

Warlord 181

Chapter 181 Large-scale hunt (2 of 3)

After Dilan let off some steam, he didn't fight rashly again.

He allowed the others to fight as well and mostly focused on supporting them.

The most important right now was to allow his people to become stronger and to get his hands on as many monster corpses as possible.

Dilan merely focused on killing the four strongest monsters in each group and being at the tip of the spear formation they mostly used before observing everyone's fight.

He might not be the best teacher in terms of his personality because he was not really known for his patience and calmness, however, he could still tell if someone was wasting time and energy in unnecessary movements or not.

Not many Ascenders possessed a passive ability about combat mastery, resulting in the Ascender's prowess being far below the standard they should have attained according to their stats.

The Basic training all Ascenders received was only that...basic training.

No amount of training would match the experience they would gain while fighting to stay alive, which was why Dilan focused on supporting them.

After a few hours passed, Dilan and the others encountered the first few groups of the Porter Unit. They were carrying the corpses to the Sun temple.

Dilan procured some information from them, which was why he knew that the Ligrav and Rasnian race didn't do anything to block his people from entering the town or Sun temple.

In fact, Priestess Brashta and her people were being quite welcoming and kind to all the groups, who came to the Sun temple to offer monster corpses as a sacrifice to the Sun God Valgard's Divinity..

She was overjoyed that Dilan acted so fast because it decreased her worry about the possibility that the Divinity's Fragment would have too little energy to maintain their current life.

At the same time, Priestess Brashta believed that Dilan's actions were a sign that he trusted her blindly.

According to her, if he wouldn't trust her blindly, there was no reason for him to show her just how weak humans truly were.

There were not many powerful Ascenders in the rows of the Porter Unit. Thus, Priestess Brashta and the Eternal Guards were able to conclude that Dilan was not only 'a little bit' powerful but that he was amongst the strongest humans in the surrounding area.

Priestess Brashta was exhilarated after realizing this and she was ready to act even kinder if that was necessary to procure more information.

Slowly but steadily, Priestess Brashta came to the decision that the human race was much weaker than she could have expected. There were only a few Tier-1 human Ascenders, and not a single one of them radiated a dangerous presence.

However, what Priestess Brashta did not include in her train of thought was the fact that Dilan had sent a non-combat unit to carry the corpses to the Sun temple.

Only a few Tier-1 Ascenders had been employed as bodyguards to protect the lives of the weak members of the Porter Units.

Yet, even these Tier-1 Ascenders were far from being the strongest in Dilan's group.

In fact, Dilan was currently intently watching the development progress of the combat unit.

They had already spent a long time hunting for several hours and were currently resting and eating.

Dilan was surrounded by Sven, Yvonne, Kathrine, and the others. A few of them continued to speak about the group's plan for the following days and found ways of helping some Ascenders to fix their most apparent flaws, and how to utilize their gains in the most efficient way.

There were only eight days left to hunt more than ten thousand monsters if they wanted to meet the quota mentioned by Priestess Brashta.

It was not that they had to meet her quota but it would certainly 'improve' their relationship with her irrespective of the fact whether that was truly necessary or not.

"In the evening, I'll go to the Krendel's Underground Valley to trade the leftover Bronze Tier-1 Essence crystals. That should be early enough." Dilan said calmly before the others nodded their heads.

They didn't think that it was necessary to run back and forth to exchange the Essence crystals they had procured with Bronze Tier-1 treasures in an instant.

Dilan could store them in the Penta Item Pouch perfectly fine, so there was no problem to reconsider anything.

They needed Dilan by their side as well, simply because their large group attracted the most attention.

"I don't think it will be necessary to wait until the evening. We shouldn't hunt for more than a few hours today. Everyone is already exhausted and we shouldn't be too arrogant in the Shikan planes. It's the first time for us to enter the Shikan plains after the Primordial Ascension, and there may be things we have yet to find out.

In the late afternoon, dangerous predators are the most active as well. It would be too dangerous for the Porter Unit's members to be out on the Shikan plains that long." Sven commented after looking around.

He had deduced quite some information through the last few weeks. Thus, he knew when monsters were the most active, and what to pay attention to.

Dilan nodded his head without thinking about disagreeing with Sven's commentary. Sven was right with everything he had said, and if Dilan were, to be honest, he was already happy that monsters such as the Blue Tiger had yet to appear.

From the looks of it, the Shikan plains were currently more secure than Rian's center.

When Dilan realized this at first, he found it to be quite weird. But after giving it some thoughts and discussing the topic with Sven, it made more sense.

The majority of humans, which were of high use to monsters, had lived in Rian and all the other cities spread through Milarn when the Primordial Ascension had occurred.

That had probably been the reason for most monsters to flood the city. They became stronger the more humans and other monsters they killed and decided to make the city their territory at the end of the day.

It was only a matter of time before the first monsters would leave the city. Once the first monsters would leave, the others would follow suit.

Only then would it be necessary for Dilan and the others to be fully focused on upping their protection even more than it was already.

Until then, it was best to focus on becoming stronger, which was what they had been doing for the last few hours.

Strength was important to eradicate all their threats, after all.

Everyone had leveled up several times, and the stats of most Ascenders had increased by more than 5 Units!

Even Dilan had leveled up once and he had gained quite a few status points.

Their strategy of hunting in a large group resulted in such a great result. The following days of hunting would become easier the more the Ascenders improved as the strength of monsters on the Shikan plains couldn't change that much in the next few days.

At least, herbivores wouldn't be able to become much stronger in a few days.

However, simultaneously with the Ascenders' increase in strength, everyone's progress would diminish the higher their level would reach.

After all, if their level exceeded that of the monsters they had killed before, the Essence and status points they would receive were bound to decrease rapidly.

The bigger the gap to the being killed, the more Essence and status points one would receive. However, the same logic played an important role the other way around.

If an Ascender was at the same level as the monster they killed, the Essence and status points could be said to be at 100%.

If the Ascender was of a lower level, it would increase exponentially but if the Ascender was of a much higher level, the Essence crystal would slowly lose value, until they wouldn't provide any Essence or status points further if Ascender's level was way too high!

Dilan didn't face many issues with all of this but his Ascenders would have problems to keep progressing at a rapid pace if they would be unable to face powerful monsters.

But Dilan didn't worry about that. His earlier worry had been that his people would progress too slowly to keep up with the rapid speed at which other living beings seemed to evolve and mutate.

It was truly frightening but with the way things were currently progressing, Dilan felt a little bit more reassured.

'As long as we're giving our best, everything will be fine...I'm sure of that!! As long as we don't give up, we'll be able to overcome everything!!'

Chapter 182 Large-scale hunt (3 of 3)

The following four hours passed in the blink of an eye. Everyone was exhausted but bright smiles appeared on the faces of the exhausted Ascenders.

They had leveled up once again, and their stats had increased as well.

Some had already noticed that their leveling speed had slowed down quite a bit and their stats were also not improving as much as before.

However, all of this was not that important because they knew that the next four days would allow them to become even stronger.

Everyone was excited, knowing that they had already killed more than 2000 monsters on the first day.

The Ascenders were slowly honing their fighting tactics, and they were getting to know their comrades, further increasing their prowess by working together as a true team.

Dilan had expected a lot in the following days. He was pretty sure that everyone would improve rapidly, whether it was their levels, stats, combat awareness, combat experience, and proficiency in using their abilities.

Throughout the last few hours, he was surprised at the high combat awareness depicted by some of the Ascenders. Their innate talent to assess the situation on the battlefield was exceptional.

It had allowed them to progress faster than others and to hunt more monsters than the rest.

The most impressive of them all in Dilan's opinion was Yvonne.

Even if it was already obvious that she would be extremely powerful owing to her Origin ability, the perks of her Legendary graded occupation were clearly displayed today..

Her Special Trait [Wings of the Fallen Angel] allowed her to fly in the air with the help of the black-feathered wings which sprouted out of her back.

Shooting bullets of darkness at her opponents while flying in the air allowed her to fight at an unimaginable advantage.

However, adding two corpses to her fleet which she could control with a single thought increased her combat power even further.

She might not be threatening for Dilan because their occupations and fighting styles were too different, but as long as Yvonne fought monsters, who were incapable of fighting in the air, or attacking via long-range attacks, she would be invincible.

But Yvonne was not the only one, who Dilan was quite astonished about. Williams' fights were extremely pleasing and oddly interesting to look at.

His extraordinary graded occupation was called [Great Mentalist]. It allowed Williams to read the mind of weaker-willed humans, which was quite useful.

This didn't help him in fighting other monsters but Williams didn't really need help to fight monsters.

After all, his [Psychokinesis] ability had been upgraded to Tier-1★, while receiving further amplification thanks to the Great Mentalist occupation.

As he could control several weapons with his mind, Williams could fight a dozen monsters at the same time.

He didn't choose to actively fight other monsters. Rather, he made use of the fact that his weapons could fly through the air the way he wanted them to and supported his people.

On the other hand, Kathrine acted like a Crazy Berserker most of the time. She charged at her opponents and made use of the Gray Slayer's sharpness to kill them. If necessary, she even used the additional lethality her lightning created to brutally finish them off.

