

## Village Head 511

Chapter 511 Three Moves! Three Lines! (3)

"Orion!" a loud cry sounded behind Orion. He turned his head around immediately to understand what was happening; however, his eyes widened at the scene before him.

Seth had activated his gift, creating a wave of molten lava from his hands and shooting it towards him. Orion didn't have the time to react as he saw the boiling molten lava arrive before him. But fortunately, before it could hit him, a wave of water appeared out of thin air, shooting upwards like a wall in front of Orion.

"BAANGG!"

"HISS!"

The molten magma collapsed once it came in contact with the water, causing a wave of thick white mist to spread outwards into the air in all four directions.

Instantly, the wall of water was destroyed, and Fifi arrived in front of Orion in the blink of an eye. She stared at Seth seriously, with a cold, expressionless glint in her eyes.

"What is the meaning of this, Warrior Seth?" Fifi asked, her words laced with an icy tone.

Seth, seeing that his attack had been blocked, gritted his teeth in anger before quickly regaining his composure upon hearing Fifi's voice. The rage and humiliation in his eyes quickly disappeared as he stared at the furious Fifi before shifting his attention to the rest of the eight warriors, who were all shaking their heads in dissatisfaction at his actions.

Seth immediately withdrew his attention, taking a deep breath to calm himself down. He refocused on Fifi's cold gaze, sighing deeply. "It seems that I might have let my emotions get the best of me," he said, shaking his head.

Shifting his attention towards Orion, who was behind Fifi, Seth apologised, "I'm sorry."

"I'm glad that Warrior Seth recognises his mistake. However, I still have no choice but to report this incident to the Village Chief once we return to the Village, just in case it happens again," Orion said, shifting his attention away from Seth towards Fifi.

The warriors nodded their heads seriously in understanding. Orion sighed in relief, seeing that none of them offered any resistance to orders. Walking back to their Orion's sky and climbing back up with Fifi and the other female warrior, Orion took note of Seth's abnormally calm figure.

He made a mental note to report this not only to the Village Chief but also to the rest of the key figures, just in case. Since Seth had already attacked him once, there was a chance that he might do so again, and Orion needed to ensure that Seth didn't get such a chance again.

As the Orion's skies continued to float forward, Orion couldn't hold back any longer and decided to ask a question that had been bothering him for a while.

"How long will it take before we arrive at the mountain?" Orion asked, turning his head to look at Fifi, who was standing beside him.

"We should arrive at the mountain by tomorrow morning. Don't worry about looking for it because you won't be able to see the mountains until we arrive in front of it," Fifi responded, as though she could already guess Orion's thoughts.

Orion nodded in understanding, now realising why he had never encountered any sight of the large surrounding mountains despite coming this far into the dead forest.

Regardless, he kept silent and continued to fix his gaze forward, pondering what had occurred in the Prismerian kingdom during his absence and hoping his partners were all okay.

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Within the mountains

Prismerian Kingdom

Beneath the imposing Prismerian Castle, where every criminal in the Primerian Kingdom faced either a sentence for a designated period or a lifetime imprisonment, the door of one particular cell slowly creaked open.

A figure in a violet, long dress with a daring slit above her waist, revealing elegant black lace panties, stepped inside, swiftly closing the reinforced crystal door behind her.

Her eyes swept across the dimly lit cell and landed on a woman with long, flowing red bangs.

The woman's arms were raised and chained to the thick stone wall behind her. She bore numerous scars from what appeared to be a one-sided brawl and was cloth in a knee-length, plain grey gown. Chains encumbered her legs, leaving her no choice but to kneel on the ragged, stony surface of the cell.

"Don't tell me you've already given up and died."

The woman slowly raised her head, allowing her long red bangs to part, revealing a wounded face that would have stunned any figure within the Prismerian Kingdom. After all, the battered and injured woman, who had been cruelly chained to the wall, now looked nothing less than a commoner who had endured brutal punishment. And she was none other than -

Former Queen Selene!

The trial that was supposed to be a glorious day, one where they would possess the unknown power to defeat the White Flame, had failed.

It marked the worst mistake of her life, not because they had been unable to obtain the mysterious power but because they had lost the only person capable of leading them out of this wretched mountain—Orion had died.

Although this news had shaken her to the core, almost crushing her heart, Orion was not just the catalyst for their escape from the mountain; he was also the key figure who would aid them in defeating the Gemheart Clan and contribute to stabilising the Prismerian Kingdom.

Despite her persistent efforts to prevent the war and even planning to use the Gemheart Clan's younger brother as a truce to halt hostilities, the following day shattered her expectations. She

witnessed the Gemheart Clan launching an assault on the castle, mercilessly killing those who resisted and imprisoning all who surrendered.

It seemed as though they had all resigned to their fate, prepared to die but not without putting up a fight. Perhaps they believed the Queen had already regained her powers or that the foreigner was alive, and hiding somewhere within the Prismerian Kingdom.

Despite facing various forms of resistance, none of them appeared. The enemies, not underestimating their own intelligence, quickly grasped the reality that no one was going to thwart their advance.

#### Chapter 512 The Chained Queen

Once this realization set in, the castle crumbled swiftly under the Gemheart Clan's assault, followed by the Crystalforge Clan. The entire Prismerian Kingdom succumbed to their control, with no opposition from any of the five major clans, the Prismaflow Clan or even the Quaztrwraith Clan.

Upon discovering that not only had the Queen not regained her powers but also that the foreigner with unknown strength was dead, they abandoned any resistance, willingly assisting the Gemheart Clan in consolidating their dominance over the Prismerian Kingdom.

Queen Selene couldn't help but sigh as she pondered once more. It had been several days since she learned the fate of her daughter and husband, assuming they were still alive. If only she had found a way to regain her former strength, perhaps none of this would have happened.

"You know, from the looks of it, it seems you haven't yet accepted your fate."

Queen Selene raised her head to find Gemheart Clan Mistress, Elara Gemheart, standing before her. Elara stared down at her with an emotionless expression, though pity radiated from her eyes.

Instead of replying to the question, Queen Selene pressed her lips together before spitting upward at Elara's face.

Fortunately, it seemed Elara had expected such a reaction, as she pushed her head to the side, dodging the projectile just in time.

