

Once Human 401

Chapter 401

The reincarnator, Losha, was silently meditating under the World Tree when her eyes suddenly sprung open . She frowned and flew high in the air while glancing around .

At first, she thought she was mistaken but when she felt it a second and third time, it wasn't a hunch anymore . She clicked his tongue and glared at the ever-so-silent World Tree while mumbling

"The bastard even got the timing right . Hmpf!"

Her body shot up toward the sky like a blinding star and soon, she left the world known as Astria . Outside of this small and insignificant world is a boundless darkness . Though it was easy leaving Astria, entering was a whole other matter .

Losha cared not about that, her duty was to fend off against what's to come . The world Darkness remained like so for two days until a blinding radiance covered half of this isolated place . Losha clicked his tongue in annoyance

"Arghh I fucking hate angels!"

Just as she said that, several winged figures appeared not far away from her, each emanating a suffocating pressure, which didn't affect her .

There was exactly five angels, led by a blondie with three pair of wings . Despite their exceptional and heavenly beauty, Losha was disgusted and almost vomited upon seeing them .

Just the aura they emitted caused to have goosebumps .

The blond-haired angel leading this small group momentarily frowned before smiling and walking toward Losha .

"If it isn't Miss Losha . "

"..."

Losha remained silent, her glare piercing him like a dagger . As the Fate Contract stated, anyone wanting to attack or enter Astria shall be eliminated, no matter who they are, meaning that all these angels will be killed by her .

Although an angel with six wings is powerful, it's not something she can't handle .

The reincarnator didn't even waste time chatting with the approaching angel . Her body turned crystalline as diamond covered her .

Like a bloodthirsty beast, she leaped at the leader, wanting to kill him . Her attack, however, was unsuccessful as the four angels at the back both jumped to protect their leader . The four of them wielded long golden spears and through flawless cooperation, they managed to block Losha's punch .

Four spears were pressed against each other, blocking a single fist, which still managed to push the four angels a few meters .

The blond-haired angel's smile disappeared ever since she attacked out of the blue . Just like his comrades, he took out a long golden spear and vanished only to appear behind Losha .

He stabbed his spear at the woman, who didn't bother to retaliate . The spear tip wasn't even able to injure her hardened skin, it was more like an itch, really .

Although Losha didn't retaliate against the leader, she still finished off the four angels . Her fist was blocked by the four spears but her other free hand slashed the air, instantly cutting the spears and the four angels in two pieces, causing blood to splatter on her face and body .

With an ugly expression, she spat some of the bitter and disgusting blood before turning toward the leader, whose face became as pale as a sheet of paper .

Losha is a well known for many reasons . First, because she's an 8-star God Monarch, her background isn't normal either, moreover, her identity as a reincarnator, which isn't known by many .

The angel believed that they'll be able to easily handle her and resolve this issue . Never did he expect her to be this ruthless, slaughtering his comrades like that, without any hesitation .

When he saw her bloodied face and chilling gaze, he knew that he'll be next . His six wings flashed with a blinding radiance which was soon cut off by Losha's Divine Sword .

The sword cut two wings, causing the blondie to groan from the pain and shame . For an angel, their wings are more important than their life, once they're cut, they'll have no place in Heaven .

Still, the angel didn't despair as he could use the 'signal' to alert Heaven . Losha protecting this place confirmed their previous suspicions . The World Tree is here and the other angels must know!

Unfortunately, Losha's attacks were just too ferocious and fast . Her movements were simple yet extremely fatal . In less than a minute from their appearance, the angels were eradicated and the leader was already half-dead .

As a last means to struggle for his life, he sacrificed three of his wings to teleport of this place . Before he managed to get away, Losha managed to cut his last wing, causing him even more heavy damage .

Bloodied and miserable, the blond angel appeared in hot desert where the sand was blood-red . As he laid on his back and panted heavily, the dying angel struggled to retrieve a golden cup .

He mustered all his strength to put it next to his head before starting his cast

"B-by God's Name...*cough* I, I besee-"

Unfortunately, his casting came to halt when a figure that was nonchalantly flying in the air suddenly descended next to him . Hopeful, he turned his head toward this person with much anticipation .

Like always, he wore a weird white costume and behaved like a lunatic, to say the least . He was chewing gum as he glanced down at the angel . It was only through a fluke did he notice this dying 'thing' .

"Bitch! You look like a homeless drunkard! My dead grandmother looks better than you tsk tsk!"

The Joker shook his head in disappointment before continuing:

"I thought angels were supposed to be majestic, righteous, bla bla bla... How come I only see a pile of dying shit? Is this perhaps a pleasant dream?"

He rubbed his eyes several times as if to ascertain of the current situation .

"Fuck! It's actually true!"

The Joker inspected the dying angel yet again, thoroughly checking him from head to toe before mocking him again:

"I've seen wild dogs in better condition than you... shit! A cockroach has more dignity than you . Come on man, if you want to crawl in this lovely desert, you have to do it properly, here... lemme show you . "

The Joker laid on the ground and assumed a swimming position before he started crawling .

The angel's face turned red from anger and embarrassment, he took a deep breath before shouting with a hoarse voice

"E-enough! Help me . "

The Joker stopped crawling and calmly got up . After patting some sand off his clothes, he threw another chewing gum into his mouth and only after fully savoring its flavor did he talk again:

"Oh no! What do I do?"

He acted panicked and backed away from the angel while hugging himself and adding:

"I'm but a pitiful mortal! I don't dare touch one of God's pure creations! Oh it's sinful... too sinful!"

The angel, whose death is imminent, glared at the Joker before turning toward the golden cup and continuing the cast... or so it should have been were it not for the Joker, who snatched the golden cup .

Mouthfuls of blood were spat by the angels, who stretched his hand in the air, precisely toward the Joker, who waved at him and flew away as if nothing happened .

So, like that, the angel took his last breath in this unknown place, surrounded by a mysterious red desert that stretched for millions of kilometers .

After a few hours, the Joker, who was cheerfully flying across that desert suddenly halted mid-air and said

"Oh... I forgot to introduce myself! Shit! It would've been worth it for him if he saw my amazing introduction before he dies . It would've allowed him to go to Heaven..."

A humanoid creature with two large wings and a horn erecting from his forehead was currently kneeling in front of an illusory silhouette .

"Master, please look at this . "

Belos handed a recording crystal to 'X', who was gazing at the night sky with an absent-minded look . Hearing his subordinate call out to him, 'X' snapped out of his daze and fumbled with the crystal before nonchalantly watching the recorded footage .

It showed a large tiger with two dramatically different wings, lightning swirled around it and it used the infamous Dark Magic . 'X' leaned his head closer to the crystal and carefully re-watched the whole fight .

"Dark Magic?"

'X' asked his trustful servant only to receive an honest answer

"Yes, it is Zodiac's Dark Magic, without a doubt . A lot of powers are making a move as Zodiac's legacy is not something to be trifled with . "

'X' remained silent for a long time before coldly snorting, clearly displeased

"Hmpf! I fought that sinister old man in more than one occasion . He's always full of tricks! Still, his Dark Magic is really dangerous . "

He got up and picked his cane before adding

"Well, it matters not . Focus on finding Arthur, the Orb should cause a huge disturbance soon enough and at that time, he won't be able to hide! Hehehehehe"

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The three remaining days passed peacefully without any disputes between the rival factions . The biggest group was definitely the ones composed of weak factions and lone cultivators, which clustered together . Arthur and Lucy were amongst them, hidden from view .

There were around three or four thousands cultivators, including all the famous and powerful ones . Dawn of the opening day, the river started reacting quite strangely . It was usually calm and silent yet it became extremely turbulent, producing waves that were as high as five meters .

Everyone who enters the Secret Realm will be sent to a random location, however, Arthur planned to forcefully teleport with Lucy, bypassing the mechanism that's going to separate them . The ARK told him that the probability of succeeding exceeds 50% so it's worth a try .

With the rising sun, the place became chaotic as the waters were restless and the wind raged . With curious and somewhat excited look, the cultivators stared at the occurring change and could barely hold themselves from diving into the river .

The presence of Lucy's sister and the other powerful individuals made them hesitate and wait for their turn . After ten or so minutes, the water started spinning, affecting even the dark clouds high above . The center of this underwater tornado was some sort of a black portal, ominous and unstable .

The first people to enter were the scarred old man and the silver-haired woman, who unhesitatingly dived into the water and entered the strange portal .

