

Warlord 111

Chapter 112 Dilan's frustration

Dilan knew that it would take time for everyone to trust each other.

That was to be expected, and it would be weird if the Survivors were to naively trust every single new member who joined their small community.

However, it was still difficult for many to digest that their number increased from a meager 60 to more than 600 Survivors!

The difference was quite a lot, to put it simply, and Dilan was sure that conflicts would erupt quite soon.

But even then, he was happy to have the shepherd's gang by his side.

Earlier, he had not liked them, but that was mostly owing to Xias and his people. They had been outcasts in the gang, according to everyone Dilan had spoken to.

This little piece of information made a big difference to him as it allowed Dilan to have a fresh and unbiased opinion about everyone, without having a prejudice against the shepherds gang!

Thus, after spending almost half a day with the other Survivors and gang members, it was quite obvious that they were different to most of the gangs he had imagined.

He had already encountered some gangs in the past when he visited his friends in their underground fights, but reality seemed to be different from everything he thought he knew about gangs.

They accepted his rules without batting an eyelid, while Xenia and Williams readily agreed to him with a thumbs up.

Dilan was pretty sure that both Williams and Xenia were not completely normal in their minds, but that was something he could say about himself as well.

In the end, it was great that the shepherds would adhere to his rules, and follow his orders.

This made things much easier than Dilan could have hoped for, even more so when more than 60 shepherds were willing to join him in collecting ordinary Essences..

Most of them were at a low level, but that created an opportunity as well!

Out of their group, only Williams had reached level 10, while his inner ring was at Level 8 and 9. On the other hand, the shepherds were at Level 4 to 6.

Dilan knew that he had a lot to do, and by providing the shepherd members with the ungraded, Trash and Bronze weapons he procured, he had armed them to the teeth.

"I will take care of the stronger zombies. Just don't die on me, or do something stupid, otherwise, I will show you a different side of mine!!" Dilan cautioned the Ascenders that were now under him.

Initially, he had planned to dash through three floors before waiting for the morning sun to arise.

But that didn't seem to be feasible anymore as everyone was way too eager to become as strong as Dilan.

Even Williams and his inner ring chose to join him in his conquest.

This was quite frustrating if Dilan were, to be honest, which was why he added further in a loud voice.

"The moment someone messes up, we will stop reclaiming the first hospital tower for tonight. I'm already tired after fending off the monsters back at the police station and relocating everyone. As such, I realize that you guys wouldn't be fully awake and focused either!"

It was not as if they were overly pressured to procure ordinary Essence crystals.

There was some pressure on them, but Dilan was sure that everyone would survive for the time being.

They were given something to eat and the few that looked the worst received something to drink along with Essences to absorb.

Knowing that the stress that weighed on him was not too much of a burden.

He could shoulder the burdening responsibility alone, but that was not necessary anymore as he was surrounded by many people that were willing to support him with all their might.

After understanding that he was not alone, Dilan chose to provide everyone with the best possible comfort as he turned on the lights of the fifth floor up to the seventh floor.

This was a decision that he debated mentally on but it was necessary as they had to see in order to fight.

"The hospital lights are not that easy to see from the city. Most panorama windows are pointed toward the mountainside.

And even if others somehow see the hospital lights, it is not really that much of an issue.

To be honest, there are quite a few buildings where the lights are still working even though they're empty.

We've been in a few of them to search for more Survivors!"

That had been Sven's comment when Dilan kept pondering whether to turn on the lights of the fifth to the seventh floor or not.

Sven spoke a lot about the things they had done in the last 11 days, and most of the time they were busy fighting other monsters, and groups, or searching for food, weapons, and people.

As such, the shepherd gang's intel was quite informative and helpful.

However the same applied the other way around as Dilan's approach to survival was quite different to theirs.

He focused on himself first before nurturing others.

In fact, it was quite obvious that Dilan wanted to become even stronger, and only both Williams and Kathrine could guess what was holding him back from becoming even stronger.

'He is gathering enough Essence for a powerful occupation!'

Both Kathrine and Williams wanted to do the same. But they also figured that Dilan was much stronger while still being considered a Tierless existence.

He had reached some sort of limit, which simply meant that they should attain the same before focusing on accumulating essence for themselves.

This would be the best approach to become even stronger in their opinion.

Following Dilan's path sounded rather easy for them at first glance, but it was easier said than done.

After all, Dilan had advantages that others didn't have, and he faced situations that others had never encountered either.

That was one of the many reasons for Williams to follow Dilan.

There were too many things he was curious about, and his interest had been enough to make him give up his former position as leader of his gang and the Survivors he had taken in.

But Williams also knew that he would have soon given up on protecting the other Survivors because they didn't have any food, let alone water left.

As such, Dilan had not only protected all of them from the zombie crowd, but also from starving to death.

A majority of the newly rescued survivors clearly understood this.

They understood that meeting Dilan had been their extreme stroke of luck since the Primordial Ascension started, which was why he immediately gained lots of trust from nearly everyone.

Knowing that Dilan was there to protect them, everyone was able to sleep soundly, while Dilan and the others chose to start clearing the upper floors.

However, it was only two hours later that they had returned already.

Dilan's body was riddled with zombie scratches, and his mood was simply bad.

Frustration could be seen in his eyes as he walked down the stairway, while some rather young Ascenders ran behind him with apologetic expressions.

Fear about Dilan's response to their current behavior could be clearly seen in their eyes, and a moment later, he did give them a piece of his mind.

"I'm not your nanny. If you guys want to become stronger, don't drag down your own people!! I won't save you guys the next time the two of you rush into the hallway like headless chickens!!"

Dilan's voice was low so as to not wake everyone up.

However, the trace of annoyance in his tone caused everyone who followed him silently to feel chills running down their spines.

Meanwhile, Williams appeared next to Miles and placed his hand on his shoulder.

He felt a little bit weird to see Dilan like this, but Williams could only agree to every single spoken word. In fact, Williams was quite sure that he wouldn't have saved the two teenagers if he had been in Dilan's place.

Not because he didn't want to, but because he would have died while rescuing them!

It was only a few minutes earlier when a handful of young Ascenders had mindlessly barged into the front hallways on the seventh floor.

As if that was not stupid enough, before Dilan had been able to check everything, they had left the doors open to let a handful of evolved zombies had emerged out of the shadows.

In the end, Dilan was bitten and scratched more than five times, just to protect the kids before he was even able to retaliate.

By now, he should have turned into a zombie, however, nothing had happened.

This was, of course, great and allowed everyone to sigh in relief. However, it was still weird!

But that didn't seem to bother anyone else but Williams and his people as even Kathrine, who couldn't sleep well, woke up just to see Dilan's appearance.

She simply shrugged her shoulders before smiling dryly, imagining what the newcomers would think of him to see his haggard and disheveled look.

"I should really reconsider taking in new Survivors if they keep acting like this..." Dilan just mumbled in frustration, as he walked past Kathrine.

Kathrine could only smile bitterly, knowing that he didn't truly mean it.

However, she could also understand that it was quite a hassle to be responsible for some people, who had yet to understand that life and death were not that far apart anymore.

After all, the Primordial Ascension changed...everything!

