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Chapter 461: Sin and Virtue Curses

Magic/mana has two forms: Abstract Magic and Corporeal Magic. Abstract Magic Attributes can't cause physical harm, opposite to the Corporeal Magic Attributes.

Attributes like water, earth, lighting, wind, and such elements were all corporeal magic. While attributes such as holy, dark, shadow, curses, and such elements fall under the category of Abstract Magic.

The Abstract Magic could directly cause harm to the mind, and it was physically harmless. This type of magic was very hard to master and complex in many ways. The owners of such magic can't use their mana to strengthen their weapons or use them in physical combat. But if someone mastered Abstract Magic, it was very hard to guard against their attacks.

The Curse Abstract Magic was as mysterious as the Holy Abstract Magic, and these two attributes were the bane of each other. Furthermore, the scoop of these two abstract attributes was so vast that they were divided into many branches.

Just mastering one of their branches was virtually impossible, and only after mastering each branch can one fully grasp the essence of an abstract attribute.

The Curse Magic was divided into two main branches: Sin Curses and Virtue Cures. These two branches are then further divided into sub-branches.

The Sin Curses were curses that feed on the target's sins, while the Virtue Cures feed on the target's virtues. Both of them were almost unbreakable cures if someone was able to master them.

The Witch Race was proficient in Witchcraft, which was the branch of the Sin Cures, and Margaret belonged to the witch race's species called the Vile Witch. The Vile Witch race studies the Whammy Poison and Imprecate Magic. Whammy is invoked by poison, Imprecate invoked by evil canticle sounds, and to study these two disciplines, one needed a magic core related to curse magic.

There were many books and Margret's personal records on Whammy Poison and Imprecate Magic in the library and database, which brought Jacob joy as he finally started his research on these two disciplines.

Jacob naturally chose the Imprecate magic first because it didn't need any physical object like poison. Although Margret left a wide variety of poisons for her inheritor to practice with, Jacob wanted spells related to curse magic more.

The imprecate magic spells were all dependent on evil canticle sounds, and Jacob discovered that there was a special magic ability scripture named the Hymn of Evil, which was essential to perform an imprecate magic spell.

But he soon frowned when he saw the requirement for this magic ability scripture, 'I need 12 Rectified Stars to make a Star Magic Formation to conjure this ability? But my magic core is only at the peak of star rank, which means I should only have nine rectified stars. This is a problem. I need more stars to conjure other magic abilities.

'No wonder those guys throw so many magic ability scriptures in auction. The more powerful the magic ability, the more rectified stars I need to conjure that magic ability. Just the silent casting magic ability required nine rectified stars. This is a bit problematic.

'Furthermore, my magic cores won't follow the common sense of the Star Magic System. The Hex Magic Core evolves by ranks, not tiers, while the Water Magic Core was formed directly at the epic rank, and I have no idea if it will evolve with other evolution magic scriptures.

'Even if it evolved, I don't know if I can create this ability in other magic cores than hex magic core....'

Jacob became confused as he was in a dilemma. He had some idea about how his magic core worked, but the water magic core was still a mystery. He still didn't find any record of someone else having more than one magic core, so he was in completely unknown territory on this subject.

"Cursed Immortality!" Jacob decided to summon the cursed book in the hope he could get some clues about how to proceed.

The moment the cursed book appeared, he asked before it could start laughing, "You should've known why I summoned you. Tell me, if I evolve my hex magic core to epic rank, how many rectified stars would I get?"

Immortika laughed as usual before replying, "Hehe... you've finally stepped into the field of magic, huh? Very well, I should help you a little. Every time you complete the prerequisites of a star magic rank of the hex magic core evolution, it will directly reach the peak of that rank."

Jacob's expression brightened before he threw another question, "Then what about magic orbits? How many do I have?"

"Hehehe, are you really putting limitations on yourself? Do I need to remind you that you're my inheritor? Your body evolves every time you complete a stage of mine. So, now tell me, if you evolve, won't your magic orbits follow suit?" Immortika questioned.

Jacob's eyes went wide as realization struck him, "So you mean to say I don't have a limit to how many magic orbits I can have if my physical body is strong enough?"

"Exactly! Hahahaha... aren't I great?"Immortika laughed.

Jacob sneered, "Yeah, if only I could say the same about your personality."

"Now, you're just being a jerk!"

"We both know who the jerk is between us. How about my water core? Can I cultivate with evaluation scripture, or if I use the rectified stars in the water magic core to form a Star Magic Formation for curse-related magic, will it work?" Jacob questioned.

"Hahahaha... now that's another matter entirely and not related to me as far as I could tell. How about you try and find one for yourself? It's not like you don't have the capital to try. After all, since it's your magic core, shouldn't you be able to control it at will?"Immortika ambiguously replied.

Jacob's eyes narrowed, "You know what, you're right. Last question, is it true that true curse magic can only be learned after grasping Sin and Virtue Cures?"

"Heh, it is indeed true, but you're still missing far too much to even think about mastering both types of curses. The sheer scoop of this ambition is something that no mortal could achieve!"

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Chapter 462: All Alive Alliance (1)

In a black mask, Lucy was silently sitting in a heated meeting between the ten strongest S-Class mercenaries of the Epic Plains. These mercenaries were not only the strongest S-Class mercenaries, but they also controlled thousands of mercenaries.

The leader of the Bronze Barbarian Mercenary League's Leader, Wilder, was also present among these ten figures, and his expression was unsightly as he glared at the gray scales menacing Wind Kobold. He was the leader of the Wind Bringer Mercenary Group, Geko!

Geko was extremely gleeful, looking at Wilder's ugly expression, "Leader Wilder, we are gathered here to discuss who will be the vanguard of our mercenary agency in the upcoming trial plains in three months not to mend your tribe's feud with Scroll Elder Ephraim!"

"Geko, stay out of my business! I'm just pointing out the Scroll Elder Ephraim's disrespect towards our agency. He publicly berated us, and I think it's time to shoot him down a peg. Even if he's one of the ten chief elders of the alchemy guild, he can't block us from acquiring magic scrolls!" Wilder retorted with a murderous look in his eyes.

In the incident with Jacob, Ephraim nearly died, and since no one was there to blame, he naturally vents his anger on his enemy, Wilder, and the Bronze Barbarian Tribe.

If before he was blocking the Bronze Barbarian Tribe from acquiring just the magic scroll since he was in control of the magic scroll business, after that incident, he started to block them from acquiring any alchemy items in any way he could.