Next was the powers of Green-Leaf such as Jian Si's sect and the Mirage Era Hall . The man covered in bandages also entered alone, unhindered by no one as all the cultivators feared him .

When it was their turn, the large group of cultivators flocked into the dark portal, pushing each other and even cursing . Arthur and Lucy remained motionless, not wanting to join that mess . Haste makes waste, furthermore, going first isn't necessarily a good thing .

In a way, it is understandable for these cultivators to be in such a hurry as the treasures in the Secret Realm was unique and priceless . You could even stumble on an ancient artifact in the middle of nowhere, it all depends on luck and keen senses .

Arthur wasn't interested in such treasures as they were useless to him . Their only goal is that soul-protecting item . Few others also chose to stay still, waiting for things to calm down before entering .

Five minutes after the opening of the portal, two siblings flew toward the dark portal with a slow yet steady pace .

Just as they got close to the portal, they were sucked into it, unable to retaliate . As he was holding Lucy's hands, Arthur's sole eye shone with a blue light .

Trapped into an unknown place, between two worlds, a mysterious force enveloped the couple before starting to separate them, each sent into a random direction .

Just when they were separated, time was stopped . Arthur flew toward Lucy and tightly hugged her before heading toward one of the countless lights in this dark place .

Fortunately, when the time-stop ended, the mysterious force couldn't separate them as they were right next to one of the lights, which was a small portal that led to a random place in the Secret Realm .

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Arthur and Lucy found themselves in a dark cave, surrounded by countless over-sized rocks . The first thing the couple noticed a small decrease in their stats . As he inspected his Status Window, Arthur was pleasantly surprised to see only his cultivation drop dramatically, as for his stats, they decreased by only 950m . It was the same case for Lucy .

Their cultivation was now at the peak of Divine Realm, nevertheless, their physical strength is absurd .

"It is quite easy to explain, actually . The limit for any person is 999 . 999m, so the Secret Realm decreases enough for you to be Divine beings, it didn't into account your current stats . "

Claud explained the cause behind this occurrence . With how strong they are now, they shouldn't encounter any real danger unless they purposely anger the dragon .

"Master said that there are many powerful monsters hiding here . Although it's the dragon's realm, it doesn't from its lair . "

Lucy told Arthur some details about this Secret Realm . Losha thoroughly explained how to proceed, what to avoid and what to do .

They have two destinations, one is at the North of this secret Realm . It's on a floating island which has a large waterfall, and the other one is near a hot lava deep underground .

Both places have powerful soul-protecting items, however, since Lucy can fuse Fire and Water, it is feasible to fuse these two items . This only applies to Lucy, who somehow managed to merge two opposing attributes .

Speaking of that flame, Losha instructed her to only use in the most desperate situations . Not only is it hard to control, it's dangerous and it'll bring much trouble .

The two of them didn't know where they were as the place didn't seem to have a nearby exit . The couple delved deeper into the cave only to discover that this place was actually a mine .

There were gigantic trolleys and broken pickaxes that were 3 or 4 meters long .

"It's a Spirit Stones mine! You got lucky . "

Claud seemed excited, unlike Arthur or Lucy, who weren't amazed . They have abundant Red Spirit Stones, even the rare Green Spirit Stones were no exception so, despite how it enticing it may be, the mine wasn't considered a treasure trove by those two .

"Even if you're not going to take some, at least summon some skeleton to do the job for you then come take the harvest once you're leaving this secret Realm . "

Arthur shrugged his shoulders and followed his copy's words, after all, he has nothing to lose . More than a hundred tall skeletons appeared around him . The undead soon started using the huge pickaxes to mine the Spirit Stones .

Lucy, who was busily inspecting the incredibly large cave, frowned and backed away a few steps only for a humongous worm-like creature made of stone to appeared where she was . Its mouth was wide open as it had planned to swallow its target only to miserably fail .

Before it could dive underground, the large worm was instantly frozen and shattered into countless pieces . It wasn't a strong beast to begin and it was unlucky enough to encounter Lucy .

The brown-haired woman crouched on the ground and put her hand on the rocky earth . She made use of her sky-high stats to locate any monsters hiding underground .

It turned out to be a monster fest, more than fifty of those stone worms were stealthily moving underground . Unfazed, Lucy activated her Yin power, which bypassed the rocky ground and perfectly hit all the worms, freezing them .

It would be a hassle to get them all so Arthur could possess them, however, such thoughts disappeared from her mind as she saw that Arthur followed her actions and used his Space Magic to teleport all those corpses, before throwing them all in his storage .

This place seemed to be isolated from the outside so Arthur switched bodies, possessing the bone shark . Lucy jumped on his back and tightly held onto one of the smaller bones . The bone shark wriggled on the surface for a few seconds before it drilled into the ground .

The rocky underground, which was supposed to be a big hurdle, was cleanly cut by the sharp bones of the bone shark . With ever-so-increasing speed, Arthur drilled everything in his way and after a few minutes, they got out of that place . They were met with a blue and clear sky, a lush and peaceful forest and the sound of running water .

They were in a forest that surrounded a high-mountain .

Even with his sharpened senses, Arthur couldn't feel the presence of any dangerous beasts or passing cultivators .

It was kind of illogical for such a place to exist in a secret realm which is supposed to be fraught with danger . Nevertheless, Arthur changed his appearance again, wearing the bracelet and becoming Lucy's 'little brother' .

This secret Realm was vast, to say the least . It had a triangular shape with the dragon's lair being at the very center . The floating island was far north, at the peak of the triangle and the hot lava was somewhere South .

From Losha's description, Lucy was able to guess their current location . It was West of the Secret-Realm, which was a big forest that's the safest place in this world .

Most cultivators will go to this place as it is not dangerous and they have the chance to find rare herbs or harvest the cores of some God beasts .

To not attract any unwanted attention, the couple chose to travel by foot and at moderate pace . From now on, they're just a pair of siblings at the Divine Realm .

The two of them started descending the mountain while enjoying the serene scenery . No beasts attacked nor any cultivator stopped them .

Though it'll be nice if they joined a group as to make their act more believable since they looked pretty weak, especially Arthur, who looked like a shy and fragile kid .

For the first three hours, they met no one but were still disturbed by some God beasts, which were slain instantly . After four hours, they met with other people, a small group .

They were a group of five, three males and two females . The three men were black and muscular, they wore gauntlets and thick silver armors . As for the women, they seemed to be along with the three men, who were lewdly looking at their new comrades .

In fact, the women didn't seem bothered by that and would throw seductive smiles at the men . As they stumbled upon Arthur and Lucy, they 'secretly' tailed them for half an hour before they showed themselves .

'Well, it's better to have idiots around us . '

Arthur shyly hid behind Lucy while trying to hold back his laugh . His act was totally believable as the leader of this small group walked up to Lucy and scratched the back of his head while saying

"Aii little miss... we're forming a small party to make easier for us to hunt . How about joining us? All the spoils will be split evenly . "

He cracked a grin while showing his disgusting teeth, to which Lucy held her hands while fidgeting, clearly not knowing what to do . Seeing her hesitant reaction, the man's eyes flashed with a cold glint as he insisted

"Come on, the more, the better . It's much safer if you're in a group, we'll protect each other's back . "

'Yeah right . '

Arthur inwardly snorted but still remained embarrassed on the outside . After what seemed like an eternity, the big sister mustered her courage and said

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"Actually... we-we're heading North . "

The man frowned, confused about her reply . After pondering for a moment, he seemed to have of something as he became excited . He heartily laughed while saying:

"What a coincidence, we were planning to go North too . How about it? Want to join us?"

Lucy took three seconds to reply by nodding her hand and holding Arthur's hand, dragging him toward the group . As for the muscular black man, he licked his lips and followed the newcomers .

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There trip North was rather safe for the first two days except the unusual noises at night, lewd ones, of course . The two women accompanying the men were actually selling themselves . Apparently, they were paid and were more than willing to sell their bodies for Red Spirit Stones so Lucy or Arthur didn't interfere .

Only the tall muscular man would remain by the couple's side at night, either rambling about his past achievements or trying to seduce Lucy, which didn't work for obvious reasons .

Although he didn't try to hide his lecherous gaze, he didn't try anything and despite hinting his intentions, he didn't voice his thoughts directly .