Chapter 113 First Tower Clear

Dilan didn't even think of wasting his time with the young Ascenders anymore. He went to sleep in the ward he had claimed for himself.

His mood was quite bad but his exhaustion pulled him into a deep sleep that lasted far longer than Dilan wanted.

Waking up when the sun had already risen, Dilan left his room before encountering a bustling second floor.

Everyone was already awake and following the tasks they had been given.

"He is doing fine..." Someone mumbled all of a sudden before Dilan saw that several gazes were lingering on him.

It were the gazes of a few new Ascenders that had joined their ranks the day before.

Dilan didn't speak to them, and instead, he went down the stairs toward the cafeteria.

Bianne was working hard to cook for everyone.

She had been given some assistants, who helped her as well, just for Dilan to see that each of them was wearing a [Ring of Yarad]!

"Morning, Bianne. How many Rings of Yarad do we have right now?"

Dilan could conclude that the others had exchanged the Essences which they procured with treasures.

That was the only plausible reason for them to own multiple Rings of Yarad.

Noticing Dilan after a moment, Bianne stopped stirring the contents of the huge pot with a ladle before smiling drily.

"We have a total of five of them. But I don't think that should be your main focus right now! The young Ascenders you lectured are quite annoying. They want to prove that they can do better, which is why they were nagging Kathrine, Yvonne, and the others to clear the tower with them!"

Dilan told the new Ascenders that they shouldn't try to conquer the hospital all by themselves. That was why they wanted the help of the stronger Ascenders.

However, that was not without dangers as well because Dilan doubted that Kathrine, Williams, let alone Yvonne would be unable to kill Silver monsters yet.

Silver monsters were simply too powerful as some of their stats were close to the limits of a Tierless existence!

Thus, Dilan took a slice of bread and some sausages they had prepared from the meat of the War Krendel before he walked up the stairways to reach the seventh floor just a few minutes later.

He didn't rush anything and focused on keeping his calm.

It would do no good to keep lecturing the new Ascenders about the mistakes they made. In fact, Dilan was not even sure if Miles and the others were truly doing something wrong by asking Kathrine and the others to clear the hospital.

They didn't ask for his help because he had been sleeping. And the fact that they were trying to solve problems by themselves was also remarkable.

Dilan was quite happy that they listened to his instruction of not going up without anyone else, as well.

As such, he calmed himself before reaching the seventh floor.

"Oh? They already cleared it?" The entire seventh floor was littered with zombie corpses.

The day before, Dilan killed only some of the Shadow zombies before he chose to return as he had been angered by the reckless behavior of two particular youths.

That was why it was quite a surprise to see that the seventh floor was already cleared.

Dilan reached the eighth floor after reassuring himself that none of the zombie corpses were moving.

The eight floor was also cleared, which led Dilan to the ninth floor, where he saw more than 90 Ascenders fighting against zombies.

They were clearly overwhelming the low-leveled zombies and crushing them easily.

On the other hand, the stronger ordinary zombies died at the hands of multiple Ascenders that ganged upon them.

A huge War Krendel moved through the hallway of the ninth floor with two crushed Bronze zombies in its hand.

After placing the corpses on a small mountain, Dilan immediately came across Yvonne's rather small body frame.

She was controlling the War Krendel's corpse, which allowed her to fight without the need for her to fight with her own hands.

This was quite wasteful in Dilan's opinion, but it was not his business to tell Yvonne how she had to fight.

He was more focused on Kathrine, Williams and Xenia, who were fighting a rather strong monster right now, either way.

Dilan didn't intend to intervene, but that didn't seem to be necessary, to begin with.

The monster they were fighting was a mutated Bronze zombie with the same or a higher prowess than the Chimera Zombie Centaur.

What astonished Dilan in their fight was the fact that Williams wielded a longsword while two daggers levitated around him.

"Psychokinesis is truly an interesting ability...but Xenia's [Enhanced Movement] looks quite interesting as well. It's a decent passive ability, that is for sure!"

Dilan had first observed the fight of the three Ascenders which he deemed as the strongest in his entire group.

They were still far from him, but Dilan was quite sure that each of them was able to kill the four-armed zombie they faced, all by themselves.

But even if the possibility existed, it was better for them to face the opponent together.

This was quite important to build some trust, to get to know each other better, and even more so to prevent the zombie from scratching them even once!

Survival was more important than showing off, after all!

After averting his gaze from the small group of three, Dilan kept looking at the other Ascenders.

Most of them belonged to the former shepherds gang, but there were also more than enough Survivors that had been in the Rian mountainside hospital for quite a while.

However, what Dilan focused on the most was not everyone's combat prowess or the question of whether they had the talent to fight or not.

Dilan's focus was solely on ensuring that the people around him did not endanger their own group by acting recklessly or being overly stupid.

That was also why Dilan couldn't help but stare at Miles and his friend for a while.

Due to his passive ability [Perception], Miles could tell that Dilan was looking at him.

No one other than Dilan had such a fierce and penetrating gaze that could stare in the depths of one's soul!

Thus, Miles froze for a quarter of a second. However, instead of freezing on the spot, or making more mistakes, Miles' eyes turned stoic as he focused on the low-leveled zombies ahead of him.

Wielding one of the Kobolds' spears, Miles was able to move much faster than the zombies.

Furthermore, owing to his precise perception, he could sense and spot every single movement of the slow zombies which allowed him to react to their movements before they took their first step.

Dilan could clearly see the way Miles moved. It was a habit he had picked up not too long ago.

And this trait of his was further enhanced because his Agility was several times higher than the opponents he outwitted with his movements.

This was not something he could do without his high agility, let alone while being as fast as the opponents he fought.

'Looks like he learned quite a bit!'

Chapter 114 First Tower Clear (2)

The 9th floor was cleared not long after Dilan had gotten a fair idea about everyone's prowess.

Afterward, most Ascenders were occupied with collecting Essences. From the looks of it, Yvonne had gained the most as every single corpse that lay next to her was a Bronze monster.

Most of them were different types of zombies, which meant that she would gain many status points as well.

'She has probably reached level 10 by now, right?'

Dilan was pretty sure that Yvonne had the highest possibility to become the second strongest in their group.

However, then again, Kathrine and Williams were already accumulating Essence for their advancement to Tier-1.

Nobody knew what kind of benefits the advancement to Tier-1 had, but if Dilan's theory was correct, they would receive abilities that were directly related to the occupation they chose while advancing to Tier-1.

Thus, one could say that being Tierless was not exactly the perfect scale to determine one's future combat prowess.

But even then, Dilan was sure that Yvonne had an advantage over everyone else.

While throwing a glance around, Dilan couldn't help but smile.

The number of their casualties was a clean zero, nobody was scratched, and everyone was able to become stronger.

Yet, instead of using the ordinary Essence crystals for themselves, most chose to gather them in several large bags.

"Everyone felt that it might be for the best to procure more Rings of Yarad. We don't have enough to supply everyone with enough water each day. Sven has asked us to gather 20 or more Rings of Yarad if possible."

Kathrine smiled faintly while approaching Dilan..

He nodded his head to greet her, just to avert his focus.

"As long as they absorbed three Essences from each type of zombie they killed to gain status points, that's perfectly fine. Leveling up doesn't provide much benefit.

