

## **A Glitched 101**

### Chapter 101 Aquarina's Soul Scape

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Yesterday I just ate food with Aquarina and had a nice time with my parents, as well as her parents. I remembered very well that they spoke a lot about my hunt during that time. I'm pretty sure, Aquarina had been left with her mouth and eyes wide open in shock when my father showed her the big corpse I had brought back... I think he exaggerated a little bit there saying a lot of stuff about me, but oh well, it was still fun...

This morning I woke up with Aquarina cuddling beside me, not letting go of me all night... I was supposed to have a separate bed for this to not happen, but she always snuck into my bed in the middle of the night, sleeping by my side.

Then again, I can't help it. My little sister was the most adorable there was, so I was very weak to her... I can't really reprimand her when she's so clingy with me.

However, as I slept at her side, I suddenly felt her aura glow with a bright azure color, moving back and forth like a calm ocean... what's this?

As I became curious, I suddenly saw a faint glow within the depths of her soul through my Heavenly Sight ability. Surprisingly, something within her was slowly growing.

What's this? Was this her innate power? I wonder...

I quickly decided to infuse more of my near-endless mana into my power. Well, at some point it would put stress on my body and soul, but I've become better at being able to stop right where I could handle it properly.

FLASH!

My eyes suddenly flashed with bright light as I was able to see the deepest areas of her soul even better than before.

Her Soul Scape resembled a beautiful ocean with a big island in the middle of it. The island had a tropical jungle and a big lake in the middle, or I guess a beautiful spring would be a better term for it. Well, that's where her Water Spirit, Undine, was swimming around.

However, in the middle of this lake, there was an altar of some sort... covered in seashells and decorated with starfish around it. There were even algae growing around the altar. On top of that, there was a nest made of algae and seashells... atop it, there was a mystical glowing egg.

Indeed, there was a beautiful azure-colored egg in the nest. It was as if it were covered in many azure scales, glowing with a metallic luster. Undine swam around it, looking at the egg with curiosity.

The egg emanated a strong presence, faintly reminding me of Ignatius' egg form.

Who is this egg? Was this a new spirit she recruited without knowing? No... this is... is this Leviathan?

If Ignatius was able to be reborn in an egg after becoming very weak, maybe Leviathan can do the same? Then... that means he hasn't died yet!

Then again... it's strange, this egg doesn't emanate the same aura that Leviathan had, but it's certainly as strong and beautiful as his... is this actually not Leviathan but something like his own egg? Wait, was Leviathan a girl?!

Huh...

I don't really know, and I wouldn't want to disturb Aquarina's Soul Scape anymore, so I quickly pulled out my vision from her soul. When I opened my eyes again, I saw her awake, looking at me with a sleepy face.

"Good morning," I said.

"Guu mornin'..." she replied while rubbing her face over my chest.

Aquarina's glistening blue eyes were like two beautiful sapphire jewels, bright and colorful to the point it left me speechless when she looked at me directly.

"Uwah, I have such a cute little sister... Aquarina-chan, let's sleep for a few more minutes..." I suggested.

"Hehe, okay..." she said, hugging me tightly. The two of us ended up sleeping for over two more hours... until our parents woke us up.

"Aquarina, did you sneak into Sylph's bed again? What did we talk about before?!"

The roar of Aquarina's mother woke me up. She was a strong and masculine woman sometimes, so she was easily able to scare us off with her voice when she got angry for real.

"Uwah! S-Sorry!"

In an instant, Aquarina jumped out of my bed and went into her own. It seemed that she had been reprimanded by her parents for getting into my bed... I mean, it's not good that she does it all the time, but she's just a kid. I don't know what's so wrong with it.

"We got her a bed specifically so she could sleep on her own... Aquarina, apologize to Sylph. You shouldn't intrude into another person's bed like that," said Shade.

"S-Sorry, Sylphy-chan... Please forgive me..." Aquarina apologized with a light sigh.

"Huh? I-I don't think it's that bad... she's... my sister after all. I think it's not right to reprimand her for that... she can sleep by my side from time to time if she wants to!" I could not help but say.

Surprisingly, my mother and Nepheline sighed after hearing that.

"T-This is why we reprimand her. You're way too lax, Sylphy..." sighed Nepheline.

"If we weren't there, you'll let anyone sleep in your bed," sighed my mother soon after.

"Huh?! I-I wouldn't! Aquarina is special. She takes a big place in my heart, so of course I let her..." I said, trying to defend myself.

"Well, it's not like you don't enjoy cuddling with Sylphy sometimes, Faylen. I've noticed that you also sneak into her bed sometimes..." father could not help but add.

"Huh?! I... T-That's because she's my daughter!" mother replied, slightly blushing.

Ah... so that's why I wake up with mother by my side sometimes... I thought she only sat down near me to wake me up in her lap, but she was actually just sleeping by my side.

Well, that's still fine. She's my mommy after all. Plus, her body is so warm and fluffy, especially her chest. It's very soft, the perfect cushion, in fact!

"A-Anyways, I think we shouldn't continue this discussion any further. Aquarina, we've already told you before. Next time you do this, we'll give you a proper punishment," Shade said, wanting to end the conversation. Not long after, his eyes suddenly grew mildly cold. In fact, it sent shivers down my spine. I guess he could still use his intimidating factor as an assassin while being a father...

"O-Okay..." Aquarina could only acquiesce.

Chapter 102 A Rowdy Kid, Zack

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As we were having breakfast, I was wondering if I should tell Aquarina about the egg I saw or not... she might think I was intruding into her soul... then I might end up looking like a creep or something, and that's not good...

I don't want her to see me like a creep!

Imagining the cute Aquarina lose all respect and love for me as she looks at me while making a disgusted face... that sight would totally break my heart!

"Ugh... you're such a degenerate... I don't want anything to do with you anymore... you're not my sister... d-don't talk to me again!"

Imagining her saying that really scares me! No! I won't tell her! I better just keep this secret until I die! Y-Yeah... that'll be better.

Well, peering into another person's soul was also quite the grave offense... so I better never tell her.

Noticing my concerned face as my expression darkened, Aquarina asked me what was on my mind.

"Sylphy? What's wrong? Is the meat not good?" she asked.

"AH...?! No... Its fantastic!" I hastily replied as I began eating the grilled chunks of meat and bread together while sipping some of the herbal tea.

"All good!" I reaffirmed her.

"O-Okay..." Aquarina could only say as she raised an eyebrow, probably curious why I was acting this way.

As we were eating and chatting, Nepheline came to our room again.

"Aquarina, Sylphy, Zack's here. Do I let him in?" Nepheline asked.

