

Chapter 421 Buried

Ilea saw her companions in the distance, flying as a trio around the Elemental, fire and death crashing against the sand still half covered in a layer of glass.

“Any chance for another one of those?” Ilea asked the being, patching up its cut face. Even removing the corruption wasn’t easy with her ash, she couldn’t imagine actually fighting the monster.

Just don’t get hit by the Elemental, she thought and quickly checked her few notifications while she healed.

‘ding’ ‘Veteran reaches 2nd lvl 8’

‘ding’ ‘Lava Magic Resistance reaches lvl 2’

‘ding’ ‘Lava Magic Resistance reaches lvl 3’

‘ding’ ‘Sand Magic Resistance reaches 2nd lvl 14’

Ilea kept her eyes on the Elemental as she flew close to the Trakorov’s face, her sphere informing her about the wounds. She continued with its legs, the creature yet to make another move.

The heavy breathing made her think the attack had exerted it more than she had expected. Granted, even she would have likely been vaporized in a direct hit of its spell. Both the Elemental’s survival as well as the partial glassing spoke for each of the creatures’ insane power.

It had certainly been the right decision to bring this one onto the field instead of trying to face the corrupted Elemental directly.

Another annoying hiss came from the creature as tendrils of sand burst out from various cracks, wiggling into the open and trying to pry away the glass.

Ilea was done with the monster’s legs and landed back on its head. “Ready for round two?” she asked, infusing her voice.

The Trakorov huffed before it looked up and roared.

Explosions of fire racked through the hovering sand, cut into by streams of death magic and cursed by the elf protecting the others with his barriers, projectiles occasionally crashing into them.

Ilea felt the heat build before a stream of lava entirely covered the sand, hissing sounds from both the heat and the Elemental reaching her moments later.

Fucking sound shit, she thought, healing her own ears and those of the Trakorov.

‘ding’ ‘Sound Magic Resistance reaches lvl 3’

“I think that just made it more mad,” she said, watching a blob of sand break out and rush to the ground.

A ball of fire impacted the creature as well as another lava spell, both burning into the sand.

The flying glass prison covered in molten rock returned to being just that, crashing into the desert a moment later, shards and splinters spreading onto the thin field of glass that had formed near where the Trakorov had broken out of the ground.

The Elemental retained a similar form, moving over the glass surface as if it was slithering, its legs losing form with each attempted step, its wings uselessly flapping on its back. Sand burst through the cracks on the ground and from farther out, rebuilding the creature as it hissed, shrugging off the magic that crashed into its body.

“Come on, we have to keep it on the glass. Otherwise it will return to sand storm form,” Ilea said and blinked forward, pointing at the glassed area and the Elemental.

The behemoth huffed and followed, its steps building momentum, steam rising from its mouth, eyes focused on the enemy.

Ilea smiled and landed on its back, holding on with her limbs as they closed the distance.

Niivalyr could barely hold his barriers against the Elemental’s sound magic, their group much closer now than they had been before.

“Distance!” Maro shouted, the three of them moving back as a plethora of sand projectiles and tendrils moved up from below.

Niivalyr formed a barrier below as they ascended. “It is charging...,” he said with a disbelieving voice.

The Trakorov was running, its massive claws and weight breaking the layer of glassed sand as if it was a tin sheet of ice formed over a pond.

“The Elemental cannot reach the desert,” Catelyn said and sent a ball of fire at the creature.

It hissed and blocked the spell, engulfed in fire as the blast further cracked the glass around it. The Elemental focused back on the Trakorov when it heard the roar, sand pouring in from all directions but its half formed body charging nonetheless.

“Is that... what is she doing?!” Catelyn exclaimed.

Niivalyr couldn’t keep the grin from his face when he spotted the ashen dot between the horns. “She is keeping it alive.”

“I was wondering where she was,” Maro said. “Come on, it’s far from over.”

Ilea sent her own spears into the approaching projectiles, to both deflect them or slow them down at the very least.

