

Once Human 251

Chapter 251

Arthur was standing in front of the walls he created last time before he departed from Astria . They were still standing tall with poisonous vines clustered on them, the vines added another layer of defense to these tall walls .

He gazed at the shutdown gate and the creature snoring near it, with a red skin and a longhorn erecting from its forehead and some kind of a large metal armor wrapping around its chest and abdomen .

It was none other than the minotaur he captured a long time ago and assigned it as a guard for his sect . The dungeon's boss became quite strong, reaching the peak of the Spirit Realm .

Normally, it's impossible for dungeon bosses to grow by themselves, especially in such a short amount of time, so Arthur guessed that Jakob or Anastassia helped the minotaur .

Using his newly acquired eyes, he could see dense green energy inside the minotaur, it was accumulated Qi that it absorbed from the Earth, it helped it shatter its mortality shackles and enter the Spirit Realm .

With such a strong guard protecting the gate, Arthur was delighted as no one would be foolish enough to attack them head-on, in fact, the enemies have more chances breaking through the gate than climbing the walls or destroying them .

To create these walls, it heavily exhausted him and cost a large amount of Mental Power, he wanted to strengthen even further but gave up on that idea as it wasn't the time for it . He'll do so after overcoming the catastrophe .

Dragon cries were heard from afar, they seemed to be approaching this area . They were connected to Arthur so once he was close, they immediately sensed him .

"Titan blood, it's a shame that it's too thin... really unfortunate . "

Swain shook his head as he looked at the red minotaur .

"Titan blood?"

"Yes, this minotaur has Titan blood, which is why his skin is red, but apart from the color change of his skin, the blood has no effects as it's simply too thin to be able to transform its host . "

Arthur looked at the minotaur which woke up due to the dragon cries, it recognized Arthur and scratched its head, embarrassed and afraid that the big boss caught it sleeping while it was supposed to be guarding the gates .

"Can you do something about it?"

Swain shot a red beam at the minotaur, which was too slow to dodge it or even react, it backed away and touched the place where beam touched him but it felt no pain or anything strange which led it to look dumbly at the red-haired youth .

"I can stimulate it, it'll take a bit of time though . Do I have your permission to proceed?"

"As long as it doesn't die, you can die whatever you want . "

Swain let out a sadistic chuckle as he added:

"That'll depend on its will to live . I also need a drop of your blood . "

Arthur didn't even ask why his servant needed his blood, he handed the youth a small bottle which contains a drop of his blood . He guessed that his blood will help the minotaur since he too, has titan bloodline but it is not too strong, not to the point of giving him the real strength of a titan .

Zodiak described Titans as ancient beings that went extinct a very long time ago . From his notes, Arthur had read that the Titan Race was too strong compared to the other races, even the dragons paled in comparison, they were too powerful so they were dreaded by all .

They weren't a domineering race, but the existing Races in the past decided to unite and kill them as they feared they'll be dominated by the latter sometime in the future .

Their union was successful and their assault almost erased the existence of the Titans except for a few clever ones which hid in very secretive places .

The Titans weren't aggressive but they were very prideful and they had the power to back it off, they had monstrous strength, a strength that could pulverize stars, crush planets and obliterate worlds . It's no wonder that they were called World destroyers .

Many considered the end of the Void Era as the beginning of time, However, Zodiak thought otherwise . He was sure that the Void Era, which lasted a very long time and devoured everything, was only a small fraction of the history .

Zodiak also talked about the 4th Universe, he thought it had a connection with the Void Era, many try to deny the existence of this Universe but the old man was certain that the Universe existed .

Quote by quote, the old man said 'I've met him a few times, he's disgustingly powerful... a little bit insane, illogical but mysterious . I cannot fathom him, the only person I could never see through, I sense no emotions from him, no reactions to provocative words, no anger nor sorrow, no hidden rage nor vengeful feelings . I do not fear him... in fact, I pity him... with no home and no friends, forever roaming the nothingness and searching for something that exists no more...'

Unfortunately, Zodiak didn't mention the person's name, so Arthur had no idea who the old man was talking about, he wanted to meet this person, the survivor of true Hell .

The red-haired youth brought the pitiful minotaur, which was wary of Swain, away from this place, he grabbed the beast and flew far off, heading North .

Arthur trusted Swain and knew that he'll get the job done, even if the minotaur doesn't acquire the powers of the titans, he'll power up a lot .

At last, when Swain left, two large bone dragons descended from above, happy to reunite with their masters . One of them is the first bone dragon that Arthur summoned, it is the most intelligent out of the four bone dragons and is oddly the strongest .

Once they were close enough to their master, they became affected by his new stats and Realm, so they automatically powered up, although not in an absurd way .

The main bone dragon, which was at the Heavenly Realm, jumped to the late stages of that Realm . As for the other dragon, it broke through to the Heavenly Realm .

Arthur caressed the dragons, which dropped their heads obediently, showing their sincerity to him . Since a free ride came to him, Arthur decided to use it, he hopped on top of the dragon, which flew toward the headquarters of the MoonStar sect, where the leaders are .

In a white room with no decoration whatsoever, there sat a man on a white chair, a kneeling woman knelt before the man, she had a pale face and was slightly trembling, clearly afraid of the individual in front of her .

"Report what you found . "

"Y-yes... the staff was felt some time ago, in the Green-Leaf World . The signal was much stronger than a few years ago . "

With a hand on his chin and in a somewhat happy mood, the man nodded his head and said

"Ohh? And where exactly was it sensed?"

"In the wasteland... but"

The woman was afraid that she'll anger him, so she hesitated and didn't know whether to spit everything or not, she knew that once he's displeased or angry, she'll be the one who's punished .

Nonetheless, she was forced to spit everything once she saw him frown as it was definitely not a good sign .

"It was sensed exactly inside the castle of the Kang Family . "

The man furrowed his brows, clearly unhappy to hear this, however, he didn't lash out at her and merely waved his hands dismissively .

"So it's the Kangs... tsk! You've done a good job, you can go back for now . Once the catastrophe ends and those beasts die, you will go to the Green-Leaf World and properly investigate how the Kang Family got their hands on it... without raising any suspicions, do you understand?"

The woman repeatedly nodded her head then left after respectfully bowing to the seating man . If Arthur saw that woman, he'll recognize her with only a glance because it was none other than the woman who almost killed him when he was at the Ma Clan . If not for Zodiac's help, he would have died miserably without being able to resist as she was too strong, at that time .

Chapter 252

"Look who's finally here . "

With an axe and Ace, the sniper he got from Arthur, Jakob looked at the incoming bone dragons with a smirk on his face . His appearance changed drastically, not only was his body full of scars, he became significantly taller and more muscular, what's more, he was missing an arm .

The tall warrior greeted Arthur with a bear hug, not minding the different status between them, after all, Arthur and Lucy were the big bosses .

Anastassia also appeared with Mary and Sonia following right after her . The little sister was more energetic than before, she was cured and was healthier than ever .

"Welcome back . "

Unlike Jakob, Anastassia and the others didn't hug Arthur, but they still shook hands . Thanks to the appraisal, Arthur could see that the red-haired Anastassia surprisingly reached the Immortal Realm, she relied purely on Qi and a bit of Nether Energy that's existing on Astria .

Sonia and Mary were still at the Mortal Realm with Mary having a higher Lv, as for Jakob, his current strength startled Arthur a bit .

The weak youth from before transformed into a grown man who reached the Heavenly Realm . This was a strange occurrence as not everyone could cultivate and expect good results, especially when he does not have a good aptitude or decent talent .

However, it seems Jakob paid quite the price for his current strength, he had many scars and was missing a whole arm . Not many enemies could cause a Heavenly Realm to be this injured, at least not on Astria .