"Heh, you should have stayed in one place; I was only going to help you cover up that nasty mark on your face if it helps you feel any better," Queen Selene said with a short laugh.

She stared at the left side of Elara's cheek, now scarred visibly, shaking her head amusingly. "I'm the Queen who has lost her crown and her kingdom, now living the rest of her life chained, imprisoned, and fed like the worst criminal. Yet, why do you look extremely pitiful?"

Elara's expression immediately scrunched up in annoyance. She opened her mouth to retort but snapped it shut, staring at Queen Selene's miserable condition.

"I just came here to inform you that the engagement between the Crystalforge Clan heir, Crystalia Crystalforge, and the Gemheart Clan heir, Zephyrion Gemheart, will take place tomorrow. This engagement will save the Crystalforge Clan from their supposed decline and extend your life, so be grateful," Elara said with a sigh, looking at Queen Selene's bewildered expression.

Suddenly, Queen Selene stretched out her tongue and attempted to bite down on it with her teeth.

Swiishh!!

After the announcement, Elara, expecting something drastic from the woman, immediately caught her jaws and restrained them tightly with an outstretched arm.

"Shh!" Elara made a silent gesture as she looked outside the cell for a moment before releasing a sigh.

"She's gone," she said, realizing that the elite warrior tasked with watching her every move was no longer eavesdropping on their conversation.

Uncleching her hand from Queen Selene's jaws, Elara pulled back and stared at Selene, who was looking at her with a furious gaze.

"What is it?" Elara asked, raising a brow as she straightened her back.

"This wasn't the plan!" Selene said, gritting her teeth in anger.

Elara sighed as she shook her head helplessly in response. "Well, what can I do? After I escaped from the Gemheart Clan and made my way over to the palace, you should understand that my husband currently has zero trust in me. As such, my opinions barely carry any weight," she explained.

Selene ground her teeth in anger.

"But..." she started, but her voice was immediately interrupted.

"But nothing," Elara spat out in annoyance. "Our plan was for me to check whether the foreigner is truly dead, while in return, you give me the information about who and how many individuals had received the unknown power that would enable us to defeat White Flame. As for whether your daughter decides to become the partner of that foolish son of mine, it is none of my business."

Though she had discovered the truth about why many of the Crystalforge Clan's elite warriors were absent from the battle from the former Queen herself, while her husband was still trying to find out the reason, preparing for a surprise attack, thinking it might come at any moment, she didn't let him in on this secret. Why would she?

Why would she tell a madman who would scar her face just to show how much he cared about her and ensure she didn't divulge such information?

Only Naka knows what he could do once he finds out. Instead of waiting for him to figure out what had happened, she had to seize this opportunity and discover the identity of those who had received the strange power that could enable them to defeat the White Flame.

This would allow her to escape the mountain and run away as far from him as possible.

"Besides, you should also recognize that she's doing this not only for your safety but also for that of the remaining Crystalforge Clan," Elara said with a sigh escaping her lips as she shook her head helplessly.

Selene looked at the ground, various emotions passing through her eyes before her shoulders slumped, and a deep, loud exhale escaped her lips.

"How did it go? Have you managed to speak with the Princess of the Garden yet? What did she say? Is he still alive?" Selene asked, trying to suppress her emotions.

She hoped that Elara had managed to find out something this time around. After all, apart from her daughter's safety, Orion's whereabouts were one of the things that mattered at the moment. Only with his strength could he change the current situation of the Prismerian Kingdom.

In short, Selene didn't believe that the young man was dead!

Elara observed Selene's hopeful expression and nodded in response. "Yes, I finally had the chance to speak with the Princess of the Garden, and she told me that he is still alive," she responded seriously.

Selene's eyes widened with joy and excitement but quickly dimmed as she heard Elara's following words.

#### Chapter 513 The Chained Queen (2)

"The Princess of the Garden also mentioned that he is now outside the mountain, but unfortunately, his condition is not good," Elara added. "It's uncertain whether he will recover or not."

The joy in Selene's eyes vanished as she shifted her gaze toward the ground, clenching her teeth in anger.

Elara observed her reaction and shook her head with a sigh.

"I've done my part and obtained the information you needed. Now, do your part and tell me who completed the trial and received the unknown power to defeat the White Flame," Elara asked impatiently.

After all, the farther she was from this place, the better for her.

Selene locked eyes with Elara's impatience and nodded in response, "Alright, I will tell you," she said before adding, "But before I do, you have to agree to one condition."

Elara's frustration surfaced, "What are you playing at, Selene? This wasn't part of the agreement," she said with a frown.

Ignoring Elara's irritation, Selene shook her head with a smile, "I promise it's not anything too demanding."

Elara scrutinized Selene for a moment, gritted her teeth, and asked, "What is the condition?"

"I want you to take my daughter with you as you leave this mountain," Selene said, staring at Elara with a determined expression. She could ensure her daughter's safety outside the mountain if she couldn't escape.

Elara's frown deepened as she exhaled deeply, looking at Selene's pleading expression. "That foolish son of mine has taken an extreme liking to your daughter and hardly lets her out of his sight, so I don't think that would be an easy task to do now," she responded seriously.

"Please..."

"I don't think that we are close enough for me to want to risk my safety for the sake of saving your daugh—"

"I'll tell you where the Crystalforge clan's artefacts are stored," Selene interrupted, staring at Elara with a resolute expression.

Elara's face scrunched up in displeasure. Selene's offer was tempting because, from what she knew, the Crystalforge Clan's artefacts treasury was more incomparable than any of the five major clans, mainly due to their clan's unique abilities.

So, even though she couldn't take all of them for herself, she could still find some things to help her get out of this mountain.

"Alright, where are the Crystalforge Clan's artefacts stored?" Elara asked, accepting Selene's request.



Selene nodded in understanding and explained everything about where the Crystalforge Clan's artefacts were hidden within the Crystalforge Clan and how to get to them. It took a few minutes for Selene to cover every detail for Elara.

Afterwards, she listed the names of all the individuals who had succeeded in gaining the unknown power that would enable them to defeat the White Flame, along with their physical features so that Elara could recognize them correctly.

Once she finished, Elara nodded in understanding, her brows furrowed.

"Are you sure that's everything I need to know?" Elara asked for clarification.

