

BIOLOGICAL 1101

Chapter 1101: Levium (18)

Erik looked outside the window.

The view was chaotic. Explosions shook the ground and everything on it. Smoke rose around. Shockwaves destroyed windows, pillars of many shapes and materials got the same destiny, and giant boulders got thrown into the air as if they were just pebbles in the hands of an adult. Dust rose, and the air smelled weird.

The streets were empty. There were no enemies in sight.

<They all retreated...>

It was as if a giant hand had swept through the city, leaving nothing but rubble and silence in its wake.

Though the scale of destruction was immense and the silence unsettling, Erik remained unfazed.

Years of combat had desensitized him to such sights. The silence, the dust, the smoke, and the crumbling structures were all too familiar. To him, this was merely another fight in a life full of them.

As Erik looked around, he saw tiny bugs moving towards him. These weren't normal bugs. His instability brain crystal power made that clear for him; Erik could sense their thoughts. These were the Chimaeric Demons in disguise.

Erik watched the bug-like clones crawl through small gaps in walls, under doors, and through broken windows.

Some flew, while others ran across the floor. To anyone else, they would look like ordinary creatures, and that was exactly how they wanted it to be.

The clones reached the area without the blackguards noticing them.

"Report," he said once the clones took human form and entered the building.

"Master, our forces are all heading this way, but many have already engaged the blackguards in battle."

Erik's lips curled into a slight smile. "Good. That's exactly what we need. They'll keep the bulk of the enemy forces distracted while we deal with Levium."

The clones exchanged glances.

"Master," another clone said, "Are you sure you want to do this?"

"Yes. You know the reason." Erik had no doubt he had to do this. Levium had to die, and he was the only one who could bring him to the afterlife, in his case most likely hell.

"We do, master... But your safety should come first than revenge."

"I will not get killed. Of that, you can rest assured; that is exactly why I asked you to come here."

In the distance, explosions rang out, accompanied by the sounds of energy weapons discharging and the clash of metal on metal. The battle was clearly getting into a heat.

Erik turned to the clone he'd initially been with. "Did you relay my orders to bombard this area?"

The clone nodded. "Yes, Master. The others are preparing for the attack as we speak."

"Good. Check the radio. I want to know exactly when they plan to start the bombardment."

The clone pulled out a communication device and started talking to the others. After a brief exchange, he turned back to his master. "They're set to begin in five minutes, Master. They suggest we evacuate the area once again."

Erik's grin widened, a predatory gleam in his eyes. "We're not going anywhere. I didn't ask for the bombardment to flee. I want to take advantage of it."

The clones had uneasy faces at that point. They had the bad feeling their master wanted to make something crazy.

"Listen," Erik said, his voice low and intense. "We're going to kill Levium during the bombardment."

One of the Chimaeric Demons stepped forward, his face etched with concern. "Master, with all due respect, this could be a grave mistake. The area will be under a relentless barrage, and that is just from us. We can't predict what the blackguards will do when they spot us. It will literally look like fire is raining down upon us. We'd be walking into a death trap of our own making at best."

The clone gestured towards the window, where the first signs of the impending bombardment were visible. "We'll be fighting not just Levium and his forces, but also dodging our own attacks. It's suicide."

Erik cut him off with a sharp gesture. "I know this isn't ideal, but it is our best chance. There are simply too many blackguards. for me to have a one-on-one fight against Levium. I need your help to get that opportunity."

He looked around at the assembled clones.

"Levium must die today. I need to know if you're with me. This won't be easy, and many of you may not survive. We're about 300 against at least a thousand of Levium's soldiers. Are you willing to follow me, knowing the risks?"

There was a moment of silence as the clones processed Erik's words. Then, one by one, they nodded.

Everyone, including Erik, knew that what he wanted to do was risky and stupid, and yet their loyalty and their wish to serve their master prevented them from leaving him alone.

It prevented them from leaving Erik on this suicide mission. However, they also knew that if there was someone in the world able to pull off that feat, it was them.

The same clone, who had initially voiced concern, unable to make his creator change his mind, stepped forward. "We're with you, Master."

But through his Instability brain crystal power, Erik sensed his unease.

Erik nodded. "Good. When the bombardment starts, we'll use the chaos and confusion as cover. I repeat what I said earlier. Our main goal is to kill Levium, but he'll be surrounded by his soldiers. Your job is to keep those soldiers occupied while I deal with the guy. The other Chimaeric Demons will bombard the area and keep the blackguard forces occupied until we do our job."

He paused. "Keep them off balance; keep them distracted. If you can do that, I can take Levium down."

The truth was, though, that Erik was underestimating Uncle Benjamin. He was a Vindicator and had two brain crystal powers. But having two powers wasn't the base for his strength. He had always been powerful. Everyone in Frant knew that, even if they didn't know the extent of his strength.

Levium wasn't someone Erik could kill in just a minute, because he would not leave Erik a chance to use his physical strength, his body, to fight. A pure brain crystal power battle was coming to the young man, and there Erik was, as powerful as everybody else.

The clones nodded.

Just then, a series of explosions rocked the area. The building they were in shuddered, dust raining down from the ceiling.

Erik and the clones rushed to the windows, watching as streaks of energy rained down from the sky, affecting buildings and streets alike. It was because of the Chimaeric Demons, but not completely. It looked like the blackguards were still bombarding the area, hoping to find him.

"It's starting. The other clones have begun their attack."

He turned to face his assembled forces. "Are you ready?"

"YES, MASTER!"

Erik's grin turned feral. "Then let's go."

Chapter 1102: Levium (19)

The Chimaeric Demons began to change shape, morphing into Galewings.

A first clone's body grew longer, and its arms became big wings full of blue and white feathers. Its face changed shape, getting a sharp, metal-like beak and smart-looking but predatory eyes.

The second clone did the same, getting as big as how usually these creatures were; its wings got as wide as 20 feet. The skin underneath its feathers became hard, and its legs turned into clawed hands.

All the other clones changed in the same way. They spread out, taking the sky. Erik transformed too, but kept the shape of a bug. He needed to get closer to Levium to try to sneak attack him or something like that, and if he got too big, he would simply be seen. He needed something that even Levium, with his Parallel Will brain crystal power, could not easily spot.

The Galewings appeared in the sky, scaring those that could see them from a distance.

Most of those who saw them were soldiers who didn't think much about them. After all, they got strong enough now to easily kill such flying thaids.

But it was different for the few citizens who remained in the city. For them, a flock of flying thaids was like death incarnate.

"Look, it's Romano!"

Erik was the only known person who could control thaids, so that was the only logical explanation for a flock of thaids being within Sleeb Harbor's barrier.

"These are most likely not thaids! It's their troops! You saw them yourself. They can shapeshift into thaids!"

Although it was weird to know that so many people could shapeshift. Of course, the real nature of the troops under Erik, the Chimaeric Demons, was unknown to everyone.

"Does it matter?" A soldier said.

"Stop spouting bullshit and focus on the enemy! These guys are powerful!"

But despite the tension, the soldiers making up the blackguard ranks were not your run-of-the-mills soldiers. They were trained, had plenty of experience, and had deadly powers.

The feelings they were having turned into determination as soon as they saw the ominous cloud of flying thaids getting closer to their position.

