

D. of Pride 731

Chapter 731- Snowsquall Drakewings (2)

Simon had broken the harmony stone in two, he placed one inside the cave and carried one with him. As such, using the Harmony stone, he could always navigate his way back.

The snowstorm continued to hit Simon, by now a small pile of snow had accumulated on his back and his level had decreased by 100. However, there was still no signs of the Abomination or the end of this place coming any closer. It was as if the place spanned unendingly, it was just too vast.

Even with Simon's speed, he felt like it would take him months to explore all of this place. Four days simply did not make sense. Simon complained in his heart but his speed never slowed down.

Finally, after a while when he was deliberating if he should go back to the cave, he found something. It was not the Abomination, the target of this trial or the challengers but something that was native to this place.

While Simon was exploring the snow lands, this thing suddenly jumped out of the snow and pounced at him. The entity was completely white, it had six limbs, was bipedal and had big ears like bats.

Its sharp fangs and claws which were each more than three feet long, shined menacingly. Coupled with its appearance that somewhat resembled a white bat, the thing stood at five meters tall.

Race- Snowsquall Drakewing

Level- 453

Skills- [High Speed Flight], [Super Enhanced Agility], [Enhanced Strength], [Super Enhanced Endurance], [Enhanced Defence], [Chill [Frostwing Dive]...

Ward], [Icy Breath], [Ice Fang], [Reckless Aura], [Camouflage], [Glacial Gale Strike], [Frozen Talons], [Ice Magic Mastery], [Frostwing Dive]...

When Simon glanced at the creature with his [Appraisal], its status quickly appeared in front of him. The Snowsquall Drakewing, it was a creature that was born and native to the snow lands. Its level was pretty decent and it had many powerful skills.

It was obvious that it hunted its prey by camouflaging itself with the snow, waiting for its gullible prey to come near before pouncing at him. Just as it did with him.

Simon quickly executed [Flash Steps] and easily dodged the monster. However, the monster did not give up easily. After seeing that its ambush had failed, it executed its blizzard skill to trap him and quickly disappeared into the snow.

After a while, it came diving at him from above, its wings shining and its momentum terrifying. This was the [Frostwing Dive] skill of the Snowsquall Drakewing.

The creature came crashing at Simon at a high speed. However, just like usual he easily dodged it and counter attacked. Numerous Infernal spears and lightning bolts locked onto it and targeted it from all directions. A feat only possible if one grasped [Dominator's Control], [Mana Flow] and [Mana Control].

Facing the siege of magic that left it with no room for escape, the Snowsquall Drakewing utilised its defensive skill [Chill Ward] and covered itself with a layer of condensed ice.

Simon's magic sieged it, the lightning bolts failed to achieve much effect, and the Infernal spears were also so. However, it did achieve to melt a few layers of ice. No matter how powerful the defence of the monster was, being sieged with many attacks at once, even its ice wall melted after a while.

The Snowsquall Drakewing roared as lightning pieced through its wings and targeted its vulnerable areas and the Infernal spears scorched its body.

Few seconds later, the monster dropped on the snow, defeated. The snowsquall Drakewing was not a match for Simon, if he wanted to, he could have ended the battle in an instant.

However, this was the first time he had encountered a monster like that. As such, he wanted to see how powerful it was and what it could do. Of course, the research was for the benefit for his dungeon and he had to say that the monster was quite powerful.

If it were the adventurers, they would have to form a team to defeat it. Unless they were rare class holders or were above level 500.

WHOOSH... WHOOSH... WHOOSH... At this moment hurried sounds of winds came from the distance and to Simon's astonishment, many white entities took to the air from the faraway mountains.

From a distance, it looked like an avalanche occurred in the mountains. However, make no mistake, it was no ordinary avalanche but hundreds of Snowsquall Drakewings taking to the air.

Right before the Snowsquall Drakewing died at Simon's hand, it gave a piercing roar that reverberated across the expanse of this white space.

Now that he thought about it was, of course, a distress call to its brethren. Hundreds of auras from the snowsquall Drakewings locked at Simon making him unable to run away and with a quick few flutter of their wings, they were already upon him.

Drive] targeted him from all directions.

Simon had no intentions to run away nor dodge these attacks, his They encircled him from the skies and came pouncing at him using their skills. [Ice Fang], [Glacial Gale Strike], [Icy Breath], [Frostwing Drive] targeted him from all directions.

Simon had no intentions to run away nor dodge these attacks, his motive was simple, he would take on their attacks and use them as the whetstone for his growth.

It just so happened that his level was quickly being suppressed and it had already fallen to a level below these monsters. If he didn't go all out, it would be difficult for him to survive much less run away. Since the moment he was found by these Snowsquall Drakewings, he only had one option open to him, fight and survive.

And so, a chaotic battle erupted with Simon as the centre, all sorts of magic and skills clashed, erupting into dazzling sparks of light that decimated the snow lands and even caused the snowstorm ravaging the area to become chaotic.

Although the special restriction of the place suppressed his level, it did nothing of that sort to his skills or his items. That is to say, the skills that he had acquired through arduous training and the

skills that were bestowed from his artefacts, were not affected at all. They could fully display their might.

It had been a while since Simon was able to fight so freely and with all of his powers. The skills that he had learned, the experience that he had accumulated over the years bloomed like a brilliant flower.

Every training that he had gone through, every fight he had fought was as if they had become a weapon colliding with the wall that hampered his growth.

Soon, numerous cracks appeared in the wall and spread through the entire surface. Rubbles fell down from it and slowly the wall started collapsing.

Simon who was locked into a fight, felt his blood rushing into his veins, exhilaration coursing through his body and his movements and attacks becoming more sharp.

ROAARRR...

A heavy demonic roar erupted, causing the Snowsquall Drakewings to suddenly halt in their tracks, their bodies quivered and the ferocious nature in their blood was subdued.

It was not only the monsters, even the falling snow was affected by Simon's roar. After all, it was roar packed with the powers of a Demon Earl and its intimidation.

Forget about this Snowsquall Drakewings that only had the blood of a wyvern, even a lower dragon with a dragon bloodline would feel heavy oppression when facing the current Simon.

Soon the wall collapsed, the aura erupting out of Simon's body went berserk. A part of the sky turned crimson, and at this sublime moment a qualitative change started to occur inside Simon.

His mana which was in a liquefied state, started condensing once again. The mana that was coursing throughout his whole body started coagulating towards his heart at a high speed.

Consequitively the changes inside Simon started affecting his environment. His body became crimson and his heart beat resounding loudly. In front of the world that had fallen still, as if

someone had pressed the pause button, winds started generating out of nowhere and pulled all of the mana from the surroundings towards him.

The wind started picking pace and soon Simon became the eye of the storm. Like a voracious demon, he absorbed all of the mana around him. This phenomenon could be seen from far away.

All the mana that rushed inside his body through his pores coagulated inside his heart and started changing forms. Vaguely, the liquefied mana inside his body started condensing and solidify.

Feeling this change, Simon quickly became excited after all, this was a transformation that told him that he had reached the level 600 stage or was very close to it.

From a gaseous state to liquefaction, it represented a chasm that represented one had reached level 500. Many people and races get stuck before this chasm unable to take this leap forward due to the bloodline restriction and potential. Forever remaining ordinary.

Those who can take the leap, transform and become a being that was the envy of innumerable people. They were the people who could truly call themselves a powerhouse and gain recognition from the world.

Similarly, the solidification of mana from liquid was another chasm, a huge chasm that even fewer people who had already condensed their mana into liquid and reached level 500 could reach.

The leap from this chasm represented that they had reached level 600 and became an elite even among the powerhouses. They are so strong that they can cause natural phenomena in the world, destroy cities in minutes and cause true calamity.

This was not just some simple level up, but a qualitative change, a metamorphosis to be precise.

Time stayed still, Simon voraciously devoured the mana, his heartbeat resounding strongly. It appeared like dozens of hours or even a day had passed; however, the change did not even take more than a few seconds.

Chapter 732- Monstrous Growth

The intimidated Snowsquall Drakewings did not dare to approach Simon. After a while, the crimson aura radiating out his body was retracted, and his skin returned to its normal colours along with his heartbeat.

At a glance, it did not look like there was any change in Simon. However, only he who had gone through the change, felt how different his body was currently.

At this moment, a crimson black aura that shined with a crystalline radiance enveloped his heart and pumped the mana throughout his body. His mana especially, although 98% per cent of it which was flowing inside his body was still in the liquefied state, if one looked carefully, they could see some small crystalline chunks floating in it.

These chunks were smaller than a speck of dust and represented the solidification of mana. It also meant that Simon was not far away from reaching level 600.

What's more, the colour of his mana had also started to change and mirrored the aura covering his heart. That is to say, the mana flowing inside his body was a vague crimson black in colour.

When he completely goes through the transition and reaches level 600, his mana will also completely turn into crimson black.

Generally, the mystical energy or the mana had a pale blue colour, the more pure the energy, the more brilliant its colour is. All life forms who utilised the mana, generally had pale blue mana flowing within them.

That was the case up until now, once one reaches the level 600 stage, the mana inside them starts displaying and matching their attributes.

For every life form it is different and it was the same for Simon too. The mana inside him was slowly changing to crimson black to match his race. Of course, it represented that his bloodline purity was also getting higher and higher.

