

Village Head 991

Chapter 991: The Astonishing Confirmation

Korrin frowned deeply, his thoughts racing as he pondered the unexpected revelation.

He nodded at Eleanora before turning to the gods' chosens behind him. "Let's go." With that, he spread his wings and took them to the air, with the rest of his unit closely behind.

"Your Highness, wouldn't it have been better not to tell them about the Vylkr alloy mine?" Lord Asher asked, frowning.

Eleanora shook her head. "They would have discovered the Vylkr alloy mine sooner or later. By revealing it now, I've accelerated their discovery and pushed them to show their true colours to Paradise. A Runaway City on the brink of promotion to Grade Two must possess significant strength. This will give us a glimpse of Paradise's prowess," she responded.

She had no hope that the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City could defeat Paradise; she only wanted to see if they could draw out more of Paradise's forces. Apart from revealing the location of the Vylkr alloy mine, she hadn't lied-she had genuinely aligned herself with Paradise.

Lord Asher's eyes widened in realization, and he nodded firmly. "I see."

"In the meantime, let's wait for Sy'ra's return. Hopefully, Paradise will handle this issue themselves," Eleanora responded.

The leaders nodded, anticipating how Paradise would respond to the sudden crisis.

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A distance away from the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City, one of the 2nd Unit Vanguard Team members of the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City asked, "Captain, do you believe what she said was the truth?"

Korrin shook his head. "I don't know. However, before we decide, let's head to the Sleeping Fox Runaway City and see if they have Patriarch Rylan and the Divine Artefact. We can also use the

opportunity to confirm her words and determine if they are playing games with us," he responded, his eyes narrowing as he peered into the distance using the Arakocra racial skill, 'Keen Sight.'

In the distance, he could see a multi-floored building and a group of an unknown race protecting them, each casting effective techniques against the Vylkr vines, quickly subduing and destroying them to preserve the buildings within the defensive line.

Despite this, Korrin remained sceptical, believing that Former Queen Eleanora might be leading him into a trap.

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The Sleeping Fox Runaway City

"As I've mentioned earlier, Captain Korrin, I have ceded my authority and forces to Paradise. So, we are no longer interested in retrieving the Divine Artefact or Patriarch Rylan. The Vylkr alloy mine is owned by Paradise and is being harvested by them. If you want to get a hold of it, you must confront Paradise's forces," Lakul said, his solemn gaze fixed on Korrin.

"However, this is not a decision you have the authority to make on your own. You should return to the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City leaders and let them decide."

So, it's true! There's really a Vylkr mine here!

Korrin held back his emotions, his mind racing as he confirmed the existence of the Vylkr alloy mine and the mysterious force called Paradise.

He took a deep breath in and out to calm himself. "And where is this Paradise? I only see two Grade One Runaway Cities here. I don't see it anywhere," he responded.

After all, a force capable of quickly subduing two Grade One Runaway Cities must possess warriors comparable to those of a Grade Two Runaway City. However, he couldn't see any other Runaway City nearby, except for the activity beside the enormous crater, which made him doubt its credibility.

"Unfortunately, we don't know where it's located. They come and go as they please. All we know is that we are currently within its territory. If you're interested in meeting them, you can head to the activity in the distance below," Lakul responded, shaking his head.

Korrin's frown deepened. A supposedly powerful force that they had no knowledge of and couldn't locate. He suspected the leaders of the two Runaway Cities were truly leading him into a trap. However, now that he had received such significant information, even though he couldn't confirm its truth, he believed it best to use this opportunity to uncover the facts and re-strategize.

"I'll have to go to the crater to verify it myself. However, before that, I want you to accompany me, Former Emperor Lakul, so you can relay this information to the Leaders of the Trekking Tortoise Runaway City. I'll also inform Former Queen Eleanora of the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City," Korrin said, his gaze locked firmly on Lakul.

At Korrin's words, the expressions of the Leaders of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City darkened into deep frowns.

"It seems the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City has forgotten to teach their gods' chosen some manners," Lakul retorted, his smile twisting into something more sinister.

A Unit Captain ordering him to accompany them back to their Runaway City? How absurd! If he had no choice but to wait for Paradise's response to determine their next steps, he would have already ordered the Captain's head served on a platter.

"We are only taught to respect the strong. Unless you want to be forcibly dragged along, you should preserve what little dignity you have left after easily ceding your authority and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City. Come with us calmly," Korrin responded, activating his Devourer's Bracelet.

The faint sounds of gears shifting echoed around them, accompanied by the mighty thud of a heartbeat.

Almost instantly, countless violet feathered-winged figures soared into the sky, from tens to hundreds to thousands, surrounding them and painting the sky, blocking portions of the sunlight from penetrating. Several more figures emerged on the platform, landing around its edges and encircling the Sleeping Fox Runaway City leaders. Their Gearweavers aimed their weapons at Korrin and his unit members.

The atmosphere became tense, an ominous and oppressive chill spreading in their direction. "HAHAHAH!" Emperor Lakul's laughter boomed, dispelling the tension momentarily. "Korrin the Titan, you are as bold as the stories say. But, are you sure that threatening a Supreme Leader in his own Runaway City isn't a grave mistake?"

Having wasted enough time, Korrin didn't bother responding. He unfurled his wings and floated upwards, drawing his Gearweaver sword and holding it firmly in his grasp. "Go into formation," he commanded, glancing at his unit members.

Chapter 992: Confronting Korrin The Titan

Despite his strength, he knew it wouldn't be wise to face so many gods' chosens alone, especially within their own Runaway City.

They all nodded and unstrapped their Gearweavers, ranging from swords and spears. Each bearing a confident expression as they eyed the surrounding gods' chosens.

The gods' chosens of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City were all enraged by Paradise's effortless takeover of their Runaway City. Yet, they begrudgingly acknowledged Paradise's strength, forcing them to suppress their simmering emotions.

Korrin's sudden appearance allowed them to release their pent-up feelings. Half of the gods' chosens on the platform surged forward as he advanced.

Imperial Blade Dance - Imperial Slash!

Facing the overwhelming number of approaching gods' chosen, Korrin swung his Gearweaver sword multiple times.

Powerful wind blades erupted from his Gearweaver blade, hurtling swiftly toward their opponents.

Witnessing the sudden emergence of a powerful technique, the gods' chosens were

momentarily surprised before swiftly raising their Gearweavers to defend against it, sensing the formidable power behind the attack.

Bang!! Bang!!!

Some were slightly pushed backwards, while others, including those who had borne the brunt of the attack with their bodies, were temporarily disoriented for just a moment, with only a few cuts on their bodies before swiftly recovering.

Unfortunately, that brief moment was enough time for Korrin to cast another technique. Whispering Gale - Tempest's Veil!

A powerful gust of wind erupted from Korrin's wings, violently shaking the atmosphere around them. Suddenly, Korrin's form began to blur until he vanished, seeming to merge with the wind and becoming invisible to the naked eye.

