

Descent 671

Chapter 671

“Huh?”

The first group was stunned to find that there was already a group standing in the small clearing. They immediately put their guards up, thinking that they would have to fight for the treasure before they could even lay eyes on it.

However, that was when a second and a third group appeared.

The tense atmosphere only grew worse.

Leonel looked up. When a few saw his face, they were quite shocked.

While it was a toss up whether or not a senior would recognize Leonel’s face, freshmen, especially those who had yet to join a Peak before the rule changes, were a completely different story. After all, because of Leonel, many of them hadn’t gotten a good night’s rest for weeks. If they didn’t know him, they’d be way too ignorant.

The freshmen’s gazes flickered with some hints of confusion and hesitancy. Unlike the seniors of Valiant Heart, they hadn’t been here for long enough to understand a lot of the rage around Leonel. They simply followed the flow in most cases. Those of them that looked down on Leonel were just going along with the crowd.

But while it was easy to do this when amongst their own friends and their private groups, when faced with the man himself, especially when his fingers were working on the corpse of a massive Titan Hyena, they suddenly couldn’t find the words to say.

“Moos.” Leonel spoke. “Explain the situation to them, you understand it all far better than I do.”

“Ah! Yes!”

Moos, the third freshman amongst Irolana and Ingkath, began to explain things from the very beginning. As he began, Leonel put up a small silencing barrier that only allowed sound in but not out and handed the dictionary to Aina.

As his fingers worked, he began to pepper the dictionary with questions about the Oryx Tribe. He realized that knowledge was power a long time ago. The fact he knew nothing about the Oryx could come back to bite him very soon.

Leonel wasn't arrogant enough to believe that he could take on whoever the Oryx Tribe had sent.

Whoever they dared to send so deep into Valiant Hall Mountain's territory was definitely extraordinarily skilled. Beyond that, who said that there was just one?

Leonel had a feel that this matter was far larger than he knew.

'So it's like this...' Leonel's eyes narrowed, his fingers never stopping. By now, he had already formed over a hundred arrow heads.

He split one mind toward thinking of what Force Arts were best suited toward it, focused another on the discussion between Moos and the others, another was trained on his surroundings, and the last focused on the words of the dictionary. The more he learned about the Oryx, the more he was intrigued. It seemed that he had finally met a non-human humanoid race.

Leonel quickly summarized what he had learned.

The Oryx were the original race on this world, it wasn't until later that Valiant Heart was established.

This was quite rare for this quadrant. No, for this entire galaxy.

The Milky Way was a galaxy of humans, the population of other races and species was quite low unless one counted beasts. But even then, the beasts one could find here were decidedly less mystical than one could find in other galaxies.

The Oryx were known for their superior strength, their three eyes, and especially the metal skeleton. The uniqueness of this world in being 90% land allowed the birth of certain special Ores that triggered the evolution of the Oryx down this path. ρ??∫??????

When coming to this point, Leonel couldn't help but wonder if the Morales family evolved in this way as well. He couldn't help but draw comparisons even though the Oryx were still definitely inferior in this regard.

What intrigued Leonel even more than this, though, were the eyes of the Oryx. According to the dictionary, that was one line of their evolution that was rapidly progressing with each generation.

Apparently there was a special term for this. The dictionary knew it as Hyper Evolution.

Hyper Evolution appeared rarely in the history of a species. It allowed the process of evolution that usually took billions to trillions of years to complete to have massive leaps every generation.

Hyper Evolution usually targeted a single trait and allowed it to progress quickly. But, obviously, it wasn't helping the Oryx see a wider range of colors, so what was it building up to?

Leonel shook his head, even the dictionary couldn't predict the future, and neither could he, so there was no use in wasting time speculating.

If a species entered a state of Hyper Evolution, they would either rise to the top in one shot or fall to the wastes of history. As a non-human species, the Oryx most definitely had a tall mountain to climb, especially since most Hyper Evolutions ended in failure.

'Is this why they're suddenly making such large movements?' Leonel's gaze narrowed, dispelling the sound proof barrier around him.

“... All of you should know about how dangerous the Oryx Tribe is, we’ve suffered at their hands too many times despite their populations being a mere fraction of our own.”

‘A fraction?’ Leonel frowned. ‘During Hyper Evolution, fertility is also increased for a period of time. But, even the dictionary can’t tell me how long they’ve been in Hyper Evolution for, its too loose a concept...’

“Are you trying to tell us to trust you all? Let’s say the Oryx Tribe is making such a big move so deep in our territory, who are we supposed to follow exactly? Him?”

The young man who spoke was called Senior Lu despite also being a black belt freshman. Maybe he was emboldened by the respect his ‘juniors’ gave him, but he pointed toward Leonel whose hands were still moving like striking lightning.

At that moment, the group had already grown to almost 30 and more were still arriving.

Having finished going through the entire skeleton, Leonel whipped out his quill and began to write at a blazing pace. But, his actions left ‘Senior Lu’ feeling stifled.

Leonel continued to work, his eyes locked onto this Senior Lu.

Regaining his composure after realizing the Leonel didn’t dare to do anything to him here without fear of losing the support of the crowd, Senior Lu continued to speak.

“I’m not one to cast judgment, but I’m sure many of you were there that day when Senior Raylion gave his speech. If we follow this man, won’t we just end up like cannon fodder to fuel his escape?”

“Remember, he is the one who called us here. He needs OUR help. Why should we risk ourselves for the benefit of his safety? I’ve seen this play out way too many times.

“If he wants our trust despite his terrible reputation, he needs to prove himself. He should be taking up the most dangerous tasks and heading the vanguard, or else won’t he just be using us?”

Chapter 672

When Moos, Irolana and Ingkath heard these words, they couldn't help but panic. Even if they hadn't seen Leonel's strength today, they had still heard about what happened between him and Gersan. To take out a Valiant Hall white belt in just two exchanges... There wasn't a single person here who could replicate that feat.

No, that wasn't true. There was one other. But, she just so happened to be his girlfriend.

They could only say that this Senior Lu was far too bold. Was he really not afraid of death?

What Senior Lu had misunderstood was Leonel's reason for calling them all here and bringing them together. In his mind, Leonel was afraid of the Oryx and thus needed their help. Even if Leonel was enraged into leaving this group, who cared? The group had already been brought together. Would one more or one less Leonel make a massive difference? They could then look after each other's backs.

