LOA Nobody 241

Chapter 241 Valtor and Amaya - a failed love story

"The fire and the way he uses his techniques, they aren't normal. I'm sure you noticed it too. That's why you've been paying attention to him right?" Valtor said, voicing his doubts, as he looked at Rio and then turned towards Leon, who was talking with Seraphina. "They're way too high level for something someone can learn in just two years after awakening, without any guidance."

'Bravo, my brave soldier. The experience you got fighting all this time in dungeons wasn't wasted it seems.' Rio praised Valtor in his head and gave him a nod of approval.

After all, Apollo was teaching Leon on his own. And since Apollo focused more on improving Leon's rank this time, instead of perfecting the techniques or increasing their masteries, there were many faults in those techniques. Faults, which won't be visible normally, but those who've had experience in real life could easily pick up. Every time Leon uses a technique of Apollo, there'll always be that extra movement, that extra energy that just gives off everything. But since Leon still has a high rank it doesn't matter to him, and he could still fight with any other first year student.

Plus it might also be his fault as he might've stolen a concealment technique from a cave near Leon's city.

Why Apollo didn't teach him anything else or gave him a new technique you ask, cause as one can guess nothing can be best than the technique author writes for protagonist. So the one Rio stole was special. Second, the skills Apollo has are really too high grade, and using them in open, many of the gods who fought with him would notice them. This is why to hide about himself and Leon, he still only gave him techniques that weren't directly linked with him or something that many other gods could perform too.

"Maybe he had some lucky encounter or found a God who's willing to teach him. After all, even if he's a waste, he's still the heir of a Baron's house." Rio said with a smile, hoping to hear what else this little shadow warrior learned.

"And yet he never mentioned anything about any God in all his interviews. You think any normal God would want that." Vator said. Remembering everything he read in the reports his subordinates found on Leon. From being a waste 8 years ago, awakening 6 years later, and having strength almost equal to him after training for just two years - idiots would believe there was no secret behind it.

"Are you suggesting he made a contract with an evil God, Valtor? That's a hefty accusation without any proof." Rio said.

Valtor didn't say anything and just waited to see if Rio would say something. He was just curious about it and wanted to know. Plus he had noticed Rio looking at Leon a few times, so he asked him first. 'Even if he doesn't know anything, his Goddess definitely does.'

"So will you say something, or should I just wait?" Valtor asked again as he noticed Rio just smiled and didn't say anything.

"Well, you are right. He did make a pact with a God, but it's not any of the evil ones, or even the trickster ones, so don't worry about it." Rio said, smiling as he read the message he got from Hela, asking him to tell everyone about Apollo.

Gods themselves couldn't talk or share any secrets of any other gods, their blessings, powers or avatars due to the rules made by the world system. As this was necessary to maintain the privacy of each avatar and God. Obviously this rule can be broken too, but as everything, gods would need to pay the price for it to the world system.

Since Rio already knew all about Apollo and Leon, Hela didn't break any rule, and she could just tell him to spoil everything. After all, she was still pissed off at that dimmed out bulb for trying to poach her avatar again and again.

[Tell the world about Apollo's avatar.]

'It's not time yet. Just wait.' Rio said in his heart and ignored her message again. This pair of father and daughter just wanted to cause chaos everywhere.

"But why would any normal god_" Valtor still had doubts about why a normal God would help someone so much and not ask for any credit.

Valtor was saying something when a sweet voice interrupted his question - "What are you talking about being all serious?"

Rio looked at Amaya who suddenly appeared near them and stood next to Valtor. She was wearing a green v cut t-shirt and an orange loose pants. A jacket with a matching fiery color was highlighting her looks.

'So that color really suits her, huh.' Rio thought after looking at Amaya.

[....] System who was silently waiting to be unmuted, could only store its comments for later.

"Are you guys forming a team? Can I join?" Amaya asked again, her voice getting excited seeing both the boys silent even more.

"That_ " Valtor hesitated a little seeing her expectant face, but then he looked serious and replied "We were just talking about nothing. There's no team."

Saying that Valtor just turned around and left.

'This guy, he kinda reminds me of Ali.' Rio thought, as he saw the flustered face of Valtor and saw him disappear instantly.

'They'd make a great pair.' Rio thought as he remembered Valtor and Amaya's plotlines.

Amaya and Valtor had been engaged to each other since childhood. Both their parents were allies, and after learning about their children's superior talents, they decided on their engagement.

Valtor loved Amaya, well not loved, as he's still young and not quite sure about everything. But he liked her.

Valtor's personality was someone who likes to stay silent, a man of few words and simple nature. He liked to train and wanted to be as strong as his father so he could take after the guild. He also had a goal that he wanted to make Nexus guild reach the number one position and overtake Dawn Guild. He had awakened the shadow element and was training towards the path of becoming an ultimate assassin.

While Amaya on the other hand was quite the opposite. She was outgoing, and she liked to talk about everything as it gave her insights about the other person. She liked reading, as her photographic memory stored everything within her brain. She didn't train much physically, as she always called it brutish behavior. That's why she preferred using magic spells to fight.

Amaya, whose every word was well thought out and would always pay attention to every little detail. And Valtor, who also thought a lot before speaking, but for the opposite reason. He just didn't like the roundabout way of speaking and never dragged out a conversation.

They were so different and that's why they were actually a perfect match for each other.

Sadly, the author didn't give them enough time and importance to fall for each other. He thrusted Valtor into training after making him lose to Leon a few times, and thus making him ignore everything else around him. And when that was done, he pushed Amaya into the camp of Leon and gave her the tag of heroine.

When Valtor finally got back to his usual self and lost his obsession for defeating Leon, Amaya was already hooked on Leon and their love story ended, before it even began.

It was funny when Shiva read all this on earth, cause when Amaya died at the hands of Amelia later, it was Valtor who came asking for her revenge, instead of Leon, who was simply busy playing hero for some other heroine.

Obviously Valtor died soon after Amaya's death too. Rio killed him.

All this drama happened so author could push another noble family and another guild on the opposite side of the Blake family and have everyone turn against them. Obviously Leon is the one who gets the final benefits everytime.

'All for the sake of the protagonist.' Rio thought and shook his head.

'Should I match them and give both of them a happy ending.'

A thought came into his mind, but he ignored it. He'll just leave it to fate for now.

"Would you tell me what you were talking about?" Amaya asked, bringing Rio back to reality.

"Your engagement." Rio replied.

"..." Amaya looked at him as her eyes turned to a shade of red for a second but came to their usual color soon again. She couldn't see anything anyway.

"I'll take my leave then, miss Amaya. The test is about to start." Rio said and left.

Professor Osborn, the homeroom teacher of class A-4 came forward and announced "The first stage of your test is about to start. Professor Harkin already told you all about the rules, so I'll just tell you about the next process. But before that, all those who are dressed like they're going on a beach, or at someone's wedding, or are living in forests, next time when you enter the VR world, choose clothes that suit the purpose you're coming here. Show us how you plan to fight dressing like that?"

Chapter 242 The match begins

"For the first stage, which is the battles between your own classmates, the teams would be chosen randomly. Whenever your matches are about to start, you'll be teleported from here to a new location. If you die or get a serious injury, you'll be teleported here. We'll be monitoring your performance from here." Professor Osborn said, "After each match your mana and physical condition would be restored to prime, so don't make any reservations and just give it your all every time."

"Even though this test is just to evaluate your basic performance, make sure your first impressions aren't bad." Professor Freya reminded everyone.

When all the students were busy preparing for themselves or mocking the guys dressed weirdly, Rio just closed his eyes and laid down on the ground. He was thinking about what kinds of fights there would be in this scenario.

In the there was something similar to this event too, but that was a survival and monster hunting test, but now that was changed to this dungeon destroying game. How or why, Rio didn't bother thinking. There had been so many changes in the academy arcs with his interference, so plotline diversion of this level wasn't even worth investigating.

In the , during this VR test, Amaya was the one who won the game. She had made an alliance with Valtor from the beginning and they acted on that deal for a while. But in the end when the chance for victor was between these two, Amaya with her brains, was able to steal the points from Valtor, before the timer ran out. Leon in that test was in fifth position, with Moksh taking the third place and Katherine in fourth place.

