

Extras 711

Chapter 711 Dragon Generals Vs Esteemed Elders [Pt 1]

~BOOOOOOOOOOOM!!!~

A shockwave followed Ce'phas as he leaped forward, charging straight for the group of Elves that huddled together in a tight formation.

He moved much faster than they could react to, and before they could even hear his loud cackles of laughter, he had already closed the distance that existed between the two sides.

"[Crumble]!" He yelled, rendering a straight thrust at the barrier that separated the Elves from his clutches.

His fist met the translucent layer of protection, causing an instant rumble all over.

Then—

~CRAAAAACCKK!!!~

In a flash, the barrier shattered into pieces, almost like glass.

The pieces flew all over, much to the despair of the Elves, and the malefactor grinned widely as his eyes glowed a brilliant white.

"Hehehehehehe! Hahahahahaha!"

His hair instantly turned pure white, and crackles of white energy danced all over his body as he stretched out two his hands to reach out for prey.

They weren't his, though.

"Kyaaaah!" He yanked two random Elves and flung them towards his comrades, granting them their quota out of the Elves.

He was a Dragon of his word, after all. He didn't even bother looking at the expressions that the other Generals had, though he assumed they had to be pleased with him for fulfilling his end of the deal.

'Now then...' Ce'phas fixated all his attention on the other Elves and licked his lips, ready to pummel them to pieces.

'Let's begin the party!'

"So... it seems I'll be fighting you." The Elf that stood before R'azak looked old—at least by Elven standards.

She still had the youthful and succulent appearance that was prevalent among all Elves, so calling her old was certainly unfair. Still, her graying hair and slight wrinkles told him that she had to be quite ancient.

How ancient? He had no idea, and he didn't care.

"This will not be much of a fight, Elf. Trust me..." He folded his arms as he gazed very menacingly at her.

"Y-you... do you even know who I am?" "No. And I don't care."

"I am the Head Elder—leader of the Esteemed Council. If you think I'm going to stand around and let you sully this holy ground with your filthy—"

"Ohh? Head Elder, huh? Does that mean you are the strongest Elf in this place?" Rather than getting intimidated, R'azak's motivation and drive for battle began to rise.

It almost felt like a sudden switch in personality.

"Only concerned with strength. As expected of the brute..." The Elder muttered, clinging onto her staff with her slightly trembling hands.

R'azak noticed this rather quickly and smirked.

"You've never been in an actual battle before, have you? I can tell..." "S-shut up!" She yelled out, her cheeks pink with embarrassment. It was obvious that she was flustered, but she did her best to hide it.

Unfortunately, even her deep frown did very little to fool anyone.

"You're scared, aren't you? Scared of what I'm going to do to you... and the pain that will accompany your experience..."

A bead of sweat fell from the face of the Head Elder as she readied her staff, prepared to fire any shot of Magic once the time was right.

She gulped, and then aimed.

"You're going to suffer quite a bit... before you die, that is. I'm going to relish in—"

~BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!~

A massive beam of pure energy shot forth from the tip of the Head Elder's staff, easily traversing the space that existed between the two opponents. R'azak saw this and grinned.

"Predictable!" He clenched his fist, causing something akin to an exoskeleton to cover his hand.

Blackish red lightning danced around his fist as he thrust it forward, allowing it to slam into the beam of energy just as it was about to wash upon him.

The result was catastrophic.

~BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!!~

As energy dispersed, and shockwaves spread throughout the aerial vicinity, a sharp blur traversed the smoke and charged towards the stationary Elf.

It was R'azak, with the exoskeleton armor still covering a majority of his hand.

"Your attack wasn't bad! But what about this?" ~WHUUUM!~

Sending his fist straight for her face, his body nearly became a mass of red and black sparks.

But—

'Hm? A barrier?' —R'azak noticed heavy resistance against his fist, preventing him from properly meting out his desired violence on the Elf before him.

Still... this only made him chuckle.

"That's not enough to stop me!" Yelling out with a pure commanding tone, he set his body ablaze with crimson energy, boosting his charging fist even further.

The outcome was inevitable... and it was R'azak's fist getting planted on the Head Elder's disturbed face.

"Guark!" She let out, her weak body flying off into the distance.

"A-ah... did I overdo it?" The blazing R'azak turned to look at his heated, rock hard fist with slight surprise. A wide smile returned to his face, though, and he chuckled once again to himself. "No matter... hahahaha!"

In one swift dash, his body gliding through the air, he reached the powerless Elf, ready to throw yet another powerful jab at her.

"[White Storm]!" The Head Elder quickly yelled out, creating a massive blizzard around her.

This served as both offense and defense, preventing any damage from reaching her while also harming anything and anyone that got within range.

This would be enough to ward off most opponent.

Unfortunately for her, her opponent was a Dragon General who belonged to the second most powerful squad in the Dragon Empire.

She stood no chance at all.

~WHUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUM!~

R'azak easily cut through the blizzard as if it was just a mild annoyance, and then charged towards her—his brilliant smile almost like that of a devil.

Even though he wasn't as unhinged as Ce'phas, this General was also a battle maniac. And right now... he was expressing those instincts in the purest form imaginable.

—Sheer violence!

"[Aura Of Na—]"

"Shut it, bitch!" His right hook landed on her cheek, almost the same time as his left uppercut pressed against her jaw.

These two attacks were intense, but not more than the straight thrust of both hands that landed on her stomach and sent her flying down.

At the end of it all, the Elder Elf fell unconscious, and the General stood above her descending figure with a satisfied smile.

"I already told you from the start... that you'd suffer quite a bit."

And now, it was time to make good on his second promise—her demise.

R'azak took a second to glance at his comrades. U'riah appeared to be toying with a rather determined Elf, while Ce'phas was enjoying himself with a gourmet of adversaries.

Each General had their own way of handling things, and he seemed to be the most straightforward of the three.

There was no real pleasure in torturing a weak opponent or seeking strong ones for him.

R'azak simply enjoyed fighting and defeating his opponents. Afterwards, he saw no purpose in prolonging the inevitable.

Instead, once they had suffered a little... he would grant them the release of death.

"And now..." In one swift motion, R'azak caught the Elder Elf by her throat and raised her with a single hand.

"... Time to die."

Chapter 712 Dragon Generals Vs Esteemed Elders [Pt 2]

'H-high Elder!'

Aurora El Slavarai's thoughts screamed out as she caught the pathetic sight of their High Elder completely obliterated by one of the Dragon Generals.

She was currently held up by her neck, almost like a trophy—a thing, rather than a person.

Merely seeing the oldest of all the Elves being treated like this made her blood boil, but Aurora knew better than to let her anger cloud her judgment in any way.

'I need to figure out a way to be productive here...' She allowed herself to think this, rather than dwell in rage.

It was easier said than done, though.

In all honesty, despite how strongly she felt about the matter, Aurora was powerless to save the High Elder due to her plate being already full.

'This person... he's too strong!' Her eyes returned to her opponent.

—The Dragon General, U'riah.