This was the way of the world. Even if two people needed each other, the person who asked for help first would always be on the losing end while the other would have all the leverage. As long as he understood Leonel's weakness, Senior Lu felt that manipulating this situation and finding opportunities to protect his own life would be easier.

"Sure. I'll take the vanguard."

Leonel's response stunned even Senior Lu, let alone Irolana, Ingkath and Moos.

"I'm the strongest, isn't being the vanguard obvious?" Leonel's brow rose.

Though his expression was quite neutral aside from the change in his eyebrow, it still made others feel like he was looking at Lu as though he was an idiot.

However, Leonel's words made the freshmen feel as though their whole worlds were being flipped upside down.

The strongest taking the vanguard? It sounded so obvious, but why was it that they had all simply expected Leonel to refute this? When had they ever come across a senior who didn't try to take advantage of their position? When had they ever run across someone stronger than them who didn't also treat them lesser than?

The strongest taking the vanguard... That was a concept they had simply never heard before.

"A general who leads men from the back isn't a general." Leonel said off handedly, his right hand flicking about quicker as he completed the last of his Force Arts.

The freshmen stared at Leonel in a state of speechlessness. A hushed silence fell over the group.

Aina smiled as she looked at Leonel's side profile.

'He's so bad.'

With a final flicker, Leonel placed the final batch of arrows into his spatial ring. Taking out his bow, he strapped it to his back and smiled toward the crowd.

"Our goal is simple, it's only to return to the mountain pass. If there really are a troop of Oryx here, it's unlikely that they'll dare to travel so closely."

The freshmen looked toward each other. By now, the crowd had grown to over 50. Yet, not a single one of them wasn't paying attention. Even Senior Lu felt as though there was a frog in his throat.

"Between here and the mountain pass there is about a 50 kilometer distance. Usually, we could cross this in just an hour or two, but I have a feeling that things won't be so easy this time around.

"The presence of the Oryx will most definitely cause a change in the habits of the beasts around here. If not yet, then very soon. Previously, the Oryx were trying to keep a low profile. But, it likely already knows that its Titan Hyena companion has died and will deduce that it can no longer keep itself hidden.

“If the Oryx is only here for reconnaissance, then this is good news. In that case, we should make it back without any obstacle and I’m being overly cautious. ρ??∪???????

“However, if their goal is to probe Valiant Heart’s bottom line, then things won’t end peacefully. We need to be ready to battle.

“Aina.”

Aina stepped forward and flipped her palm. Soon, long and narrow boxes began to appear, each housing what looked like three small spheres which were barely a quarter the size of a palm.

“These should be able to save your life at a crucial moment. Unfortunately, I don’t have enough to give everyone more than three. But, a single one should be able to take out a Tier 4 beast and below.”

The eyes of the freshmen lit up when they heard this while Leonel’s internal smile only grew wider.

Raylion had made many mistakes that day, each of which Leonel planned on picking on and tearing apart one by one.

But, one of his biggest of them was in just how vague he had been when listing Leonel’s crimes. Even when he mentioned Leonel’s faulty Crafts, he never explained what those Crafts were, what they looked like or what they did.

Not many would instantly connect the treasures Leonel had handed out to the matters Raylion spoke of that day precisely because he had been so vague.

Leonel wondered how Raylion would react when the very Crafts he deemed to be faulty works were suddenly in hot demand.

The best part was that this stock didn't even have to be replenished by Leonel anytime soon. He had had this in his spatial ring for a long time already. And, by having Aina hand them out, a person who was still wearing Hero Peak's emblem, they were even less likely to make the connection.

“Yip! Yip!”

Little Blackstar suddenly appeared to Leonel's side again, having disappeared at some unknown time.

“Done?” Leonel whispered.

“Yip! Yip!”

Leonel nodded. To everyone else, it looked as though he was only rewarding Little Blackstar with a pat on the head. By this point, Aina had finished handing everything out.

“Alright everyone, it's time to set out.” Leonel took a deep breath, his demeanor shifting.

At that moment, several howls suddenly reverberated across the forest.

Whatever excitement the freshmen had had at that point was doused all the way through.

Silence fell again, the trees swaying beneath a hollow wind.

Leonel's expression grew serious.

Chapter 673

An arrow whizzed by, arching between two thick tree branches and splitting the skull of a prowling jaguar. The beast didn't even get a chance to roar out in pain before it collapsed, falling from its high perch and landing with a heavy thud on the forest floor.

Leonel rubbed his fingers, a tingling sensation making him very much aware that the arrow had been shot by him. Ever since his body entered the Fourth Dimension, he hadn't needed to worry about slicing his fingers on his own bowstring again. But that didn't stop the thin almost metallic string from digging into him.

'There's a lot more than I thought there'd be...'

The freshmen separated out into teams to Leonel's back. If they tried to move forward in a swarm through this forest, they'd be asking to suffer.

Instead, Leonel and Aina took the vanguard as promised. As for the others, they split into the team they had originally come with, forming up groups of five to seven as they slowly followed.

By now, the group had run into several beasts, more than enough for them to realize that something was wrong. The populations shouldn't have been this dense.

Only Leonel seemed to be aware of what was happening as he had already warned them that this would occur.

The Oryx gave off a very strong odor. To humans, this was no different from any other foul smell and many would choose to just hold their nose as opposed to analyzing what was wrong.

But the truth was different from this. The foul smell that came off the Oryx was an evolutionary quirk to scare off competition. Back when the Oryx were a much weaker race, they relied on this to carve out their territory and keep themselves protected.

However, over time, this smell became more potent. It was even to the point that the most talented of the Oryx tended to have the most foul smells which helped them to gain the favor of mates.

As a result, the effect of the Oryx's smell grew even more exaggerated, it was even capable of sending beasts into a frenzy from fear.

The influx of beasts now wasn't because the Oryx could control beasts, but rather because these beasts were running away from the Oryx.

Even with Leonel senses leading the vanguard of the group, allowing them to dodge the most populated regions, they still ran into so many.

Leonel had taken down the most beasts, but the other groups were fighting as well. Unfortunately, things weren't so convenient for all the beasts to come down toward them from just a single area.

Still, Leonel's constant support had long since won the favor of many of the freshmen. Even after over half an hour, though they were still over 45 kilometers from their destination, not a single person had died yet.

As the group moved along slowly and cautiously, they ran into other groups. Assimilating these groups wasn't as difficult as it had been to convince the first. This was simply human nature, it was far easier for others to accept something when many others already had.

