

Chapter 561 Closing Battle

'Pheiw! Pheiw! Pheiw! Pheiw! Pheiw! Pheiw!'

Landon and his crew took care of the bandits one by one, while stealthily made their way into the lair.

"You!

Who the hell are you?"

'Pheiw!'

"Ahhh!

Motherf***er!..... you'll pay for that!"

"Dammit!

What did you do to me?"

"Quickly brother, shoot your arrows at them now!

Shoot! Shoot! Shoot!!!"

'Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup!'

Landon and his team continued advancing forward while killing all the bandits before them.

Since they were overwhelmingly outnumbered, they quickly killed their way into the lair in no time.

In fact, it only took about 2 hours for the entire battle to end.

And when they were done, they quickly freed up all the captured villagers in the dungeon cells below.... and hastily sent for the other bandits that had been put to sleep in the first battle.

They would be locked in the dungeon as prisoners instead.

For Landon and his men, this was just a small battle that wasn't even worth mentioning when compared to the mission that they were going for.

Time was of the essence for them, so they had to wrap up everything A.S.A.P.

But after winning the battle, one thing that they realized..... was that the main boss wasn't here, as well as some other gang members too.

And from what the slaves had said, the missing bandits divided themselves and went to collect rations from 3 other villages bot far from here.

And as for their boss, he went to one of the small towns around.

Apparently, he had gone there to deliver several messages to the messenger guild.... who would then ride out an deliver the message to the main Lord in charge of all these territories.

The message would probably be about the rations and money that the Wolfhound bandits had collected.

Anyway..... with that said, it was clear that they hadn't finished their work yet.

So immediately, Landon sent out 3 groups to head on over to those villages.... while he and some other soldiers would stay around the lair instead.

From what the slaves had said, the big boss usually came back around 3 P.M.... which was just 45 minutes away.

And so just like that, everyone did their part and took care of all loose ends.

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At 3:22 P.M, the big boss who was riding alongside some of his confidants... was immediately surrounded and captured just outside the gates of the lair, which was totally unbelievable to him.

How could this have happened?

One minute, he was like a king in these regions... and the next minute, he was brought down to the level of a prisoner instead.

This ... this was truly something that he had never imagined before.

After all, he was still a wanted convict who had fled from the empire Deiferus 4 years ago and had already started a new life here in Arcadina.

But who would've known that after all that running, he would still be captured by some random idiot?

He was totally unconvinced about his whole situation!

And what made him angry all the more, was that they had just ganged up on him... therefore depriving him of the chance for a fair one-on-one battle.

Dammit!

If he had known that today would've turned out to be this way, then he wouldn't have gone out at all!

He would have stayed in the lair and prepared to bring down these snobby pricks.

'Bam!'

The prison cell door gave out a loud 'bang' after he had been shoved into the cell.

As the big boss, he was actually given a private cell while his confidants and men were all grouped and placed in several cells instead.

The door closed right in his face, and he quickly grabbed the iron bars and tried to talk some sense into the strange-looking men that had just shoved him into the cell.

"Boy, for your own good... as well as for the good of your own men, I suggest that You let me out now !!!"

"Yeah!

We can give you whatever you desire if you let us go!"

"That's right!

Be it money, women, or even power, all that can become yours if you just open the cell doors now."

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The leader and the other bandits continuously tried to persuade them as much as they could... but also, it was to no avail.

Because no matter what they did, the soldiers before them kept silent and acted as if they didn't hear them at all.

What the hell was wrong with them?

Were they actually both deaf and dumb?

Of course some of the bandits felt like soon, the rest of their comrades who were still out on a mission would quickly come and rescue them later on.

And by then, they would definitely skin these bloody bastards alive.

But unfortunately for them, none of their expectations were met.

Because not long after they held onto their hopeful thoughts, several comrades of theirs were also brought in too.

Their faces grew paler as they saw this, as it now dawned upon them that they might actually be locked up here for a very long time if they didn't think of a way out now.

Many of them weren't originally from this region and had only settled here after their boss had picked them up from the streets.

Yes!... many of them had been local thieves and small-time criminals from all around Arcadina.

So they weren't that mentally strong to maintain a calm face in their current situation.

What if they got locked up for 10 years or even forever?

Worst, what if they got tortured and killed later on?

Remembering their dead comrades whose dead bodies had been scattered around the lair, they couldn't help but tremble slightly from fear.

If they didn't get out now, then wouldn't they also be in the same situation as well?

No!!

They had to escape!

Yes!

They had to leave now!!!"

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Yes, they had to escape immediately..... or else, wouldn't it be their own turn to die later on?

The bandits panicked all the more when they thought about their futures, and hastily went down on their knees before the men that were sent here to guard them.

'Plup!'

"Please have mercy on us noble ones."

"If you free us now, we promise to give you all our belongings."

"Yes!

We also promise not to be in your way again, so please let us go!!!"

"Noble ones... I... I know where all the treasure in this lair is.

So if you don't let me go, then you'll never find it!"

"Hmph!

Are you the only one that knows its location?

Sirs, don't listen to him!

I have been here way longer than him, so I definitely know the place better than he does!"

"Please noble ones, I have a contagious illness that might affect you all if you let me stay here.

So for the safety of everyone else, please let me go!"

(*_-_-)

The soldiers continued guarding the place in silence amidst the chaos that these bandits were creating.

Several bandits crowded around the prison bars and begged for their lives nonstop.

For many, they had never been captured, tortured or even locked up in a dungeon..... so how could they not panic?

"Please let us out!"

"Let us out I yell yah!"

"Let us out!!!!!"

They screamed and begged at the top of their lungs, but all of it was for naught because the guards there remained unmoved no matter what they did.

Of course while they were pleading for their lives, Landon and some of the soldiers were busy raiding the lair instead.

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"Your majesty!

We found 79 sacs of grain and 157 other sacs that are filled with up different food items in them.

And in addition to that, we also found 9 bags of gold coins, 29 bags of silver coins and 64 bags of cooler coins." Said Warrant officer Basil.

[1 Gold coin=100 silver coins... And 1 silver coins= 100 Copper coins.]

"In addition to that, we also found several parchment papers that documented what was taken from the surrounding villages and towns as well."

"HmMMMMMMMMM

Alright!

