

Earths GMagus 201

Chapter 201: Request

As soon as the entrance to their small hiding space was covered by chunks of earth, Emery gently placed Silva to the ground. Right then, his knees finally gave in and he collapsed to the ground. He really did use every last bit of his energy to hide Silva and himself here.

He laid on the ground, trying to relax even as his mind blanks out on the precipice of unconsciousness. After a while, he wheezed out. "We should... be... safe here..." Emery said, silently hoping in his heart that none of the regular acolytes had any sort of good tracking spells.

To his astonishment, Silva casually casted a spell. Tree roots started crawling from the small space he left and slowly made the place a little bit bigger. In addition, the green roots grew all over the chunks of earth, closing the entrance gap and reinforcing it.

Even with one look, Emery was able to tell how strong the roots actually were. The roots appeared and felt similar to those she used in [Wall of Thorns], except this time, there was no thorn around each root. He then saw Silva closing her eyes, the greenish light slowly glowing. She had casted [Nature Sense] just like Emery had done before to check the surroundings

"Seems like none of them was able to track us down... The [Blink] spell you chose to use is great, but throwing the stone into the water as a distraction was a nice touch. You know what, Emery? You're not completely idiotic, I guess."

Right at that moment, Emery realized Silva was pretending to be sick and weak this whole time. Her pale complexion, stutter and the sweat covering her whole body seemed to have almost disappeared.

Realizing Emery was looking at her with mouth agape, Silva decided to explain.

"Yeah, I was playing sick there. Look, we were in a desperate situation, alright? I was about to tell you, but then you grabbed my arm and-" Silva shook her head, "Alright, the point is, don't blame me for this!"

All of a sudden, Emery could feel his head throbbing. At first, he thought the headache was due to the girl's shocking actions, but the fact that his body felt even more drained now proved otherwise. Emery slowly started to lose consciousness while lying there on the ground.

Emery wasn't sure how long he was passed out for, but the next thing he knew, he could feel a strong spiritual energy coursing through his body.

Emery opened his eyes and saw a strange-looking flower glowing right in front of him. The bloom was around the size of his arm, each petal wide open and its pistil seemed to be constantly bursting with fresh, glowing dew. Each dew carried a little bit of plant energy, filling the place with the refreshing aura of the plant element. The dew landing on his skin made Emery feel more and more refreshed, as the seconds tick on.

Silva was sitting not too far from him. Her eyes were closed, while she sat in a meditative position to better absorb the energy. When she felt Emery stir, she asked him with pride.

"How do you like my [Spiritual Seeds] spell? I reckon this is no less effective than your [Nature Blessing]."

Emery, who was lying on the ground, slowly sat and assumed a meditative position before asking. "Yes this spell is amazing, ..So how long was I out?"

"Around two hours, we should be able to continue the game within a few hours." Silva said.

Emery decided to concentrate on the symbol engraved on his hand and seek information about the current state of the game.

[Regular acolytes: 241/320]

[Elite acolyte: 44/50]

[Your total point: 10.000]

[Your current rank: 10]

Upon seeing his current rank, Emery felt a deep satisfaction to the point he didn't realize he was smiling. It was a relief seeing the effort of beating two elite acolytes was not in vain.

Unfortunately, he did not have the chance to bask in his happiness, as Silva snapped him out from his reverie by asking. "So, I assume you already have 10 thousand points?"

Emery nodded in agreement.

"Hey, even though you managed to kill the strongest elite, don't rest on your laurels and think as if you're a winner already! Considering the distribution of the points and the current number of acolytes left, the safest amount of points to aim for is 23000. That much should guarantee you a spot among the elites."

Emery was about to ask Silva how she could come up with such an arbitrary-sounding number, but Silva immediately continued explaining.

"My prediction might not be accurate for this Group 7 game. The points should be more spread out in our case."

"How so?" Emery asked.

"Can't you see? It has been only four hours since the game started, but 6 elite acolytes have already been defeated."

"But In comparison, there are also 80 regular acolytes defeated, so isn't this normal?" Emery replied

"Aaargh! Talking to you feels like talking to a duck! Didn't you know that every year, on average only 5 regular acolytes can get enough points to get to the top 50? But currently not even half the game has passed and there are already 6 defeated elites. And as you manage to beat Lodos, I assume there will be more regular able to get into the top 50 from this group"

Emery furrowed his brows and gave Silva's explanation some thought before nodding. It appeared possible the big alliance formed by Roran became a big factor in this matter.

Silva continued "So, how does it feel defeating two acolytes especially that Maniac Lodos."

Emery honestly felt some kind of achievement, but then he still found himself lacking a lot. Luck played a big part in his victory, so he wasn't entirely proud about it.

"Well I had help, so I can't really say."

Silva frowned again and said "You should give yourself more credit. Emery! You did really good back there. If I manage to do what you did I'm sure my family and clan would be very proud."

"Your family?" Emery asked, curious.

"Ahh, sorry I don't really want to talk about it. They... they are difficult. Can you believe that if I didn't make it into the elite class, they planned to outcast me? Such a great family, right!"

Although she said she didn't want to talk about it, she still did. Silva continued talking about her family for quite a while. Apparently her background was not simple, her clan was one of the most influential in the universe, and for her to succeed in the Magus Academy was very important.

Hearing the girl continuous talk, Emery couldn't help but stare. Although she appeared tough and curse words followed each of her sentences, behind the white hair and pale skin, Emery could see a beautiful and smart girl. Combined with her wide knowledge and cunning personality Silva is an amazing girl.

Silva suddenly realized Emery stare

"Hey! Why are you staring?"

Emery quickly tried to find the words and finally said, "I realized I haven't said my proper thanks for helping me back there."

Silva looked at him, her gaze a bit startled, before saying. "Like I said before, I really found you by coincidence. Just think of it as you finally getting lucky, while your bad luck rubbed off on me."

"But still." Emery shook his head. "You came to help me regardless, and for that, I am immensely grateful."

"Huh? If you really feel that way... How about this? Say you owe me one favor and you will do one request of mine. How about it?"

Emery did not hesitate to agree, fully aware his survival was thanks to her. "Alright. What do you want?"

"I... I want you to stop hanging out with your four lame friends and stay with me..." She suddenly panicked and repeated "...No! I mean stay with your own kind... the half blood"

Emery was startled with the weird request, but he gave a small smile anyway. "No, sorry I can't do that...."

"Huh, I thought you said you'll do one request? Alright, how about you just stop talking to that annoying girl, then?"

Emery again only managed to give Silva a wry smile. "Sorry, I don't think you can do that either"

"No?! Huh! I knew you wouldn't agree... If you want to keep wasting your time with those humans, so be it! Don't come asking me for help again later."

The situation immediately turned awkward. Not long after, Emery felt his whole body had finally been refreshed.

Silva asked, "So what's your plan now?"

"I plan to meet the others at the center"

"Don't! You should come with me meeting the other two elite half blood... they are not too far"

"Wow, how did you know that they are not far?"

"Not hard... one of my innate abilities is releasing a toxin into a body and later being able to track said person."

Emery quickly remembered his right arm, the one which was bitten by Silva before the game started. Before he was about to ask about it, a little glowing green bird flew through towards him.

[You receive a new message]

[Emery! Where have you been? Things have turned chaotic here, hurry up and come to the center!]

Chapter 202: The Center

Seeing the approaching bird in the Sky, Silva commented, "That's a spirit bird, a wind spirit for sending messages... Let me take a guess, it's from your girlfriend isn't it?"

Emery, who was too concerned with the content of the message, absentmindedly answered. "Yes..." Realizing what he just said, Emery quickly countered, "I mean, no... not from girlfriend" He cleared his throat and said. "It's from Klea..."

Glancing towards Silva, Emery knew from her gaze, it was clear she was seething with annoyance.

Emery quickly told the content of the message "It seems there's a huge battle currently happening in the center?" he muttered while casting his gaze to the direction of the center.

Before answering the message, Emery quickly checked the symbol etched on his hand once again.

[Regular acolytes: 225/320]

[Elite acolyte: 40/50]

[Your total point: 10.000]

[Your current rank: 18]

Only an hour had passed since Emery last checked the symbol for the current number of surviving acolytes. Unexpectedly, four more elite acolytes had been defeated while only 16 regular acolytes died.

The number indicated that while weaker, the regular acolytes certainly put up a good fight against the elite counterparts. However, even though the number seemed to be in favor of the regular acolytes, Emery couldn't help but worry about the safety of his friends.