Strong and arrogant, the bronze barbarian tribe maybe, but in front of someone like the Scroll Elder Ephraim, who controls a large portion of the alchemy guild's business. They were fighting a lost battle, and now they were on the verge of exploding from all that pressure.

The alchemy commodities were the lifeline of any living beings, and without them, it was like living in a primitive era. As for solving this matter by killing Ephraim, if only it were that easy.

As one of the ten chief elders who were just a rank below the vice guild leader and above everyone else, killing or assassinating Ephraim was akin to an all-out war with the entire alchemy guild!

Which would spell nothing but the end of the Bronze Barbarian Tribe since the bank won't stand for them.

So Wilder now had no choice but to bring this matter here in the hope that Lucy might help him a little despite his last blunder. But Geko's tribe, the Wind Kobold tribe, has been sworn enemies with the Bronze Barbarian tribe for generations now.

Both tribes hold prominent positions in the Bank region, so they will not stand still to kick each other while they are down, and Geko was doing just that. He wanted the Bronze Barbarian tribe to perish and couldn't be more gleeful about their feud with Ephraim.

"Leader Wilder, you misspoke just now." An ebony elf with astute blue eyes and graceful bearing coldly spoke. She was not only the leader of Lighting Assassin Den but also the tribe leader of Shadow Elf Tribe, Mildred!

She continued coldly, "There is no 'we' in this but only 'you.' Don't drag the agency into your fight. If you truly want what is best for our agency, go to Scroll Elder and apologize. After all, you guys were the ones who started it because of your crass temper."

Wilder's expression turned even darker as he glared at Mildred. She has no enmity with him and was just stating it as fact, and it's exactly because of that it strings so much!

A white lion face orc, the leader of the Vlion Mercenary Team, Verlin, with a deep scare over his left eye, also chimed in with a growl, "If you want to talk chivalry, then how about we discuss the war between

the Society Killer and Killer Skull Society and how it is damaging the Epic Alive Plains. Furthermore, the likely perpetrator of this war, the Faceless Ancient, has been silent for over a year now.

"Or how about the King of Dead Onyx, who's pressuring the Alive Epic Plains even more wantonly now that the life zone is about to descend? As we speak, hundreds of lives are being harvested in life crystals.

"If you're so noble, how about you take your league and go help out the alliance armies? I promise, if you really do it, my Vlion Team will be your number one supporter."

Wilder's breathing became ridged as he clenched his fist. He couldn't find a word to refute Verlin since his selfishness was now as clear as day.

At this moment, before anyone else could take a shot at Wilder, a frigid gale of wind suddenly brushed past everyone, and they all were instantly alarmed and looked in one direction in unison.

Lucy was impassively looking at everyone, and when their focus turned on her, the icy gale vanished. But they all could still feel the chilly killing intent in it.

She finally spoke, "If you guys are done talking nonsense, shall I proceed with the matter of today's meeting?"

No one spoke in objection as they all knew their time was over, and from now on, Lucy would be the one talking.

Lucy continued, "As Leader Geko just mentioned, the trial plain will descend in exactly 93 days. Since everyone knows what's going on in the Alive Epic Plains lately, it would save me the trouble of explaining everything.

"If I remember correctly, for both Senior Nathan and Senior Mack, it is your second time participating in a plain trial, which is extremely rare."

She glanced at two wizened face pale gray elves as they were both twins and strongest among the top ten. They were the two leaders of the strongest mercenary team, the Twin Sword Golden Team.

Even Lucy called them Seniors, which clearly represents their worth in the agency.

Both Nathan and Mack smiled and bowed humbly.

Lucy didn't react much, "This will also be my second plain trial and probably last before my replacement took my place. As the rule of the bank, we don't have a vice bank manager but only a bank manager.

"So, you two will be my Chief Commanders in this trial plain, and if you perform well, I'll give you a chance which would only come in once a lifetime."

She then looked at the others, who were looking at her with wide eyes as if they were seeing a ghost.

Lucy nonchalantly continued with a hint of killing intent, "This offer is not just limited to two seniors. If any one of you performs well, you will be eligible for this chance. Furthermore, if anyone can give me the head of the Faceless Ancient, this opportunity will be yours!

"Now, let me tell you all about the changes this time in All Alive Alliance, which were made considering the variable named Faceless Ancient. Because you might not be aware of the fact that he was the champion of this time's rare trail plains, and he had done it in a record-breaking time!"

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Chapter 463: All Alive Alliance (2)

In the headquarters of the Alchemy Guild, Nelsen stood on a podium, and in front of him sat Ellie and ten chief elders!

With a solemn expression, Nelsen stated, "As always, the three hegemonies will form an All Alive Alliance a week prior to the trial plain, and it will last until the end of the trial plain!

"The All Alive Alliance is formed with the purpose of winning the trial plain before the Dark Beings could or at least win a spot to save ourselves a complete loss and stop the Dark Beings from having the rights to use 'Three Plain Authorities.'

"The last time, we somehow managed to tie in with the dark beings because the plain trial was a puzzle-type trial plain. As always, we will be first blocking the entire entrance to the trial plain so no civilian or unauthorized personnel can enter.

"The second thing will be sending the vanguard guard unit built upon the Combat Sector and our Intelligence Sector to figure out the nature of the trial before forming an accurate Expatiation Unit for the trial.

"This will be our foremost priority in the first five years after the start of the trial. Remember, the dark beings will be doing the same, and a clash with them is unavoidable.

"Both sides will be looking for stealing each other collection of data, and this data will always be in the possession of someone from the Intelligence Sector's hand, which means us!

"The rule is simple; in case you can't protect the date, just destroy the data if you can't protect it. Even if it costs you your life, the dark beings can't have the fruits of our labor!

"The Intelligence Sector's other main purpose is to stop the emergence of a sole champion, especially if an outsider tried to claim one of the positions. If someone managed to achieve this, as the Intelligence Sector of the All Alive Alliance, it's our duty to track this person down and make sure to eliminate this error.

"Although such a thing had never happened before, this time, it might be a different case. This also brings me to the changes we have made in the All Alive Alliance because of a single threat, the terrorist, Faceless Ancient!"

Ellie showed killing intent when that name, which has been haunting her nightmares, was mentioned while the ten chief elders also wore grave expressions. They all knew just how much threat Faceless Ancient possessed.

Before, they were always fully confident that no one could rival the three hegemonies. But it all changed in these last few months when the Society Killer started a one-sided massacre with Faceless Ancient technology.

No one knows how he got his hands on so many atomic grenades, but that guy clearly has enough to cause a nationwide panic. Furthermore, Faceless Ancient has vanished since the Society Killer started his conquest against the Killer Skull Society.

