

Master 651

Chapter 651 - 651. Golden Flame Heart

'Unique hero quest: Golden Flames- completed

What are the point of spirit forged weapons to an almighty dragon champion? As the top of the dragon species, it is expected that the user would show this in their battle prowess. Spirit forged weapons are of no concern. What dragon needs a weapon when they can use their body as a weapon?

Requirement:

Use the inner flames of the dragon champion to defeat the dwarven prodigys' golem; Throat Ripper.

Reward:

Skill- Golden flame heart

Golden flame heart-passive (unique dragon species skill)

This is one of the rarest skills a dragon champion can gain. The flames a dragon breathes are produced by burning its own mana. When a dragon champion breathes flames they are able to control the elemental affinity based on the elemental mana crystals they have consumed to grow. The golden flame heart is extremely rare to gain after combining all elemental flames and returning to the true meaning of dragon fire. The heart begins to burn small amounts of mana at all times making golden flames course through the dragons' body at all times.

The dragon who possesses this skill will be able to breathe the hottest flames possible along with manipulating them and withstanding their heat. The flames are able to wrap and act as damaging armor for enemies that touch it. The flames that wrap around the dragons' teeth and claws allow them to more easily cut through anything they attack.

The golden flame heart comes with the express ability to produce any elemental fire breath attack faster than normal and consumes significantly less mana from the dragon using the flame breath attacks.'

Midnight stood tall and roared in to the air with victory. She was incredibly excited about the new skill and could feel the strength in it. Her body was more powerful than before because of the golden flames coursing through it. She was busy flexing her entire body and trying to understand the effects of the skill.

When Midnight directed her feelings to her ability to breathe fire she noticed that it was no longer something she needed to focus on with great attention. When she had first breathed the decaying flames she was struggling the entire time and needed to train with Walker. However, now she felt she could just will it and she would be able to do so.

This didn't mean she could breath any elemental flame just yet, she knew she would still need to have Walker help her train with the different elements to get to that point. But when they did train she had the feeling that it would not take the hours it had taken before.

"You managed to melt away the high reinforced armor that Throat Ripper used to safeguard its' gears. We can finally get that kid genius to build and improve it. He is smart and can figure out amazing things in golem building. But he is lazy and would amount to nothing if we let him. It doesn't help that the elder refuses to drag him and force him to sit down with Grey. But seeing his golem like this, that will motivate him."

The royal guard had been part of the conversation that was had about their young geniuses' laziness. Now he would be able to report to the king that they had adequately motivated the genius golem builder. There would be a flurry of work to make a golem that could withstand the strong elemental attacks along with physical.

Midnight was very happy to hear that she had helped them. However, she realized her search for something to burn some energy and even find another snack had taken a lot of time. She turned to the royal guard and huffed a few times. She turned and headed back toward the space in the pipes she had squeezed out of. The dwarves thumped their chests in parting since this was their traditional soldiers greeting. They had seen her strength and respected it like any other dwarf.

Midnight followed the same path back to where the treasury was. She was sure to remember it. However, she was not thinking of the path she was taking on the way back since her mind was consumed about her fun battle and new quest accomplishments.

She had not wanted any of the spirit forged gear because she didn't need it. The only things she liked were the scarves that Lisa would make her wear now and then when they were home. Lisa thought it

was cute and Midnight didn't have any problems trying them on since it got her more attention and bonding with the family.

This didn't stop Midnight from wanting to help crafting the future spirit forged gear. If she was able to use her flames it would be even better. She couldn't imagine how amazing an item forged in her new golden flames would be. This thought alone made her prance down the narrow passageway and right in to the crystal room.

Her entire adventure hadn't even been noticed by the elder and Walker who were consumed by their hunt for materials and other such items in the treasury. However, there would be many shared stories of the heroic dragon with golden flames. It was the beginning of her very own epic that the dwarves would begin to spread to many of the merchants that came to visit.

Before anyone knew it there would be tales of Midnight fighting a fearsome dwarven golem named for its brutal attacks. This would also be a great way for the dwarves to continue to publicize their major military strength. None would be able to stand against them when the golem was improved. Genesis alliance would be able to recruit a major power to join them at the summit. Yet, Midnight was already snoring and didn't think of any of this...

Chapter 652 - 652. Strange Gem

"This is the material room. We hold many monster materials here. Some of them are very rare and we can't even craft with them due to their affinities or qualities. On top of this, there are also plenty of other materials from plants, mountains, and even some from across the deserts. Once we have a trader brought things from across the ocean. It was very interesting." The elder was speaking while watching the spirits explore the materials.

"This place seems like it is more of a display instead of a treasury ready to give out the materials." Walker wasn't sure what to make of the many different displays. There were some familiar monster bones and materials. Many of them were from nearby monsters like orcs and the goat monsters that lived in the mountains. However, there were many that Walker couldn't identify at all.

"If you're looking for materials that have no elemental affinity or all elemental resistances you need to come to this shelf. This is where we hold some stranger materials that not many can craft with. The reason we don't just hand these out is the levels and skills needed to craft them."

Walker had known that some quests and levels of skills were needed to get to a place where some of the materials could be crafted with. This was clear when they had helped those in the blacksmith

building by allowing them to craft with their dragon scales. At the time it had been a very rare opportunity in the lower tier of the kingdom.

