

Shota 471

Chapter 471 The Duke's Visit (12)

As the tense silence hung in the air, the elves from the capital started moving towards the two green haired elves.

It was as if they would stand on their side if a fight broke out...when a fight broke out.

With the way that everyone was positioning themselves, it really seemed like a fight would happen.

But to everyone's surprise, it was the two green haired elves who eased the tension.

The one on the left said with a smile on her face, "Now, now, there's no need to act this way."

The one on the right also revealed a smile as he said, "We're just trying to help here, there's no need to be so aggressive."

The green haired elder narrowed her eyes to look at the two of them.

The look in her eyes made it very clear that she didn't trust them, but she couldn't just tell them off here in front of everyone.

Taking a deep breath, she calmed herself down and said, "Thank you for your concern, but there's no need for your help. We will figure out something on our own since this is our village."

The two of them looked at each other before the one on the left said, "But doesn't this pose a problem for your guest?"

The one on the right nodded in agreement to this before saying, "Since it's caused a problem for your guest, how about we help you solve it?"

The one on the left continued by saying, "How about we bring our people and help escort you out of the forest?"

Everyone looked at her in shock when she said this.

The elves from the capital had unwilling looks of shock on their faces, making it clear that they didn't want to do this. The elves from the village were shocked since they never thought that these elves from the capital would make such an offer.

From beginning to end, they had acted in an arrogant manner that made it seem like they were unwilling to help anyone.

The green haired elder looked at the two of them like she didn't believe what she was hearing.

But in the end, she still said, "Thank you for your offer, but there's no need. We will take care of our own guests."

The two of them just gave shrugs before the one on the left said, "Alright, if that's what you want."

The one on the right added, "If you ever need help, feel free to come talk to us."

With that, the two of them turned to leave.

The elves from the capital looked at the two of them with surprised looks since they didn't think that they would leave this easily. They thought that they would cause some more trouble before leaving...

But it didn't seem like they were planning on doing anything.

So they had no choice but to leave with these two.

Once they were alone, the green haired elder let out a sigh of relief before knitting her brows again.

I could see that something was wrong, so I asked, "What is it? You can just tell me."

The green haired elder looked at me with a complicated look before saying, "They are right though. With the portal down like this, the only way to leave the village is to travel through the forest."

I looked right at her and could tell that there was something else on her mind, so I said, "But there's something that you're worried about?" I turned to look in the direction those elves from the capital left in, "Something that has to do with them?"

The green haired elder looked at me before giving a sigh and saying, "You already know what I'm worried about, you've already thought of the same thing."

I slowly gave a nod in response.

The way that they acted was just too strange just now.

It was clear that those two were planning something and if I had to guess what it was, it was very likely that they were planning an ambush.

If they took care of me in the forest and hid the evidence, it wasn't as if anyone could do anything.

After all, that was the same thing that I did with Apollo.

To think that they would want to do the same to me, was that considered karma or something else?

The green haired elder gave a sigh before saying, "I can't send people to escort you out or else it'll be too suspicious. I can only send a few people that can help guide the way..."

Her voice trailed off as she revealed an awkward look.

After all, as far as she knew, this was a problem that was caused by their side for me so she was put in an awkward position.

But I knew better since I was actually the cause of this.

If I hadn't made Apollo disappear, none of this would have happened.

So in a sense, these were the consequences of my own actions.

I shook my head and said, "It's fine, it isn't as if my people are that weak. If they really try something..."

My voice trailed off, but the way that I looked at the green haired elder made my intentions clear.

She was surprised when she saw how decisive and firm I was, but she understood where I was coming from.

If this was ever found out, then it would be very likely that a war between the humans and elves would start. This was the last thing that either of us wanted, so of course we wanted to handle this matter as properly as possible.

That meant not leaving a single trace of evidence if something did happen.

The green haired elder was silent for a bit before saying with a sigh, "I hope that you will show as much mercy as you can. They won't say anything if they get away..."

I looked at her and said, "But they will hold a grudge."

The green haired elder opened her mouth, but closed it again before giving a nod.

She knew that I was right, so there was nothing that she could say.

But in the end, she still said, "I still hope that you will show as much mercy as you can."

I looked at her and slowly gave a nod before saying, "I will try."

That was all I could promise her.

The rest would depend on them.

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In the end, the ones that guided us were Moon's group.

The green haired elder had wanted to send a few of her trusted people to guide us out, but Moon stopped her from doing that.

Moon knew what was happening as well, but she didn't want to get them involved.

So she volunteered for this position...though she would have had to come with us in the first place since she was going back to the town.

But the ones that had come back didn't need to. They were free to choose if they wanted to come and go because that was just how our arrangement was.

They stayed with Moon in the end, showing how loyal they were to her.

As we left the village, the green haired elder looked at us with a worried look.

She went over to Moon and patted the back of her hand as she said, "Be careful."

Moon didn't say anything and just gave a simple nod before leading the way.

Once we were out of earshot, I got out of the carriage and went to her side. As I walked there beside her, I asked, "Do you feel any regret? If you do, you don't have to do this."

Moon looked at me and shook her head before saying, "It's our fault for getting you involved in this matter."

There was a tinge of bitterness that filled me when I heard this.