Making up his mind, Emery swiftly stood up, ready to go after his friend. However, Silva pulled his clothes and asked. "Where do you think you are going?"

"I have to go now. My friend is currently in a bind, and I have to help them."

Silva gritted her teeth and screamed. "Emery, you absolute moron!" Noticing her conduct wasn't right, Silva took a deep breath and said, "Alright, listen here, you dimwit, let me get it through your thick skull. You realised that, at a time like this, the center is the most dangerous area of them all, right?!"

The expression on Emery's face remained resolute even after he listened to Silva's words. Meanwhile, Silva seemed to be shaking with anger at his reaction.

"I understand. But this is a different case, my friends and the acolytes in the alliance are all gathered in the center." Emery calmly said.

"You may be right, but for that, you have to be sure of whether you can trust them." Silva commented, while still holding him.

Emery was sure he could trust his four friends from Earth, as for the others, he had the soul contract they all signed to depend on. Silva saw Emery remain unshaken in his decision and she clicked her tongue in annoyance.

"Huh! Fine then, you seem to have made up your mind. Do whatever you want and go!" Silva said, as she released her grip.

Emery took a few steps forward, but right when he was about to leave, he stopped and looked back towards Silva. "You should come with me. I will vouch for you."

"I'll have to decline." Silva shook her head. "If I go to the center with you, I won't win the game."

Not really sure what Silva meant, Emery continued to say his thanks, but Silva seemed to be ignoring him. "Good luck then and thanks again Silva"

Not wanting to waste any more time, Emery quickly turned around and jumped on top of the nearest and tallest tree. He casted [Nature Sense] and [Hide in Shadow] to disguise his presence and for his own safety, before confirming his destination.

Emery scouted around the area, and found a building that was almost unseen with naked eyes. He then jumped down and dashed forward in the direction of the building, while maintaining awareness of the current situation and his surroundings.

The road towards the building was long and dangerous, and as he ran, he could sense some skirmishes and even huge fights happening all around him. Not wanting to waste time and his remaining energy with risky fights, Emery chose to evade them by taking the longer way around before continuing towards his destination.

While running as fast as he could, Emery thought about Silva's last words before ignoring him, about how she would not win if she chose to follow him. He realized Silva had wasted a ton of time helping him with the fight against Lodos and then assisting his recovery, when he was out of commission.

There were only two thirds of regular acolytes left, so it would be even harder for her now to gather points. He wondered why she would do that? Especially with her family and clan huge expectations on her shoulders.

After running for almost half an hour, Emery finally reached the outskirts of the central area. He climbed one of the tallest trees near him and looked around, before his gaze settled on a pyramid-shaped structure made with material similar to stone.

At the direction of the entrance, Emery spotted around two dozen acolytes standing guard vigilantly. From afar, he was able to recognize some of them, as they were part of the alliance for regular acolytes. However, he did not see any of his friends among those standing on guard duty.

Not wanting to take a risk on his safety, Emery decided to run around and head to the other side of the structure. According to the information he obtained from Roran, there were supposed to be two entrances to the structure.

The structure was quite big, and it took Emery five minutes of running at full speed to even see a little of the other side. Unlike the first entrance, the situation was very different here. He was able to sense and hear the distinct sound of spells being thrown around. From the [nature sense] spell he also can hear several figures spread out all over the forest. It was a battlezone.

He decided to take the safer approach and hide in the treelines, when suddenly a figure ran towards him away from the structure. It was a regular acolyte. However, as he did not realize Emery's presence there before, he stopped and stared at Emery, his eyes wide and his expression full of shock.

"You.. You.. pa..rt of them?!"

The acolyte turned into a stuttering mess when he saw Emery, while Emery was trying to assess the situation. However, it seems that the acolyte was far too high-strung. The moment Emery moved his wrist even slightly, the acolyte casted the ice element spell [Ice Bullets].

The temperature in the air seemed to drop a few notches, as multiple tiny ice shards manifested in the air before flying towards Emery. The spell started far too quickly, Emery was barely able to dodge the shards.

When he was about to cast another spell, Emery shouted. "Stop it! I mean no harm!"

The acolyte stopped casting for a moment, glanced at Emery, and replied. "No harm? You think I would fall for that?"

"Hey. Look. I just got here, and I don't want to waste much strength fighting against you. We are both regular acolytes, Just tell me what happened."

"What the fuck? Is this one of your tricks? All of you really are shameless! Fight with honor, dammit!"

Emery is still trying to find information about what happened. But right when he was about to ask again, a figure came moving fast from behind the acolyte with his weapon brandished. The acolyte was distracted thanks to Emery, and thus, he became unable to dodge the strike properly.

Right after he turned, a spear pierced through the acolyte's body right in the chest. Not willing to give up just yet, with both his arms spreading the ice element, the acolyte was about to cast a spell. However,

the figure holding the spear swiftly used [Vicious Barrage] skill, as the spear blurred and pierced the poor acolyte multiple times. When the spear stopped its movements, the acolyte's body dropped to the ground, before it dispersed into multiple light particles.

Emery was shocked by the sudden attack. With the acolyte's disappearance, Emery could finally see the figure holding the spear and realized who it was, a familiar face.

"My man, Emery! What took you so long! You have missed a lot of the fights!..

The figure with brown hair and holding the spear was no other than, "Thrax!" Emery exclaimed loudly.

Looking at Emery's shocked face, Thrax laughed and said, " I thought you had already died! We have been waiting for you for hours! Oo sorry I hope I didn't just steal your point just now. ha.ha"

Emery then realized, it seems the previous ice element acolyte was running away from a fight and being chased by Thrax all the way here. Before Emery could explain the reason for his delay, Thrax continued his words, "Let's get back to the center first. It's not safe here outside."

Chapter 203: The Pyramid Structure

Thrax led Emery towards the second entrance, while the two of them kept on the lookout for enemies. After a few minutes of walking, Emery saw a dozen other acolytes had gathered near the entrance, as if they were waiting for something or someone. Each of them scanned their surroundings vigilantly and were fully equipped with weapons, showing they were ready for confrontation at any time.

From the mess seen in the surrounding area, Emery was able to conclude that a battle had just happened in this place. It looked like everyone gathered here was a regular acolytes and they had captured other regular acolytes. As for the reason, neither Thrax nor Emery knew yet, but they could at least guess it.

Emery approached them to take a closer look and saw one captured acolyte was begging to be released.

"Dopa! We are from the same class 75, please release me! I don't have enough points yet. Please don't do this!" the acolyte cried, as he grabbed the other acolyte's robe.

"Huh?! Now you are begging? I bet you regret not accepting my offer to join the alliance back then."

"Yes! I really regret it! Dopa, please! Let me go right now!" the acolyte quickly replied, as he saw the other acolytes.

"How about... no? Continue dreaming and one day you might get into the elite class, sucker!"

Right after mocking him, Dopa slammed down his huge ax towards the poor acolyte's head, instantly killing him and turning him into motes of light particles.

Dopa was one of the more influential figures from Class 75. He was influential enough to lead his own team, but his team unfortunately was not in the top 10. Therefore, his influence in the alliance was not as big as Emery's team.

"Oh hey, Emery! You're here!" Chumo called out from afar and waved his hand before coming closer.

"So, how many points have you gotten?" Emery asked with a smile. Upon hearing the question, Thrax looked at Chumo in interest before interjecting. "Ah, right, yeah. Let's say our current points!"

"I got..." Emery halted, checking his points. "10.000 points so far."

"Wow! Emery, that's so amazing! I only have 3000 points, while Thrax here got 4000."

Thrax cut in and showed a proud smile. "Nah, not anymore. 5000 now! I just got one."

From hearing the number of points all his friends have gathered, Emery realized everyone here had been fighting other regular acolytes only. Well, it was to be expected. After all, there was no way his friends would be so "lucky" to find so many elite acolytes like him.

In the middle of their lively conversation, Chumo approached Emery, leaned close to him, and whispered. "Oh right, Emery... Watch out. When you see Klea, you better be on your best behavior, or..."

"What do you mean, Chumo?" Emery asked with a confused expression. Alas, before Chumo could explain what he meant. An enraged shout could be heard from afar, making the three of them turn their heads and look at the source.

"EMERYYY!!!"

Klea shouted, before running towards Emery at a breakneck speed, like a racing car. Her expression was one of annoyance, as she looked at Emery up and down, seemingly checking for wounds.

"Where the hell have you been?! You really got me worried, you know!"

