

Brand New 441

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Chapter 441: Growing Stronger

"So how do we exactly grow stronger using these items anyways?" Asked Rita. "I do know we can increase our maximum Mana by overusing it and letting it regenerate, and also we can strengthen our bodies by letting Mana flow freely around our body for a long while... But how do we exactly improve our magical power to reach the next Tiers and so on?"

"Wow Rita, I can't believe you said all of that in a row, I am quite proud of you." I felt moved.

"W-What's wrong with me getting a bit more serious?!" Rita felt slightly offended. "Well are you explaining or what?"

"I am tired of explaining stuff so Elayne, you explain them." The Great Spirit sighed.

"Yeah, yeah~" I smiled. "So anyways, you know how our Magic Circles have Runes And Circles, right? Depending in the number of circles within your Magic Circle, your Tiers will improve, from one to two, and from two to three, four, five, and so on..."

As I explained, Mark and Rita remained in silence listening as if they were my students.

"So anyways, how do we get into that? Well, through forging of Runes! Our Magic Circles need a certain amount of Runes to increase their Rank and then reach the next one. Each Tier or "Circle" has ten phases, each one made out of a certain amount of Runes. So if we want to reach Tier 2, we'll need to first get through ten different Ranks."

"I see, it is like earning EXP and Leveling I suppose." Mark quickly translated it into game-like terms

"Yeah I guess that works." I nodded.

"Hmm, well, can you know how many runes do we have?" Rita wondered.

"Close your eyes and concentrate, as you feel your own mana inside of your heart and the magic circle, you can see how many runes you have. To reach Tier 1 Rank 2, we need 200 Runes." I explained.

Both of them did as I explained them and were quickly capable of accurately telling how many Runs they had and in which Tier and Rank they were.

"It's true... I somehow can tell." Mark said. "I currently have around 80 Runes, 40 are Fire Runes and 40 are Nature Runes. Did the Great Spirit forge these?"

"Yep! And each Rune is not just that, they also compose the spells engraved in your magic circles. So while you grow stronger, you will naturally improve your magic spells as well, or get brand new ones too." I said. "For example I have one hundred Spirit Runes, these are special Runes which compose every element each. I was able to get this because of my strong connection with my Arcadia's Avatar, with this, I can conjure tons of Nature and Spirit Magic Spells!"

"Yeah you're already cheating the game and this isn't even a game..." Rita sighed. "I also have 80 Runes and they're all Darkness/Shadows."

"Interesting, is it possible to get more elements by engraving new runes of other elements?" Asked Mark.

"Yeah its possible." The Great Spirit said. "But I don't recommend it if that was so easy Elemental Affinities wouldn't even matter, right? You won't receive the best effect and it will be overall pretty weak, better to specialize and create many spells for your single element instead of trying to use everything."

"I guess that's for the better for now." Mark agreed.

"Alright! So anyways, how do we exactly forge runes, and how do we use these crystals for that?" Asked Rita.

"Well, this is a special magic circle that uses materials, which will grant us an incredible quantity of Mana, enough for us to forge more Runes very quickly. You're supposed to do this over time slowly, but nobody's going to do that, right?" I said. "Drinking MP Potions works too but the problem is that your belly's eventually going to get full with two of them, and that can barely do much."

"Also, these magic circles specialize on Rune Forging, so they're extra special and better than anything anybody could ever offer you in this world." The Great Spirit said with a cocky smirk. "Anyways, let's not waste any more time already!"

Like that, we quickly began creating the magic circles using the many materials we had. We used a specialized liquid made out of Hollow Mud, the dust of one of their Hollow Crystals, Monster Blood, and my own Blood Sap for extra magical prowess, and used them to paint the new magic circles.

After a few minutes, we were ready, each node had purified hollow crystals as well as monster cores which we had saved. Once it was activated, all three of us began utilizing our magic circles. The biggest Hollow Crystal was from the D Rank Hollow Legion, which was connected to all three magic circles and had insane amounts of Mana inside.

FLUOOOOSH!

"I can feel so much Mana flowing into my body, this is insane!" Mark was surprised.

"With this much I am already beginning to forge runes automatically...!" Rita felt amazed.

"Don't make a ruckus! Let's concentrate and do this as quickly and efficiently as possible, let's not waste a single drop of this Mana!" I said.

We spent the next three hours, the total duration of the magic circles, forging runes across our magic circles. The sensation was rather interesting, it was a bit... electrifying, and fuzzy as well. By closing my eyes, I could see the Mana concentrating and turning into new Runes.

With the Spiritual Energy of the Great Spirit helping me, I made each Rune into a Spirit Rune instead, and slowly yet steadily, I ended making hundreds of them, one by one, emerging like sparks of light across my magic circle, like stars in the middle of the night sky.

FLASH! FLASH! FLAAASH!

Once we were finished, our Mana capacity had increased way more, and we felt our magic spells were also stronger, magical auras began overflowing from our bodies, representing our elements.

"Well done! What you've awakened right now are called [Elemental Auras] and they begin emerging naturally once you hit Tier 1 Rank 5! We're already more than halfway through our current goal!" The Great Spirit celebrated.

Currently, I had a bit over 500 Spiritual Runes, and the changes were as clear as water, as I could see countless tiny spirits flying all around us!

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Chapter 442: New Spells And Strategies

Not only I had improved to Tier 1 Rank 5 in a flash, but I had a total of a bit over 500 Spiritual Runes, the power of these Runes were so strong it made it so spirits from our surroundings started swarming me, mostly curiously. They were way smaller and weaker than Arcadia's spirits, but as the days went by, I noticed more and more spirits appearing everywhere.

Maybe as the world slowly absorbs and gets used to Mana, more Spirits are naturally born, and, as an effect of their existence, magical powers, effects, creatures, and more also are strengthened. It could be said that its something similar to the past of Earth when algae completely changed the planet's atmosphere by filling it with Oxygen.

So the more days that go by, the more spirits there will be to help me out. The first day I got my magic I could barely feel any spirit, but today there were a decent amount of them, enough to help me conjure a mud golem to fight the fish, and even some others to strengthen my Elemental Shield...

Mark and Rita had also become stronger, both also now had a bit over 500 of their accumulated Runes. The Great Spirit made sure they could also get some Spiritual Runes in between by modifying the magic circles, although they don't have as many as I have, they should have at least 150 of them by now, enough to awaken more of their spiritual powers.

As of my new Spells? I managed to evolve the [Spirit Call] Spell that randomly summons Elemental Spirits around me to their specific, stronger versions such as [Fire Spirit Call], [Wind Spirit Call], and [Earth Spirit Call]!

Also a big chunk of my Spirit Runes were spent to create the [Spirit Fusion] Spell as well, one of the strongest so far! It is not as strong as the Skill in Arcadia, but it should be able to do similar things, although to a more reduced level of power, depending in my own maximum Mana.

