

## Dimension Master

### #Chapter 31: Daggar from the Trees - Read Dimension

### Master Chapter 31: Daggar from the Trees

#### **Chapter 31: 31: Daggar from the Trees**

Mike looked down at his injured friend; his jaw was clenched tightly. The sound of the man's laughter echoed through the trees around him.

Mike turned his head to Chad. "Help him," he breathed, then pulled his sword from its sheath. With a fierce look in his eyes, he dashed into the forest toward the man.

Chad bent down, pressing his hand to Drake's back lightly, who was still wheezing as he breathed. It was the only indication that he was alive. Chad's hand was shaking as he still held his new sword. For a moment, he blankly stared at the elegant blade, still feeling the calming, refreshing feeling. His eyes turned to Drake.

Thoughts raced through his mind. An epiphany of knowledge swirled in the depths of his thoughts.

As if instinct took over, he gently pressed the flat of his sword onto his friend's back, hoping it would help. At the same time, he slowly pulled the dagger out of Drake's back, being careful not to make the wound worse than it already was.

Chad knew that his sword could heal; it was pure instinct. However, He didn't know if it could heal a wound as bad as Drake's. Slowly pulling the dagger out, he prayed that it wouldn't cause his friend to bleed to death. It was a chance that he had no choice but to make. He couldn't try to heal the wound with the dagger still lodged in his back, and he could think of no other option.

Drake, with his face pressed to the dirt, sucked in air, producing a wheezing sound as he did. He knew that the knife had pierced his lungs. There was so much pain that he couldn't think. He could only feel. The taste of metallic blood was present, as hot liquid filled his lungs, as it tried to clog them, preventing lifesaving air from reaching him. It was difficult enough to breathe, but it made it even harder, as he struggled not to drown in his own blood.

Drake could feel a sudden warm feeling touching his back. Soon after, a sharp pain followed. His breathing became even more difficult as the sharp pain grew. His throat gurgled as he tried to breathe; the air was trying to get past the flowing blood that seemed to fill his lungs faster.

The warmth was near the sharp pain. After several moments, it suddenly started to spread through his body, and then the pain began to fade. Slowly, his lungs took in air with less difficulty. Drake could feel that the blood stopped pouring into his lungs, but there was already a lot, causing gurgling sounds as he breathed in and out. He coughed violently, forcing the blood out of his lungs. The blood sprayed out of his mouth in a cloud of red, clearing the way for fresh air.

Chad's eyes were filled with tears as he held the blade firmly, yet gently, to Drake's back. He kept his eyes glued to the wound. As he watched, he saw the area where the dagger had been, the flesh closing slowly. He didn't stop, afraid he would stop too soon. The flesh closed up, sealing the wound, then the cloth of his clothes followed. Chad's eyes widened, but he continued. He didn't dare stop. The hole in his armor was finally sealed. From looking at Drake, there was no evidence that he had been injured at all.

Chad smiled; relief washed through him. His tears fell rapidly, only this time out of relief for his friend. He still didn't stop pressing the sword. He refused to stop until Drake woke up.

Drake's breathing slowly became normal. He could no longer feel any pain. He lay on the packed dirt, taking in the calming energy. The healing warmth, still spreading throughout his body. He could feel it replenishing his life force, mana, and strength. Whatever was happening to him was putting all of his attributes to their peak. Even his energy was becoming fully restored.

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Mike dashed toward the man in the trees. He weaved around massive rocks and trees as his anger boiled, his eyes locked on his target. The man's laughter was still echoing through the forest around him. Mike was running with his sword, already in his hand, anger and hate pulsing through his veins. He wanted vengeance in the form of the man's death.

As Mike got closer, only a few feet away, the man stopped his laughter and grinned; there was a menacing glint in his eye. Pulling a dagger out from behind him, he threw it, aiming for Mike.

The dagger sliced through the air at lightning speed toward Mike.

Mike was a football star; he was used to catching moving targets. Mainly, the football during a game. As the dagger approached, Mike reached up with one hand and caught it with ease, then dropped the dagger to the ground, his eyes never wavering from the man in front of him.

The blade of his sword started to flicker, and electrical currents crackled as it moved up the length of the storm sword, lighting the elegant blade. It crackled and pulsed as it grew stronger, the current building up. The blade grew brighter.

Mike didn't even notice. He was too focused on the man in front of him.

The electricity crackled louder as it reached the blade's tip, pulsing for several seconds before leaving the blade entirely, leaving only the echo of soft white.