It's now 5:41 P.M

So follow the amount written in the document, and quickly fill up the trucks with both good and money." Landon said, while briefly glancing over the papers in his hands.

All that was taken from the people, would be returned back to them before the end of the day.

And whatever was leftover, would be taken by them instead.

Of course, any leftover grain would be given back to the people... But any leftover money would definitely get into their pockets instead.

After all, they were currently on a mission... And one never knows whether they would soon get short on money, or might need to buy some extra things on their trip.

So having more money was definitely make things easier for them.

And so just like that, the soldiers swiftly slotted up into several groups and headed towards the villages and small towns.

Of course when everyone heard about today's matter, they all danced and jubilated in song.

"Hurray!

The Wolfhound bandits are no more!"

"We're free!!"

The poor villagers took their rations and money back happily, while dancing and singing merrily.

For them, today marked the start of a new beginning.

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As for the prisoners in the dungeon, they had given the task of feeding them to the village chiefs of the neighbouring villages.

'System... I need something that can keep the prisoners in their cells until I personally release them.'

'Not a problem host.'

The system had several spiritual locks that can do the trick.

Here are the following options.....'

Landon listened to the system attentively, and quickly decided on one of the locks shown to him.

One should know that he had decided to get these locks only for additional protection.

Because one thing he definitely wanted to avoid, was one of the village chiefs freeing the prisoners due to fear.

If the bandits threatened these simple-minded people a lot, some of them might actually succumb to the threats and open the cells instead.

The bandits might even promise to let the people from their village go if they freed them, which might make some of the village chiefs tempted to let them go.

Anyway, these locks from the system could never be broken or open up without Landon the keys from the system.

Additionally, the lock could also strengthen the iron bars as well.

So no blacksmith would be able to destroy it if the lock was still hanging on the prison cells.

With that, only Landon would be able to free these prisoners from these cells.

Of course, he would only do so when he came back from his mission.

One should know that since he was planning to pass along this route on his way back, picking up the prisoners by then wouldn't be of any inconvenience to him whatsoever.

So he decided to take them to Baymard when he passed back.

This only meant that the Baymardian prison would welcome a few new members again.

And judging by the way they behaved, many of them might be out in sector B or C within the prison.

Only their boss who had been a wanted man in Deiferus would get placed into sector A.

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Nevertheless, since everything was finally over... It was finally time for them to set out towards the Northern Territory again.

Now, they could finally focus on their mission..... Saving Mr. or Miss Unknown.

'Vrrrrmmmmmm!'

They drove away hastily, with one goal in mind... and that was to be in time.

But of course, they weren't the only ones who were in a haste as well.

'Gallop! Gallop! Gallop! Gallop! Gallop!'

Somewhere within the western region of Arcadina, several men on horseback were carefully making their way towards a particular city.

The men ride in complete silence while keenly observing their surroundings.

And all that could be heard, was the sounds of their horse's footsteps.... as well as that of nature.

Their bodies were boiling with rage and their minds were only filled with bloodshed.

Yes!

By nightfall, several heads will roll!

Chapter 563 The Real Culpri

The day was cold yet beautiful!

Nature had done it's best to paint out a perfect portrait for all to see.

And even though the snow hasn't fallen for a while now, the place was still as coated with a thick layer of snow.

The bare trees were filled with snow, and the ground itself looked like a white blanket that had covered up the entire Hertfilian world.

But of course, even amidst the beauty... one would also realize that the more beautiful it was, the more poisonous it could be.

The bitter cold breeze blew against the bare trees, instantly making them come to life as they continuously shivered chaotically.

And every time they danced, several sprinkles of snowflakes would fall off their branches and drip onto the thick snowy blanket below.

The entire place looked like a winter wonderland!

It was already the first week of March, which meant that in another 2 weeks.... winter would be officially over, and Spring would take over from there.

In short, the place was like a painter's portrait come to life!

And on a certain deserted forest trail within Arcadina's western territory, several hundreds of men could be seen hastily riding silently through the deep cold forest.

'Gallop! Gallop! Gallop! Gallop!'

Their horses rode into the forest majestically, as if imitating the powerful auras of their riders.

The lead rider was placed at the center of the whole squad.

He was an extremely hard man that had a very noble air to him.

Of course, he was none other than Alec Barn.

Previously, when leaving Baymard.... he had been attacked and ambushed within Arcadina's western territory.

So of course, from the moment he had passed through the first major city within the territory, his vigilance had gone up even more.

They rode for a bit, before finally meeting up with another group that they had dispatched earlier on.

"I salute his royal majesty!" Said the leader of the other group.

"Hm... so do you have it?"

"Yes, your majesty... I do."

The man said, before passing on a letter to Alec.

Alex opened it and silently read it for another minute and a half, before finally bursting out in laughter.

'Bahahhhahahahahha!'

His laughter immediately made his subordinates shudder uncontrollably, as they knew more than anyone else..... that their king laughing like this, meant they some poor soul would experience hell sooner or later.

Alec laughed hard while gripping the letter in his hands angrily.

His entire body trembled violently from anger, and his breathing became rapid as well.

And even though he was laughing, his face was still very distorted from rage... as several green veins suddenly popped up on his face, making him look even scarier than he already was.

Bastard!

How dare this insignificant ant make a move against him?

Had he grown too weak that these termites would dare to go against him in broad daylight just like that?

He took a deep breath, before finally passing the note to his most trusted confidants.

'Good! Good! Good!

Cain!

Since you dared to scheme against me, then don't blame me for forgetting our old friendship.

There can only be one outcome for you, and that will be death!' He thought.

Right now, he knew that the person who had tried to assassinate him was Baron Cain.

What truly surprised him was that, that good-for-nothing butt-licking lowlife had the guts to plot against him.

Did the sun rise from the West and set in the East?

Just who the hell had given the fool so much confidence as to plot against him?

He knew that the fool was always jealous of him, but the idiot never made any moves before.

So he just treated him like a barking dog that couldn't bite.

But who would've known that the seemingly useless dog would learn to do a trick or two?

If not for his quick thinking, then he would've really ended up dead during the last assassination attack.

One by one, his confidants read the note and almost pulled out blood from rage as well.

Son of a b**ch!!

Last time, even though Cain's name had come out as a suspect, they truly didn't pay that much attention to him.