After all, the truth of the matter was that it was my fault in the first place.

After all, I was the one that had gotten rid of Apollo and his men.

Shaka who was with Cecilia's people also knew this, but he had a poker face the entire time, so no one had been able to find out anything.

Seeing the way that I looked at her, Moon looked back at me and said, "I'm fine. They have chosen their path just as we have chosen ours. If that puts us on opposite sides, then there's nothing that we can do."

I looked at her with the same complicated look, but I gave a sigh and said, "You don't need to act tough. I understand how you feel."

Moon didn't respond to this as she just turned to face forward again.

With this, it was clear that she was saying that this conversation was over.

With a sigh, I went back to the carriage.

The journey could be considered quite smooth since we were able to make it about halfway without encountering any monsters. Even if we did encounter monsters afterwards, they were weak monsters that we were able to make short work of.

It seemed like we were going to make it out of the forest without any problems.

At least that was what it seemed like.

That was until there was some kind of trembling that came from the ground.

As soon as we felt this tremble, we immediately stopped moving and took a defensive position.

At the same time, Moon immediately had two of her elves go scout out where this trembling was coming from.

It took them no time at all to find the source of this trembling.

"It's a goblin stampede."

As soon as we heard this, we couldn't help being shocked.

I looked at Moon as if I was asking if this was common, but Moon just shook her head to show that she had no idea. As far as she knew, she had never heard of a large goblin settlement in this area.

After a long pause, Cecilia looked at Moon and asked, "What should we do?"

Though she was the captain of the knights, this was unfamiliar territory for her, so she deferred this decision to Moon who was more familiar with the surrounding area.

Moon deeply knitted her brows before turning to look at the two elves who had gone scouting.

They bent closer together and started whispering, as if they were discussing something.

From time to time, they would raise their voice, but there wasn't much that we could pick up from this. At the same time, the elves that Moon was questioning shook their heads from time to time as if they were denying what she was asking them.

By the end, Moon suddenly said in a louder voice, "So you're telling me that it's all blocked off?"

The two elves looked at each other before slowly nodding.

At this, I came forward and asked, "What's wrong?"

Moon looked at me, but she didn't answer right away.

After taking a deep breath and giving a sigh, she said, "The place that we're currently in is surrounded by two cliffs on both sides. There's a small passage that we could have taken to get out of this place just ahead of us, but the goblins have already blocked that up. Even if we want to go there now, there are just too many goblins."

Cecilia knitted her brows as she said, "Then why don't we just go back the way that we came?"

Moon shook her head before gesturing to the carriage, "That's too slow, it'll never make it in time. We'll be surrounded by goblins before we can get out of the way."

All of us fell silent when we heard this.

Though we were silent, there were looks of deep thought that were on our faces.

Even though this seemed like a bad situation, that didn't mean that we had given up.

Cecilia took a deep breath and said, "What are the cliffs like? How tall are they? Can we climb them?"

Moon was surprised to hear this, but then she waved at the two elves that had gone out scouting.

They came over and answered all of the questions that Cecilia had.

After that, she fell into a period of deep thought as if she was processing all of this.

When she was done, Cecilia looked up at us and said, "We'll fight them off in this place. As long as we trap them in this valley, we should be able to take them down easily."

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A few minutes later, we were all positioned according to Cecilia's plan.

There were elves that were positioned on the sides of the cliffs that all had their bows at the ready. They were ready to fire as soon as they saw the enemy.

The ones that were still in the valley surrounded the carriage, as if they were planning on using the carriage as a blockade against the goblins.

At this point, the trembling on the ground had become even stronger and it was clear that the goblins were getting closer.

There was even a disgusting smell that filled the air as this happened.

It didn't take long before the goblins came into view.

Though it was a stampede, they were moving at a moderate pace into the valley.

However, as soon as they came into the valley and saw the carriage, they stopped moving. But this was nothing more than the calm before the storm as the goblins organized themselves.

The goblin riders with their wolves came to the front while the rest of the goblins formed a wall formation. There were even goblin archers that were lined up in the back of this formation, ready to let their arrows fly into the sky at any moment.

The way that the goblins moved, it was clear that they weren't a random group, but rather a trained group that had gathered for a specific reason. For a group of this size, there had to be something like a Goblin General holding them all together.

A Goblin General, this was something that they hadn't faced in a long time...not since the town had been hit with that beast wave.

After the goblin riders were in position, they charged out without any hesitation.

The rest of the goblins slowly made their advance towards the carriage while the goblin archers prepared to shoot.

The moment that the goblins made contact, they would let the arrows rain down.

Cecilia raised her hand for her people to hold as the goblin riders charged at them.

Seeing these goblins on wolves coming, the knights couldn't help feeling the pressure that came from this.

However, Cecilia still didn't give them the order to charge.

The goblin riders came closer and closer until they were almost upon them.

That was when Cecilia suddenly dropped the hand that she had been holding up while saying, "Do it now!"

As soon as she gave this order, the ones that weren't on horses suddenly pulled the ropes that had been hidden in the ground with all their might. As soon as they pulled on these ropes there were hidden wood spikes that suddenly came out of the ground.

The goblin riders weren't able to react in time and many of their wolves were impaled by these wooden spikes. With the speed that they were going at, it was an instant death as the spikes pierced their heads and brains.

