

THE LAST PARAGON IN THE APOCALYPSE

Chapter 10: Entering the Inner Section

Klaus entered deeper into the forest. He knew Killing Tier 2 monsters would make him level up quickly. Also, from the little he knows, his soul will become several times stronger if he kills stronger monsters. The higher the rank of the monster, the more stronger his soul will become.

He had distributed his points carefully: 40 to strength, 30 to agility, and 30 to stamina. His muscles felt like they were buzzing with energy, his reflexes sharper, his endurance higher. It was like he'd been reborn stronger, faster, and more capable. The confidence boost was undeniable.

The first sign of trouble came in the form of low growls and rustling leaves. Klaus didn't slow down. If anything, he sped up, eager to test out his new power. Suddenly, a Tier 2 wolf-like creature lunged at him from the underbrush, its fangs bared and eyes glowing with malice.

Klaus reacted instantly. With a swift motion, he swung his sword, channeling the ice element into a Moon Slash. A crescent-shaped arc of icy energy shot forward, slicing through the air with a cold hiss. The arc hit the wolf dead-on, cutting through it as if it were made of paper.

The creature didn't even have time to yelp before it was split in two, its body collapsing to the ground in a lifeless heap.

He instantly felt a rush of energy enter his body. This indicates he has leveled up and the 1200 exp has been added to his Spiritual Qi pool.

"Well, that was easy," Klaus said, almost disappointed. "Next!"

The deeper he went, the more monsters he encountered. A pair of oversized lizards with thick, armored scales appeared next. They hissed and charged at him, their claws scraping against the ground. Klaus barely broke a sweat. Another Moon Slash, this time infused with even more ice essence, and the lizards were reduced to nothing but frozen chunks.

The ice element has become several times stronger now that he has leveled up to Level 3. Although he has received 100 points to add to his stats, he

hasn't added them yet, however, with his spiritual qi pool now several times bigger, he felt energized.

The deeper he went, the fiercer the monsters became. He encountered a serpentine creature with scales that shimmered like metal. It lashed out with lightning speed, but Klaus was quicker. He dodged its strike, then countered with a horizontal slash. The ice arc followed the path of his sword, cutting clean through the creature's neck. Its head fell with a heavy thud, followed by its coiled body.

After the serpent lay lifeless at his feet, Klaus finally realized what he had just killed—a Metal Scale Silent Serpent. The name rang a bell from one of the classes he'd managed to eavesdrop on back at the Academy. He remembered the instructor mentioning that this particular snake had venom sacs that could fetch up to a thousand gold coins each.

Klaus's eyes lit up with excitement. Even a Tier 1 Metal Scale Silent Serpent's venom sac was worth around 500 gold coins, and each serpent had three of them. That meant he was sitting on a small fortune.

"Jackpot," Klaus muttered with a grin, not wasting any time. He quickly and carefully extracted the venom sacs, making sure not to damage them. Once

he had all three safely in hand, he stored both the sacs and the serpent's body away and then ventured deeper.

"Hmm, looks like some people were here recently," Klaus murmured to himself as he moved through the forest. After slaughtering a few more monsters, he stumbled upon a clearing that told a different story. The trees were splintered and broken, and the ground was stained with blood—a lot of it.

"It was a group battle," Klaus observed, his eyes scanning the area. The scorched earth and the patches of frost on the stones and trees made it clear that multiple elements had been at play here—fire and ice, at least. Whoever had fought here must have been strong, and it wasn't just one person.

He crouched down, running his fingers through the dirt, feeling the cold and heat still lingering in the air. "They didn't hold back, that's for sure," he mused. The aftermath of the battle suggested that it had been intense, with no room for mercy.

Klaus couldn't help but wonder who these fighters were and what they had been after. Were they hunting the same monsters as him? Or was there something more valuable hidden deeper in the forest for them to go all out like that? The thought intrigued him.

"Well, if they're still around, I'll have to watch my back," Klaus muttered as he stood up, his gaze hardening. "But if they're after something valuable, I wouldn't mind taking a piece of the pie."

Klaus decided to follow the trail left behind by the battle, curiosity driving him deeper into the forest. As he moved forward, the signs of conflict became more frequent—broken branches, scorched earth, and patches of frost that still clung to the trees. Each clue told him he was on the right path, but also that he was getting closer to something dangerous.