Yet not Rio wasn't sure anymore.

This test which was supposed to be a solo survival test had turned into a team match. If it was a solo match, he was sure to win easily and even show the vast difference of level he has with all the other students. Yet now with the team match, he couldn't be sure.

If fate pulled a shit and all he got were chickens, while the other side got the top rankers, then the best he could do is to make both sides lose. After all, he could either defend his castle or destroy theirs, it couldn't be both. Unless he pulled out some secret cards of his, exposing whom this early for just this, would be wasteful.

'But if that happens, let's just hope I get someone who can stay alive for a little time, until I can destroy the other team.' Rio thought and glanced at his hand, where the academy watch lit up.

Soon every student's watches lit up and they all teleported out from the Quantum Hub. In that empty white space dozens of projection displays and many drones appeared instead. All of them showing feeds from various places where every student was transported to. The matches of all the classes for the first stage would happen simultaneously so the staff don't have to waste time on it.

[Simulation starts 3 .. 2 .. 1]

[We wish you a wonderful experience.]

Rio read the notifications on his display and then a blinding light enveloped his sense.

After some time he blinked his eyes several times as the sudden shift in the environment around him was blinding them. Currently he was standing in an open hall. Surrounded by large pillars, in between all

those was a floating ball of purple energy ?? which he could guess as the castle core that professors spoke about.

Clear sky and sunlight was bathing the entire area into a beautiful sight. The smell of trees and soil wafted into his nostrils, giving a refreshing calm feeling to the mind. Looking up he could see the birds flying in the sky and hear their chirping. Rio moved forwards and touched a pillar nearby, feeling the sense of touch he nodded his head.

He closed his fists and punched the pillar with half his strength, feeling the stinging pain on his knuckles, he smiled a little. 'Looks like she didn't mess with anything after all.'

"Let's check mana and aura too."

He thought, as he waved his hand and a small arc of air left from his hand, slashing at the pillar, leaving its mark and some cracks on the surface.

'So around 40 percent' Rio said in his heart as he felt the mana in his body. Which wasn't even half of what he had outside.

Next up, he coated his leg in aura and gave a kick to the pillar, blasting it into pieces.

'Huh, did they not change aura.' Rio thought as he felt his aura rank was still the same as before. But then he understood, after all, aura mainly depended on training and mastery of everyone's physical body itself, unlike mana which could always be boosted by ranking up using pills and elixirs.

'No blessings huh' Rio said, as he tried to channel the blessing 'Master of Magic' to see if he could gather mana from the air faster to recover himself, but found that he couldn't use them here.

'Hela, can you hear me?'

[...]

'No response, meaning she's not around either.'

"Can't believe they can do all this just with codes, data and algorithms. Right system?"

[...]

'No response, did it _ ah no you're muted, got it.' Rio said, breathing a sigh of relief, "For a second I thought you'd be so useless to go offline every time I enter VR.' Rio said and shook his head.

(Bastard) system, who was muted and insulted for no reason, could only curse in its mind and note down this point to ask for judgment later.

While Rio was busy checking about all his senses and powers, behind him 14 other students appeared. Seeing him they all tried to do the same too.

Not destroying the pillar nearby, but just channeling their mana to see what was the effect of equal restrictions on them. Everyone's mana for this test was sealed around the newly D- rank awakener. Meaning at the limit of 30 or nearby to that level, atleast.

(They could call upon their world system to see all these details still, but the world system only shows real numbers and status, not the ones allowed inside the VR.)

After running his various tests and thinking up which spells he could use with this limited mana, or which technique would be more suitable to deal with what situation, he turned around and looked at the other students, and he could just curse the fate after seeing them.

It was so bad that he didn't even recognize them from the . All of them were extras or just nobodys who appeared in one chapter just to die. Or people who were only ever mentioned in academy arcs and then disappeared from the completely, as if the author forgot about their existence.

'When shit like this happens to me, I think of killing the protagonist and taking all his luck.' Rio said in his heart and sighed.

He was surprised not to find any one of his friends or even the other strong characters but he also knew this shit was random and no one did this to mess with him. After all, professor Freya, Thaddeus and Jorvik were there. He at least knew these oldies won't be going against him.

As Rio kept staring at every student, they were all staring at him too. After all, everyone knew who he was and since he was in their team they were all excited about it.

Since Rio always trained alone in the room in his free time or booked the private chambers using Merit Points, no one had seen him much outside. Even in the training class of professor Thaddeus, he was one of the few who passed the test and trained separately. But seeing his records back then and witnessing the few spars he'd have with his sister and princess every now and then in Miss Freya's class, they were all aware of his strength. So without even asking or saying anything, he instantly became the de facto leader of their group.

Seeing them all silent and just staring at him, Rio just shook his head and started his introduction. "My name's Rio. I'm a swordsman. And I can act as the main damage dealer for this team."

Hearing him, all of them understood and started introducing themselves and what role they could play in this match.

After some time, Rio remembered all their names and could identify them a little. Not all of them were useless, a few could come to be of help, if they're as good as they say.

The teams for this stage were divided into 15 vs 15. So since one class had around 300 students, it would be 10 matches a class, and 50 matches in total.

Chapter 243 Say hello to Rasengan, Arcadia

After Rio remembered their names and details about what they could do, they started strategizing about who will stay at the base and protect the core, and who will move out to deal with the enemies.

Currently in his team were 4 girls, 2 of them were healers, one an archer and the other one, who was just good at studying and solving puzzles. (Don't ask me what her role was)

In the rest 11 boys, there were 6 of them, who identified themselves as a damage dealer through using swords, spells or aura. 3 were just there to increase the count, as their original rank was F rank, and now

feeling the mana of D rank into their body and they were half wobbly, looking around with dull eyes. Where mana was just leaking out of their body since they couldn't control it. The final 2 boys were elves, who were staring at him with unkind eyes, but dared not say anything. They just said, they can do everything. (Just the typical arrogant elf line)

Rio was thinking how he should deal with this test in less time, so he can go for the next match faster and beat up Leon if he sees him. He was sure Leon wouldn't be here, as coming across him was a sure loss. And luck probably won't be abandoning him so early.

"Hello, mic check. Test 1 2 3, check, check" Professor Harkin's voice rang out as a projection of his appeared in the hall they were in.

"Huh it seems it's working fine. Then let me start."

"As you can see, the students standing on your sides would be your teammates for the first match. The purple crystal ball floating above is the magic core you guys need to protect if you want to win. Lose that and it's game over for your match."

"Once you move out from the castle, you can see a golden pillar of light in the sky, that is the location of your enemy castle. So just hurry up and destroy that. Cause I forgot to mention there's a time limit for this match. If any team can't win this match at that time, both teams would be declared losers, so don't you dare play turtle games and wait for your enemy to come to your door."

Professor Harkin said the news with a smile, making every student just look at him and curse him. This guy's personality was simply too twisted. It seems the only reason he became a teacher was just so he could lash out on students without suffering any consequences.

"Also don't be a hero or arrogant fool and move out alone, cause you never know who your enemy is. It might be the last row chickens or rankers and stronger ones. So be careful going out."

"Show us a good fight."

After saying that professor Harkin's figure disappeared in the air. And a countdown started on everyone's watches.

'30 minutes huh. That's enough I guess.' Rio thought after looking at the timer for half an hour.

"Well, there's no need to plan more than that then, time's running out." Rio said as he clapped his hands to get everyone's attention.

"Okay, I want you guys to stay here and protect our base, while I go and deal with the other team. If I see that I won't be handling them in a little time, I'll come back or call you guys." Rio said and turned around to leave.

"Whaat?"

"Let's make a strategy first."

"No, I'll come with you."

"That's stupid, professor just said not to_"

"I'm not asking you, just stay there and protect the core. It'll be over in a few minutes anyway." His feet pushed on the ground, and next second his figure appeared in the stone pillar nearby. And then it disappeared from there, only his voice echoed in the backdrop. "If I lose this match, cause you lot can't protect the core until I come back, we'll have a nice long chat in the real world."

After finishing his words of wisdom, Rio left the area with the highest speed he could muster. The professor called this a castle, but it was just the stage with those pillars in the middle and then a garden outside, surrounded by a wall. When Rio jumped over a wall, he felt a slight disturbance of mana phasing over his body.