"No way." We replied at the same time.

"Geez, don't be like that! The boy has no parents nor siblings. You're like his little sisters, you know?!" said Nepheline angrily.

"I don't like Zack..." Aquarina murmured.

"Well, he's quite the handful kid..." I added.

"Well, no buts. You're still going to meet him. It's good to have a lot of friends in your life. You can't just be content with just the two of you," Nepheline told us soon after, resting her hands over her wide hips before shaking her head.

"Come in, dear. The two are still having breakfast. How about you? Did you eat something before coming here?" she asked as Zack entered the tent.

Zack was a boy a year older than us, around 5 years of age. Then again, I'm sure he'll soon reach 6 years. He's got a decent and developing musculature since he's a pure-blooded Amazon unlike Aquarina. His skin was chocolate-colored, glossy, and rather beautiful like every Amazon.

He has short brown hair and a cheeky smile, while his eyes were sharp and golden yellow. Well, he's mildly cute sometimes, but his cheeky personality kind of ruins it. He's also always wearing a headband left by his father. Plus, he usually carries his axe with him, his main weapon.

"Don't worry about it, auntie Nepheline, I already had my fill with some fruits and grains I picked up along the forest," replied the boy. He lived alone on a little tent, and sustained himself by hunting and gathering. The people here had a market for food and other materials, but he had no money to buy. So, whatever he got from the forest, he just consumed it instead of trading it. I think Nepheline and Shade pitied him and let him become more friendly with us.

"Sigh, alright dork, come sit with us. You're not going to get through my aunt by just playing it off as a poor little kid," I said.

"EH?!" Zack got shocked. Indeed, he liked to act like a humble boy but he's an asshole and annoying idiot 90% of the time. So, I have to be a bit harsh.

"Ahahahah! I see you have good friends already, Zack!" Nepheline could not help but say soon after. Unlike a normal woman, who would try to reprimand me, Nepheline laughed it off and walked away. Then again, with her being a former hero, she was not normal by any means.

Zack looked at me while blushing a bit before sitting down near me.

"Why do you always come to annoy us?!" asked Aquarina angrily.

"I-I just want to hang around with you two! W-What's so wrong with that?" he replied with a sigh.

"Alright, fine. We'll go hunt with you... Here, eat something for now... eating grains and some fruit won't do. You're still growing up, kid," I told him.

"D-Don't call me a kid. I'm clearly older than you, Sylph..." Zack could not help but say.

"You're a kid compared to Sylph anyways," Aquarina said in response to his words.

"What did you say, shrimp?" said Zack with a hint of anger.

"Idiot!" Surprisingly, Aquarina replied with a hint of anger as well.

"Aquarina, calm down... and Zack, don't call her shrimp again or I'll make sure to leave you like one," I said.

"...okay." Eventually, Zack relented. He usually acted way more annoying than this, but recently, he had been growing more mature it seems. I guess it's mostly because of the incident we had recently... he was probably affected by it when he knew we almost died back then.

Moving that aside, we fed Zack before quickly making our way outside. Today, I had decided to go explore the small forests around the village with Aquarina and Zack, much like the one in my home. In fact, I had a Memory Paper with the map of the surrounding jungles. Sometimes, we would come here to hunt hares and other small beasts, but today... I kind of want to see Aquarina's progress.

Aquarina held my hand tightly as she walked by my side, naturally ignoring Zack walking behind us. She disliked him because he often took some attention from me. Well, he also used to be quite rude, although he hasn't been so recently.

"Why are you always holding her hand?" he asked with a bored expression.

"H-Huh? W-What's wrong with that?" asked Aquarina angrily. For some reason, I only saw her angry when she talked with him.

"It's kind of weird, actually. You're friends but you hold hands like lovers," said Zack in response.

"L-Lovers?!" Aquarina blurted while blushing.

"Ah... I guess it is awkward now that I think about it..." I said, letting go of Aquarina's hand.

"W-Wait! No..." cried Aquarina after I did that.

"Come on, Aquarina. You're not a year old anymore..." I told her as I pet her head.

"Ah... y-you're right..." Aquarina nodded with a light sigh.

Chapter 103 The Lonely Boy

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(Zack POV)

I don't have any memory of my parents, but Auntie Nepheline usually told me they were strong hunters and warriors. She told me they had died protecting the village from a monster tide that threatened the entire jungle.

It was a big tide that even that took the lives of many warriors... I could still remember when she revealed the truth to me around two years ago. I was still too immature to understand what exactly she meant by that, and ended up crying like a baby while she hugged me.

I even ended up blaming her for not having protected my parents with her strength as a heroine, even though I knew it was because she was holding back the strongest monsters in the frontlines while the smaller ones ended up sneaking inside the village and well... my parents died defending my life and that of many others.

The life of us Amazon People is not an easy one, always living in nature, with death always at our doorsteps... however, since that time when the monster tide happened, Nepheline and Shade, the two heroes that protected us, decided to ask for help from a magician they knew... a mysterious woman called the Witch of the Blue Mountain.

With her help, a powerful magic barrier was erected here, which was fueled with expensive magical artifacts the heroes got from somewhere else.

Since then, our tribe had been able to enjoy a more peaceful life, although we still risked our days daily to hunt for food, gather fruits and grains, all to survive in this wilderness.

I've heard tales of some travelers that had once come here, about the societies farther away from the jungles, where people could live in houses that protect them from nature, and walk using boots instead of barefoot. In such places, people were ruled by kings and lived comfortably, with food right next to them always available for purchasing. They also work and earn their daily bread without having to risk their lives every day...

I don't know what to think about those people, but I wasn't interested in them. I had considered going there one day. In fact, Nepheline had even offered me. But I decided to stay in this tribe and live like all my brethren. Even without parents, I simply slowly adapted to nature and hunted on my own. With the help of Nepheline and Shade, who became my mentors from time to time, I've managed to survive until I reached five years of age, soon becoming six.

I wanted to become strong warriors and hunters like my mother and my father, although they only left a tent with some clothes for me after dying. With that, I've been living in here on my own, filling up my stomach on my own.

Although I've been surviving, I quickly realized how bad I was at communication, perhaps because I spent two years lost in the jungle after I obtained the news of my parents dying...

During those times, I experienced many things. But when I came back, I ended up realizing I was rather bad at talking. Well, I even tried to become friends with the daughter of the heroes, but I always ended up acting badly, mostly because the antics of a brute still remained within my mind.

Even at five years of age and with such eloquence inside my mind, I'm still a stupid kid outside and I commit many mistakes, but I always try to redeem myself when I realize them... well, I hope to do so...