As Jakob started rambling about Ace's efficiency and his absurd power, a slender figure appeared from within the tower . The person who joined them was none other than Lissandra, who no longer had the grim look or the dazed yet slightly insane expression, she was pretty calm and composed .

The two stared at each other for some time, making the joyous atmosphere quite awkward, fortunately, the silence was soon broken when Lissandra talked

"I have tried to warn you yet you didn't want to listen... it's too late now . "

"Let's talk inside . "

Arthur didn't blame her or anything of the sort, he was the one who refused to listen to her as he suspected that she would spit lies to lead him to a dead end and waste his time . Who would have imagined Lissandra would've been able to predict the happening of the catastrophe, he would never have linked these two together . It's his over-cautiousness that resulted in this, but even if he knew it at that time, nothing would change, he would still make the same decision .

He just would have won some time to prepare more thoroughly, nothing more . Arthur teleported himself along with the others to the top of the tower, where the important meetings is usually held .

Another person was added to the party, with silver-hair and a cold face, it was none other than the ex-head maid of the imperial castle of the Demon Race, Taliya .

She decided to stay with Anastassia and the rest as she vowed to follow Arthur if he were to return her niece safe and sound to the Demon Lord .

"Now that we're gathered here, I'm all ears, you can tell me the important stuff . "

"Y-you . . You're just going to ignore me and pretend nothing happened?"

Taliya couldn't herself and lashed out at him angrily .

Arthur frowned and retorted

"What the hell are you talking about?"

"You did your part of the deal so I should do mine, how could you send me here after you've rescued Alina?! I should have stayed there and followed you, as per our agreement . "

"This is a bunch of nonsense, I didn't come back to argue with you over such a ridiculous reason, you're weak and I don't need you, if you were with me then I would have died already, end of discussion, I don't want to hear a single word about this . "

With a cold glare from Arthur, who was too preoccupied with the incoming catastrophe and didn't want to bother with Taliya and talk over such a pointless topic . The maid's face flushed with red, she didn't talk back to him but ended up storming out of the room, clearly enraged .

"You should be nicer to her, she tried her best here and helped us a lot . "

Jackob took Taliya's side as he tried to calm Arthur down and sort things out, but it wasn't that effective as Arthur shifted his stare him, making him shut his mouth and not dare to talk again . Although Arthur is usually easy-going, he's sometimes overbearing and dreadful, or so thought the startled Jackob .

"It seems your cockiness grew with your strength, I see... I've got special training for you later... I'm sure you'll enjoy it . "

While awkwardly scratching the back of his head and a forceful smile, Jackob replied

"B-boss... please d-don't, I- . . I,I'm already responsible for a lot of things . I really d-don't have any spare t-time . "

Jackob tried to look pitiful but that only added oil to the fire thanks to Anastassia, who snorted and retorted

"Hmpf! Lies... he's showing off to the female disciples all day long and lazing around in some corner, doing nothing but sleeping . "

"How could you say that! I, I've only got eyes for you... and I spend all my day cultivating! How else would I have broken through the Heavenly Realm... hehehehe"

"Hmpf!"

With her arms crossed and a pouting face, Anastassia turned her head away from Jackob, who was staring at her with bright eyes .

Arthur noticed the change some time ago and knew that their relationship was special, however, he didn't comment . They were beings with real emotions and they can do whatever they want, in fact, he's secretly rooting for Jakob as Anastassia is certainly isn't an easy target, which explains why Jakob spends all his time to cultivate, trying to become stronger to show off to her .

"Apart from the catastrophe, is there anything I need to know?"

Anastassia nodded her head and said in a serious tone

"Yes, in fact, it's an urgent matter . There is new invaders, they were first sighted on the Eastern continent . "

"Invaders? Are they humans? Or do they resemble the ones who abducted the Demon Princess?"

Arthur didn't know how, but there are multiple factions who find their way to the Astria . Some just come here to sightsee or seek adventures but others harbor malice intentions .

"These ones are more dangerous, they have a horrifying look, similar to the monster you were fighting near the Emperor's palace . "

'Bucama?'

Arthur immediately remembered the hellish word he visited last time, where humans were treated as pigs, if not worse . Torturing them or even hanging them on pillars to resemble living statues, it was really a terrifying and disgusting scene that he wished for no one to see . Fortunately, the world was destroyed and its king died but he still felt uncomfortable every time he remembers what happened there and what he had seen .

"Any idea how they came? What about their leader, their number or their base?"

Anastassia shook her head and replied

"We weren't able to find accurate information . Their numbers isn't great, about three hundred or so but each and every one of them is extremely powerful, they also have special means to disguise themselves, so not many people can see through their deception . "

"Were they only spotted on the Itas continent?"

"Yes, they are keeping a low-profile and only dealing with black market dealers to secure crystals . I've sent a group once but the outcome was... unfavorable . "

As she finished her sentence, she glanced at Jakob with a guilty look .

"Hahaha those were pure evil but I managed to kill three of them before I escaped but the team that was with me all perished . "

Jakob forced a laugh as if it was nothing but it was clear that it wasn't a simple fight, neither was it easy .

"At least you came back in one piece . Next time, don't try to investigate the enemies when you're not sure about their exact power, it'll only end badly, in your case... I think you've understood that the hard way . "

Arthur's words weren't directed to Jakob but to Anastassia, who was keeping her silence while nodding her head, clearly regretting her past decisions .

"Anyways, the enemy on the East can wait, I have a lot of preparations and the Divine Beasts are much more threatening than an evil cult . "

"Oh yeah, what are we going to do about the catastrophe?"

Jakob was also anxious about the incoming doom, he wasn't powerful enough to defend against them, so was Anastassia, so they put the meeting about this topic on hold until Arthur came for they were certain he will since it's such an important matter .

"The problem is that we don't know where they'll strike, all the leading factions all over Astria are anxious, some even started evacuating to other worlds . "(Anatassia)

"They'll only attack the Human Continent, I'm sure of that . "

"The Human Continent? What about the rest? How did you know they'll only at that the central one?"

Jakob was confused, Arthur declared that with certainty but he didn't fully believe it since there are no records about techniques that allow people to predict where these monsters will attack .

"You don't need to know how I did it, you need to focus on evacuating the inhabitants from that area, just disperse them all over Astria, even to the North since the Demon Lord agreed to accommodate them . "

"The demons? They'll surely go back on their words and slaughter all of them! Hmpf!"

Anastassia wasn't pleased since she hates Demons, she didn't like the idea of cooperating with them, especially with their leader . Although she has a decent relationship with Taliya, it didn't mean she has a good opinion about the maid's whole race, after all, the war between the two races has been ongoing for a long time until it was stopped some time ago, thanks to none other than Arthur .

Actually, with her current power and the army of the sect, finishing the demons isn't a big deal . The four bone dragons along with the minotaur will be enough to create havoc inside the imperial city, killing the Demon Lord isn't hard too, nonetheless, she restrained herself and continued taking care of the Arthur and Lucy's sect .

There are an enormous amount of disciples, they are even separated in factions and there are several competitions about them but it isn't too major, she often lets the appointed elders of the sect to take care of it and if it gets too out of hand, Jakob will just go as he is very popular amongst the populace .

"Stop dawdling over small things, we can't bring every inhabitant of the central continent to our sect, the number is just too big, and they can't go to the East because of that evil cult, so they only have two choices . Moreover, there are many vast lands in the North that are inhabited, it's a perfect place for these refugees . "

"Then, Boss, are we fighting against the Divine Beasts?"

"We? There is no we, you do your job and leave them to me, I'll deal with these invaders . "

Jakob didn't insist for he knew his strength wasn't enough to help Arthur, as for Anastassia, she also maintained her silence but she stared at him with a strange look .

