

D. of Pride 811

Chapter 811- Night Of The Raid (3)

"Then why is that I heard no alarm? Why is it that you can't even do a single task that you are meant to do?"...

"Please forgive our incompetence, Your Highness" Seeing the first prince get so mad, the soldier could only bow his head in shame and apologise, even though it was not his fault.

"Well whatever, it is my fault in the first place to have expected anything of you incompetent bastards"

He threw the soldier on the floor and walked up to the window. There on the northern part of the wall, he could see multiple flashes of light which was probably from the activation of skills and magic, continuously going on.

"Tell me where is his grace the duke? In a situation like this, he is the only one I can turn to" Alstin questioned.

"About that, the Duke already took a few men and headed for the northern walls" the soldier reported.

"What?!!"

Alstin bit his thumbnail and continued to stare towards the northern wall. Although he was gripped by paranoia and brainwashed little by little by one of his subordinates, he hadn't completely lost his rationality.

As such, he knew that going after the duke to the northern walls was nothing short of suicidal especially when knowing that he was their objective. No matter what, he had to stay alive first and foremost. He can leave the matters of the city to Duke Montford.

"Dammit, if only I had Lucas and Benny here with me" Alstin looked at the weak looking soldier and ordered.

"You there, this is my direct order. Go and tell this to the most powerful soldiers out there, they are to safeguard the castle and allow no one suspicious in. Also, bring a couple of them with you, they are to guard me by my side".

The soldier hurriedly left to carry out the orders. While Alstin was making preparations to turtle up inside the castle, atop the northern walls. Using grappling hooks, climbing cams or their own skills, the adventurers covertly climbed up the walls in the darkness of the night.

Since only those people who have reached level 500 can use Mana wings, almost all of the adventurers except for a certain few people had to climb the walls. Anyways, after successfully climbing the wall, they quickly disposed of the soldiers manning the wall and quickly took over it.

Everything went on so well and easily that it was concerning on the contrary.

"Does anyone else also feel that we managed to sneak in too easily? Why didn't the soldiers spot us even until we reached the foot of the wall" one of the adventurers raised his concern.

"Heh, you are thinking too much. Do you really think an average soldier of this city can match any one of us adventurers? In terms of skills and tactics, we are far superior to the likes of these jarheads. Besides, who do you think is leading the group of assassins while culling down the numbers of soldiers on the wall?"

With another adventurer emphasising it, that adventurer who raised the concern nodded his head in understanding. It was true that they could not assess the strength of the soldiers with their standards.

Unlike them who have lived their years, fighting monsters and dealing with one unfair situation after another all the while fighting for their life and polishing their skills and levels, the average soldier of the city hardly had anything to worry about.

The only thing they took care of was the law and order of the city, while occasionally breaking fights among the citizens of the city. How could such people even be their match?

Not to mention, even among the adventurers of the tower town, they were considered elites. It made sense that the soldiers were unable to spot them. Even if they did spot them, with Wyot and the other assassins assisting them from on top of the wall, it shouldn't come as a surprise.

Although the adventurers weren't wrong, what they didn't know was that the people they killed had already been turned into ghouls who had been ordered to just roam around the walls and not do anything.

Their task was only to keep the façade and get eliminated by Cynthia's forces during the raid. As they were expendables that could be mass produced at whim by the vampires, it did not matter if they died or survived.

"Your Highness" Blake, Frida, Wyot and the others bowed their heads towards Cynthia who had used her strange skill to fly over. As usual, beside her followed Annette and Emma who were using Mana Wings to fly.

"How goes the infiltration?" Cynthia questioned looking down at the quiet city whose people have retired inside their homes after a bustling day.

"We have successfully taken over the northern side of the wall without causing any commotion. I'm sure the ruling class of the city still has no idea that we are here" Blake reported.

"Good, the first part of the plan has gone well. It's now time to carry out the next. Give the signal, let everyone inside especially that foolish brother of mine know that I am here" Cynthia declared with an even tone.

On her command, Blake took out an item that looked like some kind of flare used to guide Air Engine during the night and threw it up. With that as the signal, an Airship rose from the borders of the Northern Outlaw Forest.

When the Air Engine came into view, one could see that there was a long wide strip of cloth tied to the keel of the Air Engine. Engraved in the cloth in big gold colours that could be seen even at night, was a symbol depicting a palace sitting beside a lake.

The symbol was none other than the exclusive insignia of the princess of the Kingdom of Ellesmere, Her Highness Princess Cynthia. Also at the same time, the bell from the south side of the wall rang out alerting people of the intruders.

The city that was quietly sleeping was suddenly woken awake. Guards hurried over and soon a spectacle was created.

"Go!! Cull down anyone who dares to stand in your path. Do not show them any mercy" Seeing this Cynthia ordered. Although her words sounded cruel and heartless, she couldn't afford to show any sympathy to the people who were in the rival faction, even if they were her own people.

Alvara, Burg, and her other retainers unhesitantly unsheathed their weapon and so did the adventurers. Even if they weren't her retainers, she was the one who saved them and their families from peril.

She extended a helping hand to them when they needed it the most. The debt of gratitude that they owed her, cannot be repaid no matter what they did for her. Forget about just aiding her to reclaim her kingdom back, some of the fanatics who worshipped her like god and would resort to anything if she just so much as moved her mouth.

"How dare you invade the duke's castle? Don't think that you can get out of here alive" one of the soldiers who was in the midst of speaking, suddenly had his sentence got cut in half along with his throat.

Wyot and the other assassins materialised out of nowhere and started going on a killing frenzy. As they were much higher level than the average soldier, the battle ensued next was no battle, but an absolute massacre.

It was like watching a wolf who had snuck into a chicken pen. The adventurers were the wolves and the soldiers the chicken. The assassins weren't the only ones who went into a killing frenzy, warriors like Blake, Burg and the others and mages like Frida and Marba were unstoppable too.

In the case of the latter, whenever they cast a spell, soldiers would fall en masse.

"We... we are not their match. Only the captains or higher rank can handle" Realising the difference between their strengths the soldiers subconsciously retreated.

As they say, quality over quantity. Although Castledor had numbers, Cynthia had quality. Even if the number she brought along with her was low probably not even crossing fifty, each and every person she brought, was the elites of the tower town who had a rich battle experience and were used to fighting beings stronger than them.

Even the captains and Corporals who were of higher rank than the others were no match for the adventurers.

"Hm? It seems the enemy is getting smarter or maybe there is a competent strategist among them. Since they know our objective is to get to the castle, they have a barricade of sorts all around the road" Wyot scanned, standing on top of a building to get a clear view of things.

"How many barricades are there? What are they using?" Blake questioned.

If they were using simple means like barb wires and other things that usually worked on low level monsters then there was no need to worry.

"Damn, it's sickening to say. Although they are using barbed wires, they are also warming the normal citizens and using them as a meat wall. Behind them, much further down the road, they have also placed the magic cannon"

"I don't know which son of bitch came up with this strategy, but they are planning to use the citizens as a sacrifice to fire the magic cannon on us. Although it can't hurt warriors like you, assassins like us who have low defence will suffer some injuries if that hits us. Worse, if it hits a mage, they would suffer some grave injuries" Wyot replied scratching his ear.

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"Should we ask the mages to construct a magic shield around all of us?".

Blake's expression was equally ugly. To use the citizens of their city that they meant to protect as bait, the very idea was revolting. However, that said, since the moment they planned to raid the city, they expected for anything to happen.

The plan did not change, Her Highness ordered them to mow through everything be it soldier or civilian, they had the orders to cull down anyone. Perhaps, she had already foreseen such a development which is why she gave such a cold command.

No wonder, her figure looked so forlorn and sad. Since Her Highness had made her mind, there was no place for him to hesitate. He thought for a while before giving out his orders.

"No need, if we do that it will only slow us down. Plus it would deplete the mana of the mages much faster. We will plough through everything in our path... let's use that".

Saying that, he pointed up.

Immediately understanding what he meant, Wyot grinned "Hehe, we are using that huh. In that case, leave it to me and the other assassins to guide it. I will make sure that none of those things misses".

"Yeah, I leave it to you".

Using the higher version of the [stealth] skill, [Meld] Wyot disappeared. Walking in the middle of the formation with several of her retainers and Annette protecting her, was Cynthia. As she marched forward while keeping a cold, unmoving face, she looked at the bloodbath that was ensuing all around her.

This bloodbath was something that was caused by her. Had she not given the order; no, perhaps if she didn't come to Castledor city, this wouldn't have happened. The soldiers of the city who were only doing their job, nor the citizens who were being forced to take up arms would have died.

However, if she didn't come here, if she left the kingdom to its fate, who knows what kind of future it would have or perhaps it wouldn't have any. Knowing Alstin, Cynthia was sure that he would bring the country that their father cherished to ruin.

To keep the promise to her father, to keep the kingdom from heading to its eventual end, she has to do it. If she doesn't then the casualties would be much higher than now. It was for the kingdom and its people's future.

Telling herself that or more like brainwashing herself with those words, she kept moving on. If she didn't force herself to believe those words, she might just collapse from all the guilt and remorse.