I've always felt alone, despite the welcoming and help of auntie Nepheline and uncle Shade. I guess living in the wilderness and surviving on my own ended up making me become self-sufficient, but in the end, I still felt like something was lacking... perhaps the love of my parents.

I always envied other kids when I sat down by the road and looked at them play with their parents. I even envied Aquarina for having such amazing heroes as her parents... I wish I could be like her or these other kids. I wish... I wish I could have my parents back.

I already got past the time when I felt sorrowful and broken inside. But even then, when I would remember that the people I'm talking with all had their own parents, I could not help but feel a bit sad.

I couldn't properly socialize with other kids, so I ended up becoming a loner... until I learned Aquarina has been visiting a girl, a friend of hers this whole time.

I couldn't make Aquarina a friend of mine, even though Nepheline was helping me. She was way too shy. In the end, when that girl came, things kind of changed.

I foolishly began to follow them around like a creep because I was too shy to talk with them. At the end, I almost got burned by her.

She was not like us, who had brown skin. Her skin was as bright as the silk that the silkworms produce, as white as the eggs we sometimes gathered around the treetops.

Her eyes were bright emerald, and her hair, as red as blood.

She looked surreal. I had only seen another person with such a skin tone, Shade, Aquarina's father. But even he most of the time barely showed his body as he covered himself in many robes.

But she was... so dazzling, it left me startled.

Although she almost burned me back then...

Her bright emerald eyes were like two beautiful jewels, plus her personality was as explosive and strong as the fire she wielded.

Her name was Sylph, and she was also the daughter of two heroes, friends of auntie Nepheline and uncle Shade.

Since then, I've been trying to become her friend. Well, she seemed friendly enough.

But Aquarina always got in the way for some reason, even becoming very annoying. It was as if she only wanted Sylph for herself, even though she was so amazing.

I kind of wanted to be by her side but Aquarina always got in the way...

Sure, we got into many discussions in the end. But because I was a stubborn fool, our relationship could have ended up very badly because both of them went through something that almost killed them.

This time... I will try to be nicer.

I really... I really want friends...

Chapter 104 Aquarina Is Quite Fierce!

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(Back to Sylph's POV)

Zack wasn't stalking us around like a creep anymore, thankfully... well, you see, he used to stalk us around while we explored around the place with Aquarina.

He was always lurking around. Every time I spotted him, he would hide behind the trees as if he was afraid of even speaking.

Later on, I realized that he had social anxiety and had a very hard time socializing. Due to this, he was extremely shy and couldn't bring himself to speak with us. So instead, he followed us around, wishing to be our friends but never actually talking with us... then again, during those times, I got a bit scared and thought he was a rapist or something, so I tried to burn him down.

He ended up apologizing after I burned his hair a tiny bit, and ended up introducing himself with his name, Zack. During those times, I felt a bit sorry for being so rude with the poor boy, and tried to be more social with him. After all, I wouldn't mind having another friend, or so I thought back then.

But little Zack was always an annoying kid, and well, partially, his way of being was also my own fault and Aquarina's. Due to his shy nature, he had no idea how to talk, so he often bothered us, calling Aquarina a shrimp, while calling me a knife ear for whatever reason.

Well, I don't know why, but that really angered me. So, every time he did that, I would kick his ass. But he somehow seemed to enjoy such a strange interaction, even though other times he felt a bit sad when I decided to ignore him.

Seriously, kids are so complex sometimes... it took me a while to realize that he actually seemed to like Aquarina, and wanted to catch her attention by being rude. Only then did I remember that kids sometimes do that, yeah... especially boys. To catch the attention of a girl, they act rude and insult her, or even bully her.

Was he trying to do this back then? Well, every time he tried something stupid, I cut it off short.

But now that I think about it, I should have been more supportive of him and tried to help him become more sociable.

Fortunately, in the end, that problem resolved itself. Although Aquarina still doesn't like him one bit, I'm trying to make him our friend... after the incident with Hell where we almost died, he learned about it and became a bit sorrowful, apparently because we could have died without him even apologizing to us.

Since that time, after that, he ended up apologizing to us for being so rude, even going so far as to kneel before us. Of course, I told him not to do such an embarrassing thing.

Since then, we've been bringing him around. Aquarina still doesn't like him, as I said previously, and she's very defensive... for some odd reason she doesn't even want him to even touch me.

Geez, this girl has become quite possessive... that's not good.

Right now, we're traversing the jungle surrounding the village, which was mostly a safe place where only little monsters crawled around.

Well, sometimes a panther or two would appear from time to time.

"S-So, Sylphy, how have you been?" asked Zack rather politely. His voice was often very rude and childish, so it was odd to hear him talk so eloquently.

"Been doing pretty good. I'm actually getting pretty good with the blade, you know? I hunted down a big six-limbed lizard yesterday." I said in response.

"Y-You did what?!" Zack could not believe it.

"Obviously! Sylph is the daughter of the hero of the blazing blade, so of course she's amazing with it, fufu." Aquarina giggled, proud of my accomplishments as if they were her own.

"I-I see... it's amazing for a girl to be so strong... you've been swinging the blade like you told me the other day?" Zack asked with eyes wide open. He was genuinely amazed.

"Yeah, yesterday I swung it around... 1600 times." I replied.

"W-What...?! I-I have to get my act together and train more... I can't lose to your blade then!" said Zack in response. His eyes suddenly blazed with motivation. I was glad I was able to motivate him.

"Hehe, you better train hard, kid, or you won't even be at my level," I told him rather cockily.

"Y-You'll see!" he said.

"Why do you even think you can even reach Sylphy's level? It's hopeless, you stupid untalented monkey!" said Aquarina, her tone somewhat aggressive. At her words, Zack suddenly grew a bit paler before falling into silence. Unlike other times when he fought back with words, he simply didn't answer her.

"Aquarina! Can you stop being so hostile with Zack?" I could not help but ask her with a sigh.

"Ah... w-well, I don't like him..." Aquarina replied.

"But you can't be so immature with the boy," I said, sighing yet again.

"B-But he's trying to steal you from me!" she refuted.

"Steal? Aquarina, I don't belong to you... we're friends but that doesn't mean... I'm an object... i-is that how you see me?" I asked.

"I... I don't! I-I... S-Sorry... I didn't mean to say that..." she said soon after.

"...fine. Alright, let's make amends. You two don't fight, okay? I would gladly prefer if both of my friends could get along!" I said.

"No, it's fine... I've said some awful things before without even thinking... I deserve to be treated like that," Zack said in response to my words.

