

# Rise of the Guardians

Von Aqua111

## Kapitel 4: The Death Legion

### Rise of the Guardians

#### *Chapter 04 - The Death Legion*

The Guardians backed away until they were standing with their backs against the Master Emerald. Soon they were surrounded by at least twenty Legionnaires. No one of them carried a weapon but their sharp claws left no doubt that they knew other ways to kill.

Even though he was shaking with fear Sabre made a step forward and stood protectively in front of the other Brotherhood members.

"I will push them back and try to give you cover", he loudly said. "Just find a way out of here quickly."

Fleeing also meant leaving the Master Emerald in a chamber full of Dark Legionnaires but Sabre knew exactly they hadn't come for it - they had come for the Guardians only.

And suddenly Spectre was at his side, his fists surrounded by a faint glow, determined to fight.

"Do you really think we want to leave you behind? I was raised to be a warrior and even though I couldn't take my usual weapons with me I still know some other ways to fight.

"I know how to fight too", now Locke said. "And I also won't leave you alone."

"We have experienced a few gang fights", Thunderhawk exclaimed. "Maybe that knowledge would come in handy now."

"Either all of us get out of this alive or no one", Sojourner said.

At first the mummified warriors remained at their positions, swaying insecurely from side to side - they obviously hadn't awaited too much resistance - but then one of them charged at Locke and though the Legionnaire's blow was blocked and he got kicked back against the other mummies they saw it as their signal for an attack.

Sabre was attacked by four of them the same time. His shield was soon broken by their furious slashes. The Guardian was able to dodge the first blow that came through his barrier but then claws hit his face. He stumbled back, one hand pressed against his bleeding cheek, the other arm stretched out in front of his face in a hopeless gesture to block the next strike. The Legionnaires thought their victim to be helpless and lunged for another attack but two of them were hit by Chaos blasts, and slammed against the other two. The blast hadn't been too strong but the black spots

on their chests indicated that any living being now would have had a painful burn. Sabre stared at them and it needed him a few seconds to realize it had been his own attack, fired from his own hands he still had stretched out in front of him. But he had no time to wonder what he just had done or better yet how he had done it because the zombie Legionnaires didn't remain knocked out for too long.

Neither Sojourner nor Thunderhawk cared if they could use any kind of Chaos attacks or not. The lavender furred male had drawn two short daggers from his belt and tossed his friend one of them. Now they fought back to back trying to deal slashes before one of the surrounding Legionnaires could do. The mummies might not have been able to feel pain but they also had limbs to lose and moreover a lot of wires to cut.

"There's too many of them and they are fast", Sojourner cried out and narrowly blocked another strike.

Thunderhawk suddenly had an idea. "Quick, we have to get up the Emerald. Then we can fight them off one by one when they try to climb up too."

Two completely surprised Legionnaires were rammed out of the way when the two Echidnas rushed to the Master Emerald. Sojourner helped Thunderhawk up then the lavender furred male reached out a hand to drag his friend up as well but before Sojourner could grab it a Legionnaire jumped at him and slammed him to the ground. "Sojourner!" Thunderhawk cried out. He barely noticed that his dagger had started glowing when he lifted it over his head and jumped off the Master Emerald. "Get away from him, you bloody bastard!"

The dagger hit the Legionnaire's metallic back but instead of ricocheting it thrust into his body, Thunderhawk slashed down and cut the mummy into half.

"Are you ... are you okay?" Thunderhawk asked breathlessly and knelt down beside Sojourner. He still was a bit shocked of what he just had done but even more concerned about his friend's well-being.

"I-I think so..." Sojourner stuttered but then his eyes widened. "Watch out!"

He pushed Thunderhawk down and shot a blast over his head. The mummified Legionnaire stumbled and broke down on top of Thunderhawk. Disgustedly the lavender male pushed and kicked the enemy off him.

"Yuck, they smell like rotten bodies."

"Thunder, they ARE rotten bodies."

Both of them got back on their feet just to find themselves surrounded by Legionnaires again.

"Great... any other good plans?" Sojourner mumbled.

"Just one. Fight for your life."

Spectre was the only one of them who actually seemed to know a bit how to use the Chaos Force. His blasts neither were strong nor too accurate but at least it looked as if he knew what he was doing and the energy didn't just uncontrollably erupt from his body.

