

Runesmith 215

Chapter 215: Not looking good.

Name :

Abyssal Abomination L ???

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Roland felt like he had been in a situation like this before but this time around there was no tunnel to collapse to get away from the tier 3 monster. All of the people from the cult had combined themselves into some kind of strange abomination that was hard to describe.

The whole transformation unfolded before his eyes. After the cultists stabbed themselves with those pitch-black daggers it all started. Their bodies began turning into the same color as their weapons while quickly melting. Their skin was first to go and their muscles and organs were quickly revealed to everyone.

Everyone looked in horror at the strange phenomenon taking place, some of the commoners started to vomit the instant they saw the convulsing dead bodies on the ground. Yet this was not the end but just the beginning. The carcasses started being molded into something and quickly slithering towards one of the dark priests that would act as the core of this metamorphosis.

It was as if the bodies were being affected by some type of gravitational spell. While partially melted they started quickly flying towards one location and combining with each other. At first, it started off as a mass of mashed together limbs and organs but soon the human appendages started taking on a new form.

A plethora of tentacles with smaller tendrils coming out from them soon started appearing. All of the squishy flesh that looked gelatinous at first took the shape of pitch-black leathery skin that was this monster's outer shell. Many large and small eyes riddle all of its body along with similarly spaced-out toothy mouths. One of these was noticeably larger than the rest and occupied the upper front of the monster along with a central eye.

"The hell is that thing..."

Nicholaus the spirit spearman called out while everyone was shocked at the spectacle. While this was a terrifying display Roland didn't seem as affected as the others. This monstrosity was giving out strange groans as it was taking shape which seemed to be causing some form of a mental debuff. It was keeping people from reacting to the change and letting this creature take its full shape.

'Won't get a better chance than this.'

Roland was quick to realize that this would be the best moment to strike. Before the Abyssal Abomination fully took shape he had some time to launch a magical attack. He did not have his staff anymore and had to blow up his backpack while running away. This left him with only his armor to perform this task.

This reminded him of the clash with the dinosaur monster from the dungeon. While he would be using a similar spell-like last time it had been improved. He did not need any large external components besides one small add-on that he still had on his side. While his backpack was gone he still had his little satchel with some ammo inside.

'I can't do this too many times, my armor won't be able to take the load but better if it breaks down before this thing can form itself.'

He knew the dangers of straining the armor's runic components. His mana reserve was large and with the ability to alter the spells he made it was easy to utilize it all. Even when the monster was not formed and lacked a level it was very obviously above tier 2. The longer he waited the stronger it would become, if he could not take it out now then everyone would be in danger.

Thus he stepped forward to get a good vantage point. With people being stunned from the strange low and high pitched screams he didn't need to worry about hitting them. After planting his legs firmly on the ground he moved his hand towards his chest area where a barely visible circular indentation was.

Previously he removed a red-colored gem from his satchel, this gem was quickly inserted into this depression. Almost instantly a runic circle appeared around his chest plate where he placed this jewel into. Thus the countdown began while he stood out with his chest pointing toward the monster.

His whole armor began glowing brightly, and the somewhat torn-up robe he was still wearing quickly started going up in flames to reveal the shiny silver armor beneath it. His hands were held in front of the glowing stone in his chest area to aid in the forming of the beam.

Roland felt his mana instantly being drained to activate this spell. While he would rather use some pre-prepared explosives he didn't have any. Instead, he needed to deal the most amount of damage in the shortest amount of time.

Soon the beam was taking shape as the area around the gem started to give out arcs of blue electricity. Some people that were previously panicking had snapped out of their stupor just from the sheer amount of magical power that was being used here.

Right before the stream of energy took shape Roland quickly activated his Rune Overload skill. Instantly the blue light that was covering his whole body shifted into a dark red. The runes on his body started eating away at the metal that it was made from. Thanks to it being of high quality the process was slowed down and finally, the attack flew out.

Roland's feet were jolted back as if he was shooting off a high-caliber rifle. The dark red beam of concentrated mana drilled its way towards the screaming monster that was still gathering the corpses of the dead cultists.

