

The worlds were in an uproar after the successful landing on the second world of Vision Expanse, which was named Legat in honor of those that discovered it. Though, whether or not the world of Legat had any inhabitants of its own or not was still something unknown.

What was known, however, was that a grand reward had been given to those who joined the expedition. Of the researchers, there were only three that actually cared to continue playing the game and keep their rewards. For the others, they immediately sold the results of their lottery tickets to either Legion or the rich guests.

These three chose to continue because each of them coveted the reward that they had been given... three lucky individuals that managed to get complete spacecraft like Watchful Aiz. They had no thoughts of selling these items for profit, and instead convinced their own companies to allow them to use the craft for further research within the game itself.

On the other hand, those guests who had bought their way onto the journey simply to enjoy the view were... less than pleased when comparing their results to the others. None of them had hit a 'jackpot', or even received any blueprints for station modules. They received system designs, spaceworthy materials, or outfits meant to be worn in the vacuum of space.

Perhaps they were unlucky, or fate had recognized their lack of any real contribution towards the expedition. Either way, they could do little more than complain amongst themselves, having no real means to change the results of their fortune. Even their lesser rewards could still be considered worth the price that they had paid to partake in this journey.

Legion themselves quickly got to work. The main team set out to explore the nearby area, meanwhile the support personnel that had been brought along began constructing a base of operations within the new world. At a glance, this world was rich in materials, possibly even untouched by civilization, so it was only a matter of scouting out a workable mine and lumber before they got started.

---

Within the Fairy's Plaza, the transport nexus of Earth housing the gate to other worlds, a familiar scene was taking place. The concentric rings of the gate rose up from its platform, causing the 'travel alarm' to call out. "Unscheduled gate activation. All personnel, please vacate the transit room and move to the designated safety areas. This is for your own safety."

The gate was not held in any fortified bunker, kept underground to prevent an outbreak of monsters or abuse. No, it was simply positioned in a large intersection, multiple roads leading to different portals nearby. However, as the alarm came to life, so too did the area around it. Those people living in the area did not panic, instead calmly walking into the nearest buildings.

Even after all this time, it was not uncommon for the gate to activate on its own and spew out some strange, powerful monster. Thus, the commonality of this event had allowed ample opportunities to prepare countermeasures.

The first countermeasure was to evacuate all nearby civilians to a safe space, in one of the many basements of the nearby structures. This would ensure that they would not be in any danger, should a dangerous beast appear. There were signs directing everyone to these safe areas posted at the entrance to each building.

The second countermeasure was to ensure the safety of the portals, which deactivated during the alarm. Each one was positioned on a small platform, which sank into the ground, metal grates closing the hole until the signal was given for them to rise again.

And then came the last countermeasure, six large turrets positioned around the gate, each one thirty meters from its outer edge. Normally, these turrets were pointed upwards, but during situations such as this one, they began to hum, their barrels emitting a dangerous orange glow as they aimed towards the gate.

If the creature that emerged showed immediate hostility, the elven commander was prepared to unleash the cannons to destroy whatever appeared. If it was simply an unscheduled visit from one of the other worlds, then the cannons would power down and return to their normal function.

As the light within the gate died down, the commander watched with rapt attention, waiting to see if he had to give the command to fire. However, what he saw confused him. It was... an elf, at least to his immediate understanding. Yet something about it was just... off. It may have been the longer than normal ears, the dark green hair, or the leather armor that tightly hugged the elf's frame.

It looked like an elf, but at the same time was just different enough so as to strike him as odd. This 'elf' looked around at the cannons pointing towards itself, and its eyes went wide in alarm. Its hands went into the air in a clear sign of surrender as it blurted out foreign words.

These words only increased the confusion of the commander, as he had made himself familiar with every world's primary languages to a certain degree. Enough at least that he would be able to guess the origin of the other party after hearing them speak. But this... this was entirely unknown to him.

"Stand down." The commander spoke, ordering the turrets to be deactivated, before giving his second order. "We have a code green. Diplomatic team, report according to protocol."

There were multiple color-coded designations to handle different situations. Code red was the most commonly used, when a monster appeared and civilians needed to give time for the turrets to handle their tasks. Then there was code blue, which was simply 'false alarm', and was

given when the arrival was simply a being from one of the allied worlds that for some reason came through unscheduled.

Code black was perhaps the most terrifying designation... it symbolized that a monster had come through that was strong enough to destroy the turrets, and that the fighting force stationed at the gate may very well fall. When this code was given, all civilians were ordered to stay within the underground bunkers for one full week, surviving off of the food and water provided within them. After one week, a scout would be sent out to determine if the threat had passed.

And finally, code green. This code meant that a 'peaceful' individual came from an unknown world. This particular code was used only once every few years, sometimes as little as once a decade. Oftentimes, it simply resulted in the individual being allowed to 'test their luck' and attempt to return to their home world. Those individuals were those that chose not to live within a foreign world, and were willing to make the gamble in order to return to where they belonged.

Soon, a small team of elven men and women emerged from the building closest to the gate, the offices of this nexus. The one in front was a woman with a slim build and almost shining silver hair, her eyes a strange mix of blue and gold. As she approached, the elf on the gate once more raised its guard, before the woman shook her head and waved a hand, as if trying to use her body language to communicate that there was no threat.

