

D. of Pride 131

Chapter 131: Might of the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse (2)

No matter how they struggled, they couldn't find the strength to break free from the antlers and slowly felt like all of their strength was seeping away from them.

The ones strung on its antlers roared in agony and didn't even have a moment to pay any mind to the other adventures suffering a similar fate as the horn that had impaled them, started glowing bright red.

An unimaginable amount of pain kept assaulting the adventurers from the area that got stabbed by the horn and peculiar markings started appearing on their skin. It wasn't just that, after the pain their mind stated getting hazier while insanity and madness started getting hold of them. They quickly put off any resistance they were trying to muster and wished to experience more of the pain.

The Bloodthorn demonic Waarhorse wasn't known only for its unstoppable charge but also for the crimson antlers like on horns on its head called Bloodthorn.

The Bloodthorn horns of the demonic warhorse was its strongest weapon and also part of what made it so fearsome and popular on earth.

Its crimson antlers were a dreadful weapon that allowed the warhorse to continuously increase its combat ability on the battlefield where blood flowed everywhere. It was also the place where the warhorse truly shined.

The Bloodthorn on its head were not actually horns but instead bones so sharp that it could pierce the strongest of defence. That was not all, after the enemy gets stabbed by the Bloodthorn, it was when the true nightmare starts.

The crimson antlers had to ability to continuously absorb the blood of its target making them continuously lose their stats and ability before becoming an empty husk.

Peculiar markings start appearing on their skin and the stolen stats and abilities get transferred to the warhorse greatly increasing its powers for a short period of time. The shade of its horn indicated the number of stats it had stolen from its enemies and the more crimson the bloodthorn glowed, the more powerful it became.

The Bloodthorn ability of the warhorse was a fearsome weapon that made the enemies cower whenever it showed up on the battlefield.

These were some of the reasons why the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse was such a popular steed in those games back on earth. Now when it was released in the world of Althaea, one could imagine what sorts of storms it would bring.

Soon after, the adventurers that were impaled and hung on its crimson antlers started becoming motionless and not even a trace of blood could be seen in their bodies.

NEEIIGH... With a jerk of its head, it threw those adventurers on the ground as their pale bodies stopped moving after twitching a little. On the contrary, the aura and presence that the warhorse released increased manifold after it stabbed those adventurers with its horns.

It was to the point that it appeared completely different than before. Its huge frame appeared more gallant and the flames engulfing its body burned with even more intensity. Not to mention the antler-like horns that glowed with a striking crimson halo indicating the amount of stats it had stolen from those adventurers.

Though the bloodthorn ability was powerful, it wasn't omnipotent as the stats stolen were only temporary and with time, it would return to normal. That is to say, if the Bloodthorn demonic warhorse couldn't finish its enemies while they were vulnerable, the stolen stats would be returned to them and they would be back to their peak strength.

Another thing of note was that once the Bloodthorn ability was used on an opponent, it couldn't be used again on the same enemy for a while.

Seeing the dry and motionless corpse of their fellow teammates, terror gripped hold of the remaining adventurers that were fortunate enough to be out of range of those horns. After those horns stabbed at the adventurers, it started glowing brighter and brighter as it continuously absorbed the blood of its enemies.

Looking at them, the adventurers finally became aware of how dangerous getting impaled by those horns was. Not only will you suffer an unimaginable amount of pain, but it would also suck you dry of all your blood.

As if it was the last straw that broke the camel's back, all of those adventurers that saw this scene, gave up any hope they had of defeating it. The only thought running around in their mind was to get away from this demonic warhorse.

However, they had nowhere to run as the flames created by the demonic warhorse encircled them from all around.

If only all those adventures were a little calm and maintained their formation, they could have gotten away from the encirclement of flames using magic. but they did not have clarity of mind to think of such methods at this moment.

It was clearly unnatural for these seasoned adventurers who had gone through many battles to fall into a state of panic. Nonetheless, their mind wasn't thinking clear enough to notice the effects of a skill that have been induced in their surrounding.

[Demonic Grip] one of the new skills learned by the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse after it levelled up. This skill allows it to influence the minds of the enemies who were already cowering in front of it. It stops all rational thought processes of the target and continuously induces them with fear and terror.

Hence the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse was easily able to influence them and barred them from any rational thinking. Once they are unable to keep their formation, these humans weren't any threat and were just a bunch of ants it can easily squash.

Since it was ordered by its master to take down these humans, it wouldn't spare even a single one of them lest it displeases the master. Encircling them with flames from all sides and taking away their rational thoughts from them, it could easily take care of all of them without even leaving a single one of them alive.

Its loyalty to Simon made it a cruel killing machine that did not falter even while taking drastic actions.

After the enemy lost their will to fight, the Bloodthorn Demonic Warhorse simply charged and rammed them down into the ground, used its crimson antlers to pierce them, or used its dark magic to corrode their bodies. It used every weapon in its arsenal to quickly take care of these adventurers.

The scene that unfolded after could no longer be called a battle but instead a one-sided massacre. These adventurers were finally experiencing the same cruel fate that they put the Forest Spring Spirits into.

Amidst the ring of flame, their screams echoed around the forest as they continuously begged their fellow friends and adventurers to save them.

“Sir laris!... sir laris save meee, I don’t want to die” one of the adventurers who was too afraid to die, cried out in anguish as his body was quickly eroding and turning into dust.

There were even some insane ones who thought it was better to die by the flames encircling them than by the warhorse. Many of them jumped into the flames and were burned alive or did as their mind corrupted by [Demonic Grip] said.

Some of the adventurers even started killing one another thinking that the Bloodthorn demonic warhorse would show mercy to them if they proved to be useful. Others just wanted to die a better death rather than to be squelched and rammed by the hooves of the demonic warhorse in which case not even their corpses remained intact.

Humans when backed into a corner would do the stupidest things, not to mention when their mind was being influenced by fear and terror. Not a single adventurer thought about getting into formation so as to even stand a tiny bit of chance in overcoming this disaster.

The warhorse true to its demonic nature utterly stomped on the hopes of its enemies and showed them a nightmare straight out of hell. Its appearance was burned inside their memories before their very being dissipated.

In one corner of the eastern region of the Ghastly winding Forest, one patch of land was engulfed in a ring of fire that spanned for hundreds of meters and from which disturbing screams echoed out occasionally.

Before long everything was pervaded by a stifling silence and only the galloping sounds of the warhorse could be heard. The Bloodthorn Demonic warhorse had made its presence known to the world of Althaea

Chapter 132: Difficult Battle

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RUMBLE... RUMBLE... flames and lightning wreaked havoc and in the sky, devastating a few kilometres of land.

Desolation filled the area as far as the eye could see and everything was in total chaos.

The perpetrators behind all of this were currently tangled in a life or death battle with none gaining an edge over the other. With a flap of wings, Simon quickly spun his body and dodged the lightning attack aiming towards his chest and swiftly delivered a roundhouse kick packed with all of his strength towards his enemy.

BOOM... the force behind the kick was strong that it created a sonic boom nonetheless, the attack didn't connect as the enemy swiftly flipped his body back in the nick of time before the attack could even touch the edges of his clothes.

Both the parties have been tangled in a series of back and forth battles for hours and it could be seen from the condition of their bodies that they were quite exhausted as they took hurried breaths of air.

Traces of wounds covered each of their bodies evident of the fierce battle that they were having and the atmosphere between them was so intense that even a slight mistake could decide the outcome of this battle.

‘Huff... huff... this damn demon should be nothing more than a stepping stone. I can see that he is full of openings but why is it that he still wouldn’t go down after all those injuries’ Laris took hurried breaths of air, his facial features were twisted in anger and annoyance.

He couldn’t believe that the demon he thought would be no match for it after he used his skills was still clashing with him neck and neck. Not only that, Laris could feel the demon was improving as they fought even while suffering all those injuries.

Suddenly a bad premonition struck him and he felt he shouldn’t give any more time to this demon who was going through a transformation in front of his eyes.