The gods' chosens were once again stunned. While Korrin's strength initially surprised them, they believed they could handle and even subdue him. However, with his continuous casting of powerful techniques, he proved a tricky opponent.

Lakul furrowed his brows as he witnessed the unfolding scene.

'Is this what differentiates the gods' chosen ones from a Grade One Runaway City and one that is about to be promoted to a Grade Two Runaway City?' he thought.

Lakul sensed the incoming attack and knew it wasn't comparable to Korrin's strength; otherwise, it would have severely injured them upon contact with their bodies. Yet, mastering another form of energy while developing one's Devourer's Heart by harnessing the Vylkr energy was still astonishing.

Suddenly, the wind before Lakul picked up, but he remained unmoved.

A Gearweaver Spear emerged before Lakul, intercepting a Gearweaver sword that had appeared out of thin air and was swiftly aimed towards his shoulder. BANG!

The clash of the two weapons reverberated loudly through the air.

A heavy gust of wind whipped Lakul's hair wildly, scattering strands into the air and tousling his attire, feathers, and those of the leaders standing beside him.

"Those fancy techniques with no real power won't save you," stated a man in thick armour with four tails protruding from his back, gripping the Gearweaver Spear that had halted the advance of the Gearweaver sword and pushing Korrin backwards.

Korrin halted mid-air, wings spread and scrutinized the man before shifting his attention to the other gods' chosens surrounding the Leaders of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City, who remained motionless.

"It seems not all gods' chosens of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City are weak," Korrin remarked with a smile.

"If this is the best 'Korrin the Titan' can offer, I'll personally return your corpse," the man sneered, feeling his hand grow numb from the clash with Korrin's weapon.

Hearing this, Korrin's expression darkened with anger. Before he could respond, a voice suddenly interrupted.

"Captain Glenn, clip his wings for now while we await Paradise's response," Lakul ordered, his tone disinterested as he glanced at Korrin and shook his head in pity. "Seems the impending promotion to a Grade Two Runaway City has made you all underestimate the might of a Grade One Runaway City. I'll make sure you remember."

Korrin smirked disdainfully at Lakul's words, pointing his Gearweaver Sword towards Glenn, preparing to charge again.

Glenn, Captain of the 1st Unit of the Main Defense Team of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City, nodded. With a light stomp, he launched into the air, narrowing the distance between him and Korrin, his spear thrusting forward through the fierce winds.

Flickering Mirage - Illusory Dance!

Suddenly, multiple copies of Glenn emerged in the air, each wielding their weapons in a synchronized pattern as they swiftly closed in on him.

Korrin snorted in disdain and moved forward to confront the approaching copies. He swung his Gearweaver through the first one, cleaving it apart. The technique obscured the wielder's individual magical signature, making it challenging for him to identify the real person. However, rather than waiting, he chose to confront the copies head-on.

Dodging swiftly to the side, he sliced through the second copy vertically, causing it to vanish into thin air. Just as he prepared to intercept the third copy, a sharp pain shot through his spine from his left wing.

A resounding 'clang' reverberated from behind, striking his armour and knocking him off balance. He swayed forward, momentarily disoriented, struggling to regain his composure. Seeing that his attack failed to penetrate the armour, Glenn clicked his teeth in annoyance as he descended from the sky, using momentum to thrust his spear toward Korrin's wings. Despite Korrin's swift evasion, the spear grazed the edge of his broad left wing, tearing out some of the feathers.

"CAPTAIN!!" Facing hundreds of gods' chosens from the Sleeping Fox Runaway City, the 2nd Unit Vanguard Team members from the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City had already been captured and bound as prisoners.

One attempted to break free from the chains and charge forward, only to be kicked back by an Orc, crashing heavily against the platform.

"Arggh!" Korrin gritted his beak against the pain, glancing at his captured unit members before fixing his piercing golden eyes on the other gods' chosens above and below him, who hadn't still acted.

He then refocused on Glenn, his feathered brow furrowed with anger.

Tightening his grip on his Gearweaver sword, Korrin prepared to charge forward once more. However, a colossal shadow suddenly emerged, blocking the already obscured sunlight. He paused mid-advance, narrowing his eyes toward its direction.

Chapter 993: Strength Of The Commander

The sloth demons in the air soon began to disperse one by one, lowering themselves to hover slightly above the platform. The silhouette of an awe-inspiring beast, tens of meters tall, with four legs covered in red fur and several ashen-pink bony structures protruding from its body, appeared. It glided through the air, surrounded by an oppressive, dense energy.

Korrin was stunned, not just by the size of the beast but also by its immense pressure.

Is this a Legendary Beast? No! It almost seems Mythical in nature!

Although magical beasts could utilize different ranks of energy, their unique bloodlines and inherited methods placed them in their own category. They were ranked as Ordinary, Extraordinary, Lesser, Sacred, Rare, Revered, Legendary, Mythical, Immortal, and Divine.

In truth, because of the oppressive energy emanating from the beast, which far surpassed Korrin's own, he would have classified it as an Immortal beast if he hadn't known how scarce those magical beasts were.

As Korrin scrutinized the enormous creature, it did the same to him. He soon noticed a few individuals standing on its back. One of them, a winged sloth demon, surged forward, prompting Korrin to tighten his grip on his Gearweaver sword.

"Who are you?! How dare you attack the Sleeping Fox Runaway City?! Explain yourself immediately!" Commander Vargoth's voice boomed across the atmosphere as he hovered before Korrin, staring at him intently, his broad wings spread wide.

"I am Korrin, Captain of the 2nd Unit Vanguard Team of the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City. I have been sent by the Supreme Leader to retrieve the Divine Artefact and Patriarch Rylan peacefully," Korrin responded, scrutinizing the sloth demon who had just descended from the beast, sensing the strength emanating from him.

After the beast's sudden emergence, he realized things had become much more dire than he had imagined. However, he knew he couldn't retract his previous statements, so he chose his words carefully.

Suddenly, one of the sloth demons below, protecting the Leaders of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City and dressed in mixed metal and leather armour that shielded his body and wings, wielding a Gearweaver sword in his hand, soared into the air and instantly arrived before them.

"Commander," he greeted before explaining everything that had transpired during Korrin's arrival.

As the sloth demon spoke, Commander Vargoth's expression grew more solemn by the second.

"Is that all that's occurred?" Commander Vargoth asked, glancing at the captured members of Korrin's team.

The sloth demon nodded. "Yes."

Receiving confirmation that the gods' chosens before him were indeed from the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City, which he had already guessed, Commander Vargoth refocused on Korrin and narrowed his eyes. "How brazen for the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City to send a Unit Captain to meet us and make demands. It seems their imminent promotion to Grade Two has made you all begin to look down on the prowess of a Grade One Runaway City. Tell me, how do you want your wings clipped?" he responded coldly.

Korrin's expression had already become stern, his hand tightening around the handle of his Gearweaver sword as he learned that the individual standing before him was the Commander of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City. Despite his strength, he was not ignorant of the man's capabilities. Anyone capable of becoming the Commander of the gods' chosens and Chief Security of their Runaway City was undoubtedly formidable.