However, that's not all, I also got myself [Spirit Infusion] right away, and a few other low level nature spells that'll evolve over time such as [Seed Creation], [Wooden Barrier], and [Wooden Spear], the last one doesn't actually exist as a spell in Arcadia for some reason.

But the best effect of having so many Runes were the relaxing feeling of having been healed of all exhaustion... ..

"I feel so much Mana and Spiritual Energy flowing... Ahh, this is so relaxing. Do we even need to sleep at this point?" I wondered. "Even when we barely sleep, we always feel energetic and good."

"Mana has that effect on your body, it makes it very resilient. The [Mana Breathing Technique] specializes on healing the body as well as strengthening, this also includes mental exhaustion in the head. Though sleeping is still recommended to settle things down correctly! So for now, all of you should go take a nap." The Great Spirit said. "Tomorrow after your normie activities, we'll be hunting for the last time."

"The last time?" Asked Rita. "But we've gotta grind some more! Agh, also we need to go back to Arcadia soon!"

"That's why I am saying that it will be our last hunt before the big event begins." The Great Spirit sighed. "Phantosmos is drawing closer. Until we get rid of him and we get this immediate danger out of our path, we can't really go back to Arcadia willy-nilly! That's my home so of course I want to go there and save that world, the forces of the Demon King of Death must be drawing closer as we speak too..."

"Phantosmos, now that my Mana has amplified, yeah, I can feel a deadly, annoying presence drawing closer... So it's true, he really knows about the identity behind the World Tree as Elayne and wants her dead." Sighed Mark. "I won't let that happen. I'll use this power to burn him to a crisp."

"That's the spirit! Ooh, I like that bad boy vibe on you!" Giggled the Great Spirit.

"Bad boy...?" Mark felt confused.

"Hahaha, just ignore her." I sighed. "Anyways, probably past tomorrow, he'll arrive. And if our speculation is true, he'll come with tons of Hollows accompanying him. Thankfully we've put Charms everywhere we could around town, so they won't be able to easily infiltrate inside the town..."

"Though this also means we'll find a lot of them in the outskirts, so when we go hunting, we might find dozens of them grouped up." The Great Spirit said. "This boost you got now will come in handy for your survival! Also, make sure to get yourselves more equipment. We couldn't get ourselves into monster materials this night, but you should be able to make decent stuff using low grade materials inside of your inventory."

"Yeah, and now that I have Spirit Fusion and Spirit Infusion, we can make magic weapons, armors, and shields much stronger than before!" I said with a smile.

"Oooh! I wonder if we could craft things?" Mark wondered. "I want to make some totems to ready my Spirit Magic as well."

"Just carve some wood for that." Said Rita while shrugging. "Hey, how about we put a Potential Cue in Mark's car instead?"

Suddenly, both Mark and I stared at Rita in shock.

How did we never had that idea before?!

"Y-You're right! If we can use those in just anything that is an object then... A magic car could be possible!" Said Mark.

"Right! Rita you're a genius!" I said with a smile.

"Yeah, yeah, I know." Rita smiled proudly. "Though, I kind of want to go take a nap for now, so let's leave that for tomorrow."

"Right, let's go then." I nodded.

Like that, we quickly returned to our rooms to rest until the next morning. I also had many plans of my own using the newly acquired spells, heh.

Oh, by the way, after munching on the big D Rank Hollow Crystal when we weren't looking at, Blackie ended becoming a Tier 1 Rank 4 Magic Beast, or in rank terms, he became E+ Rank.

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Chapter 443: The Approaching Threat & The Three Agents

After days of traveling across the skies of Canada and polluting everywhere he landed with his Corrupted Miasma and his Phantasmal Essence, Phantasmos, the Phantom General of the Demon King of Death, which had infiltrated inside of Earth for the sake of destroying the World Tree's original body, was now closer to his goal than ever before.

"I can feel her presence, that wretched scent of pure and divine life and nature... Soon, soon!"

Phantasmos had already covered most of the path towards his target, and he couldn't help but smile. His entire body had undergone several changes as he absorbed Mana and Hollows, and of course, the souls of countless living beings he had killed on his way here.

"Hmph, it seems that normal monsters are beginning to appear around these areas where humans are less common as well..." Phantasmos said. "Well, you all may join our endeavors, just as the many others behind us."

He swung his phantasmal hands, as swarms of Infected Hollows and Undead Animals he had killed and transformed began attacking wild monsters, devouring their flesh and then swiftly turning them into stronger Undead.

It was quite obvious that the power of the Death Generals serving the Demon King of Death would be close to necromancy after all...

As Phantasmos drew closer to his destination, three figures kept chasing him from another side of the countryside, going through the harsh environment of the mountains to not be easily detected by his powerful magic.

"I-I can't believe what I am seeing with my eyes..." One of the three spoke. A girl with pale as snow skin and sharp, red eyes, alongside blonde hair made into twin tails. Her eyes were shining brightly and granting her the ability to see long distances.

"What are you seeing, Rose?" Wondered one of the two males of the trio of special forces sent to deal with the Hollows, a young and tall man with average looks, brown hair and black eyes.

The young woman looked back at her team, her face distorting with a lot of disgust.

"That thing has risen a whole army of Undead..." She sighed. "That is certainly bad news. We better ask for part time payment at this point. I am not going to nasty my clothes if I'm not paid enough."

"Undead?!" The second man in the team wondered. Unlike the other, he was Asian-looking, and one of his eyes was red-colored. "But that would only mean that a Yokai capable of summoning undead would emerge! Why did it appear out of nowhere? Don't they usually show up when there's a special event within the Underworld?"

"Yokai? Josuke we're not in Japan, we don't call them like that here, just a Specter is fine. Sheesh." Sighed the brown-haired man.

"I'm not from Japan, my family is from America!" Josuke got angrier as he heard his companion make a rather harsh remark. "Do you want me to beat some sense in your thick Canadian skull?"

"Hoh? Wanna go bastard?" Asked the brown-haired man.

"Josuke, Albert, stop being so in love with one another for five seconds and listen! Whatever that thing is, it is surely AT LEAST, a C Rank Specter, it has the capacity of summoning more monsters as well! And it might arrive at his destination in a day or two... We need to prepare a barricade and stop him before he completely wipes out that town..." The girl sighed. Her eyes suddenly turned back to blue color.

"Is it even worth the effort? It is just a small town." Sighed Albert. "I feel like the money won't make for all our troubles, and we might even die. Imagine us dying and then turning into that dan ghost's slaves..."

"It's not like we even need you." Josuke said. "I can burn them all into a crisp."