The man's eyes widened, and a flash of fear crossed his face as he saw the bolt of lightning heading toward him. He turned to run, but as he did, the lightning blade hit the man in the shoulder just as Mike tackled him to the ground. The man's face was planted in the dirt. Mike looked down at the cauterized hole in the man's shoulder that his sword had created.

As Mike pushed the moment of confusion away from seeing the hole his sword had made, he noticed that the man was reaching for something. Not wanting to take chances, swung his still crackling sword down, piercing the man's head. The man quickly burst into a burst of light particles, confirming that he was dead.

Still angry, Mike stood up and scanned the area. The dagger that was thrown still lay where he had dropped it. Picking it up, he looked at it. There didn't seem to be anything special about the weapon.

Looking around the area, where the man turned to light particles, there was a set of gauntlets on the ground. They were thin, like ordinary fingerless gloves. The leather they were made from looked similar to his armor. The same runed etching that matched those on his armor. Thin plates of metal surrounded the knuckles, where strange, curved spikes protruded. He liked it a lot, but he was more worried about his friend. He knew he needed to get back.

With one last look around him, he headed back to his friends.

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Drake lay on the ground, still taking in the healing energy that he had been feeling for a while now. He didn't want to move; he was afraid it would stop. Worry flooded his mind as he remembered his friends. It was silent around him. The only light was the small lantern he had received: The lantern of truth. His thoughts drifted. He didn't know if they were in the same situation as he was. He needed to get up and make sure they were okay.

He hadn't heard their voices since before the pain had consumed him. There had been no movement either. His fear rose. Just as he was about to sit up, to look for his friends, the familiar soft voice floated in his mind.

**{A member of your cohort has slain a level 1 assassin; your cohort grows stronger}**

**{A reward has been given, Spiked Storm Gauntlets}**

## **(Strength + 1)**

His first thoughts were on Mike. Gauntlets would be a good weapon for him. The system called them 'storm' gauntlets. It had to have been him. Drake slowly sat up. Whatever was pressing lightly on his back lifted. A pair of arms appeared around him. It was Chad.

"You're alive...you're alive... You're alive..." Chade said, over and over. It was spoken as if it were a mantra. Relief was written all over his face. Tears fell from his eyes, creating a widening wet spot on Drake's shoulder.

Drake allowed his friend to hug him. The relief his friend was showing told him that he was close to death. Drake decided to hug him back.

"Where's Mike?" he asked as they detached themselves.

Chad suddenly looked worried. His face paled slightly. He pointed to an area of the trees. "He went that way. He went after the guy who tried to kill you." Chad had his head bowed. He was afraid to leave where Mike had left them. He feared that if Mike came back, he wouldn't be able to find them.

Drake put his hand on his friend's shoulder. "He's okay. He just killed a level 1 assassin. He even got gauntlets for doing."

They waited for several minutes, staring into the spot where Chad had pointed. A figure stalked out of the trees, his eyes on the ground, not wanting to see his dead friend. His features were filled with grief and anger.

"It's Mike," Drake smiled, pointing at his approaching friend.

They watched as Mike looked up, seeing them waiting for him. As they watched him approach, the anger and grief in his features changed to relief and joy. His steps increased until he was running toward his friends.

## **Chapter 32: 32: Moonless Walk**

The sky was black, the stars twinkling faintly, barely visible in the moonless sky. The moon was in its dark phase, casting no light on their path, making it difficult to see the road ahead.

The darkness of the night sky made the trees along the road look haunted and twisted as their branches reached toward the road, as if trying to grab their prey. Everything around them felt sinister.

Drake walked down the packed dirt road; his friends were close behind him. Their weapons were out as they made their way in the dark of night. The only light was the small lantern that was given to him less than an hour ago. It was the lantern of truth.

He didn't know what all the little lantern could do, just yet. When he asked his system what it could do, it gave no response. It was as if he no longer had his system to help him. Drake knew he had to wait until he fought another beast to know for sure. He tried everything to get his system to respond. It remained silent.

Sounds of insects echoed through the night as Drake and his friends made their way past the clearing that led to the gargoyle's lair. They didn't want to stay anywhere near it. It gave them the creeps.

"Keep an eye out for a place to stay the night. I need it large enough to place the cabin," Drake stated quietly. He didn't want the beasts in the forest to hear him. It was bad enough that they needed the little lantern to see. It was like a beacon in the darkness, letting beasts and bandits know exactly where they were.