"Yes, that's everything you need to know," Selene nodded, with a tired sigh escaping her lips. All this conversation was beginning to take a toll on her mind.

"Okay, besides, you don't have any reason to lie to me," Elara responded.

She looked at Selene with pity for a moment before shaking her head and walking towards the door. When she reached the door, she halted her steps.

Without turning around, she spoke, "A Queen who has lost her crown, her kingdom, and now lives the rest of her life chained, imprisoned, and fed like the worst criminal," she paused before she suddenly continued, "Compared to me, you are the one who looks extremely pitiful, former Queen Selene," her voice sounding behind her as she opened the cell door, stepped out, not forgetting to close it behind her.

As the silence settled within the cell once more, former Queen Selene found Elara's words ringing in her ears for a moment before they disappeared. Absentmindedly, she adjusted her knees to one side and attempted to lie down on the ground and get some rest.

However, her arms were restricted by the chains, drawing her body backwards and reminding her that she was still chained to the walls.

Sighing deeply in defeat and frustration, she bent her head forward, her lustrous red, long-flowing locs slowly shifting to cover up the intense emotions in her eyes and expressionless face.

As she attempted to force herself to sleep, eager to lose the feeling of being starved until she could eat something again, one thought kept ringing in her mind.

'Where are you, foreigner? Aren't you coming back?'

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A loud knock resounded on the extravagant crystal door; however, after a few minutes with no response, the knock echoed once more. Already guessing who it might be, former Princess Crystalia suppressed the irritation in her voice as she asked, "Who is that?"

Her voice was loud enough for the person on the other side to hear her. Instead of responding, another knock echoed from the door for the third time, much louder than the last.

"Tch!" Holding down her annoyance as she understood her current situation, Crystalia stood up from her bed and walked toward the extravagant, thick crystal door.

She swung the door open angrily.

"What is it..." Just as she was about to speak, her mouth immediately snapped shut the moment she noticed the figure standing outside the door.

"Ely —" Crystalia wanted to say before she suddenly sealed her lips, remembering several guards were outside her room. Most of all, seeing as Elysia had disguised herself by wearing another maid outfit and changing the colour of her hair, Crystalia understood that it would cause big trouble for both of them if it were found out by anyone that the former Queen's personal servant was meeting up with the former Princess of the Prismerian Kingdom.

So, she immediately feigned ignorance to fool the guards outside the room.

"Who are you? What do you want? Did Zephyrion send you?" Princess Crystalia asked with feigned annoyance.

## Chapter 514 Hope

"I came to tell you that your bath is ready, Princess. The engagement between you and Prince Zephyrion will take place immediately tomorrow. So, I've been instructed to make sure that you take your bath and sleep early so that you can be prepared for tomorrow," Elysia responded, playing her role perfectly.

Crystalia remained silent, pretending to hide the annoyance and disgust on her face, but she failed. Of course, she felt an extreme amount of hate at the mention of her supposed engagement. However, she needed to keep up her act.

She snorted loudly and turned back towards her bed, not bothering to respond.

Understanding that this was her cue, Elysia gently shook her head, with a deep sigh escaping her lips, before walking into the room and closing the door behind her.

As Elysia attempted to speak, she watched Crystalia instantly turn around and jump towards her, wrapping her arms tightly around her waist, almost pushing them to the ground.

Fortunately, Elysia had witnessed her actions and had been prepared for it, immediately wrapping her arms around Crystalia.

"Hicc... Hicc... I'm sorry, Princess! Hicc.. I should have looked for a way to get you out of here as fast as I could," Elysia said as she tightly hugged Crystalia, tears running down her eyes.

Seeing this, Crystalia, who wanted to release her emotions as she finally had someone to talk to, immediately suppressed her feelings. She stretched her hand upwards and wiped away the tears from Elysia's cheeks.

"You know, I'm the one getting engaged forcefully to one of the most disgusting people I have ever met tomorrow, so shouldn't I be the one supposed to be crying here," Crystalia said.

Elysia noticed tears hanging on both sides of Princess Crystalia's eyes. She nodded immediately and let go, understanding that Princess Crystalia was holding herself back from breaking down, unlike her, who had already broken down several times in private before she had arrived here.

After properly regaining her composure and stabilizing her mind, Elysia focused on the young woman before her. "I came here immediately after I heard about the engagement that will be taking place tomorrow to inform you that I have found a way for you to leave this castle and possibly get you off this mountain," she said, a solemn tone in her voice.

Upon hearing Elysia's words, Princess Crystalia's eyes widened in surprise before she regained her composure. "From now on, you don't have to call me Princess Crystalia anymore; just Crystalia is fine," she said, shaking her head before Elysia could retort.

"And what about you? Will you also be coming along?" she added, staring at Elysia's smiling face, which she could tell was masking all of her emotions.

Elysia shook her head in response. "No, I—"

"Then, I won't be coming along," Crystalia interrupted, firmly rejecting Elysia's idea.

Elysia looked at Crystalia's resolute expression and couldn't help but shake her head again in response. "This won't do, Princess Crystalia. Considering that tomorrow is your engagement, I can't waste time thinking about my safety when your safety is at risk—"

"I am not going anywhere if you are not coming along, Elysia," Crystalia said. She was not stupid; from the way Elysia had suddenly arrived at her room soon after hearing about the engagement with a plan to get her out of this castle, she understood that whatever Elysia had in mind was something dangerous.

"Princess..."

"If you are not coming along, Elysia, if my mother, father, and even Flintor are not coming along, then I am not going anywhere," Crystalia declared, interrupting Elysia's words again with a firm gaze and an even more intense, resolute expression.

"Besides, what do you think Orion would say once he finds out that I abandoned you and his child so that I could save my life?" Crystalia added.

Elysia instantly bit her lips upon hearing Princess Crystalia's words. 'So that is the reason,' she thought. She could naturally tell that the Princess's last words were why she didn't want to leave the castle and run away.

Thinking about this, Elysia couldn't help but sigh at the fact that her Princess had to fall in love with the same man as her.

'Couldn't things have been easier?' Elysia thought before thinking of another way to shift the mood of this conversation and convince the Princess to take this chance for her safety.

"How about you have your bath first and rest for a bit, Princess, before we continue with this conversation," Elysia suggested with a bright smile, looking at Princess Crystalia.

This was her job.

