

"Normal speech"

'Thought'

(Silent magic)

[Normal magic]

{Change of location, time or POV}

Hi everyone! Little bit late with this one, though, in my defense, I got good news! Someone might decide to fund Act II for Child in Black and White, so I had to take a day to actually plan the second Act in case it comes to be!

Well, not really much else as of late, pretty boring RL period, always prefer boring to bad. Gotta say, I am really happy I got this one out of the way since it is one of the most, if not the most, conversationalist chapters in the whole story.

But without further ado, enjoy!

Chapter 95: Song of the Sky-Riders and the Black Rose (part 5)

“The... future?”

The blonde knight asked as she racked her brain trying to process what she just heard.

“Wait! Wait! Wait! Are you saying you can actually see what will happen?!”

Lakyus almost yelled as her mind finally shifted in place to fully grasp what she had been told. Did the young woman already know

she would come? Did she know her future? Did she know if she will achieve her goal?!

Her train of thought was interrupted by the sound of the gruff, but still somehow melodic, laugh of the black haired young woman.

“Ahahah... You should see your face... Ahahah... Gods, you are making me cry...”

Lakyus had known all her life how expressive her face was, Renner and her team reminded her often enough. Still, this was the first time she felt some kind of embarrassment over it, she felt her ears heat up and her stomach make a double flip.

“Cut it out.”

Well, now she sounded like a mewling cat and not at all like the tiger she intended, eliciting another burst of laughter from Kaelin.

“My apologies... you just looked too adorable.”

For all Lakyus tried to remain stoic, her traitorous body could not help but send another generous dose of blood to her cheeks.

This time around the young woman had the courtesy of not commenting on her state and just send her a smirk that somehow sent not so unpleasant shivers down Lakyus’ spine.

“And to answer your perplexities... it is not as easy as that, I can’t literally see the future, but I can feel it.”

Lakyus felt her blush subside as they returned to the main point of their discussion.

“What do you mean, you feel it?”

That was a strange way of defining the concept of future. Lakyus had known that there existed some individuals who said they

could predict the future, a bunch of fraudulent charlatans reaping on the desperate. This was the first time she met someone who claimed such an ability as a Talent.

“It is not exactly easy to describe, it’s like something more than a gut feeling, more precise... I can feel the result of decisions as soon as they are made, my father has used my ability many a time to decide in which direction they should go hunting, or where we should set up camp.”

Well, that sounded like a damn useful Talent if she ever heard of one! She would also like to know the outcome of her decisions as soon as she made them!

“So, that is why you told us that we will fail? You felt the future?”

Lakyus asked, no longer feeling the sting of those word but rather acknowledging they did not come from a place of misjudgment but rather a certainty.

Kaelin hesitated for a moment before shaking her head.

“No, not exactly, I just felt the inevitable reach us earlier than it was meant to.”

Lakyus blinked at those words, her confusion must have been pretty visible, for the young woman did not hesitate in explaining herself further.

“Since I understood my gift, I have always felt a looming sensation linger over us, day after day, month after month, year after year, getting ever closer, no matter what we did, what decision we made, the future did not change.”

The black-haired woman’s tone fell. Lakyus could not fathom living with such a constant weight on her soul, with the certain

knowledge that no matter what she did, her doom approached inexorably.

What would she even do? Give up? Go mad?

“How much do you have left?”

The blonde asked much to the chagrin of the young woman.

“No idea, it could be a few years still... the only one who knows is my father, the moment S’hiraihyo wakes, it will be the end for us.”

Lakyus felt her stomach plummet into the void at those words. It was no wonder they didn’t want her team everywhere near that beast.

“But, you are strong! You have so many wyverns on your side! Can’t you prevail?!”

Lakyus noticed how foolish her words sounded as soon as she uttered them. How could she ask that already knowing that the one before her could see the outcome?

“Sorry, I am not used talking to someone who can already know the answer to any hypothetical.”

Kaelin just smiled at Lakyus in what the younger girl could only consider amusement. Lakyus admired the fact that she could still smile knowing what she knew and experienced everyday.

“Do you not fear the inevitable, would your people not rather go out fighting?”

For all Lakyus knew, they were a prideful and capable bunch, it would nor surprise her if that would have ended up being their final decision.

