

## **New Eden 291**

### Chapter 291 Painful Wait

As another stress-filled hour passed, the guilds outside the walls were still holding on to their attacks. Everyone manning the walls had their nerves properly racked, waiting for the first movements to happen.

It seemed that all the guilds outside were waiting on something, and every passing second made the tension thicker. Astaroth was currently standing atop the wall at the gate.

Next to him was Phoenix, who was looking at the number of players that had already accumulated here. Both of them knew there were also players hiding in the forest, around the base, ready to climb the walls away from the main fighting.

That was the problem with having a circular fortress in the middle of a forest. There was no natural barrier covering any of their directions.

If they had more players in their guild, that might not be an issue. But with their limited personnel, it certainly was.

But the guilds still stationed the largest part of the force at the front. This gave Astaroth and Khalor the largest part of the work.

But Astaroth wasn't feeling the pressure. He was instead feeling a mix of anticipation and excitement.

If they could drive back all these guilds, they would forever cement their position as the number guild. Even if many guilds also established their ranking based on real-world factors, this wouldn't matter.

After all, no guild ever had to face off against so many others at once before. If they succeeded, they might even gather sponsors, and be able to use that money for later important projects.

Phoenix was currently watching a player underneath them, scribbling on the inner part of the wall, slowly climbing his way over the tunnel I'die had made over the gate.

"I wonder what his scribbling will add to the base," Astaroth said, seeing her stare at the dwarf.

"So do I. He's almost done, so I guess we'll know soon enough."

Astaroth stepped to the side, dodging the occasional arrow fired from out of sight.

"That Archer is annoying and is going to be a problem when the fighting starts."

Astaroth wasn't worried about himself or Khalor. But other players standing on the wall might not have their reflexes or battle awareness.

If an unseen sniper started taking down their already small number of defenders from the walls, the situation could become tragic quickly.

"Athena has assured me she can fix the issue. She has been practicing something that she wants to try out during this battle. She says it can fix the sniper issues," Phoenix stated, looking back outward.

"I hope so. Because there will be more than one sniper against us, here. I would hate to lose before we even have time to fight back."

Phoenix giggled.

She knew Astaroth wasn't worried about any of the officers falling in this battle. But he was much more worried about the players they had recruited, that he'd never fought with or even seen them fight.

It was hard to trust people you knew nothing about. Even if Morticia had weeded out any ill-intentioned player, trying to join their guild, that didn't make all the people joining powerful fighters, either.

But there was also nothing they could do about it anymore. There wouldn't be any new players joining for a while, since every direction leading to their base was closed off.

And since they had no teleporter inside the Bastion, they couldn't have them get inside here either. Phoenix had thought about having people join and make them attack from outside the encirclement.

But that came with its own issues. They wouldn't be able to vet a player without seeing them first.

And they couldn't afford to have a loose-lipped spy in their midst once the fighting began. Phoenix would be directing the fight through guild chat, and having a traitor would make this impossible to win.

After all, no manoeuvre could work if the enemy knew of it in advance. Plus, since she would move players through guild chat, it would also announce any hole in their defence in it.

While Phoenix was thinking about this, an arrow flew at her head. Astaroth caught it a few inches away from her face, snapping her out of her reverie.

Phoenix clicked her tongue in frustration. She lifted her hand, a wisp of fire appearing over it.

The wisp of fire soon formed a lance, made entirely of flames. The odd thing about the flames was how condensed they were.

It was almost like the spear had an actual physical form.

Phoenix lobbed it in the direction the arrow had come from, setting that part of the forest ablaze. The flames didn't burn long, as sudden gusts of wind and gouts of water washed over them.

The mages from the sieging guilds extinguished the fire, since it would consume a part of their forces and cut off their retreat if left unchecked.

Phoenix grunted.

"At least that archer will not bother me for a while."

Astaroth chuckled. He could guess that a lance of flames would indeed dissuade any other surprise attack for a while. But once the battle started, it wouldn't be enough anymore.

And seeing as there hadn't been new players arriving for quite some time, Astaroth could guess that would be soon.

"I think they are planning to work together. There is no other reason they haven't already started attacking."

Phoenix nodded her head.

"They are probably holding their own meeting somewhere inside the forest, discussing how to coordinate. But even if they do, it will be a loose alliance."

Both knew many of the guilds attacking them today. The banners they flew over their troops, or the guild tabards they wore, belied their provenance.

Some of these were large guilds, others were just small time groups, trying to make it big here. But one thing was for sure.

The bigger guilds would take the reins. There was no doubt about it.

But Paragons would meet them in battle, whether they fought together or in a free for all. Khalor had already made sure of this.

#### Chapter 292 Precarious Alliance

Deep inside the Elven forests, close to a mile outside of the Paragon's new fortress, a large red tent was pitched. Inside this tent, many players were standing close to the edges, while a large table was at the center.

At the table sat ten players. These players were all famous pro players, with large followings and powerful guilds and backers.

The table was round, so no one could be seated at its helm to signify equality. Behind each player seated at the table stood at least one other player, their eyes scanning every other person in the room.

For now, silence still reigned amongst the seated guild leaders. All that was heard was the whispering of smaller guild leaders from the sides.

One hand finally raised itself from the table. The owner of this hand was a player that Astaroth held in high esteem: Killi.

"Alright, fellow guild leaders. I believe we have dawdled enough. Let us get this meeting started."

Azamus, seated directly across the table from him, smirked.

"Who gave you the right to start this meeting? Your guild is one of the weakest in the top guilds. It's been a decade since the Knights of the Sun last held an influential position."

"Watch your tone with me, Azamus. Your 'Aces High' might be stronger than my Knights, for now, but it could all change today. Also, no one else was stepping up. You were all just staring at each other."

Another guild leader raised his hand, trying to bring peace.

"I agree with Killi. The faster we start, the sooner we are out there taking this fortress. I think we have already lost enough time. I can't wait to go back to my soft bed," the leader said.

This guild leader was a small Demonoid man with purple skin. His name was Tired Panda.

He was the guild leader of Sins of Sloth. They were currently ranked as the third strongest guild in the forum rankings.

Most of it was because of outside factors, since this guild was one of the most publicized in the world. Tired Panda was a famous person, before becoming an Esports player.

He had been a child actor, with many roles in blockbuster movies, before ToB came out. But he was also a world-recognized lazy bum.

Some people even paid on the internet, to be allowed to patch into his room cameras and watch him sleep. Which was his second favourite activity.