She had received the Gray Slayer from Dilan after he had obtained the Blazing Serpentine Blade. This was why Kathrine had wanted to show Dilan that she was the perfect person to wield such a strong weapon.

However, even then, Kathrine's achievements weren't as impressive as the two Ascenders, who had shown remarkable proficiency while wielding ordinary Serpentine Blades.

Even if they were only the ordinary version of the Serpentine Blades, they were extremely difficult to control at first.

Nobody dared to approach any of the few Ascenders, who wielded these items. Thus, they had to fight on their own at first, which made things more difficult as they sometimes faced 10 monsters at once.

Yet, by facing the nearly unbearable pressure of fighting 10 monsters simultaneously, the few Ascenders improved rapidly, and at a much faster rate than anyone else.

Their control of mana improved the most. Dilan felt like a proud father upon seeing the improvements of all Ascenders in his hunting group.

They hadn't faced many problems while hunting, not a single Ascender died, and even if quite a few members had been injured in his group, nobody had been severely injured, to the extent that they would be deemed crippled.

With a few Ascenders amongst them who possessed healing abilities, it was not that difficult to tend to everybody's injuries.

And the fact that Sarah had long since begun to concoct the mana replenishment potions further improved their recovery speed.

Their effect might not be exceptional anymore but one could gulp them down one after another so as to rapidly replenish their used up mana.

Dilan didn't need these potions anymore because he would rather get accustomed to the sensation of his life force being drained.

This was one of the few forms of training Dilan had given himself; getting accustomed to unimaginable pain to prevent his mind from going awry every single time he had to replenish his mana quickly.

It was not as if he would die while bearing some pain, either way. He still owned a powerful Origin ability that could literally heal him from any kind of dying state!

"Powerful monsters spotted on our left!! They're hunting...Dodos??"

The sudden warning from one of the archers, who had been acting as watchguards of their group attracted Dilan's attention.

"Dodos? You mean these little chubby birds, who cannot fly... Those birds that went extinct hundreds of years ago?" Instead of bothering about the fact that powerful monsters were spotted nearby, one of the Ascenders was more interested in the fact that the archer found Dodos.

Many exhausted Ascenders were confused but also intrigued, so they took a glance in the direction the archer looked at with his bare eyes.

The archer in question had a passive ability called [Eagle Eyes]. It increased his eyesight to clearly see in a radius of close to 500 meters despite being a Tier-0 ★★★ ability.

After getting up from the ground, Dilan picked up the spyglass from one of the other archers, who had turned to his colleague to take a look at the Dodos.

"These monsters...what the hell are they?!" The young archer, whose spyglass Dilan had taken away mumbled, feeling confused and slightly frightened.

Dilan was confused too before his expression stiffened the moment he saw the batch of three weird mythical beasts hunting a group of more than a hundred dog-sized Dodos.

It looked like the mythical beasts were playing around with the Dodos before tearing them apart whenever one of the poor birds got exhausted.

"What are they?" Dilan repeated while keeping his senses on high alert.

He was currently looking at three mythical monsters, whose lower body was that of a grayish-scaled lizard. However, instead of short legs, they had legs that were several times longer than that of ordinary lizards.

If one considered this a rare trait, Dilan didn't know what one would call it after figuring out that the neck and head of the 'lizards' were that of two Serpents!

Their necks were one-meter-long, and each of the mythical beasts had two of them, two necks and two heads...

Dilan was not even sure what to call such a beast.

"Are those possibly...hydras?!" Oliver exclaimed in excitement after he had gotten his hand on a spyglass.

Dilan could understand Oliver's excitement. As a former full-time nerd, Oliver had obviously heard of hydras before.

However, Dilan couldn't help but frown.

'They're too small to be Hydras...right? Please don't let them be hydras...'

Taking a deep breath, Dilan focused his senses on the beasts they presumed to be hydras. Not long after he sensed the powerful presence of the Hydras as well, turning his worst fears into a reality.

"The archer was right, they're powerful...maybe even stronger than the Blue Tiger!"

That being said, Dilan licked his dry lips, completely forgetting about his earlier worry as he said in a definitive tone,

"I will take care of them, you guys can return..."

Chapter 183 One versus 3... or 6?

"You want to take care of these...things all by yourself?" Ailee asked with a disgruntled look.

Even if the serpent-headed lizards were far away, and busy playing around with the large group of Dodos, one could clearly sense how powerful these monsters were.

They might only be 1 meter tall if one did not include their long necks but a monster's size was never a great indicator of their strength.

As such, Ailee and the other Ascenders couldn't help but feel that it was too dangerous for Dilan to go out alone.

'These monsters are too powerful...if something happens to Dilan the entire community we build up with painstaking effort will crumble!'

"We want to help. As long as we have a good plan, we can wear these mythical beasts out by attacking from a long range. There are many Ascenders in our group, who can fire long-range attacks!" Kathrine suddenly intervened while looking worriedly at Dilan.

However, Dilan just shook his head.

“I want to take them on, all by myself. Don’t worry, I’m stronger than them!”

Dilan sounded confident but this was not enough to convince the other Ascenders who stared at the beasts apprehensively.

They knew that Dilan was powerful but they had also seen that the weird serpent-lizard monsters were able to spit poison out of their mouth.

Their speed was not to be underestimated as well.

Thus, Dilan had to keep listening to the other’s worried comments.

In the beginning, Dilan felt that their worry about him was a sweet gesture and it warmed his heart. But after some time, he thought that they were being needlessly anxious which made him sigh out in frustration.

“Rather than not being able to fight them on my own, I think that you guys will be in my way. There is literally not a single Ascender in this group, who has a single stat reaching 50.

Only Yvonne’s Mana stat might be close to that and even then, her other stats are far below her Mana stat! I don’t want anyone in this group to die, so I will say it only one more time.

I take the three mythical beasts on, by MYSELF! Is that clear?”

Even if there were Ascenders in his group, who had stat amplifying abilities, some pieces of powerful equipment and occupations that increased their stats by a bit as well, there was not a single Ascender in their group, whose stats exceeded 50 in a single category.

Thanks to her Origin ability and the Legendary occupation <Fallen Angel>, Yvonne’s Mana stat had reached 48 Units..

If she were to find a proper mana-amplifying treasure to wear, her Mana would cross 50 Units. However, even then, her other stats lagged behind.

Dilan presumed that she had yet to reach average stats of 30 if he didn’t include her Mana stat in the equation.

And that was already including the boosts in stats she had received by hunting for 8 hours.

That was why it was dangerous even for Yvonne to join Dilan’s fight.

After all, his stats were much higher.

“But if we stay far enough, and attack only the two mythical beasts you steer clear of, it should be fine... as long as we have a good tactic it should work!” Kathrine was the most eager to help Dilan.

She didn’t want to see him hurt and gave her utmost to follow every single order Dilan had given them just now.

He wanted them to leave, but Kathrine didn’t want to .

She looked at Dilan stubbornly, which forced him to show her his Log of the Ancient so that she would finally quiet down and leave.

'Why the hell is she so stubborn? That's not how she acts normally. Doesn't she trust in my strength anymore? Have I become so weak in her eyes?!

Dilan was a little bit flabbergasted because even his fierce and determined expression hadn't worked on Kathrine.

Usually, she wouldn't bother about what he was doing and just work on the tasks assigned to him. But suddenly she was demanding to fight by his side. This was weird.

Thus, Dilan opened his Log of the Ancient and showed her his stats, giving her permission to see everything.

Name: [Dilan Cier]

Rank[Tier-1 (Level 4)]

Race [Human]

Occupation [Kirak's Vassal(Divine)]

Title [Beyond the Stars <Bronze(Growth)>]

**

Strength= [40.1+4] (+5)

Health= [84.5+8.4]

Stamina=[34.1+3.4]

Agility=[37.6+3.7](+10)

Mana=[44.6+4.4]

Status Points to allocate→9.5

**

-Origin ability-

[Regeneration] Tier-0 ★★☆☆??

-Special Trait-

[Stone Skin]

-Active abilities (1/4)-

[Thunder Step] Tier-0 ★★☆☆??

-Passive abilities (3/7)-

[Immunity] Tier-0 ★??

[Nightvision] Ungraded ★??

[Language comprehension] Tier-1 ★??

-Blessed Curse-

[Will of the Primordial]

Dilan restricted Kathrine's sight, so as to not let her see the "Divine" tag alongside his occupation and the Blessed Curse.

He wanted to show her the effects of some of his Occupational abilities as well, including the Special trait [Bearer of Pain], the ability [Bracing Pain], and how much his 'ordinary' ability [Thunder Step] had improved thanks to the star-rating enhancement he received from his occupation.

But that was not necessary as Kathrine was already utterly dumbfounded while looking at Dilan's Log of the Ancient.

Her eyes were wide as saucers and she looked at Dilan in confusion before turning her head back once again to look at the Log of the Ancient.

Dilan was not really satisfied with his stats because they improved at a slow pace owing to his Blessed Curse but he had also the advantage of gaining more status points by absorbing the Essence crystals of higher-leveled monsters.

