Witch Monastery #Chapter 101: The Unfamiliar Monastery - Read Witch Monastery Chapter 101: The Unfamiliar Monastery

Chapter 101: Chapter 101: The Unfamiliar Monastery

In an instant, Charles shot up from his chair, disbelief flashing in his eyes.

By the gods, how is she back already?

Wasn't she supposed to stay away longer?!

His mind seethed with silent curses. Barely a month of peace, and now he'd be thrust back into that nerve-wracking existence. Every fiber of his being rebelled against it.

Yet resistance was futile. Against Theresa's overwhelming power, submission was his only option. Striding toward the dormitory, he hissed to the mosquito at his ear:

"Summon the others. Immediately. Have them stall Theresa—and tell Sephera to pry out her purpose for returning, and when she plans to leave."

"Above all, do not rouse her suspicion."

With those words, he reached the dormitory doorway. Pushing the door open, though resentment churned within him, circumstances left no choice—he could only plunge inside.

At that moment, outside the monastery's gates, on the dirty and muddy streets of the slums.

A rare sight—Theresa had returned to the monastery once again, barely two months later.

She still wore that one-of-a-kind nun's robe, milky white with gold-trimmed patterns. Even as she leaned slightly forward, hands clasped in prayerful posture, her ample bosom remained prominently raised. The thin fabric draped over her rounded, plump hips, outlining a full, voluptuous curve. A single glance was enough to ignite desire.

In terms of figure alone, even the curvaceous Hattie paled slightly in comparison to this big nun.

But upon closer inspection, one would notice Theresa's slightly swollen belly—as if she were with child, or perhaps simply overfed.

In truth, this was because just yesterday, in the Field District, she had wholly devoured the soul of a young man.

That man had been an exceptional talent among horse trainers. Though shy by nature, he possessed an uncanny skill with steeds. The most temperamental stallions would calm under his touch, becoming docile enough to ride.

He had this gift, and with it, a longing for a better life. Theresa had engineered an opportunity for him—getting noticed by a noble who'd made his fortune trading horses. The noble offered him a handsome wage to tend his stables.

Though the class was far from exalted, for a man of his lowly origins, it was a rare chance to change his fate.

The young man was naturally overwhelmed with gratitude, his heart brimming with hope: if he worked hard and lived frugally for a year, he could buy his parents a new home, freeing them from the slums. In two or three years, he'd save enough for his own house and propose to the girl he loved...

In his delight, he drank a little, dulling his usual vigilance. Passing a casino, he was lured by its clamor and the painted ladies within. On a sudden whim, he decided to try his luck.

Then, amid the casino's incense, bare flesh, doubling chips, the group's flattery—and most crucially, Theresa's mental whispers—he lost track of time and principle. The stakes grew higher, his obsession deeper.

Only when the casino, honoring his wager, severed his right hand did he jolt awake, realizing his life was ruined!

In despair, he blamed the casino entirely. Resentment, regret, and unwillingness festered within him, radiating thick malice. And it was then that Theresa finally struck, devouring his twisted soul.

Thus, Theresa now lounged in the satisfaction of a full belly, too lazy to check on her other "food." She would rest at the monastery for now.

A way to digest, so to speak.

But besides digestion, she had returned to see how the matter with Sophia was progressing.

Yet the moment she arrived, she sensed something amiss.

Hmm?

Beside the Offering Porridge Room at the monastery's doorway... since when was there a general store?

Puzzled, she stepped inside to find the space immaculately kept. Metal shelves lined the walls—one side held scissors, iron basins, harpoons, and other metal appliances, while the other displayed daily wear from hats to shoes and socks. Even the corner featured... special undergarments.

Did my witch sisters open this?

Since when did they have the leisure for such things?

Baffled, she then saw the side door of the general store swing open. A tall, sinuous silhouette in a nun's habit—though unable to conceal her figure's allure—entered. "Welcome—ah, Master?!"

The nun was none other than Sephera, whom Charles had assigned to manage finances. Feigning ignorance of Theresa's return, her face lit with delight as she rushed forward, clasping Theresa's hands. "Master, when did you return? Why no word in advance?"

Theresa smiled. "I felt the need to rest, so here I am. But you—what is this... eclectic general store? Short on funds?"

Sephera's lips curled. The excuse was ready. "Not for lack of coin. I realized our absence from labor drew suspicion among the residents. After all, the Church of the Goddess of Life is famously destitute."

"So we agreed to open this humble shop. See how tidy it is? Do you approve, Master?"

Like a child, she proudly showcased her work. Theresa chuckled. "Who sells metalware beside daily garments? This shop is... unconventional."

Yet her gaze and smile remained gentle, as if admiring a child's earnest creation.

"We only know these trades," Sephera pouted. "We bought land behind the monastery for a blacksmith's and tailor's workshop. Would you like to see?"

With that, she explained away the remaining constructions.

The altar?

It stood farther off, walled away by Charles' design—seemingly detached from the monastery. No explanation needed!

Sephera pouted her mouth and muttered as usual, "Wouldn't my report be enough?" Then she closed the outer door of the general store and walked back into the monastery through the inner door with Theresa.

However, the moment they stepped inside, Theresa's brows furrowed slightly.

This monastery... why does it feel so unfamiliar to me?

Theresa frowned, her footsteps unconsciously slowing.

Though upon closer inspection, the walls, the flowers, the rooms, and the furnishings were all exactly as she had left them.

Yet she couldn't shake the feeling... that this no longer seemed like the home she had constructed.

Sensing Theresa's unease, Sephera's heart skipped a beat, but she maintained her smile and asked, "What's wrong, Master? Why have you stopped?"

Theresa took another step forward, her beautiful brows still knitted as her yellow-green pupils scanned the surroundings. "It just feels... off. Sephera, what else have you done to the monastery?"

Sephera's heart leapt into her throat. What hadn't they done to the monastery? The list was endless—room remodels, expansions, upgrades...

But outwardly, she remained composed. "Nothing much, really. We just bought some extra land and built a simple tailor's shop and blacksmith's workshop. Weren't you here just two months ago, Sister? Did you feel this way then?"

Theresa shook her head slightly. "I don't think so... Ah, but I didn't stay long last time. Now that I think about it, there were some oddities even then..."

"Never mind. Let's just go rest for now."

With that final remark, Sephera—whose heart had been pounding in her throat—felt as if she'd been granted a reprieve. She kept her smile plastered on as she escorted Theresa to her room to rest.

The two witches entered Theresa's room, which was far more lavishly decorated than the others. Massive windows faced east, south, and west, ensuring ample sunlight—though the curtains were usually drawn to keep the light from seeping in.

Inside, the room was filled with transparent glass prisms that refracted sunlight from all angles, casting a kaleidoscope of colorful rays throughout the space.

This was Theresa's peculiar preference, tied to her true nature: her original form had been that of a mad optics mage who, while attempting to unravel the secrets of light through double slits, discovered inexplicable flaws in the laws of nature. This drew in chaotic energies from beyond the world.

The cataclysmic forces erased both him and his mage tower utterly. Yet his stored optical lenses and instruments fused together, forming a massive, glittering, irregular crystal - the entity now called Theresa.

Given these origins, her bedroom naturally required multicolored light refractions for her comfort.

The other witches, however, found this arrangement far from comfortable.

Sephera squinted uncomfortably under the prismatic assault, dodging intrusive light beams.

Theresa ignored her discomfort entirely, striding to her glass-framed bed. She lay down, half-closed her eyes, and waited for the others' arrival.

The wait proved brief. Soon witches filed in one by one, all similarly blinded by the disorienting lightshow.

Ironically, their light-induced squinting helped mask their nervous tension, preventing tells.

After perfunctory greetings, Theresa cut straight to business: "Has the Sophia situation caused further complications?"

Sephera opened her mouth to declare all resolved, then abruptly changed tactics. With an arched brow and sidelong glance at Ruth, she sniffed, "Let's just say Ruth here got absurdly lucky - some witless gang barged in and took full blame!"

Her tone dripped with apparent resentment at Ruth's fortune.

Theresa chuckled lightly. "Luck or skill matters little. What counts is the matter's clean resolution - a boon for us all!"

The witches nodded vigorously. Yet as Theresa surveyed their neat formation, her brow furrowed slightly.

What's this?

Their deference remains unchanged. Sephera's as jealous and sharp-tongued as ever. Then why...

Do they all feel like strangers?

Is the flaw in me - or in every other witch and this entire monastery?

"Sisters... are you hiding something?" she asked, visibly perplexed.

At this, the witches' hearts leapt to their throats. Sephera forced a smile. "Ah, nothing worth mentioning..."

Even as she spoke, her mind raced - where had their camouflage failed? How to recover?

Suddenly Sophia stepped forward. "Nothing consequential. If anything, misfortune became blessing - with the sisters' help, I've regained full power and memory."

Drawing deep breath, she unleashed a surge of magic. The room instantly flooded with power, making weakest-link Andny gasp under the pressure!

Theresa's eyes lit up: "Congratulations, Sophia! Oh, I understand now - so this was the unforeseen pleasant surprise in my visions!"

The remaining witches exchanged glances, their tension slightly easing as they chimed in unison: "Ah, yes yes yes!"

Sophia smiled faintly, relieved inwardly, then took control of the conversation again: "Sister Theresa, has your power... grown stronger as well?"

Behind her, both Hattie and Ruth started, casting incredulous looks at Theresa who lay there caressing her slightly swollen abdomen.

Hearing this, the archwitch broke into a bright smile: "You could actually tell? Truly worthy of being our most knowledgeable Sophia!"

As she spoke, her gaze swept across all the witches present, her expression tinged with pride: "Recently, I made a pact with a Lord of the Bottomless Abyss. But I used some clever wording - I demanded he grant me power first before I fulfill my end of the bargain."

She spread her hands wide, unleashing her full power: "My current strength has increased tremendously compared to before!"

Tumultuous magical power surged through the air, instantly overwhelming Sophia's aura entirely. The relatively weaker Andny and Ekta looked horrified, nearly suffocating from the pressure!

Even the stronger ones - Hattie, Ruth and Sephera - felt their hearts sink to the depths, inwardly cursing: What's wrong with this woman? Now purifying her will be even more difficult!

Hattie gritted her teeth secretly while maintaining her smile. Suddenly inspiration struck her: "No wonder! When I first saw Sister Theresa earlier, I felt something unfamiliar about her!"

"I thought it was just because we hadn't met for so long, but it turns out this was the reason!"

She smiled as she took the initiative, seemingly offering explanation while actually shifting all blame for the tense atmosphere onto Theresa.

Hearing this, Theresa's expression froze momentarily. She withdrew her aura, pondered for a moment, then nodded: "That makes sense. Indeed, it seems so."

"I've been separated from everyone for too long, never staying at the monastery. Now with this new power... No wonder my old home and all my dear sisters feel unfamiliar to me now... Ah, how thoughtless of me!"

After this self-reproach, she looked up with a radiant smile: "I've decided - starting today, I'll stay at the monastery for several months! I'll spend more time bonding with everyone before going out to hunt again!"

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Chapter 102: Chapter 102: Theresa's Secrets of Power

Instantly, the atmosphere in the room turned icy.

Yet after a few seconds, the witches forced smiles and nodded in unison, breaking into applause: "That's wonderful news!"

In the dorm, listening to Andny's real-time relay, Charles couldn't suppress a low curse: "Damn it!"

Then, his eyes glinted as his brain raced, already calculating the next move to make.

...

That night, in Theresa's room.

Theresa lay on her bed, ready to sleep, when suddenly she felt a cold, slippery little snake slither under her covers.

Sensing the presence, Theresa's expression softened: "Just like when you were little, always burrowing into my arms."

As she spoke, the cold little snake poked its head out from between Theresa's ample bosom—none other than Sephera, already stripped bare and chilled to the bone.

Wearing a pleading smile, she pressed her water-snake-flexible waist against Theresa's body, rubbing slowly as if to coil around her.