"So, I should assume that if the right system user is around then the corresponding materials will be taken from here. Other than that this is just storage for some basic materials too?" Walker had understood why there was a separate area in the treasury.

"Exactly. Many of these I can't forge with. Especially there. This gem here is somehow able to absorb mana but never release it. We have found a few but can't appraise them. Try it yourself. I know you have been appraising things since you came in. You get the same look as most dwarves with appraisal skills."

It was clear that Walker couldn't hide the curiosity he had and that the elder had seen through him easily. Walker attempted to use his all around appraisal skill.

'Unknown gem

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Absorbs all mana regardless of element. Breaks upon certain conditions.'

"All it said is that it absorbs all mana regardless of element and that it breaks upon certain conditions." Walker was stumped. He knew that his all around appraisal skill was not a know all skill but this was the first time he had not been able to gain anything from an appraisal. He usually would just receive useless or very little information.

"That's all we can get too. We even had a master curator use his mastery appraisal skill perfect appraisal. The drawback was that he would be blind directly afterward but it would vary depending on the item he used it on. If he used it on a ruby he was blind for a few seconds. When he used it on a person he was blind for months. But when he used it on this he was blind for an entire year. He still hasn't told us what it is."

The elder looked like this was something he had long given up on since it was a mystery one of their best appraisers had refused to speak about. However, Walker noticed that the elemental spirits were looking at the gem intently.

"Do you four have any idea what that is?" He had a feeling that this was the best bet on getting immediate information.

The four elemental spirits moved away from the strange gem not wanting to be near it but the earth elemental spirits looked like they did not like it the most. The dark elemental spirit spoke for the first time since it dipped in to Walkers' shadow after he freed it.

"Battle spirit...passed away battle spirit. Leave it to rest." The spirits went to the opposite side of the room before Walker was able to compose himself. He was thinking about why the earth elemental spirits avoided it the most.

"The dark spirit said it was a battle spirit at one time. Since the earth elemental spirits seem to be wary of it I think it is a passed away earth battle spirit. They said to leave it to rest. I think we should follow their reasoning. They are made of elemental mana, and if they get too close they may not be able to stay as they are. The elves may have better answers for you on this." His theory looked to be correct as he saw the spirits react.

The elder lifted a small pouch and slipped the gem inside. "I will separate this far from the spirits then. I will personally safeguard the seven we have and the shards of the other two until we can speak with the elves." This was very reassuring for Walker since he wasn't sure how the elder would react. But it appeared the elder was heeding his warnings without too many questions. Most likely due to the fear he would strain the relations with the elemental spirits.

"On another note. How about this rainbow elemental mana crystal. We have rarely gotten them but with that, we can never craft with them. We had a master blacksmith attempt to make something with it but the mana within caused trouble. Not many pieces of gear we forge can withstand every single elemental mana permanently." The elder looked like he wanted Walker to choose this.

"It would be perfect for the staff I want to make. But, this is way too valuable. I have only heard rumors they exist because they are so rare." Walker's hesitancy was met with a steely look from the elder. Walker could tell he would be scolded.

Chapter 653 - 653. Elders' Influence

The elders' face contorted in annoyance after Walker attempted to refuse the rainbow elemental crystal. "Do you know how rare it is for someone to be able to craft with this elemental crystal? Do you know how rare it is for an item or gear to survive without falling apart or breaking down after it is made using this as a material? You will take it and thank me."

Walker realized just how much the elder wanted to see a material like this become something. It was the look in the elders' eyes that gave him away. It wasn't one of a person who was truly angry. The fire in the elders' eyes was full of curiosity that could only be satiated by the crafting of rare materials.

"Then I will accept it. I am sure that it will be a key ingredient in the staff I will have forged." Walker smiled and stored the crystal away. He had only dreamed of obtaining a rainbow elemental mana crystal. It was just too rare yet he had been given one so easily. Yet, hearing that it was extremely hard to craft and extremely hard to keep the gear made with it intact, he knew it was not a simple matter.

"Anything else you see here that you want to use." The elder let Walker sate his curiosity by using his all around appraisal skill to choose some more materials. Since the mysterious gem had been put away the spirits joined them.

Walker was interested to see all the spirits were attracted to a tree branch. This wouldn't be strange but the branch still had green leaves on it and looked to be just cut.

'Immortal birch branch

This branch comes from a tree known to never die. It grows to a certain size then never absorbs nutrients, grows, or changes unless something changes it forcefully. Immortal birch trees are exceptionally rare since dryads are the only creatures on the planet that can cause them to multiply. All immortal birch trees resist all elementals without any affinity. They can not be affected by elemental mana at all unless a dryad uses a unique skill on it.'

"Taken a liking to the immortal birch branch? I see. We brought it here to try and grow it from this branch like the dryads. Unfortunately, we failed. It has just been here for about seventy years. If it was up to me we would have used it by now. But nothing ever stood out as being worthy. But your staff may be worthy."

Walker was hiding his excitement over this material. If he managed to get this branch then he would be able to have a staff that wouldn't be at risk for decaying, burning, breezing and shattering, being cut by the wind, and many more. He knew that physical attacks could do damage, but he had a party that could protect him and metals could be added to the staff.