Aina walked silently by Leonel's side, brandishing her ax with both hands. In a thick forest, such a weapon should have been cumbersome yet Aina didn't seem to have any problems with it at all.

Aside from the two of them, Moos, Ironala and Ingkath followed closely behind. Since most of their team had been wiped out, it was difficult for them to split out alone with just the three of them. As such, Leonel allowed them to join up with them.

The three remained on high alert, not wanting to be burdens. But, it felt like every time they sensed something, Leonel would have long since acted. Even the more stealthy of beasts couldn't avoid Leonel's detection. ρ??∫??????

They had a feeling that Leonel found these beasts long before, it was just that he only acted when the best opportunity presented itself.

'The atmosphere is too tense.' Leonel thought to himself.

But, he wasn't sure how to alleviate it. The group walked forward in silence, the slight rustling of leaves being about the only thing one could hear here. The sun was still high in the sky, though obstructed by the thick canopies, one would think that it was the dead of night considering the atmosphere.

Maybe that was a part of the issue, though. With their pace, it would be impossible to make it to the mountain pass before night fell. And, even if they tried to speed up, they would only be asking to get killed.

'Little Blackstar already finished throwing the Oryx Tribe members off our trail, if there is more than one. But, I'm not sure how long that will last so there's no point in telling them this to get them to relax. Maybe this tense state is the best for them, they would be more likely to be alert...'

Leonel had sent Little Blackstar back to spread the blood and guts of the Titan Hyena in a different direction, hoping to fool the Oryx. With their love of scents, it was no surprise that they were also quite sensitive to them. So, Leonel felt it would work.

After a quick dip in the Cleansing Waters, Blackstar didn't even have any lingering smells on him.

But, Leonel couldn't help but wonder if it really was enough...

At that moment, Leonel's pupils constricted. Holding a hand up, he brought the group to a stop.

Everyone strained their ears, trying to sense what Leonel had. Some of them with better senses grasped onto the faint sounds of battle. In fact, it sounded as though there was a large group fighting.

The group slowly moved forward as Leonel stretched his senses to their limits. He had to decide if they should attack or change course, but what he saw made him frown.

Reflected in his Internal Sight, he saw the outline of a familiar silhouette. It was none other than the busty Balthorn. At that moment, her fleshly underboob was still just as prominent even as she fought amidst a group of more than a dozen at that very moment.

Aside from her right hand lady, Henorin, she was unsurprisingly still surrounded by a flock of men. Some of these men were cowering, but others among them were still boldly trying to gain Balthorn's favor by battling valiantly.

However, there were two matters that made Leonel pause. The first was an eyebrow raiser, but the second was something that made his own pupils constrict.

The former was the fact that amongst the dozen, there was a man whose white belt was very prominent. It was clear that this senior had come here for the sake of either protecting or impressing Balthorn, likely even both.

The latter though almost made Leonel sigh with helplessness.

The creature they were battling was yet another Titan Hyena. And, since Leonel knew what to look for this time, he didn't need to cut it open to know it also had a full skeleton.

That confirmed it for Leonel.. The likelihood that there was more than one Oryx in this forest just skyrocketed.

Chapter 674

Leonel brought the group to a stop again, his senses continuing to be focused on the battle ahead.

They were no more than 200 meters or so between them. But, through the thick forest, it was impossible to spot them with the naked eye from the distance. It was no surprise, then, that the group of about a dozen had yet to notice their appearance as well.

Leonel steadied his breathing, slowly pulling out a silver tipped arrow. Compared to the arrows he had been using, this one was easily twice as thick and several times heavier. Its tip was split into four serrated edges, a look alone that made one want to have nothing to do with such a vicious killing instrument.

If one looked closely, it was possible to see a faint energy coating the arrow tip. But, one who wasn't especially sensitive wouldn't notice it at all.

With a calm inhalation, Leonel nocked his bowstring and pulled it back.

He stood on the forest floor, aiming toward what looked like nothing but endless trees, his eyes filled with a cold calculating light.

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Beads of sweat fell down Belthorn's delicate brow. After hours of battle, her long black hair had long since been soaked through, clinging to her forehead and even parts of her collarbone.

Around her, what looked like silver spheres hung around. Every so often, she would make a gesture with her slender hands, causing these spheres to shoot forward and smash into the limbs of the Titan Hyena.

It was hard to tell if this was a telekinetic ability or something more complex. But, at this moment, the men and singular woman that surrounded her were most definitely not thinking about this.

To this point, they had already lost several members of their team. If it wasn't for the combination attacks of Belthorn and the white belt senior, Jaelis, far more would have fallen.

This sounded like a glass half full type of approach, which was good. After all, it was always better to remain optimistic in this kind of situation. But, it took a turn for the worse when one realized that their group of just over a dozen had been double this size not long ago.

Jaelis held the Titan Hyena down with the help of others, his spear rotating quickly with his every attack. But, even with how haughty he was, he had to admit that had it not been for Belthorn's odd ability, he would have fallen several times already.

Jaelis and three others struck forward at the same time, their blades all aiming for the snout of the Titan Hyena.

Their blades almost reached their target at the same time, but Jaelis' eyes flashed at the last instant. In a hardly perceptible action, he slowed by a measure.

The Titan Hyena roared, swiping a strong paw across and snapping three weapons at once.

Its foul breath hung in the air as it lunged, plunging both sets of claws into the shoulders of another.

The Titan Hyena ripped downward, tearing the freshman into six strips.

Jaelis was the first to retreat, his spear tip having been spared. p??J??????

At that moment, Belthorn reacted, sending several silver balls smashing into the torso of the Titan Hyena. With it having jumped into the air, it didn't even have the chance to dodge.

The Titan Hyena was launched back, deep dents appearing in its side. Any other creature would have been entirely crippled. But, Belthorn and the others had been through this once before. The flesh of the Titan Hyena might have deformed, causing terrible bruises, but its bones were just fine.

The Titan Hyena latched onto a thick tree to stabilize itself, its eyes filled with fury as it locked onto Belthorn for the third time in this battle already.

BANG!

The Titan Hyena launched itself forward, causing the tree it had just been on to partially snap and begin swaying from side to side.

“Form up!” Jaelis roared.

He took a protective stance before Belthorn. Or, rather, it seemed like he had. Before Jaelis would take any sort of protective measures, the Titan Hyena had soared over its head. It seemed that Jaelis had miscalculated the flight trajectory of the beast.

Belthorn's eyes widened, watching the massive mustard yellow furred beast falling down toward her.