Simon clenched and unclenched his hands feeling the changes that occurred inside his body. For some reason, he felt like the mana inside him was oppressive and berserk. It made him feel like he was far stronger than before, and gave him a sensation of invincibility.

He could also do more things than before— for example, he can emit his mana and vaguely turn it into a weapon of his choice— [Mana Armament].

A technique that one can only learn after reaching level 600. Although Simon had yet to reach level 600, his potential had already breached that level. What was restricting him now was only the level and his bloodline. That is to say, the wall of talent holding his progress was breached through and he could finally take a step forward.

"This oppressive and domineering feeling..."

Simon instinctively cast an internal spear magic. To his surprise, the crimson black traces of mana made the flames even hotter and berserk as if it would blow up at any moment.

Simon willed with his fingers and the infernal spear immediately rushed towards a nearby Snowsquall Drakewing. In that very instant when his magic collided with the monster, it seemingly opened a hole through it.

But that was not all, the berserk flames that lingered on its body blew up, causing bits and chunks of gore to rain down everywhere.

What was domineering? This was.

Simon continued to experiment with his magic, Whether it be his lightning magic or tempest magic they all became multiple times more stronger. It was as if all of his magic now held the attributes of berserk in them.

A wicked smile crossed Simon's face as he glanced at the remaining monsters around.

Feeling his gaze and the oppressive aura around him, the Snowsquall Drakewings were all intimidated and turned around to flee. However, how could Simon just let them go away?

They were his precious source of exp, the whetstones for his growth. With a flip of hand, he cast multiple Infernal Spears, Lightning Bolts and Tempest Winds that drowned his enemies.

A bloodbath ensued and the snow around this area was turned crimson.

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An hour later, in the area where the battle had erupted not long ago, a figure appeared out of thin air. The figure had dark eyes, and quite perceptive. He quickly found some traces and realised that a battle had erupted here not long ago.

wore a grey robe that completely covered their appearance.

They were tall and constantly released greyish black aura around them. The figure did not stay in the area for long, after monitoring the place, they quickly disappeared.

A few hours later after they disappeared, the air in one area undulated and Raven walked out.

"Strange, why was the sky around this area crimson?" He muttered. By now, the snow had piled over the area and covered the traces of battle and gore that was there.

Although the remains of the battle couldn't be seen, Raven was quite perceptive. He quickly found some traces and realised that a battle had erupted here not long ago.

"Did Franco and his team do this? No, if he was alive, he would have already reported back. The fact that he didn't means that he already died. Then what caused the phenomenon? Who was fighting here?"

Raven narrowed his eyes and pulled out an intact corpse of a Snowsquall Drakewing from out of the snow. From what he saw, he noticed that the monster died from a powerful single attack that tore a hole through its body.

This told him that whoever was fighting these monsters was far more powerful than them and could easily best them with a single attack. And there were not just one or two corpses that were lying around here, there were many... probably dozens or even hundreds.

Some of them did not even have intact corpses and have been turned into a scorched mincemeat.

This was enough evidence for Raven to realise a few things. To be able to kill hundreds of Snowsquall Drakewings that were each around level 460 and far more powerful than an ordinary elite adventurer, what kind of strength did the other party have?

What's more the other party had killed them while under the suppression effect of the sixth trial.

"They not ordinary at the very least they should be above level 600. There are only a few people in our group who are of this level and some of them have even died during the exploration. Could it be that there is someone else besides us on this trial? I need to inform Godwin about this" Muttering to himself, Raven disappeared from the place.

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Arriving back inside the shelter, Simon drew hurried breaths of air and flopped down on the ground. He was completely exhausted, the level suppression restriction of the sixth trial, put a great strain on his body.

Apart from that, the encounter with the Snowquall Drakewings had delayed him by quite a bit causing the falling snow to chip away at his level even more. By the time he finished dealing with the monsters, his level had already fallen by half.

The journey back was also a drag as he had to avoid monsters constantly on his way.

Huff... Simon downed a couple of potions to quickly recuperate from his injuries. His level also started recovering after a while and before long, he was back at full strength.

Simon did not move out immediately and instead continued to sit in his place and ponder about his changes. The trip this time could be said to have been successful since he had already breached the wall that was stopping him from progressing forward.

Thanks to the trials, he had reached 570. Now all he needed to do was continue with this pace and before long he would be able to rank up once again.

Demon Marquis, the next rank after Demon Earl. They are high born demons possessing immense power and authority. Carrying a bloodline far superior to other Demon Nobles, they were a force that could strike terror into the hearts of countless people.

In the ancient times, they were the nightmares who ran amok in the world, their violence and evil bringing devastating damage. It was said that they were extremely cunning and ambitious. Possessing uncanny wits and intelligence, they manipulated everything and anything and brought doom everywhere they went.

In the present time, they were only second to the Demon Dukes.

'Soon' Simon clenched his hands. He could see it, the path to become strong. The once elusive Demon Marquis rank was right in front of him. Once he reached that rank, he would be one step closer to reaching his goal, the Demon Lord.

Who would have expected that he would reach the rank of Demon Marquis so soon? If any other demon noble knew the rate at which Simon was growing, they would no doubt be stunned until they were mentally unbalanced.

Some of the high ranking Demon Nobles would even feel threatened by his presence and would spare no efforts to suppress him.

That kind of growth was just too uncanny, it was outright absurd. After all, it needs to be mentioned that it hasn't been more than four years since he arrived in this world.

From a measly Level 1 Demon Baron to a pure blooded Demon Earl and now Demon Marquess. Even if he hasn't reached it yet, based on Simon's growth, it was only a matter of time before he reached it.

A growth like that... monstrous, there was no other to put it. Of course, this kind of growth was only possible because it was Simon, the Fragments of Pride allowed him to grow faster than anyone.

If it was someone else, it would be simply impossible to grow at that speed.

Chapter 733 733- Monstrous Growth (2)

"Hehe... it no longer feels impossible," Simon thought about the seven year agreement he made with Aldebaran. The promise stated he would only be able to keep the Forest Spring spirits if he became a Demon Duke and subdued the Seven Kings within the time period of seven years.

He still had more than three years to keep his promise. The lofty agreement that he made with Aldebaran did not feel as supercilious anymore. Maybe he will become a Demon Duke even before the time limit was up.

Simon felt his blood boiling at this thought.

Vague crimson black mana, emanated out of Simon and was moulded into various shapes of weapons. He can control them as he wished and he could even turn them into a gaseous, solid or liquid state with just a will.

The ability to compress and synthesize mana, this was the transformation that marked that one had reached level 600.

Simon continued to practice with his mana and learned more things about it. He realised that he was on the verge of learning another skill. A skill that bestows abilities and skills to other skills.

[Ability Conferment], it was a powerful skill that one can only learn after reaching level 600 and what separated the outstanding from the ordinary.

Simon had seen and faced opponents who had this skill. It made their attacks very tricky and powerful. By using the [Ability Conferment] to bestow certain skills in other skills or magic, it essentially increases the might of their attacks more than their level standard.

For example, if one used the [Ability Conferment] to add [Greater Force], [Destructive Might] or other skills into a magic, they can in essence double or even triple the might of that magic. The magic would also carry the effects of those skills.

This was also the reason why some enemies that he had faced were stronger than what their level suggested. On his side, Irene, Valkyries, the vampire twins, and everyone above level 600 had this skill.

Simon was also instinctively using it now that he was close to level 600. The berserk that he added to his magic, it was also a type of ability conferment. From this, it was easy to understand how

powerful [Ability Conferment] was, if used right, it can even turn the effects of some skills and magic into something completely different.

Of course, the skill was not omnipotent, it was bound by the rules and laws of the world and had many things it couldn't do. For example, the skill cannot create something that went against the natural laws of this world.

There were other things apart from this, it would take Simon some time to fully learn about them. And so after playing with his mana and familiarising himself with its changes, Simon stood up, ready to venture out once again.

Time was limited and although he had already achieved his objective for coming here, he was not going to give up on the trial after coming this far. He had already seen how unique and mysterious the forbidden ground was, the treasure and allure it held was far above anything the world had to offer.

Finger of Ozymandias, the Radiant Crown of Brilliance, the Sword of Dawn, numerous valuable ores, the mysterious ores and the [Historia]—Simon was already looking forward to what treasures he would get next after clearing the sixth trial.

Since he went towards the west the first time, he decided to head north this time. This place was so vast, that he needed to quickly familiarise himself with it.

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In the far eastern direction of the snowlands, a tall mountain range that reached the clouds dotted the place like a coiling majestic dragon. Beyond the mountains, a steep cliff could be seen and a ravine running down as if dividing the entire land into two.

In the deepest parts, a group of over forty people could be seen moving forward. The snow here reached till waist and as they walked forward, they made a continuous crunching noise. A heavy pressure enveloped the place causing the atmosphere around the group to become grave.

Leading the group, was Godwin, he held a giant bastard sword in one hand and a shield on the other. Both the items were not ordinary, from the sheen they gave off they seemed to be made of Mythril or higher material.

Especially the sword, its unique craftsmanship, its unparalleled sharpness and the aura it gave of simply being carried by Godwin, was a telltale sign that the sword was of a very high grade, probably Admantium.

The others in the group were also equipped with quality gears. Although not comparable to Godwin, it did not fall out too behind either.