That was something the others wouldn't face anymore as their level had long since surpassed that of Dilan's.

Kathrine saw Dilan's level as well but she couldn't quite come to terms with it because his Health stat of more than close to 93 Units was simply too shocking.

Even his weakest stat was at 37 Units, and it was Stamina, which was not exactly something Dilan would need an exorbitant amount of while fighting the three mythical beasts.

Nodding her head subconsciously, Kathrine turned back. She was still utterly dumbfounded, which was noticed by the others. However, nobody dared to ask her a question as she mumbled.

"Let's go...we're not needed here..."

Yvonne appeared next to her dumbfounded sister, which allowed her to see how Kathrine's dumbfounding turned into a sudden and unexpected determination.

"Sis...we need to get stronger...much stronger, otherwise we might hold Dilan back in the future...and he might abandon us at that time..."

Kathrine was spouting nonsense in Yvonne's opinion but she could also tell that Dilan's strength was not something she could fathom anymore.

Ever since he had advanced to Tier-1, his presence had changed and it was as if his endless power was consistently increasing, spreading out, shrouding everyone. It was a weird feeling.

Even if one were to try to fight him, the sisters were unable to figure out if there was even anyone, who was stronger than him, to begin with.

Dilan smiled apologetically while looking at Kathrine. However, in his opinion, revealing his Log of the Ancient had been the only way to get rid of the stubborn Kathrine.

Thus, while everyone else was packing up, and preparing to leave, Dilan grasped the Blazing Serpentine Blade tightly.

A glint of excitement flashed through his eyes as the ground below him cracked and dirt and rubble flew all over.

'I should get rid of them as fast as possible, right?' He thought, smiling devilishly before he blasted ahead.

The ground below his feet was pushed away, and a small hole was formed.

Meanwhile, everyone else had halted in their tracks as they noticed various changes in Dilan's presence and demeanor. From his 'ordinary' powerful presence, Dilan had turned into an existence several times stronger than before.

This was a change he made in an instant as currents of electricity surrounded his feet.

In a single second, Dilan had crossed the distance between his group and the mythical beasts.

He had used 10 Units of Mana to activate [Regeneration] despite it not being necessary. It was just a precaution and a means to use up more mana if required.

Following that, 5 Units of Mana were instantly transferred in the Blazing Serpentine Blade, and another 5 Units of Mana were used to activate [Momentary Strengthening] which increased his Strength by 10 Units for 10 seconds.

Afterward, he activated [Mana Slash] using 20 Units of Mana. The brightly ignited Blazing Serpentine Blade in its serpent form began to glow in a white light that further highlighted its red and fiery flames.

All of the Ascenders stopped moving as they were awestruck by Dilan's speed, his strength, and the high density of mana that shrouded their leader.

Dilan had used up a total of 40 Units of Mana in an instant...exactly as he had planned.

Bearing with the seemingly endless pain of converting 80 Units of his Health to replenish the Mana he had just used up, Dilan's Life force was rapidly drained.

In return, Dilan's occupational passive ability [Bracing Pain] had been activated, amplifying his overall prowess by more than 40%.

Feeling the endless pain surging through every single cell of his body, Dilan felt as if he was going insane.

However, the Strength and Agility of the three mythical beasts exceeded 50 times the average human before the Primordial Ascension.

This was something Dilan knew for sure! Thus, he used three Units of Mana to activate [Thunder Step] thereby increasing his Agility by 30%.

Dilan turned into a flash as his Agility easily crossed 85 Units. Gritting his teeth, he endured the pain and emerged in front of his opponents that noticed him when he had already emerged in their range.

To their misfortune, they had been too distracted while playing around with the dodos. They had noticed Dilan and his group and chose them as their next target.

But it was important to wear down their current toy before approaching their newfound plaything.

Thus, their guard had been lowered to such an extent that they noticed Dilan's sudden increase in strength too late.

He swung the 20-meter-long enlarged form of the Blazing Serpentine Blade around while releasing the accumulated mana he had used to activate [Mana Slash] all at once.

Unleashing a thundering roar that echoed through the surrounding area, Dilan's [Mana Slash] was fired at once and pierced through his opponents.

The attack was forcefully halted after penetrating the mythical beasts' thick skin, and a few centimeters of their flesh.

Their defensive capabilities were what these monsters were the most confident about.

However, what they didn't expect was that Dilan's [Mana Slash] was not his main attack, but only his means to wear down their defenses and tire them out.

Thus, the moment the Blazing Serpentine Blade slashed through the beasts upon following the exact path of the Mana Slash, blood, intestines, and body parts splattered through the surroundings.

Fleeing from the battlefield, the Dodos escaped as fast as possible and ran for their lives.

They left the only living being on the battlefield...because that being was even more frightening than the ferocious mythical beasts that had torn their brethren apart...

It was the devilish image of a human being, who was smiling like a maniac while panting heavily standing under a rain of blood...causing them to feel various emotions at once...fear...admiration...excitement...anxiety... and many more.

Chapter 184 Inhuman? Invincible?

"Oh my...god.."

"What the hell"

"He...is still human...right?"

Even if they had been told to leave, Dilan's fight had ended even before all Ascenders had been able to pack up their stuff.

After seeing his performance, Kathrine and Ailee felt embarrassed about their offer to help Dilan in the fight against the powerful two-headed lizards.

'Couldn't he have said that he will be able to take care of them in an instant?' Kathrine grumbled to herself.

However, she clearly recalled that Dilan had tried to tell her that there was no need for him to receive any help.

It was just that Kathrine had not quite understood him because she had been too worried.

Meanwhile, Williams and the others looked at Dilan in fear, admiration, and as if they were standing next to a real God...The God of War and Slaughter...

Everyone looked at Dilan as if he was an inhuman existence but the young man didn't notice that at all.

He was breathing heavily and took a batch of mana replenishment vials out of the Penta Item Pouch before swallowing the sweet liquid in one go.

After he downed more than 10 vials, Dilan felt a little bit better. He used [Regeneration] over and over again but the sensation of his Life force having been drained was still apparent in his mind..

'I wonder if I'll ever get accustomed to this weird feeling...'

It was unbearably painful whenever his Life force was drained. Not even injuring himself severely to upgrade his Origin ability was that painful.

To add on, it required a mere thought to activate the Special Trait [Bearer of Pain], and it didn't even count as a severe injury if his Health stat reached a dangerous level whenever his Life force was drained from him.

Dilan didn't understand why this was the case but he couldn't care less about it right now.

He approached the three monsters and began to search through the serpent's brains in order to find their Essence crystal.

However, before he found anything, Dilan's attention was quickly drawn to the spot right below the spot where the necks of the two serpent heads branched out. Right in the center of this spot which was below the joints of their necks and on the monster's chest, Dilan could clearly sense something.

He quickly pierced through the said spot with the longsword-form of the Blazing Serpentine Blade.

'That destroys my theory that the Essence crystals of all monsters are in their brains.'

Dilan had pierced the monster's heart, pulled it out, and found a Golden Tier-1 Essence crystal within its body.

Like the first, the two remaining corpses also had their Essence crystal within their hearts, which was how Dilan ended up with a total of 3 Golden Tier-1 Essence crystals in his hands.

"Gold...so these monsters underwent three blood enhancements? Or was it blood evolutions?"

Dilan tried to use the knowledge he had received from Priestess Brashta in order to determine the truth behind the color and purity of Essence crystals.

However, he quickly abandoned this thought and decided to let the future tell him more about this new theory. He didn't want to worry too much about something that might not even be worth being worried about.

Thus, he absorbed the three Gold Tier-1 Essence crystals that crumbled in his hand a moment later.

[3 <Gold> Inferior Two-headed Hydrani Tier-1 (Level 8) have been absorbed→+1.9 Health, +0.9 Stamina, +1.2 Mana]

[Essence pool has been filled. Host reached Level 5(Tier-1)! +1.0 Status points can be allocated!]

It had been quite some time since Dilan received that many status points by absorbing Essence crystals. It was a great feeling and clearly indicated that the Inferior Two-headed Hydrani must have been extremely powerful.

Without his surprise attack, his suicidal combination of abilities which Dilan had used to increase his prowess drastically, followed by the mana slash, it would have been quite difficult for Dilan to overwhelm the three Gold Tier-1 monsters.

And then, there was still the modified Blazing Serpentine Blade, which had followed the exact same trajectory as the Mana slash,

In some situations, it might be nice to have a fair fight, head-on against powerful opponents but Dilan was quite satisfied with the fight he had just won.

“Dodods and some Hydrani, or whatever type of inferior Hydra they're... Does their appearance mean that a dangerous permanent Gate emerged on the Shikan plains, or was it just a temporary Gate?? I found two temporary Gates in Rian as well. Is their number slowly increasing or was it just a coincidence for me to encounter two temporary Gates before?”

The number of mythical beasts in Rian was certainly not low, and the same could be said about their numbers on the Shikan plains.

However, so far, Dilan had not faced many mythical beasts that had been on par with the Blue Tiger.

The Inferior Two-headed Hydrani should have been slightly stronger than the Blue Tiger if he was not mistaken, which was why he started contemplating in his mind.