A resounding explosion that blew up lots of smoke followed shortly after this display of magical might. The monster's groan was quickly heard by everyone, this finally managed to snap everyone out of this strange debuff effect they were being affected by. Yet before they could realize what was going on, their faces were hit by strong wind containing sand and gooey monster parts.

"What the hell?"

"Get away!"

Everyone jumped back while covering their faces from the incoming debris. While they could not move their bodies due to the stunning effect they could still see everything unfolding. After backing away all of them looked to the sparkling armored man that was still radiating energy.

‘Was that enough?’

Roland wondered while moving his hands down. The red light that was covering his body along with the sparkling runes started to dim. It was soon replaced by a bluish hue as he activated his rune mending skill. While the attack was powerful and reached into the tier 3 realm he was not sure if he wouldn’t need to fire it off again.

The jewel that adorned his chest area quickly crumbled to dust after the long-range spell had been completed. More than half of his mana was gone now and a migraine was fast approaching. Only thanks to the pain resistances he continually received was he able to still focus on the unfolding battle.

“Did he do it?”

Asked Nicholas that was the highest level adventurer here. After recovering from the illusory world he had recovered his spear to fight along with the others. Seemingly Roland had managed to deliver the last blow as the monster’s shrieks had gone silent.

“Fuck, that scared me.”

Orson called out from the side while holding his large double-handed sword over his shoulder. He, along with Seena and Darlak looked somewhat exhausted after the small skirmish.

“Aye, they should reward us plenty for bringing down a cult.”

The dwarf cheered as he already could see the increase in wages for bringing this village to light. The merchants probably wouldn’t increase their wages but there was a bounty on Abyssal cultists in the kingdom. They would be rewarded for each of them slain along with any occult relics returned. With how large this helix spiral was, the amount of money they should receive would probably last them many months.

“Shut up you idiot, that thing isn’t dead yet... hey you watch out!”

But while Orson and Darlak were nodding at each other, Senna could tell that something was wrong. Due to how much energy Roland had burned through his radar system was also lagging behind. But the monster would not wait for them to reassess their situation, the only thing on its mind was to kill.

From within the dust cloud, a myriad of tentacles shot out toward the closest people to it. Unfortunately for Nicholas, he was in the line of sight of the maddened monster that had been injured by Roland’s attack. Even though he was a high-level tier 2 class holder he was unable to react in time at all.

“Ugh... huh?”

The old man could not even perform one defensive maneuver before he found himself being impaled by several thumb thick tendrils. These squiggly things traveled at a speed that he could not follow at all. Quickly his body was hoisted up into the sky along with a couple of other unlucky bastards that were too close.

'Was my attack ineffective?'

Roland was sure that he managed to hit the monster straight on. He had faced other tier 3 monsters in the form of those dungeon skeletons. By his calculations, this condensed beam of energy should have been able to kill one of those skeletons in one shot.

The way it worked was quite rudimentary. The mass of mana would spin at supersonic speeds which would go through the enemy's defenses. Once inside the body, the spell would shove chaotic mana into the body making it explode from the inside.

This was a spell that he came up with after contemplating the creatures with strong outer defenses. Most of the time the troublesome part was getting past these defenses to get to the squishy insides. One those crumbled it was mostly over but for some reason, this monster was still standing.

Finally, the dust had cleared and he had a good view of the aftermath of his spell. The first thing that he noticed was the large gaping hole inside of this black mass of tentacles. Yet even with this size of an injury, the monster was constantly putting itself back together.

Nicholaus the unfortunate spear user was one of the reasons that it was probably able to do this. At this point in time, his body was being drained of all its blood and flesh. The tendrils that went through his body were bulging out while transporting nourishment towards the main body that was mending itself.

Name :

Abyssal Abomination L 209

"Level 209?"

The creature had finally formed itself and its level was revealed. Tier 3 began at the 150th level and with each consecutive level up the gap between tier 2 grew. While it was possible for a small group of high level tier 1 class holders to defeat a lower level tier 2 this was not the same when it came to fighting tier 3.

