

Shota 341

Chapter 341 Dwarven Kingdom capital

After another banquet filled with alcohol, they rested up and woke up early in the morning to get ready to head to the Dwarven Kingdom capital to see the Dwarven King.

Ivar had said that he wanted to forget his troubles and enjoy the good alcohol while he could that he binge drunk that much.

For any normal human, that would have been an amount that was enough to cause liver failure.

However, for a dwarf like Ivar, he wasn't even hungover the next morning.

I really had to admire the dwarf's tolerance for alcohol.

As for the rest of us...we were not just a bit hungover.

Ivar dragged the rest of us into drinking with him, so we had to drink with him.

Drinking with a dwarf really was a fight to the death since he didn't know when to stop and he was never truly drunk. As long as there was enough alcohol, he would drink until it was all gone.

So for humans with their limited liver capacities, they would never be able to win.

We were completely suffering from our hangovers...

It was just a good thing that it would take at least two days to arrive in the Dwarven Kingdom capital.

At least that gave us enough time to recover.

At the same time, that would give us some time to come up with a plan on how to handle the Dwarven King.

He had suddenly summoned us like this, it was clearly not for a good reason.

But regardless of what his reason was, we needed to come up with a way to handle him.

As such, even if we were hungover, we started grilling Ivar for information on the Dwarven King.

Ivar was taken aback by the questions that we had, but he answered them in the end.

In fact, it was surprising how he didn't hold back at all in answering our questions.

Normally, information like this would be considered national secrets.

With this information, one could influence the ruler of a nation which was considered a matter of national security. So information like this normally wouldn't be spread that easily and only known by those close to the ruler.

And yet...Ivar was just telling us everything without hesitation.

It really made one give a sigh at how rough and forward the dwarves were.

But this time, we had no choice but to take advantage of this.

After all, our lives might be at stake here.

...

In the end, it took four days for us to arrive in the Dwarven Kingdom capital.

It might have been sooner, but we decided to take our time and explore the cities along the way.

Haley was the one that proposed this since she wanted to gain information on the various dwarven cities for the future and Ivar agreed to this. Though his reasons for agreeing were just as sly as Haley's reason.

He was scared of what was waiting for them in the capital, so he had wanted to delay their arrival as much as possible.

During this time, Ivar had introduced Haley to quite a few of the lords in the cities that they passed which also earned him quite a bit of alcohol.

We still had the deal where if he introduced us to the different dwarven lords, we would give him a referral fee. So he looked quite happy as he introduced us to all of the dwarven lords.

The dwarven lords were happy too since they were happy to receive all of this human alcohol as a gift.

But when we reached the capital, we had grim looks on our faces.

It almost looked like we were marching off to our execution instead of heading to the most prosperous city in the Dwarven Kingdom.

Though in truth...this meeting with the Dwarven King was like an execution since we had no idea what it was about.

Since we were accompanied by Ivar, it was easy for us to enter the city.

The dwarves didn't have strict checks like humans did and they just simply checked the carriages before letting us pass.

Or at least that would have been the case if they didn't stop us again.

When they saw that it was Ivar that was with us, they immediately stopped us and had us wait until the captain of the guards came.

When this captain of the guards came, he gave a respectful bow to Ivar before saying, "Lord Silvermine, if you would come with us. His majesty had already informed us of your arrival and told us to escort you and your guests to the palace."

We couldn't help revealing bitter smiles when we heard this.

Escort...it was more like we were being captured by them.

But there wasn't anything that we could do since we were surrounded by them.

It was as if he was scared that we would run away, so the captain of the guards had already brought a bunch of his men with him.

It was as if he wasn't even bothering hiding his intentions.

So the only thing that they could do was let themselves be 'escorted' by these guards.

As they walked through the streets of the dwarven capital, they were impressed by all that they saw.

It wasn't just the forges that were all around that impressed them, but also how prosperous this place was. There were plenty of other products that were also being sold and all the dwarves on the streets looked fed and strong.

It was clear that the Dwarven Kingdom didn't suffer.

But then again, how would they when they had all those resources to trade with.

There was no lack of countries that would want to buy ores from the dwarves, so they would always have plenty of trading partners to get food and other resources from.

So no matter how one looked at it, it wouldn't be possible for the Dwarven Kingdom to be weak.

If only there wasn't the problem of having to deal with the Dwarven King...

Chapter 342 Audience with the Dwarven King

They were quickly led through the capital and to the palace in the center.

This was a palace that could be seen from far away with how big it was, but it almost seemed wrong to call this place a palace.

That was because...it looked more like a fortress rather than a palace.

This was a building that was made completely of hard ores.

Instead of being a complete building, it was a mishmash building that had different parts to it.

There were several different buildings that were made of different ores that all seemed to be put together to form one large fortress.

But there was no doubt that this was a powerful fortress with the different ores that it was made of.

Iron, cold steel, and even mithril.

These were all powerful metals that only the dwarves would be able to bring out in large amounts like this because of their natural ability to find metal.

If this was placed in a human country, it would be ripped to pieces in an instant to be scrapped for all kinds of different things. That was just how lacking in ores the human countries were.

Or at least that was what Shaka told me.

He had been looking at this fortress with a look of regret and amazement after seeing it.

It was clear that he was thinking about the forces of our kingdom and their lack of proper equipment.

After arriving in the fortress, we were led right to the throne room by the captain of the guards.

