

Vile 411

Chapter 411 Anger Management

'Phew! No wonder Arthur wanted this power.'

Eren said as he watched Claho shed his epidermis and start transforming into the creature of wrath. He had remembered that Eliza had stated that Arthur was eyeing the true reward of Purgatory from the very beginning. Now he understood why that was the case.

It wasn't that Eren could grasp everything about the rankers' experience through his ability. He could only retain a portion of those experiences and make them his own. But the fact that he could do that was revolutionary itself.

Eren could now practically master many weapon arts and battle styles if he accumulated and grasped enough experience about them the way he did. Then all he needed to do was fine-tune them with some real-life practice. This is easy. As a result, he would be able to master a particular weapon or battle style within a few weeks. This is in contrast to the years normal ranked soldiers spend in training.

Then there was the matter of the multiple ways of the elements and their respective progressions that he had to account for. Eren wasn't sure how he could make full use of all of those experiences. However, he could use the progress he had made in the fire element, lightning element, and time element.

He needed quiet time to process these gains. It wasn't something he could do right off the bat. At least the ability hadn't progressed enough for him to do that.

But with bigger rewards came increased risks.

'This ability also has some risks.'

Eren narrowed his eyes on the creature of wrath that was standing in front of him like it was waiting for his command. Eren didn't say anything. He just looked at his body while pondering over the risks of using this ability to its fullest that he had learned subconsciously.

"Go kill your fellow soldiers."

Eren said to Claho now that he had now become a creature of wrath. Although he couldn't understand human words anymore, he could still process Eren's emotions as the caster of the domain.

It immediately left its place and moved towards the nearest battle between the rankers and the creature of wrath. Eren then closed his eyes and was about to harness the power of wrath flames. But then he sensed something and ducked.

Eren's mana sense in the Domain of Wrath had been amplified by many levels. Yet it took him time for him to sense the life-threatening attack that was executed on him just now.

Eren looked and found out that it was the bowsword woman who had used her special runic projectile sword against him. She wasn't as impulsive as Kelmar. As a result, she wasn't as desperate to fight or flee from the creatures of wrath as the others.

She instead concentrated all her efforts on killing the root cause of these events. One had to say that her strategy was right on the mark. Her timing was apt. Plus, the gear she had used was an ideal tool. Too bad, she hadn't understood the full scope of the Domain of Wrath.

"You... This is the Domain of Wrath, you know. Try not to provoke me too much. Otherwise, it would be disastrous for both of us."

Eren said that while clenching his fist. He tried to calm himself and not let his anger take over.

"Then again, it is already bad for you no matter what you do. So I understand your struggle. Hehehe. Let me give you the relief you want."

Eren said and cast his spells.

Blitz Bolt

Blitz Steps

Sedated Perception

The bowsword-wielding ranger saw that Eren had disappeared from his position and immediately became wary of him. She cast her AoE as soon as she understood the severity of her situation. She had never thought that Eren would be able to dodge the unique assassination tool, which she had saved for emergencies like these.

A small dome of water-element mana was created around the ranger woman. Sword projectiles were soon going to appear in that domain that would target her approaching foe.

But what she hadn't realized was the fact that she had underestimated Eren's current form and his stats while in the Domain of Wrath.

The flames of wrath did not only heal Eren's body completely but also boosted his stats temporarily. With the absorption of each flame, each stat would be boosted further. That meant that he would get stronger the more he kept on killing foes that were inside the Domain of Wrath.

Currently, Eren has consumed around 10 wrath flames. So his stats were boosted way more than his normal levels. So when he executed his movement spell, the butcher was already within the striking distance behind the ranger's back even before her AoE was perfected.

Eren wasn't someone who would wait for his enemies to make a move. Particularly when he was using the Domain of Wrath. He feared that he would lose control over his anger once a successful blow landed on him.

Pichook!

Eren didn't waste time. There was no exchange of words. There was no stare down. Just a simple form of efficient killing.

The ranger woman was already weak in close combat. Plus, thanks to Eren's boosted stats, the game was already over before it began. Eren pushed ahead and crushed the ranger's head with his vice-like grip alone.

Just like that, both the rangers of Claho's team along with the leader himself had turned dead within a few moments of the butcher's domain expansion. There were only a few rangers that were fighting a vain battle with the creatures of wrath.

Eren looked at his bloody hand which now had some grey matter sticking to it. The hand immediately caught fire and red flames could be seen burning every bit of that matter along with the ranger's blood into cinders. The dead ranger's body also began to burn, and the flames rising from the body of the dead ranger were soon absorbed by Eren.

'No. my approach needs to be improvised. Too much anger is bad. But what if I can control my anger and put it in the right direction?'

Eren thought as he watched the red flame disappear into his body. At that moment, he decided to test the limits of his ability by experimenting on himself as well.

The butcher let his anger consume him.

Chapter 412 Aftermath

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Immediately, his body started transforming too. His muscles that were already well-defined became even more prominent as they grew in size. His stature was increasing as well. But there was no muscle rupture or bone-breaking in his case. There was no epidermis falling off. His mana circuits and his mana core stayed stable too unlike the creatures of the wrath.

Eren realized at the time that he was under the influence of anger and mana of wrath. And yet he was still conscious and fully aware of his surroundings.

His unique constitution as a slime half-blood had made the transformation easy for him without losing any of his previous powers.

But the physical boost he had received because of his ability was even more unbelievable. He felt that he didn't need any spell to take care of someone of Claho's level anymore. He could do it with his physical prowess alone.

Eren decided to test the limits of his mental acuity to keep himself sane while voluntarily submitting to the feelings of anger. Now instead of growing even further than he already was, the transformation took a different turn.

Some otherworldly tribal tattoos started appearing over Eren's arms and limbs as more wrath mana was injected into his system. Eren was also experiencing his psych getting consumed by feelings of anger and destruction.

Just when he thought that he would lose himself in his anger, Eren stopped the process. Had it been the previous Eren, he would have been consumed by these feelings a long time ago. But the realization about himself and the path that he had gained had helped him not lose control over his anger.

Eren's stature had grown and his muscle definition had also increased. But his appearance didn't change much from his white-haired transformation.

But the tribal tattoos he had received under the effects of wrath mana were shining with red luminance. The tattoos were trying to spread all over his body. But Eren stopped their growth and only limited them to his limbs and some portion of his neck.

"Time to check things out!"

Eren said and approached the nearest team of five rankers who were battling with two creatures. The creatures screamed at the incoming Eren before stepping aside. It was as if they had suddenly realized who was the leader of their bunch under the umbrella of the red dome.

