

## Chapter 507 Impressions

“They’re at one fifty. It’s only natural to be afraid of level four hundred creatures,” Lilith retorted.

*Yes, you twat.*

“Do you shit your pants at an eight hundred one?” he asked the ashen woman.

“We’re fucking nuts though, everyone keeps telling me that,” Lilith said.

*She has a point.*

“I don’t like the look this one is giving us,” the man said and glanced at her.

*Oh shit.*

“Being a sensitive little pissbag again?” Lilith said and chuckled.

“You just don’t get the respect you deserve these days, not without a few massacres,” the man said and shook his head, water splashing to the floor from his constantly dripping clothes.

“Apologies, sir,” Reagan said and bowed. “I had not expected reinforcements, not of this incredible power.”

“There she goes,” the man said.

“Are you happy now?” Lilith asked. “Stop bowing to him, he’s a fucking pirate.”

“I agree. Why are you bowing,” the man said.

*What??*

“I liked you more with that defiant look,” he said.

Reagan looked up but remained silent. Anything she said could forfeit her life.

“You’re not making sense,” Lilith said.

*Yes! You’re not!*

“Of course I’m making sense. First she was defiant, which annoyed me. Then she turned into a little bitch, which is annoying too,” he said.

Lilith slapped the man with such speed and power that his neck must have snapped.

He remained standing however and just chuckled.

“Don’t call her a bitch. She was the only commander who managed to keep everyone alive. Ma’am, we checked on five positions in the eastern part. Do you know of any more?” Lilith asked.

*Ma’am??? You’re the higher ranking officer! Get me out of here!*

She gulped and answered, “No ma’am. There are five positions I know of. We deemed it too dangerous to spread our forces even thinner.”

“But you didn’t have enough ranged spells and artillery mages to take care of more than two positions,” the man suddenly said, his previous comments seemingly forgotten.

“The creatures were underestimated. We assumed them to be between two and three hundred, sir,” she said.

“Hmm... that makes sense. Well, I suggest falling back to the south and reinforcing that position. There should be enough space and I doubt it’s crowded with creatures again already,” he said.

*My ticket out of here!*

“Pack up everyone, we’re reinforcing Winters’ position,” she immediately said and teleported to her pack, shouldering it before she opened up the stone wall.

“Thanks for the assist, Lilith,” she said and winked towards the ashen woman.

*Oh gods oh fuck*, she thought and rushed out, followed quickly by her team. She only glanced at the massacre that had taken place in the plaza, dozens of dead monsters and hundreds of Cursed slowly drifting away in the waning waves.

*I think I peed myself a little.*

Captain Reagan focused back on her task and signaled to her team as they rushed over the roofs of Seyna, their slowly approaching deaths prevented by a stroke of fate, or perhaps just luck.

She already saw the powerful spells flying down and into the city with precise arcs, cast by several trained mages in tandem. *Just another day. Soon this war is over and we can go home.*

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“Hey, she didn’t thank me!” Hector said as they stepped through the cleared out square.

“You were a prick too, I wouldn’t have thanked you,” Ilea said.

“I don’t care about prick or no, they were getting their asses beat,” he said.

“That’s true. Pretty impressive defensive positions. And the spells they used in the central ones, I assume those were mages working together?” Ilea asked.

“Either that or they were using enchanted siege machines. I’d say just working together. They’re usually simple spells but if you have a few people fueling them together, the destructive power is rather impressive. Close to our power even if a few level two hundreds band together,” Hector said.

“Hmm... with that speed they’re not going to be very successful against someone like me,” Ilea said.

“Not what they’re used for anyway. Those spells were made to break through city walls and raze entire towns. Every adventurer team would use them if they could emulate my pressurized water for example,” he said.

“Let’s go then, we’ve lost enough time on this,” he said.

*Very well, some treasure then.*

The two teleported a few times to get into the city.

Ilea kept close to the man, trusting his treasure sense as they flowed through the buildings and streets with high speed and destructive capability.