When we arrived in the throne room, we found that there were many dwarves that were gathered. However, they were not gathered because of us...they were gathered because they were discussing the issues of the Dwarven Kingdom.

"The humans to the south tried to infiltrate and steal some of the iron from our mines."

"There's an infestation of mine bats to the west that's been giving us quite a bit of trouble."

"I heard that the bread lady on third street came out with a new recipe, want to try it later?"

The last one didn't seem related to the Dwarven Kingdom, but the rest were all important matters for the Dwarven Kingdom. These things normally wouldn't be told to outsiders, but they had no problem discussing it even though they saw us enter.

Humans to the south...luckily that wasn't us.

Our kingdom was to the north of the Dwarven Kingdom, so they shouldn't be talking about us.

But since they were talking about humans, would that sentiment spread to us?

I couldn't help being worried as we were led in.

Once we fully entered the throne room and stood in front of everyone, the dwarves inside stopped talking and turned to look at us.

There was one gruff looking dwarf who was sitting right on the throne in the center of this room. He had been sitting there with a bored look on his face as he put his cheek on his left hand.

With the way that he was sitting, it almost looked like he was dozing off.

But when he saw us enter, his eyes immediately lit up and opened wide.

Even though they had already stopped talking, he still raised a hand as if he was stopping them before looking at us to say, "Vela, are these the ones?"

The captain of the guard gave a nod before saying, "Your majesty, these are the humans that you requested." Then as if it was an afterthought, he added, "Lord Silvermine is also here."

The Dwarven King gave a nod, but it was clear that he was more interested in us than in Ivar.

I didn't know what to do at first, but then Haley suddenly gave a bow and said, "Your majesty, it is an honour to meet you."

The rest of our group also did the same except for me who reacted a bit slow, but I quickly followed them and bowed to the Dwarven King.

The Dwarven King just waved his hand and said, "There's no need for any of that. We don't like that kind of formality here."

All of us slowly stood up again with awkward smiles on our faces.

We knew that, but he was still a king...so at the very least, we should show a bit of respect.

The Dwarven King just ignored the awkward looks that we had and said, "I heard that one of you was quite good at forging. That you had techniques that even we didn't have."

When the other dwarves in this room heard this, they couldn't help revealing surprised expressions before turning to look at us with curious looks. It was as if they were trying to find the person that the Dwarven King was talking about.

But I couldn't help being surprised to hear this.

How did the Dwarven King know about all of this?

The Dwarven King saw that none of us answered, so he slightly knitted his brows as he said, "Did that one not come with you? I heard Dorin mention that this was a person that used techniques that we had never seen before and that it was much better than anything we currently have."

At this, the dwarves in the room couldn't help slightly knitting their brows as a competitive look appeared in their eyes.

At the same time, there was a bit of displeasure that also appeared.

Better than anything they currently had?

Wasn't that an insult to them?

Saying that a human could forge better than them, this was like a slap to their face.

Sensing that the atmosphere in this throne room was becoming strange, I quickly stepped out and said, "Your majesty, that is me."

Dorin...that was the name of the captain of the guards at the border.

So it was all because of him that we had been summoned like this.

The Dwarven King raised a brow to look at me when I stepped out, almost as if he was doubtful of this.

But then he said with a wide smile, "Alright, have a forging duel with me."

Chapter 343 Shameless Dwarven King (1)

The moment that the Dwarven King said this, everyone looked at him in shock.

But the Dwarven King didn't care about any of this as he looked at me with an excited look.

After a long time, the dwarves on the side said, "Your majesty, this...this is..."

They were scrambling for a way to convince the Dwarven King out of this, but it was clear by the look on his face that he was already determined to do this. It didn't seem like anyone would be able to convince him out of this.

So many of them couldn't help turning to look at me with glares that also were asking for help.

The only way that this situation can be resolved without any issues was if I rejected this duel and made the Dwarven King give up.

Of course, I didn't mind going along with them since I didn't want to get involved in this matter in the first place.

A forging duel with the Dwarven King, that seemed like trouble no matter how one looked at it.

This was definitely not something that I would agree to.

So I gave a cough before calmly saying, "Your majesty, I don't think there's a need for this, right? If it was known that someone in an important position as yourself was doing something like this, I'm sure that it would be hard for you."

I tried using his position to put a bit of pressure on him to make him give up this idea.

But of course, if I just threatened him like this, it would leave a bad impression on him.

So I added, "If you wish to discuss forging, I would be more than happy to discuss this with you. We don't need to..."

Before I could finish, the Dwarven King slammed his fist onto the seat of his throne and said, "No, I want to have a forging duel! That is the best way for me to see your abilities!"

"Eh?" I couldn't help letting slip as he said this.

This Dwarven King...was acting like a child.

He was throwing a tantrum just because he wasn't able to get what he wanted...

Was this Dwarven Kingdom really alright with a king like this ruling over them?

No matter how one looked at it, it seemed like the Dwarven Kingdom would be in danger like this.

From the awkward looks on the faces of Ivar and the other dwarves, it seemed like they suffered their fair shares of trouble having to deal with this kind of king.

But in the end, the dwarves on the side came to my rescue by saying, "Your majesty, you can't be selfish like this."

"A forging duel is a matter of prestige and as our king, you can't just challenge someone to a forging duel that easily."

"How about we just take a step back and talk this out?"

