

《Spirit King》

Chapter 35 - Bad Mood

A group of eight walked through the forest at a moderate pace. Their faces were serious and their bodies extremely dirty.

A nice breeze passed through, giving them a refreshing feeling, which made things a bit better, especially the fact they couldn't hear the screams and mourning of people being slaughtered. Trees swayed gently following the wind patterns, as the calming vibe that currently filled the world was opposite to what they had just experienced. In fact, the only sounds of death that could be heard, came from very far away, as whenever they looked towards the mountain where the settlement was located a relieved look would rise on their faces.

Niko was currently brainstorming possibilities as to why the protectors could have done such a thing. Trying to connect this even to the games he had played and books he had read, there weren't many possibilities, and he simply could not understand what would drive a person to do such a thing.

The events that happened in the settlement also gave him a strong reality check. This is such a barbaric world that anyone can kill or die at any moment, and this meant he would have to do the same at some point. He was having a hard time coming to accept such a thing but he had no choice.

Niko who was in the middle of the group barely spoke much, giving Ivanic and Fumito the lead to take them where they needed to go. They were experienced and knew this world much better than they did. The mood around the group was the same mood as when they were moving to the settlement for the first time, making it awkward to even speak to one another. Some people cried on this walk, whilst others don't look up once. A depressed mood covered them as if there was a dark cloud above their heads.

"Another one!" Andrea pointed at the ground.

If one were to follow the direction of her pointer finger, they would discover a strange rat the size of a dog. The rat had a precise hole in its neck as its eyes were wide open in shock, revealing the fact it was oblivious to what had happened. Whoever killed this

rat was extremely skilled like an assassin.

"Another dead rat... It's the second one this time." Zheng felt a little worried.

The first rat they had stumbled upon was killed much more gruesome than the current one. The head of the rat has severed and a few meters away from the body.

"Seems like someone have been through here, and based on the wound of the rats we have stumbled upon there should be more than one person." Ivanic gave his take, and everyone agreed.

"Let's keep moving forward, but keep an eye out. We don't want to end up like this rat over here." Fumito added as they all nodded.

Ahead of them was a woman, with two daggers on her hand. She was kneeling down retracting her knife from the neck of another rat. As she slowly retracted the knife, an almost human-like *mōan* came from the rat, as blood began to flow from where the knife had stabbed. The dark green grass beneath the rat quickly became crimson as the flow of the blood was nonstop.

The woman turned her head and looked towards the group, with a surprised expression. Placing her knife on her sides, raising a hood from her back covering her dark short hair, and revealing a serious expression she spoke, "Who are you? Survivors?"

Fumito took a step forward to speak, but as soon as he did so, the woman took one back and placed her hands on the knives. Her eyes serious and alert, as she gave Fumito a deadly look.

Fumito raised both hands as to say he didn't have a weapon, and spoke, "I mean no harm! Yeah, we are survivors from the settlement who just barely managed to survive. Who are you?"

Staying in her alert stance she spoke slightly more relieved, "Oh... More survivors..."

There was a hint of sadness and pain in her voice, as she retracted her hands and looked slightly less worried, and then continued, "There are a few more survivors with me... We are currently hiding a slightly up the mountain."

Hearing this everyone felt doubt, "Up the mountain? There is a dungeon there!" Kyle said.

"Well at the top of the mountain yes. We aren't all the way at the top, we were just lucky enough to find some huge holes at the side of the mountain, big enough to hide us for the time being." The woman answered.

Looking at her Niko was surprised. She wore jeans, a hoodie, and some sneakers. He was very surprised someone with no items was able to kill these rats flawlessly.

"You are free to join us, we plan to head out tomorrow morning to a rankless area." She said dusting herself off.

Ivanic looked at the others who were also looking at each other, and one after the other they nodded knowing a longer rest was much needed. There was also a huge factor they had to consider and that was the fact that it might get dark soon, staying out during the darkness was too dangerous.

They looked at the woman and nodded. Seeing this she smiled and said, "Follow me."

As she moved, they followed behind. She would look back almost every two seconds showing that she did not trust them as of yet. They moved up the mountain slowly as the walk up towards the mountain wasn't too difficult. As they for further and farther up the mountain they noticed strange residues on the ground, which looked slimy. After they reached their destination, they finally understood where the residue came from. The huge hole on the side of the mountain was ahead of them, and hanging from the hole was some green slimes, which dripped water down the mountain.

"A sewer system?" Niko looked at this feeling strange.