Of course, this was all done legally, which was a subject of many controversies over the years. But his popularity had made it easy for him to break into the world of Esports.

But his talent was no fluke, either. Tired Panda was used to playing supporting classes that mainly acted as debuffers on the battlefield.

This character was no different. Tired Panda was a Demonoid Warlock in New Eden, and his patron was a high demon, working directly for the sin of Sloth himself.

Tired Panda yawned after talking, lowering his hand to cover his mouth. Killi nodded at him, a silent thank you for interjecting.

Of course, the Demonoid wasn't doing this for him, so he didn't deign to answer. But at least, it quieted down the gnome player, and restored calm.

Currently, Aces High was still a new guild, and the only reason it was already in the top ten guilds was because of Azamus' clout.

They already ranked Aces High eighth in the forum rankings, but everyone here knew this would keep climbing for a while. It was only a matter of time.

And if luck had it for Azamus today, it might not be that long before they reached the first position. After all, getting a fortress would very much cement their placement.

Killi cleared his throat.

"Ahem! In any case, let us talk strategy. Even if we know for certain that Paragon lacks the manpower to hold us out in a normal battle, this isn't one. They can still defend a siege while being under-manned."

Everyone agreed with this point. They had seen the size of the walls defending the fortress, and unless they broke through the gate, boring through the walls would be a tough ordeal.

Killi saw no one was going to add anything, so he kept talking.

"Now. We all know that two extremely powerful players are part of this guild. Khalor, who is currently back in the first place of the rankings, and Astaroth, who holds the third position, under Azamus."

Azamus smirked at this comment. Although he was mad that he didn't overtake Khalor, he was happy with passing Astaroth and all his other lackeys.

He would tell no one that his Exp came from hoarding all the guild war Exp though. He had to repay the levels his players lost, by obligation, lest he lose his reputation, but the rest almost all came to him.

Which was why he reached the level forty-nice already. But unfortunately, he reached it after Khalor, giving him only a second position.

Continuing, Killi monitored the facial expressions of the angry little gnome. He knew Azamus liked to be in charge, and burst into anger when someone tried controlling him.

The current situation required everyone to cooperate. Their chances for success were slim if they had some infighting later.

Most people here had seen only a fraction of Khalor's power, but they knew they shouldn't underestimate him. As for Astaroth, he had proven to be a fearsome player at the tournament.

And from the reports that many guilds were getting from sightings of the man, he wasn't slacking off, either.

Those two players, being in a guild together, already gave them a much higher combat power than any guild of the same size. That was why, even though the smaller guilds were just here for the challenge, they had waited before throwing themselves forward.

No one in this tent was stupid, after all. They knew when to charge or hang back.

Killi smiled when he saw Azamus keep to himself. As long as this one kept playing by the rules, their chances of success were high.

#### Chapter 293 The Battle Begins

It took an hour, close to two, to get every guild leader on the same page on how to siege the fortress. Killi was exasperated and exhausted from having to juggle everyone's expectations.

Every guild leader in that tent, including the smaller ones that had the guts to speak up, thought the method they thought of was the best. It was hard to form a plan with all the bickering and light infighting already happening.

In the end, they managed to have a general plan, if only barely, that everyone could agree to. The only person who Killi was worried about was Azamus.

He had been quiet this whole time. Almost too quiet.

It was worrisome, and not just to Killi. Many other guild leaders monitored the gnome as they left the tent.

Every guild had its part to play today, and thus, no one guild would be pivotal to their victory. But any one guild could rapidly turn into the reason for their demise.

Killi had convinced the other guild leaders to let his guild lead the charge on the fortress' main gate. His guild members were the most numerous, and their composition of them was mostly melee combatants.

From various tanks to all kinds of hand-to-hand combatants and many martial weapon wielders. Of course, Killi's Knights also had a ranged division, as well as some healers.

His guild was one of the most well-balanced, in terms of player composition, and also the bigger in terms of numbers. But it was also the one with the least high-level players.

He had always valued loyalty and honour over personal strength. That didn't mean he lacked powerful players, though.

He, as well as all three of his principal officers, were well inside the top hundred on the level rankings. As he walked away from the tent, heading toward the part of the battlefield he would storm, he came across the newly burnt woods.

Not stopping his gait, he turned his head slightly to look at his vice guild leader.

"What happened here?"

"We had an incident. Vex was taking shots at the people on the wall, as attacks of opportunity, and she fired an arrow at Phoenix. This was Phoenix's retaliation."

Killi looked around, taking in all the damage.

"Did she come here to burn the place? Did we lose anyone?"

"She stayed on the wall, sir. She threw what appeared to be a flaming lance. Also, we lost no one, but two of our long-range attackers were gravely burned while escaping the inferno she created."

Killi sighed deeply at the news.

"She is as fearsome as ever. I just hope she isn't positioned over the wall where our guild will be. No one wants to become a wellington, after all."

The vice leader nodded.

The guild leaders had agreed to each take a last hour to prepare, before launching the assault together. This way, they would immediately put equal pressure everywhere around the fortress.

It was hard to tell what the Paragons were doing inside their gigantic walls, but they knew one thing for certain. Their lack of manpower would play against them if they were surrounded.

Inside the walls of the Bastion, a certain dwarf had just completed the last of his runes, completing the massive ring around the base. As soon as he finished carving it, the whole ring flashed once, in a soft blue light, before dimming again.

Malador grinned madly.

A notification had appeared before his eyes.

\*Rune Circle complete. Engraver Exp gained: 5,000 points. Congratulations, player Malador, for replicating a barrier rune circle without prior knowledge. Extra 5,000 points awarded.\*

Phoenix, who was now standing over the back portion of the Bastion's wall, also got a notification through the guild window, as did Astaroth.

Astaroth wondered what this new thing was, but he wouldn't be the one using it, so he didn't bother looking at it for now. Phoenix, on the other hand, immediately opened the interface to inspect its function.

### \*Rune Barrier\*

Activating this function drains mana from the reserves of the Bastion to erect a barrier protecting the fortress from all directions for half an hour. Mana cost: 50,000 MP. Cooldown: 24 hours.

### \*Caution!\*

No mana reserves have been detected inside the Bastion. To activate this function, mana will have to be poured inside the circle manually.

Knowing this option was available to them, Phoenix was happy. This could extend their preparation time, or even as a safety net, if needed during the siege.

Any extra help they got might save them from losing their fortress. Phoenix was slowly regretting the provocation Khalor had done.