This was absolutely unacceptable to her, and as such the only way was forward. Perhaps there was another way that could bring her own and everyone's misery to a quick end and that was to take down Alstin as soon as possible.

"Where is he at this current moment?" Cynthia asked the woman beside him.

"He is hiding inside the castle. There is a hidden route underneath the castle that leads to an emergency shelter. This emergency shelter is filled with rations and all facilities, it was probably made so that the people of the city could take shelter inside the castle if the city ever fell or had to close its gates. The first prince is planning to hide inside the emergency shelter until all of it is over"

Annette answered, reporting the actions of the first prince. The high ranking vampires were monitoring him 24X7. As such, any action or movement he made, was immediately reported to Annette through Theodore and Maybell.

"He is planning to turtle inside the emergency shelter huh? How very like of him" Cynthia wasn't surprised on the contrary, she smirked in contempt as if already expecting him to do something like this.

"Any powerful individuals by his side?" knowing her brother she knew that he would keep some powerful individuals by his side to keep himself safe.

"No, although there are a couple of soldiers who are stronger than the ones over here, they are nothing that the adventurers on your side cannot handle. More importantly, our bigger problem would be..."

"Your Highness we have a problem"

Annette who was in the midst of telling Cynthia something was interrupted by Blake who hurried over to her side.

"What is it Blake? For you to abandon your position from the frontlines and come here?"...

"Please excuse me Your Highness, but I felt like I should tell you this myself" Blake bowed his head before continuing "Duke Montford is standing in our path and wishes to see you"...

"Duke Montford?!!" Hearing the name, Cynthia narrowed her eyes.

Duke Montford, a noble with many achievements to his name. Not only was he a descendant of a great war hero who achieved many great things for the kingdom, but the person himself was also second to none when it came to governing his fief and political strategies.

Other than that, he had also led many successful crusades against the bandits of the Black Town and most of all, he was the person who defeated one of the legendary criminals of the kingdom, Axe hand Adger and forced him into hiding all these years.

Duke Montford's existence was a guardian that safeguarded the northwestern corner of the kingdom. However, to Cynthia all those achievements and influence matter not as he was one of the main backers who supported her first brother, Alstin.

Other than that, he was also the person who pushed the matter of her marrying Lucas to the king and her brother many times during the royal court. That being said, his loyalty to the kingdom was unquestionable and he was always there whenever the kingdom ever needed his help.

In short, Cynthia's perspective of this person was very complicated. For him to ask to see her, what could it be about? Cynthia considered all the options in her head and replied— "Alright, lead me. I want to see what he is up to".

With that Blake led Cynthia to the forefront of their formation. Standing not too far away, surrounded by powerful looking warriors with full body armour, was the duke. His short black hair had parts of grey and was neatly combed to one side.

He was wearing his regal noble clothes and donned a red robe that had his crest engraved behind. His forehead had slight creases highlighting that he was not young anymore yet despite that his gait was straight like a sword and he realised an imposing and overwhelming aura simply by standing still.

Powerful, any experienced person who saw him would come up with that to describe him. The moment Cynthia laid her eyes on him, she couldn't help but feel that the man hadn't changed at all. The last time that she saw him, he looked the exact same.

"So you were alive Your Highness" The duke spoke. Just like how she was observing her, he too was marvelling at the growth she had shown. Despite being dealt a bad hand, all of her accomplishments snatched and almost forced to forfeit her life, she climbed her way back again.

Duke Montford was in awe of the princess whom he had seen grow into a fine woman from a little girl.

"You don't sound too pleased your grace. Could it be that me being alive somehow upset your plans?" ...

"Haha" Facing her provocation the man simply smiled "It's not like that, this old man is very pleased to see the princess alive and doing well".

"Then why don't you say that to your face' Everyone on Cynthia's side, had the same thoughts within their minds.

With the two leaders of both sides now confronting each other in talks, the battle all around came to a strange standstill.

"Your Grace seems to be doing quite well himself. I heard that you got a new successor now?"

"It looks like I can't hide anything from the princess. It's as you say; however, let's stop the small talks here. I am sure we both are not here for that"...

"Oh?! then for what reason did the duke come out here personally?" Cynthia smiled.

"Don't play dumb. I am here to tell you to stop this madness. We are currently at a war with the kingdom of Blackthorn. Now that the capital has fallen and the remaining nobles have thrown their lots with the enemies, it is even more important that we unite and not fight each other. What Your Highness is currently doing is the height of folly"

Duke Montford stared straight at Cynthia and declared. His heavy and deep voice sounded all across the street clearly.

Hearing his words, Cynthia nodded "What his grace said is right. Right now, we ought to put our differences aside and fight the foreign invaders. Considering the enemy's numbers and our former allies who have defected to their side, we have an absolute numerical disadvantage. What's more, we are also surrounded by enemies now. At a time like this fighting among ourselves would only hasten our doom"...

"If you know so much then why..."

"Why am I doing this?" before the duke could continue, Cynthia interrupted him. Her gaze was no less intense than his.

"I won't let you say that. You know my intentions very well"...

"I know; however, Your Highness if you do this, there won't be no winner at all" The reason why Duke Montford came here was to stop Cynthia and her forces from killing any more soldiers.

He was afraid that if the royal siblings continued to go after each other's throats even when the enemy was right in front of them, the kingdom would be completely doomed.

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Redcrest City, the city of Mountmend, Morgress and his fief, Castledor were the only remaining bastions that were still mounting a resistance against the enemy. If even the Castledor fell in the fight between the two siblings, it was not hard to imagine what would happen to the kingdom.

This was the worst possible scenario that he wanted to avoid at all costs.

"Winner or not, I don't care at all. I must do this, I have tolerated Alstin far too much. Today is the day I have determined to resolve everything with him. There can only be one king in the kingdom of Ellesmere and this time it will be a queen. My father, the late king Henry enthroned me as the queen of the kingdom and with his last wish. I shall see to it no matter what" Cynthia's resolve was firm and her stance unchanging.

"Even if the kingdom ends up getting destroyed in the midst of all of your ambitions, you will still see to it?"...

"Yes, but you are wrong about one thing. The kingdom won't be destroyed, I won't let it. That said, I understand where you are coming from too. As such, if you want me to stop all this, there is one thing you can do"

"Hand over my brother and swear your loyalty to me from this moment forward. If you can do that, I won't have any qualms about pulling my forces back" She offered a choice.

"That... is something I can't do"...

"Then I am afraid I can't stop here".

Duke Montford sighed seeing that he could not change her mind. He could only lament about what would happen of the kingdom from this point onwards.

"Since that is the case, soldiers take your stance. Our enemy is the princess of the kingdom. Her objective is to harm Prince Alstin and disturb the kingdom. We cannot allow her to do that, as such we must fight here and win. Soldiers raise your weapons, you are fighting for the kingdom!!"...

"Yeah" With his shout, the soldiers rallied behind him, their morale reaching its peak.

"He is impressive" Blake spoke out his true thoughts.

"Yeah, it is not without any reason that he is regarded very highly by all the nobles back in the capital. In this raid, he will be the toughest opponent for us" Cynthia agreed.

"Your Highness, please leave the duke to me. I shall do my best not to disappoint you" Blake asked; however, he was rejected by Cynthia who stepped forward herself.

"This is something that I must do myself. Everyone in the city has their attention on us. If I can win against the duke and show everyone that they cannot win, then perhaps we can minimise the casualties in this battle".

"I see" He nodded his head, he didn't know that the princess was considering so many things.

"But will you be alright? The duke is above level... "

"Leave it to me" Saying so, she stepped forward. At this moment, Duke Montford who had his left arm raised up, suddenly brought it down.

BOOM... BOOM... BOOM... At this very instant deep roaring noises like the rumbling of the thunder, sounded out from behind the duke and a second later, multiple flashes of light sped past him, swaying his mantle.

Opposing him, facing the attack, Cynthia muttered something under her breath and extended her hand. At that moment, a strange white light flashed from her body and a barrier like a blossoming flower, appeared in front of her.

When the flashes of light collided with the barrier, it instantly disintegrated into nothing but pretty sparks. The flashes of light which were none other than the compressed mana balls fired by the

magic cannons, which had enough power to easily penetrate the hard defence of level 200 monsters, couldn't even create any cracks in her magic shield.

Cynthia continued to step forward.

BOOM... BOOM... BOOM...

Just like before, the duke waved his hand and multiple magic cannons zipped past him. They came from behind, on top of the walls and even from inside the buildings. However, no matter how many molly was fired, none of it managed to get past the magic shield.

"Nevermind her, direct your attacks towards the people behind her" Duke Montford ordered.

Flashes of light condensed inside the magic cannons and whizzed through the air. However this time, their target was not Cynthia but the adventurers behind her. Blake and the others who were prepared for the firing from the magic cannons took sufficient measures.

Warriors used their shields or fortress abilities, the assassins disappeared using stealth and mages created their magic shields. Using their own means, these elite adventurers easily rendered the firing from the magic cannons moot.

That being said, dealing with the soldiers who were suicidal enough to jump into the bombardment of the magic cannons was difficult for them.

"Blake we are ready" In such a situation, Wyot sent a sound transmission to Blake. He nodded his head and used another sound transmission conch to relay out his orders.