There were also some of the riders that were pierced by these spikes and were killed by the momentum.

However, there were more of them that were thrown into the air from their wolves as their wolves were impaled on the spikes.

They couldn't stop themselves as they were thrown right at the mounted knights.

These goblins riders tried to turn themselves in midair to strike back at these mounted knights, but they didn't have a chance. As soon as they were in range, the knights easily cut through these goblin riders.

It wasn't just that they were stronger after the intense training that they had undergone after the beast wave, it was also because of the special swords that they had in their hands.

Even though the dwarves had only been here for a few days, that was more than enough time for them to outfit each of the knights with special swords.

The main reason that the dwarves had followed Zwein back was because they wanted to learn his rune and forging techniques. So during this time, they had been practicing with what he had taught them.

At the same time, there was quite a bit of mithril that was brought back from the Dwarven Kingdom for them to use.

So all of the knights had mithril swords with runes engraved on them.

The sharpness of these swords was guaranteed and they cut through the goblin riders like a hot knife through butter.

There was no resistance at all from the goblin riders.

Even the ones that had raised their swords to block found that these swords couldn't resist the mithril swords at all.

The swords of these goblin riders were made from bad quality iron that they found, so naturally they couldn't compete with these special made mithril swords.

Just like this, most of the goblin riders were wiped out. The ones that were able to avoid the spike trap were quickly disposed of by a few knights that had been waiting in the wings in an ambush.

The goblins in the back couldn't help hesitating when they saw what happened to the goblin riders, but that only lasted a few seconds. As if they were spurred on by something, the goblins didn't hesitate to march again.

It almost seemed like they were driven by fear based on the looks on their faces.

As they came closer, the goblin archers prepared to fire their arrows, but...before that could happen...

There was a rain of arrows that suddenly fell down on the goblin archers.

It was the elves who had been waiting on the cliffs the entire time.

They hadn't fired their arrows when the goblin riders had charged forward, they had been waiting with their bows drawn the entire time for the goblins to come forward.

These arrows pierced right through the goblins and mowed down all of the archers. All of the arrows were aimed perfectly at the goblin archers, so there wasn't a single one that survived.

All these arrows that were shot out were those with mithril arrowheads, so the goblins didn't stand a chance against them. These were also made by the dwarves in town during this time.

There were only the regular goblins that made up the bulk of this group left, but...it didn't seem like they stood a chance against these humans and elves.

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However, even though the archers fell under these arrows, the mass of goblins didn't stop charging forward.

Judging by the look in their eyes, it almost seemed like they were terrified of something. It was almost as if they would be killed if they stopped charging forward.

But these goblins were no match for Cecilia and her formation.

They just ran right into the spikes that were protruding out of the ground while having arrows rain down on them. The ones that were able to make it through all of this reached Cecilia and her knights only to be cut down by their mithril swords.

In a sense, they were charging right into the meat grinder and they didn't care.

It really was strange why they were doing all of this...

That is until there was a roar that rang out.

When everyone looked in the direction of this roaring, they found that it was a Goblin General that came out.

With the way that the goblins looked at this Goblin General in fear, it should be that this Goblin General was forcing the goblins to charge without care for their own lives.

But it didn't make sense...

Why would the Goblin General treat its subordinates like this?

There was nothing for the Goblin General to gain from doing something like this.

Still, the fact that the Goblin General was here meant that the situation had changed.

Regardless of what reason it had, that wasn't the main concern right now.

The main concern was the fact that there was a Goblin General here and it was clearly targeting them. If they didn't take care of this Goblin General, there was no telling what it would do.

So Cecilia left a few of her knights to keep cutting down the goblins while she focused on the Goblin General.

The situation was different from a few months ago where she was barely able to fight against this Goblin General. She had undergone fierce training and had gained a new set of mithril weapons.

With her new abilities, she would be able to take down this Goblin General.

Not to mention that she was charging with her knights who had also become stronger.

Together, they would be able to easily take down this Goblin General.

It was just too bad that the Goblin General was...just a distraction.

As soon as Cecilia led her group of knights to charge at the Goblin General, when everyone's attention was attracted by this Goblin General...there were arrows that suddenly flew through the air,

These arrows flew straight and true, landing right on the carriage before suddenly bursting into flames.

With these arrows being shot at from different directions, this carriage was instantly lit on fire. There was no stopping it as the carriage was suddenly covered in flames.

In no time at all, there was only the burnt carcass of a carriage lying there on the ground.

Cecilia and her knights had swerved around the Goblin General and had tried to come back to the carriage, but they were too late.

The Goblin General didn't hesitate to charge at Cecilia and her knights when it saw them running away.

It stomped on several of the goblins that were in front of it, crushing them without any hesitation.

One could even feel sorry for these goblins as they didn't deserve such a fate, if only they weren't goblins.

However, once the Goblin General had gotten too far and isolated itself from the rest of its group, Cecilia and her knights suddenly turned around.

The Goblin General wasn't able to keep up with the horses that they were riding, so it could only raise its arms to block the attacks that came from Cecilia and her knights.

Unfortunately for the Goblin General, Cecilia and her knights all had the mithril swords.