But like the old saying went: one could never judge a book by its cover, or else they would be swallowed whole by the contents of that same book.

The confidants then turned to the test of the squad and told them the general gist of things without actually telling them who the culprit was.

And knowing that the culprit had been identified, many of the knights also felt their blood running hot as well.

Kill!

Kill!

Kill!

Kill!

They wanted to gut the bastard up and place his head on a stake as their trophy.

Alec's confidants all crowded around him angrily too.

"Your majesty!

Do we deal with the bastard now?"

"Your majesty... we are close to his city, so why don't we kill him and be done with it?"

"Your majesty, his head needs to roll tonight!"

" "

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Alec stared silently at them, before finally raising his hand his call for silence.

Right now, they were on their way to Baron Cain's city.

One should know that their main goal was to attack Baynard sometime this Spring.

So of course, they had been riding and making quick stops at different cities in order to get more men for the battle.

Travelling with such a large pack would undoubtedly cause too much trouble.

Hence, Alec had made sure that they travelled in different packs as well.

When he was back in the Capital, he had been sending teams of 900, to leave the Capital on a daily basis.

So he would send 300 in the morning, 300 in the afternoon and 300 in the evening.

And he did this for close to 3 weeks straight, sending a total of 18,900 men out.

He had already told them of the rendezvous place that they were all to meet at.... which was 3 cities, 1 town and 7 villages away from Baynard.

One should one that after Riverdale city, one would pass at least 3 more villages and one town just before getting to the next major city.

And after that, one still needed to pass through several other villages before reaching the next city, and so on.

In short, the rendezvous point was just 3 cities away from Baynard.

Anyway, before leaving the Capital, he had sent out 18,900 men.

And when he left, he took 400 more men with him as well.

Understandably, when they travelled.... they stopped through several major cities and collected at least two thousand more knights from each city lord, and a few hundred from the other nobles within those cities too.

Of course, they had also sent those ones out in batches as well.

And Alec had pointed some of his men to lead each group to the rendezvous point, since they wouldn't know it at all.

Anyway, they had only come here to take Cain's men, but surprisingly... their spies and informants had brought in such juicy gossip about Cain's betrayal.

Indeed, Alec was fuming mad.

But now wasn't the right time to take any form of action.

Cain had some secrets that he was interested in, so killing him just like that would be a true shame.

And since they didn't have time to waste on torturing him at the moment, then they could only play dumb for now until they came back from winning their battle against Baynard.

"Your majesty!

Aren't you being too kind here?

The man was trying to kill you!

Are we really going to let him get away with this?"

"For now, yes.

But who said that he wouldn't be punished?

Come!

Let's go see the fool shall we?"

Chapter 564 Alec's Confidence

Alec and his men hurriedly made their way towards Baron Cain's location with one thought in mind.... and that was to take all of his men, and bully the poor bastard to death.

"Your majesty!

Since the Scumbag initially wanted to kill you, then wouldn't it be too risky to go in just pike that?

I know that we already agreed to stick to the plan, but what if it backfires?

What about your safety?" One of his confidants asked anxiously.

The confidant wasn't worried about his own life but Alec's instead.

It just went to show that even Scum men had loyal followers too.

Alec marked and caressed his chin lightly.

"Relax Roupol, nothing is going to happen to me."

Of course Alec knew of their worries, but to him.... they were truly worrying over nothing.

Right now, he only had 372 men riding with him.... as he had sent some out to lead the knights taken from the nobles to the rendezvous spot close to Baynard.

So with just 372 men, if Baron Cain really wanted to kill him, he could easily do so.

And it was precisely because of this, that he had also lied to all of his knights here as well.

All except for his personal confidants.

In truth, the rest of the knights thought that there were thousands of hidden guards travelling alongside them.

So if there were any spies within his camp, they would immediately tell their employers to back off from fighting him.

Also, because no one would know the exact amount of people he was travelling with... some people might think that it was 3,000.... 7,000 or even 15,000.

Consequently, without an accurate number, no one would dare to match out against him just like that.

With that said, he could now march into Cain's city with his 372 men..... and act as if he had just walked in with his bodyguards instead.

After all, everyone would think that the rest of his men were camping somewhere deep in the forest instead.

So how could he be afraid that Baron Cain was going to kill him again?

His confidants were really worrying over nothing.

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As for how he was going to bully the Baron, well.... that was the easy part.

With other nobles, they only took a thousand men, and sometimes only a hundred men.

But with Baron Cain, they were going to take all of his official knights.... which were at least 4,000 in number.

And even though the bastard probably had some unofficially appointed men hidden away... so what?

One should know that this was akin to a trap.

Because if Cain had no official knights by his side, then he couldn't do anything or make any public moves for the time being..... as he would need to explain to Alec where he got these extra men from.

Of course, nobles in Arcadina could recruit as many knights as they wanted to..... but the key point was that a formal letter, accompanied by a list of chosen candidates had to be sent to Alec for approval.

This way, Alec could keep tabs on how many men each noble had.

Because knowing this could also help him predict who were the most likely people to lead a revolt against him.

If one's subordinate had the strength which was equivalent to his, then wouldn't that mean that the noble in question might also develop some ideas about his throne later on?

And so with all this in mind, Alec had made several requirements and rules when any noble wanted to recruit or hire new knights under their camp.

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He had given them a specific number of people that they could have under them at any given time.

So those who had secret bases with extra knights were definitely going against his laws.

And just to make sure that they don't hire more knights, Alec had always made sure that their allowances were just enough to take care of the number of official knights while living a lavish lifestyle with their families.

It was precisely because of this rule, that the city lords became tyrants who bullied the other nobles in their cities nonstop..... by taking a fraction of their allowances and so on.

Because what generally happened, was that within the cities... everyone had to pay their taxes, which was sometimes 1/3 or half of what they made.

It was completely unfair, but what could they do about it?

Of course, nobles paid higher taxes as well.

And money from official sites like gold mines, salt deposits and money from other mineral fields, mines and caves..... was also collected as well.

One should also know that some city lord's also had jurisdiction over several small villages around their cities..... And some Town Lord's also have jurisdiction over some other villages around too.

So taxes were also collected here in the form of money or food like wheat, grain and so on.

