

VILE EVIL HIDES UNDER THE VEIL

Chapter 14: Encountering Isaac's Party!

Eren now understood why Dom didn't let anyone know about finding a D Rank MB stone in the cave. Yes, the stone was precious for rank ups and held great monetary value.

But the real problem lied elsewhere!

The potential stone snatchers Dom would encounter by keeping that stone would only belong to D rank or lower. The higher ranked hunters wouldn't care about the MB stones they can't use.

But what if everyone knows your demon beast can track and locate natural treasures? All hell will break loose on Dom and he and his beast will be targeted by higher-ranked entities than them.

That's why Dom didn't take any risk and told nobody about finding a Mana Blessing stone. Reen's ability was too shocking. Eren needed to follow in Dom's footsteps.

The future-Dom had come across many such chance encounters that were treated as him being lucky. This had created a legend around his name and made him famous in the general and hunter populous alike.

But only now did Eren understand it was all due to Reen that he kept on getting his hands dipped in a pot of honey and gold. And with such a treasure-finding beast by his side that would potentially give him access to any Rank's Mana Blessing, his exceptional growth in ranking journey could now be made sense of by Eren.

For now, Eren needed to even hide the fact that he now has a C Rank demon beast as his companion.

Otherwise, Eren's way of obtaining that beast will be searched upon. And Dom's killer will be identified during that process. Eren didn't want to complicate things for himself even without starting his adventurer journey.

The next morning.

Eren had worked non stop the entire night in collecting the MB stones Reen had located from different parts of the forest. Thanks to the full moon last night, Eren could traverse safely through the forest.

It couldn't be helped. Eren needed to hurry and get back in the city before his disappearance was known by aunt Nina.

Eren now had five F Rank MB stones, two E Rank ones, and one other stone that Reen couldn't make sense of. Eren figured that the unidentifiable stone was beyond C Rank at the very least.

This was going to be the costliest stone in Eren's collection despite its smallest size. Eren also understood that it brought him the highest risks.

Reen also knew about some rare herbs and other gems located in the forest but Eren was running late. He needed to be out of the forest before an investigation team was dispatched. He'll be in trouble if his involvement in the whole incident is questioned.

Eren tore his sleeves and created a makeshift face mask out of it. Then he told Reen to hide inside his shirt and stay low until called upon.

Eren quickly made his way out of the forest, from a different route than he came from. He didn't want to risk taking the shortest route only to end up colliding with the incoming forces.

Various parties would enter the forest from various directions. Normally, a ranger from each of those parties will pick the shortest and safest route to traverse. And that made their routes predictable.

Some rangers would even choose to follow trails left behind by other rangers to have an easy time. Eren knew the route selected by Dom was one such route. Therefore Eren chose a route that would be the least likely to get selected by any capable ranger. He had his past life's experiences to guide him in that regard.

What Eren had concluded was true for almost all the parties. But what if it was a rookie party? And the party's ranger was a newbie and incompetent?

Eren's good luck so far had finally left his side at this time. He found a party of five members rapidly approaching him right from his front direction. Eren couldn't change the route now. The time he saw them was also the time the party members saw him.

Eren just hoped that the party would let him go without asking many questions. He didn't want to complicate his escape here.

But what he hoped for didn't come to pass. The party approached him rapidly before stopping a few meters away from him.

The party's ranger was standing in the front. He was the one who opened his mouth first to break the stalemate:

"Hello there. Fellow hunter...."

The ranger wanted to continue but a girl who looked to be a mage from the same party cut him off to correct him:

"Isaac, he is not a hunter. He hasn't formed or activated his mana core yet. The guy is rankless."

Everyone else in the party was shocked by that revelation including Isaac. They were all in too much of a hurry to traverse through the forest to notice Eren's rankless status.

Isaac's reckless charge had them second-guessing their way the entire time until all the party members finally concluded that they were lost.

A ray of hope was found in a person they could all see coming their way from the front. They all thought he was a hunter like them, but turned out it was a rankless brat. Isaac quickly recovered his wits and asked further. After finding out that Eren is rankless, Isaac's respect for him had dropped to the lowest:

"Brat, tell us who you are and what are you doing here? And take us to Simar lake. We can probably give you food for your services."

Isaac had assumed that he was talking to a street kid because Eren had torn sleeves that didn't exactly give him good first impressions. But his face was covered. And that's what he wanted at the time.

Eren didn't take any offence in that. He was called and treated worse in his previous life so he had developed certain tolerance towards such tones and addressals.

These guys were asking him to lead them towards Simar lake. The same location he had run away from. The trails left behind by Dom were enough for these guys to trace the rest of the way. It would eventually lead them all to his crime scene: the cave.

Although he had taken care of the bodies by making Reen digest them all in her gluttonous stomach, the traces of his fight with Dom couldn't be get rid of.

Forget these newbies. Eren's presence there at the scene of the crime would make it easy for other hunters to point their fingers at him. Therefore, Eren couldn't risk it:

"Sir, I don't know where that lake is. I'm just making my way out of the forest. I'm in a hurry so I hope if you'd excuse me! Good day and godspeed."

Eren wanted to take his leave after saying that but Isaac wasn't going to let him go that easily:

"Maybe you didn't hear me little punk. I first asked you about your name and your business. But you squatted those questions coming from a hunter like they were some kind of flies bothering you while you have your food.

And you have your face covered while talking to us. That means you are a known thief or something. That alone is a reason enough for you to come with us till we figure out your identity and hand you over to the city guards for your pending crimes.

Now you have to come with us even if you don't know the way to Simar lake. You can't just scoot your way out when a hunter asks you to do something. You'll learn this lesson the hard way today."

Isaac smiled at Eren wickedly and concluded in an irrefutable stance.