

## Mystical 391

### Chapter 391: Meet Again 3

Even among the people there, only Beckstone understood well how heavy Garen's words were. This was especially true if it were the Underworld Carriage. If it really was pointing towards that item, he didn't even dare to imagine how powerful his current opponent was!

Suddenly, a familiar voice came from behind Beckstone.

"Garen?"

The person, one of the two who stood behind Beckstone, hadn't spoken up until now.

Garen was stunned as he heard the familiar voice and looked at where the voice came from.

The opponent came out from the shade. He was in long grey robes and had a black wooden ring in his hand. He gently took off his thin hood with his hand, revealing a pale and old face.

He was Teacher Emin that Garen had been searching this whole time!!

"Garen... is that really you?!" Emin couldn't believe himself as he stared intensely at the incredibly powerful man in front of him.

The image of the opponent overlapped with the face he had recognized when Garen was still under him.

"Teacher..." Garen's tone was fused with shock, yet relief, and bitterness as well.

With this reply, Beckstone, Berlina and the little boy behind Emin had their eyes wide open.

This meant that Garen had admitted to his identity and he was indeed the sole student of Emin in the past.

Emin was the person who guided Beckstone to the Spirit Tree's Riddle. He was also the luminarist who joined Beckstone's team in the middle of the expedition. Although he didn't have much strength, his knowledge was unparalleled as he was the successor of the famous Tasura Academy. No one expected that he was the teacher of the Eight Cloud Crow Garen.

Emin looked at Garen with a complicated look.

"I once believed that you would become a very powerful totem user, but I didn't expect it to be this soon..."

He pondered for a while as his eyes filled with sadness..

"You finally ended up in the Royal Alliance..."

Garen stayed silent. He didn't have any choice. Vanderman's territory determined that his only path was to side with the Royal Alliance.

However, the Royal Alliance would eventually collapse in the future...

From the very beginning, he had no choice but to become a member of the Royal Alliance.

Vanderman had seriously offended the Terraflor Society, and the Obscuro Society had been trying to assassinate Vanderman. Eventually his relationship with them turned out to be incompatible.

However, the Royal Alliance was different. Vanderman had contributed a lot towards the Royal Alliance, and he had gave the result of his life long research to its Monarch as well, which formed a very solid relationship with them.

Perhaps it was due to the increment in his Intelligence attribute that caused him to think more than necessary.

Was his only path to follow the Royal Alliance until its collapse? This belief once again appeared in his mind as he saw Teacher Emin.

As he came back from his thought, he looked at the little boy behind Emin. The little boy had a delicate red butterfly on his shoulder. This butterfly was the one small scaled poisonous type totem that he had discussed with his teacher before.

He didn't expect him to create one.

Emin noticed Garen's gaze and pushed the little fellow out.

"This is your junior that I have recently recruited. His name is Bertin and he is quite talented."

"Bertin, please call him senior."

Bertin was a small boy with red short hair and had freckles on his nose.

"Sesesese...nior!" He stuttered, not because he was afraid but overly excited. "Can.. Can I be as strong as you someday!?"

"You can as long as you keep working your way up." Garen revealed a gentle smile.

Bertin's eyes glimmered as he felt his senior was easy to talk to, yet he hesitated and seemed rather slow in voicing up.

"Big brother Beckstone is a good man, can you not make his life difficult?"

Beckstone couldn't hold himself from his anger and tried to speak up but he vomited a pool of blood instead. Berlina immediately rushed towards him and pulled him up.

"Big brother Beckstone was coming after the Spirit Tree's Riddle because of teacher's health. Senior please stop making things difficult for him. Teacher is already ninety four years old and without the Life's Dew..." Bertin couldn't finish his sentence as his eyes turned red.

The teacher and disciple had different allegiances. One was of the Terraflor Society, and the other, the Royal Alliance. Although they had no conflict in their current standings, Garen knew that these power players would eventually collide against each other, and they would have to face against one another someday.

Garen understood well what Bertin's words, and Emin's intention was.

He didn't expect that the Life's Dew to be something requested by Emin. Furthermore, he didn't expect Beckstone to come here to find the Life's Dew just for Emin.

As he looked at the current situation teacher Emin was in, he couldn't help but to feel remorse.

He focused his sight gaze on Beckstone. He knew that Beckstone's hatred towards him would never be resolved when he killed his friend Darian in front of his eyes. Furthermore... The opponent was the seedling the Terraflor Society had been nurturing with everything they had, and so wouldn't go down quietly.

However, he was here to find a solution for Emin, yet his teacher's intention was to...

Garen calmed down.

Berlina and the others stared anxiously at Garen. He would be the one to decide whether they would be at war or make peace with each other.

A shapeless pressure slowly caged everyone, as if the air had solidified.

Berlina felt that she started to have trouble breathing. She would try her best to inhale but didn't dare to make any sound. This feeling, where her life was in the hands of someone else, she didn't want to experience it any longer...

Beckstone... She couldn't help herself but to look at Beckstone in that moment.

This man who was usually calm and quick witted turned overactive when he faced with that man. It was obvious that Garen had scarred him for good.

Sweat started to form on Beckstone's nose, and he couldn't even use his hands to wipe them off. He could only continue his deadly stare at Garen. He had fallen into a defeat he had never tasted before since he was firmly defeated last time.

The taste of the sun turning into grey ash was still very fresh in his memory.

He was muddling along listlessly for days, and didn't want to achieve anything at all. He daydreamed inside his home everyday like a zombie. He slept after eating, and daydreamed after his sleep. It was as if he had totally forgot everything.

The effort and sacrificed he had poured out was a total waste.

After that, his teacher had sent someone to deliver a white shelled diary to him. It was sent by Leanna's parents, and inside were descriptions of Leanna's everyday life.

Then he heard about his teacher's terminal illness. Even as he rushed to see him, he was too late to see his teacher for the very last time. It was raining heavily that day, and he kneeled in the rain. Whether the water droplets on his cheeks were that of the rain or his tears, he didn't know..

From that day onwards, he vowed that he would fulfill his teacher's ambition.

No matter how much anger he had that dangerously obstructed his rationality, Beckstone finally restricted his urge, the irresistible urge to fight Garen with his life!

A breeze blew and leaves whistled.

The broken sunlight landed on each person present.

"Teacher... When did you join the Terraflor Society?" Garen suddenly asked.

Emin hesitated for a moment but he eventually answered.

"I have been a member of the Terraflor Society from the very beginning. The whole Tasura Academy is actually part of the Terraflor Society's setup academy."

Garen closed his eyes as he lost himself in his thoughts.

On the other hand, Berlina and Beckstone were completely shocked, as if they just found out that Emin was actually a member of the Terraflor Society.

"In respect to my teacher's wish, you guys can leave now." Garen finally came to a conclusion. "As the chaotic era came upon us, I didn't come to see teacher Emin immediately, so I'll use this as a compensation. Beckstone, don't let me see you again."

Beckstone vomited another pool of black blood. As he was being carried by Berlina, his lips trembled and it was obvious that he was heavily injured. Every breath he took seemed bear the weight of the world.

"If you let me go today, I will make sure I'll be the one letting you go once in the future!"

He was a man of arrogance, and yet he was humiliated by Garen twice. This made his desire grew ever stronger than before.

"Let's go!" Beckstone barely pushed Berlina away as he turned around and leave.

Emin and Bertin looked at Garen one last time before turning around and leaving the scene as well.

The four of them walked to the edge of the levitating stone. A green light flashed and a giant Jade Hawk appeared.

The hawk's wing span was at least twenty meters wide, and his back was close to six meters wide. The party climbed up onto the hawk.

Garen looked at them from afar until they ascended beyond his sight

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At the other peak of the mountain valley inside the red fern forest.

There were a few figures in green shirts, each of them were in tight white full body armor, with their heads fully covered, the only visible parts of their bodies being their eyes.

The white armored men had a well trained air about them as they stood silently in the forest. Two of the white armored men who stood at the front observed the situation unfold between Garen and Beckstone from afar.

"Interesting. I didn't know that Eight Cloud Crow was actually Emin's disciple." The green armored leader whispered in a male's voice.

"Beckstone must be very angry to be humiliated by this fellow twice in a row. What a pity." The other person was a female, her voice was rather frivolous.

"If you feel pity towards him, why didn't you help Darian out back then?"

"We only care about Beckstone not dying. All this other stuff is very exhausting!" The lady complained.

"Then stop complaining." The male leader said impatiently.

"Don't you feel excited when you look at this kid's battle? Isn't it good to feel excited?" The lady said.  
"Oh right, take a look at that Garen kid, isn't he a character? He facial figure looks good and has a good fitness as well. He's clearly a few times stronger than you! I wonder how good he tastes..."

"Stronger than me? I can squash him with just my finger!" The man started to become angry.

"A finger? You can squash him with just a finger?"

"Perhaps two fingers!" The male said angrily.

He stared at Garen in rage as he planned when he wanted to teach Garen a lesson to let him know that there were much stronger people above him.

Chapter 392: Meet Again 4

Suddenly, Garen looked the bottom of the mountain valley.

His eyes were glowing red and blood was about to flow out from his triangular birthmark.

From afar, the white armored leader felt a shiver up her spine.

"Damn it!" He scolded.

"Did this kid just spot us? The Stealth effect from the Light Tree should be flawless." The female leader felt skeptical.

"It shouldn't be possible. Although he's a form four, he is too inexperienced and shouldn't be able to master everything. It's impossible for him to notice us... Fuck! You can't be serious..." As the male leader hadn't finished his sentence, he saw Garen pointing his fingers towards him.



In an instant, a huge columns of black fog came out from Garen's body and morphed into a giant black cloud crow.

Kaw Kaw!!

The Black Crow spread its wings. Its forty meter wings created huge vortices that were directed straight towards them that brought along with it the black fog.

The male leader's face turned pale as he knew that Garen had indeed noticed them. Through the black fog, he could faintly see Garen's mouth moving.

"Looking forward... to meet... Officially."

"Fuck me... This fellow is this strong?!!"

Before the male leader could finish his sentence, he saw a giant black crow flying towards him, drawing a clear line of black lines in the middle of the sky.

Kaboom!!!

The whole red fern forest was covered in black fog. The tip of the mountain which spanned a few hundred meters was bent over by the impact and started to slide down to the other side.

Boom!!

Huge boulders rolled downwards, disturbing huge amounts of dust and pebbles as they made their descent.

Garen wasn't trying to provoke them when he sent the black crow towards them. He wanted them to pay the price for peeping at them for such a long time.

"Let's go." He turned around and walked towards the entrance of the mountain valley.

"Why did you hit that mountain?" Windling couldn't understand his actions.

"I was bored."

"Fuck you!" Windling looked at the peak of the mountain, as he left together with Garen, none the wiser.

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"Cough cough... cough!!" Within the broken summit, a group of burning green flames covered the white armored men, who were smack in the middle of ground zero.

The male leader's face was caked with dust as he tried his best to cough them out from his throat.

"Even the Light tree couldn't defend it, and I had to activate my totem light. Fuck me!"

"You deserve it!" The female leader said so as if she was completely fine. "You have underestimated this handsome boy so you have to pay the price."

The remaining white armored men were completely silent. Those who were caught in it quickly got themselves up without any change in their expression, as if they were used to this.

"What are the old fools from the society thinking! This crazy fellow is only in his early twenties! And they pushed him to the Royal Alliance." The male leader was scolding in rage. "Are you sure he noticed us?"

"He most likely didn't see us but felt our presence." The female leader tensed up and didn't dare to joke any further. "We may have gone too far this time. To be honest, that is most likely a warning from him. If we were to really go against him, what are the chances do you think we can win against him?"

The male leader deactivated his green flame and recovered his composure.