Gripping his [C] tier Twin Blades, he inputted more of his manas and the channelled lightning magic was stronger than ever. “It’s time you go down demon... [Hell Lightning Fierce Slash]“.

With a loud roar, Laris dished out a series of lightning imbued slashes that made countless sword shadows as flew towards Simon from all directions targeting his vital points.

Similar to Laris, Simon was very exhausted from the battle and even up until now he couldn’t get any edge over his enemy. It could be seen from the state of their bodies that in terms of combat experience, Laris was far superior to him. Whenever he moved, he only used minimal movements to dodge his attacks and used the remaining time to dish lightning-fast counters to give no time to his enemies.

From the state of his body, which was laden with injuries, one could see how fierce their battle was.

Blood continuously seeped out from those wounds and dyed his fair skin red. However, the expression on his face denied all the serious wounds he suffered.

Wild joy and ecstasy to battle more was currently fueling every part of his body and even while being the one at the disadvantage, he didn’t want this battle to end soon.

It wasn’t like Simon was going insane after suffering all those wounds to have an ecstatic expression on his face even while going through a difficult battle. It was precisely because he was going through a difficult battle that he could feel that he was growing at a fast rate.

He could feel the void of combat experience filling a drop at a time and knew that he was making progress. The distant silhouette that was always in his mind, the peerless beauty who was standing

on a tall pedestal, to catch up to her he has to put his body through all this bloody battle. And only like this will he be able to someday bridge that gap between them.

If Simon wanted to end this battle, he could have just used his [A] tier Crimson Blazing Flame Blade which provided a huge buff to his stats and using the skill bestowed by the sword, he could have ended his enemy a long time ago.

However, Simon decided not to do so as he knew that stats and skills bestowed by the weapon were secondary and he couldn't rely on it all the time. The weapon might help the gap between his enemies at a critical time but relying on it too much would instead hamper his growth.

What was important was honing his skills and stats which was permanent unlike the temporary benefits provided by the sword. He could always depend on his own strength during dire times and that he would also be able to survive in this world and protect the things he held dear.

Nevertheless, the path Simon chose was filled with perils and he knew that he would have to brush through death many a time but if he couldn't even do that, it would just be a dream to catch up to Irene.

What Simon hated the most was the idea of him relying on her strength to pass through all the dangers he might encounter in the future. He abhorred the thought so much that he would instead put his body through all the dangers so as to one day he could be strong enough to shoulder all the burdens.

He knew that the world wasn't kind enough to those who didn't have enough power to protect their rights and that is why he wanted to, no he had to get stronger to make sure that those around him never get bullied again.

Suddenly a thought arrived in him, a thought about him protecting Irene one day. Though he didn't know why he would think of such an idea at a critical time like this, but he didn't dislike the idea.

He never thought about Irene needing his protection after all, since the moment they met she was able to do all the things by herself and even defeat enemies much higher level than her. Not to mention her ridiculous stats that was so unbelievable that he still wasn't able to get past the shock.

He couldn't see a future where Irene would ever need his help; however, if destiny ever decided her needing his aid, he would help her no matter the dangers.

With a coarse roar, Simon confronted all the attacks thrown at him. Compared to earlier where he was fazed by the attacks and was full of openings, this time however he was able to deflect most of the attacks targeted at his vitals and endured the ones that were off their target to dish out his own attacks.

Unlike earlier where he would just conjure the flame magic and throw it towards his enemies, this time he conjured the flame magic and compressed it to the point where it was many times smaller than its previous size.

Even the colour of the compressed flames started glowing a faint golden and the intensity of heat was swiftly approaching the advanced level of magic.

The space around him violently distorted from the conjured flames and the lightning which up until now maintained an equilibrium against his flames showed faint signs of being suppressed.

‘What is happening? Why do I feel pressured whenever I look at those flames... what are those flames?’ Laris thought. As soon as Simon conjured the compressed flames, a pressure like never before enveloped the surrounding making the atmosphere heavier than before.

The wind that was blowing before suddenly stopped and an eerily silence settled everywhere. “What did you do demon?” Laris who could no longer endure this presence asked in a hurried tone. One could even feel a trace of wariness from his voice which he failed to conceal.

Chapter 133: Difficult Battle (2)

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However, the reply that he got immediately made his face distort in anger.

“These are the flames that will defeat you” Simon said with an excited smile as he played with the flames that was shining a faint golden on his hand.

He clearly felt it, the moment he conjured these compressed flames, the sense of pressure that was coming off from Laris disappeared like it was never there and instead the might of his flames spread all over the surrounding.

The attitude of the demon was saying that he not taking him seriously, this made Laris become even more enraged. The demon was nothing more than a mere stepping stone for him and his guild, how dare he be arrogant in front of him? Just because he managed to create some unusual flame, the demon was now not even putting him in the eye anymore.

The very thought made him pissed and like a burst dam, his might engulfed all the area.

‘The demon seems to have forgotten who he is up against... I might as well remind him that he doesn’t have the ability to be arrogant in front of me’. Laris thought internally as he activated all of his skills to fend off the intimidating aura released by those unusual flames.

From his perspective even if the demon was able to conjure flames that he had never seen before, there was no way in terms of experience and skills, he would lose out to the demon. He had the [Dual Wielder] class and even the [C] tier twin blades with him. There was no way he was going to lose.

“Sword Mastery, Cutting Enhancement, Piercing Enhancement, Super Agility, Super Strength

” after activating all those skills at once, his body started making cracking noises, an aftereffect from the body not being able to handle the skills.

Even with his level and class, using all those skills at once placed a huge burden and an intense amount of pain coursed through his body. That was not all, if he kept recklessly using all his skills like that, it might even affect his bodily function.

Enduring all of the pain, Laris made a fearless smile as he looked towards the demon and pointed his twin blades “Be honoured demon you are going to be slain by me Laris Hector someone who is going to rise to the top of this world”.

Right after saying that, the man burst into laughter, he could feel the energy pouring down every corner of his body and the intoxication of this made him feel invincible. Even if this method shaved a portion of his life, it was all worth it as long as he could defeat the demon.

Giving Simon a scornful look, Laris dashed like lightning as he poured all of his strength into the Twin Blades and swung it down so fast that the speed of his slash had reached an unimaginable speed.

SHIIINNGG...

The blades were swung so fast that it could no longer be seen with naked eyes and the amount of time it took for the lightning slash to reach Simon was equally swift.

In just a blink of an eye, the blade was already upon him. Arced in devastating lightning, the blade glowed so bright that it could even be mistaken for a crystal. However, the might packed behind the slash was so threatening that it immediately made his instincts go bonkers.

Simon hurriedly pulled back and did not allow the attack to connect which could have otherwise dealt a devastating amount of damage. He could sense the changes that have occurred inside Laris' body after he activated all of his skills and the spike in his energy levels.

Simon too had once activated many skills at once previously to kill those Killer Worker Bees and knew how ridiculous the power spike was. But he also knew the consequence of using too many skills at once and the burden it put on your body. There was no way

His previous experience had made him aware that his body was not ready to handle the strain of using all of the skills at once. Not to mention Laris who was just a human, how can his body be compared to a Demon Viscount? The man had not disregarded the consequences but was also drunk on his temporary powers.

Simon couldn't be any more delighted as this was precisely the opportunity that he was searching for. If he could survive the onslaught of attacks that were coming towards him, it would become easier for him to achieve victory after the duration of the skills end.

Nevertheless, even if there was an opportunity, it was a perilous one. Enduring all those attacks which have been enhanced to a whole new realm, was easier said than done.

Each of the attacks dished out by Laris could do a significant amount of damage to him and were powerful enough to overwhelm his defence stats.

Simon recognising the threat the man represented, pored all of his attention on him and felt his blood boiling from excitement. If it was Simon from the earth, he would have never felt something like that.

