

GREED 151

Chapter 151 The Tables Have Turned.

Then they watched soverick rest for a while before he started the third choke point. They watched him do nothing while the sky rats called for reinforcements. Then he failed at stepping on the pillars and he fell down.

"I'll enjoy this short moment of pleasure for now. I bet he won't make the same mistake again." The will clone said.

Shaston shook her head. "I bet he will pass this choke point before or during the third run."

"That's impossible, right? The choke point might not be flashy or anything but the pillars are tricky. He will have to step on them lightly while being chased by the sky rats. And you're saying he will get the hang of it in a single run. Then he will also resolve the attacks by the third run and finish the choke point."

"I meant, he might do all that in the second run and at most the third run."

"If you're right, then we are in trouble."

"How so?"

"We won't have any chance for more humiliating videos."

"It will never work anyways. So why bother."

"He is about to start the second run. Let's watch."

Soverick immediately took off as soon as he left the safe zone. His feet were creating shockwaves as they touched the ground. The rock surface cracked due to the force he is intently dispersing into them. Then he leaped when he reached the edge of the cliff. This was where he failed the last time.

His foot touched the pillar and shattered it with a shock wave. He seemed to use the shockwave as a support to make the next leap. Then his other foot did the same with the next pillar. It was smooth sailing from there for him. The pillars shattered under his foot instead of crumbling on their own and the shockwave propelled him forward.

"Sky rats do your thing." The Will clone muttered hopefully. Shaston just shook her head. She didn't think her will clone will get what she was hoping for.

Soverick's smooth sailing got interrupted by the sky rats. They were too far away to reach him so they tried range attacks. They were throwing stones at him. He was the one throwing stones at them earlier, but now, became the target of stones. The tables have turned. It forced him to change his movement pattern and to pay attention to the stones aimed at him. As if the shoddy pillars aren't enough for him, now he has to split his attention backward while he tries to move forward.

Still, he managed. The most difficult thing for him was changing his direction from simply going straight ahead, to right and left to dodge the stones. It required him to make very difficult foot manoeuvres on unreliable support. Splitting his attention was a piece of cake for him. And so he finished the third choke point on his second run.

The Will clone threw its arms up. "Did you see that? Not a single mistake. How is that possible?"

Shaston was similarly shocked. The third run was relatively simple. Move to the end of the choke point or the sky rats will catch up to you. That means they have to go forward in a straight line to make good time. Then the sky rats will start to throw stones at you to distract you and throw you off your game. That means you have to move sideways to dodge. If you move sideways too much, the sky rats will catch up.

All these have to be done on precarious pillars. If you stumble or mess up your steps, then you will fall down and start again. So you have to move forward while you dodge and not make a single mistake along the way. It is a simple choke point, with simple rules and it takes weeks to make the stepping process a habit just to overcome these simple rules. Soverick finished it in less than 30 minutes. She of all people understands how remarkable it is because she has a very vivid memory of how much she struggled during these challenges.

The Will clone rounded up on Shaston. "You didn't really think he would finish this quick did you?"

"I must admit that I didn't expect this. I was going out on a limb when I made that bet. I mean, it wouldn't have mattered if I lost. I just wanted to prepare myself mentally in case he actually does pass it quickly like the last choke point. Everything we've seen about him indicates that challenges of adaptation are piecemeal to him. Pressuring him won't also work. Only challenges of pure physical exertion can give him a pause, something like the first choke point. But it will only give him pause. That's even because he is supposed to beat the titan frog's attacks. He has the stamina to spare and high enough reaction to take advantage of it." Shaston answered.

The Will clone sat down dejected and sighed. "Then the remaining choke points will not even give him pause."

Shaston agreed. "Probably not. The next choke point is the eye of the sea."

"I bet that he will finish it in at most 3 runs." The Will clone said and smirked. Shaston just shook her head at her clone's antics. She wasn't willing to bet with her clone. She would rather watch how Soverick will fare in the next run. The eye of the sea is pretty simple too but she wasn't sure how easy it was going to be for Soverick. One thing she is sure of is that it will give him a certain level of difficulty enough for him to fail his first run.

The area around the fourth safe zone was being shown on their screen.

Soverick has successfully crossed the canyon of death and its dangerous pillars. At the other end of the canyon is another cliff. The safe zone is some distance away from the edge of this cliff. Outside the safe zone, the rocky ground has given way to sand. The ground is so sandy that his legs sink into it. It made walking on it difficult and exerting without activating his fleet foot technique, the same one he used to scale the pillars.

Only when he treats the surface of the ground as unstable support, like mud, water, or rickety pillars, is Soverick able to run in it. And he dearly needs to run because the sky rats are still chasing him.

Their number has increased to more than 200 and there are no stones he could throw at them, only fine sand. So there is no chance of getting rid of them. Even if he had stones, his attempts to hit them will end in him becoming a better target for their own stones. He doesn't have stones but somehow they do.

He doesn't know where they keep getting them but they haven't stopped throwing stones at him. So he ran and quickly reached the edge of a body of water. Then he began running on its surface with ease. The transition between running on the ground to running on the water was as easy as breathing to him.

The Will clone muttered at the sight. "No hope whatsoever."

The chase continued as if nothing changed. The sky rats remained in the air and pelted Soverick with stones. He dodged remarkably well and was able to keep his balance.

The difficulty of the choke point began to increase gradually. The water surface became turbulent, wind speed picked up and some daring fishes began to attack him from below.

Soverick's astounding perception helped him to keep track of all the distracting elements and his reaction made him avoid them easily. Things became more difficult as he ventured deep into the sea until he was stopped by the eye of the sea.

The eye of the sea is a giant whirlpool that is pulling everything within its area of influence into itself. Soverick will have to detour around the eye of the sea but will have to face the tornadoes circling around the eye of the sea instead.

Of course, he won't face the tornadoes directly, of which there are six of them moving around the vortex. He will have to stay between two of them while maintaining a healthy distance between them so as not to be pulled off course into the whirlpool.

Meanwhile the thunder and lightning of the raging sea storm will do their best to make him unable to maintain the healthy distance that he desperately needs. It is a choreographed dance of a deadly whirlpool, dangerous tornadoes, and a heavy sea storm. A dance with very strict moves and high danger, to test for stability and spatial positioning.

The storm and the raging water will obscure sight so he has to be able to sense his position relative to the tornadoes and maintain it. The good news is that the sky rats can't continue their chase. The bad news is that monstrous sea monsters from beneath the sea will try to drag him into the water. It's like he traded an old outdated enemy for an upgraded and better-suited enemy.

Chapter 152 World Harmonization.

Soverick ran in circles for a while as he took in the glory of the challenge. He couldn't stop at all or he would fall into the water. The surface of the water might be behaving like a stretchy elastic material underneath his feet but that's because of the way he is stepping on it. A pause to admire the scenery will make the water surface remember what it truly is.

Then he grinned in anticipation showing all his teeth, and suddenly picked up speed. He accelerated and began moving like a knife parting the waves. His feet created massive shock waves that erupted with water and mist in his wake. The shockwaves started as ripples as his feet touched the water surface before they expanded into the blast of force that they become.

The mist formed a trail behind as if they were dust on the ground. He was fast, so fast that the tentacles from the depth of the sea couldn't catch him, and the ones that managed to anticipate his movement couldn't stop him. The turbulent water felt like solid ground to him and behaved like so to onlookers because he was dodging, jumping, and swerving as if he was on the ground.

The will clone sniffed. "It is simply perfection. He didn't even stumble at all. I could cry if I had tear glands." It was a clone without a body so it couldn't cry.

"I know right." Shaston couldn't cry too because she had the body of law. Her body had stopped being able to create tears when she became transcendent. She continued, "He has finished the second requirement for world harmonization. At this rate of progress, he will have no problem with the third requirement. I can already tell that he will be an exceptional transcendent."

The Will clone sniffed louder. "The beauty of harmonization. This is what is called true genius."

The first basic harmonization is the harmonization with the earth, it is achieved through the silent running technique. The second one is the harmonization with the water, it is achieved with the fleet foot technique used for walking on water. The third and final requirement is the harmonization with the air. It can only be achieved by those at the mana stage.

The three basic harmonizations are needed to achieve one with the world or world harmonization. It is a must-have for transcents if they wish to learn laws. With harmonization, there will be no difference between the ground, the air, or water when it comes to mobility. Advanced forms of harmonization require laws.