The plan sounded great at first, with the possibility of them establishing dominance. But if anything went slightly wrong, they could also lose all their advantages, which they had worked hard to get.

But it was already too late to change their minds. The enemies were already here, snarling at them from a distance, waiting for a signal to dash into battle.

Signal, which came soon. Everyone inside the Bastion saw the signals.

Every five hundred meters, a flare launched up into the sky, be it magical or chemical, until they went full circle around the base. Seconds later, roars of excitement echoed in the forest as the ground started rumbling.

The guilds were finally on the move.

Every player standing outside the walls in defence, as well as every player standing on the newly built platforms, started sweating nervously.

The distance shrunk between both parties, all around the base, until the attackers crashed into the defenders and the wall. Only one place was still unoccupied.

The front of the base, where the gate was raised, almost inviting players inside the Bastion, was completely unguarded. This raised alarm flags to Killi, whose guild was currently charging there.

But before he could relay his fears into the chat, a loud roar came from the skies. A shadow started growing over Killi's troops, followed by screams of surprise from the players looking up.

"A drake! Take cover!" one player shouted.

But there was no cover to be had. Only wooden huts and fields of corn to the sides. A gout of fire suddenly blew over all these players, followed by a dull thud.

Standing on the ground, in the middle of burning players, stood Khalor. He looked straight at Killi.

"It was about time you attacked. I was tired of waiting. Let the show begin."

Closing his eyes and raising his arm, Khalor whispered his incantation.

"Legacy Skill; Death's Door."

Killi watched on in horror, as wave after wave swallowed his once overpowering numbers up in black smoke, billowing with bones and rotten flesh.

Before his eyes, standing tall in between himself and Khalor, stood a gigantic door. The door towered fifty feet high and spanned thirty feet wide.

It had grown out of the ground, like exiting hell itself, and once the twin metal doors slid open, only death left its embrace. Dark smoke rolled out, containing what they could only describe as the apocalypse.

Wails of banshees, screeches of liches, the growling of various zombies, the rattling of bony skeletons, as well as so many more undead monsters came rushing out. In a matter of seconds, hundreds of undead had already poured out, with no visible end in sight.

Killi briefly scanned through the monsters, assessing their threat level. Reassuringly, most of the undead hovered around level twenty to level thirty.

But some higher-level ones were already escaping the door's confines, as well as some with grades higher than common. There was no way to know where this deluge of death would stop, and how strong the monsters part of it would be.

"Push through them! They are only weak monsters!" Killi shouted, trying to brace the mind of his guild members.

Many of them snapped back to their normal state of mind, while the weaker ones kept shaking in fear. The stronger guild members started slaying the undead vermin at a rapid tempo.

Once the killing began, even the weaker-minded guild members of 'Knights' started regaining their wits.

"They are only weak monsters!"

"Yeah! Kill them all!"

"Hah! What a useless spell! We'll kill that Necromancer in no time!"

Shouts of false bravado and stupid courage echoed across the guild members. It reassured Killi that they snapped back to normal, but he refused to lower his guard.

'There can't only be weaker undead in there. There is no way Khalor would use a spell that is weak to open on such an important fight.'

He hung back, ordering his ten officers and his fifty strongest players to fight defensively for now. His decision would later prove to have been the right one.

Further to the side, many smaller guilds used the cover of 'Knights' numbers to push toward the Bastion's gate. The tidal wave of undeath was currently being held back by them, leaving full access to the gate to others.

Among them, one guild, in particular, stood out. They held no banner or tabard to separate them from the others.

Their leader, a tall, undead man, with plated armor rusted green all over. Flames of bluish colour emanated from the interstices of his armour.



A large sword was in his two hands as he batted away any stray undead monster that approached him. He led a small troop of around twenty players, as they moved forth as a solid block.

The cohesion to them stood out like a sore thumb in the middle of this chaotic battlefield. The leader was a player that many would recognize if they watched the Tournament of Champions.

His name was Declan, and he was an opponent that Astaroth had defeated, to reach the finals. The one that had warned Astaroth about a guild recruiting special classes by any means possible.

He was storming the gates, keeping his men in check as they did.

"Remember, lads. We came here for a reason, and we shall not fail!"

"Aye, Sir!" the guild members replied.

Many players around this guild were fired up by their enthusiasm and shouted war cries, before redoubling their efforts to reach the Bastion's gates. Many of them got stopped before making it there, as a giant two-headed raven swept down from the skies.

On the other side of the 'Knights' guild, another strong undead was stopping the enemy's advance. A tall death knight, with a halberd spinning around him, took down players left and right.

The drake from earlier also did sweeping passes amongst the players, spitting flames when it could, and grabbing players in its claws the rest of the time. Flying alongside it, a Manticore, with its tail shooting meter-long spikes, impaling the unlucky players that got hit.

The fight in front of the gates was a massacre, both on the side of the players, slaying the low-level undead, and on the side of the undead, as the few high-level undead were crushing the player counterparts.

The massive door, standing in the middle of this all, was still spitting out the undead. Many players had already started doubting whether it would ever stop doing so.

But since they couldn't reach it, to cut it down, all they could do was fight on. Meanwhile, Khalor, standing atop the door's arch, was scanning the battlefield, looking for someone.

The intel they had on the guilds surrounding the Bastion situated Aces High at the back of the fortress. But Khalor knew that one player amongst them wouldn't be there.

He had purposefully provoked him into fighting him head-on. But he was yet to show his face.

Many ranged attacks came flying at Khalor, who was strangely unaffected by any of them. It was like an invisible wall was blocking all of them before they ever reached him.

'Where are you, you piece of shit?' Khalor impatiently thought.

His mind left the chaotic battlefield behind, as memories of torture and captivity fluttered inside his head.

Somewhere else on the battlefield, another guild was sneaking around the bastion, never fully committing to advancing. Another well-known player, Blue Peacock, helmed the guild.

Although her guild was on a smaller scale, in terms of manpower, she still held a position in the ten strongest guilds. The reason for this was the function her guild had.

Almost all the players in her guild were assassins and mercenaries outside of New Eden. Even if it had never been proven, players knew better than to try out the theory by provoking these players into action.

Their combat styles, as well as their natural capacity for stealth, made it pretty clear that they were experienced in infiltration and takedowns. That was enough confirmation for players.

And that guild was currently scoping out the surroundings of the Bastion, under the cover of all the other players running forward.