In the meantime, Levium observed the approaching flock with a pensive look on his face. It was clear the creatures were heading toward him.

<Is this what you came up with, Erik?>

The man didn't really know what to think. I was certain those were not normal Galewings. It was very likely these were Erik's soldiers turned into thaids. The point was, would that change something for him?

<No. Fighting against them flying does not differ from doing it on the ground.>

The problem was that Erik's soldiers were as lethal as him on the ground.

<But we are not there... I can still take advantage of the situation.>

Benjamin had to do one important thing, though, and that was to collect information about Erik and send it to the base.

Understanding what their enemies could do was the most important thing he could do in case something went bad and he failed his mission.

There had always been a certain doubt in Levium's mind about Erik's soldiers. That they were not normal. They all had the same height, the same frame, and even the same voice, but most importantly, they had the same powers.

Levium thought that Erik's soldiers were, in fact, the result of one of his brain crystal powers.

"We lost too much time," Benjamin said, looking at the cloud of thaid's.

That Erik's troops might arrive on the battlefield to help him was what worried Levium the most. He did the best he could to prevent that by trying to keep them occupied, but he failed, at least partially.

<There is a significant group of them coming here, but they are still less than a thousand. Maybe I can manage this...>

The blackguards weren't sure Erik could shapeshift before this battle started. Of course, when Erik and his driver escaped, both of them vanished, or better, they got smaller. So, right now, that Erik could shapeshift was a certainty even for Levium, and of course, he immediately told this to the Justicars.

However, in the past, they only had suspicions and tried to prevent him from using it by employing the Veritas Lenses.

"But somehow he avoided even that. This kid's skills surprise me every time."

As Benjamin watched the flock approach, he thought about the biological supercomputer. It had made Erik a beast.

It made Erik smarter, faster, and able to manipulate his surroundings in ways that even his organization couldn't comprehend and couldn't do.

The biological supercomputer gave him something that even Levium couldn't understand, and that wasn't just brain crystal powers or strength.

<It gave him purpose...>

Thinking about this power made Benjamin feel a complex mix of emotions—fear, awe, everything was there, but there was also something else.

He felt a strong, almost overwhelming desire for that power. Benjamin's mind raced with visions of being as powerful as Erik, of having more than two brain crystal powers, of making getting new ones effortless.

For a moment, he lost himself in fantasies of the feats he could accomplish if he possessed even a fraction of Erik's abilities. If he had the biological supercomputer.

"Lucky kid," he said, his eyes shining with want.

Then another volley of fireballs came from the outside of the battle area.

"Tsk. These bastards are using our same tactic."

The blackguards and their allies reacted when they saw fireballs coming their way again.

"Shields up!"

Several blackguards raised their hands and glowing energy fields appeared around them. They ended up making a dome, but one that was open on the side from where Erik was coming.

"Come, Erik... I will defeat you."

In the meantime, the rest of Levium's personal troops started an attack on the flock, while those not belonging to those he was directly controlling redirected their bombardment to the flock.

The blackguards were eager to bombard Erik's troops with their own brain crystal powers, but the proximity of their comrades in the fray made it a risky proposition.

They couldn't unleash their full arsenal without potentially harming their own forces. This forced them to be more selective with their attacks, limiting their ability to focus on Erik himself and some of the areas with less concentration of blackguards.

As the fireballs hurtled towards the blackguards' position, they collided with the newly conjured energy shields.

The impact caused them to shimmer and tremble, their surfaces rippling and undulating under the barrage.

Despite the assault, though, the shields held firm.

"Keep the shields up!" Levium said, his face lit up by the constant hits on their defenses. "Fix any weak spots!"

The shields weren't omnipotent, though. Cracks spread across their surfaces like cracks on thin ice. More cracks appeared the more the attacks fell on them.

The group of flying Chimaeric Demons got closer. They looked like a dangerous storm cloud moving towards the weakening shields.

They didn't stay idle. They started releasing starlight fireballs at the enemy, adding to those that were already raining on them thanks to their brethren.

The only difference was that they were aiming for the open spot in the dome that Levium left purposefully open.

<Uncle Benjamin is sure he can win this, uh? Otherwise, he would have never left an opening for us...>

The blackguards shot lightning, fire, and ice at the incoming creatures. Some of the Galewings were hit and struggled, but most dodged the attacks.

Those who got injured healed themselves, but they tried to avoid using mana until they were close enough to use it for something more effective. Besides, healing powers consumed a lot of mana.

Then the clones reached the blackguards.

Loud screeches and caws echoed through the battlefield. Their claws and beaks attacked the soldiers, cutting through armor and flesh.

"Kill them! I want all these guys dead!"

The Chimaeric Demons didn't just use physical attacks. Sure, they ripped, clawed, and pierced, but they also shot bright Starlight Fireballs.

What the clones achieved was multiplying their killing rate by fighting in close and midrange. It was almost impossible for them to miss an attack, but their enormous forms made them easy targets.

Most of the Chimaeric Demons were forced to use the Metal Fur brain crystal power to harden their feathers and resist the barrage.

But that just invited those with brain crystal powers with an affinity to lightning to attack them.

That made things especially dangerous. The metal-like properties of their hardened feathers made them more susceptible to electrical attacks, turning their defense into a potential weakness against lightning-wielding enemies.

But it wasn't like there were many. However, the number of enemies was still overwhelming compared to them.

It was to the point that even the Chimaeric Demons were having trouble fighting.

This battle had at least 3 enemies to kill per Chimaeric Demon. In any other circumstance, they would have done this without problems, but they were not facing the average blackguard; even more, they were not fighting the average human.

The blackguards and their allies were strong, and this meant that the Chimaeric Demons were dying on that battlefield.

Erik was right in the middle of the fight. However, there were so many fighters and attacks flying, falling, and hitting that the enemy couldn't see him.

Even the Veritas Lenses couldn't help them find him.

This didn't guarantee his safety, though. He constantly had to dodge and weave to avoid being struck by falling bodies or caught in the crossfire of attacks—many of which weren't even meant for him.

During his flight, he watched as his clones, his children, and his companions died, and his heart sank. Grief gripped his heart like a vise.

Erik's emotional turmoil intensified as he saw more of his clones fall in battle. The battlefield became a blur of motion and carnage.

The young man was remaining focused on his goal only because of his need to kill Levium. Otherwise, he would have wiped out the enemy soldiers.

<LEVIUM!>

Rage surged through him.

<I'm going to kill you, Levium!>

Chapter 1103: Levium (20)

The Chimaeric Demons dove into the fray. Their wings cut through air and bodies alike while they descended upon Levium's soldiers.

One of the clones swooped down on a group of blackguards.

With its talons extended, the clone tore through the first soldier's armor like paper.

The man collapsed, his scream stifled. The clone didn't stop there, as he immediately pivoted to face the next threat.

There were two blackguards. Both of them attacked the clone from a distance.

A blackguard raised her weapon, energy crackling at its tip. The clone was faster. It lashed out with its beak, the metal-like appendage piercing the woman's throat. She gurgled, then went limp.

Levium noticed that and tossed the woman away, making her fall to the ground.

A gust of wind flew at the clone, taking the shape of a blade. The Chimaeric Demon tucked in its wings and rolled, avoiding the deadly wind blades.

As he steadied himself, the other blackguard unleashed an unidentified attack.