With the gap in multipliers being higher and the rise in stat increases with each level it was impossible for a small group of tier 2 class holders to defeat a tier 3 monster over the level of two hundred. Even Roland, who had enough time to prepare a devastating spell could only wound it before it started regenerating.

'Can I hit it again? Will I have enough time to gather enough mana?'

Roland was not sure what to do now, he still had three more gems to perform the same spell. The biggest problem was that now the monster was on the move. While it wasn't moving from its spot much the various tentacles and tendrils were. Its counterattack began by inserting those appendages into the ground.

"Fuck... everyone get back, the attack is coming from underground..."

He shouted while activating his agility runes to increase his speed. This was just in time as a large leathery pointy tentacle shot up from the spot he was in before. He had been successful in dodging but others weren't as fast, some people instantly got impaled and had their bodies hoisted into the air where the absorption process quickly began again.

Even before the monster utilized its many mouths its victims were being digested. But some of the stronger ones that didn't instantly die were pulled over towards the larger mouth to be promptly tossed inside. The crunching sounds that were produced along with the screams of people were truly horrific.

Many individuals that were here were noncombatants. The screaming of women was followed by a stampede in all directions. The victory was short-lived as the tier 3 monstrosity started going after everyone. Even with some adventurers being able to react to the tendrils and the guards the people didn't think they could win.

"What is this thing made of?"

Orson cried out after managing to dodge one of the thinner tentacles. It seemed that the further away from the main body the slower these appendages became. At a distance, they were dodgeable by tier 2 class holders but even when the swordsman used a cleaving skill his large sword couldn't get through the darkened flesh. Instead, it got bounced off as if he hit reinforced rubber.

Roland approached this same exact spot, with his own runic sword in hand he attempted the same feat. Instead of using skills he used magic, the runes on his sword began glowing blue and surrounded his weapon in something that looked like energy.

His armor boosted his strength to an inhumane amount but even he could feel the monster's body somewhat resisting the cutting motion. Yet it did give out but at the cost of using a large amount of mana and using a special magical weapon. Not many people here were in possession of weapons that could harm a tier 3 monster.

"We must retreat, this monster will massacre us all."

The appendage he cleaved through continued to wiggle on the ground before transforming into a glob of black liquid. It was clear that they were ill-prepared to defeat this monster. His magic was capable of harming it but as long as it could grab people to regenerate itself it would be of no use. There was also a large possibility that it possessed various other regenerative skills as well.

"These types of monsters always have some kind of weak spot, if we find it then we might stand a chance, can you use that spell of yours again?"

Senna asked Roland while all of them started backing away.

"I'd need half a minute to prepare and I don't think you'll be able to keep it busy for that long."

The halfling clicked her tongue as she knew that the moment they got close to that thing they would be instantly impaled on those tendrils. While Roland could use ranged spells from afar he would not be able to deliver any lasting damage. The difference in levels was just too big, it didn't seem that they had any options left besides running.

"What are you all babbling about, are we doing this or not?"

A somewhat injured Grisalde appeared out of the blue and joined this team of five adventurers. She appeared by jumping forward and cleaving a tentacle in half before it reached them, showing off that she was above Orson's swordsmanship skills.

"Go die on your own you idiot, we need to run. I say we split in all directions, it can't follow all of us!"

Senna replied quickly while trying to convince everyone to a tactical retreat. However, this came a bit late as when everyone was about to back away a new set of wriggly things appeared behind them. There were many, much more than in front.

“Does it want to box us in?”

Roland said while scanning and looking in all directions. The same tendrils started appearing all around the area. It was as if they were in a prison cell made from squishy dark flesh that was slowly contracting towards them.

The monster had more intelligence than he anticipated. While bashing the place from where it was standing it distracted the people while at the same time burrowing underground and forming an enclosure. Now they were trapped with it and the only way out would be to go through the rubbery things.

‘Should I blast a hole through and run?’

There was only one way that he could think of at this short notice. If he used a strong enough spell he would probably be able to create a hole for some people to get through. A large number of the caravan participants would remain trapped as those tentacles would surely reform themselves quite fast but was there any other way for him to survive?

“Shit...”

