(Nathan POV)

I took a horse of one of the fallen assailants and kicked the horse. In a few minutes I had already lost sight of the guerilla squad.

(This was the second time that I had almost died. Although this time I was sure that the guerilla squad will save me in time but still.)

In minutes I was out of the forest and now the horse was running on a vast open ground. In a distance I could already see the rest of the escapees. Cecilia, Rena, Earl and various other soldiers and commanders. I reached them and the first thing I asked was

"What's the status."

One of the soldiers was the first to reply.

"Your highness, the enemy army started to move as soon as they figured out that the fort was empty."

"And when did that happen"

"Not too long ago. I was one of the last to escape. At that point the enemy had known about the escape and was preparing to march."

"You listening to this Cecilia. It was just as you planned. They want to end this as soon as they can and they are leaving the fort behind to chase us." I looked at Cecilia but she turned her head around.

(Seriously)

"Seriously" I poured out my thought.

"Yes" She barked at me. "You did it again."

"Oh please...…. Are you really gonna bring it up now? We are in the middle of no where and an army is going to attack us in a few minutes and you are worried about this nonsense."

"ITS NOT NONSENSE. YOU ALMOST DIED AGAIN."

"No, I did not. I knew that the guerilla squads would come in time. Now drop it. We have more important matters to discuss right now."

Luckily, she was not dumb and she knew that we were in a pinch.

"Remember. I am not forgiving you for this." She then exhaled a huge amount of air. "How long till they get here." She turned her serious mode on.

"They shall be here in about fifteen minutes." The soldier replied.

"Plenty..... How many have returned to us." She asked

"Almost all the soldier are here." Another replied.

"That is good. Shall we do it, brother?" She asked me this time.

"No...…" I shook my head. "It's too soon. We can't risk anything. We have to wait."

"Okay fine." She spoke. "Commanders"

They all gathered around her. A table was placed and she had a map on it. She started to give orders.

"Are we going to fight back. We have no chance of winning." One of the men said. "We should all run away and...." He started to panic but I stopped him.

"And go where? We have nowhere left to run to you know. They will come after us no matter where we are. The capital???? It will fall. You will run to another kingdom??? Why would they keep you? We all have no other choice and that is the harsh reality."

"What brother said is the truth." Cecilia favored me. "We can not run away. So, just stay with us and have a bit trust in your superiors."

The gathering fell quiet. No one was speaking anymore. Maybe they were scared, maybe they were motivated but that did not matter. All that mattered was that they were all ready to fight….. more or less. Even the heart beats of the men were clear in this eerie quietness. Then as if a spell was lifted, one man spoke. His voice was neither loud nor soft. But still every one heard what he said clearly.

"They are here."

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(Cecilia POV)

The army came out of the forest like a swarm of slow-moving locusts. The people were overwhelmed by their sheer number. From the top of the fort, they did not seem that many but now that the army was in front of us, it seemed simply enormous.

"Rena....." I heard my brother saying

"Vermillious" She whispered with that weird stick or maybe wand in her hand. Red sparks emitted from the end of it and shot into the sky, exploding like fireworks. But no one except me paid attention as they were all fixated on the enemy in front.

"CHARGE"

"YAAAAHHHH"

"FOR ARCADIA"

Many battle cries resonated in the sky above the battle grounds.

"Princes." Rena called to me. "It's time for us to leave."

"WHa wha wha what do you mean time to leave? Where are we going? I need to be at brother's side." She never let me complete my sentence.

"I have clear orders to take you away from the battle field when the mayhem begins. And that is what I intend to do." And before I could object, she put her hand on my shoulder and in the next moment

\*VUP\*

Suddenly it felt as if my body was being squeezed through a very tiny tube of some kind that was bending and twisting. The sensation lasted only for a moment but was enough to bring my guts to my mouth. The moment my feet touched the ground, I fell on my knees and puked all my guts out.

"This…. What was that." I barely managed to ask.

"Apparition" I heard Rena's nonchalantly voice.

I got up and looked around.

"Where are we?"

"This is our headquarters."

"What do you mean our?"

"Our, as in magicians."

"You have to take me back."

"I am sorry but I cannot do that."

"I am ordering you..."

"I have clear orders from the king himself. Now are you willing to look at the condition of the war or not." I heard a bit frustration in Rena's voice.

"The war? Where?" I asked her

She pulled out a crystal ball from a small pouch that could by no means hold anything of that magnitude and placed it on the table. She signaled me to come and I did as was asked. With a tap of her wand, the ball lit up and I could see a clear image of the battle field. The scene in front of me was the most brutal thing I had ever seen in my life. Even though I had puked just now, watching it, I wanted to puke again but I held in.

(Maybe this was the right choice. Maybe I am not cut out for war right now.)

The enemy was overwhelming us. When a soldier on our side died, there was no one to take his place. But if an enemy soldier died, tens of men were ready to take his place. Such was the difference in numbers.

(Oh no!!!! Now what? We are losing this big time. If they...…. Oh, it's already happening.)

Suddenly a dust cloud appeared behind the enemy army. Before anyone could assess the situation, Dozens of men jumped out of the cloud and started to kill the enemy soldiers. This was the fruit of the first phase of the plan devised by the war council. A simple pincer attack. This was the real reason why brother had sent those guerilla squads. After slowing down the enemy in the forest as much as they could, they would join the hidden soldiers in fort Miras to create a pincer attack. Never to be mistaken. The number of soldiers was still not enough to make a difference. It was the element of surprise that made the difference. Besides the real aim of the plan was not to beat them like this but by using the forces of nature. I looked at the crustal ball carefully. Suddenly I saw that our army was retreating. The ones that attacked the frontal flanks were backing off while the new army that had attacked was backing towards the forest. Then it happened, that we all had been waiting. I could not contain myself as a huge smile appeared on my face.

"Finally, its show time."