“My kin is skilled, of that I have little doubt, but S’hiraihyo is not someone you can compete against... Ten years ago there existed three tribes in these lands, riding wyverns capable of using fire and ice respectively... an alliance was formed between them in hope of vanquishing the scourge upon our existence, my grandfather joined the alliance regardless of my premonitions.”

For all Lakyus felt amazed at the fact there existed more types of wyverns, she could not help but dread how such a tale would conclude considering what she already knew of Kaelin’s Talent.

“As predicted, that foolish act only brought ruin upon us, S’hiraihyo seemed to be almost immune to our wyverns’ power and our weapons, he annihilated the force sent against him before falling upon the tribesmen left behind... men, women, and children, everyone that in his way was obliterated... my tribe was only spared because my grandfather and the other warriors managed to divert his wrath away long enough for us to flee to another part of the Frostfang.”

Kaelin finished her short recounting of why they were in their current situation.

Something clicked in Lakyus mind in that moment, a solution so simple she couldn’t believe she didn’t propose it earlier.

“Why not just flee? I guess it is not the most honorable way, but if you all already know the outcome of a direct confrontation-“

She stopped in her tracks as she noticed the sad and yet sardonic smile on the older girl’s face.

“Do you believe my people are so stupid they would willingly decide to live in this barren and inhospitable land? We are not here

of our own free will, rather, this is the only place where we might continue existing at all.”

Lakyus tilted her head at that. What did she mean by that?

Her curiosity didn't go unnoticed, eliciting a grimace from the purple-eyed woman.

“You already swore secrecy, so I might as well tell you, our ancestors... they were the noble guard protecting the home of the Gods, the Floating City of the Gods, Eryuentiu. We defended its gates until the bitter end, my grandfather's great-grandfather fought alongside the last of our Gods against the accursed Dragon Lords and their minions... but once the last of our Gods fell, the city itself seemed to fall dormant and our source of power disappeared...”

Lakyus said nothing even as her muscles tensed at Kaelin's admission. It was one thing to worship the Greed Kings, it was another descending from those in service to them.

“Our ancestors fled the battlefield, and settled into his cursed lands, out of sight and out of mind of those who would wish us destroyed, we found a place we could silently fade away from the pages of history in peace and quiet... We have no delusion on the fact that leaving this place would mean attracting the wrath of the Dragon Lords once more... for all we despise their existence, and few would admit this, we still live only by the grace of their mercy.”

Silence was the only thing that greeted the conclusion of Kaelin's tale. Lakyus did not know how to feel... no, that was a lie, she knew exactly what she was feeling.

The blonde darted forward, wrapping the older and startled girl in a tight embrace.

“I’m sorry... I am so sorry... no one deserves to live like this, like a caged animal... even less for something you are not even responsible for.”

The blonde felt the older girl’s muscles slowly relax as two arms squeezed her back. They might have known each other for just a few days, but Lakyus already felt kinship toward this one girl she first interpreted as cold and detached.

“You are a kind soul Lakyus, I am glad it was someone like you who came to us, now I can ask this of you without remorse or fear.”

Lakyus arched an eyebrow as the two broke their embrace.

“Please Lakyus, you are the only one who can defy the future I saw for us all... please, take my brother and flee.”

Lakyus expected many things, being asked to fight the threat, assist the tribe in doing so, hell, even help them in relocating... fleeing was not something she was expecting to be asked to do.

“W-why? If I am the only one who managed to change the future that you have dreaded your entire life, why would you have me flee?”

The blonde asked, flabbergasted by the purple-eyed woman’s request.

“I have felt the future change, true, but the change I felt was minimal, a drop of water against an ocean of lava, you may not be capable of challenging S’hiraihyo and win, but you can still

defy the future by sparing the one I love the most from a horrible fate.”

Kaelin pleaded her cause to Lakyus who could only grimace as she really did not wish to do as she asked... she didn't want to fail... not again!

“But you just told me, you cannot leave this place for fear of how the Dragon Lords will react.”

Lakyus tried to argue using Kaelin's previous words, the older girl just sighed as if she was about to say something she didn't want to admit.

“Luciel, my younger brother, is one of those incapable of bonding with any wyvern... it has always been a matter of great shame to him, even more as the son of the Stormclaw... with him being just one boy, and not even being a wyvern-rider at that, it is unlikely the Dragon Lords will ever learn of his disappearance, it's not like they count us up once a week like chickens.”