"I would very much like to use that for my staff. Is there a price?" The way the elder had spoken made Walker realize that this material was definitely not free in the least. There would be a price to pay.

The elder smirked and looked at the spirits along with remembering that Gil was also on a quest revolving around the modification of a spirit forged bow, "I want to be the one spirit forging more. I want to see what can be made. I want to at the very least be present when the amazing experience takes place. I want to learn more about the truth of elemental spirits that my entire people have been blind to." The elder had finally found knowledge that could fill the emptiness in him. He thought that he could spend the remainder of his life learning all of this and still only scratch the surface.

"Then you can. In the Genesis city that is being built, the alliance will have more than just forges. There will be a new alchemy guild, sentient monster races trying to earn their full racehood. There will even be trade from every single kingdom and more. Just push your kings to join and you will be the dwarf at the front of the spirit forging movement."

Walker knew that playing to the elders' desire would be the best key here. If the elder put in a word the kings would have no qualms about joining and even more so, would push to join. If they went to the summit to sign contracts instead of just discuss things then everything would progress more smoothly.

"There will be a place for the dwarves? One that allows us to craft and trade? One for golems?" The elder tested this a little to wash away any lingering doubt.

"Yes, there will. I wouldn't mind seeing the crafting and forging guild become a full force in the city along with the alchemy guild. My kingdom only has a forge building and there is no guild for it like here. The golems would make an excellent work force and assistance to guarding the borders against demons until we can sort out the demon leaders corruption." Walker didn't pull any punches and laid it out clearly.

"Then you may have that immortal birch branch. But please remember what my agreeing means to the alliance and you. I will make sure everything you have said happens as long as we are equal to each other." The elder handed the branch to him.

Walker looked at the branch which could only be described as falling off a tree that day. However, he knew it had been cut long long ago. "In the Genesis city, everyone is equal. Even the goblins are equal. Even the grey haired spiders are equal. If monsters find their intellect and become sentient of their actions they will be assisted to gain their racehood and no longer be monsters."

The last words from Walker made the elders' heart stir. It had been years since he felt the cold from the underground fade away. It was like a forge within him had been lit after sitting idle for many years.

Chapter 654 - 654. Dwarven Burials

Walker looked for other materials after taking the immortal tree branch. He didn't want to store away the branch because the spirits were so entranced with it. He chose to hold it and allow them to play and explore it instead, which was a delight to them.

"These are some giant man eating clam pearls but they are weak to wind elemental mana. These are phoenix feathers but they are weak to water elemental mana. These are the fangs of an abyssal serpent but they are only light and darkness elemental affinity. Bonding other elements with them are near impossible."

Walker was torn inside. He had not seen the monster materials of an abyssal serpent before. He had Onyx with him in his party and was glad that Onyx was helping Su at the moment. If he were here Walker would be completely beside himself with what to say and do.

"Why do you look so pale? I know humans have a hard time adjusting to the caves at first. You can head to the surface for some sun if you need to." The elder assumed that Walker was ill.

"It's just the first time I have been offered monster materials that are the same as a member in my party. My little brother Onyx is an abyssal serpent. I have used and seen dragon materials even though Midnight is in the party. But for dragons, it is normal that the weak dragons would be defeated. From what I have read it is part of their culture. But for an abyssal serpent...I'm not sure."

The elders' face shown with understanding. He turned from the materials and pointed toward the next adjoining room. "Follow me, I will show you something very unique to my people. It may make you understand our thoughts on materials and why we would use any material possible."

Walker was still a little put off that he had seen some fangs from an abyssal serpent. He could only fear that this could happen to Onyx or Midnight one day and shiver. It was not something he had considered. He was a human and Midnight and Onyx would easily outlive him. This was a terrifying thought to have since he never wanted them to feel alone.

As Walker struggled with this internal affair the elder walked him through a few storage rooms and to a smaller room. There were many pegs on the walls each holding an engraved necklace carved from a white material. "This is the history of every upstanding leader or honored warrior. Those who invested their lives or soul are here. Those who have caused great growth. They are all here."

Walker wasn't understanding what this meant. He could feel traces of mana coming from the necklaces, each was unique and different. The elder had paused with a sad but proud look on his face. "These are carved from their bones. It is a right if burial for a dwarf. The family, leaders, or even master craftsmen will take part of their bone when they pass away and carve a necklace. Their mana will be bonded inside and they will have a unique rune pattern carve in to it."

"But...is that really alright?" Walker was shaken that he was in a room full of pieces of dwarven bones.

"Yes! This is an honor for what they have done in their lives. Families will feel the connection to their loved ones. The leaders will always be recorded and remembered. The bones are materials, but they are more than that. Dwarves value crafting higher than any other race we know. Being remembered in this way is something we take solace in." The elder was firm and spoke with power. He did not want any misconceptions about why the dwarves cared for their passed on members in this way.

Walker nodded as he accepted this, "I think it will take me time to think the same as you. But how I feel won't matter. It would be up to how my party members feel about their bodies being used as materials. Midnight doesn't care because of her culture. But I don't know about Onyx. It is something I think is unique to every race and person." Walker's statement was very true and the elder accepted it without argument. This was something everyone would think about in their lives at some point.