"A barrier huh. That makes things easy." Rio said and without looking back he started running towards the golden pillar he could see in the sky. He kept spreading his mana to see if he could find someone nearby, while his aura boosted his strength. But he didn't see any sign of life in the vicinity, no monsters or animals or anyone.

The area outside their bases was that of a barren mountain land. Few trees here and there, with stone and bumpy terrain on the ground. His steps left cracks on the stones every time they touched the ground and he looked like a gust of wind or ghost just flying through.

Since he didn't find anyone on the side, his speed was uninterrupted and soon he reached the place where he could even see the base of the other team.

Seeing the tiny pillars in the far distance, Rio used his first spell, BLINK and channeled his mana to teleport to that place in an instant.

His figure disappeared in space and next instant arrived over the base of the other party. He knew there was a barrier around the base so he just teleported himself outside the wall. And jumped high to reach a certain height and then used his mana to stay afloat.

In just these two spells and that little scanning, ? of his current mana was gone. But he didn't care, all he wanted was to just finish this match as soon as possible.

[28 minutes 34 seconds]

Looking at the timer, it was clear how fast he crossed the distance, which was over two kilometers. It was common sense that since the announcement just finished, mostly all the teams would be using some time to strategize or make a plan, and that's why he just directly attacked. Even if he didn't win through this, he'd know everyone who were the members of the opposite team and go back to prepare for them.

He closed his eyes and pushed most of his mana out while channeling his main element. Soon black smoke started emitting from his body. But before it could spread everywhere, he waved his hand, and all that smoke started to gather around the palm of his hand. He used his remaining mana and elemental control to suppress all that darkness. Compressing it together, while rotating all that elemental energy in various directions to turn into one small spherical orb of darkness.

When finally he only had one orb of energy the size of his hand, floating above, he stopped himself. Looking at the black orb in his palms, a smile came to his face and he announced the name of this spell.

"Say hello to Rasengan, Arcadia."

As his words finished, he turned his palm and pushed the dark orb down with all his force.

Down below in the base, 15 students were gathered and talking about their plan of attack. When a loud bang ran out, and everyone could see ripples in the sky.

"There's a barrier." A girl with pink hair in a ponytail spoke up, as she saw the scene. She jumped up onto the stone pillars and looked towards the place where the sound came out.

She used her mana to enhance her vision and looked at the sky, but failed to see anything. "Did someone attack our base?"

"But the announcement just finished. Who is it?"

"Maybe, the barrier just opened to show that we can go out and start the match now. After all, why would anyone attack like this?"

The students below were discussing what was happening, when under their surprised vision the ripples in the barriers turned to cracks which then spread all around their base, and finally with a shattering sound the entire barrier collapsed and disappeared in silvery light.

That wasn't all, when the barrier disappeared, they could all see a tiny dot of black energy coming down. And the closer it got, the bigger it became. Before any of them could even understand what was happening, or try interrupting that spell. The orb hit the ground, and a loud explosion sound echoed everywhere. Deafening their ears, a few who managed to use mana Or aura to cover their ears on time and were still a little sane, couldn't even prepare for the next second, when a shockwave moved across their entire castle, destroying everything in its path. Trees, walls, pillars or people - whoever came between the shockwave got blasted out and then disappeared.

Rio watched everything from the sky, wiping the sweat that was formed over his forehead. Waiting for the dust, smoke and destruction below to settle down so he can go and finish the rest, when a notification popped up on his watch.

[Team A wins.]

[Match duration - 01 minute 48 seconds]

Chapter 244 Mythila Nelson - The Echo Empress

244 Mythila Nelson - The Echo Empress

Professor Osborn, the homeroom teacher of the A-4 class, voiced his concerns as he watched the projection of Rio swiftly advancing towards the opposing team's base the second their announcement finished. "And this is why I said that allowing him in the first year again was a bad decision."

Professor Mythila, the teacher of class A-2, defended the principal's decision. "Who cares? This guy's talented, and we could win the tournament with him. You're just annoyed because he's not in your class." Her words even brought a chuckle from Miss Freya.

"He's currently C+ rank, but by the time the tournament comes around, he might be a B rank or higher. Do you think anyone else can match his growth?" Professor Harkin chimed in without taking his eyes off the screen.

"There's that new top ranker from public exams, he's C- rank too. Even without allowing Rio to repeat the first year, we would've won the tournament." Professor Osborn said, glancing at the display where Leon was seen gathering his team and taking up the role of their leader.

"Not if he joined another academy and competed against us." Professor Mythila said, and all the professors fell into contemplation.

According to rumors 3 of the top 5 academies had sent their invitations to Rio after he appeared alive again. The only exceptions were Zenith, because the principal already talked with Rio personally. And Tristan academy, who knew Rio wouldn't join there even if they gave their best rewards, because of what happened two years ago during the tournament.

If Rio agreed to join any of the other academies, then this year would have been Zenith's third consecutive loss for the first year batch.

{The tournament two years ago where Rio participated, was canceled due to the warzy attack. Ever since then Zenith didn't win the tournament for first year students. And had to rely on senior students to secure their overall victory and first spot.

-So technically Zenith didn't have any trophy for first year students victory for three years now. One can be considered a draw, since it got stopped. While the other two were complete losses.}

"The tournament isn't a one man show, miss Mythila. And ignore that, do you think it's fair for other students to compete against him, when he's already at that level." Professor Osborn said as the scene where Rio teleported and appeared outside the barrier of the opposing team happened. "He's just gonna bully the kids, and put pressure on the freshies."

"Strength is what matters. It's not his fault if others can't match him." Professor Harkin said sternly, finally taking his eyes off the screen.

"He's not like that _ " Professor Freya started to speak in Rio's defense, but stopped when she saw the scene of Rio's single spell's destruction and their match ending just like that.

'This boy, doesn't he know it's a team evaluation match?' She said in her heart, but a smile was there on her face seeing he was all fine. Even though she had seen his spars and training sessions, but she was still worried EMMSY might've left some scruples in his growth. It seems he's all healed now.

Soon students who died started appearing in the Quantum hub again, all of their faces filled with surprise and shock as they didn't even know what happened. All they knew was a barrier that they didn't even know was there, got shattered, and then they just died and got a message that the match was over, and they lost.

"What happened?"

"Did something malfunction? Why did we get sent out?"

"I remember seeing the message that we lost. Was that an enemy attack?"

"No, how can it be that easy? Everyone's mana is the same, remember. It must be a glitch or mistake."

Hearing all the useless excuses and chitchat from the 'dead' students, professor Harkin laughed loudly, and waved a projection screen towards them. Showing the footage of Rio from beginning to end.

"You guys lost fair and square. So stop chattering. Your mistake, you were busy talking amongst yourselves to even clearly take a look at your surroundings. Half of you didn't even finish their lengthy introductions until your game was over." Professor Harkin said looking at their stupefied faces and continued - "And you, the one with the shining hat, why'd you even talk about your family and what they're famous for. Does that have anything to do with your test? Don't show up in my class next time until you learn how to properly introduce yourself. Idiot."

Hearing the angry shouts from a professor, they could all just stay silent and keep their heads low.

Professor Harkin had the reputation for being stern with everyone. He's someone who's impartial to everyone. But as long as you are strong or talented enough, you are his favorite. And if you make mistakes or are considered weak, then he's just like your bully, instead of your teacher.

His personality is something very easy to please and anger, and that's why he gets unpredictable, cause of his belief in 'fist is the ultimate form of justice.' If you're strong and win, whatever you do is right. While everything else is just excuses made by the weak to hide their inferiority.

Soon Rio and his own team also appeared in the Quantum zone. There was a green band on their hands, which showed the sign of victors.

Surprisingly Rio's teammates were also surprised and looked at the display with confused eyes. They were just arguing about what Rio wanted to do Or what their strategy should be if he doesn't return. Some even started arguing about being the next leader, but before they could even do anything, the match was already over and they won just like that.

"Damn it, why did we have to meet him?"

That's what all the students thought after seeing Rio's spell. Both the winners and the losers were left in awe by the swift end to the match. Everyone was itching to show their abilities, but Rio's spell had made that impossible.