He looked towards the ones that were screaming while unsure where to run and he started to move his hand into his satchel where he had his special jewels. Yet before he could pull one out he felt a large surge of magical energy. This energy was somewhat peculiar, it was certainly composed of mana but there was something else there, something divine and it was quickly approaching the spot that the monster occupied.

Chapter 216: Unexpected ally.

The radiant arc of glistening yellow came from out of nowhere. It traveled at an astonishing speed and connected with a bunch of those rubbery tentacles. They were in the process of wrapping around some screaming caravan travelers but were cleanly severed by the thin arch of energy.

Roland had witnessed similar techniques in his life and this seemed to be some kind of cutting skill. The bright golden color made it stick out from the rest as it mostly represented the divine or the holy element. Energy attacks like this took on the coloring of their respective element. When there was no element mana took on a pale blue color instead.

“Is that a woman? Did we have someone with us like that?”

Senna the halfling was the first one to point toward the person that produced this long-range attack. Just a moment ago running away was the only option but now there seemed to be someone on the level of this monster helping them out. To his surprise, he knew who this person was.

“It’s the girl from the guild?”

The previously tied up har had been loosened and their color had changed into a bright yellow. Her hazel eyes had turned into a brighter tint of dark yellow as well. Yet the most eye-catching thing about

her was the bright golden weapon that she was holding. From this location, it looked like a condensed beam of light but it wasn't quite that.

'Is that a concentrated aura blade?'

Name:

Melaina L 68

Classes:

T2 Analyst L18

T1 Accountant L25

T1 Villiger L25

Before Roland made any speculations he activated his identification skill once more. There as before he only received mundane classes and stats. It was clear that the person there was not an Analyst but possessed a higher tier battle class. Some kind of item was used to fool his analyzing skill and he didn't even notice that anything was wrong.

If her name was actually Melaina was also up to debate. For now, she looked like an ally but was she strong enough to defeat this malformed monster. In her right hand, she was holding a hilt of a sword. From the hilt, a bright golden radiant crystallization was shooting out. To the untrained eye, it might have looked like some kind of laser sword but it was not made from light.

This was an advanced aura skill used by various classes possessing it. From what Roland had read it could materialize an insanely hard weapon. The most common was a sharp blade that could even slice through mithril depending on the person using it. Then there was the color which made it seem that this woman was related to the church and the words that she spoke confirmed this.

"Filthy creature of the Abyss you will not take any more lives, this I swear on the name of Solaria!"

Her voice was stern, she did not sound like the ditzy untrained guild worker that he met before. It was now clear that this woman was good at acting the part of an inexperienced guild instructor but in reality, she was a somewhat battle-hardened member of the church.

"Is that woman part of the Solaira church? Could she be from the golden order?"

Orson asked while standing to the side. While the ray of light sliced through the monster its attention shifted to the new foe and gave everyone here some time to think.

"The golden order?"

Grisalde asked without knowing what the human was talking about.

"You don't know who the knights of the golden order are? You really are stupid, how did you survive this long."

Replied the halfling while narrowing her eyes.

"Why you little..."

“Stop it, now is not the time to argue that woman might be from the golden order but that doesn’t mean that she can defeat that tier 3 monster alone.”

Roland was quick to interrupt the two idiots from having a fight in the middle of a life and death situation. While no one explained he already knew of this order of knights that belonged to the church. They were handpicked by the church and acted as judges, juries, and executioners whenever the occult was involved.

They were a small group of powerful individuals that possessed specialized skills and classes. If they wished they could rally troops belonging to the church and also to the nobles. The kingdom had a symbiotic relationship with its main religion thus lending aid to their strongest members was a given.

Even within this knight order, there was a distinction between positions. The most influential members were the golden inquisitors that only answered to the pope. How far into their ranks this woman reached was unknown to him. Why she was here alone in the middle of nowhere was also a big question.

‘Did she know that the Abyssal Cult was here? But wouldn’t it be better to gather a large force to take them out instead of going in solo? She was also affected by the illusionary relic...’

Roland did not have enough information to figure out how this person ended up here. For all he knew she was undercover for a different reason and this was just a coincidence. But this worked in his favor as now the battle might not be hopeless.