‘We're already giving our best to improve faster. Is it still not enough? Do we have to change our plan?’

Dilan was not sure about the truth, and it was not as if he could force his people to do even more than they were already doing.

Thus, he stored the corpses of the Three Gold Tier-1 monsters away before returning to his group.

They had yet to leave and now that his fight was over, they decided to wait for him.

Dilan had not expected his fight to end so quickly as well, which was why he was glad for them to have waited for him, even if it was not what he had ordered them to do before.

He was a little bit exhausted but he could still endure it.

Without minding the gazes that were fixated on him, Dilan merely smiled as he stepped forward.

“Let’s return to the hospital. We have to be fully prepared for tomorrow and the following week!”

His voice was not loud but everyone heard Dilan. A moment later, thundering roars emerged from the usually quiet group of Ascenders.

“Yes, Boss!”

“You’re right, Leader!”

“We won’t disappoint you, Boss!!”

“As long as you’re by our side we will be invincible!”

Dilan twitched the moment he heard all of their shouts but he didn’t say anything about it.

He was simply too tired to raise his voice, let alone to act in a domineering manner.

Sven and the others could focus on quieting down the Ascenders to prevent some powerful monsters from getting wind of their group’s whereabouts.

Or at least, that would have been important if any powerful monster was still in their proximity, let alone bold enough to attack Dilan and his group...

With their exhilarated mood, nobody felt like sleeping or resting even after they had come back to the hospital.

Everyone ate their fill, while excitedly gossiping about the events of the day.

The Ascenders, who had been hunting with Dilan bragged about the increase in their strength, their level-ups, and most importantly, about Dilan’s strength.

In the beginning, they didn’t speak about Dilan’s last fight. They merely bragged about how easily Dilan defeated his opponents and that he supported them in every possible way.

They watered down the story and his fight, which was why some of the newer Survivors started to believe that Dilan was a powerful Scholar.

However, that image was shattered the moment the Elite Ascenders began to brag about Dilan’s achievement as he killed the three Inferior Two-headed Hydrani.

Even if none of them knew that these three monsters had been Gold Tier-1 monsters, this was not the important part of the story.

Rather, it was the strength Dilan had exhibited when killing the three monsters with a single set of powerful attacks!

Until late at night, the Ascenders kept bragging about Dilan, slowly etching a specific thought in the minds of all the survivors of Dilan’s group.

-Everything would be fine as long as Dilan was by their side, nobody could lay a hand on them!-

Chapter 185 Danger?

While everyone was gossiping about Dilan's achievement, their so-called 'hero' in question had been speaking with Kathrine and the others.

Kathrine had apologized to him because she had doubted his strength. However, Dilan did not take it to heart.

He knew that Kathrine had been merely worried about his well-being, which was why she had been trying her best to force him to accept her and his group's help.

It was trivial and he was not a dictator to want her apology for something so harmless. That was also why they could quickly switch the topic to something else.

Because Dilan's to-do list of things he had to do in the last few days had been filled to the brim, he didn't notice many things about the Rian mountainside hospital and his people.

The few pieces of information he got to know were from the reports he read occasionally, whenever he found time to take some rest and focus on reading.

"Is it about the 8 public executions? I already said that there was nothing to be worried about. I seriously doubt that the Survivors would dare to attempt raping the women or killing each other again. At least, I doubt that it will happen in the near future."

Dilan had heard about the eight acquaintances, who had joined them a while ago. They had planned to **** a group of women when everyone was sound asleep.

Fortunately, one of the night guards had heard the women's muffled screams and rescued them early enough..

Yet, while rescuing them the night guard had been heavily injured because two of the eight perpetrators had been an Ascender.

The Nightguard survived and was healing rapidly, while the eight perpetrators had been beheaded in public.

The rules Dilan had set up were not something one was allowed to break without fearing a drastic punishment.

Thus, the penalty of a quick death due to attempted **** and attempted murder was already awarding them a painless punishment and, in turn, an act of benevolence in Dilan's opinion.

Others may not think like that but it was not as if he cared about it. Beheading the criminals was merely an act to show that neither he nor his group showed mercy to those, who broke the rules under his reign.

For those, who had witnessed the first time Dilan beheaded someone, nobody would ever dare to do something stupid. They knew that they wouldn't be able to escape his wrath.

Exactly the same could be said about everyone else, who had seen the public execution. Only new Survivors, who would join them in the future might attempt something stupid but Dilan was sure that it wouldn't be a problem.

After all, as long as he could maintain a safe environment, a few executions were not noteworthy in his opinion.

If the death of scums brought peace and created a well-working community, Dilan would gladly 'take care' of the scums.

"It's not about the execution. Rather, more and more Survivors have started to speak about their family. Everyone wants to start searching for their loved ones. Even a few Tier-1 Ascenders asked to leave the group to start searching for their family.

They feel confident enough to leave and to come back with their family as long as they're still alive!"

This time it was Bianne, who spoke. She knew about most of the gossip because she would always spend her free time in the cafeteria listening to the Survivor's gossip, and their worries whenever she was not cooking.

That was why she revealed a lot of internal information whenever their group held a meeting.

Bianne's information was always quite useful. Their group had already spoken about the topic 'leaving the group to search for their family' quite a few times and Dilan's answer had always been the same.

Only today it was a bit different. Dilan added a few comments to his usual answer, attracting the attention of Sven and a few more quick-witted people around him.

"Well, as everyone knows, I don't shackle anyone. If they want to leave, we should give them some food, other necessities and they can give it a try. But we cannot do more than that. I won't be able to help everyone, and I actually don't want to.

It's their private business and their personal choice, I'm not their nanny and I have to stay close to the hospital to protect those who chose to stay back.

As long as we're still here, inside the Rian mountainside hospital, they can return but if they take too long to reunite with us, we won't wait for them.

Nobody should believe that they'll get any kind of special treatment."

Sven had listened intently to Dilan's comment and he looked at him in confusion. This confused expression subsided quickly but his eyes were still fixated on Dilan, question marks evident in his eyes.

"Are you planning on moving the group somewhere else?"

From the way Dilan spoke, Sven could only conclude that their leader wanted to move their base to someplace else.

He agreed to this but he felt that Dilan's decision was a little bit sudden and out of nowhere.

Dilan didn't answer Sven's question directly. He was actually not sure what he wanted to do.

However, he had a weird feeling about the mountainside behind them.

Dilan felt that it was not the best choice for them to stay in the Rian mountainside hospital or even Rian city.

The Sun temple was also a dangerous variable Dilan had yet to assess properly.

The Ligrav and Rasnian race were certainly dangerous but they faced no immediate threats from either because their relationship was currently rather advantageous and neutral, if one were to ask Dilan.

Their entire group gained numerous advantages from the Sacred Shop and the fact that they gained Sacred points by sacrificing the corpses of monsters that were nearly unusable in most cases.

Hunting monsters became several times more beneficial because they gained something from the entire corpse of the monsters they killed.

That was also why the strength of their entire group was bound to increase in the following seven days.

Yet, Dilan was suddenly thinking of relocating? Why?

It did not make any sense in their opinion. Despite that, nobody mustered the courage to say anything as they kept looking at Dilan and patiently waited for an answer.

'Something seems to be wrong, but what is it?' They thought.

However, Dilan didn't have an answer yet.

"We might have to move soon. Something is wrong about the mountainside, and it's far more dangerous than the Sun temple's existence..."

Dilan was not sure whether he felt this because his perception of danger had developed well, or if it was owing to something else.

But he could tell that something ginormous, something of extreme power resided within the mountainside.

At first, Dilan wanted to visit the mountainside to figure out what the unbearable presence he sensed within the mountainside was.

But even before he could step back into the forest he had come out of on the day after the Primordial Ascension had occurred, Dilan had been held back.

His body and mind prevented him from entering the forest, and <Kirak's Vassal>, his Divine occupation, seemed to warn him about that place, telling him that he would die if he went there.

Dilan was not even sure how his Divine occupation warned him, but he could clearly feel that it was his Divine occupation that had prevented him from entering the mountainside.

He chose to trust his Divine occupation...but that was not something he could tell the others, otherwise, his credibility would shatter at once.

"I cannot say more for now because I have yet to find out more...but it would be great if you guys stopped everyone from getting too cozy with this place. When the time arrives, everyone should be prepared to leave, if not, I'm not sure if they'll survive..."

Chapter 186 Time to go

There was not really more for Dilan to say, which was why he decided to enter the Krendel's Underground Valley to approach the large Gate.

He had more than 500 leftover Bronze Tier-1 Essence crystals to exchange with treasures.

'The number of Bronze monsters keeps increasing. If their numbers keep increasing like this, they might outnumber the ordinary monsters in the future...'

Dilan began to exchange batches of 50 Bronze Tier-1 Essence crystals of the same monster at the blueish Gate while his mind was deep in thoughts.

He was quite bothered about a few things but he didn't have the capabilities to procure more knowledge to figure out more.

Even after combing through the Sacred Shop, Dilan didn't find many things that were of high use to him in this regard.

'I can only try to focus on strengthening everyone, and to keep them safe as well.'

