

GREED 651

Chapter 651 The First Challenger.

Salvini found some armor and a spear that granted her access to world power very quickly. She found other things to bolster her strength then she went on a hunt to double her feats. A lot of people with feats died by her spear. It was after she had more than doubled her feats that she went to the 1st ring. No matter the outcome of the challenge, she will not be found wanting.

"It seems I am the first. Now I have to defend it." She said as she reached the zeroth ring.

The zeroth ring is a small white and smooth spot on the ground that is wide enough for one person to stand on. It is like a white blemish in this natural landscape. The entire arena will be destroyed leaving this white spot and a 3 meters space above it. Since flying is banned, only the person within the circle will be the last man standing. Everyone else can watch on or try to kill the person in the Zeroth ring before the 1st ring is destroyed.

She reached it first but she knows that doesn't mean that she has won the challenge. She has to defend it from challengers and she knows that they will come. She will try her best even though she knows that the likelihood of her winning is very low. There are a lot of individuals that are threats to her despite her ability to predict the future. These individuals began to arrive one after the other.

The first person to come to the 1st ring to challenge her was the Soul Fire, another king like her. This red-furred battle sage monkey walked unhurriedly to the 1st ring and gazed at the zeroth ring. The Soul Fire stopped as she slowly examined their surroundings. Litori appeared to be contemplating her course of action. She looked harmless and wasn't doing anything visibly dangerous.

Salvini wasn't fooled by the display. She lept to her left suddenly. She lept because she had been attacked. The air where she was standing rippled a little. It is the only indication of the attack that narrowly missed her. Litori had pretended to think while she sneaked attacked Salvini. There was no movement from her to indicate her intentions. Her attack was untraceable, deadly, and fast. Salvini couldn't block it even though she saw it coming way before it was made.

But Salvini didn't show fear. She grinned. "That's very bad of you. You should greet someone before..."

She didn't finish what she was saying because she had to dodge again. This time she didn't stay idle after dodging. She had to retaliate because the fate of a targeting board is to be riddled with holes. The spear in her hand cackled with power and she thrust forward.

Numerous grey phantom spears materialized in the air around her. They were about to sail forward when they stopped. She failed to attack Litori with it because she had to dodge again. Litori attacked her several times so she had to keep dodging or risk a one-hit instant death. It was more like she was hopping about, contorting her body in different ways and dodging in strange ways to keep Litori from predicting her position.

"Enough of this." She growled in frustration.

Her current situation won't last long. It has only been 10 seconds and she has had to dodge death 10 times. That is very bad and unpromising statistics in a fight. If not for her ability to predict the future then she would have died 10 times over. She can't continue like this or she will slip up and be done in. All Litori needs is one mistake from Salvini for her to be put down.

She ran off and then began circling Litori. Staying in the Zeroth ring limited her options and movements. She has to give up her position for now if she wants to get out of this alive. She began running around Litori at the top of her speed. Litori couldn't attack her with precision now that she is moving too fast so Salvini had breathing room to attack.

She didn't get close to Litori. That will be suicide. The shorter the distance between them, the less time that she will have to dodge the spirit attacks. So she stayed far away while she shot phantom spears at her opponent. She made sure not to get cocky. One hit from Litori and she is doomed. She knows that, so she made sure to evade the attacks that came her way even as she retaliated.

Litori frowned at the situation. She is a king too and this is not the first king she is fighting. She defeated the last one. It was tough but she won at the end of the day because the fight was always in her favor. This fight on the other hand is not going her way.

She was the one attacking in her previous fight with a king while her opponent struggled to defend themselves. That fight ended quickly as most of her fight have. But Salvini is managing to defend and attack at the same time in this fight. Salvini's attacks are deadly too. Litori has to defend herself or get skewered with phantom weapons.

Litori produced a dry white clump in her hands. She sprinkled it into the air around her like dust. The white dust met the barrage of phantom spears and the mechanism of control over them. She wrestled control of the phantom spears from Salvini and then turned them against her. Now Salvini has to dodge her own phantom spears and the elusive spirit attacks from Litori. Litori took the opportunity while her enemy is distracted to spread her domain.

Salvini fell into a disadvantage really fast. Dodging Litori's attacks is enough of a problem already, adding her phantom attacks is just too much. The problem is that her phantom attacks being used against her are just a distraction. If she gives them her attention, it will open her up to Litori's spirit attacks.

Chapter 652 Hegemon Of The First Ring.

Her armor can protect her from the physical damage that will be inflicted by the phantom spears used against her but Litori's spirit attacks will surely bypass the defenses of her armor and deal a deadly blow to her. So her phantom attacks are not a threat despite looking like so. They are just the visible attacks. The invisible attacks are the deadly ones.

She was contemplating ignoring her phantom attacks to focus on a means to retaliate when she saw something in her future vision that made her eyes widen. She turned and ran immediately. Her phantom weapons hit her back over and over again but she ignored them. She focused on running away and dodging the spirit attacks that came her way.

She let her armor do its job and protect her from the physical attacks while she dedicated most of her attention to the spirit attacks. It was until she ran away from the 1st ring and entered the 2nd ring that she finally stopped running. She looked back at Litori who calmly went to stay in the Zeroth ring.

"Fuck." She cursed. "The first challenger and I caved."

She used to be in the Zeroth ring just a few moments ago but that changed immediately the first challenger came. She didn't see what she escaped from but she saw what would have happened to her had she stayed anywhere in the 1st ring and that was enough for her to retreat. She saw it as clear as day. She would have started burning from the inside out until she died. Her death would have occurred moments after being hit. All she could do to avoid that fate was to escape from Litori as fast as possible.