She clung to Theresa frontally, grinning obsequiously: "Because I feel safest in Master's embrace."

With that, she lowered her head, burying her face in Theresa's bottomless cleavage, nuzzling and inhaling her scent while sighing: "Ah, Master is so big everywhere—powerful, chest, hips—far surpassing any of us..."

Theresa smiled and rapped her knuckles lightly on Sephera's head: "No shame at all!"

Sephera looked up, grinning foolishly: "Master, what kind of Pact did you make this time? I want to try it too, to grow stronger."

Theresa shook her head slightly: "This method isn't for you, Sephera. Your Strength is too frail. Even if I taught you, you couldn't handle it."

As she spoke, she suddenly frowned: "Sephera... has your Strength weakened?"

"It's just that Master has grown stronger!" Sephera laughed, brushing it off easily.
"Compared to you, we've all become weaker—so much that even you find us unfamiliar now."

Theresa nodded slightly: "True."

With that, she sighed faintly.

The monastery, the sisters, and the power they once shared—everything that had felt so familiar now seemed alien.

It couldn't be that all of them, including the monastery itself, had suffered some catastrophe. No, the issue must lie with her.

Ah, despite all her caution, the Chaos Force granted by that Abyssal Lord had still interfered with her consciousness, distorting her Perception and judgment.

She could only hope to adjust in time.

As Theresa pondered this, Sephera pleaded: "Master, I beg you—tell me. I want to grow stronger too."

"Look, I'm the Vice-abbess of the Monastery, yet because my power is rooted in toxins, I can't even defeat the weakest Andny."

"Though they dare not defy my command out of fear for your might, I still feel Wronged. Please, Master. Who knows? One day, I might need this knowledge to escape this wretched state."

"You grow stronger alone, while I stagnate, falling further behind. I want to stand by your side, to shoulder burdens for you!"

Her desperate pleas, the Agony etched on Sephera's face, and the undeniable truth in her words softened Theresa's resolve.

Very well. Sephera had been under her care since childhood, loyal beyond doubt. She would never betrayed her.

And without Theresa, Sephera was nothing. There was no need to withhold secrets. If she asked so earnestly, why not tell her?

With that thought, Theresa spoke slowly: "The secret to my growth... is simple. I bargained with abyssal demons for a taste of beyond the world's Chaos Energy..."

In the dorm, Charles's eyes snapped open, burning with intensity.

Beyond the world's Chaos Energy!

Heh. Now he had a path forward...

Chaos Energy, in essence, was a volatile amalgamation—magic, psionics, elemental forces, Divine Power, nature energies, and other arcane essences.

Such energies existed only beyond the world. In any realm—be it the material world, the Celestial Planes, the Elemental World, the Nine Hells, or even the Astral Sea—all energies and substances remained distinctly separated.

Elemental was elemental. Magic was magic. Divine Power was Divine Power. Each was demarcated, immutable. Some Spells might mimic others, but their natures were fundamentally distinct.

Only beyond the world, in the endless churn of Limbo, could such a chaotic fusion exist.

These energies were immensely potent—and equally perilous. The Night of the Witches occurred when celestial movements thinned the material world's barriers, allowing traces of Chaos Energy to seep in. This drove monsters to frenzy and wrought terrifying transformations.

It was also why witches spiraled into go out of control madness.

Yet Theresa, audacious in the extreme, dared to harness Chaos Energy itself!

Hah. This might be an opportunity...

Charles's eyes gleamed as a plan crystallized in his mind.

Others might lack the means to counter Chaos Energy—or the knowledge to wield it. But Charles possessed both.

There was a tool that could detonate the Chaos Energy within Theresa's body, plunging her into a go out of control frenzy akin to the Night of the Witches!

Then, he could strike, purifying this archwitch with brutal finality.

The only obstacle? That tool lay in the Rubble District...

The thought of that place—nestled northwest of Liberl Port, leagues from the South Harbor District, bereft of direct tram lines and requiring multiple transfers—gave him pause.

If the South Harbor District was Liberl Port's poorest sector, the Rubble District was its most lawless.

Yes, a thousand—no, ten thousand times worse than the South Harbor's slums!

The slums still had rules. Thugs, drug peddlers, gangs, cults, skirmishes, corporate-backed proxies—all existed, but residents still scraped by through trade and labor.

The Rubble District?

Battle. Killing. Plunder. Betrayal. Such is daily life here!

...

The Rubble District covers a vast area, nearly ten times larger than the South Harbor District, for it encompasses not only plains but also several mountains to its northwest.

Beyond these mountains, stretching farther northwest, lies the endless Plateau Mountains, known as "The Roof of the World." These peaks hide treasures at every turn—rare medicinal herbs, precious timber, exotic beasts, and vast mineral deposits can all be found here.

Originally, the Rubble District was established by the colonial forces of the Empire of Sein as a dedicated zone for exploiting the hidden riches of these mountains.

Yet, this endeavor ended in failure. The mountains conceal not only treasures but also countless terrifying monsters.

Snow-demons, hill giants, and ogres—these man-eating giants need no elaboration. Even the so-called "Mountain Peoples"—greatly weakened aboriginal tribes like the Shanyuan, Mountain Dwarves, minotaurs, orcs, gnolls, hobgoblins, and goblins—were enough to teach any reckless aggressor a harsh lesson.

At the height of its power, the Empire of Sein could still suppress the wrath of these local powers. But when the empire, torn by internal strife, withdrew its military forces, the fury of the Mountain Peoples surged forth like a landslide, crushing nearly every structure in the district, leaving behind only shattered rubble.

Thus, the name "Rubble District" was born.

They even sought to push further, intent on destroying Liberl Port itself. However, deep-seated feuds—rooted in race and history—prevented the Mountain Peoples from maintaining unity for long.

Moreover, after years of development, the Empire of Sein had secured allies among the Mountain Peoples, assimilating some into their fold. These allies profited greatly by trading natural resources, amassing considerable wealth. Naturally, when the time came, they sided with the port.

Adding to this, foreign investors flooded into the port, and major conglomerates, coveting the mountains' abundant treasures, offered exorbitant sums for rare materials. In such an environment, even the most audacious freelancers could achieve wealth beyond their wildest dreams with a single lucky find.

All these factors plunged the district into utter chaos. Poachers, herbalists, adventurers, miners, robbers, mercenaries, terrorists, corporate proxies—every manner of individual

gathered here. At any moment, a brawl could erupt over a patch of medicinal herbs, leaving the streets stained with blood.

In short, the Rubble District is a place of lawlessness—and boundless opportunity. In the game, it's one of the rare maps where players can grind from the lowest levels straight to the highest.

Charles isn't keen on going there. Reality isn't a game—high-level monsters don't stay tucked away in their lairs, waiting to be provoked.

He'd prefer to wait until he's strong enough to defend himself before diving into that chaotic adventure.

But now, it seems, time is running out. The moment to act has come!

...

The next morning.

Andny noticed Theresa's early rise and hurried to inform the other witches. Hattie, too, rushed to get up, feigning a chance encounter.

With exaggerated delight, she greeted Theresa:

"Eldest sister, you're up this early as well?"

Theresa smiled gently, utterly unsuspecting, and gave a slight nod.

"Yes. I wished to stroll through the slums at dawn and see how the seeds I sowed last time have grown."

Hattie's heart clenched with worry for the human Theresa had taken an interest in.

"Who has caught Eldest sister's eye this time? I'm curious—might you tell me?"

Theresa smiled gracefully: "That little girl I saved publicly during the porridge offering, of course. Didn't you notice? Her soul is absolutely adorable - actually wanting to help the slums' poor wretches."

"I truly wonder... when she sees her own mother die from being insulted in turn by the very scum she personally helped... just how twisted her soul will become, hehehe..."

As she spoke, she even couldn't help swallowing saliva, as if already imagining the delicious flavor produced by that fall from purest kindness to most twisted evil.

In the past, Hattie might have envied Theresa's refined tastes. Now, she only felt creeping horror.

That poor child's family would soon suffer unimaginable tragedy because of Theresa's terrifying hobby!

Biting her lips, suppressing her boiling emotions, Hattie suddenly looked up with a bright smile: "Eldest Sister, really, you should have told us earlier. Fortunately in this past month none of our sisters had eyes on that mother and daughter pair, otherwise your plans would have been completely ruined!"

Theresa looked startled, then laughed at herself: "True enough, ah, it was inconsiderate of me - I forgot to mention it last time."

Saying this, she walked to Hattie's side and lightly patted her shoulder: "Then I'll trouble you to inform the other sisters about this, Hattie."

"I must go now - any later and I might miss seeing many things."

Hattie nodded, smiling. Theresa then resumed her pious prayer demeanor, head bowed, walking straight through the monastery gates into the dirty, muddy streets.

Hattie watched her depart, only returning and closing the door after she was far away, then speaking to the mosquito by her ear: "She's gone. Have everyone gather - in my room."

Saying this, she quickly returned to the dorm. Here, several witches had already assembled, surrounding Charles in the center, each face filled with solemnity.

"Alright." Seeing everyone present, Charles spoke first. "Now we'll discuss who will accompany me to the Rubble District."

"First, sufficient Strength is required. Then, the ability to move flexibly through complex terrain, plus capacity to handle complicated situations..."

Sophia, the strongest present, initially intended to raise her hand, but hearing this, immediately swallowed her words.

Her true form was bloated and cumbersome; even shifted to human form her movements remained sluggish. Even with spell assistance, she was unsuited for missions in the Rubble District's complex terrain areas.

She was better suited guarding home, fighting defensive or positional battles, so by nature this mission wasn't for her.

Ruth unhesitatingly thrust out her chest, though the motion did nothing to make her modest bosom more prominent: "I'll accompany Master alone. Hattie needs to maintain monastery operations, and Sephera must delay Theresa, so the choice can only be me.

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Chapter 103: Chapter 103: When Goblins Meet Beautiful Girls...

Sephera raised an eyebrow, then bit her lower lip as she stared at Ruth with visible jealousy.

Hattie opened her mouth to speak, but after careful consideration, she nodded in agreement since this seemed the optimal choice. Still, she offered her suggestion: "Indeed. However, Ruth only excels in battle. Shouldn't we have someone else for assistance?"

She implied she should go, but Charles turned his gaze to Andny instead: "Can you control the worms in Rubble District?"

Andny shook her head repeatedly, her expression ashamed: "Forgive me, Master. My power is too weak. I need time to establish roots in an area before controlling its worms freely."

Charles sighed softly: "Very well. Andny should remain here then."

Ekta looked eager: "Master, my power has grown stronger! I can cast fireballs now! Perhaps I could accompany you—"

Charles shook his head: "No. You might burn down the mountains and make us public enemies. Not this time, Ekta. Next time, I promise!"

Ekta retreated, frustration plain on her face.

Then Sephera's brow twitched: "Master... what if I joined you?"

The coven's collective intake of breath was audible. Hattie's frown deepened: "You? Sephera, if you're absent when Theresa grows suspicious-"

Sephera waved a dismissive hand: "We settled this last night, no? Blame Chaos Energy corruption for her misjudgment. If all four of you maintain this, she'll doubt herself before suspecting us!" A wicked grin flashed. "Whereas if I stay, I'd naturally contradict you all sowing discord as is my habit. That would truly ruin everything."

She leaned forward, eyes gleaming: "Better still - suppose I tell Theresa myself that Ruth and I plan to visit Rubble District? Have her divine whether our journey will succeed. Far less suspicious than vanishing for days, no?"

Her burning gaze found Charles: "What thinks our Master?"

The witches' protests rose again - until all eyes turned to Charles. He weighed their mission: potential enemies, the value of "Toxic Mist" as a weapon... At last, he nodded. "Very well. Sephera - inform Theresa upon her return. Then you'll accompany Ruth and me."

The Sephera's face lit with triumph: "Yes!"

...

Several days later, the Rubble District.