"He definitely has something up in his sleeves. The Eight Cloud Crow. The Cloud Crow is most likely his sleight of hand, and the rumored Eight heads have yet to be presented in front of us. Rumor has it that his eight head is used in close combat and his cloud crows are used for long range battles. However, as a strong character, he definitely has more than one or two trump cards. I am sure, just from his gaze! He definitely has a huge trump card that he has yet to reveal to the world. With that confidence, he is definitely on par with the old fellows in the Society."

He had stopped calling Garen fellow and started using his name as a proper word.

The female leader knew that this meant that he had obtained his respect. To be able to notice them when they were under the protection of the Light Tree, this meant that he was qualified to be in the middle class of form four. As partners of countless of years, these both of them understood one another very well.

"Next up..."

"With Emin around, we better not provoke him. That fellow has already provoked the Obscuro Society and those monsters from the Black Sky will definitely go after him. We will let them fight against each other and we will just expand our territory in the dark." The male leader said.

"The Black Sky..." The female leader sighed as she heard this term. "They were once the strongest academy in the Tactic world. I didn't expect them to form the Obscuro Society. What are they trying to achieve?"

"Who knows. The academy, nobles, royals and even those immortals had their own plans. They are the ones who control the board, we are merely the slightly stronger pieces." The male leader explained hopelessly.

"Don't say that or else your father may be angry if he finds it. To be called an immortal by his own son..."

"Fuck him. The society is willing to send out only the both of us. Although they have a lot of trump cards up their sleeves, they never really dared to use them at all. In the end they will only rely on us. I will stop my involvement if they piss me off!"

The female leader covered her mouth as she laughed.

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Outside of the Mountain Valley, two blobs of black fog passed through the green field at an incredible speed.

The scorching hot golden sunlight could barely penetrated the black fog, and two human figures could be seen covered within it.

The white clouds passed them by and the strong winds blew against their oval shaped totem lights.

Windling placed his hands on his head, as if he was sitting on a sofa within the black mist as he looked at Garen, who is at the front, with much boredom.

"Boss, is it true that that old man is your teacher? How can your teacher be so weak? Are you the legendary weird kid who learnt everything himself?"

The guy's face had become really thick as he could call out someone who was younger than him his boss without any change in facial expression.

Garen ignored him as he knew that he possessed no threat to him after interacting with him for so long. He was a man who would complained if he had nothing to do.

"It's unforgivable that your junior would use the pity tactic to attack you." He was slightly unsatisfied. "What a pity. I really wanted that Life's Dew since it's an item that can make me live longer... If only I could get it on my hands and do some research on it... for just a little while."

He felt even more bored as Garen didn't even respond to him.

"Where are we going next?"

"We will go for some raiding, so we're going to the mission's location now." Garen replied coldly.

"Where's our objective? Is it that mission from the Headquarters director?" Windling was surprised.

He sighed as he saw Garen ignoring him, suggesting that it was what they were going to next.

"Oh my god! Why do we constantly go into these dangerous places... I feel like I've fought more battles than I have for the past ten years within these few days! Aren't we looking for trouble?"

As he droned through the magic mirror, Garen was too lazy to respond to him, choosing to arrange his thoughts instead.

This accidental encounter with his teacher had raised a problem that he had never thought about before.

His current stance had been determined. He could only be with the Royal Alliance, but the Royal Alliance would eventually collapse. By then, both Terraflor Society and Obscuro Society would definitely not welcome him. What should he do then?

Judging from the current situation, the Royal Alliance was still the strongest player in the world, but its internal structure was rife with spies. The Royal Alliance would soon slowly crumble from the inside out. What seemed to be a powerful force was actually just a wooden house; one push could cause some real havoc.

This push would not be from the Obscuro Society or Terraflor Society, but the Royal Alliance themselves.

The assassination of the Kovitan's kingdom was just a setback. There were still other incidents that could be a huge impact to them. The Royal Alliance would eventually anger the commoners and they would start a rebellion.

"Szz szz..." A sound could faintly be heard from the black box.

"This is the Kovitan's Headquarters with an important news broadcast. This is the Kovitan's Headquarters with an important news broadcast."

A clear young woman voice came out of the black box.

"Yesterday, Daniela has announced its intentions to build the largest commoner's castle -- to be named the Heart of Life, for citizens seeking refuge. Interested parties are instructed to contact your respective branches. There will be specialised doctors guiding you throughout the moving process."

The voice repeated its announcement once more, then again in different languages.

As Garen listened to the voice, his face was filled with an inexplicable look.

"The Heart of Life... This is also one of the major turning points." He remembered the original history where a civil war broke out in Daniela after a massive genocide in the Heart of Life. This occurred after the assassination in the Kovitan Empire, and the same assassination happened in Daniela, where its most pampered princess was assassinated. Hence a major investigation became a massacre. The Obscuro Society took this opportunity to butt in and Daniela finally fell in March.

On the other hand, the Ender Kingdom was slightly different as its king itself was the strongest totem user. The King of the Ender Kingdom played himself into his own hands as he was searching for greater strength. In the end, he merged with the strongest Giant Divine Statue and attempted to become a God! As he tried to become the strongest player in the world, he had declared war against all its inhabitants.

It would be ideal to call the king of Ender Kingdom a madman who was after the pinnacle of strength instead of a Sovereign power. He betted the whole kingdom against the road to become a God. In the end the three heroes who had always supported him gave up on him.

The original history suggested that the Royal Alliance had killed themselves during the whole process.

Garen was lost deep in his thoughts.

"What if I could change the history of these major incidents?" He understood that these huge incidents were hard to twist as it was the combined wish of countless citizens. Even if he could delay the path of this history, he could only give some time to the Royal Alliance before their eventual collapse.

Then where would his escape route be?

At this point in time, Garen didn't have the time to think of an impractical way to go back to his original world. If he could not ensure his own safety, then it would be pointless to consider anything else.

In this world, the mysterious phenomena of the Ancient Endor had started to become obvious as its number increased. The hidden secrets hidden here couldn't be solved within such a short amount of time.

As the large amount of information kept flowing in his mind, Garen's gaze started to become clearer and clearer.

"The strongest player in this history is the Hellgate of the Obscuro Society. Once they wake up from hibernation, they would soon surpass the Royal Alliance. Since I have already made an enemy out of the Obscuro Society, I would need to achieve the hellgate's level if I want to survive and uncover the secret in the future... This is the first thing I should be doing.

Secondly, I need to find the real reason why I transmigrated to this world. The legendary Tactics most likely exist. As this world is changing its pace, perhaps I could find out some hidden secret from within."

Chapter 393: Lost 1

In the evening, only half the pale golden sun remained hanging above the horizon, scattering light with only a hint of warmth.

In a small territory between Kovistan and Ender.

Two clouds of black mist flew across the plains, going across the plains, and entering a mud-yellow mountain region.

This piece of mountain land had bright yellow sand, and there was the occasional blackened tree, dry and leafless, scattered all across the mountain.

In some places, there were even white bones and half-rotten corpses to be seen. Most of these were from aberrated animals, but there were humans as well.

Small flocks of black scavenger birds were gathered together, pecking away at their food.

Garen looked down, and could even see some people with black skin, all dark, skinny, and only wearing a few rags, crouching by the corpses and greedily eating the rotting meat by the handful.

As though sensing his gaze, the person underneath raised his head, revealing a rotting black face.

There were only black holes in his eye sockets, tiny black bugs crawled in and out of his nostrils, and his mouth no longer looked like that of a human. His entire chin and lips were utterly gone, his creepy white teeth directly exposed to the air.

This person didn't have much flesh left on their bones, and even the bones inside were vaguely visible. There were many wounds that hadn't healed yet on his body, so his black innards could be seen even from outside.

"That person is still alive?" Garen was slightly shocked.

"What?" Windling glanced over curiously, following Garen's gaze to look down, and was instantly also taken aback. "It seems to be a person, fly lower."

The two black mists slowly descended, hovering about a dozen meters over this group of scavengers.



By then, Windling had also clearly seen the face of the person beneath them. He took a sharp intake of cold breath.

"What is that?! A new Aberration?!"

"I'm afraid not..." Garen's expression was solemn. "Let's go on and see."

The two of them were enveloped by the black mist, and continued flying ahead.

Soon enough, a small human village appeared on the ground ahead of them. Some of the mud-yellow mud houses had collapsed, while others were barely standing, damaged beyond repair. It was all quiet in the village, not a single soul in sight.

Looking down from mid-air, the whole village was like a mud-yellow round biscuit, it was just that it was covered with holes and gaps.

Before long, the two discovered yet another black and skinny person on the right side of the village. This person was also crouching in the middle of a heap of rotting flesh, chewing greedily.

This heap of rotting flesh was actually also a human corpse. It was a human man, and his entire abdomen had been cleared out, the organs inside covered with a greenish-white fluff of mould. Buzzing flies pranced constantly around the corpse.

"Let's go down and take a look," Garen said, his voice low.

Windling nodded too. Both of them were feeling rather low and solemn right now, the situation seemed to be going out of control. Both of them were thinking of a terrifying possibility.

The two clouds of black mist descended slowly, landing on the ground behind the dark and skinny person. The most scattered, quickly returning to the pocketwatch in Garen's hand.

The two of them watched that humanoid figure more than ten meters away, quietly.

This person looked as though he was severely dehydrated, his skin just like old, wrinkled and worn cloth. Some parts had fallen off in chunks, and was connected to the body by just a strand, whereas others were just full of holes, like a worn sackcloth, so that the black, dried-up muscles and tissues could be seen through the holes.

As though he had smelled something, the person suddenly stopped in the middle of chewing, and slowly turned around. A pair of utterly lightless eyes were staring intently at the two behind him.

Hiss...

He emitted a strange sound, taking in a breath, as though trying hard to smell something.

"You're still alive?" Windling yelled loudly. He quickly repeated the question in many different languages.

Rawr!!

Suddenly, the other person opened his arms wide, flailing them as he pounced at Windling. He moved unnaturally fast, as though he had springs fastened to the bottom of his feet, and he had practically bounced there in one leap. He opened his mouth wide, revealing sharp white teeth, his gaze greedy and naked. As though in his eyes, Windling was the most delicious dish of food.

Seeing how mindless the other party acted, Windling frowned slightly, raised his hand and pointed.

Tree roots and wispy yellow roots shot out of the ground, entangling themselves around this person in a moment, and tripping him to the ground.

With a whoomph, the person continued struggling on the ground, hands clawing and crawling madly on the ground, eyes fixed dead on Windling, as though on the verge of insanity.

But the roots at his legs continued to extend, and quickly reached his waist, securing him tightly to the spot.

"Forget it, let's go, this person isn't human anymore." Garen said softly behind him.

Windling glanced at the figure on the ground.

"I have a bad feeling about this."

"Me too." Garen turned around and released the black mist, "Just up ahead is the capital of this country, if we want to know what on earth happened here, we should be able to find some survivors in the capital, and maybe then we'll have some idea."

The two of them furled up the black mist again, and advanced at high speed forward.

Under them, on the surface of the ground, more and more of those figures appeared. Some were all black, others were all red. Some chased madly, some were sprawled on the ground chomping on rotting flesh, and there were also some that kept repeating certain movements.

There were more and more of these people, they gathered in denser numbers.

The two of them flashed past through the sky, both their hearts sinking.

Soon enough, within an hour, their current destination appeared before them, Veivar. The capital city of this country.

The city wasn't large, spread on the ground like a large yellow biscuit.

It was completely surrounded by a tall yellow mud wall, but the inside was empty, and unnaturally quiet. Looking down from above, the mud yellow buildings, some tall and some short, were scattered about, but mostly whole. The streets were strangely quiet, without a single soul in sight.

The two of them slowly lowered their altitude, and the city beneath them became larger, wider.

The whole city was unnaturally huge, and from midair, they could see that the whole place was divided into four parts, and each part was divided into four more. There were sixteen areas in total, and each area was filled densely with more than a hundred buildings, of all heights and sizes.

The two of them landed in a small area, directly on top of a house.