"Your next match will begin, when other teams of your class finish their match. So just stay silent." Professor Mythila said, silencing everyone, as she started looking at all the other matches where fights had just started.

Mythila Nelson, the homeroom teacher of class A-2. She had grayish hair that slid over her shoulders, giving her an ethereal appearance. While her black eyes seemed pure and peaceful. Her perfect figure and the noble grace she has, rivals that of Miss Freya.

The only difference between these two would be that Miss Freya has that fiery temper of hers which gives off the feeling, daring others not to cross her path, lest they make her angry. While Miss Mythila always had the vibe of being calm and in control of every situation. Being collected no matter what happens. But very few knew she was also extremely prideful.

Other than that both were famous beauties known all over Arcadia.

Mythila had awakened the element of air and she was quite famous about it. But that wasn't her natural talent. Years later, she had found her real talent in sound arts.

Her mastery over sound arts allowed her to use various instruments and melodies for a range of purposes, making her a formidable figure in Arcadia.

She was an allrounder, whose abilities could be used to give buffs, debuffs, to control others or calm others, for offense, defense or assistance.

Her mastery over her mana and methods of sound manipulation was amazingly high. And that's why she is given the title of The Echo Empress.

Rumor has it that she comes from a rich hidden elite family but she left her house and joined the World Association for some unknown reasons.

Rio stared at Mythila's projection for some time thinking about her plotlines and past, but then turned his eyes away. He looked at the projection where Leon was leading 5 students to the enemy base, and currently fighting against 3 students alone.

'Come on, my hands are itching now.' Rio thought as he waited for the match where he could be opposite him, so he could beat him. Hell he wouldn't mind beating him even if he was in his own team.

He had been imagining fighting Leon for years now. And the urge to beat him after what Apollo pulled two years ago, ruining his plans had only increased since then.

If the minions of apollo didn't interfere, then he could've used the name of people from Warzy and wipe out several future side villains of academy arcs. But those fanatics appeared out of nowhere shouting 'for the sun god' 'for apollo' etc etc and ruined all his hard work.

"If not for Apollo that tournament arc would've been the ending of many future plotlines." Rio said in his heart.

'Well what I couldn't do back then, I'll just do it this time.'

Chapter 245 Fate or loki?

245 Fate or loki?

After waiting for another few minutes, many other students and teams started appearing in the hub. Second to finish their match was the team led by Heath Lewis. Heath followed the same method as Rio and immediately attacked the opposing team the second his countdown started. But due to the gap in strength, it took him a few minutes to deal with everyone, instead of one shotting them.

Heath Lewis, a draconian halfling. His appearance wasn't much different from normal boys of human lineage at first glance. But looking closely at his hands and neck, which has shallow marks of blue scaled skin, and ears with pointy ends similar to elves.

As he appeared in the quantum hub, he was surprised seeing that he wasn't the first one to clear the test, but after seeing the footage of Rio, he understood too. Heath was a student of class A-1, and trained personally under professor Harkin.

There were no expression on his face, he just glanced at Rio for a second and then closed his eyes and sat back in meditation pose.

Soon one by one all the other teams appeared too. As anyone can guess, all the main characters were on the winning teams.

When all the matches finished, all the students got teleported out again. All the losing teams were sent to a separate server, where they were to compete against each other until this test was going on. While all the winning team students were ruffled up again in different teams randomly. This was done to make sure not one team could stay strong, and students learn to cooperate with new people around them.

There were around 80 students left in class A-3. So 8 teams of ten students were made for the second match. Along with the number, the distance between both team's bases decreased a little. But to increase the difficulty, traps were made in between the pathways. So no one can just run around directly from here to there.

As soon as Rio opened his eyes this time he didn't even look at his team or introduce anyone, he directly used his aura and moved out. But just after taking a few steps outside he discovered the anomaly, as holes with spears or poison bombs or illusion traps appeared in his way.

But he just used his aura to boost his speed and avoided all the traps. Whatever hit him, it couldn't even touch him, so this match became another swift victory.

[Team A wins.]

[Match duration - 1 min 20 sec]

When the third match began only 40 students were left, divided in four teams. It was the same repeat, the distance between both bases had decreased and timings for a match decreased too. This time staff even added monsters and beasts in the middle, yet the results were the same.

[Match duration - 40 sec]

How did this happen, well since the distance between their bases decreased each time as difficulty to cross that distance increased. Rio didn't even move from his base. He just flew high in the sky and shot an arrow using the technique he picked from the library. The attack had used most of his mana and was further boosted by the touch of aura. - the arrow made a hole into the barrier and directly hit the purple core. Before the barrier cracked completely, the core of that team was already shattered in pieces.

'Whispering Wind'

This technique was written by an elf and was something he made after practicing all his life. There was nothing special about this art and it was just a simple technique that taught the way to merge wind element into their archery skills. It recorded no fancy moves, no strong skills, just methods about how one could use wind magic in various ways and compliment it to perfect the aim and output.

In the Saisha found this technique and picked it. But now since Saisha got the technique of the protagonist, Rio could just make do with this one.

He'll just have to find a few teachers who can teach him all about archery later. Teachers, who can compete against the knowledge Apollo might give Leon.

Instead of teleporting out, like normally, all the students were still there in their base.

[This'll be the last match for the first stage, so there's no need to wait, You'll be directly teleported to the new location now.]

After the third match, only 20 students were left, one final match until the first stage ended and the second stage of royal rumble between all the classes started.

This was the match Rio was waiting for as now he could finally face Leon, no matter which team he ended up in. Rio opened his eyes again and hopefully looked around him. Yet he was disappointed once more as there was no Leon around him.

Looking at the side he was surprised as he found anyone who appeared in his team were the same as the one in the previous match.

'Damn doesn't that mean all the rankers and main characters are on my opposite side?' Rio thought, looking at every student who teleported near him. The other students seemed to notice this too, and started talking amongst themselves.

"Isn't this too unfair?"

"Are you sure this is random?"

"Who else was left after the last match. They're our opponents, did you see it?" One of the students asked.

"No I don't remember."

"Me either"

"Rebecca, Amelia, Valtor, Leon, Amaya, Morphius, Alaric, Edward, Pshinta, Nicole - Those are the only students who aren't here and haven't lost any matches yet." A cold voice rang out behind them and everyone turned their faces to see Katherine standing there, checking the sword in her hand.

Rio looked at her and furrowed his brows, feeling a little confused. How did she appear here? After all, if fate pulled everyone else against him in the match, so Leon can win it and shine against all the other first year classes too. Then how come it missed the second main heroine.

[She's an anomaly, host.] System's message floated on his screen, as it couldn't speak now, since it was muted.

'Well, whatever it is. If she can stay here and look after this base, I can just go and bash Leon black and blue when I find him.' Rio thought and smiled as he imagined the scene.

Katherine, who saw him smile, walked over and asked "What's the plan?"

"We wait for them to come here." Rio said. Since the distance was even shorter than last time, he was sure, if he left the base, any high level spell from any of those main character could drop his base and end the match. So he planned to just stay here and kill whoever came near him. Once enough is done, he'd just destroy their base later and end the match.

"They have the advantage so they'll attack first so let's just wait."

Rio was saying something when the announcement from professor Harkin

interrupted him.

[Hello everyone, This is the final match for your first stage. Looking at your faces, it seems you aren't very happy, it seems. The team selection was random just like before, so no one can do anything. It's all machines, and well, machines make mistakes sometimes.

So to compensate you, the timing of your match has been shortened to 10 minutes. So all you have to do is just hold on for 10 minutes.]

"But then both teams would lose?" A student chimed in, hearing the professor's words.

[Well, that's true, and in case both teams loses. The selection for the next stage would be random again. From 20 of you, 10 students would be chosen and sent to compete in the next stage. So there's still a chance for you, if you can hold on.]

Rio, who heard professor Harkin's words, had another black line over his forehead. He couldn't help but think, if this was fate's failsafe plan, in case his team doesn't lose. He could guess that if that happened, then he won't be picked for that random selection of the next stage, so Leon alone can shine over the scene.

'Man this guy, is it his luck or something else helping him?' Rio thought and shook his head.

He looked at Katherine and said "forget waiting, you."

"What about the base?" Katherine asked, looking at the rest of the students, who were grouping and talking about what to do.