Scarred by the fires of war waged by various factions, the Rubble District remained largely unreconstructed. Most areas still lay in ruins, save for a few fragile wooden shacks erected near the borders of other districts, forming small, makeshift markets where adventurers and mercenaries gathered to trade before or after their ventures into the mountains.

It was autumn, and the mountain prey had grown plump. The Mountain Peoples, too, were stockpiling food for winter, ensuring that conflicts between rival factions would only grow bloodier.

Yet the more violent the season, the greater the opportunities for adventurers and hired mercenaries to strike it rich in the Rubble District—and the greater the fortunes to be made by those shrewd enough to exploit their greed.

Thus, the cramped markets buzzed with activity, a den of schemers, swindlers, and dreamers all vying for advantage.

Among them was Ymik, a cunning and vicious goblin standing just over a meter tall, with yellow-green skin, a long, pointed nose, and jagged, needle-like teeth.

Unlike most of his kind, Ymik was clever enough to recognize opportunity early. He had purchased a few donkeys, offering transport to starry-eyed adventurers along the safer routes between the Rubble District's surviving markets and the mountain camps.

The work was grueling, but a single successful trip guaranteed him comfort for days.

And if he happened upon particularly promising prey—young, wealthy-looking adventurers with all the inexperience written on their faces—his profits soared even higher.

Today, fortune smiled upon him.

His beady eyes locked onto a trio weaving through the crowd: a boy and two women. The boy was clearly of Silver Kin blood, fair-faced and delicate, no older than sixteen.

The shorter woman was soft-skinned and icy in demeanor, the kind who spoke little and kept to herself.

The taller one, though her sharp eyes and lips suggested a cutting tongue, was still just a slender woman. How much trouble could she be?

Their pristine leather armor, clearly fresh from the shop, marked them as greenhorns—some noble's spoiled children, no doubt, who'd bought shiny swords and armor after hearing too many tavern tales.

Perfect.

The thought made saliva pool in his mouth. Wiping the corners of his lips with the back of his hand, he whispered quick instructions to his assistant, sending him running with a message. Then, plastering on an ingratiating smile, the goblin came trotting toward the trio, calling out while still at a distance:

"Good sir! And fair ladies! Are you heading to the adventurer camps in the mountains?"

"Ah, but the journey is long and the paths treacherous! Why waste your precious stamina on such travel? Why not ride my donkey carts? A bargain at just one gold per person - and I guarantee we'll arrive before sunset!"

He thumped his chest confidently, though his price was hardly cheap. Three gold total for the group amounted to a skilled craftsman's earnings for a day and a half.

The approaching trio were, of course, Charles, Ruth and Sephera. After purchasing equipment and necessary adventure supplies, they'd spent the entire morning changing carriages and enduring rough travel before finally reaching the Rubble District in the afternoon.

Yet this only brought them to the district's nominal borders - the true adventure sites in the mountains still lay some distance away.

They were currently seeking passage into the mountains. When the ugly goblin came bounding up with exaggerated enthusiasm, Ruth frowned slightly. Her past experience told her this fellow meant no good, and she already felt stirrings of lethal intent.

Sephera arched an eyebrow, about to refuse, when Charles instead put on a smile and said: "Certainly, old sir. Though might you lower the price? You see we're beginners - most of our coin went to equipment. Would two gold be acceptable?"

No money?

No matter. The three of them were the most valuable cargo of this trip!

Ymik sneered inwardly as he gazed at Ruth's delicate features and Sephera's slender waist. Heat rose in his chest, saliva pooling uncontrollably in his mouth. He could barely restrain himself from taking these two beauties right here and now.

Yet on the surface, he forced a pained expression and sighed dramatically.

"Fine, since you're just youngsters, Uncle Ymik will cut you a deal. Two gold? Two gold it is!"

"Come on, get in!"

With that, he waved Charles and the two witches toward his donkey cart. Charles smiled politely, guiding the women aboard while the rest of the camp watched them with pity.

Every soul here knew exactly why the old bastard Ymik was being so generous.

Yet not a single one stepped forward to warn them.

And so, the trio climbed into the small cart pulled by two donkeys. The wooden planks sealing the interior were crude, the space cramped—just two rows of seating for six—but it was clean. At least the goblin took decent care of his money-making tools.

Once they settled in, Ymik urged the cart forward. As it creaked into motion, Sephera leaned close to Charles' ear and whispered,

"Master, that old goblin is clearly up to no good. Why agree to ride with him?"

"Or... should we strike first? Take him out before he makes his move?"

Ruth's gaze flicked over, equally confused. Even she could see Ymik's vile intentions—there was no way Charles missed them.

Charles exhaled softly.

"Honestly? I'd be worried if he wasn't plotting something."

"The one we're after is a cunning hobgoblin warlord. But we don't know his exact location, so we'll have to gather information from locals."

He spoke truthfully—after all, the game's maps were overly simplified. Many areas just... well, the screen would fade to black, and suddenly you'd find yourself in a dungeon.

"Among all the locals, goblins have the best intelligence networks. They're flexible, shrewd, and willing to serve anyone while trading secrets among themselves for profit," Charles continued. "So if we capture a goblin boss and... persuade him to talk, we'll likely get our intel for free. Much simpler and cheaper than posting notices at the Adventurer Camp."

Sephera suddenly understood. "So that's it. As expected of Master—your planning is thorough."

Ruth nodded slightly in agreement. Then, without ceremony, Charles lay down in the cramped cart, resting his head on Ruth's thighs.

"Alright, this trip has worn me out. I'll take a quick nap to recover some stamina."

Aside from a brief lunch break, they'd spent the entire morning either riding shaky trams, waiting at stops, or rushing to catch the next one. He was completely exhausted.

"Mmm." Ruth responded softly. "Sleep. We'll wake you when we arrive."

Charles closed his eyes, silently chanting incantations to cast extended Armor of Agathys and False Life (both 2nd-level spells) before finally relaxing his mind, breathing evenly to restore his magic power.

Sephera sat opposite him, her delicate fingertips gently brushing through his hair as she tidied it for him.

Up front, Ymik glanced back and nearly choked on his jealousy. That damned boy! How dare he enjoy such attentive service from two beautiful women at once! The injustice burned in his gut!

Just wait, boy, I will let my brothers rape your two girls in front of you!

The sun had shifted southward—a full hour had passed as Ymik's donkey cart climbed the mountain trail.

Even in autumn, the enclosed cart grew uncomfortably warm under the midday sun. Charles removed his leather armor, keeping only his undershirt on as he continued resting on Ruth's lap. Sephera fanned him diligently, her care utterly meticulous.

Just then, Ymik chuckled from the driver's seat. "We're in the mountains now. Plenty of shade—it'll cool down soon."

"Youngsters must be thirsty, eh? Heh, adventuring in these mountains means enduring hardships! Heat, cold—you'll suffer it all!"

He spoke like a kindly elder, retrieving a large waterskin and small cup from beside him. After pouring himself a drink, he passed the waterskin back. "Here—mountain spring water. Don't drink too much at once though, or you'll get stomachaches."

He demonstrated by draining his cup in one gulp.

"Thank you, old sir." Charles accepted the waterskin, pouring some into his own cup. "Ruth, Sephera, want any?"

Ruth declined with a wave, but Sephera's eyes sparkled mischievously. "Mmm, I'll have some."

Charles handed her a cup. The moment she swallowed the chilled water, she suddenly kissed him, slipping her forked tongue between his lips to share the cool liquid.

"Woo..." Charles moaned involuntarily as her slender tongue entangled with his, but he didn't resist, swallowing every transferred drop.

Ruth's eyes widened—she couldn't believe Sephera would dare such an intimate act right before that scheming goblin! A sour jealousy prickled her heart.

Up front, the old goblin peeked back to check if they'd drunk from the sleeping-pill-laced waterskin—only to see the two locked in a deep, water-sharing kiss!

Flames of rage practically shot from his eyes!

Damn it! DAMN IT ALL!

That wretched boy! How dare he make such beauties service him so shamelessly! I'll make you pay! I'LL MAKE YOU PAY!

Filthy! Disgusting! No shame at all!

Just wait until my brothers catch you! We'll teach you disgraceful humans a proper lesson!

We must play with these two Beauties of yours right in front of you until your eyes roll back and your tongue sticks out, so that you will know what the ultimate shame is for a man!

You'll pay! YOU'LL PAY!

Consumed by jealousy, Ymik's face twisted grotesquely. But for now, he could only endure, lashing the donkey violently with his whip. "Move!"

The startled donkey quickened its pace.

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Chapter 104: Chapter 104: Ambush?

Gradually, the donkey cart ventured deeper into the mountains. The foliage grew denser, the light dimmer. The three passengers inside, seemingly overcome by exhaustion, leaned against each other in deep slumber.

Seeing this, Ymik knew victory was assured. A surge of dark delight flooded his heart as visions of pleasures to come in two hours danced in his mind.

Heh heh heh... This is in the bag. Just wait and see!

"Halt—"

At his Goblin command, the two donkeys stopped immediately. Ymik glanced back, confirming his passengers still slept soundly. A cold smirk twisted his lips as he leapt from the cart and scurried into nearby bushes. Plucking a leaf, he pressed it to his lips and produced a series of chirping bird calls.

The forest erupted with movement in response. From the undergrowth emerged several more goblins—equally short, yellow-green, long-nosed and ugly—brandishing crude weapons.

Though autumn had browned much vegetation, the goblins' small stature and earth-toned skin still provided perfect camouflage.

One particularly fat goblin, nearly twice Ymik's girth with a scar across his face, crept forward warily. "They all asleep? Don't screw this up like last time when we lost five brothers before subduing them!"

Ymik's eyebrows shot up. "Impossible! I told you, that was a fluke! This time I doubled the dose—and I saw them drink it myself!"

The memory of Sephera mouth-feeding Charles flashed through his mind, making his teeth grind audibly. He redirected his fury at the scarred goblin. "After all our successful jobs, one mishap and you lose faith in me?!"

"Fine." The goblin leader relaxed, eyes gleaming. "How good is this haul really? Your lackey couldn't even speak straight describing the women!"

Ymik swallowed hard, grinning obscenely. "Come see for yourself. Never seen specimens like these—they'll knock your eyes out!"

"Fancy ladies wandering these parts? They're begging for trouble. Tonight's gonna be wild..."

As he spoke, Ymik yanked open the cart's rear curtain—only to find Charles fully armored, shield ready, smiling politely at them.

Sephera smirked with mocking amusement. Ruth's expressionless face radiated murderous intent so thick it seemed tangible.

Ymik's soul nearly fled his body. "Y-you—how?! I watched you drink—"

He stumbled backward, tongue frozen, sweat pouring. Charles merely shrugged. "Maybe your drugs expired?"

Sleeping potions fell under the category of poisons. Unfortunately, having inherited part of Sephera's essence, he now possessed near total immunity to all toxins—such petty drugs were naturally insignificant.

As for the two witches? Even less needed to be said. As monsters, they were born immune to such things.

"Damn it, they're awake!"

Cursing loudly, Ymik retreated another step, realizing he'd messed up again—his drugs had inexplicably failed, leaving him no choice but brute force!

"Useless!" The goblin leader swore angrily, yet remained unshaken. "No fear! They're just three against our thirty! We could drown them in spit alone!"

"Brothers, charge! First to take one down gets first ride tonight!"

His roar sought to ignite the goblins' fighting spirit through primal lust. Admittedly, this method proved brutally effective—especially given Ruth and Sephera's appearances ranked among the highest caliber!

"Raaargh—kill them—!"

"The one with pink long hair is mine, don't fight with me!"

"The one with the flattest chest is mine, don't fight with me!"

"The one with the flattest chest is the man, I won't fight with you!"

. . .

Driven by lust, the goblins surged forward, scimitars waving wildly. A few archers hung back with shortbows, though none fired—overconfident in their numbers, they meant to capture, not kill.