'None of my attacks reach him, and he simply slips in and out of spatial rifts if I get too close to him.' Her frustrated mind echoed.

They had been at this for a while now—enough time for R'azak to be done with his own opponent, and for Ce'phas to have defeated a handful of Elves already.

Yet... she had not made a single progress yet.

"Haa... haaa..." She let out heavy breaths as she held onto her staff with resolve.

'How can I beat him? No matter the Skill or Spell, he always...' Before she could complete her thoughts, something sparked within her mind.

'H-hold on... I think I've figured it out!'

U'riah seemed to be a defensive and evasive fighter. He would block her assault by distorting space, and then if she got too close, he would slip away—returning any progress made to the same starting point.

'But why? Why doesn't he attack?' Aurora had an inkling of what it could be.

'Maybe he can't attack and defend at the same time. Also, him slipping away when I get too close means there are things he can't defend against by warping space.'

With those thoughts running through her mind, Aurora began to formulate a plan—some sort of strategy that could ensure her victory against the enemy. It didn't have to be elaborate or finely tuned to the last detail.

It just had to work!

'I think I got it...' She narrowed her eyes as she watched the calm demeanor of her opponent.

He hadn't spoken a word throughout the fight, and even now he was just floating around, staring at her with his glowing blue eyes.

'Okay... I better wrap this up quickly to help the Head Elder.'

Tightly gripping her staff and pointing it towards the Dragon General, she sent gusts of winds towards him—of course resulting in the same as always.

Space distorted, causing none to reach her.

However, this wind wasn't meant to serve that singular purpose. It was just the start.

~WHUUUUUSH!~

In a flash, a whirlwind was born, completely circling around her target. In that moment, she grabbed a stone from within her pocket and launched it towards the swirling gusts of wind.

The result was...

~BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!!~

... A massive explosion.

'It's a good thing I kept that Item from back then.' Even though Aurora gave away practically all of the items she bought from the humans, she kept one or two for herself.

One of those was the Combustion Stone that she just used.

Of course, she didn't expect it to deal any kind of damage to her opponent. Instead, she simply wanted it to impede his vision as she prepared for the next phase of her plan.

'I know he can slip away, but he hasn't displayed those defenses and his teleportation at the same time. He can't use both at the same time... I'm sure!'

That was her line of thought on the matter.

In order not to let him guess the direction she was coming from, Aurora chose an all-encompassing attack that would both block his field of vision and keep his spatial distortion busy.

'And now...' Her glare intensified as she applied Magic on herself to vastly improve her speed.

According to the analysis she made, he couldn't use the Spatial Distortion on her, which was why he kept slipping away when she got close, but now all of that had changed.

Not only could he not slip away, but he had to constantly keep up his spatial distortion.

The result?

'I can hit him!'

And so, preparing her most fatal attack in the form of a massive spear made from her Nature Magic, infusing it onto her staff to create a five meter long spear of unparalleled destructive force, she readied herself.

~WHUUUUSH!~

The winds sent her flying high into the air, granting her a much higher terrain platform than her opponent.

Once this was done, she propelled herself downward, wielding the powerful spear that she now thrust forward with all of her might.

'Hurry! Hurry and hit!'

~VWUUUUUM!~

The swirling winds, spearheaded by her ultimate attack, pierced the swirling tornado, instantly dispersing everything within a second.

At that very moment, Aurora felt her weapon finally hitting something.

'T-this it is! I did it!' All this time, her attack would simply fizzle out into space, or crumble without ever reaching a target.

But she felt it this time—the touch of flesh!

'Push harder! Faster!' Her thoughts desperately screamed as she thrust with all her might.

But...

"It's useless." U'riah's voice reverberated through the air, instantly causing Aurora to look down at him.

The moment she did so, she was welcomed with an impossible sight.

"N-no... no way..."

The tip of her spear was being stopped by a single finger that U'riah stretched upward, and he had a bright smile on his face while his eyes shone bright blue.

It seemed so effortless to him—the way he stopped her attack.

"While it is surprising to see an Elf use her wits in battle, all of your strategies are useless." U'riah spoke very softly and calmly.

"Now that I've satiated my interest, it's about time I also finish this and end your life."

Before Aurora could speak up or complain, he was right in front of her.

"Wha—?!"

He grabbed her by the neck, paralyzing her whole body in an instant.

It was most likely the effect of a Skill, but the way Aurora felt it, it almost felt like her body was being restricted within an incredibly tight space.

Not only was it uncomfortable, but it was incredibly painful as well.

Too painful.

'N-no... no, please stop!' She tried to scream out, but her throat was being tightly held by his powerful might.

In his presence, she was too weak to do anything.

"You probably thought I was limited in some kind of capacity, didn't you? That perhaps I could not attack and defend at once... or that you could somehow breach my defenses if you tried hard enough."

Aurora felt like she was naked before this man. He saw everything... right from the start.

"You only thought what I wanted you to think. Nothing you've done in this fight has been of your own accord. I decided everything... just as I am deciding what happens to you now." As he uttered those words, Aurora gulped.

She already knew the words he would utter.

"Death."

Chapter 713 Intervention In Time

Aurora was weak and powerless.

She was not the only one who found herself in such an awful predicament, however.

All of her sisters had been subjugated by the might of the Dragons. Beneath them were the several Elves—both Youngs and Elders—who watched the sight of their defeat in sheer horror and pain.

Upon noticing the many gazes that met her, she tried to summon strength to resist, but it was all useless.

'I-I can't do anything. I can't defeat him. I can't protect... I couldn't protect the High Elder.'

The last memory Aurora had of the High Elder was her impending execution. She had tried to finish her own opponent quickly so she could assist the latter, but with her situation now in such a precarious state, the fate that must have befallen their oldest was already clear.

She was most likely dead.

The very thought broke her heart. Sure, she and the Head Elder did not agree on a lot of things, and their relationship had soured over the past couple of months, but she was still her dear older sister.

Such a death had to be mourned with the whole heart.

"Hm? What's that?" As Aurora drowned in grief, she heard U'riah mutter to himself as he gazed to a somewhat far distance.

His distracted eyes seemed slightly disturbed by whatever he was staring at, and the frown on his face depicted mild confusion.

"Why is R'azak not ending that woman? No... why isn't he moving at all?"

Perhaps it was because U'riah was distracted, or because Aurora used far more energy than previously, but she was able to turn her neck in the direction that he was staring at in order to witness what disturbed him so much.

That was when she saw it—the complete standstill that plagued the General that wanted to kill the High Elder.

'T-that... that resembles [Time Stop]!' She thought to herself as her eyes widened in shock.

But how was this possible? The only person who had [Time Stop] was Feralia, the strongest Elf, and she was busy fighting in the front lines. There was no other explanation for the Dragon General to be standing still as he held his prey, who was too stunned to resist or speak.

'Does that mean Feralia is here? Do we have backup? If that's the case, then... maybe... maybe we can win!' As hope was slowly growing in her heart, she felt incredible pain swell from her throat as U'riah tightened his grip on it.

"A-ack!"