The creatures couldn't stay stable though. Or Eren didn't care enough to keep them stable under his control. Both the creatures instantly combusted as soon as the butcher reached their place.

Eren had travelled a sufficient distance to come here. He was as fast as he used to be. But there was a difference. This time, this was his pure non-spell-influenced speed that he had achieved only through his physical prowess. As a result, he had left a trail of substantial depressions on the ground that seemed like spider webs.

"Spare us, oh"

A survivor ranker was punched in his face the next second before he could complete his plea. The raw power behind the punch was so strong that it had generated a gale that threw other rankers near him away from the target.

The ranker's head was no more. It had burst into so many tiny particles that they were swept away by the gale that had been created by Eren's punch. But soon Eren started feeling his muscles getting sore as his feelings of anger were increasing with each kill. So he decided to turn things down a notch.

'Hmm! I need to keep my emotions in check under the effects of the domain. The time for the experiments is over. Need to wrap things up.'

Eren thought to himself and used his mana sense to order the creatures of wrath under his influence to go kamikaze over their opponents. He also used his pure physical powers to take care of some of the rankers who were trying to play safe even now.

Just like that, the hunting game that Claho started was ended up by Eren in his way. When everyone was killed, Eren cancelled his ability and the red-tinted dome disappeared into thin air. The wound over his chest also started closing as soon as the disappearance of red mana took place.

Eren sighed as he realized the unpredictability of the ranker's life. He couldn't believe that his last days in the duchy of Lionhearts would be full of such surprises.

Layla finally came out and observed the carnage that had happened all over the battlefield. Not a single corpse that had remained on the battlefield was in a normal condition.

Some rankers were resistant to the transformation caused by the red mana after all. Or the level of red mana they had been injected with wasn't enough for them to go through with the transformation. Either way, now Eren had bodies to take care of.

The entire battlefield screamed that it was Eren who had done this carnage. Even a newbie Ace historian would be able to find clues about him because of his dominant presence that had been etched onto the surroundings.

The red mana did help Eren in colluding his mana signatures. Plus his white-haired transformation couldn't be linked to the normal him. But his involvement in the crime scene was just too much even as his regular self.

"So what are you going to do about this mess?"

Layla asked as she aired herself with her palm as if to show she wasn't okay with the sight she was seeing. But Eren knew that this was just a show-off. The young witch was as heartless as him when it came to these things if not more.

"You tell me.

Personally, if I can't avoid it, I really don't mind being a cultist. But it would be troublesome for your master if I had to do all the things in the shadows."

Eren had resorted to blackmailing of course.

Chapter 413 Declaration

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Layla snorted when she heard Eren's response and shook her head in denial as if she was expecting this. She also knew that even though it was blackmail, it contained the truth she couldn't ignore.

"Sigh. Alright. Collect all the corpses in one place. I'll also get to work. We need to finish this faster. We also might benefit from the harvest you have reaped from such diligent work."

Saying that Layla took out a giant cauldron from her storage. It was the same type and size of the cauldron she had immersed Hexen Bee in. It was 3 meters in height and 5 meters in diameter.

Eren didn't understand what Layla was doing but he didn't waste time asking her about it. He started collecting all the corpses and the chopped off parts in one place near the cauldron. He didn't forget to store the ID stones of his victims as well as their unique, army-issued weapons for himself as he did that.

Layla's preparations were also done by this point. First, she looked at the pile of bodies and body parts that were oozing everything they had ever contained. A thick stench of blood was permeating the air.

Layla scanned her surroundings to make sure that Eren didn't miss anything. She nodded to herself after confirming that everything was alright.

"Okay. I'll take a few minutes to process these "ingredients". You can do whatever you want till then."

Layla said to Eren and started throwing a few vials into the already existing mixture present inside the cauldron. Then she used an unelementalized spell to throw a few ingredients before moving her gaze to the pile of corpses and organs.

One after the other, the corpses and other unidentifiable body parts levitated from their positions and started getting dropped inside the concoction. When Layla was ensured that everything had gone inside, she took out the lid from her storage and placed it over the cauldron— closing its mouth.

Then she started operating on the cauldron herself. The previously invisible runes over the artefact were illuminated before a green fire was conjured at the base. The green fire couldn't be called Enderflame. Nevertheless, it was something close to it.

Layla sat beside the cauldron and started mumbling a few chants. Initially, the runes were stretched out on the ground a few meters before they began to glow with a breathing effect.

Eren saw all this and came to realize that he hadn't even begun his study in potioning even though he was practically living his second life. That's because he could barely understand what Layla was doing.

But he understood one thing. And that was the fact that Layla shouldn't be disturbed in the process. So he decided to leave her to her devices and find someplace to relax.

This was technically still the middle of the night. But the time was tilting towards the hour of twilight.

Eren decided to take a walk.

'If my map-reading skills don't suck balls, there should be a cliff nearby.'

Eren thought to himself and started walking in a particular direction— leaving Layla alone. He didn't think he needed to worry about her safety anyway.

With the way Layla was going, Eren was also sure that his identity would stay safe at this crime scene. He wondered if the historians could even detect this place as a crime scene when Layla was done with it. Layla's intricate setup made him think like that when he was standing next to it.

As his hands were covered in dry blood, Eren took out a Sativa stick before lighting it.

He had returned to his normal appearance when he reached the cliff. His clothes barely held onto his body. And the light wind was making their job even more difficult as he stood at the very edge of the mountain cliff he came here to see.

There was a valley of dense green wildlife spreading down below from where Eren was watching. The bright moon was right in front of him and somehow looked exaggeratedly much larger than it was supposed to be. White moonlight illuminated the valley below the cliff.

Eren was able to remove the reins over all of his thoughts on such a peaceful night. He let them run free in his head.

Soon, he would have to leave the duchy of Lionheart and enter the duchy of Nightshade. So it was natural that all his thoughts were revolving around those changes.

But even while having multiple thoughts to process, Eren wasn't conflicted anymore. The battle that had happened just now had been pretty helpful for him to see what he was supposed to see— the naked truth of the rankers' world.

'I'm not living in a peaceful place. There's no peaceful place in this world as long as there are rankers and mana added into the equation.'

Eren thought as he took a large drag of his smoke. The drag seemed to have given him some sort of clarity as he shook his head before adding further.

'No scratch that.

There's no peace as long as there are living people involved. Rankers or not. Mana or not. Human nature is the same at its base. We are all cruel beings if we just dig deep within ourselves.