While the tentacles that surrounded the whole area still remained they didn’t seem as active as before. The monster was focusing its attention on the woman that was able to wound it. The appendages that she had slipped through also seem to be affected by the golden energy as they weren’t regenerating at all.

Finally, she charged forward, her foot hit the ground and created a small indenture. Her speed was truly tremendous, not even Roland who could boost his agility with his runic armor would be able to reach such speeds. However, the monster she was facing wasn’t a slouch either.

The multiple tendrils and tentacles shot out instantly while the monstrosity cried out with its many mouths. It was as if a hail of bullets was coming her way but she did not stop with her advance instead she just lowered herself to minimize any potential points of impact while also increasing her speed.

While a normal person would have been instantly impaled and absorbed by the monster she was able to outpace it. The tendrils connected with the ground under her while she slipped past them. Yet she did not get past unscathed, some of them managed to graze her body.

These monster attacks were shooting out in rapid succession. She did not manage to dodge them all as she sustained some grazing wounds. Even then she continued to get close all the way until she was in close quarters combat range.

‘Why is she getting so close...could she be...’

Roland wasn’t sure why Melaina was rushing into danger this much. After showing off that ranged attack it made sense to keep distance and use it more often. It was capable of slicing through multiple tentacles at once and posed a real threat to the monster. That is if she could fire it off repeatedly.

'Is she tired or something? Not like she participated in the previous fight but wait... I don't recall seeing her in the temple...'

When thinking back to the temple ritual he didn't remember seeing the woman there. He focused mostly on the cultists and the people having the leeches inserted into them. There was a small pile of people that had already passed to the side which he did not examine as much.

'Could that be it? Is it still inside her head or did she get it out?'

He didn't really have the chance to check on the affected people yet. The cultists chased him down to the other side of the double helix. The woman might be having problems with brain slugs while fighting or had removed it at a cost. Would she be able to defeat the monster in her weakened state?

After managing to force her way through the mass of tentacles she was now standing a few meters away from the large creature. Her sword finally shot out towards her enemy which protected its main body with a mass of squiggly things. Yet the sword still managed to plow through most of them along with injuring the monster's main body.

The creature let out a massive howl while thrashing about. It seemed that the monster was on the ropes as the cage that it formed with its body was retracted. It was defending itself by calling back the appendages that it spread through the underground of this village.

"We must run away, now is our chance."

Roland turned to the voice from afar that belonged to the guard captain that was somehow still alive. The caravan owner was also there and the moment the fleshy prison bars were gone they made a run for it while abandoning anyone else.

"Shouldn't we also go?"

"Aye..."

Orson looked to Dalrak, the coast was clear and they could escape now. Even if the woman from the golden order didn't win they would be able to survive. It didn't seem that the monster could move that huge body that fast. If they got out of the range of its many tentacles they would be safe.

The other remaining adventurers and travelers were already scattering to the sides. Some were going towards the surrounding woods while others went back to the wagons. The animals were going crazy but if handled right could still be used for a faster escape.

"That girl is going to die."

Grisalde commented while looking, it seemed that she also noticed that the blond was getting slower by the second. She was like a candle flame that burns the brightest before it dies. Perhaps she had an ace up her sleeve but from outside it looked like her stamina would run out faster than the monsters would.

"What are you talking about, you idiot? Even if she is going to die, what will you do?"

Senna asked while backing away, she was not willing to stay for much longer. This was the right choice as there was no way anyone here could intervene in a tier 3 battle. They were in separate worlds, they would only be turned to the monster's food and help it regenerate.

"I didn't say I would do anything, you twerp..."

Grisalde did the same, even though she was a strong barbarian there was nothing that she could do here either. It was better to live to fight another day, everyone seemed to be in agreement as they started to back away but one of them stepped forward.

"Wayland?"

"Hey where are you going, that's where the squiggly monster is..."

Asked Senna along with the others as they saw Roland step forward while placing a gem into the small chest cavity on the front.

"Uh, go ahead I won't be far behind, I just need to do something first."