The clone's Metal Fur brain crystal power was exerted against it. The fire hit its metal-like feathers without injuring the clone, leaving only a small black spot.

<Shit!>

The Chimaeric Demon targeted the two blackguards with a Starlight Fireball. However, despite using multiple powers simultaneously, the soldiers dodged the attack.

This wasn't due to their own skill, but rather Levium's intervention, as he swiftly moved the two blackguards out of harm's way using his powers.

The demon's fireballs soared past them and continued their trajectory, exploding against the ground below them.

The clone pressed forward. There were many more targets in front of him, so he stopped targeting those two guys and set his sights on someone else.

Two more soldiers attacked the clone. He could do nothing but flap his wings and avoid some other attacks.

This time, though, the clone struck back. Its claws scratched one soldier's face, while its beak pierced the weak spot in the other's armor.

The clone gushed blood, mangled meat, and claimed human lives. The clone killed 2 of the 3 targets it had to kill.

Victory hinged on each clone killing at least three enemies. Falling short meant defeat, barring Erik's intervention—provided he could defeat Levium.

Despite everything, the Chimaeric Demon wasn't so lucky. His success didn't go unnoticed. Many blasts of different kinds of energy hit him at once.

The clone infused his Metal Fur brain crystal power with more mana. The enemy's mana usage increased in tandem with the damage he sustained.

The attacks deflected off its hardened feathers, but they hindered his flight, and he found himself struggling with the wind to regain control.

Close by, another Chimaeric Demon was fighting with the same intensity. He dove into a group of enemy soldiers, tearing them apart like butter.

Levium wasn't able to control the battlefield in its entirety, and that allowed the clone to exert some pressure and kill more and more of the soldiers.

But the blackguard was doing a great job, and the Chimaeric Demons fell too.

The demon then flew into another crowd of confused soldiers. It slashed and pierced, to the point his feathers got scarlet red because of the blood.

A large soldier got close to the creature. He swung a huge energy axe, sending it hurtling through the air.

The clone barely survived it—the axe almost cut off his head—and he healed himself immediately to avoid dying from blood loss.

As he set his sight on the man, the Chimaeric Demon flew toward him. After a barrage of starlight fireballs, the man stumbled back, and the clone seized the opportunity.

It grabbed him with both sets of talons and, using its beak, ripped his head off his torso.

However, in his last moments, the man made another energy axe. Before the clone could complete his task, the blackguard plunged the weapon deep into the Chimaeric Demon's imposing feathered chest.

The Chimaeric Demon let out a loud scream as he fell. Some of the clones stopped fighting, seeing their brother die.

But the battle became more brutal as soon as it resumed. The number of enemy soldiers was much bigger than that of Erik's clones, and they couldn't rest even for a second.

In addition, losing a brother meant killing more enemies to make up for it.

However, they were genuinely making progress. While there were still more enemies than Chimaeric Demons, their numbers were not infinite.

A soldier unleashed a strange energy blast, striking the Chimaeric Demon's wing. Unable to evade, the clone faltered mid-flight. In that split second of vulnerability, enemies swarmed from all directions. The creature let out one final, piercing screech before succumbing to the onslaught.

Many other clones fell to the same fate. One had just killed a soldier when a powerful energy blast hit him in the chest. Feathers fell from the sky all over the battlefield.

<What's the situation?> a clone asked.

<It's not good! There are too many enemies; we can't keep up with them!>

It was all Levium's fault.

The clone turned to his left and watched as another of his brothers fell through the sky, resembling a flaming ball or a meteor, inexorably heading towards the ground.

Meanwhile, Erik went through the chaotic battlefield. He darted between falling debris, clones, blackguards, and many bodies falling from the sky. Blasts of fire, wind, and many other kinds of energy cut the air as if they were a knife going through butter.

Though the amount of blood around made it look more like the knife went through raw meat.

A massive chunk of concrete plummeted from above. Erik spotted it at the last second, narrowly avoiding being crushed. As the debris neared, he darted beneath it, using the falling slab as cover to conceal his presence from those soaring overhead.

Then he did the same with a body that was free falling towards him. It was the corpse of a blackguard. It missed a head, but it wasn't the only injury on his body.

There was a huge burn mark on its back, and it was also missing a leg. The stump was losing copious amounts of blood, creating a bloody trail into the sky.

Erik used this to ascend further into the sky.

Levium was floating high above the battle. Getting to him looked nearly impossible. But just nearly. In truth, Erik got closer, higher. The man hadn't yet noticed Erik.

<Just some more...>

But while things were going well for him, the same couldn't be said for the Chimaeric Demons. There were too few of them to fight on equal ground with the blackguards. Their enemies weren't random thugs taken from the street like in Frant.

Chapter 1104: Levium (21)

Erik waited, then made his move. Erik swiftly ascended onto a soldier's boot, maintaining a tight grip while the blackguards swooped towards a Chimaeric Demon, which towered over him. In truth, it was Levium that was bringing the man there.

Erik wondered how powerful Uncle Benjamin's parallel will brain crystal power had to be to make him so aware of the battlefield. It was scary, but also alluring, because if he could put his hands on it, he would be at least as powerful as the man.

When the clone killed the soldier, Erik flew onto a floating piece of debris that Levium himself was keeping afloat.

From there, he flew toward a clone, landing on the back of the Chimaeric Demon. The clone, his movements wild and unpredictable, engaged in combat with three enemy soldiers simultaneously.

The clone killed them, and he spread his wings to soar higher.

However, Levium noticed it and sent a huge section of a building towards him. The building was moving too quickly, and Erik realized the clone would not survive. Erik swiftly took off as the concrete slammed into the Chimaeric Demon.

Erik's rage surged. He then landed on top of an energy shield.

The soldier controlling it was busy blocking attacks from below and didn't notice the tiny bug.

Erik moved across it, always keeping an eye on Levium. He was getting closer, but the last stretch was going to be the most challenging.

Suddenly, a powerful energy blast hit the shield. The impact almost knocked Erik off. He held on tight and waited for the shaking to stop before moving again.

Levium was right above him now, but still far away. Erik knew he had to move out at just the right moment to reach him.

The shield tilted. The soldier controlling it had been hit by something from behind.

Erik turned his insect's head to see what was happening.

<Damn Levium...>

The man sent some stones hurtling towards a Chimaeric Demon, but the clone used his speed to ensure Levium's attack would hit his own soldier.

Erik could no longer remain there, and as the shield dissipated, he leaped forward. Arcing through the air, he got closer to his target, behind him, aiming for Levium's neck. He was very close to the fucker.

The remaining Chimaeric Demons were in trouble. There were fewer of them now, less than 120. The battle had been as fast as it had been brutal. However, the clones had reduced the enemy forces by two-thirds.

This development was both beneficial and problematic, as Erik now had fewer allies to conceal his presence and to keep Levium at bay.

<I only need one shot...>

That wasn't the only problem, though. Levium wasn't stupid. He had fewer pawns at his disposal due to the attack, and he was determined not to expose himself to Erik. Levium didn't know where the young man was, but was sure he was around here.

There was no other reason for Erik to send his troops to the slaughter, if it wasn't because he wanted to try to kill him and decapitate the blackguards of their leader. Additional enemy troops were making their way towards Levium's position.

<The bastard called for help.> A Chimaeric Demon thought.