Chad spoke softly, his tone subdued. "After we've been here for a while, I kind of thought it was cool. We were gaining awesome weapons with magical powers. Now I'm not so sure. You almost died, Drake. So did I during the battle at Draco Town. I don't know how you saved me, but I would have died if it weren't for you. I want to get this quest over with and go home. It's much safer."

"I used a life token. I know I have two left. There was a total of three. They seem to be part of my system. When you were near death, it asked me if I wanted to save you. When I got stabbed, it never gave me the option. I don't know why it didn't. I haven't been able to access my system since I got attacked by that assassin. I don't know why that is either," Drake stated. "It would have been much easier to use a life token. It just never gave me the opportunity."

"Have you tried to use any of your powers?" Mike asked. He worried that if Drake couldn't use his system, then he might not be able to use his powers either.

Drake held his emerald sword up, filling the blade with his soft green light. It filled the blade, causing the elegant runes to glow. "Yep, I can use my power. Just no system." Drake let the energy fade from his blade as they continued their journey.

"We need to make it a point to find a place for the night before it gets dark. This sucks," Chad complained.

Just as Chad spoke, glowing orange eyes appeared in the distance, not far from where they were. The beast was directly in front of them, and it was too dark to see. "Damn it, we can't get a break," Mike complained, igniting the electrical current in his sword.

Drake looked at the approaching beast, letting his eyes glow brightly as he looked into the dark. He quickly looked around them, making sure there was only one. He even looked in the trees. There was nothing.

Chad pulled his bow, a white ethereal arrow forming. He shot it toward the beast. The beast dodged sideways, easily avoiding the arrow. A low growl echoed through the darkness the glowing orange eyes came closer.

Drake uncoiled his whip, filling its length with energy as the beast approached. He kept his sight active, seeing the outline of the beast. It was the same as the last wolf beast. "It's a level 2 wolf beast like the one we fought near Draco. Be careful, the saliva is acidic," Drake warned.

Chad kept pulling his bow, releasing arrow after arrow, trying to get a hit. The beast kept dodging like the arrows were going in slow motion.

Drake slashed his whip, releasing the energy. The ethereal whip sliced through the beast's thick fur. The thin metal blade of his whip followed, cutting long gashes through its maw. Acidic saliva dripped from the long fangs, dripping onto the road. Whisps of smoke billowed up as the acid burned patches of grass that were on the road.

The beast stalked closer, its head low as it growled. Blood seeped from the wounds where their weapons had cut. The blood glistened in the light of the little lantern, shining like stars.

As the beast approached, its taloned claws scraped the dirt. Mike thrust his sword, releasing its lightning blade. The bolt shot out from the blade and sped toward the beast, hitting it cleanly in the face. Blue current spread around the beast, making its body glow. The fur twitched with the electrical current, but it still moved forward, as if the electricity surrounding it was merely a nuisance.

Chad was still firing arrows in quick succession. Each arrow hit with precision, and the beast was too close for it to dodge the arrows. The beast remained unaffected as if the arrows were made of air. Realizing this, Chad pulled out his new sword.

Mike filled his own with white energy; unlike the electrical current, this one gave the blade a soft glow. The power sharpened the blade.

Drake raised his hand, forming his explosive whirlwind. As it flew, he willed it to hit the beast's eyes. If he could at least blind the beast, they might have a chance. The whirlwind shot out of his hand, the fire growing as it flew. The spell made contact with the beast; it exploded. The beast roared in pain.

When the explosion subsided, the creature was unharmed. The only thing that seemed to do any damage was the whip.

Pulling his whip behind him, Drake filled the thin blade with razor-sharp energy. He swung it toward the beast as hard as he could. The beast howled in pain as the blade slashed, a large gash cutting through flesh and bone from eye to snout.

Playing on the momentum as the whip soared through the air, Drake slashed the whip again, a backhanded slash tearing through the air, the thin blade cutting through fur, flesh, and bone. The beast howled. Blood dripped from its eyes, the glowing eyes gone. The blade of the whip had taken out both of the beast's eyes.

As the beast shook its massive head, unable to see its prey, Drake, Mike, and Chad ran forward, swords in hand. Their blades gleamed with light; Drake's was an emerald green, the other's a soft white.

Piercing the monster from all sides, blood spilled, puddles forming on the dirt. They didn't stop, not until the light particles formed. The beast refused to die.

As they pierced its thick fur with their enchanted swords, the beast whipped its rat-like tail. It caught Mike in the chest, throwing him back. He slammed against the tree, knocked out. His sword fell beside him, the soft white glow fading.