As the Queen's personal servant, who ensured that the Queen was always stress-free and free from worries outside of her work, if she couldn't ensure that she served the Queen's daughter the same way, wouldn't she have failed at her overall task?

Crystalia's heart couldn't help but clench tightly as she could tell that even at this moment, Elysia was still trying to take care of her.

"Alright, my body has been feeling stiff since earlier today, so I think a bath might help relax it and cool off my mind for a bit," she said lightly, causing Elysia's smile to shine even brighter.

"Okay, princess, you don't have to worry about a thing then. Just leave everything to me, and I will make sure that you are well-relaxed and resting," Elysia said, "And if you need anything, don't forget to let me know so that I can take care of it."

Crystalia nodded in response, "Don't worry; if I need anything later, I will naturally let you know," she responded, despite knowing that after today, she might not find the opportunity to speak with Elysia again.

Elysia nodded back as she said, "Let's go then, Princess," before she turned around and walked towards the door.

Princess Crystalia followed behind her, wondering if Orion would appear dramatically and save them, just like he had saved her and her family previously from the assassination attempt, or if he had really died during the trial.

Regardless, she could only pray to Naka with all her heart that it was the former.

## Chapter 515 The Warrior's Arrival

In a brightly lit room, former King Brylon attended to documents about unimportant matters concerning the Prismerian Kingdom spread across his table.

The door suddenly swung open, revealing a figure clad in brown, carrying a stack of documents. The person approached the wide table and laid down the pile.

"King Garnet has ordered that you take care of these documents before tomorrow so that you can attend the royal engagement and stand as the representative of the Crystalforge Clan during the engagement," the figure informed.

Without waiting for a response, the brown-clad individual turned around and exited the study room, leaving the room to fall back into silence.

Witnessing the continuous demands of his duties in the study room, former King Brylon couldn't suppress a sigh of defeat.

Since the Gemheart Clan seized control of the castle and defeated the Crystalforge Clan, Brylon was chained to the study room instead of imprisoned in the dungeon, like his wife.

His days were consumed by resolving numerous non-trivial issues plaguing the Prismerian Kingdom, preventing it from crumbling, while Garnet managed political matters and other crucial affairs.

Garnet's reasoning was practical; in his view, imprisoning them would squander resources. Rather than seeking alternative assistance to handle the kingdom's affairs without risking instability, Garnet chose him.

In return, he got to cling to his life and his wife's.

Knowing this situation was merely a temporary reprieve; former King Brylon understood the imminent danger awaiting him once Garnet learned about the trial.

Garnet would likely launch a search for everyone who gained the unknown power to defeat the White Flame, including his daughter. This was the key to escaping the mountain and returning back to the world outside the mountain.

Moreover, the mysterious artefact Garnet placed on him weakened his strength to that of an ordinary Prismarion, slowly deteriorating his skin and flesh.

In essence, his death was inevitable; it was only a matter of time before it happened.

Despite the looming threat, Brylon felt a pressing need to ensure the escape of all participants who obtained the unknown power, especially his daughter, before the inevitable end.

Despite the heavy chains tightly bound around his four limbs, Brylon extended his hand, firmly grasping the black crystal-enchanted ink pen. He refocused on the documents sprawled across the table.

Meanwhile, in the recesses of his mind, Brylon couldn't shake the hope that Elysia had conveyed the plan to his daughter and successfully got together with the warriors who had succeeded in the trial.

Their escape from the mountain before the forthcoming engagement depended on this coordinated effort. Once outside, they would have to rely on their fortune to confront the challenges awaiting them.

Despite the weariness creeping through his body, Brylon recognized the necessity of persisting to ensure a favourable outcome.

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Outside the mountains

Morning

After tirelessly navigating through the night, Orion sighed in relief at the sight of several large mountains stretching out for miles before him.

The mountains formed a curve, each displaying unique sizes that extended into the distance, creating a captivating panorama that briefly captured his attention. However, he couldn't afford to linger on the scenic view. Shifting his gaze downward to the immense, jagged rock formations at the base of one mountain, he asked, "Is that where you found me?" Orion turned to Fifi for an answer.

Fifi nodded in confirmation, "Yes, we discovered you lying in Vylkr Warrior mode over there," she replied, gesturing toward a specific large stone.

Her eyes focused on the countless one-star and two-star Vylkr vines slithering aimlessly around it.

Orion nodded in understanding before silently gesturing for all of Orion's skies to move towards the mountain. Upon arrival, they spent some time locating an entrance, eventually finding a cave that caught Orion's eye at first glance.

Surprisingly, this cave turned out to be the same one he and Saria had discovered when seeking an escape from the swarm of one-star and two-star Vylkr vines. Reflecting on this coincidence, Orion couldn't help but sigh in remembrance. If the current him replaced the version from two weeks ago, he would have found his previous situation much easier to handle, despite knowing he would still lose to Stronghold Leader Drakar.

"So, what's your plan?" Fifi asked, breaking him out of his thoughts.

Orion responded, "We can't land the Orion's skies on top of the mountain due to the snow, so our best option would be to touch down somewhere below it."

Despite the toughness and strength of the Orion's skies, he didn't want to risk their only means for a safe and swift return to the village by exposing them to the harsh mountain conditions.

Orion surveyed the area and quickly identified a suitable spot, sparsely occupied by Vylkr vines, making it an ideal landing place.



Once on the ground, the warriors disembarked from their respective Orion's skies one by one, armed and carrying provisions. Only two warriors remained behind to pilot and attend to any emergencies or potential increases in Vylkr vines in the area.

"You can still take the Orion's skies back into the sky if the situation becomes too much to handle. Just keep your eyes sharp to spot us at any moment once we make our way off the mountain," Orion advised the two middle-aged men who would be staying behind to watch over the Orion's skies.

Both men nodded silently in agreement.

Satisfied they understood, Orion turned around and locked eyes with the warriors. "Let's go," he commanded, charging towards the direction of the cave with the rest of the warriors beside him.

With their incredible speed, they reached their destination in less than ten minutes. While Orion lagged behind a bit, Fifi helped him keep up.

The others, all three-star warriors, overlooked it, understanding that Orion couldn't match their speed even with his full strength.