Dozens of creatures and Cursed were slaughtered in their path before Hector suddenly vanished underground.

Ilea followed, blinking through dark hallways and Cursed infested halls before she appeared next to him in front of a closed vault.

“If you would, my dear,” he said and stepped aside with a charming smile.

“Is that all I am to you?” Ilea asked and charged Absolute Destruction.

“Of course not. You’re also a ball of furious ash I can throw at people who annoy me,” he said.

Ilea sacrificed a few thousand points of health to activate the blue runes glowing below her armor. Her fist flashed out and slammed into the thick enchanted steel gate with a resonating bang.

The mana flowed in and destroyed the enchantments and parts of the gate’s insides. Her ashen arms merged into four large extensions that pierced through the now mundane steel before she pried it all open, using Force to help along when something got stuck.

“After you, Captain,” she said and gestured for him to enter.

The man bowed and vanished, followed instantly by Ilea.

It took them barely seven seconds to empty the vault of its valuables, their perception, speed, and storage items making the heist quite simple.

“No defensive measures?” she asked after a while, looking at the more mundane items she hadn’t felt a need to store immediately. There was only so much space before she had the time to place everything into another crate.

“They must have been connected to the layer you already destroyed,” Hector said and twirled in place, a beautiful silver scythe in hand. “However... you forgot that I’m the defensive layer!”

She played along, displacing herself close to a two handed greatsword with gems socketed into its handle.

“We’ll see about that,” she said and lifted the massive steel weapon, to her as light as a rapier.

Ilea applied her warhammer knowledge against the quickly approaching Pirate, slamming the sword down from above before she twirled her whole body to deal a horizontal strike.

Hector dodged the first and blocked the second one with his scythe, the weapon expertly twirled before he sliced at her.

Ilea blocked the first two blows before she got hit, the weapon scratching harmlessly past her armor.

“You lose!” Hector said.

Ilea shrugged and let go of the sword, displacing it behind him and using force to push it into his back.

The sword pierced his chest and came out on the other side, the man touching it curiously. “It seems I was rash,” he said and collapsed to his knees. “Take care of my ship... and Neely, she needs a lot of attention,” he added before his form dissolved into water that formed a small pool below him.

Ilea smiled and clapped before she felt the space around her distort. “You motherfuck-” she blinked to avoid the summoned Neely, appearing outside the vault before everything inside was utterly trashed by the angry eel.

“Nearly had you there,” Hector said, standing reformed out in the hallway. “Come on back!” he shouted and stored his creature again.

“You just destroyed everything that was left,” Ilea said.

Hector shrugged. “All that trash you mean?”

“Exactly,” Ilea confirmed.

“You didn’t strike me as a scrap dealer. To each their own I suppose,” he said and vanished.

After traversing the streets for a few minutes, they looted another two vaults, neither of them as impressive as the first one both in wealth and defenses.

Ilea at least got another twenty gold pieces out of it. *Quite a skewed view of gold I’ve developed, knowing how much we got for our early Shadow missions,* she thought with a smile.

“So, the ritual site?” she asked after a few failed attempts to find more.

“Mmmh,” he said.

Ilea quickly checked if she had any notable level ups while keeping an eye on the space around her. So far nothing had stood out but the city was quite vast.

***‘ding’ ‘The Faen Valkyrie has reaches lvl 157 – One stat point awarded’***

***‘ding’ ‘The Faen Valkyrie has reaches lvl 158 – One stat point awarded’***

By now even her third Class was only really benefiting from the monster kills. The Cursed humans rarely had a level above one hundred.

Compared to Mophis and Nara where thousands upon thousands of insect monsters had prowled the streets, Seyna seemed kind of lacking in that department.

***‘ding’ ‘Force reaches 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl 17’***

***‘ding’ ‘Displacement reaches 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl 18’***

“When were the cities destroyed respectively?” Ilea asked as they breezed over the roofs.