Dilan sighed deeply as he closed the Sacred Shop once again after he received a total of 8 Bronze Tier-1 treasures.

The 500+ Essence crystals belonged to different types of monsters. It was already a wonder that the leftovers were enough to procure eight treasures.

One of the treasures was even another Penta Item pouch. On the other hand, there was a pair of boots, three weapons, which Dilan straight up ignored, and three ability crystals.

[Magnastrian Silver Boots] <Bronze Tier-1> Treasure.

[+8 Agility], [+8 Strength]

Even if they're not the most comfortable boots owing to their heavy weight, true warriors will be able to make use of the boots' heavy weight to issue powerful attacks!

Others might have a great use for these boots, but not Dilan. He was satisfied with the Aeris' leather boots. In his opinion, they were far stronger than the Magnastrian Silver Boots, either way, simply because [Gale] was a powerful ability he still used quite often.

Dilan didn't pay too much attention to the boots. He stored them inside the Penta Item Pouch and averted his attention to the three ability crystals.

[Basic Blademaster Mastery (Passive)] Tier-0 ★★★

[Nightwalker Lion Summoning (Active)] Tier-0 ★★★★★

[Triple Shot (Active)] Tier-1 ★

"Amazing!"

All three ability crystals were exceptional, to put it simply.

With the passive mastery ability, they could create one more powerful Ascender with lots of combat experience and some powerful fighting techniques.

Meanwhile, even an inexperienced Survivor would be able to use [Nightwalker Lion Summoning] as long as they had enough mana to summon the monster.

Another powerful Ascender could be created with the summoning ability crystal.

On the other hand, [Triple Shot] would be best for a seasoned Archer to increase his or her combat power by a few times.

'Ailee should be the most suitable candidate for [Triple Shot]. Her archery mastery passive ability will allow her to master this ability quickly.'

Dilan was more than just a little bit satisfied with the gains their group made in a single day. Three powerful weapons, a good pair of boots for a close combat warrior, and three strong abilities were certainly pleasing to the eye.

From the looks of it, everything was going smoothly for Dilan's group.

Ever since the day when the monsters had escaped from the mountainside, they had not faced any more problems with beasts or any invaders.

It almost felt like it would be possible for their group to return to a normal life after a few months, or years if it were to continue like this.

Everything was going according to Dilan's plan without any kind of issues. There had not even been a casualty in their group of Porters, who had carried the corpses back and forth in the Shikan plains.

Even Dilan felt like he could relax and that it was fine to allow everyone to ease their tension a little bit.

It was only fortunate for Dilan to have noticed that something was amiss, that the situation was too good to be true.

Not only the Sun temple and both the Ligrav and Rasnian race were something he shouldn't underestimate by any means but the mountainside's dangers were even bigger.

'Will we have another week of peace and quiet?' Dilan suddenly asked himself.

He was actually not sure how much time they had left before something would happen.

However, what he knew was that chaos would descend on mankind...and that the situation was bound to worsen compared to the period immediately after the Primordial Ascension.

When Dilan returned to the hospital, he found out that Williams, Kathrine and the others were still sitting together.

He chose not to join them because they looked as if they were deep in thoughts, and currently thinking about various things.

Instead of joining them, he put down the Bronze treasures he had obtained before he returned to his room.

Dilan needed some good sleep to recharge his energy.

Meanwhile, a few Ascenders, who had heard the earlier discussion Dilan had with the others, couldn't help but start their own gossip.

"What do you think about the Leader's words? Will it really be necessary for us to leave soon?" A young woman asked while biting her nails, apparently worried about the future. Everything she had heard worried her as she clearly recalled the horrifying scenes of her friends being torn apart when the Primordial Ascension had started.

A wonderful new year's eve party had turned into the start of a never-ending nightmare.

"Leaving the Rian mountainside hospital is possible now... well as long as you're slightly stronger, that is.

You haven't been outside with us but I personally witnessed how Dilan, the others, and obviously I as well, slaughtered large herds of hundreds of monsters with ease. Leaving the hospital will probably be a necessity if our groups keeps increasing in size. Our group will probably accept survivors from everywhere as long as we can find and save them.

That's at least my guess. But that we'll have to leave because of danger? I really doubt it!" A middle-aged man, and Tier-1 Ascender commented, waving off his hand to reassure the young woman from before.

"Dilan is so powerful, we have nothing to worry about. He is probably just trying to ensure that we don't slack off and stay focused and become stronger for potential future threats.

A friend of mine in the Porter Unit saw the Lion-headed Ligrav race and the Hawk-headed Rasnian race. He says that their presence is even stronger than Dilan's!! That means we have to become stronger and be prepared for the possibility of them attacking us all of a sudden!"

This time, a young man began to speak about the two foreign races they made contact with. His voice was filled with excitement and not a trace of worry could be sensed in the way he acted.

It was almost as if he trusted Dilan with his life, soul, and body.

They continued to speak about all kinds of topics but nobody took Dilan's word seriously, at least, not as much as the people, who were the closest to Dilan did.

After all, they knew that Dilan didn't give out warnings without reason...and the worry and confusion in his voice had been more than enough reason for them to start worrying about the mysterious existence lurking within the mountainside.

It was not as if they had never worried about the mountainside but the Sun temple had seemed more dangerous to them, even after the night where all monsters had escaped from the mountainside.

The Sun temple's danger could be assessed to some extent. That was why nobody was truly worried about it for now, simply because it looked like they only needed help to hunt monsters.

Thus, even Kathrine and the others had slowly relaxed a bit up without even doing it consciously.

Only Dilan's comment had pulled them back to their senses, which was why they worked even harder in the following four days.

Four days.

It was not long, and there were merely three days left before Dilan would have to meet the quota given by Priestess Brashta.

However, in these four days, everyone had hunted more than enough large groups of monsters to sacrifice more than 15,000 corpses.

They didn't need to hunt a lot anymore to fulfill the given quota.

However, Dilan was far from happy.

He had hoped that the day wouldn't come and that it wouldn't be necessary for him to say this but Kirak's Vassal wreaked havoc with his mind.

The premonition and the situation on the mountainside had kept worsening day after day according to his perception. It was impossible to postpone the inevitable.

Dilan knew that if he wouldn't give the instruction now...everyone would die, including himself...

"It looks like we have to go now. Everyone pack up..." Dilan suddenly announced, his voice both eerily calm and overflowing with uncertainty about the future.

Chapter 187 Tyrann?

"It looks like we have to go now. Everyone should pack up..."

It was merely afternoon when they had returned from hunting for the day.

Everyone was exhausted which was why his orders confused them extremely. They had been looking forward to resting for the day and catching on some sleep.

"I will exchange the Sacred points we've accumulated until now and finish the trade with the Sun temple as soon as possible. Everyone else should focus on packing up. We have a few Penta Item Pouches now, so everything stackable should be stored within them. If there is still some space left, the heaviest items should be stored as well."

Because nobody said anything, Dilan continued speaking and giving instructions. He was currently wearing a light silverish armor over his clothes and looking at the others, who stared at him in confusion.

His order had been so sudden that nobody was able to instantly act on it.

Several minutes passed without a single soul speaking. Dilan had already averted his focus from the others to access the Sacred Shop of the Sun God Valgard.

They had more than 34,000 Sacred Points. This was more than enough to purchase hundreds of low-tiered, yet powerful abilities but also to purchase other goods.

Without wasting too much time, Dilan purchased the goods they had already voted for unanimously. In addition, Dilan took charge of purchasing specific items that were also quite important while migrating to another place.

It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to use the Sacred Shop because Dilan was pretty certain that his access permission would be revoked soon enough.

Dilan made use of every single Sacred point and completed his purchase in no time. However, making the purchase and getting his goods were two different things because he had to go to the Sun temple in order to get his hands on the goods he had just purchased.

Closing the Sacred shop's holographic screen, Dilan lifted his head for the first time in several minutes.

It was at this moment that he noticed that something was odd..

"What the hell are you guys doing? Pack up your stuff, help everyone else to move, and get the busses ready for the unlevelled Survivors and low-levelled Ascenders."

However, even then, nobody moved an inch, which forced Dilan to take a few deep breaths to calm down.

"Guys...Pack up...NOW!!" In an instant, Dilan's entire pent-up frustration, and nervousity of the last days was released as he screamed his lungs out.

He didn't want to leave either. The hospital was cozy and quite nice to stay at. That was a fact. However, he wanted everyone to survive...meaning they had to leave without any further delay.

Even he didn't want to believe his own gut feeling, his Divine occupation's warnings, and the things he had perceived from within the mountainside.

But it was a fact that their life would go downhill the moment they chose to postpone moving any longer.

While venting his emotions, he released his bloody aura that had accumulated from all the lives he had reaped. When he did so, Dilan looked like a ruthless dictator, who didn't allow anyone to disobey his orders.

Everyone else would be slaughtered...that was what his aura was suggesting to him right now. It was not difficult to perceive that Dilan was serious with his comment about leaving.

However, nobody really felt like moving but then slowly they forced themselves to move their exhausted bodies.

Kathrine, Williams, Xenia, Sven, and Yvonne, were the first ones who had come back to their senses.