Compared to this whole area, the two of them were like two little ants in a bathtub, completely inconspicuous.

Garen and Windling stood steadily on the edge of the roof, looking down. The streets beneath them were covered with abandoned heaps of rubbish, some already blackening and unidentifiable. Some seemed to be large piles of food and clothes in bags.

But these weren't the conspicuous, the most obvious was the blood red words written all over the building walls, their meaning unknown.

Garen glanced at Windling, who frowned and shook his head.

"It's not the language from around here, neither does it look like any country's language. I'd rather believe it's an unconscious scribble."

Garen frowned slightly as well.

The blood red graffiti was everywhere, on the walls, on the roads, on some carriages waylaid by the roadside, on the street lamps. They were practically everywhere.

These words were scrawled and messy, looking a lot like some words, though occasionally they had some figures like curves or circles.

Garen tugged at his collar, pressing the little box on his collar.

"Is there anyone here from the departments? If yes, reply immediately."

Beside him, Windling glanced over as well, seeing if there was anyone else here.

Soon enough, the black box began emitting a clattering sound. And then there was a man's voice, barely suppressing his joyful surprise.

"Phew... phew... I'm the leader here, Chavanna, could you... could you be Lord Eight Headed Cloud Crow?!" His voice was very small and very rushed, as though he was purposely guarding against something.

"I am Cloud Crow, how's the situation now, how did this city become like this? Where are you now?" Garen asked a string of questions.

"Please come over, we'll explain to you in person once we meet." The person on the other end of the box laughed bitterly. "Our location is... Ah!!!"

Suddenly there was a scream from the other side of the box, it sounded like that of a woman.

"Dammit!!!" "Kill 'em! Use tactics!!"

"Leo!!!" "Chavanna! Save me!"

And there was a flurry of noise, a smacking sound from the box, as though it had fallen to the ground.

"Hello?!" Garen yelled hurriedly.

No more voices came from the box. There was only silence.

Garen patted the box, his expression unhappy.

"Is there anyone left on the public channel? All department members, reply immediately if you can hear this question! Now!!"

After changing the box to the public channel, it was still completely silent.

It was starting to grow dark. A cold breeze blew past, lightly furling some thin wooden planks on the roof.

The chattering sound came from the box again, as though there was vaguely a noise of chaos.

Bzz...

The noise got louder and louder, larger and larger, until it was almost piercing to the ear.

Smack!

Garen closed the black box, and glanced at Windling next to him. Windling was also more serious than he had ever been.

"Looks like the situation is kinda bad," Windling said softly. "Something not quite right seemed to have happened in this country. It's not as we guessed, that it was simply an infection of people that caused Aberration."

Garen nodded.

"The situation now is that we first have to find the people that arrived here before us, where are they?"

"When I was at Black Sky before, I had come across this phenomena. Although I only saw it in the information, it's very similar to our situation now. I'll check again and tell you. This is a homemade compass with a pointer, let's first ascertain where we are and the strength of the earth's magnetic field

here." Windling took a small white round plate from his waist pouch, there was a silver circle embedded in it.

He crouched down, and put the plate upside down on the ground.

After waiting for a few seconds, he picked up the plate again.

Just then, a clear white circle appeared on the ground, some of the fine dust in the circle quickly lining up into a pointer needle made of dust. It even had some miniscule carvings on it.

Windling carefully checked the needle on the ground. "No, the magnetic field here shouldn't be like this. We've walked several thousand kilometers to reach here, this direction..."

Suddenly, in the circle of the ground, a new needle formed.

Windling was slightly surprised.

Soon, the third needle appeared as well, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth!

A breeze blew past, and all the needles scattered and vanished.

Windling was stunned by the sight.

"What's the matter?" Garen had no idea what he was thinking.

"I used our departure point as a pole, and set it as the departure point. I should be able to tell you how far we've gone, and which direction we are in relation to the points. But now, it indicates..." Windling swallowed, rather at a loss for words.

"What does it indicate?" Garen frowned.

"It says that we haven't gone a thousand kilometers away from where we started..." Windling said somewhat guiltily.

Chapter 394: Lost 2

"Is there a problem with your method?"

"Impossible! This method was used in many unique locations and circumstances, it can prevent most interference. There can't be a problem!" Windling retorted immediately.

Garen fell silent as well. Frowning, he looked around himself. This was the tallest building in the vicinity, so they had a good vantage point to see how everything is going nearby.

There was nobody in this whole part of the city, not a soul in sight. It was utterly quiet.

"There were so many Aberrated people outside the city, so why can't we find anything at all in here?" Garen said softly.

"Shall we go down and check?" Windling glanced at Garen. I suspect this isn't where we wanted to go, Veivar."

"Under these circumstances, the best method is to find the sign of a famous shop, or post on message boards and the like." Garen nodded.

He looked around his surroundings, and quickly locked onto a target, releasing two Black clouds that enveloped the two of them once more and flew downwards.

Flying in mid-air, the buildings next to them were more than ten stories tall, the windows all pitch black like many dead and quiet empty holes, emitting a chilly cold.

The two of them landed soundly on the corner of the street, in front of an announcement wall.



On the mud-yellow wall, there were some torn newspapers and notices. Some had mostly fallen off, some were still considered whole, while others were covered with red graffiti.

The two of them split up to survey the notices.

"Found it!" Windling tore a small piece of newspaper from the wall. He began reading the words on it out loud.

"Gudan City, modified file number twenty-three, could all the infected please go to the nearest hospital at your soonest convenience to join the headcount, and receive a free vaccination. For those specially infected... Most of the back part is missing." Windling raised his head. "Gudan City? I've heard of the city before, it's the biggest and most prosperous city in this country, even bigger than the capital."

"Where is it, roughly?" Garen asked in a low voice.

"It's on our way. No, wait, I calculated our speed, there's no way we only flew such a short distance after so long." Windling was confused.

"Be it Veivar or this Gudan City, they're both large cities that belong to this Nevis Empire. After the riot last time, how has the situation been in this country?"

Windling shook his head.

"I never heard about anyone appearing from this country. After the riots, everyone's focus went to the larger countries. Who would give a damn about these small countries? Even less so for a tiny territory like Nevis, where it's basically a country within a country. What do we do now?"

"We'll check around this place for a bit, and find out exactly what had happened here," Garen replied calmly.

The sky had already gone utterly dark.

Everything around them was somewhat dim, and unclear.

Windling took out two flints from his waist pouch and a small assemblable torch.

Once he put the tip of the torch onto a wooden bat, it became a small and simple torch.

"This torch is a specialty only I have, it can burn for five hours at once, and that's the minimum! And the materials are easier to find too, so it's very convenient," Windling said somewhat proudly.

He started knocking the two flint stones together.

Psst-psst... psst-psst...

"Eh? Why isn't it lighting up?" He picked up the flints to check, somewhat curiously.

"Let me try." Garen took a match from his pouch.

Psst!

The match brushed past the striking surface, and didn't release any sparks whatsoever.

"Eh?" Garen was slightly surprised. "Did it get damp?"

"I know an illumination tactic, I can illuminate temporarily for ten minutes." Windling was also beginning to sense something amiss.

The surroundings were getting darker and darker, until they couldn't see any slits in the clouds at all. The dark clouds grew thicker. There was no moon, no stars. It was as though the whole city was slowly being swallowed by the darkness.

Windling acted quickly, a small white light appearing on the tip of his finger as he quickly drew out simple tactic gestures in the air.

Psst!

After a light sound, the glyphs scattered in the air.

"Something's not right! I can't use the illumination tactic!" Windling's voice increased by eight degrees, as he tried desperately again to make it work.

Garen noticed something was wrong too. The surroundings were getting darker and darker, and now they couldn't light a flame for illumination. This didn't seem like a coincidence.

Windling was still unable to make a light, be it with totems or an actual flame, neither could light up anything.

"This place doesn't seem to allow any light," Garen said lowly. "Let's get out of here first!"

"Okay!" Windling felt something was off too.

The two of them were wrapped in the black mist, and they took off into rapid flight, flying towards the outskirts of the city.

Before the whole city turned pitch black, the two of them quickly exited the city wall perimeters.

Psst!!

Windling kept repeating the gestures for the illumination tactic, and as soon as they left the city, the illumination gestures he carved out instantly shone with a white light.

"It worked!!"

A ball of light was suspended quietly in the air between the two of them.

"One of my totems is a fire elemental, so I can use it for illumination. I just don't know why, we can't light anything inside the city."

Garen didn't reply, and just stared dazedly towards the direction of Gudan City, where they had just come from.

Windling turned around to look, shocked.

The whole city area was completely empty, it was practically a stretch of deserted plains. There weren't any buildings or city walls there, nothing at all!

Only a few lonely small trees were planted there, looking as though they could die of dehydration at any time.

"Where's Gudan City?" Windling's expression was pure shock.

"I don't know..." Garen shook his head slowly. He took in a deep breath. "Could it be that everything we saw just now was an illusion?"

"Impossible!" Windling shook his head determinedly. "Let's look around," he suggested directly.

Garen nodded.

Wrapped in the black mist, they began to patrol the area.

The moon and stars were visible in the sky once more, the faint light shining down and scattering onto this piece of ground. There were no cities, no buildings, and even those Aberrated people from before were nowhere to be seen.

As though everything they had seen in the daytime was an illusion.

The two of them wouldn't give up, so they turned around and searched again. All the Aberrated people they had seen in the daytime were all vanished, not a single one remaining.

Garen actually already had a hypothesis in mind.

Unlike Windling, he had experienced the paranormal phenomena of Grindor twice, and after this strange encounter, he quickly found a possible counterpart from the Grindor legends.

Ghost City, a strange city from Grindor legend.

Anyone could enter and leave in the daytime, but once it got to the night, the city would disappear completely, entering an unknown darkness. If anyone didn't manage to leave before the darkness fell, they would remain forever in the city. Nobody knew where they went, nobody knew where the Ghost City came from. The next day, the Ghost City would remain as empty as ever, still as a grave.

According to legends, after figuring out how dangerous the Ghost City was, the aging hero Morgster brought the Lost Chain given to him by his wife, Starry Night Queen. After entering the Ghost City, he never came back out. That was also the ending point for his adventurous life. The great hero, who could even stand up against the Earth Mother's five sons, finally fell in this Ghost City, full of the unknown. And the Ghost City quickly disappeared as well, leaving behind only a mysterious legend.

Garen thought back to this legend, feeling vaguely grateful. Thank goodness the two of them were decisive enough, and quickly left Gudan City before the light disappeared completely. If even a deified hero couldn't leave Ghost City, it was practically the most mysterious and dangerous place to be. If they really got involved, who knew what would happen.

"It's another black copper phenomenon..." Windling looked down at the empty space beneath them, his gaze complicated as he said, "These strange phenomena caused by the black copper, we call them black copper phenomena. No one knows which direction this world will go in the end. From the moment black copper was discovered, this world was destined to change."

"Black copper..." Garen was thoughtful.

"What do we do now?" Windling splayed his hands, indicating that he was completely at a dead end.

After a moment's musing.

"Continue with our original quest, then. Although we don't know why we've only made such little progress, things still need to be done." Garen replied.

After a pause, he finally took one last glance at the empty space where Gudan City had been.

"Perhaps once everything is over, we might still come back here."

"Well, I don't wanna come back." Windling continued immediately. "If you wanna come back, you do it yourself. You can tell just with one look that this place is more than dangerous."

Garen was too lazy to reply.

The two clouds of black mist surrounded them, and they flew at high speeds in their original direction.

\*\*\*\*\*

Amidst some white mountains, far away from Garen and Windling.

Somewhere among the snow-tipped mountains.

On the white mountain slopes, on the white snowy ground, there were large black trees scattered sparsely, some in a straight line, others standing alone. Large sharp mountain rocks created a broken black surface amidst the snow.

The black trees and white snow mingled, as though the peak here only had two monochromatic colors.