The performance Soverick just showed was the perfect form of harmonization with water. It is not a simple thing to have the body and mind behave in sync, and interact with the environment as one. The earth is easier because it is sturdy and reliable, while the water is fickle and indecisive. It was a great achievement, even more than the fact that he finished the fourth choke point in a single run. With harmonization, anything is possible, it didn't surprise them when Soverick broke another unprecedented record.

Shaston clapped her little hands. "This moment will go down in history. It will be immortalized in our hall of fame. It is so wonderful to have witnessed something like this."

The rainbow fog within the small world increased a little due to her emotional outburst.

"You know you're killing yourself by being so happy." The will clone said.

Shaston sighed. "I know but there's nothing I can do about it. That's the point about not having control. I'm happy for the boy. I'm also envious of his talents."

"And you're also insecure about your so-called talent. What were you capable of doing at his age? I forget because you didn't give me memories of when you were younger."

"I thought I was talented but Soverick really puts me in my place. It isn't the first time I am being put in my place in regards to my talent."

"Yes, I know. You are failing as a titan of law and will soon die." The Will clone sounded exasperated.

"Yes, I will soon die. Now I've learned my lesson. I used my life to understand the fact that the realm lord is without a peer. Now I've come into contact with someone that could possibly fulfill my dreams and yet I find my dreams inadequate. A genius like Soverick can forge his own path, why will he take mine?"

"Wow, that was very honest of you. I understand that you're being honest with me because I'm basically you and you're also avoiding the question I asked. But you still deserve a reward. This is usually the point where the world rewards you for your epiphany and you become a sovereign."

Shaston chuckled. "Too bad the world isn't like that. I'll die for my foolhardiness and I have made my peace with it. I just wish my legacy will be fulfilled."

"I honestly doubt that, but if anyone can hope to fulfill it, then that person is Soverick. I want to pat your back right now but you didn't give me a body."

"It so that you won't bludgeon me in my sleep. I'm dying anyway but I don't want to be that titan that got killed by her clone when she lost control of it."

"I agree with you, at least for now. That's probably going to change when you're on your last leg."

"That's why I didn't give you some of my memories. It's so that I'll have a fighting chance of victory."

The two of them chuckled before turning back to watch how Soverick will finish the fifth choke point. It is also the last choke point, it is called pass the hydra challenge. The choke point starts at the beach where the land meets the water. There the hydra will be waiting to stop the challenger from crossing to dry land. The challenger must select a weapon or they can use their bare hands to slip through the numerous heads of the hydra.

The Hydra is a water beast with incredible water manipulation. It can create storms and tsunamis. It can also rule water bodies due to its domain creation ability. It does so by converting a territory of water into its personal domain where enemies are weakened and it is strengthened.

It is a full-fledged mana entity but its powers have been reduced for the sake of this challenge. It has been allowed to retain its variant physique, but not the strength of it, and a little water manipulation.

It has nine heads at first but will regrow two for each head that is cut off. Each head is a meter thick and the neck is more than 20 meters long. Soverick will have to dodge the heads he can dodge, parry, or block the ones he can't dodge or cut off the ones he can't parry or block. And he has to do it with the aim to cross the finish line quickly.

Even if the heads aren't cut off, the hydra will use water magic to create more heads. So the longer the fight draws on, the more difficult the challenge becomes. It transforms from a trial against nine heads to a trial against ninety heads. The challenge is designed to help the challenger select a weapon of choice

and to develop a rudimentary fighting style that can help them achieve the singular goal of crossing the finish line in as little time as possible.

Soverick was resting in the fifth safe zone, which happens to be on top of the water. The safe zone is in an area far away from the eye of the sea, so the area is very calm. The weird thing is that a transparent barrier has been placed on top of the water, it stopped him from interacting with the water.

So there he was, sitting on something he cannot perceive and looking as the water flowed beneath his butt without touching it. He got bored of that after a while and decided to move on.

He had been informed about what to expect from the last choke point. A hydra is blocking his way and he must pass through the obstacle.

"Show me the weapon options." He requested.

The illusion array answered and the safe zone became filled with all sorts of weapons. There were rigid weapons like clubs, morning stars, swords, etc. There were non-rigid weapons like whips, curved blades, flexible spears, etc. There were also blunt weapons, piercing weapons, slashing weapons, and range weapons.

He considered his options for a while. He wanted to choose either the spear, a bladed weapon like a sword, or a ranged weapon like a bow because they would go well with his divine ability.

The divine ability of battle sage monkeys is based on perception and they have created special techniques with certain weapons to take full advantage of their divine ability. He may not be able to use a refinement technique but he wants to have a look at these special techniques.

Chapter 153 Bad With The Spear.

These three groups of weapons are the most used weapons by battle sage monkeys and will ensure that he will have a wide array to choose from.

He used a dagger in his past life because of its lower requirement for technique and its reliance on agility rather than strength. But the dagger is more suited to assassination and will be ill-suited to cutting off the necks of a hydra. He is sure the familiarity with it and his speed will allow him to slip by

the hydra but he doesn't want that. He wouldn't be able to challenge himself and he wouldn't be able to continue using the dagger when his divine ability awakens. Battle sage monkeys don't use daggers.

He prefers the spear because it is like an extended dagger. A blade on a long stick. It will also allow for quick burst action just like a dagger and it will have a longer reach. His mastery of the dagger will be useful to a small extent. The problem is that that long reach of the spear might prove counterproductive against the Hydra as he tries to slip through its defense.

Still, he has to choose a weapon and he wasn't going to use his hands. It will be much better to choose something he is more familiar with and learn to adapt to it. So he chose the spear.

He left the safe zone with his gait sure and filled with confidence. He had been able to harmonize with the water earlier because of the repeated adjustments he had made to his body. Harmonization isn't something new to him, he had been able to achieve it relatively easy as a high elf due to his affinity with nature and mana. You would think it should be easy to do again but it isn't.

One of the major reasons is that he never tried hard to achieve it in his past life, it came to him naturally. The other reason is that his soul is too powerful for his body so his mind simply dominates his body. It is difficult for them to act in sync. But it finally happened after his body didn't require him to police it when the movement itself became a reflex action. He achieved it due to the rickety pillars. Their unstable nature made the fleet foot technique second nature.

That's why he isn't scared of water challenges anymore. He is confident in overcoming whatever might be thrown at him.

"Let the weapon become an extension of your body." He said as he caressed the spear.

He didn't know the meaning of what he said but he had an idea about it. He had heard the statement from other weapon users in the past. He was never a true weapon user, he was a killer. If his powerful mind couldn't overwhelm his opponent then he would add the sharp edge of a dagger into the mix. That usually gets the job done.

He is usually outclassed in close combat but the innate grace and agility of a high elf always helped him. That and trading blows because it doesn't matter who is the better-skilled fighter, only the person that dies first matters. He survived to become an Origin god because he always had the last laugh. But now

he wants to be able to laugh last better since he won't be going the same route as in his past life. There won't be near-unlimited regeneration to count on.

He soon came upon the hydra and began running around while observing it for any signs of weakness. Harmonizing with water hasn't made him able to stand still on the surface of the water, at least not yet. That will happen when he becomes a mana entity.

While he was watching the hydra he noticed that another head was rising out of the water. It is still unstable for now but he knew it will solidify into ice if given time. He wanted to collect information on attack patterns but more heads will make the already difficult challenge too much for him. So he dashed forward and brought his spear forward.

He didn't know much about the spear but he had some common sense about it. He knew that the blade of the spear must be pointed toward his enemy. He also knew that an enemy must not be allowed to get within your guard and to always use the other parts of the spear too. That's why he approached the hydra with the spear extended forward and his two hands gripping it.

The hydra had reptilian features. Its pupils were vertical and it has bluish-white scales that match well with the surrounding water. The necks of the hydra protrude out of a hole in the ground on the beach. The hole is behind the finish line so he doesn't have to pass the hydra exactly, it is more like he had to reach it, all the while with the hydra trying to stop him. He will only pass the choke point when he reaches the 20m glowing line right at the base of the Hydra's neck.

