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VORPAL BUNNY AND FORTRESS UNCLE

Chapter 01

Crimson Invasion

Translation by Headpats Novels

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Episode 12

The Mad Beasts' Laughters

“That can’t be... You’re not funny...”

The crackling and popping noises of the red-hot firewood rose into the air. On the other side of the shimmering flames, Letty stared at me eyes wide open.

“No matter how I look at it, there’s no way we can make it through the night.”

“Don’t say such scary things! There has to be a way out of this!”

Letty stood up and circled the fire to come next to me. She grasped my hand firmly and suddenly pulled me up on my feet.

I set my gaze on her ruby-like eyes and spoke as clearly as I could, “All our hopes disappeared along with our fuel. We’ll die in this forest.”

“No way...” Letty stood still, processing my words.

I took a step closer and smiled to her. “And that’s why we’ll struggle till the end.”

“... eh?”

“It’ll most likely be in vain, but it won’t be useless. If it’s all the same, then we have to go out with a bang.”

“Ledge... Tha-that’s right! I wasn’t going to settle for less!”

Letty now overflowed with motivation and her two red ears that had been hanging had stood back up with renewed attention.

“So, how are we doing this?”

“Resting will only lose us time. For now, let’s keep our feet moving.”

“Yes, but without <Brilliance> it’ll be pitch dark...”

“We can still see our close surroundings. And if we can get our eyes to get used to the dark, even better. That’s why we’ll stop using the lantern from now on.”

I put my lantern back into the inventory and took out the [Fang Spear] instead.

“All right, let’s run.”

I kicked the ground hard, launching dirt all around. The flames from the bonfire vanished and our surroundings were once again wrapped with darkness.

“Fallen tree ahead!”

“Got it!”

We ran through the forest, jumping over fallen trees and skipping between roots. In circumstances like these, Letty’s advanced senses could show their full potential. Following her command, I jumped over or dodged what was invisible to me.

“Are the wolves following us?”

“I can feel their presence. They’re close.”

Even when talking, we kept running.

If we stop, it’s game over. The ferocious and cunning hunters on our tracks would surround us in a blink and tear us apart.

We have to keep running, we have to get closer to Susanoo.

“Looks like we’re still being gauged. Good thing we had time to raise our skills.”

Currently, our weapon skills were around level 10. It wasn’t much, but it would keep the beasts at bay for a while longer. Still, it was only a matter of time. The wolves would howl for reinforcements, and once their number would ensure them a victory, they’ll come at us.

“Ledge!” A voice came from ahead.

“—what?”

Letty looked back to me, frowning. “There’s an open place ahead. The moonlight could give us our visibility back.”

“We’ll settle it there, then!”

It would be a perfect place for our decisive battle; I could feel myself smiling involuntarily.

“Get ready to fight, Letty. It’ll start soon.”

“—yes!”

We quickened our pace, and after a few seconds I caught sight of the clearing ahead.

Surrounded by trees that formed a distorted circle, the open space was covered in short grass illuminated by the faint moonlight.

Spear in hand, I dropped into my fighting stance and try to keep my palpitations in control. A resounding howl in the night sounded the start of our showdown.

“Incoming!”

The instant we stepped into the clearing I could feel the bloodlust of the beasts caressing my back.

One we reached the center, I turned around just in time to react to the blurry leaping shadow.

“Ledge!”

“<Double Thrust>!”

I didn't have time to properly aim my spear but there was no way I would miss at point-blank range.

“Gyah!”

With a shriek, the wolf dropped and rolled to the ground. Letty immediately brought her hammer high and followed up with the killing blow.

“Are we already surrounded?”

“Yes. There's no way out.”

Standing back to back in the center of the clearing, Letty and I scanned the tree line. From the trees' shadows, countless low growls and groans echoed as if the beasts held a personal grudge against moonlight.

“—they're coming.”

As if prompted by Letty's voice, the sound of claws scratching the ground came from all over.

I fought back the urge to flee in the face of the endless stream of shadows that jumped out from the trees and quickly established a target priority.

“—you first then!”

Making use of my long reach, I thrust.

