

Guardian gods 47

Chapter 47 Dead?

The two treants sat in contemplative silence, absorbing Ikem's expressions of frustration. The young master grappled with his first substantial setbacks, and the treants could only hope that he would find the strength to overcome them.

Breaking the silence, the stone treant spoke up, "If I may, young master" Ikem nodded which prompted the treant to continue "you have to see things differently."

Ikem, visibly confused, looked up and questioned, "What do you mean by that?"

The stone treant responded, "There is little I can say, but you need to react more and stop thinking. These creatures are not the creator who gives you time to think before acting."

Ikem sat in thoughtful silence after hearing that. The advice to act more and think less contradicted his father's teachings, who had always emphasized thinking before acting. The treant's suggestion, however, began to make sense to him as he thought reacting immediately might have prevented the bird from seizing him.

His agreement with the treant advice implied abandoning his father's teachings, a realization that weighed heavily on Ikem. If he had acted instead of thinking when the treants had stopped, the bird might not have caught him. His father's approach would have been to first assess the situation before deciding the next action, which he didn't do fast enough as the bird got hold of him before he understood what was happening. The treant's advice, on the other hand, suggested that he should have had an immediate defensive response.

The two treants observed Ikem, deep in contemplation. The stone treant considered adding more to its advice, but some lessons needed to be experienced and understood firsthand.

Ikem remained lost in thought until his ear twitched, prompting him to once again survey the dark forest around them. The treants, sensing a shift, transformed back into flowers, embedding their roots deep into the earth.

"It seems this will be another sleepless night," Ikem remarked, forming two sword constructs in his hands as he peered intently into the forest.

Despite not sensing any strong mana signatures, Ikem detected multiple weaker ones surrounding him. Suddenly, two dark shadows flew from the forest towards him at high speed. Reacting swiftly, Ikem swung his swords, cutting the shadows in two, revealing them to be bats.

However, right after dispatching the bats, Ikem was hit by an unexpected attack, causing him to stumble. Clutching his ear in pain, the sword constructs vanished.

The assault persisted for a while before finally ceasing. Slowly lowering his hands, Ikem examined the blood on them, realizing it was some form of sound attack. Cleaning the blood flowing from his ears, he thought to himself, "The sound isn't strong enough to take me down, but it's not pleasant and causes a slight instability. It is also hard to pinpoint where it came from."

Remaining vigilant, Ikem looked around as two flying shadows approached again. This time, he caught them in his hand, squeezing the life out of them. Utilizing mana to shield his ears, Ikem prepared for the inevitable sound attack.

While successfully defending against the sound, he still couldn't discern its origin. Time passed as Ikem continued to fend off bats and shield himself from sound attacks. The assaults eventually ceased, but a new sound—the beating of wings—echoed in Ikem's ear. Reacting swiftly, he dodged to the side, the wings sounding dangerously close.

Ikem surveyed his surroundings, attempting to identify the source of the mysterious sound. However, to his surprise, there was no visible creature nearby. The sound persisted, forcing him to dodge as it echoed clearly in his ear.

Curious and on high alert, Ikem carefully observed the area, but once again, nothing seemed to be present. The sound came again, and this time Ikem chose not to move, discovering that nothing happened in response.

When the sound echoed once more, Ikem stood his ground. His ear caught the rustle of leaves, prompting him to take a step back. In an instant, a green bow materialized in his hand, an arrow forming simultaneously. Ikem shot the arrow into the dark sky, resulting in a pained scream after a while.

Reacting swiftly, Ikem jumped into the air, conjuring a spear in his hand, and hurled it toward the point where he had shot the arrow. A punctured sound followed, and a massive bat corpse fell to the ground.

As the bat corpse descended, the weaker creatures' mana signatures rapidly dissipated. Roots sprouted from Ikem's head, heading toward the fallen bat corpse to nourish themselves. Ikem stood, watching the scene unfold.

In contemplative silence, Ikem pondered, "I won by thinking and assessing. Was I wrong for doubting Father's teachings before?" Acknowledging the truth in the treant's words, he sighed and returned to the bone fire. "This strange bird was strong, but its use of abilities was not smart," he mused. Ikem realized that the bird's tactics, especially with the bat, were cunning but not wise.

Reflecting on the encounter, Ikem recognized that the bird's initial surprise attack was using the high-pitched sound, causing his ears to bleed. However, the bird adapted when it realized the sound wasn't effective anymore, opting for a more deceptive strategy—producing a noise that mimicked the proximity of a hidden threat, which was meant to catch him off guard.

Ikem discerned that the second occurrence of the noise was the pivotal moment, prompting him to resist reacting when the sound repeated for the third time. The fourth instance revealed the bird's deception—the identical sound, but this time accompanied by the telltale rustle of leaves stirred by the wind from its wings.

A triumphant smile graced Ikem's face. It marked his second victory in this enigmatic forest that seemed to be in pursuit of him. After extending his senses and ensuring the absence of imminent danger around the camp, Ikem decided to indulge in some much-needed sleep for the journey ahead.