"Well, I do not expect a human to adapt to the dwarven ways in an instant. I am not a fool. Come, let's return to the high forge and see if we can get a design made for your staff. I can not craft it since it will require some specific skills. But I can make the metal parts that will go with the wooden, elemental

mana crystals, and other such pieces." The elder knew this would be a distraction from the deep thoughts that could come with death and the dwarven burial.

The pair slowly made their way through the treasury. The spirits had found hiding places in the branch of immortal birch that Walker carried. Every once in a while they would pop out trying to distract Walker making him realize just how kind elemental spirits were in the world. Even they had been caught and trapped for so long, yet they were already bright and happy to explore and forget the misdeeds against them.

When Walker saw the snoring Midnight he couldn't stay in his head any longer. He instead gave her a pat on the head to bring her back to the waking world. "Midnight, where did that ash marks and dust on your scales?" Walker was worried that Midnight had gotten in to trouble and surveyed the room. Naturally, Midnight pretended not to know anything while Walker brushed her scales off to bring them back to the black glisten they normally had. He had no idea of her adventures.

Chapter 655 - 655. Su's Quest

"Unique Hero quest- Strong as a fortress

The party leader has assisted the dwarf elder in spirit forging a proper earth dwelling shield. The elemental earth spirit involved is overjoyed to have a home and chance to travel the world. The earth spirit has a high respect for the party leader. Gain the same trust.

Requirements:

Gain the trust of the earth elemental spirit that calls the earth dwelling spirit home.

Rewards:

Elemental earth affinity'

Su had been hard at work helping where she could. However, she had found that she was needed less and less as time went on. This prompted her to end up leaving with Onyx on her shoulder. "I think we did a lot of helping today. I learned a great deal about the medical systems the dwarves have instead of healer and priestess systems we have seen at the church."

Onyx wasn't sure what had stopped Su from walking away from the medical area. Her face was a mix of confusion. "Sister Su? What is wrong? Did we forget to help someone in the medical area? We can find the nurses and ask."

"No, it's not that. I just received a unique hero quest. It wants me to earn the respect of an earth elemental spirit and use a spirit forged weapon." Onyx was shocked just like Su. He knew that the spirit forged weapons were ones that had a trapped spirit in it.

"That can't be correct. The spirit would be trapped like the bow brother Gil has." Onyx was already drawing comparisons to Gil's bow and how this was something that seemed impossible.

"If it wants me to earn the respect of the spirit then it must be free. Walker was going to work on the spirit forging issue between the dwarves and elves and he must have succeeded. We need to find him so that I can complete this quest. The reward is earth elemental affinity. I am not sure why I would need it but it must be useful. I can't imagine the system would issue such a rare reward without reason."

Su had the feeling that having the earth elemental affinity would be extremely valuable to her in the future. If it was an earth dwelling shield and an earth elemental spirit she knew that somehow having the earth elemental affinity would benefit her. She also was wondering if having an affinity to an element could boost her defense to that element. If so it was perfect for her to have.

"Walker must be at the high forge so that is where we will go." Su made this statement and hardened her resolve. She had her eyes on the high forge in the distance as she entered the merchant district.

There were many dwarves around repairing pipes and cleaning away slime bodies still. The main areas that were damaged were the places where there were grates that the slimes had been hiding under to eat away at groupings of pipes.

"Ah, you're that hero that immediately went to help the surgeons. I already talked to my neighbors and you managed to help all three of our stubborn husbands. They were all here trying to hold off the slimes with the guards and managed to get hurt by a bursting steam pipe. We already visited them earlier and found that you had been one of the biggest helps. The nurses were absolutely raving about you. That never happens."

The dwarf woman that had stopped Su and Onyx was keeping two children in line who seemed to be trying to escape and run through the streets. "It was nothing miss. I just helped move the materials they needed here and there. My family here, Onyx, also helped me by learning what everyone needed. We couldn't just sit around and do nothing."

"Now that is what a true hero does. They see people in danger and go to help. Make sure you two learn that lesson well. When you both have your system you should do your best to make the dwarven name shine." The mother was putting Onyx and Su on a pedestal and it made Su feel slightly off. This was a new experience for her.

"Oh, where are you headed dear? You look like you are a bit lost." The women saw that Su was looking around and seemed unfamiliar with the streets and paths but kept looking in the distance.

Well, we are trying to get to the high forge. But due to the way the city is we have not been able to get a proper tour. We are actually trying to head there but I keep changing my path to avoid the construction and repairs." Su just decided to admit that they had changed routes multiple times. It was more than true since she saw a great deal of damaged areas.

"Ah, It's only natural. We might be organized and precise in our crafting. Yet, when we build out cities we make mazes. It seems to be a curse. The woman laughed and caught the back clothing of one of her children trying to sneak off towards another alley to play somewhere. "Just follow this street straight then turn right at the intersection. If you keep straight you would normally go right toward the high forge but it is blocked by a fallen smoke pipe." The woman gave a wave and pushed her children toward one of the homes.

Su and Onyx moved forward and soon reached the intersection. However, Su was curious about how bad the damage was ahead and took a look. She found more than just a fallen smoke stack. There was a huge hole in the ground exposing the maintenance passageways for the steam pipes. It was a huge repair job that would block the way for some time. "I am really worried that the dwarves will be busy with repairs for some time. I wonder if Walker can help with his earth ." Su and Onyx chatted about how they would have Walker suggest his assistance when they met with him.

