

## Chapter 679 Titan

Ilea stood on the side of the descending cliff, a circular abyss below her with massive cannons and war machines all around. Her fight in the Dome would be in four days, their gold not yet invested to avoid others doing the same. Right now she was an entirely unknown new fighter, apparently taking on a promising young dwarf. She felt a little bad for him already, but it would surely be a valuable lesson.

The Guild had offered a few jobs but generally they just took everything the divers would find, to then categorize, organize, sell, and bring it to the various smithies in the town. One of the most interesting jobs was an ancient notice asking divers to investigate a deep part of the caverns, apparently called the Shining Caves. Few who went in there came back, and those who did were not quite themselves anymore.

Ilea assumed some high level mind magic to be at play. And what good war machine titan would let such a dangerous creature endanger the locals? The location was rather deep too, which would allow them to have a look at various dangerous sections of the pit on the way down.

“You have the map, right?” Ilea asked.

“Yeah, yeah,” Verena answered, the three of them lacking any visible gear other than Ilea’s war machine.

A few of the machines walking past gave them curious glances, some muttering something about newcomers or fresh meat.

“Our first stop should be on this side of the pit. Four kilometers down,” Verena said.

Pierce whistled. “Now that’s depth.”

Ilea walked forward, her wings extending out of her armored back to keep her heavy falling form at least somewhat stable.

The others followed.

She felt a few impacts going down, seeing some old machinery and outcrops of rock shattered by her legs and back. “Sorry,” she whispered, using her wings to accelerate downwards. The descent would take minutes if they were only falling after all.

“We’re close!” Verena shouted through the wind, her body slowing down.

Ilea moved out her wings and turned around in the air, her steel hands and body slamming into the stone wall of the pit, ripping out entire chunks as she slowed her descent, most of the work done by her entirely overwhelmed wings.

“It’s here!” Verena shouted from above, Ilea leaving a line of destruction in the stone before she finally just stored her armor and teleported upwards.

She resummoned it once inside the large crevice leading into the stone. *Okay don’t fall for several thousand meters. You cannot stop.*

“Are these the shining caves already?” Pierce asked, looking over the cliff side and into the darkness that still went on for an unreasonable distance.

“No, but the tunnels could lead us there. This was a silver mine... two hundred years ago. They collapsed most of it when they came upon high level undead,” Verena informed.

“We will cleanse the cursed,” the titan said, its vibrating voice traveling into the depths.

Detonations resounded from far below, dulled and far away.

“They’re having fun,” Pierce said.

Ilea increased her weight and walked into the dark mine shaft. She actually fit. The dwarves who had built it must’ve been quite considerate of war machines. *Easier to dig with these things too, for most people at least*, she thought and formed an ashen drill on her right arm. She glanced at the two Elders behind her, their forms not quite small enough to finish her cosplay but she was close.

They came up on a collapsed tunnel about ten minutes later. Ilea prepared her drill and got to work, the sounds reverberating through the vicinity, pebbles and dust falling from above and into the darkness. Only Verena’s flames and the occasional sparks from Pierce illuminated the vicinity, none of them particularly bothered by the darkness.

“Another ten meters,” Ilea informed.

Verena stored most of the large stone chunks in her storage item before she teleported away to dump it all in another tunnel.

“Any monsters?” Pierce asked.

“Yep,” Ilea said and displaced one of the waiting creatures next to the woman.

### ***[Cursed Undead Skinner – lvl 410] – [Hostile / Confused]***

The creature looked a little like an elongated hyena, its face distinctly dwarven with thin hair sticking to its skin, unkempt fur covering the rest of its body. It screeched, its mouth opening wide. Sharp teeth lined its jaws as a venomous cloud spread outwards.

Lightning cracked in the darkness, blue energy burning through the wailing monster that tried to get to Pierce. It took a few steps when a massive steel arm slammed down on its back.

Ilea grabbed the creature and smashed it against the wall a few times. She finished it off by breaking its neck. Or so she thought.

The skinner continued to slash into her armaments with its sharp claws. It gurgled and spit an acidic substance onto her helmet.

Ilea aimed the undead towards the section she hadn’t dug out yet. A bright flash of flames and heat burst out. The dark tunnel was illuminated for a second, the undead entirely incinerated including a part of the tunnel wall. A ding resounded.

Pierce coughed, waving away the venomous cloud as her armor flowed out to cover her face.

“Ugh... that’s vile. And now I’m poisoned. Great.”

“My child, do not fear the darkness,” the titan said, trying to pat her head.

The Elder dodged away. “If anyone’s a child, it’s you.”

“Then stop whining,” Ilea said, her drill bit spinning once more.

“We’re about to break through,” she informed the others. “Twenty of those things will come rushing in on us. Maybe make some distance.”

Both Elders vanished, appearing about twenty meters back the way they had come from.

“Knock knock,” the titan said and broke through with its drill.