"My lady. We found an entry point," the player following Blue Peacock said.

"Finally. Tell the others. Let's get to work."

The player nodded and vanished into the sea of charging players.

## Chapter 295 The First Line Of Defense

All around the Bastion, similar situations were happening. The ten strongest guilds sent forward the smaller guilds, with part of their weaker players, while holding back their core players and officers.

The first part of their siege plan was to test the strength of the defences Paragons had in place. The first set of defences quickly became apparent when the attackers reached a hundred feet from the walls.

Over the past day and a half, I'die had taken the druids with him, along the inside of the walls. He had taught them to visualize their magic with more accuracy, so they didn't need to see where the spell was cast.

Helping them out with this had allowed the few druids in Paragons to set up traps outside the walls from within their safety. And it also allowed them to proceed without being seen.

Only very perceptive mages would have noticed the movements in mana under the ground. And since most of those mages were either guild leaders or officers to all the guilds attacking, they hadn't been in scouting positions.

If one were to look at the Bastion from high above, the following scene would be what they saw. The thousands of players ran forward, creating a black wave of different races, swarming the Bastion.

But when they crossed the hundred feet mark, their advance stalled. Traps of various kinds started swallowing players all around the base.

Be it pitfalls, with sharp stone spikes at their bottom, or simply vines suddenly springing from the ground to tie them up, very few safe spots remained to reach the walls.

I'die zone had been the one with the most vicious trap. He had dug an underground moat, carefully leaving enough dirt and roots to hold its ceiling until people walked over it.

Inside this underground moat that circled a third of the Bastion, he had been using his new staff's ability as often as he could. The first few players that fell inside the ten-foot-deep, water-filled trench panicked.

They could read the reports of all the traps surrounding the fortress and wondered what horror awaited them. After a few seconds, seeing that nothing was happening yet, they signalled back to their allies.

"This is just a moat. It's safe. We can swim across!"

Most players waiting at the top started plunging into the trench. The more cautious players waited a bit more, looking down below with squinting faces.

As more and more players jumped down the trench, the waters became blurrier and dirtier. What had been clear blue waters were now muddy and opaque.

And soon, the more cautious player started loosening up, too. Only the cowardly ones refused to step into the muddied waters.

But it would soon prove them to be the smarter ones. The players traversing the trench started convulsing, one by one.

Any player that started convulsing eventually sank, with the people around them wondering what was happening. Seeing them not come back up, many started worrying.

One fighter swam to where his friend had sunk, wanting to see if he could pull him back up. But as soon as he got close, the water where his friend sank became red.

"What the f—"

As he was exclaiming this, he felt something brush against his thigh, followed by a sharp pain in his leg. A moment after, something brushed against his other leg, repeating the pain.

More and more things brushed against his body, sending shocks through it, forcing him into a convulsing state. He felt himself stop swimming, which caused him to sink.

Suddenly, all his eyes could see were the murky waters. Until something long and black crossed his eyesight.

Whatever it was, the player could not react, and soon enough, a small swarm of snake-looking fish started accumulating over him. Damage numbers floated in front of his eyes, in rapid succession, until his health zeroed out.

This continued happening to all the players in the moat until one of the dead ones figured out what was killing them. The player wrote in his guild chat, and people still alive relayed the message to others around them.

"Electric Eels! They filled the moat with Electric Eels! Don't jump in!"

The players still swimming inside the moat went into full-blown panic. They swam like madmen, trying to reach the other side of the trench to climb out.

Spots of red started spreading everywhere where players had sunk, and soon, the trench waters went from their muddy brown colour to a river of red.

Few players inside the moat made it out alive, and the people standing over the moat dispersed to the sides, trying to reach a crossable zone further away.

All around the Bastion, traps sprung, pits appeared, and walls formed, all hindering the sieging force's advance. To add to their difficulties, arrows rained on them from above, coming from high in the tree branches hovering over the walls.

Athena was using her connection to the wild Elves to guide them into defending the zones that were most at risk. This allowed her to rain hell on any side of the Bastion that required it most.

She had a silly passing thought about how this felt like a tower-defence game she would play on her tablet. But the scales of this battle largely overshadowed her tablet games.

Athena had to contend against rival snipers at times, dodging arrows, bullets, bolts, and spells that came flying at her from the forest, and edges of it. Many times, they forced her into using her camouflage skill to make herself impossible to spot.

She had yet to fire back at them. Her longbow wasn't made for firing that far, and her lack of range annoyed her.

She was already using the height advantage she had to increase her range, but it still wasn't enough to hit the ones further back in the forest. She became increasingly angry at her lack of options.

'I need to take them down before they switch their focus to the defenders on the walls. But I can't hit them. They're too far!'

She suddenly focused her sights on one of the wild Elves shooting his bow near her. It was the village chief.

She had seen him fire his bow many times already, but her intuition told her to watch him this one time. And when she did, her mind went blank in shock.

The village chief shot his bow, eyes closed, aiming straight forward, not at the players downward.

'What is he aiming at?'

He answered her question as soon as he loosed his arrow.

The arrow, instead of leaving the bowstring and flying forth, completely disappeared. Athena stared, her mind unable to grasp what had happened.

But a scream caught her attention, even amidst the ocean of battle cries. That was because of its provenance.

This scream of pain came from deep inside the cover of the forest below. She snapped her head towards it, seeing a player with a rifle fall from a tree branch.

He had an arrow stuck in his back. But that made no sense.

Only allies should have been behind him. When Athena turned her head back to the wild elf chief, she saw him smirk.

She quickly jumped to where he was standing.

Athena gave a slight bow, paying her respects to the man, before asking what was burning her mind.

"Sir. How did you do that?"

The tall Elven man looked at her with a smile.

"I don't know if it is worth your time. You Abnormals might not grasp the concept I am using."

Athena frowned. 'What concept?' she thought.

"Please, sir. I want to defend my new home and my friends, and these snipers are too far for me to help."

The elf thought for a moment. He then gave a brief nod.

"But you cannot show this to anyone else. My father passed this technique of archery down to me, learning it from his own father before. It is not something for the world to know."

Athena received a notification.

\*You have triggered the secret legacy, 'No one escapes the Hunter'. Do you wish to accept this legacy quest? The choice is irreversible.\*

\*Yes/No\*

Athena had only heard about legacies, and didn't know what the quest line could entail. But if it meant she could gain the ability to defend her friends, at this time of peril, she would never hesitate.

She slammed the yes button before agreeing to the village chief's terms. The man nodded solemnly.