Five status points are not that valuable in comparison to the status points one gets after killing different types of zombies and other monsters."

From the looks of it Kathrine seemed to have accepted the former shepherds' gang rather easily.

This was great, but mostly owed to Sven's highly strategic thinking.

Xenia and Williams were also far from stupid. Their tips on how to improve everyone's life were exceptional.

This was also the reason why Kathrine didn't believe that the shepherd's gang had been an ordinary gang.

There was something weird about them because none of them looked like ordinary thugs or criminals.

Dilan felt exactly the same, which was probably the biggest reason for him to accept them. Only shepherd Xias and his people had been weird, but the problems caused by them had disappeared with their deaths.

However, the weirdest was probably the fact that every single member of the former gang approved of Dilan's action against Xias and his people.

This was quite odd, but not something he would waste his time thinking about.

Instead of thinking too much, Dilan cleared his throat.

"Let's clear the entire tower today! I will look after the zombies that nobody else can handle. Other than that, I won't intervene. Don't act recklessly, and team up with others instead of attempting to fight a monster all by yourself that is too strong!

I would rather see all of you fighting together than to have to kill one of my own people, who have turned into a zombie!”

Dilan’s mood was much better than before.

That only further improved when he heard that Oliver and Ailee were preparing everything for the other Survivors to make their first kill.

There were around 500 Survivors that had yet to gain their first ability crystal.

Everyone believed that this was a great opportunity to build up a more powerful Unit of combatants, followed by improving their livelihood in several other ways.

After all, not every ability was for combat purposes, and neither was it for chores, auxiliary occupations or something else.

There were also abilities that may be deemed as a waste to be used by certain people, while it could be extremely useful for others.

Oliver’s injury had been fully tended to, and he was eager to help everyone gain their first ability crystal.

On the other hand, Sarah and Pierre focused on procuring the necessary tools to create the mana replenishment potion!

After Dilan went to the Krendel’s Underground Valley, nobody else followed him. As such, the number of ores and Lumina crystals they owned was limited and not something he could sparingly use.

But that was perfectly fine because the preparations for everything were bound to take a while.

This was also the case with Old Jeff. He felt much better than before. In fact, he was ready to return to his dear occupation as a blacksmith right off the bat.

The only issue was that he had yet to get his hands on the necessary forging tools, let alone a smithy!

Dilan had to solve this problem quite soon, which was something he wanted to focus on.

However, for now, the first of the four hospital towers had to be cleared.

This was something Dilan had been wanting to finish for a while already!!

With that in mind, Dilan hoped to encounter some Silver monsters or even some ordinary Tier-1 zombies.

‘The zombies inside the hospital are rather weak, to begin with. They cannot procure any Essence from other monsters, so I shouldn’t expect too much, right?’

Shrugging his shoulders he continued to walk up to the 10th floor.

The tower they were inside was said to have 15 floors. As such, there was not all too much left to clear.

Most zombies were ordinary and there were only a few exceptions.

The exceptions were taken care of by the others, while the truly extraordinary zombies were Dilan’s task to handle.

Unfortunately, there were not many zombies Dilan had to kill.

Because there was only little for him to do, Dilan focused on observing everything.

If his help were to be required, he could act at once.

But everything was fine from the looks of it. The situation was completely different from the night before.

It was almost as if everyone changed their outlook on how they perceived reality overnight.

Just one scratch and everything was over. That was reality, and Dilan nearly sacrificed himself for the sake of others.

They knew that anyone else but him would have turned into a zombie by now. Even for Dilan, it had been quite close which was something everyone had noticed based on the way he acted after protecting Miles and his friend.

Thus, everyone fought rather passively. Only a few exceptions advanced aggressively once they perceived an opportunity before retreating once again.

Over the course of hours, the Ascenders were slowly getting to know each other.

A bond of camaraderie was forming between the former gang members, and everyone else.

This was great to see, even more so when one could clearly see that nobody was left behind.

There was no outcast as every single Ascender was slowly included in a combat formation that they planned on using.

Meanwhile, Dilan simply kept observing their teamwork with a bright smile.

However, unexpectedly, he had to act quite often from the 12th floor upward.

It was almost as if the Lords of the tower were trying to control everything from the highest position.

That was why he encountered more than six Silver zombies and four ordinary Tier-1 monsters!

Against all odds, it looked like the hospital was far more dangerous than initially expected.

This was even more terrifying while looking at the devastating state of the three highest floors of the hospital's tower.

Dilan had been much faster and more powerful than each of the zombies he fought, which was only owed to the fact that the four Tier-1 zombies had been even weaker than the Silver zombies.

They had ascended to Tier-1 by choosing one of the Common Ancient Paths of Advancement.

He absorbed all Essence crystals he procured without even thinking about exchanging them with other treasures.

After all, his next mission was something much better than procuring some Tierless Silver treasures!

Chapter 115 Snow

It was already late afternoon when Dilan found himself on the rooftop of the hospital's first tower.

Leaning against the railing, he looked down at the city.

Rian had been devastated by the raging storm that had occurred just before the Primordial Ascension. But that was not everything because the real destruction happened only afterward.

Dilan had yet to see monsters that were able to cause true destruction, but it looked like quite a few buildings had been severely damaged.

Owing to the influence of something extremely powerful, the top few floors of some skyscrapers had collapsed.

At least that was what Dilan could tell as he saw weird cuts, places that had been frozen, and burned spots all around.

Not a single car was driving through Rian, which caused him to shake his head in disappointment.

"I wonder how many Survivors are currently trying their utmost to survive in Rian..."

He didn't even want to imagine how many humans had died in Rian. As such, thinking about the casualties that must have occurred in the rest of the country, continent, let alone Milarn was something that caused chills to run down his spine..

Never in his life had he thought that he was a good person, but he was not heartless to not feel pity for all the people who were currently suffering.

While grasping the railing, Dilan didn't even notice that he was bending it. He was just staring at the entire city from their elevated position.

After some time, his gaze diverted from Rian as he looked at the horizon.

Far in the distance, he was able to see the blurry outlines of monsters flying through the air.

They were flying past Rian at a distance of several kilometers away from them.

However, even then, Dilan was able to see them, and their terrifically high flying speed.

His interest in the horizon didn't cease, but he noticed that Kathrine appeared next to him.

Next to her was Yvonne, who was also staring far in the distance like him and trying to figure out what type of flying monsters could fly so fast.

But after only a few seconds passed Yvonne turned her head to the right, just to see that Kathrine was looking at Dilan.

Her expression was filled with concern as she stared at Dilan. He kept his mouth shut and grit his teeth while looking at the once flourishing but now destroyed city and staring at the ruins left behind.

Not a single sign of human life was in his sight, neither planes flying through the sky, nor driving cars. Not even the lights of some building complexes were working anymore.

It was a sad sight that clearly showed how weak mankind became in a matter of 12 days!

And the most frustrating was the fact that there had been no news about the military, let alone the government.

Either, everything had been razed to the ground, or Rian had been abandoned.

Oddly enough, Dilan didn't think that either of these possibilities was the truth.

There had to be something more, something he was missing that turned the illogical situation into a more bearable, reasonable scenario and outcome of the calamitous effects of the Primordial Ascension.

Time passed slowly, and the last rays of the sun peeked over the horizon, making him realize that the day was nearly over.