Soon the Legionnaires were shying away from attacking him too often and only fought when he came near one but they still encircled him and prevented him from coming to the other Guardians' help.

Another time he blasted a Legionnaire out of the way to escape the ring and another time he only closely avoided getting slashed into pieces when the circle around him narrowed for a short time until the blasted enemies had recovered.

"Will you finally stop that crap and either fight with me or let me through?" the dark Guardian brought out between clenched teeth.

"We only have the order to follow you and then kill the Guardians", one of the Legionnaires suddenly answered. His voice was rough and slurred as if he hadn't used it for years. "There's no need to harm someone like you."

"Then I'm sorry to tell you that I am one of the Guardians now too."

The undead warrior let out a dry cough that sounded a bit like laughter.

"No Dark Legionnaire will ever be a Guardian. You might think you are one for now, you might also know a bit of their abilities but deep inside your heart you will always remain one of the tribe you have been fighting for nearly your whole life."

Spectre's eyes narrowed.

"Don't you ever call me a Dark Legionnaire again!" he roared and his blast didn't just hit the one who had been speaking to him but also knocked out the two beside him.

Immediately the other enemies lunged at him again and since he had taken down more than one this time their attacks had become more furious. Spectre tried to create a shield around him just like Sabre had done it several times but it simply didn't work and the few attacks he knew weren't enough to get them away from him for too long. More and more slashes hit him and nearly forced him to his knees but he didn't want to give up fighting yet. He thought of the other Guardians. No one had been trained like him to be a warrior - during their mission they would need him as much as he needed them. Moreover if he fell without cutting down at least the majority of them the others would be completely overrun and then it was only a matter of seconds before they fell too. He couldn't let this happen. The energy wave breaking free of his body was the first attack he couldn't control but therefore it was stronger than the blows he had dealt before - strong enough to take out every enemy close to him.

Spectre knew the Legionnaires were only out cold for a short time and would return after a while but at least they were out of his way for now. He rushed to Sabre who had been able to knock out three of his enemies but now had been brought down by the last one and rammed the Legionnaire off Sabre before he could slam his claws into the young Guardian's chest. After he was sure the Legionnaire was out cold for a while he returned to help Sabre up.

"T-thanks", the younger male said still shaking a little. He looked around and with horror he saw that the zombified warriors Spectre had taken down just a few seconds ago were slowly standing up again and coming closer. "Isn't there any way to stop them?"

Spectre shook his head. "Not unless we either become as strong as the real Guardians very quickly or try to do the same as Sojourner and Thunderhawk and behead them and even they don't seem to have much success." Still he stepped beside Sabre ready to continue fighting the approaching enemy. "But I don't want to give up yet. That one stronger blast of mine proved we are also capable of doing the mightier Guardian attacks and I'm sure we will be able to send these corpses back to where they belong sooner or later."

'Provided they aren't able to kill us first', Sabre thought.

Leaping forward the mummified Legionnaire slashed across Locke's chest with razor sharp claws. Thin red lines appeared on the edges of his ripped coat. With a gasp Locke staggered backwards only to crash into something soft. The young Guardians spun around and his eyes widened in shock when he found himself face to face with

another Legionnaire. The zombie reached back ready to deal a blow too and the only way Locke had to escape this was to drop to the ground. The claws were whooshing only centimetres over his head, hitting the other Legionnaire with full force instead and slicing him open. Locke had to suppress the urge to gag when something plashed to the ground close to him.

Claws were launching down on him and he quickly rolled out of the way. Behind him metal drove into stone floor and the second the Legionnaire needed to drag his claws out again Locke used to leap back onto his feet. Balling up his hands he dealt a blow right across the Legionnaire's muzzle. The cyborg toppled backwards onto the floor. It looked as if he was out cold but Locke knew exactly this would only last for a few seconds. But what else could he do? The only way to completely stop them would have been to either hit them by a fully powered Chaos attack - which Locke couldn't do - or to slice them open - the sharpest weapon the Guardian carried was a pocket knife. Helplessly he looked around, still avoided looking at the rotten pile only steps away from him. The others were still fighting and some Legionnaires were already down but only the minority of them was gone for good while the rest just waited for a quick recovery.