The Dwarven King slammed his fist down again before saying, "I don't want to."

Was the Dwarven Kingdom really going to be alright with such a willful ruler?

The Dwarven King seemed annoyed, but there was a glow in his eyes as he looked at me.

Finally, he revealed a smile as he turned to Ivar to say, "Ivar, didn't you send in a request to sell mithril to these humans a few days ago?"

When Ivar heard this, he couldn't help revealing a slightly confused look, but he still gave a slow nod in the end.

The Dwarven King revealed a sly look as he said, "Then I'll deny this request right away."

The moment that he said this, everyone revealed shocked looks since this was the first time that something like this had happened.

The mithril mines under the Silvermine Family were private property, so asking the Dwarven King for permission was a formality in the first place. In this case, the Dwarven King would have approved of this request without even looking at the details.

But now he was going through the trouble of denying this request in front of everyone like this.

It was clear that he was trying to cause trouble or looking to gain something.

After letting his words sink in, the Dwarven King said, "That is unless this human has a forging duel with me."

When everyone heard this, they understood what the Dwarven King was trying to do.

He was using this request as a method of threatening them...but the dwarves in the room wouldn't have any of this.

"Your majesty, you should know what the consequences of doing this are."

"If you really do something like this, it will set a precedent and then there will be others who will take advantage of this."

"At the same time, if you set this precedent, there will be countless people trying to take advantage of this."

"This is the one thing that you cannot do."

Facing the pressure of all of these dwarves, the Dwarven King had no choice but to back down.

He might have acted tough earlier, but that was because he knew that these dwarves were willing to play along with him. Now that they were acting this way, he knew that they wouldn't budge no matter how stubborn he acted.

So he had no choice but to take a step back and figure out another way of doing this.

"Alright, alright." The Dwarven King said while raising his hand to calm them down.

Once they all settled, he said, "I won't do something like this. It's an abuse of power and not something that I would do in the first place."

All of them looked at the Dwarven King with looks of doubts that really hurt him, but he ignored them as he said, "But I think that there's something that the human wants more."

He turned back to look at me before saying, "If you beat me in a forging duel, I'll double the limit of mithril that you can buy from Ivar."

Chapter 344 Shameless Dwarven King (2)

"Eh?"

That wasn't just my response, but also the response of the dwarves all around the throne room.

They all looked at the Dwarven King with surprised looks when he suggested this.

At first, they didn't know what to say in response to this, but then they still said, "Your majesty, you can't do something like this."

The Dwarven King immediately swept his eyes across them and said, "Why not?"

The dwarves were caught off guard by this sudden statement from the Dwarven King.

Why not?

They actually couldn't think of a reason why he shouldn't approve of such a thing.

After all, if he did beat the Dwarven King, one of the best blacksmiths in their Dwarven Kingdom, they really couldn't say that it would be a waste to sell him this mithril. If he wasn't able to properly use this mithril, then there was no one that would be able to.

But to give this much mithril to a human just seemed wrong by nature to them that they couldn't help rejecting it.

At the same time...there was the matter of what he would do with it.

It was impossible for a single human to use all of this mithril that he was buying, so it was clear that this mithril wouldn't just be for him to use. It would most likely be for whatever country that he represented.

Giving a human country mithril...was not a good thing.

First, it would be a waste of mithril since those human countries wouldn't be able to use the mithril properly.

Second, giving humans mithril would just make them stronger which was a matter of national threat.

The dwarves that were gathered in this throne room were all people that had important positions in the Dwarven Kingdom.

They needed to care about the entire Dwarven Kingdom and not just what their king wanted, so they couldn't let this matter of national security go.

They all seemed like they wanted to say something, but I suddenly said, "I have no need for that much mithril in the first place. Even if I wanted to buy that much, there is nothing that I could do with it."

As I said this, I could feel the disappointment coming from the ones behind me.

It was clear that they wanted to take as much mithril as possible with us, but I knew that all that would cause is a bunch of trouble.

Sometimes, too much of a good thing wasn't a good thing at all.

Sometimes, too much of a good thing would just bring trouble.

Mithril was something that every human wanted since it was a legendary metal, so if people knew that we had a large amount of it...

I was not someone that was overly ambitious.

I knew that it was best to just have what I could get.

The Dwarven King couldn't help being taken aback when he heard this.

He had thought that this would be enough to move the human into having a forging duel with him, so he never expected the human to actually turn him down.

This made the Dwarven King very awkward since he hadn't thought about what to do if the human did turn him down.

After thinking about it for a bit, the Dwarven King suddenly said, "What if I also throw in trade deals for copper, iron, cold steel, and other metals?"

The moment that he said this, silence filled the room as everyone looked at him with shock. The looks on their faces made it seem like they couldn't believe what he was saying.

Before I was even able to say a thing, the dwarves immediately started trying to persuade the Dwarven King against this.

But the Dwarven King raised his hand and said to us, "If you would excuse us for a second. I wish to talk to my people for a bit."

This was their territory, so they could kick us out whenever they wanted.

Not to mention, since he was being this polite to us, we had no reason not to agree with this request.

So Vela, the captain of the guards, led us out of the throne room and watched over us while the Dwarven King and the minister dwarves talked.

After a few minutes, we were led back into the throne room.

However, this time the dwarves looked much more pacified.