Even if he wanted to change the given situation, there was nothing for him to do.

He was too weak to change the life of everyone. And even if Dilan were to be strong enough, he was not sure if that was the best for everyone.

Looking up at the sky that was slowly turning dark, he could only smile bitterly.

However, it was just a few moments later that confusion spread through his body as a single snowflake floated right in front of him.

Dilan's hand reached out instinctively and the snowflake landed in the palms of his Clawed Gloves.

Melting in the following seconds, water trickled down his gloves, just for more snowflakes to sweep in his face.

"It's snowing..." Yvonne mumbled, a faint smile on her face as she looked at her sister, who returned her smile.

The tension they had been feeling for the last few days seemed to be released at the sight of the snowflakes.

Even the former gang members and Dilan calmed down quite a bit as the cold snowflakes landed on their faces and clothes.

Earlier, nobody had truly noticed how cold it was, but with the appearance of the snowflakes, they slowly noticed the drop in temperature.

However, even though Dilan's tension was released to some extent, he could only frown deeply as a particular thought flashed in his mind.

"It looks like the next few months won't get easier..."

At first, Kathrine and Yvonne didn't understand what Dilan meant, but when Williams joined their discussion they slowly grasped what was going on.

"If streets freeze, we will have problems moving within the city, let alone the mountainside... And that doesn't solve the heating issue either. We might need more gas for the hospital's heaters to work..."

New problems cropped up with the appearance of the Snowflakes.

But that was not something Dilan was overly worried about right now.

As long as they achieved everything he had in mind, everything should be fine.

At least that was the only thing Dilan could hope for, only for a thought to manifest in his mind.

‘Even if we’re fine, the other Survivors will freeze to death, won’t they?’ Even if the weak Survivors who had nobody to rely on didn’t starve, they were likely to freeze to death.

Dilan thought about taking a megaphone before inviting everyone to the Rian mountainside hospital.

But that was simply stupid. The loud noise he would create was bound to lure monsters and hostile groups to the hospital.

As such, one could say that it was dumb to do something like this...for the time being.

Once he was strong enough not to bother about the strength others had, Dilan would be able to do whatever he wanted to.

Unfortunately, this was certainly not the case for now.

There were too many powerful existences and unknown variables that existed in Rian.

With that in mind, Dilan could only bite his lower lip before he came up with the next task at hand.

“Let’s hold a meeting. I think we have a few things to discuss...”

Chapter 116 First Meeting

The sun had already disappeared behind the horizon when everyone was present for the meeting.

Because the number of Survivors rose too quickly, it was necessary to restrict the number of participants in the meeting.

Thus, Dilan picked out a handful of people that he thought should definitely participate in the meeting.

The meeting was held in a large VIP patient ward on one of the higher floors where Dilan, Kathrine, Oliver, Ailee, Bianne, Sarah, Old Jeff, Williams, Xenia, and Sven were present.

Some were astonished to have been asked to come to the first meeting such as Pierre and the remaining members of Williams’ inner ring.

However, everything had its reason, which was why Dilan came up with one of the more important points first.

“Hello everyone, I called the eight of you here so that we can discuss the progression of our small community.

As everyone knows, our group expanded to more than 600 Survivors not too long ago. As such, we have a lot more to pay attention to.

That being said, I would like to start discussing the importance of the next few goals, and how to distribute tasks to the new Survivors!”

Dilan already had quite a few ideas about what they should do. But instead of throwing everything at the others, he wanted to figure out their thoughts about the given situation.

At first, Bianne was not sure why she had been asked to come to the meeting. However, she was able to grasp Dilan's intention right now.

"The food reserves will be used up quite quickly. We won't have much of a problem with a constant supply of water thanks to the Rings of Yarad, and meat owing to the Gate to the Krendel's Underground Valley.

However, it is quite difficult to maintain a healthy lifestyle with only meat and water... Of course, it is possible to survive, but I think we should take a look at all the supermarkets in Rian and salvage whatever food items we can before it's too late!"

Bianne felt a little bit uncomfortable speaking up at first, but her concern about the lack of a wider variety of food bothered her quite a bit..

It was not a problem that concerned everyone's health, but simply something Bianne wanted to point out.

Upon listening to Bianne, Dilan recalled something he had totally forgotten.

'Fuck, the supermarket...I forgot about the supermarket near the hospital?!'

Dilan shook his head while slapping his forehead once. In the beginning, Dilan's plan had been to visit the supermarket.

However, somehow he ended up forgetting about the supermarket completely for almost two weeks.

This was quite ridiculous, and Dilan couldn't help but doubt if there was anything even left in the supermarket near the hospital.

But Bianne's point was still quite important which was why he noted it down.

"Oliver, Ailee, I heard that the two of you lead the Survivors to receive their first ability crystal. How did that work? I believe some Survivors were quite closer to death than life yesterday when we relocated them. I hope we faced no major hiccups."

Dilan sounded quite concerned. This had multiple reasons, only for Oliver to smile proudly.

"Everything worked perfectly fine. We told the Survivors that everyone should come with us to hunt, and at least procure their ability crystal, just as you commanded.

However, we didn't pressure anyone, let alone force them to come with us. Most of them came of their own free will and we were able to get our hands on 250 ability crystals."

Oliver wanted to keep speaking, but Ailee intervened as she took out a list with several pages of content. Ailee got up from her chair before walking over to Dilan and handing him the list.

"We asked everyone what ability they had received if they want to trade it with a different ability, and in what way they wanted to improve themselves. Through this, we were able to finalize a list of abilities. It's still rough and some information may have changed by now.

But we did our best to collate as much information as possible in the short time frame we were given!”

—

[List of Abilities]

-Name of Ability- / -Ability rank- / -Bound by-

—

Dilan was quite astonished by the list he received.

It was extremely detailed, considering that Ailee and Oliver were facing a time crunch while creating the list.

Thus, he smiled lightly while reading through the list of abilities.

There were quite a few abilities nobody had bound yet, but that was to be expected.

Most Survivors didn't know what they wanted to become, which particular trait of themselves to hone, let alone what the future looked like.

Was it feasible to rely on others to be protected, or was it the best to join the ranks of the Ascenders?

“I see that there are some abilities don't provide an actual increase in combat prowess, but could be used for other occupations. Are all of them trying to barter these abilities with other ability crystals? That will be quite difficult then...”

Ailee understood what Dilan meant. But instead of answering directly, she hesitated for a moment.

“The fact that some abilities are unsuitable for almost everyone to be bound as their first ability is quite sad. But that is not really problematic because they can help out doing chores without the use of an ability instead.

That's no problem as long as they didn't plan to join the combat teams beforehand. But another issue is that some abilities cannot be bound by anyone. Some abilities have specific restrictions, which makes it quite difficult to find a compatible Ascender to bind them!”

Everyone had a restricted amount of spots for active and passive abilities. As such, it was only obvious to avoid binding 'bad' abilities.

However, some abilities seemed quite useful in Dilan's eyes, which was why he was curious about a few of them.

'I should ask them about the holders of some of these ability crystals later...' Dilan thought before he averted his attention.

“Good job, Ailee, Oliver!” He praised his comrades before proudly smiling at them.