"Begin the bombardment".

WHIZZ... a piercing sound similar to a whistle, broke through the commotion of the battle and then exploded in the air in a brilliant display of firework.

WHIZZ... it was not just one, multiple whistling noises repeatedly resounded in the city followed by bright flashes of light that appeared in the sky.

What was going on? Who was using flares at this time of the night?

Just as those questions appeared in the minds of the soldiers and citizens of the city, the answer also arrived to them a moment later. Illuminated by the bright fireworks in the sky, they saw figures who have the ability to appear and disappear freely, materialise on top of the rooftops and areas where the magic cannons are.

The next second while the entire city was dazzled by the firework, something came dropping from the sky and exploded with a tremendous force.

BOOOM... the ground trembled and a pillar of fire and dust covered the area for dozens of meters. The building which was in the centre of the blast, was reduced to nothing but sand.

If even the condition of the building was like that, one need not even ask what happened of the people who were inside those buildings.

BOOM... BOOM.. the first pillar of fire was just the start more and more objects fell from the sky or more precisely from the air engine that was flying in the sky. These projectiles razed the army of the Castledor down to the ground in no time.

"Overloaded core stones huh,"

Duke Montford remarked. Just before one of the projectiles falling from the sky razed a nearby building, the sharp senses of the duke captured what the object falling was. It was a barrel that was filled with core stones.

The thing with core stones was that they were quite valuable, found only in a monsters that meet certain conditions. Not only are the core of the monsters where all their bloodline and power reside, but it is also one of the two ways one can get a beast inheritance from.

Aside from that, they are also used in the manufacturing of various kinds of products. For mages especially, they are used in their staff and are excellent conductors of mystical energy as well as mana depot.

When the mana inside the core stone is disturbed or its flow is reversed, the resulting phenomenon generates an extreme amount of energy which then gets discharged outwards thus destroying the stone completely.

This is called core stone overload. Mages usually use this method when faced with a life and death situation. As destroying the cores was the very same as destroying the staff, mages don't usually like using this method and only keep it as a last of the last resort of sorts.

With his experienced eyes, it was not difficult for Duke Montford to see through the quip involving the falling projectiles. Barrels stuffed with core stones whose mana flow has been disturbed and being thrown from the air engine.

It was quite an ingenious idea, he had to admit. The falling momentum and the confined space inside the barrel give the overloaded cornerstone more power and destructiveness.

"So you saw through that huh? That's right, adventurers usually carry a few low grade core stones with them to use on monsters when things get too ugly. Though only veteran adventurers who have gone through a lot of experience know about such a technique"

Cynthia commented impressed by the duke's vast knowledge. Even she who had a lot of adventurers as subordinates and had interacted with them for a good part of her life, was only able to know about such a method recently.

However, all it needed for the man was a look and he immediately understood the trick behind the falling projectiles.

"Core stones are quite costly, even a low grade one would be an entire week's income for an average adventurer. There is no way they are capable of using that many amount of core stones as nothing but simple explosives"

"What's more, these ones seem to be of medium grade. Without a vast resource, it wouldn't have been possible to employ this kind of technique. And I for sure know that you don't have that kind of money. The Serene Palace Merchant Guild that you built, was ceased by Alstin as such, you shouldn't be able to finance such a cost inefficient method. Who is supporting you?"

Being someone who was adept in politics, Duke Montford quickly deciphered that Cynthia was being supported by some faction from the shadows.

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"Really, Your Grace it's a pity that you are in the enemy faction. Having you by my side would really alleviate some of my burdens. Won't you reconsider joining my side" Cynthia offered. Nonetheless, the duke only remained silent.

"It's a pity. Anyways, don't say that I am cheating your grace. This is a war, to win one is allowed to use all kinds of means. Besides, I'm not obligated to answer to your question".

Duke Montford snorted "So be it then. I don't know who is supporting you, but you won't be able to take down my Castledor city".

Saying that, he got ready for battle. Ground around him bent, jutting out an earth spear which he held in his hand.

"Hmph, using my own air engine against me huh. However, a target like that flying so low is just asking to be attacked".

SWISH... right after his words fell, he hurled the spear towards the Air engine with all of his strength.

"[Sacred Echoes]" a purple light broke through the air colliding with the spear just before it could hit the air engine.

"Hmm? Now that's surprising. I see Your Highness has prepared quite a lot of cards to fight me" Duke Monford looked at Cynthia's purple white persona and commented.

At this moment, the princess was covered in a purple white markings that raced through her body from head to toe. These markings looked exotic as well as ancient and graceful at the same time.

These markings glowed with an ethereal light, giving Cynthia an otherworldly look. It was not only her appearance that has changed, even her eyes and her way of talking were completely different than before.

"Be serious Duke, I know you are much more powerful than this".

"Haha, I'm just an old man who is getting left behind by the times now. Although, I may not be as powerful as I was in my prime, I will still keep Your Highness company"

Giving a rare grin, Duke Montford activated his skills. [Ultra Enhanced strength], [Ultra enhanced Agility], [Super enhanced defence], [Super Enhanced endurance], [Agile reflexes], [Body Reinforcement], [Keen Senses], [Precision Strike], [Battle Aura], [Intimidating Aura], [Tempest Surge], [Mana Armour... [Visage-Zephyrus Armour].

The long list of rare and superior skills, was enough to even intimidate some of the most powerful adventurers here. Yet the most dreadful aspect of Duke Montford was not his drastically increased aura or his stats but the complete transformation that he had undergone.

At this moment, he was encased in an emerald green armour, a seamless ensemble of gentle and berserk winds swirling and pulsating together. The armour looked sleek, hugging the body and giving an elegant look to the user.

Delicate patterns resembling Zephyrus ripple across the surface, emphasizing the fluidity and grace associated with the winds. Donned in the Zephyrus armour, Duke Montford seemed like the manifestation of berserk wind.

"How long has it been since I activated this skill? Your Highness, please be careful. This is the technique that was passed down to our family for three generations".

Saying so, Duke Montford stepped forward and disappeared. At the same moment, leading the group of adventurers and mowing the enemy was Balke and his team. They managed to break through the enemy defences and reach the gates of the castle.

"Will Her Highness be alright?" Frida who was beside him, asked. Her attention was towards the sky where an epic showdown between the leaders of the two sides was going on.

On one side was a violet and white light streaking across the sky while on the other an emerald green glow which released a piercing cry like that of a hawk every time it moved.

Their clash created ripples in the air, disrupting the mana and topography of the city completely. One side used advanced and intermediate magic of all five basic attributes of mana while one simply focused on earth magic and the physical skills of a warrior.

Large earth mounds which had either been destroyed into tiny debris or blasted apart by wind or other magic, fell down from the sky like meteors. The scale of their fight was so fierce that no one could intervene carelessly.

Blake observed the emerald green light in the sky and muttered "I didn't expect the Duke to be so strong. In terms of pure skill attainment he could even be a match for the strongest man in the kingdom".

He then shifted his eyes towards the violet and white light in the air and smiled "That said, the princess is not weaker either. Since she told us to leave it to her, we should believe. She will definitely win which is why, we should complete our task too. Let's go in and find that stupid prince. Miss Emma, please lead the way".

Leading the way, was one of the women who always stuck close to the princess. Since Annette stayed back to look after Cynthia, Emma was the one tasked to lead them. For some reason she had all the information about the first prince, what was he planning, where was he hiding and how many people he had on his side.

Although they all had their doubts, they nevertheless knew not to ask. The woman in front of them although looked human, did not give the aura of such. More precisely, the feeling they were getting from her every time that she glanced at them, was like a predator looking at its prey.

This feeling was extremely uncomfortable, leaving them confused many times. Who was this woman and how did she know her highness?

"We are here. There are about two hundred enemies up front and about half that number behind, trying to ambush".

While they were having such thoughts, Emma led them through the castle and in front of a large hall. Just as she had stated, there were exactly two hundred enemies in the front waiting for them while forming a defensive formation while a hundred soldiers circled them and came from behind.

"Stop, this is as far as you go intruders. We won't allow you to destroy the kingdom of Ellesmere" The soldier who seemed to be the captain of this unit, unsheathed his sword and declared.

Even though his feet were trembling and sweat trickled down his face, he still mustered his courage to confront the enemies. It was funny how even though they were both fighting for the kingdom of Ellesmere, they were enemies opposing each other.

Tsk... Blake clicked his tongue, he did not enjoy such a slaughter. However, he who had dedicated himself to the cause of the princess, had no choice but to follow it through.

With every swing of the sword, blood of many would fall, staining the otherwise pristine white floor, red. Steeling himself, he continued to proceed forward until all that remained was a mountain of corpses.

CLACK... suddenly, Blake's leg stumbled onto something and he was about to fall down when Frida hurriedly caught him.

"What's wrong Blake? Why are you walking around in a daze?"

The man looked down and noticed that the thing that he stumbled upon was the decapitated head of the soldier captain. Looking at his cold and dim face now, Blake remembered the words he had spoken to him before his death.

"You monsters!! How can you still call yourselves humans after you commit such slaughter? Even if you kill all of us, the kingdom will never fall in your hands".