Ilea watched twenty of the undead creatures crawl out with impressive speed, near instantly on her and spewing out their acid, clouds of venom covering the whole vicinity. She remained calm as her armor was scratched and eaten through, a sphere of flames flashing out a moment later.

Bits and pieces of undead were thrown aside, a smoldering sphere added to the tunnel system with strewn about creatures. Ilea was surprised some had even survived. She stepped over, lifting her foot above a slowly regenerating undead. It came down with a wet and heavy impact. An unrecognizable mush flowed away from her boot, her drill arm coming down on another creature. She displaced it back when it tried to avoid the attack. Her weaponized arm came down, the high momentum ash ripping apart the undead in less than a second, splattering the walls and Ilea’s armaments with black blood.

She stopped the spinning and used her other hand to move the bits that remained to the right of her drill. The titan stepped close to the wall where the drill spun again, the still living undead ground away between stone and ash.

She healed her armor in the process, walking onward where she could see another group of undead rush towards her from the halls of an ancient tomb.

Ilea made her drill disappear and clenched both her fists, lightning flashing past her as she changed into a slow jog. Her steps made the walls tremble. Dust and debris fell down as she alerted more undead further in the complex.

“Come to me,” she said, slamming down her fist on the first unfortunate critter. They were certainly fast and could see well enough in the dark to dodge her slow attacks. But what she had was mass. Ilea simply stepped to the side, slamming her massive form against the wall. Several creatures turned to mush, bones splintered and heads cracked.

Ilea finished off the ones close to death with her reverse healing, just in case they were actually suffering. Nothing she saw suggested any kind of intellect remained in inside their brains, but she wanted to be sure. She nearly stumbled after slamming herself into the other side of the tomb, her control still questionable.

The creatures did try to bring her down, some jumping on her chest or using their acid on her legs specifically. It was all inconsequential.

Ilea stomped those close to her legs and displaced those on her chest into her massive hands, squeezing until their bodies were broken chunks of flesh. Everything around her died, the next group of approaching creatures riddled by lances of ash. Ilea jogged towards them and tried to jump, falling onto the group of injured undead with a reverberating crash. Black blood splattered against the walls before she tried to push herself up with her hands.

She slipped and slammed into the mush again, nothing even remotely reaching her real form deep within the hunk of steel.

“Brutal,” Pierce said as she walked closer. “Do you need help getting up?”

"I am... the destroyer," Ilea said with her destroyer voice. "I do not n-" she slipped again. "Help."

Pierce checked one of the nearby graves. "Not like I could lift you anyway," she mused. "These are all broken."

"From the inside," Verena confirmed as she joined in, her flames showing the true carnage of Ilea's rampage.

"Are there more coming?" Pierce asked, another loud thunk resounding as Ilea slipped for the third time.

A bed of ash spread below her armor, cleaning both the regenerating metal and the stone floor. Finally, with a bit of a better grip, she slowly moved up her right knee while pushing herself up with both arms. Her movement stopped there however.

"You're stuck," Pierce commented.

"No," the titan replied, pushing her knee further up as she tried to get the foot under herself. She finally just slammed it into the ground to get some leverage and pushed herself forward. Her left hand crashed through four empty graves. She stumbled her way up, managing to dig her right hand into the ceiling. The pull allowed for enough counterweight to let her lift her left leg, landing on both feet. "Beauty. And grace," the deep voice thundered as pieces of rock fell from above and the walls around her.

Pierce clapped. "What will you do if there aren't conveniently placed walls all around you?" she asked.

"One step at a time," the titan replied. "And no, I think if there were any more undead nearby, they'd be here by now."

"We pretty much just go down from here," Verena said.

Ilea walked back the way they came, her ashen limbs rushing up and cutting into the ceiling. More of the tunnel collapsed, sealing the entrance once more. "We were never here."

They continued through the maze of the tomb, not finding any more creatures until they came out into a spacious hall. It was dully lit by ancient magical lights, most of them out with a few still giving off a green hue. There were dozens of graves lined up on the walls. In the back and center of the hall stood a large stone table covered in runes, a dust covered skeleton lying on top with bones on the floor on each side. In front of the table floated a being radiating an aura of death and rot, thin strips of skin still clinging to its frail humanoid body, most of it covered with a tattered black robe. It wielded an obsidian staff and turned when the group entered its domain.

Ilea's steps made dust fall from the ceiling as she watched the being through her domain.

It raised its staff. A pulse of mana rushed out, entering the graves all around.

***[Priest of the Blight Chosen – lvl ???] – [Undead]***

"It's just above six hundred," Ilea said. "I suggest you two be careful."

"More dangerous things in the graves," Verena informed, her body clad in flames as she jumped back, two burning black axes appearing in her hands.

Lightning flashed around Pierce, a large bolt rushing towards the robed figure before it impacted a shield of green energy. "Ah of course. Always with these pure mages," she murmured and vanished.

Ilea kept a loose eye on them through her dominion. She ran at the priest when a roar resounded from one of the walls.