Lucy turned a deaf ear to him and followed the somewhat decent group without having to fight too much . Their traveling speed was slow, to say the least, however, that's only because the group wanted to hunt as many God beasts as possible and pick up some herbs .

They fought sixteen times but Lucy only helped once and she acted so pitifully weak that it seemed kind of comical . If not for her piercing glare, Arthur would've burst out in laughter .

Night of the third day together, while Lucy and Arthur eating dinner while ignoring the moans coming from the nearby tents, they suddenly heard something far away head their way .

The black man next to them was oblivious to this and continued chewing on the meat of a God Beast they slew a while ago . Such a meat was not only delicious but also beneficial as it contains a moderate amount of Nether Energy, which can help in cultivation .

Apparently, the three men were peak Divine beings and the two women just reached the Divine Realm . The men were powerful despite only using their gauntlets and only relying on techniques and such . In fact, they were body cultivators, which explained their huge frames and muscular bodies .

Whatever or whoever was coming not only was incredibly fast, this caused the relaxed Lucy to strengthen her senses and prepare herself . Worse comes to worst, she'll let her new group fight before she kills this beast, or whatever it is .

Only when this hastily-approaching presence was within two hundred meters of them did the black man react . He sprung up from his seat and looked South only for a figure to appear a distance away with him .

With long silver-hair and a beautiful appearance, she glanced at the three humans around her before preparing to leave .

Just as she was about to disappear, the black man, named Jace, raised his hand to stop her while smiling and saying

"M-miss! Please stop!"

He seemed very desperate for a man who was smiling happily not even a minute ago . Quite surprisingly, the indifferent sister of Lucy listened to him as she shifted back her attention to Jace, who scratched his head while chuckling, embarrassed, or acting so .

However, before he could talk, the lewd moans coming from not far away resumed which made the woman's face distort . Seeing this, Jace's expression turned ugly, he turned toward the tents and shouted at the top of his lungs .

"HEY YOU TWO! KNOCK IT OFF WE HAVE A GUEST!"

Shortly after saying that, the two men and women left their tents with sweating bodies and red faces . Although disgusted, the woman didn't immediately leave and waited for Jace to talk again .

'Do we leave?'

'It's too late for that . Furthermore, it doesn't hurt to see what she's capable of . '

Arthur wanted to leave but as Lucy said, it's a bit too late to try and leave like this, it'll be suspicious . Moreover, this woman didn't seem she's going to stay with them, or so thought the poor couple, who clearly didn't know her well enough .

After much insistence and smooth-talk, Jace managed to convince the woman to join their party, just for the time being . She also seemed to be heading North, which made it much easier to pull her into his group .

The atmosphere was rather awkward after she joined as everyone remained silent . Arthur and Lucy excused themselves and 'went to sleep', as for the rest, they either ate or tried striking a conversation with the woman .

Jace wasn't a famous figure but he was still knowledgeable, he recognized the silver-haired woman with a glance which is why he tried so hard to rope her in . With her at their side, they have nothing to fear in the perilous land .

'Who would've thought your sister is so much different than you . '

'Hmpf! If I see you stare at her, you're dead meat!'

Lucy snorted and glared at him, clearly telling to not do anything . The silver-haired woman was indeed a beauty, just like his wife, which is why Lucy felt threatened, as usual .

However, the two behaved differently . Lucy would've never traveled with strangers... heck! It wouldn't be strange if she killed were they tried anything suspicious . As for her sister, she actually joined their group, just like that .

'Is she perhaps a softie?'

"Be careful, she has the Dark Void Physique . "

Claud warned him but it wasn't anything too serious . Although she's really strong, she isn't his or Lucy's match as their stats are just too absurd but it wouldn't hurt to be wary .

The Dark Void Physique is a branch of the Void-Physique and it's a king Physique . It's extremely strong as it allows the user to pass through material things .

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The next morning, the group departed together with Jace leading . The silver-haired woman tagged along but remained at the back . She didn't seem too interested in Jace and his former party but she would throw curious glances at Arthur, for some unknown reason .

This annoyed him as it made him feel tense . Out of everyone, why does it have to be him that gets stared at by her . She didn't talk or do anything out of the ordinary, she would follow and watch from the back if any God Beast appears .

It wasn't something Jace and his friends couldn't handle . This forest was relatively safe compared to the other zones and in one more day, they'll be out of this area .

'Hey! Your sister is kind of annoying, you know!'

Arthur inwardly grumbled as he talked to Lucy, whose lips arched up a bit, clearly smiling .

'What's that got to do with me? And she's not my sister!'

Hearing her half-serious, half-mocking tone, Arthur rolled his eyes and quickened his pace, walking in front of Lucy so that the woman in behind can't stare at him .

Sadly, his attempts were futile as all of a sudden, Jace halted and stared at a small-pond fifty meters away from them . It a clean pond that had a beautiful golden flower growing at its center . The flower pulsed with a bright golden light that made it look prettier .

"It's actually the Golden Numbra!"

As Jace just stated, this flower was a Golden Numbra . A herb that aids Sovereigns fuse with their God Spirit . It isn't priceless but it could fetch them quite the sum .

Unfortunately, most rare herbs are always protected by some sort of a beast or plant, including this one . Very soon, Jace started planning how to acquire the Golden Numbra . He discussed it with his teammates before walking to Lucy and Arthur then saying

"Since it'll be a very dangerous fight, we can't let you join us, however, you can contribute in other ways . "

He paused for a second, studying their reactions, before resuming:

"You'll have to approach the pond and lure whatever is protecting that . Once it has shown itself, you'll flee toward us . "

Lucy frowned and retorted

"So we're . . . bait?"

Jace waved his hands while saying

"No no no your job is to lure them out, it's totally different . "

'Tsk! Muscle-head . '

Although Lucy didn't like his shameless behavior and words, she still didn't refuse . As for Arthur, he tried his best to act scared and uneasy, which worked wonders as the mighty savior herself! Lucy's sister, joined the conversation .

"I will lure it out of its nest . "

'Such a brave and kind attitude! I expected no less from your sister!'

Arthur sarcastically said to Lucy, who strangely remained silent . Now that the woman butted in, wanting to take the siblings' job, Jace couldn't force them to do it . He threw an angry glare at Lucy before smiling and nodding his head to the silver-haired woman .

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The group didn't spend much time planning everything . The three men will deal with the monster or plant and the two women will provide support . Lucy's sister will approach the pond and snatch the Golden Numbra while also luring out whatever was protecting it .

As for Lucy and Arthur, they were instructed to stay at the back so they did, obediently . In fact, the husband and wife already knew what's hiding under the pond .

It was a large alligator with blue skin, it seemed threatening but it wasn't particularly strong . At best, it was a Sovereign Beast . One strike from either of the couple could finish it .

Lucy wanted something bad to happen so she could witness her sister's real prowess which is why she instructed Arthur to act and cause trouble . What better thing to cause trouble than his newest familiar, Innocence .

Although the cooldown for summoning it is kind of long, it was still powerful and it should force the woman to personally act lest they all get massacred .

There is a chance that he'll be discovered by her if he summons Innocence but only if she focuses all her attention on him . The current disparity between them is just too large for now, at least in terms of senses .

Lucy's sister was indeed powerful even when she's weakened but her Divine Sense could, at most, stretch for five hundred meters whereas this insignificant little pond is much deeper than the other might think .

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With Jace's signal, the silver-haired woman, who still hasn't introduced herself, walked up to the pond and flew to Golden Numbra .

Just as she was about to snatch it, water splashed and a huge blue alligator came from below, its mouth wide open, ready to devour her .

Unfortunately, its sharp teeth and big mouth couldn't touch her body, which bypassed her as if she was a ghost .

'It's a bit like the Tiger's ability but I'm sure I can touch her with Dark Magic even if she's in that form . '

The Dark Void Physique may allow her to travel through weapons and techniques but Dark Magic is purely made of emotions so it's possible to hurt her .

His sky-blue eye focused on the retreating woman, who seemed pretty relaxed and unafraid of the enraged alligator, which swam toward her with lightning speed .

Jace and his two companions jumped in front of the woman, wielding their weird gauntlets, they punched the five-meter long alligator .

Its scales were pretty tough but they were still damaged by their monstrous punches . All they did was punch the alligator but it was more than effective . Their bodies were sturdy and even when they were hit by the monster's tail or body, they remained unscathed . Their bodies emitted some white steam as their muscles bulged and their strength increased .

'Are you ready?'