To them, he and the others must have undoubtedly seemed like a villain. People who were trying to disturb their kingdom. The sword in his hand was stained with the blood of the soldiers of this land who bravely threw themselves towards him in hopes that their sacrifice would be able to help the kingdom.

For the first time in a long while, Blake felt that his sword was heavy and very difficult to lift.

"Don't think too much about it, we are doing everything for a greater purpose. If even that is not enough to lighten that burden you are carrying, know that no matter what you become or think of yourself, I will always love you"

Suddenly two gentle arms wrapped around him and Frida's comforting sounded beside his ears. Feeling her warmth, Blake felt energy return back to his body and his guilt ridden conscience was back to normal.

There can be no revolution without shedding blood, if his resolve was so fragile, he should have just sat back. However, he came here and followed her highness of his own volition, to return the huge favour he owed her.

This raid was no doubt the most difficult for the princess and the blood that flowed no matter which side, was of her own people. Nonetheless, her resolve was not something that could be shaken easily.

She was still fighting now at this moment, to reduce as many casualties in this battle as possible. So why was he standing here whining like a fool?

"I'm alright now. Everyone let's go" Blake nodded towards his teammates. As the leader, his attitude and mood also affected the team. As such, now that he was back to his usual self, the team's atmosphere also lifted up.

"U-Um... There is an underground route straight from here. T-The first prince is at the end, hiding inside the emergency shelter" Emma informed, leading them forward.

"Hello~" At the end of the underground route, in front of the huge reinforced door of the emergency shelter, were two children, one of whom was waving his hand towards them.

Blake, Wyot, Frida and the others instantly recognised them as the two children who were always surrounded by that peculiar demi human group. They wondered where they were all this time, now they knew.

Chapter 815- End of Duke Montford

"Hello everyone. The prince you are looking for is inside. However, the door that is blocking you all is more than fifteen inches thick and thirty feet tall. It was created to endure even the most powerful of attacks and shelter the people inside for a long time in mind"

"As such, it cannot be broken easily, more so using Brute force. To open it, we need a key which is possessed by only two people. One is with the prince who is currently behind this door, the other one is with the duke who is currently engaged in a fight with the princess"

The boy named Theodore explained energetically. At this moment, the other teams also came here after defeating their opponents. Theodore explained the same thing to them.

"Hoh, this door doesn't look that sturdy to me. Brat are you sure this thing is as strong as you say?"

One of the adventurers who had recently joined the princess' side and was very much unfamiliar with the identity of Theodore and Maybell, spoke. The latter didn't take offence to his comment and simply pointed at the door behind him with his thumb.

"If you don't believe me, you can find it out yourself".

The adventurer smiled "That's more like my style. Who wants to wait that long, I want to impress the princess by capturing the stupid prince and offering his head head when she returns. Everyone, get back. I will break open this door".

Saying so, that adventurer leader activated his skills. His sword pulsed with powerful energy as he charged towards the door and slashed his sword.

CLANG... a loud metallic noise rang out inside the underground hall, shaking the very foundation of the place.

BANG... the adventurer recoiled back from his own attack and fell on the ground, causing the other adventurers to laugh at him.

"Haha, are you trying to break the door or break your back? Since you can't do it, leave it to me. I shall be the one to impress the princess".

Being a beauty that she was, it was only natural that she had her own fanbase of young and talented adventurers who wanted to woo her. Many of the adventurers here other than wanting to repay her for the favour that they owed her, also wanted to leave an impression on her.

And so, one by one these adventurers came forth to try out their powers. The underground hall trembled continuously with the sounds of their attacks hitting the door. Nevertheless, none of them managed to successfully break the door.

Blake and his team watched the entire spectacle from the sidelines never thinking about stepping in.

"Sigh... I'm exasperated just looking at these people. How were they able to reach the level they are now with that little intelligence of theirs? Do they not realise that door is made of Mythril and

further enhanced with numerous items to become as sturdy as possible or they just don't care at all?" Wyot commented, sighing at the stupidity of the adventurers.

"Leave them be, it is normal for them to be overconfident of their strength given their talent. I can understand why they are so impatient to get in even without a key. All of this will be over if we just capture the first prince, I share the same sentiment as them"

Blake unexpectedly sided with the raucous adventurers who were foolishly trying to break the door. This caused his teammates to give him side eyes. Especially Frida who looked at him with her eyes half closed.

"Hnn" She made a nasal sound and muttered, "You want to impress Cynthia too huh"...

"What?!" Hearing her words, Blake looked confused for a second before he realised that he had been misunderstood.

"No, no, that's not what I was trying to say. I just want this whole thing to be over. That is why..."

"Hmph" Frida snorted and moved her head away not wanting to listen to his excuse. What's more, his best friend Wyot was also shaking his head from the sidelines as if disappointed in him.

BOOOM... at this moment, while the adventurers were waiting in front of the huge gates of the emergency shelter, the entire underground hall trembled intensely. Debris fell from the ceiling and a powerful pressure enough to suffocate them, descended onto the place.

Outside, in the skies above the castle, the fight between the princess and the duke of the city was also reaching its final stages. By now, both parties were extremely familiar with each other strengths and how to counter each other.

As evident by the city below that now lay in ruins. The entire eastern district of the city was filled with large craters and destroyed debris of the buildings. What's more, a wall of fire covered the entire area adding to the dreadfulness of the battle.

This wall of fire that had enveloped the eastern district of the city wasn't created by Cynthia nor was it possible for the duke. Instead, it was put up by Annette to restrict the common people of the city from rushing into the battlefield and getting caught in their battle.

"Seems like you have gained some useful subordinates Your Highness" Duke Montford commented looking down at the woman with glasses while riding a swirl of wind.

While in the state of [Zephyrus Armour], his mastery as well as his connection with the attribute of wind becomes so strong that he can manipulate wind currents as easily as breathing.

As could be seen from the lack of wind in the entire city. Whether it be fluttering of clothes, or clouds of dust that should have been present in the city after a big battle like this, everything was absent in the city as all the currents were currently being encased in the armour around Duke Montford.

Not only that he can also suck out all the air for his opponent to breathe. As could be seen from Cynthia's figure who was using her own wind magic to breathe.

"Indeed, she is quite thoughtful. However, you are wrong about one thing. She is not my subordinate. Right now, she is only helping me" Cynthia answered, smiling to herself.

"I see, no wonder she created that wall. If she can do something like this, she should be quite strong in battle. Why aren't you using her aid? Wouldn't this battle have ended faster if the both of you joined forces?"

The duke questioned. Even though the both of them were currently enemies, they were conversing with each other like they were acquaintances.

"What kind of leader would I be if I can't even win a difficult battle for my people? With this fight, I want everyone to see that their new queen isn't just some weak royalty but someone who can actually protect and lead them towards a bright future"...

"Hoh, is her highness implying that she is confident that she can beat me?"...

"You are not wrong" Cynthia smiled, the markings that covered the sides of her cheeks like whiskers and her lion like eyes, made her seem cheeky and arrogant.

"Haha, this is a problem, I can't have you looking down on me" Duke Mantford's attack became even more ferocious; however, it wasn't anything that Cynthia couldn't easily handle.

"Your attacks hold no killing intent. Your Grace, are you perhaps fighting me with no intention to kill me?".

The latter did not say anything and continued to mount his attack. Although his attacks had power and ferocity, they weren't packed with murderous intent. The latter was simply trying to delay her.

Why would he do something like this? Could it be that he realises that he cannot win and is buying time? If so, for whom and what for?

Cynthia narrowed her eyes, no matter what reason the duke was buying time for, she could not let the battle drag on for any longer. As a member of the dungeon Lapalce, she now shares the exclusive information sharing network called the Message with all the other members of the dungeon.

Which is why, she was aware that her forces had all arrived at the destination. In that case, she must hurry up and defeat the Duke. And so to make it fair and to leave no disappointment behind, she decided to reveal the information.

"Oh, by the way your grace, How is Lucas Blackwood that successor of yours doing?" Cynthia questioned in a mocking tone.

SHIING... Duke Montford came attacking with a big swing of his tempest sword that he materialised.

"What are you trying to imply at this moment, Your Highness? He went to search for you did he not? Since you have the Air Engine I gave him, you met him on the way obviously Did he lend the Air Engine to you?"...

"Your grace knows how to jest. Even if I do know him, it is merely as an acquaintance. There is no way, he will let me take his Air Engine, to lay siege on his very city. I know the duke is smart enough to know this as well"...

Duke Montford suddenly became silent. It was true that he had his doubts about why Lucas would give the Air engine to Cynthia who wanted to bring his own city down. However, as he was pressed for time, he put the matter at the back of his mind.

Now that he thought about it, the Lucas he knew would never do something like that. So how did Her Highness get the Air Engine from him? Unless...

"What did you do with him?" He asked, his aura which had been calm like a lake all this time fluctuated for a moment.

Chapter 816- End Of Duke Montford (2)

"Nothing much, since he was just another annoying obstacle blocking my way, I simply took care of him"...

"I-Is.. he alive?"...

"Dead"...

"That... can't be" Duke Montford, took a couple of steps back. The winds around his feet became unstable causing him to almost fall down.