They had no problem cutting through the thick muscles of the Goblin General and in no time at all, the Goblin General was covered in cuts as it fell to its knees. The Goblin General did all it could to try and stand up, but it was no use at all.

It just couldn't do anything as it fell forward, bleeding out from all of the wounds that had been inflicted on it.

As the Goblin General fell, Cecilia couldn't help looking at the Goblin General with a complicated look.

In the past, this had been a powerful monster that had caused her a lot of trouble.

But after months of training and new equipment, she was able to take it down easily with her knights.

She really didn't know how to feel about this, but there was a part of her that did feel pride. There was also a part of her that was satisfied knowing that her training hadn't been in vain.

But she quickly suppressed this as she turned in a specific direction.

She knew that this wasn't over yet.

It wasn't the goblins that were the problem, but rather the ones that had fired the arrows.

Cecilia just left a few knights to deal with the remaining goblins while she led the rest of them to find those that had shot the arrows.

When she climbed up the cliff, she found that there was already a fierce battle that was happening here.

It was a battle between the elves led by Moon and a few cloaked figures that were trying to escape.

These cloaked figures didn't use any special techniques, only shooting arrows at Moon and her elves. However, when one looked closely, they could see that there was a faint green energy coming from their bows.

It was clear that they were capable of using , but they were holding themselves back.

When these cloaked figures saw Cecilia's group, even though their expressions couldn't be seen, it was clear that they recognized that they were in danger.

So they no longer held back.

These cloaked figures started using , casting all kinds of different spells at Cecilia and Moon's group.

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Once they started casting spells, it made it a bit easier to identify them.

After all, the that they cast...was very similar to the that Moon and her elves were using.

It was clear that the other side was either composed of elves or they were related to the elves in some way.

But these spells didn't do anything to Cecilia and Moon's group.

The arrows and swords that they used were made of mithril, which was very sensitive to . Not only was it easy to infuse into mithril, mithril could also be used to cut right through energy.

So they were able to easily dispel all of the spells thrown at them while still putting pressure on the cloaked figures.

The cloaked figures saw that their spells weren't working, so they did the only thing that they could do. They turned around and wanted to run away, but they found that a few of the knights had already circled around and cut them off.

They were completely pinched in here.

When a beast was cornered...they didn't hold back. When a beast was cornered, that was when they were their most terrifying.

Seeing that they had no way out, the cloaked figures looked at each other before seemingly coming to a consensus.

They knew that unless they did something drastic, they wouldn't be able to escape...so they pulled out a scroll.

As soon as this scroll was pulled out, Moon immediately said, "Stop them! That's a fireball scroll! It contains an A Rank Fireball Spell!"

Cecilia narrowed her eyes as soon as she heard this before shouting, "Cover me!"

Then without hesitation, she charged at the cloaked figure that had pulled out this scroll.

The cloaked figure moved back while the other cloaked figures came forward to protect them. They threw all kinds of spells as Cecilia, not caring that they were being attacked from the other sides.

However, not a single one of these spells reached her as arrows flew right past her to scatter all of these spells.

All of these arrows came from a single elf, Moon.

She had given up on protecting herself and focused only on covering Cecilia.

She was able to scatter all of these spells, but there were some that came for her.

The elves around her tried their best, but there was one that caught her arm and knocked her back a bit.

Even then, Moon didn't fall down as she looked at Cecilia with gritted teeth and said, "Do it!"

Cecilia didn't look back once as she put her faith in Moon.

She was able to make it all the way to the cloaked figures and then to their surprise, she suddenly jumped. Before any of them could react, she landed on one of their heads and jumped at the cloaked figure that had run away.

That cloaked figure had almost finished injecting their energy into the scroll and was about to cast the spell when...

Cecilia suddenly fell down from the sky with her sword swinging down.

The cloaked figure wasn't able to react at all as the sword cut right through their arms, severing both of them while they were still holding the scroll up to use.

The faint glow around the scroll slowly faded as the two arms fell to the ground.

"Ah!"

A scream of pain rang out before that cloaked figure fell to the ground.

Cecilia quickly picked up the scroll and put it away, but that didn't mean that she was out of danger yet.

Because of her reckless charge to stop this scroll from being used, she was now deep in enemy territory and cut off from the rest of her group. There were some knights behind her who had gone around to stop these cloaked figures from running, but they were too far to help her.

The cloaked figures were only stunned for an instant before suddenly raising their hands to gather their energy.

They knew that the only thing that they could rely on was that scroll, so they did all that they could to get it back.

They didn't even care that there were a bunch of elves aiming arrows at them or a bunch of knights charging at them, they just focused all of their attacks on Cecilia.

Cecilia knew that she was in a very bad situation, but she couldn't let them get the scroll back.

So taking a deep breath, she braced herself.

It seemed that she was planning on taking all of these attacks head on and blocking them with her body...but there were just too many of them for her to deal with alone.

Before anyone could do anything, the cloaked figures had already finished gathering their mana and pointed their hands at her.

Before anyone could stop it, there were a bunch of spells shot at Cecilia.

All kinds of different spells, fire spells, ice spells, wind spells, earth spells, and everything else, were thrown at Cecilia.

This mass of mana was clearly not something that she could deal with alone.

But she didn't show any traces of fear as she raised her sword as if she was about to cut right through all of these spells shot at her.