Noticing something, Korrin shifted his focus to the green-skinned orc standing on the beast's back, then to the tall, muscular masked man dressed in fitted red trousers and a shirt with armoured padding in various places, wearing a fiery red mask.

He immediately sensed that this man was neither from the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City nor the Sleeping Fox Runaway City. The only plausible origin was 'Paradise.' Determined, Korrin immediately advanced in his direction.

Witnessing this scene, Commander Vargoth trailed Korrin, swiftly blocking his path with a deep frown.

Seeing his way forward obstructed, Korrin raised his voice, "Are you the one that captured the Sleeping Fox Runaway City and the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and caused their supreme leaders to cede their authority? Are you from Paradise?" His words echoed through the tense atmosphere as he awaited the masked man's response.

"Such insolence!" Commander Vargoth's anger boiled upon hearing Korrin's words. With Paradise having granted them authority to subdue and capture the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City, he no longer hesitated and charged towards Korrin.

Korrin's eyes narrowed to slits as he watched Commander Vargoth swiftly closing in on him. He tried to dodge, but it was too late. In the blink of an eye, Commander Vargoth stood before him, ready to deliver a powerful strike to his abdomen.

Gritting his teeth angrily, Korrin swiftly raised his Gearweaver sword to block Commander Vargoth's strike.

BANGG!!

A powerful gust of wind radiated outward from the impact, launching Korrin backwards, his hands growing numb.

Before Korrin could steady himself, Commander Vargoth closed in from behind and gripped his wings tightly.

"CAPTAIN!" Another scream erupted from one of the Arakocra's gods' chosens chained below. Before they could react, several powerful kicks slammed down on them once more, sending them crashing back to the ground with even more severe injuries.

"STOP! I AM SENT BY THE SUPREME LEADER OF THE TREKKING FLAMINGO RUNAWAY CITY! IF YOU DO ANYTHING TO ME, YOU'LL BE DECLARING WAR AGAINST US!" Korrin shouted, his voice thundered through the air, even as he felt Commander Vargoth's firm grip on his broad wings. Yet, his tone no longer carried the same arrogance as before; instead, it was laced with fear and anxiety.

As a winged race, his wings were his pride and the source of his strength as an Arakocra. If they were torn or destroyed, it would not only be shameful but also cripple him entirely.

"The Sleeping Fox Runaway City and the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City have been given the chance by Paradise to prove themselves by subduing and capturing the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City!" Commander Vargoth responded loudly, his voice echoing across the surroundings and reaching the ears of everyone present.

Chapter 994: Capturing The Enemy

Despite their displeasure at such an order coming from Paradise, the surrounding gods' chosens felt satisfaction knowing they could release their frustrations on the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City.

Meanwhile, the gods' chosens from the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City couldn't help but feel fear. They were not afraid of being attacked by two Grade One Runaway Cities, but seeing the enormous beast before them filled them with dread of the mysterious force, Paradise.

Though unaware of its full strength, it would be a dreadful threat if they possessed more of this formidable beast.

Lakul smiled inwardly, lightly sighing to himself. He had expected Paradise to be displeased with their retaliation against the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City's gods' chosens, possibly having other plans for them.

However, it seemed that wasn't the case. Paradise had allowed them to prove themselves alongside the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City. He believed they would successfully subdue the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City and bring them to their knees. While in the past he might have sought a peaceful resolution, now, thankfully, that wasn't necessary.

The other leaders also breathed a sigh of relief.

Upon hearing Commander Vargoth's words, Korrin's eyes widened in fear, a blend of horror overtaking his expression as his wings slowly broke and twisted from side to side.

CRRACKKK!! KKWATTSHHAA!!!!

Commander Vargoth firmly grasped Korrin's two wings, ensuring he felt every ounce of pain before pulling back swiftly, ripping the wings out in one brutal motion.

"AAAHHHHHH!!!!!" Korrin's thunderous scream of agony pierced the sky, echoing in every direction. Blood spilt into the air, pouring down onto the platform below, while torn feathers drifted away on the wind.

Feeling the wings twitch violently in his grasp, Commander Vargoth released them into the air. He swiftly caught Korrin's descending body by the neck and handed him to the gods' chosen, who had approached them.

"Ensure he's treated and imprison him," Commander Vargoth ordered sternly. Paradise had already given him clear instructions, so he wasn't going to kill indiscriminately unless he had to, and that too before one of their key leaders.

The gods' chosen nodded and swiftly descended toward the Sleeping Fox Runaway City, with Korrin gripped by the neck, resembling a helpless bird.

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Orion hovered high above the clouds, the Crimson Greatsword floating beside him, observing the unfolding scene below with a contemplative expression.

He watched as Commander Vargoth approached Seth and Commander Sy'ra, bowing slightly to Seth before the shapeshifted beast turned and soared towards the direction of the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City.

"How disappointing! It seems the use of techniques has become quite crude compared to the past," Aerialia remarked, shaking her head in disappointment.

Orion nodded in agreement, "But that's to be expected. With the emergence of Vylkr energy and the development of the Devourer's Bracelet, along with diluted Vylkr energy, anyone with adequate compatibility can become a gods' chosen."

"This provides a much smaller hierarchy of power growth path, where each level can easily surpass those harnessing other ranks of energies, who have a more extended hierarchy of power growth path requiring mastery of numerous techniques and arts. Coupled with the ever-developing Vylkr vines, it's more impressive than if they had cultivated another kind of energy, even if it's nowhere near their true strength," Orion responded.

He spoke from experience; the first time he encountered the Prismerions, despite their numerous clan techniques, they were thwarted and defeated by his robust and resilient body, which he had gained from harnessing Vylkr energy and his gift.

For the gods' chosens, equipped with Gearweavers and Devourer's Bracelets enabling them to enter a warrior mode-like state at will or even surpass it through overclocking, he believed they could achieve results slightly similar to his in similar situations.

Upon hearing Orion's words, Aerialia slightly furrowed her brows before sighing. "Still, after years of creating and witnessing countless interesting and jaw-dropping techniques and arts, it's disappointing to see how far they have fallen," she responded, glancing towards Orion. "However, it's good that Paradise has begun to learn other powerful techniques and arts to add to their arsenal. Suppose this is the strength of the gods' chosens from a Runaway City about to be promoted to Grade Two. In that case, it suggests that Grade Two Runaway Cities are powerful and may have mastered various powerful techniques and arts."

Aerialia didn't dare suggest that this posed a problem for Paradise's warriors, knowing the terrifying prowess they possessed even in their initial growth stages. She simply wanted to convey that if Paradise were to face a warrior or gods' chosen as powerful as them, with the difference lying in their use of techniques and arts, defeat would be swift.

Fortunately, Orion understood her words, nodding. He had anticipated such an event beforehand and had already begun teaching warriors how to harness Celestial energy, comprehend flying techniques, and implement other techniques with Aerialia's help.

