

Vile 121

Chapter 121: [Bonus] Lovers and Rivals P2

Marla didn't try to correct her second apprentice's approach to the ranking journey and laid out her plan in front of her two apprentices:

"Alright. Now I will teach both of you some basic weaponless martial arts using punches as the focal point. Eren, you need to pay attention to these pointers too. The katar arts that you will be using have these punching techniques as their basic foundation.

Of course, the execution-style would change depending upon whether you have katars equipped or not. But you'd learn to accommodate the weapons into your combat with enough practice.

Are you guys ready?"

Marla asked Eren and Ken who gave her a nod from their end. She started explaining the basics of weaponless martial arts to them while performing some demonstrations.

The butcher had come to terms that he was going to have to bear the protagonist's presence from now on. He couldn't touch him. Nor could he avoid him.

The cynic man inside him wanted to choke this white knight with his hands. But Eren held onto his emotions.

'If I can't ignore him, I might as well use him to my advantage.'

The vile evil Ken talked about was now busy planning the former's downfall in his head.

"Renita, let's stop here. I don't want to sound too rude but you've hardly improved from our last practise match. Stop burning Extols you have on Merps just so that you could keep on fighting with me.

This is not healthy. And frankly, I don't see how I can help you improve as a ranger when my path stands at the opposite side of the spectrum from your path."

New day, same old battle practises. It was another day of grinding for students in LA.

Eren was battling it out with Renita while the others in his team had their own duels. But the butcher's fight was over as soon as it started.

Eren had admonished Renita without mincing his words. Contrary to popular belief, he was saying that for her own good. The girl kept on challenging him with Merps only to lose them all with each practise match. She had also betted and lost a significant chunk of Merps she had received by participating in the interclass war.

Eren wasn't sure what his team's ranger was up to. But he knew she wasn't treading in the right direction. She had become obsessed with training with him. She would often follow him. And keep an eye on him from time to time.

At first, the butcher thought she had found a rival in him. A target she needed to beat before moving forward. She had also used a precious potion with the help of her family that shot her BTP value to 17. Just a step away from entering the liquid stage.

Renita had done this right after she came to know that Eren had broken through into the liquid stage. His breakthrough and performance in the ranking wars were one of the hot topics among LA's first-year students. But it was soon replaced with some other trending battles and breakthroughs.

Students using potions to help them increase their BTP during ranking wars was a common practice. And a good portion of them would be lucky enough to achieve breakthroughs within the stage. So Eren's sudden progress in his ranking journey didn't come as a shock for LA's crowd.

But Renita took that as something she shouldn't ignore. She felt that she should always stay close to Eren in his ranking journey, lest she gets left behind.

The young girl hadn't realized that she had developed feelings for Eren. She thought of them as her drive to one day beat up this wretched guy who always acted like Mr. know-it-all in front of her and her team.

But the butcher's confidence and unwavering attitude had left a deep impression in Renita's psyche. She had subconsciously started admiring him for the feats he had achieved so far.

So naturally, her subconsciousness told her to always be with Eren. Whether it was battling or banter, she would make efforts to engage with him using those as her tools.

Even Eren's criticism sounded to Renita that he was caring about her. She was not wrong to assume that. But the reason the butcher had to care about his ranger was different than what the young lady was assuming it to be.

"Listen, Renita. I want you to be a strong and capable ranger. And a ranger's job is not limited to battles alone. You need to also work on your tracking and observational spells. A ranger has a special advantage in executing those spells.

You may think that those spells and skills aren't necessary for ranking wars. And you may be right. But this is where most rangers, especially those who belong to LA, go wrong in their path.

They prioritize their battle prowess over their ranger skills because of the ranking wars. And as a result, start as half-assed rangers in their ranking journey. It is never a good sign when you waver at the start of your path.

And you don't know how true this is until it is too late to realize. I have heard about a ranger from LA who didn't know sh*t about tracking skills and led his team to their doom.

I don't want my team to face the same fate. Therefore, I want you to focus on your non-battle skills as much as you prioritize your battle prowess. Can you do that?"

Eren asked with solemnity on his face. He was reminded of a certain un-ranger-like ranger when he was lecturing Renita. That ass*ole was the reason behind the butcher's complications in leaving the Osan Woods soundly. But soon he was stopped from taking the trip behind the memory lane by Renita's weird reply:

“For you, Eren. Err... I mean for our team, I’ll do what you tell me to do.”

Renita’s cheeks flushed as she looked down and said that. Only now she had realized that her heart had reserved another heartbeat for this wretched guy.

Chapter 122: City of Silvermoon

“Are you guys prepared? It’ll take a day and a half to reach Silvermoon city from here even with these good colts I’ve rented. Hope you’ve packed everything you need.”

“Ready to go anytime at your command Adapt Marla. I’m sure Eren had come prepared as well. He is just too serious about everything if you ask me. So I’m guessing he likes to plan things. Haha!”

Ken answered Marla’s question on his and Eren’s behalf, which the latter didn’t like. But he didn’t let his displeasure known and just smiled in response.

‘This asshat white knight is not as dense as he pretends to be.’

Ken’s remark about Eren’s habit of preparedness didn’t go unnoticed by him. Therefore, the butcher always talked less when he was with his enemy. And yet, that almost-silent treatment ironically gave some details away.

‘I need to make good use of my shapeshifting abilities to whoop this guy’s ass. Aargh! I just can’t stand the brighter-than-the-sun smile that he flashes for no reason every so often.’

The butcher was inwardly pissed at his fellow student. That’s why he did what he did best in the meantime Ken was chatting with Marla. Plotting!

Marla enquired about her two apprentices’ preparations for a reason. They were about to embark on a relatively long journey to the city of Silvermoon. A city that was in the control of Themyscira Amazons. It was located right in the middle of the forest. With only one way in and out.

The city of Silvermoon was one of the few important places for the Amazons because it aided them in maintaining contact with the external world. The Amazons were a close-knit society and they would rarely have visitors at their core bases.

But the city of Silvermoon was different. It was the centre stage for various business and transactions that would take place between the Amazons and the outside world.

Eren and Ken had kept on taking part in practice sessions during these days. And they would also participate in their respective ranking wars. As a result of which, they were deemed as one of the rising stars in the first academic year.

Of course, Ken was at the top of the first years whereas Eren just barely made it to the list. The white knight had given his all and battled the most in the ranking wars while the butcher only made his sporadic appearances.