'Always . '

Arthur replied to Lucy as his left hand emitted an unnoticeable light that entered the ground beneath him and headed toward the pond .

The alligator, albeit strong, wasn't the match for the three men and the two women, who would hit him with their fire arrows . It was quite an efficient combinations, something the monster wasn't able to handle as it succumbed to its injuries after five minutes .

Jace celebrating their flawless victory, suddenly turned toward the pond and raised his hands as a white tentacle-like thing hit his body, sending him flying dozens of meters . His companions weren't spared as they were hit simultaneously, suffering the same fate .

They weren't dead or heavily injured but the hit was strong enough to cause them to throw up some blood, especially the weaker one, Abid .

Even the silver-haired woman was startled as she jumped in front of the humongous beast that just appeared from within the pond . She couldn't even sense its presence .

She stared at the monstrous thing with a frown, clearly disgusted by its appearance . Innocence was truly grotesque and ugly, it didn't have any eyes, only a large mouth and had hands instead of feet .

It seemed a bit different than the one Arthur and Lucy fought, but it was still hideous .

With pales faces and shaking bodies, Arthur and Lucy slowly backed away only for the new monster to ignore the human in front of it and focus on the siblings, who became terrified once Innocence turned toward them .

Obviously, this was but an act orchestrated by Arthur, who ordered Innocence to behave like this . He wanted to force the woman's hand and see how she'll act .

Will she protect them or flee? The answer shall be revealed soon enough .

Innocence banged its hand on the ground, causing it to violently shake and split in two . The two siblings hastily backed away and avoided being sucked into the bottomless abyss .

Just as Innocence was about to engage with his tentacles, it was stopped as a silver-spear cut three of its tentacles .

Jace and his comrades followed with their punches, ganging up on Innocence from all sides yet even after suffering continuous minor and heavy injuries, a bright white light covered the monsters, instantly healing everything and even recovering its lost tentacles .

Arthur, who was witnessing this from afar, suddenly clutched his chest and knelt on the ground . An unimaginable was coming from heart, more precisely, the ARK in his consciousness .

His actions surprised Lucy, who ignored the ongoing fight and said

"What's wrong? Arthur!"

Hear cries were left unanswered as Arthur wasn't able to reply . The pain was agonizing, rendering unable to move or talk . He could only hold his chest tightly and crouch on the ground .

Inside his consciousness, Arthur called out his copy, who remained silent .

"Claud! What's happening?! Claud!"

No matter how much he tried to enter the ARK or called for Claud, Arthur was ignored, having to deal with the pain himself .

Fortunately, the pain didn't last long, only a minute or so but it was still a strange occurrence . Arthur leaned on Lucy as he took deep breathes, trying to calm his rapidly beating heart .

"What happened?"

Lucy asked the silent Arthur, who put his hand on his heart and replied

"I don't know... I just feel sad... and lost . "

Why he was having such feelings was an enigma but it certainly had to do with the ARK as it seemed to be the source .

The couple backed away to a safe distance and totally ignored the fight between their group and Innocence, which wouldn't die even after having its head pierced by the woman's silver spear .

After healing itself for five successive times, it was finally exhausted so Arthur sneakily ordered it to dive into the pond and disappear . The silver-haired woman tried to stop it but couldn't, only letting go after landing one final yet fatal stab to it, which actually managed to kill the hideous monster .

Except for the silver-haired woman, Jace and his companions were injured, especially Artid, who had his arm bent in a weird way . As for the two women, they were completely safe as they stayed at the back, in a place Innocence couldn't reach .

Back on Astria, South of the Western Continent, the undead numbers were ballooning thanks to Anastassia, who would come every day to summon more of these rotting creatures .

As she was busy using the pendant Arthur gave her to summon more skeletons and bone dragons, an unknown presence was watching what's happening from behind the clouds .

With one hand rubbing his chin, he curiously looked at the millions of undead . He wore a jet black robe and his skin's color was like a corpse's . His face was wrinkled and his hair was grey, clearly from old age . This old man was contemplating the situation with an interested expression .

"I haven't seen such a sight in years..."

He shifted his gaze to Anastassia and nodded his head repeatedly, however, it was unknown what he was thinking . After a long while, the old man was about to descend only to suddenly halt and look to the front, where a silhouette appeared .

A few seconds later, the silhouette became much clearer . Clad in dark armor and a thick black sword on his back, it was none other than Leiu, the Nameless Knight .

"For the Nameless Knight to personally come to me, I wonder what the occasion is . "

The old man chuckled, totally unperturbed or unafraid of the knight .

"We're old acquaintances so... go back while I am still politely asking . "

The old man grinned and glanced at the land of death below before staring back at the pair of chilling eyes behind the dark helmet

"You know full well that I cannot tolerate the existence of so much undead, it goes against the natural laws . "

"It's not like you're the one who'll suffer the consequences so let it go . "

"Ohohoho" the old man kept chuckling before retorting "No can do . "

A soft sigh escaped the young man's mouth . He seemed to have given up on negotiating .

"Is that helplessness I sense? Are you finally going to make a move against me, Death?"

Contrary to the Death's expectations, Leiu shook his head and retorted

"I've brought a much more suitable person . "

He waved his hand and turned around before saying

"You lived for a long, long time so you must know me very well and know what I'm capable of . If I personally make move, I'll erase you and all of your petty reapers . Don't forget who killed the previous death . "

Just as he disappeared, another person appeared in his place, a woman, to be precise . A woman with a dark-hair a skin color similar to the old man's . In fact, they were the same thing, only their appearances are different .

As he gazed at the woman, the old man was totally dumbstruck . He remained speechless for half a minute before clearing his throat and mumbling something to himself .

He glanced at the red-haired woman summoning undead below then at the woman before him before understanding everything .

"I see . My eyes indeed didn't fail me . "

The woman politely bowed to the old man before speaking

"Master, it is good to see you . "

As he listened to her, the old man laughed and said

"You seem to have been Death for a long time which means you're from a faraway future . "

Chapter 405

"Huh I thought they'll run away... they're not a bunch of gutless fools after all . "

Arthur voiced his thoughts as he gazed at the sweating Jace and his two comrades . Actually, he thought they'll flee the moment Innocence appeared but they ganged up on the monster and helped the woman defeat it .

"Never mind that, are you alright? Do you still feel pain?"

Lucy held the little boy and caressed his chest, her expression clearly showed how worried she was . She was startled by Arthur's sudden actions and only after he explained what happened did she breath a sigh of relief .

Once they made sure Innocence is no longer here, the six others joined the two 'siblings' . Jace was grinning happily as he waved the Golden Numbra .

Although he had to fight Innocence and was injured, he wasn't the least bit annoyed after getting what he wanted . Kelan and Sral, his two friends, were in worse shape but they were as delighted as their leader . The two women quietly followed them and only the silver-haired woman lagged a bit behind .

She was furrowing her brows as she glanced around her, wanting to understand what just happened . No matter how weakened she was, it was to the point of not being able to sense Innocence hiding under the pond .

Unfortunately, she wasn't able to locate anything but she remained extremely cautious .

The burly black man was about to tell the siblings that they won't get a share from the Numbra only to find them totally uninterested by the flower so he shut his mouth and stored it .

The small group rested for half an hour before continuing their trip . Unlike earlier, Lucy's sister no longer paid attention to Arthur, she just kept staring to the front .

Arthur could feel her sense stretched to all direction, even after a long time, she didn't retract it .

'What do you think?'

He asked the silent Lucy, who was holding hand and following the others . The wife thought for a moment before saying

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'I'm not sure how strong she is outside but I can handle her in this secret Realm . She's pretty powerful but not invincible . The problem is the old man that was accompanying her . "

'Yes, he's a troublesome one . I think he's an Overgod, it's best to separate from them if he ever shows up . '

Lucy didn't object for it was disadvantageous for them to be found out in this place . Not only is there the old man, but there's also the Holy Dominion, who brought a pretty powerful group led by a Deacon .

The Deacon's abilities are still unknown, nevertheless, it is best to take precautions . Claud did tell him that The Holy Echelon, despite being weaker than the Holy Order, still has a few powerful individuals .

...

After the group left the relatively safe forest, the environment and weather drastically changed . From a lush and beautiful forest to a desert filled with mountains of sands . The weather became hotter and the number of battles increased .

The frequent attacks of the monsters became annoying and tiring, even for Jace . The monsters here were mostly those stone worms Lucy killed when they appeared in that dark cave .