Now, many people believe that the Society Killer has either captured Faceless Ancient or was in a cohort with him. Whichever the case had been, it was not good for the three hegemonies since the Society Killer was a sociopath who only wanted to end the Killer Skull Society, even if it meant killing everyone in the process!

In truth, the Society Killer was like the Faceless Ancient but was far worse. But he seemed to have vanished mysteriously over two decades ago, and everything thought he was dead until over a year ago.

Nelsen continued, "Like you, I don't know if Faceless Ancient is caught or killed by the Society Killer. But something tells me that he's still alive and probably in some partnership with the Society Killer.

"That's why our biggest concern is still the Faceless Ancient. Because he is nothing but simple. As well as being an astute fellow and talented alchemist, he is also the sole champion of the last rare trial plain!

"That's right, he became the sole champion of the rare trial plain in less than seven months, and that trial plain was also a puzzle-type trial plain, no less. Now you guys could imagine just why we all wanted him dead and how many secrets he's been hiding.

"So, he wasn't something to get caught by the likes of the Society Killer. If anything, my guess is he's preparing for someone in the shadows, and my guess is he's also aiming to be the sole champion of the epic trial plain as well.

"That's why, by keeping this in mind, this time, we have put many resources into sealing the entrance. If, by some miracle, he manages to bypass all that, then our top priority will be to end him within the trial plain.

"He might not know, but in the epic trial plain, as long as you complete a trial condition, your star ID will be announced in the entire trial plain. At that time, the dark beings will also join the fray to hunt him down if he dares to poke his nose where it won't belong.

"Or if luck is on our side, the trial plain type might be a tournament type or royal type. If this were to happen, we don't even need to seal the entrance, and he'll be doing us a favor by entering the trial." Nelsen chuckled darkly while the other chief elders also smiled evilly.

Nelsen still wasn't done as he spoke, "Other than that, I have another good news: I had persuaded three Dark Earls from the Dark City in the neutral zone to join our All Alive Alliance with their personal armies.

"So, this will be a rememberable plain trial because too much is on the line here, and I won't accept any errors. Further details are sent to your star network IDs, and you can look for Vice Guild Leader if you have doubts. It's time to start the preparations. I'll be seeing you all on the day of the alliance formation ceremony!"

Nelsen smiled mysteriously, and the next moment, he vanished from the podium like a ghost, but before that, he winked at Ellie.

Ellie pursed her lips, 'What a show-off!'

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Chapter 464: Masha's Strange Symptoms

A few hundred miles away from the Epic Plains in the Star Ocean, the massive ship of the Carefree Sword Star Pirates was calmly afloat on the water's surface.

At this moment, Masha stood in front of Captain Free Sword with a somewhat pale complexion, and she also lacked her sharp focus for some reason.

Captain Free Sword easily noticed this strange change in Masha, who was always spirited, and asked, "Are you feeling alright? You look absent-minded for some reason?"

Masha was not only an alchemy genius, but she was also the chief alchemist of Captain Free Sword's crew, and she had never fallen sick before because it was simply impossible for an alchemist like her to succumb to some illness especially when she was Unique Rank Sorceress!

Masha finally snapped out of her daze-like expression, and she frowned, "I-I'm not sure, Captain. According to all the scans and even after using the inner-sight, there's nothing wrong with me. But as you see, there is definitely something wrong!"

Captain Free Sword's eyes narrowed, "If you don't, can I examine you?" He can afford to lose anyone else but Masha because of her uniqueness, and if there was something wrong with her, then he had to find its root and take care of it quickly.

"Of course, that's why I'm here." Masha nodded without hesitation.

Captain Free Sword was far stronger than her, so he might be able to discover what was the cause of her current situation, and that's why she came here.

Captain Free Sword put his massive hand over Masha's head, and the next moment, Masha felt a current suddenly run down her entire body. But she didn't resist as she knew this Captain Free Sword's inner sight ability in play.

The Inner Sight ability was a unique rank magic ability that only had one use, which was to reveal the normally invisible magic orbits and magic core within your own body or you can also examine others if they are weaker than you and can't resist the potency of your mana.

This ability was a must-have if someone wanted to go further in the path of magic because this ability would make it much easier to observe the magic core and the rectified stars in it.

Not only that, but it can also help with mystic signatures. That's why this ability is a must-have for any unique. There were also similarly weaker or even more powerful versions of inner sight.

But all of them were driven by the three most powerful innate magic abilities of the legends: the Inner Espy, the Eyes of Judge, and the Vision of Truth and False.

These three innate abilities were considered the most powerful vision abilities, and there were only legends about them, and no one had ever seen someone who could use them.

Captain Free Sword frowned as he put his hand away and said with uncertainty, "I also didn't find anything wrong with your body or magic orbits. Could it be you're just tired, and all those tireless torture practices are finally catching up to you?"

Masha appeared more depressed about it since she was hoping that something was wrong with her since she would be able to counter it this way. But if she didn't even know what was causing all this, she couldn't do anything. The unknown was more terrifying, after all.

"Captain, I'm not in the mood for jokes." She pursed her lips, "I have another speculation about my condition. I think someone might have poisoned me!"

Captain Free Sword was taken aback by her declaration and squinted his eyes, "What made you think that?"

"My symptoms have been worsening day by day, and they are not affecting my physical condition but my mind. I'm losing focus more often, and sometimes, I stare at the void like an idiot for hours.

"This sort of poison is extremely rare, and they can affect others by simply polluting the air. That's why I've reached a conclusion." Masha's eyes shone with killing intent, "I think there is another traitor or traitors among us other than Veilly, and now that things have calmed down, they have started to make a move. If they are targeting me first, then this means they might want to rescue Veilly!"

Sharpness crept into Captain Free Sword's eyes as he wasn't expecting to hear this from Masha. Because he never told her about another traitor being present among them since he also has doubts about Masha herself.

But now that he thought about it, Masha's reaching this conclusion was not so startling since she was clearly being effective by something, and the only sound explanation was someone targeting her.

If she was being targeted, this could only mean she wasn't a suspect, or she was playing victim to avoid his suspicion. Whatever the case was, Captain Free Sword couldn't ignore the possibility of it being the truth since it would also put his own life in danger.

'If they are starting to move, then this could only mean they are losing their patience. Furthermore, that slave is still far away from making the three leaders his slaves. The trial plain is also about to start, which means it will take many years before he can complete them, or he might die.

'This is no longer a matter of wait and see. Since they're making their move, then this means they are confident in handling the consequences...' Captain Free Sword's mind raced as he remained silent while gawking at Masha with a grim expression.