If Ilse hadn't lost her memories, Orion would have also asked the goddess to share the techniques and arts she possessed with Paradise.

After mastering the Divine Spectral Blade Arts in the next five days, he sought another technique that matched his abilities, further expanding his arsenal and making Paradise even more formidable.

Of course, this excluded any forces backed by a god, demigod, divine apostle, or other divine beings.

Nonetheless, Aerialia had hinted that she had something in store for him, leaving Orion to wait in anticipation for what it might be. Although curious if she possessed any divine techniques or arts related to debauchery, he kept his thoughts to himself to avoid offending her.

Together, they observed as Seth dropped off Commander Sy'ra at the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City, the shapeshifted beast swiftly ascending into the sky before heading

their way.

Orion knew Seth had sensed his presence, especially since he hadn't bothered to hide it. Within moments, Seth arrived before him, descending from the shapeshifted beast.

As Seth positioned himself beside Orion, the beast bowed its enormous head respectfully before turning and descending towards the area where the Vylkr alloys were being harvested.

Chapter 995: Leaders Of The Trekking Flamingo Runaway City

"What do you think of their strength?" Orion asked, glancing at Seth.

"They are fragile," Seth spat. "Though it seems that the Trekking Flamingo Runaway has the potential to be stronger than the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City, I doubt it would make much difference if they all launch an attack together against Paradise. Nonetheless, I'm intrigued by the capabilities of their Runaway Cities. I doubt it's merely a moving contraption," he added.

Orion nodded in agreement. He also had doubts about the Runaway Cities' true capabilities and wondered what else they might conceal. He decided to schedule a trip later to find out for himself.

"Alright. We only have to wait until the real battle begins," Orion said, observing the scene below as the two Grade One Runaway Cities approached each other.

Within a brightly lit, expansive hall filled with various descriptive murals and paintings depicting dragons, winged individuals, and muscular, horned humanoids clad in heavy armour running towards a dense sky filled with obscured figures locked in battle and beautiful scenes of greenery and tombstones, there was a discernible intent of grandeur.

At the hall's centre stood a majestic, seven-meter (22 ft) wide round wooden table with a hole in the middle, surrounded by ten finely crafted seats. Each seat was occupied by a distinguished individual dressed in luxurious, finely tailored attire, their presence exuding a distinct and commanding aura.

These were the Leaders of the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City.

Suddenly, the door burst open, and a figure rushed in, bowing deeply towards the assembled leaders.

"What is it? Didn't I inform you not to disturb this meeting until we are done, regardless of the results of the 2nd Unit Captain?" asked a robust, muscular man with scaled skin and large, curved horns extending a meter (40 inches) long, each adorned with a golden crown decorated with draconic claws and beautiful gems. His two broad leathery wings spanned over three meters (12 ft)

He wore a majestic, flowing red cape and brilliant lightweight armour adorned with various runes and inscriptions. He was the supreme leader of Trekking Flamingo Runaway City, Emperor Greroth Nindainth the Fifteenth.

Emperor Greroth's eyes glowed with an inner flame as he stared at him.

The other leaders also focused on the gods' chosen before them, their expressions shifting to frowns, curiosity, and disinterest.

"It's urgent, Your Highness. So I think it's important you hear it immediately," responded the god's chosen, his body slightly shivering due to the sudden increased tension within the hall.

"Oh! If that's the case, what?" responded Emperor Greroth.

The god's chosen exhaled deeply, relaxing as though he was sure this urgent news was important enough to disrupt their meeting, further increasing the leaders' curiosity.

"From some of the members of the 2nd Unit Captain Team who accompanied Captain Korrin to retrieve Patriarch Rylan and the Divine Artifact, only one of them returned, battered and beaten," responded the gods' chosen. "According to the information he brought back, they had confronted the two Runaway Cities about Patriarch Rylan and the Divine Artifact..."

He explained everything that had transpired, word by word, based on what the returning member of the 2nd Vanguard Unit had told him. "Captain Korrin has been beaten and crippled by the Commander of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City, along with the other captured members of the 2nd Unit Vanguard team. He was the only one sent back to deliver this news."

After he finished speaking, the hall immediately plunged into silence. The leaders' expressions had morphed into deep frowns, and the tension in the hall was suddenly growing stronger by the second.

"This... is truly unexpected. Are you sure that this information is correct?" Emperor Greroth asked, his tone filled with scepticism.

Vylkr alloy mine!

A mysterious force called Paradise! A mythical-like beast!

He would have believed the validity of the information if the two Grade One Runaway Cities had uncovered a Vylkr alloy mine and wanted to band together to dispose of them to prevent information about this rumour from spreading.

However, adding a hidden mysterious force called Paradise was enough to make him doubtful. Instead, he believed it was merely a fabricated ruse, and they were trying to gain a mental edge over them, forcing them into surrender.

He might not be aware of these uncharted forbidden lands, as he had only heard tales of terrifying legends and rumours about them. However, they were all just rumours in the end, further making him believe this story was fabricated.

As for the mythical-like beast, it was already well known that the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City were well-versed in illusions and deceptions, so he didn't find it convincing.

"We also don't know whether it's the truth or not. However, the returning 2nd Unit member has sworn on the name of Nindainth that everything he witnessed was true. It was neither deception nor false," the gods' chosen responded hurriedly.

Although he had doubts, when the battered member of the 2nd Unit who had returned swore on the name of 'Nindainth,' he believed this information was accurate.

Nonetheless, deciding whether this information was valid wasn't up to him.

"Okay, you may leave," Emperor Greroth responded.

The gods' chosen nodded, swiftly stood up, and left the hall.

"Hahaha!!" A golden-feathered avian man with two broad, folded wings ranging in vibrant colours from green to gold, dressed in finely tailored yellow trousers, a white shirt, a richly embroidered golden vest, and adorned with numerous rings and glistening necklaces, roared

out in laughter.

His name was Merchant Prince Caruis, Master of Commerce and Trade of Trekking Flamingo Runaway City, and a member of the Aarakocra race.

"How marvellous! So, after retrieving Patriarch Rylan and the Divine Artifact, the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City want us to be terrorized into surrendering with this pitiful method," he remarked amusedly.

"I agree. It's quite amusing if they believe we'll surrender at the mere mention of such information. However, I don't think it should be that simple. They have no reason to reveal the existence of the Vylkr alloy mine when the Divine Artefact and Patriarch Rylan are already potent enough reasons for us to act or negotiate properly," responded a woman, possessing a robust body adorned with scales and fur in various places.

Chapter 996: The Trekking Flamingo Runaway City's Strength

She possessed two large curved horns and broad, leathery wings folded behind her back. Her name was Mistress Marla, Mistress of Natural Resources and Gardens of Trekking Flamingo Runaway City, and also a member of the half-minotaur, half-dragon race.

Despite her imposing, bulky physique, she was dressed in a long, flowing, flowery dress with a vibrant sash tied around her waist. Her expression was pensive as she carefully pondered over the words of the gods' chosen.