Afterward, Dilan's attention turned to Sven, who had been scribbling on a piece of paper for quite some time.

He was furiously scratching and writing on the piece of paper he had prepared for the meeting, just to look up when he noticed that everybody had suddenly gone quiet.

“Speak your mind. I’m grateful for every help I can get!”

If Dilan were to be honest, he was quite eager to find out more about Sven’s plan and management talent.

Thus, he looked deep into his eyes.

Clearing his throat, Sven returned Dilan’s gaze before he started to elaborate on what he wrote down earlier.

“Because we’re more than 600 Survivors by now, I propose to split up the group into different subunits. I think that is actually what you’re planning as well. At least, that is what I can comprehend from the way you picked out who was allowed to come to the meeting!”

Dilan didn’t think of interrupting Sven. But when Sven stopped midway while looking into his eyes expectantly, he felt as if it was necessary to say something.

“That’s correct. I planned to create multiple groups to manage the entire community a little bit better. But please go on. I want to hear what you have on your mind!”

Hearing that Dilan had the same vision as himself, Sven nodded his head, while trying to hide the faint smile that crept up his rather handsome face.

“In that case, there is no need to explain that the entire group’s efficiency will increase the moment we split up the community into several subunits. Each of them will have different leaders to manage everything which will be great for the community as a whole.

As such, I would propose to create four different units which are related to combat. The first and the most important unit will be the <Elite Combat> unit where the elite Ascenders will be trained.

After that would be the <Hunting> Unit which I think is quite important. The Hunting Unit is supposed to hunt monsters in the mountains for food, their body parts, and Essences to procure more treasures from the Gate.

A <Scouting> Unit will also be required to procure more intel about Rian, the surroundings and to search for more food.

Because we have several groups that require high combat prowess, a <Combat-training> Unit will be necessary as well. Every new Ascender will join this Unit first before they will be moved to the Unit in which they’ll be the most useful.

Of course, we shouldn’t be too focused on combat units. That is why I propose to create one Unit in which all <Chores> will be taken care of, with Bianne being the leader of this group.

Then an <Auxiliary> Unit with Old Jeff and Sarah becoming the temporary leaders consisting of auxiliary occupations such as blacksmithing, potion making, and many more occupations, which are focused on supporting others, and finally a unit that can be labeled as a <Porter> Unit.

That being said, the <Auxiliary> Unit is more leaned toward the future choice of one's occupation in the Ancient Path of Advancement, while the same cannot be said for the <Porter> Unit.

The <Porter> Unit is supposed to be rather flexible. They should be capable of mining, carrying lots of things, and moving everything around. This unit is more focused on management, and logistics, and will be quite chaotic in the beginning.

After all, the other Occupations such as an electrician, plumber, carpenter, and so on, can be added to the <Porter> Unit.

We will need electricians, mechanics, and so on, but splitting each occupation into its own Unit would be even more chaotic than gathering them in the Porter unit!"

Sven's suggestion was quite simple to understand if one were to exclude the question of who belonged to the Porter Unit, and who ought to take charge of this Unit.

In Dilan's opinion, the Porter unit would be more of the 'Jack of all trades but master of none'. However, he liked the name 'Porter' a lot, even if it was the name of an occupation that was often used in fantasy novels about dungeons.

Dilan understood that it was not easy to lead a group of several hundred Survivors. As such, he was trying to digest every piece of information he received, while adding Sven's suggestions to the things he had already come up with.

'Instead of focusing on the next goals, Sven wants to decide who takes charge of what Unit... That may as well be better for the distribution of the future tasks!'

While thinking of Sven's suggested plan, Dilan noticed a bit late that someone next to him voiced out her confusion.

"Why should Old Jeff and I only become the temporary leaders of the <Auxiliary> unit?" Sarah asked all of a sudden. She didn't want to be a leader, but both Old Jeff and she were the only ones, who were told to be temporary leaders.

This confused her a little bit, just for Dilan to smile lightly as he answered,

"Old Jeff will be too busy forging weapons and other armaments. So he cannot manage his own unit. Meanwhile, you will also be busy creating potions.

In fact, nobody knows whether you would want to switch to one of the combat units once we find someone else to create the potions. You never shared your opinion about how you felt after I gave you the recipe for the mana replenishment potion either."

Dilan didn't accuse Sarah in any way. He was simply stating facts.

Sarah understood this as well, which was why she quieted down for a few moments before stating her opinion.

"I want to keep creating potions...well, starting to create potions might be more precise. I think my passive ability [Multitasking] will be quite helpful to become a great Witch, Alchemist, or whatever!"

It was quite easy to perceive that Sarah was not yet sure what she wanted to do in the future.

However, in order to be of use to the whole community, Sarah chose to be the first one to start concocting potions.

This required many ingredients, including Essence crystals and Lumina crystals, which was something they had yet to procure!

“In that case, how about we focus on seeking out the best candidates to lead each unit, and what task they should work on for now?”

Chapter 117 Distribution&Leaders

After having a rather lengthy discussion about everything, Dilan announced the final decision of who would become the leader of which subunit in their community.

“So to sum it up, Oliver will be in charge of the Hunting Unit, Williams will take care of the Elite Combat Unit, Xenia will focus on the Scouting Unit, Ailee will be in charge of the Combat-training Unit until we find a martial arts instructor in the batch of Survivors.

Bianne will pay attention to the Chores Unit, Old Jeff and Sarah can focus on the Auxiliary Unit and both Kathrine and Sven will share the workload by leading the Porter Unit!”

Because both Ailee and Oliver owned a basic mastery ability over one weapon, they were the best at training new Ascenders.

Ailee had some memories about dagger-wielding as she had received the knowledge of an Archer, who was proficient in wielding both a bow and dagger.

Meanwhile, Oliver’s basic dagger mastery was more focused on daggers, which was only obvious.

Both were suitable to become Instructors and the leader of the Hunting unit, but Oliver was quite straightforward with his demand to become the temporary leader of the Hunting Unit.

Dilan and Kathrine understood that this was mostly for Ailee’s sake so that she wouldn’t have to fight against too many dangerous monsters alone.

But that was not something Ailee understood.

“While we become the leaders of the subunit, you will support all of us, I guess?”

Ailee was a little bit worried about teaching new Ascenders. After all, her teachings might prove to be a major factor in determining the course of their future..

If she were to impart wrong lessons to the newcomers, they were more likely to die, while good teaching would help the Ascenders to survive.

This meant Ailee had a huge responsibility, which became quite frightening the longer she thought about it.

However, Dilan simply smiled before nodding his head.

“Everyone will give their best to support you. Splitting up the group into several subunits is mostly to avoid confusion and have better control over everything. In the end, I’ll still take all the responsibility because I forced you guys to become leaders without seeking your opinion about it first!”

Dilan knew that he demanded a lot from his people, but there was nothing he could do about it.

He needed them, and their help to lead the group of Survivors.

This was something they could clearly grasp, which was why they chose to support Dilan.

It was better for him to share his burden, and to trust others, instead of shouldering all the responsibilities alone.

“Dilan, you know that this is no problem. If we didn’t want to help, we would not have attended this meeting. In fact, some of the survivors would have already left if they didn’t like it here, so don’t worry so much!”