Driven by lust and greed, the goblins charged forward with scimitars waving wildly. A handful of archers lingered at the rear with shortbows drawn but not firing - overconfident in their numbers, they sought capture rather than slaughter.

Charles showed no such restraint.

Stepping down from the cart, he unleashed twin Eldritch Blasts straight at the distant archers.

BANG-BANG!

The shots struck true. Two goblins went flying backward, chests caved in, blood gushing from their noses - more dead than alive.

Goblins were small creatures, barely four feet tall on average, with the constitution of malnourished adolescents. Their frail bodies couldn't compare to even Xanathar Guild thugs - where those might survive a blast, these goblins died instantly.

The melee swarm, too blood-crazed to notice their fallen kin, kept charging. Charles advanced fearlessly into their blades.

Then - his form shimmered, turning hazy.

A leading goblin's swing passed through empty air - Charles was already elsewhere.

Blur. A supremely practical defensive spell.

The remaining goblins, blaming their lust-addled vision, swung wildly.

Clang!

Thunk!

All missed - until one lucky strike connected.

The scimitar found its mark at a vital point... yet failed to pierce Charles' layered magical defenses.

Worse for the attacker -

CRACK!

A wave of freezing energy erupted from Charles' body, racing up the blade to encase the goblin in ice.

"G-gl-!"

The choked gurgle marked another corpse.

Armor of Agathys.

While ineffective against powerful ranged attacks - like Kendrz's Storm Warhammer - it remained deadly against weaker foes who couldn't breach its protection.

Only when their companion froze solid did the remaining goblins suddenly understand.

"A mage! He's a mage!"

"Bloody hells, troublesome!"

"Surround him! Don't let him cast!"

Their screams showed seasoned experience - years of banditry had taught them even mages could fall to overwhelming numbers.

Problematic...

At such close quarters, casting Eldritch Blast at distant targets became impractical.

Charles abandoned spellcasting. Raising his shield, he extended his right hand as tendrils of Shadowfell darkness wove through the air, coalescing into a shimmering longsword.

His first swing met a hastily raised goblin shield - and continued straight through the defender's throat.

Schlick!

Blood fountained as the goblin collapsed, clutching his neck.

The sight - so reminiscent of Kendrz's death - sent Charles' heart pounding.

Focus. This is battle. No room for terror.

Kill. Keep killing.

His grip tightened on the sword as he swung at another goblin's shoulder.

Behind him, Sephera emerged gracefully from the cart. With a casual wave, noxious green gas billowed from her palms.

Whoosh!

Goblins inhaled the poison and immediately collapsed, choking, their combat effectiveness halved.

"Damn it all! Loose arrows! Shoot them down!"

The goblin leader, wisely avoiding the gas, discarded his melee weapons and nocked an arrow.

Thwip-thwip-thwip!

Most shots went wild, but the leader's arrow struck true - piercing Charles' Armor of Agathys but failing against his Mage Armor and False Life protections.

The hit drew Charles' full attention.

His crimson eyes locked onto the leader with murderous intent.

Too far for Eldritch Blast...

Needed something stronger. More decisive.

Dismissing his pact weapon, Charles reached to his hip and drew the Storm Warhammer. Two points of mana ignited crackling electricity along its head.

With a mighty heave, he launched the enchanted hammer.

BOOM!

The spinning weapon struck the leader's head with thunderous force, exploding it like a melon before returning to Charles' hand.

"B-boss is dead!"

"So strong! He's an archmage!"

"Run! Run away!"

Finally, with one goblin's shriek, their morale shattered completely. They turned and fled in panic, screaming. These guys clearly had plenty of experience escaping—they scattered expertly, making it difficult for Charles and his companions to pick a target to chase.

Unfortunately for them, such tactics might work against ordinary foes, but against Charles' group? They were sorely outmatched.

Stowing the Storm Warhammer, Charles raised his hand again, firing Eldritch Blasts at the fleeing figures. Every shot that landed either killed or grievously wounded its target.

Behind him, Ruth—who had remained silent until now—finally emerged from the cart. Her body blurred into an afterimage as she darted through the trees at triple the speed of an average goblin.

The panicking goblins didn't get far before a thin red line appeared across their throats or backs. Choked screams and agonized moans followed as each one dropped dead in quick succession.

In less than two minutes, the battle was over.

"Whew. That went smoother than I expected."

Looking at the corpses strewn across the ground, Charles felt his heart pounding like thunder, but he forced a smile and spoke with deliberate nonchalance.

He knew he'd see scenes like this many times in the future. Better to get used to it now than struggle during a life-or-death battle later.

Thankfully, compared to before, today he only felt a bit of bloodlust—already a vast improvement.

The only downside was that, despite effortlessly slaughtering over twenty goblins without a scratch, he'd burned through six spell slots and a bunch of pre-cast defensive spells. A pretty hefty cost...

Cough!

Well, that wasn't the real issue. The bigger problem was that he'd gotten too carried away and failed to keep any alive for interrogation...

Wait, no. There was still one survivor.

Ymik.

This goblin had been cunning enough to avoid both the fight and the fleeing, instead hiding beneath the cart. Neither Charles nor the others had noticed him, allowing him to narrowly escape death.

Now, the wretched creature sat trembling on the ground, legs shaking uncontrollably. A foul stench rose from his soiled trousers, making him nearly unbearable to approach.

Charles muttered, "Clean up the battlefield," then turned to Ymik with a disgusted expression.

Still, for the sake of his mission, he stepped forward. Shadows from the Shadowfell coiled around his hand, forming another longsword, which he pointed at the goblin's throat.

"You saw what happened to your friends. If you want to live, answer my questions."

"Do you know a hobgoblin warlord named Zenith? Where is his old nest? Take us there!"

Ymik trembled violently before shaking his head. "I-I don't know! I don't know where his nest is—!"

Charles' eyebrow twitched. Unfortunate—this guy didn't have the information.

Still, no matter. Even if he didn't know now, that didn't mean he couldn't find out.

"Then you're useless to me." His voice was ice-cold as he raised the longsword, poised to cut Ymik down where he sat.

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Chapter 105: Chapter 105: The Goblin's Nest

Instantly, Ymik panicked. "No no no no no—! I can help, I can still help—!"

Charles paused, lowering his blade just slightly as he glared down impatiently. "Speak."

"I can tell you where our tribe's nest is!" The unscrupulous goblin merchant trembled, ready to sell out his own kin without hesitation. "Some of them know more than I do! Someone there must know where that hobgoblin warlord is camped! Just capture a few, and you'll get your answers!"

"Everyone, please, please believe me!"

He begged desperately, his voice hoarse with fear. Charles gave a slight nod—this was exactly what he wanted.

"Take us to your nest. No tricks. You've seen our strength. Even three hundred goblins wouldn't be enough to stop us."

With that, he kicked the sniveling creature, urging him to move. The two witches stepped forward as well, having finished scouring the battlefield—not that these goblins had carried anything worth looting.

Ymik didn't dare delay. Scrambling to his feet, he abandoned the donkey cart entirely and hunched forward, scurrying ahead to lead the way.

...

Two hours later.

The cave was typical goblin architecture—barely five and a half feet tall at its highest point, but wide enough for four or five goblins to walk abreast.

Weeds choked the entrance for camouflage. The ceiling sloped lower the deeper one went.

For the average three-foot-tall goblin, passage was effortless. For Charles' party, only Ruth's petite frame could move comfortably. He and Sephera would be forced to crouch painfully the entire way.

Fortunately, Charles was no greenhorn who'd blunder into such obvious deathtraps only to be ambushed, captured, and subjected to unspeakable... indignities.

"Sephera." His voice was quiet. "Gas them."

The Sephera nodded, stepping forward. A whispered incantation later, invisible poison vapors seeped into the cave's depths.

Poison Spray—a basic cantrip, the same she'd used in battle earlier.

Weak. Short-ranged. Inefficient—by her standards, at least. To goblins, it remained lethal.

But its true value lay in being cost-free and airborne. Diffusion would dilute its potency, but they weren't expecting it to wipe out the nest—just flush the vermin into the open.

Time wasn't an issue. They could keep pumping poison inside until the goblins either choked or charged out fighting.

Now? They waited.

The sun dipped westward, the air turning crisp. Charles donned his leather armor again, resting his head on Ruth's thighs to recover mana while Sephera maintained her toxic barrage.

Ymik stood frozen nearby, barely daring to breathe. His eyes occasionally flickered toward the women with barely-concealed lust, but any glance his way sent him stiffening in terror.

An hour passed. Shadows climbed the mountainside as the sun touched the horizon. With his spell slots replenished, Charles opened his eyes and frowned at the unmoving cave mouth.

"Still nothing?"

He turned to Ymik. "You're certain this is the place?"

Gassing cramped warrens was standard adventurer practice when entry wasn't feasible. Small creatures favored tight spaces, but their dens were equally confined—and their toxin resistance pathetic. Normally, this worked.

Which meant Ymik had lied.

Hearing the accusation, the goblin fell to his knees, forehead pounding the dirt. "N-no! I swear! This is it, this is definitely it! Why would I lie when you'd kill me?!"

Charles scowled. The fear seemed genuine. After witnessing the slaughter, what fool would risk deception?

Then... something was wrong inside.

"Goblin." He pointed at the entrance. "You lead. Take us to the warren's heart. Ruth, follow him."

Ymik glanced nervously at Sephera, then the poison-filled tunnel. When Charles snapped, "It's diluted enough! Move!", the creature scrambled forward.

Ruth followed, hand on her dagger. Charles and Sephera brought up the rear, bent nearly double.

Darkness enveloped them. Charles cast Light on Ruth's palm.

The floor was filthy. The expected stench of goblin filth was overpowered by Sephera's acrid poison—almost tolerable, until another odor cut through.

Rotting flesh.

Charles' stomach clenched. Then Ymik shrieked and collapsed, trembling.

Ruth whirled, blades flashing. "What?!"

She nearly slit the goblin's throat, certain this was some trap signal. But no ambush came. Only silence.

Charles frowned and cast another Light spell, stepping forward to see what had terrified Ymik so completely.

It was a goblin corpse - withered and shriveled as if something had drained all vitality from it.

Up close, the creature's face was frozen in a grotesque rictus of terror - eyes bulging, mouth gaping wide with teeth scattered around its skull-like visage like broken porcelain.

Goblins were ugly by nature, but this twisted expression made the sight truly horrifying. The sudden appearance of that ghastly face in the darkness made Charles recoil, his heart pounding. "Gods! That scared the hell out of me!"

He placed a hand over his heart, taking deep breaths to calm himself. Then the stench of decay hit him full force, making his stomach churn.

Ruth hurried forward to look. When she saw the corpse, her expression darkened: "This... this is the work of necromantic magic. Either a wraith or a powerful necromancer!"

As she spoke, she lifted her gaze toward the deeper darkness ahead. "If that's the case, this entire cave may already be doomed..."

Charles forced himself to take another breath of the foul air. "Battle readiness. The enemy might still be here."

Then he shot a glare at Ymik. "And your scream earlier probably alerted them!"

Ymik, already pale with fear, rolled his eyes at those words, convulsed, and collapsed—unconscious.

Whether he was scared to death or clinging to his last breath remained unclear.

Charles shook his head slightly, ignored the guy, and motioned for Ruth to take the lead as they pressed deeper into the cavern.

Soon, they reached the far end without encountering any foes—only a scene straight from hell.

Dozens of goblins, young and old alike, lay scattered across the ground, their bodies withered, long dead. Every face was twisted in agony, eyes wide—as if they'd been terrified to death or witnessed something unimaginable in their final moments.

The horror of it made Charles's face darken. Ruth stepped forward, her sharp nails piercing the corpses to assess their rigidity. Then she frowned. "They died around the same time—about a day ago. Last night."

"Likely an evil necromancer," Sephera said calmly, "feeding their undead... or creating new ones. Or perhaps a wild wraith in these mountains, hunting."