Upon receiving the blast of words, Emery could only scratch his cheek. "Well, I'm sorry. I encountered a few elites on my way here, so..."

Klea looked around Emery. She seemed distracted and not too interested in hearing Emery's side of the story. After looking around the surrounding for a while, Klea walked closer and whispered.

"You were late because of that snake girlfriend of yours, didn't you?" Klea narrowed her eyes accusingly.

"Huh? Ah, no..." Emery rubbed the back of his head. "I was fighting two elite acolytes and got injured, so I rested first before coming here."

"Bad Emery, you can't lie to me, you know? I can sense it, and if you still dare try lying to me, You do know I can just enchant you so you tell the truth!"

"Wow, that's... no, we did nothing of the sort. I just saw her, and we fought together. I was late not because of her or anything like that."

Hearing Emery's explanation made Klea proceed to continue asking him what happened during the hours they were separated. However, Emery, sensing the incoming barrage of questions, decided to cut in and asked. "Hey, by the way, where is Julian? Is he alright?"

As usual, the mention of Julian's name made Thrax snort, before he answered with a tinge of annoyance. "That Roman is more than fine, worry about yourself more than about him." Thrax pointed towards a group of acolytes gathered around someone. In the middle of that crowd, Emery saw Julian

giving instructions and discussing various strategies with the other acolytes. Curious, Emery approached them.

"Ah, my brother Emery, I'm glad to see you return here safe and sound!" Julian said. "Now that you have come here, you can take the guard duty at this position and cover this part. I assume you'll get a sword, so why don't you partner with Chumo? That way, you have perfect offense from the front line and backline!"

Emery saw Julian clearly took his whole co-leader of the alliance thing extremely seriously. So far, he had been fully committed to the well being of the alliance and tried his very best to look out for everyone. Seeing the attitudes of the acolytes made Emery crack a small smile. Just last year, those acolytes would have made fun of him for being a magus from a lower world, now everyone listened to Julian. It appeared being part of the top 10 in the first game did give them some advantages.

"Ah, right. Hey, Emery! Quickly, get your weapon inside!" Julian said as he beckoned with his hand.

Emery walked deeper into the place, while accompanied by Klea behind him. To enter this place, one had to use one of the two entrances, and the two entrances both led to another entrance, letting them reach the room where they could retrieve their chosen weapon. As there were alliance members guarding both of the entrances, the normal acolytes got the advantage of equipment alongside their inherent advantage in numbers.

The inside entrance led to a huge space with multiple cube-like items stacked all around them. Each cube looked similar to the cubes available to them in their own residence.

[Congratulations on reaching the center, you are rewarded with one weapon]

[Choose your weapon]

As usual, Emery chose a long sword. As soon as he made his choice, a flash of light appeared and a standard looking sword materialized right in front of him. Emery looked at the sword's surface and gave it a few practice swings. From the weight and sharpness of the sword, it seemed to be no more than a tier 2 item.

Emery tinkered around with the cube again, hoping to get a secondary weapon. However, the notification appearing before his eyes told him that each acolyte was only allowed to get one weapon. Right as Emery stopped fumbling with the cube, Klea gave him a mischievous smile.

"Emery, I think you'd like to see this." Klea said, as she offered him another sword, and Emery gave her a confused stare.

"See, I got this one from the first big battle, right after we took over this central area from the elites. You know I have no use for a sword, so you can have it."

A look of realization appeared on Emery's face. "Thank you very much, Klea,"

"I knew you would appreciate it. Tell me, aren't I the nicest person you will ever meet? Right?" Klea teased Emery and giggled.

Emery seriously gave it a thought before saying, "Yes, Klea you are the nicest person I have ever met."

Klea stopped giggling, not expecting that Emery would take her jokes seriously. Her face immediately went as red as a tomato.

After getting his weapon, Emery met with Roran, who quickly brief him of the situation. Thanks to picking up bits and pieces of information from Roran and the gathered acolytes, Emery was able to understand their current situation better and what did he miss the last 6 hours.

From the 92 members of the alliance, a total of 74 acolytes managed to reach the center. Roran was in charge of guarding the northern entrance along with half of the surviving acolytes, while the other half and Julian were in charge of guarding the southern entrance. All the while, they had been killing a few elites and dozens of regulars, who tried to approach the center.

Roran's preparations paid off, and it appeared that everything was running as they planned.

Chapter 204: Arena Border

Looking at the situation in the center, it appeared the alliance's plan to work together and dominate the area was going smoothly. After taking and equipping his weapon, Emery proceeded to go and join Julian again.

Another hour had passed and the southern entrance guarded by Emery's team, which was led by Julian, seemed to run wonderfully. Naturally, there were some awkward moments at first, due to their unfamiliarity with each other. However, the group cooperated well after going through a few skirmishes and fights together.

Inside the group Emery was currently in, there were 36 acolytes. Besides his team, which consisted of 5 people, the others within it were Okoye's all girl team and Dopa's team.

Surprisingly, Julian was able to lead the team effectively, despite the stark diversity between leading a group of acolytes and leading a group of Roman soldiers, whether because of the two sides' extreme difference on attack patterns, method and formation.

The Roman legionnaires were known for their flexibility in battle. They tended to have multiple tactics prepared in each of their fights. This versatile perspective towards battle was what Julian thrived for.

Julian clearly knew and understood the alliance's main objective was not defending the center, but to kill as many acolytes as possible for points and reach the top 50.

To accomplish that, it did not matter if the acolytes were the elites or regulars. If they were not members of the alliance, there was only one conclusion for them.

To complete this objective, the group needed to make sure the 'prey' would dare to approach the area. Therefore, Julian divided the 36 acolytes into three groups.

First group consisted of 12 acolytes, who were assigned to stand guard in front of the entrance. Their position was thoroughly arranged, so that they were visible in the plain sight. This group would become the bait. Their numbers were few enough to make sure the opponent dared to fight them, while also large enough to make sure they would hold on long enough until reinforcements came. Naturally, the acolytes who were assigned to this were the ones with good defensive skills or great close combat prowess, such as Thrax, Okoye and her Akamba warriors.

The second group, 12 acolytes chosen from the acolytes, who had great mobility spells in their repertoire, like Emery and Chumo. They were placed away from the first group and scattered in the treeline. This group would be in charge of intel about the incoming acolytes. Emery with his [Hide in Shadow] and [Nature Sense] spells was very much suitable for this role.

The third, and last group was hidden inside the center building and would act as the strike team, surprising and subjugating the opponents with their attacks, when the battle with the first group was ongoing. As the one who threw spells the best among the five of them, Klea naturally was part of this group.

Julian himself, being the leader of the group, stood unwavering in the front of the first group. He needed to be in the open area, in order to see the perfect timing to give the signals to the others.

When a group of six acolytes approached the southern entrance thinking they could break through the first group, they quickly and unknowingly became a fish in the net.

The 12 acolytes of the first group against 6 acolytes could be said as an easy fight, but it was a mistake to underestimate the regular acolytes. After all, everyone who managed to join the second game was an accomplished and strong fighter. These acolytes always had unexpected spells that needed to be handled.

[Cyclone - Tier 4 Wind Spell]

The spell immediately materialized gusts of wind, which then formed into a typhoon. It caused the guarding acolytes to be pushed back and created an opening between their ranks. Immediately, all five acolytes rushed into the opening. There was also an elite acolyte, who thought it was a good idea to sneak into the building during the chaos. However, regret quickly engulfed them, as they saw another group of acolytes had waited for them.

A few of the rushing acolytes had a life-saving spell and were able to retreat out of the building quickly. Alas, the second group, who had prepared and waited in the treeline, swiftly pounced on the retreating acolytes like a predator did to its prey. In the end, all 7 acolytes were defeated and ended up into the same light particles.

This was how Julian set the strategy for the group and how he received the acknowledgment from these prideful acolytes.

Seeing the dissipating elite acolyte before him, Emery briefly checked the symbol on his hand.

[Regular acolytes: 192/320]

[Elite acolyte: 37/50]

[Your total point: 10.000]

[Your current rank: 22]

Unfortunately, the main problem of the alliance plan was the scarce amount of opponents they had to share among themselves. The past hour of victory only ended up with 12 acolytes worth of points shared among the 36 acolytes stationed in the southern entrance.

There were just not enough points to share among them. Sometimes the group wondered if they could get more points by going solo rather than camping together like this. Currently, they were dependent on the bonus points they would receive when they managed to get into the top 50, a whopping 10,000 points. That would exceed the amount of point they got from killing an elite acolyte. However, that would mean each of them need to survive until the end.