In short at the start of each month, everything was generally collected and sent to the city lord's or the Town lord's mansion.

And from there, these lord's would send part of the funds to Alec..... and keep the rest as allowances for himself and the other nobles.

Their allowances were very important to these nobles since their subordinates usually got paid from what was given to them at the beginning of each month.

Additionally, they also used part of their allowances to purchase other weapons too.

In this way, their forces within their territories would strengthen with time..... Which in turn strengthened Arcadina's forces too, lest a war broke out at any given time.

Bottom line, Alec was going to take all of Cain's official men and see what he would do in the meantime.

Of course, he would do other 'accidental things' too when he finally met the bastard.

After all, how could he be completely still in the face of a traitor?

So even though he wouldn't kill him now, he would still vent a little by bullying the chubby idiot a little.

That was only natural!

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With these thoughts in mind, Alec's smile slowly broadened across his hard cold face.

Soon, he would get rid of all these pesky flies around his empire.

But first, he needed to start with the peskiest problem of all... Baymard!

Chapter 565 The Inspection

Alec's confidants got somewhat reassured after seeing how confident their leader was.

Yes!

The other knights didn't know that they were actually entering enemy territory.... since they didn't know that Baron Cain was the culprit that they had been cursing at all this while.

But unlike the rest, all 4 confidants knew the entire situation... so they became extremely vigilant when looking at the city walls before them.

They looked at the city walls before them in rage, while imagining that they were wringing the fool's neck instead.

But just like his majesty had said, they had to act as if they didn't know anything, lest the alert Cain.

And so with this thought in mind, they decided to vent out all their anger before seeing the chubby idiot later on.

As for Alec, he had already thrown away a portion of his anger and was now immersed in his own thoughts about Baymard.

Of course, he wasn't the only one lost deep in thought.... as several other people were also immersed in their own serious thoughts as well.

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The sounds of people rambling nonstop could be heard everywhere within a large building.

"Only 2.99 for 3?"

"What a good steal!"

"Hm?"

"What's this?"

"Buttered popcorn?"

"Is it very different from the normal one?"

"Well, it's cheap... so I'll just try one box for now."

"Mummy, can I get the new Wolverine action figure?"

"Please, mommy!"

"I promise that this will be the last toy that I'll ever ask you to buy."

"That's what you said the last time when I bought the latest Superman action figure for you a while back."

"Please mommy, Please!!!

I promise that this time will definitely be the last time that I'm requesting for a toy.

In addition to that, I'll even do more house chores than what is required of me."

"Good!

You said it not me."

(^_^)

Conversations like these ones could be heard from within the crowd.

The busy crowd had a life of its own, as one couldn't predict where the people within it would go to next.

The vibrant clothes and clean look of the people shined brightly underneath the buildings artificial... and the people moved like an enchanting school of fish.

The chatter between customers and workers could be heard around the building nonstop.

The crowd was busy and rowdy as usual.

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'Shriiiipp!

The doors opened automatically.... and soon, several men and women walked into the building.

They walked calmly and confidently, before stopping in front of one of the building workers.

"Good morning and Welcome to GreenMart.

My name is Bart, and I'd be happy to assist you in any way possible."

"Mr. Bart, we are here to see any of your managers on-site for official government business."

"Government business?"

"Yes Mr. Barn, government business.

Here is my card, give it to any of your managers on-site, and they would know what to do from there."

" "

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Bart took the card and looked at it briefly, before finally opening his eyes wider in shock.

Ever since he had begun working here, he had heard of how these people before him.

Apparently, they came 4 to 5 times a year unexpectedly.

So no one could actually pinpoint or predict when their next visit would be.

They had always come in unannounced, so as to better access whether or not businesses did their best to follow the guidelines that were given to them.

Those who did hood would be fine, but those who broke the rules would have to be penalized instead.

It was just that he had heard about how they came and went like a ghost, as if they were some sort of secret spy team.

And surprisingly, over the last 2 years... even though he had heard of them, he had never seen them before, not even once!

But who would've known that today, he would see the legendary team just like that?

He looked at them again and felt a large stream of excitement rush throughout his body.

Yup!

It looked like today, his company would definitely undergo a surprise inspection by the people.

Yes!

These people before him were all Public health inspectors!

Bart who was stationed at the Customer help desk, quickly picked up his phone and relayed his message immediately.

"Manager to customer help desk, please!

Manager to customer help desk please!"

The announcement could be heard from all corners within the building.

And just to be sure, after making the announcement... he personally called the office room allocated to all managers on duty.

He immediately told them that it was an urgent matter, and in a flash... he saw one of the managers walk hastily to his help desk.

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"Hi, my name is Bob and I'm a manager here.

And I'll be glad to assist you in any way that I can." Manager Bob said while taking a look at the card that Bart had just handed over to him.

Public Health inspectors?

Hm... it seems like it's that time of the year again.

Mother Winnie took off her face mask and quickly revealed her stunning smile to Bob.... while handing an official permit for today's inspection to him that was approved by her ministry.

"Duchess Winnie?"

Everyone looked at her in confusion and shock.

Wasn't she the popular Duchess Winnie who had even showed up in some pamphlets and books?

The customers around looked at her in awe, as they felt like he was more beautiful in person than in pictures or portraits.

Even the children quickly recognized her as well, since she was also a teacher as well.

As for Bob and the other workers, they were also shocked to see her with the inspection team too.

How many jobs did this woman have?

Mother Winnie smiled slightly while looking at their confused and somewhat dazed expressions.

In truth, this was the first time that she and her team were inspecting this particular building.

Baymard had too many stores and sites like the cafes, restaurants, hotels, butchering sites, and so on... that needed to be inspected within this small time frame given to them by their ministry.

So the ministry had always split them into several groups and sent them to all regions within Baymard... as the inspection of all these places had to be done in a single day, not to be fair.

After all, if they stretched out the inspection period might alert their friends in other businesses... which would be like cheating.

Because they would then try their best to clean up as much as they could instead.

And so, she knew where she would be sent during this time.

So this was her first time inspecting GreenMart.

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Mother Winnie looked at Bob and smiled.

"Let's get started shall we?"

Chapter 566 The Inspection 2

"Well then, let's get started shall we?"

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Mother Winnie and her team marched into the backroom of GreenMart with their equipment at hand, as well as their notebooks and checklists too.