He explained his concept of archery to the girl, who listened, her eyes wide. After telling her his piece, he offered to help her guide her first shot.

Athena doubted that what he had told her was even something possible, but since he had already proved it was a reality, she trusted him.

She got in a firing stance, pulling her bowstring back, with an arrow nocked. She closed her eyes, listening only to the Elven man's voice.

Following his instructions, she shut out every other sense than her hearing and focused on that alone. The elf was telling her to focus on the sound of the world, to locate her target.

Even though it sounded like philosophical bullshit, she tried anyway. After a minute of focusing, her ears picked up the sound of a bowstring stretching.

After locking her mind on that sound, she did as the man ordered and loosed the arrow.

'Here goes nothing.'

## Chapter 296 Exchange Of Projectiles

Inside the forest, covered by the thickness of the branches and foliage, many ranged players from all the different guilds were taking aim. Most of the ranged forces were already standing much closer, but these players were different.

Their classes allowed them to shoot from much further away, and they were tasked with counter-sniping, and taking down strategic enemies, to open up the defences.

When an arrow suddenly hit one of them through the back, the nearest archers all started arguing. The risk of foul play was high, since they didn't all belong to the same guild.

The sniper that got hit wasn't dead, but he had lost a lot of health. This put the fear of betrayal inside everyone's mind.

The argument between all of them heated up, becoming progressively closer to a confrontation. Soon enough, guns were raised, and bowstrings were pulled.

The situation had escalated into a standoff, and things looked glib. The furthest one from the Bastion was the least worried, since to his back was nothing other than the forest.

Needless to say, when an arrow pierced his throat from behind, everyone gasped in shock. Athena, who was thousands of feet away, was grinning from ear to ear.

She knew she hit her target when a damage number appeared before her eyes. She rapidly closed her eyes again, focusing back on her hearing.

Her focus was higher this time, since she knew this could work. Then she heard it.

A slight humming, coming from all around her. It was like the wind itself was singing her a tune.

The humming was so relaxing; it calmed her down, making all her muscles aside from her taut arms become hyper-relaxed. It was like she was in a hot bath, enjoying a head massage.

The sound of metal sliding on metal soon replaced the humming, followed by a crisp sound that resembled a spring expanding. Keeping her eyes closed, Athena released her fingers holding the nock of her arrow.

She opened her eyes as she did, wanting to see the process happening. What she saw baffled her.

The arrow was springing off the bowstring, but at its tip, a small purple hole had opened in the air itself. The arrow was traversing through that hole, as it disappeared from in front of her.

Soon after it completely disappeared, another damage number appeared in her sights. She grinned again.

'This is amazing!' she thought.

But something caught her attention. Under her stamina bar, in her interface, something new had appeared.

It was a counter. And on this counter, numbers were shown.

\*8/10 (3:57)\*

She didn't quite understand what they meant until she opened her status screen.

On her screen, she could see some new skills and passives, which explained the new counter.

\*Displaced Shot (Level 1): Fire a shot of any kind through the world's channels as long as you can lock on it. (Requires Passive Hearken The World). The range extends given the range of your level with the passive. Any type of pre-existing skill can be used with Displaced Shot. Shot Limit: 10. Cooldown on shots: 5 minutes.\*

\*Hearken The World (Hearing): Your sense can be attuned to that of the world, allowing you to extend your sense much farther than normal. Current range extension: 1000 meters.\*

She had a hard time believing her eyes. This was a game-breaking skill, by any measurement.

Meanwhile, the chaos in the forest had redoubled again. A third arrow had bolted a sniper player from an unexpected angle.

They were now on sudden alert for an enemy, possibly coming in from the rear. Their counter-sniping suddenly stopped as they focused on tracking down where the next shot would come from.

Inside the base, high on her wall, Violette was tasked with defending a part of the wall defenders from ranged attacks, as well as attacking anyone that made it to the foot of the wall near her.

She was focused on maintaining watery shields in front of her allies, dishing out the occasional hurt to players down below. But something suddenly caught her attention.

A sound resembling a water drop echoed in her head. It was soon followed by a second one, and not long after, a third.

She tried pinpointing what could cause this, but her eyes couldn't catch anything that looked like dripping water. Her mind was on high alert, half expecting a mental attack from an enemy, but nothing ever came.

The only thing that kept happening was that water drip sound echoing in her mind. Focusing on her mana senses, she finally found where it came from.

When she sent her sense in that direction, what she found made her frown. High above her, standing on a branch, was Athena.

Violette wondered why her mana senses brought her there, since she knew Athena was not a mage, and didn't use spells. But what she saw next made her lose focus.

She almost dropped all the shields she was holding up, putting her allies in tough spots before gaining focus again. But her mind was still in turmoil.

Through her extended mana sense, she saw Athena shoot her bow, and a ripple emerging at the tip of her arrow. Then the dripping sound echoed again, and her mana sense caught its direction, far away in the woods.

The girl couldn't quite grasp what had happened, but she promised herself to ask the archer later, when the battle had ended. Focusing before her again, Violette noticed something hurling at her.

In the blink of an eye, a massive wall of ice appeared in front of her, and something impacted it. The ice wall exploded on impact, but the projectile had already lost its momentum, falling below the girl.

A giant boulder was the projectile. Violette was pretty sure that no guild had brought catapults, so she wondered where that boulder came from.

Her answer soon came, in the form of another gigantic boulder. She blocked it again, this time shooting a jet of pressurized water to stop it from reaching her.

Following its trajectory, Violette could see what was throwing these. At the edge of the woods, a humanoid-looking machine was bending down, picking up another boulder.

In this machine's chest cavity, a gnome was pulling on levers. Violette could deduce his class from this.

'A Technomancer.'

Standing at the machine's feet, another gnome was yelling at the one inside the machine.

"You idiot, I didn't make this machine so you could throw rocks at a little girl! Use it as intended and go pierce those walls!"

"Yeah yeah. I was just testing out its strength. I'm going!"

Chapter 297 Different Tactics, For Different Sides

On the southern portion of the Bastion walls, a different battle was happening. Very few players were attacking the walls in this position.

Instead, the hundreds of players below seemed to fight with each other. The reason for this was the woman standing atop the wall.

Sporting a grin on her face, her hands outstretched in front of herself, Morticia was currently burning through her mana reserves at a sped-up pace. Holding this many players in her mental grasp was no small feat.