Chapter 656 - 656. Lingering Slime

Su and Onyx had been chatting while taking the right path around the fallen smoke stack. They had a lot easier times since there were dwarves moving along with the same or nearby destination. Su marveled at the fact that every single dwarf was working toward the same goal at the same time. It was a great coordination to reclaim the fullness of their city.

"Help!!! There's one left!!!" The shouts of a woman came from a nearby doorway. Right after a dwarf woman clad in light metal armor stumbled back out of the door. Following her was a small yellow acidic slime.

"Onyx, calm the woman down. I will smash the slime." Onyx and Su had been working together all day if not more now. They had developed the best teamwork possible in a short time. Onyx had already been on the move before Su had spoken but he still replied with a yes as he moved.

The woman was rushing away for the small yellow slime. Su could tell the armor wasn't a pair for a dwarf in a combat position and doubled her efforts to get between the two. Just as the slime was compressing itself slightly to bounce on top of the woman Su's shield was there.

The slime landed on the shield with a very slight hiss. The shield easily resisted the acidic body of the slime but it was still able to slowly be dissolved if left too long Su pushed the slime away trying to get it off the shield and found that it was still attempting to move towards the dwarf woman instead of being focused on her.

"It wants the metal you have on your body. Move back so I can get room to break its core." Su was going to put a little distance between the dwarf woman and the slime so she wouldn't risk any pieces of the slimes' body hitting the woman when Su used her shield slam strike to break the slimes' core.

Onyx had shifted in to larger size and was putting himself between the dwarf women and Su. He slowly pulled back making sure that he stayed coiled and ready to block any attack at all. As soon as Su saw this she stepped back and watched the small slime attempt the same movement to bounce forward again. However, she moved forward first.

The slime had stalled itself to make the bouncing movement in attack which gave Su the chance to come forward and slam her shields point down on it. The core was easy to locate and see. Su easily slashed it with the shield and split it clean in half. Su surveyed the area and watched as a golem with a spray nozzle and large tank arrived.

"This is the small slime that was causing trouble. If you could please wash it away." She asked the golem which immediately started its work. Su had seen many of them performing these actions on the walk toward the high forge and knew exactly what to say.

Onyx relaxed, "Miss, you should be unharmed. I did not see the slime touch you." Onyx was quick to examine and assure the woman that there were no injuries.

The woman looked at Onyx and Su amazed. She thought that she would be done for. "When that pest fell out of the pantry I thought that I was done for. I saw so many of those that had the slime touch them. Thank you so much." The dwarf woman had not expected to come home and find a slime in her pantry eating away at the metal containers her food was in.

"We would never walk away from someone in need. It was lucky that we were here." Su was glad that someone had been around to help the woman when she needed it.

"I spend all my time mapping out the caves and sneaking round only to come home and almost get taken down by some blob of snot. I swear." The woman was getting over her previous fear and was now heading toward annoyance and anger.

"You map the caves?" Su had not met many dwarves other than those with the medical systems. This was her first encounter with someone with a mapping system let alone a dwarf that mapped out the caves.

"I do. Someone has to get through all those unexplored areas and find those mines. But we all pulled back because of those pests. I was finally coming home to check the damage they had done and of course there was one here. I should have known to have a guard with me." The woman was scolding herself for her own lack of thinking.

"I think it must be very exciting to explore the caves." Su wanted to part ways but her curiosity was grabbing at her.

"Yes! I have found many iron mines, a few gold mines, and even helped with a team that found and mapped an ancie- ehm, yes I helped with a lot." Su caught that the woman was about to excitedly say something she was not supposed to say.

"Well, actually. I may have a job for you if you and your hero party are interested." The woman had changed her mannerisms in a second. It was a shock for Su who had expected her to just want to go to her home and clean up. The woman rushed inside grabbed a backpack that had plenty of roled papers

and a few scrolls. "If you're heading this way I am willing to bet you are going to the high forge. I was going to speak to the elder about a time to return to the caves. But this is fated."

Su and Onyx could only look at the dwarf woman confused with what was going on. Instead of trying to pry she decided it was better to have a guide directly to the high forge. She didn't know what else would hold her up on the way.

Chapter 657 - 657. Meet The Dwelling Spirit

"My name's Zenith by the way. My entire family has always been map makers or spelunkers. We've been managed to make a decent amount of maps in all the years." Zenith had been chatting idly as they came to the high forge.

"I am Su and this is Onyx. As you already know we are party members here on a quest for the newly forming Genesis alliance and to help with the yellow slimes. Now we are working on other things. But I am going to the high forge to see our leader." Su wasn't sure if Zenith really needed to know the entire details on why the party was here. However, because she thought Zenith almost said ancient she thought that there may be something very important.

"So that means you all may have a little time for an escort quest?" Zenith was getting at her main reason for wanting to have the party come with her.

"I will leave it up to Leader, but I do not see why he wouldn't help if you asked." Su didn't make any promises but she was sure Walker would find it interesting.

The three made their way to the front of the high forge when a familiar dragon came out of the front entrance, "Sister! Come and meet our new friend. She makes maps!" Onyx didn't hesitate to slither over and greet his sister. He had been waiting to share with her the things he and Su had done while with the medical based systems.