"Please, it's alright, you don't have to be alarmed." She spoke as she waved a hand, a piece of paper materializing as she reached for it. As part of her training, she had learned how to hastily create certain types of quest scrolls.

This paper seemed to catch the elf's eyes, before it hesitantly reached out for the, reading the contents. It was a simple quest, so easy to understand that even a child could grasp it. The 'objective' of the quest was to follow the diplomatic team to a safe room, with the 'reward' being the mutual exchange of information.

"It's alright, miss." The woman said in her most gentle tone. Even if the words couldn't get through to this strange elven woman, she knew that the tone of her voice was still important. "You can trust us."

The unfamiliar elf hesitated a moment longer, before nodding. Stepping down from the platform, she made a sweeping gesture with one hand, as if indicating for the team to lead the way. With a sigh of relief, they did just that. Secretly, they were relieved to see that this wanderer was at least close enough to pass for an elf. There should be no problems allowing her to mix in with society, once she learned the proper language skills.

Of course, these thoughts changed entirely once the group actually arrived in the 'safe area', a large room with comfortable couches and a wide table to discuss. This was because the elven woman produced four stone slabs from a storage space concealed within one of the objects on

her person. Likely, this was a gesture on her part to work towards the mutual exchange of information, while she herself seemed clueless as to the significance of the objects she produced.

Each slab was perfectly circular, with various designs inscribed on their face. Three of these were immediately familiar to the diplomatic team leader. They were the Fairy Gate keys leading to Desbar, Deckan, and Fyor. As for the fourth, it was not the key leading to Earth, but rather... a key unknown to her.

Immediately, she reached for a piece of paper, and began drawing a pattern on it before showing it to the elf. At the same time, she created a quest scroll to communicate her message. "Did you see another one like this? One that you used to come here?"

The pattern that she drew was the one that should have been found on the key that led to Earth, but this was not a question typically asked during these exchanges. Unless the individual had simply come from one of the three other known worlds, there was not a signal reported instance of a 'code green' event where the individual possessed keys like this.

The foreign elf nodded her head, the gesture thankfully seeming to mean the same thing in both cultures. With this, the diplomat was certain that the fourth key should be the one that leads back to the foreign elf's world.

---

I gave a small smile as I watched the exchange between diplomat Lisara Lionna and wood elf K'thona Everdew from my place in the Admin Room. I had not placed the gate in any inhabited nation. Rather, it was instead placed on the border between Demacry and Solace, in an isolated clearing.

I had even checked to make sure that there were no nearby settlements before having Tubrock place the gate, wanting it to be discovered naturally. And, after fast forwarding for a few days... it was. A lone wood elf, out on a travel far away from her home, had stumbled across the gate.

She saw the four keys I had laid out before the gate, along with the message written in front of them. 'Take these with you on your travels', that was all that the message said. Sure enough, she had done so, not seeming too suspicious about the strange objects. Instead, she wanted to take them for trade to the nearest city.

After taking the four that had been laid out before the gate, she seemed to notice the one that was resting within the gate itself. When moving onto the platform, I asked Aurivy to secretly activate that gate before she had the chance to remove the key. As such, instead of gaining an additional souvenir, she was taken to a foreign world.

Of course... if for some reason this elf had decided to attack on sight and use her arrows against the cannons, she would have only discovered that the magic that she was used to relying on no longer aided her. With the worlds merged, I had chosen against merging the laws as well. And one archer without her magic would not even be worth firing the cannons.

Thankfully, everything played out in a positive direction. K'thona was a rather skittish woman, so she had immediately surrendered upon seeing the weapons aimed at her. In fact, she wasn't presenting the tablets in order to share information with Lisara. Rather, she had shown them so that she could get them appraised for their value, as she judged that the woman in front of her would be more familiar with these objects.

She did not know what the gate was, nor what the stones represented. She simply knew that she had been transported to a foreign world... and that the air felt like it was starting to give her a headache.

*Okay, that might be bad.* I muttered, reading that thought in K'thona's mind. I clicked on her to pull up a detailed status window, and saw that her health had started depleting. Not fast enough to be considered dangerous, but enough that her health bar had appeared above her head.

One theory immediately sprang to mind, and I sent it off to Terra. *If an individual that is not accustomed to housing mana within their own bodies is suddenly thrust into an extremely mana-rich environment, what kind of problems will they face?*

*Pretty much what you're seeing now.* Terra's reply came back almost as soon as I had finished asking. *It's nothing fatal, don't worry. Individuals will simply need an adjustment period while their body adapts to the mana. Until then, they will suffer from moderate to severe headaches, some mild vertigo, and in extreme cases nausea.*

*Their symptoms will probably be regarded as a foreign illness at first, so I'd expect this wood elf will be quarantined soon, along with the diplomatic team. Once her symptoms pass, and it is determined to be non-infectious, everything should be fine.*

I gave a small sigh of relief when I heard that, before sending a follow-up question. *What about the reverse? Someone from Earth or one of the other worlds going to Spica?*

*They'll be light-headed for a bit, due to their bodies being unable to leak mana like they are used to, but it is also something easy to adjust to. I should note that while her body adapts to accept mana, this is a lasting change. Even though she won't be able to use the mana externally in Spica, she will still have it within herself.*

Well, that was something good to know. Though, I wasn't sure what the effects of that would be, aside from preventing her from experiencing this 'mana sickness' a second time.