She knew she wouldn't be able to keep this up for very long, but reducing the numbers as much as she could was her job. The role assigned to her was that of a mobile disruptor.

A tank was already down on the ground, ready to bat away stray players, and one of the core members of Paragon, Gale, accompanied him

The boy was swaying from left to right, getting impatient for battle. His role was also a mobile one, since he was one of the quickest players in the guild.

Once the number of players in this region would be down to a manageable number for one tank and ranged support, he would have to move to the next zone in a clockwise motion.

Morticia could maintain her chaos-inducing spell for about three minutes, before her mana was drained and she had to leave. As soon as she did, many of the players fighting shook their heads and turned to face the scapegoats on whom they would take revenge.

Gale, as small as he was, grinned like a madman, sending his arms to his side in a brusque fashion, forming wind blades on them. The tank next to him recognized him as a caster, and was about to step forward to cover him, when Gale took off.

Blasted off would be the more correct term here, as Gale launched off like a bullet out of a gun. Wind pushing out of his feet, he skated above the ground by an inch, reducing his friction to nil.

Seeing him blast off into the enemies, the tank paled. Wasn't it his job to cover for a caster?

But when he saw how quickly this boy took out every player he passed near, he swallowed nervously. He rapidly understood why the boy was with him.

It was with bittersweet comprehension that he faced the stray enemies.

'So I'm the extra. Not him,' the man thought.



His ego was bruised slightly, but he understood his role in this battle, and it was not the time to wallow in despair. After about five minutes of zooming through enemy troops, Gale dashed back to the wall.

He was panting heavily, with his mana reserves almost empty. He knew he would have enough to cross over the wall, but nothing more.

He warned the tank player of his departure and flew upward. As soon as Gale was gone, arrows rained from the skies, giving the tank much-needed support.

On the western front of this siege, a hellscape could be seen. It was easy to figure out who was protecting this side, when one looked at the devastation.

The fields that used to be present here, had been used as fuel for Phoenix's destructive magic. She spared no effort, burning everything she could to force the players to stay back.

The ones that tried to be braver, and cross the flames, were rapidly dispatched by blue lances of fire. The natural disaster Phoenix created would not burn naturally for long, but while it did, it allowed her to save up mana.

All of which she used to compress her flames into Aether. She noticed the process was suddenly a lot easier than before and welcomed this new development.

When the flames finished eating up the fields, and the fire started dying out, Phoenix knew it was time to act. She compressed one last gout of flames into a ball of white energy and slammed it into her chest.

Her body caught on fire, starting red, before going orange, and then blue. Her hair flared upward, as her eyes became slits of pitch black.

Phoenix felt her body float up, and she revelled in the feeling of power her form brought her. She could tell her fire was burning hotter than usual, as the stone under her was already melting on the top.

She rapidly descended into the fields, not wanting to damage their last line of defence. Phoenix hovered a few feet above the ground, and even then, she could see it turn to magma under her.

Players were already charging her, and they started taking damage before even making it to her. Phoenix was projecting heat around her, so hot, that it created a DOT area.

The first person to reach her, did so by ignoring the pain of his searing flesh. His overconfidence in thinking he could kill the caster rapidly, cost him his life.

When he reached two feet from the flaming woman, she swung her arm at him, a whip of flames lashing out. The whip contacted the player and instantly turned him to cinders.

Gasps of shock and terror spread out amongst the players. Phoenix had just killed a melee fighter in a single attack.

One that was built like a bruiser, at that. If that wasn't dissuasion enough to attack her in close range, then nothing would ever be.

The melee players were already stepping back, suddenly getting cold feet, despite the scorching heat. Ranged attacks started raining on Phoenix, with most projectiles disintegrating before reaching her.

Only magic attacks, and magic-covered projectiles made it to the flaming woman, before doing minimal damage.

Phoenix estimated she had about ten minutes in this form, and decided to make the most out of it. She tried smirking at her enemies, but her lack of mouth made it creepy, as only her eyes conveyed the emotion.

The players facing her suddenly felt chills run down their spines.

'She a devil!' they all thought.

"Let the hunt begin," the mouthless woman said.

### Chapter 298 AWOL Sniper

While players were trying to reach the walls all around the Bastion, by any means necessary, one place had little to no defence. The gate to enter the Bastion was wide open, with no apparent defender in place.

Many guilds saw this as an opportunity, thinking Khalor was supposed to guard the gate. And since he was being contained by 'Knights' many members, they dived for the open gate.

But crossing the gate, something was odd. They ended up inside a stone tunnel that spanned about fifty feet, before opening back up.

Exiting the tunnel, the players invading the Bastion ended up in a round stone enclosure measuring about three hundred feet in diameter. And in the middle of this hundred-meter wide circle, a single man.

Astaroth smiled when he saw the enemies finally make it to him.

"Ahh, finally. I can have some fun too, now."

He chuckled, eliciting some anger from his counterparts. Even if all the players present knew who they were facing, and that he was reputed for fighting large groups and winning, they wouldn't just take the insult lying down.

The rashest players lunged forward, intent on making him swallow his words. The others spread out, letting the tunnel entrance free, and trying to surround Astaroth.

Astaroth laughed even more at their tactics. In a normal situation, players getting surrounded spelled doom.

But Astaroth wasn't any player. His newly gained special grade, as well as his melded stats, made him the equivalent of a boss monster.

Albeit not a dungeon boss, but a zone boss, at the least.

When the first player had almost reached him, Astaroth had already melded with white. The change in appearance put the players on edge, warning them of his increased stats.

But these weren't just random players on the street of Sunpeak. They were players in a guild, backed with a modicum of training and some experience.

But against overwhelming power, it mattered not.

Astaroth pulled out Ad Astra, infusing it with mana. He wanted to go for a new weapon, this time, and envisioned an oversized metal bat.

The weapon changed in a flash of white light, becoming a club-looking metallic object. Astaroth had thought of it having something to cut or pierce, but since the image in his head wasn't specific enough, the Ad Astra interpreted his answer.

Instead of the most common protruding spikes, the weapon had serrated-looking blade tips every other inch. It looked like swirls of metal coating the exterior of the club.

When the player dashing at Astaroth first reached the weapon's range, the latter swung horizontally. With a whooshing sound, the club struck him in the face, with impact strength far higher than its apparent weight.

Astaroth felt like the weapon was super light, but the force at which it smacked into the other player's face belied a hefty weight. He didn't care why that was, for now, and simply watched the man get flung away like a baseball, getting hit by a professional ballplayer.