Just from a single glance, one could see that GreenMart's massive backroom... Which was about the same size as any supermarket's bathroom on earth, was kept very clean and well maintained.

But just inspecting things with one's eyes wasn't enough to give this company a pass.

Winnie and the rest nodded in satisfaction while walking towards the staff locker rooms here.

Of course, the first thing that they had to do....was suit-up.

"Alright!

Since there are newly joined public health inspectors on the team, then let's treat today's inspection as a lecture shall we?

So new recruits.... When starting with an inspection what is the first thing that we have to do?" Mother Winnie asked while looking at the New recruits that all had their hands raised up in the air.

"Yes, Thomas?"

"Inspector Winnie, as mandatory to all inspections.... We start by washing our hands!"

"Good Thomas!

But apart from doing so to avoid the spread of germ, bacteria and possible food contamination during routine inspections..... why else would we want to do so?"

(-_-')

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This time, fewer new people raise their hands, because even though many of them felt like the answer was just at the top of their heads..... for the life of them, they truly couldn't remember the correct answer right now.

And so, some of them smiled wryly while looking at the floor... as if dodging eye contact with mother Winnie.

Of course, some of them rubbed their chin and seriously thought of what the answer could be, while others only pretended to think deeply instead.

And for some, they started flipping the pages of their notebooks like crazy... While whispering words like: where is it?... Or what could it be?

All in all, those that didn't know, were very ashamed at the moment.

One should know that before one could be on the health inspection team, they had to write several tests on procedures and guidelines.

In total, they were required to take 6 written examinations and 3 practical examinations just to be public health inspectors.

So, of course, they had done through this phase during their practical examination.

But the problem was that they were slightly anxious now that they were on the field... And all the answers in their heads seemed to have evaporated like water.

And even though they knew that the answer was probably somewhere in their brain, they still couldn't remember it no matter how hard they tried.

And so they felt extremely embarrassed when they saw Winnie and their seniors looking at them expectantly.

But Mother Winnie and the other inspectors who have been doing this particular job for years now, didn't look down at them at all.

After all, when they began... they too continuously forgot a few things due to his anxious they were.

Everyone wanted to do their best, so this could sometimes put unnecessary stress on them instead.

The best thing for them to do was to relax.

Anyway..... out of all 15 new recruits, only 3 of them could answer Winnie's question.

"Inspector Winnie, apart from contaminating the food during routine inspection..... we still need to wash our hands, so as to show us that the premise has all required aspects of hand wash facilities in the building."

"Correct Harper!

Each facility is required to have several designated hand wash stations that are only to be used for hand wash alone.

So, what guidelines must companies follow... So as to make sure that he met the proper health standards when it comes to hand wash stations?"

"Inspector Winnie, each station should have:

- Hot & Cold Water Running
- Liquid Hand Soap
- And Paper Towels."

"Excellent!

Alright!

So, when washing your hands, what did you all notice about the backroom hand wash stations here?" Winnie asked while looking at the many hands that were now raised up in the air once more.

"Inspector Winnie, I noticed that the Hot water Tap wasn't working properly."

"Was there a red tag placed on the hot water handle?"

"Yes, chief inspector."

"Good!

Then that means that the company has already noticed it, and gas already called sideline to come in and fix it immediately.

Now, let's say the red tag wasn't there... what would you all do then?"

"Inspector Winnie, we note it down... as it will affect the results from the inspection.

And after that, we will give them feedback... As well as a brief report too.

"Hmhm... Well said, Tiffany.

Now, let's continue on with the inspection."

.

With that, Winnie and her team continued with their inspection throughout the entire backroom.

They went into the walk-in refrigeration unit and used their equipment like a thermometer to make sure the air within the walk-in fridge was at the required temperature

After all, from the guidelines that they had... There was a temperature danger zone, which was very bad for food during storage.

One should know that some foods require precise temperature maintenance, so as to prevent bacterial growth and food-related illnesses.

And apart from checking the room temperature, they also placed their sterilized thermometers in some of the food too.

Of course, they also inspected several places like the bakery station where fresh bread was made daily for the customers.. And other cooking stations as well.

In short, they checked the cooking, holding and storage of all fresh foods in the building.

Additionally, they also checked the sanitation of the place, as well as how heavy items were being stored too...lest they severely injure workers on the job.

Of course, apart from the backroom..... they also checked the actual store itself.

They looked for any safety dangers, like the cleaners not cleaning water-spills on the aisles and so on.

They also went through the company procedure to see if any changes needed to be done as well.

And while the inspection went on, they also asked the manager a couple of questions too.

It was required for all managers to know Baymard's health codes in order to operate a commercial food establishment.

In short, there was so much that needed to be done

And by the end of the day, all establishments within Baymard had successfully undergone inspection.

Winning cane back home and quickly jumped on her bed.

'Bam!'

It was finally over.

.

An while things were looking up for those in Baymard, the same couldn't be said to others.

Chapter 567 And So It Begins!

--A Secret hidden base, The Empire Of Arcadina--

.

The Night sky was inky black, with not so much as a star in sight.

And within the blanket of darkness, one could hear the sounds of several night creatures singing loudly all through the night.

'Who!!! Who!!!'

'Creeeeekkkk!'

'Wooooo!!!!!!!!!!'

The night owls, snowy wolves and other creatures of the night sang their daily choruses heartily.

And not too far away from the forest region where these animals sang, several masked men could be seen stealthily making their way through the forest.

These men were all dressed in black and had shields hanging on their backs and swords on their waists too.

Of course, some of them also had their bows and arrows on their backs instead.

'Weeeewwwwww!'

An uneasy, brisk and chilling wind blew across the faces of these masked men, making them feel both anxious and eager for tonight's dance.

Underneath their masks, they couldn't help but smile a little.

Tonight was going to be their night!!

"Your highness, from what I can remember... the enemy's hidden guards should be hiding a little distance from here." Said one of the masked men.

"Good!

Tell the men to spread out just as planned."

"Yes, your highness Eli."

With that, the massive unit of men quickly broke out into even smaller groups..... and hastily scattered around the forest in a flash, leaving only 2 small groups behind.

Eli looked at the path before him and smiled.