However, after he got reincarnated into the body of a demon, Simon could feel his mentality changing bit by bit and the characteristics of a demon were starting to get apparent. Feeling excitement during a life and death battle was one such feature. Eager and exhilarated to commence the battle that would lead to greater heights.

RUMBLE... with a thunderous sound, Laris came spinning his twin Blades and clashed against his claws that came protruding out from his fingers. Instead of claws, they were more like hardened nails that were strong enough to cut apart a boulder.

CLANG... intense sparks generated as the two weapons collided and each of their attacks was lethal and aimed at each other's vitals. The power and might contained in each of their swings was so powerful that it created sonic booms whenever they clashed.

The fight was occurring so fast that both the combatants moved at a breakneck speed. However, if one looked carefully they could see that one of them was fully offensive while the other was forced into defence.

BANG... a sound so loud that it could be heard from miles away rang out and Simon was smashed into the ground. Though the claws of his was powerful to cut apart a boulder and was stronger than an ordinary metal, it had still not reached the point where it could compete with a [C] tier weapon.

Whoosh...

Hurriedly flipping his body to the side, Simon barely dodged the attack that came down like a pillar of lightning connecting the heaven and earth.

BOOM... the land quacked and the ground was cracked open for hundreds of meters and everything was scorched black.

Lightning ran rampant wherever one could see and amidst all of this one could hear the wild laughter of Laris. Though the pain coursing through his body threatened to blow his body up, but his skyrocketing powers was enough stimulus for him to forget all of his pains.

With a look of disdain, he looked at Simon whose claws were broken, appeared to be covered in wounds and seemed haggard and exhausted.

A feeling of superiority rose within him and a belittling smile spread over his face. "Struggle as hard as you can demon otherwise it won't be fun anymore. After all, watching an ant struggle before squashing it underneath the foot is all the more amusing hahaha".

As if resonating with the emotion of Laris, even the lightning in the sky rumbled along with his laughter.

At this moment, Simon was breathing quite heavily and the wounds all over his body worsened. Even though blood was dripping from them and he looked drained and exhausted, the bright glow in his eyes was telling something else.

His eyes were as clear as ever and didn't show any signs of being clouded even in the face of such great adversity. Currently, he was just like a sponge absorbing all the experience he could get from this battlefield and he could feel himself getting better every passing second.

Chapter 134: Difficult Battle (3)

Although his body was covered in wounds, they weren't lethal enough to hinder his fight and would recover naturally if given enough time. Stabilising his breathing, Simon looked at Laris and gave him a wide smile, trying to tell him that he was enjoying it.

As if getting the message, Laris mood immediately soured and he threw out a few more lightning bolts towards Simon. this battle was supposed to be over when he forcefully activated all of his skills and yet the demon doggedly dodged and hanged on. His temper was at its limit and it couldn't be anymore foul.

BANG... BANG... the land was already devastated to the point of being unrecognisable from the aftermath of their clash but the combatants even while tired kept dishing out one attack after another.

Simon cast his own flame magic to clash with the incoming lightning attacks and his body which was already battered, was pushed back even further. After he deflected those attacks, more of them came targeting him from all sides.

It could be seen from Laris' attacks that he was losing his patience and was using all of his powers to suppress and defeat Simon as fast as possible. Keeping all those skills activated might be taking a great toll on his body.

Even when lightning came pouring down at him like a tide, Simon still hanged on like a boat that refused to topple down even during a storm. There was no way he was going down, not before taking down his enemy.

His resolve to become stronger was what made him keep on enduring the tempest of attacks that shaved away at his HP and bide for time. He knew that as long as he could endure for a little longer, victory would surely be his. There was no way Laris could remain standing after the duration of the skills are over.

As if realizing what the demon was planning, Laris squinted his eyes and immediately charged towards Simon with a flash of lightning. No matter what he has to finish the demon before the buff from the skills are over.

"You can't defeat me demon. I am far superior and powerful than the likes of a vile demon like you" Laris voice which was coated with malice and arrogance rang out all across the area. His lightning slashes was so fast and powerful that whenever it grazed past his skin, it would leave a deep wound.

It was as clear as a day that Laris was trying to enrage the demon, disturb his composure of mind and an opening to arise. Simon did not fall for such obvious provocations and did not show any openings for his enemy to exploit.

At this moment his high defence stat was completely useless against Laris whose lightning enhanced attacks were powerful enough to ignore it altogether.

CLANG... CLANG... CLANG... powerful clashes kept on ringing as sparks generated everywhere. Simon did his best to fend off all the lightning-fast attacks that were aimed at his vitals.

BANG... his hardened claws were once again broken and Simon was sent flying back from the recoil. Seeing the opportunity, a wide smile crept up to Laris face and he made an unusual stance that he hadn't displayed before in their fight.

Gripping onto his twin blades tightly, he poured every iota of his strength and mana within the Twin Blades and paid an extreme amount of attention towards his movement.

Feeling a vague resonation between his energy and blades, he swung it in a wide horizontal arc and at that moment, two bolts of dense blue lightning came gushing out of the blade and charged towards Simon.

With a flap of his wings, Simon killed the momentum and straightened his body which was about to hit the ground and landed on his feet. Wiping the blood from the corner of his mouth, he gave a fierce smile before bringing out his claws once again.

No matter how many times Laris broke them since it is part of his body, new ones appear soon after. This time he also conjured many flame spears to bombard his enemy and create some distance.

Just as the flame spears fully manifested using his flame magic mastery, two dense bolts of lightning came targeting him. The two bolts of lightning showed faint traces of morphing into a dragon as it swiftly charged towards him.

Realising that he wouldn't be able to dodge it in time, Simon gritted his teeth and poured an enormous amount of mana on the dozens or so flame spears. As he kept on pouring his mana on the flame spear, the faint golden glow on the spears became brighter and more apparent.

The intensity of heat accompanying the flame spear had reached an unimaginable level. Clenching his hands tightly, Simon made a motion of throwing them towards the oncoming lightning dragon with all his strength.

Immediately after all the flame spears flew towards the lightning dragon like a rain and fiercely clashed against it.

BOOOOOM...

a devastating energy storm erupted when the two attacks met obliterating everything and anything in a hundred-meter area.

The land was flipped outside down from the shockwave and Simon's body which was already on the brink of exhaustion jolted back and only came to a stop after he skidded across the ground for a good long distance.

Laris also wasn't spared from the aftereffects of the shockwave as he too was sent flying dozens of meters. But contrary to Simon, his condition was much better and he coped with the shockwave hitting him much more easily.

Although he looked fine externally, he knew more than anyone how bad the condition of his body actually was. By now, his muscles were all internally bleeding, veins popped in his forehead, breathing ragged and he was preparing a lot.

Traces of exhaustion could be seen all over his face. Every Part of his body were currently screaming due to the repercussions of activating so many skills at once.

"Huff... huff... that damned demon is still alive even after this? This is bad my body won't last long I have to finish this battle fast" stabilising his breathing, Laris looked towards the other end of the crater and saw the demon desperately clawing to get back up.

The demon was clearly inferior to him in terms of techniques and experience and no matter how many times he beat him down, the demon kept getting up. He could see that Simon was on its last fumes and was hanging on with his sheer willpower but even then he couldn't grab the victory.

Gathering all of his power, Laris draped himself in blue lightning charged towards the demon once again. killing intent overflowing his body, he rushed to deliver the final blow with all of his strength.

RUMBLE... with a flash of lightning, he was already on top of the demon who was hanging on with just his willpower and seemed not to have noticed him. Realizing that he had won at this moment, Laris gave a victorious smile and plunged his [C] tier twin blades onto the demon "Hell Lightning Plunge".

Maybe it was due to his instincts or his quickly growing combat experience, but the demon was able to put up a most basic of defence by crossing his arms and shielding his chest at the last moment. But it seemed that his efforts were futile as the blades swiftly stabbed through his arms as well.

SCHUNK...