The man in question flew from the center of the arena-like enclosure and impacted the wall heavily, losing what little health he had left after the first hit. As he vanished into pixels, all the other players froze.

Swinging his club on his shoulder like a small-time gangster, Astaroth snickered at them.

"Who's next?"

He didn't give them time to think or answer, though, as he suddenly vanished from where he was standing. Only the high-agility players could follow his movements, and everyone else simply saw him teleporting.

More and more players kept pouring into the closed circle, only to wonder where the others had gone. No matter how many of them entered the zone, it never seemed to fill up.

Of course, that wasn't to say that Astaroth took no damage. Many ranged attacks hit him while his back was turned, or some stray melee attack grazed him, dealing a bit of damage.

But in the grander scheme of things, what damage he received never even dented his health pool. And when it went down by one percent, it immediately filled back, because of his passive regen.

But, although the pillars of the Paragon guild were holding strong, many of their new players weren't as overpowered. Mistakes started happening amid high-risk combat, costing them their lives.

The more time elapsed, the more their wall defences thinned, and the situation would get dire rapidly. On the outside of the wall, standing on top of his legacy skill conjured door, Khalor was more and more agitated.

"Where are you, you slimy bastard?" Khalor growled.

His eyes were still scanning the battlefield and beyond, hoping to find the gnome he was looking for. But he was still unaccounted for.

Khalor even resorted to sending a message in the guild chat, asking anyone that saw him to report it to him. But, apart from messages from Phoenix about repositioning their mobile units, the rest were still silent.

He knew the damned gnome wasn't far, since he could feel his hate-filled stare on the back of his head. But as long as he didn't pinpoint him, he wouldn't move.

He was guarding the Death's Door, since it could be destroyed, and many players had already landed hits on it from afar. He had always sent commands to his stronger undead, to take care of these ranged threats, though.

His skill had already been active for five minutes, and would last another five, which was a long time, considering it poured out so many undead per second.

But something was off. He could feel some tingling in his nape, like something big was about to happen.

Scan the battlefield as he may, he couldn't pinpoint anything that could threaten him. But his sense kept tingling wildly.

His saving grace came from Phoenix, who had just looked to the skies over his area. She frantically sent a message to him in guild chat.

'Khalor! Look above you!'

Hearing the ding of a notification, Khalor rapidly went to the guild chat. When he read the message, he frowned and looked upward.

His heart dropped.

'Shit! These fuckers are here too.'

Chapter 299 Rising Issues

In the sky, above the plains that led to the gate, a massive cloud of black and blue was forming. The players could also see wild streaks of white moving inside.

Khalor was right under the cloud, and he could feel the hair on his arms standing. The amount of static electricity this required, at the distance he was from the clouds, was a dead giveaway of the power stored in those clouds.

He hurriedly dashed away from the top of his door, not wanting to be where that thing would hit. Not a moment after dashing away, a thunderclap echoed across the sky.

A flash of white, followed by a shockwave, blinded everyone looking at the door, and knocked anyone near it to their ass. Khalor was still mid-air when the shockwave hit his back.

The force behind it blew him away, sending him packing into the backs of players storming toward the gate. The shockwave reached the walls, having lost most of its force, only blowing wild winds on the players on the wall.

A cloud of dust had risen where the lightning bolt hit the ground. It was thick enough that it blocked any visual on its impact target.

Getting back up, Khalor was clenching his teeth and fists.

"Fine! If you want me to fight personally, I will!"

Khalor might not have the sharpest mana senses, but even a monkey would have felt where that surge in mana came from. Deep from inside the woods, further away than even the sniper players, was a small group of players.

They all wore mage robes, with similar patterns on them, with the only difference being the colours. All of them were standing in a circle, except for one.

That one person was sitting cross-legged on the ground, a crystal ball before them.

"Target hit! I think we destroyed it in one hit, sir!"

"Good. Let us retreat for now, then. Gather around me," the only person in a dark blue robe said.

As the other mages gathered around him, he started chanting in a low voice. After thirty seconds of chanting, a flash of blue enveloped them before disappearing, along with them.

Khalor felt the surge of mana from deep inside the woods and sneered.

'Cowards!' he cursed in his mind.

He would have wanted to crush them for their insolence, but he knew they were gone now. This was a guild that would be extremely powerful in the future, but also one that only acted for their leader's agenda.

And Khalor could easily guess what those intentions were here. After all, hundreds of players had been trying to reach his Death Door hoping to destroy it.

But they had done so without even being seen. He already knew their methods, but he hadn't thought they would act for another few months.

Their action threw a wrench into his plans. With his portal gone, it severely diminished his ability to summon the undead.

But Khalor had no time to dillydally. He hurriedly invoked all his strongest undead, before pulling out his bident.

He would show these posers why he was the strongest player in the game still. Dashing into the oncoming players, Khalor uttered a guttural war cry.

From inside the fortress, Astaroth heard the war cry. He instantly recognized the voice, and his body filled with adrenaline.

He knew Khalor was currently fighting against waves upon waves of players, just like him, and it made his blood rush. He responded in kind, screaming to the skies.

His voice was less grave than Khalor's, and he was no longer melded with white, so his shout wasn't as impactful, but it had the desired effect. The surrounding players started shaking in their boots.

Astaroth was fired up again, and they would become his playthings.

"Alright! Time for round two!"

Dashing back into the enemies that were trying to surround him, Astaroth was wielding a sword in his hand. The sword kept lashing out, extending outward in arcs, reaping the lives of the unsuspecting players.

No one was safe from him, as long as they weren't many feet away. It was a massacre.

On Phoenix's front, her transformation was nearing its end. But her aim was already reached.

Close to no player remained on her side. They had mostly retreated, trying to make it to a zone where they wouldn't be burned alive.

With this happening, she moved around ranged players, covering her direction, before changing zones. She wanted to move to a more pressing zone, where Violette had asked for help.

It was weird for the girl to ask for help, since she was just as powerful as any other core member. So Phoenix felt a sense of urgency.

Cancelling out her transformation, to save her mana, Phoenix quickly sprinted through the base, making her way to Violette's zone. Once there, she climbed the new stairs they had built in the days leading to the siege.

On the top of the wall, Violette was multi-casting spells left and right. Whoever was directing the players on this side had grasped what her role was, and was now exploiting it.

Since Violette was using her magic to protect from incoming fire, she had to maintain shields on many players. But suddenly, the sniping team on the attackers' side started bombarding them with attacks.

