

Endless Leveling Done Right!

Chapter 26 - A Dire Situation [Part 1]

"Hurry!" Alex shouted. "They're coming!"

The ladies who had just been freed hurried after Alex, running in the same direction he had taken.

The stronger ones helped to support the naked women, whom they had forced awake not long ago.

The female swordswoman Alex had freed first cast a glance in the direction where the goblins had taken the other captured girls, her jaw clenching in frustration.

She hated to turn her back on them, but there was nothing she could do. Gritting her teeth, she made the painful decision to escape while she still could. There was nothing else she could do.

Alex wanted to save as many as he could. But he understood he wasn't strong enough to fight against the goblins, and raid their den to free the other girls.

Jumping from tree branch to tree branch, Dim Dim guided them to the safest path leading out of the forest.

None dared to look behind them and simply ran to the best of their abilities.

As Adventurers, they understood what it meant to stop running. They felt weak, and their bodies hurt, but they ran with everything they had.

The ladies were panting for breath, but they would rather die running than suffer a fate worse than death in the hands of the goblins.

Suddenly, Dim Dim's shout reached their ears.

"Dim!"

Dim Dim's shout forced everyone to stop.

Alex immediately crouched down and signaled everyone to do the same.

The Dim Sum God then landed beside Alex and told him what was happening.

"Dim Dim!"

The young man's face turned grim when Dim Dim told him that four Dire Wolves had appeared in the path that they were taking.

If they could deal with them, they would be able to leave the forest and go to safety. However, two of the Dire Wolves were Rank 2 Monsters.

"There are four Dire Wolves in front of us," Alex said to the girls. "Unless we beat them, we will not be able to leave the forest and return to Thaloria. Can any of you fight Rank 2 Monsters?"

"I can," the swordswoman replied. "But I can only take on one of them."

"I'm an Archer," one of the ladies said. "But the goblins took my bow and arrow."

"I have a bow, and arrows here." Alex took out a bow from his storage ring and a quiver of arrows. "Please take it."

The Archer didn't hesitate and accepted the weapon, feeling a little more confident now that she was armed.

"I'm a Scout," another lady stated. "If you have another sword or a dagger, give me one. Either is fine."

Alex handed a sword he had looted from a Goblin Warrior and gave it to the scout.

"I'm a Mage, but I only have enough mana to cast four Fire Bullets," said a young lady with long dark brown hair. "They might not be strong enough to kill the Dire Wolves, but it can still be helpful if I get a clean hit."

"I'm sorry, but my magic pouch was taken away from me," Annie said. "I'm not good at fighting. It was always Ronnie who protected me."

A pained look appeared on her face when she mentioned the name of her childhood friend.

There other ladies in the group were non-combatants like Annie, so they couldn't do anything to help Alex and the other adventurers fight against the wolves.

They had just come to the forest to forage for herbs and usually only stayed on the outskirts where it was safe.

The sudden Hobgoblin attack had caught them completely by surprise, so they were captured easily by the monsters.

A swordsman, an archer, a scout, and a mage. Including Alex, their team had five people who could fight.

"Okay, let's do this," Alex said. "The three of us will fight, while Ms. Archer, and Ms. Mage will support us from behind. Our goal is to kill one of the wolves as fast as we can. Ms. Archer will attack, while Ms. Mage's duty is to protect her."

"Don't call me Ms. Archer, call me Cynthia," Cynthia said.

"That's right," the scout chimed in. "Call me Efa."

"I'm Seren," the mage introduced herself.

"I'm Elaine." The swordswoman smiled.

Alex nodded. "I'm Alex, and this one is..."

"Dim Dim!" Dim Dim said.

After making a simple strategy to select which wolf to target, Alex and the four girls advanced, leaving the rest behind.

It would be detrimental to them if they were attacked by the Dire Wolves during the battle, so it was safer that they stay a distance away from the fighting.

Just as Alex's group was planning to ambush the Dire Wolves, the Dire Wolves saw them first.

< Dire Wolf >

Monster Rank: Rank 2 Monster

Monster Grade: Common

Health: 150/150

Attack: 25 - 50

Note: Some beasts are born of nature. Others are born of nightmares. A dire wolf's patience is as deadly as its bite. It hunts not for sport, but for survival.