A cold sweat broke on Charles's brow. He shook his head. "Doesn't matter. Not our concern."

"Loot their nest. Even if goblin treasures are meager, better than nothing." He forced himself to stay in the grisly scene, adapting. "After this, we head to the Adventurer Camp. Maybe find clues there."

The two witches nodded and began scavenging. As expected, the nest was poor—just scattered gems, a few dozen gold coins, some silver, and cheap, damaged trinkets. Maybe 200-300 gold total.

Unsurprising. Goblins were weaker than slum gangsters, barely 4 feet tall on average. Even a sturdy teen could overpower them. Their cruelty and cunning couldn't offset physical frailty, so they only preyed on novice adventurers. Their wealth was naturally scant.

"Oh! This ring looks decent!"

Sephera's eyes lit up as she pulled a diamond-studded silver ring from a betterequipped goblin's finger—one with a sharp scimitar. She inspected it: no flaws. The diamond was cut well, its facets gleaming in the light.

"An unexpected prize." Charles turned, surprised. The ring's luster and clarity marked it as high-grade. "That'd sell for a fortune..."

Sephera knelt suddenly, took Charles's left hand, and slid the ring onto his finger. "Oh Master, marry me! Be my one and only!"

Ruth, still searching, whirled around, lips parting in shock. "Sephera, you—!"

Reserved by nature, she'd never dare say something so brazen.

Charles smirked, flicking Sephera's forehead. "Funny!."

Yet he left the ring on, pulling her up. "Let's go. The sun's set. If we don't reach camp soon, no rooms left!"

Sephera nodded. The three departed, leaving Ymik's fate unanswered as they hurried toward camp.

A forest breeze made Charles shiver—the mountain evening was colder than expected. He tightened his leather armor and quickened his pace. None noticed the eerie crimson glint reflecting off his diamond ring in the dying light.

. . .

Rockseeker's Outpost

This place had once been a dwarven camp, founded by a mountain dwarf merchant of the Rockseeker clan. He'd discovered a mine in these mountains, established the camp to exploit its resources, and transported the ore to Liberl Port for trade. Years later, the mine had dried up, and the outpost was abandoned. Yet when the Mountain Folk launched their assault on Liberl Port, this settlement—thanks to its dwarven ties—was spared.

Now, with every other outpost and camp set up by the Empire of Sein reduced to ashes, Rockseeker's Outpost, untouched by war, became the prime resting spot for opportunistic adventurers.

By the time Charles and his companions arrived, night had fully fallen. Cold, exhausted, and starving, he wasted no time. He found the town's lone inn, ordered three bowls of vegetable stew and two pounds of roasted beef.

Ruth and Sephera had no need for food, so they merely sipped the broth. Nearly all the beef ended up in his stomach. He devoured it ravenously, dipping each bite into the house's garlic sauce, then—under the envious stares of the other patrons—retired to a large bedchamber with both women and called it a night.

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Chapter 106: Chapter 106: Sadako 3D

Charles slumped on the living room couch in his baggy frog pajamas, bare feet tucked into bear slippers, munching on potato chips with his hair a disheveled mess. The AC in the corner blasted icy air relentlessly, as if determined to freeze its master to death.

On the coffee table before him sat a half-finished bottle of Pepsi. Across from it, an enormous LCD TV hung on the wall, playing the eight-hundredth rerun of Tom and Jerry.

It was deep into the night now—outside the window, no stars or moon shone, not a glimmer of light. Yet he hadn't turned on any lamps, leaving the flickering TV as the sole illumination, basking in the guiet serenity of the evening.

Ah, summer break, parents away—what a glorious life this was!

Lost in thought, he shivered slightly from the cold and yanked the nearby blanket over himself. Then he frowned, suddenly puzzled. Why was he even watching this cartoon?

Channel surf!

With that, he groped around the couch cushions until his fingers finally closed around the remote. He aimed it at the TV and clicked.

Ding-

The LCD screen flickered—but instead of changing channels, it displayed an ancient courtyard with an old well at its center.

Then, a woman with jet-black long hair, clad in a bone-white kimono, slowly emerged from the well. A ghastly pale hand gripped the edge before she hauled half her body out—then, abruptly, she lunged forward, crawling on all fours with terrifying speed.

Charles stiffened on the couch.

What the—?

Is that... Sadako?!

Since when was The Ring playing on TV?!

Holy crap, childhood trauma!

Gotta change the channel, NOW!

His fingertip jammed the remote's buttons repeatedly, but whether from dead batteries or something else, the massive screen remained frozen. Meanwhile, "Sadako" accelerated, reaching the TV's edge in seconds—

—and then, her hand reached out of the screen.

Charles' mind blanked.

This is real?!

No, it's just a horror movie... right? Am I hallucinating?

But I haven't even... indulged lately...

Before he could process further, the "Sadako" had already crawled halfway out of the TV, dropping onto the floor with a thud.

A jolt of terror shot through him.

I'm seeing a female ghost?!

No, this is the real world—ghosts don't exist!

"Ugh—"

The "Sadako" let out a beast-like growl as her pristine white feet slid free from the TV, untouched by dirt. Then, limbs scuttling, she charged across the room—over the coffee table—straight at him!

OH SH—

Charles nearly pissed himself. He flung the potato chips aside and rolled off the couch—

CRASH-

RIIIP—

He hit the marble floor hard, dazed. Meanwhile, "Sadako" plowed into the couch, her steel-knife nails shredding it like paper.

Gasping, Charles scrambled up, every inch of his body aching from the impact—but the pain sharpened his consciousness.

Holy hell, this ghost is REAL!

Gotta run!

Without a second thought, he bolted barefoot for the front door—

BANG—

The deadbolt jammed. No matter how hard he twisted, the reinforced steel door wouldn't budge.

DAMN IT! The female ghost's doing this!

Escape was hopeless. That left only one option: fight.

Kill her.

Teeth gritted, he whirled around just as "Sadako" lunged again. Instinctively, he raised his hand to cast Eldritch Blast—

—but no spell erupted. No magic circle flared.

His blood ran cold.

Why can't I cast?!

HOW?!

No time to ponder. Sadako tackled him, slamming him onto the floor.

THUD—

The back of his head cracked against marble, stars exploding in his vision. Gritting through the dizziness, he seized her wrists, sweat pouring as he strained to keep her razor nails from his throat—while his brain raced.

Why no magic? I've mastered this cantrip!

Does this ghost have an Antimagic Field or something?!

Wait...

This is the real world. Magic doesn't exist here. No Eldritch Blast, no Illusionist's Bracers.

Those are just game mechanics. Virtual nonsense.

But then—

Sadako's virtual too!

With a mental snap (Eldritch Mind triggering), clarity struck.

The hell kind of "real world" is this?! I transmigrated to another universe! Why am I back home watching TV, with Sadako crawling out of it?!

This is a dream. A nightmare. Someone's hijacking my mind, dredging up my deepest fears!

Damn it, I'm a 4th-level spellcaster now, a master of countless spells. A Female Ghost like Sadako? I could blast her apart with a few Eldritch Blasts without breaking a sweat. Why panic?

And even if that fails, I still have my system. A Female Ghost like this? Just purified her on the spot!

The moment this thought flashed through his mind, boundless courage surged within him. Even as those pitch-black, slender, razor-sharp nails hovered inches from his face, he felt no fear. Silently, he chanted:

"Purified!"

Buzz—

A milky light flared, instantly packaging Sadako's entire body.

"Gah—!"

Sadako let out a muffled groan of agony from her throat. A sudden gale howled through the sealed living room, making her kimono whip violently around her.

Her body twisted wildly—she was trying to break free. But now, the tables had turned. In one swift motion, Charles flipped her onto her back, pinning her against the cold floor!

And in that moment, with the Female Ghost trapped beneath him, he suddenly realized something strange.

This Sadako... is she really the same one from the original?

Look at that figure... She looks more like something from the 3D Zone!

He wasn't sure. He'd only watched The Ring, that horror movie, once as a kid—and it scared him so badly he never dared revisit it.

Years had passed, and the original Sadako's image had long faded from memory. Instead, countless "encounters" in the 3D Zone had reshaped her into an entirely new form in his mind.

The very form now pinned beneath him:

Those full, perky breasts. That slender, soft waist. Those plump, round hips—all accentuated by her skin-tight kimono, its curves so pronounced it might as well be sheer.

And those flawless, bare feet... they looked downright delicious.

Charles might not remember what the original Sadako looked like, but he was damn sure this much:

A Female Ghost from a live-action horror movie—one famed for its terror—would never have a body this lewd!

...Hiss. Then what the hell is this?!

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Chapter 107: Chapter 107: A Dream of Lust—The First Night with Sadako

More white light surged, completely enveloping Sadako's body. In just seconds, all the radiance vanished. Whether it was because this female ghost was too feeble or because his purification abilities had grown stronger with the monastery's upgrade, the end result was the same: the female ghost beneath Charles grew utterly docile, lying motionless under his weight, ready for him to do as he pleased.

Seeing this, a mischievous spark ignited in Charles' heart.

He didn't know which ghost she truly was, but here, in his dream, she wore Sadako's form—a version of Sadako with such a luscious figure. He wondered if he might ever have a dream like this again...

As the thought crossed his mind, he released Sadako's wrists. She didn't resist, not anymore. Boldly, his hand slipped beneath the kimono, parting the collar with little courtesy. Sadako's tender body trembled; her head turned as if in bashful surrender.

By then, Charles' hands were already full, cupping those ample, impossibly soft breasts. They overflowed between his fingers as he kneaded and teased, the sensation indescribable, like silk and velvet molded into flesh. Each gentle squeeze made her body arch underneath him—a purely involuntary response. The more he played, the more Sadako's composure wavered, her waist writhing in anxious anticipation, yet her wrists remained limp, surrender given without struggle.

He grew greedy. Pulling the kimono lower, he bared her slender collarbones, her smooth shoulders, the deep valley between her breasts—those proud, gravity-defiant orbs, so full and tempting. His fingers left no marks, despite his enthusiasm, as if the dreamy flesh had been sculpted just for pleasure. It was all fantasy, of course, but he didn't care. Now, enchanted by the sight, he bent low and took one flushed nipple in his mouth.

Sadako's back arched sharply, a gasp escaping as he drew her deep into his mouth. Lips and tongue worked skillfully—he played her, teased her, using his teeth and hungry suckling, the ghostly woman squirming and gasping in shocked delight at being treated this way for the first time. Charles relished the trembling, the heat, sensing how power was utterly his in this fantasy. Something in him pitied her—such gorgeous breasts, yet with nothing to feed on... Or so he thought, until, almost reflexively, he drew on her harder, and was rewarded with a sudden rush of hot, sweet liquid—an impossible, creamy nectar flooding his tongue.

He blinked up at her, shocked. Sadako wouldn't meet his gaze, her face turned away, a silent blush heating her ghostly cheeks. She accepted everything—his hunger, his desire—and gave him all he demanded. Now understanding perfectly what the dream would allow, Charles began to experiment: a gentle squeeze on the other breast produced a bead of rich, pale milk, which glistened at the tip before dripping down. His grin widened; so many delicious possibilities.

He shifted her, pulling her on top of himself as he reclined onto the sofa. With an inviting smirk, he spread his arms: "Feed me." Even though Sadako quivered with embarrassment, she acquiesced, carefully stripping away his pajamas and undergarments, her delicate hands protecting his skin from the scrape of her pointed nails. When his thick cock sprang free, slapping heavily against her hair, she was momentarily startled, withdrawing before gathering up her courage and reaching for it— a new adventure for her, her soft hand stroking him timidly up and down.

She leaned forward, letting those heavy breasts sway above his face. Her nipples, already swollen and oozing sweet milk, brushed against his lips. Charles sucked greedily, relishing the taste and heat, while Sadako, trembling with a potent mix of shame and arousal, stroked his cock more confidently, squeezing and exploring its length with both hands.