The black rocks and soil, the black cedars and weeds, were embedded in the white snow. As though the pure white wool carpet was splashed with black mud.

Under the large swathes of white snow, in a gap between the layers of snow, a young woman dressed all in white was lying with her eyes slightly closed, as though she was in a state of hibernation.

The woman was hugging a dark golden round wristband in her arms, many black tactic glyphs carved densely into the bracelet. These glyphs looked independent, but some were strangely linked up, like a pitch black bracelet-shaped snake. The snake's eyes were two embedded green diamond shards, emitting an eerie green light.

Avici hadn't eaten for four days, and was hanging on with solely the little bit of pure water she carried around with her.

She hid under the snow, restraining all her body's aura, even slowing her heartbeat down to the barest minimum. This was to reduce the smell of her body and her metabolism, to bring all her living processes as low as they could go.

As an elite researcher with the Geometry Service, her results in the wilderness survival training class were the best. She just had to send this heirloom into the hands of the receiving teacher from the Geometry Service, and her quest would be complete.

As for when the receiving teacher would arrive, she had no clue.

What she did know now was that the people from Black Sky were still looking for her on the surface. Or perhaps there were other desperadoes trying their luck, also on the lookout for her. Even the Secret Service, another one of the three departments, were part of the search party.

If the National Service weren't so low on manpower, there would be another batch of people searching for Avici.

## Chapter 395: See the End 1

She didn't know what the situation was like outside, were there still so many people outside? Are those damned black dogs still constantly sniffing for her trace on the snow? Wouldn't that Robina from Black Sky have gotten more and more helpers?

Avici's mind was half awake and half asleep.

She could only wait, leaving fate up to God. If the people from the Geometry Service didn't find her before the enemy did, then what awaited her may be a fate even crueler than death.

\*\*\*\*\*

Several days later...

In the sky above the snowy peaks, several pitch black flying birds kept darting around, patrolling the scene beneath them. The birds were as big as sparrows, but eerily, they had two front limbs like scythes, like a sharp tweezer.

They swam through the savage winds soundlessly, as though they were barely affected by the force of the wind at all.

On the edge of an ice cliff at the snowy peak, there were several figures in black standing.

They gathered together in a circle, with a large black metal pot between them, an emerald green potion rippling inside.

Strangely, scenes of the geography and scenery around the snowy peaks appeared on the surface of the potion, as though it was a green sandbox.

The lay of the land on the surface even kept changing minutely, it was unbelievably realistic[1], as though they were looking down from above in the sky.



"The people from the department are coming. Swanke, you still can't find 'em?" A person in black asked softly, speaking in accented Enderian, as though he wasn't very familiar with it.

"I searched the whole mountains, but I still can't find a trace of that fellow, those are some decent hiding skills." The other man in black shook his head and replied, "What about the others? A lot of people seemed to have come since then, are they trying to muddle our eyes or take advantage of the situation?"

"They're probably adventurers here to try their luck. There are monster herds everywhere here. To think they could break past the defense line and get in as well, we oughta be slightly more careful."

"Got it, inform Robina."

"Sure."

\*\*\*\*\*

On another area in these snowy peaks, on the snowy white slope, there were many little dots scattered about. Some were red dots, some were black dots, but most were little white dots.

These dots were so many delicate little totems, rabbits, foxes, squirrels, mice... There were all sorts of totems.

They ran about and darted into holes everywhere, as though they were constantly searching for something.

There was a white flying squirrel sprawled on a black-robed man's shoulder, as he walked on the snowy ground with one leg sinking deeper into the snow than the other. A thick white smoke was breathed out of his mouth, and his feet made clear crunching sounds as they stepped into the snow, leaving deep footprints.

Suddenly he stopped in his tracks, and cast his eye about his surroundings, vaguely seeing the figures of adventurers in the distance amidst the forest of cedar trees.

"Damned stink beetles!" He cursed under his breath, these adventurers were all desperadoes who had survived different places, and they were always unreliable with questionable courage. But after the batch of new adventurers joined in, the situation became slightly complicated.

These new adventurers were led by a man called Bloodhand, he was cunning and crafty, and decently powerful. He also seemed to have excellent hiding skills, avoiding a direct confrontation with their Black Sky.

But these people obviously hadn't found that little fellow either. Otherwise, they wouldn't be following them so closely.

The man in black relaxed a little.

Suddenly he stopped his steps slightly, his right hand reaching into his pocket, like he was pressing something. He closed his eyes, as though listening to something.

Abruptly, he raised his head to look at the sky, his expression slowly changing.

He began to retreat, step by step.

"Uh-oh... This is trouble... Celine, inform everyone, retreat!"

"What's the matter?" A woman's voice came from his pocket.

"I think it's the people from the Geometry Service, they're here." The man in black looked up at the sky in front of him, and three red dots were flying towards them rapidly.

The red dots grew larger and larger, clearer and clearer.

After clearly seeing the new arrival's face, the man in black took a sharp intake of breath.

"Everyone! Retreat retreat retreat!! It's Hellfire!! If you can't make it in time, hide!"

The man in black's retreating footsteps grew faster and more panicked. As though he was drawing out a clear black line in the snow. The footsteps under his feet kept forming a line, retreating towards the distance behind him.

Psst-psst!

The three red dots instantly reached the position right above the place where the man in black had been standing.

It was three men and women in red robes, two men and one woman, led by a middle-aged man with red hair.

There was a slight killing intent between his eyes, his gaze scanning the traces left beneath him.

"You dare touch the people from our Geometry Service! Looks like it's been too long since we walked the earth, and some people have forgotten the scars from back then."

"Teacher[2], we should look for Junior Sister first," the other woman in red said in a low voice.

The middle-aged man nodded, and then looked at the young man.

The latter nodded.

"My little friends are already determining the situation. The ones searching here are the adventurers and Obscuro, the noteworthy ones are Bloodhead and the five-man Ring of Gluttony team from Obscuro. Also, I found the other juniors who had lost contact with Avici. They were hiding underneath a snow hill, and haven't eaten any cooked food for three days."

Bam!

A ball of crimson flames exploded from the middle-aged man's hand.

"Those damned, harebrained brats!" He seemed to be squeezing the words out of his clenched teeth.

"You guys go receive those poor little things."

"Then Teacher, you..."

"Of course I'll show those idiots with a death wish what pain tastes like! Sometimes death is a lot kinder than living..." The middle-aged man said, his expression cold.

Balls of flames burned in mid-air, surrounding the middle-aged man inside.

He was just about to leave, and take his revenge on those enemies who had dared to defile the honor of his department.

Suddenly his eyes narrowed, looking directly at the trees to his left.

"Come out!" he roared in a low voice.

From among the cedar forest, two mysterious figures, completely black, walked out slowly.

The man in front pulled away his hood, revealing a head of golden hair, cascading over his shoulder. His face was handsome, his skin fair. The most eye-catching part, however, were the three marks like cinnabar dots between his brows.

"The Secret Service?"

"Hellfire?"

The two of them spoke at the same time.

The other person's expression was relaxed and carefree, as though he had just come out for a stroll after dinner.

"You guys only know how to hide in the cracks, so why are you here now too? Don't tell me you want the Heirloom of Greed too?" Hellfire said coldly. He had no good feelings for the Secret Service at all.

Unlike the National Service and the Geometry Service, the inner workings of the Secret Service were bloody and cruel, full of cunning and deceit. Although they were all part of the three departments. But the Secret Service's feelers reached everywhere, and their information network was all over the place, completely unpredictable.

Compared to those adorable students in the Geometry Service, Hellfire began to hate those shadow hounds, without any quality of nobility, more and more. They were like wild wolves who had caught the scent of rotting flesh, their traces could be seen everywhere.

It wasn't just him, the two people next to him also had expressions of wariness. Staring hard at the golden-haired man who had just shown up.

"It's the Eight Headed Cloud Crow Garen. A noble from Kovistan. He's very strong." The young man in red moved his lips slightly, reducing his voice so only Hellfire could hear him.

Hellfire nodded almost imperceptibly.

"We would never give you guys the heirloom!" He yelled loudly at the people opposite. "We sacrificed so much, and it's already in our hands! This is the fruit of our Geometry."

Garen's expression didn't change.

"The quest I accepted was to retrieve the heirloom, it doesn't concern me whose hands the item is in." He said calmly, as though everything was only natural.

Hellfire's eyes reddened, and he immediately repressed his anger.

"Very well, we'll settle the conflicts outside first, and then I'll come experience Your Excellency's techniques."

"That was my intention as well." Garen slowly retreated, and disappeared into the cedar forest together with the other person.

Seeing the other party retreat, Hellfire's expression grew more displeased.

"Teacher, you don't need to worry. At least before we settle all the outsider enemies, the Secret Service won't openly declare war on us." The young man in red said softly, "I just received the news, Obscuro is sending more reinforcements here. Other than the Ring of Gluttony, there's also the Ring of Greed, and the Ring of Wrath. And according to some of our newest intel, some people from Terraflor are here too."

"Terraflor?" Hellfire's emotions began to calm down slowly. "Forget them, first go figure out what Obscuro's newly-founded Rings of Evil are made of! I'd like to see, who gave them the guts to challenge the honor of the Geometry Service!!"

"Teacher, you're not thinking of fooling around again, are you..." The red-robed woman said hurriedly.

"Relax." Hellfire raised his hand, indicating that she didn't need to worry.

He looked at the direction Garen and the other had disappeared to, and raised his hand abruptly.

Psst!

A line of fire shot from his hand, flying straight into the white pine forest before vanishing.

\*\*\*\*\*

In the pine forest.

Garen looked at the group of people in white bowing politely at him, these people in white all looked a mess, their expressions exhausted, but they seemed to be very excited about his arrival.

"So you're saying we lost quite a few people from the Secret Service in this operation?"

"Yes." The leader of the people in white lowered his head and said guiltily. "Lord Cloud Crow, Obscuro's men would want nothing more than to turn the snowy peaks upside down, they come at any of us Secret Service members with the intention to kill! We couldn't avoid them completely either."

Garen touched his chin, thinking wordlessly.

"Boss, it must have been because you were a burden and held them back."

Winding threw in a few jibes from the side.

How many of Obscuro's people had the two of them killed outside? General-level, Field-level, this hit-and-run method caused many of Obscuro's plans to fail before they started, so of course they would be mad.

In fact, most of Garen's reputation was built on casualties from Obscuro.

Looking at the messed-up subordinates from the Secret Service, Garen couldn't help but shake his head slightly.

Suddenly there was a clear sound from behind. A line of fire shot through the pine forest, headed straight for Garen.

Pom!

Garen raised his hand and caught the flying fire thread, the flames stopping in his hands and revealing its true shape. It was a cube-shaped red jade, with inscriptions like glyphs and figures carved onto it.

Hellfire's voice came straight from the red jade.

"Eight Headed Cloud Crow, you and I will split this snowy peak half-half. We'll settle the matter of the heirloom internally after cleaning up here, what do you think?" His voice was strangely clear.

"Perfect for me. I want east."

"Then I'll take west."

Chapter 396: See the End 2

The voice instantly dimmed down.

Boom!!

Suddenly, a huge red cloud exploded from Hellfire's direction.

The red cloud expanded first, and then quickly shrunk and was compressed, becoming a huge red bird more than thirty meters long.

"Those who dare defy we the Geometry Service, face the wrath of Hellfire!!" The enormous voice reverberated in the sky over the whole west side of the snowy peak.

Squeee!!

The red bird flapped its wings, screeching loudly.



Instantly, large swathes of red clouds starting emanating from its body, shooting away in all directions, like so many red threads, almost lifelike in the sky above the snowy peak.

It was as though these lines of fire had a mind of their own, searching everywhere for enemies who didn't belong with the three departments.

Soon enough, there were irrepressible screams and shrieks of shock.

