

299 The Expedition [4]

The squads started scattering as soon as they entered the pavilion. The team leader ordered them to search for and study things they didn't know and to record them, along with bringing them back to the capital. 1

The first floor of the pavilion consisted of three main hallways, which divided the whole expedition team equally. And as Lucas reached the hallway where they were assigned, he helped the scout squad carry the materials they found and were curious about.

They looked different and like something special, but he wasn't interested in them. They were just mysterious because they didn't know anything about it, and it was not something special since they had nothing notable with them, for example, Qi.

While Lucas watched his squad carefully, although he didn't have any attachment to them, he couldn't ignore the thought of what he would do next. There was something he had in mind that he would do, but the thought of ignoring his squad to death still bothered him.

The expedition continued smoothly until they reached the second floor, where they scattered again. Again, they equally divided themselves

and entered different rooms until they reached the fifth floor, which didn't have any rooms and was just one big hall in total. And at the far end of the pavilion's largest room was an altar with three golden statues.

Everyone looked mesmerized as they slowly approached the altar. As they were gold, they were attracted to it. They were thinking of bringing it back to the capital, but the team leader just dismissed their ideas.

"This is an altar for a reason. Pay respect!"

They became silent, disappointed, and disheartened by what the team leader said. They lowered their heads and showed respect to the three statues, even though they didn't know who those statues referred to.

But Lucas simply gazed at it and pretended he was respecting them. However, deep inside, a throb was beating in his heart. He wasn't nervous; he was excited as something was about to happen that he knew.

The statue stood up. A huge explosive sound was created as those statues took their stance, destroying the roofs. Furthermore, their total height was 15 meters, which was the reason why the roof was destroyed. And behind where they previously sat were three holes, through which were paths for monsters.

"This is where the monsters were. The presence that I felt earlier was here, and in total, they were above the Master Spirit Realm. It would be a threat to this team, but manageable..."

Lucas witnessed how the expedition team fought with humanoid monsters that were created from mud. They were like golems but created from mud, which was a hindrance to physical attacks of the sword techniques they performed. Moreover, the golden statues were the problem in this clash.

It made them nervous because, after defeating the humanoid mud monsters, they discovered that normal physical attacks had no effect on the golden statues. They were formidable at some point, which was the main source of the cold blood of the combat squads.

On the other hand, Lucas acted as if he was having a hard time with his attacks.

"Who has some fire affinity? Let us try melting this monster down!" The team leader ordered as he pulled all of his oxygen from his lungs for that shout. He jumped high, with his lead to all the fire affinity cultivators with sword techniques and martial techniques.

A huge thud was created, which broke the system of the statue monster. And as their formation was broken by those attacks,



eventually, the expedition team was able to see some light and win the fight between those giant statues.

After a while, they finally defeated the monsters, breaking their sweat and exhaling an explosion of breath from their mouths. Visible on their faces was the fatigue, as the fight took almost half an hour. It was difficult for them but manageable. Lucas just observed their expressions and knew that they were still weak.

'Even with how these people were chosen as the strongest from the examination, they were still weak. The measly coordination they had was still useless, which strengthens my speculation about this expedition team's purpose for the 11 Elders. This was built for a reason, and it was most likely to test what was at the peak. The red sky was just a reason, or probably the reason why they wanted to test. They might know the danger in this place, but they wanted to know how difficult it was for them to clear it.'

They rested for a few minutes when finally having the energy to inspect the hall more, they went. Furthermore, they also saw plenty of items that they didn't know about which they thought of bringing back as well. Additionally, the items here were more appealing and enticing.

'Things here were better than the scraps from



the lower floors. But, they are still useless if they use them for something!

Everyone left the pavilion, and as a conclusion to their initial studies, there was nothing notable, nor the history of the pavilion. It was still unknown to them. However, it wasn't the only thing they went here for; the cave was also on the list.

"We haven't seen one thing that would lead us to the reason why the red sky appeared."

"I see... Then, what should we do now? We are still tired. Should we go to the cave?"

"Yeah... Let us waste no more time. Let us just leave the items we collected outside, then proceed with going to the cave."

Lucas's squad followed the team leader's will. They didn't want to waste more time either, so every combat squad agreed with that will. And as they were before the cave, what caught their attention was the wind pulling them in coming from the inside of the cave.

"This wide and tall entrance of a cave is peculiar. It was as if there was another hole in the cave, another entrance, and an exit in case we enter."

Everyone nodded.



"Then, should we get inside?"

"Yes..."

Lucas just sighed. "They were just stupid... How could they enter a cave that was strange in the first place? They were rushing things, impatient as usual. But, why is doing this something really stupid? They are still weak, yet they were brave enough to enter an obvious threat."

He could only shake his head. However, he didn't care as what was inside this cave would lead him to the next phase of his plan.

"What do you think is inside this cave?" David asked as they started entering the cave.

Lucas shrugged. "I don't know. I am not expecting anything. The scout squads know more about things; we are only here to fight monsters if there were any."

"I see... Then, if you had something to expect, what would it be?"

Lucas looked at him and sighed. "I just said that I have no expectations. But never mind. If you are curious, why would you ask me? Go ask the scout squad."

The rocky interior of the cave became much darker, and as they entered deeper into the cave, the darkness swallowed them entirely. They took



out their torches and lit their path, and as expected, there was a source of wind here as the fire just danced with every step they made.

The speculation the team leader and the scout squad had become stronger. They were now convinced that there was another end to this cave, even though they were already at the peak of Great Ming Mountain. And what they could only think of as having a reason behind this speculation was divinity.

"This place might be really divine. How could there be another end to a cave that had already reached its apex? There could be no other conclusion... That is impossible. What is plausible now, if we have to debate things with reality, is that this place was connected with the phenomenon. Another place? Just as the red sky is peculiar to us? Will there be a different place that creates the red sky as its effect? Who knows? I am getting more thrilled."

But, as the team leader became more excited, Lucas scoffed inwardly and returned his gaze to the path they were taking. They couldn't notice it. The wind in the cave pushed and pulled them, just like the fire danced. There was something in here.

Lucas just thought, "There was something else in this cave; they just couldn't sense it. They were

defeated by their impatience, which brought them the stupidity they were embracing. It was indeed a failure and a shame that these people were deemed to be powerful, but in the end, they just had power; they didn't have the means to have that power!

The more they walked into the depths of the cave, the stronger the wind became. The fire danced more, even hinting that it could be put down. And just what Lucas was afraid of had already happened. It was a disappointment.

"The cave was embraced with darkness, yet we are all courageous to enter a cave that could threaten our only source of light. If a monster appeared, and the lights disappeared, then we were all dead." Lucas mumbled as he watched eyes appear before them, reflecting the light from their torches. And as these eyes were revealed to be the eyes of monsters, it was already too late for them. They were swarmed by the number of these monsters, leading to death.