To make sure himself and all four of his friends would have the needed points, they shared their allocated points. Emery pocketed 10,000 points, Thrax had 6,000 points, Chumo earned 4,000 points, Klea netted 7,000 points, while the busy yet poor Julian only had 2,000 points.

Other than Emery, only Klea was able to defeat one elite acolytes and receive 5,000 points. As for Julian, he had been very occupied organizing the group, leaving him no time to fight at all. Hence, his low points.

Another hour had passed and the situation still kept in its status quo. When Emery rubbed his eyes, a notification suddenly popped up, startling him. The sudden screen before him almost made him fall from the tree he was on.

[6 hours till the game ends]

[Arena border will get smaller in 5 minutes]

This notification meant the game had reached its mid point. The 20 kilometer radius of the arena would be shortened to 10 kilometers. Emery understood that, from this point onwards, the fights would be more frequent, as the chances of acolytes meeting each other increased due to the reduced area.

When the notification announced to everyone, Roran called out the leader of the teams for a briefing. Emery, Dopa, Okoye as well as Julian, due to his position as the co-leader of the alliance. Meanwhile, Roran came and was accompanied by his two co-leader and the leaders of the teams in the north group: Lymord, the guy with a scar in his eyes and Malara, the red hair beauty.

Scanning his eyes through everyone in the room, Roran said, "Guys, we have done pretty well so far. However, if we don't make it to the top 50 later, all of our efforts will be for naught."

He then proceeded to explain the next three hours would be crucial on whether they would get into the top 50 or not. He believed the appearance of their alliance would lead to a creation of an alliance among the elite acolytes as well. He was sure they would come for them, sooner or later.

After saying his piece and deciding the strategy to welcome the incoming acolytes, the leaders quickly split up into their own team and continued the strategy to the other acolytes.

Half an hour later, just as expected, the acolytes began to come in groups, increasing the difficulty of the battle. Hence, casualties started to appear on the group guarding the southern entrance. After three hours, there were only 32 members left in the group, while the others were quite exhausted by the fights. Then, the next notification arrived.

[3 hours till the game ended]

[Arena border will get smaller in 5 minutes]

With the radius of the arena slowly shrinking into 5 kilometers, Emery could faintly see the glowing barrier in the distance, surrounding the center from all directions.

[Regular acolytes: 122/320]

[Elite acolyte: 32/50]

There were only around 150 acolytes left and about half of them are the alliance. Emery could feel the big battle would arrive anytime now. And, as if the notification was its cue, a dozen figures came out from the treeline. All elite acolytes.

Chapter 205: Elites Group

Julian, Thrax, Okoye and the other 12 acolytes in the first group watched the elite acolytes casually walk out from the forest. From how their bodies tense up, it was clear they were on high alert.

From the group, a guy with flowing, wavy bluish hair stepped forward and stopped before Julian's group and gave them a deep bow. Upon standing back up, he gave a wide smile, positioned his hands in a spread eagle position and said.

"Ah, your teamwork is really impeccable! I applaud you all for the achievement. Who is the leader?"

As if answering the question, Julian took a step forward, his expression fierce. He gripped his sword and shield tight, ready to fight should the need arise.

"Whoa, you look so dashing, dear acolyte... Please, do give me the pleasure of hearing your name."

Seeing the blue-haired man's behavior sent a chill down the first group acolytes' spine. Meanwhile, unlike the other acolytes, Thrax just gave Julian a weird, judgmental look.

"My name is Julian." Julian answered with detachment, obviously trying to distance himself from the man, but not wanting to show weakness by stepping back.

"Yes, yes... Julian." The blue haired man muttered the name several times, letting it roll on his tongue.

"That's a good name, I am Micah. You have all done your legwork. You succeeded to force us, the elites to group, to act. For that, I extend my congratulations to you all. However, now, the time has come for you all to stand down."

Julian narrowed his eyes. "Do you realize we have more people and weapons, while you have nothing, right?" Julian raised his hand. As they discussed before, the hand was a signal for everyone to come out of their assigned areas.

Emery, Chumo, Klea, and everyone else who was in hiding moved into the battlefield, tipping the score at 32 regular acolytes versus only ten elite acolytes.

Julian and the other realized, the moment they caught wind of the elites grouping up, they needed a different tactic. The plan was simply to quickly gather up, hold and surround the elite group. Meanwhile, one acolyte would go straight to the other entrance to call up for backup.

Being surrounded didn't concern the elite group in the least. Micah calmly said "Julian, Julian... What a fool. Do you think these numbers and those weapons you carry scare us? The fact you still need a weapon is proof you are not worthy to be part of the elite group."

Micah waved his hand, the air instantly felt colder. Blue light shone from his palm and extended before turning into a sharp blade made of solid ice.

"With a powerful enough spell, even a blade made of the most brittle ice is more dependable than those poor excuses of weapons you all hold."

Micah raised the ice blade up high, letting it catch the waning rays of the sun above. The blade distorted the white light and shone in seven colors, while Micah admired it as if it was the most beautiful thing ever made in the world.

"Micah, you talk too much!" Julian snapped.

Hearing Julian's shout made Micah stop admiring his blade and narrow his eyes at Julian. From the anger he radiated, one would be forgiven to think Julian had touched a sore spot. Micah hissed, swung his blade as a display of threat, and looked at the brown skinned acolyte standing next to him. The brown-skinned acolyte's body instantly hardened and he turned into some kind of stone golem.

Everyone there could sense it was not a mere [Stone Skin] spell, it was [Stone Body – Tier 4 Earth Element], Though similar in looks to [Stone Skin], the spell was capable of multiplying the user's strength and defense.

The hulking golem charged directly towards Julian and the other 20 acolytes gathered in the middle. The acolytes around quickly scattered and cast various spells in an attempt to stop the golem, from [Fireballs] to [Lightning Bolts] and even [Ice Bullets]. However, the barrage of spells could only delay the stone golem for a second. The golem put both his hand crossed in front of his face to block all the incoming spells, while still changing towards the group.

Most of the regular acolytes around Julian were rank 6 acolytes, and if what happened before was an indication, the rank 3 spells they could use would not be enough to stop the golem. Klea raised her hand and concentrated, ready to cast a tier 4 spell, when Julian suddenly said.

"Hey, barbarian! Are you even still alive? If you are, show him what a Thracian can do best!"

The situation was serious, but Thrax took the bait nonetheless and activated his battle art [Immortal Gate – Stage 4]. Power flowed into his body, followed with a notification in his mind.

[Battle power has been increased by 16]

This was the progress he achieved after defeating the Level 7 wooden puppet, and being able to activate the stage 4 Immortal Gate. Thanks to those two, he was able to reach a whooping 52 points of battle power.

Not wanting to waste the time of his buff, Thrax quickly used the battle art [Spear Throw]. The spear flew quickly through the air, hit the stone golem acolyte, and stabbed deep through his skin and into his flesh. Thrax dashed forward and gave the golem a punch on the stomach, causing a booming noise all

around them. When Thrax tried to pull his spear out, the stone golem was able to grab his arm. The battle turned into a battle of strength. The two were stuck in a tug-o-war trying to pull each other.

"That's more like it, Thrax!" Emery, Julian and the other acolytes cheered. Everyone was amazed that Thrax, a regular acolyte, was able to contest the strength of an elite acolyte using [Stone Body].

Micah twisted his face, annoyed the regular acolytes were not down for the count yet. Julian, sensing the morale of his team was high, quickly gave the signal for the acolytes to cast their long-ranged spells towards the group of elite acolytes. Seeing the group were still gathered up together, he figured it was a good chance to attack.

BAMMM!!! KZZAAMMM!! BAMMM!!

Dozens of spells hit the elite acolytes at the same time. Be it fire, lightning, wind or other elements, they all combined to create a chaotic yet powerful attack.

Julian knew all the elites would have good defensive spells enough to protect themselves and his attempt would be futile at best. However, what he could do at the moment was buy time until Roran's reinforcements arrived. The group kept on bombarding the elites with ranged attack. Emery used his [Enfeeble Blades], Chumo used his [Spirit Missile] and Klea used her [Thunderbolt]. The chaotic attacks sent dust and whirling wind that reduced their visibility.

After several minutes, Julian realized the elites had not unleash any counter attacks yet. Right as he started to worry, the acolyte sent to call for backup returned to them.

"Bad news! A dozen elite acolytes are also attacking the other entrance. There is no way to send backup at the moment. We all are on our own."