The explanation was accompanied by a challenging glare directed at Lakyus, as if Kaelin expected her to mock the boy for his so-called shortcoming, something that probably happened often if glaring was the older sister's basic instinct.

Lakyus was about to ask why everyone else in Luciel condition didn't leave as well, seeing how they could slip away without being noticed. But the question died in her throat as an easy answer came to her. Their family was here, this land was all they knew, this style of life was all they knew, what would even be the point in leaving? Even more since they didn't know of their impending doom due to S'hiraihyo.

“You want me to save your brother, and leave the rest of you to die here?”

Lakyus surprised herself with how stoic and detached her own voice sounded, even to her own ears, as if to speak was a stranger altogether.

“Yes, that’s exactly it.”

Kaelin confirmed her words without hesitation.

“Then I refuse.”

Lakyus saw a dark flash pass through the purple eyes of the woman, a fierce rage tempered only by her own self control. Before anything else could be said or done, the blonde raised her hand to indicate she was not done yet, a gesture mimicking a certain magic caster she was so fond of.

“I do not intend to leave you all to die here... I will not stand for it!”

Lakyus proclaimed, images of what she had once been flashing in her mind. ‘This time it will be different!’ she tightened her fists almost to the point of feeling nails cut into flesh.

“Why? Why are you so fixated on this?! What possible treasure are you so allured by that you would not desist even before certain death?!”

Lakyus blinked for a moment, the initial motivation behind her coming here had all but slipped her mind by now. If the young woman before her really thought she was still here for some treasure, she was sorely mistaken.

“Forget about some treasure! Your lives are more valuable than some blade!”

Lakyus rebutted prompting Kaelin to stand up her agitation no longer hidden behind her mask of self-control.

“Stop it! You are going to fail! I know it! Take my brother and go! We are the descendants of those your kind despises! You can’t save us! You shouldn’t want to save us!”

Lakyus did not back down from the older girl’s outburst. She stood up as wall, facing the taller woman directly. Emerald green piercing into amethyst purple.

“Your lives have value because you all are alive, life is valuable in itself! I won’t abandon those who need help, regardless of who they are, regardless of what those who sired them did!”

She closed the distance between the two of them, never breaking eye contact with the older girl.

“You have been honest with me... so I will be honest with you... I have a dream, no, a goal! To one day see a more peaceful world than we have now, where violence will not be the default response to perceived slight, where the strong will not trample the weak just because they can... violence will only breed more violence, triggering an endless cycle that will never end as long as multiple beings still exist... who would wish to live in a world like that?”

Her question went unanswered prompting the blonde to continue.

“I have seen it firsthand, the misery of this world, but I have also seen the hope of changing it. In a land not dissimilar to this one, three races with grudges going back centuries battled and warred with the extermination of each other in mind... I have sought to change that... now a coalition stands in place of where only violence ruled.”

She bit her lip, knowing well her words did not represent the full truth, but before she could correct herself, the black-haired woman spoke up.

“So, you have succeeded in your goal?”

Skepticism and something else coated her words, but Lakyus will not answer honesty with falsehood.

“No, I have failed at it, and I almost got killed in the process, I was saved by those who held me dear, they resolved the mess I have made of things... through means I might not approve of, they still reached a result satisfactory to what I had envisioned.”

She did not miss the disappointment in those purple orbs, still she was not done.

“But I have learned from the experience, I was foolish in giving intangible answers to solid problems... ideals will not protect the weak, words will not feed the starving, a touch of kindness will not undo a system built on suffering and domination... that is why, I strive to offer solutions, alternatives to what the world would demand of us, so that those alternatives, in time, might become the new default.”

She held the harsh gaze of the one before her.

“Big words for someone who has yet to reach adulthood, amuse me, what alternative would you see here, if not accepting our fate?”

Regardless of Kaelin’s harsh gaze, Lakyus could hear a tinge of desperation in her words, a desire to be found wrong for once in her life.

“You, Kaelin, you are the answer... you told me so, you felt the future change, even in the slightest, and that was not my doing alone... you are the one who did it! You helped me recover a part of myself I thought lost! You would have not granted me such kindness, you would have not stayed by my side when I was sleeping, if you truly did believe there was no hope, if all was lost and fate was sealed, what meaning would there be in caring at all if you thought that?”

The black-haired girl seemed taken aback by Lakyus’ words and the conviction in them.