The sand blades created by the Elemental mostly bounced off the Trakorov's armor but some managed small cuts. Ilea herself wasn't targeted, the Elemental focused entirely on the creature she was riding.

Sand both formed on its body, around it and came rushing through the cracks below as well as from farther out where the ground wasn't glassed but remained a desert.

Ilea herself formed all the ash she could, building walls in front of her in the few seconds before the monsters impacted.

They crashed into each other with so much force, both were lifted up as Ilea was flung to the side and away from them, blinking up just before she hit the ground.

She watched the Trakorov bite into the Elemental's shoulder as lava flowed from between its teeth. Sand spears cut into the monster from several sides, digging into its carapace and soon drawing blood.

Monstrous claws shredded into the sand, finding little purchase but shedding away corruption and hardened chunks nonetheless.

Ilea blinked again, using her Heart of Cinder to push and burn away the sand and corruption, healing specific wounds she deemed the most dangerous.

She used her wings and tail as well as her limbs to weave through the hundreds of projectiles and tendrils of sand that constantly formed and rained down, battering the carapace.

Lava covered half the Elemental but it wouldn't be enough, more sand flowing in as well as simply forming out of thin air.

Ilea used Storm of Cinders too by now, pushing mana into the sand tendrils as she cut and healed, occasionally hit by a stray blade or tendril that she chose to ignore thank to her precognition.

Death magic and fire burned away at wounded parts or larger spikes of sand that burrowed into the powerful monster from below.

The Trakorov's arms were getting caught in massive mounds of sand, building up and keeping them in place as it kept its tight grip around the Elemental's shoulder with its jaws.

Ilea saw the white barriers form around the sand on its left arm, biting into the mound of sand to get it free.

She blinked away and charged her wings, forming an ashen drill as large as her own body in front of herself, adding ash to it until the density couldn't get higher. Her wings charged, she made the whole thing spin around a solid base and charged.

Her flight speed accelerated before she slammed into the heavy mound of sand that kept the monster's right arm locked down. Her resistance to the element made her push farther, her drill burrowing deep before it was stopped.

Enough to break through. Ilea blinked again before the sand around her closed, seeing with joy how the arm broke out and slashed into the Elemental's head, biting deep into its body before it stopped.

She flew back and continued healing, cutting out corruption that seeped into the Trakorov as she charged her Heart of Cinder, keeping an eye on her resources.

Fire and Death magic assisted her continuously, wounds burnt out and ready to be healed, sand tendrils decaying before her eyes.

The Trakorov's left hand had slammed into the Elemental's side, the sand creature by now reverting to an undefined form as it slowly spread over its assailant.

Maro dodged several projectiles coming his way, teleporting to avoid the last one as he charged another beam, aiming at the sand spikes forming below the large creature.

"It is about to devour the creature!" the elf shouted from a couple meters to his left, forming a barrier to block a series of attacks.

"Stop the sand!" Catelyn replied, forming a set of fireballs.

A wave of heat expanded out from the Trakorov, burning up the building corruption but only pushing back the sand for a moment, reforming quickly as it slowly covered its face, its arms completely stuck in the growing Elemental.

Explosions of fire bit into the encroaching sand.

"Closer!" Niivalyr said and teleported, appearing on the creature's back, forming barriers that stopped the sand's movement.

Maro nodded, teleporting in front of the elf as purple flames formed on his body. He slowly walked towards the sand and the Trakorov's head.

"This territory I claim. Return to death," he whispered as a ripple of magic flowed out, sapping the forces that animated the sand. "Law of Rhyvor," the words spoken, he felt a large part of his mana leaving, the ripples of death magic flaring up in purple flames.

He smiled, seeing the effects of his new third tier bonus, the flames spreading as he continued to pour more mana into it, both arms outstretched.

"Get back!" the elf's words reached him just when a tendril of sand snatched around his ankle.