I didn't know what had happened during this time, but it seemed like the Dwarven King had been able to talk down the dwarven ministers.

The Dwarven King looked at me with a smile and said, "So how about it, will you have a forging duel with me? I'll offer you twice the mithril and the trade deals for all of the other metals."

I just gave a sigh when I heard this.

When we had been outside of the room while they were having their secret talk, we also had a secret talk.

We moved away from Vela before the rest of my group started scolding me for not taking this deal.

The mithril deal was one thing, but the deal for the other ores was something that we couldn't turn down.

The one that had the most compelling argument was Shaka.

Ores was the one thing that our country lacked and our troops were ill supplied because of it.

If I obtained this ore deal, there was no doubt that the king would get involved in this matter. Once he did, I could be certain that I would receive a new title and rewards because of this.

I didn't really care about the title and rewards, but the matter of the country's defenses was something that I cared about.

After all, a safe kingdom meant a peaceful life...so I should at least contribute this much to our kingdom's defenses.

With a sigh, I said, "It would be an honour to have a forging duel with your majesty."

The Dwarven King couldn't help being taken aback once more hearing this.

He secretly peeked at my companions with a knowing look, but he didn't say a thing on this matter.

He just said with a smile, "Alright, then let's do this."

Chapter 345 Another forging duel

Since this matter was set, they didn't waste any time in bringing us to the site of the forging duel.

As this was the Dwarven Kingdom, even the castle had its own private forge.

But it wasn't just a private forge...it was a giant private forge.

There were many different dwarves going back and forth in this forge, doing all kinds of different things.

It really was a sight to behold...if one didn't know the implications of this.

All of these dwarves were forging weapons and armour for the soldiers of the Dwarven Kingdom. This was where the main supply line of the Dwarven Kingdom came from.

If anything happened to this forge one day, one can be sure that it would be a blow to the Dwarven Kingdom.

There would still be plenty of forges in the kingdom to use, but this was the best of the best. This was where the best equipment in the kingdom was, so there would be a decrease in quality of equipment if anything happened to this forge.

Not that I was planning on doing anything to this forge in the first place.

The other human countries might consider it since they had always wanted to conquer the dwarves, but I just wanted to live in peace and harmony with the dwarves.

They were a rare fantasy race that didn't exist in my previous world!

It was hard not getting excited seeing them!

After we arrived at the forge, the news of the forging duel quickly spread and we were led to the best furnaces in the entire forge.

This was the private furnace of the Dwarven King, one of the best, if not the best blacksmith in the entire Dwarven Kingdom. So naturally these furnaces would be the best.

To show his generosity, he even allowed me to choose which furnace I would use.

I could see that there was a difference between the two furnaces, but that meant that there really was only one that I could use.

Between the two furnaces, there was one that was specialized for skilled blacksmiths and one for general use. The one that was specialized required special skills to use, so I could only use the general use one.

So that was the one that I chose.

Once that was done, all we had to do was submit our request for materials and the forging duel would begin.

But before that, I had a request to make.

"Huh? You want Ivar to help you with the forging?"

The dwarves all knitted their brows when they heard this.

Could it be that this human was trying to play them?

The king had said that he had amazing forging skills which was why they had been convinced to let this forging duel happen.

The problem with the Dwarven Kingdom now was...a lack of innovation.

It had already been two years since they had made their last major discovery. They were still making minor discoveries here and there, but the problem was a lack of new innovation.

The problem with being the industry leader was having to constantly come up with new ideas and new innovations, or it would be a matter of time before the others caught up to them.

The human countries had been slowly learning their techniques and catching up to them in terms of forging.

If they didn't come up with any new ideas, it would be a matter of time before they lost their advantage as dwarves.

Though they would never lose their skills since dwarves were just genetically different from humans.

But if Ivar was the one doing the forging...

The Dwarven King thought differently though.

He had read the report from Dorin at the border, telling him that Rondo had been the one to do the hammering for Zwein during the demonstration. It was clear that this human wasn't able to do the hammering himself, so that was why he needed help.

But that confused him even more since this human had forging techniques that he had never heard of, yet he wasn't able to forge himself.

Just where had he gotten this knowledge from?

Was he a genius or was it something else?

He wanted to use this forging duel to find out.

Since the Dwarven King knew what the situation was, he just casually gave a nod before saying, "Alright, that's not a problem."

Ivar was surprised that this request was granted so easily, but he didn't mind.

He had seen Zwein's techniques before, so having the chance to work with him was definitely an opportunity.

The other dwarves seemed like they had something to say, but the Dwarven King had already spoken. Once the Dwarven King speaks, it really wasn't their place to say anything else.

However, that wasn't the only request that I had.

"I also need Moon's help with the forging." I said in a calm voice.

Once again, the dwarves were caught off guard.

After all, they knew that Moon was an elf, they had all met her when she had come into the throne room with me.

But no matter how they thought about it, they didn't think that an elf would know anything about forging.

The reason why the elves had made an alliance with the dwarves in the first place was because they needed their forging abilities.

So they didn't think this elf would be able to do much.

But the Dwarven King thought differently.

There was a reason why the dwarves had formed an alliance with the elves too. After all, they wouldn't have formed that alliance if they didn't need anything.

As for what they needed...it was the mana of the elves.

They needed the ability of the elves for a certain thing that would help in their crafting.

"Runes." The Dwarven King muttered under his breath as he narrowed his eyes to look at Moon.