Merchant Prince Caruis snorted, "So what if it is? Our main goal is to retrieve the Divine Artefact and possibly Patriarch Rylan. If there truly is a Vylkr alloy mine, it's a welcome addition to the strength of our growing power. And this mysterious 'Paradise' might just be a Grade Two Runaway City or some 'stowaways' who have utilized the Vylkr alloy mines to bolster their strength. Isn't this our opportunity to prove that we've not just teetered on the verge of promotion to a Grade Two Runaway City but have already arrived?" he explained. "Regardless, even if they are a force more powerful than we anticipate-which I still doubt- we are left with only two options: confront the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City, along with whoever is backing them, or turn around and flee. Which option do you think is best?" He fixed his gaze on Mistress Marla before sweeping it across the assembled leaders.

"That's enough. We need to make a decision," Emperor Greroth responded firmly. "Anyone in favour of retreating and avoiding confrontation with the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City, raise your hands."

Among the ten leaders present, only one leader raised their hand.

Witnessing this, Merchant Prince Caruis clicked his tongue loudly in displeasure. He glanced at the red-eyed woman with long flowing hair, dressed in long sky-blue robes that covered her humanoid upper half and robust, four-legged body with hooves.

"Alright. You can lower your hands. Now, those in favour of preparing for war and facing two Grade One Runaway Cities, and possibly a Grade Two Runaway City, raise your hand," Emperor Greroth added.

Nine hands, including his own, were raised as he finished speaking.

"It's settled then. Commander Edmar, sound the alarm and prepare every god's chosen for war. Thorne, ensure that Trekking Flamingo Runaway City is fully prepared before we begin advancing," Emperor Greroth ordered.

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Up above the clouds,

After three hours of waiting, the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City, Sleeping Fox Runaway City, and Trekking Flamingo Runaway City were finally closing in on each other, ready for battle.

Orion broke out of his thoughts, having spent time comprehending the Divine Spectral Blade Art, and focused on the unfolding scene below him, feeling the tension in the air.

"Finally, it's time," Seth muttered. He was exhausted from waiting and eager to train further, unlocking more of the gift's potential now that he was a Five-Star Vylkr warrior.

Suddenly, Orion sensed something approaching far below in the distance. Five three-star Vylkr vines were present; their appearance, a familiar, terrifying amalgamation, was approaching, attracted by the confrontation below.

He had already stationed warriors in various areas, forming a protective zone to keep watch for any approaching Runaway City and to prevent any three-star Vylkr vines from emerging and disrupting the battle. He wasn't sure how long the war would last.

"Take care of them. We don't want anything hindering or preventing them from showcasing our true strength," Orion ordered.

Seth nodded and immediately flew towards the direction of the three-star Vylkr vines. He could handle them from this distance using his gift, but to avoid alerting those below, he decided to deal with them naturally.

After consuming some of the five three-star Vylkr vines and delivering the rest to the warriors stationed near the Vylkr alloy mine, he swiftly returned to Orion's position.

Orion exhaled, reminiscing about the days when facing three-star Vylkr vines meant life-threatening battles.

As the gods' chosens descended from their Runaway Cities, their eyes were fixed on Trekking Flamingo Runaway City.

"Energy Level - 1,580 BEM."

"Energy Level - 1,345 BEM."

"Energy Level - 1,400 BEM."

"Energy Level - 1,689 BEM."

"Energy Level - 1,733 BEM."

Orion looked down in surprise at the primary races occupying the area.

Aarakocra! Winged minotaurs with dragon-like features! Centaurs!

Nonetheless, as Orion read the energy readings of the gods' chosens, his eyebrows rose in surprise. Seth was equally surprised.

It should be noted that the lowest energy readings among the gods' chosens with the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City were as low as 250 BEM, while the highest was 1,660 BEM.

Commander Sy'ra of the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City possessed the highest at 1,805 BEM, with Commander of the Sleeping Fox Runaway City close behind at 1,800 BEM, a mere 5 BEM difference between them. However, the lowest energy reading Orion had seen from the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City was 1,400 BEM, with the highest exceeding 1,780 BEM.

Even the gods' chosen who had attacked Lakul had a strength reading of 1,650 BEM, so he held high expectations for the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City. However, it was evident that he wasn't the strongest, so he couldn't identify the reasons for his appointment as captain.

"They're still coming out," Orion muttered, narrowing his eyes at the area beside Trekking Flamingo Runaway City.

Despite their gods' chosens to stabilize below 1,780 BEM in energy readings, their numbers continued to increase.

Five thousand gods' chosens!

Six thousand gods' chosens!

Eight thousand gods' chosens!

Ten thousand gods' chosens!

...

They surpassed the ten thousand mark and continued to increase, eventually reaching over twelve thousand gods' chosens, filling the earth below like sand scattered along the seashore.

Their sheer numbers attracted even more one-star and two-star Vylkr vines toward them. However, with such a massive force, the Vylkr vines were swiftly crushed, barely able to penetrate their ranks.

"No wonder they boldly approach the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City. With this many and this much strength, even if their numbers doubled, they wouldn't stand a chance," Seth remarked, his gaze fixed intently on the multitude of gods' chosens below.

He fervently awaited the day Paradise's warriors would exceed this scale, possessing far greater prowess. When the time came, they could easily strategize and conquer various Runaway Cities by sending one or two warriors to accomplish this task.

Chapter 997: The Clash Begins

As the winged races ascended into the sky and took their positions, Orion focused more intently on two individuals who appeared to be the leaders of Trekking Flamingo Runaway City.

They were both tall, imposing minotaurs with leathery wings and powerful draconic features. The first wore a full suit of heavy, ornate, scaly armour embellished in gold and silver filigree, with the insignia of Trekking Flamingo Runaway City—a dragon and miniature minotaur—on his chestplate.

He also wore a crown-like helm that showcased his large, twisted horns, a bulging metallic bracelet on his left wrist, and tightly gripped a Gearweaver blade in his right hand.

The second individual, also of the same race, wore heavily fortified metallic armour covered in chips and cuts, evidence of numerous battles. Instead of looking worn out, it gave him a frighteningly rugged appearance. He had a Gearweaver bracelet on his left wrist and wielded a Gearweaver spear firmly in his hand.

They both advanced forward on a scaly, four-legged magical beast with sharp claws, several bony cones protruding from every direction of its neck, and a frightening, razor-sharp jaw. Long, forked tongues darted in and out of its mouth. The beast slightly resembled the lizards Orion remembered from his previous life, but that wasn't all.

Around the left hind leg of the magical beast was a large, bulking devourer's bracelet tightly locked in place. Orion knew that the beast could also utilize Vylkr energy. Although he had already been informed about this, witnessing it firsthand was a surprisingly new experience. Nonetheless, at a glance, Orion could already ascertain that the first individual was the supreme leader of Trekking Flamingo Runaway City, while the second was the Commander. The gods' chosens parted for them as they made they advanced forward.