Some of us know it. And some live their whole lives without being aware of their true nature.

Should I call them lucky or gullible?

Hehehe.'

Eren's thoughts then shifted to his past life which was full of misery. He then thought about the changes he had introduced in this timeline and their aftereffects as he smoked.

Eren had ambitious plans for the place where he was heading. Most of his projects depended on the effective execution of some of these plans. Of course, he didn't want to go there under the circumstances he was in right now, but he had no choice.

Then his ever-restless mind thought of Reen and he started feeling the heartache. He felt even more pain than when it was pierced some time ago.

The domain of Wrath was like a catharsis for him so he wasn't angry anymore in his situation. But he did feel that the determination to see the metaphorical "view at the top of this world" was getting stronger in his heart.

Eren narrowed his eyes as he suddenly remembered Eliza's face and everything she represented to the current him. He realized that he could still feel shivers running through his entire body if he decided to relive the memories he had at the time of their meeting.

Eliza's voice kept reverberating in his head as he took out another Sativa stick and lit it up.

Eren thought as he kept on thinking about the way Eliza had worded her intentions to him. He chuckled after having another random thought.

'That was a good piece she had written. Do all Sages need to possess such skills? Hehehehe!'

Eren chuckled to himself as he had that thought. But that thought stuck in his head and kept on growing.

Audience or not, Eren felt like he needed to voice his feelings too. So he took a long drag from his Sativa stick and released a cloud of smoke in the air before saying aloud.

"As their dried and dead blood

Paint my skin merlot

My calluses are chipped away

And liberated are my thoughts
Their souls shall be torn asunder
Their bodies shall nourish the soils
The debtor will settle the debts
Wasted not will be my toils
To find peace
Amid a clusterfuck of misery
All I need is but a chance
To rewrite my history
My mask of sanity slips away
There's nobody to tell the tale
Even the gods won't see it coming
When a Vile Evil Hides Under the Veil"

A moment after Eren declared his declaration, he threw the butt of his smoke. Then he chuckled to himself and started walking in the same direction he had come from.

The butcher was about to get busy for a while.

Chapter 414 News Hour

Two months after Team Claho's mass wipeout.

Eren was seen drinking at a lounge facility made for Edinburgh army personnel. He was sitting alone at his table in a corner away from any attention.

He had worn a large black overcoat and black pants. There was an insignia of the kingdom of Edinburgh attached to the right shoulder in the form of a strap. On his left shoulder, there were runic inscriptions that would spectrally project his army joining details if and when he runs his mana through it.

This was the standard uniform in the Edinburgh army for Ace rankers like him. It was just that nobody else had worn their uniforms in the lounging area apart from him. They were all in casuals or their personal gear.

He had ordered a known but relatively rare Elven ale on his tab— Frostfoam. He was also seen reading a spectral book that contained army regulations, the geography and topography of the nearby region, and some other details that only the army personnel of the Edinburgh kingdom were supposed to be privy to.

After reading some pointers, Eren would jot down a few of them or whatever he had learned from them into his journal. The other people would give him weird looks whenever they passed by his table. That was because he was writing things down in a book instead of saving them on his ID Spectral screen.

Eren had been inspired by Edgar's way of noting things down. So he had also started to write whatever he deemed relevant to him.

'Hm! Got to say the elven ale provided here is a bit different but that's not necessarily a bad thing. The shit packs a punch.'

Eren said to himself as he drank from his large mug. He had started to cherish times like these now— thanks to the experiences he had had so far.

They had taught him that life happens amidst a series of comedies and tragedies.

Eren had also stopped fearing his alcoholism now. He had come to realize that the Sativa stick was a viable vice. And since it wasn't something that could be detrimental to him or his growth, he didn't have to worry about getting used to it.

Now the booze was something Eren would drink to relax and unwind. He was glad for himself that he could drink this way, with this mindset.

However, peace doesn't last forever, just like the relaxing liquid in his pint.

"There you are!"

Eren heard a familiar voice behind him when he was enjoying his alone time. A few creases appeared on his forehead as a result. But he controlled his irritation and lifted his hand and waved without looking back.

"Why are you drinking alone, Eren? You could have come with your squad, you know. We are heading outside the army base to drink. Want to come?"

This was a young elf male in his mid-twenties. He had grey hair and grey eyes. He looked charming and attractive— highlighting his pure-blooded elven background. He had first patted Eren on his back and grabbed a seat in front of him without hesitation. The guy had asked Eren the same question twice in a day, expecting the same answer from the butcher.

"Sigh! I already told you, Arjun. I have some work. You guys can enjoy yourselves and have fun. I'll meet you when we are ready to resume our on-field duties after two days.

I mean, we all have our personal lives outside of our duties, right?"

Arjun pursed his lips after he heard Eren's response. He knew that it would be difficult to convince Eren. This was going to take time so he decided to join Eren.

"Excuse me. I'll have what this guy's having."

Arjun placed his order with the bar staff nearby before responding to Eren.

"Heh! I know why you don't want to come. It's because of Sid, right? Man, you shouldn't pay much attention to him if you ask me. The guy talks bullshit sometimes. You can just listen with one ear and let it out with the other. Haha!"

Arjun said and picked up the pint of Frostfoam that was just placed in front of him. He drank two-three gulps before putting it down and waited for Eren to respond. The latter shook his head before replying:

"It's not that, Arjun. I couldn't care less what the guy thinks about me or says to me as long as it's not totally off the line. I'm here to complete my on-field assignment in peace and that's what I'm focusing on."

Eren tapped his fingers on the table as he continued his speech.

It's nothing personal, Arjun. It's just not my style to waste time arguing with idiots or getting offended by them."

Arjun smiled mirthlessly after hearing Eren's "I don't give a fuck" answer before speaking up.

"Your nonchalance is exactly the reason that guy is getting irritated. Now he thinks you are looking down on him. Sometimes, it won't hurt for you to act your age and settle things for the better, Mr wise-ass!"

Arjun said and downed the elven ale served to him. He didn't like drinking Elven from any place because they would always be diluted. The guy was used to drinking strong stuff. Even what Eren had considered strong wasn't good enough for him.

That's why he regretted following Eren's lead in ordering up booze. However, he was known to be spontaneous like that. So he forgot about his dislike for diluted elven ale. He then chugged some more booze down his throat before continuing his speech.

His demeanour suddenly changed before he spoke up.

"Listen, Eren. I don't want to lecture you on how to behave. Especially someone like you who does everything right. However, sometimes you have to give 110% to the team.