The Hydra attacked him. It attacked with a single head. The attack speed was very fast but it wasn't as fast as the tongue attack of the titan frog. He could see the head of the hydra move forward to try and bite him. He could see it and he could react enough to do something about it. He dodged by hopping to his right. There was another head just behind the first one, he transformed his dodge into a roll. Then he fell into the water. Another hydra head bit into him underwater and so he returned to the safe zone.

He slapped his forehead. "It isn't the ground. How could I forget such a thing."

Only the soles of his feet can utilize the fleet foot technique. The rest of his body can't, that's why he sank when he rolled out of the way of the second attack. It was an instinctual movement on his part to evade the second attack. He left for the second run to engage the hydra again. His gait wasn't so confident.

This time he anticipated the attacks. He watched the movement of the necks in order to predict them. It was just that while he could anticipate the first and the second attacks, he couldn't react well enough to resolve the attacks. He doesn't have the full use of his ability on the water surface. The worst part is that the heads can also attack him from behind even if he had succeeded in dodging it earlier. The attacks came from the right and left, from back and front, from up and from under the water. So the water inhibits his performance but amplifies the hydra's attack options.

He had a plan of attack after understanding most of the parameters of his situation. Dodging the head wasn't working and he wasn't equipped to parry them. The only plan he could think of that would work is to cut off the heads, cut them fast and move fast. He plans to move faster than the heads can regenerate or at least that's what he planned to do.

He started another run with that plan in mind. But a blitz attack is easier said than done with the spear. The spear turns out to be unable to cut the heads fast enough because it is more suited to thrusting. The diameter of the necks is 3 times the length of the blade of the spear. There's no way a short blade like that can cut something that thick. Either that or he is very bad with the spear. Anyways, he stopped trying to execute that plan after 10 runs ended with failure. The hydra would just regenerate the small injuries he was able to create to it.

So he moved on to thrusting. He was inclined to believe that he might not be so good with the spear when thrusting didn't work either. Thrusting required power to fully penetrate targets and cause damage. His attempts with thrusting ended poorly. He always lodged the spearhead into the skull of the hydra and can't remove it. So he either has to let go of the spear, which is a bad idea, or hold on to it and be swung around like a puppet.

Whatever damage he can create to the head with thrusting is quickly regenerated by the hydra. The hydra is too big to use his spear effectively. Even when he uses a full-powered coiling dragon technique to fuel his attack, all he created was a deeper hole in the hydra's head. The deeper hole will kill the hydra head but he wouldn't be able to pull the spear back before he is annihilated. In the rare times that he succeeded in pulling out the spear, the hydra's head will regenerate quickly enough to render his effort useless.

Chapter 154 It Is Inelegant But It Works.

The Hydra is a very tough enemy to put down. It wasn't meant to be killed by the challengers but it has been weakened so that they will have a fighting chance against it. He may have failed numerous times but he has learned not to hope to kill the creature.

Now he knows why the heads must be cut off, because only then will he have enough time to do something other than watch the hydra regenerate. This entire experience reminded Soverick of the difficulty of killing him in his past life. It didn't help that crushing his head won't stop his regeneration at all. Only debilitating destruction could kill him, but he doesn't have that kind of firepower to overwhelm the Hydra's regeneration.

"This isn't working." He complained in the safe zone after another 10 runs of failure.

He always sits and reviews his performance after each run. He would change his plan after all variations of an attempt has failed.

The runs usually last a minute at most because the fight is always fast-paced. It takes a minute for a head of ice to be created which means every minute of the fight leads to the creation of more heads that join the fight.

"Cutting obviously isn't working. Thrusting isn't either. I need something else. What can the spear do?" He began to think.

He doesn't know much about the spear but he knows that it could cut, thrust, deflect, sweep, bash, and can be thrown. He was tempted a little to try other weapons but he squashed that thought. He is just too inexperienced with the spear. The best spear users he has seen only use the weapon as a channel to release their power.

Still, he doesn't want to dwell on his disadvantage with the spear. The challenge is also for those without awakened bloodlines and the ancestral memories that come with it. They too must find a way to pass through this choke point without any advantage but their hard work.

If he were given a teacher, he was sure he would be able to figure out to use the weapon better. But the academy wants them to fumble about a bit to know what weapon suits them instead of having a weapon forced upon them. He had learned something that made the spear different from the dagger. The spear needed strength as well as agility to use it properly.

"Deflecting and bashing it is then." He decided.

He knows what deflecting means and what bashing means but he doesn't know how each one will be effective against the head. He intends to use them in tandem or separately to see how it would work. He selected his spear again and went forth to meet the hydra.

Deflect didn't work. It didn't work no matter how hard he tried. The head of the hydra is too large and the attacks too powerful to be deflected effectively by the small blade of the spear.

"I doubt it is possible. But if it is possible, then my meager skills cannot achieve it." He said and sighed after another defeat. But he won't give up until he has tried everything he could. He understood that he has room for failure now, so he is allowed to fail. Failure now means an opportunity to grow.

So he tried bashing the heads of the hydra with the spearhead. Bashing on the other hand worked wonders. It was unrefined to use a spear like a club but it worked for him. He was able to knock the heads always when he used bashing with the coiling dragon technique.

The possibility of passing through the choke point opened up as soon as he discovered something that worked against the hydra. He collected more information with 3 runs and refined his plan which he executed on the fourth try.

He stepped on the water rapidly as he approached the hydra. It hissed and roared defiantly at him. Then it attacked with one of its nine heads and a second one followed right behind the first. He treated the heads like projectiles which he bashed with his spear. He held the spear with both of his hands and swung the spear to hit the head with the flat side of the blade. He needed the coiling dragon technique for an effective bashing, which means his arms had to reset for a while before he could use them again. He could only use two charges of it because he had only two arms.

So he began to use the coiling dragon technique to the fullest by using it only when needed and recharging it as soon as possible. He would dodge the first two heads, then bash the third head into the fourth one effectively disrupting two attacks with a single move.

The Hydra cried in protest as two of its head smashed into each other. He would have loved to use a single bash to disrupt 3 heads, and he tried, but the power of his bash isn't enough to affect more than two heads at a time. He is content with just two heads and made it work out for him. It is enough to give him some space to Dodge as many attacks as he can and also use the opportunity to recharge the coiling dragon technique.

If he can't, he will use his second charge to bash another head into the next one, this will give him time to recharge at least one more opportunity for the coiling dragon technique. If that still doesn't give him enough time, he would use the striking viper technique to harness the rebound force from knocking off the heads to bash the next head. Using the rebound isn't as effective as the coiling dragon technique as it can't knock the head back enough to disrupt another head but it will buy him time to use something more effective.

In summary, he alternated the use of bashing and dodging to resolve the attack of the hydra. It wasn't easy to do considering that the entire fight is being carried out on the water.

But he was finally able to succeed in this run. The fight lasted 21 seconds and he made it past the finish line onto the beach. The world around him changed and he was back in his training room. There was a screen waiting for him there. On it was a congratulatory message and an evaluation of his performance. He had broken the previous records by 13 weeks.

He felt a profound sense of fulfillment as he read his evaluation. He knew that he had made tangible progress on his path but he has to continue moving forward and making more progress so that the previous progress won't be invalidated. He shook his head and left the training room. He met Wendy at the entrance.

"Congratulations on completing the final regimen of the physical techniques training. With this, you have gotten the final requirement to move on to the third stage of the training. You will have to complete the Spiritual technique training to acquire the second requirement. Shall we start or would you like to rest first?" Wendy asked. She was congratulating him but her frozen face didn't show any emotions.

"Let's start immediately." Soverick chuckled and answered.

Wendy nodded. "Good then. Wait a moment."

The tray in her hand disappeared with the five empty memory crystals. Then another tray reappeared in the palm of her hands. It could be the previous tray but it only had three memory crystals on it.

"The Spiritual technique training is split into five regimens. You will learn to be proficient in Spell casting, Speed casting, Multi Casting, and Amplification Casting. Then you will have to overcome the Mind

Pressure Challenge. It is recommended to take the regimen in the aforementioned order, but the choice is ultimately yours. What would you like to start with, Soverick?"

Soverick chose to go according to the recommended order. He was also not planning to pull his punches. He had held back in the spiritual preparatory stage but he didn't want to do that now. He would rather move on to the next stage as quickly as possible so that he can finally learn more about the spear rather than play around with some mind games. His mind is much too powerful and his knowledge of spell craft cannot be rivaled by the battle academy at this stage. The family will no doubt have collected a lot of information about spellcraft but they will still be out of their depths.