Midnight rush over to Onyx and Su, she was happier to see them than ever since she had been only with Walker and the elder who were consumed in their own conversations. "Su, I thought you were busy with the healing area"? Did you need a break?" Walker wasn't sure why Su was outside the high forge when he walked out but he was glad to see her. He wanted to introduce the earth elemental spirit to her.

"Leader, I have a quest to meet the earth elemental spirit that is part of the earth dwelling shield. I will earn its respect." Su spoke with surety but inside she knew that it was not so simple to just go and earn someone's respect. It was often something that would take time.

"That's perfect, I wanted to have you use the shield since the elder said I could take it. The earth elemental spirit wants to travel too so it's even better. There's also another earth elemental spirit, a dark spirit, and a fire elemental spirit. These three will most likely join us for a while but are also considering helping to make a spirit forged dwelling gear." Walker was proud to introduce them since he knew the spirits would be interested in meeting someone new.

The dark spirit was already partially out of Walkers' shadow. It was clear that it was the first to take interest in Su. This was similar to the dark spirit that had met Su that worked with Elise. It was safe to say that Su had a knack for darkness elemental mana because she had bonded closely with Midnight who was originally a darkness elemental affinity dragon.

The dark spirit slowly approached and examined Su, in just a few seconds its curious attitude changed in to happiness as it flitted here and there around Su's shadow. This again reaffirmed that Su had an affinity with the darkness elemental mana. "I'm Su, nice to meet you. Can you introduce me to your friends over there?" Su wanted to start off with the dark spirit introducing her to the other spirits because she thought they would be friends.

The fire elemental spirit seemed not to care much about what was going on. It was more concerned with the furnace pipes nearby since they had a lot of fire elemental mana in them. The two earth spirits were next to each other semi interested. Walker approached them, "This is my friend and family Su. She uses shields already and I hope she would be able to use the earth dwelling shield. Would you like to meet her?"

The earth spirit that had helped make the earth dwelling shield came forward, "Could be friends, but she doesn't have earth's favor..." The earth spirit looked a little dejected that Su didn't have an affinity with its' element.

Walker was a little glad that Su couldn't hear the dejected spirit's voice, however, he knew that this would make things a little harder for Su. He was going to try and push them closer when he realized the dwarf woman approaching them. "Hello there, elder, hero party leader." The woman greeted both The elder and Walker.

"Zenith, back already? You just arrived from the deep cave. I would have thought you would be too busy repairing your home, that is, are you putting it off?" The elder seemed to have a better handle on Zeniths' personality than the others did. Which made sense since they had just met her.

"No no no, I would never. I just happened to have a little pest trouble in my home that this hero helped me with. I had the idea that if they were not busy then they may be interested in an escort job. To that new area, I discovered before the pests got out of control?" There was heavy innuendo in her words making Walker and Su know that there was more to the words that they knew.

"You want them to escort you in to...that place? I can see why. It would be a wise opportunity. It would also give me time to modify my arms for more forging and also prepare materials. Yes. That is a very good idea. Report to the king of the deep caves and let him know of the mapping expedition. Walker, can your party assist us with mapping out an ancient ruin we found? We believe it to be from many years ago. It has been inaccessible due to the slimes but now we can explore it."

Chapter 658 - 658. Cave Exploration

Walker heard this offer and was interested, to say the least. It was clear that the elder needed to prepare so Walker, Su, Midnight, and Onyx would be limited in what they could do. The only other thing Walker was going to try to do is to explore for more materials, but what better than exploring the caves to do that?

"I think it would prove valuable for us to go exploring for a while. I think Onyx and Midnight can use a little exercise. But to be fair. Su and I will need some rest before that. We have been away for who knows how long." Walker had been fairly comfortable but could feel the nagging tiredness.

"Ah, yes. Humans are not as used to the environment down here. We have that artificial sun made with endless rune carvings and some valuable gems and ores. It is fueled by elemental mana crystals and gives off an aura that can help keep us working longer. I can go for a month without rest. But a human...I'm not sure." The elder spoke as if this was just a small detail forgotten.

"That's amazing. You can really stay awake for a month? I never imagined there was something like that without using a ton of ." Walker and Su were both having trouble hiding their surprise. Even Onyx stopped talking to Midnight and focused on the conversation.

"It takes our best rune carvers and forge masters to keep it in order. It is not something that is easy to maintain. However, it is the masterpiece that many have worked on and it pays us back many times over. It is part of our culture." This was one reason why the dwarves had also become known as sleepless workers. They didn't actually force themselves not to sleep they just invented an item to assist them.

"I have actually seen something similar in the church. It gave off an aura of healing that assisted mana and health regeneration." Walker connected the two very well.

"We have found items like that in ruins and mines in the caves. There are so many ancient artifacts that span before any of the other races have recorded. I once went to the surface ruins and even they are newer than the ones we find below the earth. It's safe to say that the world history is a mystery." Zenith was showing a glimmer in her eye that explained why she would be exploring and mapping out caves in the first place. It seemed that the systems always matched the person that used them.

"Leader, I think we should go. It would be valuable to explore ruins like this and possibly discover new knowledge about the past. We may have had strange encounters in the ruins above ground but it is different now. We are different." Su was sure that they were still weaker than Immortal King, but this didn't mean they needed the most extreme caution in everything.