Hehehehahah Laris laughed, although the demon put up a defence, the plunging blades that contained all of his strength penetrated through the arms and went inside the demon's chest.

SPLAT... blood dripped down unceasingly from the wound and painted the ground red.

“Hehehahahaha...” feeling the sensation of his blades stabbing through the demon, Laris burst into a wild joyous laughter and a frantic look appeared on his gaunt face.

“I won... I won against the demon, I Laris defeated a Demon Viscount on my own... Hahaha”. Still grabbing on to the blades, he twisted them around and flashed a mocking smile when he saw the demon’s face distort in pain.

“It seems I was the superior one, you vile demon. Hehe, after you die I will destroy all you have and snatch away the things you took away from me” Laris declared directly looking at the crimson eyes of the demon.

Chapter 135: Pride Once Again

[Pride is being activated] [Pride is being activated] [Pride is being activated] [Pride is being activated] [Pride is being activated] [Pride is being activated] [Pride is being activated] [Pride is being activated]

‘This damn buzzer won’t stop ringing’ While an excruciating amount of pain assaulted Simon as the blade penetrated through his chest, his attention was diverted towards a series of notifications that continuously rang inside his head since he started taking a beating.

Although at first, he was able to suppress it using his will but now he no longer had the energy or willpower to do so anymore.

His pride fragment had been activated and he could feel all of his emotions was rapidly being overwhelmed.

Simon was too tired to even contest with it right now and so he let it loose. After a few moments, all of his emotions disappeared as if they had been consumed by something and what took its place was unrestrained arrogance and a deep-seated superiority.

Just before losing all of his emotions, Simon could feel himself becoming a totally different person. Though the body was still his, the personality was of a Simon that had never had the chance of surfacing back on earth.

“Uggh... ouch. Oi, puny human, it hurts alright! Get that disgusting smile of yours off my face” Spewing some words at the wildly smiling man, he garbed Laris by his wrist and gave it a twist...

SNAP...

“Wha... aaaaaarrrrrggghhh” before Laris could realise what had transpired, he felt his wrist being grabbed and forcefully twisted.

After Simon twisted the man’s wrist, he used his other free arm to pull the blades that were inserted in his chest. Blood trickled down from the edges of the blades as they were extracted out, all the while his face was so composed and not even an ounce of pain flashed on his face.

Fortunately, Simon had activated his [Super Endurance] skill just on time and shielded his chest with his hands, because of that the blades were unable to dig deep inside his chest.

Laris whose wrist was still grabbed by the demon was unable to break free from his clutch. The duration of the power spike achieved by activating all of the skills came to an end right now and his power returned to normal. No, it would be more appropriate to say that his power dopped by quite a lot and he could not even muster even the tiny bit of it right now.

Rather than his powerless body, he was more focused on the demon whose entire aura changed and felt like a completely different person than before. However, what shocked him more was that even after getting stabbed in the chest, the demon was still standing straight.

Not only was he not displaying any pain, but the demon even effortlessly pulled out the blades from his chest. It was as if the attack did not penetrate him at all.

Clang... the sound of his twin blades which he had plunged inside the demon hitting the ground rang out.

“No, it can’t be. I used all of my strength on to that attack, the demon must be feeling it. Yes, that right... he is just putting up a brave front... that must be it” his emotions jumbled, Laris was desperately trying to make sense of the situation.

“Hmm?” after pulling out the blades from his chest, Simon looked at Laris who was blabbering something and praised “No, you are mistaken. The attack did really hurt, but that was all to it. Though your attack was powerful, it is not enough to bring me down. Well considering that you managed to push me to such a state, you did quite well human”.

Simon was already quite taller than Laris but after his change, Simon arched his body to look down on Laris. Even his heartfelt praise sounded nothing more than naked arrogance, and his voice was laced with unconcealed superiority.

Sensing the tone in which the demon was talking to him, Laris's chaotic mind immediately erupted into a maddened fury "It's Laris... remember the name you damn demon".

To Simon, Laris's roar sounded nothing more than a weak cry as he nodded his head and said "You are right, that is indeed my mistake. I should at least give you courtesy by remembering the name of someone I'm about to use as my stepping stone. I mean it would be a basic manner to do so... isn't that right?".

Overbearing to the extreme and a deep inborn arrogance that looked down on the whole world. His words were laced with superiority while his tone was condescending as he flashed a haughty smile towards Laris.

At this moment, Laris had a disbelieving look in his eyes as he stared at the demon whose entire personality seemed to have undergone a 180° change. He did not know what went down, but after he plunged the blades inside the chest of the demon, he started to act strange.

What was more astonishing was that even after being afflicted with a fatal wound, the demon still seemed fine and standing.

Before he could ponder any longer about the changes in the attitude of the demon, the demon grabbed his other wrist and forcefully twisted it like a twig.

SNAP... "Aaaaaahhhhhhhhhhh" Laris screamed in agony as both of his wrists were broken and twisted while his body was still recovering from the intense exhaustion and burden after activating all those skills.

He was already experiencing immense pain as the muscles in his whole body were twitching and trembling. And now that his wrists were broken, the pain that he experienced was several times more extreme.

However, the torturous pain was just the beginning. Simon who still grabbed onto Laris' wrist, flung him down into the ground like a rag doll.

BOOM... BOOM... BOOM... as if once wasn't enough, Simon continuously smashed him onto the ground left and right.

Laris did not even have the time to reel in pain, as he was continuously tossed into the ground face first. Along with the churning blood, he also tasted the dirt on the ground as all of his teeth were shattered after being smashed like that.

“Wugh ahmd deeroon... wuh draa iuwwoohlah me (You damn demon, you dare humiliate me)” a garbled voice mixed with broken teeth and blood came out whenever he opened his mouth to speak.

“Hmm? Did you say something?” Simon cocked his head and asked looking at the wriggling Laris. Right now the adventurer did not have the least bit of his former dignity and glory as he crawled pathetically onto the ground.

After getting beaten brutally, Laris's disarrayed mind finally became clear. He desperately tried to get back on his feet but the strength would always leave him no matter how he struggled. Turning his head around, he saw the demon who was slowly walking towards him in disbelief.

Laris couldn't understand how the demon was still not dead even after getting stabbed by his blades. Puking out a mouthful of blood, he finally screamed out some coherent words “You... how... why... No, who are you demon, how are you still alive?”.

Simon who was about to grab Laris by the neck stopped in his tracks after being questioned so vehemently. Making an expression that said that he was in deep thought, he uttered out an egotistical reply “Hmm yes, it seems that I have forgotten to introduce myself. My apology for the late introductory... I am Laplace the demon the world shall fear and respect”.

The moment Simon declared his name, the black-golden tattoos on his body shined with a mysterious lustre.

“Well enough with the chit-chat, let's finish what we have started shall we?” right after saying that, Simon grabbed Laris by the neck and suspended him up.

Cough... cough... Laris continuously coughed as he was lifted up, glaring at the demon with hatred he said “How can I lose to you? I will not be defeated here”. He barked out loud, unsatisfied with the outcome of the battle.

Simon looked at the man and was just about to say something when from the corner of his eyes, he saw Laris trying to hide something in his sleeve.

Ruthlessly throwing him to the ground, he pried the item Laris was trying to hide open from his hands.

“Hmm? What’s this a ring?” an emerald green ring was pried open from the hands of Laris.

Chapter 136: Paying Back All Debts

As Simon was inspecting the ring which seemed to give off an unusual sheen, a furious roar came assaulting his ears “Ahhhhh... don’t touch it demon, it’s mine give it back to me”.

Seeing that Laris was getting infuriated with him inspecting the ring, Simon couldn’t help but get curious.

He had never seen such a peculiar ring before that gave off a mysterious feeling.

“Could it be that this ring is some kind of artefact?... What!??” while scrutinising the ring, Simon nonchalantly decided to insert some of his manas inside his ring and was amazed by his discovery.