There was one other type of monsters that lived in this desert, it was short monsters that were as short as goblins . They had grey skin and used primitive weapons .

Their appearance wasn't frightening but they always traveled in groups and were powerful, individually . These creatures, known as Grey Korvs, heavily relied on cooperations and would often ambush their enemies .

They would dive under the sand and try to grab a human's legs, immobilizing them so that their comrades could finish their job . Most annoying of all is the needle-like things they throw . If it lands in a vital spot, it can instantly kill the target .

Two times did Jace and the others meet other cultivators and two times did they see them get killed by these thin and lightning-fast needles .

...

Today was another hot day for the party of seven, just as they were a mountain of sand, the silver-haired woman suddenly leapt at Arthur and Lucy, grabbing them both before jumping back . The two siblings were startled, especially the boy, whose face became pale .

In the place where the two siblings were at, two thin grey hands appeared from within the sand, catching naught but air .

The Korv tried to retreat only to be grabbed by Jace, who snapped its back in half while grumbling . Three arrows were shot by the two women, accurately hitting three Grey Korvs that were hiding in the vicinity .

Their temporary companions were fooled by his and Lucy's flawless act . They genuinely thought that Arthur was a good for nothing kid who's being taken care of by his reliant big sister .

Lucy did fight a few times but she didn't use any special skills . She used two silver daggers and would rely on [Advanced Dagger Mastery] to take care of her enemies .

None were suspicious of them so they continued their play and would rarely interact with others . In fact, neither Arthur nor Lucy ever talked to the silver-haired woman... till this day .

As she saved them both, she softly put them on the ground and turned toward the boy while saying

"Are you okay?"

She seemed to be worried, which was a bit surprising for Jace and the rest . Arthur's guess was kind of correct as Lucy's sister had a soft heart despite her indifferent attitude or expressionless face .

While it is true that Lucy becomes soft when children are involved, she isn't like her sister . Lucy wouldn't go out of her way to save a kid who is in the Secret Realm and is a Divine being! It was just too suspicious and strange .

The boy timidly nodded his head while tightly holding sleeves, clearly afraid .

"Please forgive him, it's the first time he goes outside . "

Lucy intervened, explaining the reason behind his attitude . Jace, who has been stealthily listening to their conversation, walked over and retorted

"Then why'd you bring him to such a dangerous place? It's not meant for kids . "

For a kid of his age to be at the Divine Realm is a huge achievement, however, he lacked real combat experience so even an Immortal can finish him . Jace didn't want to cause trouble, he just voiced his

honest opinion, moreover, he didn't like people who leech off others, even when they're innocent little boys .

"I had no choice, there's no one to protect him there . "

Lucy's words more or less hinted that it's dangerous back in their 'home' too so it's better than he came here with her . Jace shrugged his shoulders and said nothing but he still got glared at by the silver-haired woman .

Flustered, he scratched his head and said

"W-well... you better stay close to us so we can protect him too . "

He amicably beckoned her while brightly smiling, not wanting to show any hint of unwillingness .

To show her appreciation, Lucy bowed her head while her face brightened . As for the silver-haired woman, she just kept staring at Arthur, which made him have goosebumps .

...

Coincidentally, later that day, precisely when the sun went down and the sky turned black, they were attacked by a monster .

It was neither a Grey Korv or a Stone Worm, the creature that attacked them was monstrous in size and was covered in scales . It was an aerial monster, very similar to a dragon yet a bit different . This creature was a fully grown Wyvern .

Adult Desert Wyvern (Race: Wyvern): Realm: Sovereign

Age : 3,057 years

Emotion: None

Title : None

Skills/techniques: Wyvern Blast (Lv98)/ Sand Storm (Lv45)/ Petrification(Lv22)

Short Description: A sub species of the dragon race, smaller in size but is decently fast .

TIP : Vulnerable against Dark Magic - Space Magic - Void Magic - Ancient Flames - Flames of the Vermilion - Godly Thunder .

TIP : Petrification will be negated by [Eyes of Tranquility]

TIP : Earth, Water, and Wind Magic are weak against it .

ARK: The user 'Arthur MoonStar' has 99 . 99% chance of defeating the Wyvern .

Such a thing wasn't a threat to the couple, however, it'll be a challenge for Jace and the others, excluding Lucy's sister, of course .

All of them woke up due to the loud screech of the flying Wyvern . It flapped its wings, causing a Sand Storm to appear . Not only the vision was limited due to the dark sky, it became worse as the sand caused their body to become unsteady and their eyes to turn red .

Jace, angry that he got woken up from his sweet dream, retrieved a long javelin from his storage and threw it at the beast .

The javelin whistled in the air as flew straight at its target only to be petrified and fall down at the last second .

The Desert Wyvern refused to decrease its altitude as long as it wasn't necessary . It relied on its long-ranged skills to deal with the humans .

Its petrification won't work as it was too far from its targets, however, the Sand Storm was already causing it much trouble .

As for why Jace and the others didn't fly, it's because it's extremely hard to levitate in the Secret Realm . Not only is it disadvantageous to them to fight an aerial monster in the air, but it's also inefficient due to the restrictions of this place .

While it's not impossible to fly, it isn't easy either . As this Realm was the dragon's world, it was subjugated to its rules after being controlled by it for thousands of years, which is why anyone entering this place is forced to travel by foot to guarantee their safety and increase the chances of their survival .

Chapter 406

At first, the silver-haired woman remained motionless, not butting it and letting Jace and co take care of the Wyvern but when the burly men along with the two archer women showed great difficulties in shooting down the beast, she decided to land a hand .

Her figure turned half-illusory as she mysteriously stepped in the air, just like climbing some stairs, she swiftly made her way to the Wyvern and blasted it to the ground with the help of some kind of purple symbols that were created by her rapidly-moving hands .

The technique she used was similar to Arthur's Death Seals but instead of weakening the target, it blasted it . The Wyvern was pushed down a few dozen meters only for a second purple symbol to hit its body, causing it to fall down even further .

When the third symbol was about to hit it, it flapped its wide yellow wings and screeched loudly . It opened its grotesque mouth and spat a thick beam that directly hit the women .

Fortunately, she was more than prepared as the [Wyvern Blast] passed through, unable to hit her thanks to her Dark Void Physique .

The Wyvern followed the blast by using its eyes to petrify the human only for it to fail again . The Dark Void Physique isn't just all talk, its ability to bypass all kinds of attacks is literally a cheat .

Just like any other Physique, the Dark Void Physique strengthened its user's body, albeit slightly . Relying on her pure strength, the woman fell from the air, landing the wyvern's head, hitting it with her elbow .

It was only then that the beast finally succumbed, falling into the ground and allowing Jace and the others to attack it .

The struggling beast didn't wield even when Jace, Kelan, and Sral, started punching it with their thick gauntlets . Unlike the Stone Worms, which looked tough, the Wyvern's scales were pretty tough thus allowing it to stabilize its body and lash out with its claws and wings .

The Sand Storm intensified and the three men's gauntlets started turning into stone . It was then that Lucy joined the fray, accompanied by her 'little brother', who started casting Earth and Fire-oriented spells .

The Dark Oath made him unable to use any weapon other than Makaze, so he had to rely on long-ranged spells . The two silver daggers were continuously slashing the wyvern's body . Sparks flew everywhere yet the speed at which the daggers moved increased by the second .

Lucy would dodge whenever she's attacked, which startled Jace, who never thought she was so good at fighting . She wasn't absurdly powerful but she wasn't weak either .

Arthur, who had been timid and silent ever since they met, also helped, sending large fireballs at the Wyvern . A large prison made of jet black earth sprung from the ground, entrapping the beast for a few seconds .

"Please back away!"

Arthur shouted at the others before he mumbled a few words which caused a large explosion to occur inside the prison, which soon crumbled . From within the accumulated dust, there appeared an injured Wyvern, which groaned in pain as it viciously glared at Arthur, the perpetrator behind the last explosion .

Jace felt chills down his spines as he witnessed the explosion, never did he expect the weak-looking boy, who was missing an eye to be able to do this much .

Although the explosion wasn't enough to finish the Wyvern, it allowed his party to finish the job and kill the hateful Wyvern .

...

As the beast laid lifeless on the red sand, Kelan happily climbed on top of it and dug its core from its skull . The core was as big as his head, filled with Earth Energy, its interior pulsating with a dazzling luster .