Julian sighed when he heard the news and gave a signal for everyone to stop their barrage of spells. Meanwhile, Thrax and the golem also took a few step back after being unable to out strength the other.

The dust slowly dissipated, letting the acolytes see that a dome of thick crystal-like ice covered the entire elite acolyte group and protected them. Moments after the barrage stopped, the crystal broke and disappeared and Micah gave them a creepy smile before pointing at them. "Attack, everyone! Kill them all!"

Chapter 206: Battle of Speed

The tension between the two sides rose with each second of the standoff. And then, Micah gave the signal to start the battle. All the elite acolytes swiftly spreaded out and found their own opponent or, more accurately, 'prey'.

Emery could see one of the regular acolytes instantly turned into light particles when a zap of lightning passed by him. It appeared one of the elites was using some kind of spell that allowed him to move extremely fast, as if using the [Blink] spell. While the regular was still shocked by the sudden movement, the elite already burnt the poor acolyte into a crisp with his lightning element spells.

As for Emery himself, a female elite acolyte rapidly approaching him. Looking at the swirls of wind around her, he could infer she was a wind element acolyte. The female acolyte moved so fast, Emery was barely able to dodge her strike at the last second. If it was not because of the battle art stage three

he had preemptively activated before, Emery was sure he would have been hit by her and sustained an injury.

As a rank 7 acolyte, one would have better overall power whether it was in casting speed, spell power, stamina or physical strength and defense. A wind element acolyte in particular had the best spell to increase its user's speed by a massive amount, the [Windwalk] spell. The spell itself was already a great spell to have but, when it casted by a rank 7 acolyte, the enhancement the spell gave were truly on another level.

The female acolyte didn't give up when she realized her first strike was unsuccessful. She proceeded to move across the grass at high speed, leaving a blur behind her. Emery found it was quite difficult to follow her with his eyesight alone. She continued moving around Emery, as she tried to find an opening she could take advantage of.

swish *swish*

The faint sound of something moving through the air resounded, causing the expression of the female acolyte to change. Suddenly, two arrows were shot from the sides, as they flew towards the moving girl. It was Chumo's [spirit missile]

Unfortunately, the arrows were easily avoided by the girl, as she ducked and slid on the ground. Before Chumo could take another shot, the female acolyte was already two meters away from him with her weapon swinging down on him.

Chumo, who was shocked by the speed of the girl, swiftly took out his weapons and tried to block the attack. Scoffing at the futile attempt, the girl subtly adjusted the angle of her slash, so the attack would land decisively on the Chumo's body.

But then, she was surprised to see the figure she hit was dispersing into a shadow, leaving nothing before her.

Meanwhile, an identical shadow of Chumo was seen moving closer to Emery. "I will back you, Emery." It appeared the girl figure killed by the girl was Chumo's clone, the result of his [Shadow Self] spell.

Seeing his best buddy, Emery flashed a confident smile, "Alright, Chumo! Back to back!"

The two of them then swiftly put their backs against each other. With this, even though their line of sight would be restricted to just what was in front of them, they would also be able to react decisively and did not need to worry about attack coming from behind. This was a good method one could choose when fighting against this type of opponents that relied on speed.

Emery and Chumo immediately casted each of their long range spells, but none were able to graze the girl's clothes let alone hit her. Meanwhile, the girl also didn't remain still, as she counterattacked by hurling blades of wind towards the two of them. Even though Emery and Chumo had dodged the wind blades thrown at them, the sharp winds generated by the spell still managed to scratch their arms and legs.

"This is really annoying!" Emery loudly said, as he stepped to the side, dodging a wind blade coming at him.

Emery truly wished to capture the girl with his [Shadow Root Binding] spell. Alas, the feat was not that easy, since the girl moved too fast for Emery's spells. The spells only hit the empty air, as their target was already a few meters away, while the spells were still on the way.

Suddenly, the girl stopped on her speedy tracks and jumped back in a hurry. Bullets of air landed on the place where the female acolyte was heading to, causing dirt to fly into the air. If she didn't retreat and kept advancing, there was one hundred percent she would be injured by the air bullets.

Apparently, another acolyte had come to help Emery and Chumo fight this female elite. He was a regular acolyte, but he was one of the few rank 7 acolytes among the group. Moreover, he was a wind element acolyte, which was perfect for Emery and Chumo's current situation.

Seeing the situation she was in, the female acolyte immediately charged towards the new acolyte, as she knew he was the greatest threat between them. Unfortunately, the young man was able to dodge her attacks and even counterattack. Hence, a battle of speed was unfolding in front of Emery and Chumo in this instant.

Looking at the fight before them, Chumo opened his mouth, "E-Emery, should we join them?"

Putting his hand under his chin, Emery replied, "Hmm, it depends... Can you follow their speed?"

"Ahh.. Not really..."

At an opportunity like this where the opponent was snatched away, Emery took a moment to look at the situation on the battlefield. In the distance, Thrax was still fighting against the stone acolyte and Emery could see a rare sight, where Thrax and Julian were fighting together helping each other. He thought for a split second the sky and earth must be upside down because of that.

On the other hand, Klea was having a group battle where three elite acolytes were fighting against 7 regulars. It looked like another regular acolyte had just been defeated. Nudging his arm to Chumo, Emery said, "Chumo, I think you should help Klea. I will defeat this wind girl here and quickly back you up soon."

Realizing there was no need for the two of them in this fight, Chumo nodded his head, "Alright, sure." Immediately after, Chumo turned into shadow and moved towards the group battle.

Emery then returned his attention toward the two wind acolytes.

Splat!

Blood splattered in the air as a deep bloody wound could be seen on the arm of one of them. Surprisingly, it was the female acolyte who got injured. Thanks to that, the fight came to an abrupt stop, as the two figures stood a few meters away from each other.

"Huh?! You elite acolyte is nothing, huh? Without your family backing you all are the same with us!"

As she listened to the acolyte bragging about himself, the female acolyte only flashed a smile, while holding her injured arm.

"Be careful. Don't lose sight of her." Emery warned the acolyte, as he saw him turning his gaze away for him, courtesy to his bragging.

"Don't worry friend, our speed is roughly the same, but I have this advantage." the acolyte said while showing, what he had in his hand.

There, a knife was seen with its surface covered with blood. Evidently, the knife was his weapon of choice, received from the center building. While the girl needed time to cast offensive spells as means to attack, the boy only had to slash his knife around to attack. That was why he was able to injure her.

"Don't be too cocky, you will regret it."

"Hah?! Come at me! I'm not afraid."

This time, the girl casted the same spell again, [Windwalk]. But then, the confident expression on the boy's face suddenly changed.

"How is this possible!? Where are you?! How fast are you?!"

Emery was also alarmed, as the girl suddenly went missing from sight. And then, the next thing he heard was a loud scream. Turning his eye towards the source of the scream, Emery saw blood bursting out from the boy's neck. He fell down to the ground with a shocked expression still etched on his face. Swiftly after, he turned into light particles.

"!!!"

Seeing the female acolyte was nowhere in sight, Emery immediately used [Nature Sense]. He perceived a signal moving fast at him. Realizing that, Emery hurriedly blinked away lest he died like the arrogant acolyte.

The girl stopped in the place where Emery previously was, "Wow!! You have space magic! That's a very handy spell. However, as long as you can't see me, you will not win." The girl casually said and then disappeared again.

Thanks to [Nature Spell], Emery could tell she was coming to him. Fast and invisible, that's a cheat, isn't it?

Chapter 207: Jade Flash

An acolyte who relied on high speed and was also capable of turning invisible. Those two abilities were a scary combination, it was no wonder she landed in the elite class. Emery thought while still fully alert predicting her movements.

Swisshh!!

She slashed again, and Emery was not so lucky this time, as he was unable to land a perfect dodge. If he did not activate his [Granite Skin] beforehand, it was likely the wound would be much deeper. Instead, he only got a relatively shallow cut.

The enemy he was currently facing was not only fast and able to turn invisible, she seemed to have managed to take the knife from her latest victim. She was already dangerous before and now, with a sharp weapon on hand, she became even more threatening.

With quick thinking, Emery decided to run as fast as his legs could carry him towards the woods. As he ran, the crunching sounds from the fallen leaves and the dried branches echoed all around them.

"Now you decide to run? Hah! You think you can escape me?" his pursuer shouted from his back.

He was lucky to have the spell [Nature Sense] for this fight. Whenever the blades of grass behind him were stepped on, he would react quickly and casted [Blink], making him instantly reappear further away from her and deeper into the woods.