"Don't become a martyr, Zack. You're just a kid. Kids make mistakes and do dumb stuff. It's part of growing up to realize they're wrong," I told him.

"Ah..."

"Oh..."

"What?" I asked.

"You really talk as if you're an adult..." Zack could not help but say.

"T-That's because Sylphy is very mature and cool, unlike you..." replied Aquarina.

"Fair, fair, I'll take that one as well... Aquarina, please, let's get along. I'm seriously trying my hardest here," Zack said soon after with a sigh.

"Hmm... I-I'll think about it." responded Aquarina, furrowing her eyebrows. For some reason, she became very grumpy. This was a side of her I only saw with Zack by my side.

After Aquarina seemed to say that she'll think about becoming friendly with Zack, we reached an area of the jungle that wasn't mapped. With that, I took out my pen before beginning to map things around us.

Chapter 105 Hunting Monsters With Friends

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After Aquarina seemed to say that she'll think about becoming friendly with Zack, we reached an area of the jungle that wasn't mapped. With that, I took out my pen and began to map things around us.

I used Heavenly Sight to glance at the surroundings with great detail. In fact, there was a special part of my sight ability that could even combine with magic, so I had conjured a spell named "Eye of Light" which shared my eyesight with a floating bulb of light that can do reconnaissance. After that, I used it in combination with Heavenly Sight.

The result? I could look across most of the area where we were from the skies, which made mapping very easy. Thanks to this, I often get praised for how accurate my mapping, fufu.

As we walked, I continued to flawlessly draw the map without even looking at the paper.

"W-Wow... Sylph, I never get amazed enough with you. How can you even draw without looking at the paper?" Zack could not help but ask.

"Didn't you know? Sylph has an amazing spell that can let her see around places... it's called... erm... what was it? Eye of something..." said Aquarina in response.

"Eye of Light. I combine it with the Blessing of Theia, the Great Goddess of Sight, allowing me to see through a lot of stuff. Thanks to it, mapping the place becomes easy," I said, continuing where Aquarina left off. Suddenly, my eye of light appeared right in front of Zack. Through my eyesight, I was able to see his skin in great detail, even down to a microscopic level, which was rather dizzying... maybe I could use this power to disinfect places? Well, not like it matters as of now.

"Uwah!" Zack got scared and fell on his butt. On the other hand, the floating bulb of light floated around him before flying into the sky again.

"...was that thing alive?" he asked.

"Not really," I replied.

"How can it be alive? It's just a spell," Aquarina added.

"Oh... I'm not that good at magic in general, so I didn't know," he said in response to our words.

Indeed, Zack was terrible at magic.

He was, however, very good at fighting. He had gathered many skills over his life, as well as techniques. And his axe arm was very nice, plus he could do a lot of aura-based slashing attacks with his axe even at his young age, showing off his amazing talent. After all, it's something that only people that had experience over many years should be able to do.

Due to that, he held a lot of weight in the party, easily disposing panthers by himself with his axe alone.

We continued walking around the area but quickly after, we came across a group of five panthers. From their appearances, they were furious, seemingly part of a pack. I wasn't sure if panthers were in packs back then, but this was another world, so make that double unsure.

The panthers were a type of beast-type monsters named Shadow Claws. These panthers specialized in unleashing aura-based shadow attacks with their claws. In fact, these were an evolved version of the panther I had once killed with Aquarina, often being around mid to peak strength in Tier 1.

Well, nothing too hard.

With that, I stored the paper in my clothes and quickly unsheathed my blade...

"A-are we going to fight?" asked Aquarina rather fearfully.

"Of course! You've been training, right, Aquarina? Let's slay these creatures and get done with it. You're plenty strong so you can do it for sure," I told her.

Aquarina's eyes shone brightly with blue light as her aura of mana began to come out of her body. After that, she took out her little magic knife, which was gifted to her by her father.

"Y-Yes... I can do it! As long as you're with me, Sylphy-chan...!" said Aquarina.

"Good! That's the spirit, Aquarina. You're finally not being a chicken!" said Zack as his axe was covered in a green light. Surprisingly, his element was wind, although he couldn't use magic. In any case, his element still showed up on his own slashing attacks using his axe.

"D-Don't call me a chicken, idiot!" replied Aquarina, becoming distracted as the Shadow Claws leaped towards us.

"GROAR!"

One of them got incredibly close using a movement ability, leaving an afterimage of shadows behind. Soon, it slashed the air, unleashing three slashes made of shadows directly at Aquarina!

Aquarina was too distracted and couldn't react in time, but I was right by her side, so I quickly infused mana into my blade as many Embers were unleashed around it. Soon, my blade was covered in flames. Using the strength I've gathered through my swing training, I went ahead and unleashed a strong slashing attack with flames.

"Blazing Blade Arts: Blazing Slash!"

FLAAAASH!

The flames impacted the shadow-infused slashes as both magic-infused attacks exploded in the air. The other panthers were already around us and leaped towards us all together, however, I unleashed several slashing attacks at them from behind me by moving swiftly through the enhancement of Metabolism Acceleration and Flashing Light.

SLASH! SLASH! SLASH!

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

"GRAAOOO...!"

Three panthers were left with big burned wounds over their bodies, falling back and stepping down.

Meanwhile, the one that had attacked Aquarina rushed towards me and tried to attack me from my back. Before I could kill it, however, Aquarina moved with a flashing speed I had not seen before. Her body was covered in water, but she was walking in the air with it!

"HYA!"

SLASH!

She suddenly slashed through the panther's neck while running around in the air by covering her feet with water. In response, the beast groaned in pain as its entire throat was sliced open, with blood gushing out like an ocean of crimson-red liquid.

BOOM!

The beast died right after falling to the ground!

"Haah..."

Aquarina sighed in exhaustion. She didn't know it, but she had done something rather amazing.

"Great job!" I said.

"I-I'm going to grow stronger to protect you, Sylphy-chan..." said Aquarina. Her eyes suddenly flashed with a conviction I had not seen before in her.

Aquarina... you've really grown up a bit.

"Come on! Help me out!" Before we could continue to bask in the current atmosphere, Zack cried out as he was handling the wounded panthers all by himself.

Chapter 106 Let's Go To The Dungeon!

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One panther was gone, defeated by Aquarina's outstanding performance. Her magic-infused knife was actually a good catalyst for her water magic, letting her infuse slicing water into it, making the cut very clean and strong as her magic was stronger than her physical abilities.

In fact, I also saw some great techniques in there. She was probably taught these by her father, not really her mother. Shade was an expert at moving at fast speeds, plus he could use all sorts of techniques using knives and other secret weapons, such as kunai, shuriken, and even needles. Maybe Aquarina will learn more from him than I thought... ugh, damn it. I also want to learn more from him, but my father's training barely leaves me any free time!