"I don't think that'll work out completely, Josuke." Sighed Rose. "Let's concentrate on the mission for now. It has been a long while since I confronted a Necromancer, the last time was when I killed a crazed Vampire back in England that was turning people into Ghouls, tough guy, but still died to the Sunlight Cross."

"You brought it with you?" Sighed Albert. "I am surprised you're even allowed to go around with that thing, seeing you're a Dhampir and all..."

"I was raised by the Vatican specifically to kill Undead and Vampires, do you think they would let a nobody like you handle it around then?" Sighed Rose.

"You damn old hag..." Albert gritted his teeth. "Alright, let's go then, we're wasting too much time here. We should land on the town earlier today to set everything up. Though, I fear we won't be able to keep everything a secret anymore."

"The boss knows we can't, this is probably why he said we should do everything we can to stop them, no matter what." Josuke pointed out. "And... have none of you felt it? The three masses of Mana that have suddenly grown so powerful even I am surprised back in that town?"

"I thought they were some wild monster, now that they're showing up so frequently... But it is not?" Albert wondered.

"I felt them the most out of you two." Sighed Rose. "The presences of three powerful magicians, who seem to only be growing stronger. Depending on the situation, we might be forced to either kill them or... well, receive their help, it all depends if they want to cooperate."

"There hasn't been a register of an agent or anybody within the Ancient Bloodlines living there either..." Albert sighed. "Do you think... That they could be Awakeners?"

"No, Awakeners are not this powerful, these three just go completely beyond a normal Awakener..." Rose said. "I hope they can help us instead of fighting us..."

"In the supernatural world that's a hard bet to win." Josuke laughed. "But we might see, the world's changing so much already... Things are only going to get crazier. [Phoenix Flight]"

FLAAAASH!

Josuke quickly grabbed the other two with his arms as flames emerged out of his back and shaped as wings, flying into the skies at an incredible speed.

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Chapter 444: Visiting The Town's Harvest Festival

"You're currently at around... 700 MP! Not bad at all! Let's do our best to get to 800 tonight." The Great Spirit analyzed my Mana Capacity while we drove into the town's plaza.

Today we decided to spend the day in the plaza, as there are a lot of festivities, there's an event in here that the people of this small town created named "Harvest Festival" where we celebrate the good harvest of the farmers around here.

To relax and have a good time with my family, and to find good veggies and fruits for my special project, we decided to visit the Harvest Festival, which was now already open in the plaza.

...The people we found in the plaza last night might had gone there to begin preparations for today's activities, thankfully they didn't see our faces.

"We're here everyone, let's have fun. You're free to wander, buy, or whatever. We can catch up at the other side of the plaza where the food stalls are located." Said my father, as everyone seemed excited to explore the place, especially the kids.

"Mom, we'll be going with Anna and Elisa to go see the rabbits." Elena said, as she and her friends immediately disappeared from my sight...

"The rabbits?" Mark wondered.

"Well there are animal exhibitions as well, mostly a lot of farm animals. They're selling them as pets too. There's an area filled with rabbits, chickens, guinea pigs, and so on." I said. "The kids love that place and they're allowed to pet and play with the animals."

"Oooh, I see." Rita nodded. "Hey what if we go there to find some familiars?"

"I guess we could get ourselves some familiars that way, although I can help but find it weird." I sighed.

"Yeah it still a bit weird to just buy a little animal to make it into our familiars..." Mark sighed.

"Well while you two question if its right or wrong, I'm gonna get myself a rabbit or something." Rita said, quickly rushing to see the animals as well.

"She should be able to be alright on her own, I believe." I said. "How about we go check some ingredients for my project?"

"Project?" Wondered Mark.

"Yep, with the Great Spirit we are beginning to plan out an "army" and we need a lot of ingredients. Of course, we'll use those from Arcadia too but if we use the ones from this world as well, it will surely be better as well." I said with a smile.

"An army... Wait, I see..." Mark began rubbing his chin. Whenever he got into his "deep thinking" process he would always make this pose, he was so cute. "Then it would complement well with what I am preparing."

"What you're preparing?" I wondered.

"I barely slept because I spent the rest of the night building totems using my Nature Magic. It was a bit hard but it is possible to shape the living trees around the town as totems, and I've been doing that while also making some personal totems for me. Can you save them inside your inventory once we get back?" Wondered Mark. "So we can use them whenever we need to."

"I see... Your powers are really useful. Totem Carving and Beast Spirit Magic, right?" I wondered.

"Yeah, I've managed to get myself those spells in specific, they go the best with my current abilities." Mark analyzed. "If we can manage in time, we could probably build a barricade of totems in the living trees."

"Interesting, but won't we need insane Mana to activate it completely?" I wondered.

"Yeah... It won't be perfect, but we just recently bought a few hundred more HP and MP Potions from the in-game Market, right? I think that should do." Mark said.

"Though pulling them out exhausts my Mana, I can still recover it by drinking an MP Potion, I guess we've discovered a rather broken loop! Although it only works until my belly can resist..." I sighed.

"Yeah, but even then, we can transfer you our own Mana, no?" Mark said.

"R-Right! I didn't thought about that." I said, thinking some more. "I should get done a staff that can harbor Mana as well to expand my Mana Capacity, and probably enchant some rings and accessories we can wear by a ton."

"Yeah, items made by you using both materials from Arcadia and Earth are the best at that." Mark said.

"D Rank Potential Cubes are also not that expensive in the market either, so we could get more easily."

"Yep! There's a lot to do once we get back home, but for now let's concentrate on what we came for." I said. "Oh, also, you should check the woods they sell here, some are from special trees that might channel your totem powers better."

"Right, thanks for reminding me." Mark smiled. "Hah, though it is getting pretty hot in here, how about an ice cream to enjoy the trip?"

"If you invite!" I giggled.

Like that, we enjoyed ice cream while we bought tons of stuff through the entire market. I utilized the help of the Great Spirit that flew around looking at the veggies and fruits with interest, checking which ones could harbor a lot of Mana and which ones were the best out there.

We also bought tons of compost, which was the most needed ingredient for my plan. It seems Mark plans will easily converge with my own which might expand the whole scale of our operation.

While we were doing everything to maintain efficiency, I constantly created special "Spirit Seeds" by fusing both the Seeds from Arcadia with the ones we bought from this world and imbuing them with Spirits through Spirit Infusion and combining everything with [Pathway] and Spirit Fusion.

These seeds were super special, and weren't as powerful as the Spiritual Buds of my Avatar in Arcadia, but they'll surely work similarly, and I've made over a hundred already, hehehe.

We'll do everything we can to protect our town. Phantamos, don't ever think you'll be the only one with an army.

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Chapter 445: Rita Gets Herself A Little Familiar

After purchasing everything we needed, we found Rita and the rest of my family enjoying some roasted meat skewers in the food stalls area. We quickly decided to join them and enjoy the food as well.