"There is no way he can die. That child is strong, he is as talented as I am; no, even more. There is no way his fate is to fall down here. You are lying, how can he die from the likes of you? Besides, I also sent all of my most powerful men with him, that's right Benny Beckerman is also with him. There is no way, he can be defeated"

Duke Montford stated, though his statement sounded more like yell and a self satisfying proclamation rather than anything else.

"It is up to your grace to believe me" In response, Cynthia simply shrugged her shoulders and replied "However, if you are as witty as they say, you will be able to realise that I am more than capable of handling the like of Benny Beckerman. He was never a challenge for my forces to begin with. I not only defeated him, but I also took your grace's Air engine and am now using it to raid your city".

She explained with a cheeky smile "Oh! By the way, if you want to collect their corpses, you can find them in the Northern Outlaw Forest".

"You Dare!!"

killing intent flooded his body and Duke Montford was finally serious. The existence of Lucas Blackwood was like his reverse scale, anybody who touched it, would incur his wrath.

Although it has been kept secret from the whole world, a few individuals in the kingdom were still aware of the scandalous event regarding the wife of Marquess Blackwood and Duke Montford.

Duke Montford had no child of his own, his wife was unable to sire him any offspring. However, it didn't mean that he didn't have any child, Lucas Blackwood or as it should be stated, Lucas Montford was the child that was born between Duke Montford and Marquess' Blackwood's wife.

An event that couldn't be spoken out loud. It was also because of this reason that Duke Montford favoured Lucas so much to the point where he even declared him as his successor.

Lucas dying meant that his one and only son dying. How could Duke Montford not be mad after hearing this? His rage caused him to completely forget that he was trying to buy time for prince Alstin who was probably trying to activate the teleportation formation installed in the emergency shelter at this moment.

In the state of rage, Duke Montford was a force to be reckoned with. His attacks carrying the destructive force of the wind and the highly trained skills of a warrior, was extremely berserk and powerful. It took all Cynthia had just to defend.

"[Illusory Beast Steps]"

Her figure divided into multiple afterimages as she quickly dodged the attacks and opened some distance from the Duke. Now that the latter was coming at her with the intent to kill, the playing board had been evened out, she could also go forth and use her killing move without any regrets.

"Leo, how long can we maintain our partial beast state if we use that skill?" Cynthia asked in her head.

"At my current strength, it won't be a problem to maintain that state for a couple of hours. However, if you use that skill, you have to make sure that it count or else, if even after the skill ends and the enemy is still standing, you will fall at a disadvantage" The sacred beast's soul living in her soul ring, replied.

"In that case, let's go"...

"Yeah"...

"[[Ancient Beast Manifestation]]"

Two voices interlaced together and a spectacular visual marvel occurred. The sky across the entire city and even across the entire expanse of land turned grey. Dark clouds loomed over out of nowhere and a big swirl appeared at the centre.

Then in a fashion as if the very fabric of space was being twisted and torn, an image appeared from the swirl, dominating the skyline with an overwhelming presence. The visage of a lion, larger than the city it overlooked, materialized in shades of grey and silver.

Its eyes, primal and fierce, glowed with an intensity that sent shivers down the spines of any onlookers. The environmental upheaval was immediate. The mana in the surroundings rebelled, swirling in chaotic patterns, and an oppressive pressure descended upon the land.

It was as if the very essence of something ancient and formidable had been awakened, causing the ground to shudder in trepidation. Every soul present in the city, from the bravest to the most timid, was swept by a wave of terror causing them to freeze in place, unable to find the courage to move.

It wasn't just a physical restraint; it was as if the very essence of their being recoiled in the face of a power that transcended mortal understanding. The streets, once filled with commotion, fell into an eerie silence as if the city itself held its breath in deference to the ancient beast's manifestation.

Even the elite warriors from Cytnhia' side, accustomed to facing all manner of challenges, felt a chill crawl down their spines. The intimidation they felt, wasn't just merely fear; it was a primal recognition of their own insignificance in the presence of a power that could reshape the very foundations of their understanding.

No fingers dared to twitch, no voice dared to speak. The city stood as a collective witness to the awe-inspiring spectacle that unfolded before them. And then, in an almighty fashion, the colossal lion in the sky opened its mighty maw, revealing a set of teeth that seemed capable of rending anything and issued an otherworldly roar that thundered across the city.

ROOARRR... the roar transcending the physical realm, carried with it not just sound, but concussive force that rippled through the air. It carried a pressure that attacked ones soul, instilling an instinctive fear and causing your consciousness to shut down.

The people of the city, who were exposed to this roar, experienced a sudden overwhelming surge of pressure. As if an invisible hand had pressed upon their very souls, their bodies unable to withstand the sheer force, succumbed to a momentary lapse of consciousness.

Even Blake, Wyot and the others, who were inside the secret underground chamber, felt their consciousness waver for a brief second and their surroundings became a blurry dreamscape.

The only ones still remaining standing and unaffected were perhaps Annette, Emma, Theodore, Maybell and the group of demihumans. Other than them, every single person in the city passed out, becoming a sea of collapsed bodies.

The roar had that much of an impact. What's more, the aftermath of the city was just an unintended consequence, the target of the roar was not even them, yet they fainted just by getting exposed to a part of it.

From this, one could imagine how powerful the roar was. The actual target of the roar, Duke Montford was in a state multiple times worse than the rest of the people of the city. Not only did he fall down on the ground, the Zephyrus Armour disappeared from his body, and he was also bleeding from his seven orifices.

However, to mention those were comparatively just minor injuries. One cannot fathom the degree of damage he suffered simply by looking at his outward body. The roar attack from the sacred beast was purely a non physical attack as such, it was the mind and interior of his body that suffered all of the damage.

His Eyes became dim losing all sight permanently, his mana lines had been disintegrated causing him to be unable to muster any mana and he was quickly losing all of the stats he worked hard all of his life for.

Like a balloon quickly deflating, Duke Montford was also quickly losing all of his strength.

Whoosh... Cynthia slowly flew over and stood in front of the duke who couldn't see anymore. With the damage he suffered, forget fighting, it would be a momentous task to even get up.

Cough... as if sensing her presence, Duke Montford tried to say something. However, all that came from his mouth was blood and foam.

"You have lost Duke Montford. On account that you have been loyal and faithful to the kingdom all this time, I have decided to end your life swiftly. Do you have any last wish before you die?"

Cynthia had given up convincing the duke to join his side, she knew that the man would never go back on his won words no matter what she said at this point. As such, it was better to take out a potential risk rather than letting him live and hamper her plans.

"Lo...n..." Duke Montford opened his mouth to speak something. However, much of it became garbled due to the blood that accumulated in his mouth every time he opened it.

"Lo..ng... Li..ve... the..Ki..ng..dom".

With those final words, even the slight twitching of Duke Montford's body stopped.

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Back inside the underground chamber, in front of the huge mythril doors. Adventurers who had fallen unconscious from that roar, slowly regained consciousness and picked themselves up.

"Unngghh... dammit what happened?" they rubbed their still slightly dizzy head and groaned.

"My head feels heavy, what is going on?"...

"The heck I know, the last thing I remember is hitting those doors and then I suddenly fainted. Did somebody do anything?"

The adventurers questioned one another, confused by the recent event.

Chapter 817- Shameless Till the End—Alstin

On one corner of the chamber, Blake and the others who had regained their consciousness a while earlier than the others, looked at the ensuing confusion. They themselves were perplexed by the sudden turn of events and would have surely behaved just like the other adventurers if not for the fact that they saw the two children who were among the peculiar group of people who followed Her Highness acting as if nothing happened.

Although they did not know the heart of the matter, they could tell that it was related to Her Highness and those people.

After a while, as the confusion died down, Cynthia who was followed by Annette who walked two steps behind her, entered the place.

"Your Highness"

Everyone bowed their heads. These unruly adventurers who hardly learned any manners were as docile as a lamb in front of her.

Cynthia nodded her head to put them at ease before moving her eyes towards the huge ash grey doors in front of them blocking their way in.

"Your Highness, the first prince is beyond this door. Unfortunately, these doors are just too damn sturdy and can't be forced open without a key"

One of the adventurers wanting to impress the two ladies, beat the others to the punch and reported the exact same thing he learned from Theodore.

"I know, I brought the key with me"

Cynthia's tone was unimpressive as she walked past and stood before the door. She took out a weird cylindrical object from her space ring and showed it to the two children standing before the doors "I got the key".

Theodore nodded and pointed at the centre of the door where a small depression that matched the key, could be spotted.

"The key not only unlocks the door, but all the magical traps and arrays that have been set up inside the emergency shelter in case the door was broken through" He explained. As one would expect of a fortress like city, even their emergency shelter was impeccable.

Cynthia was impressed when she heard that. The adventurers, on the other hand, were sweating bullets. Just a little while ago, they were attacking the door with all their strengths and skill, trying to force it open.

However, it was only now that they knew that doing so, would only have made things even more complicated. There were so many more mechanisms installed inside that just listening to it, made their headache.

Cynthia inserted the key and the mechanism inside the doors immediately started whirring and coming to life. With the key as the centre, mana passed through the entire door and even through the ceiling and floor.

The patterns looked very much like the mana lines that form within one's body. A metal that conducted mana so well, everyone watching had no doubt that the metal was none other than Mythril.