The ring had a three-meter wide subspace and various items and artifacts could be seen lining inside. Just as he was marvelling at the features of the ring, he suddenly sensed the vast aura that felt familiar to him coming from the contents inside the ring.

Examining the items carefully, he soon noticed that the vast ocean like aura that excited every pore in his body was coming from the emerald green orbs inside. The aura that was emitted by these objects were quite familiar to him as he had come into contact with the same aura not too long ago.

It didn’t take a genius to understand what those items were and where did they come from. Knitting his brows, Simon’s eyes gloomed over and he looked at the grovelling Laris with revulsion.

BANG... a furious kick came smashing to his stomach and Laris flew a meters back. Even while he continuously puking out blood, his eyes were still glued to the ring that was in Simon’s hand.

“Give... it... back” He repeated continuously. The ring had the Forest Spring Spirit Orbs harvested from the Forest Spring Spirits and was an incredibly precious treasure.

Simon could see that there was easily more than seventy spirit orbs inside the ring that was giving off a vast natural aura. How many Forest Spring Spirits did they kill to gather that many?

From Irene, he knew that once the spirit orb is taken from the Forest Spring Spirit, their body would naturally die after some time. It's like taking a soul away from the body, without the soul the body would naturally die.

The pain and suffering the little girl had gone through because of adventurers like them who were blinded by profits and didn't even bat an eye to resort to such inhumane tactics.

Simon wasn't a humanitarian in his previous life and now after reincarnating in this world, he was no longer a human but he could still feel the pain, cries, worries and various other emotions from these spirit orbs.

The spirit orbs of Forest spring spirits are considered a priceless and extraordinary treasure in this world, one that is able to increase the purity of one's bloodline and make them reach a whole different realm and level which was previously impossible for them.

Simon was aware that such an extraordinary treasure would incite the greed of all the inhabitants of this world; after all, once one gets the taste of power and authority, they would crave for even more.

The forest spring spirit orbs was one such item that could fulfil their desires. The Spirit Orb of a forest spring spirit might be an unparalleled treasure in the eyes of the people of this world but to Simon, they were nothing but dirty treasure obtained by massacring the peaceful Forest Spring Spirit clan.

Sigh... after letting out an audible sigh, he looked towards the direction where the forest spring village once was. The forest spring spirit was blessed with gifts bestowed by heaven; however, these blessings turned out to be the curse that shackled them and became the cause of their suffering.

As the saying goes if one did not have sufficient strength to protect their treasure, they would just be inciting trouble for themselves. The forest spring spirits were born with the treasure of nature but were a non-combatant race and didn't have the ability to protect themselves.

From Cecilia, he became aware of the treaty that the Dragon Lords along with several other races imposed on all the continents of the world to protect the species that were being hunted from the ancient times.

Despite all this, there are still many species in the world that are being hunted for their treasures, unaware and out of reach for the Dragon Lords.

These seventy or so spirit orbs were releasing an ocean-like vast aura but Simon didn't have it in him to possess such items. Thinking about it for a while, he decided to return it back to the forest spring spirits.

Seeing that the demon had kept the ring for himself, Laris became insane with fury and all the blood in his body rose up to his head.

"You bastard you dare take the treasure that belongs to me?... I'll kill yo..." he shouted like an aggrieved beast but before he could utter another sentence, a foot came flying on his face.

"Puah..." His face which was already beet red from all the anger became a deeper shade of red after being kicked on the face by Simon. Laris's nose cavity was smashed and all the remaining teeth he had left came apart.

Simon who was being heavily influenced by the pride fragment didn't have any mercy for a person who in his eyes was worse than a beast.

"I'll... kill you, I'll kill you, I'll eradicate everything you have" Laris roared out those words with much difficulty and tried to get back up. Just when he got to his knees, a foot came bearing down on his back and smashed him face-first onto the ground.

"Kuh... aaaaaggggghhh" No matter how Laris clawed and struggled beneath his feet, he couldn't even move an inch. The foot that was bearing down on him felt like a huge boulder sturdy and unmoving.

Simon wasn't someone who liked inflicting torture on someone but he deemed it necessary for this human to experience the same pain and suffering he had inflicted on Cecilia who he took as his little sister.

Though subtly, his demonic nature was coming to light and even while tormenting Laris under his foot, there wasn't any change in his emotions.

Getting tired of all this screaming and cursing, Simon finally decided to end Laris.

Flames, intense flames... flames that could burn everything and anything in its path, flames that burned like wildfire, flames of arrogance overbearing to the extreme.

His intense emotion was starting to influence the mana flowing within his body and as the flames were compressed, along with the tinge of golden lustre, the flames seemed more animate and lifelike.

Laris who was pinned on the ground could feel his whole body shuddering at this moment and a fear that he had never experienced in his hundred plus years of adventuring, assaulted his every sense.

Even without turning back, he could tell from the intensity of the flames and his screaming instincts that the flames were dangerous.

"Experience the pain and suffering before turning into ashes... [Blazing Flares]" Simon declared after conjuring the magic.

BOOOM... as responding to his declaration, the flames erupted and was just about to engulf Laris when all of a sudden he cried out. "Still not helping me?... DAAAALLLEEE" his piercing shout rang across the whole forest and disturbed the previous silence.

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"Tch... you don't need to shout, I am not deaf. Dammit, you just ruined the element of surprise" right after the shout rang out, a rough voice that carried some resentment sounded from behind Simon.

The voice was none other than Dale's who had gone insane after activating his skill [Battle Hunger] and was knocked unconscious by Simon before he could kill the pair of Lisa and Chuck.

Judging by the tone of his voice, Dale had come back to his senses and was no longer in an abnormal state. However, what surprised Simon was that even before he could sense the presence of the guy, he was already upon him with his blade drawn.

It seemed that he was already awake since a while ago but was hiding his aura in an attempt to catch Simon off guard.

Brandishing his long sword, Dale activated all of his skills and channelled the power into his swing. Immediately, the sword took on a crimson hue and berserk power along with a fierce wind engulfed his whole body.

Chapter 137: Paying Back All Debts (2)

Brandishing his long sword, Dale activated all of his skills and channelled the power into his swing. Immediately, the sword took on a crimson hue and berserk power along with a fierce wind engulfed his whole body.

“Haaaaaa” With a great shout, all the channelled power that Dale erupted with engulfed his long sword, making it appear even more menacing.

The sword which was previously two meters long, expanded to the size of tens of meters and was still getting bigger. Influenced by the berserk nature of his power, every inch of the blade became a scarlet red exploding with tremendous power.

Even the air surrounding the ten-meter sword made up of Dale’s berserk energy seemed to distort a little and a terrifying piercing intent emitted out.

“Guh... hehehe, demon I guess you didn’t expect to be killed by the ones you looked down upon. Huff... huff... die as you regret in hell for underestimating me [Scarlet Berserk Sword]” Dale’s entire body was dripping with sweat as he used the maximum output of power and activated all of his skills to dish out the attack he was most confident of.

He did not dare to look down on the enemy after seeing the condition Laris was in and hence used all of his power to deliver a sneak attack the moment he had a chance. He did not know what would happen if he confronted the enemy head-on; after all, the demon was able to bring down Laris, someone who Dale considered to be his equal.

Thus he quietly bided his time after he became conscious of his surroundings and looked for an opportune time to end the demon. And luck had favoured him, his patience was rewarded as the demon was suddenly agitated and showed a small opening.

Immediately grasping the opportunity, he leapt towards the demon from behind before activating all of his skills to dish out his most powerful attack the [Scarlet Berserk Sword].

The air vibrated as the ten-meter scarlet sword took form. Grasping onto the air, Dale made a motion of throwing the sword. Simultaneously, the huge sword in the air trembled a little before flying towards the unguarded Simon.

SHIIIIINGGG...

A scarlet streak of light would remain behind wherever the sword travelled and a swishing sound of air being pierced would echo out. The huge sword instantly covered the distance between them in a split second and was already upon Simon.