Erik could, in theory, do the same. The problem was that his troops were blocked by the blackguards. It wasn't just that. Erik didn't want them to rush here because he needed them to keep bombarding the area.

A constant barrage of fire, in fact, rained down on the battlefield. This made it hard for the blackguards to find Erik, hiding him well, and it kept Levium under pressure.

But it also caused problems for the Chimaeric Demons, who had to dodge their own side's attacks.

They dodged energy blasts from enemy forces below while also escaping the fiery attacks from their own allies above.

Despite the incredible skills of the Chimaeric Demons, their efforts did not keep them alive, as Levium's army continued to attack with greater intensity.

A battered Chimaeric Demon confronted a group of elite blackguards, successfully taking down one, only to encounter two more. The enemy's fire hardened his feathers further, causing cracks to form.

Another clone joined, launching Starlight Fireballs. However, some newcomers came to the blackguards' aid.

More and more soldiers poured in.

Just as the clones were about to meet their end, an energy blast tore through the air. It struck a blackguard, obliterating his head along with those of five soldiers behind him in a spray of blood and brain matter.

Then a series of rapid-fire shots rang out. The energy projectiles, seemingly composed of mana, consistently resulted in a kill.

The Chimaeric Demons looked around. More shots followed, each one finding its mark. Blackguards fell left and right, taken out by an unseen ally.

<What's happening?>

<I don't know. But whatever it is, it's buying us time.>

The unknown sniper kept shooting at the enemy. Whenever the blackguards tried to group up or attack, the sniper would stop them with well-aimed shots. Even Levium failed to save his soldiers.

The Chimaeric Demons could only imagine the frustration they felt. Up until now, Uncle Benjamin behaved as if he were a god. Observing the fight from above and intervening whenever he saw fit.

Then, a massive amount of concrete, metal, and bricks floated around him, encapsulating the Vindicator.

<The fucker!>

<What a coward.>

But in truth, Levium left some spots open so that he could observe the battlefield. Then he made the debris float at high speed.

The rotation was going to stop every attack while, at the same time, not preventing him from seeing what was happening around.

<Whoever's helping us should have hit Levium.>

The others agreed. It had been an amateurish move, but at least they didn't die, and the load for them was reduced.

The mysterious sniper continued their support, then arrows started joining the fray. Any time a blackguard got into a position to threaten the clones, a well-placed shot would eliminate the danger. It was as if the Chimaeric Demons had gained a guardian angel.

<Ah...>

<What?> A Chimaeric Demon asked.

<I know who they are...>

It was at that moment that all the Clones understood. Emily, Mira, and Amber joined the fight.

<We're pushing them back!>

Indeed, Levium's forces were beginning to falter. But the battle was far from over.

<Any news about the master?> A clone asked.

<No... But he must not be that far considering we can send mental messages to each other!>

Chapter 1105: Levium (22)

<Finally!>

Erik clung to a piece of debris orbiting Uncle Benjamin. The man kept that and many other things, including human bodies, close to him so that he could use them to attack.

What he needed human bodies for was unknown—maybe to look more scary.

The makeshift shield rotated at dizzying speeds around the man, a whirlwind of concrete, metal, brick, and disgusting things.

The rotating shield was a masterful defensive strategy on Levium's part.

The thing was very effective for several reasons. First, it was unpredictable and always moving.

This made it hard for attackers to hit Uncle Benjamin directly. Any attacks would likely be blocked or broken by the spinning debris.

Second, the fast rotation created a blurry effect. This made it hard to see where Uncle Benjamin was, so enemies couldn't aim at him.

The shield's mix of concrete, metal, bricks, and who knew what else could also absorb various attacks, and as the shield spun, any weak spots were quickly covered, leaving enemies with almost no opportunity to strike.

Uncle Benjamin's defense seemed nearly impenetrable. In theory, at least. However, even the strongest shields could be shattered with a powerful enough attack.

Erik's compound eyes took in the swirling mass, searching for a weakness in the defense.

<I think I only have one viable route here.>

And that was the route of destruction.

Erik didn't have many chances. If he sneaked his way to him before he surrounded himself with the debris, maybe he could have backstabbed him or something like that. Since Levium made that impossible, he either drew him out of the shield or destroyed it.

Erik focused, channeling massive amounts of mana through his Frostwind Fire Tempest brain crystal power's neural links. The surrounding air began to shimmer and chill as he summoned a colossal mass of wind-powered ice.

Erik didn't know if this would be enough to destroy Levium's defenses, but he had to test the shield somehow.

With a surge of power, Erik conjured a gigantic iceberg, its crystalline surface glittering in the light. Harnessing the wind from his Frostwind Fire Tempest power, he propelled the massive ice formation towards Uncle Benjamin at breakneck speed.

The colossal iceberg hurtled towards Uncle Benjamin's rotating debris shield, colliding with a thunderous crash. The impact was world-ending.

At first, a huge shockwave scattered the above clouds. Then, as the ice met the whirling barrier, a grinding sound filled the battlefield.

The debris shield, spinning at incredible speeds, shredded the massive ice formation. Chunks of ice of different sizes splintered off, raining down towards the ground below.

Snowflakes drifted down, blanketing the battlefield in a surreal winter landscape—an eerie sight in the heart of July.

The temperature plummeted, the air becoming crisp and frigid. Steam rose from the warm ground as it met the suddenly chilled air, and the vapor filled the battleground.

Uncle Benjamin's eyes widened in shock. There was one thing he had been certain about Erik: despite having multiple brain crystal powers, only his body's strength was enhanced, not the powers themselves.

It meant that, like everybody else, his destructive power in a battle of powers depended on his mana.

Levium was uncertain about Erik's mana reserves. Logic dictated they should be minimal, yet the biological supercomputer was a wildcard.

While its full capabilities remained a mystery, Levium reasoned that if it could give brain crystal powers, it might also boost mana levels. But how much did Erik get?

The man who had seemed so composed and in control just moments ago now was taken aback.

His mouth hung slightly open, his brow furrowed in disbelief, because Erik just showed to have a similar amount of mana to him.

Uncle Benjamin wasn't weak. He had been blessed by having a very powerful brain crystal, which made his power even more destructive.

Among the blackguards, it was hard to find someone with his same amount of mana, and yet the kid that had almost none three years ago now matched his blessed body.

"Impossible," he said. The biological supercomputer became suddenly much more valuable than it already was.

With a thunderous crash, the shield collapsed. Chunks of concrete and twisted metal rained down on the battlefield below, mingling with the snowflakes created by the shredding of the huge iceberg Erik created.

The citizens of Sleb Harbor watched in awe and terror. Erik's creation was so immense that it was visible from every corner of the city. The sheer scale of his power left onlookers stunned, struggling to comprehend how any single person could wield such might.

The iceberg's sheer size was awe-inspiring, yet Levium's shield shattering it into countless fragments was even more remarkable. The soldiers under his command knew better than anyone else how strong that thing could get. Yet Erik destroyed it.

Uncle Benjamin, exposed, tried to reassemble his defense, but Erik seized the moment.

He shed his insect form, transforming back into his human shape in mid-air but keeping multiple pairs of insect wings on his back.

They were better than birds wings since they allowed him to hover instead of just flying and gave him greater control.