"It seems my good luck has ended. I faced an ephemeral flame wielder and survived. That is enough to drain whatever luck I have. I better not tempt fate anymore. I should go and hunt for more feats." Salvin said to herself.

She shook her head at the Zeroth ring and decided to hunt for more feats. She knew becoming the last man standing is almost impossible but the quick defeat stung. Her speculation about her inability to be the last man standing was confirmed but it did not give her the pleasure it ought to do since her conjecture was confirmed at the hands of Soverick's littermate.

She already lost to Soverick once so losing to his littermate too is not encouraging at all. It doesn't help that Litori is an ephemeral flame wielder. Wielders of the ephemeral flames are very dangerous and difficult to deal with but that doesn't excuse her loss. It doesn't change the fact that she has lost to Soverick's sister. So she would rather shore up her future in the competition by hunting for more feats than think about her defeat.

Litori's attacks were soundless, traceless, and unblockable. Salvini could track them based on what will happen to her if she stayed in her course of action. She would have died if not for her ability to predict the future. Someone that couldn't see the future would have died without knowing what killed them. Ephemeral flame wielders are that dangerous. They are incredibly rare because of the Soul affinity needed for them. Even those with the affinity of the soul might not be able to wield their powers so well.

Litori did more than master her abilities. She excelled at it. The domain that she set up covered the entire 1st ring. It would have killed Salvini had she continued to stay around. Litori took the Zeroth ring and is using her domain to prevent other challengers from even getting close to her. The entire 1st ring turned into a death zone.

The first unsuspecting challenger that approached her nearly died after having their emotions turned into fuel for her flames. Only a quick immediate retreat saved the person only for them to be killed after Litori fired a concentrated spiritual attack at the weakened person. Even Salvini with foresight wouldn't have been able to dodge the spiritual attack because of the weakness caused by being in her domain. The unsuspecting fool stood no chance.

The display warned others. No one approached the 1st ring any further. If no one can enter the 1st ring, then no one can fight her to claim the Zeroth ring at the very center of the Arena. If this continues, then Litori will be the last man standing.

Ghaster's POV.

Litori is not the only sibling of Soverick enjoying success. Ghaster is too. He defeated Amegle. It was a narrow victory. She put up a good fight. Her natural armor and weapons gave her an advantage in a place where no one had weapons. She was also a very skilled fighter with highly precise battle instincts. Unfortunately for her, lightning was his weapon. He was faster than her and he could hit harder too.

His victory might have been a close one but the rewards of that battle were massive. He can still feel the changes even now. It was subtle at first. He stepped easier and moved smoother. It was the easy things, easily overlooked, that showed the first signs of improvement.

Things became obvious when he suddenly had an epiphany and comprehended more of the law of lightning. He somehow became synchronized with the world enough to reach the third step of mastery.

The changes didn't end with acquiring one with the world. He became sensitive to danger and he became able to differentiate between fortune and traps. His luck soared to the sky. He became able to always find his way around to acquire what he needs.

If he needs a weapon, he found it in a loot box. If he needs a place to hide because of the people chasing him to get his new shiny weapon, he finds it very quickly. If he needs people to kill without much trouble, he finds them too. While in his hiding place no less. Everything seems to be working well for him.

Chapter 653 Payback.

He was looking for a weapon when he stumbled upon a loot box. He didn't even consider the result of his actions because he didn't sense any danger. He broke the loot box and found a very strong blade. Some people saw him get the weapon and they attacked him. He could have avoided them if only he had been careful and observant of his surroundings. He could have hidden and waited for them to pass by before breaking the loot box but he didn't because he didn't sense any danger.

He was wrong about that. His new instinct for danger gave him false confidence. The box wasn't dangerous but the 10 or so people that attacked him are very dangerous. He fought them but they were too many for him. So he ran away from them and they gave chase. He was able to escape due to his superior speed and he found a place to hide in the city of stone that they are in.

He is hiding on the 3rd floor of a building. The city is filled with such buildings of stone. It is a jungle of structures made out of stone. The stones aren't precious or enchanted. They are ordinary stones created from a hardened mixture. The city is abandoned and derelict so there's no one occupying the buildings. He was able to lose his pursuers within the maze of buildings and hide in one of the buildings.

The room he is in is empty and dusty but it granted him a good view of the ones chasing him now fighting for their lives. The ones that tried to take his weapon were ambushed as they were looking around for him by another group. The two groups make a total of 20 fighters. Their numbers are dwindling fast because of the generous use of explosives. Ghaster is watching and waiting. He is waiting for them to injure themselves well enough for him to finish them off.

He believes it will happen. The world has been moving to his whims ever since he beat Amegle. It is like he became lucky or he suddenly became talented at doing things. He gained a sort of intuition for making the right decision. And right now, his intuition is telling him to wait for the opportunity to appear. He can choose to escape but he chose to wait because his intuition has not been wrong so far.

His wait bore fruit. The opportunity arrived after their number was reduced to 6 with 4 on the winning side and 2 on the losing side. The group that chased him to kill him are the ones losing. They were ambushed by a group with a larger number so it is expected. They fought well though. They should have been annihilated but they managed to cut down a lot of their enemies before their defeat. Now they are being cornered by enemies that ambushed them just like they tried to corner him. The world itself is punishing them for trying to hurt him.

His lips curled into a feral grin at the opportunity that has been delivered to him by fate. His pursuers are to be his prey.