"I think we will go. It sounds even more interesting now. But like I said. Rest first." Walker would not compromise on Rest. Therefore, the elder left them to go and prepare. He mentioned he would be forging new arms from the best materials and it would take a full day of nonstop forging. Zenith showed them to a workman resting quarters. It was where the craftsmen from the high forge would rest if they were too exhausted to safely walk home. Walker and Su worried this was too common but after they ate and fell asleep they could not worry about anything as sleep overtook them.

"Brother, sister and I are ready." Walker was woken up by Midnight and Onyx working together to drag him from bed. It looked like they had already done this to Su who was just walking back after washing her face. The elemental spirits were flitting about in excitement since they had decided to spectate the adventure.

"I know you four want to watch and see what we find. But remember it is dangerous down there. The only one that has a place to hide is this earth spirit in their earth dwelling shield. So if something happens or you see something please yell for help right away." Walker lectured them as they prepared and he got up. It was one thing he wanted to be sure of.

"Leader, I would like to carry the earth dwelling shield with me. Please store my two shields. They are hard to use in the mines anyways if things get cramped." Su had accepted that using her dual shield style was not applicable. If she did then she could catch one on the walls and take a bad hit.

"Show me! I will see what you can do!" The earth elemental spirit did not shy away from what Su wanted. It actually was even more exciting to see what she could do since the dark spirit had already started to speak fondly of it when it discovered some elemental mana from Elise's dark spirit partner.

"The earth spirit already agreed. It's smart to stick with the single shield. I also think that it is a good chance for you and the spirit to bond a little." Walker grabbed the last of his gear and looked at the waiting Midnight and Onyx who were more excited to go exploring than either of them.

They had agreed to meet at the high forge entrance after they had slept for a few hours. So when the group got there and saw Zenith with a smaller back pack and a few more pieces of protective gear the rest seemed even more valuable. "Hello again. Hope you four rested enough. I grabbed a few things from home. I also made sure I grabbed some more mapping materials, I have a feeling we will get a lot done."

Chapter 659 - 659. Clear Path

"The caves we need to pass through should be well cleared since they are on a popular mining route. I'm certain that the golems have already cleared and checked the path. The only dangerous portion will be the unexplored route that we have started to map. It is smaller and we can't get the golems to fit so it is all up to those we bring as guards." Zenith was explaining the path they would be taking. It seemed like a maze to Walker and Su since they were not used to caves.

"What are the dangers in the area that you know of? Any rough footing or monsters?" Walker thought it was best just to outright ask since Zenith seemed to have recorded a great deal of what she had already noticed.

"Rock horned vipers. There is a large nest there. But we shouldn't have a problem. We don't have any pale salamanders with us and they will more or less ignore our group. But if you see any eggs do not touch them or else all the rock horned vipers will go after you." This was very good advice.

"Onyx, Midnight, did you hear her? Do not touch or approach the rock horned viper eggs in their nest. They will attack us all if we do." Walker wanted to be sure Onyx and Midnight who were slightly behind them heard and understood the danger.

"Sister and I will be sure to remain careful," Onyx replied which put them at ease since they knew he would make sure Midnight didn't try anything either.

"What about the ruins themselves? Will we need to know about anything?" Su knew that the caves were filled with the rock horned viper but worried about what might lurk in actuality ancient ruins.

"No. Not at all. They are a mystery. We located the entrance because of a small cave in. Then when we went to look we encountered some of the yellow slime pests. We needed to retreat after losing all our equipment. " Zenith looked like she was still not done mourning the lost equipment and paused for a moment.

"The ruins we often find have some form of burials since they are below the ground. The most dangerous we have encountered are high tier undead monsters. However, we also have dealt with ghosts, some monsters that remain dormant until more air flows, and I even saw a golem that formed in a ruin." Zenith didn't do much to ease their worries. It seemed that the ruins could hold any number of dangers.

"If they are undead I think we can handle them. But if they are ghosts, I have no clue how to fight them. A golem will depend on its strength. Other than that I can't say for anything more than that." Walker was worried that they would face a powerful golem and have trouble battling it in a tight walled ruin.

"Oh, ghosts aren't a problem. They just play tricks, hide tools, follow you creepily, and sometimes activate traps. They can be warded off by light though." Zenith spoke like having a monster set off traps was no big deal at all.

"I know the path is easy now, but if we will be facing traps I recommend that I take the lead. My defense should be able to handle many traps even if they are poisoned." Su had the thought that her strength would be needed. At her words, the earth elemental spirit was showing interest. It liked the fact that she was willing to take the lead in danger.

"I may be a map maker, but I do have some trap detecting skills. I would not be able to explore and discover new places to map without them. But if you take the lead I will be a lot more comfortable. You seem like you could block anything." Zenith already held Su in very high regard since she had saved her from the yellow slime. But having her take the lead again just increased the respect.

Walker had brought up the map that Zenith had given him since she had long memorized all the maps she had seen. "I have no idea how you can keep all this straight. It says there are discerning markings on the caves but I can't seem to find them anywhere."

"Really? They are so easy to spot. Just always look up to the top right hand side of the cave. There should be a series of runes or marking that show the netter and number variant of the cave." Zenith pointed it out and there indeed was a marking. However, Walker still struggled to head or tails of it.