Uncle Benjamin's eyes widened in shock behind his mask as Erik materialized before him, his fist already in motion.

The punch connected with a sickening crunch, but the only thing that it got was an enormous piece of metal that got shattered. One of the debris hit the older man in the face.

Uncle Benjamin reeled backward, blood spraying from his nose. But he recovered quickly and sent a massive amount of metal shards flying at top speed towards his best friend's son.

Erik barely dodged. It was true, his body's strength made him more powerful than anyone else, but that was exactly why he feared pure brain crystal powers battles, because he lost that advantage in such cases.

His wings beat, and he unleashed a bolt of lightning from his fingertips. But Uncle Benjamin was not stupid.

Not only did he see that coming, Parallel will give him an edge, but he also countered that by making many blocks of metal hover in front of him and in his immediate surroundings.

He basically used Erik's same strategy, but using metal instead of ice.

"Fuck..."

Then the young man launched a massive fireball at the man, who flew away from it.

The ball of fire ended up hitting the ground, and everything that could go on fire did, including people.

[HUMAN KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[HUMAN KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[HUMAN KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[HUMAN KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[HUMAN KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[HUMAN KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[HUMAN KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[HUMAN KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[LEVEL UP.]

[LEVEL UP.]

[LEVEL UP.]

[LEVEL UP.]

[LEVEL UP.]

[LEVEL UP.]

[LEVEL UP.]

Chapter 1106: Levium (23)

Buildings around them caught fire, with flames spreading quickly. The intense heat melted the ice from Erik's glacier. Water flowed down the streets and turned into steam as it hit the hot air.

The mix of fires and steam made the battlefield hard to see through. The air wavered, making it difficult to tell friends from enemies. Smoke and steam combined created a strange, swirling fog that covered the area.

Erik's Chimeric Demons kept launching fireballs; only this time, it was almost impossible for anyone to avoid them.

The Chimaeric Demons weren't the only ones who kept attacking from a distance.

The blackguards, too, kept attacking the areas where the Chimeric Demons were. It was just that they used many types of sources. From weapons to brain crystal powers.

"Surprised, boy?" Uncle Benjamin said, wiping blood from his face. His mask was now cracked. "Did you think I'd be weaker than you? In the air, you can't use that body of yours..."

Erik didn't respond. He was too busy reading Uncle Benjamin's status.

—

-Name: Benjamin Kaminski

-Brain Crystal Power: Telekinesis, Parallel Will

-PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: Benjamin, a man in his late thirties, has dark skin with a smooth, rich complexion reflecting his heritage. He stands at about 170 centimeters, with a lean, athletic build suggesting an active lifestyle. A neatly trimmed goatee accentuates his chiseled jawline, lending him a rugged masculinity. Benjamin's most striking feature is his long, black hair—a thick, lustrous mane reaching his mid-back. Often tied in a ponytail, it gives him a distinctive, sophisticated look. His hair's natural wave frames his face, drawing attention to his expressive, almond-shaped brown eyes.

-BRAIN CRYSTAL POWERS:

Telekinesis: The ability to manipulate objects and matter with the mind. At Benjamin's level (Aα2A), he can control multiple large objects simultaneously with precision and force. In combat, Benjamin uses this power to hurl debris at opponents, create shields, and enhance his physical attacks with telekinetic force. He can also use it for flight and to manipulate his immediate environment.

Parallel Wills: This power allows the user to perform multiple mental tasks simultaneously. At Benjamin's level (Aδ1B), he can maintain focus on several complex actions at once without loss of efficiency. In battle, this enables him to coordinate his telekinetic attacks while simultaneously planning strategies, analyzing his opponent's movements, and maintaining situational awareness of the entire battlefield. It also enhances his reaction time and decision-making speed.

{Attributes}

-STRENGTH: 371

-INTELLIGENCE: 203

-DEXTERITY: 308

-ENERGY: 1191

{Others}

-Power Level: 829

-Brain Crystal Rank (Telekinesis): Aα2A

-Brain Crystal Rank (Parallel Wills): Aδ1B

-Estimated Experience by killing him: 149,640

—

Erik's confidence shattered as he read Uncle Benjamin's stats. His heart raced, sweat beading on his brow. The numbers, far higher than expected, remained unchanged despite his disbelief.

Erik's emotions churned—shock, apprehension, and reluctant admiration. The man's strength, far beyond expectations, shook Erik's core.

Erik's mind reeled as he grasped Uncle Benjamin's true power. Hidden strength, potential surprises.

Erik's eyes widened as he processed Uncle Benjamin's power level. At 829, it was barely 500 points shy of his own. It might have looked a vast amount, but Erik knew well it wasn't that at all.

Power level measured more the body than the potency of one's brain crystal powers. Not only was Uncle Benjamin very close to him in strength, but based on what Erik just saw, they were equal in terms of pure destructive power.

"How..." Erik said. He had always known Uncle Benjamin was strong, but this... this was beyond his expectations. The gap between them was far narrower than he had anticipated.

Erik's expectation of a quick victory was shattered by Levium's unexpected resilience. Levium's defenses proved remarkably effective, deflecting Erik's attacks. The young man checked Levium's energy levels, realizing he needed to reassess both his strategy and his opponent's true capabilities.

"1191 Energy points... He has more than me."

But Uncle Benjamin didn't have the system, and he didn't know that. <Let's keep it that way.>

It wasn't just this; it was also the astronomical amount of experience, or better, energy, he would get if he killed him, but most importantly...

"371 Strength points..."

Erik had 542. "371... This is unfair! System, what the fuck is this?!"

<It is the result of Uncle Benjamin not having control over his DNA.>

<I understand, but how is it possible that with only two powers, he's nearly at my level?>

<That's because he gets 3 points in each stat, but he can't use the energy like he wants. >

<The DNA points...>

<Yes! While Levium gains more stats with each neural link, he can't do anything else with it aside from automatically increasing all his stats.>

<I still don't find it right...>

<It is not,> the biological supercomputer said, <But at least you don't risk turning into an abomination...>

Uncle Benjamin moved through the air, staring at Erik. Gravity didn't matter to him. Erik looked at the man's face, one he was so used to seeing in the past. His long black hair flowed behind him, as if he were underwater.

Pieces of broken objects floated around them, moving like Uncle Benjamin wanted, as if they were part of his body. The numbers were staggering. He'd known Uncle Benjamin was powerful, but this... this was beyond anything he'd imagined.

<Fifty-three Neural Links in Telekinesis, and forty-five in Parallel will...>

"You better focus on the fight!" Levium said. Erik grated his teeth.

Uncle Benjamin used his powers to gather an enormous pile of broken buildings and various debris above him. He made a shield out of concrete chunks again, but this time he didn't make them into a swirling mass.

It wasn't that he didn't try; the problem was that Erik sent chunks of ice towards him and used strong winds to make it harder for the man to control them.

"Fuck..."

The task proved challenging. Despite the Chimeric Demons' relentless barrage of fireballs, none penetrated Uncle Benjamin's defenses. His shield deflected every attack, keeping the flames at bay.

Simultaneously, he created a vortex of smaller debris around himself. Splinters of wood, fragments of buildings, and discarded weapons whirled rapidly, forming a protective cyclone.

"If you think this will be enough to stop me, then you are making a mistake."

"We will see about that," Levium said.