The only other thing in her eyes was...a trace of regret.

She shouldn't have been so rash about this.

If she had calmed down, she might have thought of a different way to take care of the cloaked figure with the scroll instead of diving too deep like this.

But in the end, there was no cure for regret.

So all she could do was face these attacks that came her way.

However, before these attacks could reach her...there was a cloaked figure that suddenly appeared in front of her.

This was a different cloaked figure from the ones that were attacking her.

This one stood in front of her, as if they were protecting her.

This cloaked figure raised their arm and a bracelet was revealed that released a bright glow.

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The bright glow from this bracelet became stronger until it formed a barrier in front of them.

This barrier was translucent, making it hard to see, but it was clearly there.

After the barrier appeared, there was a powerful sensation that came from it. It was a powerful source of energy that was far stronger than the spells that were coming at Cecilia.

When these spells slammed into the barrier, they were scattered in an instant.

They weren't even able to make a single dent in the barrier before being scattered away into energy.

It seemed that this barrier was on a completely different level.

The cloaked figures were shocked when they saw this, but they quickly came back to their senses and wanted to throw out another round of spells.

It was just too bad that the knights and elves behind them had already caught up to them and were pinning them to the ground. The knights jumped them while the elves shot arrows into the robes, pinning them in place.

Just like this, all of the cloaked figures were caught.

Cecilia looked at the cloaked figure in front of her who had put up this shield.

At first, she didn't recognize this cloaked figure, but then she slowly recognized who it was.

It was Shadow Five who had followed Zwein back on the order of the fourth prince to protect him.

After coming back, she had put on her cloak again even though the fourth prince had given her the order to take it off. It was what she was used to wearing, so Zwein had given her permission to do so.

After recognizing her, Cecilia said, "Thank you."

Shadow Five looked at her before saying in a calm voice, "I was ordered to do it."

She didn't have any emotions in her voice as if she didn't care about anything other than her orders.

Cecilia revealed an awkward look when she heard this, but since Shadow Five didn't want to say anything, she didn't force her to say anything.

She turned to look at the cloaked figures that were captured and asked her knights standing over them, "Is that all of them?"

The knights turned to look at her and confirmed that it was indeed all of them.

It was only then that Cecilia turned in a different direction and said, "It's clear, you can come out now."

There was what seemed to be a distortion in space before several figures came out.

It was me and the ducal family with a few knights guarding us.

The moment that we appeared, the cloaked figures looked up at us with visible shock. Though we couldn't see their faces, it was clear that they were shocked based on their body language.

After all, as far as they knew, we should have been burnt to a crisp when the carriage had been set ablaze.

But in reality, the carriage was nothing more than a bait.

The only things that had been inside were a few dummies with crystals in them to simulate living creatures. So the only things that burnt down were just a few dummies.

After walking out, I narrowed my eyes to look at the cloaked figures.

I looked at them this way not because I was wondering who they were or who they worked for, but because I was wondering what I should do with them.

After all, I had made the promise to show mercy if I could...

So I was torn on just how to take care of these cloaked figures.

But before I could do anything, Moon suddenly came forward and pulled off their hoods.

I couldn't help slightly knitting my brows when I saw this.

After all, once their identities were exposed, then it would make it hard to show mercy.

But there was no stopping her since she already had her hand on the hoods.

I just gave a sigh and looked closely at who these cloaked figures were.

They were elves as expected, but they weren't any elves that I recognized.

I turned to look at Moon and she also shook her head to show that she didn't recognize them either.

Then that meant that they weren't from the group that had come from the capital.

Before we left, Moon had made sure to memorize the faces of all the elves that were in the village so she could identify them if we were attacked. However, it didn't seem like any of these elves were from that group.

They must be from another group that they had kept hidden all this time.

It really was strange, they even kept another group hidden from the elven village who should have been their comrades. Was this a sign that they didn't trust them or was there something else?

Since Moon had already pulled off their hoods and revealed their faces, then there was no need to hesitate anymore.

I should do what I can to get information from them or else this might repeat itself.

If I could get some information to make the other side back down now, that was the best case scenario.

But either way...these elves had to be buried or else it would be very bad.

Moon took the initiative to ask, "Who are you?"

But none of the elves even looked at her when she asked this question.

All of them were either looking at me or looking around as if they were trying to find a way to escape.

Moon naturally saw this as well and was about to go forward to stop them.

But before anyone could react, one of the elves suddenly broke free of their ropes and started charging at me. As they charged at me, there was a green energy that appeared around them that seemed to make them go even faster.

No one was able to react in time to stop that elf from charging at me

In his hand, I could see that there was a shiny glint...

It was a knife that he had hidden away!

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No, when I looked closely, I found that it wasn't actually a knife.

It was what seemed to be distorted space...it was a spatial spell.

That was why no one had been able to take it from this elf when they tied him up, it wasn't something that they could take away in the first place.

If it was possible, I really wanted to capture this elf alive and see how his spatial worked since it was considered rare in the first place.

But that wasn't the real problem right now.

The real problem was that they were coming right at me with that spatial knife.

I hesitated a bit as I was torn on what to use...but in the end, I pulled out a strange looking sword.