The forest grew darker and more oppressive as he ventured further. The sounds of distant growls and rustling leaves kept him on edge, but Klaus pressed on, determined to see where this trail would lead.

But then, the trail began to fade. The signs of battle became less clear, and the once obvious path started to disappear. Klaus frowned, trying to piece together where the fighters might have gone, but nothing seemed to add up. He pushed on a little further, hoping to pick up the trail again, but it was no use.

That's when he realized something else—he was no longer in the same part of the forest. The atmosphere had changed. The trees were taller, their trunks thicker, and the air was heavier, almost suffocating. It hit him then—he had crossed into the border of the Inner Section of the forest, a place far more dangerous than where he'd been before.

"Great, just great," Klaus muttered to himself, glancing around warily. The Inner Section was known for its powerful monsters and treacherous terrain. He hadn't planned on venturing this far in—not yet, at least—but it seemed the forest had other ideas.

"Guess there's no turning back now," he sighed, gripping his sword a little tighter. If the trail led here, then whoever—or whatever—he was following was in a whole different league. And that meant he had to be ready for anything.

Roar

As soon as Klaus stepped into the Inner Section, a thunderous roar echoed through the forest, coming from about a kilometer away. The sound was powerful enough to send a chill down his spine, but it also sparked his curiosity. Sensing the intense presence, he decided to check it out.

Moving quietly, Klaus closed the distance, his steps careful and calculated. As he approached the source of the roar, now just 700 meters away, he was met with a scene of pure chaos.

Two massive beasts were locked in a fierce battle—a flaming lion and an earth leopard. Both were Tier 2 monsters, but they were unlike anything Klaus had faced before. The sheer power they were unleashing was on another level, far beyond the other Tier 2 monsters he had encountered.

Klaus watched in awe as the lion roared, flames erupting from its mane, scorching everything around it. The leopard, not to be outdone, retaliated by slamming its paws into the ground, causing the earth to tremble and sharp rocks to jut out from the soil, aiming to impale the lion.

The clash between fire and earth was intense, with neither monster willing to back down. Klaus could feel the ground shaking beneath his feet, the heat from the lion's flames warming his face even from this distance.

He couldn't help but grin. This was the real deal—the struggle for power that he had been itching to experience. He was now at Level 4, and although he

hadn't distributed his stat points yet, he knew this was the kind of battle that would truly test his limits.

The monsters were dishing out attacks with everything they had as if their very survival depended on it. And in a way, it did. Klaus knew that stepping in would be dangerous, but the potential rewards were too tempting to ignore. If he could take down one of these beasts, the experience and power he'd gain would be immense.

"It's not like I enjoy cheating, but when two friends can't get along, sometimes they need a big brother to step in and resolve the issue," Klaus muttered to himself, a mischievous smile spreading across his face. He retrieved his sword from his space ring, the blade gleaming with a faint blue light as it caught the reflection of the surrounding chaos.

Klaus moved quietly, his steps as light as a whisper. He knew that failing here would be disastrous. The monsters were so focused on each other that they hadn't noticed his presence yet, giving him a rare opportunity. He waited, watching for the perfect moment to strike.

His heart pounded in his chest, but his mind was clear. This wasn't a game—it was life or death. He had to go for the kill in one swing. Taking them both down in two strikes would be ideal, leaving no room for error.

Klaus positioned himself, every muscle in his body tense and ready. The flaming lion reared back, preparing to unleash another wave of fire, while the earth leopard crouched low, gathering its strength for a counterattack. This was it—his chance.

With a deep breath, Klaus sprang into action, his sword slicing through the air with lethal precision. He unleashed a crescent-shaped ice arc that flew straight for the neck of the flaming lion. At the same time, another ice arc followed, cutting through the air and striking the earth leopard diagonally at the waist.

The attacks connected almost simultaneously, the force of the impact sending dust and debris into the air. Klaus stood there, motionless, for a split second.

Then, as the dust began to settle, a smile crept onto Klaus's face. The kill notification flashed before his eyes, confirming what he already knew. Both monsters had fallen, their bodies slumping to the ground, lifeless.