Charles surrendered to the sensation—the hot ache of Sadako's hand working over his shaft, a perfect counterpoint to the sweet, wet teasing at his lips. He moaned into her flesh, clutching her round, full hips and thighs, guiding her down until his fingers pressed in, parting her lush folds to seek her heat. Two fingers slid inside with a wanton ease; Sadako gasped and shuddered, a stream of her milk squirting onto his tongue as she convulsed, her hips grinding helplessly against his touch. The wet heat around his fingers grew wilder as he explored, her pussy soaking, clenching, desperate for more. The other nipple dripped with milk, running down her breast in rivulets as Charles licked her clean; each new squeeze brought more.

He could wait no longer. Withdrawing his fingers, he licked the last drop of milk from her breast and flipped her onto her knees. Sadako moaned helplessly as he bound her arms behind her with a conjured strip of red silk and tied one ankle high, forcing her to lean, her body exposed—her swollen breasts pulling toward the floor, the cleft between her thighs spread open, every inch on display. Her cheeks glowed with humiliation, but she never once tried to escape.

With a satisfied grunt, Charles took her waist, positioned himself, and pressed forward. The thick head of his cock parted her wet pussy slowly, inch by agonizing inch, until she engulfed him, her body squeezing around him in needy welcome. Charles growled, thrusting fully forward until his hips met hers. He paused, savoring the sensation; Sadako's muscles clamped down hungrily, milking him for every inch. He pulled almost all the way out, then slammed home again, harder and deeper each time. Sadako's cries rose with every stroke—sweet, broken, pleading—for him to go faster, harder. Her breasts bounced wildly, milk leaking and spraying as Charles pounded into her. With every thrust, his balls slapped her slick thighs; the sound filled the room. He reached up, squeezing a milk-heavy breast, drawing more cream from her, forcing it to spray down her stomach and onto his cock, mixing with the wetness pouring out of her.

His pace quickened, the slap of flesh growing rougher, more urgent. Charles felt the heat building—his whole body tightening, Sadako's fluttering moans driving him to the edge. A low snarl escaped him as he bottomed out inside her, grinding against her trembling hips. Sadako shuddered, her body tensing, clenching around him. Liquid gushed from her pussy. He threw his head back, groaning, and erupted within her—pouring himself out until he felt dizzy, pleasure overwhelming him. Sadako felt it too; her body squeezed every drop out of him, milk streaming with every pulse, painting his belly and hers.

Exhausted, Charles let her down gently, cradling her trembling body. He kissed her neck, her cheeks, licking the milk and sweat from her skin, soothing her with soft touches—tending her as she whimpered, her breathing heavy, small aftershocks making her muscles jump and twitch. He leaned down, lapping up the last drops from between her legs, then wrapped her in his arms and whispered comfort until her breathing slowed and her shivers faded.

The world began to dissolve. The elaborate bindings, the shameful display—they blurred, faded at the edges. Charles felt himself drifting, senses dulling, and realized he was waking.

In reality, morning light crept through the windows. On the other side of the bed, Ruth sat upright, her face grave. Sephera stirred, her usual mischief absent, both witches exchanging wary glances over Charles' sleeping form.

"Sister, why are you up so early?" Sephera's tone was unusually serious, devoid of her usual taunts.

"I had a nightmare," Ruth replied, her features stern. "I dreamt our secrets were uncovered by Theresa; she defeated all of us, even Master."

"Fortunately, right at the end, I realized it was just someone preying on my deepest fears. I turned the dream around, saved Master, and took Theresa apart."

"In the end, she vanished in a blaze of white light before I woke."

Sephera nodded. "I had a similar nightmare, and saw through the same spell. But I couldn't bring myself to kill Sister Theresa—she raised me. So I just revived Master and everyone, healed them, and we all took turns tormenting her until she fainted."

She smiled wryly. "Still ended with her vanishing in light."

They both shivered. "If we were both hit with nightmares... then Master..."

Sephera crossed the room and pressed her hand gently to Charles' shoulder, her voice as soft as a caress. "Master, wake up..."

Back in the dream, Sadako stood naked in the room, blindfolded and gagged, arms tied above her head, balanced on one leg. Huge breasts dangled, each capped with a transparent milking cup nearly full of creamy ghost milk. Her hips thrust high, her white flesh trembling with every vibration of the pulsing sex machine set deep in her wet, stretched pussy, buzzing as it drew gush after gush of slippery nectar from her core.

Charles lounged on the sofa, sipping a glass filled to the brim with Sadako's fresh, sweet milk—so fragrant, so rich that he closed his eyes, savoring. If only he could taste something like this in real life... But he knew it was only a dream, a fantasy conjured by his mind.

He glanced over at Sadako as she convulsed in helpless pleasure, her body writhing against her bonds, breasts leaking anew into their jars as her pussy gushed another wild stream around the pumping toy. Wry amusement curled his lips. "What a pathetic female ghost you are," he said, and, conjuring a brush and inkwell from thin air, painted another bold line across her jiggling ass—preparing her for the next game he had in mind.

That shadow flashed and vanished, but Charles immediately recognized who it was.

It was Sephera.

Hearing her seductive voice, memories rushed back in.

Ah, yes, they were in the mountains above Rubble District, inside the Rockseeker's Outpost.

So, it really was time to wake up.

With that thought, his whole dream vision dissolved: the decadent parlor, the helpless, debauched Sadako—everything faded away.

Dream-world Charles felt consciousness slip away, while in reality, his eyelids fluttered open.

The first thing he saw were Ruth and Sephera, one on each side, their faces hovering anxiously over him, their eyes full of worry and concern.

The moment he woke, both witches immediately spoke up, voices urgent and synchronized.

"Master, did you dream last night? What did you dream about?"

Charlies' eyes were still foggy with confusion. He frowned, searching his memory, but finally shook his head, "I can't remember. I almost never recall my dreams. As soon as I wake, they're gone."

It was a habit that had persisted throughout his life: maybe his dreams were vivid, but he'd only ever remember that he *had* dreamed—rarely a single detail survived more than a second or two.

"But, I suppose it was a nightmare..." His brow creased as he caught their worried glances, "Hiss... All I know is, I didn't wake up halfway through, and it felt like the nightmare went on for a very, very long time..."

He looked at the two women, voice thick with confusion, "Why do you ask? Did you two have nightmares as well?"

The two witches then took turns recounting their own bad dreams. When they finished, Sephera's face grew grave, "If all three of us suffered nightmares, this is no coincidence. We must have been attacked!"

"It's likely the one who assaulted us is also the culprit who slaughtered that whole goblin warren yesterday," Ruth agreed, anxiety deepening in her expression. She glanced at Charles, "Sephera and I are strong enough to protect ourselves from mental attacks like that, but Master... How is your condition, Master?"

Sephera paused in thought, her tongue flicking seductively over her lips. "Perhaps, we should conduct a full examination of Master's body, just to make sure his vitality wasn't siphoned away by that evil bastard."

Charles blinked, just a touch of anticipation stirring in his chest. "And—how should we check?"

Sephera paused in thought, her tongue flicking seductively over her lips. "Perhaps, we should conduct a full examination of Master's body, just to make sure his vitality wasn't siphoned away by that evil bastard."

Charles blinked, just a touch of anticipation stirring in his chest. "And—how should we check?"

"Like this," Sephera replied smoothly, her bifurcated tongue gliding wetly over her lips as her hips rolled, lithe as a serpent as she slithered down beneath the covers.

"You—!" Ruth's exquisite eyes widened in outrage and disbelief—she hadn't expected this 'examination' to be so... hands-on. But Charles only smirked, shifting to give Sephera more room. The cool air under the sheets grew suddenly hot as Sephera's tongue began to trace slow, lazy circles over his bare skin.

Her mouth trailed down his chest, nipping and tasting, until her lips met the base of his cock. Charles let out a low, approving hum as that notorious tongue flicked and curled over his thick shaft, spreading pre-cum in slow, shining strokes.

Sephera's golden pupils glinted up at him in mischief. Her tongue parted, forking to trail one tip along the sensitive vein beneath and the other around the flared head, swirling patiently.

She drew his swollen cock into her mouth, inch by inch, until her cheeks were bulging, and began to suck and lap with obscene, expert enthusiasm. Her hands massaged his balls, squeezing and rolling them gently, coaxing another spurt of pre-cum from the tip.

Meanwhile, Charles caught Ruth's expression—shy, envious, hungry, her cheeks burning with arousal. He reached for her, pulled her into his arms, and kissed her deeply, his tongue plunging between her lips, devouring her whimpers. His hand slipped under her robe, cupping her soft breast, teasing her nipple until it stood taut beneath his palm.

Ruth shuddered as Charles' fingers pinched and toyed with her nipples, his kisses growing rougher, wetter, leaving her gasping, panting for more. Her thighs parted instinctively, hips rocking against him, begging for the friction—anything to relieve that growing, aching need between her legs.

Beneath the covers, Sephera devoured Charles' cock, mouth gliding up and down, tongue swirling, lips sealing tight as she bobbed faster, daring him with every skillful move. She moaned around his thickness, the vibration making him grunt, hips starting to buck. Her hands never stopped: one fondled his balls, the other slipped lower, trailing her own slick heat over his thighs as she pleasured herself, dripping wet.

Charles watched Ruth lose herself—her body arching into his touch, one hand buried in his hair, the other guiding his hand down to her bare slit, slick and burning for him. He slipped two thick fingers inside, causing her to convulse, gasping his name as he thrust gently, curling his fingers to rub along her sensitive walls.

The sheets became a tangle of limbs and heat. Ruth whimpered into his mouth, her cunt clenching desperately around his fingers. Charles' cock throbbed under Sephera's relentless assault—her throat swallowing around him, tongue flattening as she sucked in greedy, relentless spurts. He wrestled free a breast from Ruth's robe, latching onto her nipple, sucking it, biting until she cried out and nearly clawed his back.

The pleasure built impossibly high. Charles' hips jerked, his cock swelling as the first wave of orgasm surged through him. Sephera sensed it, deepening her hold on him—the head of his cock buried in her throat. With a groan, his thick cock erupted, shooting creamy, hot cum down her gullet. Sephera moaned, swallowing every pulse, licking him clean with that devilish serpent-tongue, never spilling a drop.

At the same time, Ruth climaxed under his hand and mouth—her body bucking, cunt squeezing his fingers as she writhed, shuddering in his arms, her nails raking his shoulder.

For long minutes, the only sounds in the room were panting breaths and muffled, wanton moans. Aftercare unfolded like a ritual: Sephera daintily dabbing the corners of her lips with a handkerchief, then leaned up to deliver a cum-laced kiss to Ruth, who—blushing, trembling—licked the trace from Sephera's lips, moaning softly as she tasted Charles' seed mixed with their own arousal.

They collapsed into the sheets, Charles holding them both, caressing and soothing, his cock softening but still sticky with Sephera's saliva and the last traces of Ruth's climax.

Half an hour later, Sephera, having finished swallowing every last drop, smiled with satisfaction. "It's confirmed—Master's vitality wasn't drained in the least. Whatever spell or raid was attempted last night, he triumphed over it."

Charles exhaled, finally relaxing his grip on Ruth, whose chest still heaved from the aftershocks. He stood, stretching.

"In that case, the one who tried to snare us in nightmares is powerless against us," he declared. "Let's not waste any more time on them. We've work to do."

With nothing lost, they thought no more of the would-be attacker. The three of them rose, dressed, and shared a leisurely breakfast before heading to the guild-hall. There, they submitted their application and began seeking out intel on the local hobgoblin warlord from both the townsfolk and adventurers who made their living here.

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Chapter 108: Chapter 108:Dream World

In the slums of the South Harbor District.

Theresa concealed her presence with magic as she strolled along the filthy, mud-caked streets. Rounding a near-collapsed wooden shack, she spotted a woman with sallow skin and a gaunt frame—her once-delicate beauty now entirely hidden, save for her still-alluring figure—sitting beside a massive tub, scrubbing a pile of clothes reeking of sweat and fish.