Drake pushed power into his whip. His sword was already glowing a brilliant emerald green. With one hand, he stabbed down, aiming for the creature's head; with the other, he slashed his whip. The ethereal blade sliced through the beast's tail, severing it at its base. The metallic blade followed, hitting its hide. A thin streak of blood seeped through its fur; The orange patches of the beast, distorted with black blood. The orange veins of its taloned claws, fading.

Chad was stabbing at the beast, chipping away at the long gash on its side, trying to make it deeper. The hide was too thick, difficult to penetrate to get to the flesh below. Drake kept swinging, with each blow his elegant runes on the thin blade grew brighter, when suddenly. The blade went dark, and the beast glowed briefly before exploding in a rain of flesh, blood, and fur. The familiar light particles burst, cleaning everything of the beast as if it never existed at all.

**{You have slain a level 2 beast}**

**{Strength +1}**

As Drake was hearing the soft voice in his mind, Chad was running to Mike. Drake looked over at Mike, just as Chad reached him.

"He's fine, just knocked out," Drake stated. "See if your sword can wake him. It's too dangerous out here to be left vulnerable like that."

Chad bent down, pressing the flat of his sword on his friend, letting the soft glow of the blade do its work. After a few minutes, Mike shifted, slowly opening his eyes. He looked around. "Did we win?"

### **Chapter 33: 33: The Cabin**

"Did we win?" Mike asked, looking around for the beast. He had been unconscious moments ago from being knocked into the tree by the wolf beast.

Mike's question echoed through the night, breaking the eerie silence. The sound made the three boys freeze, looking around them for another beast. They didn't want to attract attention. It was too dark to see anything, making it easy for the creatures in the area to target them.

Drake let his eyes glow a bright green as he looked around them, scanning every inch of their surroundings. He looked as far as he could in all directions. The area seemed to be free of creatures. The wind blew softly, causing the trees to sway gently. "It's getting cold," Drake observed. "The wind is picking up, too. It feels like a storm is coming. We need to find a safe place for the night. I don't want to be stuck out here in a storm, especially when it's too dark to see our surroundings."

Chad grasped Mike's forearm, helping him stand up. Drake was still scanning the trees using his special vision. His eyes stopped on one area. It was on the opposite side of the road from the gargoyle's clearing.

"Follow me closely. It's too dark, so you have to rely on my lantern. I found a clearing over there," he said, pointing through the thick foliage.

Seeing the sinister dark trees, Mike and Chad glanced at each other, unease filled their eyes before following Drake and his little lantern. The ground was uneven, making it difficult to walk on in the dark. The Clouds were floating through the darkened sky, hiding the faintly twinkling stars. The darkness grew thicker

Without the little lantern, there wouldn't have been a way to see even their own hand in front of them.

The trees turned out to be only thirty feet deep before the clearing emerged. Behind the trio, the trees were thick, and the rapidly growing wind whistled through the branches as they swayed, threatening to break. Icy wind swirled around them, turning their exposed skin numb. It was getting colder by the second.

The moisture in the air was cold, frozen mist, like fog. A fog that only Drake's magic vision could penetrate.



They were inside the clearing, only by a few feet. "We need to get inside for the night. I'm going to set the cabin here," Drake stated, shivering in the cold night air. The temperature was dropping rapidly, making it difficult for their bodies to adjust.

Drake quickly pulled out his storage book and turned the page to where his cabin was stored. With a flourish of his hand, the cabin was in front of them. Making him smile.

Mike was the first to head to the door. Grasping the door's handle, he pulled. It didn't move. "It's locked." He frowned.

Drake stepped in front of him and pulled the door open with ease. "Seems fine to me," he shrugged, before stepping inside. The others followed close behind him.

After closing the door, Drake slid the bolt and then held the lantern up to see inside. The room was cozy. A fireplace sat in the back. A rack was beside it, filled with chopped wood.

Wanting to start a fire to thaw himself out, Mike immediately went to the hearth and stacked some of the wood in the fireplace so it could be lit, then looked around for a way to light it. He didn't see anything. "No matches," Mike stated, disappointed. He continued to search around the area of the hearth for a way to light the fire. There was nothing to be found.

Drake stepped in front of him. His palm began to shine with a soft orange glow. A flame materialized, then rested in his palm. With a quick jerk of his wrist, the flame landed on the neatly stacked wood, igniting it. Flames shot up, consuming the wood. The warmth quickly radiated from the fire, warming the room.