No, it wasn't The Penetrator this time since I wasn't sure if it could resist spatial . I didn't want to take that risk and ruin the one weapon that I had been relying on the entire time.

Instead, I pulled out Durand.

The elf was caught off guard by Durand suddenly appearing before he said, "Demon sword..."

That was all that he was able to say before I cut him with Durand.

I had planned on holding back so that I didn't hurt him that much, but I found that there was no resistance at all when I swung Durand. The weight of the sword carried me forward in the swing and when it was over...I found that the elf had been cut in half.

Wasn't this too sharp?

Wasn't this too strong?

But then I braced myself as I waited for the pain to come back to me.

While it wouldn't kill me...it would be the pain of being cut in half which was not something to scoff at.

That was the power of Durand and the price of using it.

However, even though I braced myself for that pain to come, it never came in the end.

I just stood there with my eyes narrowed, looking like an idiot.

After a while, I couldn't help looking down at Durand and found that it was idle. There didn't seem to be a single thing that changed about it.

The others ran over after the elf had been cut down and they all looked at me with worried looks.

Cecilia did the usual and went around me to make sure that there was nothing wrong with me.

Once she was done, she stood in front of me and looked down at the sword in my hand before slowly saying, "This is the sword that you bought in auction?"

I slowly gave a nod without saying anything.

I could tell that there was a strange look in her eyes as she looked at Durand. In fact, there was a strange look in the eyes of most of the people around me as they looked at the sword in my hand.

These looks weren't considered good looks, but they also couldn't be considered bad looks.

It was as if they didn't know how to feel about Durand.

It was silent until the elves broke that silence.

It wasn't Moon's elves that broke this silence, but rather the ones that we had captured.

After seeing their companion being cut down by Durand, they had all been sitting there staring in shock at Durand.

Finally, one of them said, "It's the Cursed Sword! It's one of the demon swords!"

As soon as one of them spoke, all of them started speaking and crying out in shock.

But the one that stood out the most was...

"That's why we need to kill him, he's one of the holders of the Cursed Sword! He's one of the demons that will plunge this world into chaos!"

They had been so shocked that they didn't even bother hiding the fact that they had been sent here to kill me.

Of course, it wasn't a surprise for us that they were sent here to kill me.

Still, this was an opportunity.

They were frazzled right now, so it was my chance to push them and get the information that I wanted.

So ignoring how everyone else looked at me, I walked forward with the sword raised.

I specifically pointed it forward so that the elves would be able to see it, even though it was heavy for me to lift it like this.

As I came forward, I said, "Now, which one of you wants to be next?"

When they heard this, all of them couldn't help revealing shocked looks of panic.

It was clear that there was fear that they felt towards this sword, even though it was strange that they felt afraid of this sword.

There was a silence that came over the elves as all of them just stared at the sword in my hand. All of them had strange looks on their faces as if there was something that they knew about this sword that I didn't.

After this silence lasted for a bit, a few of them couldn't help whispering.

"This demon sword...I've heard that it takes your soul if it kills you."

"I've heard that it severs your ties with the mortal plane, erasing all traces of you from this world."

"I've heard that it turns you into an undead...cursed to wander the land under the owner of the sword."

When I heard all of their whispering, it slowly made sense why they had acted this way.

It was because they had heard all kinds of rumours of this sword and had a misconception of it.

That was something that I could use to my advantage.

Letting them go for a bit, I gave a cough and said, "Well, since no one is volunteering, how about I just pick someone?"

All of the elves trembled when they heard this and they couldn't help scooching back a bit.

Seeing this reaction from them, I said in a slow voice, "That is unless...someone is willing to give me the information that I want."

Chapter 478 The duke's visit (19)

All of the elves couldn't help looking at each other before looking back with a firm look.

Even if they were in a panic, that didn't mean that they had lost all of their reasoning just yet.

As soon as they heard this, they realized that they had some kind of leverage against me.

I had information that I wanted from them and they had the ability to hold that information from me. As long as they had something that I wanted, then that meant that there was a chance to negotiate.

It didn't take long before the elves chose a representative amongst them to speak for all of them.

This elf said, "That depends on whether you can..."

Before he could finish, he found that there was a sword already coming at him.

With the rope bindings on him, he wasn't able to dodge out of the way in time.

It was a good thing that I stopped it at the last second, so it only made a cut on his arm instead of chopping the entire thing off.

All of them trembled in fear when they saw how decisive I was.

I just calmly looked at them and said, "I never said that this was a negotiation. I only said that it would only depend on if someone was willing to give me the information that I wanted."

My eyes turned cold as I said, "That doesn't mean that I need every single one of you."

I turned back to look at the elf that had been cut in half on the ground and said, "Since there's already one of you dead, then that means that there's no taking it back. There's no need for all of you to go back alive and I'll do what I need to do to get the information that I want."

All of the elves trembled when they heard this.

This time, when they looked at each other, there was no longer the same camaraderie that had once been in their eyes.

They realized now that as long as one person broke, it would mean that the rest would die...

So it was a matter of who would break under the pressure first.

But at the same time, it was a matter of who desired to live the most.

After all, it would be a matter of who gave the information that Lin Fan wanted and survived this ordeal.