Masha suddenly felt chills in her spine when she saw Captain Free Sword's grim expression, and realization dawned upon her, 'He knew!'

She felt even more alarmed because if Captain Free Sword knew about another traitor and didn't tell her, this meant she was also a suspect, which was anything but good.

Captain Free Sword sighed ruefully as his eyes went sharp like a ruthless predator, "Alright, Masha, I need to trust you, and only then can I help you and myself. I really want to avoid it, but now the safety of all the crew members is on the line here, so you all have to be considerate of my plight.

"I want you to carve a slave rune on yourself, and if you're not the traitor, I'll promise after a few questions, I'll set you free. Only after that, we will start combing through the rest of the crew!"

Chapter 465: The ATLAS Council

The ATLAS organization was the most mysterious organization after the Dark Cities.

But unlike the Dark Cities, the ATLAS was only known to the upper echelon of the three hegemonies. The common public only knows about the Star Hackers and how they should never associate with them.

The ATLAS ranking structure was quite straightforward and solely based on achievements. The head of the organization was given the title of the Star-Lord, and the successor of Star Lord was the Vice Star Lord Rank.

Below these two highest ranks were the Star Numbers, starting from Star1, and they go on as more people join in. The lower the star number, the higher the member achievements, and there was a unique system in place that couldn't be cheated.

If someone makes an achievement befitting the position of Star1 or even the Star-Lord, no one can rob that person of their rightful position, and everyone has to obey.

As for how this system works, it was still a mystery that even the Star-Lord wasn't aware of, and the member section was also done mysteriously. No one can recruit anyone, and members were selected by a unique method of the ATLAS.

That's why no one has any control or monopoly over this selection system because no one knows when or how a member will be chosen to be part of the ATLAS.

Then, there was the Atlas Council built upon five councilmen, and only the Star-Lord and the Vice Star-Lord were aware of their existence. However, they don't know their identities and any major movement related to the organization has to be approved by the Atlas Council.

The Atlas Council's job was to make sure the Star Lord wouldn't use its authority to endanger the origination, and as long as they had proof, they could easily strip the Star Lord of its title.

Today, in the hidden base of the Atlas, in masks, the Star-Lord and Vice Star-Lord were standing in front of five large screens, projecting five dark silhouettes. They were the councilmen of the Atlas Council!

"Star-Lord and Vice Star-Lord, you both have our condolences for your children!" A mechanical voice rang from the central screen. The gender of this person was unknown, but it was the First Counselman!

Star Lord's eyes were raging with killing intent behind his mask as he replied, "I don't need your sympathy! If you're really empathic, then you wouldn't have stopped us from searching for them!"

"We gave you two months, and I think it was enough to comprehend the situation. Anymore, and we were at risk of being exposed. So, you have to understand our plight better than anyone. Personal feelings have no place in our organization. We've told you this long time ago." Another mechanical voice rang from the Third Counselman.

"Still, we let you do as you please for two months because of your achievements, which is enough empathy from us." The second councilman spoke, and its voice was the same as the others.

The Vice Lord finally couldn't contain her fury as she retorted, "Don't make me laugh! You guys stopped our search before we could even confirm whether our children were alive or dead or who killed them. If you had allowed us to use the S-Augmented Reality Lane, we could've easily discovered the killer's star ID. Yet you guys!"

"Humph, do you even hear yourself? That thing can only be used three times, and you want to waste it to solve your personal matters? I know you're angry, but don't get blinded by it. We are protecting you both from ruining yourselves. It's not like you can't make more children!" The fifth councilman sneered, and despite its emotionless, mechanical voice, the disappointment in its voice couldn't be hidden.

"You bas..."

"That enough!"

Before the Vice Star-Lord could complete her sentence, the Star Lord strongly pressed his hand on her shoulder and stopped her. Although he wanted to tear apart the fifth councilman's mouth, he knew better.

They had indeed lost their children, but they couldn't lose their position in their fury because as long as they had their positions, they at least got a chance to get justice.

The Vice Star-Lord also knows that as she is even more astute than the Star-Lord, it's just that as a doting mother, she has lost her rationality for a moment and suppressed her raging emotions.

"Let's not discuss my children anymore. It is best for all of us." The Star Lord coldly uttered while suppressing his rage, "I want your opinion on the Void Star Server Extermination Plan. You should've received the documents I've sent you all."

The atmosphere suddenly became solemn, and the first councilman spoke, "That is indeed an excellent plan. But how confident are you that you can pull this off?"

"About 50%. Even if it failed, we won't lose anything." The Star Lord stated, "But if we manage to pull this off, I don't want anything but the chance to use the S-Augmented Reality Lane. I think this sort of achievement is enough for a single use, no?"

The councilmen didn't reply instantly, and the Star-Lord and Vice-Star-Lord waited patiently. They were aiming for this exact thing, for this was their last hope, and they no longer cared about anything else but taking revenge for their children.

The first councilman finally spoke, "Are you sure you don't want to go into the higher plains? You always wanted it, if I recall correctly. If you missed this chance, your lifespan would be over before you could pull something like this again."

The Star Lord replied without hesitation in an icy tone, "We indeed wanted to go to the higher plains, but we were doing it for our children. Now they are no longer here, what's the point in going to higher plains?

"As a parent, it's our duty to protect our children, but since we failed our duty, we at least want to avenge them as their parents. Furthermore, even if this mission fails, I'm planning to aim for the trial plain sole champion position, which should be sufficient for the same reward."

The second councilman spoke, "Sigh... you guys are really determined this time. But it would be a shame to let someone like you die since the organization needs you. Very well, if you can pull any of it, you can use the S-Augmented Reality Lane, and we'll also give you two tickets for the higher plains!"

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Chapter 466: The Awakened Fluid Acceleration

The Southern Wing of the Witch Palace, where the death maze was located.

A group of thirty Shadow Wraiths was sieging a giant figure clad in black armor and wearing a dark windbreaker on top as they moved systemically and with flawless coordinates and tried to take the giant down with every vital attack.

However, the giant didn't seem to be at any disadvantage as every time, those shadow wraiths were about to pierce into his armor. He would block them with his two dark-blade swords as he spun them around like a pendulum.

With every move, he would push a shadow wraith a few meters back before focusing on others. It was like he had eyes on every angel, and at this moment, a faint smock screen started steaming from him as if he was on fire.

At this moment, on the edges of his two dark blades, ethereal blue energy surfaced, and thereafter, he ruthlessly slashed it down the shadow wraith who was about to stab his heart.

'Swishhhh...'