She spent thirty stat points to increase her Vitality while fifteen went into Intelligence before she quickly checked her status.

***Name: Ilea Spears***

***Unspent statpoints: 1***

***Unspent Core skill points: 23***

***Unspent 3rd tier General skill points [1744 Total skill levels]: 1***

***Class 1: The Azarinth Sentinel – lvl 364***

***- Active: Absolute Destruction – 3rd lvl 28***

***- Active: Sentinel Reconstruction – 3rd lvl 30***

***- Active: Azarinth Awakening – 3rd lvl 30***

- **Active: Blink** – 3rd lvl 28
- **Active: Sentinel Sphere** – 3rd lvl 28
- **Passive: Sentinel Core** – 3rd lvl 30
- **Passive: Azarinth Fighting** – 3rd lvl 30
- **Passive: Sentinel Huntress** – 3rd lvl 8
- **Passive: Azarinth Perception** – 3rd lvl 27
- **Passive: Azarinth Reversal** – 3rd lvl 21

#### **Class 2: Kin of Ash – lvl 364**

- **Active: Armor of Ash** – 3rd lvl 30
- **Active: Aspect of Ash** – 3rd lvl 30
- **Active: True Ash Creation** – 3rd lvl 30
- **Active: Heart of Cinder** – 3rd lvl 27
- **Active: Storm of Cinders** – 3rd lvl 23
- **Passive: Ash and Ember Unity** – 3rd lvl 28
- **Passive: Ashen Wings** – 3rd lvl 26
- **Passive: Eyes of Ash** – 3rd lvl 19
- **Passive: Avatar of Ash** – 3rd lvl 30
- **Passive: Keeper of Ash** – 3rd lvl 29

#### **Class 3: The Faen Valkyrie – lvl 158**

- **Active: Force** – 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl 17
- **Active: Flare of Creation** – 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl 17
- **Active: Displacement** – 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl 18
- **Passive: Space Shift** – 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl 8
- **Passive: Body of the Valkyrie** – 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl 3
- **Passive: Space Awareness** – 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl 2

#### **General Skills:**

- **Dancing** – lvl 3
- **Deviant of Humanity** – lvl 11
- **Elos Standard language** - lvl 6
- **English Language** – lvl 15
- **Gourmet** – lvl 2
- **Harmony of the Drowned** – lvl 9
- **Heavy Archery** – lvl 11
- **Identify** - lvl 15
- **Meditation** – 3rd lvl 9
- **Monster Hunter** – 3rd lvl 4
- **Oxygen Repository** – lvl 14
- **Sage of Torment** – lvl 18
- **Soul Perception** – lvl 5
- **Teaching** – lvl 3
- **Veteran** – 3rd lvl 6
- **Warhammer Mastery** – lvl 9
- **Arcane Magic Resistance** – 3rd lvl 17
- **Ash Magic Resistance** – lvl 1
- **Astral Magic Resistance** – lvl 1