"You know something, don't you?" He growled, drawing his face closer to hers. "Tell me what this is right now!"

"G-gurghh..." She couldn't even speak if she wanted, as he was already slowly suffocating her. Resistance was useless, and within a moment or so, she felt her consciousness slowly fading away.

Then... a somewhat distant sound echoed in her ears.

She couldn't make out what it was, but... the moment the sound echoed out, she felt that grip loosen on her neck.

It almost felt like a slashing sound—a clean ~SWISH!~

Then—

"Gahhhhh!!!" The pained yell of her adversary echoed out, and he leaped away a few meters, his expression that of pain and shock.

Aurora could not properly make out his expression, or the cause of his panic, as her vision was still blurry. She felt incredibly lightheaded and weak, even feeling herself falling down since she was unable to maintain her flight.

But, as soon as her body fell, she was caught by something... or rather, someone.

"You're safe now." She heard a voice—the most soothing one she had ever listened to—whisper into her ears.

A pleasant aroma filled her nose, sending her into a realm of pleasure. As her vision blurred out, a sign she was going unconscious, she caught a glimpse of the one who had her cradled like a baby in his arms.

"R-Rey...?" She muttered, noticing his jet black hair, the black eyepatch that clung tightly to the left side of his face, as well as the crimson iris that warbled in his exposed eye.

"That's right." "You came... to save us?" She asked, her hands slowly reaching out to his face.

She felt his warm touch as he held it gently, nodding while staring compassionately at her. Never in her life had she felt so loved... so special... so safe.

"I came to save all of you." Tears proceeded from her eyes as everything finally went blank, and her last words stuck to her mind in a distant echo.

"Thank you... thank you so much!"

"Now then... looks like she's finally unconscious." Rey muttered to himself as he watched Aurora enter a state of deep sleep.

'She must have been quite exhausted. I have to say, I'm quite impressed by her tenacity. Her fight was certainly the most interesting to watch.'

But, now that it was all over, he didn't have to waste any more time.

"I should—"

"Hey you! What the hell are you doing here? Shouldn't Adrien be keeping you occupied?!" A sudden voice erupted from a small distance, prompting Rey to look in its direction.

There, U'riah stood with a deep scowl on his face.

He was clearly intimidated by Rey's presence, but most of this unease about him stemmed from confusion rather than true fear.

He was also clutching his right hand with his left—the same hand that Rey had sliced off in order to rescue Aurora from his grasp.

'Dragon Regeneration really is something magnificent...' His thoughts trailed as he smiled at the sight.

U'riah noticed this expression and growled even further, most likely feeling his pride stained by a mere human.

"Answer my question, you—!"

"Give me a moment." Rey raised his hand to U'riah before glancing away and looking at the ground where many Elves were clustered.

~VWUSH~

He instantly appeared among the crowd of Elves and thrust the unconscious Aurora to one of them, who just gawked at him with both wonder and respect.

"Take care of her." As Rey muttered these words, he witnessed all the Elves get starry eyes.

Using this opportunity to flash them a reassuring smile, he gave a thumbs up and declared with a loud and deep voice:

"I'll take care of the rest."

Chapter 714 End Of The Line

'W-what just happened...?'

U'riah was stunned beyond words.

The human that was right in front of him just vanished—and it happened before he could even sense any spatial abnormalities or distortions.

'I couldn't even react to his teleportation...' His mind trailed as he tried to wrap his head around the occurrence.

'Is that why he was so comfortable despite recognizing my presence? But... isn't he only human? No... I can't use that as a metric right now.'

After all, Adrien was also a human, yet he exhibited qualities beyond what most humans could even dream of conjuring. Heck, even most Dragons—anyone below General Level—could not compete with that kind of power.

'Is he a special kind of human like Adrien? If that's the case... then I can't think of him as a human.'

Since he was on the side of the Elves, that meant this guy was also their benefactor who helped them resist and conquer the first and second Undead Wave.

He couldn't be disregarded in the slightest, and U'riah was well aware of that fact.

But none of this still made any sense.

'Adrien is supposed to be taking care of him while we handle the Community. Does that mean he failed?'

If that was the case, it would be somewhat plausible—all things considered—that this Rey person was as strong as him... if not stronger.

'He's definitely faster, and more skilled at using Spatial Magic or Skills.' He thought to himself.

While U'riah wasn't aware of other elements, he couldn't downplay his skills. After all, after taking a glimpse at his swordsmanship when fighting Adrien, he admitted Rey's fighting skills were also higher than his.

'I don't think I can win... against him.'

For a Dragon—especially one as high up as U'riah—to have arrived at such a conclusion, it had to have taken a lot of introspection and rationalization. It pained him to even think of it, but this was the unbridled truth.

He could not deny Rey's power... and that burned him to his core.

'What about the others? If we can just—'

"Ah, alright... I'm back!" Before U'riah could turn around to observe his comrades, or even call them to gather around him, the man he was so worried about reappeared before him.

A certain casualness surrounded the man; something the Dragon General could not understand. His glare grew deeper as he clenched his fist, all so he retained his resolve not to back away.

"I didn't take too long, did I?" As Rey said this, he placed both hands in his pockets and stared straight into U'riah's eyes.

"You should stop trying to read information from me. It won't work, you know?"

U'riah's eyes bulged as soon as he heard this. 'H-how did he know?!' And yes, just as Rey said, it seemed like his Skill [Seer's Sight] was useless in this regard. He could not glean a single detail from Rey, but it seemed like the former was taking in information about him so freely.

His glowing crimson eyes almost seemed to pierce U'riah's very core, and it made him very anxious. Before he realized it, he found himself glancing around to look for his comrades.

R'azak was still frozen as a statue, and the Elf he previously had in his grasp was long gone. As for C'ephas, he didn't seem to be anywhere nearby.

The two sources of backup that he was hoping for were invalid.

'Does that mean I'll have to face him on my own? I don't know... the odds are stacked against me.' As he had this thought, a bead of sweat forming on his face, he noticed Rey's smile growing wider and wider.

It irked him to no end.

"Don't worry about your comrades. I am going to have you all face me at once. There's something I've been meaning to try... and honestly, you'd be perfect for the role."

The way Rey spoke made U'riah and his comrades seem like test subjects. They were Dragon Generals—leaders of the second greatest squad in the entire Dragon Empire. How could a human refer to them like that?

"You don't believe me? Here."

~ZZZZTTZZ~

In a slight distortion of space, both R'azak and Ce'phas appeared right beside the stunned U'riah.

Not only was R'azak free from his paralysis, but Ce'phas also seemed absolutely confused by his change in environment. Complete disorientation filled the minds of the three Generals, and their reactions made it perfectly clear.

"Y-you... aren't you the one Adrien should be facing?"

"Hahaha! Did Adrien lose already? Was he that weak... or are you just that strong? You're the one who teleported me far away a while back, weren't you? That Spatial Magic... it means you're stronger than U'riah, right? Interesting... interesting!!!"

All of the Generals now had their full attention on Rey. Of course, they had questions and concerns, but now that there were three of them... the cause for hesitation and wariness had diminished significantly.