He felt his mind fall into ecstasy, as he imagined today's outcome in his mind over and over again.

Aiiihhhh!

The feeling he had right now was so strong that he almost felt like he could physically smell his victory fast approaching.

Hahahhahahahaha!

Soon, he would have his cousin's head in a platter of gold.

Of course, such an enemy was worthy of being placed on a gold platter.

He had been tailing this cousin of his for years now, and finally... catching up to the bastard indeed gave him the most satisfying feeling ever.

Because no matter how he looked at it, no one could save this cousin of his tonight

Yes. ... That's right!

Today, his cousin... A.K.A The Ghostly Prince, will finally die!!

.

Of course, Eli wasn't the only one who was thinking in that same manner too.

On the other side of the secret base, several other masked men in black were also making their way into the forest too.

"Your highness, this is the route that I used to escape after confirming everything about your cousin."
Said a tall broad-shouldered masked man.

"Hmmmmmm... so this is the entrance to their main base?"

"Yes, your highness!"

"Wonderful!"

Let's but keep uncle, aunty and my dear cousin waiting any longer shall we?"

"As you wish, your highest Connor."

With that, their men also scattered into groups and quickly made their move.

And just like that, 2 different enemies had proceeded into the base fearlessly from different ends.

One should know that this was a base, so there had to be a few hidden or open paths that would allow the residents of the base to flee from enemy attacks if there were too many enemies.

Surprisingly, there were just 2 ways to enter the base at ground level.

And of course apart from these 2 entrances, there was also another tunnel-like entrance in one of the buildings in the base, that led to a cave far away in the heart of the forest.... were many people dared not venture, lest some wild animals walked into the tunnel and attacked them.

For sure, this entrance was always sealed with a large metal jail gate.... and was only opened during emergencies.

Anyway, both Connor and Eli had used both ground-level entrances when attacking... because these were the entrances that their spies had used when last they came over.

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Connor stayed back with another squad while watching the other teams advanced in different directions.

For him, today's matter would undoubtedly finish in a flash with the end result being his victory.

Ever since his mother had gifted him with a top grade assassin and strategist, everything seemed to be going on well for him.

Heck!

He even suspected that the reason why Eli had always been able to pull a fast one on him, was because the villain probably he such a person by his side too.

In short, ever since he had gotten extra help, he found that his scheming abilities had gone up a notch as well.

He now had a better idea of what Eli was up to, and even found out about Slytherin Cord and the Ghostly Prince's matters.

He felt his chest swell up with pride when he thought of how he was now yielding the fruits of his labour.

Today, he was here to kill this cousin of his and take over his men.

It was just that simple!

After all, it was a rule when battling.... that the victor would claim everything that the loser had as his.

This was the natural way of war.

So with his cousin's skilled men... he would now have a better chance of taking over Baymard.

In his mind, he was sure that Alec would win the battle against Baymard... making everything a lot easier for him.

Because when Alec finally died, Eli would rule over Arcadina... while he on the other hand, would rule over Baymard instead.

Of course for this to happen, he needed to convince Alec to wield or give Baymard to him just before the old fart died.

One could say that Connor wanted Alec needed to write a will before his death.

And that was why, even though he would kill this cousin of his... he still wouldn't kill this uncle and aunt of his.

No!

At least not yet.

.

To gain Alec's trust, as well as to get the 'promise of his majesty'... Connor planned to take his uncle, Oden Barn and his aunty to Alec.

Undoubtedly, Alec would be so shocked and very thankful that he had captured them.

In this way, Alec would also tell him to say whatever he wanted as a gift of gratitude.

And that was when he would state his wish of becoming ruler of Baymard.

Yes!

With Eli as crown Prince of Arcadina, it would only make sense for him to be Baymard's crown prince.

Connor smirked while looking at the part before him.

Hahahhahahahaha!

Soon, he would be King!

Chapter 568 The Beginning Of The End!

In the dark and mysterious night, both enemy groups were currently advancing towards the base.

The trees were bald and the forest was bare, as the snow had completely swallowed the place whole.

Large piles and heaps of snow could be seen all around the forest, causing several cold chills to run down the spines of these intruders.

Eli's men stealthily advanced while hiding behind the massive heaps of snow..... and continuously scouted the place in search of all hidden guards.

They only knew that their enemies were now hiding around this point, but they didn't know what formation the enemy was using when hiding.... as well as where their enemies were guiding and watching them from.

So they didn't know the exact location where each hidden guard binding to their enemy was.

With that said, they had no choice but to advance while hiding behind the snow, trees or fallen tree logs that were lying on the ground.

Eli's archers first moved forward through the snow, while looking up and down, East to West and so on.

And as they moved, they felt the air before them grow extremely tense.

Were their enemies now close by?

Call it a warrior's instincts!

But as they approached, they felt the feeling grow stronger and stronger with every passing second.

It was as if they could feel the presence of several evil-intentioned minds, that were now waiting in the shadows.... ready to pounce at them any time soon.

Several of them quickly took out their bow from their backs, and slowly pulled it along the strings of their bows..... while closely observing their surroundings steadily.

The tension in the air was really too high, and some of them instantly felt that the enemy was about to make their move anytime soon.

"Keep Vigil Men!

They're Here!" Said one of the leaders in the group, who quickly ran towards a tree in hiding.

'Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup!'

'Ahhhh!!!'

In a flash, heavy rain of arrows was sent flying towards this group of men from all directions.

Some of the men were too slow to react and immediately got shot to death, while others either dropped to the ground, hid behind the trees or fallen logs instead... after all, where else could they possibly take cover in this dead of winter?

'Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup!'

"Men, focus!

From what we know, we are more than them in number.

So we undoubtedly have the advantage here!

Shoot! Shoot!

Shoot down the bastards now!!!"

Their archers also launched multiple towards their enemies confidently, as that victory was just a stone throw away.

'Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup!'

.

As for their enemies, A.K.A, the Ghostly Prince's men.... even though it seems like they were properly fighting back, the whole thing had come too suddenly for them.

What the hell?

This was the first time ever, that their main base (The Home), had been attacked since its creation decades back.

So who exactly were their enemies?

They attacked with all their might, while quickly assessing the situation too.

And it was only there and then, that their leaders had decided to fall back instead.

For them, it was better to go back and properly protect their young master and his family.