If you want to work with your team and want your teammates to have your back, you need to adapt. There would always be guys like Sid who would hate on guys like you.

Of course, those people would also be made to change their behaviour sooner or later. But you also need to make conscious efforts to reach out to your teammates. You can't just ignore them and pretend they don't exist."

'I can. It's you who won't let me.'

Eren said to himself internally. He then finished his drink and lit up his smoke. Only after releasing a dense cloud of smoke, did he find the right words to respond to Arjun with.

"Look, Arjun. I never wanted this position of vice-captain. It's just these stupid rules and regulations that you, me, and every other ranker in here are bound by.

If a person is dense enough to hold a grudge because of this, I'd rather ignore that person as much as I can. I'd rather focus on the personal tasks at hand. I'm already behind schedule.

We are only supposed to report to duty for three days of the week anyway. The remaining four days are mine. So unless I'm assigned any on-field mission, I'd rather spend my time my way than be part of a team even during my off-hours. You wouldn't have found me here in the army base if it wasn't for the fact that I'm supposed to meet someone here."

Eren replied leisurely as if he wasn't affected by Arjun's request. The latter felt like he was about to have a headache talking to the butcher. It's not that he hadn't talked with Sid, who had quarrels with Eren over his position as deputy vice-captain.

But just as Eren had said, Sidro Zas was as unreasonable as Eren had painted him to be. So he had thought that maybe talking to Eren would solve this thorny problem in their team. He didn't want these two guys to become buddies. He just wanted them to find a common ground on which they could both come together and work in their squad without generating any on-site conflicts.

Arjun wanted his stubborn teammate to do more. But a spectral screen popped up in the lounge area before he could try to talk sense into him. It projected a female narrator in army uniform who was meant to provide regular updates about the Edinburgh kingdom.

Every day at 8 PM was a new hour in the army base. Spectral screens like these would pop up inside various army facilities to keep the soldiers updated about things happening inside the kingdom.

Eren and Arjun both shut up at this point and listened to the news given by the news lady.

"Good evening and at ease. This is a standard daily update at 8 PM. First, we'll look into the news about Nightshade duchy..."

The news lady began describing major crimes and cult activities in the duchy Eren was currently in. Then she talked about the monster activities in the duchy before shifting her focus to the neighbouring forces.

Eren had observed that the number of cultist activities and other crimes in the Edinburgh kingdom was slowly rising. He had also understood the reason behind these things. It was none other than himself. Or to be precise, his identity as the real Osan Woods Butcher.

She talked briefly about many things that happened in the Nightshade duchy. Then she started narrating about other duchies— one at a time.

Finally came the Lionheart duchy. And this is where everyone in the lounge and other parts of the army base paid close attention. This section of the update was slated to cover news about the OWB, after all.

"Team Claho posted in the city of Osan is still missing. It is assumed that the Osan Woods Butcher may have a hand in its disappearance. The report has yet to confirm the deaths officially. But it is assumed that their lives have been lost on duty.

The Lionheart duchy has announced a welfare package for the affected families..."

'Layla didn't disappoint me.'

Eren smirked after hearing the news.

Chapter 415 Investment

'Layla didn't disappoint me.'

Eren smirked after hearing the news. He had been keeping tabs on the news related to Lionheart duchy ever since he came to this place. So far, things had worked out exactly the way he wanted them to.

He finished all his projects in the city of Osan and left with Nina to come to the duchy of Nightshade. Travelling to this place would have taken them months if they took regular transport. So they chose the shortest method: using kingdom controlled teleportation arrays.

Eren and Nina only needed to travel to the city of Lionhearts to access the teleportation array. Even a one-way trip using a teleportation array was threateningly expensive in Eren's eyes. Nevertheless, since this was an on-field assignment, he was exempt from paying the fee.

Eren had also arranged for Agatha to come to the duchy of Nightshade. She had taken a few days to wrap up her affairs and arranged everything the way Eren wanted her to. Then she used Eren's arrangement to go to First Salvation, which was on the border of Edinburgh. A bunch of tasks were awaiting her there, assigned by her master.

Eren had also uncovered something of significant value after revisiting the Osan Woods following the spectral coordinates stored on the array disk. He only delivered the disk to the person Lin wanted him to deliver it to after he was done with it. Suffice to say, he had struck a metaphorical gold when he reached the site. But the effects of these fortunes were going to take some time to surface for him.

Renar and Viper were preparing to take a long route to the duchy of Nightshade. This was because they had been assigned a few tasks along the way. That and the fact that Eren was too frugal to spend teleportation money on two more subordinates.

The news lady in military uniform kept on talking but Arjun had something on his mind so he asked Eren about it.

"Eren, you are from the city of Osan, right? How was Isen Osan?"

Eren had expected questions like these thrown at him even before he entered the army camp. So he compiled a few standard answers ready for standard questions like these. The two kept talking for a while.

"Tell me Arjun, you are a talented ranker yourself. Plus, you were running for the vice-captain role along with Sid and Dianna. How come you aren't as frustrated?"

Arjun shook his head before replying:

"Experiences matter more to the elves than holding onto any positions. It's not that I'm not frustrated. Hell, I'm doing the vice-captain's job for you by trying to make peace between you and Sid without getting any rewards for it.

But I'll be fine, Eren. All my grievances vanished after looking at you. If you were any less worthy of your position than you are right now, I would create a bigger ruckus than that doofus."

Eren raised his eyebrows after listening to the ranger talk before replying.

"So you think I'm still not worthy of my position?"

Arjun flashed a grin before bursting into a burst of hearty laughter.

"Hahahaha! That doofus Sidro would have considered that as me praising him. Alright. Seems like you have made up your mind. So I won't bother you anymore. But be sure to report on time. I'm not planning to send you reminders anymore. Consider that my way of getting back at you. Kekeke!

See you on the battlefield, my friend."

Arjun finished his drink in one big gulp before taking his leave. Eren breathed a sigh of relief when he did that. He didn't have anything against the guy. It was just that his plans mattered more to him than bonding with his teammates at the time.

Eren wasn't planning to stay in the army forever anyway. So positions didn't matter to him. This job was just a means to an end. He had taken up this job to enter the Anfang Badlands without any hindrance.

"Sorry for being late, Eren. I was busy with some personal stuff, hehe."

Another person showed up at Eren's table and took a seat exactly where Arjun was sitting. This was also another of his squadmates. She was a redhead human that looked to be in her early twenties. She was tall and had a medium bust. Her waist also has the right curves.