His teleport failed as his eyes opened wide at the avalanche of sand breaking through his flames, as if they were the mere cinders of a bonfire.

A beam of death magic separated the tendril but half his body was already covered in sand. A fiery explosion sent heat over him and the sand, ripping out a chunk of sand as well as half his arm.

A hundred blades slashed through his armor, tendrils punching through his arms, his body exploding in purple flames as the spear about to pierce his head was blocked by the fire.

Still, his teleport failed and his last stand ability too would only last as long as he had mana, the Elemental slamming more blades into his defense every passing moment, only a small part of the sand decayed by his spells.

Maro struggled frantically, for each destroyed section of sand, the pressure of another increased threefold.

He coughed up blood, realizing that he was trapped, arms held up defensively as the sand covered him entirely.

A fitting end, challenging an Elemental, he thought, his sight blurring slightly.

A sudden blast of heat burned away the sand on his left, a dozen ashen limbs cutting between him and the sand, ripping him out before he impacted someone's chest, nearly puking from the maneuvers that followed.

He saw the ashen tendrils moving behind them, suddenly vanishing entirely, as if plucked from existence. He couldn't help but laugh at the sight, coughing up more blood as he felt something warm flow into him, something that protected him, kept him whole.

"Don't pee your pants you old fart," he heard a familiar voice say, an annoyance rising within him before it was quenched by the warm feeling.

Ilea charged and flew as far away as she dared, pumping Maro full of healing magic that he simply ate up, his condition not improving much according to her spell. The wounds however did close and she knew that he would probably survive, having seen his ability several times already.

This time he had even been semi conscious, now passed out and drooling blood and slobber onto her armored chest.

She deemed the distance enough and chucked him onto a nearby rock. "Thanks for the assist, little one. Can you keep him safe for a while?" she asked the Fae that had appeared nearby, her wings charging already as she once again formed a drill and checked her Heart of Cinder. Not quite enough but with the next couple seconds she might have a chance.

She had hoped the Elemental at least somewhat retained its form but as it turns out it could just become fucking moving sand.

Protect!

She nodded to the Fae and sped up, covering the distance in mere seconds as she aimed right in front of where the Trakorov's head would be.

The Elemental had covered a third of the other monster's body by now, only marginally slowed down by the waves of heat it exuded as well as the shields and fire magic from Ilea's teammates.

She suspected the Elemental had retorted to a tactic she herself would have deemed useful against the large lava breathing creature.

A heavy impact sent her burrowing into the sand, stopping a little past the Trakorov's open maw. Fully surrounded by sand, Ilea started to use her reversed healing as well as her limbs to deliver Mana Intrusion spells.

Her eyes however were focused on the open maw, massive teeth still moving as more sand poured into the monster's throat. She charged her wings again and reformed a drill, as large as she managed with the encroaching sand. She shot off as soon as they were charged, burrowing through the sand and into the Trakorov's throat. Her second tier resistance allowed her to get through the sand rather easily, coming out at the other end.

"I really hope this pisses you off," she said and aimed her hand at the corrupted sand that closed in from outside. *Heart of Cinder*, she sacrificed two thousand health and released the spell, a blinding light of heat and fire forming past her hand as the sand started pushing against her ash.

The fire burned deep, pushing the sand back just enough for her to briefly see the monster's teeth before they were once more covered in sand.

Heat formed behind her as the muscles around her tensed. *Cleaned the way, time to fuck off.*

Her perception slowed down as she felt and saw the lava come to life behind her. She formed as much ash as she could in the fraction of a second, moving her arms, limbs and wings out to push against the restricting throat.

Right before the lava came, she made all her ash vanish and moved into a fetus position, activating her blink now that she wasn't touching the monster anymore.

She appeared where her sphere had perceived nothing to be, twenty meters to the side of the Trakorov's head, right when a wave of heat washed over her, singeing her skin as her ashen armor reformed, wings spreading behind her.