There were signs of breaking in the eyes of the elves and there were some that couldn't sit still anymore. It was clear that they were tempted by my words, so they were thinking about betraying the others.

To sweeten the pot, I said, "If no one gives me the information that I want, I'll start killing off one of you randomly every minute until someone talks."

Though this wouldn't put as much pressure as threatening just one person, it was more than effective enough since it put pressure on everyone. It wasted too much time threatening one person at a time.

It was easier to threaten them all so that it could weigh down on them more.

At the same time, it would help to turn them against each other since no one could be certain that someone wouldn't betray the group to save themselves.

It didn't take long before the real cracks started to form and there were lines drawn between the elves.

It wasn't real lines per say, but separation of the elves as they formed smaller groups.

It seemed that even in this group, there were smaller group divisions.

Now it was time to keep that promise.

"Alright, a minute has passed, so let's get started." I raised the sword and started moving towards them.

When the elves saw this, all of them revealed looks of fear.

Before I came forward, the feeling of this situation was surreal since they didn't believe that I would actually kill them.

But now that I was keeping my word, they were starting to feel the fear that came with this, they were really starting to crumble.

I didn't stop moving just because the elves remained silent.

I walked up so that I was between two of the smaller groups that had formed and I revealed a smile.

But when they saw this smile, all they felt were chills that ran down their spines.

They knew that this wasn't a good smile and they were right.

I looked at the two groups in front of me and said with that smile on my face, "Let's have some fun with this."

As soon as they heard this, they felt a chill run down their spines.

Seeing this, the smile on my face grew wider as I said, "I'll let you pick who lives and who dies. As long as you can come to a consensus, I'll kill the person that you choose. Otherwise, I'll kill the person that has the least votes."

Then as if I was remembering something, I added, "Of course, that is only assuming that none of you have the information that I want."

All of the elves felt chills run down their spines as they looked at me with eyes filled with fear.

As expected of a person who owned a demon sword...he was a demon himself.

At this point, they were all suspecting that I was a demon in disguise that was just acting as a human because there was no way that humans would be able to come up with such a diabolic idea.

Then after a while, they started wondering if I would actually go through with it.

When I saw this look in their eyes, I went forward and brought the sword up in front of one of the elves. Holding this sword to their neck, I asked, "Tell me, who do you think I should kill?"

Now they realized that I wasn't kidding...

That was when they finally cracked and gave up.

The one that I held the sword up to said, "Spare me and I'll tell you what you want to know."

Chapter 479 The Duke's Visit (20)

As soon as this one elf said this, all of the other elves immediately glared at him.

Then as if there was a domino effect, they all started to crumble.

After all, once one person gave the information that they had, then the rest of them would lose this chance.

In the end, it was a large mess as they all tried to be the one that offered the information.

Though, not a single one of them actually said anything.

To settle them, I had no choice but to slam Durand down into the ground so that they would be quiet.

Once they fell silent, I said, "I will choose one of you to give me the information that I want. If I don't get the information that I want, I'll move on to the next person."

All of them looked at each other before looking like they wanted to volunteer.

But I already knew that this would happen, so I raised my sword again and said in a threatening voice, "I will be the one that picks who speaks first."

All of them fell silent after they heard this, but they still had looks in their eyes like they didn't want to give up.

It was their lives after all...no one was willing to just die without doing anything.

After they calmed down, I put Durand down and said, "Those that have information will say 'yes'. I will pick from the ones that speak up and that person will tell me what they know."

The elves revealed unhappy looks when they heard this.

This didn't give them any chance of increasing their chance of survival. It was leaving everything in this human's hands, which wasn't something that they could be happy about.

But there was nothing that they could do.

After all, they were completely tied up.

Once I was finished, I waited to see how they would react.

However, the elves didn't say anything as if they were waiting for something.

It was only after a minute of silence that they finally realized something and one of them said, "Yes."

As soon as they said this, I pointed at that elf and said, "Alright, it's you then."

The other elves revealed looks of shock and regret when they heard this.

There were some that wanted to say something, but I put my hand on Durand's hilt once more and they closed their mouths.

In the face of Durand, there was nothing that they could say.

The knights helped that elf up before bringing him forward with me.

This was the elf that had been chosen as the representative of the other elves, so I was surprised that he would choose to betray the rest of them like this.

But in the end, it seemed that his own life was more important than anything else as he gave me all the information that I needed.

As we had expected, they were a group that followed the two elves from the capital.

They had been left outside of the village just in case they needed to take care of the village.

Moon deeply knitted her brows when she heard this.

The goal of their trip was...to scout out the elven village and see if they could find anything related to Apollo. But the way that they had arranged this...it was clear that they suspected the village to have something to do with this.

No, put it more simply...they suspected that Moon had something to do with this.

Anyone that knew Apollo would have known about their engagement, so the fact that Apollo disappeared put suspicion on her as his fiancée...or former fiancée.

So they were here to take care of the village if there was a need for it.

But no one at the village really knew what happened to Apollo.

They just knew that he left and never came back. They had assumed that he had gone to the capital to meet his father, or gone on an adventure somewhere else, they never thought that he had disappeared like this.

By the end of it, the elf admitted that they were planning on turning me into a scapegoat for all of this.

They were here to kill me so that I could be blamed for this.

After all, dead men tell no tales.