They had been talking about the possibility of Dilan ordering them to leave, to move away from the hospital for the last few days.

Thus, they knew what to do, and who was likely going to follow them.

Having spread the 'rumours' about them having to leave in the coming few days, everyone slowly regained their senses.

“Patrick, Miles, Nina, Killian, Ovir...you guys gather the others. Organize the goods of the Elite Combat Unit, and pack up our stuff. We will leave once Dilan returns!”

The five Ascenders, who had been called out, were still stupefied. But upon hearing their names, they felt a shiver run down their spine before they nodded their heads.

With quick steps, they disappeared in the hallway.

“Miriam, Hannah, Bianka, Phillip, Sandro, and Tarkan, collect as many mattresses, clothes, and other daily utensils and store them in the Penta Item Pouch. Hurry up!”

Kathrine threw one of her Penta Item Pouches toward the six young members of the Porters Unit after giving the instructions.

Following the second order, Sven and Xenia began to issue their orders as well. Dozens of Survivors began to move rapidly and finally got into action. They slowly got to know that the situation was real and that Dilan was far from joking with them.

He would leave the Rian Mountainside Hospital, and the Elite Combat Unit, followed by the strongest Ascenders who would follow him...that was certain.

That was why even many Survivors and Ascenders, who didn't think that it was necessary to leave, began to move.

Even if their current life in the Rian Mountainside Hospital was far from dangerous, they knew that all of this was owed to the constant efforts of Dilan, the closest people to him, and the strongest Ascenders that allowed them to stay in a secure place with food in their bellies.

If all of them were to leave, they would be alone, which was not something they wanted to be in the time and Era they had entered...being alone and weak was a death sentence after all!

Thus, even if they were unwilling, many Ascenders moved, followed by numerous Survivors, who could clearly understand what was going on.

“I thought he was nice...but he just wants to order us around however he pleases. There is literally no reason for him to order us to relocate... If we were to face a beat tide with dozens of Tier-2 monsters, I would understand it, but right now? What a tyrant! I vote for dethroning Dilan from his position as a leader!” A certain Karen said, speaking up as if she was the representative for everyone.

However, merely a moment after she finished speaking, a hoarse voice could be heard from Karen's left side.

“You dumb bitch. How valuable is your shitty vote? Strength determines everything. Furthermore, how f*cking low is your IQ? The moment we face a beast tide with dozens of Tier-2 monsters, all of us will be dead. What do you even think are Tier-2 monsters? Some plushies? Your IQ is truly that of a brick...what the hell...!!

You can only spew nonsense because Dilan is around, otherwise, some horny blind men would have probably f*cked you by now. Well, maybe not because we don't have anyone blind in our group.

That means we have only men, who can see your face that resembles a construction site.”

In the beginning, the bulky Ascender didn't want to waste his time speaking to that idiot of a woman. However, he could not hold himself back from wanting to put some sense into her.

After he had been saved by Dilan, the young and bulky Ascender had noticed that Dilan worked relentlessly, not for his own sake but for everyone else.

He might be merciless and cruel on occasions, to the extent that he may seem like a dictator, but if Dilan wanted to, he could have just left everyone to fend for themselves.

It was not like creating a huge group and taking care of close to 3000 Survivors would actually help him in any way. Forming a small group of 10 powerful Ascenders would be more than enough for him to survive, to become stronger and to escape all kinds of dangerous situations.

The bulky young man trusted Dilan fully, which was why he felt the need to support him with all his might, and lecturing the braindead woman was the best way to do so.

"But why..." Oliver suddenly mumbled, acting as if he was a sulky little child.

He couldn't understand Dilan's reasons for making them leave their home even after four days had passed since he announced that they might have to leave soon.

Oliver was slow-witted and didn't notice many small hints that should have made him realize what was going on.

The young and former nerdy Oliver was not able to see the fear in Dilan's eyes. Many could see it after looking at Dilan for some time and they also sensed his aura that was wildly fluctuating.

The majority of Survivors could sense his fear...and if Dilan feared something, it was time to get the fuck out of there!

"Because I said so, do you understand?! If you want to die, don't drag others with you! Act according to your age, will you?!" Dilan was fuming when he finished his comment. His eyes gleamed coldly as he diverted his attention from Oliver.

Dilan knew that he had been mean to Oliver but that was not something he could care about.

There were more important things to take care of than treating a sulky adult.

"I'll start the busses. You three, follow me!" Nick, a young but dependable young man, who had become the new vice-leader of the Porter group suddenly stated.

He could ignore Dilan's comment and his anger toward the sulky Oliver. He had assessed the situation correctly and could tell that time was running out.

A few Survivors and Ascenders seemed to be creating trouble but they quieted down quickly.

Dilan's presence was terrifying enough to prevent anyone from doing anything.

Even after Dilan left the hospital, nobody dared to say anything openly against Dilan.

The situation was quite odd.

Most Survivors were not even sure why they were suddenly moving. They only regretted leaving the place they had started to call their home.

However, because Dilan told them to move, they followed his orders. The reason for this was simple and exactly as the young and bulky Ascender had said.

Dilan was the strongest and strength determined everything. They needed Dilan's strength to protect them...and the fear in his eyes caused an unexplainable feeling within the deepest parts of their conscience.

Without actually knowing what was going on, the Survivors felt as if they were currently facing a situation that would decide over life and death...and that was exactly what was going on.

While packing their stuff, the Survivors didn't even realize that doom was slowly crawling towards Rian, reaching out with its claws of despair and destruction.

Chapter 188 Baggage

Dilan didn't take long to leave Rian. Despite his worries, he didn't rush it and sorted the jumbled mess of thoughts in his mind instead of doing something stupid.

'I should be back in half an hour as long as the situation does not spiral out of control.'

He was certain that Priestess Brashta would find something odd about him to not let him avail the benefit of even a single Sacred point they had accumulated during the last five days.

Even someone naive would notice that it would be quite weird because it made no sense to use up every single Sacred Point. At least, it made no sense, as long as one wanted to continue accumulating more Sacred Points.

That was also the reason why Dilan was ready to confront the Ligrav and Rasnian race if that was necessary.

Dilan had read more than enough reports about the behavior of everyone within the Sun temple.

These reports were provided by none other than his own people, the members of the Porter Unit during the last few days. Thus, Dilan was pretty sure that Priestess Brashta had made her own assumptions about the human race's strength.

There were quite a few facts both sides had learned about each other. Simultaneously, both Dilan and the Priestess had concealed specific information that the opposite party was not ought to get to know..

'Even if I were to be forced to fight the Eternal Guards, I should be able to pose a threat to them. As long as I can retreat to the frozen Shikan plains there shouldn't be anything to worry about.'

Dilan had already come up with several plans to survive, and one of it involved the new chestplate he had obtained from exchanging Essence crystals at the large gate inside the Krendel's Underground Valley.

[Ilran Chestplate] <Silver Tier-1> treasure.

[+10 Health]

Powerful Chestplate inscribed with mythical runes.

Enhances the effect of protective abilities by 15%

Other than the Ilran Chestplate, Dilan's equipment was pretty much the same. However, the number of monsters he had killed during the last four days had been quite high.

Contrary to the others, whose level had already surpassed level 10, slowing their progress drastically owing to the lower level of their defeated opponents, Dilan was still at Level 5.

After fighting for four days, Dilan's level had increased by one and he sensed that his Essence Pool was about to be filled once again.

He didn't need much Essence to reach Level 7. But Dilan's level was far less interesting than the progression of his stats. The monsters he killed were always the leader of the groups the others hunted.

Thus their strength and level was the highest. Dilan had also received quite a few status points, despite the restriction of the Cursed Blessing [Will of the Primordial].

But even then, Dilan couldn't be certain to emerge victorious against existences, whose strength was on par with the peak of Tier-1, at least not without playing around with his abilities.

"There is no need for you to hide. Why did you follow me, instead of helping the others pack up?"

All of a sudden, Dilan's voice rang through the large and empty street. Nobody could be seen in his immediate surroundings, but Dilan had halted in his tracks before looking in a specific direction behind him.

Seconds turned into two entire minutes, yet, not a single leaf fluttered anywhere around Dilan. It was as if the entire area had turned into a statue.

Dilan's eyes turned cold, his gaze fixated on a single spot as he ordered

"Come out and reveal yourself!"

His volume was low but his tone was stern. Dilan was not in a good mood, to begin with. Migrating with their entire group was certainly not easy, even less if everyone thought that Dilan was either being overly cautious or simply trying to show off that he was the one who had all the power in the group.

The trouble that awaited him was also not something Dilan looked forward to because it was not a mindless fight of life and death but more related to politics.

He couldn't simply bash everyone in the Sun temple, eradicate believers of the Sun God's temple, and offend two foreign races of unknown strength and the Sun God Valgard.

This was not what Dilan was out for, thus, his head began to ache while he thought about what to do to prevent the situation from escalating the moment he reached the Sun temple.

"I-I-I'm sorry Sir...I-I just wanted to...to follow you...to help you..." A stuttering and somewhat familiar voice could be heard from behind the corner of the building Dilan's gaze had been fixated upon.