Several attempts of attack ended in similar results and Emery's pursuer finally shouted out in a mix of anger and frustration. "You bastards are more slippery than eels!"

Emery quickly went into a part of the forest crowded with a lot of trees.

Emery ran faster and faster, wishing to reach the heart of the forest. In such a place, the clusters of trees were pressed together and could serve as a barrier. His [Nature Sense] would be able to tell him more about his enemy's movements, it's even easier with tall grass and tree branches all around the area. However, when he reached the heart of the forest, he saw that the place was not as dense as he would have liked.

"Oh well, this place is as good as any, I guess." Emery shook his head and conceded in his mind.

He stopped running and turned around to face his pursuer. The moment his [Nature Sense] warned him of an incoming attack, Emery cast [Blink] and dodged forward. It seems the enemy attempted to attack him from the back.

Right as Emery turned around to look at his pursuer, the elite acolyte seemingly materialized from thin air. She faced Emery with a knife in hand and a fierce expression.

Now that she stopped her invisibility spell, Emery was able to have a good look at the girl standing in front of him. She had short black hair, shorter than what most girls would have, along with a pair of black eyes that seems to shine like obsidians. Her gaze was sharp and focused, just like the knife she wielded.

"I have to admit, your tenacity is quite impressive. But, you lack training. I am Aiko, the Jade Flash and you will fall before my blade."

Emery exhaled, clearly unimpressed upon hearing what the girl had to say. "Okay, I really wonder... Do all elite acolytes seriously need a nickname? I've heard of The Violet Flame, The Maniac... tsk, do I really need one too?"

Upon hearing Emery mention the Maniac, Aiko was a little bit startled. "Huh, you must be brave, or foolish, or both, if you can say his name so casually. Listen, you're lucky you are only facing me... You won't last even five seconds facing the maniac."

A part of Emery wanted to see her reaction if he told her he had managed to defeat the maniac, but another, more reasonable part of him reminded him that there was no point in doing that.

"Okay, okay then. Let's see how long I'll last against your attacks." Emery said.

"One minute!" The girl said confidently, before casting the spell that let her become invisible again.

A moment before she disappeared, Emery saw a glow of a bluish element right before the spell was successfully cast. It seemed the girl was a wielder of two elements, water and wind, and the spell she used must be the one called [Mirage], a tier 4 water element spell known to be very difficult to learn. The invisibility spell combined with her speed made her a difficult opponent to deal with.

Emery concentrated on the water element spirit within his body, channeled it toward his dark core and then quickly cast [Shadow Mist]; instantly there were 10 of him all around the area.

"What an interesting spell! But, I can tell all of these are only illusions and it's useless against me!" Aiko boasted and dashed around, jumping through each of the shadows. One by one, the shadows were destroyed, each dispersing into fine black mist before dissipating into the wind.

Emery wished his shadows were able to fight independently similar to Chumo's shadows. Unfortunately, as she said, his shadows were only illusions. Within seconds half of his shadows were destroyed. She managed to find Emery's real body on the fifth strike.

Clang!!

Fortunately, he was not idle. The positions of the destroyed shadows gave him enough hints to pinpoint her position, and he was able to block her attack with his dual swords.

Emery casted [Blink] and reappeared farther away before casting [Shadow Mist] yet again. Another ten figures reappeared around the area, bringing the total illusionary figures to 15.

"Seriously? Is this all you got?"

Again, within the span of seconds, the clones were dispersed with slashes from the short blade. Like before, after several attacks, Emery's real body was found.

The two of them fought like two blind people, each seemingly slashing at nothing, yet still making sounds echo around them all the same. But it was clear Emery's illusions were not enough to defeat the elite acolyte. After a few [Shadow Mist] casts, Aiko shouted in anger.

Clankk!!

This time, when she found Emery's real body, she was determined to not let him out of her sight. But oddly, this time Emery did not cast [Blink] to get away from her.

"Did you run out of spirit energy?" She asked.

"No... its just my preparations have been completed"

Right as the words left Emery's mouth, Aiko saw a black root rise upon her feet. She cut the root off and attempted to dodge away, only to find that a dozen black tree roots slithered around her like snakes.

The [Shadow Mist] was only a distraction. While Aiko was busy hacking away at the illusions, Emery had been casting [Shadow Root Binding] to cover the whole area without Aiko realizing it. Now, it was too late. Aiko was being strangled by the black tree roots and she did not have the strength to break free. Just like Lodos, she had no strength. She was all speed.

"You! You managed to get me... this is a plant element, the mist is water, your body is covered with earth elements, and you used darkness and space elements in our fight... Who are you!?"

"I am Emery"

Those was the last words she heard before Emery stabbed her with his swords. She instantly dispersed into light particles.

Emery smiled. This virtual game was somehow helping him get used to the act of killing people.

[Congratulations! You have defeated an elite acolyte]

[You received 5000 points!]

Before leaving the area, Emery made sure to grab the knife now lying on the grass.

Chapter 208: Entrap

After defeating Aiko and collecting the spoil of his victory, Emery quickly rushed back to the southern entrance, because he was still worried about his friends who were fighting there. Rushing through the woods, Emery occasionally used [Blink] to reach the entrance in the shortest time possible..

When he reached the southern entrance, Emery heaved a sigh of relief seeing his four friends were still in the game. Currently, he could see Julian and Thrax were fighting against the stone acolyte. Their battle turned out to be a stagnant one.

On the other side of the battlefield, Dopa and a few of his team were fighting Micah. It was a battle of six against one, but Dopa's team didn't seem to have gained the upper hand, let alone be close to win.

There were also two more battles going in other corners. The first battle was Okoye and her Akamba team fighting against 3 elite acolytes. It appeared they were doing well on their own. Meanwhile, the other one was the one Klea and Chumo had joined in.

At first, the battle was three elites against six regulars. But as time passed, the regulars were defeated and if not for Chumo's help, they would definitely be annihilated. Thus, the battle which previously was on the verge of losing, courtesy to the defeat of other regular acolytes, turned into a somewhat manageable battle after Chumo entered the fray. And now, it was a two against three fight.

Seeing the overall situation, Emery didn't need much time to think which group to help. Theax and Julian should be fine with their opponent for the time being neither do Okoye and her team, and Emery wasn't that close to help Dopa in his fight. Therefore, he would be helping the battle where his two friends were currently in pickle.

But of course, he would not be that stupid as to announce his arrival to the opponents. There was no way he would not take advantage of their unawareness of him and didn't do a surprise attack. Emery chose to wait in the woods and wait for the right moment to launch the most decisive ambush.

The two elites, who were fighting against Klea, Chumo and the other acolyte, were a lightning element and a plant element acolyte. Emery could see how the lightning acolyte shot powerful spells from a distance, while his counterpart transformed both of his hands and feet into razor-sharp roots that circled around the two of them as a defensive means. The roots would also occasionally lash and strike.

On the other hand, Klea kept casting [Thunderbolt] spells and shot them towards the two elites. Emery could tell Klea's thunderbolts were much stronger than before. It was apparent from the crackling lightning that sounded very intimidating. Alas, the spells couldn't do much, as the lightning acolyte was able to keep up with her. The two of them kept countering each other to make sure the strong spells didn't hit their teammate.

In between the scene of long-ranged attacks, Chumo was trying to reach in to attack the lightning acolyte, accompanied by the other acolyte, who fought using a sword. Even though Chumo was already using his [Shadow Self] spell and the three of them charged in simultaneously, they still didn't manage to pass the thorny roots that lashed around. Emery couldn't help but think of someone swatting a bug, when he saw how the roots behaved.

swish *swish* Clank!

Multitude type of sounds resounded in the area as the battle kept going. The plant acolyte formed some sort of a moving wall of thorns with more than a dozen razor-sharp roots attacking like metal whips.

Furthermore, Chumo and the other acolytes were not only unable to break in to attack the lightning acolyte. They were even being pushed by the roots themselves. In fact, the regular acolytes got lashed by one of the roots and flew a few meters back for the sheer impact of it. He crashed into one of the trees and started bleeding profusely.

Klea kept throwing her [Thunderbolt] spells to either the plant or lightning acolyte, but her spells kept getting intercepted and couldn't reach their targets. Chumo used shadow steps and spirit missiles, but none was able to break through.

Emery believed his [blink] spell was the solution, he could pass those roots in a second. But he chose to wait and wait, observing until the perfect timing came. He gauged the time and concentrated his mind to not miss the right moment. And finally, his time came.