Once he was done telling me everything, the elf said with a sigh, "I've already told you everything. Can you let me go now?"

I didn't look at this elf as I turned to look back at the other elves.

I left this elf to the knights while heading back towards that group of elves who had depressed looks on their faces.

When they saw me coming over, all of them braced themselves.

After all, they thought that I was coming over to kill them all.

But to their surprise, I said, "Is there anyone else who wants to give me information?"

There was a few seconds of silence as they were shocked by what I said before all of them started fighting to be the one chosen.

I picked a few of the elves randomly and brought them away to talk to them.

When it was all over, we confirmed that what the first elf had said was true and that there was nothing else that they had for us.

At that, I had the elves all gathered in one place again.

The elves were all confused when this happened and many of them wondered what would happen to them.

Once they were all gathered, I looked at the knights and simply said, "You can take care of them now."

The elves were all shocked when they heard this, but the ones that had given us information quickly said, "You said that you would let us go! You're breaking your promise!"

I just calmly looked at them and said, "I said that it depended on the information that you gave me." My eyes turned cold as I said, "And the information that you gave me wasn't worth your lives."

The elves just stared at me in shock when they heard this.

Chapter 480 The Duke's Visit (21)

There were many insults and complaints that came at me once they recovered from their shock, but they fell onto deaf ears.

I didn't care at all about what they said and just gave a nod to the knights for them to do their jobs.

The elves were brought out into a line and forced to lean forward.

Behind each of the elves was a knight that held a sharp mithril sword.

As they leaned forward, the elves kept cursing and begging for their lives, but not a single person was moved by their words.

The knights just looked down at the elves in front of them before turning to look at me, as if they were waiting for some signal from me.

I just gave a simple nod for them and then the swords that they had been holding up came down.

Even in the moment of their death, the elves never believed that they would really die.

After all, it really was too hard for them to believe that they would be killed like this.

The looks of disbelief on their faces as their heads rolled to the ground really was something else.

Once these elves had been executed, I said to the knights, "Just bury them somewhere. Even if they were enemies, we aren't brutes."

They nodded in agreement before picking up the corpses of the elves to take into the forest nearby.

But before they could leave, Moon came forward to stop them.

They all looked at her with confused looks as she said, "Let me take a look at them first. I want to see if there's anything that we can use as evidence."

The knights looked at me and I just gave a nod in agreement.

Though I didn't feel like she would be able to find anything, it definitely didn't hurt to let her try.

So Moon went over to the side with the knights holding the corpses.

It was also at this time that the remaining knights came up from the valley and joined us.

While we had been fighting the elves, these knights had been down there cleaning up the rest of the goblins.

Once the goblins had lost the Goblin General, they had been a mess and it had been easy for the knights to clean them up. Still, there had been quite a few goblins, so it took them a while to clean them all up.

It seemed like they really had a hard time cleaning up those goblins judging by the state of their weapons and armour, as well as the amount of blood that they were covered in.

All of us avoided them since they really stunk with the blood on them.

So all they could do was reveal bitter smiles.

Still, they cheered up when I promised to give them a special reward when we went back.

The only thing was...I had no idea what to give them as a special reward.

It was worth noting that we didn't suffer a single casualty this fight.

Because of Cecilia's plan and everyone's increased strength, we had been able to fight the goblins without problem.

If this was before, we definitely would have struggled with the goblins.

But this was a testament of everyone's training and hard work during this time.

I really couldn't help feeling grateful for everyone working this hard while I had been away.

The last thing to take care of was...the duke's family.

They had been watching from the side with some knights guarding them.

They had been patiently waiting, but in the end...they were guests and I had to apologize for everything that happened.

So as soon as I came over, I prepared to bow my head.

However, before I could, the duke came forward to stop me. He took me by the arms and lifted my upper half back up as he said, "There's no need for you to say anything. I know that you were nothing more than a victim in this matter."

After a pause, he added with a bitter smile, "In fact, if it wasn't for me, we might not have even gotten in this situation."

Perhaps he was right since if we didn't come here, we wouldn't have met the elves from the capital.

If we didn't meet them, then they wouldn't have come up with the plan to use me as a scapegoat and we wouldn't have had to fight all of these elves and goblins.

However, I knew that it ran much deeper than this.

In the end, it was the consequences of my own action since I was the one that had decided to kill Apollo back then.

It was only because he had been killed that these elves had come from the capital to investigate this matter.

So it could even be said that I was the root cause of all of this.

But I would never admit that even if I was beaten to death.

Still, I had to say something since I couldn't let the duke take the blame.

I shook my head and said, "No, even if you didn't want to come, this still would have happened. It just came faster because we were unlucky enough to bump into this group."

The duke looked at me with a complicated look.

But in the end, he just gave a sigh and patted me on the shoulder.

There was nothing that I could say in response to this even though I knew what he was implying.

I just gave a nod and said, "I hope that this doesn't ruin your visit."

The duke revealed a faint smile and said, "It certainly has been an interesting and exciting trip, but it can't be considered ruined."

The two of us were about to keep chatting, but before we could...

"Come over here, there's something you need to see."

Moon suddenly called out to me from where the knights were burying the corpses.

I looked over with a surprised and confused look, but I still walked over in the end.