There was strength in numbers, after all.

'As much as I hate to admit it, he's stronger than me. He's also stronger than R'azak...' U'riah's mind trailed as he watched Rey. 'The fact that he could paralyze a General like R'azak proves that he's definitely up there.'

The only one who wasn't certain was Ce'phas, but it would be a stretch to assume his strength reached the level of their wild card.

'Either way, if we stick together and bombard him with our abilities, he stands no chance at a—'

"You rescued those Elves from me at the last moment. I was about to slaughter them all at once, in the most exquisite manner too. I will have you pay for that, you know? Take responsibility... and FIGHT ME!"

~WHOOOOSH!~

Before U'riah could even stop the hot-blooded, bloodlusted General, he had already sped off to attack Rey—a scary smile plastered on his face.

But...

"H-huh...?"

Ce'phas found himself right where he started from; the position he stood in right before he made his dash for Rey's throat.

"You've all had your fun, but I should tell you now before any of you get the wrong idea." Rey's voice echoed in the air as all three of them still tried to wrap their heads around the confusion.

"This is the end of the line."

Chapter 715 One Versus Three

'So much has changed in such little time...'

As Rey's thoughts flowed, his exposed eye that seemed focused on the three Dragon Generals was actually staring at a screen before him.

The screen's glow was invisible to others, and it displayed something they were never to know.

[STATUS WINDOW] - Name: Rey Skylar.

- Race: Human (Otherworlder)

- Class: Singularity (S-Tier)

- Level: 270 (0.58% EXP) - Life Force: 13,000 - Mana Level: 29,000 - Combat Ability: 21,550 - Stat Points: 30,650

- Skills (Exclusive): [Doppel]

- Skills (Non-Exclusive): [Merger]. [Perfect Calm]. [Sacrifice]. [Symbiosis]. [Consume]. [Perfect Mimicry]. [Domain Of Man]

- Alignment: Neutral Good

[Additional Information]

You have done the impossible and stand at the precipice of power. As such, you now possess the interest of this World.

[End Of Information]

'So far, so good...'

He had been racking up more Levels than he expected thus far, and thanks to his Divine Growth, he could Level Up a lot easier than before.

Then, there was the matter of his Stats.

'[Sacrifice] has never been more useful than now. I have seen so many Skills being used in the span of just a few days.'

Of course, most of them weren't particularly useful to him—or they overlapped with his current Skills—so he simply used [Sacrifice] to turn them into Stats.

The result of that were the excess Stat Points that remained unused in his arsenal.

'The main thing here, though, is that Skill... [Domain Of Man].'

Rey had noticed its presence ever since he returned from the Oracle's Domain. He had no idea how the Skill appeared there, but he reckoned it had something to do with him witnessing something within the space.

'I've gotten Skills without particularly meaning to or knowing why before, so it all adds up.' He told himself in order to quell his slight confusion on the Skill's appearance.

But, unlike last time where Skills were captured with [Doppel], this one appeared among his regular Skills.

That didn't make sense at all.

'It hasn't happened before. It means I didn't copy the Skill, but naturally awakened it.' Since Rey was no stranger to the natural awakening of Skills, he also didn't consider it too strange. In the end, this only meant he had one new Skill to work with.

And this particular Skill was incredible.

'With these three here, I should be able to see how far I can go with it.' He leaked out a small smirk as he finally took his eyes off the vanishing Status Window in order to focus on the trio before him.

U'riah, R'azak, and Ce'phas: the Dragon Generals leading the invasion on the Land of the Elves.

'They don't seem particularly strong.' Rey had already taken a glimpse at their Status Windows a while back, so he could think these things with absolute confidence.

'Their Skills are also not particularly intriguing to me... except a few.'

For example, the [Time Dilation] Skill that Ce'phas had was rather interesting. No... it was beyond interesting.

[Seer's Sight] was also interesting, but since Rey already had [Perfect Divine Appraisal], the former didn't seem all that impressive any longer.

All in all, the Dragon Generals were not a formidable bunch for him.

Still, since they had multiple S-Tier Skills, and also possessed ample combat experience, they were the perfect guinea pigs for the utilization of his new Skill. At the very least, they seemed to be the most powerful opponents around.

'Now then... shall we begin?'

All of Rey's thoughts were encapsulated within a moment, so as soon as he finished his internalization, it seemed the world resumed activity.

"W-what did you do to me just now?!" Ce'phas yelled out, his eyes bloodshot as he focused a certain kind of emotion on Rey.

It was rage mixed in with confusion.

His two colleagues—U'riah and R'azak—mostly had shock written on their faces, but this soon graduated to confusion as they processed what they had just witnessed. If their eyes were not deceiving them, the way Ce'phas was returned to his position resembled a certain Skill.

'[Time Dilation].'

Ce'phas must have recognized this, gotten confused, and then enraged. "How can you use [Time Dilation]?!" He yelled out, veins now appearing on his face as his bloodshot eyes burned with fury.

As one of the only two Dragons in the entire Empire who had that Skill, he held great pride in it. He was recognized as incredibly strong as a result of it as well. While he wasn't as proficient as the other user, he had mastered it to the point where he was considered invincible.

Yet... YET...!

"How did you even... when did you make physical contact? What the hell is going on here?!" He screamed, dashing towards Rey once again.

The result—just like before—remained constant.

~ZZZTTZZZ!~

Ce'phas returned to his earlier position, his face displaying an agonizing feeling of helplessness.

'Thanks to [Perfect Divine Growth], the [Time Dilation] Skill has evolved into [Perfect Time Dilation], and it allows me to control the flow of time of anyone within my range of influence as long as I am equal or superior to them.' Rey thought to himself, somewhat relishing in the despair of his opponent.

Using the new [Perfect Time Dilation] Skill with his other Skills, like [Perfect Domain Of The Divine] and his Spatial Magic under [Perfect Divine Magic], he could even improve his range and affect opponents from an extended distance.

In essence, the limitations that bound Ce'phas did not apply to him at all.

'There's no need to tell him all of that, though...' Rey slowly moved his hand, causing all the Dragon Generals to react by taking combative stances.

None of that mattered to Rey, though.

They could try to escape, fight back, or plead. The results would still be the same, so he didn't even try to waste his time on unnecessary activities.

His hand reached out to the eyepatch that covered his left eye, all so he could fully control and observe the effects of his new Skill.

Once the eyepatch was removed, his eyes shone bright red, blue, and then purple.

As the sparks burst forth, his lips parted and words emerged.

"[Domain Of Man]."

Chapter 716 Domain Of Man

"[Domain Of Man]."

The moment those words were uttered, the world turned white; like a blank canvas.

Everything within 500 meters—the range decided by the Skill Caster—was swallowed whole in an instant. In the sky, the only people present were Rey, R'azak, Ce'phas, and U'riah, so all of them were brought into the blank world.

It was only to remain this way for less than a moment, though.

Almost as soon as this blank canvas was made, the architect stood at its center and began to breathe life into everything around.