"Hey, look what I got myself!" Rita showed her new pet, which was now sitting inside a small cage. It was not what we expected, as it was a tiny, white colored rat.

"Chuu, chuuu..." The Rat seemed slightly stressed, and was making a very loud sound while sniffing his cage.

"You got yourself a tiny white rat! So cute... But it is so afraid." I sighed.

"Hmm, will it obey you once you turn it into a familiar?" Wondered Mark.

"As long as the familiar contract is made it should be possible! Of course the rat has to agree to that." The Great Spirit explained.

"Meow..." Blackie quickly showed up in my shadows, giving a glance filled with appetite to the tiny rat Rita bought.

"N-No! He's your new friend, not food, Blackie! I order you to never eat it." I told the black cat.

"Mereooow..." Blackie gave an annoyed meow before diving into the shadows again.

"Well, we can get to do that once we get back home for now." I sighed. "Have none of you seen any hollows?"

"Nope, they have not showed up at all." Rita said.

"Seems like the Charms we put everywhere are doing a great work." Sighed Mark in relief.

"Good, because I can feel a ton of them outside the village, they're beginning to pile up by the dozens." I sighed.

"Ah, yeah there's a lot of dark smoke coming from far away..." Mark sighed, pointing at the distance.

Hollows were only visible to people that could wield magic, and they emanated a black smoke when they stayed in a place for a while. According to the Great Spirit, this Black Smoke would eventually land somewhere else and create even more Hollows, so it is dangerous to keep them in a single place for too long and its better to slay them before that.

"Hey sis, what are you doing there? Come! There's seafood skewers here! Oh, they're selling homemade ice cream too!" Mary called for me with her two little daughters.

"Auntie, ice cream..." Little Camilla offered me her own ice cream, which was half-melted and already licked all over.

"Sure, I'm coming! Camilla thank you for the ice cream but don't you worry, you can eat it all by yourself." I gave her a head pat, as she guided me with her sister Tereza to Mary.

At the end, we were forced to stop our chat about magic and stuff and just enjoy the day and the trip as well. Today we didn't had any plans on cooking back home, so we began trying out every single thing we found around the food stalls. Rita and Mark had a good time, and I saw my daughter giggling and smiling with her friends.

How long has it been since I saw my daughter smile so carefreely like this? And she has also been reconnecting some more with our family. It made me so happy to see her smile like this... And it also reminded me how I began playing Brand New Life to reconnect with her.

I have already met her Avatar and even made her into my guild member and all, but I feel like I've already reconnected quite a lot with her these last months, not necessarily because of the game, but due to the many things that have happened IRL.

Nonetheless, now that I've been revealed such truths about Arcadia, and I've awakened a power that could help me protect her and everyone I love, it fills me with motivation to keep striving forward.

For her...

"What's wrong mom? You've been looking at me for an awful lot..." Elena wondered.

"Nothing, I just want to tell you that mama loves you~" I said, giving her an hug and kissing her cheek.

"O-Okay, I get it but don't do this in front of my friends!" Elena got all embarrassed.

"Heheh, look at your face all red." Anna giggled.

"Your mother really likes to spoil you, Elena..." Elisa said.

"Sorry about that, I just felt like I needed to refill my energy a bit." I smiled back at the girls.

After enjoying the harvest festival in the plaza for a while, we finally returned back home. My parents were exhausted so they quickly went to take a nap, and my brother stayed with the farm animals, my daughter and her friends started riding Patches, my daughter's horse, in turns, and Mary and her daughters went to the house to watch TV (mostly for the little girls who were growing bored).

Meanwhile, Mark and Rita came with me to the river, which has now become our temporary meeting place. We told my brother we were going to go fishing to relax for the rest of the day, so he shouldn't be coming here curiously.

"Alright, I guess we can begin now." The Great Spirit said, having engraved a magic circle using monster blood on Rita's palm and then engraving it on the tiny white rat she bought. "Elayne, give the rat the purified Hollow Crystal."

Purified Hollow Crystals simply became Magic Crystals, and apparently they were useful for a variety of things such as turning normal animals into familiars. Blackie digested an unpurified one by accident and survived by miracle too. However, the normal method uses purified materials.

"Now, feed the rat the Magic Crystal while channeling your Mana into him. Tell him that you want to protect him." The Great Spirit said.

"O-Okay?" Rita nodded, as the rat sniffed the magic crystal and then began munching on it.

"Hey please become my familiar, I'll protect you or something..." Rita said without a hint of honesty in her words.

FLAAASH!

Her Familiar Pact Magic Circle began shining, and so did the Rat's one, which had already devoured the magic crystal.

A thread made of magic between the two was made, and in mere seconds, it was done!

"Wow this was surprisingly easy!" Rita laughed.

"Wait, what the heck? It worked?" I wondered.

"Well, animals are not that perceptive." The Great Spirit sighed. "It could be said the little rat got easily tricked."

"Chuuu!"

The little rat jumped over Rita's head.

"Uwaaah! No! Don't get there! Aggh, get away! I hate rats!"

"Wait, if you hate rats why did you even get one?!"

Mark and I ended facepalming at the same time.

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Chapter 446: Crafting Armor

"Chuu! Chuu!"

The Little rat had yet to have a name but began licking and biting Rita's head and hair. He seemed to love her already, but there was a little problem, Rita didn't really like rats. I wonder why she even got one then.

"Rita why did you get a pet rat if you dislike rats?" I sighed.

"I-It was cheap! They were selling rats at like twenty bucks... All other pets were way too expensive..." Rita sighed, as she was slowly beginning to give up on taking the rat off her head.

"Are you serious?" Mark sighed.

"H-Hey! Look who's talking, the familiar-less!" Laughed Rita with a teasing smile.

"Actually I already got myself a Familiar." Mark said. "Come out!"

"CRRYAH!"

Suddenly, from the trees, a small species of eagle-like bird showed up, was this like a falcon or something? And when did he even made it into his familiar?!

"I called him Falco. I already had taken notes and pictures of a lot of the magic circles, so I just did as the Great Spirit said and I got myself this familiar I caught using magic." Mark said.

"Wow, you pretty much enslaved him!" Rita said.

"Isn't it the same thing for your rat?" Mark sighed.

"No! I bought him! It is legal." Rita crossed her arms.

"W-Well, anyways, that's nice. Now we all have familiars." I said. "Anyways, Rita, to make your familiar awaken his magic powers you need to give it a name."

"A name... Whitey!" Rita said.

Ah, I knew she would give it a simple name.

FLAAASH!

Whitey began shining with a bright, holy aura. Its eyes suddenly changed from red color to golden color, and he gained a few golden streaks around his body.