Chapter 1107: Levium (24)

Erik sent a web of lightning toward Levium. Though the man moved the metal poles that once composed the surrounding buildings' columns in front of him and absorbed the attacks.

The lightning, upon striking the metal poles, created a brilliant display of electrical arcs and sparks, illuminating the battlefield.

The electrical arcs zapped from pole to pole, which Levium then hurled towards Erik. The young man swiftly dodged, evading the bizarre projectile as it crashed to the ground.

"That was dangerous."

Buildings crumbled as stray attacks hit them. The ground beneath them cracked and split, fissures spreading out like a spider's web.

Soldiers on both sides took cover. They realized how dangerous it was to be near such a powerful battle. Levium was still keeping his soldiers floating around, but was starting to send them to the ground.

He couldn't keep up with Erik while keeping the soldiers in the sky. Erik wasn't giving him a chance.

The young man shattered a projectile with a well-timed blast from his Force Bastion brain crystal power.

That was a last resort move, though, because Erik wanted to avoid the strike but had been unable to.

Uncle Benjamin closed the distance between them, his knee driving into Erik's armored solar plexus.

The strike was strong enough to leave Erik's lungs without air.

He plummeted several feet before regaining control, gasping for breath. Uncle Benjamin pressed his advantage, raining down debris from above. They reached an incredible speed.

Erik raised his arms and a huge ice shield appeared in front of him. He dissipated most of the energy those debris had, but they still ended up shattering the ice wall.

The debris shattered into smaller fragments, violently pelting Erik's body. Each impact sent shockwaves of pain coursing through his muscles and bones, resonating through his entire frame.

The sheer intensity of the barrage felt like being repeatedly struck by bullets or golf clubs, depending on the projectile size.

Even his Force Bastion brain crystal power struggled to fully shield him from the onslaught.

"Shit! This is painful!"

But the self-healing brain crystal power quickly fixed his injuries.

Erik analyzed Uncle Benjamin's attack patterns, looking for any hint of predictability. There had to be a weakness, some flaw in the man's seemingly perfect defense.

Erik endured the punishing blows, then sent a massive gust of wind toward the opponent. That further reduced the debris speed and power.

Then he hurled massive blocks of ice, which exploded on impact with the concrete and metal Uncle Benjamin was sending his way.

Ice met concrete and metal; the energy was enough to shatter the ice.

The ice shattered into a million glittering shards, and the concrete, unable to withstand the impact, crumbled and pulverized into a fine, choking dust that billowed outward in thick clouds.

The intense heat generated by the collision caused the metal to glow red hot, its edges softening and warping as it melted.

A thunderous boom resulted from this, and the debris showered the area with shards and dust. A frigid mist obscured the combatants as the vapor increased.

The debris fell down in a treacherous hailstorm as shockwaves rippled through the air, further destabilizing nearby structures.

Erik, at that point, regained his balance and flew toward the man. He was fast. His wings were powered by his strength, so it wasn't easy to follow him.

But Uncle Benjamin had the Parallel will, brain crystal power, and massive dexterity, which made his reflexes faster, and his ability to keep up with Erik was incomparable to that of his soldiers.

If for the others Erik basically teleported, for Levium he was simply moving fast, albeit inhumanly fast. He saw him rocketing toward the sky and prepared another debris barrier.

Erik channeled more mana. He was hell bent on destroying Levium's creation and killing the man. The problem was that to do it; he needed the strength generated by his Force Bastion brain crystal power.

So, he made mana freely flow through his neural links.

Once he was below the shield of debris, Erik punched. The shockwave pulverized and dispersed the shield, but he lost a lot of momentum.

Though Erik pierced Levium's defenses and entered the area between him and the barrier the blackguard made, which he shattered.

Erik threw another punch, this time landing on Uncle Benjamin's chin. The man would have been dead if he didn't create another, smaller shield in front of his face.

Uncle Benjamin's reflexes were nothing short of extraordinary. In the split second between Erik's attack and impact, his mind processed what was happening, allowing him to create a shield with inhuman speed and precision.

Though a punch from Erik was a certain death sentence. The shield almost completely dissipated the strength behind Erik's punch, but couldn't do it fully.

The blow caught Uncle Benjamin squarely on the chin. His head snapped back, eyes glazing over for a split second. Erik pressed his advantage, unleashing a flurry of strikes to the older man's

midsection. His main brain was filled with pain, but his parallel will allow him to still keep up with the situation and create shield after shield.

Some shields shattered after having dissipated the power behind the blow. Some withstood Erik's attack since Levium packed the shields with more mana to block those blows he considered life-threatening, even with reduced strength.

His recovery was swift. He snarled, his eyes blazing with mad fury. A crazy smile plastered on his face. The surrounding air shimmered as he channeled his mana into his telekinetic brain crystal power.

Suddenly, Erik found himself besieged from all sides. Levium had just transformed the battlefield into a maelstrom of deadly projectiles.

Chunks of concrete, twisted shards of metal, fragments of shattered glass, and even the weapons of the blackguards that got killed during the fight hurtled towards Erik at terrifying speed.

The air itself seemed to have turned against the young man, becoming a swirling vortex of debris and imminent danger.

Erik's reflexes were pushed to their absolute limit as he spun, twisted, and dodged.

Sweat beaded on his brow as he fought to stay free from the onslaught. He frequently sent wind blades and ice bullets to attack, but Levium was as strong as him in a battle of brain crystal powers.

The sky darkened. At that point, the Chimaeric Demons, the other blackguards, and their allies got as far away from that battle as possible, but that didn't mean they stopped fighting.

As for Erik, he also created shields as much as Uncle Benjamin did. However, without the ground acting as support, they were not really easy to use. In fact, Erik had to create them at the best possible second.

Despite his best efforts, not every attack could be avoided. A piece of rebar caught him across the back.

The impact sent a searing line of fire across his skin, drawing a grunt of pain from Erik's lips.

"I'll kill you, Levium!"

Chapter 1108: Levium (25)

The two continued their dance, neither able to gain a decisive advantage. Not all of Erik's powers were suited for this kind of long-range fight based on brain crystal powers, and having to keep his armor on the wings and at the same time attack drained his mana reserves.

On the opposite side, there was a man whose power was supremely versatile with just one power, albeit powered up by his second one.

Sure, most of Levium's strength depended on the stuff he had around him, but even being in the middle of a desert was enough because Uncle Benjamin could use the sand.

Everything was a weapon for him. It didn't even help that Uncle Benjamin was actively influencing Erik's flight.

If Levium made people levitate with his powers, he certainly could do the same with Erik, even if he was an enemy. It wasn't that he needed people's permission to do that. Of course, the man would not make it easier for Erik to fly. The goal was and would have been to prevent him from moving.

The only reason the young man hadn't been tossed to the ground like a ragdoll was because the younger man's wings were powerful, powered as they were by his inhuman strength. So Levium actually didn't have that much grip on him.

<Even a small grip can still have an effect, though.>

Erik barely registered the destruction surrounding him. His entire world had narrowed down to this fight, to finding a way to overcome Uncle Benjamin's seemingly impenetrable defenses.

To the man himself.

<How Ironic... If I had killed Doran back then, none of this would have happened. The power Levium had, telekinesis, was certainly a powerful ability, but it was nothing compared to what I am facing today, and that's just because of the Parallel Will brain crystal power....>

Erik sent Uncle Benjamin some wind blades while he struggled to avoid some massive chunks of concrete sent by Uncle Benjamin, who was also trying to prevent him from moving.