"Listen up, all of you will stay here and look after the base. Use all your mana and protect the core with your life."

Rio said and disappeared from his place. "Follow me" Katherine heard his voice and flew behind him too. "Don't move out."

She left a few words behind her and disappeared from everyone's sight too.

On the other hand, Leon and other students were surprised to see this scene too. After all, on their team were basically all the top powerhouses of their class, while the other side only had Rio and Katherine. They were just in this team pattern last match and they won that in less than a minute of time..

In the quantum hub, all the staff members looked at Professor Arabella. Who was the homeroom teacher for class A-5.

"Was that really necessary?" Professor Freya asked, looking at the charming lady, seeing the set up for the match.

"You were all just arguing about him. I just did this so we'll all know his limits." Arabella said, looking at Rio's figure in the projection with a subtle smile on her face and a mischievous glint in her eyes.

[Loki praises you for fulfilling his request.]

Chapter 246 2 vs 10

246 2 vs 10

Few minutes ago, when everyone inside was talking about the absurd combination of students that appeared for the final test, the professors outside were equally surprised too. They turned towards the woman who was responsible for this and couldn't help but ask for confirmation.

"It's not fair to pit him against all of them like this, you know?" Professor Harkin said.

"If he wins, it'll break everyone else's confidence. And if he loses, he won't participate in the second stage. That's just not fair, right." Professor Freya also chimed in.

"The students of Zenith aren't so weak minded to be stumped by just these little setbacks, Professor Osborn. You're underestimating them." Professor Mythila said, as she was also curious about the result.

"What's the point of even arguing, it's just a normal evaluation test. We already saw how everyone else was trying hard past two matches, while this guy's just been breezing through everyone. With this combination we can just evaluate him better." Professor Arabella said, after getting the confirmation from Loki that she did good.

"And he's not alone, I gave him another ranker, didn't I? With this set up, we should actually see some fights instead of just a one shot kill." Arabella said, with a charming smile, as her enchanting eyes swiped at the projection screen.

'Show me a good show, Hela's chosen' she thought, looking at Rio.

"What's the barrier output this time?" Professor Freya asked, changing the topic. Anyway, the match already started so what's the point of pointing fingers now. She'll just have to keep a better eye on this trickster next time.

"About B rank. Even if he attacks with full power now, it should last a while this time." Jorvik said, after adjusting the power levels for everyone.

In the test arena

"This is gonna be fun." Rio said as he just walked out of his base, but found Amelia, Rebecca, Pshinta, Alaric, Leon and Nicole standing there, already waiting for him.

"Four of them are not here. Do you think they're defending their base or_ " Katherine asked while looking back at their own base, to see if someone attacked there. She pulled the second sword out from her waist, and readied her stance.

"Who cares." Rio replied, as he directly charged forward. In the middle of the way before he reached the opposite team, his figure disappeared in thin air, confusing everyone. Until they heard a loud sound of metal clashing from their side.

"Defeat the ones who know your methods first." Amelia said as she pulled back her sword and stepped back. "It won't work. Change your tricks, brother."

"I already did." Rio said, as his figure disappeared again and appeared beside Nicole, the girl who was in his team for the last match.

"Look out" Rebecca shouted as she sent an arc of water towards her, while Pshinta started flying towards him like an arrow. But before both of them could reach him, Rio slashed his sword at Nicole's neck. A red light glowed near her, and then her figure disappeared in tiny particles.

"Five to go." Rio said, as he jumped up to a tree, when Pshinta controlled his element to shoot tree wines to bind him.

Rio looked below and noticed Katherine fighting with Alaric and Rebecca. Both of them were tough opponents and she was having a hard time, but he was sure she could hold them off for a while.

So he ignored them.

He looked at Leon who was preparing a big spell, as a golden fireball was floating above his head.

'So he taught you this huh' Rio said to himself as he remembered about the spell.

Dawn's blessing, a spell used by Apollo's followers. Which can reduce damage to allies and boost their skills for a limited duration. While creating a radiant light in the area which has an extra effect to suppress dark magic or dark elementals.

Rio charged his sword with aura and sent an arc to cut the golden sun in two. But before it could hit Leon's spell, a crack appeared in space and the attack was pulled in.

Rio jumped away from his position instantly, and just the next moment the tree he was standing on was chopped in two.

"You should change your tricks too Ames." Rio said and waved his hand, as roots shot out from the ground, binding Leon, interrupting his chant.

But the moment the roots tightened around Leon, his figure disappeared and water splashed everywhere.

'She's getting better' Rio thought, as he saw Rebecca smirking from the side.

His attack failed and only ended up hitting a mirage she created beforehand.

"You shouldn't look away in a fight." Katherine said, as she moved at high speed, slashing her sword at Rebecca's neck, but Rebecca managed to dodge.

But not entirely, as a shallow cut was there on her shoulders, and red light was shining there.

Rio looked upwards where the golden sun was still getting bigger and bigger slowly and was about to take complete form.

"You're gonna lose, brother." Amelia said, as she made a few invisible daggers floating behind him. Ready to escape their portals and attack him at her signal.

While Rio moved towards the golden sun to disrupt Leon's spell, Amelia appeared in front of him, stopping him.

While Rio was dealing with her, Pshinta came from the side. His speed was hard to notice, as his feet made no sound in the forest. Yet before their attacks could land, Rio's figure melted in his shadow, and he disappeared from the area.

Chains made of darkness rose from the ground and started moving towards the golden son. Binding it from all sides.

The cracking sizzling sound was echoing in the vicinity, but there was no sign of Rio.

Until suddenly with a loud boom a figure crashed into the ground, creating a big crater and sending dust and debris everywhere.

-cough cough -

Leon coughed and stood up from the ground and looked at his spell, which was finished. But instead of happiness, his brows furrowed in confusion, as he saw the golden sun was fully covered in black chains and soon all the light of it was surrounded by darkness.

It was like the shining sun lost all its luster and was now turned into the dark moon.

"Give you back your spell." Rio said, as his figure appeared in the sky holding a chain attached with that dark moon. And with a pull he swung it down with a force. Smashing it over the figure of Leon.

Amelia created a small crack in the space behind him and was about to pull Leon away, when Rio appeared behind her and kicked her back. Disrupting her focus and the spatial crack.

Pshinta created lots of tree wines which rose from the ground and covered Leon, but the black moon smashed onto them, breaking everything.

Pshinta spat a mouthful of blood as he was injured slightly, but before he could notice, Rio's figure appeared behind him and kicked him in the back, sending him crashing into a tree.

"fuck" He cursed and used his last of mana to control flowers and leaves, so he wouldn't get hurt.

But sadly, before he could hit his cushion, a few icicles appeared behind him and pierced his back.

The red glow enveloped him and he disappeared from the match too.

Katherine gave a nod to Rio, as she jumped high into the air, while turning the entire field near her into ice.

Leon's figure walked out from the crater, dusting his clothes. Looking around, two of their teammates were out. And it has just been 2 minutes yet. He took a deep breath and moved towards Katherine, hoping to defeat her first. His fire magic was the weakness for her ice magic, after all.

But he had just taken two steps out, when Rio's figure appeared in front of him and hit him in the head with the sword's hilt.

Amelia appeared behind her brother and kicked him. Sending his figure crashing forward into Leon.

But turning surprise into success, Rio turned his face mid air and kicked at Leon, while sending an arc of wind towards Amelia, which throwed the daggers she sent his way off course.

Leon felt his arms getting numb after blocking the hit on his chest. He turned to look at Rio, who ignored Amelia and directly went to the opposite side where Katherine was getting cornered.

Alaric, the vampire wolf hybrid, had just slashed at Katherine. Leaving a big injury on her hands. Rebecca took this chance and shot several water bullets to hit her. But when they were just about to hit Katherine, the shadow rose behind Katherine and pushed her away. Taking all the hits in her place.

"That's not how you do it Becca." Rio said and his figure appeared behind her and a sword slash came near her neck. At the last moment she used the last of her mana to push herself backward and create a water bubble around her. Which absorbed the attack.

She just gave him a proud smiling expression, that she survived his attack, when he pointed towards the side, where she saw Katherine slicing the head of Alaric, who was bound by chains made of darkness.

