

Skeleton Soldier Couldn't Protect The Dungeon

Note: This is my own representation of MTL Chapters. It might not fully show what the author intended with each sentence, instead adding any extra flavour through my own writing abilities.

Chapter 3 – Waking Up (3)

Ray Rubia, the Necromancer who woke me from slumber. There was a reason that I had no memories with this woman. Our time together was too brief to even consider it.

“Follow me,” I told her.

“Follow you?”

As we walked forward, I remember the blur of twenty years ago. Two bandits will soon gallop here and I would be beaten. Rubia was but a fledgling necromancer and I, just an unprepared skeleton who just woke up. In reality, there was never any chance, but this time it could be different. I had years of experience and travelled back in time with the power of 36 levels. Although it could end up not being enough...

I might be able to defeat an untrained human or bandit, but these bandits were not regular troops. I can't let myself be tricked and assume they're weak. This situation holds all kind of risks. Besides, for me, this all were events of a long gone time. I don't remember the exact situation at this point. It's confusing.

I'm not sure how many enemies there actually were, so it'd be best for both of us to stay hidden. I raise my hand and gesture at Rubia, “Woman,” I call to her, but she was still stupefied at my sudden ability to speak.

“Rubia,” this time I called her name, “Come here.”

We really can't afford to bump into these people. If I remember correctly, it was right after I woke up, not sure exactly how fast but any moment now they will pounce on us and it could mean the end. Why does she not get it...

“C-come?”

Her fright was directed to the wrong target, when she doesn't realise the bandits are the issue, not me.

“The bandits will be here. Come on.”

I stretch out a hand to Rubia again.

“Why d-do you know how to speak?”

Still dazed, Rubia ignored the reaching hand. Women truly are obsessed with these trivial matters.

I tried to point out her meaningless worry, “Why aren't you surprised I'm able to move, isn't that as shocking as speech?”

I moved, made hand gestures and climbed up from the grave. Her shock at this was sort of laughable, but it was not the time for this. While we could discuss her shock of my speech and my surprise of waking up from the dead, our fates were still undecided.

“Hide over there. We don't have much time,” I point out to her again and point with my finger bone to the other side of the road leading up to the cemetery. There, the bushes were dense.

I planned to hide with Rubia. If the bandits show up, this would be the best way. Though there is something wrong with this situation. It's not like these men came here to take anything from these rubbish graves and who would they target in this rain? Did they really come upon Rubia by chance?

There is something I am missing.

Looking back at Rubia, she still held some confusion in her expression. She really isn't listening to me when I keep telling her to hide in the bushes. It's hard to say whether she was stupid or slow. I'll give her benefit of the doubt and say that seeing the skeleton you just woke up say all these ridiculous things isn't too normal.

If we don't get moving, we'll both suffer. I'm struggling to get that through to her. I give the area we're in another look. In these remote cliffs, twenty years ago I was kicked down and was trapped in the cold ice for a year. What if that happens again and instead I break down and die.

I shook my head, I don't like that outcome, I have to stay alive for now. While I'm not obsessed with living as a wandering skeleton soldier, I'm not completely indifferent to life that I would throw this chance away. Maybe I'll get to see Mistress again. Since I'm back, maybe I'll get to hide with her for a long time.

"Why are these bandits doing this, I don't have anything to take?"

I thought about Rubia's words for a moment after she woke me up from my reverie. In all honesty, it was a stupid question with an easy answer. Nothing to take from you? Well I raise my finger and point to her clothing.

"Steal," I said. Then I point to her dagger, "dagger," next I point at her, "pleasure."

"W-what's that?!"

Rubia reddened at my suggestion of their possible motivations. There was no reason to be embarrassed these were the normal procedures if a woman was unlucky enough to fall in the claws of these savages. I again recall her poor abilities, in addition to being foolish— I guess that's why she resorted to necromancy. Well let's leave this at that. Bandits will show up, but you can go hide by yourself and I'll ignore you and go my way.

