

《Spirit King》

Chapter 53 - Troubling Times Ahead

"Screech!!"

An ear-piercing screech echoed through a badly lit forested area, as a few shadows could be seen moving past a tree trunk to another at fast speeds. Three shadows were being chased by others, as they were making ground on the pursuers, however, the chasing came to a conclusion as the leading shadow came upon a wall of stone blocking their path, making it impossible to keep running. The area was less dense with greens, therefore, once the leading shadows stopped their features were exposed.

Three Rattans in a very rough shape stood there as they slowly turned to face the trees. The face of the rats showed signs of anger, pain, and hate as their bodies were covered in scars. Normally these scars wouldn't pose a threat to the Rattans, and they would be able to continue fighting instead of fleeing, however, the scars were strange as green veins began to form from it, and by the minute it spread further throughout their body making it much more painful and difficult to function, let alone fight.

Facing the trees a hateful light formed in their eyes as two figures appeared. Niko who wielded a staff, on one hand, appeared, with a calm look on his face as he was followed by Ivanic whos green knife showed signs of battle as blood was dripping from it.

This was a strange scene for anyone who could witness it. A one-armed man who was quite skinny holding a small knife and a slim young man was able to corner three Rattans who were usually tough to deal with. Even seasoned survivors would find it a tough task to handle these three Rattans, and if they saw this scene they would faint. In fact, Niko and Ivanic had already witnessed what these guys were capable of as many of their comrades had lost their lives to them.

Niko smiles gently as he slowly lifts his staff off of the ground. The majestic movement quickly turned the hateful gazes of these Rattans to one of fear as they took a step back almost hitting the stone wall behind them. This expression of fear was rarely seen in these monsters and such an expression would shock other survivors once more.

Niko slowly lowered the staff.

"Puck!"

A light sound came from the ground as silence covered the air. Suddenly, ghastly beings began to materialize from all around.

Niko looked like a demon summoning his minions, as he slowly spoke, "Kill."

The Spirits were ruthless as they instantly went for the kill, and since the rattans were in very rough shape they could barely defend themselves. Bitten, Stabbed, kicked, these Rattans received the worst from the spirits.

In a flash, the ghastly figures began to thrash the Rattans. Painful screeches echoed but eventually slowed down till silence filled the air once more, and with the silence, the smell of blood began to rise.

This was already the third day of their hard work, and Niko was level nine, whilst Ivanic level eight. Both men have had their fair share of killing and tempering, which allowed them to grow stronger. Niko also had acquired around sixteen spirits from the killing he has done, and most of them were either Rattans or rat-like monsters as they had killed plenty surrounding their mountain.

Ivanic was also getting much more proficient in using his knife and Javelins. Having one arm made him a strange person to battle against, and although he was old, he was quite agile and powerful.

"It's gonna get dark soon, we have already gotten a few good harvests let's go in." Niko spoke.

Ivanic nodded as he agreed.

Before they began to walk back to the castle, Niko ordered most of his spirits to spread out around the castle and keep guard and to alert him of any intruders in his territory as he kept one Rattan and the bee spirit with him.

Niko couldn't be happier with the skill he acquired. It was such a convenient and powerful skill that he simply couldn't have wished for something better.

After arriving in the castle both men went to the spacious kitchen and began working on cooking a three-horned deer they killed earlier that day. As both men were fond of cooking, they had their go at it.

The eating area was equally as spacious as a gorgeous chandelier hung above a long table where both men sat. The chandelier gave off a warm light as both men sat across one another enjoying their food, as they discussed;

"Have you heard about Fumito lately?" Niko asked.

Niko feared the worst. There had been no words from the Japanese man, he hasn't left his room from anything. He understood how much losing those close to you can affect you mentally and physically, as he simply hoped Fumito would be able to overcome his mental troubles.

"Tomorrow morning lets go see him." Niko made the decision.

Time went on and they kept discussing, as eventually, both men went to their rooms to re-energize and continue the grind.

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More time went on and it was already the next morning. Lying on his bed, Niko quickly opened his eyes as his heart began to race.

"Someone has entered my territory." He murmured, not knowing what to expect.