“Me? I have done nothing... how can I be the answer?”

Lakyus almost laughed at how the situation had reversed. Is this what it felt like to have your words affect another? No wonder Renner did it all the time.

“You can tell us the result of our effort without anyone risking their lives... give us three months! Three months of preparation and we will prove you that fate can be changed! And if you are not satisfied with the outcome you feel, we will take your brother and leave as you asked.”

Silence was all that followed Lakyus’ proposal, the older girl in front of her clearly out of words, and with her jaw half opened as if she was about to say something that died on her lips.

“You...”

Kaelin partially recomposed herself with a sigh of resignation as she lowered her head in what seemed to be almost submission.

“You are the most stubborn person I ever met.”

Lakyus decided to take that as a compliment, a feeling of deja-vu overcoming her as she felt like this was not the first time someone told her so.

“You are not the first to call me that.”

The blonde said with a large smile blossoming on her face at the reminder of who exactly uttered those words.

“Maybe you should start listening then.”

The black-haired young woman rebutted with a small smile of her own.

“Sorry, I am too stubborn for that... now let’s go! We have no time to waste!”

The swordswoman chuckled as she turned around, marching out of her tent, coming face to face, or face to chest might be a better saying, with her steadfast protector.

“L-Leinas! How long have you been there?!”

She stuttered out at the realization she had been overheard this entire time.

“It took me less of a minute to come back with bandages, even though they are no longer needed, so... pretty much the entire time... I am glad you feel better Lady Lakyus, as I am glad you regained your lost strength, and I will be eager to share your wise and gallant words with the rest of our team.”

Lakyus’ face turned beet red at the teasing of her knight as she sputtered out excuse after useless excuse.

{Hours later}

{Riyuro’s P.O.V.}

“So, let me get this straight boss... you want us to train and prepare for three months here so that we can get strong enough to bring down one of the whatever kings’ pets, that was apparently strong enough to deal with two tribes of these lizard-riders?”

The former Quagoa king asked after Lakyus finished telling her team their next objective. The blonde in question did not answer as she looked quite embarrassed by her unilateral and probably deadly decision.

Just shows how much she still had to learn about Riyuro’s own kind.

“You must teach me how you always manage to get into the most exciting quests! Fuck! When do we start?!”

He grinned as he cracked his knuckles.

“Damn it Riyuro, you are not supposed to be excited.”

Lakyus just shook her head as she uttered those foolish words. As he already said, she knew too little of his kind still.

“Well, you certainly got us in a big mess... I expected nothing less.”

Rayne shook his head in resignation.

“I am gonna tell on you when we get back to the kingdom, clearly Master Satoru did not instill in you enough self-preservation.”

Arche admonished the sheepish older blonde.

Riyuro had to be honest, he initially was wary of the caster duo, knowing exactly who was teaching them set him on edge, even though their power was clearly no match for his right now. Still, the due of teenagers had grown on him over the more than a year they spent adventuring together. Their age certainly did not match

their wisdom and ability, he wished the average Quagoa could be a third as gifted as any of those two.

“Humph, we dragons have ruled the skies since the world was still an egg, it will not be an overgrown garden-lizard with too many heads to prove us unfit of the title!”

Vulmitar boasted, slightly reminding Riyuro of the dragon’s father for a moment. Even though that was an unfair comparison, the young frost dragon was far more level-headed and strategic than the self-proclaimed White Dragon Lord ever was. He was also very much not prone in giving into his pride or rage as many of his kin was.

Riyuro had always feared the dragon would be the hardest to get along with in this team, but unexpectedly, when they first where introduced to each other, he was surprised to find him meek of personality. Not at all what most of his kind looked like, and even now that he had seen the dragon’s pride and confidence grow to the point he could boast, Riyuro was still not annoyed, that was well-earned pride and confidence he gained through battle and not through legacy.

“If that is your wish, my blade shall be by your side.”

Zaryusu was the next to speak his mind and renew his allegiance.

That one and Leinas had always been the hardest for Riyuro to put his finger on. They were extremely devoted to Lakys, he had no doubt they would follow her in a suicidal charge if she asked them too... and the fact she would never ask was the same reason why Riyuro himself would follow her as well.