At this moment, the air in front of him wavered and Godwin gave the signal for the group to stop. Soon, a couple of Assassins led by Raven, showed their faces.

"How is the situation?" Godwin asked. Raven shook the snow from his robes and answered "We are going in the right direction. I can sense the lingering presence of the target around here. It should further this path".

The snowstorm around this path was especially strong as such, they could only send a few experts like Raven who had many navigational and versatile skills forward, to scout ahead.

"I can also feel a terrifying aura sweeping into these parts of the land from ahead. How long before we reach that thing?" Godwin asked deliberating something in his head.

"From the looks of it, at our current pace, it would still take us more than half a day. If we fly there, we should be able to reach there in an hour and a half".

Hearing that, Godwin shook his head "This is the territory of the Snowsquall Drakewings. Their levels and number far exceed what we have encountered in the other parts. With our numbers, if we fly using Mana Wings, we will quickly be spotted by them and become sitting ducks".

"Not to mention that using Mana Wings depletes a lot of mana, if we fly we will only increase the rate at which our level is suppressed. We might get wiped out even before we reach the abomination"...

"Then we will proceed as planned and find a secure shelter to hide here first"...

"Please do"...

With that, Raven and his team disappeared once again leaving behind Godwin and the other warriors as they slowly made their way ahead in this violent snowstorm.

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In the far opposite direction, Simon was currently busy engaging a group of monster that surrounded him. The monsters that he encountered around this part were not Snwoqsquall Drakewing but of some other race.

Iceman Raptors, a fearsome monster native to the snowlands. They were extremely ferocious and territorial and their body which was built to run on snow, gave them speed that couldn't be ignored.

Coupled with their powerful sense of smell, these monsters were a force on their own. These Iceman Raptors had caught Simon's scent and had followed him for more than a couple hundred kilometres.

Seeing that he couldn't lose them no matter how fast he flew, Simon finally decided to engage these beasts before they followed him back to his shelter.

Race- Iceman Raptors

Level- 441

Skills- [Super Enhanced Agility], [Super Enhanced Endurance], [Enhanced Defence], [Enhanced Strength], [Heightened Smell], [Coordination], [Ice Resistance], [Strengthen Bite Force], [Silent Stalkers], [Swift Rush], [Glacial Hide], [Fierce Claws], [Frosty Bity], [Extreme Pounce], [Icy Tail Swipe], [Icy Roar of Resilience], [Pack Tactics]...

Simon analysed his pursuers with [Appraisal]. Although the Icemane Raptors were lower levelled than the Snowsquall Drakewings, they weren't inferior. To be able to survive in a territory with the Snowsquall Drakewings, one cannot look down on their ability.

Especially their speed, tracking skill and the pounce. When Simon was flying, he was astonished to find that these monsters could pounce a few hundred meters into the sky. They had almost caught him off guard once.

Aside from this fact, their numbers were also higher than the other monsters. At a glance, Simon could already count more than twenty hundred of them following and surrounding him.

Sigh... He sighed and unleashed his skills. Before the Icemane Raptors could even come closer they were bombarded with all sorts of skills and magic.

Some which were able to close the distance, came biting him [frosty Bite]. However, those ones were deftly dealt with and sliced in half with the [Burnt Sword].

Simon executed [Thousand Sword Mastery], [Infernal Magic Mastery], [Lightning Magic Mastery], [Tempest Magic Mastery]. His steps domineering and oppressive as he made short work of the monsters.

From this battle, Simon understood a few things about the Icemane Raptors. These monsters although individually weaker than the Snowsquall Drakewings, they were far more powerful when cooperating with each other.

As could be understood from the skill [Pack tactics and [Coordination], their power relied on their numbers. In that regard, they were very similar to orcs who also had excellent coordination and fought in groups.

In any case, after dealing with his annoying pursuers, Simon continued his flight and scouted the area, searching for the target he needed to defeat to clear the trial.

Mid flight, his attention went towards his status. His level had risen once again after defeating hundreds of Icemane Raptors. It had now reached level 576 and was getting closer and closer to level 600.

Simon planned to use the sixth trial to increase his level as much as he could. Of course, it was not possible to reach the next rank in three days; however, he at least wanted to inch as close as possible.

Chapter 734 734- Abomination Vs the Adventurers

Levelling up would also help him and increase his chances against the Abomination that he would have to eventually fight.

Resolving himself, Simon continued to fly forward and explore the snow lands. Whenever he found himself surrounded by monsters, he would use them as stepping stones to increase his level.

And so just like that, one day went by. Apart from his level continuously increasing, he did not make any progress towards finding the target or the other challengers for that matter. Heck, he was even starting to believe that he was the only one here.

If not for the notification informing him, he might have believed so. This only went to show how vast the place was.

The second day was also not any better. Apart from being tackled by the native monsters of this place, there were no signs of the Abomination anywhere. Simon did not falter, he continued to fly around and scout the place. His level increased further.

Inside the Forbidden Grounds, there was no difference between day and night. It was always as bright as a day, as such, it was very easy to lose one's sense of time. When the second day was almost coming to an end, Simon suddenly had a thought.

He now clearly believed that four days was simply too little of a time to clear the trial. Given the vastness of this place, four days would be over from just exploring the place and it would still not be enough to map it out in its entirety.

That was how big this place called the snow lands was. In a situation like this, it made no sense that he only had four days of time to clear the trial. It was only logical for Simon to think that something must be up.

Something happened that had affected his trial.

"Could it be because of the other challengers or is there another unknown variable here?" Simon muttered to himself. Just as he was deliberating this inside his head, his ears suddenly picked up a noise.

The sound of blowing snowstorm was enough to drown out any noise. However, this noise was clearly very deafening and travelled through a very long distance.

"This... someone is fighting!!" Simon's eyes lit up and at the same time, a sense of urgency also assaulted his heart. This muffled rumbling noise was definitely from a magic going off.

Someone was fighting, Simon's first thought was the other challengers.

"Did they find the target?" Not wanting to be left behind, Simon turned around and immediately flew towards the direction he heard the noise coming from.

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Far in the east, a fierce battle broke out. Hordes of Snowsquall Drakewing surrounded a group of adventurers who formed numerous small teams to fend them off. The side teams held the monsters off while the main team led by Godwin, was busy fighting an enormous black shadow in the middle.

The black shadow had a terrifying appearance, it stood more than twenty meters tall and had aspects of various races stitched into its body looking very disturbing, like a weird lab experiment.

It had six legs, a scaled tail like that of a dragon, a human's upper body and demonic wings. It did not have any skin and its inner muscles were visible. Green scales protruded from the muscles and covered some vulnerable areas of its body.

It had three heads, each of which was glaring menacingly at Godwin.

ROARRR... the creature opened its mouth revealing jagged pairs of incise teeth and gave a deep guttural roar. At that instant, all the magic started going out of control and even the falling snowstorm was affected.

[Mana Disruption], a skill possessed by a few extraordinary beasts. Thanks to the skill, all the mages suffered a fierce backlash as the mana inside their body went haywire. However, looking at the way they moved even after suffering an unexpected blow, it was clear that they were used to such a tactic.

None of the mages panicked and hurriedly drew back on orders of Godwin and started casting magic once again.

One of the ways to deal with [Mana Disruption] was to either stop the enemy before they can use it or to estimate the area of effect of the skill and get out of it.

Seeing from the way the mages behaved, it appeared that they knew how to counter the skill. Numerous magic formed and assaulted the Abomination. Its three pairs of eyes shifted towards the magicians in the backlines as it started charging towards them.

One could imagine how terrifying the charge of a hulking creature as big as the Abomination was. It was like an avalanche that threatened to drown them. However, before the creature could reach the backlines, an overpowering force came battering and forced it to slide back.

[Bulwark Bash] The lion on Godwin's shield released steam as he used his powerful rare skill to stop the creature in its tracks.

Right after that two blades shining with a deadly light, appeared out of nowhere and dug into its eyes. The creature released a powerful aura, stopping the blades in its tracks and forcing Raven to blow back and crash into the snow.

Before the Abomination could connect Godwin rushed forward and started brawling with the creature. His shield deflected all of its attacks, as if he could predict all the moves of the creature.

His sword did not stay still and executed complex and extreme sword skills that were each powerful enough to bypass its defence and injure it.

The rest of his team followed his lead and attacked the Abomination. However, it was clear that they were unable to deal any significant damage to it.

When the warriors were done dealing damage, they swiftly retreated and allowed the magic conjuring in the distance to let loose their magic.

Advance and retreat, the team were in perfect sync. As one would expect of a group that was led by a ranker. These adventurers have fought numerous battles, they were a veteran when it came to how to deal with monsters.

BOOM... BOOOM... BOOM... As the magic bombarded, the Abomination blocked. Numerous twisting thorns looking all sinister, started growing out its body.

After the magic ended, it was the warriors and Assassin's turn once again. They repeated the cycle, keeping the creature cornered and slowly chipping away at its strength. However, the situation did not last long and changed after a while.

The aura of the Abomination spiked all of a sudden, greenish liquid seeped out of its body and melted the snow.

The adventurers all predicted this and swiftly retreated except for Godwin. As the most powerful warrior in the group and a genuine Ranker, he was the only one who could handle the creature when it was going berserk.