The fire crackled merrily, lighting the area around them. Before doing anything else, the boys warmed their frozen hands, letting the warmth of the fire thaw them. There was a small couch with two chairs on either side of it that faced the hearth. A fur rug was placed in between. The fur had red patches, going through it. It looked like it was at one time one of the wolf beasts they fought, only instead of yellow or orange patched fur, this one had red.

Mike and Chad stayed by the fire, while Drake went searching for candles or another form of lighting. He couldn't rely on his little lantern. He worried that it would go dark without warning, needing to recharge. Since his system wouldn't give him any information, he had to watch it, wait, and see.

There was a small shelf near a table that had four matching chairs around it. They were rustic, made from neatly cut logs. The wood was sanded and polished with oil to protect it. In the center was a Lamp, filled with oil.

Carefully pulling the glass casing from the top, he materialized a small flame at the tip of his finger before transferring it to the lamp. When he placed the glass back on, the entire room lit up.

The boys at the hearth looked around the small cabin. They could now get a fairly good look at its layout.

To one side, there was a single door. It was open, revealing three beds. They were lined against the walls. There was a trunk at the foot of each bed.

Each trunk had different runes carved into it. They could tell which trunk belonged to whom because the corresponding runes matched the runes on their armor.

There was another door inside the bedroom that revealed to be a bathroom. It had a single toilet. It was a porta-potty that could easily be emptied. It was housed inside a polished wooden frame for aesthetics. There was a small door to the side of the frame that allowed for it to be removed for cleaning. There was a mirror on the wall with a basin below it. Towels hung on a rack. Each towel was decorated with runes.

To their dismay, there was no bath. There was a large tank in the corner, with a spicket. Drake could tell that it was to hold water. It appeared to be their only water source. It needed to be filled manually. He was happy that it was already full. "We have to be careful with how much of the water we use. We don't have a way to fill it right now, and we don't want to run out." Drake explained as he looked around the small room for other items.

Chad just nodded, his eyes scanning the room. Mike smiled. "I never thought this cabin would have a bathroom. I imagined it to have an outhouse, or we would have to go outside and find a bush or something."

"Pleasantly surprised," Drake said, smiling, before exiting to explore the rest of the cabin.

In the main room, opposite the small table, there was a counter. A block of kitchen knives was in a corner. A small rack of spices hung on the wall. There was no icebox to store food. A single cabinet under the counter housed plates, bowls, and cutlery. Several types of cooking containers made from cast iron were placed on one of the shelves along with several cooking utensils. Hanging on the cabinet door was a rack that unfolded to place pots or pans on, in order to cook over the fire. The rack, coupled with the hearth, appeared to be their kitchen.

Drake, noticing the handles on the pots, walked over to the hearth. That's when he saw a chain, affixed across the top, inside the hearth. There were several hooks lined up along the chain that slid along it for repositioning. The hooks would easily hold the pots. Sitting on the top of the hearth's narrow shelf was a percolator-style coffee pot.

Chad was staring at the coffee pot like it was the best thing in the cabin so far. "Any chance there's coffee somewhere?"

Drake shrugged, "I doubt it. You can look through the kitchen area and see if you can find something. Did Mary give us coffee when she stocked up with supplies?"

"Maybe," he grinned.

Drake looked out the windows, using his magic vision. His eyes glowed a brilliant emerald green as he searched for danger lurking. After checking each window in the cabin, he closed and locked the shutters, then hung the small bells that he found near the door to alert them if something outside the cabin tried to get in.

After they ate a quick meal from the items in Chad's storage ring, they went to sleep for the night. Chad was forlorn, finding that there was no coffee in his stash given to them by Mary.

## **Chapter 34: 34: A Good Night's Sleep**

### **Chap 34: A Good Night's Sleep**

The sound of the storm outside beat against the sides of the cabin, threatening to tear the walls down. Rain fell heavily through the night. Drake lay awake while his friends slept through the noise.

Even though he was exhausted, he couldn't sleep. It wasn't the sound of the storm outside, nor was it the pounding of the rain on the glass windows that kept him awake. He couldn't sleep because he knew his friends wanted to go home, and there was nothing he could do to make that happen, other than completing the quest to find the Cave of Valor and receive the staff.

Chad almost died in Draco Town, and he himself almost died from an assassin on the road. His gut told him that there were powers at play that were trying hard not to allow him to complete his quest. It made him want to complete it even faster, more in fear for his friends than himself.

Everything in him told him that the quest he was on wasn't supposed to be like it had been so far...and he wanted to know why.

