

## Guardian gods 54

### Chapter 54 Difference

Emerging from the storm on the icy platforms, Maul and his team saw two enormous snow-white bears standing on their two feet. The bears each held half of the fallen hunter's torn body, readying to devour their prey.

Without a word, the teams descended, attacking the bears. The creatures noticed the intrusion, and one bear raised its head to witness Maul descending from the sky, axes in hand. The bear raised its arm as a feeble shield, but Maul's axes, fuelled by mana, sliced through the icy defence on the bear, severing the bear's hand.

The wounded bear roared in agony, summoning ice spikes to shield itself. Maul, agile and focused, leaped back to avoid impalement. However, one of his men, rushing in without caution, fell victim to the ice spike, pierced through by its deadly point.

Maul, showing no outward reaction to the loss, commanded the remaining hunters, "Don't rush in carelessly. Focus on dealing small blows; leave the finishing blow to me." Out of nowhere he moved his head to the right as a huge ice spike flew past him. Looking closely Maul saw the huge bear break the ice spike it created in half with its other hand while throwing it at them.

The battle reached a climax as Maul, with a resolute command, shouted, "Now!" He surged forward, agilely evading the ice spikes hurled by the wounded bear. His team followed suit, keeping pace with their leader as they broke through or dodged the remaining spikes in their path.

As the bear prepared to unleash its final desperate attack, Maul, undeterred, approached with unwavering determination. With each step, he shattered the incoming ice spikes, closing in on the formidable opponent. The bear, sensing its impending demise, mustered all its strength, launching a final spike toward Maul.

Instead of dodging or breaking the spike, Maul declared, "My turn," and seized the projectile. With a surge of power, he infused mana into the ice spike before hurling it into the air.

The bear, driven by confusion and rage, charged toward Maul with a deafening roar. Above them, a foreboding sound echoed as the infused ice spike broke into pieces and soon descended from the sky. A single ice spear pierced the charging bear's body, followed by a barrage of twenty more, raining down and impaling the creature from every angle.

Maul's men followed through, their weapons aglow with silver light, seized the opportunity. The first hunter, sliding skilfully across the icy ground, dodged a massive paw strike. In a swift motion, his weapon sliced through the bear's leg, causing it to stumble.

The next hunter advanced, his spear finding its mark in the bear's paw after it missed its paw strike and pinning it to the ground. With precision, the third hunter, wielding a gleaming sword, leaped up and sliced through the bear's paw, rendering it defenceless.

Seizing the moment, Maul, with a swift and calculated approach, closed in on the bear's exposed stomach. The mana and silver light emanating from his axes illuminated the scene as he delivered a powerful swing, tearing the bear's stomach open.

Without pausing to savour his recent victory, Maul immediately turned his attention to the second bear, which his son Wulv was valiantly holding off. A sense of urgency overcame Maul as he observed the bear's imminent threat to his son.

The bear, visibly damaged with one leg left and bleeding profusely, raised a massive paw, poised to tear Wulv apart. Maul, roaring with determination, infused mana into one of his axes and swiftly hurled it towards the bear. The axe acted as a catalyst, drawing snow and ice around it, forming a colossal ice axe construct. By the time it reached the bear, the ice axe had grown substantial enough to cleave the creature in two.

Aware of the incoming threat, the bear redirected its focus from Wulv to the airborne axe. In a desperate attempt to intercept, the bear caught the axe, but the speed and force were too much. The ice axe sliced through the bear's palm, halting only when it reached the creature's shoulder. The massive ice axe dispersed, leaving Maul's original axe embedded in the bear's shoulder.

The bear roared in agony, but its cry was abruptly silenced as Wulv, seizing the opportune moment, thrust his silver-light-covered sword from beneath the bear's neck. As Wulv withdrew the blade, the bear's colossal form crumpled to the ground, stirring up a cloud of snow.

Maul soon reached his son with a mixture of worry and relief in his eyes, scanning him for any signs of injury. A breath of relief escaped him as he found Wulv unharmed. However, his attention quickly shifted to the surrounding area, revealing the unfortunate fate of three of the men who had fought alongside his son.

Wulv, tears streaming down his face, expressed remorse, "I am sorry, father. I couldn't protect them."

Maul, with a serious expression, placed a comforting hand on his son's shoulder, replying, "It isn't your fault. You can't always protect them all, son. Even I myself lost some men in this battle."

As Maul contemplated the situation, a realization struck him. "This seems to be the limit of how strong a werewolf can be without learning the right usage of mana." He wasn't referring to Wulv, as he had personally instructed his son in the ways of mana. Rather, Maul had refrained from teaching the broader

werewolf population about mana usage. This was because of his Observation of the different interaction between mana and himself compared to how it responded to his son, Maul recognized a unique connection between him and the mystical force "mana". It was as if mana, in his presence, was a favoured entity, eager to gather around him, while with his son, a coaxing effort was needed to get the mana to gather around.

Maul's contemplation deepened as he observed his son. The realization that his own power system might not be suitable for the entire werewolf population weighed heavily on him. The silver light, a manifestation of his mother's divinity, enhanced their weapons during the hunt, but Maul understood its transient nature. Relying solely on this borrowed power wasn't a sustainable solution, especially considering the high casualty rate during hunts.

In the wake of this understanding, Maul decided that upon returning to the village, he would gather his clansmen and kin to teach them about mana. He could only hope that his people is able to explore and harness their own potential, as that would be the key to true strength for the werewolves. Maul envisioned a collective effort, where each werewolf could draw insights from their unique experiences and form a system that would benefit them all.

A dragging sound diverted Maul's attention to his men, dragging the bear corpse with its stomach torn open. One of them inquired about the other hunters, and Wulv, with a heavy heart, looked down. Maul, however, steadied his son's shoulder and addressed the question "They didn't make it" Maul stopped for a while before continuing "But they also made sure their people and children won't starve for a day with the prey they sacrificed their life for," Maul announced solemnly. "They have earned their place with the silver mother of the moon and motherhood."