Her name was Malena—the very woman who had once clutched her daughter, weeping and begging Theresa to save her.

She had been the daughter of a noble in Liberl Port, married off to a foreign merchant at sixteen. But misfortune struck after she gave birth to her daughter: her husband perished in a shipwreck, and her family was ruined by fabricated accusations.

With nowhere to turn, she ended up here, eking out a living as a laundress. In just a few years, she shed all her former fragility, transforming from a pampered lady into a pillar of strength, single-handedly holding her household together.

After her daughter regained her health, a new hope ignited in her. She pushed herself to the limit, scraping together every coin, determined to provide her child with a better life and education.

This resilience caught Theresa's attention, captivating her. Truly, the bloodline of the Beleucci family, she mused. Not only does the daughter possess a compassionate heart from childhood, but the mother, too, is so unyielding...

Well then... why not let mother and daughter soar together—straight into my belly?

Heh. Malena's entire will to live stems from her daughter. I wonder how she'll rage when her child is snatched away by human traffickers?

And when that girl awakens the power in her bloodline, slaughters the kidnappers, and rushes home with magic, only to find her mother reduced to a madwoman by the very slum-dwellers she sought to save... what a delightful spectacle that'll be.

How thrilling...

But first, I must give this mother-daughter pair a glimmer of hope...

With that thought, she dispelled her magical concealment and strode toward the woman.

Ten minutes later.

"Thank you, Sister Theresa! Thank you, truly, thank you!"

Malena was overcome, tears streaming as she choked on her words. "You must be an angel sent by the Goddess of Life... Bless you for your kindness, offering me such work..."

Moments ago, Theresa had promised her: if she could labor eight hours daily at the Tailor's Shop run by the sisters, meeting a set quota, she'd earn two gold coins as remuneration.

This was wages fit for a skilled artisan. Washing clothes from dawn till midnight barely netted her a single gold.

So this opportunity was nothing short of miraculous.

Watching Malena's tearful gratitude, Theresa smiled gently. "Don't thank me. I hired you for your eye for beauty, deft hands, and diligence."

"If the work is shoddy, or you slack off... I'll deduct your pay."

As she spoke, she frowned slightly, sensing an oddly familiar grace in the woman's bearing.

Strange. What is this?

Malena nodded eagerly, her full bosom trembling slightly with the motion. "Understood, Sister Theresa, I understand! I'll devote myself fully to the work—I swear I won't waste a single coin of this wage!"

Then, her expression grew hesitant. "Sister Theresa... where exactly will I be working? Could you... show me the place?"

Theresa gave a slight nod. "Very well."

"Then please wait a moment—I'll change my clothes." With that, Malena turned and headed inside. As Theresa watched the subtle sway of her rounded hips, the faint gap between her thighs that refused to close completely—a sudden realization struck her.

So that's it.

All six of them... just like this woman... have already... done that?!

Her eyes widened slightly, pupils contracting, cheeks flushing pink. She took an involuntary half-step back, her right hand pressing against her chest as her heart hammered wildly.

Who was it?

No—how many have they been with?!

The thought of her sisters' usual shamelessness made her face burn hotter.

Gods... They say once you open those forbidden gates, there's no return from the abyss of desire...

Ahead, Malena returned, now changed. Noticing Theresa's odd state, she quickly asked, "Sister Theresa, are you unwell?"

Theresa shook her head slightly, opened her small mouth slightly, gasped, and then smiled reluctantly and responded: "Nothing, I just suddenly remembered something. Let's go, I'll take you to see where you work."

Having said that, she turned around and took Malena away. As she walked, her mind was still racing.

It seems that during the time when she was not in the monastery, many interesting things did happen to the sisters...

. . .

Dream World

Charles lay flat on his large bed, arms folded beneath the back of his head, eyes closed, savoring Sadako's devout service.

Across from him, Sadako sat on the bed, propping herself up with her arms behind her, lifting her flawless feet to clumsily grip his massive length, sliding up and down in an awkward rhythm.

The pleasure was exquisite. For several nights now, he had revisited this dream, toying with the female ghost in ever-changing ways, pushing her to the brink of collapse before finally being satisfied.

The only flaw? Upon waking, he would forget everything that had transpired—only to recall it all again upon returning to the dream, along with the purified female ghost and the ecstasy she brought him.

Yet bliss was always fleeting. Soon, a pink silhouette flickered beside him, followed by a familiar voice whispering in his ear:

"Master, wake up. It's time."

Sephera's voice.

Ah. Right. Time to rise.

With that thought, Charles sat up, patting the female ghost's jet-black long hair gently.

"I must wake now."

Then, the entire Dream World dissolved.

Back in reality, Charles stirred, his eyes fluttering open in confusion as Ruth and Sephera loomed over him, their faces etched with concern.

"Master, did you dream again tonight?"

Charles remained dazed for a moment before finally furrowing his brow.

"I must have... but I can't recall what. Nothing important, surely. I'm fine—don't trouble yourselves over it."

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Chapter 109: Chapter 109: The Huntress Nidalee

The two witches wore troubled expressions. Since that first night, neither had dreamed again—yet Charles dreamed nearly every evening...

Though the dreams seemed harmless, even leaving him in high spirits, they couldn't shake the suspicion that the malicious dream raider was still at work, using him as a foothold...

"Relax, it's not the raider."

Noticing their furrowed brows, Charles chuckled reassuringly. "See? I'm perfectly fine. No need to worry."

Truthfully, he'd already deduced that the invader of his dreams had been eradicated—the threat was gone.

He'd discovered an additional 550 Purification Points in his system. Checking the details revealed the source: "Purified Agatha."

So while he remained unaware of what he'd purified, the danger had clearly passed.

"Alright, up we get. Let's see what today brings."

With a kiss to each witch's lips, he rose and dressed.

Lacking means to investigate dreams, the two could only suppress their concerns and focus on tracking the hobgoblin warlord Charles had mentioned.

Three days had passed in this camp since posting notices seeking Zenith. Whether due to genuine ignorance, insufficient remuneration, or the target's fearsome reputation, their efforts had yielded nothing.

Well, not entirely nothing. At the very least, they'd familiarized themselves with the camp's layout—the town's regular guard rotations, the procedures and pricing for posting quests, and so on.

They'd also visited numerous locations: a chapel devoted to the Moon Goddess, a dwarven blacksmith's shop, and various stores selling adventuring supplies.

Thanks to their striking appearances, impeccable manners, and—most crucially—Charles's game-acquired knowledge of each resident's personality, they'd quickly befriended the small town's locals, building considerable goodwill.

While this rapport offered little immediate assistance to their current predicament, it was still valuable. At least when they needed to return here in the future, they wouldn't be completely in the dark.

Yet these gains provided minimal help for their immediate mission. Even Charles grew restless.

Dressed and ready, the trio descended the wooden stairs. Halfway down, a booming female voice called from below:

"Mr. Charles! Someone's looking for you—seems there's news about your quest!"

They turned to see the innkeeper—a stout, century-old mountain dwarf matron—standing proudly behind the counter.

Like most dwarves, she barely cleared a meter in height, her head level with Charles's waist. But unlike the frail goblins, kobolds, or halflings, even as a relatively lightweight mountain dwarf female, she possessed a thick waist, sturdy arms, and impressive musculature.

By Charles's estimate, the matron likely weighed over fifty kilograms—heavier than most human women—with physical strength surpassing most human males.

"Any news? That's wonderful!"

Charles perked up at once. Truth be told, he'd grown restless. These past three days had been wasted, and back at the monastery, the other witches still faced Theresa's threats!

"Aye, the night watch at the guild hall returned at dawn and told me someone took your quest last night," the aunt added. Thanks to their good rapport, their task progress had been tracked closely. "Eat up and head over. Same as usual—ham, eggs, and bacon?"

"Whatever you have, Aunt. We're not picky." Charles smiled, settling at a wooden table. The dwarf soon brought a steaming platter: ham, fried eggs, bacon, a vegetable salad, and hot milk—a feast.

Charles devoured his meal, while Ruth and Sephera barely nibbled, prompting the aunt to mutter, "City girls and their diets..." Polite as ever, she didn't interfere further, retreating with her own plate.

After breakfast, the three set off for the local Adventurer's Guild hall.

The "lobby" was once the town's Government Affairs Hall, now remodeled by adventurers. Outside, the notice board had become a task bar plastered with cheap

jobs. Inside, high-value bounties lined the walls—quests only seasoned, powerful adventurers could claim.

When the trio arrived, guild staff were posting new tasks on the high notice board. Below, adventurers watched eagerly—some seeking coin for ale, others scouting for leads.

The cheap work didn't concern them. Weaving through the crowd, dodging grubby hands, they reached the task window and presented their token. "Nigel Charles, sponsor of the 'Hobgoblin Warlord Zenith' bounty. I heard there's a lead?"

The window attendant, a beardless halfling with a thick mane, perched on a tall chair, feet dangling. Puffing his pipe, he leafed through documents. Spotting the bounty's price, his eyes lit up. He hopped down, eager. "Aye, Lord Charles! At dawn, a highlander woman claimed she knows where that old bastard Zenith hides!"

Ten minutes later, in the guild's sealed meeting room, the trio met the highlander woman.

A classic mountain tribeswoman—petite, wheat-skinned, with raven hair tied back and primal green eyes. She stood slightly taller than Ruth, lithe but with defined arm muscles.

Her attire was sparse: crude hide armor covering her chest, exposing a toned waist and navel (making Ruth self-conscious). A hide skirt left her thighs bare—muscular, no excess fat. Her hide boots seemed laughable for autumn mountains, yet she showed no chill, flaunting her wild, athletic frame.

"Greetings. I am Nigel Charles, the sponsor of this commission." Charles stepped forward, offering his hand while studying the girl, trying to discern which tribe she belonged to.

When the Empire of Sein first colonized these lands, their classification of the natives had been brutally simplistic: any human dwelling among these mountains was indiscriminately labeled as "Shanyuan people."

Yet in truth, those living at the foot of the mountain or halfway up its slopes were nearly indistinguishable from the natives of Liberl Port. Meanwhile, the people of the deep plateau were universally shorter, darker-skinned—an entirely different breed from their lowland counterparts.

But alas, due to historical baggage, these distinctions would likely never be properly acknowledged.

And this girl before him? Clearly one of the deep plateau natives—the very group most resistant to the Empire of Sein's expansion.

Fortunately, she showed little animosity toward Charles, a white-haired, blue-eyed youth whose refined features marked him as nobility from the Empire. She clasped his hand firmly and introduced herself with confidence: "Well met, Mr. Charles. I am Nidalee, an unremarkable mountain druid—and a hunter."

Charles' eyebrow twitched. A mountain druid? Oh-ho, the quintessential bottom-tier class.

And while hunters weren't quite as pitiful, they still ranked among the weaker classes...

Ah well. Let us mourn her future prospects in silence.

Ahem!

Not that it was entirely the classes' fault. After all, the game designers had poured their hearts into mechanics while balancing with their feet—one misplaced stat adjustment had doomed both druids and rangers alike...

Then again, their mechanics didn't synergize well, with too much overlap and wasted potential...

So yes, this girl's future remained... concerning.

Ahem!

Though his mind brimmed with impolite thoughts at that moment, Charles maintained perfect reverence on his face: "Ah, a mountain druid! Guardian of the untamed peaks. Your sacrifices for ecological balance command my deepest respect!"

While seriously doubting the girl's actual combat strength, this didn't prevent him from showering the maiden with flattery—words he'd mastered from in-game dialogues.

Nidalee, by nature unaware of his true thoughts, visibly preened at the compliments, the corners of her mouth curling upward. "You honor me. 'Tis our shared duty."

After a brief pause, she cut straight to business: "The locals say you seek trouble with Zenith?"

