile in to a frown. "Well...I read about it too. Yeah, I read about them once in the library and they are very rare. They can only grow in pure springs with pure water mana. Even a little impurity and they stop growing and could die."

"I bet they aren't as cool as the lava slimes in those story books. They swim in lava and eat molten rocks. They can't even come on land!" Calen wanted to join in too, but she only had knowledge of the fairy tales she had read. Unfortunately, she had never gone to a volcano to see something like a lava slime.

"I don't even want to know what a lava slime would become if it grew big enough. They would be too hard to beat as a small version let alone giant or massive." Walker was letting all the new information seep in as he walked with the party. Alma was constantly expending mana to cause the decaying branches to fall from the trees.

"Next time we come across a small slime we can drop some of the antidote potions on them and see if it does anything. If it harms them then Gil and Wade can have a modified arrow. I have some arrows that need to be filled with something." Walker gave Gil another look. This was an excuse For Gil to show off his arrows since Walker knew he would be anxious after only using regular arrows.

Midnight had seemed to make a game of pulling the branches away from the trees and pile them up. She was having more fun than the party was. So much so that Onyx had left Walker's shoulders and joined her on her back. Waker was secretly thinking about how he was more comfortable with the heavy serpent off his back. Onyx was on a huge growth spurt and any day would need to start slithering around on his own.

Calen ran off ahead of the group to scout out the path ahead, she was back in an instant with a frown on her face. "Things are a bit rough up ahead. There are a lot of grey haired spiders. The problem is they aren't alive. They were partially dissolved by a slime but they weren't finished."

This made the entire group fall in to battle stances ready to deal with anything they may find. Midnight ceased her game and Onyx went on to Midnight's shadow for safety. He was sure that his tattoo form would protect him and also make it easier for the group to battle.

"Su, on your lead." Walker let Su take the lead since she had the best resistance to poisons and her shields had proven to be invaluable in the last battle since they had perfectly resisted the slime's body.

They moved forward with a much more careful and quiet approach. After a few minutes, the group started to find the remnants of what seemed to be a spider massacre. There were torn and partially dissolved legs and torsos everywhere. The grey haired spiders must have numbered over twenty. "There doesn't look to be anything here now. I wonder why they left without finishing their feast?" Su was looking about and finding that the group was alone here.

"What made them leave was most likely their master. It is normally impossible for a slime to be taken away from their food if they have encompassed." Wade was ginning the remains of the grey haired spiders a dirty look. He knew they were dangerous monsters especially in a large group, but they were still important for the forest's ecosystem.

"The path we have been following appears to veer off towards the city again. The strange actions of the slimes might mean they are being made to attack the city finally." Alma said the one thing not a single one of them wanted to hear. If the slimes were going towards the eleven forest city that meant that the city was in grave danger.

"Calen, go scout things out further. I want to know how far ahead the massive slime is." Wade's voice held steel as he took on a more serious role. He refused to let his home fall to any form of creature.

"The spider body parts are still fresh. The slimes must have recently been here. My bet is we are catching up to it." Walker had examined the legs from the grey haired spiders and realized they had not started to dry out in the least.

"Good, I don't like the idea of showing up late." Gil was also becoming more serious. He wanted to be useful to the party and show off his strengths. He didn't need his skills to do his best.

Walker and Su had caught on to why he was suddenly more motivated but kept it to themselves. They both knew that this was not the time to fool around and tease each other. Instead it was time to get themselves ready for action.

"Walker pass out some of the low tier mana potions I made. We need to have full mana before we battle." Remey was right, the party and the elves were not fully rested and could not do their best if they came in contact with the massive slime at this second.

Alma watched as Walker handed out potions and even helped Midnight drink one to get in to tip top shape. "Why didn't Gil need one?" This question from her made Walker hesitate before handing three to Wade for him and his group. She was lost on why Gil would still be full on mana since he was an archer and not some form of mage that could refill their mana with skills.

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Chapter 350 - 350. Trap Setting

"I am already full on mana. No worries here." Gil just brushed it off looking away, he didn't want to let them know about his skill to quickly absorb mana from his surroundings. If they found out they might start to draw some conclusions about his actual system.

"But how-" Alma tried to pry but Wade noticed that the party was unwilling to share the details. He held up a hand to make her stop her prying. Walker gave Wade a thankful nod. They didn't have the time to talk much longer anyways since Calen had just come back in to sight.

Calen was breathing heavily. "They saw me. I don't know how it knew I was there, but it saw me. There is a regular looking slime that keeps eating and shattering medium and large slime cores ahead. But it's not growing." She was in shock at this, she had no knowledge of something like this happening.

"Minimize. It has the minimize skill." Wade had heard of this before. "Some special slimes raised by herbalists and alchemists get a skill called minimize. It condenses its slime body to become thicker and gain defensive prowess. It also keeps it small and able to go into smaller areas."

"What you're saying is that the massive slime is now minimized and most likely won't get penetrated by any arrow we fire." Gil summed up the fears of the two archers easily.