The three men cheered as they played with the core . After a while, Jace walked up to the siblings and did a small bow while apologetically saying

"I was a bit impulsive . I underestimated you before and I sincerely apologize . "

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He seemed earnest in his apology so Lucy merely nodded her head without saying a word .

"I-it's nothing . "

Arthur stuttered as he reassured the muscular black man . Jace seemed like a person who relies on his emotions to act, he's a bit sly but not in a bad way .

Actually, Arthur thought that he'll try something in the night as he seemed to be eyeing Lucy with a lewd look but since the sister appeared, he barely looked at his wife .

"You're strong, why didn't fight?"

An almost robotic voice entered Arthur's ears, which made him flinch . He turned his head only to see a very close silver-haired woman stare at him . He slightly backed away and replied with a flustered tone

"I-I'm not using to fights... It's the third time I ever f-fought a monster . "

The woman nodded her head understandingly then asked again

"I can teach you if you want . "

She very casually asked to train him only to be refused by Lucy, who sweetly smiled and replied

"It's fine, I'll protect my brother so he won't have to fight often . "

Since it was his family speaking, the woman couldn't insist . After one final nod, she returned to her half-destroyed tent .

Back in the dark world, which is actually the courtyard of the manor belonging to Leiu, the Nameless Knight . The Joker was still training the changed Saly .

Just like last time, she was blindfolded, however, her hearing was cut off and her sense of smell disoriented . Just when she got the hang of fighting, he would give her another handicap, angering her and causing her to greatly suffer .

His blows were agony itself . Whether it's a broken jaw, bent legs or shattered ribs, she was subjugated to all kinds of pain until she became numb .

In fact, three days ago, she started disregarding her body and relentlessly attacking only to be berated by the Joker and hit so hard it almost killed her . The kick she suffered was so powerful that it caused her to remain on the ground for six hours .

He gazed at her pitiful state and said

"Ha? So you don't care about your body anymore just because you got a little hurt? Fuck! Are you dumb or what? When you attack and can't dodge an attack, you must make sure the damage you receive is decreased, even by a little bit . Foolishly ignoring the condition of your body is suicidal . "

As she panted heavily while coughing a bit of blood, the little girl glared at him and retorted

"Y-you don't let me rest for some time so I can heal the injuries... How can I-"

Before she could finish, she was kicked yet again, causing her to cry in pain

"Did I tell you to answer? You listen and obey, nothing else! Bloody crybaby... arghh I can't believe I'm stuck with someone like you... my reputation will disappear if people see your state!"

He continued rambling non-stop so Saly used this time to recover a bit .

All of this happened three days ago and now, she can't see, hear or even smell, which made it pretty hard for her to even locate him, much less hit him .

...

A few days later, the Nameless Knight returned only to see a bloodied Saly laying on the ground, no one knew whether she's dead or alive .

The Joker, who had been standing a distance away, noticed the appearance of Leiu so he walked over .

"How's the training going?"

The Joker raised four fingers and answered

"40% done . "

The knight frowned, clearly surprised, he glanced at the unconscious girl and asked again

"Already 40%? This fast?"

The Joker chuckled while fixing his messy costume then added:

"She's a tenacious, I'll give her that . Jack of Spades Growth, 4♦ Strength, Jack of Diamonds Combat ability, not bad, for now . "

"Is that while including her awakened powers?"

"Of course~~"

Leiu pondered for some time before nodding his head . As he was about to enter the manor, the Joker stopped him and asked

"How's things in your end?"

"Death shan't be a problem . It's also about time I return Makaze . "

The Joker angrily stomped his foot and protested

"I don't get why didn't let me deal with that grumpy old man . "

"Because it's not your job but hers . Everything must be done properly so 'it' doesn't happen again . "

The Joker clicked his tongue but didn't object . He turned around and walked toward Saly . No matter how unhappy he was with Leiu's decision, he will never go against his words .

The two were brothers went through thick and thin together . He was the second and he must and will follow Leiu's words .

Chapter 407

Isadore Marfront, the Crown Prince of the Royal Family ruling Green-Leaf, was currently reading some documents, as usual . However, Wrath was nowhere to be seen, replacing him was Dan, the man wearing the straw hat . He was the one who blocked the Deacon and her party and prohibited them from setting a single foot inside the Imperial Capital .

"What's this Dan? Are you sure of their authenticity?"

Isadore waved the documents in his hand, clearly worked-up and suspicious . Dan, who was leisurely eating some grapes while relaxing on a comfortable couch, nodded his head

"Yep, I personally investigated . "

Hearing this, Isadore could only believe the contents written in front of him . He tapped on the table as he stared at the view behind the windows, his mind soon drifted, thinking about many things .

'Five years ago, a commotion occurred in the Pigolo Tribe . Some invader their headquarters and caused a ruckus . One of their higher-ups disappeared and they went into conflict with the Gargoyles . Furthermore, they were abducting people from another world, most likely a low-Realm . However, someone broke in and saved the prisoners, the witnesses said that the man had long grey-hair but didn't have a scar .

He wielded a dark sword and was accompanied by a youth with a short red-hair . The man's target was a silver-haired young lady, who disappeared right after being saved... is she the one who accompanied him here? A sister? Or from the same family? Silver hair isn't a common thing, after all . There's also the issue with the tomb, where Kai Min, a rising talent in the Water Cloud Sect vanished, supposedly killed . These events match with the death of Rozak, who also entered the Tomb to capture the Dark Magic-user, then again, how did they locate him, and so precisely, at that . Is that why he refrains from using Dark Magic in the open? Is it easily detectable by the Holy Dominion?'

"You weren't able to obtain the name of his world?"

"Nop, it wasn't mentioned . I think only the Kangs know but I didn't try to reach out for their help, you know why..."

Isadore let out a long sigh before standing up and saying

"Let's go, I would very much like to visit Kang Amidel . "

Dan, surprised by what he heard, hastily got up and said

"Are you really going? I don't think your father will agree . "

Isadore waved his hand as if he didn't care while retorting

"It's not official business so there's nothing to worry about . Hurry up, time is ticking . "

It's a funny thing, ambition . It can take one to sublime heights or harrowing depths . And sometimes they are one and the same .

In a world that knew naught but destruction, a world covered in fire and darkness, a world where an evil aura festered the land and corrupted the earth . Such a world, where no human dares to tread, where no human believes it exists, there was a young man that stealthily moved around .

What he witnessed, none could describe, what he felt, none can explain . Whether it's terror, despair, or fear, the youth foolishly entered this forsaken world, not knowing what he had gotten himself into .

The things he had seen would make anyone traumatized, including himself . Scattered limbs everywhere, blood rivers that endlessly flowed, the foul stench that made him vomit over a hundred times .

With escaping death, he entered a place no different than Hell, if not worse . Living humans, beastmen, elves, and many others, where they're treated as decoration, statues to please the eyes and lighten the mood .

They were put in excruciating positions, whether it's the bent arms or legs, missing eyes or ears . Some were even hanging in the air with a pointy hook in their chest or back, the sight was horrifying .

As for the perpetrators? Monsters, evil itself! Creatures with multiple arms, jet black skin and a hideous appearance . The way they snickered when they butchered the innocent and ate them .

The way they roasted people alive just to watch them suffer, the youngster had seen it all yet no matter where he went, it was always the same .

Days passed yet this nightmare knew no end, it only worsened . He got discovered countless times, fought thousands of times and barely escaped . He was injured more times than he could count, in this word covered in blood and fire, Vyncent tasted the bitter taste of real despair .

His body reached its limit, whether by endlessly running or the non-stop battles . The evil monsters didn't leave him alone, in fact, they found it amusing to chase him as if he was a fleeing rabbit .

A week passed since his arrival but no survivors were found . The only 'survivors' are the ones pitifully hanging on a hook or the living statues, which were people that were initially tortured then put there . Never did Vyncent expect such a place to exist .

"Huff huff huff"

Vyncent leaned on a huge boulder as he peeked his head from the side, trying to see if there's anyone still chasing him . His Sense could stretch five meters at most and his techniques became extremely weak ever since he stepped foot in here .

The only thing that kept him alive is his secret movement technique . More than once did he thank the person who passed this technique to him for it saved him from death numerous times .

The exit disappeared the moment he entered so he became stuck, unable to do nothing but cover his ears to not hear the hoarse and pitiful cries of the dying prisoners .