A clean blue streak suddenly glowed in the center of Shadow Wraith, and the next moment, it split in half. The other shadow wraiths wailed in their spooky voices before they moved to shadows.

But the giant figure didn't give them any chance to enter the shadows, as he splashed his blade without caring about what he would cut, and in sword wing, eight shadow wraiths lost their limbs or cut in halves while others managed to enter the shadows.

Taking this chance, he quickly gets rid of those disabled ones before he focuses on the sneak attacks from those who entered the shadows. As someone who had been fighting dark beings for over three months without resting, he was aware of their tendency never to retreat if prey was a living being.

"Water manipulation!" He hoarsely uttered as water suddenly started to materialize around him, and he muttered again as his amber eyes glowed blue hue, "Water weaving!"

The next moment, the surrounding water suddenly started to take the shape of fifty bullets.

"Fluid Acceleration; external!"

The next moment, something magical happened. The water bullets suddenly started to spin like crazy, and their speed only increased without any sign of slowing down. Those water bullets spin so fast that the surrounding air vibrates.

At this moment, the wraiths who entered the shadows crept out with increased speed as they were all aiming for the giant's vital spots.

"Hmph! Released!" The giant sneered, and the next moment, those fifty bullets were released in the direction of the wraiths, and their speed was so fast they left behind small shockwaves.

The shadow wraiths were clearly not afraid of water bullets, but those weren't just any water bullets, and the moment they touched those wraiths, they made big holes in them, and even after passing through the wraiths, those bullets blasted apart the stone floor, creating small creators.

The next second, the shadow wraiths started to crumble down as they were all dead without even realizing it.

The steam from the giant finally vanished as his breathing appeared somewhat uneven, and he muttered, "Haa, using fluid acceleration externally is even more tiresome than using it internally, especially when I'm using both of them simultaneously. Still, I'm glad that I found the true potential of my first ability from Water Acceleration before it was too late."

The giant, who was naturally Jacob, sounded very excited about defeating thirty shadow wraiths at once, and he felt that all that solitary magic training was worth it all.

In these past 20 months, he has learned many things in the witch palace about magic and witchcraft. His biggest discovery was naturally about fluid acceleration, which can not only manipulate his blood but any fluid!

He was able to discover this secret after learning about the Unique Rank Magic Ability, the Water Acceleration. Although this ability could only accelerate water up to 100kmph speed, its principles were the same as fluid acceleration.

Jacob was shocked when he discovered the resemblance between the two and instantly confronted Immortika about it. The reply he was given almost made him faint.

"I never said you can 'only' accelerate your blood. Besides, your ability name is 'fluid' acceleration, not 'blood' acceleration. Hahahahah"

That was the typical reply of Immortika, but Jacob felt like crap because he ignored such an obvious thing.

Nevertheless, he didn't wallow, and he instantly started to research fluid acceleration by following the water acceleration principles.

Although it took some time, and he almost lost control, the results were far more terrifying than he could've imagined.

First, he was able to manipulate any fluid that he touched and accelerate it. After some more practice, he was able to manipulate fluid a few centimeters away from his body, and now, he was able to manipulate fluid 2 feet away from his body.

Although the ring wasn't much, it matched his water magic that has been honed with the Universal Scripture Aura of Water and Fire Knight. The Fluid Acceleration turned out to be very terrifying.

About the universal scripture, Jacob was easily able to learn it like any other magic user. However, Jacob also discovered another fact about his unusual water magic core. It was that he didn't have any problem learning any magic spells or abilities, whether they belonged to combat or sorcery.

After dealing with the magic, Jacob finally decided to put that all to the test of what he had learned. Also, he wanted to upgrade the hex magic core to the next level. This way, he will be killing two birds with one stone.

Although there were many more things he wanted to learn and try here since he was only able to absorb about 20% of the knowledge the Witch Queen Margret left about witchcraft. The thing was, he didn't have time, so he put the witchcraft on hold and focused on his combat magic.

Jacob looked at the cursed book in front of him and asked, "How many more left before I can upgrade my core to epic rank?"

Immortika laughed in amusement, "Hahaha... 1,284. But I'm afraid you have already exhausted the dark being in this place, and in a few hours, the trial plain will descend. Just thinking about it makes me ecstatic to no end. I can finally get the entertainment I deserve! Hahahah!"

Jacob pursed his lips, seeing the crazy laughter of Immortika, and sighed ruefully as he couldn't do anything about it because what Immortika said was a cold, hard fact.

'Oh well, I just need to enter the trial plain. Completing it that is another story, and I can continue my study of witchcraft in that place. I think it's for the best since I need some living test subjects for the witchcraft.' Jacob's lips rose in a cruel smile as he ordered coldly, "Guide me to the central wing!"

Cursed Immortality

Chapter 467: Void Star Serve

Today, the entire Epic Plain seemed to be noiseless, creating a solemn atmosphere. Massive armies, both dead and alive, were on standby on their respective borders as if they were waiting for something and no one was moving an inch.

Whenever a trial plain was about to descend, those with the plain shares would be given an advance notice 24 hours prior. Just like 23 hours and 59 minutes ago, the three hegemonies' leaders were given advance notice.

Now, only seconds remain before the life zone, dead zone, neutral zone, and trial zone will be divided. These zones were always the same, and that's why everyone knows their borders.

Furthermore, unlike the rare plains, the three hegemonies didn't have any reason to hide the existence of the trial plain because they were in full control of epic alive plains.

Right at this moment, both size armies felt a massive fluctuation, and out of nowhere, the mist started to appear on the borders. Within a few seconds, that mist became as thick as clouds, and not even the ground could be seen.

A giant in golden armor loudly proclaimed with a solemn expression, "Warriors! This is the start of Trial Plain! This time, the entrance is hidden within this fog! We, as the vanguard unit, have to find it first and claim the exit before those corpses!

"Only then will we have an upper hand in defeating those corpses! The three leaders have already given us everything needed for this venture, and now it's our turn to prove ourselves. Glory or death, let claim it with dignity!"
The surrounding men shouted loudly, full of spirit and ambitions, as they all marched forward into the mist.
"Halt!" However, right at this moment, the giant's roar stopped them.
When they looked at him in bewilderment, they saw him looking into the sky, and they all looked up.
"What the hell is that?!"
"Dead Duke of West and Dead Duke of South, don't disappoint me!" The King of Dead Onyx's cold and eerie voice rang in the gloomy fields filled with thousands of kneeling dark beings, and two figures were kneeling at the very front.
Both of them were clad in dark armor and crimson caps behind their back, carrying the symbol of five dark skeletons. They were the two dukes of dead out of four.
"We obey the King of Dead!"
Both of them yelled in unison.
"What is that?" However, the King of Dead's uncertain voice rang all of a sudden, and both dukes looked startled.
'Shee'
A strange sound was getting closer all of a sudden, and when they looked towards it, they were shocked because some flying object leaving behind a trail of thick cloudy smoke was moving toward the direction of the epic alive plains, and from its trail, it was coming from the west of the dead plains.