"Ooh, did you become like... a Holy Rat?!" Asked Rita in shock. "Wait, your element doesn't even fit mine! Whitey change your element!"

"C-Chuuu..." Whitey couldn't do that, of course.

"Oooh amazing! While Mark's Familiar is Wind Attribute, Rita's is Holy Light Attribute! Who would had thought that rats that are often believed to be nasty and dark-aligned would have such a powerful attribute... And don't worry, his element suits yours very well. You two can complement each other like Elayne and Blackie." The Great Spirit explained. "After all, Whitey can probably conjure healing magic and protection magic now, things you lack because you're a freaking glass cannon."

"Aaagh... I guess it's true..." Rita sighed. "Yet... Hey how about we change familiars? Wouldn't a black cat fit me way more because I am a Witch?"

"HISS!" Blackie appeared behind me and hissed at Rita.

"I guess that's a "no"." I laughed.

"Meanwhile, Falco offers long ranged attacks, rapid wind enchantments to agility, and also the ability to scout from afar." Said the Great Spirit. "Overall our party's finally looking pretty alright!"

"Anyways, now that we're done here, it is finally time to begin crafting stuff." I said. "Did you guys bought what you wanted to become your equipment and disguises?"

"Yep, I bought this in a Halloween shop!" Rita said, showing what she had inside the bag she has been carrying around.

I never thought she would actually buy it, but this thing was... a Sexy Witch getup. It was almost completely black. It came with the witch hat, sexy boots, and even fishnet stockings, yikes, and it showed a lot of cleavage.

"I told you I was going to become a witch!" Rita said with a smile.

"Err, this is serious?" I sighed. "Well, whatever. Have it your way."

"Ah, oh, I just got normal clothes myself. I got these easy to use and flexible military pants. An anti-bullet jacket and this and that..." Mark took out a whole set of clothes and other stuff.

"Huh, a bit of a military geek, aren't you?" Rita teased him.

"Not anymore..." Mark sighed. "I stopped caring years ago but I had these things inside my house, I brought them preemptively when I read Elayne had awakened powers and that there were monsters."

"I see, very well then!" I said. "For now, we'll use [Pathway], [Spirit Fusion] and [Spirit Infusion] to combine these pieces of clothes into a single set of equipment. Also we'll use some other materials from Arcadia and Magic Crystals..."

Like that, our modification of these pieces of clothes began. Because we wanted "disguises" to not be easily recognized by people. We used Spirits of as many elements as possible too to grant them elemental resistances. Although the current limit was only one per element, I ended adding Dark Spirits that were swarming Rita, Earth, Water, Nature, Wind and Fire Spirits.

I wasn't able to find any Light Spirits though. The Great Spirit explained they were of a higher grade, such as Beast Spirits, Poison Spirits, Death Spirits, Life Spirits, and more, so unless I develop my spirit magic further, I can't really call these guys.

Although I imbued one spirit of everything while combining the clothes into a single set of equipment that would share the powers with one another through a magical connection, I used Pathway to call the Gods, if they ever wanted to interfere and give Mark, Rita, and I something good into our clothes (as of me, I simply used my best available clothes, which looked fairly plain).

"[Pathway]! [Spirit Infusion]! [Spirit Fusion]! And now the finishing move, Potential Cubes!"

FLAAAASH!

[The Divinity [All Mother of Life and Souls] has decided to bless your creation.]

[The Divinity [Dark Lady Dressed By The Night] has decided to bless your creation.]

[The Divinity [Furious King of Blazing Flames] has decided to bless your creation.]

[Potential Cube (D Rank)] has been utilized on [Spiritual Mother's Casual Clothing Set (No Rank)]!

[Potential Cube (D Rank)] has been utilized on [Dark Fake Witch's Sexy Getup Set (No Rank)]!

[Potential Cube (D Rank)] has been utilized on [Handsome Military Geek Set (No Rank)]!

The voices were resonating inside of my head as I saw several threads made of divinity coming from my hands and connecting with the sets I've improved using spirits and materials!

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Chapter 447: Named Weapon

FLAAAASH!

[The Divinity [All Mother of Life and Souls] has decided to bless your creation.]

[The Divinity [Dark Lady Dressed By The Night] has decided to bless your creation.]

[The Divinity [Furious King of Blazing Flames] has decided to bless your creation.]

[Potential Cube (D Rank)] has been utilized on [Spiritual Mother's Casual Clothing Set (No Rank)]!

[The [Spiritual Mother's Casual Clothing Set (No Rank)] has evolved into a D Rank Magic Clothing Set!]

[It has gained the Potential Abilities [All Stats +10% (D)] and [Spiritual Armor (D)]!]

[Potential Cube (D Rank)] has been utilized on [Dark Fake Witch's Sexy Getup Set (No Rank)]!

[The [Dark Fake Witch's Sexy Getup Set (No Rank)] has evolved into a D Rank Magic Clothing Set!]

[It has gained the Potential Abilities [MP & INT +12% (D)] and [Veil of the Night (D)]!]

[Potential Cube (D Rank)] has been utilized on [Handsome Military Geek Set (No Rank)]!

[The [Handsome Military Geek Set (No Rank)] has evolved into a D Rank Magic Clothing Set!]

[It has gained the Potential Abilities [HP & VIT +11% (D)] and [Blazing Defense (D)]!]

Ugh, a lot of information entered my head, it made me feel almost dizzy, but I quickly realized all the sets combined together into a single "item" even when they were separate pieces of clothing. If that's the case, even the "Instant Equipment" function should work just like in Arcadia.

"Alright, they're done!" I said happily. "Gaia, Nyx, and the God of Flames blessed these as well!" I quickly handed them back to my friends. "If you want to instantly equip them, just say [Equip] while touching them."

"Equip?" The two said at the same time, the clothes suddenly turned into pure energy and wrapped around their bodies.

FLAAASH!

"Woah tis worked as intended..." Said Rita in shock.

"I can't believe they became just like the equipment in-game. Though it feels a bit stuffy with our normal clothes below..." Said Mark.

"Yeah but still this is awesome!" Rita celebrated, her whole witch set was emanating a dark aura.

"So what abilities did they get?" Wondered Mark.

"Let me see..." I said.

I quickly explained them what they got, the two immediately tried to get to use them.

"Veil of the Night!"

FLUOSH!

Suddenly, a black cape made of darkness emerged around Rita. She discovered she was able to move and shape it around, and it seemed to be some sort of stealth ability that helped her hide or travel between shadows.

"It probably works better when its actually night, but its pretty dope!" Rita seemed happy.

"And mine is... Blazing Defense?"

FLUOOOSH!

Suddenly, a wall of flames surged in front of Mark, startling him and almost making him fall over the ground.

"W-What the...?"

POOF!

But it quickly disappeared again.

