# Beefed Boar

**LEVEL :** 40    **ORIGIN :** Animalia    **HP :** 650    **ATT :** 450    **ATT DEF :** 200    **AGI:** 30

Nav flashed an abbreviated stat prompt. There was no point in showing all their stats. Not when they were so low that they were comparable to the nutritional value of a blade of grass.

Satiation was all they were good for.

Birds fled in droves as the forest began to rattle. The leaves shivered as loose pebbles danced like water on a hot skillet. The world vibrated as lines of trees obscured the entire hoard of Beefed Boars. They chased a small group of Adventurers straight into their direction.

A head on collision was inevitable.

"HELP! HELP! PLEASE HELP!"

"SOMEONE! ANYONE! I KNOW YOU CAN HEAR US! STAMPEEEEEEDE!"

"WE'RE SORRY! WE'RE SO SORRY!"

It was not long before Frost had a direct line of sight with the three Adventures, and the massive, muscular boars that gave chase. They were incredibly fast for their level and size, which was easily twice that of a regular adult boar.

Furred, snouted bulls better described those monstrosities. Once again, the term 'monster' and 'animal' meant little to her in this world where their normality were her abnormalities.

Tree trunks were pushed aside by the great beasts. All that stood in their path were trampled and ripped to shreds, leaving behind a trail of devasted earth and trees that were shoved like parted reeds.

Their raw strength was incredible. There was no way those three Adventurers were going to stand a chance against them. Frost had to wonder just how they ended up in that predicament in the first place.

"I don't know what your customs and rules are like in this world, but I don't think dragging a whole train of monsters right towards another group is a good idea." She criticized with furrowed brows.

Most of the foragers were less than level 20, and the average levels of the Adventurers present were roughly 50, including those three. Two or three stray boars would be no problem for a prepared group.

But 50? It was better if they led them towards the stream and just jumped in to avoid them than to drag them and cause a potential murder.

"No way. That's punishable by the 6th Branch. They call it 'tagging'. Cause you're tagging other groups into your mess. And last time I checked, Beefed Boars aren't social animals. They like to be alone. Those idiots must've kicked a hornet's nest somewhere." Cer yawned as Frost set her sights directly upon the entire horde.

They all collapsed in an instant, and the Adventurers were left dazed by the event. Each of the boars played dead the moment they realized they were caught in the metaphorical maw of an inescapable beast.

And then, with a voice louder than the sound of countless trampling hooves, Frost shouted:

"YOU THREE! STAY RIGHT THERE! DON'T MOVE!" Her voice washed over them like a tidal wave of pure dread.

She didn't immediately believe that they had malicious intentions, but as soon as she saw one of them turn on their heels and try to flee, she hit all three of them with Scrutiny. There was no red. Just blue, indicating that there was no ill intent.

They blinked only once, and Frost was already standing just a meter away. She reached a hand out towards them and watched them tremble. After witnessing the sudden 'deaths' of the boars, they could only expect the worst from this person whose gaze drilled so deeply into their souls that they felt like even their thoughts were being scrutinized.

It did not help that Ignis' glare was just as scathing.

But it was not her intention to scare them. Quite the opposite in fact. While she was understandably angry, she did not know their circumstances. Judging from their frightened and equally relieved expressions, their malice was more likely explainable with incompetence.

"Hey. Are you hurt anywhere?" These were the first words to leave her lips. They were mellow, and her voice was warm. Frost did not judge them immediately, and instead, wanted to ensure that they were ok first and foremost.

"Fine… We're ok… You saved us." A short, Elven mage lady uttered, leaning on her staff as Frost cast [Area Healing]. Their wounds were minimal, but they were completely exhausted. "Too… Many… Damn…"

"Take deep breaths. You're safe now. Calm down and tell us what happened to you all." Frost kindly asked, her voice so starkly different from her eyes that it made the group of three wonder if this really was a healer at all.

Plus, her near all black getup was weird for a healer to begin with.

"Boars… W-We didn't mean to tag you! There was so many, and we didn't know what to do or where to go!" A lightly armored man, who also carried a wooden staff, apologized profusely.

He spoke in a begging manner, deeply aware of their actions and the damage it could have caused.

It was oddly refreshing. Of course, she didn't enjoy seeing people so distraught, but it made her glad that they weren't anything like Leitmotif and the Bloody Herring. Those unapologetically evil Impuritas did not shed a single ounce of sorrow, and they truly believed they were in the right till the bitter end.