He said to himself with anticipation, "It's my turn now."

Then he turned into a bolt of blue lightning. He flew from the building he was in, circled around the back, and approached from behind the winners. He appeared behind the unsuspecting 4 with his weapon raised high. Both of his hands gripped his blade tightly. The other 2 saw him and their eyes widened in panic. They have seen something like this before. It decimated some of their group earlier before they were ambushed. So they are very afraid of what's going to happen next.

Their weird behavior alerted the 4 that are cornering them. One of them looked behind just in time to see Ghaster bring down the blade. There was a flash of light as lightning fell from the sky on the 4. A torrent of blue lightning poured down in a great pillar onto his enemies.

"BOOM."

There was a massive explosion that rocked the earth. The violent energy of the lightning entered their bodies and wrought untold destruction. Their bodies dried up and cracked. Then the thunderclap of the lightning shattered their bodies to dust. They disappeared before their bodies broke apart leaving him with the other two.

The other two were slammed by the residual force of the thunderclap. They were thrown against the wall behind them and almost knocked unconscious. They struggled to stand up but they did nothing after that. They have nowhere to go and their backs are literally against the wall. Their eyes were glued to the figure obscured by smoke and dust. They can see his sparkling eyes and they can hear his lightning-frazzled hair sizzling and popping. If they are to escape then they must go through him.

The dust finally cleared to reveal his figure. He was still grinning at them.

"Remember me?" He asked them.

They remember him. He was the one they were chasing before. But now, there is a massive smoking crater between them. It is a crater that he created. The bodies of those who were there earlier are nowhere to be seen. The same thing could have happened to them. The only reason why they are alive is because he spared them. But that has not alleviated their fears. So their refusal to speak is understandable.

They know that they are probably going to die so they don't have any interest in humoring their killer. The two parties just stared at each other. One side outnumbers the other but it is the outnumbered party that is confident of victory. The crater of melted and scorched stone ground beneath them can attest to how destructive lightning can be. They are alive because of his mercy. But he didn't spare them without hoping to get paid. They have much to pay for.

Chapter 654 Interruption

Ghaster was waiting for them to make a move. He knows he should kill them quickly but he wants to toy with them. Power is euphoric. He became able to do some things with lightning that he never thought he could do. To be honest, he stumbled on the revelation but it empowered him the same. That power is his now and it feels great to have. It feels even better when there are others who lack power.

These people who have not yet managed to learn the laws of this world are no match for him. If not for their use of explosives, they would have been hunted like rats with no way to fight back. Instead, they chased him and sent him running like a rat. But the world works in mysterious ways. He is here for payback now. He is not a rat anymore. He is the predator.

The feeling of hunting is a good feeling to experience. He doesn't aim to be the last man standing in this challenge. He just wants to fight and fight to his heart's content. He was to wield lightning as a hunter and unleash it on his prey. So he waited for them to move. One of them did move. She brought out an explosive from her space ring and tried to jug it at him.

Her movement was quick. The explosive appeared in her hand in the blink of an eye. All she had to do was throw it at him. Then she will cause it to explode. She failed to throw it. She spasmed instead as a bolt of lightning shot from his outstretched hand to her. She shook and fell to the ground with her eyes rolled far up into her head. She might have been fast but lightning is faster.

Starting from transcendence, injuries become a serious matter. The elements of the body and soul are not separate any longer. So she just had both her body and mind fried with lightning. It is a nasty experience to endure. Her body continued to shake on the ground even after Ghaster stopped channeling the lightning. Her partner watched with dread.

"Wasn't going to work anyway," Ghaster said to her unconscious form.

Explosives are thrown. They go off when the person with spiritual control of them wills them to explode. The explosion is deadly but it is only effective against those that can't move. You have to throw it first at the target and there's no way someone with freedom of movement will not dodge. Transcendents move at a mind-boggling speed which makes targeting them very, very difficult.

Only talented individuals that can target where someone will be can use explosives effectively. Such talented individuals won't need explosives in the first place. So her attempt to use an explosive on him wouldn't have worked on him anyway. She is not one of those talented individuals and even if she were, he is too fast to be targeted. They also don't have the numbers to try and overwhelm him with explosives anymore. It is just two of them and he can react to both of them.

Of course, she didn't hear him. She is preoccupied with spasming and mind-cutting pain. It is of no harm. His words were for her partner. Ghaster said it so that he will try something different. What fun will a showdown be if the two of them try the same useless thing? It is best that the partner learn from her mistakes and try something else. Preferably something fun.

He was waiting for his prey to move. But his fun was interrupted. A nearby group heard the thunderclap and saw the descent of lightning. It is not a normal occurrence. They figured that it must be due to some treasure and they are confident of wresting ownership of the item from whoever had it. It is why the first group came to hunt Ghaster in the first place. They are partly right. The power he has shown is a combination of his new skills and the blade in his hands. Access to world power when combined with lightning manipulation is a deadly combination.

"Good. More people. More fun." Ghaster said with excitement.

His instincts to do battle began to rear their head. He did not feel unhappy with the interruption of his showdown. As they say, the more the merrier. It is a party and all are welcome to join. He has the confidence to fight and escape if he needs to because of his skill, weapon, and speed. He began looking forward to the appearance of the group after hearing their footsteps rushing toward him.

Ghaster's blood turned cold when he saw the leader of the group. His craving for a battle turned into a warning of danger immediately. This group didn't approach him because of their foolhardiness. Their leader is a king. One of the most talented beings in the challenge that the sage had hopes for. It is why they are confident in subduing him.

