

~ Day 119 ~

BOOM

Stepping aside, I watched on as a massive great orc was launched through the air, over the stage, to then finally crash into the cobbled ground beneath, crushing stone and dislodging nearby tiles.

"Winner, Mav'ithh's followers!" Tahl, the minotaur, announced.

Being showered in cheers, the group of four bedraggled monsters up on the stage took it all in proudly.

This Mav'ithh and his followers was another underdog team apparently, someone from outside the city's borders. Being able to take down the followers of one of the city's minor noble scions, however lesser, was quite a feat to be commended.

As the defeated party of nobles removed themselves from the stage and gathered their battered orc party member who was still very unconscious, the winners also made their way back to the sidelines afterward.

"May I please ask for groups 8-12 to take to their respective stages, and groups 18-22 to take the opposing sides," Tahl announced.

The follower fights were done in groups whereas a total of four large fighting scenes had been set up in the main plaza and each group would face-off their opponents simultaneously while the other groups also fought their respective battles.

That way they saved a considerable amount of time as there simply were too many contestants to be taking their fights one by one.

As this underdog group had been the last to fight in their respective round, it was first now that the sixth and last round would start.

Since this was the sixth round, Bob and Mia had already fought twice, and this would be the third match. Resting in between rounds, they both were more than energized for this fight. Not that they really needed any rest as the two previous matches had been pathetically easy for the two newly evolved monsters to handle and sweep the floor with their opponents.

With Bob literally wreaking havoc on any frontline that the enemies would dare to attempt to block him with and Mia being shielded behind three immutable and indestructible blood constructs, allowing her to unendingly control the flow of the battle with her crowd-control magic, they were an absolute force to be reckoned with.

Additionally, even though Mia had only seen two days of instruction from an accomplished **Dark Magic** master, the breadth of which she could use her magic had expanded astonishingly.

Being corrected on certain misconceptions and bad habits she had gained from learning on your own definitely would do that, and when taking in Mia's talent, she easily picked up on what exactly she had been doing wrong for all that time with the guidance of an experienced master of the craft, effectively rooting out many of her faults.

Watching as Mia, Bob, and three massive blood puppets make their way up on stage, I smiled. Although this fight would be their first tough one, I was confident in their ability to emerge victorious.

Meeting them up on that stage, five monsters of varying races sized up Mia and Bob's group. This group was the followers of the monster named Caelin, those who scored 5th-place, right above our 4th-place in the first test.

A massive armored bugbear with a club and a solid metal tower shield, the leopard lady with tribal markings on her fur from the agility test, a dark-skinned great orc dual-wielding two longswords, and two lycan archers,

Their whole group looked like a ragtag team of fighters, their equipment and races rather odd, but the aura and confidence they gave off told me that they were anything but uncoordinated and weak. Also evident by the fact that they had managed to score fifth in the first test stage.

As all fighters were on stage and ready, Tahl lifted a large hand into the air.

"Begin!" He announced, dropping it with a swish.

Instantly springing into motion, four stages were lit up with the sounds of metal clanging against metal and the sounds of air being displaced by the movements of the large monsters doing battle.

Of course, like the indomitable frontline that Bob was, he sprung directly into battle alone while the three blood puppet covered Mia with their large frames. Although Bob was a single warrior diving into their ranks, he needn't worry as Mia's supportive magic came flooding in to disrupt the enemies' retaliation and make sure he wouldn't become overwhelmed.

But even if Mia would occasionally be unable to interrupt and take control over certain individuals, meaning that Bob would take hits, he was such a juggernaut that he was basically as much invulnerable to damage as the blood constructs themselves. Not that they'd find it easy to land attacks on him anyways seeing as the seemingly chaotic fighting style he used was like fighting against a whirlwind that both landed devastating strikes and evades all retaliating attacks.

As Bob mowed through their defenses, the enemy team decided to switch up strategy and abandon attempting to take down the lumbering draugr. Having the bugbear restrain Bob as best it could with its durable armor and shield, the leopard lady and the dark-skinned great orc bolted for Mia to take her out first.

Simultaneously, the archers began raining down arrows upon the petite drow. Using their shape-shifting capabilities, the blood puppets easily blocked the hails of arrows ripping their way through the air.

But before the great orc even managed to get half-way to Mia, he was suddenly and unexpectedly assaulted by the leopard beastkin. This was clearly a shocking development for the enemy party, seeing their own all of a sudden turn against each other in the heat of battle.

The great orc was screaming in some intelligible and unknown language at the leopard beastkin as he desperately tried to ward off her lightning-fast attacks, but they were clearly ineffective as the beastkin simply kept attack with glossy eyes.