- **Blast Resistance – 3rd lvl 1**
- **Blight Resistance – 2nd lvl 1**
- **Blood Magic Resistance – 3rd lvl 8**
- **Blood Manipulation Resistance – 2nd lvl 20**
- **Bone Magic Resistance – 2nd lvl 6**
- **Corrosion Resistance – 2nd lvl 20**
- **Crystal Resistance – 2nd lvl 14**
- **Curse Resistance - 2nd lvl 20**
- **Dark Magic Resistance – 2nd lvl 6**
- **Death Magic Resistance – 2nd lvl 8**
- **Diamond Magic Resistance – 2nd lvl 3**
- **Divination Magic Resistance – lvl 6**
- **Dust Magic Resistance – lvl 6**
- **Earth Magic Resistance – 2nd lvl 20**
- **Emerald Magic Resistance – 2nd lvl 1**
- **Fear Resistance – lvl 11**
- **Flesh Magic Resistance – lvl 8**
- **Gravity Magic Resistance – 2nd lvl 20**
- **Health Drain Resistance – 2nd lvl 20**
- **Heat Resistance – 3rd lvl 7**
- **Ice Resistance – 2nd lvl 20**
- **Lava Magic Resistance – 3rd lvl 1**
- **Light Magic Resistance – 3rd lvl 1**
- **Lightning Resistance – 3rd lvl 5**
- **Mana Drain Resistance – 2nd lvl 20**
- **Mental Resistance – 3rd lvl 5**
- **Mist Magic Resistance – 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl 20**
- **Obsidian Magic Resistance – lvl 3**
- **Pain Tolerance – 3rd lvl 3**
- **Poison Resistance – 3rd lvl 2**
- **Rot Resistance – 2nd lvl 5**
- **Ruby Magic Resistance – lvl 14**
- **Sand Magic Resistance – 2nd lvl 20**
- **Sapphire Magic Resistance – lvl 13**
- **Silver Magic Resistance – lvl 1**
- **Smoke Magic Resistance – 2nd lvl 3**
- **Soul Magic Resistance – 2nd lvl 3**
- **Sound Magic Resistance – lvl 18**
- **Space Magic Resistance – 3rd lvl 2**
- **Stamina Drain Resistance – 2nd lvl 20**
- **Time Magic Resistance – 2nd lvl 20**
- **Topaz Magic Resistance – lvl 18**
- **Vine Magic Resistance – lvl 14**
- **Void Magic Resistance – 3rd lvl 2**
- **Water Resistance – 3rd lvl 1**
- **Wind Resistance – 3rd lvl 2**
- **Wood Magic Resistance – 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl 3**

**Status:**

**Vitality:** 930  
**Endurance:** 420  
**Strength:** 515  
**Dexterity:** 425  
**Intelligence:** 900  
**Wisdom:** 1000

**Health:** 13736/13736  
**Stamina:** 4149/4200  
**Mana:** 18482/20000

“Odiah, then Seyna, Mophis, and finally Nara. Between Mophis and Nara a week or more passed I think,” Hector said.

*Pretends not to give a shit but reads the reports,* Ilea thought with a grin.

“You’re implying they did this to learn about the ritual? To get better?” he asked.

“You’re pretty sharp for a wet noodle,” Ilea said.

“It’s not exactly a testament to your intellect to make this discovery based on what we’ve experienced. Nobody else knows how many monsters there were in each city,” he said.

“No Rock Beetles either. So if they’re getting better, we could see even more powerful monsters with coming rituals,” Ilea said.

“Perfect. Something interesting for fucking once,” he said.

“There’s plenty of interesting shit out there, things that don’t need thousands of human sacrifices to show themselves,” she said.

“Yeah, but I’m not there, am I? I’m here,” Hector said. “If they’re killing off their population anyway, they might as well make it worth my fucking time.”

Ilea just shook her head. The man had lost all regard for human life.

She would gladly be rid of the Baralia nobility that allowed for slavery and the current war but not if it meant sacrificing even one child.

Ilea didn’t comment on it. They had already established that he was a massive shit. One that nonetheless saved hundreds if not thousands of lives by being here and helping out.

Actions mattered more than beliefs and comments. Plus Ilea was at least somewhat sure he just said those things to irritate her. The man didn’t shy away from anything in his banter.

She would likely not mind as much either if they weren’t quite literally wading through living corpses.

By now she could spot the temples of the Order of Truth quite easily. Their design was distinct, the buildings nearly always a little higher than those close by.

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Nicholas used his Sight once more, seeing the robed fanatics rush through the tunnels with haste. A few enchantments were activated before they vanished through the doorway ahead.

His spell faded and he returned to the now dark and damp hallway. None of the fanatics had remained, only his companions and the corpses they had left behind.

Cursed and insect creatures far too powerful for him to fight.

“Where?” Carson asked.

Nicholas summoned three small barriers where he had seen the enchantments activate.

He glanced at the silent group behind him.