'Idiot. Can't he just hold on for a few seconds more.' Rebecca cursed Alaric as she stomped her feet in anger.

Rio and Katherine looked forward and saw Amelia, Rebecca and Leon standing opposite them. From the original 6 vs 2 to 3 vs 2 - this difference was too big. Every one of them was sweating and feeling tired, as they all used up most of their mana in this fight here alone. And didn't hold back at all.

Leon, who was covered in dust, wiped the blood marks near his face and looked at Rio, who was just looking at him with a smile, as if taunting him.

"Don't stare at my shadow too much" A voice suddenly sounded behind Leon, as the Rio's figure he was looking at disappeared in a puff of smoke. And before Leon could turn back, a kick landed on his back, throwing him forward. Where Katherine appeared with a sword in her hand, ready to slice his head off.

Chapter 247 Leon's beatdown

247 Leon's beatdown

-urgh-

Leon spat a mouthful of blood as he got kicked again. Using his element he created a little propulsion on his right, which pushed him away from Katherine's attack.

While Katherine missed her swing, Leon used the chance to propel himself forward and attack her. In mid air, he created a fireball and sent it towards her face, hoping to distract her and not give her enough time to dodge his main attack. Which was the sword slash he was preparing.

'Ice wall'

Katherine chanted the spell and an ice wall formed in front of her, but with her mana mostly depleted, it couldn't stop the fireball and broke upon contact. Few of the ice shards ended up hitting her, dealing a little damage as the barrier of the suit started glowing in amber around her.

She covered her sword in aura as she moved backwards to create distance, but Leon closed in on her fast. With a scream Leon slashed his sword hoping to stab her in the heart, yet when he reached close to her he found his hands empty.

No, there was actually no hand there.

It took a moment for his mind to go from confusion to shock, as the pain reached his nerves and a loud scream escaped his mouth, like a roar of a wounded animal.

-ahhhhh-

Rio's figure appeared beside Katherine pulling her back. While the chopped up hand of Leon fell to the ground.

'So fucking predictable' Rio said as he moved forward and slashed at Leon's head, ending his misery.

"Good luck next time."

Those are the words which echoed in Leon's head, before he felt lightness in his body, and then complete darkness all around him.

"Not fair, brother." Amelia said, as she used the last of her mana to break the chains of darkness and tree wines, which were binding her and Rebecca.

Rio smiled, as he saw the notifications for points that started appearing in his panel. He looked back at Katherine, who was about to fall down due to mana depletion and her injuries, and rushed towards her. Before she fell, he picked her up in the princess' carry and started moving towards his base, where the sound of fighting could be heard.

Clearly while Leon and others were holding him back, Valtor and the rest of his team attacked their base. Rio glanced at the time and noticed there were still 4 minutes remaining until the match ended.

"You should go back on your own. While I hold off Rebecca and Amelia." Katherine said softly, as she tried to use her aura to seal off her injuries.

"You're no match for them." Rio bluntly said, silencing her struggles.

After all, if Amelia fought seriously she could even take out Leon, unless Apollo gave him some of his secret cards. Amy was now C- rank too, and had many blessings to boost her strength.

As he channeled his aura to move quickly. During the fight, those guys dragged them a little away from the base. So to give enough time to their team partners.

At the base

"Why didn't they return yet? The barrier won't last for much longer." One of the boys from Rio's team said, as he looked at Valtor, Edward and Morphius attacking the barrier from the outside.

"Damn it, we won't be able to stop them if they come inside." A girl said as she moved back near the core.

"Maybe if they used all their mana, we could fight them."

"You serious, didn't you see what happened to the others." The girl said while scoffing at him. As she kept shooting arrows outside.

5 of their members went out to intercept Valtor and others, so as to stop them from attacking the barrier and buy time, but they all died without much of a challenge. The rest of the team tried to attack from the inside several times, but none of them were able to land a hit. As everyone was always able to dodge the spells. So as to conserve their mana, they chose to stay inside.

Morphius was in his werewolf form, with a wolfish head and a fur-covered human body. His claws and fangs were out. And every time he slashed them, each physical attack was creating sparks to fly whenever it landed on the barrier. His yellow eyes were scary to look at.

While Edward with his flame spells was creating a massive fireball ready to drop over the barrier.

Valtor was responsible for intercepting any attack that came towards Edward. He didn't use much of his mana, as he was saving it in case anyone returned or when the barrier broke.

'Ray of flame' A spell that concentrates fire into a focused beam, akin to a laser. That can burn through everything in its path, leaving nothing but devastation in its wake.

Edward finished his spell, and shot the flame towards the barrier. The sizzling sound echoed as sparks constantly flew down and the barrier started to melt around the beam.

– Hahahha "Burn everything for me" Edward said with a maniacal laughter as his red hairs danced in the air behind him. His aggressiveness from his childhood was only intensified several times after he awakened and got control over his element. And the villainous personality of arrogance and anger he had, would always show up whenever he used his spells.

"Damn it, I can feel the heat even here."

"How much mana does he have, he's gonna destroy it."

"Get ready to fight them. Barrier's about to be burned down."

Rio's teammates said, as they stared at the sky, where several cracks appeared in the barrier and started spreading.

While Valtor was preparing to enter the barrier, a blurry figure went past him, and he could only feel a gust of wind on his skin. "He's back" Valtor said, as he looked at the barrier and moved towards Edward.

Rio, after using his aura, crossed the barrier easily and placed Katherine inside.

"You should go _ "

While Katherine was about to say him to destroy the barrier of the other team since except Amaya everyone was here, Rio's figure disappeared directly.

Morphius turned back to gather with Edward and Valtor to attack together, as Rebecca and Amelia's figure could be seen a little far away.

"They can't even hold back two of them. Even after all that boasting." Morphius muttered.

"Why don't you try yourself."

Rio's voice came from behind him, starting him. Morphius turned back, raising his hands to block any attack, when a kick landed in his stomach knocking the air out of his lungs. Followed by a punch to his face, breaking one of his fangs and sending him flying.

Shadewarp, a spell which can help the user teleport to a place whose shadow they marked before.

Rio had marked Morphius's shadow before he entered the barrier and instantly teleported back out after placing Katherine inside.

"Time for round 2" Rio said, as he charged towards Amelia and Rebecca. While his shadow avatar rose from the ground and moved towards Valtor and Edward. After all, both of their elements were useless against his avatar.

Chapter 248 End of the First stage

"He's much better than he was at the tournament two years ago." Professor Thaddeus said, noticing Rio's fighting style.

"His aura mastery is insane for kids his age. His avatar alone can hold off two of the top rankers for this year." Professor Harkin commented.

"Not just aura, even the techniques he uses hardly show any faults or extra movements. Even without mana he's holding back the other two." Professor Mythila said, after watching Rio eliminating Morphius with a mana infused arrow that blasted his body, before he even got a chance to make a comeback.

"He was always a monster. So there's no need to be surprised." Jorvik said, as he listened to professors talking about Rio. "You should focus on her instead, she's not any less than him." He said as he pointed towards Amelia, who was fighting closely with Rio, while channeling the last of her mana to eliminate his team who were surrounding the mana core.

Amelia waved her hands, as she sent all the arrows lying on the ground towards Rio. In their path, she clenched her fists, creating a small rift in their path and sending all of them into the torn space, which appeared over the heads of Rio's teammates. The falling arrows managed to hit two of his teammates in their heads. Eliminating them instantly, before they could even notice anything.

"Her talent for space element is top grade." Professor Mythila noticed.

"No wonder, she became an avatar directly after she awakened." Professor Harkin said. Mentioning the rumors that the little princess of Damascus was chosen by a Goddess as her avatar on the very day of her awakening. Though Blake family never announced it, or boasted about it, everyone had heard of these rumors.

"Golden generation indeed." Professor Osborn commented, as he ignored Rio and turned his attention to other displays, where final matches of other classes were starting now.

Every class of first years had a few monsters in them with top talents and skills which are hard to come by in years. This is why even the professors wanted to know everyone's limits and skills better.