Biting her teeth, she mobilized what remained of her floating silver spheres. In order to launch her previous attack, she had flung the previous five outside of her ten meter range of control. Usually, Jaelis would find a way to throw them back to her, but he had already been retreating before he could this time.

Now, she only had one left, the one she had left behind for emergencies. But, just this singular sphere wouldn't be able to toss the beast away like those five before had.

She needed time to accelerate her spheres to reach that level of power. But, this foul beast was already falling toward her. Even if she by some miracle managed to kill this Titan Hyena, this wouldn't change. There was no way her body could survive the collapse of a beast so heavy onto it.

Henorin stood beside Belthorn. Seemingly not knowing what to do either.

"Dammit! Protect her!" Jaelis roared.

At that moment, Henorin's eyes narrowed.

Belthorn roared, her final sphere shooting up. Her face was drained of all color, clearly having been overtaken by fear. If anything, her final roar was less about her confidence and much more about gathering up the courage she needed to do anything at all.

The silver sphere shot upward, but it was off target.

Belthorn had aimed for the beast's chest. In such a situation, aiming for the largest target was best and it would hopefully give her better leverage to throw the beast off course.

But, in her agitation, she missed, aiming too high and causing the sphere to smash against the bared fangs of the Titan Hyena.

A splutter of bone and broken teeth flew, sending the sphere spinning off in another direction. The Titan Hyena roared in pain, but as expected, its downward trajectory didn't change. In fact, it was now even more infuriated.

It was exactly then that a sharp whistling sound filled their ears. It was as though someone was blowing the flute right next to them all, intent on making them all go deaf.

SHUUUUUUUUU!

Chapter 675

A blinding silver light tore through the forest. It curved in an elegant arc, snaking past the thick trunk of several ancient trees as though a god had personally come down and drawn a line through the forest.

It appeared amidst the fighting group in an instant. The number who even noticed its appearance were too few. But by the end, everyone saw the result.

PENG!

PCHUUU!

It was as though some mysterious force had ripped the Titan out of the air. The arrow was far too fast to spot. To an outside observer, it really did seem like an invisible force had torn it away from its original flight path.

BANG!

The Titan Hyena smashed against a tree in the distance, its body hanging limply as though a stuffed animal. It hung pinned to the thick tree, its eyes steadily growing vacant amidst its whimpers.

At that moment, there wasn't a single person who wasn't shocked by the sudden change.

Balthorn, who thought her life was forfeit, brought a hand to her chest, her heart beating so erratically that it sent ripples throughout her ample breasts.

Jaelis was maybe the most stunned outside of Balthorn. That Titan Hyena was a bit weaker than the one Leonel and Aina battle previously, capping out at Tier 6 in strength. But, it still wasn't something they were able to casually face.

Not long after his surprise faded, it was filled with rage.

'What fool did this?! Does he not know the consequences of killing a Silver Clawed Titan Hyena?!'

Jaelis clenched his fists.

'Fuck! The smell. I need to leave this place quickly!'

Jaelis hesitated, gritting his teeth. Though he couldn't defeat the Titan Hyena, he hadn't been looking to in the first place. From the very beginning, he was looking for a covert way to slip away without exposing himself.

He was a sly man. Even if there was a small chance things would come back to bite him, he wouldn't take the risk. If not for fear that these brats would survive, he would have run away more blatantly.

It turned out that he was right to be cautious. Had he run away, this bastard would have still interfered in the end. By then, his name would have been dragged through the mud.

Still, calmly analyzing the situation, Jaelis realized that whoever this bowman was, he was an expert marksman. That strike only carried the strength of a Tier 5 existence going all out. In fact, it might have been just Tier 4 while infinitely close to Tier 5.

But, this person's marksmanship, not to mention the quality of their arrows made up for this weakness.

The instant the arrow shot through the Titan Hyena's eye, Jaelis sensed that its brain had been turned into minced meat.

Jaelis had a sensory ability as well. It was just that his family's Lineage Factor also gave him a strong body, so he wielded the spear to make use of it. But, he was much more fond of using his ability.

'There's more than one of them?'

Jaelis took a deep breath, turning toward a certain direction.

At that moment, Leonel and Aina, followed by Irolana, Moos and Ingkath entered the small clearing. Seeing Leonel, and especially noting the bow in his hand, Balthorn's eyes lit up with surprise.

However, not long later, everyone was shocked because there were actually more than 50 individuals following behind them. $\rho \int$

Leonel looked at the carnage. He felt a bit of guilt looking toward the freshmen who had been sliced into six, but had he acted too soon, things wouldn't have ended so simply.

Things became more and more complex the more people he had to take care of. With that came many more variables. That said...

Leonel turned his attention toward Jaelis, ignoring Balthorn.

At that moment, Jaelis felt as though he was being locked onto by a beast. Even the stare of the Titan Hyena hadn't nearly been this uncomfortable.

According to Leonel's original simulation, the three freshman plus Jaelis would have struck at the snout of the Titan Hyena. Following this, the Titan Hyena would chase after Jaelis since he was the strongest and Leonel would then shoot at the perfect time to save him.

Yet, Jaelis pulled back at the last moment which eventually led to a death Leonel couldn't stop because he had to recalculate everything at that instant.

If Jaelis hadn't pulled back, they wouldn't have suffered anymore deaths in the slightest. How could Leonel not be infuriated?

But at this moment, Leonel knew that it was impossible to convey this matter properly. Jaelis' actions were so subtle and well calculated that Leonel was sure that he was the only one who noticed the change at all.

If Leonel tried to call him out now, the fragile trust he had built to now would crumble. He would come off as a man who wanted to get rid of a potential rival rather than someone indignant – rightly so – about the death of a fellow student.

Controlling his emotions, Leonel pulled his gaze from Jaelis and scanned everyone else. His look hadn't lasted more than a split second. But, for a sensory type like Jaelis, it felt like an eternity.

“I'm sure you all are aware of what's happening by now. The Oryx seem to be making a move and could be coming down at us any time now.”

As Leonel spoke, he had already walked to the pinned corpse, stripping it clean. He doused the tree bark and surroundings in cleansing waters then sent Little Blackstar off with the remains again.

“We'll follow you.” Balthorn spoke before Leonel could even ask.

Leonel nodded. “Alright. We're still about 40 kilometers away, so let's work together.”

Balthorn was the reason so many of these freshmen had come together in the first place, so it wasn't much of a surprise that they all agreed. The only one who was hesitant was Jaelis.