The meeting didn't last for long, after talking for a little while, all of them, except Arthur and Lissandra, left . The slender woman was staring at Arthur with a peculiar gaze

"You're not their match, you know . "

"We would never know until we try, would we?"

With her arms crossed and a serious look, not afraid of Arthur anymore, she retorted

"It's not a matter of trying, it's a fact . To defeat the four Divine Beasts isn't as simple as defeating strong entities, it's much more difficult and complicated . The only reason the high Realms easily manage to kill the beasts is because they have too many powerful individuals, they rely on the sheer quantity of experts they have . "

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"So, what are you suggesting?"

"Simple, get away from Astria . You can go to the Underworld, it's much safer and the threat of the Divine Beast isn't big, we have the king of the Abyss, after all . "

"Fleeing is not an option for me, that's not how I do things . If you have any information about the Divine Beasts then I'm all ears, if not then I'm leaving . "

"I spent countless years researching the Divine Beasts, their appearance, strength and son on . I'm almost ten thousand years old and on the day of my birth, the first catastrophe occurred, many family members died so I wanted to get revenge, which is part of the reason I wanted to acquire more parts of the Dark Magic, the power you wield .

I don't know where it came from or who created it, but Dark Magic is more powerful than you could ever manage . It isn't something that could be used by any person, in fact, it chooses its host and not the other way around, much like those special Soul Weapons . More than two hundred years ago, I've found a secret shelter in the Underworld, it's through it that I've come to know about Dark Magic and how to acquire it . I have read ancient notes that indicated the presence of this magic in ancient wars, it even appeared during the war against the titans, the problem is, it is difficult to wield and almost impossible to master . Many of my subordinates spent dozens of years yet were only able to conjure simple weapons that would crumble in a short time, I was the only one that managed to use it normally, more or less .

So I've concluded that it cannot be passed down to others, however, I continued my experiments as I believed that it needed the right host, someone with perfect compatibility with it . "

Although the topic was interesting since it was about his Dark Magic, Arthur didn't want to hear this from her so he interrupted and said

"I need details about the beasts, not my Dark Magic . "

Lissandra let out a long sigh and continued

"Use Dark Magic, that's the only way you can defeat the Divine Beasts . No matter your other trump cards, or powerful sword techniques, those won't even scratch them, much less kill them . Relying on physical attacks is only a waste of time and effort, it'll lead to nothing but defeat . The defense of the Black Turtle is impenetrable, the speed of the White Tiger is unprecedented, the flames of the Vermillion Bird are unstoppable and the soul attacks of the Azure Dragon are frightening, if you exclude its dragon breath, that is . Your Dark Magic becomes stronger the angrier you are, basically, you need to be emotionally unstable . Sure, it is strong if you're calm but it's several times stronger if you're enraged, angry, etc..."

"And why is it that only Dark Magic will hurt them?"

"Dark Magic has a bit of Darkness Attribute in it so it counters the bird's flame if it is used properly, it also has strong penetrative strength, so it is also doable to hurt the turtle shell if it's hit at the right time and place . The problem is the tiger and the dragon, they are both fast and versatile . "

"What you said isn't that convincing but I'll take that in mind . Although I still haven't forgiven you, your help is much appreciated . "

Arthur left right after, leaving Lissandra alone, the woman clutched a pendant that was hanging on her neck and closed her eyes as if she was praying...

Chapter 254

On the roof of the tower that symbolized the headquarters of the MoonStar sect, Arthur stood there, gazing at the large building in his view, newly built pagodas, disciples that are sparring with each other, elders lecturing the juniors and so on... It was a peaceful atmosphere one where most of these people, who were ignorant about what's happening or what's about to come, are able to enjoy their lives without feeling anxious, worried .

To say injustice doesn't exist in his sect would be a lie, but at least it's not as extreme as the on the outside, where the strong take everything from the weak, uses their lives like disposable toys .

"It's amazing to see how fast the sect prospered, don't you think?"

As he was lost in thoughts, a feminine voice was heard from behind him . Arthur glanced at the newly arrived figure who was none other than the temporary sect master, Anastassia .

"I must say, you did a great job . None would have been to perform better than you did . "

Anastassia joined him on the roof, standing beside him and gazing at the sect territory .

"It wasn't only me, many people contributed . Although this position is appealing, I'm more eager to see you come back with Lucy and take the reigns, after all, it is quite tiring for most of the times . "

"Come back, huh..."

Anastassia turned her head to look at his dazing expression, she frowned and said

"Hmpf! The person I know wouldn't be so pessimistic and lose all hopes before even fighting . I remember when I first met you, you were so arrogant, thinking you're a big deal... and indeed, you had the strength to back it up but that attitude of yours irritated me a lot . I wonder, where did that person go?"

Arthur stared back at her, he opened his mouth to talk but hesitated for a few seconds before speaking:

"It's just that... lots of things happened, I met and fought many people, strong ones beyond comprehension yet I managed to defeat them and remain alive . This time, however, I'm not feeling that usual confidence, that certainty of winning or coming back alive . "

"You have died once, so why fear death this time?"

Arthur was momentarily startled, with his eyes wide open he stared at the woman in front of him, the surprise only lasted for a short time before he returned to his usual calmness .

"So you know..."

"Un! Lucy told me . She didn't warn me not to tell you, nonetheless, I refrained from doing so anyway . "

Arthur didn't care much if Anastassia knew what happened to him, he already considered her a close friend, moreover, he trusted Lucy and if she wanted to tell Anastassia, he wouldn't have stopped her from doing so .

"I do not fear death, I fear leaving a widow and a child without a father when I could have avoided such outcome . "

Anastassia patted him on his back and added:

"Just like every time, I trust that you'll come back . I can see it, this isn't your end, the story of Arthur and Lucy cannot end here, how can it? When you still haven't met her yet, am I right?"

Arthur let out a long sigh then took out the marriage ring he got from Lucy . He caressed the ring for some time before he passed it to Anastassia, who was confused by his actions .

"Since you're so sure I'll come back then I want you to keep this for me... just in case . "

She carefully held the ring and nodded back to him, not questioning his actions . Arthur left without giving any unnecessary goodbyes or pointless words .

Only Anastassia was left standing on the roof of the tower, she stared at the sky with her hand tightly clutching the ring

'Make sure to come back, we'll all be waiting!'

Arthur left for the Human Continent, less than two months remained before the Divine Beasts' arrival and he needs to be in the perfect condition .

There is room for improvement, he could try to hone his skills management and if he's lucky, he may be able to break through to the God Realm, officially becoming a Parasite God .

Furthermore, he still had two additional skill points which can be invested in any skill of his choice, techniques are also an option . The best choice was to upgrade an already maxed skill, like his Sword Mastery, the ancient flames, Dark Magic .

He could also try upgrading one of his enigma abilities, but they weren't absurdly powerful so maybe the results will not be what he's hoping for .

Arthur chose a remote cave in a mountain range that spanned from the West of the continent all the way to the South . He found a large cave so he cut used some miscellaneous skills to make it more habitable and much decent looking .

He entered the ARK and entered the Recovery Mode, where he can test any of his skills while recovering the lost Energy or Mana faster than outside .

He waved his hands and unleashed a powerful [Heavenly Arrow] made of pure Dark Magic, the arrow flew for some distance and crashed into the white ground, causing white rubbles and boulders to fly in all directions .

The damage that has been done disappeared in a split second as it was instantaneously repaired by whatever was controlling this space .

Arthur repeated this a few time while changing the arrow was conjured from . The one which is the deadliest is without a doubt was the Void Arrow, however, the fastest arrow was the one made by Natural Lightning . The one made from Dark Magic is weaker the weakest but like the Void Arrow, if it hits the target, then it'll kill him without a doubt .

