

## Chapter 849 Feast

Dawn had yet to break when Ilea arrived in Ravenhall. With her came an entire party. Four future Sentinels changed by the Bluemoon root. With them the entire faculty of the Medic Sentinel Corps, including the elder who had helped in the endeavor to change the Bluemoon Grass into a less dangerous Elixir.

Torches and magical lamps lit the cobbled street in front of the now famous Golden Drake. A single cook stood in front of the building, wearing a yellow hooded cloak that covered much of her reptilian features.

“Good morning, everyone,” she spoke, not in the least surprised at the high number of people. She was familiar with most of them after all.

“*You seem relaxed. Did I interrupt something?*” Ilea sent, her brows raised.

“*Oh not at all, friend, how come you would suggest something so insidious?*” Keyla sent back. “I suspect you will all want to be fed?” Her tone was accusatory, though not entirely unkind.

“If you and your cooks area available,” Ilea answered. “We have reason to celebrate.”

“Oh? Does it have to do with the four slightly lost adventurers I have yet to know?” Keyla said.

“Indeed. And I think having the celebration in the Headquarters seems appropriate, what do you think Trian?” Ilea asked.

“Yes, I suppose that’s a good option. Though once news gets out, I’ll have dozens of fresh students knocking on my door to get the elixir,” the man said. “Let’s go. The sooner we can start, the sooner I’m done with the work.”

“The Meadow can take care of it. Won’t be long,” Orthan spoke and smiled.

“And I’m around for a few hours too, I can send them up. How much of the root is available anyway?” Ilea asked, glancing at Lucas.

He shrugged. “Not enough for an entire Healing Order, but hmm. I suspect there won’t be quite that many.”

“Eighteen people,” Trian said, grumbling slightly as he started towards the Headquarters.

“I will go get a few people,” Keyla said and vanished.

Ilea didn’t miss the many knives on the cook’s belt, a few of them flashing in the mix of torchlight and the blueish hue of magical street lamps.

They didn’t have to wait long, though some of the cooks didn’t seem quite as ready as Keyla herself.

### **[Chef – lvl 210]**

“*You’re quite a bit higher leveled,*” Ilea remarked as their band of adventurers and cooks made its way to the northern section of town. Glowing green eyes watched them from the walls and rooftops, the familiar tapping of metal against stone audible from time to time. Large cannons loomed above, sure to cast long shadows once the suns would rise.

*"I am,"* Keyla said with a smile.

*"Interesting adventures?"* Ilea asked.

*"I would like to say. Some were, but the main contributor is your former dagger, as far as I understand,"* the cook replied.

*"Just skill levels from training? Or did you destroy machines?"* Ilea said.

*"You didn't know Guardians were being destroyed? Only if you could actually beat them of course, but the levels are great. I'm not sure if they're set to kill people, but it feels real enough,"* Keyla sent, shaking her head as if reminiscing.

Ilea turned to the Hunter Praetorian walking with them, the black metal machine looking as dangerous as the first time she had seen one. Despite knowing she could easily destroy it. *"You let people destroy your machines?"*

*"Guardians are numerous and they have many uses. Helping adventurers train and level up against dangerous foes is one of them. I resumed production in a few of the facilities. The waste is hardly worth a mention. I'm far more concerned about the Hunters and Executioners I lose to the search of Ascended facilities. Creating one of them is far more resource demanding, in every aspect,"* the machine explained. *"Plus, Guardians cannot gain levels on their own. Other beings can."*

*"I guess they would be great way to both train and level,"* Ilea said. She certainly knew. *"Do you set them to try and kill the trainees?"*

*"I'll leave that to your interpretation. Danger provides more experience. I certainly don't shy away to show those who employ my services just how dangerous and painful the wilds will be,"* Aki spoke. *"Though I don't go quite as hard as with the Sentinels of course."*

*"And anyone can just employ you for free?"* she asked. *I would've loved that kind of opportunity. I guess the dungeons I found were plenty. But an inn nearby would've been nice.*

*"I evaluate it on defined rules. Income levels, background, reasons for training, association with both countries and organizations. Students of the Ravenhall Academy can train for free. As do most organizations based in Accords territory. However only the Sentinels get to destroy Centurions, their core explosions turned off, against the wishes of the young Medics."*

Ilea smiled, shaking her head a little. *Idiots.*

They reached the headquarters where Keyla and her cooks set up in the available kitchen space, added to the mess hall. The faculty informed the present Sentinels and recruits about the feast, word spreading fast. Many were still asleep at this time of day, their low levels not yet allowing them to stay awake through the night.

A few teams in stonehammer and bone armor were present as well, delaying their departures to join in on the celebrations.

*"Are more arriving?"* Ilea asked, seeing people come down the spiral stairs.