Though, that was all he could say of the two, he had not much in common with any of them apart from his loyalty. Zaryusu seemed

like a good and dutiful father when possible, something he could not relate to, not having a family of his own, and Leinas often surprised him with her sudden teasing he would not expect from someone who was so stoic most of the time. He was ashamed to admit he had been a successful target of such surprise attacks more times than he would have hoped.

Still, the two remained some of the best sparring partners he ever had, hell, together they might even manage to put him on the defensive once in a while.

“Well, what is done is done, we all know how Lakys gets when she made a decision.”

Arche just sighed in exasperation.

“Hey! I am not that bad!”

The older blonde protested.

“How?! How are you all going along with this?! Don’t you realize you will more than likely die?!”

The black-haired rider who came along with Lakys seemed quite astonished if not frustrated by their seemingly making light of the situation.

“We are adventurers, we would not be in the business if we didn’t accept the risk... but even more than that, we trust Lady Lakys will never voluntarily bring us into something we are incapable of overcoming.”

Everyone agreed with Leinas’ words be it by nodding or speaking up, which seemed to baffle the rider to no end.

“Well, if we are to face a beast such as this... we should first understand what we are up against, the fact this S’hiraihyo seems

to take little to no damage from the wyverns' elemental breath, and those metal lances basically bouncing off is concerning... luckily for us I have been blessed by Master Satoru!"

Rayne exclaimed excitedly as he turned to rummage among his belongings till a sound of jubilation erupted from his mouth as he turned around cradling something in his arms as if it was his own child.

"Behold! The Great Encyclopedia of Master Satoru!"

He presented the thick book to everyone in their group. Riyuro had to say, he never saw many books in his life, seeing how most of them were inside the Royal Palace and the few found outside were useless due to his kind inability to read. But the few he managed to put his claws on were extremely informative and at the base of many of his reforms.

This one... this one was the most luxurious book he ever saw in his life, his natural instincts telling him that the golden lines on the cover were actual gold and not just paint.

He didn't expect any less from the monster the two caster call their master. Everyone else seemed to agree as exclamations of awe and surprise filled the area at Rayne's reveal.

"Wait! I never saw that book before!"

Lakyus was the one who spoke up, questioning how the boy came into possession of such an artifact.

"Master Satoru granted me this incredible artifact before our departure! Seeing how we would be so far from familiar land and foes, he wished to grant us a meaning through which we might learn of those we meet!"

The boy explained excitedly.

“And how do you know what we seek can be found in there? This is a creature born of the Gods, I doubt there exists another of its kind your master could have met, nor survived the encounter.”

The one to voice doubt was none other than the black-haired, which attracted the annoyance of the blonde imperial caster.

“Master Satoru is a greatly experienced caster of the 6th tier! He could probably defeat this one on his lonesome, after all he already slew a Dragon Lord in single combat, I doubt this creature could rival him in power!”

The rider seemed taken aback at first before the shock of the revelation hit her completely, prompting her to turn toward Lakyus as if to seek for a contradictory.

“I saw it with my own eyes Kaelin, Satoru killed the White Dragon Lord alone, and it didn’t seem like he was injured in the process... but please, do not talk of this anymore, after all he was Vulmitar’s father.”

The rider turned her head from the swordswoman to the frost dragon and then back to the smug form of Arche. She did not open her mouth again.

“And to answer your question, this is not a book Master Satoru personally wrote, when he granted me this he told me it was an heirloom that passed through the hands of generation after generation of warriors and explorers, till the last one lost it to Master Satoru in a duel... He also added his personal notes to the book about the creatures it displays.”

Rayne explained further before placing the open book down on his lap, as he scrutinized the index written in a language Riyuro did not know.

“I am still not as fluent as you in this, Arche can you help me?”

The boy asked for the assistance of his fellow apprentice who sighed.

“How are you going to learn more if you refuse to practice?”

She lamented but went down on her knees, nonetheless.

“Should we check the Wyvern section? Or maybe the Chimera section, seeing how it has multiple heads?”

She pondered aloud to no one in particular.

“Uhm I think Chimeras are a mix of different beings, I don’t think that is the case here... maybe Hydras?”

The boy suggested, receiving a nod from the blonde caster.

“Then Hydras start at page 893 and Wyverns at page 1078.”

The girl explained after consulting the index, though Riyuro had to mentally doubt her ability to read those numbers as the book, while large, could not possibly be over 400 pages. He had to eat his words before even uttering them as Rayne proceeded to pass over hundreds of pages making the Quagoa question his own sight as the book seemed to be never ending, as if pages were appearing out of nowhere.