Darkness suddenly began to fill everywhere, resembling the darkness of space. Its vastness also bore resemblance to the deep vacuum, since the space within this domain stretched further than eyes could possibly see or senses could properly perceive.

Then, from within this darkness... light was birthed.

Several fragments of lights in the form of stars became manifest. Distant stars, nebulae, and several celestial bodies emerged from nothingness.

Then, a sun stood at a close distance, with planets trapped within its orbit.

Gravity. Relativity. Electromagnetism. Nuclear Forces. Light. Matter. Energy: EVERYTHING was built and decided on by the architect of this domain.

—Rey Skylar.

'I see now...' His thoughts trailed as his two eyes took in the beauty of the world he just created.

He got to decide just how vast it was, what it contained, and all of its functions. The more complicated the features were, the more energy he would have to consume, but all of this was well worth it.

He had more than enough time to properly set things up, since his first feature upon entering the world was to completely halt the time everywhere—save for his own immediate surroundings.

Hence, the three Dragon Generals were stuck in time.

Even if they weren't given his incredible cognitive speed, they probably wouldn't notice him creating his Domain from scratch if he chose a more simplistic model. But, with Rey being a very curious person, he wanted to see just how far he could go with this—how much he could push his creativity... as well as his energy. In a bid for all that, he went all out and created something vast and beautiful from memory.

And it worked!

'Just as in the Skill description.' He smiled, witnessing the magnificence of space, all seen from within the solar system of Earth.

'Of course, everything is a miniature version of the actual thing. Space, the eight planets, our Sun, and distant stars... this whole space is only as large as a continent—I think.'

He couldn't even create a model as large as a whole planet with its realistic scale.

'Still... to think I could go this far.' Rey beamed to himself. 'This feels incredible!' There was only one major downside.

'It really does consume a lot of energy. I'm nearly out Mana now...' He would have run out a while back if it hadn't been for his Mana Recovery Skill that was now working overtime for his purposes.

The maintenance and constant management of this Domain drained his Mana, so despite recovering Mana, all of it was being burned up nearly instantly.

'The longer I stay here and keep up the domain, the more my Mana is drained. It seems this is the largest I can make the Domain without completely depleting my Mana.'

At the very least, with his Mana constantly being recovered and then taken, this particular model was sustainable.

'I can also save this design, so I don't have to go through the efforts of creating everything from scratch next time.'

Even though this world was mostly made for spectacle, since he could alter any of the variables, it was still an incredible fortress for himself.

Well, he couldn't entirely decide that—at the very least, not yet.

'That's why I brought these ones here.' Rey stared at the completely still Dragon Generals, observing how the world he made interacted with them and vice versa.

'As expected, I can't control them the way I can control everything else in this world, but this entire plane exists and interacts with them as if it were real.'

In essence, even though he couldn't make them hot or cold, he could make the surroundings take on said qualities, which would directly affect the Dragons. That was only the tip of the iceberg when it came to examples too.

The mere fact that they were completely still in his domain was due to a quality he set in the world and not a result of [Perfect Time Stop].

'I should consider the possibility of others capable of resisting the Skill. I thought they would be able to show some resistance to it, since this is an S-Tier Skill, but I guess they're unable to do anything about it.'

Rey couldn't help but wonder what would happen if he was able to upgrade this Skill to the Divine Tier, or better yet... Perfect Divine.

'Well, one thing at a time. For now, I should wrap things up with these three.'

With only a single thought, he was able to change the entire equation of time in the Domain, forcing the three Dragon Generals to regain their complete sense of reality. This was only for a few seconds, though, as they soon lost their minds the moment they realized where they were. "W-what is this?!"

"Where are we? What did you do?!"

"....!!"

As Rey observed their stunned and panicked reactions to their predicament, he made a few quiet points in his mind.

'It seems H'Trae really has no concept of deep Space. The humans have not explored beyond this planet, but I thought the Dragons might have an idea.' He was clearly wrong about his previous assumption.

'I haven't been to space here before, though. It's not like I haven't thought of trying, but after getting a particular altitude, it gets difficult to advance higher—almost like there's something pushing me back down.'

Rey previously thought it was gravity, but it didn't feel like that. The force was akin to a barrier, and even at his current strength, he couldn't resist it.

In the end, he had no choice but to postpone this endeavor of his.

'I wonder what dwells beyond this planet. Whatever it is... I don't think it wants anyone finding out.'

That very idea only made him more curious, and he sought out the time he became strong enough to tear through the barrier and see what was beyond the sky in the world.

'There is a sun, moon, and even stars. That means space must exist, in some shape or form...' And Rey desired to be the first man to witness it.

'Should be fun and all, but I really ought to get back to this.'

Finally returning his focus to the three Dragons before him, he decided to finish everything with one final experiment.

'This should test out a bunch of things at once, so...' Stretching his hand forward, he put his mind to work and controlled the particles of his Mana that existed in every facet of the Domain.

'First... I'll need a massive star'

Out of nowhere, the sun began to expand—easily swallowing the other planets in the process.

"Arhhhhhhh!"

"What are you doing?!"

"We're all going to die! Stop this madness!"

The Dragon Generals could not escape, or even move at all, thanks to Rey's might.

They could only watch as the mass of brimming light neared them, its immense pressure and heat causing them to wail in incredible pain.

'This is only the start, though. The main thing is...' Rey pressed his open hand and made a fist, demonstrating what he was about to do to the now expanded Sun.

'... Collapse!'

At that very moment, the center of the massive star collapsed in on itself, compressing very rapidly until something new was born.

It was no star, neither was it anything else that previously existed within this vacuum of space.

This was something that ate through vacuums, as well as anything that dwelled around it—an abomination formed from the death of incredible light and mass.

—A true Black Hole.

Chapter 717 Aftermath Of The War [Pt 1]

The Dragon Generals stood no chance against the Black Hole.

The center of the immense singularity pulled them in, breaking down every form of energy and resistance that they could possibly render.

Whether it was [Time Dilation] or any kind of Spatial Manipulation, none of it worked in the presence of the Black Hole. All of those Skills were interrupted by the severe distortion of space and the breaking down of time.

In the end, their entire bodies were ripped apart by the event horizon, and even their screams could not be heard.

They simply perished, drowning in the void.

"... And just like that, it's over." Rey murmured, watching the whole thing from a safe distance.

Just as he observed, he too was subject to the laws he created within this Domain he made, so it would be incredibly rough to be so close to the Black Hole—especially with his Mana Reserves being at such an abysmal state.

Hitting his limit, while being sucked in by a growing singularity didn't seem like such a pleasant experience to him, after all.

'Having Emil with me would double all my Stats, so I guess this really isn't my limit.'

As soon as he had the thought, he returned his focus to the Black Hole, seeing as it was consuming everything around it still.

'I don't even have enough Mana to stop it, so... I'll collapse the whole thing instead.' Causing the Black Hole to cease would mean altering the features of the Domain, which cost a load of energy.

Now bankrupt on the stuff, Rey had to seek out a cheaper way to achieve his goal.