ROAARR... The Abomination gave a loud roar, peculiar pattern started growing on its body causing its aura to reach a terrifying level. The sky was turned green and all the snow in a few hundred kilometres was swept away.

Even Godwin and his team were forcefully blown back.

On the other side, Simon who was making his way over was suddenly hit by a strong gust of wind and was nearly smashed into a mountain. After barely stabilising himself, using [Flash Steps] to constantly move away, he saw an unusual scene.

In the distance, the sky was suddenly turned green and waves of snow each rising to a height of couple hundred meters were swept away like a tsunami. They came crashing into the mountains causing earthquakes to appear in the snowlands.

Simon saw the bodies of numerous Snowsquall Drakewings and even some adventurers buried in the snow. Just like he had thought the other challengers had already found the target and were in the midst of currently engaging it. It was a good thing that he rushed here at the first signs of battle.

Simon hurriedly took out the [Ice Phoenix Sigh] and ducked into a corner of a mountain to monitor the situation. He found a shelter from which he could perfectly oversee the battlefield.

He did not recklessly dive into the chaos, instead he first monitored the situation and tried to make sense of what was going on. Given that the other party had the qualification to be recognised by the master of the forbidden ground and accept the trials, it was all the more reason for Simon to be cautious.

Apart from that, there was also the finger of Ozymandias which was behaving quite peculiarly recently. Ever since he arrived at this place, it was as if the finger was suddenly trembling in excitement, releasing streams of curse energy that overflowed out of his space ring.

Something was resonating with it but what was it? Could it be the target? Simon narrowed his eyes as he looked into the distance. There he could see a terrifying green energy storm brewing. It was so overwhelming that even the mana in the surroundings started getting affected.

The aura flowing from the green storm had reached a level that caused the surrounding adventurers to take a step back in fright. The battle had reached a point where it was no longer possible for just anyone to intervene.

Simon focused his eyes and noticed a man standing in between the storm and the adventurers. His posture was straight and his aura was calm. His back profile gave one a sense of security and assurance.

The moment Simon saw the man, his pupils suddenly dilated and his body trembled as if he had pricked by a needle.

How could he not recognise this man? Even though from his position it was difficult to see the other party's face, that aura, that presence and that charisma clearly belonged to someone that he recognised.

Chapter 735 735- Abomination Vs The Adventurers

That person was not his friend, but rather his enemy, the one who cornered him and pushed him to the brink of madness. How long had it been since he last saw him? He did not think that he would see that person once again.

Simon was trembling in excitement, rage, delight and amusement. He would finally be able to take his revenge. Although he had cut the limbs of the Sea God's Trident Guild in the last expedition when they came diving inside his dungeon, high ranking members such as Godwin, Raven and Benny Beckermann were missing.

With them still present, the Sea God's guild would never truly be wiped out. If it was any of the other top five guilds of the kingdom of Ellesmere, Simon wouldn't bother too much with them as long as they did not overstep their boundaries.

However, the Sea God's guild had repeatedly crossed his upper limits, attacking and invading his dungeon at every point. This caused them to become irreconcilable enemies.

What's more, they even knew about the secret of the forest spring spirits residing inside his dungeon. They have to die no matter what or else Simon wouldn't be able to sleep or eat properly.

They cannot live under the same sky, one of them has to be eliminated. That said, although Simon's blood was boiling in indignance as he remembered the scene from the past, there were also traces of gratitude mixed within his emotions.

He was thankful that he had gone through such an experience as it had opened his eyes. It made him finally accept him for who he was and let go of all naïve and idealistic thinking.

He was a Demon Noble in this life, he cannot cling to the way of thinking of his past life. Thanks to the experience he could break out of his shell and become a true Demon Noble.

"I will let you experience the despair I experienced all those years ago" Making a wicked smile, Simon resolved. He did not attack immediately but instead formulated a plan in his head.

He used appraisal on his Target and Enemy.

Name- Subject 2777

Race- Unidentifiable

Level-740

Skills- [Herculean Strength], [Ultra Enhanced Defence], [Enhanced Agility], [Super Enhanced Magic], [Ultra Enhanced Endurance], [Ultra High speed Regeneration], [Body Reinforcement], [Frost Magic Resistance], [Flame Magic resistance], [Lightning Magic Resistance], [Tremor Magic Resistance], [Gale magic Resistance], [Blunt Damage Resistance], [Poison Immunity], [Intimidation Resistance], [Frost Magic Mastery], [Flame Magic Mastery], [Lightning Magic Mastery], [Tremor Magic Mastery], [Gale Magic Mastery], [Chaotic Mind], [Parallel Thinking], [Atrophy Gaze], [Rampant Roar], [Nethermaw Devour], [Chemic Fury], [Voidfire Breath], [Ethereal Scales], [Aspect Anomaly], [Abomination's Charge], [Fury of the Multitudes], [Altered Form], [Origin Form], [Transmutation Surge]...

It was as he had thought, the Abomination was the Abomination he had in his head. The monstrosity created by the greed of humans, subject 2777 also said to be the greatest creation, there was no mistaking it.

That aura, that gaze and that appearance that gave one chill right down to their spines, should he say as expected of the Abomination? It was downright terrifying. There was also its long list of skills, it was not without reason that those humans believed that it was their greatest creation.

The Abomination had resistance to all five basic attributes. Not only that, it also had mastery over the intermediate tiers of all the five basic attributes. It begs mentioning that all the five basic attributes need different talents and affinities to master.

Someone who could use all five basic attributes were exceptionally rare, one might even be able to count them with their fingers.

Even Simon was unable to master all the five basic attributes. He only possessed affinities for fire, electro and wind and no matter how much he tried to learn the other two attributes, it was simply impossible.

"No wonder they said that it was their greatest creation and their greatest failure" To be able to utilise all five basic attributes of magic, what kind of concept was that? Simon did not know whether to laugh or cry.

Then there was also some dangerous sounding skills in its arsenal like the [Chemic Fury], [Voidfire Breath], [Transmutation Surge] and so on and so forth. There was no doubt about it, these were rare and lost skills, and their tiers were also very high, at the very least it should be at the Ancient tier.

The more Simon glanced at the Abomination, the more speechless he became. It was a good thing he did not attack it, even Simon was not absolutely sure that he would be able to bring it down.

After appraising the Abomination, Simon shifted his attention onto the man standing not far away from it. To his surprise, the moment he tried to use [Appraisal] on Godwin, his skill was blocked.

He was unable to see anything regarding this man.

It needs to be said that the [Appraisal] skill can only be blocked during two instances. One when there is a large difference in level between the two parties and second when the other party is in possession of something that blocks all prying skill.

Simon did not believe that there was a large difference between him and Godwin. He was even able to appraise the Abomination which the latter was struggling against. Which meant that Godwin wasn't stronger than the Abomination.

Simon recalled that the first time the two of them met, his skill was blocked just like now. However, at that time, he attributed not being able to see the other party's status to them having a large difference in level.

However, what about now? Not only had he gotten a lot stronger since then, but even his [Analysis] skill had evolved. Simon knew that his growth speed was exaggerated and that no one in the world could match his speed after all he possessed the Fragments of Pride.

However, even after all this, he was still unable to pry at the other party's status. This meant only one thing, it was not due to the level difference but because of a certain thing that Godwin possessed.

Simon wasn't surprised, this aligned perfectly well with the conjecture he had drawn when he learned that there were other challengers at present in the sixth trial.

"He should be the other challenger recognised by the master of the forbidden grounds" Simon was curious, he didn't think that he would encounter his enemy much less them being able to gain the recognition of the master of the forbidden grounds.

Well, no matter what the case was, it did not change the fact he needed to defeat Godwin. It was a good thing that the other party also possessed a formidable card. With that, they should be able to resist the Abomination for a while.

Be it the Abomination or Godwin, both of them were very strong forcing him to change his plans on how to approach the situation.

He did not think that the battle would be decided anytime soon, from what he could see both the parties looked very alive and kicking. As such, Simon decided not to meddle and see how the situation develops. It would be best of both of them tire each other out.

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On the other side of the battlefield, the adventurers have regrouped back together. Thanks to the earlier outburst of the creature, all the monsters in a nearby area had died. The adventurers barely managed to safeguard themselves at the critical moment.

They downed a few vials of potions and stood their ground. Just as they planned to attack the creature, Godwin raised his hands and ordered them to back down. He did not say anything else and swiftly charged towards the creature, golden light enveloped his body, raising his strength to unknown heights.

With a speed that defied his build, Godwin crashed into the creature forcing it out of the aura storm. At this moment as the creature's form came into view once again, everyone realised that something was wrong.

The creature hadn't gone into a state of berserk like they thought but instead, changed forms. That's right, after those peculiar markings and runes appeared on the creature started transforming.

The Abomination had gone into its [Altered Form]. It now had a serpentine look, its three pairs of legs were reduced to green tipped spikes and barbed thorns protruded from its tail. Its upper body had also become extremely muscular to match its current build.

Hard outer shell grew out of all of its three heads and covered its entire face like a helmet, it separated vertically like an insect mandible. The wings on its back expanded and branched into three parts each, looking all sinister, like feelers.

Looking at the abomination, no one would be able to tell that it was the very same creature they were fighting just a moment ago. The Abomination did not wait for the adventurers to come out of their stupor, its three heads quickly conjured various magic and threw it at them.