<You wish!>

"You can't win, Erik! Maybe you would if we were on the ground, but here, in the sky, my power is vastly better than all of yours combined!"

Erik laughed.

"Really?! Then why haven't you killed me already?"

"That's because I need to bring you back to Maynard Island."

"Oh, how generous of you," Erik said, his voice dripping with sarcasm. "I'm sure it has nothing to do with the fact that you can't actually kill me at all! "

Levium's face broke into an amused grin, his eyes twinkling with mirth. A low chuckle escaped his lips, gradually building into hearty laughter.

"HAHAHAHAHAHA, OH ERIK! There is no amount of fire, wind, ice, and lightning you can use to defeat me! I didn't see any other ability suited for a long-range fight, meaning you don't have it; otherwise, you would have already used it."

"Are you sure of that?"

At those words, Levium turned serious. "Show me, then!"

The man's face turned into a mask of concentration, his eyes burning with resolve.

He decided to bring the big guns this time and make an entire building levitate.

The downside was that this required intense focus, forcing him to release the few soldiers he was still keeping aloft back to the ground.

That would put them at a disadvantage against the thaids, or whatever those things Erik had, and that were fighting for him, but it wasn't like he had any other choice.

For sure, they were not Galewings since they should have had powers related to wind, but those things could shoot fire.

In truth, Levium was trying everything he could to defeat Erik. He still couldn't. The young man knew he said it himself. Not that it wasn't clear.

The massive building Levium targeted groaned as it was wrenched from its foundations.

Debris rained down as Uncle Benjamin's telekinetic grip tightened. Lifting the entire thing into the air required a tremendous mental effort, but thanks to the Parallel Will brain crystal power, that got severely reduced.

With a gesture, he hurled the improvised and massive projectile at Erik, its shadow obscuring the sun.

Erik's eyes widened at the sight of the oncoming behemoth.

"You crazy fucker!"

The young man tucked his wings close and shot upward, accelerating to breakneck speed.

The wind howled in his ears as he climbed the sky, the building's jagged edges missing him by mere inches.

As he cleared the top of the falling structure, Erik spread his wings wide, using the momentum of his ascent to spin around. With a fierce cry, he unleashed a barrage of heavily mana-concentrated wind blades, propelled by immense pressure, and the centrifugal force Erik gained by spinning on himself.

The blades sliced through the air, their high-pitched whistle piercing the sky as much as their form was.

The problem was, he wasn't the only one having the same thought. In fact, Uncle Benjamin sent huge metal pole beams toward Erik.

Both of them found themselves having to zip into the sky to avoid the deadly projectiles. All of them missed their target but ended up destroying the surrounding area.

At that point, all those that were still fighting there with their respective leaders had to abandon the area.

There weren't many; the bulk of the opposing forces had already moved to a much safer area. It was just that the site of the battle between the two monstrous fighters kept enlarging, forcing even those that were already left to move elsewhere.

Their clash was too titanic for them to take part in.

As for how their battle was going, the Chimaeric Demons were still holding their ground, but the blackguards were too many.

While already outnumbered and having a lot of trouble, they found themselves under a relentless barrage of fire and different energy projectiles, which rained down upon the battlefield from both the blackguards and the Chimaeric Demons.

The fighters below found themselves caught in a maelstrom, unable to understand the source of the onslaught.

Was it from their enemies or their allies? Did that friend die because of the enemy or because a comrade did it?

The air was thick with smoke and various other sources of smell that the fighters weren't able to distinguish.

In a sense, it looked like someone had just vomited trucks of their stomach content, and they were fighting right inside of that thing.

The ground trembled under the impact of countless explosions.

Soldiers from both sides scrambled for cover as they struggled to survive the indiscriminate assault.

But it didn't matter. Both factions had a simple goal in mind: to kill, and to kill a lot.

Chapter 1109: Levium (26)

Erik and Uncle Benjamin continued their aerial duel. The surrounding sky looked like it had just came out of an apocalyptic movie.

Erik's wings strained against the invisible force of Levium's telekinesis. Every movement was a battle in itself.

"You're tiring, Erik," Uncle Benjamin said. "How long can you keep this up?"

Erik gritted his teeth, refusing to show weakness.

"How long can YOU keep this up? I bet the amount of energy you are using must not be low."

"Don't worry about me. I have plenty of mana left."

Yet Levium was shocked by how well Erik was holding against him in a pure brain-crystal power fight. He must have had similar levels of mana to him.

Erik summoned a whirlwind, sending it hurtling towards his opponent. The funnel of air picked up shards of glass and twisted metal along the way, transforming into a deadly cyclone.

Levium's eyes widened slightly, but his reaction was swift. With a gesture, he created a shield of debris to protect himself and used a huge chunk of his mana to dissipate the whirlwind energy.

Yet, Shrapnel pinged off the barrier and rained down on the battlefield below.

"Is that all?" Levium taunted.

Erik struck back with a powerful attack. He created a swarm of ice spears, each as big as a person's arm and sharp enough to cut through metal. These flew at high speed, leaving trails of frost behind them, making the surrounding area colder. There were so many ice spears that it looked like there was a winter storm.

Levium's parallel will sprang into action. He seized control of several floating chunks of concrete and hurled them at Erik's attacks with equal velocity.

The ice spears kept traveling toward him but were severely reduced in speed. That made the older man able to avoid them easily.

"It's my turn now, Erik!"

Not wasting a moment, Levium counterattacked. Erik expected that already; he would have done the same. However, he didn't expect Uncle Benjamin's next move. A huge crate among the debris below surged into the sky.

Uncle Benjamin exerted tremendous pressure on the crate, causing it to buckle and shatter. The contents spilled forth. For a moment, the objects obeyed the laws of physics and plummeted to the ground. Until they did no more.

A stronger pull got a hold of them, and they began their ascent.

Then Erik saw them well enough to understand what they were.

"Are those?"

"You are seeing it right, Erik... Those are bows, specially made for me by Elara 'Steelhand' Winston herself!"

Elara Winston, known as Steelhand, was Nokisi Point's best crafter. She was the one who created brain crystal equipment.

If that was true, though, that meant that all those bows were brain crystal weapons.

Uncle Benjamin, at that point, made the bow levitate around him. Countless arrows surged through the sky, directed to the bows.

"Fuck."

Erik's eyes narrowed, focusing on the bows floating around Uncle Benjamin. He channeled mana and unleashed a barrage of wind blades toward them.

"I must destroy them!"

The air whistled as the invisible blades sliced through it, racing towards their targets.

The wind blades cut through several bows, splintering the finely crafted weapons into useless fragments.

But Erik destroyed only around 40 of the bows before Uncle Benjamin started knocking the arrows onto the remaining 60.

The older man's eyes widened in surprise, as he did not expect Erik's reaction to be that quick.

However, the 60 bows, which remained intact, already pointed at Erik.

"Nice try!" Uncle Benjamin sneered. "But you'll need to do better than that to stop me."

Erik tucked his wings and dove, the projectiles whistling past him. He could feel the displaced air ruffling his hair.

The problem was that all of these bows were brain crystal weapons. They were able to create a myriad of different effects.