There was only one.

'Time to leave.' With a precise thought, he vanished from the space he constructed, and at that very moment, everything within it collapsed into oblivion.

Like shattered glass, ground into particles that glittered, they all became grains of energy that dissipated around him as he reappeared in the sky above the Land of the Elves.

~FSHUUU~

Hissing sounds reverberated around him, as a certain cloud of energy surrounded him. As he witnessed the familiar presence of the world he left just moments earlier, he smiled and took in a deep breath.

"Haaaaa..." Exhaling out loud, he cast his gaze down and noticed the cheering Elves who all set their eyes on him.

Rey smiled at this and chuckled to himself.

'To think it was only a few days ago when they were all wary of me...'

Regardless, with the work completed, he could finally rest easy and deal with the aftermath of the invasion.

'Here we go!' Teleporting to a much lower position in the air, Rey appeared before the crowd of Elves that knelt and clasped their hands in reverence to Nature, The Oracle... and himself.

Their devout stances only intensified once he got closer to them.

"The battle is won... the war is over." Rey declared, ignoring the cult-like gathering of the Elves as a decision.

"All will be fine. You are all safe... and you are all free."

As soon as he said this, the Head Elder sprouted up, raising her staff which was held by both of her hands.

"All hail Rey Skylar, harbinger of the Divine!"

'Hm?' His calm facade remained unchanged, but he was slightly taken aback by the suddenness of the Elf.

Before he could properly think about it, though, all the Elves bowed their heads to him in absolute reverence, chanting the same word in the loudest way possible.

"HAIL! HAIL! HAIL!"

Floating above all of them like this, Rey thought he was akin to a god.

He avoided being too conceited in his rationale—considering where that usually led him—but in this situation, there was no better way to interpret his current status.

'All of this is unsatisfactory, though. After all, I know who the true god is here... and it's not me.'

The Oracle was probably staging down at him—watching every action play out as part of her grand scheme. He was a piece on her board, and he had no choice but to play the game if he wanted to save his friend.

... Well, two of his friends.

'I shouldn't forget my place in this whole thing. Dragon Generals are a piece of cake for me, but there's still the Dragon Emperor. I've also never fought a Dragon Lord, so I can't say for sure...' He narrowed his eyes, refusing to soak in the adoration he received from the crowd.

'Still, this outcome is good. This means the Elves will be compliant and obey everything I say even in my absence...'

They could even contribute to the Refinery Project in some way or the other, and their discriminatory acts towards his own workers that could possibly leave the United Human Alliance in order to manage the plants he wanted to construct would be reduced drastically.

As long as he willed it, they would obey.

Despite how barbaric some of their acts were, the Elves were a very noble and cohesive faction. They stuck to a code and respected authority more than anything. Rey could only see this as a good—no, even perfect—thing for his future plans.

'They owe me their lives, and that should be a good way to enforce compliance.'

[Moments Later]

'Huu...'

Rey entered a certain tent reserved for him among the Elves in the battle camp. No one dared to near the place, per his instructions, and everyone was resting in their respective tents too... so there was not likely to be any form of interference.

Even at that, he could already feel some barriers surrounding the tent—set up by the ones inside it, no doubt.

He smiled, venturing inside without a moment of hesitation.

What he found inside were two figures who were discussing heartily as they sat opposite each other. Their interaction caused the smile on his face to slowly vanish, but he maintained his composure regardless.

"Oh? When did the two of you become so close?" He asked, his gaze alternating from the boy that looked his age to his own lookalike that sat on the opposite end.

It was only after he spoke that they were able to detect his presence, and the two of them looked at him at the same time.

"Master! You're back!" His lookalike swiftly jumped to their feet, transforming to the black sludge that was their original form.

As for the other boy in the room—Adrien Chase—he slowly rose to his feet, possessing a rather calm smile that unnerved Rey for some unknown reason. Despite them being confirmed to be allies, he still couldn't fully trust the guy.

"Emil, get back here." Rey commanded, causing the Symbiote Slime to reluctantly obey, leaving Adrien's immediate presence only after waving a goodbye with her slimy appendage.

"Bye, Emil. Maybe next time..."

The trailing words uttered by Adrien made Rey even more uneasy. He didn't like how he casually addressed Emil, and how pleasant the mood between the two of them was—especially after the conflict that they both had to participate in.

'I had Emil disguise herself as me to fight with Adrien while I remained in the Community. To think these two would get so close within such a short span of time...'

He didn't like it at all.

Rey hid his displeasure—at least for the most part—as he reached out to Emil, who did the same.

In an instant, she returned to his body—recreating their synergy once again.

'Ahh... now that's more like it!' He smiled, feeling half of his strength return—or rather, the strength that Emil offered him.

He had missed the power, and feeling the ecstasy made him slowly forget the displeasure he had just moments earlier. With his emotions being suppressed for the most part, emotions like that were already fickle and fleeting anyway.

Instead, Rey found himself focusing on the more important thing—his current state.

'Status Window.'

[STATUS WINDOW]

- Name: Rey Skylar.
- Race: Human (Otherworlder)
- Class: Singularity (S-Tier)
- Level: 272 (0.58% EXP)
- Life Force: 13,000 (+13,000)
- Mana Level: 29,000 (+29,000)
- Combat Ability: 21,550 (+21,550)
- Stat Points: 30,750
- Skills (Exclusive): [Doppel]
- Skills (Non-Exclusive): [Merger]. [Perfect Calm]. [Sacrifice]. [Symbiosis]. [Consume]. [Perfect Mimicry]. [Domain Of Man]
- Alignment: Neutral Good

[Additional Information]

You have done the impossible and stand at the precipice of power. As such, you now possess the interest of this World.

[End Of Information]

'I really need to find time to properly allocate all those Stat Points...' He thought to himself, before finally returning his focus to the matter at hand.

"Looks like things went well on your end. I saw the craters and devastated landscape on my way here..."

As Rey spoke, he went to the seat that Emil occupied, making himself comfortable as Adrien remained standing—almost as if he was getting ready to depart.

"Yeah... well, we had to make it believable."

"Hm. Indeed..."

For a moment, there was silence between the two of them. Adrien had his usual calm smile on his face, while Rey's cautious gaze betrayed the likewise calm facade he wanted to employ in the conversation.

Either way, a subtle tension wafted in the air... one that didn't seem to be disappearing anytime soon.

*

Chapter 718 Aftermath Of The War [Pt 2]

"So... what will you do now?"

Rey finally broke the tense silence between him and Adrien with a smooth tone. The both of them were on opposite sides of each other—the latter still standing—as composure oozed from their respective station.

After allowing the question to marinate in the air for a few seconds, Adrien finally spoke up.

"I have to check something out first. A prior investment, if you will. Afterwards... I guess I'll continue with the original plan."

Rey nodded his head as he heard all of this, not asking any further questions. As curious as he was about this 'investment' that Adrien was referring to, he also understood that he would be putting himself in a rather compromising position by asking.

'If he tells me more of his secrets, he'll want more of mine.' And Rey felt he had revealed more than enough at the moment.