Almost at the same moment "Get into formation" Godwin roared. He wanted to block the magic targeted at his team. However, before he could help them, an enormous tail with sharp barbed thorns growing out of the end, came smashing towards him, forcing him to stay.

BANG... BANG... BOOM...

Sharp spikes of earth protruded out of the ground, razor sharp winds blew everywhere, lightning flashed and fire and ice wreaked havoc everywhere. The adventurers could only protect themselves, forget about participating in the battle. They could only leave it to Raven to aid Godwin.

Chapter 736 736- Meeting of Enemies

A greenish black light flashed from the centre head and a breath was fired towards Godwin. [Voidfire Breath]... One of the scary sounding skills of the Abomination. It packed enough power to violently distort the surroundings and leave spatial tears in its wake.

Looking at its might, it spared no doubt that it would deal devastating damage if it connected. Even Godwin did not dare to block the breath and dodged left and right using his mana wings.

He would also use [Mana Armaments] that was conferred with various skills using [Ability Conferment] to counter attack.

While the Abomination was busy targeting Godwin, a shadow crept near it. Immediately, the figure of Raven came out of the shadows and executed a complex dance of blades that targeted the underbelly of the creature.

However, the abomination agilely dodged his attacks. It appeared that one of its heads had spotted him. Afterwards, multiple feelers came attacking him, forcing Raven to quickly duck into the shadows.

The Abomination was quite intelligent, it was using [Parallel Thinking], [Fury of the Multitudes] to cast various magic, [Atrophy Gaze] to intimidate and [Transmutation Surge] to synchronise all the different abilities of its body.

It kept everyone else at bay and solely focused on Godwin. It could tell that the greatest threat to him was from this man. As long as it could kill him, it wouldn't have to worry about the other ants.

As for Raven, this was a slightly annoying ant that's all, the other party couldn't harm him. And so, the Abomination came charging at Godwin with its [Chemic Fury] and used [Nethermaw Devour] and [Serpentine Strike] to overpower him.

Godwin was still fine even under the heavy barrage of its attacks. However the same couldn't be said for this team. Even though the Abomination was only using its magic to keep them at bay, enduring intermediate tier magic of all five basic attributes was not an easy task.

The mages couldn't stop all magic with their magic shield and the warriors did not have resistance for all the five attributes. As time passed by, more and more injuries occurred which put heavy pressure on the formation. It was slowly starting to fall apart.

If this continued, soon Raven and Godwin would be the only ones alive facing the Abomination. The two also realised this and increased the intensity of their attacks.

Godwin was a Ranker who currently held the 7001st position, he defeated many rankers to climb to the position he was now. His rise was quick and it hadn't been long since he joined the Rankers.

If he was given time to grow, he would even reach the peak of ranker and maybe even go beyond. As for Raven, he definitely had the potential to become a Ranker and rise in the ranks. However, potential was only potential, the current them were clearly not the match for the Abomination.

Realising this difference, Godwin extended his hands out. Golden light shined and a pendant appeared on his hand. The design of the pendant was simple, it did not look overly extravagant nor did it give off any extraordinary aura.

No matter how you see it, the pendant looked totally normal. However, it was this seemingly normal pendant that overturned the situation.

As soon Godwin opened the pendant, the sky above them changed, an enormous magic formation that was more than hundreds of kilometres in diameter, shining with complex runes and markings appeared overhead.

As soon as the magic formation appeared, it quickly engulfed the area with its magnificence. Every eyes turned towards the sky even Simon looked at the formation with astonishment.

Its size aside, just the fact that it carried such an oppressive atmosphere easily drowning the presence of the Abomination was enough to make him realise that the formation was extremely powerful.

"This should be his rump card right?" Simon muttered to himself observing the formation. Since Godwin dared to confront the abomination, he had to have some kind of measures prepared, some tricks up his sleeve.

The magic pendant should be his magnum opus. As Simon was wondering when he should intervene, the situation on the battlefield had already changed.

Eight enormous pillars appeared out of the formation and quickly erected themselves around the Abomination in an octagram. The pillars released golden lightning that transformed into chains and bound the creature in place.

No matter how the abomination struggled or what skills or magic it quickly put away by Godwin.

used, it was unable to break out of the seal. It turned out that the trump card that Godwin had prepared, the pendant was actually a sealing artefact.

After accomplishing its effects, the pendant lost its lustre and was quickly put away by Godwin.

Now that the Abomination was sealed in a place and could no longer move, everybody rejoiced. They seemed to see the glimmer of victory where Godwin defeated the creature already.

SWISH...

However, just as the latter moved to deal with the abomination, a huge greyish pillar of light came attacking him at a speed that was difficult to ignore.

Swiftly, Godwin changed the trajectory of his attack and instead targeted the greyish pillar of light.

BOOOM... a powerful shockwave erupted waking everyone up from their stupor. Space collapsed where the two attacks collided, the radiant sword light from Godwin had already dissipated leaving behind only the greyish pillar of light.

No, it would be wrong to say that it was a pillar after, the thing that attacked Godwin was an enormous finger. It was huge, larger than the trunk of a tree and was dotted with complex runes that glowed with a mystical light.

What else could it be than the Finger of Ozymandias? After the finger was stopped, it pulled back and returned towards a figure that was flying in the sky not far in the distance.

"Godwin you alright?" At this moment, Raven and the other adventurers reorganised around him.

Godwin nodded his head, his eyes glued to the figure in the distance. Nobody could see it; however, his hand which was holding the sword, was trembling a little. The greyish pillar earlier had given him a powerful sense of death, causing him to counterattack without holding back.

However, all his attack managed to do was block that pillar. What was going on? Where did this person come from?

Could it be he is the other challenger?

It was not only Simon who had received the notification, Godwin too received the same. He was the other challenger who was recognised by the master of the forbidden grounds and thus allowed to go through the trial.

However, at that time Godwin did think of much of the notification back then, thinking that it might have been one of his teammates surviving. After all, their numbers were more than one thousand when they started the sixth trial around a month ago.

But the harsh environment of the trial had slowly culled down their numbers, leaving only the elites of the elite to survive.

The weak died and only the strong remained, that was how the law inside the trial worked. Given their numbers, it was only normal for Godwin to believe that the number increased because one or two of his teammates managed to survive.

However, it appeared at this time to him that he was wrong.

Dalton and tens of thousands of adventurers from our Sea God's While Godwin was busy deliberating and sorting out his thoughts, Raven squinted his eyes when he saw the figure in the distance. His mind churned and soon he realised who the other party was.

Killing intent flashed in Raven's eyes as he reminded his team of who they were facing against.

"Snort... So you are that Demon Noble who killed former Vice leader Dalton and tens of thousands of adventurers from our Sea God's Trident guild? I heard that the guild leaders of the other top five guilds had also disappeared inside your dungeon? It's a shame that I didn't destroy your dungeon at that time"

Godwin clenched his sword and glared at Simon with righteous anger. Of course, he had heard about the great expedition of the kingdom of Ellesmere, that turned into the greatest failure and disaster in their history.

The expedition into the Ghastly Winding Forest was led by the top five guilds and many other big guilds of the kingdom of Ellesmere. There was no one who believed that the expedition would fail at that time.

However, when none of the adventurers who participated returned even after months, many people started to speculate if something had gone wrong or if the expedition team had failed to usurp the dungeon.

As days passed by their speculation turned into reality when the kingdom, becoming exaggerated and horrifying as it spread.

numerous search teams went diving into dungeons in search for them and came out empty handed.

They did not find any trace nor any clues about the expedition team. It was as if they had mysteriously disappeared after they went inside the dungeon.

The nobilities of the kingdom tried to keep the news in check. However, how could such a big event be hidden? Like an explosion, the news of the failure of the expedition quickly travelled across the kingdom, becoming exaggerated and horrifying as it spread.

Some said that the dungeon had devoured the expedition team, some said that they had become the minions of the dungeon and others speculated that it was the conspiracy of the top five guilds to eliminate the other big guilds who were a thorn in their side.

The event had been overblown by the people; however, no matter the people thought at the time, the one who took the biggest blow were the top five guilds and the kingdom of Ellsemere who lost more than 70 percent of their elite adventures in that expedition.

Chapter 737 737- Crushing the Numerical Superiority

The Kingdom of Ellesmere lost more than 70 per cent of the elite adventurers and that was discounting the loss that came from losing people like Karina Lowell, Brutus Sarge, Cassius Grey and many more who were the guild leaders and pillars of this kingdom.

The news travelled to the other neighbouring countries, which gave them the opportunity to severely suppress the kingdom. The Kingdom of Ellesmere quickly lost its footing as the third grade country and was on the verge of becoming a vessel nation.

Fortunately, the guild leader of their Sea god's trident, Benny Beckermann who was busy tackling the forbidden grounds at that time and did not participate in the expedition team, survived.

However, this caused the suspicions of the people and the royalty of the kingdom to turn towards them. Many started accusing their guild for colluding with the demons; after all, their guild leader was the one to propose the idea to form an alliance to curb the quickly growing danger in the Ghastly Winding Forest that was the dungeon Laplace.

What's more, in the expedition, they were the only guild who had suffered the least damage. The other top five guilds had lost their position and dissolved leaving only the Sea God's Trident.