*"I took the liberty of informing those I could reach,"* Aki spoke.

Ilea raised her brows and sat down on one of the benches, leaning her back against the stone wall.

She didn't have to wait long for the first Sentinels to find her.

“Ilea! May we join you?” a young woman asked. Her blue eyes downright sparkled as she looked at Ilea. Her brown hair was bound in a well done braid.

**[Battle Healer – lvl 175]**

“Raphia, sure, sit down,” Ilea said with a smile. She was surprised to find that the girl didn’t avoid her eye contact. *She doesn’t look as ghostly anymore either. And the look in her eyes has changed. For all of them actually.* She saw Cornelius and Dany standing a little farther back.

*How fast they grow,* she thought with a smile, seeing many more familiar faces arrive in the hall, the Sentinels sporting enchanted weapons, armors of metals she had never seen before, spells or perhaps familiars following them around. They hugged and spoke as if returning to their home after a long journey. Which she supposed was true for many of them, despite the availability of the gates.

“Godslayer,” a deep voice called out from her left.

Thick and sturdy looking spiked armor made of dense ash covered the large man, his crimson eyes taking her in.

**[Berserker – lvl 356]**

“Good to see you, Gael,” Ilea said. She glanced at the cup he held out towards her. “For me?”

He nodded.

She didn’t miss the many eyes nearby turning her way, those who didn’t slowed their breathing and stopped their movements, likely watching through alternative perception options.

She grinned and took the cup. *What poison did you concoct?*

Ilea didn’t even check. She locked eyes with Gael and took a deep drink from the wooden cup.

**‘ding’ ‘You were poisoned by Cinderberry Tea – You resist its effects’**

She smiled. The spicy taste that she remembered was tuned down to a slight tinge, either by her high resistance and enhanced body, or because the tea was not quite as strong. She doubted the latter.

“You can still just call me by my names,” Ilea said and took another sip.

A few cheers resounded before everyone joined in, some shaking their heads with smiles on their faces, others sitting in quiet contemplation, faces covered by their helmets or elemental armors.

“*Why don’t you join me?*” she sent to the four slightly lost looking recruits she had brought to the domain of the Meadow earlier. They were sitting alone at their table, three of them looking around with somewhat nervous glances.

Malise looked her way. “*With all due respect, Lilith, it would not do our standing well to take such a privileged position.*”

“You will be Sentinels, like everyone here,” Ilea spoke, the room calming down again. “We are to have a feast, and I’ll be here, at least this morning. Been a while since I got to know the new faces here, and caught up with the old. The Elixir works, and I hope soon, you’ll have arcane healers here.”

Quick whispers were exchanged, many of the people, even Hunters and Veterans celebrating in silence.

“Thank the Meadow,” someone called out.

“No shit, finally,” another voice said.

“You four got the elixir?” an armored woman spoke as she walked closer to the table, chains wrapped around her arms.

“Yes, ma’am,” Malise spoke, respectful but not subservient.

The Sentinel chuckled. “We’ll have to train you then, and see what kind of Classes you will get. We’ll be first to support you,” she said and looked behind herself. “Nathan, let’s take them with us later.”

“It’s too dangerous,” the man replied, sitting at his table.

“We’ll train them here,” another voice came from near the stairwell, a group shrouded in ash and moving wind. Vienna and her team.

“Don’t come in and take the glory,” Celeste spoke, chains falling to the ground as the nearby Sentinels moved out of the way, chairs and tables dragged over the stone floor to provide space.

Silver was exchanged between people as murmurs broke out throughout the hall. Someone got out a lute and started playing.

“I’ll take care of her,” the small muscly woman next to Vienna said as she walked forward. Stone formed on her skin, her smirk growing wide as powerful magic emanated from her.

Barriers appeared to protect the kitchen and the walls, Ilea saw a few Sentinels who had activated the enchantments, powering them with their mana.

She glanced at Gael who still stood at the same spot, looking at her instead of the oncoming fight. “You can sit down, you know,” she said and teleported the four elixir recipients to the opposite bench as well. “Better get out of the way of those two,” she said to them, a smile on her face, once more gesturing for Gael to sit.

Halra made wide eyes as she looked at the giant of an armored man sitting down next to her with a careful motion.

“Would you like something to eat?” Ilea asked him.

He shook his head.

“That’s alright,” Ilea said and returned her attention to the battle when the first cheers resounded, followed by heavy impacts.

A few Sentinels teleported through the hall and started placing the first plates onto the various tables while the fight was taking place, heavy punches striking ash and stone as the two high level Medics exchanged blows.

A wince went through the crowd when Celeste was slammed into the stone floor, dragged by the smaller Chana before her armor, jaw, and teeth were broken.