"ROAR!"

Ah right, the battle!

There were four more panthers left. Three of them were burned by my attacks, but they were still alive somehow. Meanwhile, another one was sneaking up right behind me.

"GROAR!!!"

SLASH!

A powerful slashing attack reached my back as I infused Ember into my foot and jumped into the air, evading the powerful Shadow Slash that the Shadow Claws were well known for.

While in midair, I swung my blade several times, unleashing more slicing attacks, this time in a cross pattern!

SLASH! SLASH!

BOOOM!!!

The cross-pattern slash was special, holding the impact of two slashes in one, with the center of where both slashes intersected held a very strong force. In fact, this ended up making it even deadlier. In any case, the cross attack hit the panther's face and well, the entire face was sliced into four pieces, dying instantly. The smell of burnt flesh filled the air around us a bit.

"Vertical Swing! Kick!"

On the other hand, Zack suddenly unleashed two techniques to defend against the three wounded panthers attacking him. He swung his axe vertically and sliced through all three of the panthers, throwing them off while one of them ended up trying to bite his leg as it managed to be impacted less. He then infused mana into his right foot before kicking it into the panther's chin. This "kick" he said wasn't just for show. In actuality, this was the incantation for one of the beginner unarmed fighting techniques, Kick. Simply put, it allows one to kick someone with a lot of strength!

CLASH!

"GRYYAAOO...!"

Zack gritted his teeth in anger as he rushed forward. Then, his axe was quickly encompassed by a powerful and large amount of mana as he slashed the panther he just kicked. The slash actually pierced through the beast's torso, slicing the entire monster in half!

SLASH!

"ROOARR...!"

BOOOM!

Soon, the massive cat fell over the floor as its innards came out of the sliced halves.

Meanwhile, the other two seemed fearful and began to doubt if it was worth it to keep fighting, but now that we killed three of their friends, they were too vengeful to think too straight, rushing forward while Zack was tired of attacking to finish him off.

"Aquarina!"

"On it!"

With Aquarina, we rushed forward with all the strength we could muster. I unleashed my flames within my blade while Aquarina left behind a trail of blue oceanic water behind her blue-colored magic knife. We reached Zack in an instant as we protected him from the two panthers.

CLASH! CLASH!

"Ah... you girls..." he muttered.

"Leave it to us!" I said in response, quickly gathering several Embers within my free hand before unleashing a large fireball right in the face of the panther.

BOOOM!!!

"GRYYYYAAAOO...!"

The massive cat received the blast right on its face, making it fall over the ground motionlessly. Unexpectedly, it was knocked out!

"HYA! Quivering Water Dagger Technique: Torrential Slashes!"

Aquarina suddenly unleashed a new technique we had not seen before, swinging her little arm at an incredible speed. Each slash unleashed a strong river of oceanic water that clashed with the panther's body several times, all of them being as sharp as spears!

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

"ROOOAAR...!"

CLASH!

With that, the other massive cat fell to the floor. Well, it was more than just dead, it was devastated! Surprisingly, Aquarina left its entire body covered in holes... damn.

"I-It's done... phew..." I sighed in relief, sitting on the floor.

"That was tougher than I thought, we had never battled so many at the same time... did we enter into one of their territories?" Zack asked.

"Yeah... maybe you should mark this area as Shadow Claws territory, Sylphy... ugh..." murmured Aquarina, barely able to move after overexerting herself so much.

"You're right..." I replied.

After saying that, I quickly wrote that down on my map as we decided to rest for a bit.

Then, I opened my pouch, which was a special dimensional inventory item my mother had gifted me recently, where I had stored some bottles with water, as well as some fruits and sandwiches.

"Want some?" I asked.

The two kids looked at me with tired yet hungry expressions as they nodded.

Aquarina grabbed an apple and a cheese sandwich, while Zack got a meat sandwich and a pear.

We enjoyed our meals while drinking some water.

"I wonder where that dungeon your mother had spoken about be..." I said all of a sudden.

"Huh? You're planning to go to a dungeon?! Isn't that dangerous?" Zack could not help but ask in response.

"Yeah... m-maybe we can defeat these monsters, but we end up becoming very tired... dungeons are said to be infested with monsters to the brim, Sylphy!" Aquarina said, trying to dissuade me.

"I know, I know... but I kind of want to memorize where it might be at least..." I said in response.

"Hmm... I don't really know, then. We should look around until we find something," said Aquarina as she quickly stood up, ready to resume the journey.

"Yeah, let's keep looking... but if we find it, let's not head inside, okay?" Zack said.

"Sure, I promise you!" I replied.

"You're not really convincing us..." said Aquarina and Zack at the same time.

"Eh? Ahaha! You said it at the same time! You make a good pair," I could not help but reply.

"Huh? Ugh... don't say something so disgusting, Sylphy!" replied Aquarina, making a disgusted expression.

"Yeah! Don't joke around like that..." Surprisingly, Zack agreed with her.

## Chapter 107 Against Walking Mushrooms

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According to what I learned from what he had talked before, Zack had once lived for over a year in the wilderness. Of course, he lived within the vast dome made of magic that protected the village of the Amazon tribe. However, he lived outside of this place, in the surrounding vegetation where animals crawled around.

This massive dome covered more than a kilometer of land, so there was plenty of wild areas to explore and go around without even heading outside the barrier.

He had explored a fair amount of all of this and was often our guide in such places because he learned everything almost photographically inside his mind.

Apparently, he had escaped the village after the tragedy with his parents, who had perished in a monster tide. He was a little toddler and made a rash decision, but somehow, he survived outside.

However, it was later revealed by Nepheline and Shade that they always helped him out survive in the outside, although they still let him go through the hardships. In other words, they let him go out there to forge his character.

With that, it made him grow stronger than other kids his age. In exchange, this also made his social skills go down a lot, so he lacked any sort of etiquette or manners, even speaking rudely.

But over the years, he had gotten better at speaking without sounding or acting so annoyingly, so I can tell that he had progressed.

I guess it could be said that Aquarina's parents were like his second parents. He always called them auntie and uncle, and I think this made Aquarina a bit jealous. After all, she didn't want her parents to give attention to another kid, even though they dedicated 99% of their lives to her already.

If it were my case, I would have also gotten a bit jealous, but I wouldn't have minded at the end of the day and just shrugged it off.

Actually, having a sibling would have been nice... sigh.