Back at Draco Town, Mayor Ivan even indicated that there could be those trying to stop him. He just couldn't figure out who it was. Gavin was one of the suspects, considering that out of the blue, he offered help. No one in their right mind would travel out of the safe haven of Draco Town to head to the Dragon Head Mountain that contained level 5 beasts. The road was dangerous, filled with beasts and bandits.

When they got closer to Dragon Head Mountain and the beasts got stronger, would they be strong enough to defeat them? It was a question he had been asking himself since they fought the last beast. Nothing seemed to kill it; Only his whip. Even Chad's arrows didn't do anything.

He could tell that the ambush on the road was meant specifically for him. Then there was the assassin. Although he turned up soon after the ambush, Drake knew that the two incidents were not related directly, but their goals were the same. They wanted him dead. That was all he knew.

'I need to sleep, Damnit. If I'm too tired to travel, it's going to get me killed.' Drake complained in his mind.

Shutting his eyes, Drake calmed his breath, eventually falling asleep.

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The Dimension Master watched the computer monitor in Drake's room, watching the three boys sleep. Outside the cabin, the storm still assaulted the small dwelling as they slept.

His friends and cohort stood behind him. "I don't like what's been happening. There are too many getting involved. Chad almost died in the gargoyles' attack, now Drake with that assassin!" One of the men complained.

The Dimension Master responded, just as angry as the others. "Drake's system didn't even offer to save him with a life token. I know he has two left. We are all fortunate that Chad received his sword so soon. It may have saved them all. If Drake dies, they all die."

The second man turned to his green-eyed friend. "Do you think someone is using magic to interfere with the system?" It was only a suggestion, but it was a valid one.

The Dimension master stared at the screen, thinking, trying to figure out who could mess with a dimension master system. Even he couldn't do it. "I don't think so. I can't come up with anyone who could do something like that."

The first man who had spoken spoke again. "If others are interfering, doesn't that mean we can too?"

"Whatever we can do without breaking the rules, we will do to keep the boys safe. Something isn't right. We need to find out what it is and eradicate it. The boys' lives are coming too close to death for my liking. They're supposed to be getting stronger in a somewhat controlled environment. With what's been happening, they won't even make it to Dragon Head Mountain." The Dimension Master complained. He was worried that

the boys would die trying to complete their ascension quest. The worst part is, they have no choice but to complete the quest, or they would never get home.

The blond man next to the Dimension Master spoke; his eyes were glued to the sleeping boys. "What about eliminating the threats before they make it to the boys? I know they need to fight the beasts, but all those trying to stop the boys, can't we deal with them?"

The brown-haired man shook his head. "They're doing more than trying to stop the boys from completing the quest; they're trying to kill them."

The Dimension Master pulled his long black hair out of his face, tying it up. When he stood up, he looked at his two friends and cohort. "I know where the assassin came from. I'm going to deal with his boss. I expected it from the gargoyles, being as we lowered their numbers, but not the others, and how aggressively they are attacking the boys. At this point, I wish I could just hand him the staff. I can't do that, though."

"And Gavin? Do you trust him?" The blond man asked. It had been strange that Gavin offered to go with them. It wasn't like him to do something like that. It was completely out of character. "Is he trying to help the boys or sabotage them?"

"That's also a good question," The Dimension Master nodded, agreeing. "He is part of Draco Town; there is nothing we can do to find out. The only ones we can deal with are the assassins that are being sent. If I know anything about their boss, if one fails, he will send another."

"If we need to, are we forbidden to reveal ourselves to them?" The brown-haired man asked. His eyes kept going to the screen, which was showing the three teens sleeping. He was worried that they would be attacked while they slept.

The Dimension Master sighed. "Only under specific circumstances. So far, we haven't broken any rules. If we reveal ourselves under the wrong circumstances, the boys will be stuck there forever and be part of the dimension's residents. Now...Let's go deal with that asshole before he sends another assassin."

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At the base of the massive Dragon Head mountain, a man stood looking down the dirt road toward Draco Town. His arms were folded, waiting for his man to come back with the heads of the three boys.

A green light flashed in front of him, and three figures stepped out. Each wearing leather armor, etched with elegant runes. The man in the middle had long black hair tied up in a bun. His eyes glowed a brilliant emerald green. His whip glowed faintly with a soft green light, and he had a sword on his back with glowing green runes. Tied to his belt was a miniature lantern that shone with a soft white glow.

The two men beside him, one had short blond hair, combed back with not a hair out of place. His eyes were a stunning blue. He carried a bow in his hand and a sword at his side.