Eren’s ranking didn’t gain momentum because he was controlling the instances of his participation. That prevented him from becoming the absolute best within the first-year lot.

But the terrorist had made sure that he is placed in the top-tier list of every category of the ranking war. He had also participated solo in the interclass ranking wars to get nominated for that category as well.

Eren maintained a ranking position of 7th and 9th in the intra-class ranking war's solo and group categories respectively. And he was placed at 29th and 36th position in the interclass ranking war's solo and group categories.

The Inter-year ranking war was still about to take place for students in the first academic year. But they were all gearing up for the same while participating in the ranking wars that were available to them.

The inter-year ranking war was considered as a foregone conclusion for most participants in the first year, whether they participated solo or in the teams. That's why almost all the first-years were looking to only participate in the compulsory matches and reduce the collateral that they would have to pay by participating in teams.

The first-year students' grind these days was to overcome the future loss. And nobody could blame them for thinking like this.

Eren had limited his participation in the ranking wars because he had too many things to do on his platter. But the ranking places he had reserved for himself in various categories were just the right spots as per his designs.

The butcher's ranking position attracted enough attention to make him known within the first-year crowd. But they weren't so groundbreaking that he would be made the focal point of the students' everyday discussions.

Attracting attention was the white knight's job. Eren was comfortable playing an underdog.

And it wasn't like he had free time in his hands to play with the kids of his age.

The exercise routine Marla gave to him itself wasn't something Eren could do with absolute ease at his level yet. Then there were potioneering lectures with Levine from time to time. Plus, he was training Steve and Ramy while giving pointers to others in his team at the end of the day.

The practice battling sessions with Ken were also newly added to his to-do list.

But that was not all. The butcher did not forget to keep on earning Merps while he was doing activities. He had started making a few basic F-Rank potions that were known to be widely used. Then he would sell them off to LA through Levine.

But the butcher's biggest revenue would start coming from Jake's father. That is because the butcher had started producing the most potent potions that weren't preferred by the masses but loved by the specialists. That was because they were controversial. And he was going to use Jack Sullivan to introduce his potions in the market of the city of Lionhearts.

Jack's father had already opened a shop in the city and he was gearing up for an expansion. Eren's potions weren't something that would get sold like hotcakes. But they were still enough to draw some special customers.

The whole reason Eren had kept a good relationship with Jake was so that he could use his father's connections to make some bucks. The butcher also had some other plans in his mind. But for now, this setup was enough.

Eren had opened multiple fronts to gain the best out of his time and efforts. As a result of which, he barely slept for a few hours. But he didn't care. The young him could take it. And with the progression in the ranking journey, these herculean tasks would soon turn into chores.

"Alright! It looks like we are all set. But making our next move, let me first introduce you to one of the assistants I have who would also accompany us during this mission.

Meet Almera. She is an E-Ranker ranger with wind elemental affinity.

Now that the formalities are completed, grab the colts that are assigned to you and head out. Almera would stay at the front, leading us. You two will stay in the middle. And I'll tail you guys from a safe distance."

Eren and Ken gave a courtesy bow to Alema who was newly introduced to them before making their way towards the city of Silvermoon. The butcher was excited. Because he knew this city was special in many ways from his past experiences.

One of the reasons among them was the fact that the majority of its citizens weren't humans.

That's right. The city of Silvermoon had Faeruns.

Chapter 123: Faerun

The city of Silvermoon had Faeruns as its majority.

They looked like humans except for their pointy ears and exceptional attractive features. They also had a copppy range of complexions that made them stand out from the group of humans.

The Faeruns were indeed species of elves that were reclusive, insular, feral and stealthy in nature. They preferred to remain close to nature and were rarely seen by other races.

The Faeruns had their own customs and beliefs, most of which revolved around the concepts of predator and prey or life and death. They behaved in moderation with other races, including other species of elves. But they were also known to be fierce allies to those they consider their friends.

Most Faerun ladies would join Amazons from a young age because their ideologies synched with the core values of the creed. That's why the Faeruns held significant sway over Amazons.

The city of Silvermoon was one of the rarest urbanized places the Faeruns would be willing to visit. Otherwise, they would usually be found in their settlements spread across the huge forest that was under the Thimiscera Amazons' control.

Eren was excited because he had finally found a way to solve his problem with acquiring the precious ingredient Levine needed the most. Friendly contact with Faerun was what he needed to safely get his hands on the Malva Hibiscus.

This was a good opportunity for the butcher to secure his discipleship with Levine. That's why he let his colt run wild without worrying about his position in the formation. Something that Almera took offence to:

"Eren Idril, what are you doing breaking the formation all of a sudden for? Go back to your previous position at the back otherwise, I'll take things up with Adapt Marla."

Almera shouted at the terrorist at which the latter nodded his head and was about to obey the orders he was given but was soon joined by Ken who followed his battle buddy in his misadventures:

"Ace Alema, please forgive us for breaking the formation. But why are we trying to maintain a formation when there's practically nobody around? We should just enjoy this journey and let our colts run loose on these abandoned paths decorated with greenery from both sides. Hehe!"

Eren had a grim face after hearing Ken's remark:

'This **** ***** **** guy! He just had to raise death flags for both of us.'

And Eren's premonition was right on the spot this time as well.

"You idiots, do what I tell you to do. Do you even know the mission given to us? If you refuse to maintain the formation anymore, then I'll have to..."

Alema was about to finish reprimanding the two novice rankers she was leading. But before she could do so, the young amazoness sensed a foreign presence surrounding them. But her ranger-specific spells weren't to be underestimated. She quickly caught onto what was happening and changed what she was about to say to Ken and Eren.

"Listen up, airheads. We are surrounded. Draw your weapons and prepare for battle. Ken, take a position to cover the direction that is in front of us. Eren you are assigned at the back.

I'll stand in the middle and cover the area in a 360-degree range.

Don't worry, we only have five enemies. Four of them are in the F-rank while only one of them is in the E-Rank. You handle the F-Rankers and I'll deal with the E-Rank enemy while providing you cover from behind."

'Don't worry? Don't worry? Does this bit*ch think it is okay for two LA students in the first year to go against four unknown enemies in the same rank just because one of us happens to be this fu*cking protagonist?'

Eren complained in his head while drawing his katars. Ken too wore his gauntlets on. The set of wearables was an F-rank artefact with runes and inscriptions that provided extra boosts to the earth element user.

The rich boy had element-specific artefacts at his disposal. Eren couldn't be caught off guard by the former's sudden revelation that he considered being super cool.