Kathrine consulted Dilan all of a sudden. She was trying her best to make him feel more comfortable.

She could clearly notice the stress that was weighing him down was clearly noticeable by her. Thus, Kathrine had felt as if she should help him a little bit.

Dilan nodded to her with a faint smile on his lips before he returned to the main topic of the meeting.

“Now that we have completed the first step, how about we start distributing the missions to each Unit? We have lots of things to do, and very little time in comparison!”

Everyone nodded when Dilan spoke, just for Sven to point out the reasons why this was the case.

“That’s true, we have to hurry a little bit! After all, we cannot be certain that winter won’t get worse. The speed at which monsters grow stronger is also not known, let alone the fact of how many hostile groups of human Survivors reside in Rian.

The Death Beatles, for example, may become a major headache if they can grow even stronger. Their ‘surprise gift’ would have been enough to annihilate us, if not for you, Dilan! So... how do you propose to handle them?”

It was not necessary for Sven to speak about all of this because everyone had a rough idea of what dangers awaited us.

However, there were still some small pieces of information shared by Sven, which some people in their group had missed out on earlier.

Dilan understood Sven’s worry about the Death Beatles gang. The information Xenia had procured and the known facts were already worrisome enough.

That was why Dilan could clearly understand everyone’s worry.

The Death Beatles gang was completely different from the Shepherds. Not only were they known for torturing people, but there were many bounty hunters in their group.

Apparently, the Death Beatles even consisted of infamous murderers in their group, which was quite astonishing.

After all, if that was something Williams and his people had already known before the Primordial Ascension, it was likely for the police to know that as well.

Thinking about the police made him cringe.

'Isn't it quite funny that it looks like the officers of the police have abandoned the city and the police station which they could have used as a hideout, while the Shepherds gang made use of the police station to take in more Survivors?'

Dilan could only shake his head at this thought before saying,

"Instead of focusing on tackling the threat of the Death Beatles gang right off the bat, I want to focus on our group's strength first. This would be the easiest by providing a smithy for Old Jeff while using the Porter Unit to mine for metals and ores in the Krendel's Underground Valley Gate."

In the end, Dilan felt that it was more important to increase the strength of his group, rather than to destroy possible human opponents around him.

Dilan knew that the latter was also possible, but that wouldn't help to increase the strength of his group.

Rather, everyone would become even more dependent on him than the Survivors were already.

And that was not what Dilan wanted because he was in need of a powerful group that could survive on their own if necessary, instead of scared Ascenders, who would ask for his help if the situation would spiral out of control.

"I will take a more detailed look at the workshops to see if they're usable for forging purposes...we need a group to start mining soon as well. For that, we need people to enter the Gate.

I can help everyone level up, but will that be enough? Unfortunately not! The requirements to enter the Krendel's Underground Valley are to be Level 10 with a minimum of -4- and above points on all stats.

That means, everyone who wants to enter the Gate will have to hunt by themselves to gain the necessary status points!

After reaching the requirements, everything should be quite easy. The Krendels' Underground Valley is good to farm status points, essences, especially metals and Lumina crystals!"

Dilan's analysis was quite decent. Searching for a workshop would take less time than preparing everything to start the forging process.

Old Jeff had already pointed out that there are only small workshops in the hospital's proximity, which meant that he had to work quite a bit before everything would be in a ready-to-use condition!

Simultaneously, the leveling up of several Ascenders to be eligible enough to reach the requirements and enter the Krendel's Underground Valley would take a while.

Thus, even if Dilan wanted to hurry up, Sven presumed that it would take 3 days before the forging process could be initiated!

In the meantime, Dilan could complete other tasks, amongst which scouting, and possibly hunting down the Death Beatles gang was a priority.

Sven felt that their leader was a little bit more secretive than he was willing to admit.

This shrewdness was certainly not something bad because not disclosing the dangers he was bound to face would allow many Survivors to keep their calm.

After all, being oblivious to the fact that Dilan might die if he were to do a small mistake in the next few days, saved the survivors from lots of worries!

Chapter 118 Clearing

The first meeting of his rather small group ended late at night.

They had many things to talk about, including the main goals of every single subunit.

It was necessary for each of them to focus on something, which meant that each Unit received daily tasks, followed by additional goals they should work toward to keep them occupied.

This made things much easier for everyone as most people were oblivious to what they had to do.

Half of the leaders that took charge of dozens of people were in their early 20s.

Thus, they were rather inexperienced, which was why daily tasks and specific goals were quite helpful.

On the other hand, Dilan had so many things to do that he didn't know if he had enough time to solve all of them in the next few days.

He could only do his best, which was what he always did.

That was also why he kept reading through the list of abilities after the first meeting had ended.

There were a few abilities he was interested in.

Unfortunately, Oliver told him that most Survivors would only trade the said ability crystals Dilan was interested in with equally powerful abilities.

That was more than enough reason for Dilan to focus on the unbound abilities that nobody seemed to want..

"I guess you would be the best, right?" Speaking to himself as he reached his room, Dilan chose to approach the owner of a particular Essence crystal the following day!

**

"What? You will help me level up, and gain enough Essences to choose a special ancient path of advancement if I give you my ability crystal?" A woman in her mid-40s asked with a slightly dumbfounded look.

Her voice was loud enough for everyone in the large hall on the second floor to hear.

As such, many Survivors looked over at the brown-haired woman in slight astonishment.

“Wasn’t Jacqueline frustrated about the ability crystal she received? If her ability is really that bad, why would the leader offer her to procure enough Essence crystals to advance to Tier-1 using a special path of advancement?”

Not only the middle-aged man, who had voiced out his confusion, show his interest and confusion in Dilan and Jacqueline’s conversation but most of the survivors had perked their ears up.

It was still early in the morning, and the hands of the clock had not even reached 8 am, and they heard such astonishing news.

‘If her ability is really bad, should we have sold our ability crystal to gain even more benefits?’ Some wondered, regretting their earlier decision to have bound their ability.

Little did they know that Dilan was just trying his best to get his hands on the ability Jacqueline possessed!

The said ability was called [Nightvision]. Its use was quite obvious as it was a passive ability, only for its grade to be quite low.

Ungraded ★!

Even if the grade of the ability was low, Dilan was the most bothered about being unable to hunt in the night.

Many great opportunities were blocked off due to the fact that the night was so long.

He wanted to go out hunting, and possibly kill powerful monsters in their sleep as well.

This would accelerate his growth by a lot, which was exactly what Dilan wanted to achieve.

Providing Essence crystals in exchange for receiving an ability that could only show its true potential during the night was a must for him right now.

After all, he wanted to show others that they could gain something from him and his people if they were willing to sell their abilities.

Jacqueline didn’t even have to think about his offer. She nodded her head, just for her hand to reach in her pocket, where she took out the ability crystal she received a mere day ago.

She handed it to Dilan without hesitation before smiling faintly.

“When...can I expect to get my Essence crystals?”

It was only obvious for her to ask this question. In fact, under normal circumstances, she would give Dilan her ability crystal only when she received her Essence crystals.

However, considering that Dilan was their leader and that he seemed trustworthy, Jacqueline just handed over the ability crystal to him without thinking much about it.

The ability crystal crumbled in Dilan’s hand, and two notifications popped up right in front of him.