Unlike Leonel, he didn't seem intent on being the vanguard in the slightest. At this moment, he just wanted to look out for himself.

In the end, though he decided to follow along. As much as he trusted his senses, he knew he wasn't infallible. In the case, wouldn't it be more convenient to escape if there were others blocking the way?

Jaelis made his decision.

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An unknown distance away, a familiar large humanoid figure reached thick, dirty fingers forward. The Oryx's nails looked as though they had been bitten down to size before being caked in the foulest dirt.

However, a moment later, the Oryx's fingers were coated in a thick crimson.

It looked around, but soon realized it had come to the end of the trail.

It seemed that he had been following a false path.

The Oryx stood to his full height, wiping the line of crimson across his chest.

He rose his nose to the sky, taking a deep whiff. But after a while, he couldn't seem to sense anything.

In the end, he looked into the sky, watching the sun that was slowly setting. This didn't matter much.. Once night descended, they wouldn't be able to escape anyway.

Chapter 676

Back on Earth, the matters of the war were only just beginning to be settled. It was no surprise that even after the death of the Puppet Master, Terrain was still able to put up a great fight. After all, they still had Anared's father, City Lord Keafir, and the mighty City Lord Black.

However, a great fight was all they were capable of.

After Anared's death, much of the hope had already crumbled. His existence was simply too important to the core plans of Terrain. Now that he was gone, even if they did win, it held no merit. With their pitiful talent, holding onto Earth until they could begin to birth Fifth Generation children who could take over for them was nothing more than a pipe dream.

In the end, the City Lords of Terrain all committed suicide in hopes in that the innocent citizens they had brought along would be spared. Maybe then, in some small way, Terrain would become a part of Earth and live on in another form.

Not unexpectedly, Camelot became among the greatest contributors of the war. Their sudden appearance after the second fall of White City had turned the battle for the Capital on its head. In thanks to them, the desperate last struggles of the Cities didn't cause many waves at all.

The war finally came to a close and a time of reform began. However, this didn't mean that every place on Earth was experiencing this kind of peace.

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"You knew. Didn't you?"

James stood before his father, his fists clenched. He tried his best to keep his expression even, but he had never been as good as Leonel at doing this no matter how hard he tried to copy his former best friend.

James simply wasn't that kind of person. He wasn't good at hiding his emotions and often wore them out openly. It was precisely because of this that he called Leonel a hypocrite that day, not just any hypocrite, but a psychopath as well.

Of all the people who knew Leonel, maybe other than his own father, James knew him best. He knew more than enough to know that the charisma that seemed to be the foundation of Leonel's personality was nothing more than a thin veneer hiding his true depths.

But that didn't change the fact that James had always seen Leonel as his best friend. Yet now, the pressure from his father had split them apart.

How could he choose between his best friend and his family? But this was exactly the choice his father forced him to make more and more frequently nowadays.

"Did I know what?" James' father responded without even looking up from his documents.

Hearing such words, James snapped.

"You told me to go to Conrad's family and tell them that it was Leonel and not Aina Brazinger who kill their trash of a son! I'm asking you if you knew that Leonel was a Prince back then!"

James' voice came out in a roar. He had never raised his voice against his father before, but right now, he felt as though his world was spinning.

By now, who on Earth didn't know of Leonel's true identity? Let alone his name, even his picture had been broadcasted through the skies. If James didn't know by now, how much of a fool would he be?

James' father paused, looking up. ρ???)???)???)

His gaze was sharp, seemingly drilling holes into his son with each passing second.

At that moment, James seemed to realize that he had actually yelled at his father. An uncontrollable fear hooked into him, causing his knees to tremble and collapse under him.

He sat on the floor, staring at the tiles before him with a blank look. His father hadn't even said a word but he still felt all his will power collapse in the blink of an eye.

James' father looked back toward his document, not saying a word to his collapsed son for a long while. Yet, James himself didn't dare to move.

“... I can only say that it’s a shame about the Siegfried family. They were the only ones not present when The Emperor revealed his connection with Leonel that day so it presented a great opportunity. I can only say that it’s unfortunate.”

James shivered. So that really was what it was. His father wanted to use the Siegfried’s family’s ignorance to target Leonel, believing that all The Emperor’s nonsense about going out to kill his grandson was just nonsense. Was there really a grandfather who wouldn’t take action when their grandson was killed? One only needed to look at what happened to those Shield Cross Stars members to understand.

“Setbacks like this are an inevitable part of aspiring for lofty ideals. If not for this, wouldn’t everyone succeed?”

James’ father rose.

“Soon, Earth will be opening up diplomatic channels. The worlds whose people got wrapped up in this war due to Terrain’s abrupt action will use this as an excuse to reach their fingers toward this place.

“When this happens, the nobles have decided to send you youth out to experience the world and there are a few organizations you can choose from.”

James’ father paused, looking toward his kneeling son.

“Your ability underwent a great evolution after Earth evolved, correct?”

James’ lip trembled, but he couldn’t seem to form any words.

“Good, then.” His father continued without a care. “You’ll go with the others and train yourself properly. This is an age of war and expansion. I don’t believe that this most recent Code Black will be the last. We took great advantage of it this time, but we have yet to reclaim the former glory of the Bennett family.

“Soon, though... Our time will come.”

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Across worlds and through several Folds of Reality, Leonel had no idea that such a talk was occurring between James and his father, nor did he know that many were about to set out to the wider galaxy not much unlike he and Aina had.

However, even if he did know, he would be hardpressed to spare it any attention at this point.

The sun in the sky seemed to be sinking faster and faster, the usually quiet surroundings filled with the labored breathing of the freshmen Leonel was dragging along.

There were still more than 35 kilometers that separated them and the mountain pass.

Chapter 677

Leonel's breathing held steady. Ever since his magic and body became interconnected, it wasn't just his speed that gained a great boost, but also his recoverability. This was only to be expected. After all, his Light Elemental Force had awakened its Healing Branch and now it was one with his body.

Even though his current Healing Branch was almost like a glass canon, providing one massive heal in exchange for months of dormancy, it had gained a somewhat passive state as well thanks to Camelot's magic system.

The only shame was that Leonel had been so busy recently that he hadn't had the time to research more of this magic system. He felt that he definitely had to find this time in the future.

Leonel had already simulated the best path for him, and he felt that that was fusing his magic and spearmanship into one. As things stood now, he always either used one or the other, but that was almost like crippling himself. He would definitely have to do some more experiments.