She wasn't in her military attire though. She had worn her casuals. A skin-hugging blouse that only covered her bust and cargo pants that were placed way below her navel. Her curvy mid-waist region didn't fail to grab the onlookers' attention.

"It's fine, Dianna. So tell me, what do you have for me?"

Eren had ordered a few snacks to munch on while waiting for Dianna. The latter couldn't resist the fish fingers. She picked up one and started nibbling on it before replying.

"Eren, before you buy that land, I need you to understand something. That land won't gain anything and would end up as a dead asset in the end. Are you sure you want to proceed even after knowing this?"

Eren smiled after he heard Dianna. He had realized that she wasn't really worried about him. This was just her way of keeping the "I told you so" card in hand in case he acts up in the future.

"Yes, I'm sure. I wouldn't have asked you otherwise. Will you tell me now?"

Dianna shrugged her shoulders as if to convey "she had tried" and took another fish finger from Eren's snack basket before responding.

"Alright. Even though my family owns that land, it's not like we are doing anything over it. I already asked. This is the amount my uncle wants me to pitch to you."

Dianna drew a number on the table with her slim fingers and long nails. The exuberant price Eren had to pay for a seemingly dead land made him whistle. But he also knew that this was an inflated price.

So he kept on bargaining with Dianna, who then kept on calling her uncle to receive instructions from him. The sessions lasted for a while before both parties agreed.

"Sold!"

Dianna hammered the table with her hand when she said that. Eren also smirked after realizing that the first few steps of his plan were heading in the right direction.

Chapter 416 Anfang Badlands

"You showed up on time today. That's a fresh change. Hehehe!"

Arjun welcomed Eren when he saw him approaching. This was the meeting spot they had chosen to gather before heading up for their usual clean up mission.

"I'm not someone who always runs late, you know. I had been very busy settling my affairs in the early days of coming to this place."

Eren replied to Arjun with a light smile.

Eren's squad had 33 members. There were seventeen Ace rankers in the team along with an equal number of rookie soldiers in the Novice ranks.

Of course, not all of the 33 soldiers had been gathered at once at the same place. Life at the army camp required squads to divide their schedules in such a way that things would work for all of them. There were too many tasks given to a single squad. So the squads would be divided into groups of two or three depending upon the task.

"Heh! I wouldn't be surprised if the guy gives the same excuse not to show up when our squad runs into some trouble."

A harsh voice sounded in Eren's ears. He looked past Arjun and saw the man to whom it belonged— Sidro Zas.

Eren didn't pay him much attention. The guy was eyeing his position long before Eren came into the picture all of a sudden. Sidro Zas, Arjun Ruku, and Dianna Remus were potential candidates for the position of vice-captain ever since their previous vice-captain was assigned to a different task.

But then Eren chose to do his on-field assignment at the duchy of Nightshade and that put a halt to the trio's race. The position he had secured was that of deputy vice-captain. It didn't seem that strong at first. But should Eren decide to continue serving the military post his graduation from LA, his position as vice-captain will be cemented. Students of top academies enjoyed this advantage the most.

The duchy of Lionhearts was different from the other three duchies because of its geographical position. It was the only duchy that didn't face any Badlands because it shares its borders with the kingdom of Leyos. The same kingdom that Isen had escaped to.

The remaining three duchies of Edinburgh had their borders shared with Anfang Badlands.

Anfang Badlands were the places that were occupied by the monster tribes like goblins, orcs, cyclops, kapre etc. Anfang Badlands was not one place but a common term for all the places where the monsters had established their dominance throughout the continent of Anfang.

That's why the presence of guilds was not that prominent in the Lionheart duchy. But the other three grand duchies differed greatly from the southern one in this regard.

Anfang Badlands had been used to define kingdom borders by many establishments. That meant two establishments would usually have Badlands dividing them. The kingdoms then assigned their respective armies to keep the Badlands in check.

The kingdoms would tacitly agree not to reclaim the Badlands from their side because it served as an ideal neutral ground. Plus, for some reason, the monsters' presence in the Badlands didn't completely disappear no matter how many purges the kingdoms ordered. The land that the creatures had occupied wasn't worth the cost of committing to war against them.

So over time, the establishments came to a mutual understanding that Badlands would be used as neutral grounds to define each of their territories. They would also be harvested for resources from both ends without anyone claiming pre-defined claims over them.

The armies of the kingdoms would organize regular clean-up operations to keep their borders safe from sudden monster invasions. The aim of these clean-ups was not total purge but population control.

Of course, the monsters would not leave things lying down. They would attack the borders of human establishments from time to time. So the army of each kingdom played a big role in keeping their normal populace safe from monster invasions.

This was the reason not just Edinburgh but other establishments also focused on cultivating young rankers through their academies or other such practices. High-ranked entities were only used as deterrents in such regular skirmishes. The real battles would unfold among low-ranked citizens of their respective establishments.

The resources found in the Badlands would be used for a variety of goods. Not just positioning or other forms of alchemy, they would also be incorporated into making weapons and other such gears. The economies of almost all the establishments were hugely dependent on Badlands.

Eren had taken the on-field task so that he could enter it from the Nightshade duchy's side. The Badlands were heavily restricted zones in which normal citizens wouldn't be allowed entry.

Only the army and certified guilds were allowed to send their teams into the Badlands. Then there were some areas in the Badlands that only the army could enter. The region in Badlands Eren wanted to enter was one such area.

The guilds would pay kingdoms a fixed cut as an annual tax. In return, they were allowed to build certain facilities near the borders or in the safe zones of the Badlands.

Of course, there had been times when the monster invasion had gotten so intense that they would have the potential to threaten a substantial population of the establishments. Some special protocols would be initiated during such times.

This was the reason why the case of Osan Woods Butcher was blown up so big. Only the Lionhearts duchy was considered relatively peaceful in Edinburgh. As long as the treaty with the Leyos kingdom was intact, the southern duchy was the least troubled region of the kingdom.

So when the peace in Lionheart was compromised, almost everybody thought of a foreign hand. And Isen's escape into the Leyos kingdom only worsened that suspicion.

However, what Eren's team was currently doing was a regular clean-up. At least that's what the butcher wanted his team to think. He had different goals in his mind.

The Badlands were going to become his playground eventually.

Chapter 417 Altashia

"Heh! I wouldn't be surprised if the guy gives the same excuse not to show up when our squad runs into some trouble."

Eren didn't reply to Sid. But he had decided that he would kill the guy and blame it on the Badlands if he found a chance to do so. The butcher preferred the act of biting instead of barking after all.