Oh well, despite how hard they try to hide it, I do hear my parents doing the deed sometimes... although it's very faint, my ears were very sensitive. I could tell they tried to use spells to hide it, but I could always tell they're enjoying themselves sometimes at night...

Agh, it's a bit embarrassing, but I guess that means they have a healthy relationship where they love each other and enjoy... well, that.

Maybe having a sibling in the future doesn't seem so far-fetched?!

Oh well. I've heard that elves have very low fertility due to having long lives, so it's very unlikely. After all, I was already a miracle in itself.

Two miracles were just asking for too much.

Nevertheless, going back to the previous topic, Zack was pretty knowledgeable about the forest here, and with my Memory Paper and my special Eye of Light combined with my Heavenly Sight, we had been mapping this entire thing rather well.

My father said that if I made a nice and accurate map, he would copy it and make more. After that, he would sell them to the Amazon as it would help them be able to identify gathering spots to go to and dangerous areas to evade.

That doesn't sound so bad, actually. Maybe I could dedicate my life to become a mapper and travel the world!

I've heard from my mother that the maps of the world were very inaccurate, even more than that of the continents...

So maybe I could map them as accurately as possible while exploring the world! I could even make history myself... it really doesn't sound so bad!

"I think I remember the dungeon entrance being around a place with a lot of red mushrooms... but maybe those mushrooms already died, it has been years since then..." said Zack all of a sudden.

"Hmm... mushrooms live for a long time. Perhaps they're around here... oh?" I looked at the side of the forest, right behind a large tree with the shape of a woman's waist and there it was, just how Zack had explained it, a lot of red mushrooms there.

"It's here, Sylphy!" Aquarina got a bit excited, pointing at them with her index finger.

"I can already tell! Wow!" I said, looking at the immense quantity of red mushrooms. They were almost all the same size, plus they were all growing together in a big bunch.

Their caps were red with white dots, and that seemed to indicate that they were obviously poisonous. One look from my eyes of Heavenly Sight already told me they were, thanks to its information which emerged as a strange semi-transparent window.

It said that this thing was called a [Red Cap Mushroom] and that it was very poisonous, causing stomachache, nausea, hallucinations, and death... it also said that it was a monster that would emerge when one got closer, but when they were young, they pretended to be normal mushrooms to not have any predators.

Weird...

Wait, what?

"Hey, these guys grew a lot! I remember they were this little," said Zack soon after, stretching out his fingers. Apparently, they were just a few centimeters big- and yep, the mushrooms began to move.

Rumble!

POOF! POOF! POOF!

Three mushrooms suddenly jumped out of the ground and began to walk with root-feet. Then, they opened their wide, vertical jaws, showing sharp teeth and a long tongue. Ugh, they were indeed monsters.

"Uwah! Monsters again!" said Aquarina in surprise as she walked back. In response, the mushrooms moved slowly towards us.

"Gryyeeehh...!"

"Guugeeh...!"

"Graagh!"

"T-Those are Walking Mushrooms... they're annoying but slow. We can just evade them, and they'll stop following us after some time." Zack tried to calm us down.

"Oh, I see! They don't seem so strong, though..." I could not help but say, pointing my hand at them before conjuring Fireball using conventional spells.

The runes were built in a few seconds, and I fired a strong ball of flames that hit the first Mushroom that walked towards us.

BOOM!

"Gryyeeggh...!"

Bump!

It fell to the floor and began to burn to death. Hey, that was easy! Easy EXP too!

Chapter 108 Learning How To Walk On Trees

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"Alice, how much EXP have you gathered so far?" I wondered all of a sudden.

"Oh, quite a big amount after everything you've hunted this time... it's actually enough to heal some glitches... but Sylphy, shouldn't you be concentrating in battle?" she responded.

"Don't worry, they're nothing to worry about," I told her as the two other mushrooms suddenly hastened their pace and rushed towards me at a great speed.

"S-Sylphy!" shouted Aquarina in fear as she quickly acted. Her magic knife suddenly harbored her mana as she unleashed a slicing blade made of crystalline water, glistening across the air before slicing through the mushroom nearest to her. The creature was sliced apart rather easily!

SLASH!

"Gryyyhh...!"

The mushroom was easily one-shotted. From the looks of it, we have too much firepower.

"I guess I'll take care of this one..." Zack could not help but mutter. Surprisingly, a swing of his axe was enough. He unleashed a strong aura-based attack composed of wind mana. It was strong and fast, enough to slice the mushroom multiple times as the winds exploded around the creature.

"And done...!" I said after the last one died.

"But there are more mushrooms around us... maybe we shouldn't get closer," said Aquarina.

"If we get closer, we'll wake them all up." Zack agreed with her.

I quickly went to the corpses and opened them, taking out the slime-covered Magic Crystals inside of them.

"Uh huh. I guess you're right. We can't get through them so let's go through the trees instead. They got a lot of branches," I suggested.

"The trees?" Aquarina asked.

"Yes, can't you guys walk on trees? It's easy," I replied as I showcased how to do it. I just crawled over the nearest tree by grabbing on the rough parts of the bark. Well, it was a bit slippery due to the moss stuck around, but nothing too big. Fortunately, I remembered the techniques I had learned from my previous life, and it was fairly easy.

With that, I reached the tree branch in a few seconds. When I looked down, I expected Aquarina and Zack to quickly imitate me, but they were looking at me with eyes wide open.

"W-What...? I've heard that elves are good at climbing, but you got there in just two seconds!" said Zack.

"Eh? It's just tree climbing..." I murmured.

"S-Sylphy, let me do it too!" Aquarina was less of a pushover than Zack, so she quickly showcased some new techniques that she was taught by someone, or she learned herself... I've definitely begun to think her father had begun to teach her.

FLASH!

She used her water magic to cover her feet and move upwards towards me while walking in the air, reaching the same branch.

"I did it!" she said.

"That's cheating... but I guess we all can do it on our own way," I told her

"C-Cheating?" she asked in response.

"Well, not really... never mind, that was amazing!" I said soon after.

"Ooh! Hehe..." Aquarina seemed to giggle adorably as she was praised.

Of course, Zack was still on the ground.

"Hey, didn't you live in the wilderness for some time? Don't tell you never learned how to climb a tree!" I could not help but say to psych him.

"I-I'm a bit rusty in that regard...!" he said.

"Chicken! Let's go, Sylphy. Let's leave him behind. We can do this the two of us anyways!" said Aquarina while smiling cockily at Zack.

Naturally, Zack was easily motivated by that provocation as his entire body exuded a green windy aura, and his anger started to bubble up. He had a bad temperament and it surprised me he was resisting for so long towards Aquarina's offenses.