In an instant, he knew who had followed him but it didn't lighten his mood. On the contrary, Dilan knitted his brows, feeling as if the entire situation was slowly turning for the worse.

"Mason, go back and help the others. I'm going to the Sun temple. It's too dangerous for you to be there!"

Right now, they were already at the outskirts of Rian. After crossing another 300 meters they would reach the Shikan plains. Mason might not be as weak as a week or two ago but he had barely advanced to Tier-1.

His stats were quite high already but the Sun temple was still too dangerous for Mason to be at, right now, at least.

"N-No sir. Please, you might need my help. I will help you in any way, just let me follow you right now. You don't even need to protect me, but I want to help..."

Dilan clearly remembered that Mason had been working hard during the last few weeks. He was one of the few young men, who trained daily with the spear. Mason's ability [Thrust] was the most compatible with the spear, which was also why he was one of the few Ascenders, who had received a Bronze Tier-1 weapon.

'He won't be able to help me well... He might be able to fight well but he is quite naive and hyperactive...well usually, at least.'

Dilan sighed deeply before staring deep into Mason's eyes. They were crystal clear and filled with the determination to help Dilan. Mason wanted to be useful, he was eager to learn from Dilan by observing his fights and he wanted to become stronger...stronger than everyone to achieve one thing.

He was not overly ambitious but there was one thing he wanted to achieve, and it looked like Dilan was the only one who could help him in achieving this.

Thus, the determination in his expression intensified the longer Dilan looked at him.

A minute passed but Dilan had yet to move. His ice-cold eyes stared deep in Mason's clear greenish eyes. Only when Dilan seemed to be satisfied with what he saw did his expression soften.

"Let me make one thing clear. Both of us might die if we make a mistake, so act properly and don't do anything stupid. I'm not confident of protecting you in the Sun temple...if you cannot protect yourself, go back and help the others, otherwise, I can only consider you as an unnecessary baggage!"

Dilan's words might sound cruel to some but they were his honest words. If the situation in the Sun temple escalated, Dilan was not even sure whether he would manage to save himself or not.

That was why he didn't make any empty promises to Mason but he told him the truth about the given circumstances.

"I understand...please let me come with you, Boss!!"

Dilan sighed after hearing the excited voice of Mason. He shook his head and turned back to the direction of the Shikan plains before he broke into a light jog.

“Follow me then...”

Chapter 189 Annoying Bitch

To have Mason by his side was certainly not planned and it made things more difficult for Dilan.

However, after handing Mason a specific treasure he received from exchanging Silver Tier-1 Essence crystals at the large Gate, Dilan was able to regain his composure.

[Instantaneous Teleportation Scroll] <Silver Tier-1> Treasure

One-time use.

Anchor for teleportation has to be set up before.

Teleportation cannot exceed 1,000 Meters!

Even if they were to land in trouble, Mason would be able to escape, lifting a huge burden off Dilan's chest that would allow him to go all-out.

Like this, nothing would go wrong.

The Instantaneous Teleportation Scroll was the only reason why Dilan allowed Mason to follow him, to begin with.

Mason understood this as well, which was why he held tightly onto the scroll with one hand.

He hid it in his thick jacket while holding a spear in his other hand. If one were to look at Mason from afar, they would definitely think of him as an Inuit.

With Mason next to him, Dilan felt a little bit less stressed than before but that was mostly owed to the youth's non-stop talkative nature.

Since Dilan had accepted his company, Mason's prior timid behavior had changed completely.

However, even Mason was not able to keep his act together when they reached the range of the Sun temple..

After setting up the teleportation anchor for Mason to escape if necessary, they made their way into the small town that surrounded the Sun temple.

For the Ligrav and Rasnian it was not weird to meet humans anymore. Rather, they were quite familiar with them after the constant stream of humans had entered the Sun temple one after another to offer the monster corpses.

Despite their familiarity with other humans, everyone tensed up a little upon perceiving Dilan's presence once again.

Some recalled him as the first human to enter their town and to make a sacrifice to Sun God Valgard's Divinity fragment.

They clearly remembered his presence from before as well.

Dilan's strength didn't seem to have increased by leaps and bounds. He had definitely grown stronger but it was still within the realms of an ordinary life form, or so they believed.

However, what astonished most Ligrav was the eerie calmness that surrounded Dilan.

It was not long ago that Dilan's entire existence gave off the desire for blood, clearly telling everyone that he was proficient in killing his opponent, and that he would not hesitate to kill them if they tried going against him.

But now, one couldn't even assess the true might of the young and determined man and most ordinary Ligrav and Rasnian could only make assumptions about his strength.

This was even scarier than knowing Dilan's bloody aura because an unknown and well-hidden powerhouse was the most dangerous.

A concealed and sheathed sword would only unleash its true potential when unsheathed. Meanwhile a bloodied saber exposed everything.

Dilan continued to walk towards the Sun temple and didn't even halt to wait for someone to welcome him, or to get him the goods he had ordered.

Instead, he walked up the stairs to approach the Divinity Fragment.

Contrary to before he entered the proximity of the Sun temple when he had been a bit nervous because of Mason, Dilan's mind and heart were eerily cold now. Mason noticed that Dilan's behavior had changed and that he was fully focused on his task ahead.

Admiration gleamed in the young man's eyes after seeing how focused Dilan was and that nothing seemed to be able to ruffle his feathers.

'He is so amazing!!' Mason could only think, momentarily forgetting about the excitement that filled his heart after seeing so many beings of other races.

To Mason, Dilan was no less than a hero of the old legends.

He might seem cruel occasionally but Dilan was always doing his best for others.

Mason didn't even think that Dilan was doing everything for his own sake. On the contrary, Mason was sure that Dilan tried everything in his power to better the lives of his fellow survivors...the fellow humans that were not as strong-willed, determined and powerful as him.

Dilan tried to ignore Mason's stare as he kept advancing to the cone-shaped building on top of the Sun temple.

He had already perceived that a few powerful beings were located there, which he presumed to be the two Eternal Guards and Priestess Brashta.

'As expected...oh...wait...a third and fourth Eternal Guard??'

When Dilan climbed the last stair to reach the Sun temple's large top, the first thing Dilan noticed was that four Eternal Guards stood behind the Priestess.

It didn't look like the Eternal Guards, whom Dilan knew from before, had gotten stronger. Each of the four Eternal Guards was stronger than one of the Inferior Two-headed Hydrani he had killed earlier.

Dilan even presumed that it would take two Inferior Two-headed Hydrani to hold back one of the Eternal Guards, even if it was only for a minute or two.

Mason felt that his entire existence was being pushed to the ground by an invisible force the moment he encountered the noble-looking robe that was worn by an arrogant looking Ligrav. This particular Ligrav seemed to be looking down on Dilan and him, and the pressure the four Eternal Guards created.

Though Dilan began to smile faintly, his heart began to race.

Even if he didn't want to acknowledge it, he...wanted to fight the Eternal Guards.

However, for now, he had to calm down because he knew that it was not a good time to spar with someone else, let alone to enter a life and death battle.

'Who knows what kind of hidden tricks they have up their sleeves. I'm in their territory, right below their God's Divinity Fragment. Hold your horses dude!'

Dilan forced himself to calm down. He was still worried about various things, but also excited to see that there were four Eternal Guards.

His worries and excitement were a weird mixture and they revolved around an equally weird person. Dilan was pretty sure that his emotions were usually not like this but the warmth that radiated from the Sun God's Divinity Fragment prevented him from being able to think straight.

"Brave Warrior of the human race, what is your reason for wanting to exchange all your Sacred points so soon? Don't you feel the need to save up more to purchase rarer goods or possibly a powerful slave?"

Priestess Breshta didn't waste her time greeting Dilan. She had gotten more than enough information to understand that they had an upper hand over the human race.

As long as the winter season would end, it was possible for the believers of the Sun God to expand their influence, to kill everyone who obstructed their sacred mission, and enslave the sinners!

Everyone who worked against them would be annihilated, without a single exception!

All of this was more than enough reason for the Priestess to talk to Dilan with a slightly angered and disappointed tone as she stressed on the words 'all your Sacred Points so soon'.

'As expected, she has figured it out. Well, it's not like I tried to hide my intention, to begin with.'

Dilan's expression didn't change at all even after hearing the trace of hostility in Priestess Breshta's voice.

He expected everything that had happened up to this point, which was why he was ready to deliver a 'plausible' explanation.

"Esteemed Priestess, you're correct. I would love to save up more Sacred Points to purchase even better goods. In fact, I have already chosen to purchase several Slaves because their unique characteristics would be extremely helpful for our entire group.

There are also mighty Tier-1 abilities and unique Tier-1 treasures I wished to purchase but unfortunately I'm not alone in the group.

As you might be able to deduce from my purchases, I focused on purchasing various ability crystals, including several treasures, and even a Tier-1 Storage ring...all of that just to increase our group's strength.

Maybe you have figured it out already but my group is truly weak. We have only a few powerful Ascenders, which is why it was possible for us to kill so many large groups of monsters in the past five days.