While he realized that what he was about to do wasn't the smartest it was also a chance to gain an ally. If he just left and this knight here died he worried that the Abyssal cult would just ransack this place. The creature was probably created to keep this place a secret and it would most likely destroy the relic that caused those illusions to happen.

Roland was getting tired of running away. It never really solved any problems, just pushed them towards another date. The longer he didn't face reality the worse the future would be. He would not be surprised if the cultists got ahold of the passenger list of this caravan and then started assassinating each one of them after this was over.

How could he prevent this from happening? Either by running again and keeping a low profile for another couple of years or giving the cult other things to worry about. Their biggest secret was this cursed relic of theirs. Without it, they would not be able to carry out their assassinations. If he could help this woman defeat this monster then perhaps the cult's biggest asset would be exposed.

While he had inserted the gem into his armor it was not as powerful as he had hoped for. To deliver a meaningful blow to the monster he needed to get closer. Luckily his enemy was preoccupied with the blond church member. Her aura sword was turning the tentacles into mincemeat but the creature had many to spare. After feeding on some adventurer corpses it was managing to cope with that radiant blade of light.

"There he goes..."

The small group of adventurers looked at each other while Roland moved forward. Even though none of them were willing to get closer to the monster they all still remained in close proximity wondering what their new friend was trying to achieve. After activating all of the cloaking spells that he had in his possession he slowly sneaked towards the center of the battle area. The closer he got the more outlandish the battle seemed to him. He could barely see the blurry tentacles flying around yet the woman even in her weakened state was able to bat them away with the help of her swordsmanship.

She did not seem to have any grand skills besides the ranged attack she performed a few times. It was swordsmanship and quick movement that she was relying on to keep herself going. Regretfully the decrease in speed was starting to be noticeable, even though the monster was getting cut she was unable to find the core to finish it off.

'This thing's weak point must be changing locations...'

If this monster was similar to a slime then it had some kind of core that if destroyed would cause it to die. But while slimes were transparent and their core was easy to spot, this thing was pitch black with many eyes, mouths, and tendrils. Finding its core in such a chaotic battle would be almost impossible. That's why burning through its body with magical energy could be the best choice.

"Hey I don't know who you really are but if you can hear me, dodge!"

Finally, he found his opportunity to strike. The same long-range spell was activated, and the runes started burning into the metal yet again as they shifted from blue to red from being overloaded. His Goliath Slayer title was probably increasing his damage as the creature out-leveled him by quite a bit. The monster was focusing on the front where the aura user was so he decided to aim right for its back.

The wide drill-like beam shot out yet again but now with even more mana behind it. After drinking some mana recovering potions he decided to go for broke. Previously he took his entire mana pool below fifty percent now he would push it further down. The energy arcs gained in thickness as they continued to destroy the ground he was standing around as he continued to pump out his spell.

But to his surprise, a bunch of tentacles shot out just in time to protect the monster's body from behind. Yet he did not stop and as he continued to prolong the attack he drilled itself into those thick rubber-like appendages before breaking them. At about this point in time he lost his footing as the strain on his body had gotten too high and a splitting headache caused him to crumble to the ground.

A resounding explosion rocked the entire area and it was quickly followed by another huge scream coming from the monster. It was hurt and part of its body evaporated yet again but instead of dying it continued to flail around those tentacles that were now on a collision course with the one injuring it.

Before the monster's retaliation began though the person on the other side counter-attacked as well. The moment that Roland gave her was enough, her sword moved at an astonishing speed to connect with the now exposed weakened spot. During the explosion, it had become apparent and now it had been cleaved in two by the golden blade made from aura.

Almost as if time had stopped, the tentacles halted their advance. Roland, who had stumbled down to one knee, looked up to see a pointy spear of dark flesh just a few centimeters away from his eyes. Soon it started crumbling into dust as if it was burned away by a massive fire. The moment the monster's core was destroyed its life was over, it could not even groan as it disintegrated before his eyes.

The battle at the village finally reached its conclusion and the two responsible for it were looking at each other. One was an unsuspecting runesmith that didn't want to stand out and the other was a supposed guild worker that just came to grade a test.