"I hate to have this thought, but if it condensed its slime body, then won't the decay effect be worse," Su said this painfully slow, it was like she didn't want to admit that the slime was more dangerous than the giant slime they had just needed to use a lot of effort to avoid.

Walker drew in a sharper breath, "I am limited to the I can use. The water elemental I have won't be able to do much if it has higher defenses. I would like to think that the freezing of its body will make it hurt more since it is condensed, but I feel like it will be the same issue as the arrows. It will om;y freeze a small looking fortune of the condensed slime."

"That means and blunt attacks are also out of the question." Remey and Midnight were instantly depressed. This enemy seemed to be completely covering all its weaknesses.

"What if we took responsibility for the damage to the forest? Alma might be able to pull back some of the plants and regrow them." Wade was ready to hear the things Walker could do, he was already preparing to use his three arrows he had received from his long passed master.

"I have a fire that can cause a large group of explosions. But it needs time to activate, it might not work within the slimes decaying body. It is a fire element and could be eaten away before it even activates. I doubt my fire bolt skill will work either. If I use my high earth sculpting I might be able to trap it, but if it has a smaller body then the chances are lower." He was getting ready to try fusing elements on the fly but worried that it would cause more trouble than good.

"The earth sounds like it could work well for us. If you can make it spiky enough to shave off parts of the minimized massive slime then it could start to make a difference. We should set up traps." Wade was making a decent plan, but it was not enough to change the outcome.

"Start with traps. Then make a stand before the illusion barrier the elf city has made. That's the best we have for now. I doubt we will have time to test the theory Su had so we will soak weapons and the spike traps with the antidote potions. It is better to try than not do anything."

"Calen, guide Walker to the path along with Alma. The rest of us will follow behind. Walker and Alma are the only two that can start off the plan. The rest of us can prepare ourselves while we move to the final

stopping point. I will go ahead from there and warn the enforcers so they can get everyone to a safe place underground or in the trees."

Calen was already motioning for Walker and Alma to get moving. No one argued with Wade's plan. It was all they had and the only way for them to attempt to end this without running to their death.

Walker and Alma followed at a brisk pace after Calen who was not letting up at all. For her to hold up and keep her pace slower looked to be a chore. She was used to going full speed at all times to try and make it to a faster speed. "Hurry up. We are about to get to the first spot. We will only have a few minutes before the slime gets here. I don't know if it is alone, but whatever is telling it to go this way might be around."

"We are coming. Just tell me when." Walker said this through heavy breaths. Alma was equally ragged as she tried to keep up. When Calen stopped the two were glad to see the stationary elven girl.

"Alma, here." Calen pointed to the space in front of them. That appeared to be the least full of older vegetation. It was clear she would try and go for a more open space that could harm the forest less.

Walker pulled out a few lower tier mana potions knowing that Alma was about to burn a lot of mana. The same would be true of him as well. Alma grabbed one and started to use her whispering skills. The forest jolted to life around her as if it had just been shocked. Walker could feel roots underneath his feet pushing up the earth as they moved away from the area. When he felt the vibrations start to cease he started his own skills.

Walker imagined the ground becoming harder and stronger. The large and small earth spikes that rose around him in the area were pointed like blades. Any thing that moved through them would be cut and shaved apart. The best thing that he knew about the spikes he was making was the fact that they would not be decayed by the slime's body. They were not organic or able to rot away, they were made of the earth completely. They may not be tough enough to pierce through the minimized slime body, but they could do damage and that was the goal.

Alma made the trees nearly bend over away from the trap of spikes Walker was creating. She backed away from the trap as she whispered since she had not realized how large it would be. Walker also traveled away from the spikes as he made a larger trap to ensure the slime would encounter as many spikes as possible.

Walker finally stopped feeding the high earth sculpting skill mana right before he ran out. He pulled a light mana potion from his inventory and drank it down. The feeling of mana flowing in to his body refreshed his mind and pushed away the exhaustion. "No time to stop, catch." He tossed Calen and Alma the antidote potions and the three started to spread them on the spikes.

The three repeated this process five times until they were nearly at the illusion barrier hiding the elven city. Alma and Walker were feeling like they had been put through a massive trial. The mental stress from using their skills to breaking point then suddenly recovering their mana was a lot to put on themselves. "I know that Wade said he would go and tell the enforcers, but they are still not here. I will go." Calen ran off and no sooner had she done so, did the rest of the group show themselves.

"I saw Calen go. It is fine. I want to see what these wither spike arrows Gil has told me about work." Wade was ready to start preparing the arrows he had just been enlightened to. "He says they are made to store poisons. If we put the antidote potion in them, we can deliver a damaging dose to the slime."

"That is exactly my thinking. If I can use my bow's skill to add wind element maybe it can pierce deeper and the slime body will trap the antidote inside of itself causing more damage." Gil and Wade were having an indeed conversation. The two showed off their excitement as archers to have new arrows and strategies to try. Walker was a little afraid to give them the arrows that could still be filled with antidote potion. When he removed them from his inventory Wade's eyes lit up as if he had just been shown a lifetimes worth of gold.

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