He became pensive as the king approached. His eyes stayed glued to the golden crown on their head. His instincts are telling him that he has to take this fight seriously. This person is dangerous and he will have to try his best to defeat them. The chances of victory are not absent. The odds are 50/50. He can win and he can lose. The problem is the company following the king. Even now, they just keep coming.

'They must be more than 100 of them.' he thought to himself. 'This is not looking good for me.'

What he saw while observing his surroundings is not good news. He began considering retreating. He can't face off 100 people. He looked around and realized that they have the place surrounded. That isn't going to stop him from escaping though. He can manage it now when they are still in disarray and he should escape before he can't. He might not be able to retreat if the two sides join in battle.

Chapter 655 Stupid And Rash.

The King whistled appreciatively when she saw Ghaster. "What do we have here?"

She would have attacked instead of talking if she thinks he is weak but the sight of the tendrils of lightning slithering across his fur and sparkling in his eyes discouraged her from attacking outright. Common sense dictates that someone who has become one with lightning must be very dangerous. So she decided to try some diplomacy.

"You seem to be a wielder of lightning. Those are pretty rare."

Lightning wielders are rare. Lightning is not a natural element. It is more of an invocation of power. It is fast and highly destructive. To get lightning to listen to you and manifest is very difficult. To wield it like a weapon is a sign of true talent because lightning as a weapon can destroy its wielder before it becomes a threat to others.

She walked up to him and stopped about 100 meters away from him. That is pretty close enough.

"I am the stone empress. What is your name?"

Ghaster took a fighting stance instead of answering. He got ready to move at the first sight of an attack. He may look ready to fight but he is planning to run. The mention of her name spooked him and helped him make up his mind about running away. If there is something that lightning is weak to, it is earth and someone that can turn others to stone with a look is not someone you should let lay their eyes on you.

She chuckled despite his silence. "Silence is good too. I am not here for your words. I am here for your weapon. You see, I have been looking for something of that quality. Hand it over and I'll let you go."

Ghaster laughed. "You must think I am stupid."

The fact that they are both talking and not fighting means that both of them are wary of the other. After all, what is needed for a fight is one willing party, not two. So the two of them don't want to fight

because they don't like their chances. Giving up his weapon will tip the scale in her favor. Maybe they will fight then. He will surely be doomed when that occurs.

She replied to his question. "I don't think you are stupid. I was hoping that you were stupid. I hear that lightning wielders are rash and stupid."

Ghaster felt insulted. He might be rash but he is not stupid. Or maybe he is stupid. Staying here and listening to her talk is certainly not a smart idea.

She chuckled when she saw his angry face. "It seems that my hopes are to be dashed. I must admit that I do not want to fight you. It will cost me a lot to get that weapon if we fight. But I don't have a choice. I must have that blade. So I must fight you. You don't have a choice either. You will lose. I have this place surrounded. You can either give up the blade easily or go down messily. I am guessing you want to go down messily."

She doesn't want to fight because of her followers. She could have taken an army with her but she didn't because numbers don't matter to some individuals. She is one of those individuals. An army is no different from one person if they can't resist her eyes. That's why she chose talented elites to follow her. Ones that can be really helpful when she needs them. So her followers are actually useful. They are not expendable riff-rafs. She prefers not to lose her elites but she is ready to do anything for the weapon in his hands.

Ghaster didn't reply. He just stared at her. There's no way he will give up his weapon without a fight. The person in the most awkward position is the last guy of the fight group that ambushed Ghaster. The two of them were staring at each other before. Now Ghaster is staring menacingly at another person. He doesn't know if he is allowed to leave or not. He wants to leave but he knows that being the center of attention is bad. So he stayed frozen and motionless. Maybe they will ignore him if he pretends not to exist.

Their awkward staring contest was interrupted by a noise. The loud noise is coming from a place far away from their location. They looked in its direction and saw the after-effects of an explosion. The explosion must be massive because they saw the giant plume of smoke created by it from such a far distance.

Someone snickered audibly. "Someone created a mega explosion again. I pity the person they used it on."

What the person said made the stone Emperess' followers laugh. They are clearly light-hearted enough to laugh. Ghaster would have laughed too if he were not in such an unfavorable situation. It is because the people who were affected by that explosion will be in a much bigger situation than him.

An explosion created from the combination of hundreds of explosive consumables rigged together is very dangerous to be around. Something that large will rip virtually anyone apart. But funny enough, noises that indicate a violent battle didn't end. It continued and increased in tempo sharply.

"It seems the people they used the mega explosion on didn't die completely." Someone else observed.

The sounds of battle died down soon after. But there was still one reoccurring noise. This noise got louder as whatever is creating it got closer to them. The stone empress's minions rushed toward her and surrounded her. They took up positions to guard her. The two sides ceased hostilities to determine the new intruder. Or so Ghaster thought before he lost control of his body.

The stone Emperess smirked and said. "So stupid."

It turns out that he really is stupid. Maybe there is some truth to the rumors that lightning-wielders are rash and stupid. It could be that lightning has fried their brain cells. It is either that or she lucked out in encountering Ghaster who is stupid and rash. Now he will turn into a statue of stone.

Chapter 656 Two Giants Or One Small Battle Sage Monkey.

She attacked while Ghaster was distracted trying to figure out what was making all that racket. He began to turn into stone. He tried to run but his movements were sluggish. She caught him unawares and got a head start on him. A grey stone layer began appearing over his body until his entire body was encased. He made sure to glare hatefully at her throughout the transformation. Unfortunately for him, his eyes aren't capable of killing people on sight. Glaring only made him look like a statue of a bitter battle sage monkey.