Every time these lines of fire touched anything living, they would be completely enveloped and ignited into flames, becoming so many torches of fire.

The sky above the snowy peak was mostly covered by the red clouds, like the fiery clouds of twilight!

"Hellfire Monchetto!! Don't think we from Obscuro are afraid of you!!"

A furious old voice came from somewhere else.

Garen saw his subordinates from the Secret Service looking at him expectantly.

Although the three departments were forbidden from infighting, there was evidently some competition between them, and neither side wanted to lose to the other in terms of presence.

He smiled slightly, stretching out his right hand, the black pocket watch twined around his wrist hanging down.

Boom!!!

A large gust of black air rushed into the sky. It rapidly scattered into countless black cloud crows, flying into the air in flocks and making piercing squawks.

The large flocks of black crows rapidly scattered together with the black mist, quickly dominating the entire west side of the sky, forming a stark contrast against the bright red clouds in the east. One black and one red, the two sides were like two huge and tightly neighboring screens, neither giving way to the other.

"The Secret Service is clearing out here, if you don't want to die then leave these snowy peaks!"

The Secret Service members at the side stared, mouths gaping.

The elite fighters from the Secret Service were never this showy and arrogant, to the point of challenging the enemy head-on.

The Secret Service dealt mainly with assassinations, and not a single one of them had been as open as Garen was being now, releasing his energy and letting the enemy see his exact location.

At first they thought Garen would lead them to secretly get rid of these damned pursuers. But now...

For some reason, though, this feeling wasn't too bad either...

There were the flames of excitement in everyone's eyes.

The sky full of black crows, a huge presence of power, this was all from their very own leader/ This was the legendary peak-level fighter, who had a title of his own!!

Just then, all of the people from the Secret Service had a new and fresh emotion, one they never felt before.

\*\*\*\*\*

The huge red cloud bird in the distance looked towards the flocks of black crows, a hint of surprise in its eyes.

"Eight Headed Clouded Crow? I think I kinda like this guy now. To think the Secret Service has someone who likes to fight face-on as well."

"What an attitude."

Somewhere in the snow on the peaks, several people in black robes and red masks looked up to see the red clouds and black crows.

One of them had a hoarse voice underneath that mask.

"How pretty, I like huge scenes like this." One of the other voices was very gentle, like a rather young woman.

"Don't bother with all that, hurry up with the arrangements, don't delay the plan."

Another person reminded softly, with also a woman's voice, but hers sounded deeper and raspier.

The three didn't say any more, hurriedly walking towards a secret place amidst the snowy peaks.

Boom! Boom! Boom!!

Huge explosions kept coming from the area covered by the red clouds.

Some completely blackened survivors stumbled out under the protection of their totems, running down towards the foot of the hill. Some even had limbs blasted off. They didn't even dare to turn around, running directly down the peak. Looks like there were several dozens of them.

In comparison, from the area covered by the black crows, there were only a handful of escapees. The rest vanished without a trace.

The squawking of the cloud crows was drowned in the sound of the explosions, until all that could be heard was the vague screaming from inside.

\*\*\*\*\*

In the following two days.

Garen and Hellfire used their respective large-scale attacks, clearing up most of the weaker guys around, and then they reined in their power again. The remaining groups were not people that could be easily destroyed by large-scale attacks.

These remaining groups had tactics that could gather everyone's power, enough to hide and avoid the highly diluted spread of attacks.

Somewhere on the west side of the snowy peaks.

Several black lines blasted into the snowy ground in front of them.

Soon enough, the black lines threaded out, flying back into Garen's hands.

Fresh and gory blood oozed slowly out of the snowy ground.

"How's it like on Windling's side?" Garen raised his leg and walked slowly ahead. This was how he had destroyed several hiding spots over these past few days.

"Lord Windling's side has settled four hiding spots." There were two people following beside Garen, both subordinates from the Secret Service and in charge of the operation this time.

They were one man and one woman, both rather young. Looks like they were just raised to this position recently.

Garen nodded. "Let's go to the next spot. These people won't give up until the end."

"Yes, sir."

Both of them were vaguely excited. They were actually siblings, the older brother and his younger sister.

The man was Bell, and the woman was Belanie. They had joined the Secret Service together, because their home had been destroyed. In order to get revenge, they had no choice but to join the three departments, that fought the monsters and Obscuro.

And right now, they were full of sincere admiration and respect for Garen. This feeling of sweeping over everything was too awesome, they just bulldozed through, and killed every living thing that wasn't on their side.

If they had this power as well, when their home was destroyed, when their country was destroyed... perhaps there wouldn't have been so much tragedy...

.....

"Wait!! We surrender!! We'll pay the price to pay for our lives!"

Several people in grey walked out of a huge black boulder, yelling loudly.

Psst-psst!

Two black threads went through them, piercing right through their chests and splattering fountains of blood onto the snowy ground.

"Next one!"

Garen walked over the bodies calmly, leaving behind a person in white to deal with the bodies. The one man and one woman from the Secret Service kept following behind him.

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In the pine forest, two people in white were looking at their surroundings in surprise.

"We had just discovered traces of the other parties here... sir..."

Garen raised his hand and stopped their report.

His gaze glanced instantly at the left of the pine forest.

"Fools!"

Psst!

A black crow turned into a black thread and shot out.

There was a distortion in the air, and a woman in white armor appeared out of mid-air.

A layer of white Totem Light appeared around the woman, but was instantly penetrated by the cloud crows.

"Have mercy!!" She yelled loudly.

Bang!

A circular, bloody hole was instantly opened up in the woman's chest. She looked down blankly, staring at the bloody hole in her chest, before she fell to her knees with a whumph, and falling flat on her face.

"Sir, we just discovered a new hiding spot..." A person in white ran up to Garen and reported quietly in his ear.

After listening to the report, Garen didn't even look at the woman's corpse.

"Let's go."

He turned around and walked down the direction they had come.

.....

Rawr!!

A huge black lion was running quickly in the snowy land. His speed was surprisingly fast, and covered over a hundred meters in the blink of an eye, sending a trail of white snow up in his wake.

There was a knight in black armor riding on the lion. He was panting, his face bloodless, and he turned around occasionally to glance behind him.

Behind him, a large flock of black could crows was chasing him rapidly. Black mist wrapped around Garen as he followed behind.

Looking at the escaping black lion in front, Garen raised his hand, ready to finish the opponent in one hit. Now, opponents who weren't at least Spiritualized didn't pose any threat to him at all, and were basically like ants to him.

Raising his right hand, the black mist slowly gathered into a black crow in his hands.

Suddenly, Garen's movements stopped.

His whole body suddenly stopped on the spot, and he landed onto the ground. His eyes narrowed, his long golden hair flying slightly to the left.

"Come out, all of you."

Garen said calmly.

Clap-clap-clap-clap...

The sound of crisp clapping came from behind Garen.

With the sound of the clapping, five shadows in black robes and red masks slowly appeared around Garen at the same time.

Each of them was holding a purple crystal, a smidge of silver liquid shining inside.

"Garen Trejons, how long has it been since we met?" A familiar woman's voice came from directly in front of Garen.

It was the two red-masked, black-robed people who walked out slowly, both women by the looks of their figures.

The one on the left took off her mask lightly, revealing a seductive and fair face, a black eyepatch over one of her eyes, with a head of short purple hair.

"Demetrius..." Garen immediately recognized the woman's voice.

"Looks like, you're doing pretty well as an illusionist, huh?" The other woman took her mask off as well, revealing a beautiful and delicate face. Her long hair was pitch black, woven into many cylindrical curls, making her look especially graceful and noble. Most obviously, there was a purple-black diamond pattern on her right cheek, like a short dagger, entwined with snakes and tree leaves.



"Nice to meet you, I'm Antherella. I am now the NO.1 Elemental General with Black Sky."

Garen's heart gave a jolt.

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On the east side of the snowy peaks.

Boom!!

Hellfire waved his hand, his expression calm, as he blasted the snowy ground underneath him into a charred black, bloody water and fresh blood mixing together to form currents of water that were quickly frozen into red ice.

"Monnie... It's been a while, you're still as impatient as ever."

Suddenly, there was a deep man's voice from behind him.

Hellfire suddenly stiffened, floating in mid-air.

This voice...

"I still remember, back then when I personally helped you edit your tactic formation design, you were still only as tall as my waist." The person behind him reminisced calmly.

Hellfire's whole body was stiff as he stood, and he turned around with great difficulty. A silhouette made of countless black clouds floated behind him. The countless black clouds were still distorting and gathering, and even rapidly gathered into a body like that of flesh and blood.

That was a man who had a hole in each shoulder, and black chains going through those holes. The chains in his shoulders seemed to extend into the unknown, connecting to an unknown space. It was as though he was chained to the abyss.

"Teacher... God Cloud..." Hellfire squeezed out those words through an unbelievably dry throat.

#### Chapter 397: Ambush 1

The snow filling the sky slowly scattered down. Like white cotton, softly and gently.

Amidst the snowy ground, the five people in black had Garen surrounded. The purple crystals in their hands were emitting a faint silver light.

The purple light slowly formed a semi-circular membrane of purple, slowly enveloping Garen in the center as they stretched to merge above the top of his head.

Garen raised his hand, but couldn't move an inch. Before he had noticed it, many translucent silver strings had penetrated his whole body.

His arms, the backs of his hands, his shoulders, knees, all his joints were being yanked at by those silk threads.

The source of these silk threads was a black-haired woman in front of those people in black.

"Poison again..." The crimson mark on Garen's brow looked like it was about to drip blood.

Antherella smiled lightly. "Honeysuckle poison, enough dosage to fatally kill a beast twice. Aren't you already starting to feel weak, and isn't your Totem Light already diminishing?"

Garen didn't speak.

Antherella's voice grew more gentle.

"Honeysuckle poison isn't that powerful, but when mixed with the existing poison in your body, it becomes a brand new, more powerful, and even more stubborn poison."

"If I recall correctly, the strongest Elemental General among you Oscuro in the East Continent uses ice, right?" Garen said calmly.

Antherella's expression flashed with a hint of unnaturalness. But she immediately recovered. "Ice, is it? That traitor has already been confined to a lightless prison, for revealing Society secrets and ruining the Marshall's plan, acting out of order. That is his fate."

"In other words, you lucked into this NO.1 position, huh?" Garen's lips curved, his expression contemptuous.

Antherella's expression grew unfriendly.

"You'll be our prisoner soon, and yet you speak insolently!"

Bzz!

Just then, the purple membrane of light finally closed up above his head, emitting a strange buzzing sound.

In the veil of light, looking from above, a silver needle appeared in the entire circle, turning slowly in the light veil.

Like a silver clock.

And Garen was locked in this clock, the silk threads around his body disappearing, The clock needle brushed past his body, looking illusory but vaguely taking a wisp of black air away from him.

"This is the heirloom, Primal Needle." Antherella laughed daintily, "Eight Headed Cloud Crow, this heirloom is activated by the combined power of five of Obscuro's carefully chosen Elemental Generals, it's not something the forgery in your hands can imitate."

"You really did luck into the number one position, don't tell me you think you've won already?" Garen's expression didn't change.

"Are you saying I'm wrong?"

"I think I know now, why you're still scared of ice to this day." Garen's expression was contemptuous again.

Boom!!

Large clouds of black mist surged out of the pocket watch in his hand, about to gather into the form of a black crow.

But strangely, before the black crow could form, the silver needle brushed past it, and took away most of the black mist.

The silver needle was like a vacuum, rapidly absorbing most of the black mist.

Garen was shocked, and quickly pulled back the watch's black mist, but he was still rather late by now, the watch looked slightly dimmer. This forgery heirloom had a constant amount of black mist inside, and could only be refilled using certain special methods, but now that so much has been absorbed away, the power of the pocket watch would have instantly fallen by a large chunk.

"Do you still think something that had come out of our hands like that would work?" Demetrius said coldly from the side.