'It'll be night soon.' Leonel sighed.

Nearer to dusk, the pace of the group had slowed considerably. This wasn't just due to the poor lighting, but also because of Leonel's orders.

In the afternoon, they had focused on speed, killing every beast they came across while dodging large dens. However, when the lights began to dim, Leonel became more cautious.

Every time a beast was killed, they would go out of their way to clean the scene and move the corpse elsewhere to throw the Oryx off course. In fact, Leonel had even gotten a few freshman with ice abilities to chill the corpses ahead of time as well so they would be even more difficult for the Oryx to find.

All of this caution led to their pace slowing down even further.

Though many understood why Leonel had chosen to do this, there were other anxious individuals who would have much rather focused on their speed. If they had, they might have already been half way there and just another four or five hours away.

But, Leonel had chosen to take the opposite approach, something Jaelis was greatly unsatisfied with.

Logically, this was the best approach to limit casualties and help the most people survive. But, why should he care about the survival of some mere freshmen?

The darker the skies grew, the more antsy Jaelis became. He really began weighing his options for whether he should split off on his own or not.

What he was more surprised about, though, was that he had already tried to sway the group's opinion earlier in the day. He had thought that with his white belt status, many would listen to him. And in truth, a few did.

Among them, there was no surprise that the silent Senior Lu had also taken his side.

But, to their surprise, the vast majority still took Leonel's side. They weren't fools. If they could come to Valiant Heart, they definitely had some intelligence of their own.


Though Leonel's approach was a bit overly cautious, there was nothing fundamentally wrong with it.

Like this, Jaelis' small stint at rebellion had fallen flat.

He looked toward Leonel's back at that moment, only to find that the latter didn't seem to be paying attention to him in the slightest. He didn't seem to realize that Leonel's Internal Sight was observing every single one of his actions from start to finish.

But how could he? As far as Jaelis knew, Internal Sight was easily detectable. When had he ever run into one as subtly controlled as Leonel's?

'I guess it's about time.' Leonel thought.

"Alright, everyone. There should be a mine network up ahead. As long as we have metals interfering with their sight, it will be even more difficult for the Oryx to find us. We can hide away here until the morning." 

When Leonel's voice silently reached all their ears, everyone perked up.

So it seemed that Leonel really did have a plan. This was great!

Of course, if they all knew that the mine network Leonel was speaking of was one from the map he had memorized on the day he launched an attack at the Ores Market... Who knew how they would react?

Aina looked toward Leonel's side profile.

'He's getting more and more bad everyday.' Her lip couldn't help but curl.

This had been Leonel's plan from the beginning. He knew they couldn't make it so he had laid a map of their progress atop of a map of Sarrieth's mind network within his Dream World. Then, he picked out a suitable location they would reach just before the sun officially set.

Soon, the group found a small rock field. Sparse grass sputtered through every so often, but the minor 20 or so meter wide space were mostly made of greys.

Near its center, a cave mouth hung open, dipping into the ground quite quickly. But, what was especially eye catching was the fact that there were four white belted seniors playing a game of cards by the cave entrance.

The four sat at a table together, taking swings of what looked like liquor and happily laughing amongst themselves. It was clear that they had no idea of the looming threat hanging over their heads.

At that moment, the four suddenly went on high alert, their eyes widening when they saw a group that now numbered over a hundred walking toward them.

Had they really been so out of it? How had they not sensed these people approaching?

Of course, they had no idea that Leonel had set up several sound blockades around the large group.

“Who are you?! This is the territory of King of Ores faction! Turn away unless you want trouble!”

The moment the four saw that this was nothing more than a group of freshmen, they relaxed.

When had the fresh meat become so trash? They completed such simple missions in groups of a hundred now? How pathetic could they get?

Leonel's lip inwardly curled. 'Well isn't this just perfect?'

Raylion had no idea that Leonel's trap was slowly closing in on him.

Clearing his throat, Leonel stepped forward.

“Respected seniors, we’re here to ask for shelter. Our group has run in to evidence of Oryx activity. It’s too dangerous to stay in the forest after the sun sets. We only want to hide within the mines until morning comes.”

Leonel’s expression looked sincere, but he already knew what the response to him would be.

‘Come on, King of Ores Faction.. Don’t disappoint me now.’

Chapter 678

The four seniors were stunned when they heard Leonel’s words. Mention of the Oryx was guaranteed to cause such a reaction. After all, there were very few who could reach white belt without having heard at least one horrific story about that race of people. It was safe to say that they wanted absolutely nothing to do with this matter.

After the initial surprise, though, one of them frowned.

“What proof do you have of this? Why haven’t we heard anything?”

The question made sense. After all, they were about 35 or so kilometers from the mountain pass. That region had a strong concentration of Valiant Heart Mountain elites, so it was relatively safe. In fact, it was due to this that Oryx Tribe attacks so close to the heart of their organization were so rare. They usually wouldn’t dare travel this close.

Though the scuffles at the border between their territories was growing by the day, normally those were trouble only blue belts and above had to deal with. Even white belts like them weren’t even qualified to worry about those matters. So, how could they so easily believe Leonel’s words.

Now that they thought about it, they felt ridiculous for the way they acted and were even somewhat embarrassed.

Leonel hesitated when he heard these words.

Proof? He didn't have any. He had turned the skeleton of both Titan Hyena's into hundreds of arrow heads. As for their bodies, their stench had been distributed in directions opposing to their own thanks to the help of Little Blackstar, so they obviously didn't have any pieces of it remaining.

Leonel decided to quickly explain all of this.

"... So the only thing we have left that might be of some proof are the kidneys of the Titan Hyena's. Those are the only parts of them that I kept for myself."

The four white belts looked at the large hand sized kidney in Leonel's hands then looked at him as though he was an idiot.

"So what you're saying is that you have no proof whatsoever. But, somehow you expect us to believe that the Oryx Tribe is stupid enough to attack so close to the mountain pass? Do you take us for fools?"

Leonel frowned. "... Listen, we—"

"No. You listen. Do you think we can't recognize you? This is the last chance we'll give you to scram, or else don't blame us for being impolite.

"If you think you can overwhelm us with numbers, think again. Not to mention the fact that we'd never lose to a pack of trash like you freshmen, do you really think that there's only the four of us here?"

The four card playing seniors stood.

Leonel inwardly shook his head. It seemed that these four had no idea what happened to Nigmir and the others. But, this was fine too. In fact, this was even better.