Meanwhile, the entities making the noise continued to approach their position by bulldozing every building in the way. Tall structures of stone broke and fell to the ground in the wake of their battle. It is like two giant creatures are running amok in the city of stone. Nothing could stand in the way of the creatures. Buildings cracked and the road split apart. It created a cacophony of noise that made it seem like the jungle of stone is being demolished.

The entities finally reached them. They penetrated a building close to them passing through the walls as if they are wet paper. Then the fighting entities collided with another building opposite their position. This time, the entities couldn't go further after exhausting their momentum.

The Stone Empress and her followers expected to see two giants but what they saw was a short obscured figure. The short obscured figure was standing above something that lay at his feet. Then the figure bent low and did something to the thing laying at his feet.

Dust obscured the figure of the entity so all they could hear were cracks of thunder coming from within the dust cloud. The dust also refused to dissipate. Whatever is going on within the cloud is disintegrating the surrounding stone and throwing up more dust into the air.

The stone empress and her group had to be content with the sounds of whips breaking the sound barrier over and over again. They heard the crack of thunder followed by the sound of thuds as if someone is hitting a mountain with hammers. It happened again and again. It was very terrifying.

"Finally." Someone spoke from within the cloud of thick dust. "Up you go then."

Then something passed above the stone empress really fast. It flew at mind-boggling speed and it collided with another building. Then whatever that thing is exploded on contact with the building. It struck the wall at a ridiculous speed and turned to mush. The building groaned at the impact before it too collapsed.

The stone empress felt dread. It's a tangible feeling that crept up her back and made the fur on her back stand up. It is a very clear sign that she is in danger. She didn't spare Ghaster a look even though he began to break free from his prison of stone.

She didn't get to finish his transformation earlier because of the sudden intrusion. Layers of the stone began to fall off of him once she took her eyes off him. His scowling face was the last part of his body to be covered and it is the first to be uncovered so he saw what happened next clearly.

The dust cloud began to die down without the strenuous activity that was kicking it up. Something made him freeze. He sensed a cascade of a frightening amount of energy from within the dust cloud. That

energy was then tossed in his direction. He wanted to run but he can't. Most of his body is still frozen. Fortunately, the attack wasn't aimed at him.

All that energy formed a blade arc that mowed down the stone empress's group. It cut them down as they were standing. None of them could resist. The Stone Emperess died too without being able to resist. It happened so fast that it was mind-boggling. It is as if all that energy just sprang into existence instantly and then it disappeared after splitting everything in its path. A king and the majority of her 100 guards were killed just like that. With a single attack.

The stone empress and the ones that surrounded her are no more. Their deaths were swift and painless. Her remaining followers saw what happened and turned tail. They ran away as fast as their legs could take them. None of them looked back much less tried to avenge the death of their leader.

They are elites in both body and mind. Plus it doesn't take much mental gymnastics to realize that it is a bad idea to fight whoever killed the Stone Emperess. So they didn't decide to do something foolish like confronting the attacker.

Ghaster gulped. He felt thirsty all of a sudden. His body seemed to think that he needs water which is absurd. He should have been happy about her death but that emotion found it very difficult to take root within him. The attack that wiped out most of the stone empress's group missed him narrowly but Ghaster didn't feel relaxed.

Whoever could dish out something like that is not someone he wants to be around. Unfortunately for him, breaking out of his stone cage is slow going. So he put in more effort to escape before the entity attacked again.

The entity muttered audibly, "What an inferior material. They are doing it on purpose. I haven't found one good weapon all this while."

Ghaster froze again. The entity spoke close to him so he heard their voice much clearer. He froze because he recognized that voice. He stayed frozen still as the rock on his body finished dropping to the ground. He saw the entity walk out of the dust cloud while examining something in his hands.

Ghaster was right about who the voice belonged to but he wasn't happy. Happiness refused to propagate in his mind. Something else is stopping him from feeling happy. He recognized the person and he only felt dread. It was Soverick. His dread increased the closer Soverick got to him.

Chapter 657 My New Weapon.

Soverick appeared to be examining a spear. He was turning it over and over in his hands with his head bent focusing on the spear. He has a black crown on his head and some golden orbs orbiting his back. Ghaster doesn't know what the black crown means and he doesn't need to. He has also never seen the golden orbs before. This Soverick that he is seeing seems totally different from the one he knows.

But he didn't let his confusion and ignorance get the best of him. All he needs to know is that he is in a bad situation. It is all because Soverick is getting close to him. He has never had a much greater need for a miracle than right now. He wishes dearly that something will happen that will make this encounter not become a disaster.

The weapon that Soverick was examining turned to dust just as Soverick struck it with his finger. It cracked all over and broke apart. The fragments turned to dust before reaching the ground. The internal structure of the weapon has been compromised after he forcefully pumped world power into it. It managed to produce a strike despite it not being made for such an act. The act itself destroyed it just like the groups of people that the strike swept away.

Soverick looked up from his musings and spotted what attracted him here in the first place. He smiled and said, "There it is. My new weapon."

If not for the weapon, he wouldn't have decided to come here at all. He wouldn't have been attacked by a King and his group that thought they could take on the child of the plane. They even rigged an amalgamation of explosive consumables of some sort to eliminate him. They thought they could kill him. They thought wrong. It is obvious how well that plan of action went for them.

That hair-brained idiot didn't delay him too much anyways. He used the King as a plow to destroy every obstacle on his path here. Then he beat the person up to tenderize their flesh. It made their body explode after being thrown and smashed against a building.