"What is that?" The Dead Duke of South, the Bloody Wight Dead Duke, repeated the same question in a creaking sound, but he looked at the Puppeteer Zombie Dead Duke!

The Puppeteer Zombie Dead Duke was startled before he replied innocently in his extremely sharp voice, "I don't know?"

At this moment, almost everyone's attention was pulled by that flying object, especially those who were gathered together for the trial plain.

The people of the alive Epic Plains easily speculated that it was some attack by the dark beings because it was coming from the dead Epic Plains' direction.

The question now was where this object was heading and what sort of damage it was capable of causing. But one thing was clear: since the dark beings decided to launch that thing right now, they were up to no good.

However, right at this moment, something magical happened. The flying object suddenly smashed into something, which was extremely absurd because there was nothing in the sky.

A corporeal neon wall suddenly appeared in everyone's eyes, which were right in the sky, and the flying object was now covered with a dark gray glow as it was spinning into that neon wall. It was as if it wanted to bore into it, and glowing particles were exploding like firecrackers.

Everyone was bewildered as their entire attention was gathered on the sky, and they had no idea what was happening and how in the world that sort of wall could even exist right in the sky. Furthermore, who attacked that wall and why? This was an even bigger question in everyone's mind.

At this moment, every star watch in the epic plains, whether it was active or not, started to buzz in sounds.

"Warning...warning...warning!

"Someone is attacking the Epic Void Star Serve! "Please use any means necessary to stop the attack, or the epic plains will be cut off from the star network for years! "Anyone who can stop this attack will be granted immense rewards! "Warning..." The same message was being repeated again and again, startling the masses as they had never expected such a day would come when someone would try to destroy the star network. The even more shocking point was someone was able to discover the weakness of Star Network, as everyone thought that it was invincible. But now, the mysterious and mighty Star Network was crying for help, and no one had any idea what in the world was happening and how they were supposed to stop the attacker that even the Star Network couldn't! As for those who were watching the neon wall crack little by little, they instantly guessed what was the Epic Void star server! But despite being closest to the scene, they were miles away from the crime scene, not to mention they couldn't fly.

Within a few seconds, the neon wall finally broke apart, creating a small hole in the sky, and that object

Furthermore, they didn't even have the time to react because whoever launched that attack made sure

that no one could interfere, and it went as swiftly as possible.

instantly vanished into that hole.

But what happened next made everyone's blood run cold because a huge explosion that could be heard in the entire epic plains sounded before the sky lightened up in white as another sun appeared!

In the history of Epic Plains and the Star Network, this day will be known as the Star Destroyer Sun Day!

Cursed Immortality

Chapter 468: No Star Network Available!

In the northern wing of the Witch Palace, Jacob stood in front of another blue portal, reading to depart for the trial plain, which was going to descend in a few minutes.

Since this was his primary objective, it was impossible to delay, and he didn't want to lose control of his body either. So, he willingly decided to move out.

As for this portal, it didn't lead anywhere near the Vile Witch Valley. In fact, Jacob found that the witch palace wasn't even located in the Vile Witch Valley but hidden somewhere in the neutral plains closer to the coastal line.

These portals are made with a unique rank runic array called the Space Portal. Space Portal required a Great Elder Rune Artificer, a rank higher than the Elder Grandmaster, to make this array in two specific points before connecting them with their unique array signatures.

In the entire Epic Plains, the Witch Queen Margret was the only Great Elder Alchemist, but even she was only able to create three of these Space Portal Arrays because of the rarity of the materials.

She made one space portal in the Vile Witch Valley that led to the inheritor grounds, and it activated, but Jacob destroyed it.

However, the remaining two space portals were specifically made for the owner of the Witch Palace. One led to somewhere in the center of the Epic Alive Plains, while the other was at the border between the Alive and Dead Plains!

Since Jacob had inherited the entire Witch Palace, he was able to get his hands on the extremely precious map of the epic plains and many locations, including the Witch Palace, which was marked in it.

Furthermore, that map was left in a specific star watch, which should be the best in the epic plains, and with that star watch, he could give commands to the palace system remotely and open these portals or even the main entrance.

Without the Star Watch, it was impossible to enter the witch palace anymore unless extreme force or a superior rune artificer than the Witch Queen Margret appeared.

That's why Jacob was very reluctant to leave this fortress and wanted to spend some more years, at least until he could absorb everything. Just the workshop in this place was enough to give Jacob the freedom to bring 60% of his weaponry knowledge to fruition.

In the end, he had no choice but to focus only on the important things, and now he was ready to leave and exit. His decision was...

"Alright, as soon as I exit, close this portal!" Jacob gave the command and entered the mirror-like portal.

The next moment, Jacob found himself in a dark tunnel wide enough to hold him, and the only light was from the portal, which soon disappeared as the portal vanished the moment he crossed it.

Although it was dark, he was able to see with his night vision clearly. He moved forward towards the hidden exit.

After walking for over a hundred meters, he found a runic gate blocking his way. This gate was just like the one in the inheritance ground. He took out a new crimson key, which was apparently the master key of the witch palace, and inserted it into the keyhole.

The next moment, the runes on the gate shimmered brightly, and sounds of cogwheels spinning were heard, and the next moment, the door shifted.

Jacob saw greenery on the other side, and he walked out. Looking back, he saw the gate was installed in a cliff, and as he took out the key, he started to close off. The moment he was locked, the gate's appearance changed, and now it appeared as part of the cliff.

His lips rose, "How thoughtful. No wonder no one had ever discovered this place after so many years." Pleased with the security, he finally paid attention to the thick forest he was in.

Since he remembered the pathways around this portal, he knew where he had gone. However, right at this moment, Jacob felt a vibration on his new star watch.

Startled, he looked at it, and the next moment, the static voice started ringing.

"Warning...warning...warning!

"Someone is attacking the Epic Void Star Serve!

"Please use any means necessary to stop the attack, or the epic plains will be cut off from the star network for years!

"Anyone who can stop this attack will be granted immense rewards!"

Jacob was shocked when he heard those unknown words, "What in the world?"

He had no idea what was going on and thought the star watch was malfunctioning as it kept repeating the same message, and nothing else would open.