'Is this really my end? Should I just kill myself?'

Suicide is a much better option than being caught, however, no matter how many times he thought about killing himself, he just couldn't bring himself to do it . His body was on a breaking point yet his wavering 'willpower' refused to simply give up .

After a month, he grew a beard and his hair became longer, his clothes were dusty, messy, bloodied, and dirty . This place made him like a mortal, he would always feel sleepy . The hunger and thirst were quenched at first but after a whole month, the situation changed .

Fortunately, he could use water Magic but the starvation aggravated his dire situation . In the end, left with no choice, Vyncent was forced into cannibalism .

With tears running down his thin and pale face, he devoured the human meat he just roasted . His hands were shaking and his eyes were wet as he kept repeating the same word

"I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry..."

"What do you think?"

Midolf smirked and asked the red-haired youth next to him . Radolf continuously nodded his head as he stared at what's in front of him .

"Master will be very pleased to see this . "

"Damn right he will! It's the first time I've seen this many . There's even a Lich King but he doesn't seem to be hostile... the fucker is probably afraid of you . "

The Water Empress, who started investigating the origins of the book, spent weeks trying to decipher some mysterious symbols that were engraved on the back of the book . They only appeared after she used some kind of unique glasses that showed her the unseen .

The symbols were actually a language, it was extremely hard to translate and despite her wide knowledge and infinite resources, she only uncovered the meaning of one symbol .

It was actually a name of a person, most likely the author of this book .

"Vyncent?"

The Empress repeatedly muttered that name to which her servant, the short girl scratched her head in confusion and said

"I've never heard of such a person, he wasn't even mentioned once in the ancient records about the era before the Hour of Creation . "

The blue-haired Empress flipped the book and thoroughly examined the strange three lines for the thousandth times but still wasn't able to understand their meaning .

"Just what is the meaning of this book?"

The short girl shrugged her shoulders and said

"Probably some encyclopedia, just give up on it . I think you should try looking at other things . "

The Empress heeded her servant's words and stored the book . She pondered for a moment before asking

"What of the Fire Region?"

Hearing switch to this topic, the servant became excited . She proudly patted her flat chest and said

"Ha! Drak couldn't even protest and was immediately executed by the Star Empress . After all, no one forced him to break the High Rules . "

The Empress snorted while saying

"Hmpf! Serves him right! Invading my territory? Did he think the ones above will turn a blind eye to his actions?"

"I heard he plotted with an elder from the Moon Region, who was also executed . "

Chapter 408

The next morning after the fight against the Desert Wyvern, the small party continued their journey . Surprisingly, another member joined this already strange group . They met him purely by accident and like always, Jace invited him .

The newest member never talked, he would only shake or nod his head, however, what's stranger is his outfit . A body covered with bandages, only his eyes could be seen . He was in the midst of fighting a large group of Stone Worms when they stumbled upon him .

He swiftly killed the worms and was about to depart only to be stopped by a smiling muscular black man . This man was none other than the ghost who got appraised by Arthur . It was also the same person who joined the tournament in Astria .

He fought against the girl who used the pink ice and emerged victorious, his techniques are strange but there's no doubt that he's a skilled fighter . The newcomer paid no attention to everyone but the silver-haired woman, he stared at her for a long time, not hiding his fighting spirit .

He just wanted to fight her, any ulterior motives were absent . Of course, Lucy's sister ignored, she would just walk at the back with the deadpan face of hers .

As per Jace's words, they should arrive to the floating island in three days, at most . They didn't encounter any more Wyverns, as for the Grey Korv and Stone Worms, they were disposed off by Jace and his companions .

There was another pleasant piece of news, it was the return of Claud, who was strangely silent ever since the event from last time .

Though Arthur asked him about the cause, all he got for a reply was this

"I would rather not talk about it . It doesn't concern you so you don't have to worry . "

Arthur was unhappy with the vague reply but didn't inquire any further as his copy didn't seem to be in the mood for chitchat .

'That ghost is looking for you, the Dark Magic user . '

Claud nonchalantly said that before returning to his eerie silence . Arthur, who got hit by such a shocking news, was momentarily startled before he bombarded his copy with questions .

'Why is he looking for me? Who sent him and what are his goals?'

'The hell?! Do you think I'm omniscient? What I said is merely a speculation, one that is most likely true .
,

'Then, do you mind explaining?'-Arthur

'He's a ghost and a pretty powerful one at that . Your fight against the Holy Dominion attracted too much attention . The Whisperer King is seeking you . Apparently, he was acquainted with Zodiak in the past . '

'Another person to avoid... ugh'

Although it's unlikely he'll be discovered with the bracelet on, Arthur still didn't like the fact that many people are searching for him . Fortunately, the ghost wasn't as strong as Artid, the Black Rose executive, who's always looking for him .

At the center of the secret realm, exactly where the dragon's lair was situated, there was a large silhouette which was laying on the ground . With exquisite silver scales covering its body, which was humongous . It was over four hundred meters long and the ancient aura emanating from it showed how old it was .

The air around it was suffocating and a simple gaze from it is enough for a Sovereign to be stricken with boundless fear .

In front of this majestic and powerful creature sat a human wearing a dark cloak . With a short grey-hair and two clear eyes, he gazed back at the silver dragon .

"Are you hesitating?"

The man asked the ever-so-silent Space Dragon, who opened its eyes and looked at the small human that dared to enter its base and leisurely sit beside it .

"Which mother would be willing to abandon her son?"

The man glanced at the pulsating stomach of the dragon before replying

"Such is the fate of newborn dragons . Being protected by you will make it difficult for him to properly grow up . "

"Thy words are not false . By thy claims, my son will grow in a safe place?"

"That is right . You have my word . "

"Thee understandeth that this is not an edict but an offering?"

The man nodded his head and answered

"I am fully aware . Please rest assured . "

The dragon closed its eyes, no longer paying attention to the human, who silently sat there and patiently waited .

Jace's words were spot on, they arrived at their destination exactly three days later . The climate changed yet again, from suffocating heat to bitter coldness .

You could see tall snow mountains from afar, several winged creatures were flying in the air, eyeing the group but not daring to attack as long as they don't enter the snowy area .

Far above the mountains, there was a floating piece of land, it was incredibly big and the mere sight of it was a feast to the eyes .

It is said that this piece of land is a big garden, divided into many levels . It all depends on how much a person can advance, nevertheless, if you clear a level, you'll be able to obtain generous rewards .

In this perilous floating land, where only the strong are rewarded, there was the item Lucy and Arthur sought .

...

Ever since the Wyvern fight, Jace's attitude changed, he treated the siblings much better . He would even encourage Arthur to be more courageous while flexing his bulging muscles .

The floating island, named The Paradise Garden, is a monument of its own . Entering is not an easy feat, it all depends on the person . There are illusory stairs that lead to the garden and only a selected few are able to walk all the way to the top .

The soul-protecting item is at the third level of the Garden . It has a total of nine levels and you can't just climb there and begin the trying lucks with the levels .

There's a specific time the garden opens its doors . Fifteen days after the opening of the secret Realm and since Arthur and co have been traveling for eleven days, only four remain before it begins .

There's bound to be strong cultivators waiting at the top, he just wished that the butler won't be there too, anyone else is fine .

First things first, they had to reach the illusory staircase, which is still a distance away . Unfortunately, the moment they stepped in the snowy area, the flying monsters above started their assault .

Their fate couldn't be miserable as the ghost clicked his tongue and waved his hand, sending dozens of bandages which wrapped themselves around the beast and crushed them within seconds .

The drastic change in weather caused Jace, who was going around half-naked, to shiver from the coldness . He still persisted and didn't wear anything, laughing it off and saying it was some kind of training for his body .

His comrades, however, didn't share his thoughts as they retrieved some coats from their storage, causing them to receive a resentful glare from Jace .

Unlike the desert, this area was flat and much more comfortable to travel in . There was an overabundance of monsters in here, ranging from carnivorous plants to packs of snow wolves, however, they were easily defeated by Jace, who endlessly fought to warm himself .

Activating the powers inside his body would make it sweat from heat, which is a much better feeling than the freezing coldness .

Only after six hours did they reach their destination . It was an open snowy field with illusory white stairs that led to the floating island high above .

There were several cultivators camping around the stairs, either waiting for their friends or are just there to watch . Arthur also noticed several figures climbing the stairs, some with ease, others with great difficulty .