Maybe not immediately, but the Dark Magic will invade the target's body and finish him slowly, consuming his Dantian and eating away his life .

As for a Heavenly Arrow made from ancient flames, it was doable but it takes much more times, it caused a mind-numbing explosion that shattered a large part of the area it hit, it also let remains of dark red flames that burned the ground and scorched everything in its way .

The other choice Arthur had was to upgrade the skill named [Breath of the Dead], it is the mysterious grey fog that contained a dense amount of Death Energy . It did little to nothing physical damage but it ate away the target's vitality and lifespan, this skill hurt Rozak, the Sovereign, badly and pushed him to become much more serious, unfortunately, by that time, Arthur had started preparing Rizaki, which more or less concluded the fight .

Speaking of which, the last option was [Rizaki] and [Thousand Waves], the latter is rather unlikely to be upgraded because it required a blade, and as it is right now, Arthur cannot fully unleash its potential, much less if it's upgraded .

There is even a chance that he won't be able to use it after it's upgraded as the cost would too high .

Rizaki is also the same, the problem was that it could harm the user, Arthur had been lucky that he used Dark Magic last time, if he used Ancient flames then he would have died .

The actual explosion is what will kill him, the sea of flames that'll flow won't hurt him since he has fire immunity .

He always uses Rizaki with an attribute that he has total immunity against else it'll most likely kill him, even if he doesn't die, he'll be at death's door, in a crippled state .

Arthur stared at the endless space, pondering what he should do . After an unknown amount of time passed, he retrieved a luxurious wooden box decorated with beautiful red runes . He took out the object that was laying outside and took a deep breath, ready to test out its potential...

Chapter 255

Since Arthur went to the Human continent, fifty days have passed . For the inhabitant of this doomed continent, this period of time passed in the blink of an eye .

Everywhere one looked, it was chaos . Fleeing families and shouting kids, not wanting to leave their villages and cities .

Arthur ordered the Holy Church to move every living being out of this continent, he didn't tell them to force these people but even without force, it is still doable .

The new Pope did her job properly as after forty days, the continent was practically a ghost land . The grand cities were empty, you could only hear the howling wind or the fighting beasts, which weren't evacuated, obviously .

There is bound to be special cases where certain people didn't want to leave, but even those people changed their minds when they found themselves in their area . Stubborn nobles would have no one or nothing to rule if the town is empty, their wealth is meaningless and knowing their attitudes, they would most likely choose to save their skin rather than keeping all of their wealth and lands .

The majority of Humans were moved to the Northern Lands of the Demon Continent as it has many deserted lands . The Demons cannot reproduce easily so their number is largely inferior to the Humans, so even though they ruled a whole continent, they didn't have enough manpower to spread across all the land .

The Holy Church also allocated a new place for their Headquarters . Since they are regarded negatively by all Demons, they didn't go to the Northern Continent but chose to build their new HQ on the Wasteland situated on the West .

They chose a quite place in the far South of the Western Continent and started building right away . There was a small group of islands at the South which was given to them by Anastassia . Initially, the Pope pleaded Anastassia so she agrees to give them this archipelago, after all, the MoonStar sect is basically the ruling power in this continent, moreover, the Pope knew that Arthur is behind this sect and knowing his temper, she doesn't dare act arrogantly or do things without consulting him .

Heck! The Holy Church no longer hunts demons, if any soldier is caught doing anything bad to a Demon, he'll be immediately executed by a superior, no matter the consequences, this was a direct order from the Pope, who was the ex-archbishop .

...

To the far East of Astria, just beside the gigantic World Tree, stood Arthur with Makaze sheathed on his waist and a serene aura surrounding him . He seemed to be a time bomb, calm right now but ready to burst at any moment .

For the last fifty days, he stabilized his Realm, gaining a bit more stats, he also visited Robin and received a storage ring full of corpses . Unfortunately, the beasts of Astria aren't that powerful, so the amount of stats he gained when he possessed them is meager compared to the overall numbers .

"At last, you've come..."

Arthur heard the weird sounding voice belonging to the World Tree . He also a small blob of light float toward him, he wasn't cautious against it since he knew what it was so he didn't resist or retaliate when it entered his body .

"Knowing you... you wouldn't waste time by coming here just to greet me . I have already given you my blessing, speak, what is it that you want?"

Arthur shrugged his shoulders and replied

"I've heard that an evil cult is residing in your territory . It just happens that I've also heard they are still hiding here... they are planning something and there's no one to stop them which honestly surprises me! I thought you didn't like foreign visitors yet you're so hospitable to these monsters . "

"Hmpf! Those insects sure are annoying but even as a World Tree, there exists rules that limit my actions . If I could stop any invader then no one would know of Astria's existence . Rules can bent but only in special cases . "

Arthur frowned and retorted

"Special cases? I think this is more than a special case . They are pure evil and not just simple tourists . "

"No, they are not threatening... at least not the point of bringing Astria's destruction . You should focus more on those Divine Beasts, I noticed that you didn't leave with your friends so I presume you're going to fight them?"

Arthur snorted and added:

"What else is there to do besides fighting them?"

The World Tree remained silent for sometime before speaking again

"As a World Tree, my existence is more important than yours . Although you made an oath to protect me from invaders, that mainly included the angels . The logical choice is to leave, the Divine Beasts are strong and they'll destroy most of Astria but not all of it . They cannot obliterate the whole world as long as I'm rooted here . "

"Only the Itas continent will remain... and not even all of it, do you think that's enough to house all the people on Astria?"

"I only said it's the logical choice, not the right one . I know how powerful you could be if you go all out and I admire your courage to be willing to fight them alone but that's just an unnecessary struggle . "

Arthur didn't reply to the World Tree, he sighed as he stared at the thick trunk of the World Tree then he used his Spatial Magic to teleport away .

He didn't spend the whole fifty days hiding in a cave, he built several teleportation arrays in all four continent so that traveling between them will take much less time .

He teleported next to the array and used it immediately, sending himself to the Western Continent as he needed to do a last trip there before the big fight .

The teleportation array he built was situated in an underground cave several hundred miles away from the MoonStar Sect, he already informed Anastassia about it so she could contact the demons and the church easily .

As he appeared in the dark cave, Arthur teleported in front of the main gates of his sect only to see a large creature standing there .

With more double its original height, a red skin with several black tattoos and a ferocious look, it stood proudly in front of the gigantic gates, doing its duty properly unlike last time .

This was none other than the red minotaur which Swain brought with him some time ago to who knows where . The aura emanating from the beast was overwhelming, with its current size, it matched its job as a guard for the gates . The gates Arthur built were much taller and larger than the minotaur, but that didn't stop the monsters from being suitable for the job .

The minotaur even had hair that grew out of nowhere, its eyes were no longer dark but became violet and there was a new horn erecting from the back of his head . It definitely looked threatening, it could easily scare someone at the Deity Realm .

'Whatever that brat did, it sure worked marvelously'

Arthur nodded his head as he inspected the red minotaur, who became aware of his presence and did a small bow, indicating his respect and also greeting his master at the same time .

This transformation made it much more sentient, it couldn't talk but it fully understands human speeches, which will help the disciples and anyone residing inside the sect to communicate with it in case something happens .

Grizzly, the Red Minotaur(Race: Minotaur): Intermediate Stage Deity Realm

Age: 42

Title: Titan descendant

Bloodline: Titan (0 . 7% awakened)

"Not bad, not bad! A powerful beast needs a strong weapon, don't you think?"

Arthur didn't wait for the minotaur to react before he waved his hand and threw a large object at the frightened minotaur, which thought Arthur was going to test him . It knew how powerful Arthur was and just the idea of battling against him freaked the hell out of this poor beast, which was feeling proud the last several days only to return to its usual attitude when it met its master .