'Could it be something is really attacking the star network? But who? And what is this Epic Void Star Server? Even if someone is crazy enough to attack it, shouldn't it have some defensive measures?' Jacob wondered with a frown.

However, a few seconds later, Jacob suddenly looked up as he heard a massive explosion, and thereafter, a blinding white light covered the entire blue sky.

Jacob's eyes widened because that white light seemed somewhat familiar, 'I couldn't be?' He thought with bewilderment.

However, looking at the star watch, then that ridiculously loud explosion followed by the white light that could cover the sky, Jacob felt a chill running down his spine, 'Don't tell me someone used the White Sun Missile against the star network no less?!'

Jacob knew just how destructive the white sun missile was and its aftermath. Although he sold them knowingly of what kind of destruction they were capable of, he never thought someone would use them against the Star Network.

'No! It's just a coincidence!' He rejected the silly notion.

However, when he looked at his star watch, which fell silent after that explosion, he found himself sweating because there was written, 'No Star Network Available!'

No matter how he looked at it, this didn't seem to be a coincidence but a huge scheme!

As the white light started to vanish, Jacob's heart turned colder and colder, and in the end, he inhaled a deep breath and muttered, "Now this spells serious trouble!"

Cursed Immortality

Chapter 469: Unstoppable Trial

Somewhere in the star ocean was a hidden island.

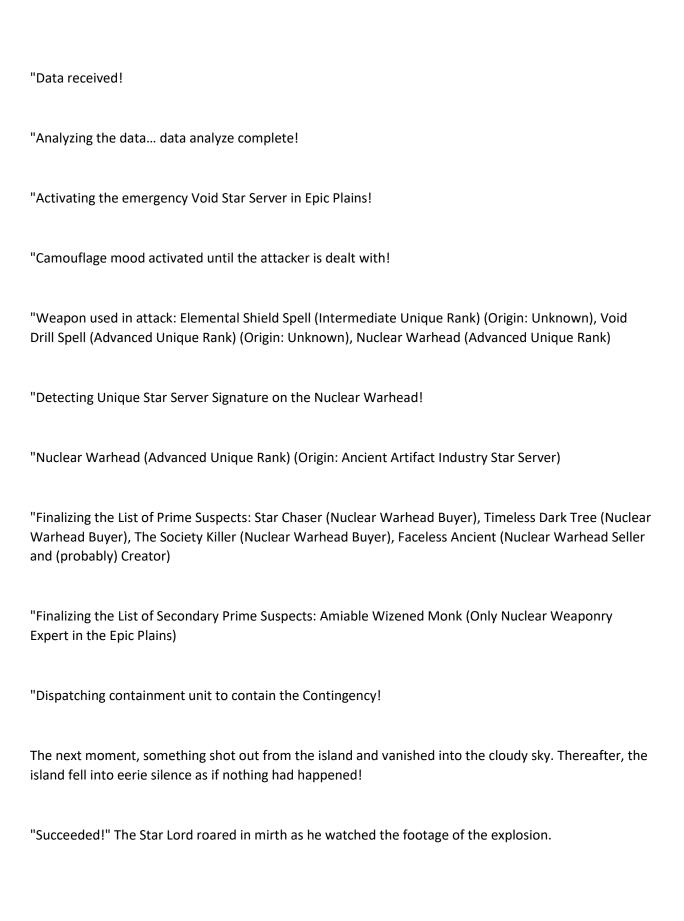
At this moment, the entire island was buzzing with static voices,

"Contingency Alert! Epic Void Star Server has been destroyed!

"Contingency Alert! Epic Void Star Server has been destroyed!

"Contingency Alert! Epic Void Star Server has been destroyed!"

All of a sudden, this voice suddenly stopped, and another voice rang,



The Vice Star Lord was trembling with excitement as she spoke, "Decades of research and planning finally paid off!"

The Star Lord nodded, "Now that annoying AI is gone, and the star network is shut down, we don't need to hide our movements. All we need to do is strike down the three hegemonies before the Star Destiny Corporation can react!"

"More importantly, now we can find the bastard who stole our children!" The Vice Star Lord murderously declared.

"Hmph, that's our primary objective." The Star Lord coldly nodded, but at this moment, he frowned, "Wait, why is the trial plain still there?"

The Vice Star Lord was startled as she looked at the screen and found the mist was still there and frowned, "Could it be the trial plains are not connected with the Star Void Server? Those trial plains are still the biggest mystery, as no one has ever been able to discover how they are made and why.

"Furthermore, the Star Watches won't work inside the trail plains, so they might be independent. This is new for us since this sort of information is top secret in the organization. But now that we have achieved this, those old men can't keep secrets.

"Even if something goes awry now, it no longer concerns us since we kept our end of the deal. Now, let the council deal with the aftermath. I'm not interested in dominating this wretched place anymore. I just want to find that bastard and torture him for my remaining life!" The hatred and madness in her voice were apparent in just how much she wanted vengeance.

The Star Lord looked at his wife with a hint of concern and sighed in sadness, "Zee, you know you can blame me for what happened with Frugal and Aven. I was the one who let them out. I never discussed it because I was afraid that I might lose you as well. But now I'm afraid I might lose to your vengeance. We still have our lives after we avenge our children. I want you to remember that. If not for me, live for them and keep them alive in your memories."

The Vice Star Lord looked at the Star Lord deeply and for a long time before her hate-filled eyes suddenly turned moist, and tears started to gush out.

"I-I *sob* my precious babies! *sob*" She pounced in the giant's arm without saying another word as they were simply too heavy for and all she could do was cry and express her boundless sorrow, which she had been keeping for too long.

The Star Lord hugged her back as his eyes were also misty, "You can cry all you want. I'll always be here for you. Just don't blame yourself. We will avenge our children even if it's the last thing we do!"

Jacob was moving towards the trial plain with a hint of ecstasy. His early anxiety was completely gone. After he mulled over the destruction of the epic void star server, which has cut off the star network from the epic plains, he thought that the trial plain would also vanish or at least be delayed because of it.

Although he might get suspected as an accomplice in the destruction of the Void Star Server, he decided to worry about it when the time came, and he had a clear conscience.

If it was the SAAI, it could easily tell that he was cooped up in the Witch Palace when the attack happened. So, he had nothing to worry about there.

Furthermore, only three people had bought the white sun missile from him, and he easily ruled out the possibility of the dark city behind this attack since they didn't have any reason to go against the star network. So, the attacker was either the Society Killer or the Star Chaser. He highly suspects the Society Killer.