He was apparently not the only one who was baffled by the strange book, to the point Rayne addressed their doubts without needed to be asked.

“The book is magical in nature, Master Satoru says that we are welcome to record any new being we meet, and that the index is automatically- Wow! Look at this Lakys! An elemental Hydra! Is this what Luck is going to turn into?!”

The boy interrupted himself midway, excitedly turning the book around to show them a giant hydra with six heads. A different element in each of their mouths. The image seemed to have been painted on the book by an artist of great skill as the creature looked more intimidating than even the White Dragon Lord to Riyuro.

“Wow! An average danger level of 65?! That’s damn high!”

Rayne cried out in surprise.

“That doesn’t seem that high though, isn’t that like a Troll General?”

Questioned Lakys with a doubtful expression.

“This is not like the adventurer guild’s danger level, here a Death Knight, who is considered around 90 in the adventurer system, is a mere 35.”

Lakys was not the only one to gawk at Arche’s explanation, as Leinas seemed shaken just as much at the revelation. Riyuro never met one of those undead as they were quite rare, but he had been around humans enough to hear stories about the legendary undead only the strongest warriors and mages could hope to bring down.

“And this hydra... is double the danger level of a Death Knight?!”

Riyuro could count on one hand the times he saw Leinas lose her usual stoic composure.

“It must be a legendary creature...”

Added Zaryusu as he apparently marveled at the imposing figure of the hydra.

“Here it says it is a boss? No, I think it should be read as leader, that can be found in the deep lakes of... I can’t seem to read the name of the land here... though its scales render it immune to magic up to the 3rd tier and magic weapons or higher quality are needed to pierce its hide.”

Many of them widened their eyes at the description. That sounded like a most dangerous beast indeed. To be so resilient.

“Imagine what an amazing armor you could create out of those scales...”

Lakyus wondered aloud, seemingly lost in her own fantasy.

“Or a robe!”

Rayne added matching her dream-like expression.

“Can we get back to S’hiraihyo?”

Asked an impatient Kaelin, as the young casters continued to flap through pages and pages.

“Wyverns... so many wyverns... Uhm! I think I found you your tribe’s!”

The blonde caster turned the book to reveal a wyvern much similar to the tribe’s own mounts.

“Danger level between 15 and 20, territorial, and prone to lose themselves in their bloodlust if not tamed... Only way to bond with one is to have them hatch using the rider’s heat to care for them in the incubation period.”

Arche recited what she read much to the black-haired young woman's shock.

“H-how do you even know that? That is a secret of the tribe!”

Kaelin stammered out, clearly taken aback by the knowledge displayed.

“This is quite the amazing source of knowledge... I doubt I ever saw a book that could hold a candle to this in the entirety of the Dwarven Royal Palace's archives... I wonder why a great caster coveting knowledge such as Lord Satoru would part from this.”

Vulmitar questioned something Riyuro himself had been asking in his mind.

“Ah, Master Satoru told me he pretty much knew this book by heart at this point, he wishes for me to keep adding to it as his apprentice... ah! I had no doubt he meant Arche as well in that statement!”

The boy clearly learned his lesson since he managed to avoid getting a stick shoved upside his head before it was too late. Still, that was still a concerning statement, Riyuro had long ago stopped getting surprised by the caster's feats, after all he had accepted the fact this one apparently had no ceiling blocking his ascension. Yet others still gawked at the information given, much to his amusement.

“Hey look! This is a Wyvern Emperor! They are born from a special egg laid by a wyvern with royal blood... whatever that means... danger level... 80?!”

The blonde caster almost cried out as she turned the book to show them a giant and far more fearsome version of the wyverns they

have seen, its multiple horns and head structure making it look it was wearing a crown.

“Capable of magic of the... 9th TIER?! No, I must have mistranslated this one... there is no way!”

Arche jumped back as if she had been physically burned by the pages. Not that anyone could blame her, what she just said was an absolute impossibility, magic of legends and myth, attributed only to godly beings.

“Y-yeah, you probably read the number wrong, maybe it is 6th tier? We can check that later!”

Rayne intervened, immediately turning the page to continue their search. It took the better part of an hour and a half before they finally found something matching the description given.

“I told you we should have searched the Chimera section, you dolt!”