It was after he confirmed the weapon that he looked at his wielder.

"Ghaster, is that you? You sure have changed." Soverick said as he clapped his hands in eagerness. "You have a weapon and you also have some feats. Talk about a double jackpot. My double jackpot of course. It must be bad being you right now."

He sensed the Weapon and Ghaster through the law matrix of the Arena. He also knows that Ghaster is about to be killed by someone else. But he didn't come here to save Ghaster. He came for the weapon and he would have done the same thing were it another person holding the weapon.

He continued walking towards his prize unconcerned about Ghaster's furious face. He is here for the blade and he will have it. The wielder doesn't matter. That means the anger of the wielder doesn't matter either. As far as he is concerned, the blade is already his. He won't stop, no matter the faces that Ghaster makes at him.

Ghaster may be trying to make himself look adorable by making faces like a child to avoid being robbed but he is making faces at the wrong person. Soverick would rob and kill a real child who has something he wants. A grown-up pretending to be a child won't make him show mercy.

Ghaster overcame his dread to shout. "Stop right there."

Soverick didn't stop. He kept coming leisurely. The only thing that has changed is the smirk of amusement tugging at his lips.

Soverick asked. "And why should I?"

That's a good question. Ghaster considered it and answered. "The weapon is mine. I won't give it up."

Soverick laughed. "That's funny. You know, I have always found you funny. You are funny and stupid. Litori is smart but she is such a bore. You? You're something else."

Ghaster fumed but Soverick wasn't done. "If you want to keep something then you have to fight to keep it. I take what I want from those that I can take it from. Unfortunately for you, I am here for your life and your weapon. You will have to do your best to stop me."

Soverick spread his arms wide and said, "Go ahead. Take your shot."

Ghaster's instincts screamed certain death to him, that he should run and not look back. His new instincts are telling him that nothing good will come out of this encounter. But he didn't run. It is not because he realized that he can't escape. Yes, he can't escape even if he tried. But no, his brain is too preoccupied to realize that yet.

He didn't choose to escape because of the dread that he feels from Soverick. It reminded him of the very first fight that he had with Soverick. They were month-old babies when the fight occurred. Soverick hadn't even touched him to defeat him then. Even now, he doesn't know how he lost that fight.

His dread of Soverick had faded into fear, awe, and anger since then. It was like he stopped being able to sense what an immense danger Soverick is to him. But his recent improvements seemed to have changed that. That dread came back in full force. He knows now with uttermost certainty that he will lose. That is why he must fight. He must always fight against hopelessness or his heart will forever be shrouded with dread at the mention of Soverick.

"I am not the little boy I was before." He said to himself for encouragement.

He has changed over the years. He has become better. He defeated that lady that Soverick defeated. It is proof that if he continues to strive for progress then he will get success. If anything, fighting Soverick will let him gain knowledge about him and this is the best opportunity to get it. Soverick will never be this weak again.

Chapter 658 Oppose The Heavens.

"I may lose. But I will always fight." He said to affirm his will.

So he got into a stance. He bent forward and put one foot in front of him. He cycled his energy and lightning bloomed all over his body. He was like a caterpillar evolving into a butterfly. Lightning is his cocoon. It has forged his body. It has forged his mind. And it has forged his character. He is one with lightning now. He is a lightning wielder.

Two large wings of blue lightning formed behind him. The same lightning went into his blade and amplified it. The wings flickered slightly. Then he shot forward towards Soverick. His environment became a blur as he shot forward toward his target.

'So fast.' he thought to himself. 'I am so fast.'

He has never been this fast before, not even in the real world. Something seemed to click within him at that moment when he decided to defy Soverick. His bloodline awakened with a roar. It is the bloodline of heavenly punishment. It is a bloodline that will oppose even the heavens, take heaven's lightning for itself, and use it to punish its enemies. If he can oppose the very heaven itself, it will never accept defeat to Soverick.

He promised himself, 'I will fight as long as I can. I will always fight.'

Ghaster became the embodiment of lightning. Power courses through him. His incomplete body of law allowed lightning to synchronize with him as if he were a titan of law. He brought up his blade and called down lightning from the heavens.

Soverick was still standing with a smirk on his lips and his arms stretched wide. That's what Ghaster saw before Soverick moved. The world has slowed down in his perception. Nothing should escape his sight. And yet, he only saw a blur when Soverick moved. It was a dash. Soverick stepped on the ground with one foot. His position shifted sideways near instantly. The ground where his foot smashed onto is cratered. It kicked up a lot of dust.

Fortunately, he is not blind. He saw what Soverick is trying to do through his eyes and his divine sense. He can also react to his due to the amplification of his mind by lightning. His instincts flared up and he flicked his lightning wings before he knew that he did. That enabled him to abort his current attack and narrowly dodge a punch thrown at him from his right.

He didn't get to rest after that narrow escape. Another punch came at him almost immediately. He dodged that too. Soverick is fast. Almost too fast to react to. The major problem is that his movements are simple. A single step will take him a large distance near instantly. He can also abort his motion and turn around near instantly with another single stomp of his feet.

But he is fast too. His perception is top notch so he can always keep track of Soverick. And his instincts help him not to get fooled by the feints that Soverick throws at him. He managed to keep up with the barrage of attacks. He even managed to counter-attack but he stopped doing it because they are not effective against Soverick.