"Seems like a defensive ability that allows you to summon a wall of flames! It has low durability so you should use it only on specific moments." I said.

"I see... That's awesome, I don't even need to conjure it using magic at all either." Mark seemed surprised. "I never thought the God of Flames would be interested on me."

"Well you use flames." I shrugged. "It seems that the Gods might be actively seeing us as we improve and want to sponsor us more depending in the situation."

"I guess they did this because they know we'll be fighting Phantasmos soon." Rita said. "So anyways, what's next in the crafting list?"

"I'll be modifying my shovel so it can also work as a staff. I realized having both a shovel and a staff at the same time would be annoying, so it would be better to have both at the same time." I said. "Sadly the powerful weapon I got from Gaia back in Arcadia is too strong so I cannot bring it here yet... At the very least, we should enchant our current weapons to become stronger. Lastly, I was thinking on making a ring for each one of us for a last enhancement to our stats and to give us an extra ability."

"Sounds good to me, let me help you in anything you need." Mark said.

"Yeah, let's do this together." Rita nodded.

I was really lucky to have such reliable friends with me.

Like that, I utilized some new materials we've harvested, such as the Hollow Mud, the Phantasmal Soul Crystals that dropped off the Hollow Legion, and the various herbs, flowers, plants, and other things, alongside a full boost of spirits compatible with me fused into the shovel, and lastly, the Amphibious Fish Water Stone and low-ranked Elemental Crystals mined from the mines in the underground of the Forest of Beginnings! Oh, and an old, branch of my own tree, which was surprisingly barely D+ Rank, so I was able to bring it.

"And of course, we'll add another Potential Cube!"

The limit of Potential Cubes was strict, a Potential can only have four lines, more Cubes will only reset the four lines to find something better, kind of like a random gacha thing. So to not waste them around we decided to just apply two cubes per items.

FLAAASH!

The shovel started to shine brightly, growing longer, and resembling a beautiful staff, but with the tip of a golden shovel. It had several colorful jewels incrusting on its shovel tip, all of the resonating beautifully with spiritual essence.

[You have evolved the [Old Farm Shovel (D Rank Magic Weapon)] into a [Spiritual Farm Shovel Staff (C Rank Magic Weapon)]!

[The [Potential Cube (D)] has improved the weapon's Potential and added two new Potential Lines: [Elemental Resonance (D)] and [MP & INT +15%]!

[The Improved Existing Potentials have become: [STR +15% (D)] -> [STR & INT +15% (D)] and [Explosive Blow (D)] -> [Spiritual Explosion (D)]!

[The Divinity [All Mother of Life and Souls] has granted a name to your Weapon [Irene]!

[Your Named Weapon has begun to develop a will of its own...]

[The Weapon acquired the [Intelligent Weapon (C)] Ability!]

"A-Amazing...!"

Even Rita and Mark were left shocked as my shovel changed completely.

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Chapter 448: Intelligent Weapons

"Wow! I never thought I could become such a powerful magic weapon! This is all a dream come true for a humble country girl like me!"

Suddenly, as the shovel evolved, a voice echoed from somewhere.

"Huh? Who did just talk now?" Rita wondered.

"It sounded like a bratty girl." Said Mark.

"Hey! Who are you calling bratty girl you city boy? Want me to slam those ass cheeks of you with my tip or something? Well not like I would mind!"

The voice only continued to get more bratty and increasingly horny.

"Hey! It's me! Come on, I am talking RIGHT HERE." The Shovel suddenly began shining brightly.

"I-I can't believe you're talking." I sighed. "Not even in Arcadia this happened..."

"Hahahah, that's because I've been given a name by Gaia herself! That pretty lady from another world!" Laughed the shovel. "Thing is, I do remember being a normal shovel too. Like how I was used to clean the horse poop, or how I was used to dig the ground, hell, I even remember when I was made out of wood in the factory! Hahh, brings me tons of nostalgia."

"It unexpectedly has a personality very similar to the Great Spirit." Mark sighed. "Does Gaia always creates spiritual beings with personalities like these?"

"Hey!" Irene got angry.

It was hard to accept but the shovel began talking and everything. I guess she's really an Intelligent Weapon now.

"N-Nice to meet you, Irene. I hope you can behave a bit better, let's get along." I said with a smile.

"Well sure, if a pretty girl like you asks for it I'm all for being a better person myself, Elayne!" Irene giggled.

"You talk so personally with me, d-do you really remember being a shovel?" I wondered.

"Yeah, like, I remember you since you were a tiny little baby girl and all! I am actually the oldest shovel in your whole house." Irene laughed. "Ahh, you were so cute and small back then, you've grown into a beautiful woman too!"

I can't believe this shovel sounds like an aunt to me now...

"A-Ahahah, well I am glad." I sighed.

"So anyways! Can I get everyone's names? My memories are a bit fuzzy and all." Irene said.

Like that, I had to introduce everyone to Irene.

"I see, the gang is truly here then!" She laughed. "Hey why is that floating carrot not talking to me?"

"I can't believe Lady Gaia created a copy of me into your shovel!" The Great Spirit felt offended.

[The Divinity [All Mother of Life and Souls] says that she didn't made a copy of her, just another Spirit.]

Oh, I see! So Irene is actually a spirit fused into my shovel, interesting. So it is like a weapon spirit or something? I can't really get it but I suppose that's a nice thing.

"This is awkward but let's get over it." Mark sighed. "Let's improve our weapons as well. And should we get into making the rings too?"

"Yep! Let's get going!" I said.

"Ooooh! Maybe your weapons may begin talking too!" Irene felt excited.

"I hope not..." Rita said. "I don't want a lousy gun talking to me..."

"I... Well, I wouldn't mind it I guess." Mark sighed.

Like that, their weapons were improved using a variety of low-quality materials, both from Arcadia and from here. The power of Spirit Fusion and Spirit Infusion were the pillars of these creations, as these powers allowed for the easy fusion of items.

But how does it exactly work? Well, the trick is rather simple, by imbuing a spirit into an item, it is then qualified as a spirit. Then I use Spirit Fusion on the spirit-imbued items and then they fuse. It is like a cheat but it actually just works as intended.

[You have evolved the [Smith & Wesson 442 Handgun (D Rank Magic Weapon)] into a [Lethal Black Reaper Handgun (C Rank Magic Weapon)]!

[The [Potential Cube (D)] has improved the weapon's Potential and added two new Potential Lines: [Defense Ignore: 25% (D)] and [Bullet Time (D)]!]

[The Improved Existing Potentials have become: [DEX +15% (D)] -> [AGI & DEX +15% (D)] [Mana Bullet (D)] -> [Elemental Bullet (D)]

[The Divinity [Dark Lady Dressed By The Night] has granted a name to your Weapon [Onyx]!