Given all this, it was only natural for the suspicion of the people to be directed towards them. Bits and pieces of news of what happened in the remote north western region of the central continent and the name dungeon Laplace also made its way to the Mainland and into the ears of Godwin and Raven who were training there under a guild at that time.

When they returned to the kingdom, many things had changed. People no longer welcomed them, the scorn and disdain as they looked at them was clearly evident in their eyes. Their guild had lost the public support and was only standing because it still retained the high ranking members like them.

Everyone ignored the sacrifices their guild made and started to condemn them. Godwin felt that the blame lay on him, he felt responsible for what had happened. If only he had destroyed the dungeon at that time when he was passing through the Ghastly Wining Forest, then all of this wouldn't have happened.

The top five guilds wouldn't have to form the expedition guild and the former vice leader Dalton wouldn't have to die. Just thinking about it, made Godwin furious.

"Hmm? Dalton? Doesn't ring a bell. Forget about some nobody, don't you think you and I have some history that we need to settle first?" the figure flashed their fangs as they gave a wicked grin that was very much true to their race.

An oppressive air emanated from them and quickly engulfed the place. Just one look at those heterochromatic eyes was enough to feel a sense of intimidation. Who could the figure flaunting his dashing demonic figure be other than Simon?

"It looks like he holds the grudge from when we pursued him to the city of Aqualin and cornered him" Raven interjected, there was a complex feeling in those eyes of his.

As someone who worked as the right hand man of the guild leader of the Sea god's trident, he was much more informed about the demon in front of them than Godwin.

It was precisely because he knew that he felt a sense of urgency to kill the demon even more. Looking at how absurdly fast the demon grew, he knew that his decision at that time was right.

"It looks like you used the transit stones to get away from us back then. However, now that you have shown yourself openly don't even think about using the same trick to escape again. Godwin

don't tell me you want to take him alive after what he did to our guild and kingdom?" Raven asserted his tone grave.

Godwin understood how Raven felt, he looked at the Demon in the sky and remembered the battle in the city of Aqualin. If not because the director of the Adventurer's Association branch of their kingdom and Chuck, he wouldn't have thought about taking the demon alive.

Thanks to his moment of indecisiveness it gave the demon the demon the chance to flee.

"Seems like you remember what happened the last time we crossed paths. To think that you would appear before me once again, it looks like all that growth of yours made you feel invincible"

Godwin sighed drawing his swords towards the demon. He wouldn't make the mistake he made last time, there was no one to save the demon this time.

"Hehehe... Yeah, I feel much better than last time. Just thinking about how I will twist your necks, rupture your bodies, and massacre you lot, makes me feel weirdly refreshed. This is the feeling that I a demon noble should feel. Thanks for making me realise who I was last time"

Simon laughed, his solemn and bloodlust filled words caused everyone's blood to run cold. In terms of charisma, the demon in front of them did not lose to their leader at all.

"As I thought so, the Demon Nobles are the root of all evil. This world will continue to suffer unless you lot are purged. Today, I will make all my wrongs right and kill you once and for all. Everyone, go into formation A, do not let this demon get away"

Godwin shouted, immediately his fellow teammates activated their mana wings and spread all across the battlefield, encircling the demon in the middle.

"Hehe... What a way to justify your actions, that was some self righteous, virtuous bull crap right there. But do you think that just your teammates are enough to corner me?"

Just as Simon spoke those words, two blades materialised out of thin air and targeted his neck. The blades shined with a terrifying blade light. However, before they could get near his neck, Simon extended his hands and stopped the blades with his claws.

Infernal flames spread from his claws and threatened to devour his assailant. Raven hurriedly pulled back after his failed assassination attempt.

Godwin narrowed his eyes seeing that the demon was easily able to stop Raven. Nevertheless, his composure did not falter as he snorted "Unlike the last time, I don't even need to personally take action. My teammates are enough for the likes of you".

Although the Abomination was sealed by the pillars, someone had to watch over it lest something unexpected happen.

However, to his surprise the demon rendered his statement moot the next second. Simon took out a cube and wilfully boasted "Since you are proud of your number superiority, let me take that card off your sleeve".

The Eon's cube on his hand expanded and soon it reached the size of a mountain. It shifted and turned and before long, Andromedas poured out of it. Ten, twenty, hundred, two hundred, three hundred, five hundred...they continued to pour out like an unending wave.

The numerical superiority that the adventurers were so proud of, disappeared like smoke. Their eyes widened as they stared at the mountain like Eon's cube and the Andromedas that were pouring out of it.

Simon did not cut corners, he did not bring out the old Mk 9s to make up for the numbers, but the latest Mk 7s that one would only encounter on the lower floors of his dungeon.

That's right, to celebrate his reunion with Godwin, he did not spare any cost. The numbers of the Andromedas were all made up of Mk 7s.

It needs to be mentioned that as the versions went up, the strength and technology of the Andromedas also increased. They were equipped with far more powerful weapons, structures, designs, data and computing ability.

An Mk 11 was far more powerful than a Mk12, Mk 9 was greater than Mk 10 and so on and so forth. As for Mk 7, they could easily fight with an adventurer above level 500. What's more, these Mk7s were far more advanced than the ones that he brought out during his battle with the Harpies and their queen.

The ones currently here are the finished product.

The Mk 7's were one thing, but Simon even pulled out the big guns, among the pouring war machines there were also a few Revenant Crows and Mk 6 present.

The Mk 6 are the version that are currently in the manufacturing process after Simon secured a large amount of ore deposit in the Harpies territory.

The Mk 6's outer structure was fully made of Mythril and its interior was made from a special alloy called the chronium. Since the latter was very difficult to find, there was only a few of the Mk 6 manufactured.

However, on his venture to the forbidden grounds, Simon had secured a large amount of Chronium, enough for the manufacturing of the Mk 6 to keep on going.

"I usually don't like intimidating my opponents with numbers but I do make sure to bring an army along wherever I go" Simon grinned.

The Andromedas only stopped pouring out of the cube when their number reached the thousands. The scene of thousands of Andromedas releasing mechanised noises as they scanned their surroundings and located their target was a scene to behold.

It made all the adventurer's skin tingle as they looked at the Andromedas in dread. Even the elite among the powerhouses, being above level 600 were looking at the scene with an apprehensive expression.

As for Godwin and Raven, they had a dark expression as they observed the grinning demon. They could tell that these golems were not ordinary golems and represented a threat to their team.

Chapter 738 738- [Thousand Swords Mastery]

Especially the golden ones, they were made of Mythril and gave off a dangerous aura.

The adventurer's initial plan of surrounding the demon and ganging up on him was overturned in its head. Now it was the demon who had them surrounded. They did not know how and from where the demon took these golems out from.

However, there was one thing that they knew and that was—they had to defeat the demon here. They cannot give him any more chances to escape, they needed to kill him before the latter could grow even stronger.

Given the growth that the demon had shown them, it was only natural for Godwin and Raven to take the matter as a serious concern.

The former closed his eyes for a second and took a deep breath. With the appearance of the Andromedas, he could no longer sit back. If he wanted to take the demon down, he would have to do it himself.

The next moment Godwin opened his eyes, his eyes started shining brightly and his aura surged. Everyone could see the halo of a gigantic figure behind him. the halo lasted only for a second before disappearing. However, it gave every adventurer who had a dispirited look after the appearance of the Andromedas, a new ray of hope.

That's right, they all believed that as long as Godwin was with them, there was no way they would lose. After all, it was not once or twice that he had gone through a perilous situation such as this.

He would always find a chance to overturn any dangerous situation. He was their pillar of faith. Simon saw the changes in the attitude of the others after Godwin decided to step in. However, he did not do anything and allowed them to get their hopes up.

It wouldn't be fun at all if the other side did not struggle with all their might. Simon gave a deafening demonic roar to start off the battle.

Dark black aura released out of his body and quickly engulfed the battlefield. To counter, the adventurers, more specifically the mages with mastery in light magic, started casting light domes to keep the negative effects of the dark magic from affecting them.

The Andromedas advanced and started engaging with the adventurers in a chaotic battle.

Almost at the same time, Godwin also made his move. He brandished his sword and sent forth holy blade lights to attack Simon. The latter dodged and counter attacked with his own powerful skills and magic.

All sorts of attacks were exchanged in a matter of a few seconds indicating that both the parties had [Mana Lines] and a solid foundation.

While Simon utilised his racial advantage and the training and growth he had gone through all these years to bombard his enemy with relentless and precise attacks, Godwin on the other hand put his years of experience, his unmatched confidence and the power of his class and level into display.

Any attack that Simon threw at him, was either dodged with minimal movements or deflected. His sword and shield became like an extension of his own limbs as he performed all sorts of techniques with seamless perfection.

It was as if they were not tools but living entities that had merged with him.

Simon and Godwin were so fast that they left afterimages behind, their battle couldn't be contained in a limited space and spanned all across the sky.

The adventurers fighting the Adromedas or more like defending against their assaults, could see the brilliant flashes of magic and skills colliding and tearing the sky asunder.

Simon used every technique and skill he had learned and honed over the years in his battle against Godwin. One could even see his efforts and diligence in his moves, the path he had chosen and the training he went through to reach this point.

However, even then he was unable to suppress Godwin. As he fought with the latter, he was able to tell that he was still lacking short in various areas and there were still various things he had yet to master.