What's more, unlike what they thought, it was not just the doors that were made of Mythril, but the entire emergency shelter. A place as big as the emergency shelter built entirely with mythril.

Just the thought was enough to make every adventurer here gawk in awe. To build this entire place with a metal as precious as Mythril, how rich was the Duke? No, this amount of Mythril was something that no amount of money could buy. One had to get their hands on a large deposit of Mythril to build something like this.

"Even the Main palace doesn't have this much Mythril. Duke Montford, he was truly something" Cynthia marvelled.

After the door was opened and all the mechanisms deactivated, the inside of the emergency shelter finally came into view. This subterranean refuge was surprisingly spacious with high ceilings and well-lit corridors branching out in an organized manner.

As it was designed to accommodate the entire population of the city, and its scale reflected this purpose. The architecture combined functionality with simplicity, creating a layout that allowed for efficient use of space.

If one looked around, one would be able to see that Every corner of the shelter was stocked with provisions, ensuring that the basic needs of the inhabitants could be met. There were rooms filled with neatly arranged beds, providing a place for everyone to rest.

The dining area featured long tables and benches, with shelves stacked full of non perishable food items. Adjacent to this, there was a large kitchen area equipped with tools for cooking, emphasizing self-sufficiency.

To address the essential aspects of daily life, the shelter included well-maintained toilets and bathing facilities. There were systems in place to manage waste and provide clean water for consumption and personal use.

That was not all, Understanding the potential duration of stay of the refugees, the emergency shelter was designed with self-sustainability in mind. In case the entire city's population had to take shelter here for months or even a year, there were empty spaces with soil, designated for gardening, allowing residents to plant and cultivate vegetables.

As Cynthia and her group walked further in through the emergency shelter, they were able to see that The shelter wasn't just built as a place to stay; it was a place to live. As such, it was equipped with tools and supplies that extended beyond mere survival.

There were areas designated for communal activities, workshops, and even storage for emergency medical supplies. No matter who it was, if they saw this emergency shelter that the duke built they would no doubt be left in awe of it.

The place stood as a testament to the forethought and planning that went into ensuring the survival and well-being of the city's inhabitants in times of crisis. It was also a sign of how much the duke cared about his people.

"Even the emergency shelter, built under the royal palace, is no match for the one the duke built" Cynthia spoke her honest thoughts. Honestly, she was quite hesitant to finish off the man given how useful he was.

"I'm sensing the presence of multiple people further down the hall. Your Highness, our target the first prince must be there" Leading the team, Blake stated walking forward.

Cynthia nodded her head and then looked towards Annette who was currently arching her brows. Seeing her make that expression, she couldn't help but question "What's wrong?".

The Valkyrie continued to maintain her silence before replying with a question of her own. Though her question was not directed towards Cynthia but instead at Theodore and Maybell who were carefreely walking beside her.

"Why is that I am sensing such strange spatial fluctuation?"...

"Hm? Ah, it must be because of that spatial formation that was laid out at the end of the shelter" Theodoroe replied putting his hands beside his head.

"A spatial formation was installed here? How could we have missed that?"...

"Don't worry, it's just a faulty spatial formation with an ancient runic system. There is a very low possibility that it will work and even if it does, it is going to need a large amount of energy and isn't going to start anytime soon".

Hearing Theodore's reply, Annette relaxed a little. As the person who was made the leader of the entire mission, it was on her to make sure that everything went according to plan and the wishes of her master.

As such, she wasn't going to let any mistake slide and accomplish her mission seamlessly. Walking a few steps in front of them, Cynthia listened to their conversation.

'Leo is it really like that?' she questioned the guardian spirit residing in her space ring.

'Yeah, it's as the little boy says. The spatial fluctuation is very turbulent and unstable. It is unlikely that it will start. Although I am unsure about the ancient runic system that the little boy talked about. It makes me reversely curious as to who this boy is and how is able to understand the ancient runic system that even I an ancient beast don't'.

Leo the guardian spirit replied. The emergency shelter built by the duke was large but after walking for a while, they could finally see the figure of the prince and his entourage in their line of vision.

At this moment, the prince was frantically ordering and yelling at his people to hurry up and fix the teleportation formation. The sight of them running around and placing mana crystals to charge the formation could be seen even from a distance.

"Dammit, what is taking you guys so long? Hurry up and get the formation ready you numbskulls" Alstin shouted.

"If Castledor falls, I must survive at all costs. I am from the royal lineage, only I can eligible to rule this kingdom, only I can continue it on. I must not fall"...

"Oh? Is that so brother? Do you think you are the only descendant of father or is it that you think only you are worthy of the throne?"

Not expecting to hear a reply, Alstin was quickly taken aback by the voice of the speaker.

"It can't be... you are already here?!! But the duke and the others should have been outside. Not this can't be" Turning around, he was surprised to find that it was none other than Cynthia and her followers.

"Duke Montford died by my hands as for the others, they too have been taken care of by my force. It's all over for you brother; no Alstin. Give it up"

Cynthia spoke looking at her brother who has changed so much in the short amount of time she hadn't seen him. Hair line thinning, dark circles under the eyes, sunken cheeks... he looked the very definition of miserable.

Chapter 818- Shameless Till The End—Alstin (2)

Looking at him, no one would say that he was the first prince of the kingdom.

"No, no... you are lying. There is no way I can lose. I am the only worthy king of this kingdom, I am the only one destined to rule this land" Alstin rambled, slowly backing down.

Finally, when he was in the vicinity of his subordinates, his body stopped shaking and his expression changed from that of a helpless pitiable person to a murderous ugly killer.

"All of you, she is right there. Quickly kill her, make sure you cut her into pieces" Poiting at Cynthia, he ordered.

Looking at that sight of her brother, Cynthia could only sigh. There was no pity in those eyes of hers, instead after this it became even more resolved and firm. Extending her hand, five magical attributes materialised in the centre of her palm.

Seeing Cynthia prepare for an attack, Alstin grew even more panicked. He hurriedly shouted out orders; however, no matter how many times he shouted, nobody from his side moved nor did they unsheathe their weapons to prepare for an attack.

Confused by their unexpected disobedience, he turned his head to question them.

"What are you doing? I said attack her, kill her for me".

Nonetheless, the soldiers did not move. It was not only Alstin who was surprised by their disobedience, the adventurers on Cynthia's side were the same. They were expecting a fierce fight between both their sides to break out.

However, from the look of things, the situation seemed different. While the adventurers from Cynthia's side looked at the situation with perplexion, things took an even more confusing turn.

Seeing that that his own forces weren't obeying his command and his sister almost finishing her attack, Alstin turned around to flee.

"HIEEEK!!" Giving a yell that was very much unlike a royalty, he tucked tail and fled. However, just as he took a few steps, a sharp ringing noise like that of something piercing through the air sounded beside his ear and a sword light could be seen passing through his left ankle.

The next moment, before he knew it, he lost his balance and fell forward.

"Ah... Ahhhhh!!" What came next was stinging pain and blood that gushed out without stopping.

Alstin lurched in pain, screaming and crawling as he looked at his assailant who still had his sword out. The one who cut off his leg, the one to attack him was none other than his own guards.

"Why?!!" He questioned, blood trickling down his mouth.

The guard did not answer him and simply retracted his weapon back. Thereafter, in front of the stunned eyes of everyone, the guard's figure started distorting and deforming into a completely different appearance.

It was not only that guard, all the other guards around him, did the same. Soon, they changed into an appearance that could only be described as such...

"Demi Humans?" While Alstin looked in astonishment at his guards who suddenly transformed into demi humans, the adventurers who also witnessed the change, reacted differently.

"It's them" Blake muttered, eyes opened wide in surprise.

"What kind of skill was that?? To be able to do something like this..." Wyot and the others were speechless too.

That's right, the demi humans who appeared were none other than Alric, Drow, Ariel and the others who they hadn't seen for a while.

"Who are you? Where are my guards? What did you do to them?" Fallen on the ground, while still lurching in pain, Alstin questioned.

"There is no meaning in explaining anything to a dead person. However, since you asked, let me answer you as a form of honouring a last request from the dead".

The one to answer him was not the demi humans, but their master Theodore.

"These demi humans that you see around you, are precisely your guards. What? They don't look anything alike? Hehe, that's because the appearance you saw earlier was just a deception caused by their Formshift skill"

"Their real appearance is the one you currently see. Ah, and one more thing. They are my subordinates which is why, they aren't listening to your commands. It is also on my orders that they

attacked you. Do you understand now?" Theodore explained each part slowly as if explaining to a baby.

"No... this can't be... you are... I can't..." It was understandable that Alstin had difficulty believing it after all if one understood those words, it meant that he had been playing into his enemy's palm all this time.

This entire time his sister has been monitoring him and knew all about his moves. It was a complete checkmate... the guard he trusted so much and brought with him inside the emergency shelter, was the informant from the enemy's side this whole time.

"Kugh..." Alstin started crawling away, leaving a trail of blood behind. Even though there was no place out of here, he still tried to run in a situation like this.

SHIING... Alric flashed his claws, intending to stop the person from moving anymore when Maybell his master stopped him.