Spellcraft is the area of specialization of High elves while it is a side business for battle sage monkeys. Battle sage monkeys are majorly warriors. It is just that the distinction between warriors and mages becomes blurred at the transcendent level because you have to have a strong body and a powerful mind just to have the opportunity to break through to that level.

Spellcraft is an area of weakness for battle sage monkeys that they have decided to resolve through training but it is different for him. Soverick might fumble and flop with a spear but spell craft is one area that he cannot grow in because there's nothing the academy can teach him.

Chapter 155 It's A Boring Exam, Not Training.

"Let's get this over with." He thought to himself.

Then he picked up the first memory crystal and digested the information within. It is actually a spell catalog with over a hundred different spells. Absorbing the catalog has made him learn over a hundred spells just like that. Not that he needed them, but it will be a proper cover for his future spell usage.

In ancient times, people were killed for a single spell and they spend days and weeks trying to learn it. Spells are still rare outside families with a great heritage like the Ghastorix family but learning has become too easy.

To the Ghastorix family, spells of this level, well any spell in general is worth less than the memory crystal that holds them. Spells start to become irrelevant at the transcendent level because they start to pursue laws and spell matrixes instead. A family like the Ghastorix that only considers transcentents and those with the potential to reach it significantly, will not care about spells at all.

But while spells are easy to acquire and even easier to learn, the need for proficiency still remains relevant. There are several areas of proficiency like casting speed, multicasting, amplified casting,

delayed casting, silent casting, and many more, but the battle academy focuses on the first three. These three are the most important because they focus more on visualization.

The proper casting regimen is all about practical spell casting. Learning spells is very easy, casting them is another thing entirely. Learning spells entails becoming aware of the requirements in mana weaving and the various components of the spells. You also acquire the knowledge about the proper hand gestures and magical phrases that help with spell visualization. Casting spells requires you to use the information you have by carrying them out in order to cast the spell. Knowing about something doesn't mean being able to do it.

Soverick is required to cast 10 spells of choice out of the list of spells. The array within the training room will grade his performance until it reaches an acceptable level of performance. A fireball spell has to be able to do a certain amount of damage instead of winking out, for it to be considered practical. Ideally, it takes a week of constant practice to get a spell to the level of practicality that is required to pass the challenge and that's for bloodline geniuses.

"Reminds me of when I was learning spells casting when I was younger." Soverick began to reminisce about his younger years. The high elves were in a period of peace by the time he was born. They had the realm lord and they didn't want for anything. High elves were carefree and could train or not. Their bloodline will help them to grow powerful without much effort and the small effort they put in will have amplified effects because of their natural affinity.

If their decadence had been allowed to continue, high elves will become too lazy to do anything. It's not their fault per se, they have just been highly influenced by their ancestor. The ancestors of high elves were trees and trees don't like to move even if they are capable of it. They like to stay still and enjoy the wind blowing through their branches. They don't have to work for their food either, there's water and nutrients from the soil, and there's energy giving sunlight every day. They can stay in a single spot all their lives since they want for nothing. High elves are much too alike to trees in that aspect. They can also be stubborn and tenacious, but they have to be forced or faced with the necessity for them to show that side of their personality.

"That's probably why the realm lord allowed demons to attack us occasionally." He shook his head and began to concentrate on the matter at hand instead of thinking about his useless past.

He selected 10 spells and spent one minute on each one of them for a total of 10 minutes. He thought it was ample enough time to tone down his ability. He spent 10 minutes on it while others spend 10 weeks. Then he moved on to the second regimen.

The casting speed regimen entails learning spells and becoming so proficient in them as to cast them in under a second. Anything over a second of casting time is considered sloppy. The spells are rudimentary for this stage because true spell casting begins at the mana entity stage. Only then is instant casting possible.

"Too easy," Soverick commented.

He needed to choose 10 spells of the 100 and perfect his understanding of them enough to cast them in less than a second.

Even though the spell has been learned, casting it isn't easy. Spell casting at this stage is rigid. There are short phrases, hand gestures, and visualization required to cast spells. These rules have to be followed properly or the spell won't be able to function.

Using the spell Mana Shield as an example, it is a spell that takes 10 seconds to cast if the spell nuance is followed to the letter. An amateur will always be able to cast the spell as long as they follow the various steps. Better proficient casters will be able to skip some steps and have success in casting it. Each step that is skipped will lead to a reduction in casting time but will also increase the difficulty of casting it successfully. Experts will be able to cast it in a second by visualizing all the steps instead of actually performing them or performing some steps together by using mind division.

In ancient times, becoming an expert is something that takes years of effort, study, and practice but thanks to the intellectual advantage of bloodlines, that time has been cut down significantly. Nowadays, the journey from amateur to expert can take weeks of dedicated effort depending on elemental and spiritual talent. That's if they focus on a single spell and succeed in it.

Sometimes the trainees might fail in becoming proficient in a spell or give up. Then start another spell, they have many options to choose from. And that's for a single spell. There are still nine more spells to become an expert in.

Soverick didn't need weeks or months. It took him less than five minutes to completely relearn the spells and become an expert in them. He cast all of them silently, without words or gestures, and even then he still held back a little.

He didn't even pay attention to Wendy as she congratulated him. He didn't care about the record and she wasn't truly impressed by it either. She can't feel anything and is just going through the motions. In a way, her presence was soothing to Soverick.

He picked the next memory crystal and went back to train. The next regimen is multi-casting. The memory crystal contained visualization techniques to perform it. It can only be performed by experts, they are already well versed in the art of visualization. That's why 4 of the 10 spells that the trainee has chosen will have to be cast simultaneously to pass this regimen.

Multi casting is the benchmark of a master mage. A master mage must be able to use mind division and impeccable visualization to cast spells simultaneously. Casting two spells at the same time is the lowest requirement and each subsequent addition becomes more difficult to achieve. To cast four at a time is a feat that would have been considered impossible in ancient times.

While it is possible today, some spells cannot be cast together. These spells will interfere with one another even though the mind has been divided. Water whip and fireball cannot be multicasted. It is a matter of elemental opposition. The earthen shield and water whip cannot be cast together because of visualization problems. Earthen shield and mana shield are very compatible, mana shield and water whip are compatible, but the three of them cannot be cast together. Fireball isn't compatible with the earthen shield, but it can be cast together with the mana shield if the mana shield is used as a buffer. These are just a select few situations that only experience in multicasting can acquire.

This will require the trainee to fumble in the dark a bit because they aren't informed of which are compatible or not. They will have to discover these peculiar phenomenons between spells on their own and probably return to their list of 100 spells to learn more in hopes of finding compatible ones.

This will make them experts in more than 20 spells and maybe up to 60 if they are unlucky in finding four compatible ones. This will turn their weeks of training into months and maybe years. It all depends on their talent. Soverick finished it in 4 minutes. He chose water whip, air bust, wind cyclone, and ice shards, then he dedicated a minute to each of them.

"That's the highest time I can go." He grumbled.

He couldn't wait for this experience to be over. It wasn't training to him, more like an examination he has to pass before he is allowed to be promoted. He just wanted it to be over with as soon as possible.

Chapter 156 Finally Done With The Second Stage Of Training.

Then he moved on to amplification casting. The art of casting multiple spells and linking them so that act on another and create an amplification effect. It can be within the same spell which is easier or between different spells which is more difficult.

Fireballs can be amplified by air gusts or wind cyclones. It can also be amplified by another fireball spell. The more similar spells combine, the more unstable the spell becomes, but it is still easier to amplify a spell with another exact one than a different spell.

It is worthy to note that some spells that can't be multi-casted can be used in a delicate combination to amplify each other. They can't be savages at the same time but they can be cast one after the other to amplify their effects. It's all about timing and coordination.

He is required to chain four spells together to pass amplified casting. This usually takes months for the challengers to determine a proper combination and to actually execute it. He simply recycled the four spells he used for multi-casting. Their combination created a small cyclone of deadly ice and shale which took him a minute to accomplish. He moved on after that.