The minotaur subconsciously raised its hand and caught the large and heavy object . Made from reinforced black steel and having its sharp side crafted from Uranium, this was one of the masterpieces that existed on Astria .

It used to be wielded by a powerful dungeon boss a long time ago, this artifact disappeared after the boss and it was only found accidentally by Arthur some time ago .

He planned to give it to Jakob, as he is also an axe user but since the general already had Ace and a good weapon, he decided to give it to this gate guardian .

This axe didn't even reach the Spirit Rank but Arthur knew it could be upgraded and if the user is strong, it could probably boost itself by relying on its master, so as long as the minotaur doesn't slack off, it'll grow up to become a monstrous artifact .

Chapter 256

After Arthur gave the weapon to the minotaur, he made sure to fully strengthen the already existing walls by adding to their height and creating much more poisonous vines . Even someone such as Anastassia will find it hard to destroy these walls, much less climb over them . Sure, a Spirit Realm could try to fly over them but the vines won't stay idle, neither will the roaming dragons or the guarding minotaur .

His Mental Power was depleted so left his sect's area and teleported away from the wasteland, appearing in the cave he created right at the center of the Human Continent . There was a teleportation array that he created a while and once he appeared there, he immediately destroyed to not cause further complication .

Although it's not certain, his friends such as Anastassia knew the existence of this secret teleportation array that led to his cave and they may come here to try to help him, although it's foolish, many people do stupid things in desperate times .

Arthur went to a small room to rest only to see a short figure standing there . Upon a closer look, it was none other than his servant, Swain .

The red-haired youth stared back at his master and said

"Thou are my master, I cannot abandon my duties and watch you die, we're bound by fate and only death shall separate us . "

Arthur thought that this was what a lover should do, not a servant . Nonetheless, he let out a helpless sigh and raised his hand, drawing what seemed to be a red mantra that emanated an ominous aura .

As he saw his master do this, the youth couldn't believe his eyes, before he could react or stop Arthur, the red mantra shone with bright red light then flew straight at his chest, pushing him back a few steps .

The youth didn't bother checking what the mantra was for he knew its meaning, he only displayed a look of total disbelief .

"You..."

"You've been with me for quite some time so you know my priorities well . Although given enough time, Anastassia could also find a way to travel to Earth and find Lucy, but I feel more assured if you do it . You're stronger and wiser, moreover, you'd do so sooner or later . However, the others may never achieve that which is why I refused to let you fight with me . I value Lucy and Saly's life much more than mine and with you on the task, I would feel reassured, even if something unexpected were to happen, you could deal with it one way or another . We're no longer tied and from now on, you're free, I just hope that you'd this last favor for me . "

The youth kept listening to Arthur without replying, after a while, he just nodded his head unwillingly and left without uttering a word .

Arthur sat on the bed and let out another sigh, Swain was really a good servant, one who is powerful, understanding and wise, he always made the right decisions whatever the situation he was in . He even befriended Emily, who took a great liking to him .

Freeing Swain from his servitude was a difficult decision to make but he really didn't hope for this youth to fight with him, although Swain's background is mysterious and he never talked about it, Arthur could see that he's really just a youth despite his wisdom, he is not merely the fusion of a book and a death golem .

Knowing Swain, Arthur was sure that he won't betray the task he had given to him and in no time he would arrive where Lucy and Saly are .

There are a few days left before the arrival of the Catastrophe . Using his newly acquired eyes, Arthur was able to see the density of the Death Energy, which never ceased increasing for quite a while .

The quantity of this fearsome energy was stable for the first forty days and only at the 41st day did it start increasing, slowly but surely . The environment wasn't largely affected but some of the weaker plants withered and even the strong beasts which didn't leave the continent preferred to remain at their nest as their bestial instincts warned them about what to come .

After Swain left, Arthur started meditating, recuperating his lost Mental Power and calming his mind in preparation for the big fight . With no one to bother him and the calmness of the cave, he recovered quickly and was in top form in just a few hours .

The Human Continent now looked no more than a dead man's land, with hiding beasts and withered plants, it looked more miserable than the wasteland on the West . Cities were evacuated, mansions were scavenged and houses were emptied and by the 58th day, not a human soul was left in the continent .

Arthur was currently floating in mid-air, a mountain range that stretched as far as the eye could see was below him and a rising sun was coming up from the East . He had his eyes closed and was cross-legged, Makaze was on his knee with both his hands holding the dark blade that kept vibrating and burning with dark flames .

Arthur's white skin reflected a black layer of Dark Mager that was created thanks to his body-strengthening technique, he managed to make a small breakthrough that boosted the properties of this technique and augmented his defense by a decent amount .

His mind was clear and his heart was calm, with his ever-lasting companion resting on his knees and a sleeve full of trump cards that he had prepared, he was patiently waiting for the incoming beasts, whether it's a good ending or a miserable one, only he could decide that, fate can't do a thing in such a situation, it's his actions that'll twist what shall happen and make it nothing more than a horrible yet harmless nightmare .

...

It was at the dawn of the 60th day that it happened, a never-before-seen earthquake assaulted the whole world, causing fear and chaos to occur in all cities and countries . Followed by the earthquake was the shadow of four gigantic beasts, one bigger than the other, overwhelming auras and suffocating pressure .

They literally appeared out of thin air, and as predicted by Swain and seen by Arthur, their appearance was above the Human Continent .

Arthur didn't know where exactly they'll strike from, but he had guessed right and they did indeed appear right at the center . From the looks of it, they wanted to start from the center then stretch to all corners of this vast land .

the first beast was a massive flaming bird that had a wingspan of one hundred meters, it had a golden crown on its face and ferocious eyes that could kill a mortal with a single stare . The second was a gigantic dragon, with a length surpassing three hundred meters and majestic aura surrounding it, it was azure in color and had abyssal eyes similar to a black hole .

The third beast seemed like a moving plant, it was the biggest out of the four yet it had the weakest presence, almost unnoticeable by any person, if not for its size, no one would have guessed a beast was there . It had a huge shell that covered the sky, cloaking the lands with its massive shadow, the shell looked extremely tough and unpenetrable, its skin was made from brown scales and its eyes were blood red, indicating its bloodlust .

Last but certainly not least was a tiger, a white one, with a long tail, golden claws and thick yet beautiful fur that covered it, giving the appearance of some ancient beastly God . It had golden eyes and some black tattoos on all of its limbs . The four beasts were directly staring at the lonesome insect that floated before them, from their glares, it could be seen that they harbored hostility toward this man .

Chapter 257

Activating the appraisal skill, Arthur only saw the name of the four beasts accompanied by a long row of question marks .

Copy of the Azure Dragon of the East??????

Copy of the White Tiger of the West??????

Copy of the Black Turtle of the North??????

Copy of the Vermilion Bird of the South?????

What's astonishing is that they are mere copies yet they were so powerful and huge in size, just from the pressure he was feeling he knew that even Rozak could do naught against them . To win, fighting like

he did against that Sovereign won't do at all, he needs to go all-out from the beginning, aiming for a swift victory .

The more he drags the fight the worse it is for him as he didn't know if they had Stamina or not, heck! Even if they had limited Stamina, they had the advantage in number, he couldn't even think of a single advantage he had .

Hearing the growling of the turtle and the screeching of the bird, he knew they were about to engage, they won't take turns or anything like that, they aim for destruction and chaos and from their point of view, it's not someone like Arthur that's going to stop them .

"Are you ready for the end, partner?"

Arthur's words were directed to the dark blade vibrating in his hands, the blade emitted intense black flames that started affecting the air and corroding it . The intense vibration and the flames were a satisfactory answer for the smirking Arthur, he tightly held the blade with his right hand .