"Has everyone gathered?"

A young yet dominant feminine voice suddenly rang out. Eren looked up and saw a girl in her early twenties standing at the tip of a branch on a tree not far from their place. She seemed as tall as the current Eren.

This girl was also wearing a military uniform. But there was a single star on her strap— hinting at her position in the squad. She was the captain of Eren's group.

"Yes, Captain Altashia. All 14 of us are accounted for now that Eren is here. We are ready."

Arjun replied while bowing a bit. Altashia was not only their captain but also a superior ranker to all of them. At such a young age, she was an Ace ranker in the solid stage, just a step away from ranking up. That alone was impressive enough. But her family's military background and her status as a Royal Ren student enabled her to dominate almost everyone in her team with her presence alone.

Plus, she gave off a unique aura. An aura that stated that there were plenty of things about her that made her dangerous.

Arjun was no pushover. But he respected his captain because of her talents. The guy had challenged her plenty of times already with no single win to his name.

Altashia looked at Eren briefly before nodding. She seldom chatted with anybody. So Eren didn't feel odd about her non-verbal gestures. He also understood that she was an introvert like his past self. So he too decided to adapt to her preferences and simply nodded.

"Alright. Today. We have to clean up an orc tribe that is getting too close to the neutral border. The recon team has stated that the tribe has five Orc Leaders and 17 Orc Soldiers."

Eren raised his eyebrows and looked at his group when he found out about the enemy's strength. There were 14 of them equipped with military gear. Seven of them were in the Ace rank while the rest were in the Novice rank.

Monsters had their stages of evolution. Their reference names would change as per their strengths. An Orc Soldier was equivalent to the Novice ranker whereas the Orc Leader was similar to the Ace ranker.

In short, Eren's team held an overwhelming advantage. Their numbers were overkill. He shook his head when he realized its connotation. The army was about the efficient deployment of forces to the right place. It would never allow a team to have an easy time on its mission because it was not cost-effective.

'That can only mean one thing. The recon team has an unconfirmed target.'

Eren quickly came up with the conclusion. And in the next moment, his conclusion turned out to be true.

"The recon team also has a reason to believe that the tribe has an Orc Lord amidst it."

Altashia spoke next and jumped from the branch. A gale of warm wind cushioned her fall. A crow of average size zipped past the tree's branch and landed on her left shoulder. It rubbed its head affectionately against her neck.

Altashia patted the bird with her right hand as she watched as her teammates started having stressed expressions on their faces. An Orc Lord was equivalent to a D-Rank entity after all.

"Don't worry. According to the recon team, the Lord has lost his claim to power and his territory. He was banished from his place along with the tribe members who supported him.

He'll be injured from his duel with the young Lord and probably waiting to recuperate in silence. That's why the recon team couldn't confirm his existence.

That being said, an Orc Lord is not something you guys can handle. So I'll take care of him. You get the ones that are left behind. Understood?"

Altashia spoke softly but her voice was heard by everyone. Eren had to say Altashia was a beautiful girl even though she gave off a cold and domineering aura. She was almost his height with her long legs. Her arms were also long and slender. Her figure seemed petite despite her tall stature. But her ample bust made up for all the curves she was missing on her hips.

Altashia let her shoulder-length blonde hair fly. Her blue eyes added extra charm to her already-attractive facial features.

Everything about Altashia spelt perfection. It was no wonder that she had so many admirers in and outside the army. Sid was no exception to her charm either. The guy was smitten by her. This was the reason he was extra hurt by not being allowed to be a deputy vice-captain. He had lost so many valid reasons to be with her by losing that position. And that too, to a brat who didn't seem to appreciate Altashia's charms.

Contrary to Sid's assumption though, the butcher was indeed interested in his captain. He just didn't like to show it so overtly like a certain bull-headed idiot.

'I'll plough this beautiful woman when the time is right and make her submit to my Sin. Hehe!'

The butcher thought to himself as he listened to the tactical plan his captain had come up with. She had crafted a simple setup that would enable her team to get the maximum monsters remotely before the frontal crash unfolded.

Years of experience shared by all the teams led to well-defined military practices. In addition, the month-long incubation period in the military ensured that the most standard tactics used by army squads were known to those who had just joined.

Altashia retrieved a rectangular-looking, array-inscribed platform after she was done briefing her team. This slab was 3 meters in width and 6 meters in length.

The Ace rank artefact levitated from the ground at a fixed height. It was a standard utility vehicle issued to every captain to transport their team.

Chapter 418 Raid

The Edinburgh kingdom along with a lot of other establishments had heavily controlled the usage of transportation-related artefacts because of its potential to pose a serious threat to public law and order.

In the hands of the crazy rankers and even crazier cultists, even a simple thing such as the levitating platform could be used to cause mass destruction. There were cases in the past of cultists lacing these artefacts with explosives and creating a chain effect that led to mass panic. Afterwards, they used the same type of artefact to run away from the forces chasing them.

As a consequence, almost all cities in Edinburgh did not allow their citizens to use such modes of transport, even if they could afford them. In place of these modes, colt-hire was incorporated to keep things under control while creating employment opportunities for unranked citizens.

Even though it was technically not a flying artefact, it was pretty fast. Faster than standard modes of transportation. Plus, it allowed multiple rankers to be transported at the same time.

That's why such equipment was mostly restricted to being used by the army and kingdom-sanctioned personnel.

Eren and his team got onto the platform and imbued their unelementalized mana into the platform to confirm their identities. Their feet were secured by the runic lines that got on their skin right after they did that.

Altashia set up a simple energy barrier after ensuring that everyone was on board. She operated on the artefact and made it levitate off the ground. It ran on Extols as well as rankers' mana. But the Extols were usually reserved for emergencies.

Eren's team began moving forward. Despite the uneven terrain, they rode at exceptional speed, faster than any colt riding ranker.

The raid on the orc tribe was going to happen at night when those monsters would be the least alert. Eren's team found what they were looking for soon after following the directions of the recon team.

A perimeter made of simple wooden logs had been created by the tribe and they had been placed on the two sides of the tribe's camp. There were huts made of wood, stone, mud, and dry grass. The huts were of varying sizes— hinting at the position of their occupants in the tribe.

There was only one one-story structure visible in the camp. The rest of the huts only had ceilings made of wooden logs and dry grass.

"Well, what is your assessment?"

Altashia asked Arjun and Dianna— the team's two rangers. They both looked at each other and decided that Arjun would brief them about the situation.