He began the last regimen with the least enthusiasm. He just wasn't feeling pumped up by the challenges. The Mind pressure regimen requires him to perform some straining physical acts while being under a constant spiritual attack. The physical acts require finesse, such as running on water and balance challenges, but the Spiritual attack will make it highly difficult to concentrate.

It is supposed to help the challengers develop competent spiritual resistance and strong mental defenses. Their ability to focus and concentrate will also receive a boost through the exercise. Soverick could never receive a boost from something like this. Even transcents cannot receive a boost from it much less the soul of an Origin god. He simply went through the motions and called it a day.

"I am finally done," Soverick said as he closed the training room behind him.

"Yes, you are. You have completed the required regimen to move on to the next stage. Your performance has broken all rules and conventions. It seemed to me that the Spiritual techniques training wasn't a challenge to you. So I hope you will find a challenge in your coming days." Wendy said.

"Thank you. That's a nice thing to say. I guess I'll see you around."

"I doubt that. My job is done with you. But anything can happen. Goodbye." The golem said then walked away.

Soverick decided to see his siblings before moving to his next training stage. He isn't visiting them to alleviate his boredom but to check up on them. He might not see them again until he finishes his next stage if he doesn't check up on them now. Mihila will appreciate the effort and he can always use the fact that he checked up on her children against her in the future. He will save it up and use it to win himself some benefits from her.

He went straight for Litori's room but no one was around. Ghaster wasn't around either. He decided to check up on them in the preparatory training room. It was then that he noticed some people running in a certain direction on his way to the preparatory training room.

He isn't one to go along with public currents but he was intrigued. These people must be attracted by something which caused them to gravitate toward a single direction. In a place like this without any form of entertainment, something like this might interest him too. So he went in the direction that everyone was moving in.

He came upon a large crowd of about a thousand people in a large room. He was surprised because he didn't know that there were this many people in the academy. The room resembled a colosseum with seats surrounding a raised platform that appears to be a fighting ring.

"It is an arena. Why have I never heard about it?"

He sat at the edge of the arena, a position that is almost 100 meters from the fighting ring. His eyesight is good enough to see clearly what's going on at the center of the arena. His hearing is also good enough to pick out little bits of information from the cacophony.

The ability to communicate with divine sense didn't curb their enthusiasm to shout and cheer. The range of the divine sense is very short at this stage of refinement while sound waves can travel farther. There are some things that are better said with the mouth rather than the divine sense.

From what he could gather, this event is a rare occurrence. The arena can only be opened by someone in the third stage of training, which Soverick has just qualified for. The stage is called the fighting proficiency stage.

The trainees at this stage challenge one another and they use this arena for fighting. Their challenges happen a few times in a month and only on such occurrence can these people entertain themselves a little. It is why more and more people were coming into the arena to watch the fight. He also heard talk about a blue battle sage monkey boy that has been getting trashed here for the past few months. He suspected that they are talking about Ghaster.

He focused on the ongoing match. There were two battle sage monkeys in the ring duking it out. One of them had blue fur and was wearing a light battle attire that is more of straps than defensive wear. His opponent is another battle sage monkey dressed in a red robe that matched his fur. The opponent had long fur on its head that did nothing to help Soverick in determining their sex.

If there was a way to determine sex among battle sage monkeys, then Soverick doesn't know it. Sex difference begins to disappear in most races when they reach the transcendent level. That is also the lowest level necessary for a bloodline.

Transcendents can change how they look, their height, weight, and muscle mass easily as long as they have enough energy. This change is temporary but it becomes permanent by the time an organism reaches the origin god level. Only if a race's divine ability is linked to their sex do sex differences prevail.

The refinement process affects different races in different ways. One of its effects is physical features. The original variant of battle Sage monkeys only develop visible female features such as mammary glands when they are pregnant. At any other time, you won't be able to tell a male apart from a female unless you check their genitalia.

He only knew that Kayla is a female because Ghoto told him. Mihila didn't even exhibit any physical changes when she was pregnant apart from a swollen stomach. Thankfully, she had evolved to a stage where her babies did not need more from her in order to survive. Or else they would have starved to death as babies because their Mon wasn't producing milk.

So Soverick can't tell battle sage monkeys different sex apart but he doesn't care. Sex hardly matters in this society. It certainly doesn't when you become an Origin god.

The blue fur warrior held an ax in both hands and he fought with wild abandon. He was a hurricane of movement. He attacked in a flurry of strikes with each arm always moving in tandem. But he always missed. Most of his strikes impact the ground instead of his opponent. The ground would crack with the

force of his blows but would then heal up. The fighting ring had been enchanted with self-healing properties.

His opponent with the long curly red fur wielded a single blade which he used to great effect to resolve the enemy's attacks. Unlike the blue warrior that was moving with the momentum of a storm, the red warrior was calm and precise. But there was the strength behind each of his blade strikes, enough to block the ax in a direct blow.

They crossed weapons many times in a shower of sparks. The blue warrior was aggressive in his stance and his actions. He pressured the red one again and again. The red one gave up ground but always managed to escape unscathed. The red warrior dodged what blows he could dodge and parried what he couldn't.

They fought to the wild cheers of the audience. The audience whistled and shouted. The arena was filled with the infectious excitement of violence. Those in the audience probably have a lot of pent-up emotions due to frustrating training regimens.

Soverick found it all amusing.

"This isn't so bad."

The fight is an outlet for those pent-up emotions. He knows how frustrating the Obstacle Course was for him, so these people needed the outlet more than him. Anyone will be frustrated by the lightening fast attack of the titan frogs.

Chapter 157 Bloodline Rivalry.

The fight was exciting and the crowd loved it but Soverick was bored quickly. He could already guess who would win. The blue warrior is undoubtedly strong and full of energy but most of his power is being wasted in the fight. He is fast but his opponent is able to weave through the barrage of ax strikes with a calm that is rare for someone with an affinity to fire. Instead, the explosiveness that is expected of their behavior is concentrated within the blade strikes of the red warrior.

"He is playing with him." Soverick shook his head.

There were many occasions where the red-furred warrior could have dispatched the blue one but he held back. It is probably due to caution or a decision to tire out the other. He doubted it is because of ineptness since the red fur warrior has shown impeccable judgment during the fight in disabling attacks with minimal effort. It might be risky but he could slip that blade of his behind the guard of the ax wielder. Still, the red warrior was holding back.

The fight was entertaining to watch even though he already knew the outcome of the fight. The two of them are better warriors than him, but he would still beat them. They weren't fighting with spells at all, which is his forte. He would blow them away with spells.

The trainees might have learned how to use spells but they favor physical weapons more. There are two major reasons for it this preference. While physical fighting requires stamina, and spells require spiritual energy, both of them require concentration. Spell casting and moving the body are very difficult to achieve at this stage.

Concentration is a limited resource that can not be spent on both options at the same, at this stage of refinement. The other reason is casting time. One second is too long to be casting a spell while you're still. Fighters at this stage can move at a top speed upwards of 150m/s. It might take a while for them to accelerate to that point, but their acceleration is enough to dodge whatever you throw at them easily and their momentum is enough to break defenses with a single hit. This disparity isn't the case in all races, but battle sage monkeys have an advantage in physical combat.

Things will change when they become mana entities. At that stage, an individual archives a unification with mana like no other. They breathe in mana and mana flows within their veins. The strength of spells will skyrocket and the casting time can become instantaneous. It becomes a necessity to be familiar with spells at that point.

A lesser reason why they don't focus on both is time and effort. Focus on both spells and physical might will mean less time spent on each for training and honing. Spell crafting requires time and practice to become an expert in the spells, it also needs constant meditation to increase Soul power.

Soverick isn't plagued by these inadequacies. He has enough concentration to move laws, casting spells and moving is nothing but peanuts to him. He doesn't need to practice spells either and his soul power is not lacking. It is the opposite, he is trying to tamp down on his soul to let his body keep up.

The red warrior won just like Soverick suspected. The crowd cheered while some booed. The noise increased to another level as the red-furred warrior held his blade to the neck of the kneeling blue

warrior. He had finally beaten the blue warrior. The red waited for his opponent to become tired and sloppy before he went on the attack. His attacks were swift and precise as his defense. He didn't waste time in disabling the arms of his opponent with explosive blade strikes.