Soverick wouldn't dodge an attack. He would calmly and easily deflect it aside with his body. Lightning stung him but it could not get a purchase on him. Then he would use the opportunity to counterattack. Those counterattacks are too much dangerous. Ghaster was almost done in by one of them so he decided to defend and distance himself from Soverick. Unfortunately, Soverick stuck to him like the color white on white clouds.

The two of them flashed around like two fireflies having a mating ritual. They flickered about never stopping for long in a single place. Each place they went to gets destroyed. Buildings collapsed and the ground began to crack. The city of stone started to collapse all around them. Soverick did most of the damage. The destruction to the city is because of his missed attacks and his stomps. All Ghaster did was run around.

"Is this what you wanted to do in a fight with me? Do you just want to run around?" Soverick asked with a mocking tone."

Ghaster roared. "Enough"

Lightning blasted out of him. It exploded into his surroundings. Soverick was caught by the blast. He was thrown across the city before smashing into a building and destroying it. The entire building collapsed onto him. Tonnes of reinforced stone fell and buried him. The city quieted down for a few seconds.

The fighting stopped and so did the destruction to the city. Ghaster looked around at the city. He noticed that it has become different from what it used to be. It is as if an earthquake hit the city and caused massive collapse to its structures.

The silence became marred by a rhythmic thumping. This thumping is coming from where Soverick was buried. He wants to get out so he is punching his way out. Stone and rocks flew into the air with each punch. The punches also caused booming sounds that felt like thumping.

Soverick came out from where he was buried. He looks no worse. That means he looks pristine and spotless. He doesn't look like someone who was buried a few moments ago.

He clapped and said, "That's not so bad. Is that all you've got?"

Ghaster replied. "You are a bully. Do you know that?"

Soverick began to laugh. He doubled over and held his stomach as he laughed. His laugh resounded across the devastated city. He laughed until he couldn't laugh anymore.

Then he shook his head and asked, "You think I am a bully? Tell me, have I bullied you?"

"Yes."

"That is so funny. You are such a naive and ignorant boy. It is obvious that you haven't grown over these past few thousand years."

"I am not naive." Ghaster interrupted him with a shout.

Soverick continued without care. He said with a cold determined voice, "I'll show you bullying."

Chapter 659 Bullying Is A Fact Of Life.

Bullying is an act of intimidating a person to do something they would rather not do. Or it can be persistent acts intended to make life unpleasant for another person. Ghaster believes that Soverick is a bully. His existence bullies others. He has condemned numerous others to mediocrity just by existing and excelling.

Ghaster more than anyone else knows the pain of being constantly intimidated by the glory of his brother into constantly training without rest. It is something he would not do if Soverick isn't pressuring him so much. He tried and tried to catch up to his brother all to no avail. What's worse is that he has to continue hearing about Soverick's greatness everywhere he goes. His life has become unpleasant for it.

Soverick knows all of these. He can see it too. But he doesn't care. You can't please everybody so there's no use trying. Whatever you do, someone somewhere will have a problem with you and say you did something bad to them. And he doesn't think what he has been doing is bullying.

Bullying is done repeatedly and with the intention to gain something from it which could be simply the pleasure of causing pain to someone. His existence might be unpleasurable for others, but he wasn't causing them harm with the intention to gain something from it. Besides that, it doesn't matter even if he wanted to bully everyone else. Bullying is the right of the strong.

He can bully Ghaster just as the first sage can bully him. Bullying is not right or wrong. It is just a fact of life due to the differences in power. The weak don't have a choice but to be bullied. He is not somewhere complaining about being bullied despite being constantly manipulated to do the sage's bidding. He is always moving forward with the sole aim of becoming stronger. But just for this moment, he will actually enjoy bullying Ghaster. He will cause him pain for the sole intention of gaining pleasure from it.

Soverick divine sense latched onto the momentum of the world. Momentum was then forced into a specific shape as instructed by his mind based on the foundation of his solidified divine sense. Several golden fists appeared in the air around him. These phantom weapons number around a thousand.

"Prepare yourself," Soverick said, then he attacked.

He bolted forward with his numerous golden fists leading the way. Ghaster's eyes widened in fear. He didn't think it was possible. He has never seen such a sight in the competition. People have used phantom weapons sure, but not like this. They are not as powerful and they are not as numerous. Phantom weapons are aids to others, not actual things that can threaten his life.

He didn't stay idle. He sped forward to engage Soverick. He roared and roused all the lightning within him. Then he channeled it and as much world power as he can manage into his blade. He swung down his blade at the incoming tide of fists. A massive wave of lightning was ejected from the blade in his hands. This massive wave struck the golden fists and resulted in a massive thundering explosion.

The explosion rocked the world. It was loud and it was bright. He was too close to it so he wasn't spared from the blast. His mind blanked out as he slammed face-first into something. When he came to, he was flying backward instead of forward.

Then his flight was rudely interrupted by the wall of a building. The wall cracked with the force of stopping his flight. It groaned as fragments fell from it to the ground. But the damage on the wall cannot be compared to the damage to his body.

He was moving forward so fast but he collided with something that had a higher momentum than him. The momentum was so great that it forcefully killed his speed and sent him back the way he came. It is why his mind blanked out. It is commendable that he came to mid-flight. But he would have regained consciousness when his back smashed into the building sending jolts of pain through his body.

He tried to stand but failed when a searing pain cut through his mind as well as his body. It was worse than everything he just experienced combined. He opened his eyes with a lot of effort. His mind felt sluggish but he was able to comprehend what he saw. Soverick was standing in front of him using his sword to stab his chest. That's what's causing the mind-numbing pain and general body weakness.