Ken had thought that bringing out his trump card at the right place and the right time was cool and epic. What he didn't know was that someone in their group had an even more deadly trap prepared for the opponents heading their way.

“Look what we have here, lads. Two young thorns around one fresh-looking flower, waiting to be fuc... I mean plucked. Pardon my foul mouth, young beauty. I don’t want to ruin my first impression, you see before we get to know each other.

Let’s do our job here and take our rewards, boys. You will get whatever the brats have on them. And I’ll have... hehe!”

Eren, Ken, and Almera found themselves soon after they prepared themselves for a battle. They soon heard a man in his 40s making that threat-laced proclamation. Eren and Ken couldn’t gauge the man’s strength, but from the way their E-ranker was looking at him with daggers in her eyes, it was clear that he was an E-Ranker as well.

The man stood at one end of Eren’s group. And the four positions manned by young-looking rankers. One of them was a female, the other three were guys in their early twenties. They had formed a Penta-star siege around Eren’s group.

“Who are you? And what business do you have with us? Don’t you know we are from...”

“Ken, shut your mouth and pay attention to the situation at hand. They are not here to answer our questions. At least not yet. So ask them after we’ve dealt with them.”

Ken was about to ask a clicked question when he was interrupted midway by his battle buddy.

“Al.. alright. But what should we do now?”

“As I said. Attack first, ask questions later.”

Eren went towards the enemy female ranker right after he said that. The enemy team was bewildered by the young ranker’s hasty reactions because of which they were caught off guard.

Even Ken and Almera were surprised by Eren’s reckless move. They didn’t expect him to enter the fray as soon as it was presented to him. The guy looked like he wanted to battle it out with someone as if he was on a schedule.

The only female in the enemy camp didn’t know how to react at first. But she soon came to her senses. The young man was still a few meters away from her.

She started casting a body modification spell. Her fingers started getting elongated. Her stature was increasing. The hair on her body started growing rapidly. She was soon going to turn into a humanoid wolf monster.

The female thought that her solo battle with this young and small-statured kid was going to be short-lived. She would soon be joined by any of her accomplices and they would soon take care of him swiftly.

The kid looked like he was well experienced in battles. His actions spoke volumes about his battle prowess. The female wasn’t necessarily going to win because of her heretic spell and higher BTP value.

But she didn’t need to win the round in the first place. All she needed to do was hold her ground and await someone from their team to join her.

It was that simple a matter. But alas, the terrorist didn’t like to play by the book.

He came within a few meters distance from the wolfina and threw something her way before heading to the next guy from her team that was standing beside her.

What the terrorist threw the wolfina's way was a sealed vial of explosive potion that was changing its colour at a rapid pace.

Chapter 124: Terrorism and Mutilation

What the terrorist threw the wolfina's way was a sealed vial of explosive potion. And it was changing its colour at a rapid pace.

"Agatha, you idiot, stop looking at the potion and throw that damn thing..."

Kaboom!

The vial exploded and soon a huge crimson domain was seen at the place of the wolfina named Agatha. The blast had generated a mana fire that was changing its colour from crimson to pink and back to crimson again. The explosive the little terrorist had used was an F-Rank potion from his collection.

The vial had exploded while Agatha was holding it. There was no way she could come out unscathed from that even with her body enhancing spell active.

Eren of course didn't like to draw long battles if he could avoid them. And he especially didn't like the protagonist-ways of handling life and death situations. Like fighting multiple opponents at the same time.

What he did right now was to even the playfield by a little. Why should he fight two opponents all by himself just because he could? He liked to squash the ants that bothered him without any hesitation in his mind.

The explosive potion was one of the items Eren had made in abundance during his sleepless nights of potion-making. And it was also one of the items he had asked Jack Sullivan to sell in the city market in a low-key manner.

As it was said previously, Eren's potions catered to a niche audience. They weren't meant for a mass audience. Instead, they would be used by people with special skills and purposes.

Eren didn't pay attention to the explosion going off by his side and approached the guy that was standing at a distance from it. The guy had to force himself to steer his eyes away from the explosion and focus on the incoming terrorist.

Eren stopped midway and pulled another vial of potion from his storage before throwing it off in his next victim's direction. The latter was terrified by the former's act. He was about to run away from his initial position but soon found out that the vial was just about to hit his face.

Eren had executed Blitz Bolt on his throwing hand this time of hurling the potion bomb. He hadn't done it earlier so that his next victim wouldn't take countermeasures against his speed and retreat in advance.

That's why the poor lad couldn't avoid the potion bomb. Or what he thought to be a potion bomb.

The vial was caught by the lad inches away from the tip of his nose. He was about to throw the darn thing off when he looked at the content within it. Unlike the potion bomb that had colour-changing liquid inside it, this vial contained nothing. It was an empty shell.

'This fuc*ker has thrown a dud to fool me.'

Eren's next victim was about to spit blood in anger for the move the former had pulled on him. It was as if the butcher was saying he was not worth wasting his potion bomb over.

Eren approached the enemy with his katar in his hands. The Blitz Bolt ran at its fullest potential, lighting up the edges of the dual weapons. This time Eren didn't target his victim's vital spot. Something told him they needed to keep at least some of them alive for interrogation.

The butcher cut off the shocked victim's right arm, which his victim was using to hold the vial. The vial and the hand that held it in place were dropped on the ground at the same time.

"Aaaaaaaaah!"

The now-handicap victim shrieked like there was no tomorrow. Alas, his mutilator wasn't satisfied with his quick work yet. He chopped the guy's legs from his joints next.

All this had happened within a few moments from the time Eren had gone ahead soloing two enemies in his terrorist-101 way. The spectators that included his team and the remaining of the enemy team were still processing the blast that took place just now.

But they were all brought back to reality by the guy's shriek. They looked at the source of that voice and found that it had been mutilated beyond any immediate repair. The guy now boasted only one hand which he was using to check on his newly amputated regions.

The blood had started spilling in abundance. He was lying in the now-expanding pool of his own blood. And he was too shocked to care about his teammates or anything happening around him.

Eren didn't hold back and executed Blitz Bolt on the guy's forehead to make him unconscious. Then he executed another Blitz Bolt variation and landed it on the victim's freshly amputated region. This variation of Blitz Bolt produced white heat which was enough to cauterize the wounds.

'This guy is taken care of. My work is done here.'

Eren concluded his voluntary retirement from the battle. The deal he had with Ken and Almera was that he'd handle two opponents, Ken would handle the other while the E-Rankers would sort things out between themselves.