"Energy level - 1,989 BEM!"

"Energy Level - 1,994 BEM!"

Orion looked at their energy readings and furrowed his brows in thought. This was the highest energy level he had ever seen outside Paradise. Although he expected the leaders of Trekking Flamingo Runaway City to be strong, he never anticipated them being so close to the ceiling of a three-star warrior.

What does this mean?

Since this was their base energy level, it meant that when they fought with everything they possessed, they could temporarily break through the 2,000 BEM threshold.

If Trekking Flamingo Runaway City was this powerful and only on the verge of becoming a Grade Two Runaway City, then it implied that the Wandering Wolf Borough Runaway and the Journeying Jaguar Runaway City, which were already Grade Two, had gods' chosens with energy levels ranging from 2,001 BEM and above.

However, it made sense. They were growing stronger with the Vylkr Fusion Armlet's help, so nothing stopped those who already had the Devourer's Bracelet from achieving the same.

All they needed was time to catch up, and any enemy they encountered would be trampled under their feet.

"Unfortunately, the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City have no chance of winning this battle," Seth said, shaking his head in disappointment.

Despite the two Runaway Cities boasting 13,400 gods' chosens, they were still at a significant disadvantage against the 12,000 gods' chosens amassed by their opponents. How shameful!

It was evident that Trekking Flamingo Runaway City must have several forces stationed back at their Runaway city, guarding and protecting it from any ambush, along with a trump card in case of unforeseen events. This likely wasn't even their full strength.

"Yes, but we'll still need to intervene to prevent heavy casualties on either side," Orion nodded.

Since he wanted to control their forces, even with intentions to dispose of them later, he knew brute strength alone wouldn't suffice. He needed a carefully calculated approach centred around Paradise's long-term goals. He sought a strategy that would instil deep-seated fear and willing submission.

Seth considered suggesting they focus solely on taking Trekking Flamingo Runaway City to conserve resources, but he recognized that Orion's strategy wasn't just about quality—it was also about quantity. So, he held his thoughts back.

Aerialia hovered silently nearby, quietly observing with thoughts of her own. Knowing Orion wouldn't acknowledge her due to Seth's presence, she remained silent, watching the scene unfold below.

They soon stood at the edge of Trekking Flamingo gods' chosens forces, halting before Eleanora, Lakul, and their commanders, alongside those from Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and Sleeping Fox Runaway City.

On the battlefield,

Emperor Greroth arrived at the frontlines and scrutinized the four prominent individuals before him.

Lakul wore a dark, flowing, enchanted robe interwoven with Vylkr alloy threads that shimmered under the sunlight, contrasting with his violet skin hue. His feathered wings were folded behind his back. Hanging over his shoulder was a quiver, arrows forged from Vylkr alloys and other enchanted materials. At his waist, a Gearweaver Bow exuded an ominous aura with its intricate engravings and design.

Next to him stood Eleanora, clad in form-fitting crimson metallic plated armour that allowed for nimble movement, adorned with intricate designs and runes on every piece. Her hair was tied back, and atop her head sat a crimson helmet that completely covered her head, leaving only slits for her eyes and a small opening for her nose and mouth.

The helmet bore a slight protruding image of a tortoise surrounded by multiple figures, each wielding a bladed weapon pointing upward, with a feminine figure lying on its shell. She wore enchanted white gloves laced with Vylkr alloy threads, her right hand resting on the scaly, shimmering hilt of a sheathed sword hanging beside her waist.

Beside them stood their commanders, armed and ready for the impending battle.

As Emperor Greroth scrutinized them, they returned the gaze with equal intensity. Despite the formidable forces of Trekking Flamingo Runaway City unsettling their hearts, they maintained a steady stance. Knowing that the Key Leaders of Paradise were likely observing the battle, they understood the importance of giving their all to demonstrate the full prowess of their Runaway City to ensure favourable treatment in the future.

Chapter 998: The Clash Begins (2)

The tension in the air intensified, making the atmosphere noticeably heavier.

"Are you certain this is your choice? I can recall my forces this moment if you choose to surrender the Divine Artefact and Patriarch Rylan," Emperor Greroth's voice, as sharp as a blade, sliced through the silence, echoing across the surroundings as he fixed his gaze on Eleanora and Lazul.

His eyes lingered particularly on Eleanora, sensing something peculiar about her yet unable to pinpoint it.

Lazul snorted loudly. "You've shown great disrespect to Sleeping Fox Runaway City; mere pleasantries won't cleanse that. Furthermore, we now have the support of a force stronger than any Grade Two Runaway City could muster, let alone yours. So, the question should be mine: how do you wish to conclude this battle? Which of your gods' chosens will you send to their doom first?" he retorted.

The sharp wind whipped against his robe, causing it to flutter.

Commander Edmar tightened his grip on his weapon, his gaze chilling as he stared at Lazul.

"Your backing? Paradise, is it? Where are they? I don't see them anywhere," Emperor Greroth responded, briefly scanning his surroundings. He wasn't provoked by Lakul's words but rather genuinely intrigued about Paradise and who they were.

"Unfortunately, you won't see them until after this battle. Your fate was sealed the moment you set foot on this territory. Paradise is a force stronger than you can handle, so I advise you to take this battle seriously, or you'll regret every moment," Eleanora replied, a slight smile showing through the small opening in her helmet.

Emperor Greroth frowned deeply. "So if you're confirming the existence of Paradise, does this mean the Vylkr alloy mine exists as well?"

Eleanora and Lakul nodded solemnly in response. They understood what the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City leader was thinking, but they couldn't reveal more, allowing their gods' chosens to prepare mentally for the imminent battle. They knew the Key Leaders of Paradise were likely observing, so caution was paramount.

"It seems both of you have allied with a formidable force. Very well. I will defeat you, advance to the Vylkr alloy mine, and draw them out. From this day forth, the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City will cease to exist," Emperor Greroth declared. He gripped the reins of his magical beast and turned, prompting it to backtrack along its original path.

Observing this, Lakul and Eleanora also turned and departed, leaving their commanders at the frontline.

Commander Sy'ra and Vargoth exchanged solemn looks, understanding the upcoming battle would be challenging.

"Are you ready to meet your end?" Commander Edmar's deep voice was chilling as he stretched his hand and signalled the start of the battle.

Commander Sy'ra and Vargoth followed suit, each giving their own signals. Sy'ra advanced silently, wielding her shield and a Gearweaver sword in one hand. Vargoth ascended into the skies, his broad wings outstretched as he hovered, drawing Edmar's attention.

Suddenly, a cacophony of voices erupted across the battlefield. The footsteps of opposing forces pounded like thunder, shaking the earth and raising dust clouds. The clash of weapons echoed through the air.

BANG! BOOM!

The war had begun.

Receiving no response, Commander Edmar continued, "Very well. Stay silent until your demise." With a firm pull on the reins, the magical beast opened its jaws wide, aiming towards Commander Sy'ra's approaching figure.