Grasping his cutlass tightly, Orion surveyed the eleven warriors present as he spoke, "Remember, follow my lead. Until we get to the Prismerian Kingdom, conserve whatever energy you have. And lastly, if you see a White Flame, do not engage. Quickly inform the rest of us and run as fast as you can," he said.

## Chapter 516 The Warrior's Arrival (2)

Their opponent was a god, so despite Orion's curiosity about how the three-star warriors would fare against White Flame, he wouldn't take such an unnecessary risk until he learned the current situation of the Prismerian Kingdom and had a conversation with Aegis of the Arctic Deity regarding how the trial had ended and why he had woken up outside the mountain.

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Upper section of the mountain

Iris steadily gripped her great sword, suppressing the trembling feeling in her hands as she stared at the long, broad, rocky, route in front of her, gradually lit by a bright white flickering light.

Turning her head to the side, she observed that, just like her, the warriors and the elite warriors, all of whom had passed the trial and obtained the power to defeat White Flame finally, were also shivering, barely standing properly on their feet as they witnessed the route before them slowly brighten up.

Iris could only clench her teeth in annoyance and frustration as she observed this scene. She couldn't blame them or anyone else who reacted in such a way in their current situation because they were about to face a being that had plagued the Prismerion race for countless generations.

A being who was the cause of the 'Three Great Slaughters,' a being whose sole existence had made them accept their fates of being trapped in this mountain, showing just how powerless and fragile they were.

And now, they were about to come face to face with this being.

"Tchh," Iris bit her tongue in annoyance to snap away and break free from the fear within her body.

She understood that if they didn't regain their composure in time, regardless of whether or not they had gained the power to defeat the White Flame, they would surely die at the hands of the vengeful god without being able to do anything about it.

"Everyone, snap out of it!" Iris shouted as she looked at the other eighty-one warriors around her. "How will we win this battle and obtain the freedom of the Prismerion race if we continue like this? Don't tell me that you have already thought about losing. If so, why did you risk your life to obtain the divine power that would enable us to defeat the White Flame?"

Seeing them all pondering deeply at her words, Iris inwardly sighed that they were all gradually returning to their senses.

They were all elite warriors and warriors who had trained for several years to achieve their current strength; as such, she wasn't that surprised by their swift change in composure once they heard her words.

Nevertheless, she recognized that she didn't have much time left as the rugged, stony walls around them had also brightened up, indicating that in less than a few minutes, they would soon be confronted with the vengeful, bloodthirsty god.

"Tch! Tch! I can't believe that I allowed myself to be carried away by fear after all the sacrifices I've made up until now!" a voice sounded in the crowd.

Everyone turned their heads toward the leader of the 5th Elite Division of the Crystalforge Clan, the Starfall Legion, who had spoken up as he brandished his spear toward the direction of White Flame that was about to appear before them.

"Everyone, don't forget to give the current leader of the Starforged Knights a gift after this, as we all need to thank her for bringing us back to our senses!" a member of the 9th Elite Division, the Iron Bane Legion, spoke up as she tightly grasped her long sword, her gaze also focused forward on the lit route in front of her.

Several more voices rang in the air, each sharing the same determination as the last.

Witnessing this, a smile appeared on Iris's face, "Quickly, everyone, sense the divine mysteries and activate the divine power that you received from the trial," she spoke loudly.

After the trial was over, the Aegis of the Arctic Deity told them that the divine blood that they had collected would bless their bodies with the power to injure a god.

Without wasting any time, Iris closed her eyes and tried her best to sense the divine power flowing through her body due to the drop of divine blood coursing through her veins.

A rumble echoed within Iris's mind and simultaneously within the others around her who were also attempting to draw out the divine power within them.

Although she had prepared herself physically and mentally, continuously training her body and mind since they completed the trial, she still didn't expect the mental and physical impact to be overwhelming.

Her muscles tightened, and the rumble in her mind slowly intensified. Let alone subdue it. Even defending against it seemed basically impossible. Iris could feel her consciousness slipping out of her body.

Roaring loudly, she gathered her consciousness and steeled her willpower, which she had strengthened for several decades as an elite warrior. Still, it felt as though she could collapse here at any moment.

"I... can't... die here! I CAN'T DIE HERE!" Iris gritted those words through her teeth as the sensation of her soul being painfully pulled out, string by string, suddenly overwhelmed her whole being.

Under the impact of such a sensation, Iris felt as though her whole being was already on the verge of falling apart.

"Katcha!"

The sound of something shattering deep within her body caused Iris's entire body to tremble. Suddenly, a bright milky mark of two wings appeared on her forehead, one looking immensely more significant than the other.

The bright-winged mark became more apparent with each passing moment. It slowly seeped within her being as though it was etching itself deep within her body and soul before it slowly began to dim down, suppressing the overwhelming sensation that had previously consumed her entire body.

Gradually, Iris could feel her consciousness returning, causing her eyes to flicker open slowly.

Around her, some of the warriors had already fainted from exhaustion or shock, failing to withstand the process of merging with the divine blood to the end, even though the Aegis of the Arctic Deity had helped refine some of it while they were unconscious at the end of the trial.

### Chapter 517 The Warrior's Arrival (3)

As Iris shifted her focus to the remaining seventy-one warriors still standing, the rumble in her mind gradually calmed down, and memories with strange and unfathomable powers suddenly surfaced.

She wanted to arrange her thoughts properly, but time was something she couldn't afford.

Iris roared, "EVERYONE..." but her voice caught in her throat as she beheld the scene before her. The broad rocky passage was ablaze with an astonishing flickering brightness, almost forcing her to squint.

However, it wasn't the brilliance that halted her words; it was the source. Instead of a flickering white flame, a tall humanoid figure stood erect, studying them with an intensity that seemed to scrutinize each individual.

She strained to see the being's face clearly, but its humanoid shape, like the rest of its body, seemed to embody white flames, obscuring any distinct features.

Iris needed no confirmation; she could recognize him at once. Despite the unconventional form, she could unmistakably identify the humanoid figure before her – White Flame!

Without hesitation, Iris opened her mouth and spoke one of the few memories she had absorbed in just three breaths.

"STAR GUARD SHADOWS!"

Almost immediately, a sphere of divine light enveloped the area before expanding outward, embracing Iris and the other eighty-one warriors in its brilliant aura.

Iris felt her pupils contract as she witnessed the humanoid flickering White Flame turning his head in her direction, advancing in the air towards her.