But in the end, he still said with a nod, "That's not a problem at all, you can have her help you."

With those two conditions agreed to, we started our forging duel.

Chapter 346 Runes (1)

When we submitted the list of materials needed, the dwarf in charge looked at me with a strange look before asking, "Are you sure that you want all of this?"

I just gave a slow nod in response without saying anything.

The other dwarves couldn't help revealing curious looks when they heard this and they went over to that dwarf to see what I had requested.

After seeing my list, they looked at me with the same strange look.

I just ignored all of it as I waited for my materials to come.

It didn't take long for them to gather the materials, but that was to be expected from the Dwarven Kingdom.

They had an abundance of ores in the first place, so it was easy for them to gather the ores that I had requested.

After everything had been gathered, we began melting our metals.

Both the Dwarven King and I threw the mithril that we requested into the furnace and waited for it to melt, but there was a difference between us. The furnaces that we used were different from each other, so there was a different effect when it came to melting the mithril.

The furnace that I used was a simple furnace used for general ore processing.

The furnace that the Dwarven King was using was a blast furnace which would allow him to infuse a jet of air into the furnace itself. This would allow him to quickly increase the temperature of the furnace and greatly increase the heat of the furnace to quickly melt the ores.

So in no time at all, the Dwarven King was done with melting his ore while we were still waiting for the mithril to melt.

With that blast furnace, he was able to also purify the mithril even more since the blast furnace released gas waste in a different location.

So the ingots that he made were more pure than ones that were made in a normal furnace.

However, we didn't let that bother us at all as we slowly worked at our furnace.

After a while, the mithril finally melted and it was at that point that I threw in another thing.

When Ivar saw what I threw in, he couldn't help saying in a confused voice, "Why are you doing that? Wouldn't that just corrupt the mithril?"

I just said with a smile, "Remember what I told you about alloys?"

Ivar knitted his brows slightly when he heard this before his eyes suddenly opened in realization.

He said in a slow voice, "You mean..."

His voice trailed off, but the meaning in his voice was clear.

I just slowly gave a nod in response.

Ivar didn't say anything else as he looked into the furnace, as if he was trying to see just what was changing with the metal mixture.

I didn't say anything until it was time to add in another thing.

When that time came, we put in the last ingredient and watched it all melt together before taking it out.

Instead of making something fancy this time, we were just making a simple dagger.

But the metal that we used looked much different from the metal that the Dwarven King used.

The dwarves could tell that this metal was like mithril in both its colour and its attributes, but there was something strange about this metal that they just couldn't put their finger on.

It was as if the structure of the metal had been changed in a way that they had never seen before.

But just what was this?

They really wanted to take this piece of metal out of their hands and analyze it, but they couldn't do that while the forging duel was happening.

So the only thing that they could do was watch and wait, hoping that they could see something special about this metal that the human had created.

We just ignored the gazes of these dwarves and focused on our forging.

I left everything to Ivar since I didn't know how to blacksmith in the first place and it took no time at all for Ivar to finish off the dagger.

A dagger like this was a simple matter for him, though he couldn't help looking at the metal he was working on with a strange look.

When he hammered it, there was a resistance that he had never felt before.

This was a type of metal that he was working on for the first time, so he couldn't help revealing an excited look.

The other dwarves understood that look and they couldn't help looking at him with looks of envy.

When the dagger was done, the other dwarves were prepared to come over to inspect it, but I stopped them by raising my hand and waving them away.

I pulled out the engraving knife that had been brought along with the rest of the materials.

This was a special engraving knife that I had asked for since it wasn't included with the tools at the forge.

At the same time, I took out this bag of silverish powder that I placed beside me.

With this, I focused on the cooled dagger in front of me and started making marks on it with the engraving knife.

The dwarves were confused as to what I was doing at first, but then they slowly understood as some of them muttered...

"Runes, he's marking runes on the dagger."

"Runes, huh?"

"Runes..."

Many of them seemed like they were disappointed by the fact that I was marking runes, but I understood what they were thinking.

At this point in the game, runes were still regarded as failed technology.

There were runes that had been discovered with the help of the elves, but they didn't have the effect that the dwarves had wanted.

So rune smithing had been regarded as a failure that was abandoned by the dwarves.

There were some that wanted to keep studying rune smithing, but now wasn't the time for that when they had hit a wall in their innovations.

So rune smithing had even reached a point where it was looked down on in the Dwarven Empire.

That was why they seemed disappointed when they saw me carving runes in the dagger.

Chapter 347 Runes (2)

I just ignored their disappointed looks and focused on my work.

Slowly, I carved more and more ruins onto the dagger, but they were still inactive.

For these ruins to have any effect on the dagger, they needed to be infused with first.

I was just carving them into the dagger first without the . Once I finished engraving these runes on the dagger, I would need Moon's help to activate them with .

I slowly but surely carved out five different ruins on the dagger.

There was still space for more runes to be carved onto the dagger, but I felt that five was enough for now.

If it was any more, Moon might not have enough mana to activate them all and there was no need to mention the miniscule amount of mana that I had.

So five should be considered the limit.

But then again, it wasn't as if I was creating a dagger to kill the gods with, so five was already more than enough.

Once I finished carving, I waved for Moon to come over.

She came to my side and looked at the runes that I had carved with a curious look.