When Klea casted another powerful thunderbolt towards the lightning acolyte and he prepared to intercept it once again, Emery immediately used [Blink] and appeared behind the lightning acolyte. The lightning acolyte was still clueless about the presence of danger behind him, Emery quickly used the battle art skill [Hidden Blade], using the knife he picked up from Aiko.

The silent yet deadly knife swiftly made its way to the elite acolyte's back and proceeded to pierce it, causing him to lose focus and his spells failed to cast. Hence, the thunderbolt Klea casted was able to zoom through the air and hit the acolyte straight in the chest.

Emery himself was barely able to dodge the strong offensive spell, otherwise it would truly be the worse of friendly fire. But of course, the poor lightning acolyte received the full brunt of the spell, turning him into blackened, sizzling, crisp human. Immediately after, he dispersed into motes of light particles, leaving his counterpart, who was still dumbfounded by the surprise attack.

Even though Emery didn't get the points, since he wasn't the one who dealt the finishing blow, knowing Klea was the one who had it, he didn't mind at all.

When the plant acolyte woke up from his stupefied state and realized his partner was gone, leaving him the only one remaining, the acolyte decisively tried to run away as he rapidly retracted his roots.

Unfortunately, there was no way Emery would allow that to happen as he immediately casted [Shadow Root Binding] spell. Although this spell had its one glaring weakness, that was the speed of its root being ordinary, it didn't stop Emery from choosing this spell.

Instead of using the spell to bind the running acolyte, which could be a success or failure, Emery chose to entangle the roots that spread out around the acolyte. After all, even though the acolyte had tried his best to retract the roots, it just wasn't fast enough. The running acolyte's movement was impeded as his hands and feet were still attached to those roots.

As a result, it became a fight of strength between the two roots of different origin, Emery's shadow roots and the rank 7 elite acolyte thorn roots. Seeing that their strength was pretty much equal, Emery nodded his head feeling satisfied.

The elite plant acolyte realized he couldn't escape as his movement was restricted by his own spell, he immediately tried to wrestle control against Emery's roots. Unfortunately for him, the roots were not his main problem, but the pincer attack launched by Chumo and his shadow.

[Cross Slash]

Using the two knives he had, Chumo and his shadow swiftly swung their weapons and did a criss-crossed slash from the front and behind the acolyte. The slashes acutely hit the elite acolyte and he quickly dispersed into light particles.

With the last speck of light disappearing, the battle ended with the regular acolytes' win. At the moment, Chumo, Klea, and Emery each got one elite kill, which gave them 5,000 points each.

It was time to move to another battlefield.

Emery could already see that a group was winning, as Okoye and her team were able to kill their opponents. Only the battle in the center looked tricky, the battle between Dopa's team and Micah.

Chapter 209: Points

After defeating the two elites, Emery and the others decided to go and help the others who were still fighting. Like a snowball that once rolling kept getting bigger, the regular acolytes suddenly held the upper hand in this confrontation after winning two of their battles.

As a spellcaster, Klea went ahead and assisted Okoye's team, as they needed a long-range attacker amidst their close combat-focused team. The new addition of Klea into the fray made the fight against the three elites much easier for the regular acolytes' side.

On the other hand, Chumo would go and support Thrax and Julian, who were still fighting against the stone acolyte. Meanwhile, Emery approached the wounded sword-wielding acolyte and healed his wounds.

Emery observed the other fights that were still ongoing. There were three more small skirmishes, consisting of one elite against two or three regulars. Checking each and everyone's fights, Emery was confident that sooner or later these elites would eventually be defeated if the situation kept going the current flow.

However, there was one fight that truly made him concerned, the fight that involved Micah. It looked like Micah was the strongest person among these bunch of elite acolytes. Currently, Dope and four remaining acolytes were still fighting him, but from the looks of it, they were struggling against the lone Micah.

Recalling there should be more than five acolytes who fought against Micah before, Emery was surprised to see him manage to defeat several regular acolytes despite him being assaulted with numbers.

Micah was an ice element acolyte, but Emery noticed something peculiar in his spells. Different from the ice spells Emery usually saw, the ones Micah casted had more luster compared to the normal ice spells regular acolytes commonly showed.

Rather than calling it ice, crystal was a more appropriate word to portray what Emery currently saw. Apart from its distinct look, Micah's ice spells were also much stronger than the ones regular acolytes released.

From what Emery saw earlier, it seemed Micah was a long-range spellcaster just like most of the other elites he had seen. Since the beginning of the battle, Emery only saw him continuously casting multiple [Ice Shard] spells and hurling them towards his opponents.

Even though his method looked crude on the surface, the sheer power hidden in his ice shards were enough to obliterate everything in his path. The dozens of flying sharp objects materialized in the air reminded Emery of Lodos' black needle spell.

Emery could only hope Micah didn't have spells that were similar to Lodos' gravity spell. If he indeed had that kind of spell, Emery was sure the fight would be hard, extremely hard.

The brawny-looking Dopa was crushing all the ice shards coming towards him using his huge ax. When the ax swing got in contact with the ice shards, Emery could faintly see Dopa take a little step back from the brunt. Meanwhile, all the other four acolytes were taking some distance and began throwing long-range spells at Micah.

Out of the four, two of Dopa's teammates were fire element acolytes. However, even though they had bombarded Micah with continuous fire spells, the abnormal white-colored ice shield, which positioned in front of him, managed to hold on, without cracks or damages on it. It didn't even melt because of the fire spells!

This spell was the same spell he used to protect all the other elites when they were bombarded by the offensive spells before. Therefore, it was normal for it to stand strong when only faced against the combined spells of these four acolytes.

However, Emery guessed these acolytes probably just hoped there was a limitation to the spell, thus allowing them to breach it.

Seeing the acolytes' spells couldn't do anything to his shield as expected, Micah laughed, "Hahaha, I am telling you that my unique [Ice Crystal Barrier] will not be broken by your pitiful spells!"

Dopa was beginning to be impatient at his teammates' inability. He started to cast some sort of strengthening spell on himself. After the spell was applied, he stomped the ground and dashed towards Micah, unbothered by the flying ice shards coming at him.

Much to Emery's surprise, Dopa's charge crushed through all the spells thrown at him, as he continued to make his way towards Micah. The other four also followed behind him and took out their melee weapon. They thought it would be possible that these crystal-like ice spells were pretty strong when met with magic, but pretty weak against normal physical attacks.

Realizing their plan, Emery exclaimed inwardly, 'Good plan!'

Even for a rank 7 acolyte, it was impossible to have such a strong defensive spell without any weakness.

With Dopa's new strategy, Micah finally began to move a few steps back. This was probably the first time he ever moved during the battle. Dopa turned even more agitated seeing that, thinking he had already found his opponent's weakness. Emery thought the same too, until he saw a glimpse of a smile on Micah's face.

Emery immediately stopped his healing spells and quickly cast [Blink] to appear closer to warn Dopa and his team, "Watch out!!!"

Alas, Emery was too far and too late, thus disaster struck Dopa's team. While retreating, Micah cast another spell, he raised both his arms to the front, palms open. This time, instead of the appearance of another barrier, Micah created an explosion of ice spikes. Field of ice spikes was created in an area that shaped like a cone as far as 10 meters. The sight was dreadful yet beautiful.

While Dopa was fast enough to block the ice spikes with his large ax, his shoulder and knees were still pierced by them, as they received quite severe wounds. However, Dopa's condition could still be counted fortunate, all three other acolytes, who charged in with him, had been hit by the crystal-like shards and instantly dispersed into light particles.

Only one acolyte was able to flee unharmed thanks to his rather behind position, but Micah seemed unwilling to let him go, as he quickly casted another ice shard towards him. Before the shards could reach the acolyte and send him out of the game, Emery who kept blinking through the space finally arrived in the area and destroyed the shards with swings from his sword.

Looking at Emery who appeared suddenly, Micah flashed a smile, "Now, now, now... Look who we have here! You aren't half bad compared to that Julian."

Before Emery could answer the man's somewhat mocking statement, another voice came from Emery's back, "Compared to me? I'm surely more handsome, but sadly, you aren't my type at all."

Turning his head around, Emery was surprised to see Julian approaching him, "Julian... you..."

Julian gave Emery a thumbs up, "We managed to kill that stone guy."

Another figure approach with a disgruntled voice, "Huh! You took away my points!"

"Ahh, shut up Thrax. Sharing is caring. You can have this pretty one if you like." Julian said, pointing his sword towards Micah.