"Y-You little shrimp, I'll show you that I can and shut you up!" he roared. Suddenly, his body continued to exude more aura. This was something I had yet to learn well, but aura was pretty much the expression of the body's strength combined with Mana. It's a special ability that all physical fighters use, and well, we had been using it without realizing it.

FLASH!

He encompassed himself on his Aura of Wind as he flew up here by running vertically over the tree. He reached us in an instant, although he felt tired and dizzy after that.

"You did it!" I said, petting his head as he rested over the branch.

"Don't praise me as if I was a puppy or something!" he replied, albeit a bit embarrassedly.

"Alright, let's get going. You guys can jump in between branches, right?" I asked soon after.

"Yes, I think I can!" replied Aquarina.

"I-I'll try..." answered Zack.

Well, I guess this could work as a way to train the two to move over trees. Instead of the floor, moving over treetops was always more useful and efficient as one could travel longer distances by jumping over each one. Plus, it also allows one to see a wider range of the landscape.

"The dungeon entrance should be right there..." said Zack.

"Okay!"

We quickly began to jump from branch to branch. For me, it wasn't hard at all. In fact, I had taken a long time to relearn this back home. But I was now rather good at it after a few days of training after relearning this technique.

Flash! Flash! Flash!

We moved over the treetops as we reached an area surrounded by small plants, mostly wild berry plants. There was a large boar with two small boar children at her side. From the looks of it, she seemed to be a mother eating berries.

I wouldn't really want to disturb her, so we sat down over the branch to watch them while they ate.

"That's a cute family of wild boars..." Aquarina could not help but say.

"Hm, maybe we should hunt them. The little ones always have tender meat," Zack suggested soon after.

"Zack, shut up," I said in response to Zack's words.

"Eh?! What?!" he asked, confused.

"Poor things, look at them, they're just eating... I know I've hunted boars before, but now that we don't really need to hunt anymore, leaving them would be better for my mental health... I don't think I would be able to live knowing I killed little boar babies..." I told him.

"Ah, you're so weird sometimes..." Zack told me in response. He didn't really understand me that well.

"I know... it makes me feel bad when I kill when I don't need to... we got a lot of panthers so it's better to wait." Of course, Aquarina agreed with me.

"Fine..." Seeing as both of us didn't want to kill them, Zack relented with a sigh while crossing his arms.

#### Chapter 109 A Small Dungeon

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We waited until the boar family finished their feast. They ate for around half an hour, enjoying the sweet and sour berries the plants gave out. It seemed that these berries were all edible. If they ate them, then that meant they weren't poisonous. I guess this was how ancient humans found out what was poisonous or not without superpowers in my previous life.

But in here? I guess a strong enough person could eat even poisonous things... ah, I bet some still died either way.

I looked around curiously and saw that there were no more things, so we quickly made our way down without any problems.

Bump!

"And here we are..."

I glanced at the dungeon entrance. It looked like an abandoned temple atop the jungle. It was mostly covered by moss and other plants growing all over it.

The entrance of the dungeon looked eerie... well, just a bit. On top of that, it emanated a strong presence of antiquity. I could see through it with my Heavenly Sight but it stopped at the wall in front.

But inside the place, there was a large room at the end of a corridor, which led to a place with a wall in front of it and then two corridors, one that led left and another right.

There were no dangers ahead, but by expanding my senses through the Mana Sense spell, which was a basic non-attribute spell that lets one expand a part of one's mana as if they were waves, allowing one to detect living things across physical objects, I was able to detect a few living beings down there.

I don't know how strong they were, but they certainly emanated a lot of vitality from them. Plus, they were crawling around doing something I had no clue on.

They say that although there were many monsters inside dungeons, there was also a lot of loot! If I could be a bit lucky, I might even find a treasure chest and get a special item from it...or even money!

It's because of these things that people seem so incentivized to head into dungeons despite their dangerousness... I guess that's the goal I should also have right now! Right?

"It looks a bit creepy... I don't know if we should go there, Sylphy..." Aquarina said.

"Yeah. Also, you said that we weren't going into the dungeon anyways, so map this out and let's head back," Zack added.

"Hehe! You two really have no knack for adventure! You can stay if you want to, but I'm going in!" I said in response as I began to step forward, heading deeper into the dungeon.

Wow, the entire place had such an ancient feeling to it... it feels like there were even ancient echoes of the past... oh, are these paintings?

"SYLPHYYY! W-Why are you heading inside?!" cried Aquarina.

"W-Wait! Come back! Agh...!" muttered Zack as he saw Aquarina rushing towards me. With that, Zack ended up forcing himself to follow me.

Of course, I wasn't just gonna stop here when adventure was calling for me right in front of me. I wasn't a pushover myself and I knew I could safely escape any time I wanted, so I just stepped inside and walked through the corridor. On the other hand, Aquarina and Zack followed me from behind and began to reprimand me, telling me to head out.

"Sylphy, this is dangerous! W-We're too young for this..." Aquarina told me.

"I-I agree! Let's go back, okay?" Zack persuaded.

"You two are such pushovers. I just want to explore a bit. Back in my home, I have yet to find any dungeon, so all of these are new things I want to see... don't you agree? Haven't you been wondering how the world is like outside? How things are? Even more, how are dungeons even made to begin with? Just entering here, I can already notice such a large amount of mana... I want to explore it! No way am I going out... At least let me explore the first floor!" I said.

I began to walk rapidly around the corridor, finding out paintings of letters and creatures of folklore, monstrous chickens with the tails of snakes, or even three-headed dogs with fire over them. There was even a massive dragon- oh, I've seen those before.

"B-But Sylphy..." Aquarina tried once more to persuade me. She was a bit scared of getting in here. Then again, what's a better way to beat her fear than by jumping straight to danger?

"You're being reckless, not an adventurer!" shouted Zack.

"Adventurers are inherently reckless," I countered.

"Ugh..."

"Sigh..."

For once, the two had joined hands into a single purpose, trying to stop me. But they had failed miserably because it's impossible to change my mind once I'm immersed into it.

When we reached the room, we found out it was pretty big. This thing was actually 30 meters tall.

In front of us, there were two corridors, to the left and right. A wall greeted the front, which was naturally immovable.

"Now... left or right?" I wondered.

"How about back and outside?" Zack said in response to my question.

"Sylphy, let's get out..." Aquarina said yet again.

"Come on... Oh?"

I suddenly noticed that the wall before us was hollow. If I hit it, it might break and show the dungeon ahead.

But could I break the walls? Maybe with Zack's help...

"Zack, help me break this wall. I feel like it's hollow," I asked.