"Do you think you can keep me contained just like this? How ignorant!" Garen's expression was cold.

He raised his hand and pointed forward.

Rawr!!!

Two invisible dragon jaws rammed mercilessly into the purple membrane.

Crack...

The light membrane shook a little, but didn't move.

Four dragon jaws rammed into the same direction again.

Bang! ...Bzzz...

The sound of the impact kept reverberating throughout the light barrier.

Garen's expression didn't change, and was about to bring in more dragon jaws. But he suddenly felt weaker.

"Don't waste your strength, in order to capture you, we've set up large-scale tactic formations all over this area, almost a thousand meters in all. There are even about a hundred General-level and Field-level Obscuro members outside. With so many people working together, even you can't possibly get away so easily. Now we just need to wait for our Commander to settle matters on the other side, and then come destroy you with his own hands!"

Garen's expression was beginning to waver. The poison had taken away half of his dragon heads, and now there were so many people gathering their power in this tactic formation.

"One more time!"

A flame of fury was burning in his heart. A neon red light lit up on his brow.

The four dragon heads instantly appeared from the void, bringing with them the four other drastically weakened dragon heads, and the huge body of the Eight Headed Dragon was suddenly squeezed into the purple light barrier.

It climbed out of the void, as though about to burst the small purple membrane open at the seams.

Rawr!!

The Eight Headed Dragon raised its heads and roared, the huge sound spreading out in all directions, but it was reflected back in full upon hitting the purple membrane. Reverberating back and forth within the light membrane.

The whole light membrane began buzzing and vibrating intensely, emitting unnatural cracking sounds.

The five Elemental Generals were beginning to grow impatient, turning their gazes on Antherella.

Antherella's expression changed slightly, throwing a glance at Demetrius' direction beside her.

The latter immediately understood, and held a strangely black dagger in his hand, tossing it lightly towards Garen's direction.

The dagger flew in a beautiful arc, spinning as it landed on the purple light barrier, and actually sank into the light in an instant, vanishing completely.

The light barrier had initially shown cracks, but now it stabilized rapidly.

But just then, the sound vibration in the light barrier had already become several crests and valleys of waves.

Just then, Garen sneered contemptuously, the red light on his brow growing brighter.

He bent his finger, and slowly flicked it against the light barrier.

Clang!!

This sound just happened to be on the highest wave crest.

Ker-chack... Bwah!

With a crisp sound, the whole light barrier collapsed and shattered, a red figure shooting out in an instant, headed straight for Antherella.

Garen's eyes glowed with a crimson light, his left hand darting out straight like a snake, biting the opponent's neck with unnatural speed!

Bzz!!!

A white Totem Light appeared around Antherella, and she had no time to react at all, rapidly retreating by instinct alone.

Psst!!!

Garen's left hand pierced through her neck in an instant. The Totem Light couldn't withstand that pierce at all, that bloody red light completely unstoppable, like a tragedy.

Just then, Antherella's body actually began to disappear slowly, vanishing into nothing.

His attack didn't hit, so Garen retreated hastily. He hit a tree beside him with a backhanded fist.

Ker-chak!!

The tree trunk exploded from the middle, countless wooden shards flying backwards like bullets.

Mmgh!

There was a groan from behind him.

The huge shadow of the huge Eight Headed Dragon appeared behind Garen again, opening its four jaws and biting towards the four Elemental Generals around him.

Strangely, the dragon jaws closed with a clatter, and had bitten down into nothing, not reaching the Elemental Generals at all.

"Illusionists..." Garen didn't turn around, merely cocking his head slightly.

Behind him, a man in similar black robes was slowly appearing behind him. He was also wearing a red mask, but his hand was on his chest, as he coughed lowly. There were actually several wooden shards embedded in his chest.

The people around him looked at Garen in shock. He could break the purple light barrier with only his body, and even the wooden shards he broke out could injure the illusionist!!

Antherella imperceptibly took a slight step back. Looking at the blonde man standing in the center, there was a feeling of dread in her heart.

A small black bat appeared on her shoulder, soundlessly, completely unmoving as though it was dead.

"Second Form!"

She roared loudly and suddenly.



Instantly, the countless shards of purple light gathered in her hands, like the whirlpool in a purple ocean, sucking everything around her inside.

In the blink of an eye, there was a purple-black scimitar in Antherella's hand, its blade embedded with countless thorns of purple crystal, while the sword's handle was like a living thing, squirming constantly, as though it was four spiders tangled together in a hug.

"Demonic Blade Kunta!!" A general gasped from somewhere. But Antherella couldn't bother with all this now, the moment the Demonic Blade appeared, and the purple light faded, she was shocked to see Garen's face appear in front of her. His demonic and bloody left hand was about to touch her nose. No! That was not a hand! That was a sort of incomparably sharp claw, Antherella could even smell the blood and odor from it.

Without any thinking whatsoever, she swung the Demonic Blade hurriedly.

Psst!!

A circle of purple waves rapidly spread from the center, and it was everything slowed down.

The trees instantly became shards, and the rocks also became powder. The snowy ground, the black soil, everything instantly shattered into pieces.

The waves moved extremely quickly, not giving anyone any time to react.

But someone was even faster than that!

Garen somersaulted a few times in the air, the black light formation appearing for only an instant underneath his feet so he could use the momentum to land steadily on a shard of tree bark nearby.

As soon as he steadied his footing, and intense vibration of soundwaves spread out with him at the center.

Roar!!!

It was the Dragon Roar!

Demetrius and the others, who were about to give chase, suddenly felt their eyes blur, and were instantly shocked to see Garen appear before their eyes.

Bang-bang-bang!!

Three dull sounds, and the three Elemental Generals were instantly hit. They were sent flying far, and no one knew if they were dead or alive.

Demetrius was extremely shocked, and started retreating rapidly. But she saw Garen's face appear in front of her again.

"Blackhorn!!" She yelled out of instinct.

A Black-horned Unicorn rushed out from behind her, going through her as though an illusion, and crashed towards Garen mercilessly.

Squee-eee!!

The Unicorn's cry mingled with the sound of Garen's claw tearing through the air.

Boom!!

A huge tremor spread out, and the Black-horned Unicorn cried out tragically, instantly becoming dots of black light that scattered and vanished.

Demetrius watched in despair as the red claw reached for her brow.

"No!!" Antherella's scream of terror came from nearby, but it still seemed so, so very far away.

"Save me... Big Sister..." Demetrius wanted to speak, but couldn't make a sound. In that instant, it was as though time was stretched and stretched, infinitely.

Chapter 398: Ambush 2

"Hmm?"

While midair, God Cloud single handedly carried the unconscious hellfire, his eyes pointed toward the far end of the battlefield.

There was a hint of surprise within his eyes.

"Eight-headed Cloud Crow?"

He smirked at the corner of his lips, as he pointed with his right hand.

Fuuuuu!

A black chain suddenly flew out from his hands, and disappeared into a void.

\*\*\*\*\*

The sharp claws touched Demetrius' neck slightly.

Garen's expression changed all of all of a sudden, and he retreated without hesitation.

Jii Jii Jii! With three successive evasions, he appeared several metres away in a flash, counterattacking with a palm strike

Bam!

The demonic blade clashed fiercely with the red claws, but it was not a frontal impact but a mere redirection, causing it to miss. Garen smirked, his free right hand cast a bolt of lightning.

Bam!

The Totem's Light on Antharella's abdomen shattered, she was pushed back lightly from the impact. Large volumes of blood spewed from her mouth, the skin on her abdomen quickly turned to a charred black with signs of burns, which smoking fumes with clear palm-shaped brand on her abdomen.

Swish!

At this moment, multiple black chains appeared suddenly, right under Garen's Totem's Light, which bound him tightly.

Ancelora tried her best to swing her blade.

"Kunta!!" She roared.

That tremendous horrid quake happened again. Its power was actually several times stronger than before!

Garen's expression changed, this tremendous force was enough to threaten him.

"Die!!!" Antharella's berserked blade fell upon Garen's face. The vibration condensed and closed inwards, like a bent ray of purple light.

Bam!

In a loud thump, Garen's head was shattered, splattering into a paste of blackish-red mixture of flesh and bones.

Purple rays of light scattered, releasing a bright flare in an instant, blinding everyone in the vicinity.

The black chains were also completely released due to the impact. Garen's body exploded into smithereens, turning into a blackish-red pool of body parts, splattered across the snowy grounds.

Oddly, Garen's silhouette appeared once again at the forest nearby. He seemed completely fine, backstepping quickly away.

In the air, countless dark clouds congregated and formed on God Cloud's body.

He calmly looked at Garen from afar.

"Running, eh?"

He extended his arms and clenched his fists, multiple black chains instantly appeared from the void; shooting towards Garen with overwhelming density.

Hua huaaaa.....

In an instant, the entire sky was filled with the loud noise of clashing chains rubbing into each other.

A bit of fresh blood leaked from the mark between Garen's brows, and he looked at God Cloud, who was far away in midair. Garen raised a pointed finger at him.

A giant scarlet silhouette appeared behind Garen. The attribute points that he had accumulated over a long period were all instantly added to Intelligence.

The Eight-headed Dragon roared ferociously, the growth on its back popped, and a golden colored dragon head shot out, ferociously rushing towards the chains.

Roar!!

The golden dragon head howled, the other eight dragon heads regained their vitality and simultaneously flew towards the sky-filling chains.

In that instant, the Nine-Headed Dragon clashed ferociously with the countless chains. Numerous dragon roars and the clashing of chains filled the air around them.

A loud thump echoed throughout the snowy mountain cap.

The large snow cap exploded, bringing down large volumes of snow, crushed boulders and uprooted trees.

From afar, it seemed as though the white mountain top was sliced by an unfathomable force; it's broken upper half exploded into countless bits of debris.

A giant red nine-headed dragon was entrenched in the mountain top, its nine heads howled all at once. Countless chains were bound onto it, much like a trapped demon dragon from the folklores!

In an instant, the demon dragon secreted a translucent liquid akin to blood plasma. These plasma flowed along the chains, completely dyeing them red.

Pa! Pa! Pa pa!!

The chains broke one by one, as though the plasma corroded them loose.

Roar!!!

The Nine-Headed Demon Dragon roared once again, Badum!!

With a humongous bang, the Demon Dragon turned into extremely luminous crimson rays, so bright they outshined the sun itself for an instant, casting the entire mountain valley in a shade of red.

Garen's silhouette was moving quickly towards the right side of the mountain, and vanished from the horizon.

"As expected from Commander God Cloud! I will repay your kindness in the future!" A cold voice reverberated from the top of the mountain.

God Cloud could not help but to cover his eyes as he waited for the rays to disappear. The snow peak was in an incorrigible mess, with the opponent nowhere to be found.

As he observed the ranks of Antharella's men dropping like flies, God Cloud extended his arm, recalling the demonic blade Kuna, which flew up and landed in his hand.

"From here on, in this vast land, comes another formidable opponent ..." As he looked towards the direction which Garen fled, his eyes filled with lament.

Without a sound, God Cloud vanished into intangible dark clouds, along with his demonic blade.

\*\*\*\*\*

In a dark cavern, deep within a vast desert far away.

Innumerable chains extended from a dark void, binding a man in the center like prey within a spider's web.

There were two holes pierced into his shoulders, but there was no blood flowing out at all.

Just as God Cloud's body vanished, this man slowly opened his eyes.

"Orders."

"Here." A silver lady appeared from within the darkness, much like a statue carved from white silver. Oddly, the lady does not have a face, instead only having a slab.

"To everyone from Obscuro Society, once you encounter Nine-Headed Demon Dragon Garen, report back to headquarters immediately, I will personally create a clone to deal with him."

"Yes sir. General, must we pay such close attention to a single person?" The lady could not comprehend the attention this man warranted.

"His abilities in and of itself are comparable to my clones. This person has embarked on similar paths as we. Unfortunately, the totems that he chose were not considered strong; its potential has been maximized. Otherwise, we might find ourselves with another commander-class character."