It was not just the difference in level, Godwin could easily predict his moves and divert his attacks and movement in his favour, indicating that the other party had a higher version of [Intuition] skill.

However, that was not all, there were also various other basic high tiers skills involved in his actions. Although Godwin's attacks were not flashy, each and every one of them was extremely refined and advanced.

That level of sophisticated and polished moves cannot be achieved without going through a rigorous training and hellish battles. The power packed in Godwin's attacks was far more powerful than any flashy skill or magic. He was on a level of his own where the likes of Davis couldn't even compare.

The more Simon fought with him, the more he was made aware of his shortcomings. From looking at Godwin, he also understood why Irene repeatedly stressed on improving and acquiring basic skill sets rather than focusing on flashy skills that gave one power from the get go.

It was because it was these basic skills that would become the building block for his power in the later stages when he battles with true experts, rather than the flashy skills which would sooner or later hit a wall thus stopping his growth.

Simon wasn't discouraged when shoved with the obvious difference between their abilities, instead, he became excited and marvelled at his powers, feeling that he had much room to grow.

The fact that he was able to fight with Godwin and last this long even without using his trump cards like the Finger of Ozymandias, said a lot about his growth. He has been walking on the right path since the beginning.

In their previous clash, Simon couldn't even last a few seconds and was pummelled into the ground and was forced to eat a loss. However, this time the situation was different. Although it was obvious that he was not Godwin's match, the difference was not something that couldn't be covered up.

The other party clearly couldn't defeat Simon in a short period of time. Of course, the fact that Godwin had already gone through a gruelling battle against Abomination and was clearly not at his full power, played a huge role.

However, Simon had flown his way all the way over here as fast as possible even if it meant it would increase the rate at which snow accumulated in his body and suppressed his level. So in a way, it could be said that both of them were not fighting at their peaks.

"[Resilience Strike]"

At this moment, Godwin erupted out with a powerful skill, his sword that was made of Adamantine shone with a brilliant golden as he swung his sword forward. The power of the attack was enough to tear space and send Simon crashing down on the ground.

BOOM... the land that was devoid of the snow, cracked and a large depression formed on the ground. At the centre of the depression, Simon who was picking himself up, had a huge gash in his [Mana Armour].

That strike from Godwin was powerful enough to bypass his defence stats and create a large wound on his chest. Blood seeped out from his injury causing Simon to grit his teeth in agony.

The external wound was superficial, it would go back to normal given his restorative abilities and skills. However, that strike was not an ordinary strike, but an attack packed with Divine magic, the advanced tier of light magic.

For a Demon Noble like Simon, Divine magic was his bane and his greatest weakness. The divine magic that seeped inside his body from that attack earlier wreaked havoc inside him delaying his recovery.

Though Godwin's attacks did not stop there, after that initial strike, he chained his attacks with more powerful skills and techniques and came sweeping down on Simon. Just as the attack arrived, the grin on Simon's face widened and the space ring on his flashed.

BOOM... dust rose and the ground collapsed.

On the other side, looking at the awe-inspiring battle of Godwin, the adventurers rejoiced. However, their happiness was short lived as hundreds of Andromedas engaged them.

These war machines although around the early stages of level 500 were becoming stronger as time passed. They analysed all the patterns and skills the adventurers had and formulated plans based on that.

What's more, these war machines did not tire and could keep on going endlessly until they were destroyed. Even the ones that were destroyed were swiftly rebuilding themselves. Fighting these cold machines of destruction, that continuously evolved during the battle was like a horror that had no end in sight.

Then there were also those incredibly powerful and sturdy ones whose whole frame was made of Mythril and the smaller and structurally different ones that looked like a crow.

Those ones sniped from the backlines and occasionally joined the battle causing the entire formation of the adventures to collapse.

"Everyone, do not lose hope, we just need to hold long enough for Godwin to win. As long as he defeats the Demon, these golems would also stop functioning" Raven swiftly defeated a Mk 7 and spoke.

The twin blades in his hands that were an [S] tier weapon, continuously swept through the air, defeating and damaging every Andromedas that came to stop him.

In this group, only he and a few others could hold their own in front of the absolutely discouraging numbers of the Andromedas. However, even then, all they could do was fend for themselves much less aid their teammates.

Chapter 739 739- [Thousand Swords Mastery] (2)

The number the adventurers did not even account for 5 per cent of the total numbers of the Andromedas. No matter how many times they swung their weapons and defeated these war machines, more and more would replace them.

In front of the absolute numbers, their individual strength meant nothing. They couldn't even make any waves. A few of the weakest teammates in their group had already died, their bodies torn apart by the Andromedas.

As time passed by they would only get weaker and the casualties on their side would increase. Additionally, and it was something that everybody had realised it by now, the golems showed no signs that they were being affected by the restriction that was placed on everyone when they arrived at the Sixth Trial.

That is to say, the level suppression of the falling snow had no effects on the Andromedas. They who were artificial beings created with a medium and possessed no soul, appear to be invulnerable in the sixth trial.

Everybody knew that, but no one wanted to acknowledge it. They also had the option of using the Transit Stones on them to escape from this place. Nevertheless, they did not choose so and continued to fight even if it meant dying at the hands of the golems.

The reason for their resilience was simple, it was Godwin. They had gone through thick and thin with him, they all felt that if it was him, he would get them out of this hellhole just like always.

Their optimism on Godwin bordered faith. After Raven's rallying cry, their spirits started to reignite once again.

However, their delight was short lived as when the next deafening noise resounded from the other side of the battlefield, they all saw the silhouette of a figure flying out from the dust at a great speed and crash into the ground, creating a long gorge in the process.

The figure that suffered a loss in that exchange was not the demon as they had expected, but the person who was their faith. The one that flew out was Godwin.

At that very moment, the expressions of the adventurers who were barely holding on against the assaults of the Andromedas, collapsed after watching that scene. Something improbable had actually occurred.

Godwin slowly picked himself up and looked ahead. Although he had suffered a loss in that exchange, it did not appear that he took much damage.

"What was that?" He narrowed his eyes recalling the power that pushed him back in that earlier exchange. However, before he could think any further, attacks came raining down on him, forcing him to defend and dodge.

"Hm? These are swords?" Godwin realised in the midst of defending. These sword shadows were not created through some technique or [Mana Armament] but were actual physical swords. Godwin tried to grab a sword; however, it pulsed with a light that repelled his hand.

After the swords failed to hit their target they obediently retreated back as if they had a mind of their own. Godwin looked in the direction of the retreating swords and realised that they were moving towards the demon who was slowly coming out of the crater.

At this moment, Simon carried a small trace of a smile at the corner of his lips and dragged a dilapidated burnt longsword in his hand. What's more, tens of hundreds of swords floated around him, like soldiers following their king. It gave him an awe-inspiring and overbearing look.

Looking at the demon surrounded by hundreds of swords, Godwin's eyes flickered for a moment. He could see that all of those swords weren't ordinary, each and every one of them were at least [C] tier.

There were many [B] tiers and even [A] in the midst. What was going on? Where did the demon get all these treasures from?

Godwin's first guess was that all these treasures were from the expedition team that had supposedly gone missing inside the dungeon. Immediately, he was overwhelmed by rage when he thought about how the demon killed all of those people.

Although Godwin was right, it was not entirely the case. Amongst the numerous swords floating around Simon, there were some that came from the adventurers of the expedition team, but the majority of the swords came from the daily draws from [Ga?????] and [Armoury].

As mentioned earlier, what Simon did not lack the most were treasures. Thanks to the long years of gacha draws from the [Ga?????] option, he had accumulated a mountain of items some of which were even burnt like oil to create higher grades weapons like the [A] tier and the [S] tier Burnt Sword.

Although Godwin's blood boiled with anger, he did not rush head first and calmly analysed the situation. He could tell that the demon's aura had changed somewhat now that he was holding that dilapidated sword.

The other floating swords aside, the one of the demon's hand gave him an intense feeling of heat and danger as if he would be burned into cinders the moment the sword so much as touched him.

'I don't know how many hits from that sword can my shield take, but one thing is certain. In terms of lethality, that sword is not inferior to my own sword which is made of Adamantine. I cannot allow that sword to graze me' Godwin noted while trying to come up with a strategy.

The sword on the hand of the demon wasn't the only thing he had to pay attention to, the other swords were also so. Although Godwin could also control the numerous swords with [Mana Armament], their numbers and degree of control wouldn't be as perfect as the one displayed by the demon right now.

Additionally, it would just burden his mind and mana consumption further. Even if one possessed a [Superior Mana Lines] and [Minimal Mana Consumption] this kind of performance was simply not practical.

It was like asking for one's mana to be depleted at an insane rate.

So how was the demon keeping it up? Godwin did not believe that the other party had an unlimited amount of mana, even if they were a demon noble they had to have a limit.

"Let's see how long you can keep this up".

The fight ensued once again. However, this time, Godwin was unable to suppress Simon as easily as before. With the presence of hundreds of swords that were protecting and acting like both offence and defence, it was difficult for Godwin to predict their movements even with his high tier [Intuition] skill.

He no longer had complete control over the fight and could only bide his time and wait for when the mana of the demon ran out. Unlike his opponent, Godwin had long reached the level 700 realm and had stepped into the world of the true powerhouses.

Those who reach this level, can absorb the mana from the surroundings to restore their expended mana and fight for a long period of time without worrying about their mana running out.