The beast's fangs cut through air as my spear dug deep in its forehead. Upon hitting one of its vital parts, a critical hit notification popped up, and in a sharp scream of agony, the wolf crumbled to the ground and went limp.

Cutting short to any sentimentality, the next one came at me without delay.

"<Double Thrust>!"

One more kill.

"<Heavy Blow>! Uryaah!"

On the other side, Letty mixed normal attacks and abilities to swiftly counter the incoming flood of wolves.

"—ow!" A silver claw had grazed my cheek.

The constant stream of attacks was considerably reducing my time to react so I stopped thrusting and waved my spear around in a mowing motion instead.

"Fuck! There's no end to them!" I swore.

"Ah ha ha! I'm starting to enjoy myself here! Bahahaha!"

While I was desperately trying to keep the wolves at bay, Letty lightly kicked the ground in excitement. She was delivering critical effects left and right, as if playing a fast-paced whack-a-mole game.

"Was she always like this...?" I muttered, stabbing another leaping wolf to death.

She usually gave the impression of a cheerful girl, but now she radiated a somewhat mature and graceful aura.

"Well then, come at me. I'll be your opponent!"

With each blow, a skull cracked, a jaw snapped and bones broke. And with each impact, the air vibrated with violence. Each blow meant death for one beast.

"Ha ha... Ah ha ha! AhAHAhA!!" Letty's high-pitched laughter cut through the screams and howls of the beasts.

The more she fought, the more her movements became fluid, every blow more precise and heavier than the previous.

A bewitching smile on her face, the frail girl was sending countless wolves flying in a violent vortex of blows. Her red fur shone bright under the moonlight, adding a bloody touch to the already crimson carnage.

“Come now, bring it on, don’t be shy! I’ll send the lot of you flying!”

I’m getting legit scared...

“Too slow! Way too slow!! You’re putting me to sleep! You pathetic, foolish, sad creatures!”

I don’t remember Letty being that kind of character...

“Ah ha ha! Ahahah!”

Anyway, it looks like she has her side covered, I’m not gonna complain. And I won’t lose either.

Spear held tight, I pulled myself together, ready to face my next opponent.

“All right, come see dadd— Hm?”

However, there was no sign of incoming wolves.

“Hey, Letty.”

“AhaAHAhAh!!”

“Hey! Come back to your senses for a bit!”

I was scared to get too close to the red storm so I stepped a bit further and called to her. After a while, Letty seemed to notice that the wolves were gone and regained her composure.

“Aw, so-sorry, I seemed to have lost myself for a second... Hm? Where did the wolves go?”

The square was littered with corpses but no living wolves could be found. Before we realized it, the pack seemed to have pulled back to the forest.

“D-do you think we won?”

“That’d be nice but...”

I couldn't help but feel uneasy. I gripped my spear tight and scanned the tree line.

“—Letty!”

“—Eh?!”

Still on my guard, I noticed the shadow that had leaped from the darkness and pulled Letty close to me in time.

“GAOOOOAAH!!” The huge shadow let out a scream of frustration.

A large and squat creature emerged in the moonlight from the forest.

“It's... a bear?!”

“That explains why the wolves fled!” I connected the dots.

Its blazing yellow eyes lorded over us and its overwhelming presence felt like it wasn't just for show.

“Letty. This guy's different from the trashes we fought earlier.”

“I know,”—she tightened her grip on her hammer—”but I won't give up.”

“Excellent answer.”

I grasped my spear with both hands and assumed back my fighting stance.

The jet black furred giant bear took a menacing step and bared its fangs.

“—here I go!” Letty opened the hostilities.

As soon as she started running toward the towering bear, she used <Intimidate>. In response, the bear growled in anger and launched itself at Letty, the ground trembling under its weight.

“Uryaaah!”

Our showdown in the darkness had just begun.

End of episode 12

Tips

<Joujutsu>

One of the basic weapon skills. Upon using a blunt weapon like a staff or a hammer, the <Joujutsu> skill will level up. As a rule of thumb, abilities accessible via this skill have long delays, high LP consumption, and high attack power. It is also possible to inflict the <Stunned> status upon hitting an enemy square on the head, therefore opening a window for an all-out attack.

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