"W-What? I won't!" Naturally, he didn't want to.

"Come on. If there's treasure inside, I promise you I'll give you a nice portion of it..." I replied, trying to bait him into doing it.

"Hmm..."

"Come on... don't you want some money?" I said while giving him a smirk.

"...Fine." Eventually, he relented. He really did want money in the end.

"W-Wait! Hitting a dungeon... that's kind of wrong, right?" Aquarina could not help but say.

"Calm down, dear. We'll be fine!" I told her.

"Okay..." muttered Zack.

The two of us charged our weapons with mana before hitting the wall in front of us with all our might.

BOOOMMM!!!

...

"Nothing happened," Zack said.

"Is that so?" I asked in response.

Crack... crack!

Chapter 110 Surprise Mimic!

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CRASH!

The walls broke after we hit them with all our strength as a hidden passage was shown before us!

"W-What? No way..." murmured Zack.

"Ugh, so much dust... cough..." said Aquarina soon after.

"Indeed... Vacuum Wind," I chanted.

I conjured a simple Wind-attribute spell I had learned from mother. She had not taught me many spells at all. In fact, this was perhaps the only one I knew because it helped clean clothes and other things from dust.

The spell easily absorbed the cloud of dust into a sphere of dust, collecting every ounce of dust in the surroundings.

It wasn't capable of absorbing anything else than dust though. But I think it's possible to take the oxygen out of the lungs of a person if I pointed my hand into their open mouths... then again, that seems hard to pull off if they're armed.

In any case, I threw the ball of dust towards another corridor as we continued our journey ahead.

"This place is dark..." Zack could not help but say.

"Light Bulb," I chanted in response.

FLASH!

A small sphere of light quickly emerged before my hands. This was another Light-attribute spell, though it didn't do anything else other than create a bulb of light to illuminate the place.

"Do you have a spell for everything now?" Zack could not help but ask.

"Hehe, my mother taught me the most basic spells for daily stuff. I could also use Ember to illuminate our surroundings, but the light is dim and if I make too many, we might burn," I replied.

"O-Oh..." uttered Zack. He was surprised because I seemed to have endless mana unlike the two of them.

"Sylphy-chan is indeed amazing...! B-But let's grab the treasure and walk back home, okay?"  
Unsurprisingly, Aquarina still wanted to head outside.

"The day is almost about to end as well. If we stay here until night, maybe more monsters would appear." Eventually, Zack said something that finally put the nail in the coffin.

"Ugh, alright, we'll go back after inspecting this room... And we'll come back another day," I finally relented.

"T-Thank you!" squealed Aquarina. She was very scared and was holding back her tears of happiness.

"Finally," said Zack with a sigh of relief.

As we reached the room through the secret corridor, we found out it was a completely enclosed place, a cubic-shaped room that was filled with things.

"U-Uwah! I-Is that a human skeleton?!" asked Aquarina.

"Yeah..." replied Zack.

"Ooohh! Hello there, mister bones. Mind if you move aside?"

Inside the room, there were many glowing crystals growing from the ground, ceiling, and walls. The entire room was approximately 25 x 25 meters. Aside from the crystals which I had found out were named Magicite, there was a skeleton sitting over something covered in moss and dust.

And I think I know what it might be.

"Sylphy, don't move the skeleton. What if it's cursed? Ah... that skeleton brings back some bad memories..." Aquarina murmured.

"Don't worry about it. I'm here to protect you children," I replied.

"You're overconfident as always," said Zack in response to my words.

I moved aside the skeleton rather carefully, sitting the dead man over the floor, resting his back over the Magicite.

"W-Who is that skeleton from anyways?" asked Aquarina.

"Probably someone that got here and died..." replied Zack.

"Well, duh..." I responded.

"But... from what?" asked Aquarina.

I looked at the thing in front of me. It looked like a very old and rusty treasure chest!

Was this man guarding it as he died?

"Maybe he just died out of starvation or ate some poisonous mushrooms or something... it doesn't have to be because he was killed here... oh look, it doesn't even have clothes from your tribe. He must be from another place..." I told them.

"True..." answered Zack.

I touched the treasure chest as it seemed to be very old, but I could clearly feel it was holding something inside. Although, for some reason, there was some sort of magic coming from it that blocked me from discerning what this thing held inside. Maybe it really is holding a magic treasure.

I slightly opened the treasure chest, however...

"GRAAAARRR!"

Out of nowhere, the treasure chest opened itself and showed me an assortment of razor-sharp fangs all around the entirety of its opening.

It had a long tentacle-like tongue that it quickly used to grab my body, wrapping it around my waist.

Then, it pulled me right towards its maw! I've seen these things before in monster encyclopedias... they were treasure chest mimics.

"SYLPHY!"

"SYLPH!"

The treasure chest mimic was incredibly quick and close to me, so taking out my blade would take a considerably amount of time. I couldn't easily do this. However, I had my instant cast Ember to help me out, and an endless amount of mana.

With just a thought that moved faster than the mimic, countless little Embers began to emerge across my hands as I grabbed the slippery tongue of the mimic before covering it in flames.

"GRYYYYEEEEEEGGG...!"

The monster quickly screamed in agony as its tongue burned. Then, it was torn apart by Zack, who moved faster than I thought, using his axe. He sliced the tongue and helped me out, while I moved back and saw the mimic scream in pain as it hit its tongue over the floor until the fire dissipated.

"Gryyaaagaaagggh! Gryyagaghh! GRAAA!"

"Sylph, are you okay?!" asked Zack out of concern.

"Of course, but thanks for that," I replied as I gave him a smile.

"Y-You're really an idiot!" he said with a sigh as he suddenly blushed a little bit.

"Sylphy!" Aquarina hugged me from behind.

"Okay, let's save these for later. We got someone here that doesn't like to give up," I said, pointing at the mimic, which began to stand up. Several bug-like legs emerged around its treasure chest exterior as its mouth opened widely and a massive worm-like mass of red flesh with several eyes, teeth, and tentacles emerged out of it, looking absolutely horrendous.

"GRRRUUUUUOOHHHH!!!"

"W-What the heck?! This thing is way too big and strong to be a mimic inside a treasure chest!" yelled Zack.

"T-That's... not a mimic..." said Aquarina not long after.

"Eh? What do you mean?" asked Zack in response.

"T-That's a demon!" Aquarina replied.

"A demon?!" I asked.

I looked into the monstrous being. Indeed. It was like a treasure chest mimic, but it wasn't like a normal monster, it really was a demon.

"GRAAAAAHH...! Y-You damn... ants! How dare you burn my tongue?!"