He had a large dark shield on his back just in case as he knew his defense isn't enough to resist their attack, especially the flames of the bird, which may affect him despite his immunity to fire .

There are different categories for the fire Attribute, just like there are ancient flames, there is the fire of the Vermillion bird, the phoenix flames and the golden flames of the three-legged golden crow .

The damage may be reduced but he'll still be injured by these orange flames of the screeching beast, there was also the problematic dragon and the swift tiger .

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Arthur took a deep breath as he closed his eyes and mumbled

"A heart bleeds, a man weeps, a soul burns, thence comes thy darkness to consume, yet even in the depths, the flames endures . "

His aura started growing and black flames enveloped the left side of his body from head to toe .

'Eternium!'

He looked way different than his usual appearance, with his left side burning with black flames and the right one having red flames enveloping it, creating a scary appearance .

Makaze was also divided into two sides, just like its master, it even emitted a weird grey fog . [Eternium] was a self-strengthening skill that drastically boosted his damage, whether he uses normal physical attacks or skills .

It is very practical, especially if he were to fight an enemy much stronger than him, however, such a frightening skill have horrifying side-effects .

Not only does it permanently injure Meridians, but it can also even cause one's cultivation to go berserk if he isn't able to control it . What it really does is augmenting the potential of the user, accumulating any future training that he would have done into this moment, thus, giving him unimaginable strength .

Using this skill made sure that Arthur won't reach the God Realm any time soon, but that's the least of his worries because if he doesn't defeat those beasts, reaching God Realm would be a meaningless goal .

The first beast to engage was the Vermillion Bird, it flapped its long wings and flew straight at Arthur, just by moving it left a trail of flames that fell from the sky, similar to a fire tsunami .

It was a perfect chance for Arthur as his first target was none other than this bird, it had the deadliest damage, so he decided to get rid of it first and kill the turtle last since its defense is a huge problem and it'll take a lot of time to penetrate it, much less kill it as it'll not stand still while he attacks .

Fortunately, Arthur could use [Faster Than Death] to teleport to the side, dodging the bird, however, he did no such thing, instead, he rushed at the incoming bird, intending to meet it head-on .

The bird opened its beak and spat a humongous flame ball that was even bigger than the bird . Even Arthur was momentarily startled by the sudden appearance of this fireball, he didn't daze for long as he grabbed the shield that was on his back and protected himself .

At the same time, he used Makaze to slash at the big fireball, creating a huge dark arc that clashed with the fireball . Luckily, the slash was enough to create a small gap, enough for him to pass through and attack the incoming bird . He raised his shield and defended against the flames all around him, the Dark Barrier that he put earlier was shattered instantly once it met with the flames, this proved how strong they were .

Using his new eyes, Arthur was able to see that the bird was going to spin around and wave its wing at him, aiming to send him flying away so he used [Faster Than Death] and teleported a hundred meters to the right, even after teleporting, he was still not out of the fireball .

He had his pain immunity on so he didn't feel any pain but he could see his Health decreasing by a huge amount . His eyes glanced at the map to make sure the other beasts still didn't move, only when he ascertained of that did he teleport again, finally appearing above the descending Vermillion Bird .

Without any hesitation, he swung Makaze down as he uttered in his mind

'[Heavenly Slash]!'

A concentrated amount of Dark Mana was unleashed from the dark blade, it transformed into a creepy looking dark skeletal head that was opening its mouth, ready to bite down at the back of the bird . The skeletal head was twenty meters in size and emitted a very ominous aura that even freaked out the Vermillion Bird, which screeched loudly did span its body, forcing Arthur's attack to meet with its burning tail .

What happened after that left Arthur dumbfounded, it took him a whole second to fathom what just happened . [Heavenly Slash] was one of his three strongest sword-attack, even against the Sovereign, it would deal a lot of damage . Moreover, he gained Rozak's stats and he was currently using [Eternium], so if such an attack were to hit a Sovereign, it would deal a considerable amount of damage yet when the dark skeletal head clashed with the bird's tail, it simply dispersed immediately, it didn't even last for a split second . As if meeting a metal wall, it was destroyed too easily, the bird didn't even attack with its tail, it merely used it to block his attack yet it resulted in this .

Arthur didn't remain dazed for long, for fear of being ambushed by one of them, he teleported two times, getting away from that there, however, just as he appeared three hundred meters away from the bird, he felt his head get really dizzy and before he could ascertain what just happened, a large white shadow appeared before him .

The problem with [Faster Than Death] is that it needs a bit of focus to be used, so this dizziness rendering him unable to teleport away . His instincts warned him repeatedly when the dizziness began, he subconsciously raised his shield in defense and back away with great speed, unfortunately, he wasn't fast enough as a big white shadow appeared in front of him .

Without even pondering about whether to use his skills or not, Arthur activated [Armageddon Shield Aura] and [Death's Glory], reinforcing his shield with death chains and increasing its efficiency . Despite the Dark-Star body strengthening technique creating a strong layer of defense above his skin, with the addition of the many passives that are activated such as [Metal Body], [Earth Armor] and so on, the incoming attack seemed to have bypassed all of them .

It was just too strong compared to his meager defense and like a cannonball, Arthur was sent flying until he crashed into a tree, pulverizing it and creating a deep hole, where he laid there, bloodied and coughing blood .

The dark shield wasn't destroyed but it was cracked, many of his bones were broken and that blow took more than 30% of his Health Pool .

Just after a dozen of seconds, more than half of his Health was gone and his shield was damaged, this showed the clear difference between four Divine Beasts and a lonely fighter with borrowed 'power' .

Chapter 258

Arthur coughed a mouthful of blood and dashed from that big crater, flying straight at the four divine beasts . The speed of the white tiger was faster than his reaction, he needs to pay his full attention to the tiger lest he suffers another hit, which will render him unable to fight .

He didn't know where that dizziness came from earlier but it was obvious that the Azure Dragon was its cause, Lissandra told him that the dragon could use several mysterious attacks to confuse the target, it could even use fatal soul attacks .

Arthur wasn't very worried about the soul attacks since he had the chains around his soul but it doesn't hurt to be careful and avoid such attacks if possible .

'I should hurry up, they are starting to team-up already . '

He thought they'll attack him one by one first to test him but from the looks of it, they wanted to finish him immediately . He put the cracked shield on his back and held back Makaze with two hands as he activated [Blood for Blood] then swung the dark blade with all his might toward the Vermillion Bird which screeched and covered its body with its two giant wings .

'[Heavenly Slash]! [Heavenly Slash]! [Heavenly Slash]! [Heavenly Slash]! '

Arthur ignored the cost of [Blood for Blood] and used it four times, allowing him to unleash continuous heavenly slashes that were purely conjured from Dark Mana which led to them being creepy skeletal heads flew straight at the Vermillion Bird .

After using them, he used [Blood for Blood] one last then tightly clenched the hilt of Makaze, he concentrated his Nether energy and circulated the Dark-Anguish Technique then he slashed the air, resulting in the shattering of the space around it .

Arthur speculated that if one [Heavenly Slash] doesn't work then five would surely do some damage, although it's just wishful thinking to hope that'll severely injure the Vermillion Bird, just buying some time is enough for him, if it's distracted then he can sneak-attack it and deal a fatal blow .

The last slash contained a massive amount of Nether Energy and was boosted with the Dark-Anguish Technique, further strengthening it yet increasing the cost . This time, it wasn't a flying dark skeletal head but a lizard-like creature made of only black bones, it had a tail with dark flames and a creepy head with two eye-sockets pulsating with a violet light .

This creature resembled Randuin, the lizard that was sent to Earth with Lucy and the others, however, this one seemed more powerful as only is appearing is threatening .

'Boom!'