[Passive ability [Nightvision] was bound successfully!]

[[Nightvision] Ungraded ★

As the name suggests, it provides the wielder with the ability to see in the darkness.

Slight enhancement in sight during day and night]

After he finished reading through both messages, Dilan smiled before he averted his attention back to Jacqueline.

“I will give you the first batch of Essence crystals today. I’m not sure how many Essences you need so I cannot promise you more than that. But you should receive everything by the end of the week!”

Dilan was not even a Tier-1 himself, and neither was anyone else in his group at that level. As such, promising enough Essences to allow others to become a Tier-1 Existence was quite a big deal.

However, Dilan knew that special paths of advancement didn’t require as much Essence as one might think.

It had been quite a while since he had filled the ancient path of advancement for the [Suicidal Warrior] occupation.

As such, filling a rather easy special path of advancement should be easy.

This hadn’t been a problem for him as his combat prowess was quite high, to begin with.

Even the [Necromancer] path of advancement had been filled, while [Kirak’s Vassal] was merely filled to a quarter.

It clearly showed how much Essence he needed to choose the ‘Unknown’ Ancient path of advancement.

Dilan’s expectations were quite high, so he was eager to figure out more about it.

The passive ability [Nightvision] ought to help him with this.

After everything was completed, he decided to leave the Rian mountainside. Meanwhile, Yvonne wanted to accompany him.

She knew that he would be going out to hunt and search for the most suitable workshop in the vicinity.

However, instead of accepting Yvonne’s company, Dilan just shook his head before he dashed away from the hospital.

He had come up with a specific path to inspect the surrounding area.

At first, Dilan revisited the workshops he had already seen before.

This was something he did for an hour or two and carefully inspected each of them, just to start fighting stronger monsters the moment he spotted them.

He hunted Bronze monsters for Jacqueline while absorbing all Silver Essence crystals and ordinary Tier-1 Essence crystals he could procure.

The number of Silver monsters and Tier-1 monsters in his surroundings was less than what he had hoped for.

However, it was quite an advantage for everyone else as the dangers radiating from these powerful monsters decreased drastically.

Dilan killed the few monsters he came across, while the other monsters were not powerful enough to pose a threat to Kathrine, Williams, Yvonne, and the others.

This was something Dilan wanted because the others should focus on protecting Old Jeff while securing the pathway between the Rian mountainside hospital and the workshop.

With weak monsters in the surrounding, this was no problem, which was why they had chosen to clear the surrounding of powerful monsters, while the Elite Combat Unit was tasked with keeping the surroundings 'clean'!

That was something Dilan focused on while paying attention to the workshops that he entered without hesitation.

He was careful while entering unknown places. But once he had seen every nook and cranny in the workshops, Dilan averted his attention to the requirements a workshop had to meet to be suitable for blacksmithing purposes.

And these requirements were what Dilan paid lots of attention to every single time he entered a workshop.

"Is that it?"

Chapter 119 Workshop

Dilan had been calmly looking at the pottery workshop in front of him before entering it.

It was a five-story tall building made of ordinary bricks that were a huge contrast to the surrounding buildings that looked rather modern.

A metal pipe protruded out of the side of the first floor, going all the way up to the roof of the building where it ended.

Dilan predicted that this might be the chimney used for the oven that was used for baking and hardening the clay pots and other objects that were created in the workshop.

He hoped that the oven's heat was high enough for their needs as the workshop was only two kilometers away from the Rian mountainside hospital.

It would be great to have Old Jeff's working place near the cafeteria, which was why Dilan hoped for the best.

And from the way the workshop looked, Dilan seemed to be quite lucky.

Everything would fit Old Jeff's requirements in that workshop. And altering everything to his needs before starting to forge was also possible.

There was no need for Old Jeff to pressure himself. Quality and safety were still more important than the quantity of the goods produced!.

This was Dilan's opinion, which was why he returned in a span of a few minutes before leading Old Jeff, Sven, and Williams to the pottery workshop.

While Sven's management abilities were extraordinary already, Dilan just found out that Sven had also worked in a steel factory when he was young.

Sven wanted to see how capable Old Jeff was, and if it was reliable to trust the old man in forging the armaments they trusted with their lives.

Old Jeff understood this, in fact, he would have acted in the exact same manner if he would have been in Sven's shoes.

It was always better to hold back and test someone to gauge their potential instead of blindly trusting them without knowing their actual capabilities.

Thus, Sven ended up coming to the workshop as well.

Williams was present because he had to know the path to the workshop as a leader of the Elite Combat Unit!

His unit would be in charge of protecting Old Jeff and the Survivors of the Porter group that would be assigned to bring all the necessary goods from the Rian mountainside hospital to the workshop and vice versa.

"The workshop's location is perfect. If I am not mistaken, it is possible to see it perfectly from the hospital.

This will be a great help to prevent mishaps from occurring if the Elite Combat Unit were to fail their duty." Sven was quite satisfied with the workshop, and even more so with the way, Old Jeff's hand's moved expertly.

Every single move he did while controlling the pottery oven and other tools clearly showed his experience that was worth several decades.

While observing Old Jeff, one could be reassured that everything would be fine. That was, at least, the feeling one got by looking at Old Jeff.

Thus, Sven even noticed how he subtly humiliated his former leader.

Clearing his throat, Williams stared daggers at Sven before growling,

"My Unit...A mistake in their duty?! Do you want to fight me???"

AT first glance, it looked like Williams was ready to tear Sven apart at once. His eyes were daggers that stabbed into Sven.

However, the moment Williams saw Sven's baffled expression, the atmosphere relaxed once again.

"I know what you mean, Sven. But I will look after the Elite Combat Unit so that no untoward incident shall happen under my supervision!!"

Williams lifted his fist against Sven, just to see that the middle-aged Sven nodded his head while smiling weirdly.

He was not sure what exactly he should say, so he remained silent.

“I should leave you guys. I want to focus on amassing more Essence for my advancement!”

Dilan felt that it was quite important to advance to Tier-1 as quickly as possible.

The Death Beatles were an annoying group with people who had lots of experience in fighting and even more so in killing.

Of course, this was worrisome, providing more than enough reasons for Dilan to feel like killing every single Tierless Silver and ordinary Tier-1 monster in the surroundings.

Unfortunately, this was easier said than done as his stats were restricted to the limit of being a Tierless existence.

Dilan was fine with doing a night shift as well, which was now possible.

The [Nightvision] ability enhanced his eyesight slightly, not just at night but during the day as well.

However, the most important was the obvious effect of being able to see much more clearly in the night.

Dilan didn't think that the ability was perfect, but that was obvious.

After all, it was still an ungraded ability, one of the worst-ranked at that!

But Dilan was not all too worried about this fact. Being able to see in the darkness was more than enough for him.

Williams was just looking at Dilan, not saying anything at first before he thought about something.

“How about I lead a group of my people to the second hospital tower? I can gather my own Essences to advance to Tier-1 while providing the others with support and Essences as well.

Right now, my focus is on procuring more stat points, but if you want, I can change my focus to nurturing more Ascenders to level 10 so that they meet the conditions to enter the Krendel's Underground Valley.

This should lift a huge burden off your shoulders, or not?”