Rio noticed Amy's movements, but he let it be and ignored it. He could see, she had no plan to destroy the core, so he just turned his focus towards Rebecca, who was panting heavily. Her face was full of sweat drops, glowing bright in the sunlight, while her golden hair danced along her every movement. Despite the tiredness and exhaustion marking her face, her blue eyes were fixed upon him with the determination to win. Yet all her attacks were turning out to be futile. The more they fought, the more cuts and injuries were accumulating over her body, and now the barrier around her was almost shining in total amber, signaling she would be eliminated any moment now, if she didn't get healed soon.

"You should give up, princess." Rio said as he dodged her attack, while moving closer and giving a light slap to her head. "You're no match for me. You never were," He finished his words, and seeing the fuming expression on her face, a smile came to his face. So just to tease her further, he added "And you never will be."

Rebecca glared at Rio, as she clenched her sword and slashed at him again. "Just stay still and I'll show you, you damn panda."

"Tsk tsk tsk, aunt Athena was right, your language is getting worse and worse, princess." Rio said as he shook his head in 'disappointment' - "No class at all."

"You_ " Rebecca, who was about to curse him again, was slapped at the back of her head, this time by Amelia.

"Language" Amelia said, and then ignored her.

Rebecca could just stare at Amelia's back and mull over her luck. This pair of brother and sister were just bullying her now.

"Why don't you end it brother." Amelia said, as her sword clashed with Rio's, pushing him back a little.

"What's the rush, I still got more than 2 minutes left." Rio said, shrugging his shoulders.

"Why don't you show me, the technique you picked from the library?"

"I don't have mana." Amelia said.

"Just demonstrate the moves, no need to perform them. Maybe try to use aura in place of mana." Rio suggested, while dodging sideways, as Rebecca, who was resting back threw a stone at his head.

"Is that even possible?" Amelia asked.

"How would I know? It's your technique, did you try it?" Rio said in a nonchalant way, while catching a stone in his hands. He crushed it into little pebbles in his hands and threw them back at Rebecca, eliciting another angry shout from her pretty face.

His words got Amelia into thinking, as she decided to give it a try.

Though it was a stupid move and could backfire, and even hurt her, but they're currently in virtual reality, so she can try it without actually harming her body.

Many techniques had requirements for a specific type of energy, like some worked only by magic and some only worked without it. Yet there were a few techniques and methods, which could work with all kinds of energies, be it mana, aura, ki, Ether, Arch or Chakra - some techniques could work with everything after minor adjustments in the core idea behind them.

The technique Amelia picked from the Zenith library was an example of one such art. She just had to find the correct method of adjustments that suits her style and abilities.

Planar Imbuement, that was the name of her technique.

Just like his book, hers was written in two parts too, and yes, he did steal the second part for her too.

But since she just joined the academy now, and started learning about that technique now, he's still holding onto that part, before giving it to her.

He could teach her everything himself, but that would only hinder her talent and slow her growth. And since there isn't any emergency around, so he just wanted to let her practice with peace of mind.

Future events will already be stressful enough for her anyway.

'It'll be best if Amelia can remove the limitations of the first part before learning about the second one, called Steller Attunement.'

'Well, I already gave her a clue, so she can do the rest herself.' Rio said and stopped Amelia from focusing on performing that technique now by attacking her.

He just said that to give her some clues, as for performing it - there was no need to do so, in front of whole class and academy so early.

He used chains of darkness to bind Amelia and throw her back towards Rebecca, who was trying to sneak up on him.

"Nice try, princess. Better be silent next time." Obviously he didn't forget to laugh at Becca before she fell down and got eliminated.

As Rebecca disappeared from the match, Amelia fell down to the ground too, and Rio knocked her out, by hitting her head with the sword's backhand. Eliminating her too.

This was one of the simplest take down methods of VR knockouts, that only a select few knew and could control.

A glitch in the system you could say.

If someone attacked a steady part of someone's brain in the VR, simulating a specific nerve which gives the signals and maps the data readings in the real world, one could eliminate anyone no matter strength or rank, in the virtual world and trigger the security protocol to have them exit.

Rio had to bash a lot of people's heads in the VR arena's and online tournaments to learn this trick.

Simple painless effective elimination.

Though it only worked in case security protocols are fixed in the settings for that match. This trick is useless in life or death matches and banned in betting games.

Rio looked at the time and saw, one minute and twenty seconds were left now. His avatar had already eliminated Edward some time ago, and now Valtor was the only one still fighting.

Rio didn't care about the victory of the match at all. He just wanted to beat Leon and he already did that. So he was just playing around now.

But even that was enough now, I guess.

Let's just end this, so we can start stage 2 and beat Leon again.

Chapter 249 Loki and Arabella

Once Amelia and Rebecca were both eliminated, Rio canceled his aura avatar and walked towards Valtor, who was panting heavily.

Rio had controlled his avatar to not show the blessing of gluttony to anyone, cause if anyone learned about this method, even those SS rankers and leaders wouldn't hesitate to come after him.

After all, all the high rankers had many strong blessings and many high ranked gods behind them, so a method which can let them use one of their strongest skills into a separate entity, who wouldn't want that.

Sure, if they knew the backlash of it, many might hesitate and give up, but even then, they'd like to take this method.

After all, if someone bound a blessing with too much power and too much backlash with their aura avatar, not only could they get rid of that cursed skill, but also get an avatar which could perfect that op blessing without any setbacks.

Anyway, until the gods come down and directly interfere themselves, Rio's all secrets were safe, unless he showed them himself. After all, there are too many loopholes and limitations by the world system, that this world yet has no idea about, not even the gods. And he knew exactly how to use them for his goals.

"How long?" Valtor asked as he forced his body to stand straight.

Though he didn't finish his question, Rio could understand what he meant. Valtor just wanted to ask how long it took him to reach that mastery over his aura.

After all, he had been training since childhood too, and both of them had even fought once while entering a dungeon. Even though Valtor lost at that time too, but it was a close match. And after that match, Valtor was sure he could defeat Rio someday if he tried hard.

Yet the feeling he got today, after facing that avatar, was like standing against an insurmountable wall. A mountain he could never cross and only look up to.

He hated this feeling.

If he couldn't defeat Rio, then he might not be able to defeat Shade guild. And if he can't defeat Shade, how was he supposed to get his father's guild, his own guild, Nexus at the top.

At this moment, he felt his determination waver. A seed of doubt and drop in competition rose in his heart - telling him, he'll never catch up. That he'll never succeed.

But then Rio's words echoed in his ears, bringing him back.

"8 years." Rio said honestly.

Counting from the time he woke up in this strange world, it had indeed been 8 years. Since the moment he decided to protect Amy and change his ending, everything he did, every choice, every decision, every move, it had always been for this.

"I will defeat you. One day." Valtor said, before being eliminated as Rio pierced his heart with a sword.

"Did we win?" The last remaining teammate from Rio's team, beside him and Katherine, stared at everything with wide eyes, and couldn't help but mutter.

"Not yet. One of them is still alive. And we haven't destroyed their core yet." Katherine said with a stoic face.

She had healed a little after resting for some time.

She closed her eyes as she replayed the match in her hand, guessing the strengths and weaknesses of everyone who participated. To see how she'd fare against any of them. And the conclusion she got, only forced a frown on her face.

'I need to get stronger.' She thought as she clenched her fists.

[Time left - 57 seconds.]

Rio looked at the time on his watch and sighed, why is it taking so long.

He waved his hand, and a bow from inside the barrier flew into his hands. He jumped up onto a stone pillar and stood there. Pulling the bowstring, he looked ahead, as his eyes glowed focusing on a certain direction.

A black arrow formed in his fingers, when he took aim and gently he released it.

-swish- trrrtrrr-

As the arrow left his hands, cutting through the air, only the sound of vibrating bowstring was left behind, and soon it broke in two pieces too.

Amaya, who was reading a book while sitting on a chair made of wood, looked upwards as she felt the disturbance in her surroundings. She looked at the sky which started to darken suddenly, and she just sighed slowly. "So it's over already." She whispered, as ripples formed in the barrier covering their base. But it didn't break, and the scene calmed down.

Yet before the calmness could settle in, another arrow hit the barrier, and the same scene repeated again.

In the 4th arrow the barrier completely collapsed and shattered in pieces.

Amaya looked upwards and saw a black arrow slithering in the air, as if a serpent was coming towards her. Without the interference of the barrier the arrow directly entered the space in their base. Amaya looked at the timer and saw only 5 seconds were left, so she created a barrier herself around the magic core, hoping to delay him. Yet after some time, she noticed the arrow didn't attack the core but fell down in front of her, with a note attached to it.