Gritting her teeth, Iris's mind swirled with various thoughts as she desperately tried to figure out her next move. Suddenly, a loud voice resounded beside her.

"STAR GUARD SHADOWS!"

The divine protective barrier thrummed with intensified light, its radiance growing brighter as numerous voices resonated in the air. They tapped into the unknown power within the 'Divine Blood' coursing through them.

Iris observed with satisfaction as White Flame, advancing toward her, abruptly collided with the protective barrier.

Despite his determined attempts to breach it, he was repelled each time, unable to pass through.

"It's working," a voice rang out from the crowd, echoing Iris's sentiments and those of everyone present.

A smile graced her lips as she shouted, "EVERYONE, PREPARE TO ATTACK!!" With each thwarted effort by White Flame to breach the barrier, she sensed a slight tremor within her body, realizing that it wouldn't withstand the assault for much longer if they continued like this.

"LIGHT STRENGTH GROWTH!" Iris bellowed. She felt a sudden surge of strength coursing through her veins, her blood boiling with newfound power.

The winged mark on her forehead radiated a pulsing divine light, inducing a calming sensation.

Without hesitation, she unleashed her magical energy, now composed of several wisps of divine energy, wrapping it around her body and sword.

As White Flame's attacks intensified, Iris and various others who had acted swiftly charged toward his direction.

Their goal was to buy more time for the others going through the process, knowing the divine energy flowing through them had an effect on the formidable being before them.

**BANGG!!**

Iris swung the edge of her great sword against the lower midsection of White Flame. Instead of cutting through him, the blade stopped midway, delivering a powerful blow that knocked White Flame backwards with a thunderous explosion reverberating against the rocky walls of the cave. The force also propelled Iris backwards due to the rebound.

As she regained her composure, before White Flame could react, a spear impacted the side of his head, almost piercing through before coming to a halt.

The force, however, sent White Flame crashing into the rocky passage walls with a resounding, 'BOOM!!,' his body creating a deep pit within.

White Flame parted his lips for the first time, a sharp exhale escaping as he began to break free from the imprint he had formed on the rocky surface.

Despite their inability to injure or harm him, the sight of White Flame being pushed back, coupled with the sharp intake of breath after enduring their attacks, sent an intense wave of overwhelming emotion surging through the hearts of Iris and the others.

Perhaps—

Perhaps today, they might finally get the chance to defeat the White Flame.

That hopeful thought ignited in the minds of everyone present.

"EVERYONE, ATTACK!!!" Iris screamed, her body surging forward with extreme speed as White Flame was on the verge of fully extricating himself from the wall imprint.

Various waves of magical energy erupted from the Crystalforge Clan's Elite Warriors, spreading outwards like a ripple within the rocky passage.

The collective magical pressure emanating from the dense magical energy in the air was enough to force any lesser-ranked warrior to their knees and send shivers down their spines. Nevertheless, in front of the deadly barrages of various high-ranked warriors, each strike aimed at him with the intent to kill, White Flame, who had been silent throughout, finally opened his mouth and spoke,

"Let there be darkness."

Darkness fell like a curtain upon their eyes, causing Iris and the others to freeze in their steps.

They couldn't hear, sense, or see anything around them.

"I will cleanse the earth and rid it of you, filthy invaders," a cold, emotionless voice echoed in their ears, sending shivers down their spines and causing the hairs on their skin to stand on end.

Immediately after the voice ceased, a bright flash of light erupted within their vision, almost blinding them and sending them flying backwards.

"Arrghh!!" Iris groaned uncomfortably as she quickly regained her composure.

However, the moment she decided to take a good look at her surroundings, her eyes widened in disbelief, mirroring the reactions of several others.

.....

At the same time

"BOOOM!!!" "BOOMM!!!"

Orion and the others halted their footsteps, the cavern walls around them trembling once more alongside the thunderous sounds that echoed within their ears.

"What was that?" Seth asked with a frown, squinting in the direction of the noise.

Although they had ventured deep into the mountains, where sunlight couldn't penetrate, they were warriors with keen eyesight that allowed them to see even in the deepest hour of the night. As such, the darkness around them posed no challenge.

Chapter 518 The Warrior's Arrival (4)

"BAANNGG!! BOOM!!!"

"It sounds like a battle," Orion responded, a pondering expression on his face, feeling an itch where the mark of the crimson greatsword was.



Fifi nodded in agreement. "Do you have any idea what it might be?" she asked, looking at him.

Since Orion had been here previously, she figured he might have an understanding of what it was so that they wouldn't be rushing into it blindly.

Orion thought deeply, contemplating what it could be. His eyes suddenly widened in realization as the walls around him shook again, alongside the thunderous impact that resounded through the air.

'Shit, they are facing White Flame,' Orion thought.

He hurriedly looked at Fifi and the others, "Change of plans. Everyone, get ready; we might have to do a rescue mission," Orion said, trying his best to suppress the itch from the mark. He would have to speak with Aerialia later about this because, although he might be okay with having a goddess to talk to occasionally, that didn't mean he enjoyed the sensation of his skin feeling as though it was being burned or itching.

Seth's frown deepened, "A rescue mission?" he asked, not particularly liking that they would have to rescue anyone before they had to save the tree nymph.

"Yes," Orion nodded before explaining, "As I've mentioned before, we are currently within the territory of a god. From the sounds of battle, someone or a group of individuals are currently engaging the god. Considering that the only people currently within these mountains are the Prismerions, it's not too far-fetched to say that it's them."

"Of course, it could be that they are currently fighting among themselves, or the god is going on a rampage by himself. But I highly doubt that. However, we won't know until we see for ourselves and find out what is happening."

Fifi and the others nodded at Orion's words. Although Orion had just briefed them on what might be happening, they knew they would only fully understand the situation once they observed it. So, they readily agreed with Orion's words.

Seeing that they were all in agreement, Orion led the way forward. As the warriors surged forward with incredible speed, Fifi remained beside him, keeping her guard up to protect him from any sudden dangers.

Their speed was steady, neither too fast nor too slow, until they suddenly slowed down after noticing the bright light in the distance.

"What is that? I don't think the sun can shine this deep within the mountain," Seth asked with a raised eyebrow, a sense of foreboding rising within him.