He just had decided to run over to and help Sojourner and Thunderhawk when the sight of a Legionnaire Sojourner had brought down only seconds ago made him stop. Was that little trail of liquid underneath him blood? Could there really be living warriors among these corpses. He knew he was wasting time by examining this Legionnaire instead of helping his team members but he just had to find out. He knelt beside the cyborg and touched the dark liquid. No, it wasn't blood. This liquid was too greasy. It could have been oil. Of course, something must have been used to let the old metal parts which probably had been lying buried under earth for decades run smoother. An idea formed in his head. Probably it wouldn't work but he had to use this one chance.

"What the heck are you doing?" Sojourner cried out when he noticed the boy kneeling beside the Legionnaire. "That thing can come back to life any second. Stay away from it!"

But Locke barely listened to the things around him when he grabbed his pocket knife and carefully started removing and exchanging wires. He also could have cut them right through but he tried not to. Cutting them would have destroyed this one but if the plan in his mind worked he could destroy more of them.

With a roar the Legionnaire jumped up and pushed Locke away. Due to the sudden movements some wires were ripped apart sending out a shower of sparks but they didn't seem to have any life supporting functions. Locke crawled backwards as fast as possible when the cyborg towered above him, claws lifted up for a deadly strike. Sparks emitted from different cybernetic parts of his body.

'This isn't working!' it shot through Locke's mind when he rolled to the side and narrowly escaped the blow. Again the razor claws swooped down on him and this time he knew he couldn't avoid them anymore in time. He squeezed his eyes shut and awaited either pain or death but neither came. Carefully he blinked then snapped his eyes fully open. The picture in front of him was terrifying yet strangely fascinating. Sparks had ignited the little trails of oil and the dry skin. The Legionnaire stumbled around like an aimless Echidna torch. He didn't seem to feel pain but knew that the fire would destroy him if he couldn't find a way to extinguish it. Whenever he ran into another Legionnaire he set him on fire as well. Some tried to avoid him but paid their short lack of attention on the Guardians by either getting struck down with a Chaos

blast or the slash of a dagger.

"This ... this is it..." Thunderhawk panted as soon as the last mummified warrior was destroyed. "We really ... made it ..."

Locke sank to his knees looking as if he was close to vomiting. Sabre knelt beside him and put a comforting hand in his shoulder.

"Are you okay?"

The younger Echidna only nodded slowly.

"Don't worry, that often happens after the first few battles against the Death Legion", Spectre said. "You will get used to it."

"The what?" Sojourner asked.

"Death Legion - that's what we call these desert mummies", Spectre explained. "And the zombies from other regions too now that they are slowly awakening everywhere. Silent, deadly creatures - though some of them might still be able to talk if their tongues haven't gone rotten already - capable of moving underground. The Dark Legion itself would have needed years to return to their former strength even after Enerjak's return but with the Death Legion at their side they will come to power very fast. That's why I'm so eager to get to the Legion camp in the Sandopolis Zone. If we give Enerjak more time he will also be able to awake Death Legionnaires in the north - or absolutely everywhere he finds corpses that haven't already completely dissolved." Thunderhawk snorted. "You might be on our side or lead us into a trap, I still don't know, but one thing's for sure - you are freaking crazy. How in Edmund's name are we - five Echidnas who can barely handle their abilities - supposed to bring down a god?"

"We will have to learn on our journey", Spectre said. "We already made a large step ahead by discovering we had them in us. When I arrived here you were still concerned because nothing special happened to you and now during the battle all of us used Chaos based attacks. We now only have to learn how to control them."

"And even now I stayed a freak", Locke silently mumbled.

Sabre knew exactly what he meant - he also had noticed that the younger Echidna hadn't shown a single hint of Chaos abilities aside of his fast healing.

~~~\*\*\*~~~

"I know we all are tired", Spectre said when they stepped out into the evening forest, "but I think it would be an advantage if we either train a bit more today or go as far as we still can. What do you rather want to do?"

Sabre still felt so shakily that he didn't believe he could do either and he also saw that Locke felt the same way but Sojourner answered, "We definitely already had too many fights to start with. I just want to leave this place behind me."

Thunderhawk nodded as well and since neither Sabre nor Locke had an opinion about it Spectre said, "Alright, then let's move. If we're fast we can still reach the rocky hills before it's completely dark. It would be a good and protected place to stay the night as well."

Another time the Echidnas were running through the forest but now they were heading south, into territories only one of them knew.