He had done his part. The butcher wasn't interested in doing someone's work if he wasn't going to gain anything out of it.

"Eren, you..."

Ken was about to say something when he was interrupted by the enemy team's E-Ranker who was pissed on certain someone:

"You spineless f*cker. Not only did you attack a lady first but also..."

Eren was salty because of Ken for days on end now. His mood was turning fouler by moment. Therefore, he wasn't interested in listening to someone lecture him about how rankers fight with honour and glory. Especially from someone like these guys who had previously outnumbered them.

"First of all, Ken, my man. Why are you so spaced out now when you can finally make use of those gauntlets that haven't been used in the real battle yet. Those two little shrimps are your opponents. Go and battle it out with them.

Ace Almera, I request you to take care of this hypocrite E-Ranker who is about to speak more nonsense in front of us now."

Almera had just processed Eren amputating the enemy team member's three limbs as if he was cutting some vegetables. No scratch that. Someone would put more thought into cutting veggies than Eren when cutting off limbs.

So when she was hit with Eren's obvious request, Almera was caught off guard again. She could only muster a single word to answer the terrorist mutilator"

"Al... Alright!"

Chapter 125: Ranker's Codes of Conduct

"Al... Alright!"

That was all Almera could muster before turning her attention to the enemy E-Ranker. She felt awkward fighting the guy now. Because it felt like her team was on the wrong side because of the poor fates her team member had dished out for the enemy.

"You little rat..."

The E-Ranker was about to spit fire with his words but he was interrupted by the terrorist again:

"Also, don't call me a little rat. First, I'm very sensitive about my height. And second, I only allow one person to call me that."

The E-Ranker was speechless after hearing about Eren's rebuttal. Was it even a rebuttal in the first place when you don't even let your opponent talk?

The E-Ranker got so mad that his eyes turned red. He was about to attack this little vile menace. But this time, Almera was prepared.

She quickly took out a rune-printed crossbow from her storage and aimed at the E-Ranker before firing a mana arrow. She kept on shooting more mana arrows in rapid succession to attack her opponent from various angles.

The targeted E-Ranker had very good agility. The mana arrows couldn't touch him for the most part. And those which did only gave him slight injuries.

But Almera had it covered when it came to the security of her members. The E-Ranker couldn't touch the two Novices without putting himself in danger due to the ranger's accuracy.

That gave Ken enough time to tackle the two guys he was assigned with. One had to admit. The protagonist was strong.

He was so strong that he could handle the two young rankers simultaneously without breaking a sweat. Plus, his custom-made gauntlets did half the work.

Ken could have finished the fight within a few moments if he wanted to. But he would retract his attack every time it was about to land on the opponents' vital spots.

That dragged the fight more than it needed to. Eren had a headache watching Ken's battle. He wanted to chop all three of them in half for wasting time on silly charades.

The outcome had already been decided the moment Eren had decided to reveal his potion bombs. The enemy team wouldn't have attacked a group with such a vile creature as its member.

Marla showed up only when the enemy E-Rankers was about to run away. She dealt with them effortlessly and made him follow the same fate as Eren's mutilated victim. Forced slumber.

The sudden battle was a wrap. Now comes the aftermath.

"Eren, you performed splendidly. Your presence of mind impresses me the most. And where did you get your hands on the potion bombs?"

But I hope you understand that this is not how close combat experts fight. We do not deal in explosives. And there's a reason for that.

And you had the guy under control. You could have taken him captive as a whole instead of amputating three of his limbs.

Remember this. Criminals would be seen as victims if you deal more damage to them than they ever could to you. Your case becomes weak at that point even when you have been in the right all along."

Marla didn't hold back from praising her apprentice while criticizing some of his actions. The guy had almost bombed the close combat style by using a potion bomb on his opponent.

Normally, close combat experts wouldn't handle anything explosive. Because they were required to approach their opponents and engage with them by breaching their personal space.

That would make them the targets of their own attack if the timing goes off. Putting at risk the personal space you are going to barge into was an absolute madness no close combat expert was willing to commit.

But Eren was an exception. He had Sedated Perception as his go-to supporting spell. It allowed him to change his speed, direction, and orientation however he wanted to in the middle of the fight. As if he had all the time in the world to do that. That's how Eren was confident in using potion bombs in his close combat style in the first place.

But just because he could doesn't mean he should. Or that's how Marla interpreted it.

Rankers had a few unwritten rules collectively known as Rankers' Codes. Most of them dictated how a ranker was supposed to fight with another ranker in a non-war-like situation.

The way Eren fought broke most of the Rankers' codes. He first used potion bombs as a means to deal with his opponent when he should have been engaging with them in close range.

And Eren attacked a woman first before anyone else. Most male rankers would have considered it shameful behavior.

But the butcher didn't feel even a shred of guilt.

Because he had to die once to understand that everything was a fair game when it came to his interests. And sadly for his victims, his interests lied in them getting bombed and mutilated.

And rankers had a silent agreement with others in the community. That they wouldn't incapacitate their opponents the way Eren did unless it was a last resort.

That's why the enemy E-Ranker was so mad at Eren. The guy didn't follow the script. He just went ahead and started dishing out violence with that irritatingly expressionless look on his face.

"Eren, I think you've gone overboard, buddy. And why did you use a potion bomb on a girl? We could have..."

Eren's team was converging at Marla standing in the middle. Ken asked the question as soon as he got close.

Being women themselves, Marla and Almera wanted to hear Eren's explanation too. They wanted to see what kind of rare creature they were dealing with.

'Ugh! This guy's a headache. But I have to answer. Marla and Almera are listening.'

Eren took a long sigh before replying to Ken:

"Um... I attacked her because I could? Isn't that reason enough? I mean they were the ones who asked for it.

I bet she wasn't expecting to get attacked first. Her brain had been trained as per the Ranker's Code. I used that against her to catch her off guard.

And the second reason I attacked her was that she looked like the weak link among those guys. It's best to take care of the weak link first when you are outnumbered."

Eren cursed the white knight a million times before replying. He knew the justice maniac's two opponents were safe and in one piece. He had just knocked them out with his punches.

The whole reason Ken had taken up fist saint as his ranking path was so that he could kill less and bore more after all. At least that's what the butcher thought about his battle buddy.

Chapter 126: The Cultists

"The logic behind your action on the female ranker seems sound. But why did you amputate the other guy?"