"If it's about me, then fine." Leonel said resolutely. "I won't enter the mine, but can you at least allow them to?"

“Leonel!” Ingkath was the first to step forward. ρ??ϕ???

Ingkath had already done too many things he was ashamed of himself for. The guilt of what his teammates had done still lingered over his head even to this very moment. Hearing Leonel want to make such a sacrifice, he couldn't stand idly by anymore.

Leonel smiled lightly and patted Ingkath's shoulder. Even though the two of them were about the same height, at that moment, Ingkath somehow still felt that he was looking up at Leonel.

Leonel was actually quite confident that he could survive alone, not that this was what he was aiming for right now. He was quite certain by the display these four seniors had put up to this point that they wouldn't disappoint him.

And indeed...

“We're not here to negotiate with you! Since we said to scam, scam!”

Seeing Leonel's willingness to take a step back, instead of compromising, the four seniors only became bolder. This was the true way of the world. Sympathy was something reserved for the strong. And, often times, the strong wouldn't bother to hold onto such a virtue.

The more they thought about it, the more they realized they had to chase these bunch of freshmen away.

By now, they didn't believe that Leonel could really be lying. Considering his status, convincing a hundred freshmen without proof of what had happened was impossible. Most of them wouldn't want anything to do with him for fear of offending those they couldn't afford to offend.

But, even in the case that they weren't lying, they still needed to be chased away.

There was a reason only the strong factions could hold onto mines. This wasn't only because they had to defend them from other factions, but also because mines weren't exactly safe. There were all sorts of creatures that lived in the underground networks.

As a result of this, there were only a few 'safe' regions that could be used to hide away in. But, even all these regions added up together couldn't possibly house all these freshmen along with all the seniors that were currently already at work below whether that be in mining or in clearing new paths to be mined.

The short of it was that they had to thank these freshmen for giving them such a warning, but if they actually expected to get any help out of them... Well, they could wake up from their pitiful dreaming right now.

Hearing such words, Leonel hid smile behind a cold mask.

"You really want to turn us away?"

His voice was frosty, even to the point the seniors didn't even respond immediately. But, this didn't last long. It wasn't even a moment later their expressions were overtaken with rage.

"Are we not speaking in a language you can understand?!"

Leonel's gaze narrowed, his palm flipping over to reveal three arrows as he slid his bow off his back.

The four seniors were stunned. He actually dared to attack?! How could they not be infuriated?!

"Wait!"

The sudden voice stopped the sequence of events.

Leonel frowned, watching Jaelis and Senior Lu push their way through the crowd.

Chapter 679

At this point, Leonel was really curious about what exactly these two wanted to do. How would stepping out now help them, exactly?

The reason Leonel was so confident that these four would turn him away was because he knew that whether or not he was telling the truth didn't matter. But, he was certain that Jaelis and Senior Lu believed that as long as they could prove themselves to be trust worthy, they would be allowed in.

Leonel found this to be particularly amusing. They thought that they were being clever, when the truth was that they were simply dancing clowns.

It was still possible for the seniors to allow them in, but Leonel could guarantee that they wouldn't allow all over 100 of them to do the same.

The reason for this was simple. This wasn't the first of King of Ores mine they had run across. In fact, it wasn't even the easiest to get to. Leonel had made a slight detour to choose this one in specific.

With Leonel's ore expertise, he was capable of guessing which ores could grow where simply depending on the environment. From his understanding, the ores in this place were among the most valuable assets King of Ores faction had... Of course, this was restricted to those mines that Sarrieth had actually shown on his map.

This was to say that this place had the tightest security along with some of the highest priority for the faction. There was no way that Sarrieth, with his character, would place fools here. That definitely meant that they had already guessed he was telling the truth, yet couldn't allow them in for other reasons.

Seeing that Jaelis was wearing a white belt, Leonel's internal smile only grew brighter despite the fact his face told a completely different story. In fact, now he quite hoped Jaelis was allowed in.

"What are you two trying to do?" Leonel asked with a frown.

Senior Lu swept Leonel a sneering gaze before completely ignoring his question.

“Esteemed seniors.” Lu bowed slightly. “I know that it’s difficult to trust us, but there really is solid proof of the Oryx Tribe’s movement.

“I’ve heard a lot about some of the issues your King of Ores faction has had with this Leonel. But, we implore you to not punish us all simply for his mistakes. We are willing to denounce him completely.”

The atmosphere seemed to shift slightly.

Though Senior Lu hadn’t come outright and said it, many began to remember at that moment that the King of Ores faction seemed to have a great rivalry with Leonel. Could it be that this was the true reason they were being turned away?

Moos, Ingkath and Irolana frowned deeply. It could be said that many of them had only survived so long because of Leonel. Even if it turned out that their worries about the Oryx were unwarranted, what they had all seen personally was the change in the beasts.

On their way here, they had noticed the increased attack rate and violence the beasts displayed. Even if there was no Oryx, this alone was enough to say that Leonel had saved them all. For Senior Lu to do this now was nothing short of abhorrent.

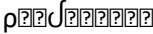
Yet, when they looked toward Leonel, he had paused. His three arrows remained nestled in his fingers, but he didn’t seem like he was about to nock them any time soon.

The four seniors frowned when they heard this.

Dammit, couldn’t these fools get a clue? They didn’t want any of them here!

Jaelis’ expression flickered. He seemed to have understood something as well. It seemed they had misread the situation. But, he smiled inwardly. After all, he wasn’t the one to speak.

“Didn’t you...!”

One of the seniors seemed to be about to snap when he was stopped. They began to whisper amongst each other. 

“What did you stop me for?”

“Hush, lower your voice idiot.”

The four huddled together, believing their voices couldn’t be heard by anyone but themselves. And in fact, they weren’t wrong. Leonel indeed couldn’t hear them at this moment, it seemed that one of them had quite the special ability.

“Think about it, don’t you think this is a good opportunity?”

“For what? We can’t afford to let them in, there’s no space!”

“Use your head for once, Yako. King gained a lot of benefits from allowing The Hero to use our faction’s name, but at the same time, our prestige took a hit because of it.

“King had no choice but to swallow this insult. After all, our rise was too abrupt. King managed to become a blue belt in just a couple years, how could he not be seen as a threat? It isn’t yet time for us to go against those behemoths.

“But, this is a good chance for us to recover some of the prestige we lost by ‘losing’ to a freshmen. If we humiliate him like this and the news spreads, we’ll be able to get in the good books of King, don’t you think?”