Arche berated her fellow apprentice with no true heat if Riyuro had to judge.

“This is an Elder Elemental Hyvern, three heads capable of each using fire, ice, and lightning respectively, it is a creature known for its great elemental resistance, a... common ride? Maybe I translated that wrong, though, seeing how riding is mentioned, it is possible this creature was somehow a favorite ride of the one who wrote this information?”

Arche hypothesized, Riyuro noticed how the dark-haired human jumped back as soon as the image was revealed to them, as if frightened by the only sight of it. Riyuro was not going to lie, it was one ugly bastard, and pretty resistant-looking, a foe worth his claws.

“I-I think that might be it... b-but I will have my f-father take a look since he s-saw it with his own eyes.”

Kaelin stammered out as the two casters continued to read.

“Highly resistant to elementally enchanted weapons, can be cut by adamantite and rarer ores? I am no smith, but I never heard of any metals greater than adamantite, though, this is a book which passed through centuries and foreign lands... so we might just be uninformed.”

Arche was interrupted by Rayne pointing at one corner of the page.

“Look, here the calligraphy is different... is that... Master Satoru’s notes? I think I recognize some of his signature writing.”

The boy said excitedly as the blonde caster squinted her eyes to look at what he was indicating.

“That looks a bit like Master’s writing... uhm... Do not waste mana on high tier spells... just use Penetrate Magic?”

The two casters looked at each other as if having a silent conversation among themselves.

“So... uhm, what danger level is that?”

Lakyus’ question seemed to break the spell as the two turned toward the book, clearly aware of their blatant overlook of one of the most important details.

“Danger level... 50...”

This time around it was Rayne to read the book out loud for all to hear.

“That’s... higher than I hoped...”

Lakyus grimaced as the scope of their foe was revealed to them. She sounded as conflicted as Riyuro ever heard her be, but he already knew what her answer would be... so, he would just nudge her in their inevitable direction.

He moved swiftly, wrapping his arm around the shoulder of his boss in a confidential manner.

“Why so gloomy boss? Have you forgotten? This claws can cut through adamantite as if it was paper... and I bet those two and the flying lizard already have some magical solution concocted into their minds, your tall guard and the fish farmer might not be as good as this amazing former king you have here, but they can act as decent bait.”

Both Leinas and Zaryusu snorted at his playful address. He was sure their next spar will not be as one sided as the last was... but the important thing was that a confident smile had been returned to Lakyus face.

“Thanks, Riyuro.”

She whispered before addressing everyone else, her green eyes ablaze.

“Well, everyone! We have a lot of work to do! And only three months to do it!”

She said cracking her knuckles.

This was about to get dicey... he expected nothing less!

A.N.

Well, everyone! Lots of talking in this one! But I also got out a big chunk of the lore I intended to add to this arc, so it is only going to get more action-focused from here onward!

Though, I certainly hope this did not bore you, as I had put a lot of thought in crafting something believable that could fit in the New World of Maruyama.

Short note on the Encyclopedia, we only see it in canon when Shalltear takes it out addressing it as Peroroncino's. Now, I have thought for quite a lot that it was something the birdman created, but apparently it is an item given out at the start of the game to everyone. So Satoru certainly has one of his own. The bone daddy certainly got high hopes for the spiritual second coming of Ainz Ooal Gown if he is willing to lend it to Rayne and Arche. So, yeah, just wanted to clarify that it is not an actual custom item since I thought it was for the longest time (hope I am not alone in having been fooled).

And yes, for those who still have doubts, these guys are the descendants of the naturally spawned minions of the 8GK's base. Nazarick has its own, but since they are undead, they are incapable of reproducing, something I don't think these one would have a problem doing.

Another note on S'hiraihyo, I am very proud of that name since I think it is pretty clever (I can address it now that his race has been revealed).

Hi = Fire

Rai = Lightning

Hyo = Ice

The initial S'+Hi sound like the word Shi when read aloud (since apostrophes are non verbal). And Shi = Death as many Japanophiles will already know.

So, if we wanted to translate the name it would be something like “Fire, Lighting, and Ice of Death” or “Death by Fire, Lightning, and Ice”.

Dunno why I feel really proud about this name. maybe it's because I am pretty bad at naming stuff usually.

With that said, I am eager to hear your comments / reviews more than ever!

Stay safe! Till next time!