Soverick said to him. "Thanks for the feats and blade. It is very generous of you."

He doesn't even know how he ended this way. He was attacking but now he is dying and Soverick is thanking him for the weapon. His bloodline ability helps him to slow the world down and accelerate his thoughts and yet he can't figure out what happened during the last clash. He seemed to have lost the weapon somewhere in the transition between attacking and being skewed to a wall.

"You are not bad for someone who is not a king. You even performed better than some kings. You have potential. You really do. But you are naive and ignorant. Whining and complaining won't do anything good for you. Only strength matters. Pursue strength above all else. Because as you are right now, you are not worthy enough to be bullied by me."

That's the last thing Ghaster heard before his consciousness blacked out for good. Soverick finished him off. He pumped a torrent of energy into the body of his younger brother to make it explode. Ghaster's brand saved him while Soverick took all of his feats.

He really did try to bully Ghaster but Ghaster died too quickly. He was playing around earlier. But Ghaster died after one clash when he decided to become serious. Ghaster is not worthy bullying material. How is he to be bullied when he can't take a beating? He died without even knowing how he died.

Chapter 660 Good Blade.

The only one that knows what happened during their last clash is Soverick. They are all at the zero mark and are not getting any assistance from the world during this challenge. But that doesn't make them equal. He could fight hordes of rank 4 monsters as a rank 0 and kill some of them. So he is much faster and stronger than the other competitors because of the 9 golden orbs on his back.

Ghaster had his own advantages. His bloodline made him very fast while his instincts helped him to utilize the speed to great effect. Unfortunately for him, he is not strong enough to withstand the explosion created by their last clash. He was stunned by the explosion.

Soverick is physically empowered. His speed is just a side effect of that physical empowerment. He can take on more damage than anyone in the competition can so he wasn't fazed by the explosion. He went through it and took advantage of Ghaster's stunned state to attack him. It was the simplest solution. Ghaster is as fast as him so that was the easiest way to kill him without using his eyes or the nullification domain.

Even the spectator of their fight didn't see what happened clearly. The remaining guy from the first group was standing close to Ghaster. He wasn't attacked by the stone empress and Soverick's attack missed him too. He was standing there motionless when Ghaster fought Soverick.

Then both Ghaster and Soverick disappeared. The two of them ignored him and fought all over the city. The man looked left and right but didn't see anyone. So he bent down and picked up the unconscious lady on the ground. Then he escaped with her. It is a good thing too or the collapsing building and the explosions could have killed him.

He didn't run away though. He stopped when he reached a safe distance and chose to watch the fight. Even so, he didn't see how Soverick managed to close the distance between him and Ghaster. He has an inclination about what happened but he can't believe it.

Soverick noticed them but he didn't bother with them. He would rather stare appreciatively at the blade in his hands than try to kill some trash. The two actions don't need much effort but one is more pleasurable than the other.

"Nice blade. Nice quality too." He complimented the weapon as he caressed it. "It is much too good for Ghaster anyway. It is better in my hands."

It is a black metallic blade with a blue crystal edge. There are inscriptions on the metallic part of the blade. The crystal is translucent and it is becoming more translucent as the blue color is fading. It is blue because the last person to use it directed lightning into it. It is changing now that it has changed owners. He uses pure world power so the crystal edge will stay clear. It makes the blade look much thinner than it really is.

He said to the blade, "Now to the first ring. I will slay everything that blocks my path with you. With you in my hand, nothing can stop me from becoming the Last man standing."

Then he resumed his journey to the 1st ring. He has everything he needs so he decided to move on to the next important agenda.

Meanwhile, a lot has changed in the first ring. A lot more people tried to enter the 1st ring but they failed. Their death warned others of the dangers so they stayed in the 2nd ring and waited for something to change. Some began to fight amongst themselves but no one ventured into the 1st ring anymore.

Only ignorant newcomers that think themselves smarter or stronger than the others try to enter the 1st ring. They will sneak and creep along thinking themselves wiser until they go up in flames. The 1st ring has become a death zone. Anyone that enters it dies. Litori held that position with an iron grip and gave no quarter. That all changed when someone with more means arrived.

Salvini went and brought someone that she is sure can usurp Litori's domination. She said to the person as she pointed at Litori. "See, I told you, brother. We have to do something or she will win."

Her brother Salvin is also in this joint arena. Salvini found him and told him about the child of the plane's sister. He was busy enjoying himself by facing large groups and putting his title as the one-man army to the test. He thought it was too early to try and take the 1st ring. It has only been 3 days of the challenge after all. But he followed her when she came to ask him. Any information about the child of the plane interests him. Soverick has beaten him before so he wants to see how good his sister is.

He licked his lips as he gazed at Litori. "The child of the plane's litter seems to be strong. His litter mates certainly match ours in prowess. The youngest one of his litter beat the youngest one of our litter."

Salvini huffed. "She cheated. Her attacks can't be blocked. You better be careful or you will fall here. Her domain is insidious. Anyone within 100 meters of her will be attacked and they will die.

Salvin nodded in agreement. "Yes, yes. I can see that. An ephemeral flame wielder. Very rare. And very dangerous. Thankfully she is suppressed or even I might have no chance."

"I don't think so. The outcome of a battle between you both will be close even if she isn't suppressed. You are both lethal. You might both kill yourself. But I don't think there's a way that she can kill you without a significant chance of her dying herself. Don't forget, you are also suppressed."

Salvin cocked his head. "Maybe that's true. All I am saying is that there's a better chance of victory now that she is suppressed. No one can complain about that in a fight."