"This is not our job". The one to finish Alric shouldn't be them but instead...

"Stop right there Alric. Don't make any more fool of yourself than you already have" Cynthia spoke slowly condensing the magic in her hand.

Given the condition of the other party and the disparity between their levels, the magic she conjured would not doubt claim the life of her opponent. However, even then there was no trace of mercy or any familial affection in her eyes. Only pure cold light of conviction.

"[Beast Inheritance- Quintessence Elemental Unity]" Cynthia muttered as she slowly stepped forward.

Hearing the sounds of footsteps behind him, Alstin grew extremely anxious. His eyes became watery and he even responded to begging.

"Cynthia you are my little sister... you can't do this. I am your big brother, I am your family. You can't kill me... please don't kill me".

Shameless... seeing him beg at this point, after all the hardship he made her suffer, Cynthia could only scoff in derision. When he was sending assassins after her, when he was making plans to kill her and take claim of all of her life's efforts and possessions, did he think for a moment that she was his little sister?

That she was his family? How can he use her as a political tool to proceed his own schemes? The person in front of him did all that he could in his power to make her life miserable. This person was no brother of hers.

"Goodbye Alstin" Without extending things any further, Cynthia extended her hand and willed her magic forward.

The [Quintessence Elemental Unity] that carried the power of five basic elements, rushed forward and crashed onto Alstin. Immediately, his body flashed with multiple lights and disappeared into nothing in front of the startled eyes of everyone.

Cynthia stood there in a moment of silence before turning her eyes away.

"Let's go".

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Around the same time, Dungeon Laplace— Forest Spring Spirit Floor. Simon was standing in front of a large tree with snow white leaves that stretched from the branches and dropped down all the way to the ground.

The tree resembled a willow tree very much no matter how you looked at it. However, make no mistake, this tree was no ordinary willow tree but instead the infant spirit tree. Under the care and nourishment of Cecilia, the infant Spirit Tree had grown into a juvenile tree surprisingly fast.

Not only had it grown many times bigger, standing at over fifty meters tall, but it was also starting to show some of its extraordinary abilities.

Although being a demon Simon was unable to feel the presence of pure spirits, he could still feel the disturbance in mana caused by their presence. That's right, the spirit tree standing true to its name, was starting to attract spirits to it.

However, unlike the Forest Spring Spirits or Annette who was a superior spirit, the spirits attracted around the spirit tree were pure spirits. That is to say, they do not possess any intelligence and are too young to assume any form.

The spirit tree along with the Forest Spring Village and many others was no doubt a marvellous spectacle on this floor. That said, Simon was here for a different reason.

"Hmm... although I placed it just like I was told by Cecilia, I don't think there was any great changes" he muttered to himself as he stared ahead.

Placed at the base of the tree where its roots dug into the ground, was a golden oval object the size of a football releasing bright golden energy. The object was marked with complex ancient markings and runes and was none other than an egg.

However, it was no simple egg as Simon could feel the disturbance in mana the greatest there. Well, even without needing the spirits to tell him personally, he knew that the egg was special since it came out of the [????????] option of his.

Around a month, just after Annette and the others left to carry out their mission of helping Cynthia, Laplace produced another emblem. With the addition of that one, Simon had four emblems sitting on his inventory.

As such, he decided to use the mysterious abyss option of his menu in hopes of pulling another one of the twelve heroes to his side. Needless to say, his hopes weren't answered as the thing that came out was a bizarre egg.

Standing true to its mysterious nature, the option gave him another oddball this time. The last time too he got Elemental Constructs which were now sitting on different floors of his dungeon, affecting the environment of that floor.

Chapter 819- Gish-Bolg, Drovos

Since the strength of the Elemental Constructs depended on the environment they were in, it was still hard to understand how powerful they were. However, Simon could already guess how

powerful the being inside the egg would be once it hatched as the dungeon had already assigned it a role.

The bizarre golden egg that was currently being incubated under the spirit tree was given the highest authority after the dungeon master.

That's right, the Sixth Guardian of Dungeon Laplace was finally here. What's more, it was only after a few seconds that the egg came out of the abyss that the dungeon assigned it the role.

To be assigned the role of Guardian which only special individuals like Cecilia, Wisp, Theodore and Maybell were deemed worthy to stand on, from this one could imagine how powerful the being inside the egg was.

Although Simon had no idea who or what kind of being was inside the egg, he at least knew that they weren't hostile to him or his dungeon or else the dungeon wouldn't have assigned them as a Guardian if that was the case.

"I guess there is no point in worrying about it. They will hatch when they hatch" As a royal among Forest Spring Spirits and gifted with heaven defying powers, it was Cecilia's idea to keep the egg near the Spirit tree.

When asked why, this was the answer he received—"I do not have a clear answer but I can feel that there is a strong connection between it and the spirit tree".

Since that was the case, Simon saw no harm in keeping the egg here. In any case, Cecilia and the forest spring spirits were here to take care of it.

Simon turned around, just as he was about to teleport away to the main floor to continue his work and training, Jarred who now led a team of [Helpers] of his own, appeared before him.

"My lord" the boy who grew into a full fledged young man, spoke while bowing his head.

Now that the Fey, Maya and more and more Forest Spring Spirits have taken up the role of managing the dungeon, Simon gave the task of compiling the reports and various observations sent by Revenant crows placed around that area for surveillance to Jarred and his team.

"Raise your head"...

Jarred lifted his head and began his report "My lord, the Queen of Harpies has sent a messenger carrying intel for you. The messenger is waiting south of the Ancient Treants Territory".

"Oh!" Simon arched his brows. The Queen of Harpies, Melinda suffered a crushing defeat under his hand when she was in a weakened state and was placed under a soul contract by him.

As long as the other party was under the effect of his soul contract, they would never be able to betray him. In other words, she was one of his subordinates that wasn't made official.

Since the power of the seven kings could potentially harm his dungeon and he wasn't powerful enough to face them head on at that time, he left her and her entire clan there to monitor the other seven kings.

For her to send words, it must mean that the seven kings were on the move.

"It's about time" Simon muttered to himself. He had an idea which of the seven kings it was.

"Alright, I'll open a [Phased Floor] in that area. I'll go there myself... send words to Bea, tell her to accompany me. Also, inform everyone to stay alert while I am gone"

Simon left his instruction before teleporting to the training floor. Not long afterwards, Bea along with a few Ogoraths and Diluvian High Orcs appeared in front of him.

"Master we are ready" Bea spoke carrying her heirloom, which was a twin earrings that looked like snakes and was in the shape of a crescent moon dangling from her ears.

The Valkyries were in the strongest state with their heirlooms on. As such it could be said that Bea was completely geared up for fighting even the most difficult of battles.

Simon looked at her and the small platoon that she brought and nodded his head. Other than the ten Ogoraths (a few more that were summoned from the [Ga??????] option) she also brought the RimeBlood Tribes, a new evolution of Diluvian High Orcs with her.

Standing well and above seven meters, with a physique that brimmed with muscle and power, they looked quite menacing. Unlike your typical Diluvian High orcs, not only were they a head taller,

they seemed to be even more beefier and durable with a blood coloured marking engraved in each of their bodies.

Since they have reached a new evolution and needed experience and more battles to grow, they were brought here by Bea to level up.

Apart from the Rimeblood Tribe, there were also Icevein Savages, GreatTusk Brutes and other new evolutions for the Diluvian High Orcs.

Standing true to his words, Prime really did find a way to evolve the Diluvian Hig Orcs whose growth had come to a standstill after they were taken into the dungeon.

Twenty one.. Simon counted the numbers of the RimeBlood Tribes. Since it hadn't been too long that they started evolving, not many orcs had become Rimeblood tribes or the other evolutionary race to say for that matter.

As such Bea only brought the tribe that had the most numbers. Other than all of this, the main reason that she brought them here, was on orders of Simon who wanted to see the strength of the newly evolved Orcs.

"Although their levels are just at the late level 400, the purity of their bloodline is strong enough for them to break through the level 600 threshold without much difficulty. Their growth has been improved significantly I see"

Using [Appraisal] on the RimeBlood Tribe gave Simon an overall idea of their strength and growth potential.

"Very well, I will open a [Phased Floor] here, get ready" Saying that, he opened the [Main Menu] and used the newest feature of his dungeon.

Soon a sphere of sorts big enough to cover dozens of meters of land, formed around them and before one could even understand what was happening, the view of the training floor disappeared, replaced by nothing but blank whiteness.

The blankness surrounding them did not last long and soon an unfamiliar environment appeared before them. Bea looked around and saw an unfamiliar ceiling. From the looks of things, they were inside some cavern with glowing phosphorescence crystals illuminating the place.

The place was no doubt not inside the dungeon; however, how could that be, they were inside the dungeon just a moment ago. What's more, the ground that she was standing on, was still the soil from the dungeon. Which is to say, she hadn't taken any step from her initial place.

"So this is the [Phased Floor]"

Bea muttered under her breath. Being one of the [Administrators] of the dungeon, she was of course aware of the newest feature of the dungeon.

[Phased Floor], an enigmatic and newest addition to the dungeon. This feature transforms an external area that is separate from the dungeon, into a temporary extension of the dungeon.