The other man had short brown hair and soft brown eyes. His muscles bulged, his shoulders wide. In his hand was a sword, with electrical currents traveling up and down the elegant blade. He had spiked gauntlets on his hands, like leather fingerless gloves. All three men looked at the man in front of them with a calm air, yet there was anger in their eyes.

The man faced the three newcomers. "Well, well, well... I assume your heir died, so you're here to exact vengeance? He asked with a laugh.

The Dimension master smiled. "No, he's doing remarkably well even though your man put a dagger in his back."

The man paled. If the young heir was still alive, then the Dimension Master could kill him. He normally couldn't interfere with his heir's quest except when someone tries to kill the heir for the purpose of stopping the ascension. He was trying to kill the heir to stop the quest, steal the staff, and become the new dimension master. It appears he failed.

The Dimension master lightly tapped his foot on the ground, and a pulse of green energy exploded from where his foot touched. It shot out, slamming into the man. As the man was thrown back, the whip snapped, his vision went dark, and he knew no more. His death took less than a second.

The two men beside him folded their arms across their chests, irritated. They wanted to fight the bastard who sent the assassin, but didn't even get to see a good fight. The dimension master turned his head, lifting a brow. "It was my heir that nearly died. If yours gets injured, and we have to deal with another one, you can take out that one."

Both men sighed in unison, seconds before a green flash consumed them, and they were back in Drake's room to continue to monitor the boys' progress.

## **Chapter 35: 35: Phobia**

Drake sat up in the bed and looked around the small room. The other two beds were empty and already made. The smell of cooked meat floated through the room. His stomach growled in response.

Stretching his arms, Drake yawned and then pulled himself out of the comfort of the soft bed. After washing up and preparing for his day, he quickly tidied his bed and then followed the smell of seasoned meat.

"Morning!" Drake greeted, pulling out a chair.

Chad placed a plate of meat and eggs in front of him. "We couldn't open the shutters. The bells would have woken you up."

Mike was stuffing his face with large chunks of cooked meat. Fat dripped down his face as he gulped down chunk after chunk, ignoring his eggs altogether. Chad sat between them, a cup of steaming tea in his hand, sighing deeply. "If we get back home, we need to stock up on coffee, so if we end up here again, we'll have it."

Sitting back in his chair, Mike wiped the grease off his mouth. "I think we should leave the shutters locked up. We're only going to be sleeping in here for the night. It would save time to leave them locked. We could maybe open one of them, in case we need it, but no more than that."

Drake nodded in agreement. It was a good idea. They only needed a place to sleep at night. During the day, they would travel on the road toward the mountain. They wouldn't need to live in it full-time.

Chad sipped his tea. He had a disgusted look on his face. He hated tea, but it was the closest he could find to coffee. "I'll open the window by the front door. It's probably the best choice out of all the windows in the room."

As Chad stood to open the window, Drake frowned. "Aren't you going to eat? It's a long road ahead of us. It's better to eat while we can. With our luck, we will spend the entire day fighting beasts."

Chad had a wide smile on his face as he pointed to the empty plate on the small counter. "I ate while I was cooking for you two."

Drake went back to his own meal. Mike begrudgingly started eating his eggs. He didn't particularly like them, but they added protein. He normally added raw eggs to his protein shakes, but he didn't have the ingredients or the appliances to blend his morning shake.

Chad pulled the bells off the lock that was holding the shutters in place. The ringing echoed through the cabin as the other boys finished their breakfast.

When Chad pulled the shutters open, he gasped, slamming them shut again. Hearing their friend, Mike picked up his sword from the table, rushing up to Chad. Drake grabbed his whip, letting it fall to the floor, already preparing a spell.

"What is it?" Drake asked. His voice was tense.

Chad stuttered, unable to speak. "Uh...uh..umm." His eyes were wide and breathing in short pants as if he was having a panic attack. He stood there like that, not answering.

Mike slipped past his friend, carefully opening the shutter, just enough for him to see outside. He gasped at what he was seeing. He turned to Drake. "I think we have a

problem. Unless you can portal us to the road. We're stuck here. Then he looked at Chad. "Remember Chad's phobia? Well, if we ever get out of here, we will have the same one."

Drake lifted one brow. "Chad's phobia is large bodies of water, specifically oceans. We're at the edge of a clearing. There was no water except for the rain."

Mike didn't say anything while Chad remained breathing in short pants, his eyes wide. His face was sheet white, drained of all color. He was getting worse.