It was even possible that Adrien was baiting him to ask by intentionally mentioning this 'investment' but Rey didn't want to overstep his bounds. To him, this was the safest position to take.

"In the end, the Dragons lost this battle. It's possible that the Empire will send an even more powerful squad... which is why we have to act quickly." He added.

"Don't worry. I won't forget my end of things. I'll be on standby, so you sort out what you need to." Rey responded with folded arms.

"That is all I ask." Adrien's response was humble, and he even went as far as bowing his head, which threw Rey off for a second.

"Right now, most of my assets have been extinguished and I have encountered great loss. This plan has to succeed for me to recoup some kind of benefit... so yeah, forgive my evident desperation."

Rey understood all of this quite well.

Adrien had compromised greatly in order to accommodate him into his plans. In order to follow The Oracle's wishes, the Dragons had to be exterminated. That meant it was inevitable that Adrien's assets would fall to ruin.

'I'd like to believe that he had to go along with this alternative because he recognized I would have destroyed the Dragons anyway. At least, with this, he gets something out of it.' Rey's thoughts further trailed.

Of course, all of this solely hinged on how Adrien would deal with the aftermath.

Rey trusted his capabilities, and he had firsthand experience on how resourceful and manipulative Adrien could be. Still, he had to make sure not to put all his eggs in one basket.

As much as he hoped for his success, he also had to consider other scenarios.

"Well, it seems we are done here, right?" Adrien shrugged as he spoke, taking a few more steps away from Rey.

"Yeah... I suppose."

Somewhere within Rey, he wanted to ask Adrien about what he was discussing with Emil prior to his arrival—satiating his curiosity on how they got so close, but he decided not to at the last minute.

'I can just ask her myself.' Even though Emil was still giving him the silent treatment, she seemed happy to see him return, so that meant she wasn't particularly serious with her oath of silence.

Besides, he could always pry the information from her if he gave a command.

'Either way... it's all under control.'

"I guess I'll see you soon." Adrien interrupted Rey's thoughts with a farewell, followed by a burst of spatial distortion.

Before any response could be made, the boy was long gone.

Spreading his senses as far as he could, given his current state, he couldn't sense Adrien anywhere. That meant he was either on a remote area on the Eastern Continent, or in another Continent entirely.

It was anyone's guess where he was, but if he so happened to teleport to the United Human Alliance's territory—particularly the Capital—Rey was sure Ater would handle things from there.

At the moment, he had much bigger fish to fry.

'Now that I've taken care of the Dragons... it's time to save Esme.'

[Meanwhile...]

A bright burst of bluish energy tainted the darkness of a rather enclosed space. With the distortion of space came a young man with jet black hair and glowing blue eyes. His surroundings seemed like the entrance of a rather large cave, and the further down the road went, the larger the surrounding space became.

... Almost like a cavern.

This young man—Adrien—stood out quite a bit in this raw and primal setting. His pristine suit and polished appearance did not fit the rough vicinity he found himself in.

Still, it was obvious he wanted to be here. Until...

"Hmmm?" Almost as soon as Adrien appeared in this space, he had a stunned expression on his face; the kind one makes when they are bamboozled by something.

This lasted only a few seconds before he used a hand to cover his face. His palm covered the bloodshot eyes that brightened, and the deep glare that was slowly forming.

This tense atmosphere only grew more intense, until finally—

"Kukuku... kekekeke... kuahahahahahaha!!!"

—All of the climbing intensity dissipated.

"Hahahahahahaha!!!" Rather than yell in anger, or frustration—which would have been a normal reaction, given the situation—Adrien burst out in a loud laugh.

As he laughed, he took measured steps forward, traversing the barren lands that surrounded him.

This continued until he reached the end of the line, finding a massive space spread out before him—a place meant to be littered with Monsters and Precious Minerals.

Instead, the whole place was barren.

"I should have known he would beat me to it... that Rey." Adrien chuckled even more, shaking his head in the process. "He didn't even leave their corpses for me."

The Dungeon that Adrien had looked forward to plundering for so long was already claimed... and from the looks of it, this had been the case for quite a while.

'What a loss, though...' He sighed in regret, though maintaining his oddly playful smile while observing the area.

'Nice one, Rey.'

Chapter 719 Player Of The Game

Adrien was sincerely impressed with Rey.

At first, he didn't really have an opinion of him—just as he didn't have an opinion of anyone else. He had no clue if he could 'use' him, or if he had to be wary of him.

In the end, it turned out the latter was the case.

Their relationship had somewhat evolved and devolved over the months that were spent in H'Trae, but at the moment Adrien was in a rather complicated position when it came to Rey Skylar.

'He's brilliant, and he's outsmarted me in many instances already... almost as though he is a completely different person from the one I am used to.'

Still, anytime he interacted with Rey, something seemed off.

'He seems just like the Rey I had profiled. All those features... his easily-readable expressions, incredible agitation and aversion towards me, and a bunch of other staple things I had associated with him after our interactions.'

Yet... those observed characteristics ran contrary to a lot of Rey's actions.

It was so puzzling.

'That version of Rey would not have been able to manipulate all of these scenarios to such a level of sophistication.'

Not only was he easy to read, but his scope of knowledge seemed very lacking. He expected the competent Manipulator that pushed him to such an extent to be much more knowledgeable and mature, but Rey showed no such thing.

The entire thing almost felt like Adrien was dealing with two different people.

'Or... maybe he is doing all of this intentionally. It's possible that his current persona is meant to mislead me into profiling him a certain way, and then end at a faulty conclusion.'

It was no wonder that many of his predictions had been affected—including what happened with the Dungeon he was standing in.

'If that is indeed the case, then... for someone who preaches so much about morals, he is quite the monster.' Adrien didn't particularly despise Rey for any of his actions, and he didn't think much

would change about how he viewed Rey if all of these premises were true. He couldn't hate the player, if the game was already so messed up from the start.

'Both of us are just trying our hardest to win, after all...' Besides, while he indeed encountered some loss, it wasn't like he gained nothing. 'Thanks to the death of all the Dragons, I have some decent Undead in my army. I even got my hands on the corpses of the Dragon Generals...'

The ones who were obliterated by Rey were mere puppets, which meant he had the genuine article. 'I had to sacrifice the Commanders for that, as well as a great deal of the Mana I stored up, but the results were worth it. Now that I have more powerful pawns in my arsenal, I should be able to achieve a lot more...'

In essence, he gained and also lost.

'I should be satisfied with this outcome, especially since there are future prospects in sight. But...' A certain glint appeared in Adrien's eyes as his lips began to curl up, forming a rather disturbing smile.

'... I can't help my greed this time.'

His mind fell on a particular entity he could not help thinking about ever since he encountered it.

'Emil! That Slime... it's too fascinating and useful to let go.'

During their fight—when it pretended to be Rey—they ended up having a deep conversation, and he got to know a lot about the Symbiote Slime.

... Things not even Rey knew yet.

'This is another reason why I'm so perplexed about who he really is. Perhaps... I can use this current scenario to determine that as well.'