'To vent out my frustration of having to talk with you.'

Eren answered Ken's next question inwardly. But what he spoke out loud was entirely different than his inner monologue:

"I did that so we would get to catch these enemies and interrogate them. Haven't you realised this part of our mission here?"

If I'm not wrong, then Master Marla was trailing us from a distance because she wanted these guys to attack us. That means they've been doing this for a while now.

If Adapt Marla was with us, then this E-Ranker would have never dared to come out in the open. We were acting as baits to draw these sharks out.

There can only be one reason for this set-up to have been arranged. Adapt Marla wanted to catch these criminals and take them as prisoners to interrogate them.

But the leader of this small team is enough for interrogation. We don't need small fishes that don't know anything besides their own names.

But that E-Rank would have run away as soon as things became difficult for him. We needed a strong reason to keep him here so that Master Marla could catch up with us and cover his exit.

So I gave the guy a reason to stick around with us some more; hate. His hate towards me for chopping his lackey into pieces and answering rudely to his arguments.

I did all that to keep the E-Ranker from running away for as long as he could avoid that temptation. Is this enough? Or do you wasn't something more?"

Now, if you really want to ask questions, we already have three suspects that can serve as your targets."

Eren took a long breath after answering the justice freak's questions. Then he looked at Marls who nodded at him in response.

"Eren's right. The guy would have run away long ago if it wasn't for his anger on Eren. And thanks to that, we could catch them all.

Yes. This was also part of our mission. The kingdoms of Edinburgh wants to maintain good ties with the Amazons. And these guys were creating unrest in that relationship by attacking random travellers bound to the city of Silvermoon.

So it wanted LA to take care of it. We knew they won't target veterans. So you students were perfect as bait. Hehe! I know that it is rude, but suck it up. I've also been used for petty stuff when I was a low levelled ranker like you."

Ken didn't like that he had been used. Eren didn't give a damn about it since he already knew how the real world worked and functioned. And Almera was just sad she too was roped into being used as bait with two Novices.

Marls noticed Almera's crestfallen visage and laughed before continuing:

"Almera, you shouldn't feel so down. If it had been only two F-Rankers traversing through this region, then this E-Ranker wouldn't have shown up.

First, taking care of two people with four, all of them with near equal BTP values, was a sound decision from the enemy's point of view.

And second, two F-Rankers travelling alone in these regions despite the news of it being a dangerous area already out in the public would have been too suspicious. These guys would have smelled the trap.

Therefore, you were included in the team to ease that suspicion. Of course, Eren's and Ken's sudden acts gave them more courage. And when they listened to Ken's loud mouth, they thought that you guys are just regular travellers and decided to act.

So in a way, Ken's mistake helped us catch these culprits. Good job, Ken."

"That was no biggie, Master. I just did what should have been done to catch these criminals after all."

Ken replied earnestly. But the butcher felt like puking blood by the cliched development. Where the protagonist's silly mistakes end up benefiting him.

And then there was Eren. the one poor fellow who had planned everything about the Osan Woods' incident carefully. And took every precaution he could to cover his tracks. And yet, he was still caught in a bigger mess.

If he could, Eren wanted to snatch the white knight's luck to himself. His current one certainly wasn't working too great for him.

"Now what should we..."

"Eyaaaaaaaaaaaah!"

Ken was about to ask Marla about their next set of plans when he was interrupted by a loud screech. It came from the domain of mana fire created by the potion bomb.

Agatha had survived. She came out of the domain with her flesh almost burnt to a crisp and collapsed on the floor.

Soon her lava-like epidermis (upper layer of the skin) cracked and pink flesh underneath became visible. But a rapid regeneration of new flesh and skin had already kicked in. And it didn't look like it was driven by the effects of the spell. It was something that looked like a natural healing process that has been expedited many times over.

'Interesting. These guys are cultists for sure.'

Eren had this thought after witnessing that phenomenon. Ken was surprised by what he was seeing but it seemed that Marla and Almera had already expected this.

The cultist was a term used for rogue rankers who walked steadfastly on the heretic path of magic. A path that wasn't approved by the establishments running their respective lands. They didn't like to employ themselves to the kingdom just to get their hands on the higher ranking knowledge.

They thought that the knowledge on magic and ranking journeys should be given freely and without any restrictions to everyone. The cultists didn't like that the kingdoms and empires were using the knowledge as leverage to make the rankers submit to them and increase their powers.

The cultists were rebels of the society living in the shadows. They wanted to dethrone the current governments no matter which kingdom or empire they belonged to.

The establishments actively hunted the cultists by putting bounties on them. These bounties would then be issued to various adventurers' guilds so that mercenaries would take care of the hunt for the kingdoms. Various empires also had separate squads to take care of these cultists themselves.

Chapter 127: Rankers' Restrictions

"Eren, you don't look surprised after seeing that rapid regeneration."

Almera couldn't help but ask the butcher this question because of the lack of enthusiasm on his face. Eren already had his answer ready:

"My aunt Nina had told me about the heretic path of cultists before. So even though it's my first time seeing something like this, I'm not that shocked. More importantly, should we save the girl? Even with her rapid regeneration, she is going to die if healing potions are not administered on time."

The terrorist who terrorized his victim now had started caring about her. Almera wanted to point out the complete his complete flip but was overshadowed by Marla's next words:

"You are right, Eren. Without a healing potion or spell, she isn't going to make it. For now, let's save her and see if she could be of any use. Here, take these vials and use them on her. Meanwhile, I'll tie up the E-Ranker. Ken and Almera, you do the same for those two young lads."

Marla handed a couple of vials to Eren before issuing her next set of orders. Her team members obliged and got to work. Soon the four cultists with their 13 limbs were safely secured. Marla had used rune-engraved chains to tie these menaces to a large tree.

"By the way, Eren, you didn't answer my question. Where did you get these potion bombs?"

Marla asked with curiosity. The potion bombs were technically not readily available for purchase and sale. So their distribution and use was a rare event. A LA student with a mediocre background getting their hands on such an item was surprising.

"Oh, the potion bomb! But it's..."

"Fret not, Eren. Let's just say I want these products too for research purposes."

Marla gave a meaningful smile to the butcher at which he replied with a cunning grin of his own before answering:

"Oh. Yes, research. I also got these for research purposes. I'm certainly not maintaining a good stock of them. If you also want to research them, I can give them some for you from my stock at the same price I bought them.