"I think so too. Whatever it is, I don't think it's natural," Orion replied solemnly.

If it were the light emanating from the flickering flame of White Flame, he would have immediately noticed.

However, this wasn't it.

With a bit of foreboding in his heart, Orion gestured for the other Warriors to follow as he walked towards the direction of the light. As soon as they arrived at the source of the light, disbelief filled their widened eyes as they stared at the scene in front of them.

Even Orion dispelled the thoughts within his heart as he gulped, taking in the scene before him.

Before them stretched a wide, grassy open field extending into the distance, with various tall mountains surrounding the plain, creating a strange and unnatural landscape that left each of them dumbfounded.

What was this?

Weren't they within the mountains? How could such a scenery be so deep within the mountains? These thoughts passed through the minds of everyone present.

"BANNG!" "BOOOMM!!!"

Although they had every right to be stunned by the scene before them, they quickly snapped out of their daze and focused on the ongoing battle on the landscape.

Especially Orion, who noticed several corpses on the ground, immediately recognized them as participants who had participated in the trial. He then shifted his gaze towards the humanoid engulfed in flames, fighting against Iris and the other Crystalforge warriors.

Orion turned his head towards the warriors. "I'm sure you could already tell, but just to clarify, the individuals fighting the humanoid white flickering flame are part of the Prismerion race, while the humanoid white flickering flame is a god I mentioned previously."

"In order to get to the Primerian Kingdom and rescue Saria, we need the help of a Prismerion, as they already know a portion of the mountain. So, we will need to rescue one of them and let them lead the way for us," he said, understanding that it wouldn't be a good idea for them to face White Flame now that they hadn't yet rescued Saria.

Even though he would like to rescue a few of them since they all succeeded in the trial and had received a 'Divine Blood', he knew it wouldn't be possible as they needed a distraction to hold off White Flame for the plan to work.

As for why White Flame had taken a humanoid form, he would find out later after asking them.

"Who do you suggest we rescue?" Fifi asked.

She could tell from the look in Orion's eyes that he recognized some individuals before them.

"The woman in heavy black armour wielding a greatsword," Orion said, pointing a finger at Iris.

She continued to wield her great sword, stubbornly attacking White Flame despite her bloodied and battered figure.

"Okay, I've been looking for where I would be able to release some pent-up stress, so I'll take the lead and cover for you all while you rescue the woman," Seth said as he grasped his machete tightly and stepped onto the grass, feeling the sensation of the strange grass beneath his legs as he released his Vylkr energy from all three containers.

Although he didn't know how powerful this so-called god was, he could tell it wasn't that formidable just from watching its battle against the Prismerion race. Still, to avoid any unexpected occurrences, he decided to use his full strength and release some of the intense emotions he had obtained after being defeated by Orion.

## Chapter 519 Foreigners From Outside The Mountain, Please Help Us!

Instantly, Seth's body surged with incredible strength as the immense Vylkr energy from all three containers filled his veins, bones, and tissues, slowly advancing throughout his entire being.

Tightening his grip on the cutlass, Seth disappeared from his spot.

There was no sound or extravagant movement, only a slight breeze that briefly tilted the grass where he once stood in a specific direction.

Orion couldn't help but widen his eyes as he witnessed the astonishing speed that Seth had just displayed. He knew three-star warriors were strong, but this... was just ridiculous.

He knew that Seth didn't possess a gift that would let him vanish into thin air, as he already knew what it was. As such, he could only come up with one conclusion: Seth had just moved at a speed that was too difficult for him to see.

"That's why I worried about your decision and Seth's plan. The gap between a one-star warrior and a three-star warrior is too wide. If you both had faced each other without holding back, it wouldn't even be called a fight," Fifi said, taking note of Orion's slightly dazed expression.

"Come on, we need to rescue that woman," she added, snapping Orion out of his daze before she immediately surged forward with Orion beside her.

Meanwhile, when Seth reappeared—

**BAANGG!**

The reverberating sound of Seth's sword impacting against White Flame's flickering body was like a giant angrily stomping its foot against the earth.

Seth sent White Flame flying backwards several meters due to the collision of the impact. His body tumbled, performing two three-hundred-and-sixty-degree spins before he landed on the ground with

a resounding, "BOOOM!!" rolling a few more times on the grassy soil, upturning some parts of the earth due to the impact of his landing before coming to a sudden stop.

The grassy plain field became silent.

Even the grasses that rustled slowly came to a standstill.

Seth couldn't help but raise an eyebrow as he witnessed the humanoid White Flame slowly get back up to his feet.

"Although you're not that strong, it seems that you possess an exceptionally tough shell," Seth said as he disappeared from his spot once more, leaving only a gust of wind behind, and instantly reappeared right before him.

His cutlass came down as it collided with White Flame's body once more.

"BAANGG!"

The resounding sound broke through the air, sending shockwaves flying in all four directions as White Flame was forcefully flung backwards again.

On the side, Iris and the others, each of whom had suffered several injuries, from broken bones to crushed organs, and were still clutching their weapons tightly, preparing to fight to the death against White Flame, could only stare blankly with their eyes wide open as their very cores shook like drums.

Of course, they were not shocked that someone had managed to knock back White Flame, as they had done so several times already, but it wasn't to this level.

Also, they recognized the faces of all who had participated and had succeeded in obtaining 'Divine blood.' They could all swear that they didn't recognize anybody like the man, putting on a strange attire, who had just forcefully knocked back White Flame.

Who is he?

How strong is he? Where did he come from?

Their minds raced with various questions as they wondered why they had not noticed his presence until now.

As they scrutinized him from head to toe, Iris's eyes lingered on his hair as a figure sprang out within her mind.

"Iris," hearing her name ringing within her ears, her eyes widened before she immediately snapped them shut.

Great, now she's hearing his voice also.

"Iris, are you alright?" the voice sounded again, accompanied by the soft touch of something pressing against her armoured shoulder.

Wait a minute!

Iris's eyes snapped open. She instantly turned her head to the side, and her eyes landed on Orion's figure.

"M-Mr. Orion!" Iris blurted out.

Her eyes scanned Orion from head to toe, scrutinizing his whole figure to ensure he was the one.

"You're... alive," she said, seeing that it was indeed him and that she wasn't seeing things.