She had never seen these runes before, but she could tell that there was some strange power that was coming from it. She could feel that as long as there was infused into these runes, they would demonstrate some kind of incredible power.

So Moon couldn't help feeling a bit excited seeing these runes.

She looked at me and asked, "What do I need to do?"

I was happy seeing that she was interested in this, it would mean that she would do a better job since she was interested to see how this would turn out.

I pointed at one of the runes and said, "Inject your after I've finished spreading the powder. That will finish the infusion of the runes and allow it to absorb mana to operate."

Moon gave a nod before reaching her hand up over the rune.

Seeing this, I took a pinch of the powder that I had requested.

This powder was mithril powder.

Mithril was a metal that was very good at conducting , which was why it was a very sought after metal.

If it was used in armour, it would be able to conduct to become stronger. At the same time, it would allow to pass through, which would lower the effectiveness of any spell thrown at the person wearing the armour.

If it was used in a weapon, then it would allow the user to inject into the weapon, making it even more powerful either in the form of making it sharper or infusing it with some kind of elemental .

Mithril was a metal that was very useful in this sense, which was why it was so sought after.

As for the powdered mithril, it would also conduct , allowing us to create a circuit on the runes that would allow them to absorb mana and activate.

Once the mithril powder was spread on the first rune, Moon released her mana and infused it.

The main circuit was in the rune, so the powder was just there to catch the mana that Moon infused.

Once the mana was infused into the rune, the rune released a glow before dimming.

However, the rune no longer looked like scratches made on the surface of the dagger. Rather, it looked like a silver painted rune on the dagger because of the mithril powder sticking to it.

Seeing this, I knew that the first rune had been finished, so I moved on to the second rune.

Using the same process as the first rune, we infused the second, third, fourth, and fifth rune with .

When we were done, the dagger now had five silver looking runes engraved onto it.

At the same time, there was a strong power that came from the dagger itself.

Just based on this, it was clear that these runes had turned this dagger into a weapon.

But just that wasn't enough for this dagger to qualify as a proper weapon.

It would depend on what abilities these runes would give the dagger.

When the dwarves looked at the dagger that I held, they noticed that they didn't recognize the runes at all. The runes that were engraved on this dagger were completely different from any runes that they had seen before.

Even those that had studied runes before weren't able to figure out what these runes were or what they meant.

So they all couldn't help being curious as to what this dagger was capable of.

But it wasn't time to demonstrate that yet since the Dwarven King still wasn't finished with his forging yet.

He had been watching our forging a bit, but he had also been focused on his own weapon.

This was a normal sized sword that was completely made of mithril.

With the sheen that this sword possessed, it was clear that it was a very sharp sword.

It seemed like it could even cut a hair in half with how sharp it was.

After putting on the finishing touches, the Dwarven King brought his sword forward with a satisfied look on his face.

When he was done, the Dwarven King was finally able to come over and admire our dagger.

The other dwarves who had been crowding around it, trying to figure out just what these runes did made room for him to study this dagger.

After looking at it for a bit, he said, "These are quite interesting, I've never seen them before. But I can sense the power coming from them and I can tell that these runes definitely aren't weak. How did you engrave them on?"

I just said with a faint smile, "How about we test them first before I say anything?"

The Dwarven King looked at the dagger again before saying with a nod, "Alright."

He was also interested in seeing this dagger in action.

He wanted to see just what these runes could do.

Chapter 348 Power of runes

Since both sides had finished forging, the only thing left to do now was to test the blades that they had created to see which side had forged the better blade.

But since I had crafted a dagger with runes, it wasn't suitable to do the same test as before.

Testing the blades against each other wouldn't show the true power of the blade.

Especially since both of them were made of mithril.

Mithril weapons would become stronger when was injected into them, so just testing them against each other wasn't a good measure of how good these weapons were.

So instead, we settled on the armour test.

This was testing the weapons against armour prepared.

This would be considered a waste of good armour, but the armour had been prepared by the dwarves in the first place. The armour used were failed products, so it didn't matter if they were cut up.

But even if they were failed products...these were pieces of armour that were made of mithril.

When my human companions saw this, they all revealed looks of regret.

Mithril armour, even failed mithril armour, was considered rare in the human kingdoms.

If they could obtain just even a single set of this failed mithril armour, they would be able to die of happiness.

However, here we were using them as tests for our blades.

It really seemed wasteful...

After the mithril armour was set up, it was our turn to test our blades.

The mithril armour was put on a stand that had a crystal inside of it that would release into the mithril armour, making it much stronger than normal.

This set of mithril armour failed because it absorbed more than normal, which made it harder than normal mithril. That was a problem since that made it too heavy for anyone to wear, so they couldn't find a use for it.

Even if one controlled the amount of that they injected into the armour, the mithril armour just kept draining without a care.

So there really was no way to use the armour...that was until now.

Since it was so hard, it would be perfect to test the blades on them.

The Dwarven King stepped up first and said, "I'll go first."

I didn't mind at all since I knew that the results from my dagger would go beyond what they expected. It was better to let the Dwarven King go first before going myself since I was confident that I would be able to destroy this armour.

The Dwarven King gave a nod in response to my nod and stepped up in front of the mithril armour with his sword in hand.

He took a deep breath before suddenly giving a roar.

When he did, he slashed out with that sword in his hand.

There was the sound of metal clashing with metal that rang out when the mithril sword in his hand hit the armour, but he didn't cut through it.