"I will just need to believe you on that." Walker decided he would just go with it since he didn't understand the dwarves' short hand. "Hey, weren't we supposed to stop and talk to the king of the deep?" Walker realized that Zenith had mentioned that too but they had been directed down a different path.

"I sent a communication to him while you were resting. I just needed to let him know that I was returning to exploration and that we would be going to the newly found ruins. He sent out golems to double check the path there for us. That's why it's so clean." Zenith appeared very proud of her forward thinking. This also made a lot of sense since the path they were on was exceptionally clear of any small rocks or debris from mining.

Midnight and Onyx had been exploring the sides of the caves themselves and were slightly annoyed that it had been cleaned up. The two had been playing their own game of search since they wanted to bring back more items and treasure. The fire and dark spirit had been joining them in this game along with the other earth elemental spirit. Yet, when they began to approach the narrow cave that Zenith mentioned Midnight perked her head up.

Chapter 660 - 660. Breeders

"This is the cave system we will be entering. The rocks here are very hard so it would take the miners some time to safely chop them down and add in supports. That's why we are going to map the area first. Once they manage to get support in and golems can travel it will be mapped for them. It might become a breeding ground for the rock horned vipers. I know there are a few breeders that are looking to expand." Zenith was just chatting idly as she prepared her scrolls and ink.

"Breeder? We know breeder systems exist but wouldn't they just be the same as the tamers at that point?" Su had the thoughts of the slime breeder that was causing them and many other troubles, However, she didn't think much of other breeders. The tamers guild seemed like it would be the place for a breeder or any other related system.

"Oh, I'm sure your kingdoms' farms have breeders for livestock animals. But we have them for monsters like stone horned vipers and even the pale salamanders. When we find a cave with a hefty nest we will have a breeder compete to purchase the cave and use it as a breeding area." Zenith thought that the humans would also breed monsters and was surprised to hear that they didn't seem to.

"Since there are many used for them and the materials they shed I assume that is why they are bred. I didn't think that it was done like that." Walker knew that there was a common pet in the horned viper for some of the dwarves. But having them specifically for breeding was slightly unexpected.

"Alright, I am ready. The cave will be tight for a little bit but it will open up in to the nesting area. Try not to step on the rock horned vipers' tail. They will get angry but most likely not attack. I think." Zenith started to motion for Su to take the lead and they had no choice but to move.

Midnight followed behind with Onyx since Walker thought it would be better to hold up the back. He also wanted to make sure that he could keep watch over the spirits that were still flitting about. The only one that wasn't exploring and playing around was the earth elemental spirit which was intent on sticking to Su to watch her.

The tonight walls were suffocating but they were able to squeeze through. It only took them about ten minutes to fully sneak through the entrance to a larger cave. The signs of monsters were clear. There were snake like trails that carved their way in the dust at the floor. "This is a fairly dry cave. That seems good for us." Walker didn't want to deal with the water from before. It also meant that they wouldn't need to worry about any monsters in water.

"Leader, there are weird round yellow mushrooms over here." Su had spotted the strange mushrooms as soon as they came in to the slightly large cave. It wasn't the nesting area but it was enough for them to move around.

"Let me check them out and see if we should bring them back for Remey." Walker thought that anything they found would be valuable and used his all around appraisal skill.

'Yellow puff mushroom

This round puffy mushroom only grows in dark dry and dusty places. It is harmless to most creatures as long as they do not let the spores touch their skin. When accidentally touched the spores escape in to the air and cause an itching sensation all over the afflicted creature's body. This can only be alleviated by thorough washing. This can be used in special battle potions.'

"Remey is going to like this. She can make a battle potion with it. She has been caught up with the ones that Trish used back in the forests." Walker took out a small bag and softly covered the yellow puff

mushrooms before closing it and pulling them up. He stored them away and immediately manipulated some of the water from a flask to wash his hands.

"I'm glad I did not step on them. She wouldn't have been able to use them." Su was thankful to be free of any itching effects but also since she was able to spot something to help Remey.

"Sharp eyes! Sharp Eyes." The earth spirit thought that this was also a good find and was praising Su. Walker relayed the message and knew that it was a good step in impressing the spirit for Su.

"Those are pretty common in caves like this but we don't harvest them. Most of the time we just let the golems get rid of them. I'm sure we can have the golems bring them to you when this cave is cleared." Zenith didn't see this as an extra labor and made a note to do just this.

"That would be very nice and we would appreciate it." Walker was glad that they had another kind dwarf with them as they moved ahead. He also watched Zenith sketch away making detailed markings of the kinds of rocks making up the walls and other features. The mapping was incredibly accurate and he couldn't help but be impressed.

"This is right before the rock horned viper nest. Keep your eyes open and try not to step on to jagged rocks. Those are rock horned vipers." Zenith gave one last warning as Su stepped in to a larger cave.

The cave itself was double the size of the previous with many stalagmites that had risen and dried to make things harder to travel around. However, it was clear that it was ideal for the rock horned vipers. The stalagmites made round dusty crevices perfect for nesting and placing eggs. "Leader, I can already see a few resting around there along with some eggs." Su was pointing them out and the number of them around was amazing.