The four were suddenly enlightened.

“You’re not bad Miya... Even though your name is a bit girly.”

Miya slapped Yako on the head, snarling. But, his lip curled into a sneer not long after.

Miya stepped out of their group, his arms crossed over his chest. His gaze swept over the group, his demeanor looking like that of a commander in charge.

Seeing the apprehension on the faces of them all, he couldn’t help but take a breath of satisfaction.

The feeling of having the lives of so many in the palm of his hands made him feel intoxicated.

“We’ve come to a compromise.” Miya said calmly. “We still have no way of telling if you’re telling the truth or if you’re here to sabotage our mines. So, we will allow some of you in. As for the majority, you will camp out in the surroundings.

“If the Oryx really attacks, our detection systems will find it long in advance and we’ll allow you into the mine. If not, you all will stay out here for the night.”

The freshmen felt a light of hope when they heard these words, naively trusting in the words of these seniors and in their so-called ‘detection’ system.

Miya’s lip curled. He had truly found a group of useful idiots.

Allow them into the mine? If an Oryx came they’d execute one of Sarrieth’s contingency plans and collapse the mine entrance and run away through the tunnels before waiting for morning. As for the lives of these freshmen? Who cared.

“However, we have one condition.”

Miya’s gaze turned toward Leonel, locking onto him.

“If he’s here, all of you can scram. I don’t want to see his face. It’s displeasing to my eyes.”

Chapter 680

Leonel’s gaze flashed with something that looked like rage. However, this only made Miya feel emboldened, his chest spilling over with a sense of satisfaction.

Leonel took a deep and steady breath, looking over the crowd of freshmen that had followed him to this point. But, not a single one seemed to want to meet his gaze. Without fail, they all looked away.

Senior Lu’s sneer deepened when he saw such a scene.

“What are you trying to do right now, exactly? Didn’t you say the strong should take the vanguard? Since you’re so bold, why are you trying to pressure the group of us who are so much weaker than you?”

The heads of many of the freshmen remained lowered. But, after hearing Senior Lu’s words, a small number of them regained enough courage to look up and meet Leonel’s eyes.

That was right. Since Leonel had said that the strong should sacrifice, why wasn’t he sacrificing now?

Leonel’s hand trembled. But, he slowly retracted his bow, putting his arrows away. Without a word, he turned toward the forest and began to walk into it.

Seeing such a scene, Miya and the three were stunned for a moment before they erupted into an uproarious laughter. They really didn’t think that things would end so easily. To think that he was actually such an idiot.

“That’s right, scuttle away little doggie. I almost feel a bit bad, look at how pitiful he looks.” Yako laughed so hard he could barely breathe.

Miya’s lip curled. But, his smile froze not long after.

Among the freshmen, Aina didn't hesitate to follow after Leonel. It would have been fine if it was just one, but outside of even Leonel's expectations, Ingkath, Irolana and Moos clenched their fists tightly, turning away with stiff steps and following Leonel as well.

Balthorn's expression warped. It looked like she too wanted to follow, but before she could, a slender hand chopped at the back of her head. She couldn't even understand what happened before she collapsed into darkness.

Henorin caught Balthorn's body. Yet, by some oddity, no one blinked an eye. It was as though it had never happened at all.

Miya soon recovered as their figures disappeared into the forest. Who cares if a few chose to follow him? A mere four out of over a hundred, such a ratio was pitiful.

Senior Lu smiled ingratiatingly after Leonel was gone. He hadn't even opened his mouth yet, but one could already hear his fawning.

"Esteemed seniors.... How will we decide who can enter the mines, if you don't mind me asking?"

"Oh, that."

It was only now that Miya remembered that he had indeed promised such a thing. What a hassle...

Now that Leonel had been thoroughly humiliated and his life was even on the line now, he didn't really care what happened to these freshmen.

But, after some thought, he realized that there was really no point in humiliating Leonel if no one could spread the tale later. So, he had to make sure that at least some of them survived in the end. In that case...

Miya scanned the crowd, his gaze lighting up when it landed on Jaelis. How could he not be drawn to the only white belt in the crowd? This was perfect.

Freshmen were nothing but deadweight, but it was a different matter entirely if there was someone who could actually be of help here.

“Let the strongest among you decide.” Miya said after some thought. “No more than five can enter.”

Senior Lu’s expression twisted, but he still looked toward Jaelis almost immediately, a pleading look in his eye. p??U??????

Almost like a ghost, Henorin appeared with Balthorn in her arms, standing beside Jaelis as though she had always been there. Even to this point, no one seemed to realize that Balthorn was knocked out. Or, maybe, they simply didn’t care about the details in this sort of situation.

Jaelis swept a gaze over. “I’ll just take them.”

With that, Jaelis walked toward the mine, not bothering to pick out two more to fill in the five number cap.

Senior Lu’s expression was ugly to behold. He sent a pleading gaze toward Miya, but the latter had clearly cleansed his hands of the matter. He wanted nothing to do with it. He truly couldn’t be bothered to care.

Without a choice, the freshmen began to silently set up camp, quietly vying for position closer to the cave’s mouth.

Senior Lu clenched his fists, a hint of despair marking his brow. The complicated looks he received from the other freshmen only made it all worse.

...

While two seniors guarded the entrance to maintain order, Miya and Yako led Jaelis and the two women into the mind.

One would have expected the tunnels to be dark, especially so nearing the night, and possibly lit by torches, but this was far from the truth.

The walls of the cave seemed to sparkle with their own pale light. The visibility wasn't as bright as day, but it wasn't as poor as dusk either. It was a nice, gentle in between that was easy on the eyes.

After a while of silence, Jaelis suddenly spoke.

“Tell me the truth, you don't actually intend on allowing the others in, right?”

Miya's steps paused for a moment before a sneer spread across his face.

“Of course not.”

“Good.” Jaelisi said casually.

Not long later, Miya led them down a few diverting paths before they made it to a medium size opening. It seemed capable of fitting about 50 or so people.

“This is our safe house. Any further and we'll have to deal with Stone Beasts.”

“Miya, who the hell did you bring here?”

A voice that almost sounded more like a bark sounded out, snapping at their ears.

Miya smiled bitterly before quickly explaining the situation.

“The Oryx?”

The expression of the King of Ores members working the mine changed. If this was true, they were in no small amount of trouble.

It was at that moment the ground quaked.

The setting sun had finally disappeared over the horizon.