Silver was once more exchanged as many turned their attention to the food instead, or conversation. Celeste slapped away a few helping hands as her own healing took care of the damage. “Unfair,” she muttered. “I’ll get you next time.”

“You’re free to try, sweetheart,” Chana said and blew a kiss her way.

Ilea turned to the food as well, some of the Sentinels challenging each other in the impromptu ring. They had earth and wood mages in the lot to fix any damage done, though she knew none of them were going at it seriously outside the training halls. Most of the faculty was present after all.

“You look strong,” Halra spoke, her eyes on Gael.

He didn’t meet hers.

“And you are thoughtful,” she added. “Would you help me train?”

Ilea could see the misery flashing in Malise’s eyes before she hid again behind her perfect mask.

“I have to train myself,” he answered.

“I understand that. Then maybe I can watch you fight, and give you pointers. I have trained many men and women. To fight and kill,” Halra said. “And you have killed many before. But you move like a beast.”

He turned his head and growled.

She held her own.

Gael watched her before turning back again. “We may train. Once the crowd disperses.”

“We can leave now,” Halra said, giving a questioning look to Ilea.

“You can do what you want,” Ilea said.

Halra stood up and grabbed Gael’s arm. She didn’t pull but he stood up and followed.

*Now that is an interesting match,* Ilea thought.

Veyra followed them with her eyes before she drank from her tankard. “They won’t even know if they’re fighting or fucking.”

“That monster will kill her,” Malise murmured.

“That’s her choice to make,” Veyra said with a grin. “And he seemed more gentle than you might think.”

“He is dangerous, like most people here,” Malise said.

“You don’t have to stay if you’re uncomfortable,” Ilea said, piling food onto her plate.

Malise considered and then just remained quiet, tapping the table with her fingers.

“Do you not want to eat?” Dany asked, looking at Balt.

The former slave looked at her and slowly moved his hand to one of the plates. He took it and seemed surprised when nothing happened.

“You can eat as much as you like,” Dany said with a smile. “The Headquarters is safe. Except when you train. But nearly everyone has healing spells, so you should be fine anyway.”

He still seemed suspicious, but soon started to eat.

“So,” Cornelius said, glancing over at Ilea. “About that Class or whatever it is. Did you really kill a god?”

She sighed, already kind of lost in the food conjured up by Keyla and her cooks. *How many times will I have to tell that story?*

Ilea finished her last plate in one of the training halls. The grounds in her vicinity were blood covered, severed limbs and innards scattered all around. Panting could be heard from the Sentinels crouching or kneeling at a safe distance from the monster in her ashen throne.

“Nothing left in you?” Ilea asked as she made her empty plate vanish, wings extending before they lifted her out of the large ashen chair. She smiled at the knocked out Sentinels too stubborn to give up, though they too would recover in mere minutes. *You really have to kill them quickly, or they’re just standing up again and again.*

“I’ll be on my way then,” she said and stretched, the chair behind her dissolving.

“Thank you for your guidance, Lady Lilith,” a few voices called out, the rest following.

“Dangerous travels to you,” Vienna said, the Huntress of the Corps regenerating both of her missing arms.

“And to you,” Ilea said with a grin, summoning a gate before herself and stepping through.

*A bath would be nice.*

“*Felicia, meeting in a few hours at your mansion?*” she sent, amused by the thought of her girlfriend owning a mansion.

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Vienna broke down to her knees. She didn’t feel pain, but she felt exhaustion. *Entirely ripped apart. Effortless.*

She had known Ilea was powerful. Had known that she could face multiple Executioners, but they had faced Executioners too. Granted it wasn’t much of a fight yet, but they at least felt graspable.

“The Fourth tier,” Elias murmured. He stood, uninjured but out of mana, eyes wide still at what he had seen.

A growl resounded when Gael woke from his unconscious state. The beating he had taken was beyond anything Aki had subjected him to. The machine was precise and calculated.

Ilea was brutal.

*So nice and casual, sitting at her table, eating, as if she was a human being.* But when her eyes changed. Vienna gulped, still seeing the smile on the woman’s face as her ribs were shattered in a single punch.

“We have a long way to go,” Niram spoke. The man vanished without another word.

“That we do,” Raka said, helping her team recover from the training session.

“Almost reminds me of the first few weeks,” Chana said. “When she was here more often.”

“She has returned to her own hunt,” Vienna said.

“I pity the gods that face her,” Nathan said. “Come on guys,” he said to his team. “Let’s go before Gael wants another round.”

“He does seem frustrated,” Chana murmured.

“Another round?” Vienna asked.

The woman cracked her neck, the shattered stone armor reforming. “While we’re here.”

“While we’re here,” Vienna confirmed, a smile on her face as they watched the Berserker stumble up and turn their way.