"You help Chad, I'm going outside." Drake headed to the door, removing the bells from the lock. He pulled the door slowly open.

They were surrounded by water. Lots and lots of water. As far as the eye could see, there was only water.

After stepping slowly out of the cabin, Drake closed the door, leaving him alone on the porch with his friends safely inside. He looked at his surroundings and the vast amount of water that surrounded him. 'There is no way it rained this much.'

Drake walked around the cabin, being mindful of remaining on the wood slats of the porch. He looked around him as he did. There was nothing to see. There was only water. 'Think Drake, think.' He told himself, 'Last night, we came through trees. We only took a couple of steps into the clearing. It was just enough to place the cabin.'

He knew that there should be trees in front of the cabin. He had no idea what was on the other side of the cabin, but he knew for a fact that in front of it should be trees. He wasn't paying attention to what was beyond where they were staying last night.

After circling the cabin and only seeing endless water, he stood at the front again, staring at the spot where the trees were supposed to be. It was the same spot they had entered.

Letting his whip fill with energy, he slashed it out toward the direction of their arrival. The ethereal green whip left its metallic counterpart and flew forward. Twelve feet away, it collided with an invisible barrier. The barrier rippled, briefly revealing the other side, where the thick forest was seen.

'Fucking barriers. What is it with this dimension and the fucking barriers?' He grumbled to himself.

Entering the cabin, Drake looked at his friends. There was anger in his eyes.

"What is it?" Mike asked. Chad was still unable to move or speak. His phobia had completely taken over.



"When I used my whip to see if it would hit anything, I figured out that we are inside a magic barrier. It's like the one in Draco Town. Unlike that one, we can't see outside of it."

"Are you able to find the power source so we can destroy it?"

Leaving the cabin again, Drake turned to Mike. "I'll do my best, but my system is acting strange. I might not be able to."

Standing on the edge of the porch, he looked at the closed door behind him. Then back at the endless water. Letting his eyes glow, he scanned the area. 'What the hell!'

What he saw was everything as it should be. There was no water, no barrier, the trees were where they should be, and there was nothing out of place. When the green glow of his eyes faded, the endless water was back.

Drake stood there, confused, not sure what to do. Pulling out his emerald sword, he stepped to the end of the porch, pressing the tip into the water. Or at least he attempted to. The tip hit the top as if hitting solid ground.

Bending down, he placed his hand on the surface of the water. To his surprise, he didn't feel any water at all. He felt the soil from solid ground. Scooping up a handful of dirt, he lifted it.

Once his dirt-filled hand passed the watery surface, the water shimmered, revealing the dirt in his hand. Drake looked out into the endless sea. Letting his eyes glow again, he slashed his whip at the barrier again. As it hit, it went through as if it wasn't even there. Drake smiled. After several moments, he laughed.

When he entered the cabin again, he was laughing, unable to stop. The situation was too absurd.

Mike, seeing his friend laughing while Chad was getting worse by the second, frowned, anger filling his eyes. "You're laughing at a time like this!" he yelled. "We are stuck in the middle of endless water and you're laughing!"

Drake held up his hand, his laughter finally subsiding. "You'll understand once we get out of here." He held out his hand, showing the pile of dirt. "There is no water. It's an illusion."

He was about to explain more when he remembered something. He remembered the little lamp. It was called the Lantern of Truth, suggesting that it shows the truth. The small lantern was sitting on the table where he had left it after lighting the oil lamp the previous night. The white glow had vanished, leaving it dark.

When he picked it up, the soft white glow appeared.

"Mike, take this outside and tell me what you see. Don't let go of the lantern." He instructed as he handed the lantern to his friend.

Mike followed his instructions, anger in his eyes as he left the cabin with the lantern in his hand. When he looked around him, there was no water, and the trees were about twelve feet away. He stood there for a moment, taking in what he was seeing. "Damn magic!" he grumbled. "It is causing too many problems."

Mike reentered the cabin; his anger had vanished. "Sorry," he told his friend. Then went over to Chad, who was shaking and pale. He was still wheezing as if trying to get air.

Picking him up, Chad didn't even respond. He proceeded to carry Chad outside. "Look, Chad, Look. No water," he pleaded, trying to get his friend to respond. Setting his friend on the porch, he held his face so that he could look into his eyes. "Chad, there is no water. Look," he said, forcing the teen to look at the space.

Chad slowly calmed down. His breathing slowed as his lungs loosened, allowing the air to flow freely. His pale face was slowly regaining its color.