My roommate Jake's father maintains a limited supply of them so that he can give these items to various researchers. He runs a small shop in the city of Lionhearts. You can directly get things from him if you want to do more thorough research. Here, I'll send you the shop's details."

Eren sent Marla's Jack's shop details through his spectral screen. He knew the potion bombs would create a buzz sooner or later. What he was doing now was just some early publicity.

Even the normal rankers had to agree with some of the cultists' belief that the kingdom's restrictions were too overbearing sometimes. They wouldn't outrightly come in the support of these cultists by saying these things openly. But they agreed with these points nonetheless.

This was the reason Nina couldn't teach Eren ranked technique even when he was perfectly capable to learn from her. The kingdom's restrictions prevented them from entering a proper student disciple relationship. All she could teach him were some basics of potion-making along with the concoctions of some elementary potions.

Anything related to magic was extremely expensive to learn no matter which kingdom one lived in. Plus, only high-ranked entities were allowed to pass a few things to their family members privately after taking the kingdom's permission. Rankless mortals didn't have such easy access to ranking techniques, spells, and anything that described anything about magic.

And exorbitant money or someone high-ranked in your family could only give you access to an introduction. Anything beyond that was a well-guarded knowledge that only the elite members of a kingdom-sanctioned organization could have access to.

Nina could have covered the real basics of ranking-related potion-making herself without having to send Eren off to LA. But the Edinburgh kingdom, like most other governments, had placed a few written and unwritten rules about teaching magic.

Only a licensed ranker appointed or approved by the kingdom had the right to teach magic to their students, apprentices, and disciples. The process to get such a license wasn't easy of course. And one had to serve the kingdom for a substantial period to get issued the said license.

What's more, learning introduction to magic and ranking journeys was expensive in the kingdom when bought through legal channels only because it would discourage a large populace from ever taking steps in their ranking journey. A significant number of poor people stayed rankless their whole lives without ever knowing whether they were good rankers or not.

For example, the rankless Edinburgh Standard Technique that Eren was practising was easily available through legal channels yet was extremely expensive at the same time. Most normal rankless people could not hope to buy it with ease.

On one hand, these rules and restrictions were put in place to prevent or limit criminal-minded rankers from causing mass destruction with magic. On the other hand, they helped the kingdoms in employing the rankers in their fold.

Therefore, teaching about ranking journeys even to your family members without the kingdom-approved license or paying the handsome charge was considered a huge taboo. No Sane ranker would do that. Only cultists indulged in this form of knowledge exchange.

Even if Nina could secretly teach things about potioneering to Eren, the fact that the latter obtained the knowledge through a non-official channel would ruin his prospects. That's why Eren had to join LA, which would serve as his legal source of knowing about his ranking techniques and spells.

Eren saved Agatha's life by making her drink the healing potions he had been given by Marla. This little feisty cultist was saved thanks to the Adapt ranker's generosity. If it was left to Eren, the scrooge would have let her die than wasting potions on her.

The butcher emptied the second vial on Agatha's naked body to stabilize her condition. The girl quickly started recovering after the potions worked on dual fronts, from inside and outside.

It took a few minutes for Agatha to look normal again. She was naked of course as all her clothes were long burnt away. He was about to touch the girl to make her awake but was interrupted by Almera's voice:

"Hey, Eren. I think I can take it up from here. Why don't you help Ken with his work?"

'Oh! She thinks I'm interested in this lass's body. I'm not. But should I play around with her? Hehe!'

"Oh... but... but I want to finish the work I've been given by my Master Marla first. I can't let things remain half-finished. Certainly not this."

Eren talked in a daydreaming voice. His eyes were staring at Agatha's body and his face carried the look of fascination.

Chapter 128: Interrogation

"Oh... but... but I want to finish the work I've been given by my Master Marla first. I can't let things remain half-finished. Certainly not this."

Eren talked in a daydreaming voice. His eyes were staring at Agatha's body and his face carried the look of fascination.

"You pervert, Why don't you state things honestly and say that..."

"Almera, the boy's playing with you. Hehe! He has no "reaction" down there after seeing what he has been seeing."

Almera was about to admonish the butcher but was made aware of the fact by Marla right on time. Then she realized the Adapt ranker had used her mana sense to keep an eye on Eren's bodily responses.

'Things started with life-and-death battles and ended with lewdness in the air. Life is so fickle.'

The young Amazoness smiled mirthlessly at her thought before shaking her head. She walked off in the distance to feed their colts which were tied to a tree further back.

Eren and Marla had already started laughing in the backdrop behind her. Ken had the face of someone who was yet to understand the joke.

“Wakey wakey, Mr E-Rank cultist douchebag. I’ll ask you questions only once. We are tight on our schedules, you see. So you might want to answer quickly and truthfully.

I’ve separated your lackeys and will conduct another round of interrogation with them. And if I find any discrepancies... Well, let’s just say things would get much worse for you than they already are. Capiche?

Now let’s get down to basics. What’s your name? And which cultist gang do you belong to?”

The interrogation had been initiated. Marla was in the lead. Her team members were standing behind her.

“Haha! Pretty lady, you don’t even have a historian in your team. How are you going to establish that what I or any of us spewed was true or not? We just need to come up with the same story and we are good.

Do you think we are not ready for an interrogation?”

‘Damn it. The guy’s spitting facts.’

Eren thought and looked at Marla whose eyes twitched in response to the latter’s retort. All of them were battle oriented rankers. But they needed a specialized ranker to do these jobs. Their interrogation was bound to be full of holes if they depended on usual means.

“Okay, hotshot. Here’s another deal. If I can’t find the authenticity of what you say to be true or not, I’ll give that responsibility to you. Say what you want, however, you want, but by giving enough and relevant evidence you can produce.

If you can convince me with proof that what you said was the truth then I’d take you to the city of Silvermoon where you would be turned into a slave and live off a relatively comfortable life.

You can also try to break free from slavery and get back to what you were doing now. Tempting aren’t they? The prospects are limitless for you even now. I don’t care either way.

So it’s your job to make me believe that what you say is the truth. If you fail to do that, I’ll just kill you all right here. I don’t want to do extra work by taking you guys to the city. Now choose. What will it be?”

Marla came up with another approach to interrogation.

‘The plan is good but it lacks finesses. It lacks a threat.’

Eren was no stranger to interrogation techniques. Marla was good, but he was better when it came to unconventional things like these.

What the butcher said came to pass. The E-Ranker laughed it off by saying:

“And why should I do that? If you want to kill us, just kill us. We are not scared of dying anyway.”