"Light! The bright light! It was attracting them! Boars – Y-You all know Beefed Boars don't herd up together like the smaller ones!" The third member was another Elven woman, who carried a shortened pike. "I'm telling you; we didn't do anything wrong! They just looked at us and started chasing! If we turned, then we would've been done for so… S-So u-um – Coins!"

The Elves suddenly wrang out a handful of emerald, leaf-shaped coins.

"We have coins! Elven coins!" The other exclaimed.

"Or do you prefer standard coins? S-Silver's all we have. Sorry –!" The man was then suddenly cut off by Jury.

"Calm down! We're not shaking you down. You didn't mean it, so it's ok." Jury's words could be taken for as naive, but that was how she genuinely felt.

There was no malice, so it was ok in her mind. And besides, since nothing major did come out of it, Jury was willing to let them go. They didn't seem like the kind that would make trouble either.

Rather, they looked like the kind that tended to attract it.

"You do understand that if it weren't for us then someone could have died today." Frost's tone deeply shifted.

"I understand."

"I know… I'm sorry. I'm so sorry."

"I'm telling you, it's… It's out fault but there wasn't anything we could have done."

Frost forgave them for what seemed to be totally out of their control.

These people were sincere. But there was a risk that a phantom guilt would linger in their hearts. The triplets, Ignis, and a hidden Snap watched on from aside.

She could tell that they thought they were letting them off way too easily. If this was Grandis, then they'd be paying with other things besides coins. Either that or they'd already be dead.

Brandar was a thousand times more civil, more forgiving, and ever more vibrant.

"… I guess Adventurers like you wouldn't need coins in the first place…" The man said shamefully.

Frost ended up letting loose of a silent sigh before she reprimanded them in her own way.

"If you're really sorry, then how about you go back to the Guild and let them know about this."

"To turn ourselves in…" The Elven women knew that Adventures like Frost would have a sphere of influence, so there was no escaping them.

But they deeply misunderstood.

"You three can't haul all these boars alone. Tell the Receptionist that the Black Dove sent you. It's the least you can do. Just be careful next time. Do you know the way back?" Frost kindly spoke, causing all three of them to stare at her in disbelief.

They didn't refute.

"Y-Yes. We know the way back. E-Elves and forests, haha… Hah… 50 boars for the Black Dove." The mage Elf nodded, thankful that things turned out ok.

Not just the outcome, but also that no one was hurt in the end.

"T-Thank you… For overlooking this." The human man shallowly bowed at them. "We won't forget it."

"I thought that was over for us." The other Elf sighed in relief. "You're really letting us go? Tagging is a big deal in Brandar."

"I can still change my mind." Frost joked, instantly causing her to shuffle off with a loud, fake laugh.

"Hahahah! W-We'll be going now! 50 boars for the Black Dove! And thanks a lot! Not often you meet reasonable heads!" She exclaimed, dragging her companions along until they disappeared.

They were left alone with the 'dead' boars. Frost poked at one with a finger, dragging it along its belly. Looking at them up closely, they were kind of cute.

"Don't you dare show them any remorse. Beefed Boars are pests. They're a kill on sight kind of threat." Res stated as Ignis also nodded in agreement.

Ignis jabbed one in the head using her bony appendage, and Res electrocuted another. The other boars did not even dare to move. They simply accepted the fact that they were done for.

"You let them off waaaaaaaaay too easily. What's up with that?" Cer critiqued.

"I figured they're not bad people. No one ended up getting hurt, so let's not harp on it." Frost said. "We already forgave them. And besides, what's 50 boars going to do to us?"

"Exactly! That's what I wanted to hear from you!" Cer exclaimed.

"Yep! They're just four legged lumps of meat!" Ber joined her. "Only animals run on all fours!"

"Are you even listening to yourselves?" Res stared at them like they were idiots.

According to Nav, Beefed Boars were an invasive species that once thrived in the neighboring Emvita Region in the south. But due to unforeseen events, they migrated into Brandar centuries ago and ruined 30% of its woodlands.

This explained why Brandar was mostly a barren plainland. Old artistic works of Brandar depicted endless thickets and woodlands. While they were not the main culprits for Brandar's transformation, they were certainly one of the main contributors.

But of course, they couldn't compare to the nightly pores that swallowed the lands beyond the walls of the Nex Megalopolis.