The lady did not ask further, but bowed and went off.

\*\*\*\*\*

On the snowy peak was Antharella, lying on the snow covered ground. Demeritus squatted beside her, slowly smothering a green medicinal cream onto her abdomen.

The burned palm mark was recessed in her abdomen, like carvings on rock.

"Sister..." Demeritus looked at the wound on Antharella's belly, completely clueless as to how to handle it.

Even with the strongest Elemental General's Totem's Light was only capable of mitigating most of the damage caused by Garen, the little bit of power left that penetrated Antharella's Totem's Light and hit her had actually caused such devastating damage.



Garen's speed was too fast. Even if Antharella had many tricks up her sleeve, in that instance of close quarters combat, the only thing that could defend her was the Totem Light. She hadn't even managed to spiritualize, yet she already had her totem's light shattered by one palm strike, sending all of her totems into a state of heavy damage and injury.

Even the demonic blade Kunta was unable to hurt Garen with its strongest, non-blade tip attack; concussion.

Demeritus had chills to her bones as she recalled the scene just now.

Immense speed, strength, phantom-like movements. He could even revive after being slashed by the demonic blade.

"Rumour says he has eight heads, according to the analysis by the Grand Oscuro, he should have 8 chances of revival. Now that he has nine heads, we need to kill him another eight times, only then can we destroy the monster once and for all!" Antharella said with a defeated look. "My attack previously should have denied one life from him"

"Killing him another eight times..." Demeritus looked around, out of the five elemental general mobilized, only two were missing in action, likely to have fled. The remaining three who launched frontal attacks on Garen were thrown off the peak after having their totem lights shattered. They were likely dead as well.

The totem users of the outer ring had sustained major injuries due to the knockback from the broken tactical array. Adding onto the damage sustained from being within the blast radius of the explosion, it's unlikely that they will survive.

"Just to kill him once, we had to give up so much..... Eight more times....." Demeritus didn't know how to go about this problem.

Her face wore the expression of shock as she stared at her elder sister Antharella. From her eye sockets emerged streams of warm, red blood.

"Sis....Sister..."

"I'm fine, don't worry, I'll recover after a while" Antharella smiled in a comforting manner, then she felt that her face was wet.

She reached out to touch her eyes, her hand suddenly turned bloody red.

"No....no... No way! What is happening!!!?" Antharella got frightened, both her hands tried to wipe her bloodied tears dry, but her eyes just kept tearing with more blood.

She felt her eyes bulging, getting dryer, as though there was something stuck inside her eyes. She rubbed her eyes vigorously with her hand.

She put down her hands, but her eyes bulged even more instead.

The bloodied tears flowed more and more, eventually....

Bam!

With a muffled explosions happening simultaneously, Antharella's eyeballs exploded. She remained stiff, and did not move.

With a bang, she looked up, then fell again.

"Sis...sister..!!" Demeritus covered her mouth, and took two steps back in fright. She saw that within her sister's bloodied eye socket was some reddish-white grey matter!

"No!!!"

\*\*\*\*\*

The battle of the snow peak had spread across the entire East Continent's forces without any form of reconnaissance within just two days.

The obscuro society mobilized seven generals, two Ultimate Heirlooms, two sets of tactical arrays. General God Cloud's clone was mobilized, ambushing the Royal Alliance at the peak of the snowy mountains.

The master of the Geometry Service, Hellfire is missing, his status unconfirmed. Secret Service Eight Headed Cloud Crow, who walked into a heavy ambush, actually killed the leader of the ambush against Royal Alliance.

The evolved Nine-Headed Dragon totem had a single clash with God Cloud's clone, and managed to retreat after breaking free from the chains.

Indeed, The Eight-Headed Cloud Crow shook the East Continent, and the order which came from God Cloud within the Dark Maze had also been spread far and wide. The pocket watch belonging to Eight-Headed Cloud Crow was broken, The announcement from God Cloud indicated that the Nine-Headed Demon Dragon is obviously more indicative of Garen's totem characteristics.

At this moment, Garen's nickname changed once again. The Nine-Headed Demon Dragon shook the world.

On the third day after the battle at the snowy peak, Black Prince arrived at Kovitan's capital, officially meeting Emperor Avic.

Chapter 399: Notice 1

Several thousand metres away from the Snowy Peak, on top of the dark green sea-like forest, a cloud of thick black mist shrouded a speeding blonde silhouette. .

After some distance, the black mist slowly dissipated, becoming thinner and thinner.

Finally; all the black mist disappeared into nothing.

The black pocket watch in Garen's hand let out a crackling sound, and a crack revealed the watch within..

He suddenly lost the lift he had had from the black mist and began freefalling to the ground. The black light array lit up beneath his feet, and Garen used it as a platform to somersault in the air, steadily landing on the branch of a large tree within the forest.

Among the rustling sounds of the leaves, squirrels and birds scurried away, frightened.

Garen couldn't care less about those animals, he was instead feeling sentimental about the pocket watch in his hands.

"Too bad, the Cloud Crow Array was really nice to use. Now it's broken." He recalled the previous battle's scenarios; it was probably damaged by God Cloud's chain binding.

Those kinds of chains were very strong, which conversely meant that his body was strong enough to resist that kind of binding. If it was any other totem user; they would have probably been turned into minced meat.

Garen waved his hand, and three-dotted marks between his brows turned red. The status of the Nine-Headed Dragon was reflected into his consciousness directly.

He lightly touched the left side of the mark, which seemed to have dimmed a little following his main body's death.

Within his consciousness, the Nine-Headed Dragon was lying quietly in a pitch black space, the one on the far left seemed to be dying without any signs of vitality left in it.

"Looks like this three-dotted marks are not simply a representation of the changes in the body." Garen thought, he recalled in the Secret Techniques world's top invincible Holy Fist Palosa. One of his ultimates technique was the 99 Acute Airholes, which meant he needs to be killed 99 times before one could truly win him.

The Nine-Headed Dragon's body containing nine lives are akin to the 99 Acute Airholes in its mechanisms.

"If it wasn't for the continuous hunt for strong totem users on the snowy peak and gaining large amounts of potential points, this battle would have resulted in some significant damage."

He originally thought that there was more he needed to do before he could maximise his Intelligence, but during the hunt on the snowy peak, a large portion of his opponents were strong totem users, which made it adequate to maximise his Intelligence and then some.

The gang up by Obscuro Society was within his expectations, but the fight God Cloud's clone had eluded Garen's predictions..

God Cloud's body was obviously immaterial, even at first glance. It was without a doubt a clone condensed from tiny particles, but nonetheless, a mere clone could reach such levels of power. Not to mention the odd Demon Blade Kunta.

If it was just a clone, Garen was confident that he himself would not lose in a frontal fight, but with that blade... he also wasn't sure if God Cloud had more tricks up his sleeve.

As one of the few strongest in existence within Obscuro, the level at which God Cloud was was definitely something Garen had not been able to reach. Naturally, his gamut of strong moves wasn't lacking.

That's why he made the decisive move to run away.

As he inspected the status of the dying dragon head, he found it to be very close to death; it breathed in short, raspy breaths that were increasingly frequent and short.

Garen focused onto his own ability's Attribute Pane. After researching multiple totem theories and experimentations, according to his on Nine-Headed Dragon's genetic model, he should be able to mitigate the problem with his ability.

Indeed, the nine lives of the Nine-Headed Dragon are absolute!

Which means, these nine lives were not transferable; Garen has to die a total of nine times before he would perish for good.

But back then when the dual-headed salamander was able to evolve into the Nine-Headed Dragon, it was actually because he depended on his abilities to force an evolution. All these depended on abilities to evolve all the way to the absolute genetic limits.

Originally, the dual-headed salamander did not qualify to evolve up to this point, the Nine-Headed Dragon genetic pieces in its DNA was too little, only in literal shards. However, with a push from his abilities, he could fully explore its potential, and freely unravel all the possibilities that laid in the bits and pieces of genetic material, hence the nine heads.

"According to the derivator, since the abilities can evolve a Dual-Headed Salamander into a Nine-Headed Dragon, the loss of that severed head should have been permanent, but this could be fixed using my potential points." Even though Garen was quite sure this was the case, he still felt nervous when it came to the moment of truth. This was the pivotal point, where he would ascertain whether his deduction was correct or not.

He looked at his own stats.

"Strength 12, Dexterity 10. Vitality 10. Intelligence 10. Potential 3218%. Possess the qualities of a Luminarist."

Jumping across his dense Skill Panes and other totems, Garen eventually shifted his focus directly upon the core totem.

"Core totem - Nine-headed dragon: Evolved creature from the ancient creature Eight-Headed Dragon, perfect genetic organism. Theoretical Form 4 creature, ultimate form not upgradeable.

Information on Ancient Genetics: In the Luminarists' records, the Nine Headed Dragon is one of the organisms with the strongest survivability in the ancient era. They possess 8 extremely vicious sub-heads and one main head. Each dragon head has differing abilities, although they were mostly related to

poison. Each of the dragon heads has a different poison ability, and ruled over the ancient era for tens of thousands of years. However, due to the extinction of the Nine-Headed Dragon's food sources, the Nine-Headed Dragons fell into decline, and was evicted from the position as the apex predator of the food chain.

This terrifying menace possesses strong poison. It was ugly, but extremely possessive towards objects that are aesthetically pleasing. They are attracted towards beautiful things; whether it be beautiful flora, fauna, or serene environments and its creatures. They would normally inhabit the side of a lake on a bed of gems. Even though they are distant relatives of the multi-headed salamanders that dug out underground mazes, as the top-dogs of the food chain, they never had the need to hide in a cavern underground, instead preferring to bask under the sunlight, cleaning its dragon scales. According to the Luminarists' research and deduction, this kind of apex predator should turn out to be extremely narcissistic.

Abilities: Void Whirlpool (extends the dragon head, bringing it greater reach and tearing down prey. In the Nine-Headed Dragon's eyes, enemies mean food! This ability allowed for its prey to be slaughtered and devoured straight away.)

Nine Lives (Must be killed nine times before it completely perishes, each time requiring the opponent to slice off all nine heads at one go, otherwise the heads will continuously regenerate; a nightmare for any opponent.)

Dragon Skin

Berserker's Howl (After the inducing concussion, temporarily increases all dragon heads' abilities for 155 seconds, attack and speed increases by 30% at the same time)

Vitality Tear

Rotting Poison Mist (A blood red, potent poison that can break down and decompose most of the organisms in the world.)

Virus Parasitism (The Nine-headed Dragon does not possess the parasitizing abilities like the salamanders living underground; it hates everything filthy and ugly, but had another type of extremely horrid parasitizing ability, which allowed it to inject live bacterium into the enemy's body, continuously

absorb the enemy's life force, ultimately transforming it from the inside out into an aesthetically pleasing - the dragon minion)

Looking through all the information, Garen knew these messages were sorted and collected by the ability within his memories, which meant that he had known some of the facts partially; while the rest were derived by the ability itself.

In reality, the Nine-headed Dragon's strength is not completely known to its full extent. For instance, for its final ability, Virus Parasitism, the exact product of what was named dragon minion, even Garen didn't know, the ability also hadn't managed to detail it properly.

He looked at the end of Nine-Headed Dragon's Nine Lives abilities, and there was an additional blood red symbol which looks like an icon of the eight-headed dragon: it was a status icon.

‘Nine Lives’ Status: Eight Lives.’

Garen tried focusing on this ability.

In five whole seconds, the Nine Lives ability actually had some movement. The eight lives symbol slowly got blurry.

His potential points also slowly decreased.

Garen's heart fluttered, he knew it was working.

The potential points kept dropping for 20 whole points before it finally stopped. In the end, the eight lives symbol lit up again, but instead eight dragon heads, there were nine.

In his consciousness, the dragon head on the far left was slowly turning normal, becoming lively, like all the other heads again.