The first three skeletal heads dispersed upon contact with the flaming wings but the fourth one managed to push the bird, it even forced its wings to open and allow a small gap to be seen through them, the lizard that was leaping at the bird used this chance to jump at the large bird and bite down ruthlessly while issuing a deep roar that brought chills even to its caster, Arthur .

'SCREECH!'

Arthur didn't know if it screeched due to the pain or from anger, but it was apparent that the lizard enraged the bird as it pushed the Divine Beast back as it bit down, causing some sort of thick dark lines to spread over its left wing .

Unfortunately, the White tiger appeared out of nowhere and attacked the lizard, killing it on the spot without any chance for the latter to resist or even dodge .

When lizard had bitten the Vermillion Bird, Arthur didn't say idle and watch, instead, he made use of his Spatial Mage to bend space and decrease his presence yet despite that, he could feel the gazes of the silent turtle at the back and the curling dragon .

They were motionless and didn't attack him but he knew they were waiting for the perfect time to act, the dragon was agile and had a strong physical strength, as for the turtle, Arthur was clueless about its abilities .

He only knew it had a strong shell that is unpenetrable, as for its offensive attacks, he was ignorant of them, which left him in a tight spot .

Arthur teleported closer to the screeching bird and held Makaze horizontally, preparing to begin his finisher, the white tiger turned its head to glare at him when it flung off the lizard so he didn't have time to fully prepare and was forced to act immediately .

'[Thousand Waves]! 'First Wave, Black as night, Calamity descends!'

The blade became as black as night, it emitted a cold humming sound as it fiercely slashed the cracking space . The rising sun was hidden due to the activation of Arthur's skill, a curtain of darkness covered the Human Continent and the nearby seas and oceans around it, leaving the hiding beasts in completely fear and bringing awe to whoever was foolish to get close to the area of the battle .

The fusion of his sharp and powerful Sword Energy and the dense Dark Mana was successful as the first wave as unleashed, creating a humongous black wave, bigger than the Vermillion Bird .

The Divine Beast was also startled by the black wave, it knew that it was dangerous so its screeched loudly and lifted its wings, waving them in a weird wave .

The lightning speed black wave was upon the bird in a split second, moreover, Arthur purposely got closer to the bird so that his attack would reach it instantaneously, which will force it to take it head-on rather than blocking it .

He also made sure that the turtle won't appear out of thin air and block it for he knew that such an attack won't do much to it, much less kill it .

Although the sky was covered in complete darkness, once the Vermillion Bird waved its wings, a hole was created in that cloak of the darkness, orange flames descended from the sky, bringing with them intense heat that would incinerate trees thousands of miles away .

The flames enveloped the Vermillion Bird, protecting from the large dark waves that were descending on it . Unlike last time, the black waves weren't blocked easily or dispersed upon contact, in fact, it pushed the bird and caused a big amount of the flames to disappear as if it couldn't handle the devouring ability of the dark wave .

Arthur didn't stand there watching, holding the vibrating dark blade, he swung it again, executing the second wave without hesitation despite the stress it put on his mind .

Normally, he would wait a short amount of time before performing the next wave but looking at the current situation, the dark wave won't injure the bird unless he executes the next wave, plus, the tiger was going to act and either help it or turn its attention to him, which is rather troublesome .

'Second wave, Thunderous God, Punishment for the Sinners!'

Chapter 259

Standing at the top of the tower belonging to the MoonStar sect, Lissandra, Jakob, and Anastassia stared at the East, where an ominous aura could be felt even from their location .

After the first earthquakes, they didn't feel anything but a few seconds ago, they could feel the familiar yet chilling aura of Arthur's power . This was due to the first wave, which largely affected the environment around it . Although the sky didn't become jet black, the effect of the attack still reached them .

Even the heat from the Vermillion Bird assaulted them, causing Jakob to sweat profusely but apart from that, it didn't injure them in any way .

"It has begun . . . I wonder if Arthur will be able to do it . "

As he stared East, Jakob murmured with a worried tone .

"We can only pray for his victory . "

Anastassia clenched her fists as her eyes were fixated on that direction, she really wanted to go there and help Arthur but such thoughts were foolish and reckless . The difference in power between her and Arthur is unimaginable, she would be capable of doing nothing but make it harder for him, which is why she obediently agreed to all of his requests and remained here .

"Hmpf! You think your praying will do him any good? If I were you I would start preparing other plans such as an emergency evacuation in case things become worse . "

Lissandra snorted and left the roof, not wanting to spectate anymore, after all, it's not like watching from here would benefit here . The shockwave may even injure a mere mortal like her so it's best to stay inside the tower, where it's significantly safer .

Now that she doesn't wield Dark Magic anymore, just getting exposed to it may deteriorate her physical body and cause her mind to collapse, that's what Dark Magic is good at, after all .

Unlike Lissandra, Anastassia just stood there, expecting Arthur to return victorious . Jakob threw a couple of glances at her, then he said after some hesitation

"S-should I start preparing?"

"Mmh"

The woman nodded her head so without wasting any more time, the general left the roof to perform the task he was assigned to do a few days ago . Just as he entered the tower, an earthquake even more powerful than before occurred, thanks to the strong material the houses inside the MoonStar sect were created from, they didn't suffer a lot of damage but there are still some which couldn't hold up and collapse . As for the walls surrounding the sect, they were as motionless as ever, not affected by the earthquake .

The earthquake was followed by an ear-deafening roar that resounded all over Astria, just the roar caused large and deadly shockwaves that were sent in all directions .

Fortunately, the shock waves didn't last long and dispersed after traveling for a few thousand miles, nonetheless, this merely added to the shock of the spectators, which became even more fearful of the source of this angry roar .

. . .

Next to the gates of the MoonStar sect, there stood a large red minotaur with a domineering presence and a matching weapon on its back, however, such a monster was currently cowering behind a short red-haired youth that stood before it, calmly staring at the horizon with a deep gaze and a calm demeanor .

Sensing the heavy earthquake and the hearing the chilling roar, Swain sighed and mumbled

"Master . . . It's hard to fight when the fight ain't fair . Why must thou choose such a lonely road?*sigh*"

Swain turned around and waved at the minotaur dismissively while saying

"Let's go, there's nothing for us to watch . "

Although the minotaur was unwilling to leave, it still obeyed him and followed the youth reluctantly .

. . .

"Are you that worried about him? I never thought that my elder sister would be attracted to a man . "

The Demon Lord, who was sitting next to her husband, commented as she noticed Taliya, who was absent-minded .

"Instead of talking about such stuff, you better focus more on carrying your duties . Furthermore, I do not like him, I simply admire him . "

The Demon Lord chuckled and retorted

"Either way, why didn't you grasp this chance and followed him? A person such as him would surely leave Astria and travel to stronger worlds, achieving greater feats, a person of his caliber won't be restricted by such a world . "

Listening to her little sister, Taliya let out a helpless laugh and replied

"Travel to higher worlds? All I'm seeing is a man searching for his family . I know that he doesn't care about exploring the Universe and venturing outside, seeking powerful foes . All he wishes for is a peaceful life, devoid of danger . "

Taliya wouldn't know a lot of Arthur despite the time she passed with him, however, she talked with Anastassia and Jakob and came to know a lot of things about him, she also deduced a few things from her time traveling with him .

"Although my discerning ability has declined due to my age, I can at least see that you do wish for more than what Astria could offer you . Big sister, why don't you follow your heart and do what you really want to do not what you should do . . . "

The Demon Lord remained silent after that as she noticed the head-maid who was back to being lost in thoughts as if she was in a completely different world .

. . .

'Second wave, Thunderous God, Punishment for the Sinners!'

Arthur executed the second wave just after he unleashed the first one . After he possessed the Sovereign, his stats increased drastically, so logically, [Thousand Waves] will become much more powerful if it's unleashed right now . In fact, Rozak, the elderly Sovereign would have died after three waves at best yet the Vermillion Bird was resisting the first wave, which would leave a Sovereign with no means of resistance .