Surprisingly, Ikem fell into a deep slumber swiftly this time. Although not completely oblivious, he maintained a level of readiness for any potential disturbances. The night deepened as Ikem peacefully slept, his eyes closed. Yet, out of nowhere, a dark purple smoke began to envelop the camp. As the purple smoke thickened, the atmosphere in the camp became surreal. Within the dream realm, Ikem found himself in a vast, ethereal landscape. Colors beyond description danced across the horizon, and strange creatures frolicked in the distance. Unaware of the events unfolding in the physical world, Ikem wandered through his dreamscape, blissfully disconnected from the encroaching purple mist.

The two treant flowers rustled their leaves in response to the emerging smoke. However, Ikem, who was only half-awake, seemed unaffected as the smoke gradually filled the camp. The closer the smoke got to Ikem the more relaxed he became, the faster he succumbed to a deep sleep, complete with a slight drool escaping the corner of his mouth.

A dragging sound reverberated as a nearby tree shook, and from the dark forest emerged a colossal purple snake, resembling an anaconda in size. The snake slowly approached Ikem but abruptly halted, adopting a defensive stance. Its sharp gaze fixated on the scale hanging around Ikem's neck.

For some inexplicable reason, the snake felt deterred by the scale. It lingered, observing Ikem closely. Opening its mouth, more purple smoke billowed forth, enveloping the entire camp. The purple mist surrounding the camp began to take on shapes, swirling into phantom figures and illusions. Shadows danced in the night, and the air was charged with an otherworldly energy. Unbeknownst to the serpent, Ikem was already deep in the realm of dreams, snoring peacefully amidst the mysterious haze.

The snake got closer to Ikem and soon began wrapping around him, the roots reacted at this time and was about to counter attack to wake up Ikem but its roots halted as the two treant communicated with it, it soon detangled from Ikem's hair falling to the ground and getting into it.

Ikem fast asleep in the snake stomach, couldn't help but frown as he felt that his body was squeezed into a tight space and he has it hard breathing, he tried to move his body in sleep but found it hard to do, the more he found it hard to breath the more Ikem panicked soon his mind became active as he noticed that he was in danger.

Even though he knew he was in danger, Ikem found that his body couldn't move, he could think but his body for some reason wasn't responding. "Am i dead?" The question came to Ikem's mind as he couldn't help but panic at the thought, " Did I die in my sleep?" Ikem found it hard to believe as he himself knew that he wasn't fully asleep.

The snake drew closer to Ikem, beginning to coil around him. The roots holding Ikem braids stirred, preparing to counterattack and wake him. However, the roots abruptly halted as the two treants communicated with them. Detangling from Ikem's hair, they fell to the ground and re-entered the earth.

Unaware that its hunting plan had almost been thwarted, the snake continued wrapping itself around Ikem. Satisfied with the coiling, it initiated a squeeze. Yet, contrary to expectations, Ikem's bones didn't yield easily. Reacting and flexing his muscles, Ikem fought back, prompting the snake to cease its constriction. In response, the snake opened its mouth, releasing more smoke on Ikem's face.

The smoke subdued Ikem's struggle as relaxed and the snake, not bothering to squeeze again, the snake opened its mouth wide, gradually swallowing him whole. Having completed its hunt, the snake coiled around a tree nearby, intending to digest its catch.

As the enigmatic dance of mist and shadows continued, Observing the scene, the stone treant flower spoke to the water treant, its petals ruffling, "I think this is when we are supposed to act."

The water treant's petals also ruffled as it replied, "Wait a bit more. Maybe the young master will surprise us."

Transforming back into its treant form and eyeing the oblivious snake, the stone treant remarked calmly, "I hope he does because I won't be waiting much longer."

Meanwhile, Ikem, deep in sleep within the snake's stomach, sensed discomfort, he tried to move his body in sleep but found it hard to do, the more he tried to move, the harder he found it hard to breath. Feeling squeezed and struggling to breathe, panic set in and soon his mind became active as he noticed that he was in danger. Though his mind was active, his body remained unresponsive. The idea of being dead crossed Ikem's thoughts, but he quickly dismissed it.

"No i can't be dead, the two treants wouldn't let that happen, so is this some kind of spiritual attack" Convinced he wasn't dead, Ikem mind became active the more he thought as the thought he was under some kind of strange attack crossed his mind. Instinctively, Ikem unleashed a surge of mana through his

body, attempting to regain control. However, his efforts were futile as he still remained paralyzed within the creature's stomach.

His father's words echoed in his mind: "Always put yourself in your opponent's thinking pattern." Analyzing the situation, Ikem realized the creature had not gone in for the kill which it should have done after getting him into this state. But then the treants, vigilant as ever, would have intervened and stopped that but they didn't which shows something else is amiss. "A delicacy?" he pondered.