Otherwise, we wouldn't have been able to accumulate so many Sacred Points. I hope the reason for the noticeable improvement of my group's combat prowess is enough to calm you, Miss Brashta.

It was a mere coincidence that I used the Sacred Points up without leaving a single one for future use!"

Dilan was already acting as if he could fully understand Priestess Brashta's anger. He attempted to pacify her by revealing a few semi-true facts.

In the end, he needed to strengthen his people and everything he purchased was for the sake of becoming stronger, whether it was for him, the strongest combat focused Ascenders in his group or the other occupations that had to be nurtured as well.

There was no lie in his words, which was why Dilan could still hope to escape the worse-case scenario as long as he could trick her.

Priestess Brashta looked at him for several seconds before she reached for the pocket in her robe. A small ring appeared in her hand.

The ring seemed to have been made out of granite or some similar colored stone. It was nothing special but Dilan could clearly sense that it was the ring he wanted.

'A storage ring...did she really believe what I said? Does she trust me that much?' Dilan was confused for a moment.

But in order to keep the charade up, Dilan stretched his hand out to reach for the storage ring. He had yet to ascertain that it was truly a storage ring and that everything he had purchased was stored within.

It was difficult for Dilan to keep his heart under control but it didn't thump as wildly as he expected the moment he grasped the ring. A faint smile appeared on his lips while holding the storage ring, which was only obvious.

Everyone would feel exhilarated after getting hold of an invaluable treasure, after all.

However, the moment Dilan tried retracting his hand, Brashta's hand enveloped his hand, preventing him from moving.

"Oh, by the way...why did you create a teleportation anchor point roughly 900 meters away from the Sun God's temple? Say...are you scared??"

All of a sudden, the Priestess' eyes seemed to turn into blazing flames as she stared in the depth of Dilan's eyes. Her hand holding the storage ring suddenly erupted in flames, scorching Dilan's skin, while the Eternal Guards unsheathed their weapon in unison.

'What an annoying bitch...how frustrating.'

Chapter 190 Doesn't work

The sudden hostility Priestess Brashta and the Eternal Guards behind her had revealed shouldn't have astonished Dilan in the slightest.

Rather, it should have been an expected response. But even if he expected it, Dilan was extremely worried about the fact that the anchor point they had carefully installed was now exposed.

'Did she send some of her people to the anchor point to prevent us from fleeing?'

Dilan's right hand was currently set ablaze. Yet, instead of bothering about something as trivial as burning a little bit and feeling some pain, Dilan's attention was on the storage ring he was already holding in his hand.

His high Health stat, which had crossed the Natural limits of a Tier-1 existence, was already powerful enough to endure the Priestess' blazing fire.

Additionally, with the use of his Special trait [Stone Skin], it was possible for Dilan to be completely unbothered about the Priestess' rather mocking tone.

He assessed the storage ring with his mana, combed through the contents for a moment before a bright smile emerged on his face.

"Little Priestess, I don't think it was smart of you to show me all these treasures inside the storage ring. I think I'm getting greedy now!"

The moment he finished speaking, Dilan's left hand moved with a blinding speed.

"Mason, use the scroll!!" He shouted all of a sudden before he averted his attention to the others.

[Thunder Step] was activated after using one Unit of Mana. A thunderous sound reverberated through the entire Sun temple and the town of the two foreign races, attracting everyone's attention..

However, that was not something Dilan bothered about anymore. From the moment the Priestess had looked down on him, Dilan had known that there was no way for them to continue making deals.

If the Priestess would have acted nicely, Dilan might have even warned her about the dangers lurking in the mountainside.

'Warning the dead about something concerning the living is not really necessary either way!'

The moment Dilan had activated [Thunder Step] his left hand had moved to his belt. It was a rapid movement and none of the Eternal Guards were able to react in time.

Their Agility might be close to 70 Units, but Dilan's was not much lower after he activated [Thunder Step].

Dilan was also at an advantage because he moved first, which was why he could easily bring out the dagger he had hidden in his belt to slash in the air in front of him.

[Mana Slash]!

Using a meager amount of 5 Units of mana to activate [Mana Slash], the dagger Dilan was holding began to crumble the moment the compressed energy entered its body.

A small crescent blade was released from the dagger, cutting into the Priestess' arm. Afterward the Jadetite dagger broke into hundreds of fragments owing to the strong force five mana units exerted upon being compressed.

Jadetite was certainly not the best choice to use [Mana Slash] but it created the desired effect, so Dilan was satisfied.

Taken aback by the sudden attack of Dilan, the Priestess had instinctively opened her hand.

Dilan's [Mana Slash] hadn't been powerful enough to cut off her arm but it was more than enough to enrage Priestess Brashta.

But Dilan didn't allow the Priestess to vent her anger.

He was still tightly grasping the storage ring, and had activated [Aegis' Shield] to block off the path of the Eternal Guard, who had reacted the fastest before he turned around to dash off.

With the use of three Mana, [Regeneration] was activated before Dilan replenished the entire Mana he used just now by activating [Bearer of Pain].

His Health stat decreased drastically though on the brighter side his mana was filled to the brim.

Thus [Bracing Pain] showed its unique powers once again, amplifying Dilan's stats by nearly 15% at once.

Dilan was about to rush outside the Sun temple, fearing that the Divinity Fragment was capable of weakening him, or that it would further strengthen the Eternal Guards.

However, the moment he saw Mason, and his pale, horrified expression he realized that something was wrong. The young man was simply staring at the [Instantaneous Teleportation Scroll].

'It doesn't work? Fuck it!!!'

Dilan grit his teeth, wore the storage ring on the ringfinger of his other hand before he rushed forward and went over to grasp Mason.

Afterward, he created another [Aegis Shield] behind him before he converted more of his Life force to Mana.

Dilan's expression was filled with pain despite not having been attacked even once. The burns on his right hand were negligible as the injury didn't restrict him but [Bearer of Pain] was truly painful.

[Bracing Pain] amplified his strength further as his Health stat kept decreasing.

But none of this was something Dilan could be bothered about right now.

After all, he wanted to fight but could not simply because Mason was in his way.

Jumping down the stairs of the Sun temple, Dilan let go of his previous humble and gentleman-like image.

He used the shortest way to reach the ground, while moving his other hand to the Penta Item Pouch.

The hilt of the Blazing Serpentine Blade emerged from the pouch and Dilan tightly grasped it.

The Serpentine blade instantaneously reached a length of 20 meters the moment Dilan brandished it.

Flames engulfed the blade, increasing its lethality drastically.

Simultaneously, the blazing flames made it easier for Dilan to block the attacks that were bound to reach him at any moment.

The Eternal Guards pursued him. Their Agility was slightly lower than him by now owing to the various abilities he had activated.

However, it was only obvious that the Eternal Guards would make use of their abilities as well. Their active and passive ability slots were less than that of a human's but that was not necessarily a disadvantage.

By possessing both a fire and wind affinity seed, they didn't even need abilities to exhibit a terrifyingly high combat prowess.

Only by using their high proficiency with the wind affinity was it already possible for the Eternal Guards to catch up with Dilan.

They were flying in the air, slashing at Dilan with their longswords that hissed through the air with a velocity that was barely traceable by him.

Using the vast majority of his focus on controlling the Blazing Serpentine Blade, Dilan was momentarily able to block the Eternal Guards' advance.

But the moment Dilan reached the ground of the Sun temple with Mason in one of his arms, he realized that he had grossly undermined the strength of the ordinary Ligrav and Rasnian.

Attracted by the commotion, several dozen Ligrav and Rasnian had noticed Dilan's fight against their Sacred Priestess and the Eternal Guards.

Manifesting hundreds of Fireballs and Windblades, both the Ligrav and Rasnian charged forward to attack Dilan.

Even if they didn't know what was going on or why, it was obvious that Dilan had turned into their opponent.

And all of their opponents had to die!

The moment the first windblades and fireballs reached his proximity, Dilan knew that he couldn't continue like this.

He frowned deeply while thinking of a way to escape this situation.

“What the hell is wrong with the scroll?!?” Dilan shouted, trying not to panic. He wasn’t afraid for himself but Mason.

Even if it was highly risky to use the Instantaneous Teleportation Scroll after the Priestess found out about it, Mason’s presence here was way more burdensome for Dilan than 900 meters away from the Sun temple.

The Eternal Guards never left the Sun temple’s proximity and they hadn’t seen any hunters of the two races outside the Sun temple during the last few days, let alone in the last half an hour, either.

That was why Dilan believed it would be better for Mason to leave by using the Instantaneous Teleportation Scroll, rather than staying by his side right now.

“I-it doesn’t work...I d-don’t know w-why...” Mason could barely respond in a panicked voice while trying to endure the pressure of four Eternal Guards that weighed on him, and Dilan’s terrifying strength.

His breathing was labored and he felt as if his mind was going to explode at any moment.

However, Mason forced his entire being to stay awake so that it would be possible for him to help Dilan if necessary.

But it was only now that Mason truly realized that he had not helped Dilan by following him. Instead, Dilan was now in big trouble and drastically restricted because of his presence...because he had to be protected.

‘If only I would have listened to him and not followed him here... will....we die today?’