Upon activation, the two areas switch places or perhaps become one, linking the floor with the outside area. Now, the training floor was temporarily connected with the cavern that they were in currently thus creating a passage to lead in and out of the dungeon.

Of course, there were several limitations and preconditions before one could use such a feature. However, once all conditions have been met, the feature really becomes quite handy.

With Simon leading, the group stepped out of the area and the figures of beings with wings for hands and talons for legs, came into view.

Harpies... no matter who looked at them, they would recognise them as such immediately. There were a couple of them in front of the cavern, all of whom were the personal subordinates of Melinda.

As Simon approached them, they landed on the ground and bowed their heads. The Hierarchy was clear, now that their queen had become subservient to this person, they who were lower in position than their queen must also bow their head and behave respectfully towards him.

"We have been awaiting your presence, Supreme Lord" the harpies spoke in unison. Supreme Lord?!! Simon arched his brows before shaking the thought off his head.

He nodded, acknowledging their fealty before asking "Let me hear the report Melinda sent you guys to give me"...

"Yes" the harpy who seemed to be the most senior in command, nodded and gave her report "Her Majesty sent us to tell you that the king of the Black Ogres, Gil-Garna has formed an alliance with the king of the barren wild lands, Ivory Terraquake Rhino—Yverza to attack the Supreme Lord's dungeon"

"Right now, the opposition's forces which contain the Black Ogres and Terraquake Rhinos, number over thirty thousand. However, there is a growing concern about the Dungeon of the East among the Seven Kings. Although the possibility is low, the others might join the fray given their opportunistic nature. Our Queen was also offered to join the alliance and has accepted his offer under your orders".

So that was the case, Simon mulled over the information he just received. As he had thought, it was the king of the Black Ogres who was trying to act against him. After making the Queen of the Harpies his subordinate, he allowed their race to stay in their territory and govern themselves because he wanted to know the inside information on the Seven kings.

Chapter 820- Gish-Bolg, Drovos (2)

Simon had the revenant Crows Mk V continuously surveilling the area of the seven kings. However, they could only provide him with surface level information. Intel such as alliance and schemes that they were planning only someone who was one of them, could provide him.

That's right, Melinda was now one of the spies from his side, supplying him with intel and activities on the seven kings.

That being said, the Terraquake Rhinos... it was not like Simon did not have any idea what kind of race they were. One of the ruler clans of the Ghastly Winding Forest, the Terraquake Rhinos occupied the wild lands of the western region of the forest.

Not only were they extremely dangerous and powerful, being able to create their own dominance and name across the forest, the Terraquake Rhinos also had a unique physique that made their outer body stronger than even Blackgold.

What's more, among them, their king the Ivory Terraquake Rhino was said to even possess a physique that was equivalent to Mythril in sturdiness. Coupled with their high level and numerous sets of rare and superior skill they are a force to be reckoned with.

If Melinda was a pure magic fighter, using her evil eyes to fight, then Yverza the Ivory Terraquake Rhino was a purely physical fighter. Simon knew that in his mission to complete the mission given to him by Aldebaran, Yverza would prove to be one of the most difficult opponents.

This was also the reason why he was not trying to involve himself with the Terraquake Rhinos at this point in time or at least until he grew strong. However, with the other party joining hands with the king of the black ogres, it was no longer possible.

It was a problematic matter that two of the seven kings joined hands. It was a matter that he couldn't ignore and must deal with as soon as possible. With the forces of the two kings, they could do some serious damage to his dungeon which had only just recovered from the mess made by the criminal organisation not too long ago.

What's more, there was still a possibility that the other seven kings might join the fray. This was a scenario that he must stop from happening at all costs.

A multitude of thoughts ran through Simon's head. Of course, since he had the skill [High Speed Thought Processing] skill, barely any time had passed on the outside.

"Very well, take me to your queen. I need to discuss with her how to move forward from this point on".

The harpy subordinates did as they were ordered. After tasting the benefits that Simon provided them from his dungeon, the attitude of these harpies turned a total 180° towards him.

Now they no longer viewed him as a foreign usurper and harboured a friendlier feelings towards him.

One of the harpies gave a sonorous cry and a few moments later, a large shadow dropped down from the sky.

Sky Breakin Eagle, a monster above level 400. When Simon looked at the being, he immediately recognised it.

The Sky Breaking Eagle landed on top of the mountain and spread its wings in a manner that made it seem like a ramp for people to climb on its back. With the Senior commanding harpy leading them, Simon and the others climbed on top of the huge Sky Breaking Eagle.

As the territory of the Harpies consisted of mainly tall spiky rock hills that even pierced through the clouds, the main mode of travel here was through the sky. If one travels from the ground, they would become a target for the numerous aerial monsters that reside in this area.

As harpies were known as the tyrant of the skies, living on tall rock hills was not a problem for them. However, for those who did not have wings or flight ability, travelling through the territory of the harpies was nothing short of suicidal for them.

Although Simon could fly up to a pretty high altitude and Bea had spatial and mana wings ability, the Rimeblood Tribes they brought with them were unable to fly. As such, they had to take the Sky Breaking Eagle.

"It's quite fast" Enjoying his company while sticking close to him, Bea muttered.

Simon nodded in reply, indeed the Sky Breaking Eagle was quite fast. Should he say as expected of a level 400+ monster? Although he hadn't inspected the latter with [Appraisal] he suspected that the monster would definitely have [Ultra High Speed flight] if he did.

In any case, it felt good to ride on such a high speed mount. He remembered the last time he came here, he had to sneak in and use the aid of the Valkyries just to reach the queen of the Harpies.

This time, he boldly and openly travelled in their territory without worrying about anyone or anything obstructing him. From this altitude, Simon could see a good portion of the territory of the harpies.

His eyes were inadvertently drawn towards an area where one could see many mechanical humanoids mining and excavating ores from the numerous rock mountains here. This was a part of the agreement in regards to allowing the harpies to govern themselves so that he would openly mine the resources of their territory.

As the territory of the harpies was sitting on top of a large Mythrill deposit, the conditions were in his complete favour.

Simon grinned seeing that the mining of Mythrill was going excellently. Soon, he would have a large amount of mythrill to set up a better manufacturing facility to produce higher marks of Andornedas, Revenant Crows and other war machines.

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With the speed of the Sky Breaking Eagle, it didn't take long for them to reach the biggest and the most tallest rock mountain around this part of the land which was also the personal abode of the queen of the harpies, Melinda.

At this moment, she was entertaining a couple of guests on the second peak of her mountain. Some had enormous bodies and endogenous armour while some had toned condensed bodies that was no different than a human.

From his distance, Simon could tell that the guests were none other than from the Terraquake Rhino race and Black Ogres.

"Lord Melinda please think over the proposition that Lord Gil-Garna sent you. The other kings would soon also join the alliance. At that time, even if you wanted a share of the benefits, the portion you would get would be the leftover after being distributed amongst the other kings"

A man with a scar on his right eye and an indigo horn on his forehead indicating his status, spoke. He wore a sturdy looking armour and carried a huge bastard sword around with him on his back.

Next to him, was a hulking being wearing endogenous armour that completely covered their body and gave them an appearance of an impregnable fortress.

Other than them there were also numerous members from the Black Ogre tribe and Terraquake Rhinos, standing as guards behind them. The two of them were the direct subordinates of the two of the seven kings and were here on orders of their kings to meet with the queen of the harpies.

"Lady Melinda... the Dungeon in the East has been a growing concern for all beings residing in the forest. If we don't do anything, soon we will pay for it once it grows in strength. At that time, perhaps the strength of just one king would prove insufficient to push out this intruder. The forest belongs to us as such, you need to make a decision"

The black ogre with the indigo horn spoke again. The manner in which he addressed her was quite disrespectful which pissed quite a few of Melinda's subordinates. However, the latter did not show much reaction in the face of such provocation and continued to keep her eyes closed and her aura calm.

"I see, as I said before, I will think about it. Right now, it is not a good time for me and my clan as we are currently busy with another business right now" Melinda replied with a smile.

"No matter what things you are busy with, you should know that this matter should be of the topmost priority"

A brusque voice intervened at this moment. It was from the hulking terraquake rhino beside the black ogre. His voice seemed irritated just like his expression.

"You... you dare address our queen without any honorifics" One of the personal subordinates of Melinda was unable to take it any longer. He drew out his sword that was made of super sharp reinforced feathers and was just about to rush forward when...

"Stand down Oro, I'm still talking" Melinda spoke, causing the harpy named Oro to freeze in his place.

"But my queen they have been insulting your honour from the moment they came here. Forget about bowing their head in your presence, they even have the audacity to talk back to you. Please allow me to teach these people where they are right now..."...

"I will not repeat it again, stand down".

A weird chill descended onto the place affecting the sky and mana in the surrounding as Melinda opened half of her eyelids.

The Harpy named Oro immediately toned down and backed away. The atmosphere of hostility that was almost about to burst into sparks was snuffed by Melinda.

"Please excuse my subordinate. Although he is a hot headed one, his loyalty towards me is without question. Anyways, as I have said before, I need time to make the decision. Tell Gil-Garna and Yverza that I told them that" Still carrying a smile, she addressed her guests.