Garen exhaled in relaxation.



"Twenty points to recharge one life, this is really worth it. Unfortunately the heirloom was nowhere to be found, probably was taken away by people from the Geometry Service amidst the chaos. Who would've known that the Obscuro's attempt to steal the heirloom was faked, whereas the ambush of the Three Departments was bona fide. It looks like this will turn into a full-blown war."

After finishing his checks, Garen jumped off the branch. He glanced at his own torn attire; the full black body armor was entirely destroyed, as well as the magic mirror that Windling made. It didn't manage to reflect anything, and it had already been shattered into pieces due to the chains. The shards even got embedded into his own skin, as though they inserted into the muscles itself.

Garen's body shuddered, and painfully extracted the shards.

"Big Brother... Big Brother..." Unexpectedly, the shards of magic mirror actually transmitted faint voices.

"Windling?" Garen asked in an explorative manner.

"Big Brother you're alright! I knew it, how was it? Are you amazed by my noble techniques? It was still usable even though it shattered into pieces! This is not something any ordinary elite is capable of accomplishing!" Windling snickered.

"You're okay?" Garen filtered out the nonsense.

"I had to hide further away to be able to observe Big Brother's stalwart heroism." Windling said cheesily. Nine dragon heads!! Pshh, indeed, it's not your ordinary strong creature, even God Cloud's clone got beaten till it fled!"

Garen was speechless.

"I'm preparing to head back to Kovitan's Capital, are you coming?"

"I...." Windling had a rare instance of not joking around, instead he quieted down. "I wanna go check on my kid."

"Where to?"

"Maryland, a small country near Daniela. Thanks to you, I have gotten a tonne of great materials, killing people and looting is indeed the fastest way to grind."

"Then, take care" Garen replied coldly. For Windling, he couldn't say it was vengeance, but instead felt oddly like a friend. This fellow seemed like the type of happy-go-lucky person, walking around with a carefree look, but inside, he carried a lot of weight on his shoulders.

"So this is it, I'll meet you next time, who knows if I'll be looking for you." Windling snickered again.

"Sure, I'll probably be in Kovitan this year, you can come directly to me."

"Big brother..."

"What's up?"

".. Actually, you're a good guy..."

With that, Windling disappeared. Garen speechlessly put down the shard.

Chapter 400: Notice 2

"Blood Tower, if it were you, would you be able to escape safely from this harsh environment?"

Within a tall black tower somewhere in East Continent, in a room on one of the middle floors.

Two regal looking young men stood in front of a large sand basin, where one of them was manipulating the geography and settings of the sand within with his right hand.

The contents of the sand basin were black and white, and it appeared to represent the snowy peak on which Garen and Hellfire were under siege. Each little black dot represented an Obscuro Society member, while the two red dots represented Hellfire and Eight Headed Cloud Crow.

The other young man frowned. His face appeared ordinary, the kind that would go unnoticed if you passed him on the streets. At this time, he was watching the sand basin closely with a stoic expression.

Both of them did not look like they were past thirty years old, but the calmness in their eyes was something that one in their thirties could never accomplish.

"General God Cloud is one of the two strongest commanders, hence he was put in charge of the strongest military in East Continent. I wouldn't know how much power he had allocated to a single clone of his" Blood Tower thought for a moment before he answered carefully.

"How much power was allocated?" the man before him laughed. His skin was slightly tanned and he had bright blue eyes. His face was marked with a black tattoo of the number "4", and his soft white hair glowed in the light.

"I acknowledge that God Cloud is stronger than I am, but you don't have to rub it in right? In the 30 years I've guarded the Secret Services, I've clashed with him several times, and each time ended with me in a losing spot. He was one of the three strongest people within Obscuro Academy, after all."

His eyes fell on the sand basin once again.

"You may be unconvinced this time, but God Cloud has definitely unleashed his full power."

Blood Tower did not say anything, awaiting his rebuttal.

"His clone had even brought the demon blade Kunta, how much effort was put into this? Even so, he wasn't able to restrain the Nine-Headed Demon Dragon." The white haired man said softly.

"If I were against him, I could retreat safely too." Blood Tower replied seriously.

"Even after you've been affected by the mixed poison?"

"Er..." Blood Tower was unsure of how to reply to him.

"God Cloud's power have realistically reached the pinnacle of Form 5. This Garen being able to fight his clone on an equal level means he should at least be a normal Form 5. After all, the difference between each stage of Form 5 is extremely huge, like between the Leader and I." The white-haired youngster explained calmly.

"But Form 5 is already the top. It is then decided by the strength of the heirloom, as well as the comprehension and delivery of power. We are already in unison with the totem and have reached realms previously unimagined. This realm may be the pinnacle, but it is also a shackle. Each Form 5 is searching for a way to break through."

The young white-haired man turned around and walked towards the window, and he gazed towards the golden boundless desert outside.

"Such a pity... I guess God Cloud cracked his head researching on this topic. Even though I cannot beat him, someone else managed to."

A small smile quirked his lips for a moment.

"Heed my order!"

"Yes!" Blood Tower rushed forward.

"By the order of the chief minister, send an announcement to Secret Services: Once spotting the location of God Cloud's clone, he shall personally destroy his clone!"

Blood Tower's pupils constricted, but it immediately recovered.

"Additionally, summon my personal messenger, tell God Cloud." The white-haired man once had a warm expression again. "Have you lost your bloody mind?"

Blood Tower's face paled; he then knew the Deputy Minister's old habits occurred again.

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A few days later...

By the borders of Kovitan, at the upstreams of Red River --- Snowy Mountain Nebulus.

An otherwise quiet and serene snowy mountain had an unimaginably large black bird gliding around it.

This giant bird had some semblance to the Dragonhawk, with similar long, sharp beaks. Its wingspan extended a hundred metres, encompassing the area beneath it within an enormous shadow.

Under the shadow of the giant bird, a knight in black armor was riding a large black horse through the air, as though the sky was solid ground.

The black knight was circled by copious amounts of black smoke, which was diffusing in and out of the crevices of the armor, as though it was alive.

Jii!

The large horse exhaled two streams of white air strongly, before it stopped midair.

The black knight gazed into the distance towards the snowy mountain, raised his hand, and pointed at it.

Jii!!!

In an instant, the weather changed. Countless black clouds swirled from behind him as the sky immediately dimmed, while the land was blanketed by an enormous shadow.

Those were black dragonhawks!

Black dragonhawks that numbered more than thousands! Each had a wingspan of at least twenty metres, and they were cloaked within the black smoke, forming a large area of pitch black cloud. They flocked towards the snowy mountain.

"That... That is the Snowy Mountain branch of Obscuro Society! Blackfield Dragonhawk King.... Has he lost his mind?!"

"Sir?" A few white-clothed subordinates ran over, gasping for air as they questioned the white-robed man. They did not know what was happening, and they could only look at their leader in confusion.

"That is the place where a clone of God Cloud was stationed.." The white-robed man recalled, he looked at the situation at the sky with equal amounts of shock and confusion. "Is Blackfield trying to wage an all-out war with Obscuro?"

In the sky, the black knight upon his giant horse galloped forth. The heavy clip-clop of the horse could be heard from the patrol tower, despite being several hundred kilometres away.

The black knight accelerated, to the point where he appeared to become a streak of black lightning, heading straight for the snowy mountain's peak.

On the peak of the snowy mountain, a single man bearing chains on both his shoulders slowly appeared. Both men faced each other.

"Dragonhawk King! Are you courting death?!"

The black knight pulled out the giant sword sheathed behind him with a clank. The black smoke surrounding him was concentrated on the black sword.

"In this world, there are things that I must do." His voice echoed from within the helmet.

Gachak!!

A lightning strike rent the sky, illuminating the two men's imposing figures.

A few hours later.....

Bam!

In a loud strike, the Nebulus Mountain was split into two. The seemingly endless snow tumbled down as an avalanche, morphing into a white tide that swept away everything in its path, levelling the forest.

The black knight was adorned with a full suit of rent armor as he slowly flew off. Countless black dragonhawks twirled in the sky, announcing the victor of the battle.

"Blackfield announcing to the world: Garen, just because you didn't mention some things doesn't mean that they'll be forgotten."

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After the Nine-headed Demon Dragon's earthshaking incident, the royal Three Departments' Geometry Service was furious, sending out personnel to negotiate for Hellfire's release and the surrender of the heirloom.

But this wasn't the big news.

The shocking one involved the Secret Services.

On the third day of the announcement concerning God Cloud, the chief minister of the Secret Service announced that he would personally create a clone to purge any sighting of God Cloud and his location.

The announcement and God Cloud's content clashed, with neither of them giving in!

On hindsight, everything made sense; the Nine-Headed Demon Dragon was on a mission on behalf of Secret Services, and even though it wasn't successful, Obscuro actually took the Three Departments lightly, publicly sending out the announcement to get his own clone to kill Garen. This made the elites within the Secret Services extremely aggravated.

When had it ever been others' turn to hunt one of their own?!

Since the ancient times, it has always been them hunting down people. Now they actually dared to turn around and attack them?

In a series of forces' influence, the incident involved both the Three Departments' honor and the elites' sense of belonging. The chief minister then announced to the world to launch attacks targeted at God Cloud.

The message was clear: You broke the rules first, and if you make a move, we will not hesitate to erase you!

Following that, another huge incident occurred.

Possibly in response to God Cloud's announcement, the King of Blackfield, Blackfield Dragonhawk King Goth actually made a public appearance at one of the important Obscuro branches, fought hard with God Cloud's clone, and at the price of a serious injury, he successfully destroyed a strong branch that had a God Cloud clone stationed there. The incident was earth shaking too, as at the same time he announced a similar content involving the Nine-Headed Demon Dragon Garen.

Two incidents, which were supposed to revolve around the Ultimate Heirloom had changed into a bloodbath.

By the time he received the news, he was already on the way to the capital.



He heard about this from the Secret Service member who escorted him, who also happen to be from the Crimson Team.

\*\*\*\*\*

As Garen sat on the back of a large pale grey rhino-like creature, he carefully studied the latest intel.

These white rhinos that he sat on were the latest creatures bred by the kingdom, which had extreme stamina, being able to last over a fortnight with just one meal, and its speed was pretty decent.

The rhino was only second to the Yellow-eyed Crow, which were hailed as one of the best transportations.

For the aforementioned crow, although it wasn't considered large by any measure, its wingspan was too eye-catching. With the current train of events, travelling on the crow would make him an easy target for elites, and reinforcements would not be much help either. It was better to move on land where it was covert and safe.

On the right side of Garen's rhino was Kid's rhino. This fellow was humming an unknown song, and hadn't changed much from before.

By reasons unknown to him, Kid always had an odd aura about him which made people pay less attention to him, but they still feel felt his slight eccentricity when they paid closer attention.

After Crimson Team rendezvoused with Garen, everyone except Kid treated Garen with a mixture of fear and respect. Only Kid had the usual attitude as before.

Garen faintly understood some eccentric traits of Kid and he didn't mind it, what he was most concerned about was the intel brought by Crimson Team.

As he quietly rolled up the intel sheet, he used some force and kneaded the paper, disintegrating it to be carried away by the wind.

"Goth you brat... you're nothing like before.... And Chief Minister, with these two incidents, it may seem dangerous, but it's already overwhelmingly safe."

Thinking back to the scenarios that happened in Iron Tank City, and the quartet he'd been in back then, its members had gone missing, been scattered, and had been killed in combat.

But the biggest influencing factor was not these, but the fact that Blackfield attacked Obscuro, which meant that the entire Blackfield had declared war against Obscuro.

There had already been ongoing subjugation missions against Obscuro led by Blackfield. Both sides had their respective wins and losses, though back then it had not escalated to this point. Blackfield Dragonhawk and God Cloud both had some restraint.

Unexpectedly, for Garen's sake, he'd revealed all his cards.