It was only after a handful of moments that they finally realized that Mia had taken control over the leopard lady's mind with her magic.

Things were taking a turn for the worse, and they were steadily losing with Bob raining blows down on the now bloody and battered bugbear.

The two archers, clearly the minds of the party, looked at each other with determined expressions right before they knocked a special-looking ivory bone arrow on each of their bows. As they pulled back, those curious-looking arrows began lighting up with the clear tell-tale indication of some grand skill.

This is even managed to somewhat alert my danger sense when my senses picked up on the power of those arrows and the skill infused into them, however, before they even let the skill complete and let loose, the air-shattering sound of the bugbear's shield shattering and splintering everywhere stopped them both dead in their tracks.

Falling onto his back and gliding far back, the bugbear laid unconscious at the archers' feet.

Right the instance before they could react, their pupils dilated and a sense of foreboding doom came crashing down upon them.

A shadow, looming over them as the massive destroyer came swinging down had both archers petrified in abject fear. The instant before the cleaver would've decimated them both in nothing more than chopped meat, however, it suddenly stopped, making a torrent of air billow into the faces of the archers from the aftermath of Bob's cleaver ripping through the air.

Falling to their knees, they both let out a shaky sigh.

And with that, the enemy team conceded.

"Winner, Xavier's followers!"

Watching Bob, Mia, and my blood constructs make their way down from the stage, I grinned.

"I had been rather hoping that you would've shown that new weapon of yours that I had so painstakingly crafted for you." I teased.

"Not yet," She grinned back. "I've trained with it a lot, and I want to show it off in a better fight."

"Fine - fine," I conceded, looping my arm around her.

"Well done anyways," I said, making Mia lean against me with a contented sigh and Bob simply beam happily with that characteristic goofy smile of his.

"Don't get to relaxing too much, else we won't get a proper fight when it's finally our turn to clash weapons." A young and melodic voice teased suddenly.

Looking in the direction of that voice, I simply scoffed.

"So... you really still remember me?" I asked Melane.

"I sure do, bug-guy." The grinned. "Or maybe it's elf, now?"

Groaning, I exhaustedly covered my face with the palm of my hand.

"Not you too... I swear to god, I'm going to cut the tip of them off if this continues." I muttered, reaching up to feel one of my pointy ears.

Just today, in fact, I had almost been attacked by some unwitting monster on the street that had mistaken me for an enlightened in disguise. Usually, I would just attract stares and hushed whispers from other monsters, but this has really gotten too far.

Getting an idea, I did something I hadn't done in a long time.

Using my small appearance-changing capabilities, I could change the shape of my ears. Doing so, I just looked like a pale and oddly colored human, but it was at least better than constantly been whispered behind my back and confronted as a god's damned elf...

"Better?" I asked.

But before the young great orc could respond, I felt Mia's intense stare from under my arm.

"But I like yours..." She pouted, lifting a hand to touch her own much longer ears. "They're like mine..."

Sighing, I just reverted the change which instantly made the drow smile.

"As the miss wishes." I teased.

Maybe there weren't all that bad... okay...

"Woaw, you can change your body at will?!" Melane all of a sudden blurted out, interrupting my train of thought as Mia and I had completely forgotten she was there.

"Yeah, I suppose..." I sighed. "Anyways, was there something you needed? If it's anything regarding the mess back at your city, I have no intentions of listening or conversing about it."

I wasn't entirely sure what this odd and spirited young monster wanted, but I almost certainly wanted no part in it. That time in Maldrak was something I wanted to put behind me, and that father of hers was an unknown figure who I had no clue how strong he really was besides that ridiculously strong status of his. But the fact that he had managed to produced an off-spring like this young great orc, he was undoubtedly a terrifying powerful individual, not to mention scheming from what I heard of this girl's words back then.

"No, no, I just wanted to-" She waved off with her hand before suddenly being cut off by a stern and commanding voice calling out in Rathian.

"Melane!"

Looking towards the voice, King Maldrak himself stood there impatiently with his group of followers silently flanking him.

Sighing expansively, Melane shot me a grin.

"Well, that's my cue to get going, see you in one of the next rounds hopefully!" She said as she skipped off to her father.

This dynamic of a girl, no more than simply an adolescent child possessed the power of a great orc and would merrily skip past crowds of deadly powerful monsters, was quite an odd dynamic as she was still just a mere child wielding such immense power for her age. Well at least for Earth standards...

But that still wouldn't make me lower my guard as I felt an uncanny cunning under that facade of playful childishness she portrayed.

She definitely wanted something, but as to what, I hadn't the faintest clue...