The might behind the sword was so great that Simon even while under the influence of the pride fragment felt threatened by it. However, earlier during when he found the forest spring spirit orbs inside Laris' ring, his emotions overwhelmed him and he was no longer calm.

It was also at that moment that he showed a slight opening that was instantly grasped by Dale. Even if he wanted to get out of the trajectory of the scarlet sword, he was still a step to late. The huge sword was already a few meters away from him and the piercing intent emitted by it stuck onto his body and made him unable to move.

Knowing that he wouldn't be able to avoid the attack in time, Simon chose to take on the attack. Since he was under the influence of the pride fragment, all his other emotions were being overwhelmed and suppressed, even fear.

Activating all of his skills, he tried to endure through the attack with his body alone. He heard the laughter of the two humans surrounding him right before the sword was about to hit him.

However, the sword never made contact and was still suspending a few inches away from Simon. It was also at this moment that the laughter of the two humans stopped unnaturally as they gazed at the sword that was unmoving and was only a few inches away from taking the life of the demon.

“Wha-what is happening?... why isn’t my sword moving forward?” Dale who was convinced that he had won after releasing his sneak attack became dumbfounded when he saw that the [Scarlet Berserk Sword] that he put all of his might into becoming motionless midway.

No matter how he tried to force the sword to push forward, it wouldn’t budge from its place. It was as if the sword was stuck mid-air unable to move forwards or backwards.

“What... are you doing Dale? Finish this demon!” Laris roared as he saw the attack stopping right before it claimed the life of the hateful demon. Since he wasn’t the one who dished out the attack, he didn’t understand that Dale didn’t choose to stop the attack mid-way instead, the attack that contained all of his might became motionless on its own right before it struck Simon.

To Laris or maybe anyone watching, it would seem like Dale stopped the attack before it could hit the demon. But nobody was more surprised than the attacker himself, Dale didn’t understand why his attack would stop and not listen to his commands anymore.

Unable to think of any reason, He pointed at Simon and angrily inquired. “What is going on...What did you do demon?”.

Simon did not reply to him and instead kept on staring at the sky dazedly. His eye were focused on a particular direction and it was as if he did not even hear Dale shouting.

At this moment, in the direction where Simon was looking at, stood a woman of ethereal beauty. Her mesmerizing figure was so brilliant that even the sky was outshined by her splendour.

Standing amongst the white clouds, her figure was awe-inspiring and every curve of her body looked perfect to the extreme. Her jade white legs seemed to be carved with the greatest of care and appeared to be delicate and soft.

The woman that could ensnare all the attention of the world, was none other than Irene. The moment she appeared, the entire forest for miles became icy cold. Soon after, the ten-meter huge scarlet sword that was inches away from piercing Simon, had a layer of frost accumulated on it.

WHOOSH...

{t didn’t take long for the entire sword to get encased in ice as a frosty might enveloped the whole surrounding. CRACK... small crisscrossing cracks appeared on the frozen sword before the entire

thing shattered into tiny icy fragments. It didn't matter whether the scarlet sword contained all of Dale's power, it was frozen and shattered in an instant.

The ten-meter long sword burst into icy fragments and a bone piercing chill spread everywhere. The atmosphere became so cold that fog started appearing in the surrounding area.

"Hmph... as I thought you are too prone to let your guard down," Irene said, her tone was cold as she snorted and shifted her beautiful crystal eyes from Simon.

Though her voice was indifferent and cold, Simon could still feel her concern through her voice. He smiled and faced Laris who was absolutely gobsmacked by the turn of events that he forgot to even close his open mouth that had no teeth.

Simon had to admit that the power contained within the scarlet sword was absolutely frightening and even with his physique, he might have been badly wounded and would have rendered unable to battle.

Fortunately, even before the attack could come a few inches near him, it was frozen solid by Irene.

Before coming here, Simon had asked Irene to stay inside the dungeon and protect the forest spring spirit children. But it seems that she did not listen to his request as she was too concerned about him. And she was right, Simon was this close to being defeated.

Now that Irene was here, Simon could focus on Laris without having to worry about being sneak attacked again.

Dale who was inwardly depressed that his attack had failed, gazed blankly at the frozen ice splinter that was scattered everywhere on the ground. He finally knew why his attack wasn't proceeding any further and was stuck in its place.

The Scarlet Berserk Sword was wrapped by a powerful energy until it was unable to move forward or backwards before being frozen till its core. The sword that he was using for so many years, was instantly smashed apart like a fragile piece of glass.

It was no ordinary sword, the material it was made of was Blackgold a material much stronger than Whitesilver and was even comparable to a [C] tier weapon.

Chapter 138: Paying Back All Debts (3)

Looking up towards the sky where the mysterious voice came from, Dale's heart that was aching from the loss stopped beating at that very moment.

His eyes were glued to the person standing amidst the clouds and his entire mind became blank. He couldn't help but wonder how can there be such a beautiful woman in this world as great waves were tumbling inside his mind.

His mind only came back to himself when the exquisite features of the woman were hidden behind the clouds and he finally snapped back to reality.

A cold chill ran down his spine as he realised the immense might of the woman to have frozen his most powerful attack in a fraction of a second. Droplets of sweat rolled down his body and instantly became frozen beads after they dropped into the ground.

The brain cells in his head churned and he recalled the frozen village of forest spring spirits that was completely covered in a thick layer of ice and he couldn't help but tremble as realisation struck him.

It was all done by this woman. Recalling how this woman proudly standing above the clouds was able to completely freeze his powers without even him realising, he finally started to cower.

It finally dawned to him, it wasn't like those adventurers back at the village allowed the enemy to complete their advanced magic but were actually unable to stop the magic since it was cast in an instant.

Dale hurriedly tried to invoke the energy inside him so as to prevent repeating the same incident again, only to realise that he couldn't channel it anymore.

"T-this can't be... how is this possible?" he was making a disbelieving face and was unable to accept the reality. No matter how much he tried to channel his energy, it remained still and refused to budge even a little.

It was as if the very mystical energy inside him was frozen. There was no way one can freeze other's energy if the gap between them wasn't big enough. One had to be in a completely different realm than their opponent to make them unable to even utilise the tiny bit of their powers.

Dale started laughing hysterically as such thoughts went through his mind “Hehehahahaha”. He looked back all around the devastated forest since a while ago he wasn’t able to hear the shouts of his subordinates and even their presence had disappeared altogether.

Only a desolate land destroyed by the aftermath of their battle remained behind. Dropping onto his knees, Dale made an anguished face, his irises were enlarged and trembling as he thought about what went wrong.

What kind of enemy were they fighting?... how can they be so powerful to the point where he felt like an ant before them. He couldn’t help but laugh at their naïve thinking before coming to this battleground.

He must have been braindead to have offended an enemy of this level, even funny was that he and Laris deluded about defeating them. The enemy wasn’t someone they could have afforded to offend and were now paying the price.

If he had known that the enemy was this strong he wouldn’t have dared to provoke them. After all, who wanted to stir a hornet’s nest. Thinking back, if only he didn’t get swayed by the rewards Laris promised him, none of this would have ever happened.

That right! It was Laris’s fault for dragging him together into this deep marsh. If only he didn’t allow the Forest Spring Spirits to run away, the situation wouldn’t have come to this. Thinking about the guild, Dale couldn’t help but get infuriated by the wrong information they provided him.

What newly emerged dungeon? what perfect scapegoat? Everything that the guild told him was bullshit. They said that the enemy was weak... snort, then how come there are such strong people amongst them? The demon before them who could defeat Laris one on one was one thing, but even those around it were abnormally strong.

Dale gazed at the distant battlefield that was razed to the ground by the flames and a silhouette of a demonic warhorse radiating an immense power that even suffocated him came into view.

Not to mention there was still her, the woman capable of freezing the mana within him showcasing the herculean gap in strength between them. He knew that the battle was already lost but he still felt unresigned to die here.