"Yes, it's me," Orion nodded with a smile.

"Come on, we have to get you out of here," he quickly added, seeing as Seth and White Flame were about to engage in battle again.

Since he understood what kind of being they were dealing with, Orion didn't want to take any chances even though Seth seemed to have the upper hand and was about to send White Flame

plummeting into the ground again. The fact that he still couldn't inflict any injury on White Flame worried him.

"No, I'm not leaving," Iris shook her head in response, saying firmly, "There are others still alive but incapable of fighting, so you can go ahead and rescue them. I am not leaving until I ensure that White Flame is dead and free the Prismerion race from this curse."

Only after she finished speaking did Iris notice someone, an extremely tall woman, standing beside Orion. Just by looking at her muscular physique, she didn't need to be told that she possessed an explosive amount of strength.

Even her trained instincts were currently screaming at her just from her presence.

Iris glanced from the unknown woman to the man who was singlehandedly taking care of White Flame, taking in their strange attires before she finally settled her gaze on Orion, realizing that these two individuals might have come from the same place as him.

A mouthful of saliva went down Iris's throat as she pondered this.

'Then, there must be more of them,' Iris thought, contemplating how their earlier guess about Orion's place having even more powerful individuals than he was might be accurate.

Orion furrowed his brows at Iris's words. Scanning the surroundings again, he noticed several figures focusing their attention on him, all still clutching their weapons tightly, even as Seth handled White Flame alone.

"BOOOMMM!!" BANNNGG!!"

A deafening sound exploded in the distance, diverting their attention toward the source, only to witness Seth flying backwards at an extreme speed before colliding on the ground with a "BANG!"

Chapter 520 Foreigners From Outside The Mountain, Please Help Us! (2)

"TCH!" Seth clicked his tongue in annoyance as he pushed himself back up to his feet, tightly clutching his cutlass.

Instead of immediately rushing back towards White Flame for another attack, he distanced himself from the flickering figure.

Seth arrived beside Orion and Fifi.

"Although he isn't that strong, I can't seem to penetrate that body of his with my blade, no matter how hard I try," Seth said.

He briefly focused on the armoured woman before shifting his gaze towards Orion and Fifi.

"Yes, we've been having that issue too. Whenever our weapons feel like they could break through his defence, they stop at the last second. We've tried everything, but no matter how much strength or method we apply, nothing seems to work well enough to get through his defences," Iris explained immediately.

"Then that means we will have to leave here as soon as you can," Seth responded with a frown.

He had no intention of fighting against an opponent with an impenetrable shell, as that would only deplete his energy—an outcome he wanted to avoid.

Despite wanting to issue orders on how to handle the situation and quickly find Saria to leave this place, given that they couldn't defeat the 'god,' he had lost the leadership role to Orion. The final decision was now left for Orion to make.

"The only thing we can do now is quickly go and rescue Saria to get out of here as quickly as possible. Since the 'god' is imprisoned in here, there's no way it would be able to follow us once we're out," Seth added with a solemn expression, still offering his suggestion.

Hearing his words, although Iris didn't understand the rest, she still grasped the unknown man's meaning. "Bang!" Iris collapsed on her knees, the armour around her kneecap caving inward as the upturned grassy soil settled around her legs.

"Mr. Orion, please, I beg of you... Help us! If we don't get the chance to kill White Flame here, then the Prismerion race might never again have the opportunity to be free of this curse. I understand this is too much of a request and isn't your burden. However, given that you have also



experienced the trials with us, I am sure you understand just how much this means to us.... Please... Foreigners from outside the mountain, help us," Iris pleaded.

Her two hands were dug deep into the grassy soil, gripping it tightly, and her forehead firmly placed on the ground.

Following that, as though the rest of the Crystalforge Clan warriors had heard her words, Orion watched as they all went down to their knees one by one, positioning themselves the same way as Iris, with their hands still tightly grasping their weapons.

"Foreigners that came from outside the mountain, please help us!"

"Foreigners that came from outside the mountain, please help us!"

"Foreigners that came from outside..."

One by one, their shaky, unwavering voices rang out loudly in the air.

As Orion and the others listened to their voices, he immediately understood that the warriors before him were not just individuals who had risked their lives for the trial because they had been trained to do so but individuals whose backs had been pushed against the wall for generations. Now, with the only opportunity they had to free themselves right within their grasp, even if the chances were slim, even if they needed a miracle, why—

Why should they let it pass?

As far as they were concerned, the moment they stepped into the upper region of the mountain, there were only expected results: defeat White Flame and release the curse that had been placed upon the Prismerion race, or die and forever accept the fact that they would never be able to leave this mountain.

Another thing other than that... was unacceptable!

Orion focused his attention on Fifi, who shook her head with a sigh escaping her lips, signifying that this was a decision he needed to make.

He then shifted his attention towards Seth, who snorted at his gaze, "I've already given you my opinion. As the leader, the remaining decision is left for you to make. Just remember that due to the importance of this mission, failure to rescue Saria and return her safely to the Village is not an option. As such, in case you don't want to make one of the most haunting and damaging mistakes of your life, I advise you to think about this wisely, Leader Orion," Seth said, ending his sentence with a huge grin.

If Orion makes a stupid decision that would put them all in trouble, then no one would be able to refute it if he regains his leadership of this mission. Furthermore, he could use it as a valuable excuse against him in case Orion reports the issue about what happened yesterday to the Village's key figures.

Orion understood what Seth was thinking as he wasn't even bothered to hide it. Regardless, it would be his fault for giving him such an opportunity since this was his decision to make.

"Why—"

"Why are you humans helping these filthy invaders?"

A cold, emotionless voice rang out in the air, sending a shiver down the spines of the bowing Crystalforge Warriors. This was the third time they had heard White Flame's voice, but this time, it carried a tone of both curiosity and disdain.

Meanwhile, Orion and the others turned their heads toward his direction, immediately fixing their attention on him. His body was still flickering with White Flames as he hovered in the air; however, his humanoid form gave him an even more strange and unnatural presence as he focused on them and the other warriors still waiting at the cave entrance.

"Did you forget the day that they tore into our world, reaped our lands away from us, planted our bodies like seeds under the soil so that they could rid us from the surface of the earth? They did all this and many more without the slightest bit of regret or shame, and now you stand with them?"