During their interactions, he was able to sow enough seeds to guarantee him some measure of rewards in the immediate future.

He wanted Emil.

'... And I suppose there's also nothing wrong with that.'

Rey was surrounded by darkness, having no one around him except for a single figure.

The naked Dark Elf was unconscious, and as her dark hair draped over her face, and her body hung to the walls of the pitch-black space, her pathetic frame was completely observed by Rey in its entirety.

He had no perverted thoughts, despite her being bare before him, and there was nothing about his countenance that displayed any kind of pleasure—not even a hint of it.

He was absolutely serious.

"I've been through quite a lot for this moment, you know? For you..." He murmured, his eyes fixated on the face of the Elf named Ciela.

He knew she most likely couldn't hear him, and there was no point telling her all of the details, but he needed someone to vent to at the moment. Emil was still giving him the silent treatment, and he felt things only got worse after he commanded her to reveal all she talked to Adrien about.

Needless to say, their relationship wasn't the best at the moment.

He wanted to address it, and he knew he would have to, but not at the moment. Right now, he was at a precipice that demanded all of his attention.

'Once I'm done recovering Esme... I'll properly hash things out with Emil.'

That was his line of thought.

If Adrien was still present, maybe he would have been more impatient, but since he couldn't sense him around, and he figured his task was probably off-Continent, Rey reckoned he had enough time to swiftly wrap up the Esme issue and properly address his neglect of his Familiar.

His rationale behind this simply stemmed from the fact that he would be too distracted at the current moment to properly cater to all of Emil's needs.

'I have to give a hundred percent attention to her once this is all over...' He smiled to himself, now focusing all his mind on the target before him.

—Esme's mother.

"I didn't understand it at first, but now I know what The Oracle meant when she said a 'path' would open up for me." As he said this, a smile crept up on his face and he took a few steps forward.

Then, pausing right when he was a hair's breadth away from the Dark Elf, he continued speaking.

"I now know how to fix everything."

Chapter 720 Tempora

At first, Rey didn't get it.

He expected a more overt 'path' to open up before him, so when the entire war was over, he began to wonder if he missed any obvious signs that would lead to his grand goal. However, he soon realized—with a bit of introspection—that he already had the tools he needed all along.

Firstly, the [Time Stop] Skill that he obtained from Feralia, which was now upgraded to [Perfect Time Stop] as a result of his [Perfect Divine Growth], was a key component in the task he was about to undertake.

However, that was only one side of the coin.

The other side was the most recent Skill that he obtained from the Dragon General, [Time Dilation]—or rather, [Perfect Time Dilation].

With these two distinct but somewhat similar Skills under his control, Rey could find a way to get out of the current situation he was trapped in regarding the Dark Elf before him.

'[Perfect Time Stop] stops the time of the target, while [Perfect Time Dilation] slows or speeds it up. Both of them combined should be able to control the time of the target with far greater liberties...'

That was his hunch, and all of his instincts seemed to be hinting in that direction.

As a result, he decided to take the chance.

'I'll use [Merger] to combine the Skills together, creating a much better Skill that'll increase my chances here...'

He still wasn't sure if this would even work, so the best way to achieve the desired result would be to make the Skill at least SS-Tier. 'If it still doesn't work out, I'll just assume [Wish Fulfillment] is the way to go about it... though I'm reluctant to use it since it's a one-time use only Skill.' He thought to himself in all determination, ready to use any means possible to crack The Oracle's code.

He hadn't come this far for nothing, after all.

"Now then... let us begin."

Just as he purposed, Rey utilized [Merger] to combine [Perfect Time Stop] and [Perfect Time Dilation], allowing the two S-Tier Skills to vanish from his catalog of Skills. Replacing them both was a new Skill... just as he had predicted.

"Skill details." He whispered under bated breath.

[Tempora]

Tier: SS

Ability: Grants the user access to the flow of time of whatever they touch (whether directly or by extension).

{Limitation: Depending on the target, more Mana will be consumed for the Skill's execution. Can not be used on the dead.}

[End Of Information]

Upon seeing the details of the new ability he possessed, Rey could not stop the broad smile that formed on his face.

'So simple, and yet... perfect!' Now that he had completed the first hurdle—creating a means to achieve his goals—the second thing remained.

He had to do the deed.

'Using [Perfect Domain Of The Divine], I can expand my reach with [Tempora], but... just to be safe...' Rey reached out his hand and touched the Dark Elf on her head.

He could feel the dry and rough state of her dark hair, but that didn't bother him in the slightest.

Now wasn't the time to be bothered with superficial things. "Huu..." He took a deep breath, exhaling with the same veracity, as he prepared his mind for what would happen.

'I still don't know if this is what I'm supposed to do, but... I've taken all the steps necessary.' His thoughts trailed as his mind teemed with uncertainty. Still...

'It's time I followed my gut.'

Without leaving much room for any further thoughts, including the doubts that would inevitably come with it, Rey activated the Skill.

"[Tempora]."

At that very moment, a brilliant light shone in the room—drowning everything inside in its brilliant multifaceted light.

A clock-like structure appeared underneath both Rey and Ciela, with a miniature version of the circle manifesting around his hand as well—almost as if telling him that he had control over the time of the person he was currently touching.

'Whew! It worked!'

The major worry Rey had when activating this Skill was that the Skill's Limitation would surface, and he would be prevented from using [Tempora] on the cursed Ciela as a result of her current cursed state.

Thankfully, though... he shouldn't have worried.

'Let's start with one day...' He focused his energy, and the Skill did as he instructed, turning the hands on the energy-constructed clock around his hand.

Within a moment, the target's age was reversed by a day.

'She doesn't look any different—as expected. Then, what of my Mana?' He checked his Status Window and realized that it had barely even moved from its position,

Even the little decrease was eventually supplemented by his Mana Recovery Skill, so he was back on track for the most part.

'It would take too much time to do this one day at a time. Why don't we try one year next?'

Rey's thoughts manifested through the Skill, and the light that brimmed from the Skill's activation shone even brighter than before.

The result?

'Not much has changed still. She does look healthier than before, though...' His senses could also pick up the covert changes in her Mana signature.

A lot more had changed on the inside than the outside.

'And my Mana has decreased quite a bit, but the Mana Recovery is working well. Plus, I have Emil's additional Stats to help me out here, so it's still going rather smoothly.'

With that in his mind, Rey smiled to himself, inhaled deeply, and then decided to take the big step of not taking any more breaks or moments of experimentation.

"Let's do this quickly, shall we? [[Divine Power Ascension]..."

~VWUUUUUUUSHH!!!~

That very moment, his energy exploded within the vast space, causing everything around him to tremble. Not only had his Stats increased to an unfathomable amount, including his Mana Level, his senses and proficiency over the Skill seemed to rise in all facets as well.

His timidness vanished almost instantly, and replacing that was confidence.

There was nothing to fear... nothing holding him back in the slightest. Right now, Rey felt invincible, and so he took the massive leap he never would have prior to this point.

"Go back 16 years."