[The Named Weapon has begun to develop a will of its own...]

[The Weapon acquired the [Intelligent Weapon (C)] Ability!]

"Ooh, it gained a lot of abilities..." I explained Rita what they were while she was terrified by her gun talking to her.

"Hey, you said something about not wanting a lousy gun talking to you, huh? Rita I can't believe you're saying this after all the time we've spent together!" Onyx said. "Traitor! I will tell your husband."

"Nooo! Wait, please let's get along! Also are you a girl?" Rita wondered. "I imagined you would have a manly voice..."

"What's wrong with me being a girl?!" The gun got angrier. "Guns can be girls too!"

And while the two were talking about nonsense...

[You have evolved the [Expert Hunting Knife (D Rank Magic Weapon)] into a [Blazing Dragon Tooth Knife (C Rank Magic Weapon)]!

[The [Potential Cube (D)] has improved the weapon's Potential and added two new Potential Lines: [Lesser Dragon Flame (D)] and [Slashing Power +25% (D)]!]

[The Improved Existing Potentials have become: [AGI +12% (D)] -> [STR & AGI +13% (D)] [Aura Slash (D)] -> [Twin Slash (D)]

[The Divinity [Furious King of Blazing Flames] has granted a name to your Weapon [Ignis]!

[The Named Weapon has begun to develop a will of its own...]

[The Weapon acquired the [Intelligent Weapon (C)] Ability!]

"I-Incredible, it became a dragon knife with the Drakon Tooth we added?!" Asked Mark in shock. "It was a fairly low quality one too, and even then thanks to the Fire God's powers it evolved into this... incredible."

"Yeah, praise my lord some more!" Laughed the knife. "Congratulations, you're barely qualified to hold me with your weak hands, human!"

This knife was just as cocky as the other weapons.

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Chapter 449: Rude Talking Weapons

"Do you have to treat me so badly?" Mark sighed. "Don't you have fond memories with me?"

"Fond memories? You purchased me just some time ago and never used me! What memories would I have with you? I barely have memories of being in the shop you bought me from..." Sighed Ignis. His voice was masculine unlike the gun and my shovel. "Anyways, let's cooperate for now. The god of flames has high expectations on you! It is thanks to him that I can talk now."

"I see." Mark felt pressured that a rather wrathful god had taken a liking on him, mostly just because he could wield the fire element. "I-I am honored, I guess..."

He clearly didn't seem honored! But whatever, I know he'll be able to handle his new talking companion.

While everyone was talking, I already had our rings done. Making rings was easy because I just used the lowest quality rings in Arcadia, the F Rank [Steel Rings] that give like a tiny bit of VIT and HP once equipped as the base, and simply fused them over with compatible materials and spirits.

And of course, Potential Cubes! This time I decided to just use two Potential Cubes for each ring right away and handed more Potential Cubes to my friends to enchant their clothes so they could have two more Potential Lines each, with that, my number of Potential Cubes has plummeted, but Mark just sent me some more he bought from the market.

[Two [Potential Cube (D Rank)] have been utilized on [Enchanted Spiritual Steel Ring (F Rank)]!]

[The [Enchanted Spiritual Steel Ring (F Rank)] has evolved into a D Rank Magic Ring!]

[It has gained the Potential Abilities [AGI +8% (D)] [INT +7% (D)] [MP Recovery Speed +30% (D)] and [Spirit Magic Power +20% (D)]

[Two [Potential Cube (D Rank)] have been utilized on [Enchanted Dark Steel Magic Ring (F Rank)]!]

[The [Enchanted Dark Steel Magic Ring (F Rank)] has evolved into a D Rank Magic Ring!]

[It has gained the Potential Abilities [WIS +8% (D)] [INT +7% (D)] [Dark Magic Power +20% (D)] and [DEX +7% (D)]

[Two [Potential Cube (D Rank)] have been utilized on [Enchanted Fire Steel Ring (F Rank)]!]

[The [Enchanted Fire Steel Ring (F Rank)] has evolved into a D Rank Magic Ring!]

[It has gained the Potential Abilities [VIT +8% (D)] [HP +7% (D)] [HP Recovery Speed +30% (D)] and [Fire Magic Power +20% (D)]

I quickly wrote everything down by memory and then gave a paper with the info of each ring to my friends. Mark and Rita felt even more amazed.

"Damn now I feel like I am taking advantage of you..." Sighed Mark. "Is this really okay? This ring's awesome. How much would you sell this for?"

"Well, if you want to buy it, seeing how it is a magical ring with amazing effects and everything... In a world that has yet to offer these kind of items... Maybe it would cost like almost a million dollars." I said while thinking.

"G-Gah...!" Mark almost had a heart attack.

"Hahaha! I am joking, take it for free! You've been helping me all this time as well, you deserve it. We need as much strength as possible for what's to come." I smiled back at him, giving him a head pat.

"Yeah, I'll make sure to use this to protect the town and slay that Phantasmos." Mark nodded, totally looking like a cool manga protagonist.

"Heey, is that it?! Can't you make like more rings? One for each finger should be enough power up!" Rita said with a cocky smile.

"Don't ask anymore! I am tired, and we've ran out of proper materials, and it takes time to handle the spirits." I sighed. "One ring for each one should be more than enough."

"Eek, okay, don't get mad at me..." Rita sighed. "So anyways!" Rita grabbed the Potential Cube I gave to her and imbued it into her witch getup.

Mark and I did the same, enchanting our equipment one last time before continuing our monster hunting session.

[The [Potential Cube (D)] has improved the [Spiritual Mother's Casual Clothing Set (D Rank Magic Clothing Set)] Existing Potentials and Added the Following Potential Lines: [All Damage Taken -10% (D)] and [Spiritual Barrier (D)]!]

[The Improved Existing Potentials have become: [All Stats +10% (D)] -> [All Stats +12% (D)] [Spiritual Armor (D)] -> [Elemental Spirit Armor (D)]!]

[The [Potential Cube (D)] has improved the [Dark Fake Witch's Sexy Getup Set (D Rank Magic Clothing Set)] Existing Potentials and Added the Following Potential Lines: [Magic Damage Taken -15% (D)] and [Shadow Tentacles (D)]!]

[The Improved Existing Potentials have become: [MP & INT +12% (D)] -> [MP & INT +14% (D)] [Veil of the Night (D)] -> [Abyssal Veil of the Night (D)]

[The [Potential Cube (D)] has improved the [Handsome Military Geek Set (D Rank Magic Clothing Set)] Existing Potentials and Added the Following Potential Lines: [Physical Damage Taken -15% (D)] and [Blazing Armor (D)]!

[The Improved Existing Potentials have become: [HP & VIT +11% (D)] -> [HP & VIT +13% (D)] [Blazing Defense (D)] -> [Blazing Fortress (D)]

FLAAASH!