"The recon information checks out for the most part. Hate to break it to you guys, but there's indeed an Orc Lord present in the tribe. But his vital signs are not stable. Captain, should we proceed as planned?"

Arjun asked Altashia with a serious look on his face. Orc Lord was no joke even though he seemed to have been weakened. Even though Altashia was on the verge of breaking into D-Rank, she was technically not prepared to handle a monster of that level yet.

Altashia patted her black raven affectionately before looking at Eren.

"What do you think, Eren?"

This was Altashia's way of saying that Eren needed to be more involved in the decision-making process in the team. He couldn't just let Arjun handle all the duties of vice-captain for him and watch as a bystander forever.

"Presence of an Orc Lord indeed complicates things. We should keep our plan for kitting out perimeter security the same. But instead of prioritizing the small fries, I would suggest we go straight for the Orc Leaders. Orc monsters are known to exhibit strange spells. So it would be better if we took care of the leaders first for a change, instead of the standard military practice of prioritizing targeting the weakest link first.

Captain Altashia shouldn't show herself until the Orc Lord makes their presence known. We'll focus on the small fries right after we get rid of the Orc Leaders— leaving the Orc Lord to her entirely."

Eren didn't hesitate to state his plan. Altashia nodded after hearing him and making a decision.

"We'll follow Eren's way. You are allowed to use traps to keep the Orc Soldiers busy."

Altashia was a woman of few words. Those present agreed to her plan and waited for the sky to turn darker.

Two orc soldiers were playing a game of strange runic symbols on their makeshift table, which was just a wood log cut in half at waist length. The two orcs were seen conversing with each other in their monster language. At first, they seemed to be only a few steps away from turning their verbal spat into a physical altercation. But that was just how the monsters conversed.

The game of the runic symbols seemed to have reached its tipping point when both the sentries stopped playing and looked in a particular direction. They then looked at each other and continued conversing on a more serious note.

Bree!

One of the Orc sentries made a strange and high-pitched sound. This called out for a bunch of Orc soldiers stationed nearby the pair to come to their place.

Five Orc soldiers seem to be heading in a certain direction to investigate the disturbance. This was the team one of the Orc Leaders had decided to respond with after he heard the report of a strange mana pulse from the sentries.

The monsters responded to threats and strange phenomena in typical patterns. So the raid tactics were based on those responses.

Sweeeee!

Sweeeee!

Sweeeee!

Three green, ice-element arrows cut through the night. Two of the arrows lodged themselves into the eyes of an Orc Leader who had come out at the perimeter after the sentries' call. The third arrow pierced the space between his eyebrows.

The Orc Leader was dead before he could even respond to the life-threatening attack coming at him. His body crashed onto the ground as the last embers of his life turned cold all of a sudden.

An Orc Leader was killed within a few moments of the team's raid.

Suffice to say, chaos broke free into the monster camp the next moment.

Chapter 419 Rigor Mortis

Chaos broke free into the monster camp the next moment.

Breeee!

Breeee!

Breeze!

The cacophony of orc noises pierced the night's silence. Several Orc soldiers ran outside their huts with weapons in their hands and shouting something in Orc language. Some of them had come out in their birthday suits— clearly indicating what they were doing inside. Still, both male and female orcs looked ready to battle from the moment their call to battle was heard.

Sweee!

Sweee!

Sweee!

Another bunch of green arrows flew towards the camp. A few more orc soldiers died on the spot the same as the first Orc leader had died. This execution-style long-range attack was launched by Arjun Ruku. He liked shooting his target in their eyes so much that it had become a game for him.

Equipped with a vision-enhancing spell and artefact along with the top-notch runic bow for his rank, Arjun could be seen as a grim reaper for his orc opponents even without getting his hands dirty in the process. He was sniping the monsters from a considerate distance with unbelievable accuracy.

'People in the army really like their hunting games, huh!'

Eren watched as Arjun sniped one Orc Soldier after the other. After a while, the monsters had tried to zero in on the source of the incoming arrows. Too bad, Arjun could turn his elemental arrows mid-air using his mana sense while avoiding getting detected by the enemy. He would mix such attacks with his regular ones— making his enemies dreadful of his attack.

Arjun's ice element was poisonous by nature. It would act on his victim's heart. So if the opponent was unable to negate his laced-by-the-poison-nature mana in time, it would intrude their mana circuits through their mana circuits and act on the heart— freezing and poisoning everything in its wake.

Arjun had killed four Orc soldiers alone and injured three. The Orc Leaders had to come to their fellow brethrens' rescue to stop him from increasing his count. But drawing them out was his exact goal anyway.

"Dianna, my darling. You are up."

Arjun said to his fellow ranger who was placed in the other direction from where Eren, Arjun, and other soldiers were. This was a multi-front raid after all.

"Hehehe! Roger that."

!

!

!

There was no noise. No mana fluctuation. Seemingly no flying projectile to keep track of. And yet one of the Orc Leaders crashed onto the floor as if he suddenly remembered he needed to sleep on time.

Another Orc Leader had been incapacitated at the start of the raid.

It wasn't like the Orcs weren't using any defensive spells or that they didn't have any mana defence layer. But all of that couldn't prevent them from falling susceptible to the rangers' attacks. And both of them now had focused on the Orc Leaders alone.

At last, the Orc Leader who was standing amid his fellow Leaders screamed and raised his hands. Immediately, a defensive-type, dome-shaped mana layer was created in the air— taking a significant part of the camp under its protection.

Something hit the spell-created dome as soon as it was conjured by the Orc Leader. It was dissolved before the witnesses could discern what it was.

By now almost all the surviving Orc members had come under the mana layer's protection. The Orc Leader who had executed this spell sat on the ground and closed his eyes to strengthen the dome-

shaped mana defence some more. Because he was expecting a stronger reaction from his hidden enemies.

And his predictions came true. Another bunch of projectiles crashed onto the dome-shaped mana defence before crashing down. This time the orcs could see what they were.

The projectiles were a dense mana-smoke shaped into darts.

These smoke-element darts had been launched by Dianna of course using another military-issue artefact given to her. Her mana had retained its formlessness even though it was made to take shape through the use of her spell— making the darts undetectable for the monsters.

The smoke-element mana would cause hallucinations and seizures among other effects related to the nervous system of its victims. The combination of Dianna's element and inherent nature boded well with each other— enabling her to take care of her opponents efficiently.

And yet, her attacks shared a huge weakness. The darts she could produce with her spells couldn't carry much penetrative power. So they could be easily blocked once her target got a lock on the projectiles coming their way.