They were both panting from the exertion but the blue warrior was visibly weaker than the other. His arms were dangling powerless at his side. They had a deep cut that reached the bone on each of them and blood was leaking uncontrollably. He wasn't in danger of dying but he will be weakened for a while until he heals. The red warrior was panting after that burst of exertion.

"Hmm, seems he has poor stamina so he was waiting for the right time." Soverick finally understood why the red warrior was holding back.

The red warrior spoke. "You have been bested again by me. This is your fifth loss against me. Concede and admit that my bloodline is superior to yours."

Soverick rolled his eyes. "It's a bloodline rivalry. I thought it was something serious."

The blue fur warrior looked like he would swallow his feces rather than admit the inferiority of his bloodline.

He shouted with what little energy he had and said, "Never. I'll never admit such a thing. It is an absurdity and I'll rather die than let such dishonor to my bloodline be allowed."

Other similarly blue-furred battle sage monkeys stood out of the crowd to cheer his bravery. Some red-furred ones also stood up in support of the other. These people don't have the same parents but the bond of their bloodline has brought them closer more than having the same parents could. It has also made them acquire lifetime rivals.

Red fur raised his hand to silence the crowd. Then he said, "How much loss will you receive before you admit your inferiority?"

The blue warrior snorted. "What inferiority? For generations, my bloodline has triumphed over yours. You just got lucky enough to beat me. Your small victory cannot turn the tide in your favor. It only proved that poor people can have their lucky days too."

The red warrior got angry at that, then he kicked the struggling blue warrior in the side of the head, knocking him out. It is one thing to refuse to admit inferiority but to call your superior a lucky poor person is something else. Then the red warrior left the fighting ring and the arena. Some people went to check up on the blue warrior while most others started leaving.

Soverick remained in his seat and watched while people left the arena. There is only one exit and he is hoping to find his siblings by watching it. He should be able to spot them unless they didn't come here to watch the fight. People threw him odd looks as they passed by him. It was probably about his fur but he didn't care about their opinion of him so he maintained his vigil instead.

He spotted Ghaster talking to another battle sage that wasn't Litori. They seem to be arguing about something. Ghaster was so engrossed in it that he didn't notice Soverick. He didn't notice that there was an odd golden fur battle sage monkey with multicolored eyes sitting by the entrance. Soverick reached out with his divine sense and tugged mentally at Ghaster.

Ghaster immediately turned to him. "Eldest, it is a nice surprise. What are you doing here?"

Soverick noticed that Ghaster's body was full of vitality. His cell activity was as high as the time Soverick was trying to form his vitality core. The weird part is that Ghaster already has a vitality core. So all that extra vitality is just sitting around doing nothing. Soverick could already guess what was going on with Ghaster but he ignored it.

"Came to watch the match and hoped to find you," Soverick answered.

The one that Ghaster was arguing with noticed that Ghaster was paying attention to someone else. He also noticed Soverick and he began to examine him. Then he said to Soverick, "Freak, are you related to this loser in any way?"

Soverick's expression didn't change at all and he didn't spare this guy his attention. He could be polite if he wanted to, but he certainly won't be polite to a brat that doesn't know what's good for him.

"Where is Litori?" He asked Ghaster.

Ghaster scratched his head in annoyance before answering. "She is in the training room."

Soverick stood up. "That is good. Are you done here? I was hoping to hear how well you're doing before I become engrossed in training."

"I'm almost done."

The third wheel finally couldn't take it anymore. His breathing increased but he didn't lash out. "I see. You have chosen to ignore me. I must not be worth your attention. I will change that when you reach the fighting proficiency stage. True warriors talk with their fists anyway. Consider it your luck that you missed me if I graduate before you can reach that stage. But if you're so unlucky as to meet me there, then I'll repay this humiliation by many folds. Good day." He said while fuming. Then he left immediately.

Soverick finally spared the guy a glance. "Who is he?" He asked Ghaster as they left the arena too.

Ghaster deliberated before answering. "It's a she. Her name is Viki. I wanted to fight her and was hoping to arrange it."

Soverick coughed. "She's female? Is she the same one that has been beating you or another one?"

Ghaster blushed. "You heard about that huh."

Soverick nodded. "Everyone was talking about it. I heard the fights were sensational."

Chapter 158 Unwilling To Admit Defeat.

Ghaster sighed. "So everyone is talking about the beatings I received."

"That's safe to say. I mean, if I found out about it then it should be commonplace by now."

Ghaster shook his head. "But she is refusing to fight me now. Viki has been promoted to the fighting proficiency stage recently. Maybe the notoriety of our fights is why she is refusing my challenge. She said that I am not a challenge to her now and I was never one. The only thing that has changed is that I'll

make her rusty by indulging in my interest in masochistic self-abuse. She said while it was fun to release her tension by beating me up, it must not come in the way of her martial pursuit."

"Then she isn't bad. She has a good grasp of her goals and what's of importance to her. She isn't hotheaded like you. I hope you learned that much from her."

Soverick was impressed by her bearing. She might not be able to control her mouth and had called him a freak, but she held herself well when he ignored her. She had self-control and obviously cared more about power than social niceties.

Plus she has been tutoring his younger brother, which made him have a favorable opinion of her. Besides, she wasn't wrong. He is a freak. She just might not know how much of a freak he is. But that might change in the future when he joins the third stage.

Ghaster laughed. "I'm glad that you are not angry that she beat up your brother."

Soverick ignored the sarcasm. "You're welcome."

Ghaster shook his head. "It seems your training hasn't changed you. You are still the same obnoxious person I know. That's good. I heard that the second stage has a way of breaking people mentally and emotionally, more than the physical aspect."

Soverick waved his hand dismissively. "It was a little frustrating at times but I overcame it."

Ghaster blinked. "You have finished the second stage?"

"I just did."

Ghaster blinked "You what? Are you joking? You began the second stage less than two months ago. I heard it takes years. Viki spent 11 years at the second stage."

Soverick shrugged. "That's Viki. I'm not Viki. Don't compare me with others and don't try to compare yourself to me. I am beyond compare at this level and I will be beyond compare beyond it too."

"How is that even possible? You spent less time on it than the preparatory stage." Ghaster was still in disbelief.

While Soverick was unconcerned. "That's for you to figure out. Let's talk about why you like getting beaten up so much. Do you like it?"

Ghaster had stopped walking forward. He was quiet and trembling a little.

Soverick called back to him when he noticed his odd behavior. "Hey, Ghaster, what's happening to you?"

"I was getting beaten so that I could catch up to you. It turns out that I was wasting my time. Here I am, still fooling around in the preparatory stage while you're about to start the fighting proficiency stage. I thought fighting Viki will give me an edge over you since I thought you were still grinding in the techniques stage. I was wrong. You will probably leave me behind here."

"Really, are you jealous?"

"I am not jealous. I just cannot admit defeat. I must not admit defeat."

Ghaster reminded Soverick of the two battle sage monkeys that just fought in the arena. They were also bogged down by what Soverick considers irrelevant.

"Stop being so dramatic. Everyone has different strengths and weaknesses. Everyone has different talents and abilities."

Ghaster screamed, "But it's not fair."

Soverick snickered. "Of course, it's not fair. Life isn't fair. Stop thinking like a moron. You have the help of Hadrick don't you? He supplies you with life force. That's why you are full of vitality and I know what

you intend to do with it. You want Viki to beat you up while you're in this state so that your vitality can heal you up and strengthen you. Is it taking a shortcut or cheating? Who else has a reservoir of life force at their beck and call that they can use to strengthen themselves instead of exercising? Is it fair that you have that advantage?"

Soverick had tried to get a supply of life force from Hadrack but Hadrack had refused until he threatened him with Ghaster. Yet, Ghaster gets to simply ask and get as much life force as he wants. Just because his ancestor had a close relationship with Hadrack.

"It's not cheating. I work hard for what I have. The life force is an advantage I got due to the hard work of my ancestor. It is my inheritance." Ghaster maintained.

"Who says that I don't work hard for what I have? Your bloodline is your inheritance. That life force is preferential treatment. Not everyone has a royal bloodline like yours that gives them an advantage in elemental affinity and everything. Did you work hard for your bloodline? No. When last did you train your vitality core? Those without a bloodline have to work hard to increase the conversion of their vitality core and they might still fail to become mana entities. You don't need to train your vitality core and you make progress every day. Your bloodline is a cheat, an unfair advantage. Everyone with a bloodline is cheating. People aren't born equal. Life isn't fair." Soverick's voice had become mocking by the time he finished his tirade.