ROAR!

Not good!

Witnessing the spark from the magical beast's jaws, Commander Sy'ra swiftly brought her shield up just in time to deflect a torrent of lava-like flames shooting towards her.

Fortunately, the shield was crafted from Vylkr alloys, which were strong enough to withstand such an attack.

While his magical beast engaged the Orc, Commander Edmar immediately aimed his spear towards the soaring sloth demon.

Dragonic Fury Spear - Ember Spiral!

The moment the Gearweaver spear ignited, he hurled it forward. Flames enveloped the spear, creating a vortex that expanded swiftly through the air, reaching Commander Vargoth in seconds.

Soul Dominion Embrace - Spirit Shield!

Commander Vargoth immediately countered with his own technique. Light burst forth from him, expanding and enveloping him in its warmth. When the flaming vortex made contact, it sent him staggering back momentarily before he regained his balance.

Dragonic Fury Spear - Crushing Thrust!

Commander Edmar swiftly arrived beside Commander Vargoth, gripping the descending

spear tightly as he thrust it forward with immense strength. The air split, creating whistling sounds as the spear collided with Vargoth's shield.

BANG!! CRACK!!

Vargoth's spirit shield shattered, fragments dispersing into the air as he was propelled backwards two miles away, his wings unable to halt his descent.

BANG!!

He crashed onto the ground, creating a massive crater fifty-six meters wide. Dust billowed in the air, instantly shrouding his figure.

Skystride technique - Sky Dash!

Commander Sy'ra immediately activated her technique, forming an invisible platform to enter the air. Swiftly dodging to the side, she ascended above the beast's head. Using the momentum of her movement, she propelled herself downwards, gathering enough force to swing her Gearweaver blade at the beast's neck before it could react.

"YOU!!!" Commander Edmar seethed angrily, witnessing her action. He hadn't been able to act in time due to Commander Sy'ra's nimble agility. "I'LL KILL YOU!!!" He spat, raising his spear

in preparation.

Dragonic Fury Spear - Ember Spiral!

A vortex of flames engulfed the spear once more as he launched it toward Commander Sy'ra.

Skystride technique - Sky Dance!

Commander Sy'ra stepped into the air again, swiftly heading towards his direction.

...

The thick scent of blood quickly permeated the battleground. As predicted, despite the greater numbers of the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City, they were outmatched not only in strength but also in technique, resulting in a higher casualty count among their gods' chosens compared to the Trekking Flamingo

Runaway City.

The casualties continued to mount sharply as the battle raged, with the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City steadily pushing back its adversaries.

"Go and support them. Make sure all eyes are on you," Orion said, glancing at Seth.

Chapter 999: Fiery Enclosure

Seth nodded before immediately flying toward the battle.

"Do you think they still have other forces in hiding?" Orion asked.

"They've shown they have the strength to subdue both the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City. If they have the confidence to take on Paradise, then I believe so. However, I doubt they have much more in reserve," Aerialia responded.

She saw no reason why the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City would commit all their forces while still wary of Paradise's potential attack.

Orion nodded. "I think so too. This will force them to reveal all their strength. We won't have to worry about the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City hiding any of their power from us."

Aerialia nodded in agreement with Orion's decision. They both continued to observe the unfolding battle below as Seth prepared to join in.

...

On the battlefield,

Commander Edmar blocked a strike from a dishevelled Vargoth while swiftly dodging a descending strike from Sy'ra. Their weapons clashed with a resonant clang, followed by an intense burst of wind that spread outward, lifting dust clouds and overturning the ground and corpses below.

Commander Vargoth and Sy'ra had been fighting with everything they had, pushing their bodies to the limit and scrutinizing their attacks in hopes of landing a successful hit on Commander Edmar. However, all their efforts had been in vain.

Soon, they began to realize that he had been toying with them. Edmar's attacks were carefully measured to weaken them without hitting vital organs, effortlessly dictating the flow of their battle.

Soul Dominion Embrace - Spirit Grasp!

Commander Vargoth immediately cast another technique, creating several translucent threads that wrapped around Edmar, temporarily immobilizing him. However, Edmar broke free a second later.

But that was enough time for Vargoth to cast his second technique.

Soul Dominion Embrace - Mind and Soul Rend!

A burst of white light swiftly emerged from Vargoth, striking Edmar and immobilizing him again. Unlike before, Edmar's mind and soul began to sting as though pierced by countless sharp knives, tearing through his being.

Skystride technique - Sky dance!

Commander Sy'ra seized the opportunity presented to her. She appeared behind Edmar instantly, her feet finding solid ground in the air as she swung her Gearweaver sword, poised to cleave through his heavy armour.

Unexpectedly, Edmar quickly regained his composure and raised his spear to block her attack.

CLANGG--

A sharp burst of wind erupted from their clash, scattering into the surroundings. Seeing her attack fail again, Sy'ra immediately retreated, attempting to create distance between them while Edmar aimed his spear at her.

Dragon Fury Spear - Dragon's Breath Strike!

As Edmar hurled his spear forward, an orange, scorching flame swiftly enveloped it, followed by waves of churning flames trailing behind. Before Sy'ra could devise a plan to evade the inferno, the flaming spear reached her instantly.

Her eyes shrunk to needle-size as the spear pierced through her abdomen, the searing flames burning her skin and churning her insides fiercely.

"AHHHHH!!!!" Commander Sy'ra's agonized roar pierced through the echoing sounds of battle. The flames eventually subsided, leaving Sy'ra's body slumped on the ground with the spear still lodged in her gut.

Having incapacitated one Commander, Edmar redirected his focus to Vargoth, who was preparing another technique after witnessing Sy'ra's sudden defeat.

Soul Dommi--

However, before he could complete his technique, Commander Edmar swiftly closed the distance, his broad, leathery wings casting an enormous shadow over Vargoth, causing him to momentarily halt his actions.

Immediately, Edmar seized Vargoth's wings with both hands, tightening his grip.

"Ahhhhh!!" Vargoth screamed, swaying as he struggled to free his wings from Edmar's grasp. He knew any wrong move could severely injure his wings, so he restrained himself.

"I've heard what you did to my Captain. Today, you'll pay for it," Commander Edmar growled, his deep voice weighing heavily on Vargoth's heart as he intensified his efforts to break free from Edmar's grip.

CRACCKK!!

Commander Edmar didn't immediately pull on the wings but continued to tighten his grip around the edges, intending to inflict severe torture on Vargoth before ripping them off, exacting the same shame he had inflicted upon his Captain.

Suddenly, as the tension escalated, the atmosphere heated up. An acrid smell of sulfur pervaded the air, causing Edmar to pause and peer into the distance.

A wave of molten lava steadily ascended from the battleground into the air, burning and engulfing the Vylkr vines around it, creating dense clouds of smoke that rose into the sky, obscuring their view of the battlefield beyond.