So, Jacob threw his worry behind his head and decided to focus on the benefits. If the trial plain were delayed, then this means he would be free to head back and continue his research.

That's why he was ecstatic about this whole situation and was going toward the supposed location of the trial plain with the hope that it wouldn't be there.

However, after heading towards the dark beings' territory for half an hour, Jacob's steps came to an abrupt halt when he saw the thick, cloudy mist and frowned deeply.

"There shouldn't be any mist in this place, right?" He muttered as a bad feeling suddenly aroused in his heart.

He knew whenever the trial plains descended, a unique pathway was created to enter it. Like the gray land trees in the rare plains were that passage towards the rare trial plain, the Dark Ruins.

'Don't tell me even that server thing can't stop the descent of the trial plains?'

Jacob grimaced and having no other choice, he had to move forward, and if he was able to enter the dead plains, then this meant the trial plain was not active yet. But if he's not, then he was ready for the worst, and he also summoned Cursed Immortality!

Cursed Immortality

Chapter 470: The Hunter's Necropolis (1)

Walking in the cloudy mist, Jacob didn't feel anything, as if that mist wasn't there at all, yet his senses seemed to be getting restrictive the deeper he went.

"Are you sure this is not dangerous?" He questioned Immortika with scrutiny. The only thing that stopped him from turning around was the damn slave mark.

As long as he didn't confirm the trial plain was not descending yet, his body wouldn't listen to him, so he could only turn to the cursed book for help. Furthermore, with how things were going, he could tell the trial plain was least affected by that epic star void server's destruction.

"Hehehe... of course is an entrance after all, just like the last time."Immortika wrote.

Jacob's expression stiffened, and he questioned, "So, this is the entrance to the trial plain. Can you tell me the purpose behind the trial plains, and I mean the realm purpose? Is it really to give some space to the dead and living to grow? Why not let them duke it out once and for all? Why keep them together if they can't coexist? Moreover, how the trial plains are even made?"

"Hahahaha... do you know what you're asking is one of the biggest mysteries of the Zodiac Plains, and you want me to answer you, heh... fat chance."

"Could it be even you don't know?" Jacob pressed wasn't bothered by Immortika's remark.

"Who knows? If anything, this is all but a means of entertainment for me. Think about it: watching others struggling, scheming, exploring, and killing each other constantly. What's bigger entertainment than violence?" Immortika revealed its sadistic beliefs.

Jacob sighed with a hint of nostalgia, "Although you're a psychopath, I can't refute you. Violence is indeed the biggest source of entertainment, especially when it's about life and death, and maybe it is because it draws the true nature of others, the devil within."

"Oh, so you're agreeing with me? That's a first." Immortika wrote.

"I'm not unreasonable like a certain someone." Jacob sneered before he changed the subject since there was no point in debating about it, "Alright, enough with the violence. If you have time to write nonsense, tell me about this trial. Would it be like the Dark Ruins, where I need to solve riddles?"

"Hehehe, you'll know soon, don't you? So why spoil the surprise? But I can tell you that there are not just riddles in a trial plain. You can think of it as a specific trial mode. The Dark Ruins were a puzzle-mode trial plain, and you should be very grateful that you got free labor from both dead and living.

"To put it simply, in all those years, they had already dealt with almost all the dangers and traps and looted what they could. So, it becomes easier for you to snoop around and take everything from right under their noses.

"Furthermore, as that trial was a puzzle mode, it wasn't focused on strength but wits, so it was even easier. But if that trial, for example, happens to be a Kingdom Mode Trial, then you'll have to deal with the entire force of a Kingdom that was entirely made to stop you, and their wits are not any lower than yours.

"So, if you're arrogant just because you'd managed to complete the rare trial plain quite easily, you should put it aside. Because an epic trial plain, even if it's a puzzle mode trial, it would blow off your mind.

"Oh, and let me tell you a fun fact that even your 'master' didn't know about. The medallion you're after. It can only be obtained by being the sole champion of the epic trial plain. This means if someone was able to claim even one position beside you... hahahahaahh!" Immortika's maniacal laughter filled the page like crazy.

On the other hand, Jacob's expression turned stern and somewhat pale because he wasn't expecting the last revelation, and if it was true, then he was in huge trouble!

Because first, he wasn't confident in becoming the sole champion of the epic plains. There were too many variables and hidden forces in play in the epic plains, and they were almost united under the banner of the three hegemonies and the dark beings.

The second was even if he strived to become the sole champion, the others wouldn't sit still and let him be, especially if they also knew about the medallion.

The third was Jacob wanted that medallion for himself because he wanted to go to the unique plains. He didn't have the luxury of waiting for a thousand years to try his luck again. His life span wasn't even close to being 1000 years yet.

Even the elves and giants who were supposed to have the longest lifespan could only for around 1200~1300 years at epic rank with some precious herbs.

So, Jacob would be devastated if he wasn't able to go to the unique plains because it would halt his growth rate. Because he was pretty sure after the Cursed Blood Condensing was completed, he might need to hunt the unique rank species.

Now, Immortika has dropped this massive bombshell on him right at this moment when he needed to be focused.

"You fucking wanker! Despite knowing the significance of this information, you only decided to reveal it now!? Are you out of your goddamn mind?" No matter how much tolerance Jacob had accumulated in these past few years, he still couldn't able to control the fury and anxiety he was feeling right now.

In its defense, Immortika only laughs even more, "What can I do? I can only tell you specific things at a specific time or location. It's not my fault that ogre didn't know. Hihihihi..."

"Just tell me whether the things I heard about that medallion are true or not?"

"Oh, they are absolutely. Hehehe"
"Bastard, all of you!" Jacob gritted his teeth as his blood boiled, and his eyes shone with dark conviction, 'This is no longer about winning a spot or about that pirate pig. I need that medallion if I want to live on. I need to change my strategy from passive to active!'
Right at this moment, Jacob suddenly sensed something changed in the mist as it suddenly started to turn colder.
Immortika suddenly wrote, "Time to go, have fun and let him have it too hahhahahaha"
The next moment, the conditions started to be revealed on the page,
"Epic Plain Trial NO.28948743
"Code Name: The Hunter's Necropolis
"Trial Mode: Hunt
"Time of Beginning: A few minutes
"Time of End: Ongoing
"Conditions Implanted for Epic Trial (The Hunter's Necropolis):
"1. Find and Kill the Beast of East
"2. Find and Kill the Beast of West

- "3. Find and Kill the Beast of South
- "4. Find and Kill the Beast of North
- "5. Kill the Beasts of Directions to Kill the Beast of Necropolis"