He was only able to make a gash in the mithril armour with the sword in his hand, but that was already enough to shock the other dwarves.

They all knew just how hard this failed mithril armour was, so just being able to make this gash was already proof enough of how sharp this mithril sword was.

But on the face of the Dwarven King was a look of disappointment.

It was almost as if he wasn't satisfied with this mithril sword that he forged at all.

With a sigh, the Dwarven King came back and said, "It's your turn now."

I gave a nod before walking forward with the dagger in hand.

As I walked forward, I could feel the gazes of the dwarves on me. Even the Dwarven King's eyes were on me as I came up to the armour.

The Dwarven King had slashed down at the armour from one side, creating a gash on one of the shoulders.

So I would be slashing down on the other shoulder and then comparing the results with the Dwarven King's gash.

But I knew that there wouldn't be anything to compare.

I just calmly stood in front of the armour and took a deep breath before bringing the dagger to place on the left shoulder of the set of armour.

Taking another deep breath, I released my power to fill the dagger.

Ever since I obtained the Orb of the Dead, my power had awakened.

It was still very weak, but I had been working with Moon to learn how to control it.

She had given me exercises on how to use that power and I had been diligently training with those exercises.

So I was able to squeeze out a bit of power to use this dagger with.

That was all that I needed since the runes on the dagger already contained power. They just needed a little bit of mana to activate the power that was inside.

When the dagger received my mana, the first rune on it started to glow.

Then as more and more of my mana flowed in, all five runes were lit up.

Only then did I bring the dagger down with a deep breath.

The moment that the dagger made contact with the mithril armour...there was no resistance at all.

The dagger cut right through the mithril armour like a hot knife through butter.

I didn't stop after cutting into armour and just pulled my arm all the way down until the dagger came out of the armour the other way.

Just like this, I had cut not only the armour, but also the stand that it was on in half.

The top part of the armour with the stand inside fell off the bottom part.

The bottom part fell to the ground since there was nothing holding it up anymore.

There was a loud clattering sound as both parts fell to the ground.

All that followed afterwards was silence as everyone stared on in shock.

Chapter 349 Learning about runes (1)

In truth, I was even shocked by this.

I never thought that the runes would be this powerful even though I knew that they were powerful.

I had thought that this dagger would get stuck halfway through the armour, but that didn't seem to be the case.

Regardless, I couldn't act surprised now, so I forced myself to reveal a calm look.

After a long silence, the dwarves suddenly came forward.

They immediately surrounded me as expected, but they also surrounded the stand and mithril armour. They looked at it carefully as if they were trying to see if there was a flaw with it.

But they couldn't find a single thing wrong no matter how they looked at it.

This mithril armour was still the same as before, it was just that the dagger...was sharper than it.

That was how it had cut through it like a scythe through wheat.

Once they recognized this, they all turned their attention to the dagger.

With the results like this, there was no need for them to argue who had won. Even a fool would be able to see that this dagger was much better than the mithril sword.

In that case, there was no problem in them inspecting the dagger now.

I had already guessed this, so I walked over to a table and put the dagger down for them to look over.

The dwarves took a while inspecting the dagger and from time to time, I could hear...

"This metal, it's like mithril...but it's even lighter and harder than mithril...just what is this metal?"

"How can that be? Mithril is already one of the lightest metals out there, how could there be something lighter than mithril?"

"How would I know? I'm looking at the same thing as you and I can't figure it out either."

There were a few dwarves that seemed like they were about to start fighting as they discussed this, but then one dwarf suddenly shouted something.

"Silver!"

All of the other dwarves looked at this one dwarf with a confused look as they waited for this dwarf to explain.

But this dwarf didn't say anything as he looked more closely at the dagger.

The other dwarves waited at first, but they became more and more impatient when they saw that this dwarf wasn't saying anything.

So they surrounded this dwarf and asked, "What do you mean by silver?"

With the way that he was surrounded, it really seemed like they were threatening him at this point.

But that dwarf didn't care as he kept staring at the dagger.

Slowly, that dwarf said, "Silver, there are traces of silver in this dagger as well that makes it this light."

When this dwarf said this, all of the other dwarves stuck their head in closer to the dagger to examine it. When they did, they started muttering things.

"That's right. When I look closer, there really are traces of silver mixed in with the mithril..."

"But how does that work? If you add metals in the furnace together like this, that would just increase the impurities of the ingot you make. It shouldn't make something that's stronger and lighter like this?"

"How would I know? I'm looking at the same thing as you are."

"What did you say?"

As they were muttering, they started arguing with each other and in no time at all, it almost seemed like they were about to fight.

It seemed that dwarves really were passionate when it came to forging...

But they didn't start fighting as they all turned to look at me.

I had already expected this and said with a sigh, "It's true that if you put random metals together, they will just add impurities in the final product. However, there are some metals that compliment each other..."

I knew that I would have to give another lecture about alloys, so I didn't hold back at all as I started giving them this lecture.

During the lecture, there were many questions that they had, but I was able to answer them all.

It was a good thing that the questions that they asked weren't that complicated.

But that was only because this was a new concept for them and they didn't really know what to ask yet.

If they had some time to study it...I wouldn't be able to keep up with them and would run out of answers.

For now though, I was still able to act like I knew more than them.

Once we were finished talking about the alloys, the dwarves started discussing many different things.