Although its health points were lower than the Brown Bear and the Red-Eyed Zebra Jumping Spider, that didn't change the fact that a Dire Wolf was a deadly monster through and through.

The wolves didn't hesitate to lunge at Alex, Efa, and Elaine, who were acting as vanguards for their group.

The tactic that the three had agreed on was simple—whichever wolf that Elaine targeted would become their targets as well.

This wasn't the first time that Elaine had fought against Dire Wolves, so she was familiar with how to handle them.

The problem was that she was working with strangers, and she didn't know their fighting style.

Still, she stuck to the plan and activated a skill that took Alex by surprise.

She boosted her speed and distanced herself away from her allies before gripping the sword in her hand firmly.

"Whirlwind Slash!" Elaine roared as she activated her skill.

The swordswoman swung her blade in a wide-arc, making a full turn from where she stood. A gust of wind blew outward, which stopped the wolves from their tracks.

Blood spilled from the place where her sword had hit the wolves and pushed them back slightly.

"Close your eyes!" Efa shouted before appearing between Elaine and the Dire Wolves.
"Flash Slash!"

A blinding flash of light erupted from the blade of her sword, catching the Dire Wolves by surprise.

Since they had been warned beforehand, Alex and the rest managed to shield their eyes from the light Efa used on the enemies at point blank range.

"Now!" Elaine exclaimed.

The sound of rustling wind reached Alex's ears, and a moment later, an arrow had firmly embedded itself in the eye of the Dire Wolf that had been leading the group.

A pained cry spread in the surroundings as the Dire Wolf found itself seriously injured in that brief moment of blindness.

Alex, who had also advanced forward, rammed his shield on the arrow that was sticking out of the wolf's eye with the full weight of his body.

His intention was clear.

To push the arrow deeper inside the monster's head until it pierced its brain.

Whether he was lucky or skilled, the young man managed to succeed with his plan. The leader of the wolves was immediately incapacitated, collapsing on the ground after letting out a blood-curdling howl filled with pain.

Chapter 27 - A Dire Situation [Part 2]

The leader of the dire wolves was already about to collapse when another arrow flew past Alex, embedding into another dire wolf's neck.

As an experienced hunter, Cynthia knew better than to take things easy.

A single arrow might not be enough to kill a Dire Wolf, but it could wound the beast and buy some time.

"Heavy Slash!" Elaine shouted as she swung her sword at the Dire Wolf, who had decided to target the archer first.

The monster tried to avoid it, but Elaine was a step faster.

The sword dug deep at the side of the Dire Wolf's body, injuring it seriously.

Another wolf lunged at the Swordsman, intending to bury its fangs into her body.

But Alex had stuck close, already prepared to protect her.

For the second time, Alex used his shield to ram the side of the wolf's body, pushing it to the side. Though its attack missed the teenage boy, he still fell on the ground, unable to get up right away.

Sensing an opportunity, the third wolf of the group opened its jaws to attack Alex.

Just in time, a Fire Bullet slammed into its mouth, making it yelp in pain.

Efa was not far behind and charged ahead, thrusting her sword into the monster's eye, drawing blood.

Struggling to push the sword deeper, she quickly pulled it out and swung at the wolf's other eye, blinding it completely.

Having noticed the lady's quick save, Alex thanked the scout silently in his heart before shifting his attention to the wolf whom Elaine had been fighting.

The wolf the swordsman had fought earlier had died, and she was now up against a new one.

'She's stronger than I thought.' Alex was genuinely impressed with Elaine for defeating a wolf within the relatively short time they had spent dealing with the other surrounding monsters.

Now, they were down to the last wolf.

With all its comrades down, the wolf shifted gear and attempted to run away with its slightly injured body, only to get shot by an arrow at the back of its hind legs, making it lose its balance.

Alex, Efa, and Elaine completely ignored the blinded wolf thrashing at the side and focused their attacks on the fallen Dire Wolf.

Three sword strikes landed on the wolf's body from different locations.

The swordsman slashed on its neck, Efa stabbed the side of its body, while Alex stabbed the place that was nearest to him... the wolf's butt.

In his defense, they were locked in a battle of life and death. That said, the young man didn't hold back and stabbed the wolf where it hurt the most.

A pained cry reverberated in the surroundings.