Dale was a person who sought power and authority from the moment he became an adventurer. He joined the Seven Swords guild only after he was defeated by the guild master Morgress in one of his

adventures and was offered to join the guild. In return, he was promised power and authority to rule over thousands of men.

It was only because Dale saw prospects in the guild that he joined it. However, who could have guessed that after many years, the guild would push him onto a deep, dark well from which he could never return?

The guild master of the Seven Swords guild was powerful, but even he was unable to lock Dale's power and make him unable to even use a tiny bit of it.

This goes to show that the woman was much stronger than even their guild master. Then doesn't this mean that they have made an enemy that their entire guild couldn't dare to offend? The more he thought, the more depressed Dale became in his heart, the disparity in their strength was just too great.

Crestfallen, Dale looked on with daze as a small azure lotus silently bloomed in front of him. The lotus was mesmerising to look and the azure halo around it contained mysterious yet cold energy that seemed to relax his strained mind.

He let go of all his worries and felt like a great burden had been lifted off of him before a cold breeze soothing to the touch blew past before everything became serene.

CRACK... CRACK... frost gathered all over Dale's body and in a split second, he was frozen till the core. Extreme frost energy lingered around the surrounding before disappearing mysteriously leaving behind a frozen statue that was extremely lifelike.

Up amidst the clouds, Irene retracted her outstretched hand, her skin was pearly white and her fingers shapely. Even until the moment she froze Dale, she never spared a glance towards his direction.

Only occasionally did she look towards the place where Simon was. Although nobody present was able to detect her, she was present here from the very start of the battle and had seen how Simon struggled to achieve his victory.

Looking at his wound covered body, Irene did not know why but she felt a pang of pain in her heart. Her temperament was usually indifferent and her emotions were like a frozen lake unable to make any ripple. However, in the past few weeks, Simon made her look at him in a new light.

These past events made her indifferent self unable to remain impassive and even more so when dealing with Simon. Unknowingly, Simon had made his place in her heart regardless of how small. Although Irene herself was unaware of the changes in her heart.

“Hmph, truly a man that wouldn’t let others be at ease” as she said that, she shifted her gaze away from Simon and turned towards the direction of the dungeon and silently left.

Simon faced the crawling Laris who was struggling to get away from this place. His eyes did not contain any pity and only a trace of cold killing intent flashed across them.

Silently, Simon walked towards Laris who was trying to claw his way out of here. A huge pressure bore down on Laris as his whole body shuddered due to intense fear. Fear of losing his life in this goddamn forest where nobody could even find his corpse.

Only a few moments ago, his eyes lighted up in delight when he saw the attack from Dale about to take the life of this hateful demon. But his hopes were shattered like a fragile piece of glass when he saw Dale’s attack being frozen.

Dale who was his last hope in defeating the demon was now dead, frozen just like his attack. “Curses... all of them are useless, every single one of them” Laris ground his toothless jaws and spat in anger.

He was left all alone on the battlefield, even the subordinates he brought along with him were all dead unable to defeat a single warhorse. Rage had already clouded his mind as he repeatedly cursed his incompetent subordinates

Chapter 139: Paying Back All Debts (4)

Rage had already clouded his mind as he repeatedly cursed his incompetent subordinates.

“I cannot die here... I am the man who will become one of the seven swords” as he frantically moved his tattered body away from the demon, he saw the demon landing right in front of him.

Panic and afraid to die, Laris tried to move away from the demon. However, his body was too battered to allow such movements. When he saw the hands of the demon clawing at his neck he squealed like a pig about to be butchered

“Ahhhhhhhhh... don’t kill me, don’t kill me... if you kill me you will make the entire Seven Swords guild your enemy”.

Simon’s hand which was just about to grab Laris’s neck paused for a moment, intrigued.

“Hmm? Seven Swords Guild?” he inquired trying to get as much information from Laris.

Thinking that the demon was cowered by the name of their guild, Laris further explained like his life depended on it.

“That’s right, the Seven Sword guild is the strongest guild that sits on top amongst all the guilds in the nearby cities and also the ruler of the city of Morgress. We have seven warriors so powerful that they can instantly defeat the likes of you, not to mention our guild master who has undergone four classes changes and reached level 500 [Thunder Striker]... Even the duke of the entire northwestern region of the Kingdom of Ellesmere has to show us some respect”.

“How is it demon do you now know how great of an enemy you would offend by killing me?”

Simon quietly listened to the bullshit that Laris was spouting before making an annoyed face and asking “I don’t want to hear all this nonsense... what I want to know is whether the Seven Sword guild was behind all this?”

Simon did not care how big or powerful their guild was or not. What he wanted to know was whether the Seven Swords guild was the one behind the operation of subjugating the village of Forest spring Spirits.

If they were, then Simon couldn’t leave them alone since they know the existence of the Forest spring spirits inside the Ghastly Winding Forest. Even if they are defeated here, the allure of a priceless treasure such as the spirit orbs would make them send more manpower to subjugate them.

Simon wasn’t afraid of the powerful enemy that was the Seven Swords as he knew that with time, he could easily surpass them and at that time they would be no threat to him. He had the [Main Menu] with him, although it got bugged after merging with his dungeon menu, it worked all the same.

Simon did not have to worry about his impure bloodline or the limitation of his growth and with luck, using the summon function he might even be able to call forth strong subordinates to defend his dungeon.

That was how much of an edge his innate skill [Main Menu] gave him. So does he still have to worry about Seven Swords guild who was just a small tyrant in this remote corner of a region?

Not getting the expected reaction from the demon, Laris became gobsmacked and couldn't help but wonder how his brain was wired. Instead of cowering in front of an enemy that was so powerful that even a Demon Viscount had to think twice before offending them, the demon in front of him was asking whether the Seven Swords guild was behind all of this.

Though he was internally frustrated, he did not dare show it on his face since his life hanging on the hands of the demon... Knowing that he can't get around the question, Laris decided to answer it truthfully.

"Yes... yes it was the guild who ordered me to subjugate the village of Forest Spring Spirits and plunder their spirit orbs". Suddenly an idea flashed inside his head and he made a sly smile as he stared at Simon.

"So what of it? These forest spring spirits orbs are incredibly precious treasures of the world that can purify one's bloodline and make them ascend to a whole new realm. They are so valuable that you cannot even imagine how much they are worth. What's wrong with the strong enjoying these treasures?"

"From what I can see, your bloodline seems to be quite impure and your current rank should be your limit. Even if you reach the peak level of your rank, you wouldn't be able to go up any higher than that. However, with the help of those treasures inside the ring, you can even reach a higher realm than what was previously possible".

Seeing that he got the attention of the demon, Laris inwardly sneered thinking that Simon got hooked.

"How about it? Don't tell me you are not interested. If you let me go, I'll let you keep all the treasure in that ring and won't pursue this matter any further. You also have my word that the Seven Swords guild will not make it difficult for you and will each mind our own business" Laris explained grandly as he tried to convince Simon.

Pretending that he was very interested in the deal, Simon repeatedly nodded his head before suddenly arching his brow and asking “Didn’t you just say these orbs are incredibly precious? And you are giving all of this to me... wouldn’t this make the guild unable to digest it?”.

Simon asked as if finding the flaw in the arrangement.

“Hahaha, what are you saying. Of course, the guild would be depressed after losing all those treasures but given that strength of yours, even the guild wouldn’t want to make an enemy out of you. I’m very sure the guild would be willing to gift them to you to soothe our relationship” Laris gave him a bootlicking smile

Of course, whatever he said was bullshit and filled with lies. The guild would never allow such incredulous treasure to fall into the hands of a demon.

They might even assemble their whole force to snatch the spirit orbs back from the demon. He cooked up all the nonsense just to preserve his life and once he returns, he would come back with an even stronger force to exact his revenge. There was no way he won’t pursue the matter, Laris was a man who settles all his grudges and believed in an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

Laris couldn’t have imagined that Simon was just pretending to play into his hands, nor could he have guessed about the existence of [Main Menu] whose one of the functions allowed Simon to increase his rank without the help of treasures such as the spirit orbs.