Ilea watched in anticipation as the sand started glowing a deep red, brightening quickly, the Elemental retreating away from the Trakorov before its insides were turned to glass.

A blob of sand remained, falling to the ground and slithering away before four white barriers formed around it. The Elemental was already adding to its form again within its newfound prison as the Trakorov collapsed, hitting the ground with a resounding crash as the glassed sand shattered, chunks and pieces rolling to the side.

Ilea blinked within the prison, spreading ash to mix it with the sand, her reversed healing flowing into the corrupted Elemental as she charged Absolute Destruction. She felt the powerful effects of Elfie's curse, her ears popping when a hiss resounded from right next to her.

She could feel the presence, the frenzied elemental trashing against the cracking enclosure. It focused on her as soon as it felt the damage, ignoring the barriers for a moment.

Ilea saw the two white barriers outside, one below the Trakorov's sideways lying head and one on top of it. Slowly, the elf steered the monster's head towards his barriers, Catelyn landing on top of it as she charged a sphere of fire.

"Wake up!" Ilea shouted, infusing her voice as she felt her body punched through by the sand, her organs and bones shattered by the powerful creature. Her regeneration couldn't keep up with the damage.

A smirk spread on her lips when she saw the Trakorov's eyes open up behind her, its mouth opening just when Elfie opened his prison.

Ilea couldn't blink but kept the Elemental's attention on her, moving through the sand as she tried to get herself behind its form.

Flames erupted within the small confines, followed by a focused stream of lava that evoked a hiss from the corrupted creature.

Ilea held on, feeling her flesh and bones melt away, her instant healing recovering her body as the prison was filled with molten rock. The barriers exploded outwards and she felt herself being dragged away.

Elfie, she thought as her eyes reformed, everything below her neck missing entirely. Her instant regeneration made flesh and muscle explode from her head a moment later.

The elf who had held on to her hair was suddenly dragged down by the weight of her whole body, his robes melting and in flames as he rolled on the glass.

Ilea reformed her ashen armor and started healing the elf who was in a bad state, his skull and ears heavily damaged by the sound magic. The lava and heat had burned into his body too, enough to kill any lesser being.

No help of my perception there, she thought, deciding the initial hit of the lava wouldn't have gotten her down to twenty five percent but the following stored explosion of heat and lava would have finished her off. *Hard to say, with Niivalyr saving me*, she thought and stood up, staggering as her ashen limbs formed behind her.

"You are... I saw you... reduced to a head!" the elf shouted, ripping off his partially melted steel mask as he coughed blood, barely able to stand up.

Is he really surprised? Ilea thought and saw his smile, right before he started laughing, more blood splattering on the glassed ground.

A ding resounded in her mind as she helped him stand up, healing mana still flowing into him. "A head is all I need," she said jokingly, the elf recovering quickly.

'ding' 'Your group has defeated [Corrupted Sand Elemental – lvl 1483]'

'ding' 'The Azarinth Sentinel has reached lvl 336 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'The Azarinth Sentinel has reached lvl 337 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'The Azarinth Sentinel has reached lvl 338 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'The Azarinth Sentinel has reached lvl 339 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'The Azarinth Sentinel has reached lvl 340 – Five stat points awarded – One third tier skill point awarded'

'ding' 'The Azarinth Sentinel has reached lvl 341 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'The Azarinth Sentinel has reached lvl 342 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'Kin of Ash has reached lvl 335 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'Kin of Ash has reached lvl 336 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'Kin of Ash has reached lvl 337 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'Kin of Ash has reached lvl 338 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'Kin of Ash has reached lvl 339 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'Kin of Ash has reached lvl 340 – Five stat points awarded – One third tier skill point awarded'

'ding' 'Kin of Ash has reached lvl 341 – Five stat points awarded'

“Focus and stop healing me, heal that one,” Elfie said and pointed at the Trakorov, corruption pulsing from a variety of wounds. “Otherwise we have merely replaced one monster with the next.”