This may be the best way to go about this rather than risk spending a year in that icy ravine. I don't care what happens to this woman after this. No matter what these bandits do to her, no matter how she cries... Or how her body is cut...

N-no matter what they...

I clench my fist and shake my head. The end Miss Succubus experienced overlap with my previous thoughts. Those memories brought forth unsought pain and I looked right into the eyes of Rubia, unable to show any sort of expression with this rigid skull of mine. Maybe it was for the best I couldn't show an expression.

This woman, she who gave me my first, I really was about to abandon her. I'm such a dumbass. I need to protect Rubia and with this thought I grab and lift her up.

"W-what kind of strength is this?!"

Technically I was a level 1 soldier, but behind the façade hid twenty years of built up strength. Not much, but enough to carry a weak human woman.

"How can a Skeleton Soldier be this strong!"

“Grow up,” I told her.

“Ugh,” Rubia struggled in my grasp.

I was being rather mean. Actually, thinking about it, it was rather inconsiderate to blame someone for not adapting quickly. It was rare for a necromancer to encounter a talking skeleton and not be uneasy, let alone a normal person.

At that moment, I hear the cry of a horse. The direction it came from was up ahead the road, the same path I assumed these bandits would show up from. My expectations were not incorrect. We're too late to escape and hiding in the bushes was all that I could think of. I hug Rubia on my shoulder tighter and put a finger on her lips, telling her to stay quiet.

We hide inside the dense thickets. Will this really work?

Rubia's breathing was still too loud so I order her to keep silent. In the midst of this storm, with the rumbling thunder and darkening sky and splotted ground there was no reason to upkeep their search and so hiding might work. They were too close to us now, running away will definitely alarm them.

I stare at the two approaching men. Each time lightning struck, I focused on their attire and equipment. For those brief moments of light were the only chance I had to analyse who these men from twenty years back truly were. One of them held a loaded crossbow that I had never seen before. I could tell it was enhanced, one that probably specialised in piercing shields. While the second man's weapon of choice was a giant hammer and because of the weight of this hammer, his stallion seemed more exhausted.

Both men hop off their horses and both their attires were similar. An outfit of metal and leather. These men didn't seem to be bandits, but I'm sure that back then I was beaten by bandits. This current sight defied those memories for these men of functional armour and refined weaponry didn't feel like simple bandits. Adding the fact that they have the ability to ride horses completely removed the thought that they were simply men who chanced on Rubia.

Their unusual atmosphere now makes sense. They smell like hunters, the type who hunt humans— assassins. Professionally hired to slice up people. Now that I have twenty years of experience, I easily recognised this fact.

Then, one the men used 'Sound Location Prediction', but such an ability proved useless in the current climate. So the two men manually searched through some bushes for a few minutes to no success, but their demeanours brought a non-existent frown to form on my face.

“The weather is bad. Let's go back.”

The two men exchange glances and get back on their horses. As they sped away in the distance it was clear to me that they were not bandits and were specifically on the hunt for Rubia.

Rubia raises her head, “Is it over?”

As she asks, I sensed something and push her head back into the bush, “Shhh”

“Ah,” Rubia groans in discomfort from the force I used to push her down.

They were back and they knew their game was around here. The man held his crossbow ready.

I could sense the girl's trembling. Rubia, hang in there. You'll get to live if you endure longer. I don't know how long these two will hold out for. We wait and wait and even I began to feel discomfort in my joints from having stayed still for so long. It must be difficult, more so for her. The human body is not well suited to staying still for these long periods of time. Though the fact I can feel discomfort sort of shocked me.

I told myself to not get cocky. I could not let Rubia get brutalised like the first time. Who are these men to be so accustomed to such a long hauled hunt. Where did they come from and what is their true purpose with Rubia?

And how did they get here?

In my last life I did not have the chance to think about all this, but now, with a chance of winning, I need to carefully consider the possibilities.

Unfortunately for us, the two assassins seem to be closing in on us. This time they seemed to be more thorough and I could feel Rubia's trembling within my grip.