An illusory old man appeared above Arthur, he waved his staff and pointed it at the Vermillion Bird, causing the dark sky to split open and a gigantic sword made of pure white thunder to descend at the bird with incredible speed .

Last time, it took quite some time for the sword to materialize and attack Rozak, yet this time it happened in just two seconds, leaving no time for the Vermillion Bird .

However, two seconds were more than enough for an agile Divine Beasts such as the White Tiger to act and fly straight at the descending sword .

The Godly thunder has a terrifying explosive power, but its stunning effect is even more dangerous . The White Tiger decided to block it as the Vermillion Bird would probably be unable to defend against two waves, although the Divine Beasts couldn't talk, they were intelligent beings, fully sentient .

Using his eyes, Arthur was able to see an absurd amount of strong Golden Energy condensing around the paw of the tiger as it was ready to meet the sword .

'Since you're asking for it, don't b-'

Arthur was going to unleash the third wave by the next second but before he could do so, he felt his body become extremely heavy and the dizziness from before assaulted him, making his body feel wobbly and unstabilized thus rendering unable to execute the rest of [Thousand Waves] .

By the time he opened his mind has cleared a bit and he managed to see properly, there was already an azure dragon flying straight at him with its mouth wide open, ready to devour him whole . . .

Chapter 260

At such a perfect timing, Arthur could not afford to get hit by the Azure Dragon . Seeing the approaching wide-open mouth, Arthur raised his hand and created a small dark cube around him, protecting him from the impact . He didn't stop at that point, he added two more layers of dark cubes as one won't be enough, heck! Even three would collapse upon contact but at least it'll lessen the damage he'll receive and buy some time for him to unleash the next wave .

Holding the dark blade with two hands, he raised his weapon and closed his eyes, concentrating his Nether Energy . Meanwhile, the dragon's body crashed into the layers of dark cube protecting Arthur . The first cube was obliterated upon contact, the second lasted two seconds and the third was the sturdiest of the three, it managed to buy Arthur five whole seconds before it shattered, revealing a flaming humanoid figure which had black flames burning from one side and red flames covering the other side .

As the dragon was launching a full-on offensive assault on Arthur, the white tiger had already clashed with the descending thunder sword . Using its mysterious golden energy and its monstrous strength, it met the sword head-on and ferociously slashed with its claws, creating heavy turbulence in the air and shattering the very space the golden claws passed through .

Five golden lines met the tip of the white sword, although the white tiger was obviously going to deflect the sword, it wasn't done as easily as anyone would expect . The golden claws unleashed a dense amount of golden energy that met the sword, cracking it from its tip to its hilt .

Godly Thunder roared and winds howled due to the clash, even the Vermillion Bird didn't dare assist the white tiger as there was a chance it'll be stunned too . The forest that was situated under the area of the battle had long since it transformed into a desert, whether it was incinerated by the Vermillion Bird's flames or the pure pressure of the previous attacks that created sufficiently strong shock waves that were able to create a large hole and uproot thick trees .

...

When the last dark cube was destroyed, Arthur was done preparing for the third wave, he couldn't unleash them one after one even if he wanted to . Just by executing two waves in a very short period of time tired him mentally, so he couldn't afford to damage his mind further, especially when the dragon can use mental attacks that affect his thinking and force him into an uncomfortable dizziness that causes his battle prowess to diminish by a huge margin .

'Third wave, Extinguishing Flames, Fire of Redemption!'

This wave was unlike any other one, empowered by the skill [Eternium], the red flames covering one side of Arthur became even more violent, a large flaming wing appeared on his big . The dark blade had the same color as melted iron, it emanated intense heat but surprisingly, it didn't emit any flames like any other time .

Not wanting to disappoint its master and partner, Makaze let out a deep cry similar to the growling of a beast and by the next second, when the fearful eyes of the Azure Dragon landed on Arthur and its mouth was just a few meters away from him, the wave was finally unleashed, going straight into the dragon's mouth .

Since the wave was sent inside the large body of the Dragon, it had no effect on the environment, nonetheless, one could see that Arthur's attack was fruitful at last as the dragon's body was pushed back fifty or meters .

It curled its body in a strange way and cried angrily as flames came out from its mouth, they were not its flames but the ancient flames that belonged to Arthur .

Arthur didn't need to take a closer look to see that the ancient flames were very effective against the Azure Dragon, although it wasn't a fatal strike, it would take some time before it gets rid of the effect of the third wave, after all, extinguishing the ancient flames isn't an easy feat, especially when one is vulnerable against them such as the Azure Dragon .

Actually, Arthur wanted to use the third wave to hit the stunned white tiger, which was preoccupied with the godly thunder sword, unfortunately, the Azure Dragon butted in and obstructed his plans thus forcing him to use his strong attack against it .

Just as he was about to rush at the white tiger, Arthur lost sight of it, he couldn't see the godly sword or the tiger which was supposed to be resisting it . Even if it was strong, it couldn't have destroyed it this fast, could it?!

His instincts warned repeatedly so he cloaked himself using Spatial Magic and used [Faster Than Death] to retreat from that position, however, such efforts were futile against a foe that was much faster than him .

The shadow of a white beast appeared before his sight, with its tail striking him from above, Arthur let go of Makaze and held his shield with both hands .

Knowing that this wasn't the time to think about counter-attacking, he unhesitatingly used [Blood for Blood] multiple times again just to make sure he isn't severely injured by the tiger's tail .

[Aura Of Inversion]

[Concentration of Glory]

[Spatial Crack]

These three were one of his strongest defensive skills, the first one was a newly acquired one, it belonged to the druid he killed inside the ancient tomb and if it's used at the right time, it can be beneficial .

On the surface, it is a simple skill that makes the area around the user a bit like water so that any skill that is launched at him is absorbed, or rather, drown inside that conjured surface .

But if one were to dive deeper into the details, they can discover that such a skill causes a massive molecular change on the environment surrounding the user, if he could wield it flawlessly then no enemy could dream of touching him .

[Concentration of Glory] is a shield-based skill, it increases the percentage of blocking any incoming magical skill but it sacrifices 10% of the user's current Health . Its cost was tremendous so Arthur only uses it in emergency situations .

As for the last skill, it belonged to the Spatial Master he killed last time, it simply cracks the space around it, causing the void to devour any skill that is close to the crack . It is a very strong skill and it can also be used offensively, however, in terms of defensive abilities, it is a bit lacking compared to [Aura Of Inversion] .

The area around Arthur turned a bit hazy, as for the dark shield he was using, the changes around it started trembling as a yellow rune was imprinted on its surface, boosting the equipment . Several spatial cracks appeared around Arthur, seeing this, he heaved a sigh of relief and readied himself for the impact as it's not entirely certain that he'll be able to block this attack .

Just as the long and large tail of the tiger was going to hit the shield, the whole tiger dispersed into a fading light that vanished right after .

Shocked, Arthur stared dumbly at this sight, he soon realized what was happening but by that moment, it was far too late for regret .

'Shit, it's an illusion!'

For even himself to be unable to see through it, this was a very high-grade illusion, even the aura of the white tiger was real, he couldn't notice anything different . It was odd that the white tiger wasn't stunned and the white sword disappeared but since he was facing Divine Beast, he didn't give it much thought as they are absurdly strong, however, it turned out to be an illusion from the start and he had been duped .

What's saddening is a continuous usage of [Blood For Blood] for naught, he activated three strong defensive skills only to be hit by nothing, or so he thought .

When he just realized his mistake, it was far too late as a wave of heat assaulted his back which was followed by the sharp beak of the Vermillion Bird . . .