Some were faster than the others; someone exploded; someone made the area its arrows traveled decrease in temperature.

There were even some that left a weird floating trace of hardened material, sharp as a blade.

Erik protected himself as he could, creating wind and ice shields. That worked, but some of the arrows pierced dangerously deep through the shields.

"SHIT!"

Uncle Benjamin reached out with his telekinesis, grabbing hold of a nearby skyscraper. The building groaned as it was torn from its foundation, windows shattering as it rose into the air.

Erik's eyes widened. "Again? You're insane!" he said. "How many people are you willing to kill?"

Sleb Harbor had been basically destroyed at that point.

Levium's face was cold. "As many as it takes to bring you down."

With a gesture, he sent the building hurtling towards Erik. The massive structure blocked out the sun.

Erik's mind raced. He couldn't dodge this time because the building was too massive. He looked below, seeing his Chimaeric Demons decimated, but the troops Levium had with him were in the same situation.

<Guys,> Erik said.

<Yes, master?>

<Tell the others to come here... I... I can't kill him alone, not like this... His brain crystal power is too strong.>

<We will, master...>

Summoning every ounce of power he could muster, Erik pumped his force-bastion brain crystal power into his wings. That way, he could get much faster than the speed at which Levium sent the building to him. The problem was, he wasn't sure he could avoid the building, and even if he did, there was no assurance he could escape Uncle Benjamin's sight.

Parallel Will, pumped with that much mana, was a real menace.

Erik flew. The force generated by the Force Bastion made him incredibly fast. He was at least twice as fast as he usually was.

Erik struggled to control his flight. The Force Bastion brain crystal power made him incredibly fast, but it came at a cost. He was moving so quickly that his brain couldn't keep up with what he was seeing; he couldn't steer as well as he normally could.

<Yet the mother fucker is still looking at me...>

Chapter 1110: Levium (27)

For a moment, it seemed as if time stood still. The building ended up crashing to the ground, and a tremendous rumble resounded into the city.

<There is now way he has mana left at this point.>

Erik panted heavily, the effort of avoiding that thing having drained a significant portion of his mana reserves. He couldn't afford to show weakness.

Levium, for his part, looked impressed. "Well done, Erik, but I must say... I thought you were stronger."

"Ah... Yes... Excuse me if I don't have that massive cheat power like you!"

"Ah! Right, I was lucky to have been born with this. I thought you would have gotten something as powerful as this."

It wasn't that Erik's powers were not strong; it was just that they couldn't reach that level of destruction.

His fire power was strong, but fire couldn't vaporize things in an instant. The wind blades could be compressed to incredible levels and cut through almost anything. Almost anything wasn't everything.

Besides, if Uncle Benjamin threw thousands upon thousands of pieces of debris between him and the blades, he could dissipate the strength behind them to the point they were no longer a threat to him.

His ice powers followed a similar logic. Only his lightning lord brain crystal power could do something against Levium, at least in theory. The problem was that with all those metals in the sky, Levium could basically create a Faraday cage.

Still, he wanted to try. Erik gathered lightning in his hands. The air crackled with electricity; he released the built-up charge.

Levium created a cocoon of debris around him before Erik was even done. The lightning struck with the force of a bomb.

The makeshift shield exploded outward, sending Levium tumbling through the air. For a moment, it looked like Erik had gained the upper hand.

<Is he stupid?>

Levium recovered quickly, halting his fall with his telekinesis. His clothes were singed, and there was a new wariness in his eyes as he looked at the young man.

"You've forced my hand, Erik," he said, his voice low and dangerous. "No more holding back."

[ALLY CHIMAERIC DEMON KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[ALLY CHIMAERIC DEMON KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[ENEMY BLACKGUARD KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[ENEMY BLACKGUARD KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[LEVEL UP.]

"Yeah... No more playing around." Erik smirked. Levium must have used a ton of mana, but Erik just got a new level, and with it, his reserves had been replenished.

There was a power Erik hadn't used yet. <With that parallel will of his, I don't know how much it will work. I might just try...>

Immediately, he turned invisible.

Uncle Benjamin was visibly shocked by Erik's disappearance. He quickly surrounded himself with a rotating shield of debris. Even though he couldn't see Erik, he could at least force him to just attack from a distance. If that happened, he'd be able to spot the incoming attack.

The debris from the destroyed skyscraper rose into the air, swirling around him in a deadly vortex. In truth, it wasn't just debris—the very air itself seemed to bend to his will. The rotation was so strong as to affect the surrounding wind.

Erik braced himself, knowing that the real battle was only just beginning.

He flew at top speed, producing countless ice shards, wind blades, and many kinds of fireballs.

All eyes turned skyward, soldiers on both sides momentarily forgetting their own fights as they saw the mesmerizing yet harrowing display of power above.

The fate of the war, perhaps of the world itself, would be decided here and now.

Then a loud clapping sound reverberated. Honestly, it looked like a shot, but no one was able to pinpoint from where it came.

Just when it seemed the fight might go on forever, something changed.

In that split second, before the shield truly surrounded him and reached the right rotating speed, something struck Uncle Benjamin. The debris still in the sky plunged below. Among them was a corpse.

Dust arose.

Erik turned his invisibility off. "What the fuck?" Below, he could see Uncle Benjamin's body, an enormous hole in his chest.

[BENJAMIN KAMINSKI KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[0%...1%... 5%... 30%... 70%... 100%]

[MANA SUCCESSFULLY ABSORBED, STARTING CONVERTING PROCEDURE.]

[3...2...1...0]

[MANA SUCCESSFULLY CONVERTED INTO EXPERIENCE. 154656 EXPERIENCE POINTS AND 1546.57 DNA POINTS AWARDED TO THE HOST.]

"Who? How?"

The crack of the rifle was lost in the chaos of battle. Even Erik didn't recognize it. But its effect was unmistakable. Uncle Benjamin was dead.

"Like that?"

Erik turned to look around, then he saw a glint a kilometer from his position. He would have flown there if it wasn't for his clones arriving on the battlefield.

Few, of course, but enough for them to sweep this area clean of blackguards.

<Master.>

<Who killed Levium?>

<It wasn't us, master...>

<Then who?> Erik couldn't believe it. He barely fought toe to toe against him, and yet someone had been not only smart but skilled enough to go through the shield using the gaps Levium created to see around, while these were constantly moving?

<Well... We knew that Mira, Amber, and Emily were around here. So, it must have been Emily...>
>The clone said.

That shocked the young man... He had always known Emily was skilled with a sniper rifle. But these... These were godly skills.

<Emily?>

Regardless, now that the man was dead, the blackguards lost their commander. Of course, they would soon regroup.

The same thing could be said for his clones.

<Kill them all... I need all this mana. Something tells me Levium is just the tip of the iceberg...>

If a Vindicator had been able to pose this much of a problem to him, if just one man had been able to neutralize all his advantages, he couldn't fathom what would happen if he found himself against multiple ones.

He needed mana. Those would come only from levels. However, there was something else he needed, something much more important than mana. He needed a power that could match this kind of fight scale.

<And I have a great idea of what kind of power to get...>

Erik looked at Uncle Benjamin on the ground below.

Erik then saw Emily, Mira, and Amber making their way toward him.

He took his communication device. "Stay there. This is not over yet..."