Our equipment glowed brightly one last time. Everyone gained some amazingly improved abilities and stat bonuses. And just by wearing these plain-looking clothes, I was already way stronger than before.

Adding that up, I also decided to improve my Shield.

[The [Potential Cube (D)] has improved the [Roughly Made Monster Shield (D Rank Magic Shield)] Existing Potentials and Added the Following Potential Lines: [VIT +15% (D)] and [Nature's Protection (D)]!

[The Improved Existing Potentials have become: [RES +17% (D)] -> [REST +19% (D)] [Elemental Shield (D)] -> [Elemental Spiritual Shield (D)]

"And done! Amazing, we're all set up now! Enough wasting time on this, let's proceed with our plans." I said.

"Alright, I'm all for some hunting on broad daylight." Mark said.

"Hehe, now the only thing I'm missing is a flying broom- Wait!" Rita suddenly smiled back at me. "Hey Elayne, can you give me a Potential Cube, pretty please~?"

"Don't tell me you're planning to use it on a broom?!" I sighed.

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Chapter 450: A Flying Broom!

Rita's idea was insane and stupid, but I somehow thought we could just experiment and see if it worked. I imbued a big Wind Spirit that volunteered himself for the experiment, and then asked the aid of the Goddess of Winds using [Pathway].

"[Spirit Infusion]! [Spirit Fusion]! [Pathway]! And...!"

[Two [Potential Cube (D Rank)] have been utilized on [Wind Imbued Plain Old Broom (No Rank)]!

[The [Wind Imbued Plain Old Broom (No Rank)] has evolved into a D Rank Magic Staff!]

[It has gained the Potential Abilities [Levitate (D)] [Flight (D)] [Mana Engine (D)] [Shape Enlargement (D)]!

FLUOOOSH!

The broom suddenly began floating in midair, as if it had gained life of its own. The power of the wind spirit I put inside was clear, he was happy it worked.

"N-No way..." I gasped.

"I-It actually worked?!" Mark wondered.

"YES! We're done here! It's finally done!" Rita laughed evilly, quickly trying to sit over the broom. "Ahh, now fly- Ouch! Oh my god this is so painful! My ass hurts!"

"Well, who said sitting on a thin and hard wooden stick would feel nice?" I sighed.

"B-But they do it so happily all the time in the fairy tales and movies!" Rita complained. "Can't you become more comfortable?"

FLUOSH!

The broom suddenly began growing longer, but it couldn't shape itself into something comfortable. However, because it can enlarge itself, many people can sit over there at the same time. All three of us quickly sat over it, as it slowly started to hover.

"Ouch, my ass..." Rita complained.

"Yes, it really hurt, my ass is already burning." I sighed.

"T-This is even more uncomfortable for men..." Mark sighed.

Ah, I can tell why he's saying that.

"C-Come on, let's... go! Aaagh..." Rita muttered, as we began lifting up and down.

The broom absorbed Mana from the one using it, and it absorbed quite a lot. Rita was already getting drained of all the Mana and looked pale.

"Uuugggh... This shit sucks!" She cried.

"I told you it would be more convenient to just enchant a car." I sighed. "But I guess we can use this for emergencies."

"Agh, let's just walk." Rita sighed.

At the end we managed to fly like two hundred meters around town before we had to forcefully go down. I ended storing the flying broom inside my inventory for the time being.

"HAHAHAHA! That was way too funny! Did ya really thought it would work?!" The Great Spirit laughed at us.

"Hey, don't laugh at the girls! They had a dream, ya know?" Irene sighed.

"A stupid dream at that, just get a flying motorcycle or car, would be way more comfortable." Sighed Onyx.

"Your ability to hold on your pain for all this time was admirable, I was wrong about you, you're quite a strong man." Ignis said, praising Mark.

"Shut up..." Mark sighed, rubbing his backside.

Like that, we chatted and relaxed a bit, while seeking the presence of Hollows or Monsters. It was still around 5 PM, so it was as bright as every day. We decided to hunt as many Hollows and Monsters as we could find today to give ourselves the last enchantment before the fight against Phantamos.

His deadly presence was now very, very close, and it will only grow closer in the next hours. I don't know what he's up to, but according to Mark's Falco, he said a large group of monsters the bird couldn't see completely was approaching.

There's already a big army around the town just standing around, incapable of entering due to the charms, I can't imagine yet another one added into the mix, it would certainly be utter hell on Earth.

"If it wasn't thanks to the Charms we set up last night, this entire town would have already been overrun by Hollows or even other monsters. People would have probably died." I sighed.

"Yeah, I guess we've indirectly become their saviors already. Heheh, being a hero in the shadows has its charms, I give you that. Though I wouldn't mind a bit of fame and recognition either!" Rita giggled.

"I don't really mind not being recognized, as long as I can stop these damn things from hurting the nice and innocent people of this town..." Mark said, his fiery eyes filled with determination.

"Geez, so stiff! Say something more selfish for once..." Rita crossed her arms.

"Rita... I don't think this is really the place to talk so casually!" I said.

"GRUOOOOHHHHH!"

A gigantic red and black-colored bear charged at us, while over a dozen E Rank Hollows surrounded us. The bear monster was an E+++ Rank monster the Great Spirit called "Bear Tyrant", but he had been parasitized by Hollows imbued with Phantamos ghostly powers, and had become a "Ghostly Bear Tyrant", a D Rank monster.

BAAAAAM!

The Bear's gigantic claws hit the ground, shattering the floor below us easily as his powerful hits generated shockwaves. Blue flames started to emerge around the affected areas, Phantasmal Flames!

"Get behind!" I said, as the shockwave of Phantasmal Flames was coming towards us. "[Elemental Shield]! [Life's Shield]!"

FLAAAASH!

My shield unleashed a powerful shield-shaped aura that stopped the enormous blast of Phantasmal Flames coming our way.

BOOOOOO MMM!!!

The flames were completely purified by the shield's powers, but the bear took this opportunity to draw closer, swinging his gigantic claws against us. Unlike a normal bear, this behemoth was over five meters of height!

CLASH! CLASH! CLASH! CLAAASH!

I tanked the hits using my shield but I didn't know how long I could keep this up.

We have to attack and finish this thing off as soon as we can!

"Blackie!"

"Meow!"

Blackie, who was already busy fighting the Hollows around us, quickly gave us a hand, extending his shadows as countless tentacles wrapped around the bear's legs.

"[Earth Spirit Call]! [Spirit Fusion]!"

Several spirits surged around us, as I hastily fused them together, a gigantic arm made of stone emerged out of the ground, punching the ravenous bear in the head and throwing it down into the floor!

BAAAAAMMM!!!