It was only obvious that Dilan couldn't take care of everything by himself. Williams had also noticed that there were quite a few Ascenders, who chose to rely too much on Dilan.

This was something Williams, Sven and a few others had realized. It was not bad to feel reassured with a powerful leader by their side.

Dilan would always try to protect them, but Williams could tell that some Ascenders had grown too lax about the dangers of the apocalypse!

Upon understanding what Williams wanted to convey, Dilan smiled faintly before nodding his head in gratitude.

'It's great that I didn't kill the shepherds! I should work even harder...I should kill only 60 Tierless Silver or ordinary Tier-1 monsters and then I'm done...should I start searching for some monsters in Rian's central area tonight?'

Happy that he received more help from outside, Dilan was ready to thank them by working even harder.

That was if this was even possible!

Motivated by the achievements he had accomplished during the last few days, and the support of the people around him, Dilan could only smile before he left the workshop once again.

Chapter 120 Night Hunt

There were still a few hours of daylight left when Dilan provided Jacqueline with the Essence crystals she required to level up and reach level 10.

He had procured more than enough Essence for her to fill the common ancient path of advancement that she could choose from.

Unfortunately, Jacqueline didn't seem to have unlocked a special ancient path of advancement, which was something that bothered her a lot.

But Dilan had already expected this to happen. After all, it looked like one's abilities, and achievements since the advent of Primordial Ascension were taken into consideration when the different ancient paths of advancement were given out.

Jacqueline was bothered by this, but it was not Dilan's fault that she didn't have a special ancient path of advancement.

Thus, Jacqueline could either choose one of the few common ancient paths she received, or she would have to wait until a special ancient path would unveil itself to her.

He finished his other business with Old Jeff as well, which left him with the task of amassing more Essence crystals to be able to pick Kirak's Vassal as his occupation.

For this, Dilan began to research more about the surrounding area.

He moved carefully through the streets and avoided monsters that were simply too powerful.

Simultaneously, he avoided large groups as well because the commotion they would cause while fighting them would unnecessarily attract more trouble.

The dangers within Rian were numerous, and Dilan noticed that there were far more Tier-1 monsters than before.

They didn't number in the hundreds yet, which was a relief but it seemed that the terrifying possibility wasn't far off.

Dilan doubted that anyone would survive such a significant increase in the monster's strength as well..

As such, it was great to see that there were mostly weak and ordinary Tier-1 monsters that seemed to have chosen the common ancient path of advancement.

That was also why Dilan was able to assassinate a bunch of them by using his superior speed and [Gale], the extraordinarily powerful ability of his boots.

He took his time in approaching the center of Rian and kept his guard up. While observing the surroundings, Dilan realized that his theory of stronger monsters being closer to the center was correct.

There were fewer monsters the closer he came to the center of Rian, while the number of corpses that littered the ground were relatively higher.

Dilan could even see the bodies of monsters he had seen before. And those monsters had been Tier-1 existences with a prowess that exceeded his own!

Their head was either bitten off, or their bodies disfigured due to a huge hole caused by claws, tendons or other sharp attacks.

‘Looks like the city’s center is a battle royale...’

Dilan’s assumption was on point and perfectly summed up the happenings in the city.

His ability to scrutinize situations and uncover the truth behind them was exceptional.

But this was something that annoyed Dilan right now because he could clearly tell that he would die the moment he would encounter a monster from Rian’s center area.

That was also why he had begun to distance himself from the center once again.

It was quite annoying, but not exactly something Dilan could avoid.

After all, survival preceded everything else.

‘The others should be fine, right? They won’t fight recklessly...or will they?’

Dilan knew that both Kathrine and Williams wanted to increase their stats right now.

Simultaneously, they also wanted to accumulate more Essences.

But amassing more Essence was quite challenging because their stats were not that high.

Their highest stat was at 8, while their lowest was at 4.

This was a huge contrast to Dilan’s stat and progress, which everyone was fully aware of.

‘I wanted the others to become more independent, and stronger by themselves...why am I so bothered about how they’re doing, now??’

Dilan tried to avert his train of thoughts, but it was quite difficult.

As such, when he returned to the hospital to have dinner after a thorough inspection of Rian, Dilan kept checking whether everyone was present or not.

He couldn't help but think that he was being unnecessarily paranoid, which was why he left the hospital shortly after he finished dinner.

Dilan didn't even ask many questions about the progress of the Ascenders' training, and nourishment.

Somehow, he felt like a hypocrite for acting like this, but Dilan knew that he was incapable of changing his behavior overnight.

That was just how he acted.

To clear his head, he went outside the hospital and tested [Nightvision] for the first time. The last sun rays had already disappeared behind the horizon, decreasing the efficiency of his natural sight rapidly.

Dilan had already expected that he wouldn't be able to see as much during night as he could in broad daylight.

But even then, his sight was much better than expected.

Because his sight in the darkness allowed him to see beyond 30 meters, Dilan was not really worried as he rushed through the surroundings.

The once-bustling city was eerily silent and merely a few monsters could be heard issuing various voices from further away.

Dilan followed a specific path for more than half an hour until he reached a different corner on the outskirts of the city.

Stretching his arms, he took a deep breath and a faint smile emerged on his face.

Here he was not burdened by the responsibility of protecting the others or tackling some pseudo-powerhouses, who believed that they could decide the fate of all the living beings in the world with a snap of their fingers, Dilan finally gained the freedom he needed to gain more Essences.

That was also one of the few reasons for him to reach a different area of the city's outskirts; to kill as many powerful monsters as possible.

Another reason was quite simple but even more efficient. With the information Xenia procured from the Death Beatles gang members he had crippled, they figured out their shelter's location, their numbers, and much more.

Now, Dilan wanted to make sure that the intel was correct and to find out even more about them.

His self-appointed mission during today's night hunt was to obtain more information about the Death Beatles gang, and to hunt numerous monsters!

After spending a few hours fighting against the rather weak ordinary Tier-1 monsters, Dilan grew a little bit bored.

He had picked out these monsters in order to gain more Essences to fill the progression bar of Kirak's Vassal.

But even then, Dilan couldn't help but feel frustrated because most ordinary Tier-1 monsters didn't even have half the stat points he owned.

They were simple Tier-1 existences at level 0, who chose to advance by picking a common ancient path of advancement!

Even then, Dilan was perfectly fine with facing boring opponents as long as his purpose of fighting them was fulfilled.

That was the case, which one could clearly see as he looked at the progression bar of Kirak's Vassal when the moon reached the zenith.

<Kirak's Vassal> [44.8075%]

Considering that he was hunting in a rather careful manner, the progression bar had filled up rather fast.

Dilan was already a little bit tired because of everything he did during the day, but now that midnight had passed, he felt that it was time for him to fight a little bit more aggressively!

"With the uses of [Gale] having been recharged, I can fight to the fullest once again!"

Because Rian was quiet during the night, it would be stupid for Dilan to activate [Thunder Step].

Not being able to use the ability would hamper his speed and decrease his combat prowess by a large margin, thereby preventing him from fighting to the fullest.

With, at least, one ability left to use in an emergency, Dilan was glad that [Gale] could be used without attracting even more attention from the surrounding.

Being pursued by powerful monsters was not something he wanted to face, after all!

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