The extra damage coming in strained her shields so much, she constantly had to recast the water bubbles. And all this meant she couldn't attack.

That raised another issue. At the foot of the wall, a massive golem-looking machine was drilling through the stone wall.

And Violette was helpless to stop it. And her allies were too busy keeping all the other players from reaching the wall, so the golem was drilling with impunity.

The gnome sitting inside its chest was grinning like an idiot. He was drilling with expertise, like he had done this many times before.

Phoenix assessed the situation in moments and knew she had to hasten her actions. She rapidly reignited herself before jumping down the wall.

But before she could make it to the machine, a bubble of energy enveloped the zone where he was. A small gadget had sprung from the ground, and it was whirring with electricity.

"I'm sorry, lass. But I will have to ask you to wait here while my brother drills through that precious wall of yours."

The voice came from a gnome that walked out from between the golem's legs. He was grinning wildly, watching Phoenix from across the energy barrier.

"Who the fuck are you?!" Phoenix screamed, rage apparent in her flaming eyes.

## Chapter 300 Battle Of Wits And Time

Hearing her outburst, the gnome working in the golem burst out laughing.

"Bahaha! The lass has a mouth on her, do'n she? It's been a while since a woman spoke to you that way, hasn't it, bro?!"

"Shut up, Terrance."

"Hey Don't call me by my real name, you idjit. It's Gravedigger here! Would you like me to call you Clarence?"

"Fine! Shut up, 'Gravedigger'!"

"Sure thing, Gnomestein! Bahaha!"

"Both of you shut up!" Phoenix shouted.

She was growing angrier by the second, with how the two of them ignored her presence.

"And stop digging into my walls!"

The gnome on the ground, Gnomestein, turned to face her.

"Ahh, I'm sorry. No can do. They ordered us to drill through the walls, and we will do just that."

"Yeah, lassy! Plus, I've never dug into rock this hard. This is challenging and I love challenges!"

"Then I guess you'll have to burn."

Phoenix started burning bright blue as she increased the heat of her flames. She shot out a torrent of fire, sending it at the barrier protecting the two buffoons.

But her fire washed upward, licking the barrier walls on their way up, but doing nothing more. Phoenix was taken aback.

There wasn't much she couldn't burn down, and she couldn't understand how such a thin energy barrier could withstand her attack. The cackling of the gnome in the golem snapped her out of her thoughts.

"That little flicker will not pass through my invention, lass. That there is a magic-repelling barrier. It could withstand a nuke, so long as it's magic."

The gnome never stopped drilling into the wall, and the confidence in his tone told Phoenix a lot. These two were not just any Dick and Jerry.

The golem was an intricate piece of robotics, and the gadget generating the barrier wasn't any less impressive. The level of moving pieces and carefully constructed parts belied their skill in mechanical engineering.

She understood that this was most likely skills transferred from real-world experience. They had only adapted them to what they had available here.

Phoenix tried burning the barrier again, but to no avail. It was like the heat of her fire wasn't even reaching the energy wall.

The two gnomes laughed at her futile efforts. This angered the woman even more.

She stopped for a second, examining the barrier, trying to detect a flaw of some sort. But she couldn't find anything.

She tried blasting away at the ground where the barrier stopped, but every time she made a dent in the dirt, the barrier filled it up, closing the gap.

But a thought occurred to her. The barrier was sealing gaps, but wasn't entirely closed up.

'What if I burn the ground?' she wondered.

Phoenix tested her theory. She blasted a non-stop stream of fire at the ground before the barrier.

The gnomes inside chuckled.

"Give up, lass. You won't get past the barrier."

Phoenix ignored him, focusing on her test. Soon enough, she started grinning, making her eyes slit a bit more.

Noticing the change, the gnome watching her could deduce the face she was making.

"Why are you suddenly grinning? Did you go mad? Did you know that insanity is doing the same thing repeatedly and expecting a different result?"

Phoenix ignored him.

She kept up her stream of fire, always aiming it at the same place.

The gnome was offended that the woman ignored him. But when he looked at the ground where her flames had been licking for so long, his face turned pale.

"Terrance! Did you account for natural factors in your calculations for the barrier generator?!"

"Hey! It's Gravedigger!"

"Answer the question, Terrance!"

"No! Why would I? It's a barrier to block magic. Why would natural factors even matter?"

"Fuck! Then dig faster!"

"Why are you even — oh... Oh!"

Gravedigger spun around to tell his brother to simmer down, when he noticed why he was being hysterical in the first place. At the edge of the barrier, the ground that had been dirt and stone was now turning into magma.

And the magma was slowly expanding. Looking at the burning woman, Gravedigger and Gnomestein both thought they saw a manic glint in her eyes.

Phoenix suddenly intensified her flames, pushing every ounce of mana she could into them, making them glow almost a pure white. The result of that was that the molten lava suddenly expanded three times as fast.



It would be only a few seconds before it reached the gnomes. That's when they started moving again.

"Fuck it! Grave, get out of the digger golem. I'm taking over. You use your gadgets to buy me some time!"

"On it!"

Phoenix watched on while laughing as the two gnomes suddenly got serious. They swapped positions, and suddenly things changed pace.

Once the one called Gnomestein sat in the golem's chest, it suddenly started digging twice as fast. And the other gnome, Gravedigger, suddenly pulled out an arsenal of gadgets from his inventory.

He threw a few round things at the expanding lava. When they blew up, they formed a thin layer of ice over the magma, but it didn't last long before melting.

He pulled out many things, trying to stop the lava from reaching them before they were digging. Gadget after gadget was used.

He tried blowing up the ground to form a trench and slow down the expansion. He planted metallic barricades that dug themselves into the ground.

But this only slowed it down, never fully stopping it. But Phoenix looked worried.

The acceleration of the golem's digging speed, doubled with all the tools the brother used to slow down the magma's expansion, was getting to a critical point.

It was now a race against time. Who would win?

Would the gnomes succeed and bore a hole in the Bastion's defences? Or would Phoenix's plan work before they could go through, saving the situation?

To make matters worse, Violette was losing her own battle on top of the walls. More and more players she was guarding were taking damage.

Weariness could be seen in her gaze, as her multicasting slowed down progressively. She wouldn't be able to maintain this pace much longer.

"AARRGGHH!!!"

Gravedigger was now standing in the lava, watching his health plummet. He turned his head to his brother's golem.

"COME ON! PIERCE THROUGH!"