No one knew whose attack hurt the wolf the most, but it didn't change the fact that their combined attacks had injured it severely.

"Heavy Slash!"

With a roar filled with anger and determination, Elaine slashed the wolf's neck a second time, severing it completely from its body.

Now that three of the four wolves were dead, they shifted their attention to the blinded wolf, which had rammed itself into a tree while trying to run away.

Elaine, their heavy hitter, didn't hesitate and landed the killing blow, finally ending the wolf's life.

[Level Up!]

Alex wiped the sweat on his forehead after hearing the notification inside of his head.

He then added the three stat points to Agility before glancing at his comrades.

"Efa, please go back and tell the others we've dealt with the enemies," Alex said.

"Yes, sir," Efa replied in a teasing tone before heading back to where they had left the other girls.

Alex didn't hesitate to store the bodies of the Dire Wolves in his Beast Pouch, which made Elaine, Seren, and Cynthia smile faintly.

"You must treat us to dinner when we return to town," Elaine said in a tone that would not take no for an answer.

"Of course," Alex replied. "It's a team effort, so everyone gets their share."

A few minutes later, the scout returned with the ladies in tow, and once again followed Dim Dim's instructions.

They had taken a detour away from the fighting, so it took them a considerable amount of time before reaching the exit of the forest.

Even so, they didn't lower their guard and continued to run to the Town of Thaloria.

Only when they were halfway to their destination did they dare to stop and rest.

After all the running, everyone was inevitably tired. So, Elaine decided to let everyone rest for a few minutes to catch their breath.

Seeing how tired everyone looked, Dim Dim took out some bamboo steamers and handed some barbecued pork buns to the ladies to eat.

"Thank you, Dim Dim," Annie said as she accepted the food that the little one was giving her.

"Dim Dim~"

Knowing the effect of the pork buns, Alex eagerly took a bite.

A moment later, he heard the notification inside his head, telling him that his Stamina Regeneration had increased by 30% for an hour.

Perhaps feeling that their stamina was starting to recover, the ladies decided to head back to the town after a few minutes of rest.

All of them were of the same mind.

The sooner they got back, the safer they would be.

When they reached the gates, they saw Annie's father pacing nervously. It didn't take long for the man to notice the newcomers and, as soon as he noticed his daughter, he immediately ran toward her.

"Annie!" The middle-aged man hugged his daughter tightly while doing his best to stop himself from crying. "I'm sorry! I couldn't protect you!"

Unlike her father, Annie no longer held back and cried in his arms, embracing him tightly.

Elaine glanced at this scene before tapping Alex's shoulder.

"Are you staying at an Inn?" she asked.

"Yes," Alex answered. "I am staying at the Cat Tail's Inn."

"Oh, I know that place. They have good wine. Well, then. I'll meet you at dinner time," Elaine said. "By the way, can I keep this sword as a souvenir of this expedition?"

"Okay." Alex nodded.

It was looted from a goblin warrior anyway, so he didn't feel bad about giving it away.

Efa, Seren, and Cynthia also bade Alex farewell and told him that they would see him tonight at the Cat Tail's Inn.

After one last glance in the direction of the Floating Forest, he headed to the Adventurer's Guild to sell the Dire Wolves that he had stored inside his Beast Pouch.

Since the girls wanted him to treat them for dinner, he would need some funds to make sure that they were satisfied.

Alex was certain that his Master was still inside the forest since the sound of fighting had reached them even as they had escaped.

This incident reminded him of the benefits of fighting as a party.

If it hadn't been for his allies, who were seasoned Adventurers, things might have taken a wrong turn for the worse.

The young man then glanced at the round, black shield on his left arm and sighed internally.

The moment he had used the shield to bash the wolves, it had felt so natural as if it was a part of his body.

But after checking its information, he knew all of its abilities were still sealed.

This meant that Svalinn hadn't done anything special during the battle, and everything had happened naturally.

Perhaps Alex's experience as a Shield Savant had been engraved in his body, allowing him to act the way he had.

'I hope Master is safe,' he thought.

Although Cairo was meant to gain the title of Heaven's Sword in the game, the young man was still worried about his safety.

For him, Arcana was no longer a game.

This world was light years from the one he had come from, but it was his reality now. And if there was one thing Alex knew for sure, it was that he didn't want to lose the people who'd started to matter to him.