Sweeeee!

Sweeeee!

Tch!

Tch!

Arjun didn't stop attacking the Orc Leaders even after the mana defence layer was created. He focused at a particular point on the mana defence and sent multiple arrows. They hit the same point of contact one after the other. Unlike Dianna's projectile, Arjun's arrows could pack a punch.

Break!

A huge hole was created in the mana defence layer. Just enough for him to send more arrows into it. But by now the Orcs had gotten wary of the flying projectiles. They had started using their defensive spells and equipment to effectively defend against the approaching projectile.

But the hole in the enemy's defence was not created for the projectiles to go through. It was created so that Eren's team could enter the dome. The ranger's job was finished. They could only support the team from now on.

Immediately after entering the dome, the Novice rankers approached the Orc soldiers and used array traps on them. These array traps would allow the rankers to catch their enemy in another energy field with them. These energy fields would provide the original caster with some buff effects while applying some debuff on their enemy.

The Orc Soldiers and the Novice rankers now had their battlefield. The Orc Leader who had cast the mana defence dome was protected inside the inner dome he had created for himself. He had sealed the gaping hole in the dome by now, locking Eren's team and most of the tribe's warriors inside.

"Time to test these babies."

Eren retrieved a new set of weapons and wielded each of them with either hand. He wanted to test the new gear he had been using for a long time now. Upon his request, a new kind of weapon had been given to him instead of his usual katars.

They were Shamshirs. A pair of swords meant to be used by close combat experts like him.

He had named them Rigor Mortis!

Chapter 420 Purple Reaper

Rigor Mortis!

The new weapons were meant to make quick work out of the enemies in an up-and-front clash. The medium-sized weapon sported a relatively slender blade that was a bit wider in the middle. It also boasted runic inscriptions that stated that it was element-bound.

The weapon's length was bigger than the katars he had been using till now. It was relatively straightforward as it was projected from the hilt. It developed a pronounced curve around halfway down the blade. The point of each of these Ace Rank runic blades was tapered, making it an excellent thrusting and stabbing weapon. The balance of the sword would usually fall right around the apex of the curve. So it was better if the user gave the weapons a spinning or swinging action to make the best use of them.

Sweesh!

Eren found the nearest Orc Leader woman and swung Rigor Mortis Left at her without a moment's delay. He wanted to take down the lady orc's left arm with his quick and agile movement. But only ended up chopping two of her left hand's fingers.

Eren had been trying to fill the gaps missing between the weapon comprehension he had absorbed from his victims. He had been practising the weapons inside the army camp on a couple of rankers in the form of practice duels.

Initially, everybody in the army camp including some of his squadmates was ready to label him as a hasty ranker. That was because Eren was abandoning his katar mastery for something he wasn't experienced in. But he shut their mouths by quickly adapting to the weapon's style and developing his own moves from the comprehension he had digested.

Even Eren was surprised by the ease with which he had adapted himself to the weapon during these two months. The practise didn't cut it anymore. He wanted to try his new battle style on his opponents for real. And this battle was the perfect opportunity for him to do so.

Kreeeee!

The orc screamed and executed her movement spell. Green vines appeared all over her body starting from her feet and safeguarded her.

Eren's execution of his shamshir arts was exceptional. But it wasn't without its flaws. They showed up distinctly in real-life scenarios. But this was exactly what the butcher wanted anyway.

The lady orc got away from her attacker that had appeared in front of her like a ghost. She had considered Eren to be the most dangerous among the intruders that had come to raid their camp because of his speed and the kind of aura he gave off.

Only after ensuring that a sufficient distance had been created did the orc lady cast her attacking spell on him. It was a wood element spell that manifested as countless vines coming out from her chopped and no-chopped fingers. They multiplied in the blink of an eye and zeroed in on Eren as he was planning to get close to the orc lady again.

'Time to test this out!'

"Purple Reaver!"

Eren imbued his lightning-mana into his weapons and cast a weapon-centric spell that was inscribed onto them. This was a flying slash spell that used Eren's mana to create a lightning-element slash.

Swoosh!

Chirp!

Two purple slashes flew toward the green vines approaching him from both sides. They cut up the vines like hot knives through butter and continued to approach the lady orc.

The purple slashes landed on the lady orc as she was still busy getting away from them. But it was of no use. Because the slashes were a bit faster than her. Eren's inherent nature had seeped into them after all.

Breeeee!

The lady orc cried in pain and looked at her attacker with malice in her eyes. Two distinct-looking flesh wounds had been created on her torso which ran from her shoulders to her waist. This was although she had guarded herself with the green vines. She would have been cut down vertically if that was not the case.

There was a feeling of fear mixed with the malice in the lady orc's voice. Her body was beginning to feel numb because of Eren's lightning mana intruding on her body. She had to channel her entire mana at the cost of hurting her mana circuits to get rid of the foreign influence on her wounds.

Still, her muscles felt sore like they had been atrophied due to Eren's lightning mana. Eren's opponents had told him about the after-effects of one facing the lighter variants of Purple Reaver. Hence he named his two swords Rigor Mortis.

The lady orc decided to go all out and enter an enraged state. Just like the mana beasts and demon beasts had their berserking stages, the monsters had access to the rage state. It was more like a ranker's forbidden stage. But the post-usage effects of the rage stage on monsters were much lighter than what rankers would face after casting the forbidden spells.

But Eren didn't want to wait for his enemy to power up. He seemingly disappeared from his position and appeared right above the orc lady. He was merely 7 ft away from her head—levitating above her in an upside-down manner while experiencing the near-stagnant time dilation.

Purple Reaver!

Eren again executed his weapon-specific spell and released two new flying slashes at the orc lady from above. The latter was still looking at the afterimage she was seeing at his previous position when the purple slashes approached her.

Sweesh!

The lady orc's head was split open from above right in the middle when the two slashes hit her in the same place. Eren's military-issue weapons had allowed him to dominate his opponent within only a few moments of his clash.

'Hmm! This attack is indeed great. It has basically allowed me to extend my attacking range while still keeping me in close combat.

Damn! These army-issue weapons are no joke. The only downside is that the attack eats up too much of my mana. I'd have to be wise about when to use such attacks in case the fight is going to last long.'

Eren thought to himself as he was coming down on the ground from his flight. He cancelled his enhanced perception after he landed on the other side of the orc lady as her dead body was beginning to crash down.

Eren then looked around and saw his squadmates still battling with their respective opponents. He didn't want to work extra than he needed to so he just observed those battles as he lit up his Sativa stick to smoke.