Marla had creases on her forehead after she heard that. She wasn’t a pro in interrogations. Thankfully, a dark knight came to her rescue:

“Master Marla, allow me to do the honours.”

Eren spoke plainly. Marla and his other team members looked at him strangely at his proclamation. They just couldn't wrap their heads around the fact that a mere student in the F-Rank wanted to lead the interrogation of a battle-hardened E-Ranker cultist.

"Eren, no offence but..."

"Hear me out, Master Marla. We have nothing to lose even if I ask this guy a few things. At best, we can learn a few things that you can confirm with your round of interrogation. And at worst, you can take over anyway if I don't gain anything. Not a bad deal, right?"

Marla pondered for a while before giving Eren a nod. But she was soon met by another of his strange requests:

"Madam Marla, I want to interrogate this guy in private. I mean, for real. That means no keeping tabs on what happens here with your mana sense.

I won't say what I'm about to do but trust me that you don't want to know. Please grant me this request as well."

Eren gave a courtesy bow to Marla after he put forward another of his requests. The butcher didn't want to do this but there were a few things he wanted to ask the guy that he couldn't do in front of the audience.

Marla sighed deeply before agreeing. The boy had already proved his mettle on various occasions. There was some leeway he had earned with her as a result of that.

Eren's team went away from their earlier positions. The butcher waited for them before turning his attention to the E-Ranker.

The cultist wanted to make fun of the mere teen in front of him. But for some reason, he subconsciously felt more threat coming from this novice than Marla who was an Adapt.

Eren didn't speak but dived into a staring contest with the guy. Then he let his eyes roam on the cultist's well-built body. The victim of eve-teasing got creeps from Eren's strange gaze landing on his body. He felt naked in front of the boy.

"What... what are you thinking little ra..."

"Don't you fucking say what you are about to say, you hear me? Haven't I told you before? I only allow one person to call me that. Now, where were we? Yeah, interrogation.

You see, these past few days have been shitty for me. I'm forced to interact with the guy who makes my blood boil every time I even see him. So you can say that I'm kind of on edge here.

I'll not tell you to speak the truth right away. I don't want that. What I want is for you to take your time in spilling the facts. That should give me plenty of space to vent out my anger. Hehe!

Let's start with the torture first and ask questions later, shall we? Hehe"

Chapter 129: Torture

"Let's start with the torture first and ask questions later, shall we? Hehe"

Eren removed a palm-sized pebble from his storage that had various inscriptions inscribed on it. He supplied enough of his unelementalized mana and the inscriptions lit up. Soon a semi-transparent dome with a 10m radius formed with him and the cultist in the centre.

This was the sound isolation artefact Eren was gifted with by Matt when he was in the city of Lauriel. The guy had come to the butcher to sign his death warrant with his own hands and blood. The butcher was just kind enough to grant him his request and accept this artefact as a payment.

“Sound isolation artefact? Little bastard, how many victims have fallen in your hands for you to carry this type of artefact on you? Don’t tell me you were counting on me to attack.”

The cultist’s eyes opened wide in surprise after he found that the terrorist had deployed a sound isolation barrier around them. It strengthened his belief that this teen was not normal.

These types of artefacts weren’t common after all. They would only be available in the black market. And yet, this teen who didn’t even have a shred of beard formed on his face had it in his possession.

“Haha! You are thinking too much. All this was just a coincidence. Now let’s remove your clothes already.”

“Wait. First, you need to know that I don’t swing that way. Whatever BDSM sh*t you have on your to-do list, I’m sure Agatha would be a better target for your plans. And second, ask me what you want to know about, damn it. At least give me a chance to come clean.

I’ll give you enough proof myself...”

“No means no, my man. I want to hear someone scream. This sound barrier is generated by an F-Rank artefact in the upper grade.

And those rune-inscribed chains have made you equal to a rankless nobody. So I can let you scream all you want without worrying about interruptions.

That is unless Marla decides to use mana sense on us. But I’d doubt an Adapt ranker like her would break an agreement with her apprentice over a cultist like you.

Now, wish me luck with whatever is about to take place. And just enjoy the ride. Haha!”

Eren didn’t completely remove the cultist’s clothes. He just slid the pants down and let the guy’s wiener come out in the open. Then Eren took out his spare potioneering gloves and wore them.

Next, he held a nearby tree’s long and slim wooden branch in one hand while with the other hand he held the guy’s dick in one place.

Then the terrorist drove that branch inside the dick’s almost non-existent urethra cavity.

The cultist screamed in pain and anguish. He would have never thought that someone could defile him in such a way one day. He would have committed suicide had he known this was the fate had in store for him.

But the butcher was smiling. He was carefully guiding the branch inside the dick’s mouth with utmost care. As if he was completing an academic project that needed his utmost attention.

Through pain and suffering, the cultist was barely able to see the smile on the teen's face. And he couldn't help but feel horrified by it.

'Who is the fuc*king cultist between us. Me or this devil?'

The cultist had this thought before it was overwritten by some more pain and misery. Eren had started to drive the branch in and out of the guy's dick now. It was coated in blood. And the guy had peed himself. The amalgamated smell of urine and blood was unique.

But Eren had seen the human bodily functions plenty of times in his previous timeline. So he wasn't discouraged by it. He was just glad that he had worn gloves before the act.

The guy was about to faint but Eren used another of his despicable moves to keep him awake. How can he let his main actor walk off the stage that he had taken efforts to set?

"Devil... What do you want? Just fucking ask me already what you want. I swear on all that I hold dear that I'll speak the truth. Just stop this madness. I... I beg of you."

The cultist had come to realize that there were indeed some fates worse than death. The eternal slumber was a much better choice than experiencing something like this. But he knew that this devil in front of him wouldn't give him relief if he asked him nicely.

Eren would only stop what he was doing if he came clean to him. And the cultist had already decided that he'll speak the truth. His loyalty to his organization can go fuck itself in the arse.

No amount of loyalty seemed greater for him to keep experiencing this torture method ever again. Now all the cultists wanted was to be allowed to come clean to this freak.

"Withdrawn already? Whatever happened to your cheeky attitude and your fearless claims that you don't fear death?"

"They have gone to eat sh*t damn it. Just ask me What do you want to know. Do you want me to tell you my name? My name's..."

"Hold on there, big guy. We'll need a much bigger audience for your confession. But before I fetch my buddies up, let me say a few things to you.

What you experienced was only a trailer. I have much bigger schemes that I'm sure would please you even better than this little demo here.