"What would be the fun, if everything ended just like this."

Amaya read the letter and smiled, as the match ended and a white light enveloped her senses, transporting everyone back to the quantum hub.

When Rio opened his eyes into the quantum hub, what greeted him was the silent stares of everyone around him. Though some matches were still ongoing, most of the eliminated students were glued to the screens of his match playing on replay.

[You happy now.] The notification from system appeared on his screen, when he glanced at Leon, who was still downcasted about how he was defeated. [There's no way fate's letting you play anywhere near the protagonist again.] System said, still feeling happy about Leon's death, but acting cold. "Who said I need fate.' Rio said, and called Hela. "Your father's watching this match, right?"

[He is. He's quite happy with your performance.] Just in a moment, the reply from his goddess came to his ears.

"Tell him, I need a favor." Rio said, ignoring the chill he felt hearing her ghastly cold voice. The effect of her voice increases with her emotions, and now, she was probably feeling amused or happy.

[He says it'll be done.] Hela replied, before Rio could even say what he wanted.

'Knew it.' Rio thought and shook his head.

Experiment number 7 - Fate needs mediums to act out it's will. - is always right.' Rio thought to himself and turned his eyes towards the little fangirl of tricksters , professor Arabella.

When he looked at her, she turned towards him too. Their gazes met, and Rio just kept staring at her, until she smiled and nodded her head. Confirming to the request Loki probably suggested her.

'System'

[Yes host.]

'Be sure to use my points if Loki and Arabella fails somehow. I need to be on that team.' Rio said, as he looked at the front where random names for 10 students started to appear, who'll enter the second stage.

'This time let's not kill him easy and torture him a little.' Rio said and closed his eyes.

Chapter 250 Apollo and experiment

"He's much better than he was at the tournament two years ago." Professor Thaddeus said, noticing Rio's fighting style.

"His aura mastery is insane for kids his age. His avatar alone can hold off two of the top rankers for this year." Professor Harkin commented.

"Not just aura, even the techniques he uses hardly show any faults or extra movements. Even without mana he's holding back the other two." Professor Mythila said, after watching Rio eliminating Morphius with a mana infused arrow that blasted his body, before he even got a chance to make a comeback.

"He was always a monster. So there's no need to be surprised." Jorvik said, as he listened to professors talking about Rio. "You should focus on her instead, she's not any less than him." He said as he pointed towards Amelia, who was fighting closely with Rio, while channeling the last of her mana to eliminate his team who were surrounding the mana core.

Amelia waved her hands, as she sent all the arrows lying on the ground towards Rio. In their path, she clenched her fists, creating a small rift in their path and sending all of them into the torn space, which appeared over the heads of Rio's teammates. The falling arrows managed to hit two of his teammates in their heads. Eliminating them instantly, before they could even notice anything.

"Her talent for space element is top grade." Professor Mythila noticed.

"No wonder, she became an avatar directly after she awakened." Professor Harkin said. Mentioning the rumors that the little princess of Damascus was chosen by a Goddess as her avatar on the very day of her awakening. Though Blake family never announced it, or boasted about it, everyone had heard of these rumors.

"Golden generation indeed." Professor Osborn commented, as he ignored Rio and turned his attention to other displays, where final matches of other classes were starting now.

Every class of first years had a few monsters in them with top talents and skills which are hard to come by in years. This is why even the professors wanted to know everyone's limits and skills better.

Rio noticed Amy's movements, but he let it be and ignored it. He could see, she had no plan to destroy the core, so he just turned his focus towards Rebecca, who was panting heavily. Her face was full of sweat drops, glowing bright in the sunlight, while her golden hair danced along her every movement. Despite the tiredness and exhaustion marking her face, her blue eyes were fixed upon him with the determination to win. Yet all her attacks were turning out to be futile. The more they fought, the more cuts and injuries were accumulating over her body, and now the barrier around her was almost shining in total amber, signaling she would be eliminated any moment now, if she didn't get healed soon.

"You should give up, princess." Rio said as he dodged her attack, while moving closer and giving a light slap to her head. "You're no match for me. You never were," He finished his words, and seeing the fuming expression on her face, a smile came to his face. So just to tease her further, he added "And you never will be."

Rebecca glared at Rio, as she clenched her sword and slashed at him again. "Just stay still and I'll show you, you damn panda."

"Tsk tsk tsk, aunt Athena was right, your language is getting worse and worse, princess." Rio said as he shook his head in 'disappointment' - "No class at all."

"You_ " Rebecca, who was about to curse him again, was slapped at the back of her head, this time by Amelia.

"Language" Amelia said, and then ignored her.

Rebecca could just stare at Amelia's back and mull over her luck. This pair of brother and sister were just bullying her now.

"Why don't you end it brother." Amelia said, as her sword clashed with Rio's, pushing him back a little.

"What's the rush, I still got more than 2 minutes left." Rio said, shrugging his shoulders.

"Why don't you show me, the technique you picked from the library?"

"I don't have mana." Amelia said.

"Just demonstrate the moves, no need to perform them. Maybe try to use aura in place of mana." Rio suggested, while dodging sideways, as Rebecca, who was resting back threw a stone at his head.

"Is that even possible?" Amelia asked.

"How would I know? It's your technique, did you try it?" Rio said in a nonchalant way, while catching a stone in his hands. He crushed it into little pebbles in his hands and threw them back at Rebecca, eliciting another angry shout from her pretty face.

His words got Amelia into thinking, as she decided to give it a try.

Though it was a stupid move and could backfire, and even hurt her, but they're currently in virtual reality, so she can try it without actually harming her body.

Many techniques had requirements for a specific type of energy, like some worked only by magic and some only worked without it. Yet there were a few techniques and methods, which could work with all kinds of energies, be it mana, aura, ki, Ether, Arch or Chakra - some techniques could work with everything after minor adjustments in the core idea behind them.

The technique Amelia picked from the Zenith library was an example of one such art. She just had to find the correct method of adjustments that suits her style and abilities.

Planar Imbuement, that was the name of her technique.

Just like his book, hers was written in two parts too, and yes, he did steal the second part for her too.

But since she just joined the academy now, and started learning about that technique now, he's still holding onto that part, before giving it to her.

He could teach her everything himself, but that would only hinder her talent and slow her growth. And since there isn't any emergency around, so he just wanted to let her practice with peace of mind.

Future events will already be stressful enough for her anyway.

'It'll be best if Amelia can remove the limitations of the first part before learning about the second one, called Steller Attunement.'

'Well, I already gave her a clue, so she can do the rest herself.' Rio said and stopped Amelia from focusing on performing that technique now by attacking her.

He just said that to give her some clues, as for performing it - there was no need to do so, in front of whole class and academy so early.

He used chains of darkness to bind Amelia and throw her back towards Rebecca, who was trying to sneak up on him.

"Nice try, princess. Better be silent next time." Obviously he didn't forget to laugh at Becca before she fell down and got eliminated.

As Rebecca disappeared from the match, Amelia fell down to the ground too, and Rio knocked her out, by hitting her head with the sword's backhand. Eliminating her too.

This was one of the simplest take down methods of VR knockouts, that only a select few knew and could control.

A glitch in the system you could say. n((o..$\mathbf{v}$-($\mathbf{e}$((ℓ.-Ƅ/)1(-n

If someone attacked a steady part of someone's brain in the VR, simulating a specific nerve which gives the signals and maps the data readings in the real world, one could eliminate anyone no matter strength or rank, in the virtual world and trigger the security protocol to have them exit.

Rio had to bash a lot of people's heads in the VR arena's and online tournaments to learn this trick.

Simple painless effective elimination.

Though it only worked in case security protocols are fixed in the settings for that match. This trick is useless in life or death matches and banned in betting games.

Rio looked at the time and saw, one minute and twenty seconds were left now. His avatar had already eliminated Edward some time ago, and now Valtor was the only one still fighting.

Rio didn't care about the victory of the match at all. He just wanted to beat Leon and he already did that. So he was just playing around now.

But even that was enough now, I guess.

Let's just end this, so we can start stage 2 and beat Leon again.