Two graves that had just opened up revealed a few Skinners crawling out, just before the wall behind them exploded into the hall. A massive humanoid being covered in rotten flesh and sickly skin barreled through the debris. It probably weighed about as much as Ilea with all of that fat. Below however, strained muscle could be seen.

*A tank, just like me,* Ilea thought with a grin reverse healing the dozens of Skinners coming from the many graves.

Pierce flashed in and out of existence around the Priest, lightning crashing with death magic shields and beams, Verena running through the hordes with her axes and flames cutting through both flesh and stone.

“God you’re disgusting,” Ilea’s deep voice bellowed. She charged the massive being with a grin on her face.

The creature did the same, its eyes milky and unfocused.

***[Undead Flesh Titan – lvl ???] - [Heavy]***

*Yeah, I noticed,* Ilea thought, her armored form crashing into the mountain of flesh and muscle.

Both of them were brought to an abrupt halt, their feet looking for leverage to push on. Ilea sent a heavy strike into the monster’s side. Flesh wobbled with the impact but the monster didn’t react at all, instead trying to grab her arm with both hands.

It coughed and retched, a mass of steaming flesh puked up from its mouth to cover Ilea’s armored helmet and chest. A sizzling noise came from the liquid as it ate through the steel at an alarming rate.

She healed against it, using her ash to wipe off what she could, her limbs cutting through the monster’s flesh and muscle without a reaction. She went for the head and managed to rip it off with three quick slashes, but the thing kept moving.

The Flesh Titan held on to her arm before its whole body started to bloat. The cuts on its body were already knitting themselves back together, a part of its head regenerated too.

Ilea could feel the massive amount of mana build within the level eight hundred creature, ripping her hand free with a last effort before she covered her chest and helmet. The sound that followed was downright revolting. A deep squelch.

Blood, guts, and flesh exploded outwards, splattering against everything in a near ten meter radius. The undead nearby were entirely covered, screeching as their bodies dissolved in the steaming piles of disgusting fat. The stone itself dissolved, the red mush turning a darker shade.

Ilea’s arms were gone, her real ones revealed below, two layers of her ash eaten through as well. Her steel chest had been reduced to less than half, her helmet just barely covering her face at this point. She could feel herself retch at the smell coming through. What she perceived with her dominion was more than enough.

*Let’s not train Flesh Magic Resistance with this guy,* she thought, already questioning her decision before the smell reminded her once more. *You could just remove your nose and close your eyes. No. No, let’s just not.*

Most of the monster's body was gone, its skeletal legs barely keeping the fleshy remains aloft as it regenerated at an alarming speed.

"My turn," the steel titan said, channeling her 80s action energy before a sphere of heat flashed out.

Whatever had remained around them was now entirely gone. And still, Ilea stood before her enemy. Its rib cage was all that remained, bone and flesh quickly appearing as its magic kept it alive.

She formed more heat within herself and extended a few ashen limbs towards the remains. Her armor healed at a slower pace than the undead, but in the end only one of them would remain. Embered Heart flashed out in a cone, stripping away the undying flesh. She raised her armored boot and brought it down on the scorched rib cage. Cracks resounded on the first strike. On the second, it crumbled entirely. Ilea kept on stomping, occasionally sending another blast of heat onto the small crater. Until she finally received the notification.

**'ding' 'You have defeated [Undead Flesh Titan – lvl 803]'**

A few more messages came up but she ignored them for now. She turned to the others, her steel still repairing itself with the help of her healing.

The two Elders had managed to somewhat reduce the number of Skinners but more were still coming.

Ilea watched the priest, seeing it still send pulses of magic into various nearby graves. *Those are empty*, she thought and watched as new Skinners formed from mana itself. "We have to kill the source," she said and walked towards the creature.

It turned and sent a beam of purple death magic her way but the attack failed to stop the monstrous being.

Ilea let the death beam burn into her armaments until her fist came down on the priest. A thick magical shield flared up, sparks lightning up the surroundings.

*Let's get rid of that, shall we.* She formed a dozen ashen limbs, all of them slashing into the shield. Tempered seal burning into the magic coupled with spreading white flames and delayed explosions. The shield cracked and she lashed out to grab the undead.

Her massive hand closed around its frail chest. She squished it and used her other hand to rip off its head. Neither managed to kill the being but the summoning of more Skinners ceased.

Pierce's armor looked battered, a part of her face melted away by acid but her lightning still lit up the room as she flew by and scorched the undead running after her.

Verena looked fine, her body glowing with power in Ilea's dominion, her wounds constantly regenerating as she slashed and cut into the horde of beasts.

"Can I get a beam!" Pierce shouted. She flew past Ilea's shoulder with a dozen monsters at her toes. Only ash remained after a cone of flames enveloped them.

The woman landed on Ilea's shoulder. "That was close. Thanks."

"Get off my shoulder, mortal," the titan boomed.