For example, how about chopping your dic*k off and then inserting that inside your arsehole? You'd give a new definition to the term "I fucked up all by myself." Hehe! Wouldn't that be funny?"

The cultist felt like his soul was about to leave his body after he heard the devil's proposed torture method. He felt that the kingdoms should hunt this vile creature instead of targeting poor blokes like him who only wanted to fight for some freedom.

"Listen to me, sir. Whatever I'll say will only be the truth. I'll not keep anything hidden from you. I promise. I don't care even if you kill me after I come clean. Just... just don't come close to me anymore."

“You are saying no to my care that I can give you, huh? Alright. If that’s what you want, I’ll grant you your wish. Remember the talk that we had.

But I want to ask you a few questions of my own before I bring my team here. You need to answer them as well.

And for your sake, you better keep quiet about what transpired between us or anything related to my personal line of questioning, you hear me? Otherwise... Hehe!”

Chapter 130: Renar’s Plight

The terrorist adjusted his victim’s clothes and kept the branch and storage inside his storage. He wanted to throw the nasties away but Marla’s senses were sharp. She would pick things up from those items lying in the vicinity and get a fair idea about what happened here.

Eren had already used a low-grade healing potion on the cultist so that his blood loss wouldn’t affect what he was trying to say. Then he first asked a few questions about his organization and some insider information.

The cultist was already on the edge after experiencing Eren’s vicious nature. He was scared of him. So he told everything the latter wanted to know from him, and then some more of his initiative. He even assured his torturer that his line of questioning wouldn’t get revealed to his teammates.

The butcher gave the cultist his seldom warm smile that a certain someone was known to flash now and then. The former patted the latter’s cheeks and stood up.

Finally, Eren called his team members up from his ID stone.

“Did you find anything?”

Almera asked, expecting a hard no. But the butcher nodded his head before replying:

“We are about to. Ace Renar here wants to cooperate with us. You can ask your questions.”

“What did you do to him?”

Almera couldn’t help but ask. The guy looked like he was a tough nut to crack. She wanted to know how a teen managed to achieve what an Adept level ranker couldn’t.

“Almera, stop asking pointless questions. If the boy wanted to let us know, he wouldn’t have asked us to give him some private time with the cultist.”

Almera’s cheeks reddened a little when Marla came in support of the butcher. The torturer shifted their attention to the cultist again to ease anyone’s curiosity about what he did to the cultist.

“Small details aren’t that important. Ace Renar, answer your question with honesty when they are asked. Adept Marla, you can take the lead.”

“Alright. First of all, tell us all your identities, Ace Renar if that’s what your name is. And what’s your purpose of attacking travellers inbound to the city of Silvermoon.

And don't tell me it's about money. Because there are far more prosperous paths to do banditry on instead of this low-trade route."

Marla folded her hands beneath her chest and replied. She had already ruled out banditry.

"Name's Renar. As you must have already figured out, we are what you guys call cultists. We work for Beast Bloods. It's an up and coming organization we have that works under a mysterious entity I don't know much about.

I, like most others, joined Beast Bloods because I wanted to start my ranking journey without having to face the kingdom's suppression. I wouldn't try to sell my logic to you. Because I know deep down, you also agree with me on the fact that the ranking journey would have been much easier for all the rankers if the knowledge was made freely available.

But the law of equivalent exchange holds true even among us cultists. We have to contribute to our organization with our blood and sweat if we want to gain the ranking resources. It's just that the cultists' organizations are more willing to share such resources in masses.

This is where they have you beat. The kingdom wants to breed the elite in a controlled quantity. Whereas the cultists just don't care if the ranker is a genius or not. They don't care how far the ranker goes in their ranking journey with their talent, as long as they do what they've told to do.

Et voila! They have so many scapegoats like me and my underlings that they can just discard us anytime they want. Hehe! In a way, it would have been better if I obtained my ranking resources through the kingdom's legal channels. My progress would have been slower. But I could have avoided being bossed around by scumbags.

Anyway! The reason we were attacking the travellers here was that we were ordered to do so. We were tasked with creating unrest in this region in any way we saw fit. And we chose this way.

Various squads within the Beast Bloods have been ordered to perform the same tasks in various regions across the Edinburgh kingdom. And more cultist organizations like ours have already joined hands and are currently working in sync.

You know, I've signed a mana contract with Beast Bloods that dictates that I don't spill its secrets. Otherwise, I'll regress in my ranking journey before dying shortly after.

The reason I'm still alive and talking to you is because of these chains. Now that I've told you what I know about the Beast Bloods' current plan, I reckon I'll die as soon as these chains are removed. It's in your hands to take preventive measures against the backlash due to the contract breach.

Save me or let me die. Either way, the backlash should serve as proof for you to know that I'm telling the truth.

I only ask that you spare the kids that are with me. They haven't even signed a binding contract with the Beast Bloods.

Agatha is the most innocent one among them. The kid has done nothing wrong yet. You can say that this was her first job at our organization."

Renar stopped talking and looked at Marla afterwards. He was expecting her to ask him a question but all we got was a tired sigh and an empathetic reply:

“Some people just have a bad start. I know someone who faced a lot of discrimination in the kingdom and defected to the cultists in the end. What she didn’t know was that grass only looks greener from the other side. But it’s a mess no matter where you go.

So I understand where you are coming from. But making innocents pay for the hardships you had to face is never the right way to get what you want.

Acer Renar, I can’t completely nullify the contract you have with your organization even with my D-Rank prowesses.

So your ranking journey will regress for sure even with my intervention. It might completely halt as well. But what I can do for you is save your life. You’ll still live. Just as a normal, rankless nobody.

As for the kids that are with you, I’ll see what I can do about them at the city of Silvermoon. You all need to come with us to get your punishments and start a new life, however shitty it might seem at the beginning.

Just answer me one thing. The mysterious entity that you talked about. What more can you tell me about them?”

Marla only wanted to know about the person who was controlling the Beast Bloods from the shadows. As if she had already filled in the details of whats and whys from Renar’s explanation and the briefing she must have been given before taking up this mission.

“I.. I’m fine with being rankless if it comes to it. Maybe I’m a failure as a ranker. But I might succeed as being something else.

Who knows? Hehe! So thank you for providing a way out for me and the kids. It might sound cliché, but we won’t forget the kindness we have been graced with.

As for that entity. I don’t know much about them. I only know that the Beast Blood’s head refers to them as...

The Ancients.”