Because whether they liked it or not, it seemed like their enemies had come fully prepared for tonight's saga.

So who knew what other tricks they had up their sleeve?

For them, it was better to go back, surround their leaders and properly fight to the death there.... while making sure that those who could escape did so swiftly.

Yes!

They were buying more time for their leaders and comrades to escape using that underground tunnel instead.

And so with that, their leaders decisively gave it their orders.

"Fall back!"

"Retreat!!"

'Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup!'

As they retreated, some of them ran towards their base with their backs backing their enemies.... while others ran facing their enemies instead.

Of course, the last group of people were there to defend their comrades who ran ahead of them.

So they shot several arrows towards these intruders, as well as held out their shield up in the air too.

"Watch out!"

"To your left!"

"Ahhhh!!"

"It hurts!.... it hurts!"

.

Blood quickly dyed the white snowy fields beneath the trees crimson red, and it's very strong foul smell quickly filled up the air in a flash.

'Bam!

As the battle progressed, several lifeless bodies dropped to the floor like flies.

Back in Eli's side, one of the warriors came back to report in the situation ahead.

"Your highness!

We have successfully pushed them back.

And looking at it now, they seemed to be running away instead.

It appears that they have been cornered!"

"Wonderful!" Eli replied with a broad smile plastered on his perfectly chiselled face.

Of course as Prince, there he generally didn't have to join the battle at all.

He was the final boss, so why should he even move a muscle now.

All he had to do was watch his men deal with his enemies, while slowly advancing instead.

And when all enemy forces had been properly taken care of only then and there, would make an appearance.

This way, he would be able to give his proper winning speech to his enemy, while looking glorious and radiant.... as opposed to his enemy who will look tattered and unkempt instead.

This was also good, so that if by some miracle his enemy won... then he, on the other hand, would be able to flee the scene at ease, since his group was following behind the rest.

"Excellent!

Rush forward as fast as you can and tell the rest of the men to do as we planned."

"Yes, your highness!"

With that, the man hurriedly rushed forward with his horse, while Eli on the other hand.... calmly rode his horse towards the Base.

Now, it was finally time to end it all once and for all!

Finally, victory would soon be his!

Chapter 569 The Beginning Of The End! 2

"Men, they're retreating!

Quickly!

Charge!!!!!"

"Fall back!"

"Retreat!"

"Ahhhhhh!"

"Bastards!!"

"kill them!

Kill them all!"

"Dammit!

How did it become like this?"

'Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup!'

Both sides were constantly losing men left, right and centre... while steadily advancing towards the base.

Of course, no side showed any mercy to their enemy.

And as those at the back advanced, they killed those who were slowly dying as well.... lest they woke up just before their death, in hopes of shooting and taking down any enemy to hell with them.

'Swish!'

Their sharp blades pierced right through the hearts, skulls and necks of their half-dead enemies in an instant.

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'Din! Din! Din! Din! Din!'

Several uneven footsteps could be heard running through the snow towards one of the base's entrances.

Some of the men ran as fast as they could, while others supported their injured comrades instead.

They hastily made their way towards a cave and hurriedly blocked the cave's entrance by using a large boulder and several sticks to keep it in place.

"Captain Zion!

No!

We can't accept this!"

"Yes Captain, we won't leave you behind.

Please come in with us." Said some of the hidden guards, who were now looking at their leader in respect and worry.

It was obvious that their leader wanted to buy more time for them to escape.

But even though they knew all of this, they still felt choked with sorrow and grief at the thought of their leader's possible death.

Why did such a day have to come?

The pain that they felt in their hearts, was stung them more than any physical injury that they had ever gotten before.

.

Captain Zion.

This was their leader and Captain, who had been leading their team and many others for so many years now.

The man was 38 years old and was like a father figure to a lot of the youngins in their group.

And so with that said, many of them felt like wailing pitifully when they thought about the fact that they might never see him again.

"Please leader!..... please follow us out now!"

"Leader, please stop being stubborn!"

"Yeah, leader!

If you leave with us now, then all of us will be able to escape in one piece."

"Please Captain!"

"Please Leader!!!

Zion raised his hands and quickly demanded forward for silence.

"Enough!

Didn't I already say that I'll be staying behind?

If I follow you all back, then who will buy more time?

Do you know how many of us are in this base?

It would take quite some time for everyone to get out safely since the secret tunnel underneath is very narrow."

"Captain!

If that's the case, then I want to volunteer to stay back and cut more time too."

"Me too Captain, I also volunteer to stay behind as well."

"Count me in!"

"And me!"

"Me too!"

(*^*)

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Zion looked at the men that he had been training for years now, and felt very warm inside.

These were the men that he had personally trained throughout the years!

They were brave, courageous and daring!

And even though he felt truly touched, he still couldn't bring himself to allow them to aid him in buying more time.

Because unlike himself, almost all of these men had families far away from the base.

In fact, many of his men were first-time fathers as well.

As for himself, he had always been an orphaned bachelor, whose parents had died in the hands of several bandits.

As a 38-year-old bachelor, how could he dare to allow these men who had plenty of responsibilities to aid him?

Thinking of this situation like that, his face that previously had a trace of warmth on it, was now as stern and solid as a rock.

"Are you all here to test my patience?"

The young master and his family are in danger, and you all are to defy my orders??"

Don't forget!

Your jobs are to protect the young master and his family.

So what are you all standing around for?"

Go!

Get the hell out of here now!!!" He bellowed while swinging his sword at them crazily.

The men looked at him in sorrow, and finally turned around and ran as fast as they could.

Of course, some of them were still hesitant.

And just as they were about to leave for good, they heard several loud sounds coming from outside the cave.

'Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

Eh, what was that?"

'Brrrrrrrrr!'

The tremors were somewhat faint but powerful enough slightly to cause the cave's floors to tremble slightly... As if it were experiencing several mini-Hertfilianquakes.

Zion's eyes instantly lit up and he hurriedly ushered everyone away anxiously.

"Go, Dammit!"

'Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!'

Sh**!

He had to quickly set up the cave's defence system now.

Time was truly running out.

.

Of course while Zion was serving more traps fro the men outside... they, on the other hand, were busy throwing explosives at the cave's entrance instead.

"Can't you all aim properly?"

Why are you all wasting everyone's time?"