Commander Edmar's expression immediately turned solemn. Glancing around, he realized the same situation surrounded them across the battlefield—a thick wave of molten lava sealing off their escape routes, looming over them like a menacing fiery dome. Edmar swiftly noticed a half-oval forged from molten lava suspended in the air. Strings of molten lava emerged from its edges and connected to the oval.

Twisting Vargoth's wings to an awkward angle, Edmar let go of him, dropping his writhing body to the ground and ascending higher into the air to get a closer look at what was transpiring. He observed a figure hovering within the suspended half-oval, standing unfazed amidst innumerable strings of molten lava extending from the fiery dome's edges.

On the battlefield, the gods' chosens had already halted their battles. Some were battered and injured, others on the verge of death, and several still brimming with strength. Yet, at this moment, all eyes focused on the suspended half-oval forged from molten lava and the mysterious being within it.

Uncertain of the mysterious figure's identity, a name suddenly popped into Edmar's mind.

Paradise!

Soon, several strands of molten lava began to protrude and morph into slick, reddish-orange searing swords, spears, cutlasses, halberds, and other sharp-bladed weapons, each pointing menacingly toward the direction of the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City and its gods' chosens.

Tension skyrocketed immensely as the gods' chosens of the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City tensed their bodies, preparing for the imminent attack from their sudden assailant.

Chapter 1000: The Mysterious Powerhouse

Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City

Witnessing the arrival of one of Paradise's key leaders, Eleanora breathed a deep sigh of relief. They were clearly losing this war despite fighting with all their might. Their performance paled compared to the astonishing display of strength from the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City.

They were indeed on the cusp of becoming a Grade Two Runaway City. This realisation struck Eleanora deeply, emphasising the vast gap in strength between them and a Grade Two Runaway, filling her heart with dread. Nevertheless, this fear paled only compared to Paradise, leaving her uncertain about which force was more powerful.

Regaining her composure, Eleanora turned to the gods' chosen stationed beside her, "Go and retrieve Commander Sy'ra quickly!"

Since the beginning of the battle, her gaze had been fixed on the fierce duel among Commanders Sy'ra, Vargoth, and Edmar, knowing the outcome would sway the battle's fate.

Contrary to her expectations, neither Sy'ra nor Vargoth could land a decisive blow on Edmar. They found themselves constantly defending or seeking fleeting chances to counterattack before being pushed back again.

Just as her hope began to wane, Commander Vargoth finally managed to land several telling blows on their opponent, swiftly shifting the tide of battle before they were severely injured.

Despite witnessing Sy'ra recover from severe injuries thanks to her race's regenerative ability, this was the most harrowing attack Eleanora had ever seen her endure. It made her heart weigh heavily with doubt over whether Sy'ra could survive.

Fortunately, Paradise had finally chosen to intervene.

The gods chosen beside her nodded in unison before leaping swiftly out of the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City toward Commander Sy'ra's location.

...

Sleeping Fox Runaway City

"Quickly retrieve Commander Vargoth for treatment!" Lakul ordered, glancing at the winged sloth demon beside him, who immediately took to the air and headed swiftly towards Commander Vargoth's position.

Lakul cursed quietly under his breath. He hadn't anticipated the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City to possess such formidable strength. Fortunately, they had the support of Paradise; otherwise, their losses would have continued to mount uncontrollably.

....

Trekking Flamingo Runaway City

"So, it appears they weren't lying," Emperor Greroth muttered, his gaze fixed on the hallowed dome of molten lava and the half-oval forged from the same substance suspended in the air.

The other leaders shared deep frowns, their expressions reflecting their concern. Clearly, the mysterious figure did not belong to the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City or the Sleeping Fox Runaway City; otherwise, they would have revealed themselves at the battle's outset. The only conclusion they could draw was ominous.

Paradise!

The terrifying technique the figure above them unleashed left no doubt-they faced an opponent of equal or greater strength. They couldn't be sure if this figure was a Stowaway group or a hidden Grade Two Runaway City surviving by pillaging others.

"Do you need my help?" asked a cloaked figure standing beside Emperor Greroth, his eyes fixed on the mysterious figure in the sky. The figure was tall and imposing, with a cloak that seemed to blend with the shadows. His eyes were slitted and glowed with an otherworldly light.

Emperor Greroth remained silent, ordering, "Prepare to attack," to the gods' chosens beside him. They had humanoid upper bodies with robust, hooved lower bodies, each armed with a Gearweaver Bow and a quiver full of arrows forged from Vylkr alloy and other mysterious enchanted materials.

Upon hearing Emperor Greroth's command, they nocked an arrow, drew back their bows, and aimed at their mysterious assailant, ready to attack.

Receiving no response, the cloaked figure turned to Emperor Greroth. "Do you think you can defeat this mysterious opponent on your own?" he asked, a smile breaking across his lips, contrasting the gravity of his question.

Emperor Greroth finally shifted his focus towards the cloaked figure. "Yes, we can. We will crush them, retrieve the Divine Artefact and Patriarch Rylan, seize their Vylkr alloy mine, and solidify the promotion of my Runaway City to Grade Two," he responded, withdrawing his gaze and fixing it skyward as he gave the attack orders.

The cloaked figure chuckled before nodding in understanding. He didn't doubt their determination to succeed, but the appearance of this mysterious individual and the immense scale of his technique gave him pause. He silently resolved to intervene if things spiralled out of control.

Cleaving Bow Technique - Wind Piercer!

Meanwhile, the Centaurs unleashed the same technique, simultaneously releasing their arrows. The arrows shot forward with extraordinary speed and force, creating a sensation of a vacuum as they streaked through the air,

They repeated the gesture three more times before halting their actions.

....

Witnessing the barrage of arrows launched from the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City towards one of the Key Leaders of Paradise, the gods' chosens of the Wanderlust Travelling Tortoise Runaway City and the Sleeping Fox Runaway City felt incredibly tense, sensing the destructive power within the arrows as some of them were also headed towards their own positions.

The constructed bladed weapons, formed on the net-like strings above the hallowed molten magma dome, shot forward, colliding with and incinerating the descending arrows.

BANG!! BANG!! BANG!!

In the blink of an eye, the terrifying arrows loomed overhead, casting a shadow of impending doom, disintegrated into ashes that vanished into thin air.

Observing this scene, Commander Edmar frowned deeply. While he could counter the Main Defense Team's attack, he understood the difficulty of stopping such a large-scale assault

with precision.

And this was only a figure from Paradise. Could he be their Supreme Leader?

More bladed, molten lava-like weapons formed on the strings of molten lava and shot downwards toward the gods' chosens of the Trekking Flamingo Runaway City.

BOOOM!! BOOM!!

"Argghhh!!!"

"Ugghh!!!"

Screams of pain and anguish erupted from the gods' chosens. Surprisingly, none of them were dead; they were only severely injured and seared by the terrifying attack.

Commander Vargoth observed the scene solemnly, gritting his teeth before swiftly heading towards the mysterious figure. He could do nothing now except try his best to stop the mysterious individual and Paradise's hidden forces.