**[Ranger – lvl 202]**

Carson summoned an arrow and aimed, taking out the first enchantment with his magic arrow.

They waited for a little while before he aimed at the second one, and then the third.

*Gods it's warm in here*, he thought, not willing to take another look back.

“Are we done?” Maria asked.

“Seems like it, give it another minute for any effects to-” Carson started but Maria walked past him.

She glanced at Nicholas but he kept his gaze forward.

“Still scared?” Owen asked as he walked past and slapped his back with entirely too much strength.

The small barrier flickered out below his robe. He knew the man well and it was easy to predict his actions, both for his divination and just plain old common sense.

*Why did they send Me?*

He stopped himself from sighing, instead swallowing before he followed the group.

Owen Karrick was the perfect offspring to the military noble house. There was little left of the boy he had once played with, replaced by the armored sword master and blood mage. The man who wouldn't shy back from killing.

**[Warrior – lvl 238]**

Nicholas wasn't the only one who had joined the strike team on short notice. The Generals hadn't given them much time to plan and prepare after all.

**[Mage – lvl 252]**

*The Butcher of Jorim.* Maria Acantha. One of the lost daughters of their House. She had sprung up from nowhere, suddenly joining the war on the side of Felicia Redleaf, just as much appearing out



of nowhere. Her father had died recently and one didn't need to be a scheming genius to suspect foul play.

Nobody seemed to care however, both quickly welcomed to join the war efforts.

She gave him chills. The gray hair and purple eyes but most of all the way she moved, used her magic.

He gulped again and followed.

Nicholas cared little for the games of politics played among the nobles of the Empire or beyond. He really just wanted to get back to his studies. The relics from his most recent expedition were gathering dust because his family thought it important that someone represented House Walker on the front lines.

They suggested he could surely find riches and relics in Baralia too, before the cities were destroyed or pillaged.

There was some truth to that but in the end he was sent because he couldn't refuse.

Again he suppressed a sigh.

Carson gave him a glance but didn't say anything. As vile as he was, when they were in a dangerous situation, he shut his mouth.

*This is so far over my head*, he thought and checked behind him. His divination spells were active at all times by now, steadily draining his mana but he wouldn't risk it.

Normally he could at least trust his teammates but now he was forced to work with a sadist, an asshole, and a void mage.

He took a deep breath as they entered a large hall, light coming in through cracks in the high ceiling.

Owen glanced at him, making him wince.

"This is the place," Maria said, looking around. "Interesting..." she said.

His spells weren't necessary after all.

"Something is coming!" Nicholas suddenly called out and pointed to an empty space.

The group prepared and fanned out.

A moment later a one and a half meter tall mantis creature appeared out of nowhere. It had a white pinkish carapace and seemed confused for a moment before it focused on them.

The arrow shot by Carson flashed past harmlessly, the creature vanishing.

Spells exploded around him as Nicholas focused on his magic. It was second nature to him by now to trust his Class more than his eyes and ears.

Owen blurred in his heavy gray and red armor, much of the latter coloring just blood. His sword was held close to his body, ready to attack wherever the creature appeared.

The air around Maria distorted slightly, some kind of defensive spell she had used before with great efficiency.

Carson had another arrow ready.

The Mantis appeared, exactly where it should.

Nicholas locked eyes with the creature as a circular shining blue barrier with intricate runes appeared, cracking slightly when the beast slammed its talons into his defense.

***[Pearl Mantis Sire – lvl ??]***

Maria held out a hand before the beast screeched, one of its legs squashed slightly by the void magic she had conjured.

The woman had mostly vanished when the mantis teleported. It couldn't perceive her anymore.

An arrow glanced off its carapace before it charged towards the ranger.

*It's completely frenzied*, Nicholas thought, watching the creature with interest.

The charge was stopped by Owen who intercepted the beast with a few expert slashes. This wasn't the first Pearl Mantis they had fought and it wouldn't be their last.

The beasts were dangerous and incredibly high level but with their group, they could take them down. In time.