Don't you know that the more time we waste, the more chances they have at escaping?"

Hurry it up, will you?!!!" Said one of Eli's men, who was currently pointing at the archers hatefully.

Good God!

What was the point of calling then archers, if they couldn't even do such a simple task?

"Don't shot the boulder for crying out loud!

Shoot the floor beneath it or the cave walls that are keeping the boulder in place!" He screamed angrily.

F***!

How dumb could they?

If they used their black powder to shoot through that thick boulder, then wouldn't they be here for quite some time?

At this rate, wouldn't their enemies have enough time to escape?

No!.... No way!

They couldn't let that happen, not when they were this close to victory.

"You good-for-nothing!

Give me that now!!" Said the man, who literally shoved one of the archers angrily and quickly grabbed his bow from him.

'Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup! Thup!

'Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom

The archers launched several attacks towards the targeted spots... And soon, the boulder came rolling down towards the group below.

"Careful! Careful!"

Everyone steadily dived to the side, away from the rolling boulder.... before finally letting out several sighs from relief.

'Phew!'

'So far so good', they thought., while looking at the cave before them.

Hmm... it was time to see what other tricks these people had.

Chapter 570 A Good Captain!

'Drrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr!'

The large boulder rolled away from the cave, forming a massive track wherever it went.

'Bam!'

It crashed into several trees, knocking some of them down in a flash as if they were ordinary bowling pins.

Many of the men looked at the damage caused by the boulder and unconsciously wiped the 'invisible' sweat from their foreheads.

'Phew!'

The weight of the rock alone was enough to grind their bones into dust if they were ever unfortunate to be victims of it all.

"Enough dwindling around!

Everyone, get into the cave now!"

"Yes, Captain Belbooz!"

With that, the men hurriedly but cautiously made their way into the dark gloomy cave ahead.

Yes!

It was time to see what other tricks these people had.

.

Stepping into the massive cave, the men quickly took out a simple lighter (obviously made in Baymard), and hastily lit up several torches before proceeding any further.

Gone were the days when they would've needed to hit two dry stones together or rub two dry twigs against each other in order to make fire.

Now, in just click, this weird but simple Baymardian device had helped several peasants, merchants, and even nobles all round the Pyno continent.

Only the heavens knew how hard it was to get any spark from stones or trees during winter or rainy seasons.

It was possible, but one could take several minutes or more just to get any spark.

But now, all they had to do was press down on a spinny-thingy on the lighter and the rest was history.

Anyway, once their torches had been lit, they hastily stepped into the cave fearlessly.

'Din! Din! Din! Din! Din! Din! Din! Din!'

They continuously observed their surroundings while jogged forward steadily..... and soon, danger had met them yet again.

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"Hehehhehe... I'm sure they're panicking right now while anticipating our arrival." One of the men said while feeling smug.

At this moment, he was ridiculously proud of the fact that he was in prince Eli's camp.

Right now, he truly felt like he could fly!

Every warrior wanted to follow a powerful leader who had hot manpower and skill.

The many people looked up to the strong, and he was no exception to it all.

In his eyes, even if Eli murdered innocent people.... the strong were always right.

And that was how he perceived the world.

He looked at those around him and felt his heart race a little bit.

Yes!

He had been placed in the winning team.

"Hahahhahahaha!

They're probably crying their eyes out in fear right about now."

"Nah!... I think they might commit suicide instead."

"Pui!

Do those cowards look like they would have the balls to do something as noble as that?"

"I agree!

It hasn't even been long since we arrived, and they were already running for their lives.

Tsk!

What a bunch of wimps!"

"I reckon that we will be able to deal with them within the next 3 hours."

"Please!!

Aren't you giving them too much credit?

Trust me, it'll be done in 2 hour's time.

"You both are wrong.... it'll only take an hour for us to deal with these sons of a b**chest."

"Hmph!

Want to be?"

"Game On!

Who's afraid of you?

We'll see who will have the last laugh, won't we?"

"Yes!

Let's wait and..."

'Bam!'

'Ahhhhhhhhh!!!!'

--silence--

Everyone had their eyes and mouths opened widely, as they looked at the gruesome scene before them.

(°Δ°)

F***!

That could've been them.

They looked at their comrades below and felt all the colour from their faces drain swiftly.

Their lips trembled violently, and their heads felt very lightheaded as they saw the gut-churning scene below.

'Ahhhhh!'

The shrivelled cries of those who had fallen in the trap, echoed out as if they were ghosts who were out to hunt for revenge.

As for the trap, well.... those who were ahead of everyone else, had fallen into a wide, long pit of sharp pointy iron sticks.

The enemy had pinned a large brown tent-like material over the hole and had lightly sprinkled a thin layer of dirt over it... just to camouflage it a bit.

It was only after they had seen their comrades fall below, did they alone see a massive iron board hanging way over the trap.

The thick heavy looking iron bridge was massive enough to allow carriages to pass through it.... and it also had several ropes on all its ends, which were attached to a pulley system on the other side of the pit.

Dammit!

It looked like after crossing over, their enemies had raised the board way up using the rope pulley system.

And now, some of their men had fallen into the spiky pit below.

These cowardly motherf***ers were really something else.

If they got the archers to shoot down the ropes on the pulley, then the bridge might fall in a disadvantageous position to them.

Plus no matter how they looked at it, that iron bridge was f***king heavy, so imagine it dropping down from that height above?

If it fell, it would take more time for them to properly position the bridge so that they could softly cross.
So their only option now was to strategically get to the other side and lower the bridge properly.

Dammit!

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"C...Captain.... please save us."

"P... please save us."

The men in the pit who hadn't died yet, all spat out blood from their mouths while begging to be saved.

Their Captain in question stopped forward from the middle of the crowd and only briefly glanced at them before speaking again.

"Don't worry.... as our men, we will definitely save you." Captain Belboosa said with no hint of emotions on his face.

As for the men in the pit, just hearing his words alone made them feel like all the pain in their bodies had magically disappeared.

They were going to live!

They looked at Belboosa with gratitude and respect, and couldn't help but struggle to say thank you while feeling like they were on cloud 9 right now.

"T.....Thank you, Captain!" They blurted out while gushing out more blood too.

(^_^)

'Captain!

You're such a good man.