Charles' eyes flickered briefly before his expression smoothed over. "Ah, we're merely gathering intelligence. Any further action requires assessing the target's actual circumstances first."

He pressed immediately: "So, Miss Nidalee, could you guide us to covertly observe Zenith's castle?"

Nidalee's expression shifted. Clearly, this human already possessed some intelligence—at minimum, he knew Zenith's nest was an abandoned mountain castle. Not entirely uninformed then.

This complicated matters...

"Certainly," she said, mentally adjusting her original plan while emphasizing: "Truth be told, that scoundrel's plagued these lands too long—raiding adventurers, dragging women to his den for his underlings to toy with and insult. Vile. Cruel."

As she spoke, she studied Ruth and Sephera's reactions: "Yet his cunning leaves no traces. Adventurers have never caught his trail."

Her clumsy provocation failed to elicit the rage she sought.

"Mmm. How dreadful," Charles parroted tonelessly. "So have you uncovered clues, or already located his nest?"

"The latter," Nidalee said quickly. "We'd normally ignore bandits, but his recent atrocities have disrupted nature's balance. I tracked his trail through the wilderness to his precise location."

"Rest assured, I've mastered a hidden path to safely observe his castle."

"Excellent." Charles nodded. "When do we depart?"

"Surely... you'll need preparations?" Nidalee probed again. "His castle lies deep in the mountains—a grueling journey across ruined paths while evading scouts. Arduous."

Subtext: You pampered city folk should pack tents before following me.

Charles shook his head decisively. "Unnecessary. Lead us directly."

With spellcraft assisting them, he was confident of matching Nidalee's pace—even in mountainous terrain.

Studying his youthful face, delicate complexion and slender frame, Nidalee's eyes gleamed uncertainly. True capability or mere arrogance?

No matter. She'd test them soon enough.

"Very well," she said. "We leave now!"

Charles matched her nod. "Then we depart immediately!"

All his belongings were stored within his Carry it with you Bag of Holding. The damned thing had cost him 600 gold - an outrageous fleecing that still made his soul ache.

But with circumstances being urgent, he hadn't had time to haggle. The purchase had to be made. Still, the convenience proved invaluable - at the very least, it granted him the freedom to travel unencumbered at a moment's notice!

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Chapter 110: Chapter 110: Ogre Raid

Deep within the dense forest.

The sun drifted southward, yet the mountain noon remained cool beneath the canopy's shade. A gentle breeze carried the fragrance of wild grass and a whisper of chill, soothing the travelers.

Though such comfort couldn't erase the weariness of trekking, those with poor stamina—or lacking a master's skill—would still collapse after a morning of relentless climbing.

Nidalee, clad in animal-hide boots, deliberately maintained a pace brisk for ordinary folk.

As a druid of the Circle of the Land and a part-time hunter-modeled ranger, these mountains were her favored terrain. Without consuming a shred of magic, she leaped uphill and downslope with ease, swift as if crossing flat ground.

Yet for adventurers outside these classes, such speed was taxing. Nidalee paid no mind to her teammates—or rather, she intended this.

She aimed to test the strength of Charles's trio. Were they truly capable, or just sheltered nobles oblivious to the wild's dangers?

So far...

After two unbroken hours covering over twenty mountainous miles, only Charles showed slight flush. Yet he neither lagged nor complained.

As for Ruth and Sephera? Not a pant, not a pulse out of place, as if another dozen miles would be trivial.

Tch. To openly post a bounty on Zenith's head... They came prepared after all. Not to be underestimated.

Very well then...

She pivoted abruptly, quickening her steps until emerging at a pebble-strewn creek. "We'll rest here. You must be tired. Eat, then we press on—aim to arrive before sunset for your reconnaissance."

Charles halted as well. Two hours of nonstop walking had indeed left him weary, so without much thought, he gave a slight nod. "Mm, let's take a break."

As he spoke, he and the two witches stepped onto the pebbles, making their way to the riverbank. They set down their backpacks and settled onto a large, clean rock, then pulled out rations—hardtack bread, dried radish, beef jerky, and the like—preparing for a quick, makeshift meal.

Before eating, he consumed his remaining spell slots, casting extended Longstrider and protective spells on himself, leaving only two points in reserve. Only then did he eat slowly, using this hour-long lunch to restore his state to full.

The two witches only ate symbolically before finishing. Then, Ruth stayed by his side, holding a waterskin to his lips, while Sephera took another, now-empty waterskin to fill from the river.

Their meticulous service made Nidalee frown slightly. Are they here to adventure or to picnic?

Hmph. Soon, they'll learn—this is a perilous wilderness, a man-eating forest, no place for carelessness!

With that thought, she suddenly looked up, puzzled.

Strange. Why hasn't it happened yet?

Whatever. Time to eat.

Silently chanting an incantation, she cast Goodberry, conjuring a cluster of crimson berries in her palm. She plucked one and popped it into her mouth.

These divine berries, reformed from nature's energies, could sustain a person for an entire day with just one. So, with a druid in the party, there was little need to carry much food.

Though even so, most would rather pack extra rations than drag a useless druid along.

Ahem.

At that moment, the two groups maintained an almost-stranger's distance, each handling their meals. Though slower than Nidalee, Charles's group finished quickly. He was about to rest his head on Ruth's thighs for a quick nap to recover stamina—

But then, Ruth's expression shifted. She frowned, glancing behind them.

Sephera sensed it too but chose to voice it: "Is something approaching? I hear noises."

Charles's eyes snapped open. "I feel it too. Stay alert—prepare for battle!"

He rolled to his feet, inhaling sharply as he shifted into battle state. Nidalee gave a slight nod, then drew her throwing spear, gaze fixed ahead.

And then, they saw them—three ogres, each nearly five meters tall, wielding uprooted trees as greatclubs, charging down the mountainside. "ROAR—!"

They had sparse black hair, brown skin, and filthy, matted fur. Their bodies were grotesquely wide, with massive bellies, clad only in patchwork animal hide armor around their waists—like frenzied primitives!

Charles's pupils constricted.

This is an ogre nest?

We rested here?

No—Nidalee, a hunter, led us here on purpose?

His peripheral vision caught Nidalee feigning panic as she shouted: "Ogres! Damn it, don't engage them head-on! Take cover in the woods—their size hinders them there!"

Even as she spoke, she was already retreating, darting into the dense woods behind them and quickly putting distance between herself and the group.

Damn it! This Nidalee is definitely suspicious!

He gritted his teeth silently, suppressing his anger for now. "Do as she says!" he roared before turning to sprint toward the woods.

But even with Longstrider's enhancement, human legs could never outrun five-meter ogres. The distance between them closed rapidly—Charles could actually hear their slobbering gulps!

Yet he remained completely calm inside. Just three of them? Not impossible to handle.

Hell, Nidalee alone could probably take them down with proper maneuvering!

Ogres had notoriously low Intelligence, living primitive and savage lifestyles. They relied entirely on their thick, rough hides and overwhelming brute strength in battle: they couldn't even craft proper weapons, just scavenged for clubs to use. Even if they found metal weapons, they'd either discard them immediately or—in their stupidity—try to swallow them whole!

If not for their massive size advantage, they would've gone extinct long ago.

Therefore, with proper use of terrain and some clever tactics, eliminating them all here wasn't beyond possibility.

Like using those woods behind them!

With that thought, Charles sprinted deeper into the trees, then whirled to face the charging ogres. He backpedaled in quick, measured steps, gauging the distance.

Ruth and Sephera flanked him, waiting. The moment the lead ogre crashed through the branches—its bulk snagging on the dense foliage—Charles struck.

Shadowfell's darkness unleashed from his fingertips, coiling around the brute.

Hexblade's Curse.

His first time using it since becoming a Hexblade. Previous foes hadn't been worth the effort.

Today's different.

The curse's thirty-meter range kept him safe—for now. He'd need precision; Eldritch Blast alone wouldn't drop these monsters.

The ogre shuddered as the curse's chill seeped into its veins. Charles leapt back, yanked the Storm Warhammer from his hip, and hurled it with a twist of magic.

WHOOSH—CRACK!

"GRAAAGH—!"

The electrified hammer smashed between the ogre's eyes. Lightning detonated on impact, sending birds screeching skyward as the brute collapsed to one knee, dazed.

Perfect. Now it's a punching bag.

The hammer's recall spell snapped it back to his grip. He sheathed it, then traced twin Magic Circles in the air—

BANG! BANG!

Two Eldritch Blasts struck true, carving bloody craters into the ogre's torso. Though its thick hide absorbed most damage, the creature's twisted expression told Charles everything - Hexblade's Curse was at work, its shadowy tendrils gnawing at the brute's innards!

"Huuuh... whew..."

The ogre groaned, shaking off its daze as it lumbered upright. Charles maintained his retreat, firing steadily - death by a thousand cuts would suffice.

Then he saw it.

The beast turned, hefting a boulder from the riverbank with terrifying ease.

Hiss...

Damn!

Fifty meters separated them - well within an ogre's throwing range.

Charles swayed on his feet, ready to dodge. With spell slots exhausted - not even a Shield remaining - his only defenses were footwork and lingering protective magics.

Just then - ZAP!

A viridian beam lanced from Sephera's position, piercing the ogre's flank.

The poison took immediate effect. The brute convulsed, its throw going wide as muscle control failed.

CRUNCH!

The boulder smashed through branches, kicking up dust. Charles exhaled and resumed his barrage.

BANG!

Massive yet clumsy, poisoned and tangled in foliage, the ogre stood no chance. Its sulfuric complexion marked it as living target practice.

"Urk... oogh..."

The ogre's wails painted a clear picture - its life force draining away bit by bit. Minimal damage per hit, but cumulative enough to be lethal.

Almost done. A few more shots would finish it.

While Charles maintained pressure, Ruth moved like a songbird through the canopy. Magic propelled her graceful arcs as she circled behind the rearmost ogre.

Then - LEAP!

Her body spun midair, magical energy reforming into a gleaming blade as she struck-

SCHLICK!

"ROOOAAAR-!"

Arterial blood fountained as the ogre's cry turned shrill. Severed nerves rendered its legs useless - one ton of meat collapsing like felled timber.

"Beautiful work!"

Nidalee's praise rang out as she channeled magic into her throwing spear. With a grunt, she launched it-

THWACK!

"GRAAAH-!"

The projectile punched through the final ogre's hide, burying deep in its chest. The brute howled in agony.

"HYAH!"

With another battle cry, she leapt forward. By the time her feet touched ground, her form had shifted into that of a sleek panther. Muscles coiled, then released—propelling her across dozens of meters in a single bound. Her front claws lashed out—

Schlick!

Razor-sharp talons split the ogre's eyes open. Twin trails of blood wept down its face as it howled in agony. The creature swung its massive club blindly—

CRASH!

—shattering a nearby tree trunk to splinters. Nidalee, untouched, backflipped away.

The panther landed gracefully, putting distance between herself and the blinded brute. Then, in a shimmer of magic, she shifted back to human form. Another spear left her hand—

Thunk!

"AARRGH-!"

The projectile buried itself in the ogre's gut. As it roared, Charles finished his own target and turned—

BANG! BANG!

—loosing twin Eldritch Blasts. Sephera's Ray of Sickness struck simultaneously. The massive body toppled like a felled oak, motionless at last.

Battle concluded.

Nidalee bounded over as a panther, shifting mid-leap to human form beside Charles. "We're unstoppable! Alone, I'd need hours to take down prey like this!"

Her delighted grin met only Charles' icy stare. Shadowfell energy coalesced into a longsword at her throat. "Freeze."

Nidalee's hands shot up. "I yield! Honestly—no ill intent here!"

Ruth dropped silently from the trees behind her while Sephera blocked escape, their gazes colder than winter steel.

Tension thickened the air—one wrong word away from violence.

"No ill intent?" Charles' blade didn't waver. "Explain how a veteran hunter 'accidentally' leads us into ogre territory. Make me believe it."

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