"Then what about you? What is your cheat? Why are you so great? I can't catch up to you even with my 'preferential treatment.' Why am I lacking compared to you?"

Soverick spoke proudly. "I worked hard to reach where I am today. I am the first of my kind. I am without compare and I can not be compared to anyone. That is why I am so great."

Ghaster glared at him and said, "One day, I'll rise above you and I'll trample you."

Soverick retorted. "One day, I'll rise above the world and I'll trample the strongest beneath my feet. Everything that stands in my path will be crushed. Good luck in your endeavor and be careful not to be crushed."

Ghaster watched as Soverick turned and left. He watched him with unyielding eyes. The same as the ones that the Ghastorix ancestor used as he watched the better warriors. Ghastorix was born weak and

so couldn't get access to Origin waters or good trees. And yet he didn't accept defeat. He continued to work hard and fortune smiled on him when he met Hadrack. Things changed then. Ghastorix's hard work when paired with Hadrack's assistance bore a bountiful harvest. Ghastorix achieved greatness and strength.

Then Hadrack was about to die and Ghastorix didn't concede to fate. He left for the ancient battlefield where he fought and nearly died several times. He was strong but there were stronger people from all races on the ancient battlefield. He was beaten, broken, and defeated. And yet he didn't accept defeat.

He trained and became better. He went to the tower of heaven and fought with his life on the line. He returned triumphantly but it was too late. And yet he didn't accept defeat.

Ghastorix sacrificed everything to save his friend, including the prize he won with his life in a gamble. Then he stood guard as the very heavens were determined to end his friend. Day in and day out he suffered under the barrage of lightning strikes. His body and mind were wrecked with pain and he was almost broken. And yet he didn't accept defeat.

He stood back up every time he was sent to the ground and fought harder. He fought harder and became stronger for it. He comprehended the law of lightning and lightning could no longer harm him. But the heavens increased its punishment and aimed for total destruction. For years and years, he suffered as he was pummeled with destruction. This time, he was broken in body and soul. And yet he didn't accept defeat. His willpower helped him to remain conscious and he finally comprehended the law of destruction.

The Ghastorix ancestor never accepted defeat. Some might say it doesn't matter, that it doesn't change the fact that he was defeated. That he is being stubborn and unreasonable. That his stubbornness does change the fact that he was defeated numerous times and trampled upon. But he doesn't need to be reasonable because lightning and destruction are not reasonable.

If he were not stubborn and unyielding, he would have stayed down after being trampled. The numerous people who looked down on the defeated figure of Ghastorix and disdained to kill him wouldn't have regretted that decision.

Lightning and destruction ignored his pleas, supplication, and suffering, they were stubborn and unreasonable. So he learned to ignore all else and be stubborn. That's how he became the first in the line of Punishment Lightning and Destruction Royal Bloodline.

Chapter 159 Determination.

Ghaster has the bloodline of Punishment Lightning and Destruction. With it came the resolution to ignore all else and be stubborn. He will be damned if he ever accepts defeat. His eyes blazed with the fire of determination.

He repeated the promise he made to his eldest.

"One day, I'll rise above you and I'll trample on you."

Then he left to forge his path while Soverick went to find Litori.

Soverick's meeting with Ghaster was less than pleasant but he still wants to complete this small errand, especially since it will have a bigger return when used against Mihila.

He went straight to the training room and found her exercising. She was focused more on physical training because that's the area she is lacking at. She has her advantage in the mind and focuses on the body, while Ghaster has an advantage in the body but chose to focus on his body.

He approved of Litori's decision more than Ghaster's. She is trying to fix her weakness while Ghaster is focusing on his strength. Each decision has its advantages and disadvantages but Litori has only her bloodline to help her, Ghaster also has an endless supply of life force.

Life force is precious and still useful up to the level of transcendent. And yet, Ghaster is complaining about something else. Such is the greed for power. It can never be enough. People pursue power for different reasons. For Ghaster, it is the need to come out victorious against all adversaries.

He was easily noticed when he entered the training room. His fur makes him stand out too much. Litori saw him and came over a few minutes later.

She waved to him. "Hey, Eldest. How have you been?"

"I've been fine. I came to check up on you. How is your progress in training?" Soverick replied.

"Did you come to check in on us so that you can get something from Mom?"

Soverick grinned. "I admit nothing.

Litori laughed. "That's so like you. You don't do anything without a purpose and that purpose must be beneficial to you."

"That's a baseless accusation."

Litori laughed harder. "I understand and don't hold it against you. It is who you are. I must say that your visit is appreciated regardless of the reason. I have been fine but the progress has been slow. Our bloodline is only focused on the quality but not the quantity of our life's order. We have to improve the quantity ourselves and it is not easy going. I am making less and less progress the harder I work. It has been 5 months already since we started the academy and at this rate, I'll not be done with the preparatory stage until a year as passed. It is so frustrating."

Soverick listened as Litori complained about her training. She had been pushing herself both for the physical and the spiritual preparatory stage. He compared how well she might fare in the second stage. Ghaster and her might not have a definite advantage over each other right now, but things will change in the second stage. Ghaster will have the advantage in willpower and determination but it won't be able to stand up to Litori's analytical mind.

Physical training needs as much Mental acumen as physical prowess. It is about the perfect control of the resources of the body and the ability to adapt to unfavorable conditions. To adapt, one needs to have an open mind. It is something that Ghaster is definitely lacking. Litori on the other hand will be able to make the necessary adjustments needed to overcome the challenges. The physical techniques stage aims to break bad habits and learn better ones. If Ghaster is too stubborn to break his habits, how does he hope to learn? No matter the outcome of the second stage, Soverick is sure that it will have a much greater impact on Ghaster.

Soverick listened to her talk for over an hour. He gave her some advice here and there but it was mostly Litori doing the talking. He excused himself a while later to start his third stage. He didn't tell her about his progress so she assumed he was still challenging the second. She was sure to find out if she talks to Ghaster or when he fights in the arena, but he doesn't care about what are reaction could be. He had no obligation to inform her of his progress and her thoughts about it is her business.

'No one can say I never tried. I visited them twice in less than 6 months. That's a pretty high frequency. Time to train" He thought in satisfaction.

He had spent more than 2 hours on his visits to them, enough time for him to finish some challenges. So it can be considered a lot of effort and time. Now that he has fulfilled his so-called duty as the eldest, he could concentrate on what he wants to do.

He followed the direction of his vision to a different part of the academy. There was almost no difference in the environment, the academy is all doors and hallways. But he could tell that this area is different because of the leftover aura of strong people. These auras indicated that this area of the academy is frequented by people that are at least transcendents.

He reached another door that looked similar to the others and swiped his wrist logger against it. The door beeped and he was informed to wait for permission. The room behind the door doesn't belong to him but to his new teacher. This person will teach him how to fight with a spear for the next period of his training. He didn't have to wait for long. The door turned green, so he opened it and entered.

He entered a large rectangular room with several doors that led to places currently unknown. There was a battle sage monkey in the center of the room. This battle sage monkey, male or female, had a yellow fur that paled in glory when compared to Soverick's golden fur. The thing that garnered Soverick's attention is that the battle sage monkey was somehow resting with its tail as support. The legs were folded and the battle sage monkey was meditating. The tail wasn't standing on the ground, it was standing on the butt of a vertical but inverted spear. The spear was standing with the sharp tip of its blade touching the ground.

Soverick could sense that this battle sage was somehow balancing its entire weight on his tail and the spear beneath it. There was no other force apart from the energy that is coating the blade preventing it from stabbing into the ground. He knew the principle of balance and what is necessary for it but he couldn't figure out how to make his center of balance align with his tail and the spear enough to attain such a feat.

'It probably has something to do with world harmonization.' he mused.

He had many guesses as to how it was achieved and was content in trying to parse it out when his new teacher didn't acknowledge his presence. The battle sage monkey knew he was here, it gave Soverick permission to enter. So for him to enter and yet be ignored is a game that two can play.

'Challenge accepted. Let's see who's patience breaks first.' Soverick thought to himself.