However, there was no need for Simon to tell him that as the [Main Menu] was his deeply guarded secret and also the most important skill he had in his arsenal. All this while Simon was testing Laris. He didn’t have any plans of sparing the man much less soothe his relationship with their guild.

From what Simon heard, the Seven Swords guild seemed like a tyrant that was flaunting its powers and suppressing others unrestrainedly. There was no way such a guild would let Simon be in peace. Even if he did not start a fight with them, the Seven Swords guild would inevitably start one since he was holding onto the items that their guild took great endeavours to get.

In the same way, Simon couldn’t forgive the Seven Swords guild as he deeply abhorred their actions and now that he had taken Cecilia and the other under his wing, he had a duty to protect them.

If the guild wanted to come then let them, all debts must be settled one day.

“Hey... Hey what are you thinking? Isn't it a good deal! You get to rank up and I get to keep my life. It's a win-win situation” seeing that the demon was lost in his thoughts, Laris couldn't help but snap him out of it, lest he changes his mind.

Simon nodded and looked like he was satisfied with their arrangement “I can forgive all the offence against me...” suddenly he locked his brows before saying “However, I cannot forgive you for all the offence you committed against the forest spring spirits and Cecilia”.

Just as his voice sounded, crimson flames with a tinge of gold erupted from his hands and engulfed Laris

“... aaarrgghh”.

Chapter 140: Unforeseen Changes

On the main floor of the dungeon Laplace

Cecilia who was inside one of the large halls of the white palace, looked at her clan members who were sleeping soundly. After going through soo much suffering and countless sleepless nights, they finally let all their burdens down and slept peacefully.

She caressed Maya's hair who sleeping near her and wiped the tears staining the corners of her eyes. She knew Maya very well as they were the best of friends and always played back in their village. She was like an older sister to all of the children present here always scolding and tutoring them whenever they made any mischief.

However, Cecilia knew that Maya adored all of the children and that was why she was strict with all of them. Seeing that strong Maya like that, Ceilia felt a heartbreaking pain in her chest. Those carefree and free-spirited days were now all gone, they can no longer go back to their village again.

Reminiscing about the warm smiles of her parents, relatives and clansmen, a small smile bloomed on her face. However, it disappeared soon after because whenever she recalled her village, scenes of those adventurers cruelly subjugating and massacring them would always flash in her memories.

She tightly hugged her knees and her delicate body trembled as those scenes like a nightmare continuously plagued her.

“Huff... huff” just when fear was about to grip hold of her entire body, she recalled her meeting with Simon and Irene. How she was brought here and how Simon was so adamant about saving her clansmen.

Even while knowing that their race held such precious treasure within them, not even a tinge of greed could be seen in his eyes. And even while fully knowing that harbouring them would only bring disaster and trouble to himself, he still resolutely took them in.

One by one those nightmarish scenes were shattered and a warmth spread to her whole body which was trembling non-stop a few moments ago.

“Hmm... let’s see from now you can call me big brother”

“As your big brother; of course, I’m duty-bound to protect my little sister”

She recalled the words that Simon had once said to her and a small light in her endlessly dark world suddenly popped up lighting the entire place. Her trembling and so was her cowering. She would no longer be a coward and run away from everything as Simon had shown her the meaning of courage and bravery.

Steeling her mind, she got up from her seat and walked out of the palace. Looking all around the place and feeling the density of mana, she was amazed... “So this is a dungeon!”.

Ever since coming inside the dungeon, it was her first time exploring it. Tilting her head, she saw a pond at the backside of the palace and became dazed. The scenery was just like her house which also had a small pond in the backside.

Curious, she lightly walked towards the pond which was releasing a calm and serene aura. The pond was the Pond of Serenity that Simon had installed which had a calming effect on the mind and helped in the growth of trees and plants surrounding it.

Coming near the shore of the pond, Cecilia quietly sat on a small rock and looked at her reflection. Emerald green hair, two pairs of ceratin wings that shined with seven-coloured lights and the mysterious orbs of light that always surrounded her.

She could tell that she was quite different from the members of her clan. Her mother once told her that she was special even amongst their Forest Spring Spirit race in that she was a royalty. A Forest

Spring Royal Spirit was born by the essence of heavens and earth, carrying the blessing of nature and unimaginable abilities.

When her mother told her all this, she was too small to make any heads or tails of it. At that time she only wanted the lectures of her mother to end quickly so that she can go out and play. But now looking back on it, she wanted her abilities to quickly blossom so that she can help her big brother who believed so much in her.

Unknowingly to her, minute changes started occurring inside her and the mysterious orbs as if answering her prayers, glowed profoundly. The changes were so small that Cecilia failed to notice; however, the changes did occur.

Mystical energy from the surrounding flowed through the earth and into the pond of serenity. Like veins, they transferred the energy into the pond and nourished it continuously.

The Pond of Serenity assimilated with the vast energy that was being continuously deposited into it and incredulous changes started occurring at the bottom of the pond. Mysterious plants and tiny gems and stones that were releasing a powerful light started forming inside it.

Unbeknownst to her, Cecilia started influencing the area around her. It was not only the pond but also the saplings of the trees of mana that have been planted by Simon surrounding the pond also got affected. Though they were still called saplings, the trees of manas were already more than fifty meters tall and ten meters wide.

Feeling the rush of vast energy through the veins inside the earth, they swayed in delight and danced their branches and leaves to generate a gentle breeze that blew towards Cecilia, rustling her hair.

Cecilia furrowed her brows suddenly, she felt as if someone or something was saying their thanks. But it was just a fleeting feeling and it soon disappeared as if it was never there.

“Strange... what was that feeling? It was as if something was showing its appreciation towards me” Cecilia tilted her small head and pondered. There was no one here other than her, so there was no way she could hear someone.

Thinking that it was just her delusion she stopped pondering about it any further and instead focused on feeling the abilities that her mother and Irene told her that she possessed.

Time flowed constantly while Cecilia was focused on sensing her abilities by the pond side. An azure light suddenly shined before the alluring figure of Irene came into view. She was fond of the pond of serenity that was behind the palace and it was also the spot where she liked to spend most of her time.

Turning around she saw Cecilia quietly sitting by the pond with her eyes closed. Irene immediately understood that Cecilia was in a focused state and shouldn't be disturbed. She too quietly found a spot and sat on it looking at the pond in a daze, nobody knew what she was thinking.

Suddenly she furrowed her delicate eyebrows as she attentively studied the pond and felt the changes happening underneath. Irene couldn't help the shock that was revealed in her eyes after she finished examining the pond.

Massive changes were occurring underneath the pond at this moment as large volumes of mystical energy like crisscrossing rivers were flowing inside. The pond was being purified at a rapid speed as its content was being altered.

Why were these changes taking place all of a sudden and at this speed? Now that she looked around, it was not only the pond but the surrounding trees of manas were also being affected as the rate of their growth was being bolstered at a rapid speed.

The mystical energy through the pond flowed inside the trees through their roots, altering their structure altogether.

Irene could sense the trees continuously purifying and gathering the surrounding manas, while at the same time bringing some unusual changes onto it.

Why these changes were occurring? There was only one reason and that was it was being influenced by Cecilia. Irene was well aware of the heaven-defying abilities that a Forest Spring Royal Spirit possessed and right now that little girl was unlocking a small part of it.

Lightly smiling to herself, she marvelled at the changes that were occurring all around her.

"Her abilities have already started to fester, it wouldn't be long in the future when she would be able to utilise all of the power granted by her race and display abilities that would shock any onlookers

Suddenly a thought occurred to Irene ‘What would that man think after he sees all these changes?’
A rarely seen curious smile bloomed on her lovely face when she thought about it.

Cecilia who was in a state of focus suddenly felt a presence not far from her and she slowly opened her eyes. Seven coloured lights of varying depth flashed across her eyes before mysteriously disappearing