They already had different ideas for what kind of ores they would be able to mix together to create new alloys.

There were many that I had already heard of both in the game and in my past life.

As expected of dwarves who were obsessed with forging.

It really wouldn't take them long to surpass me in terms of creating alloys...

I should really take advantage of my advanced knowledge while I still can.

But the Dwarven Kings suddenly said, "That's not the key thing."

When they heard this, the dwarves couldn't help looking at the Dwarven King with a confused look.

The Dwarven King came forward and reached a hand out to point at the runes on the dagger before saying, "You need to remember that there are these runes on this dagger as well."

When they heard this, they all started paying attention to the runes that were drawn on it.

That's right, there were also these runes that had been on this dagger.

They knew that it was impossible for the dagger alone to demonstrate that kind of power even though it was a new kind of metal.

So it had to be the power of the runes that had allowed this dagger to cut right through the mithril armour and the stand.

If they were able to put these runes on the items that they forged...wouldn't they be able to make even better items?

All of the dwarves turned back to look at me with curious looks that just made me reveal an awkward smile.

Chapter 350 Learning about runes (2)

Since I was willing to take this out, naturally I was willing to teach them.

But before that...I had to make sure that I was getting something that was worth this information.

I didn't explain what these runes were like I had done with the alloy right away.

Instead, I looked at the Dwarven King and calmly asked, "The results of the forging duel?"

The dwarves were taken aback when they heard this, but then they all suddenly revealed wide smiles.

The Dwarven King gave a chuckle before saying, "You still need to ask? If I wanted to proclaim victory after that display, I would be a fool, right? My eyes are still clear, so I can see the difference between our blades. There's no need to worry, I accept my loss."

After he said this, all of the other dwarves gave a chuckle.

They knew what personality their king had, that was why they were willing to follow him in the first place.

After that, the Dwarven King said, "Since I've challenged you to the forging duel, naturally you'll receive the reward you deserve."

His expression became serious as he said, "I'll permit you to buy double the amount of mithril that you've requested and I'll allow you to buy a certain amount of other ores from our Dwarven Kingdom."

He looked at me with that serious expression and said, "Is that alright?"

I gave a firm nod after hearing this.

This was all that I wanted.

I wanted to make sure that I would be able to collect the prize once it was all over.

The Dwarven King gave another chuckle before saying, "It's not like I would go back on my promise in the first place. The things that you humans worry about really are trivial and silly, but then again, that's just how you humans are."

The dwarves all nodded with knowing smiles when they heard this.

I couldn't help revealing an awkward look when I heard this.

It was true, these were just the things that we humans were worried about and there was no changing it.

So I just acted like I didn't hear anything and said with a cough, "So let's talk about the dagger."

When they heard this, the eyes of all dwarves lit up and they paid attention to me.

They immediately gathered around the table with the dagger, with quite a bit of pushing between them as they tried to get a better position to watch my explanation. Even the Dwarven King wasn't an exception to this as he pushed his way to the front.

Even though he was their king, they didn't give any preferential treatment to him as

I just stood there in front of the table with the dagger on it and pointed at one of the runes.

This was the first rune that I had carved at the hilt of the dagger.

After pointing at it, I said, "This rune is the rune of sharpness. It increases the sharpness of the blade when activated."

"Sharpness?" The dwarves repeated after me.

The Dwarven King then asked, "How do you know that it's sharpness? Also, how sharp does it make the weapon?"

I just said with a shrug, "That's what I've learned, I don't know the rune language at all."

After I said this, all of the dwarves couldn't help looking at me with surprised looks as the Dwarven King slowly asked, "You...don't know the rune language?"

I just gave a calm nod in response.

All of them looked at me with strange looks before the Dwarven King asked, "Then how do you know how to carve runes? Don't you have to know the runes to do something like that?"

I shook my head before saying, "As long as you know what the runes are, you can carve them with a bit of technique. You should have seen my sloppy technique, right? Even someone like me could do that, so anyone should be able to."

Of course...that wasn't the truth.

I knew how to do this because I had seen it in the game.

It was a good thing that there was a detailed cutscene of this, or I really would have been in trouble trying to pretend like I knew rune carving.

The dwarves had sharp eyes for technique since this was what they specialized in.

They could see that my technique was sloppy, a clear sign that I was an amateur and yet I was able to carve such amazing runes on this dagger. So they had no choice but to accept my explanation as the truth since the facts were in front of them.

After accepting this truth, the Dwarven King once again touched on the key thing here as he asked, "How many of these runes do you know?"

That was when I revealed a smile.

This was the question that I had been waiting for since this was the only real card that I had in my hand.

Perhaps there would be a way to develop new runes if one understood the rune language, but that was just too advanced for me. Instead, I had my knowledge from the game.

I knew different runes that didn't exist in this period of the game, but existed further in the future of the game.

As long as I took these runes out, I could advance rune smithing by at least several decades.

But of course, I wouldn't bring it out that easily.

After pretending to think for a bit, I casually said, "Maybe around ten or so."

Hearing this, the dwarves revealed looks of shock and admiration.

They had thought that it would be good if I knew one more, but I knew five or so more.

This was without a doubt a very meaningful thing.

If they could get these runes...

The Dwarven King once again touched on the main thing as he asked, "How did you come across these runes? Did you find them or were they given to you by someone else?"