It isn't odd for teachers to test their students during their first meeting. The result of the test usually determines if the teacher will take on the student. So this scenario wasn't odd to Soverick. He wished they could get it over with. He is also determined to foil this teacher's plan, whatever it is.

He had acquired a new perspective on life after facing and overcoming the challenges of the training regimen. It became solidified after interacting with his siblings. He had decided to embrace his weakness and try to overcome them like Litori. That's what made him reincarnate. He found himself wanting and he decided to change it.

He had to become greater than he was to challenge conventions and overcome them. To be victorious against obstacles instead of being like Ghaster. Even though it is nice to bounce back after a defeat, it is better to never experience it. You will grow stronger on the spoils of war faster than the dregs of defeat. It is best not to experience a defeat because it might mean your end.

Soverick experienced defeat a lot in his past, but he remained alive because he could outlive his enemies, run away quickly and hide very well. But he realized that it wasn't enough to achieve excellence. So he set out to achieve perfection.

Ghaster may have determination but who doesn't? Determination can always be used to pursue victory and not only to return from defeat. Just like right now, Soverick is determined to one-up this teacher of his in a battle of patience.

Chapter 160 Suspicious Behaviour.

The mock competition didn't last long. His teacher extended his divine sense and reached out to Soverick's mind with a mental construct for communication.

"Can you stand on one foot?" His new teacher asked.

"Yes," Soverick answered. He felt a small joy at having won the test of patience.

"Can you stand on one hand?"

"Yes"

"Can you stand on a single finger"

"Probably. Yes." He never tried it before but he was sure he could do it after some rounds of failure. His teacher continued to ask his questions.

"Can you balance on your spear?"

"No."

"Why can't you?"

Soverick resisted the urge to roll his eyes. He answered. "It is because it is not a part of my body. I can not control it as easily as I can my body."

But he held back the part that only a transcendent can have the control needed to stand on their tail at all. It is something impossible to achieve for those beneath without resorting to cheating.

The battles sage monkey smiled. "You are smart. Insightful and also patient. I am SQUARESKULL, and I am to be your teacher in the beginning arts of the spear, your chosen weapon. Is it not?"

"Yes, it is."

"Good. I have received an evaluation of your performance in the preparatory stage and the techniques stage. Your performance is beyond extraordinary. It is an understatement to call you an unprecedented genius. I am sure you have pride in your talents. Do not let pride be your downfall."

'You don't need to tell me all this nonsense. Just do your job and teach me about the spear.' Soverick grumbled inwardly, but smiled at his teacher and said. "You don't have to worry about that, teacher SQUARESKULL. I am an impeccable student above all else. Learning is my talent."

"Is that so? Then I'll tell you what to aim for. We will talk about the spear while your seniors are on their way. It is tradition to meet and greet the newcomer."

"They don't need to come." Soverick interrupted.

SQUARESKULL's brows furrowed. He asked. "Why not?"

"I don't need neither do I want their presence here. I also will not drop whatever I am doing to come and visit a newcomer in the future. I don't care about such things."

SQUARESKULL stared at him as if to bore a hole into Soverick with his sight. Then he began to talk slowly. "I see. I understand your choice. You do not care about the frivolities of the world and only your strength matters. It is a good outlook, I'm sure. It is also probably why you don't respect me or fear me. You didn't call me Master. You used the word teacher. Do you not think I am worthy of such a title? Am I not worthy of being your Master?"

Soverick remained silent. What could he say? That SQUARESKULL was right or he was wrong? He was right, but Soverick won't admit that. Lying would also be a disrespect to both of them, so he kept quiet and continued staring back at SQUARESKULL, totally unfazed.

"You have nothing to say?"

Soverick remained quiet.

SQUARESKULL nodded grimly. "I admire you, do you know that? Brave and uncompromising. You have the features of a true Spearman. But you have an innate arrogance about you. It is as if you look down on the entire world. I understand that your bloodline and the success you have enjoyed in your life have buoyed your confidence. How old are you now? Less than two years old and yet you have come this far. You have so much ahead of you. Arrogance is pride without sufficient strength to back it up. Here you stand before a transcendent and you remain proud. Do you have the strength to back up your pride? I

am sure you will become a great battle sage, but do not let your arrogance cut off your future path short."

Soverick wasn't going to argue with this grown-up child that will be his teacher. He should be the one telling his teacher not to be arrogant in front of him, but he smiled and said, "You are right, teacher SQUARESKULL."

SQUARESKULL sighed. "This is a waste of our time. Have it your way. I have informed your seniors that they need not come. But some of them remain on their way."

Soverick shrugged. He had said his piece. He would do what he said and others can do whatever they want. He doesn't care. He just wants to learn the spear.

"I can see your yearning for the spear and yet you do not hurry me. You have more self-control than I thought."

SQUARESKULL stopped speaking and continued to watch soverick in silence. It was like he wanted to compete with Soverick in patience. Soverick continued to watch his teacher silently. They continued to wait until the door to the room opened and a battle sage monkey entered.

The newcomer glanced at soverick, he lifted an eyebrow in surprise but said nothing. He was carrying a spear which he placed on his lap as he sat down. Then he joined the duo in silence. More people entered for a total of five. They were now seven battle sage monkeys in the room sitting or standing in silence.

"Now that everyone is here, I'll start the tradition. First will be the introduction." SQUARESKULL spoke while staring intently at Soverick. It was more of a look of Challenge rather than a look of curiosity. As if he wanted to get a rise in Soverick's emotions.

Soverick began to suspect that his new teacher was out to get him or maybe haze him. He wasn't a child that could be riled up easily. He could and would maintain his cool no matter what this is. For now.

He barely listened to what the other five were saying but he noted down the most important things. Everything they said can be summarised into First Senior, SYNCLAIR, 44th year with a ranking of 231.

Second Senior, SLEEP DEPRIVED DEMON, 38th year, ranking=364. Third Senior, NARGOTHROND, 34th year, ranking=527. Fourth Senior, NOBELLES, 29th year, ranking=607. Fifth Senior, JUST EVILNESS, 24th year, ranking=781.

He got the main points of their introduction which was their seniority, name, the amount of time they have spent in the academy, and their student ranking. They said more but only those were important enough for him to take note of. The five of them became silent after their introduction. Then the room plunged into silence for a while.

SQUARESKULL only started to talk ten minutes later. "We will move on since that is over. Next, I'll talk about what you have to aim for in the academy and how to accomplish it with your martial pursuit."

Then he went silent again. This time the period of silence extended for 20 minutes before SQUARESKULL broke it.

"As you might have guessed, there is a ranking system in the 3rd stage. There are about a thousand students in the third stage and they engage in a tournament of sorts to determine their ranking. There are four major rules that determine how the challenges are done. For the first rule, you can only challenge someone that's within 50 positions from yours on the ranking. For the second, you can challenge as many people as you want but it is up to them to accept or not. For the third rule, you must accept at least a single challenge once a month. The fourth rule states that you cannot skip milestone fights."

Another silence ensued for 5 minutes.

"Milestone fights are fights that must occur when you try to move from one tier to another. Each tier is composed of 100 ranks. There are 14 milestone fights in total. They are at the zilch, 10th, 20th, 50th, 100th, 200th, 300th, 400th, 500th, 600th, 700th, 800th, 900th 1000th positions. That means you must pass the milestone fights to move from the 401st position to the 399th one. The 400th position is where you stay if you pass the milestone fight. The milestone positions are the only position that can be held by more than one person. You fight against puppets with an increasing level of skill and power in the milestone fights.

Another silence for 10 minutes.

"There are only two ways to graduate from the academy. You must either complete 12 of the milestone fights or get a certification from your teacher. It is not a must to graduate. You can always choose to drop out and go home. But your graduation will guarantee you a spot in the Tertiary Level of the academy, the mana entity stage. The Zilch milestone fight is optional and it is set up with the power and the skill of the last person to beat it. So it has increased in difficulty over the years. Only the best of the best can beat it."

Then SQUARESKULL took another one of the long breaks of silence that he takes during his talk.

If Soverick suspected that he was being messed with before, now he is very sure. Either SQUARESKULL was taking these periods of silence to relax his throat or he was pushing Soverick to get angry.

The first option is highly unlikely because there's no way a transcendent will have a sore throat. Plus there's no way anyone will have a sore throat if they were communicating with their divine sense. So his teacher, for one reason or the other, must be out to get him.