A few moments later, Klea, Chumo and even Okoye and her teammate came to the center.

Seeing the bunch of people in front of him, Micah understood that, although he won his fight, he had lost the battle. Realizing his disadvantage, he quickly made a loud whistle, and two other elite acolytes who were still fighting quickly broke away from their opponent and joined him.

Seeing the number on his side, Micah's face couldn't help but turn dark. Out of 12 elites he brought, only three of them were left. Meanwhile, there were still 20 of regular acolytes he still needed to face.

"Huh! Just consider your win this round." Micah said, as he and the other two elites quickly escaped into the woods.

"We shouldn't let them escape!" shouted Thrax, when he saw everyone was unmoving.

"No, no, no! We should stop and rest up." Julian hurriedly stopped Thrax. He seemed to be unwilling, but in the end, Thrax nodded and listened to the command.

After taking care of this reckless bull, Julian turned to others and said, "We should quickly heal up and check out the condition of the others at the northern entrance. I am worried they will need our help."

Okoye seemed to agree with the plan, while Dopa surely appreciated the time given to heal his severe wounds. While the wounded were being healed, the others stood guard, lest there was another group. All remaining 20 acolytes gathered up in the middle, fully alerted.

At this moment Emery took the time checking out each of his friend's points

[Your total point: 15.000]

[Your current rank: 38]

As for his friends, Klea has a total point of 12.000 at rank 47, Chumo's total point of 10.000 at rank 58, Thrax with 9000 point rank 71, and Julian's total point 7000 rank 88.

Because they have successfully stopped and killed a few of the elites before, they have managed to raise quite significantly, but probably not enough unless they survive until the last 50.

Before Emery was about to go to the northern entrances, suddenly he heard footsteps, but not from the treeline. The sound came out from the pyramid building. To their surprise, a group of acolytes came out of the building with their own weapons. At first Emery thought it was Roran's team, but then from their attires, he realized who they were.

Another group of elite acolytes.

Chapter 210: Ingenious Plan

Seeing the incoming group of people, Emery and the others couldn't believe their eyes. The people in that group were all elite acolytes and there were 10 of them. Looking at the weapons in their hands, the same thought ran through everyone's mind. Did Ronan and the others get defeated?

Seeing the pure shock on Emery and the others' face, a bald young man with a striking red mark on his forehead flashed a smirk, "This is the end of you, regular class rookies. It's time to get out of the game."

Emery, Julian and the others swiftly rose up brandishing their weapons. Meanwhile, Chumo sneakily approached Emery from behind and whispered, "Should we run or should we fight?"

Facing this important question, Emery quickly re-checked the symbol in his hand.

[Regular acolytes: 78/320]

[Elite acolytes: 23/50]

In the last two hours since Emery, from the previous 150 acolytes, there were now only 101 still remaining in the game.

But then, Emery's expression suddenly changed, as he noticed an abnormality in the statistic itself. The numbers didn't add up. If Roran's team really was defeated, the number of acolytes decreasing would be much more.

Julian, who noticed Emery's expression, quickly asked, "What happened?"

"Be careful, something is wrong.." whispered Emery to Julian

Actually, Julian was thinking to fight this group of elite acolytes. Sure, it would be a difficult fight, but if they managed to do it, the result would be wonderful for them. After all, they still had bigger numbers than the group and Julian still liked the odds.

Alas, Julian's ambitious thought quickly dashed away as what Emery worried about showed up.

From behind the elite acolytes, another group of acolytes walked out and stood beside them. There were 30 acolytes all regular acolytes with familiar faces. The Roran's group.

Julian was shocked when he saw him, and he couldn't help but shout, "What is this, Roran? What does this mean?"

Hearing Julian's shout, Roran's expression didn't change, as he calmly said, "I am sorry, I have to do this. But I... we need to do whatever it takes to be in the elite class!"

When Emery and the others heard the words spoken by Roran, they finally understood they were being backstabbed. It was clear Roran didn't just make an alliance with the regular acolytes, but also with the elite acolytes. It might also be possible he had already done it even before the creation of regular acolytes' alliance.

Actually, one could really say Roran's plan was quite brilliant. With this, he would have three groups under his hand: his own personal group of thirty, the elite group, and the cannon fodder group, Julian's group. Now with the elite group he can dominate the last battle especially with Emery's group now in such a poor condition.

Julian couldn't hold himself from laughing and giving the young man a big applause for his ingenious plan. Thanks to Roran's scheme, they all now had successfully come under his trap.

Dopa seemed to finally understand the situation where the fight could suddenly turn into a 40 against 20 situation. He couldn't help to point his finger and shouted, "What about the soul contract? Was it a fake one? There's no way that is the case!"

Glancing at Dopa with a gaze saying 'Are you stupid?', Julian said, "Essentially, if its the elites group who attacked us, that means the contract isn't broken."

"Wow! That is so slick!" Klea quipped loudly, clearly dissatisfied.

Roran's face kept his calm facade, clearly showing his high-level of shamelessness.

"Why must you do this?" Emery asked calmly, as he truly wanted to know the reason he betrayed them.

Casting his gaze towards Emery, Roran flashed a faint smile, "Emery, this opportunity is very important for me. I might have the connection and resources my family had. Unfortunately, I don't have the talent to enter the elite class. Therefore, I'm truly resolute in this matter and will do anything for it."

"So, the words that you said, the thing about making history by winning against the elite acolytes is all a lie?" Emery said calmly, but if one observed him closely they would notice a glint in Emery's eyes.

"No, no, it's all true Emery, but we can't possibly defeat All of them. Please be assured with the help of these elites, the regular acolyte in my group will all be in the top 50, we will break the record and all regular acolytes will receive the rewards. But again, there's just not enough room for all of us in this game"

"Why can't you guys do it fairly?" Someone asked, gritting his teeth.

As if he had heard the most ridiculous joke in the world, Roran laughed derisively, "Fair?! There is nothing fair about this competition!"

Turning his head towards the one who spoke, Roran continued, "Can't you see it? There are more than 300 of us and 50 of them in this game. So mostly the game is actually about hunting regular acolytes, and as they can receive 2000 instead of 1000 points, that's mean It's much easier for them to get points! Can't you all see the reality? From the start, the rules were in favor of the elites!"

Seeing there was no hope for negotiation, Emery whispered to Julian, "There's only a few minutes left until the last hour of the game. It will be impossible to fight them when the soul contract has ended"

Julian seemed to be more emotional than Emery when he heard that. Well, his reaction was to be expected. After all, he really did his best for the alliance's cause. Hence, the betrayal truly brought him an unnecessary amount of indignation.

Emery tried to make the best of the situation and asked "Roran! At least let us go.. you can take the center and do whatever you want"

"Unfortunately Emery, killing you all was part of the deal with the elites. They do need the points as well"

Seeing that the group before them wouldn't let them go, Julian shouted, "We are retreating!"

They really needed to leave now. If they waited until the soul contract time came, it would be a much more troublesome fight, as there would not only be 10 elites who would fight them, but also the 30 regular acolytes..

The standoff finally broke as the elites began to advance towards Julian's group, who were retreating. To their surprise, Julian suddenly turned around and proceeded to place both of his hands on the ground.

In a split second, the ground in the center area suddenly cracked apart and collapsed, as if it was hit by a devastating earthquake. Most of the elite acolytes who were chasing fell into the several meter deep hole and covered by dust and soil, while the rest stopped in their tracks.

Seeing the unbelievable spectacle before him, Roran roared, "How is this possible?! You are a mere rank 6 acolyte and Earthquake is a rank 8 unique spell!"

"Retreat!!!" Shouted Julian, clearly ignoring Roran's question.

Roran and the others could only watch from behind the gaping hole, as Julian and the rest retreated to the woods. They couldn't attack Julian's group as the soul contract would be broken if they did so.

All surrounding acolytes were both surprised and amazed seeing what Julian had done.

The hole was not the result of a rank 8 [Earthquake] spell like what Roran said. Instead, it was only a clever application of low-tier earth element spell [Softening].

In fact, the hole was prepared beforehand using the spell to soften the ground beneath the center area, Julian would only need to destroy the ground above, thus revealing the hollow part beneath it.

It was a trap Julian prepared in case the group lost the fight and had to run away into the center building. Who would have thought it would be used the other way around.

When the group was about to enter into the woods, unfortunately another group of elite acolytes came out from the forest, blocking their path. One of the elite acolytes who just showed up quickly casted a spell. Immediately after, a metal wall as high as the trees emerged from the ground, covering all access to the forest behind them.