So in a way, it could be said that they had an endless amount of mana and the longer the fight dragged out, it would only be advantageous for them. The only thing he was worried about was his teammates.

Will they be able to hold on until he defeats the demon?

Simon's glanced at Godwin but he did not say anything. Their fight was intense with none of the parties bothering to speak anything, their sole focus was on their fight and they let their blades do the talking for them.

Simon had long seen through the other party's plan; however, instead of revealing it, he only smiled in contempt and continued to fight just like usual. Time passed by, numerous skills and magic were exchanged in split seconds.

Simon's and Godwin's battle had already become the centre of attention. Their fight was so fierce that the surging shockwaves to be overwhelmed by the Andromedas.

from their collision was like waves of tsunamis sweeping everything away.

The battle between the adventurers and Andromedas was affected due to it. However, it was like a blessing for them who were about to be overwhelmed by the Andromedas.

The war machines also did not press them hard thus giving them the opportunity to witness the battle between the two leaders. Needless to say, it was a command given by Simon, he wanted these adventurers to witness the moment when their pillar of faith crumbles in front of them.

Just thinking about their terror stricken and desperation filled faces, was enough to send a current of exhilaration through Simon's body. He pressed on, fighting with all of his might.

All of his augmenting skills had already been activated and pushed to their extent except for [Ancestral Symbol Ignition]. Simon did not dare to use all of his trump cards at once. And besides, it did not seem like Godwin had revealed all of his cards yet, they were holding onto something.

Simon had to be careful. After a while, Godwin who was in the midst of deflecting numerous swords that came sweeping down on him from every angle, realised that something was wrong.

The mana of the demon did not show any trend of drastic drop. On the contrary, at the rate at which it was being expended, it did not seem like the other party would be running out of mana any time soon.

How was it possible?

Could it be that the other party was not using multiple skills to control all these swords? Then how was he able to use the various skills within each of the swords?

Chapter 740 740- [Thousand Swords Mastery] (3)

What Godwin didn't know was that Simon wasn't superimposing multiple skills at once to control hundreds of swords as that would only play into the hands of the enemy. Instead, he was using the [Thousand Sword Mastery], a Lost Ancient tier skill that he had evolved from the Normal [Sword Mastery] skill.

Normally it would be impossible for the [Sword Mastery] skill to evolve in that direction unless one was stupidly rich and foolish enough to practice with all sorts of swords. That's right, the

[Thousands Sword Mastery] was a skill that was accidentally created by Simon when he was practising with all the swords in his [Inventory] like a madman.

That said, it was impossible for anyone to acquire the same skill by copying his actions, after all, even Simon himself did not know it but he was only able to create the [Thousand Sword mastery] because of the [Ga??????] and [Armoury].

The [Ga??????] skill was an exclusive skill of the game Laplace and [Armoury] needed one to have a deep understanding of the items to upgrade them. Thanks to these two skills, Simon possessed near enough understanding of each of the swords to create a skill as versatile and absurd as the [Thousand Sword Mastery].

This skill might have a wide range of uses and applications like attacking and defending but it fell short in some areas when it came to pure understanding and refined skills created through the extreme mastery of a single sword.

For example, the [Resilient Tempest Sword Mastery] skill of Godwin which had evolved twice from the normal tier [Sword Mastery], was a Rare Ancient tier skill. Although it lost to [Thousand Sword Mastery] in terms of rarity, but in terms of pure sword skill and techniques it was more powerful than the [Thousand Sword Mastery].

This is because Simon hadn't mastered and tried refining his techniques over any of the swords. He simply had enough understanding of the hundreds of swords to create a bizarre skill such as this.

This is also the reason why the skill is called [Thousand Sword Mastery] since he uses a thousand swords instead of [Burnt Sword Mastery] that would come from mastering the [S] tier sword in his hand.

That said, if looked at from the overall perspective, the [Thousand Sword Mastery] was better since it allowed him to use a thousand swords and the skills bestowed within each of them in any way he wants.

He did not need the aid of [Mana Flow], [Mana Control], [Minimal Mana Consumption] and other various skills to utilise them, a feat that only a few people in this world could recreate.

For an erratic like Simon, who did not conform to the laws of this world, it was the best skill he could get. Just think about it, a thousand swords surrounding and floating around Simon, displaying the skills within them.

Forget about the kind of terrifying power it would bring, just the sight of a thousand swords shining with various skills, would be enough to intimidate and break the hearts of any opponent.

Right now, Simon only had around five hundred swords that were above [C] tier. Of course, he would have a lot more if discounting the fact that a good number of it was used up during the process to upgrade the sword to [A] and [B] tier.

Simon planned to fill the numbers in the future and use a full thousand swords just like the name of the skill [Thousand Sword mastery] to overwhelm his enemies. But that was not all, Simon also planned to increase the number of [A] tier and [B] tier swords in his arsenal.

Right now, the majority of the five hundred sword were [C], only a small portion was [B], much less needs to be said for [A]. Simon had lofty goals, he wanted to possess over a thousand [S] tier swords and use them, that way even the power that his [Thousand Sword Mastery] skill could display would be even greater.

Possessing over a thousand [S] tier swords, if anybody heard that or knew of his goal, they would no doubt deem him as some kind of idiot, or someone who had a screw loss.

[A] tiers were already incredibly rare in this world as for [S] tiers they were even so. Only a few unparalleled craftsmen in this world could create an [S] tier item and even then it takes them a long time and effort to create.

Plus a single mistake can completely ruin the entire effort, making it even more arduous for an [S] tier to appear.

Given all of these facts, Simon's dream might sound like a lunatic's rambling; however, it might just really come true. After all, he possessed the two options that no one else possessed and at the rate at which his dungeon grew, he would soon be able to allocate more points for [Ga?????].

Funnily enough, it might just be a matter of time before the beings of this world witness a thousand [S] tier swords surrounding and levitating around a demon.

Then there was also the [Thousand Sword Mastery] skill itself, which had reached the Lost Ancient tier in its first evolution. This meant that the skill still had more room to grow. What would happen once Simon increases the tier of his skill?

At that time, what tier would the skill reach? Legendary? Phantasmal? Or perhaps even higher? How many swords would he be able to use at that time? Ten thousand? Hundred thousand? Or perhaps a million?

Simon seemed to have already seen the path he needed to walk to master close combat, a path that only he could walk on. If he continued down this path, he would no doubt be able to reach the peak.

Now add his talent for magic into the mix and the foundation he had been building for supporting both the disciplines and the result one would get was... Terrifying.

It would be oversimplifying things with just the terrifying after all, a solid foundation like what Simon was building, set him for a path of the exceptional, a royal road.

Godwin must have also noticed the peculiarity in the demon's skill set and came to a realisation. His attacks started becoming heavier, winds started picking speed and the mana in the surrounding agglomerated towards him like crazy.

It was clear that Godwin had been forced to change his plans and reveal another one of his cards that he had been hiding up until now.

"Hehe... Interesting, then let us see whose trump card is more powerful" Simon also stopped playing around, he now had enough gauge on his own ability and the opponent's strength. He brought out the Finger of Ozymandias and let loose the curse energy inside it.

As the greyish black energy drowned the place, the sky and even the world around him started to change colour. From white, it changed into dull grey. Although these changes were only limited to his side of the space.

Over on Godwin's side, the sky was a mix of emerald green and faint golden colour that swirled and churned with him as the centre. After a while, a pillar of light dropped from the sky and engulfed Godwin within it.

Like a light descending from the heavens, the scene was both fascinating and nerve wracking.

The pillar of light stayed on Godwin for a while, before dissipating. When the light disappeared, the adventurer's figure came into view once again. However, unlike before Godwin looked completely different.

He had a golden set of armour that pulsed with a divine light donned, the colour of his pupils had changed to match his armour and most obvious and conspicuous of all, he had sprouted a pair of long golden wings behind his back.

That's right, the wings on Godwin's back were no longer the mana wings but actual physical wings just like Simon's. Though in his case, the wings were elegant and shone with a grace that defied earthly bounds.

The feathers, like spun gold, caught and held the very essence of light itself. Each plume glistened with an otherworldly luminescence, a shimmering cascade of soft, iridescent hues that ranged from the purest gold to the palest ivory.

No matter who it was, they would be fascinated by this sight.

"Quick look... the appearance of Leader changed"...

"Right... he looks more charismatic and sanctified than before"...

"Did leader have that kind of skill? Why have I never seen him use it before?"...

"Hmph, how can someone like you be worthy to know the abilities that leader possesses? Clearly, he was withholding it all this time to use it as his trump card"...

"Anywho... with this, we are saved now. With this level of power, the demon should no longer pose a threat".

The adventurers watching the battle from the distance rejoiced at the powerful transformation of their leader. They thought that with this new power up, victory was almost but certain for them.

"This... so he was even forced to use the power hidden within his body" Raven muttered in a low voice. Unlike the others around him, his eyes looked solemn and his fists trembled as he observed Godwin from the distance.

His teammates only marvelled at Godwin's transformation; however, it was only he who knew what kind of sacrifice the other had to give to receive that kind of power.

Over on the other side, just like everyone else, Simon too was marvelling at the drastic change that his opponent had gone through. Looking at that kind of eye-catching transformation, he almost had the urge to retort.