Jace's two comrades decided to stay here along with the two other women . They were planning to hunt some powerful beasts and obtain some treasures if they're lucky .

Only Jace, the ghost, the silver-haired woman, and the siblings were going . Lucy's sister hesitated for a split second before going toward Arthur, wanting to tell him not to go as he's not ready or strong enough .

Unfortunately, she abandoned such thoughts when she saw Lucy drag her 'brother' toward the stairs . Although she was skeptical, the woman decided not to interfere and silently followed them .

The first one to start climbing was the ghost, whose quickly bypassed other cultivators and easily made his way toward the garden .

Jace talked with his comrades before flexing his muscles then following the ghost . Arthur used telepathy to talk with Lucy, who asked him how to proceed .

Their plant was to struggle a bit before reaching the top, like that, it'll be more believable . He didn't want to risk it as the old butler may be waiting there and instantly climbing there will bring too much unwanted attention and suspicion .

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The silver-haired woman followed Arthur and Lucy, paying close attention to them as they started climbing the illusory stairs . They intentionally advanced with a slow yet steady pace . As one would expect, the higher the one climbs, the harder it is to continue .

Some kind of formless pressure would press their bodies on the ground, rendering them unable to continue any further . Arthur saw a dozen or so cultivators fail and teleported all the way to the base of the stairs, way below .

Unlike what Lucy's sister expected, Arthur was able to reach the end of the stairs albeit with a bit of difficulty . As for his sister, she seemed completely fine as she helped her brother when he started struggling at the end .

The ghost and Jace had no problems as such thing wasn't a challenge to them, same thing for the annoying woman, who gazing at Arthur from the back .

Upon arriving at the end of the illusory stairs, a huge platform was presented before them . It had some cultivators waiting for the silver gates of the garden to open .

Fortunately, the old butler was nowhere to be seen, which made Arthur a bit relieved . Some familiar faces could be seen waiting on the platform . Emily, the princess, and Shu Ru were all present, however, they could recognize neither Arthur nor Lucy .

Seeing the newcomers, many people were startled, especially after glancing at the ghost and the silver-haired woman . Obviously, not everyone knew them, however, most did .

The princess and Emily exchanged a few words with the silver-haired woman, they seemed to be acquainted . The ghost took an empty spot and sat, ignoring all the gazes he was getting .

Jace accompanied the siblings, who were quickly ignored as they weren't really eye-catching . It would have been fine if it continued like that, unfortunately, this sister of Lucy was like super glue, once she latches on you, she never let go .

Many people wondered about Jace and the siblings' identities, wanting to know how they managed to win the woman's favor to the point of making her stay with them . One must know that Lucy's sister is known to be a lone traveler, she rarely interacts with people and almost never makes friends .

...

Time peacefully passed without any fights or commotions occurring . When the opening time finally arrived, everyone stood up and prepared themselves .

A fair distance away from the Paradise Garden, there was a floating silhouette that was shrouded in a white fog, barely even noticeable .

This person stared at the bunch of cultivators in the platform before rubbing his chin as he pondered .

"The divination can't be incorrect . It said that she'll enter the garden, as for who she is... I'll have to carefully look at each and every one of them . "

This was none other than the scarred butler who accompanied Lucy's sister . His real mission was to find Lucy and protecting her sister isn't necessary as she's strong enough to protect herself .

Although he paid a heavy price for the divination, it'll be worth it if he finds his target . It couldn't be the young miss, however, everyone else is a suspect, even Emily and the princess .

He gazed at the cultivators who, one by one, passed through the wide gates of the garden and entered this dangerous place .

The moment Arthur stepped into the garden, he was separated from Lucy but it'll not be a problem as they'll meet at the second level .

The first level of the garden isn't particularly hard, it's tricky and needs a good pair of eyes . It wasn't some kind of boss fight but a maze, a big and threatening maze .

Arthur, using his senses and eye abilities, easily and almost immediately located the exit . Despite the size of this maze, it was still within the range of his [Sixth Sense] . He could see the energy of the invisible traps so avoiding them is a piece of cake .

He couldn't locate any other cultivator even when his sense covered the whole maze so he leisurely made his way toward the end . Arriving first wouldn't be favorable for him so he only arrived at his destination after three hours .

Sadly, the moment he was teleported out of that place and sent into a large circular room, he could see none but himself . It was then that he understood that he was the first to arrive, obviously .

Shortly after, Lucy appeared a distance away . She waved her hand and softly smiled, happy to see him here too .

Arthur appeared before her and used his Space Magic, making both of them invisible as they entered a spatial dimension .

It would need an expert in Space Magic to locate them and even then, it'll not be a certainty as Arthur activated three more Stealth skills .

Thirty minutes after Lucy's arrival, the silver-haired woman appeared . She was followed by the ghost, who was as silent and gloomy as ever .

The two ignored each other and sat in a corner of the room . The fourth and fifth person appeared exactly at the same time, it was the two females friends, Emily, and the princess .

Shu Ru managed to arrive too albeit a bit later . From the sixty-two that entered the maze, only thirty-eight came out alive .

Surprisingly, Jace was the last to arrive but he seemed unscathed, just a bit annoyed . As for Arthur and Lucy, they disabled the Space Magic when the normal cultivators started appearing .

No one noticed them hiding, which was a good thing . Like always, Jace and the silver-haired woman joined them, even the Ghost decided to approach them .

People started grouping up for it was more efficient in a place like this, were joining hands is beneficial and would increase the chances of survival .

When everyone arrived and things calmed down, a small, bright creature appeared at the center of the circular room . She looked similar to a fairy, her body glowed with a green light as her small illusory wings flapped with abnormal speed .

"Greetings, contestants!"

She politely bowed before waving her hands, causing flashes of light to fall in the people's hands .

"I've handed you the rewards for the first level . The less time it took you to clear the maze, the better the reward . "

The flash of light soon transformed into a grey item, a ring, to be more specific . Arthur inspected it for a few seconds before using appraisal

The Star Ring (Unique): Increase the power and efficiency of Space Magic by 30%

Grants a new stat: Camouflage +1 . 5

Camouflage: A stat that allows the user to escape the sense of his enemies . Every point is a realm higher than the user 'Arthur MoonStar' .

Arthur frowned as he read the description of the ring, it seemed this was tailored just for him . It couldn't be just a coincidence . Lucy nudged his sleeve and passed the item she received .

It was a ring similar to his but pure white and a bit cold .

The Moon Ring(Unique) : Increase the power and efficiency of Yin Magic by 10%

Grants a new stat: Splash 10%

Splash: Every attack of the user will cause a splash damage to nearby enemies . If an AoE Skill is used, the damage will be doubled .

'It really isn't a simple garden . '

Lucy never used her powers in this floating land yet it knew everything about her, just like him . Moreover, the rings were quite powerful and granted them new stats . These were just the rewards of the first level, what about the other ones?

Arthur imitated Lucy and put the grey ring on his finger . Some people got weapons, while others got artifacts . Even Jace got something useful despite being the last .

He got a consumable which tripled his strength for a day, it wasn't as good as their rings but it was still a fascinating item .

After handing the rewards, the fairy-like creature covered her mouth and giggled as she saw their surprised expressions .

"Hehehe~~ this is nothing compared to future rewards . If you can clear the third level, you'll even get Godly items . "

She clapped her hands to grab their attention then resumed talking with a melodic and sweet voice

"The second level this time is actually a game!"

She waved her hand, changing their location . They were transported to a rectangular room that was a bit similar to a baseball court .

"What is better than dodge ball?"

She heartily laughed and spawned a normal ball from nothingness then added:

"I prefer teams with eighteen players each so two will be left out but don't worry, you won't be disqualified but you'll be granted access to the third level though you won't gain any rewards . "

Just as she said that, two robbed men raised their hands, clearly wanting to skip this level .

The fairy shook her head and said

"To make it fair, the two lucky ones will be chosen at random . "

She then waved her little hand, causing two arrow of light to start spinning in the air before they randomly hit two people, startling them but not hurting them .

The two people were Shu Ru and the ghost, the former was surprised and a bit delighted, as for the bandage man, he showed no reaction .

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The group of cultivators was split into two teams by the fairy creature . Fortunately, Lucy and Arthur belonged to the same team . Emily and the princess were also with them, however, the silver-haired woman was in the opposite team .

The game is simple with clear rules, if the ball hits you and then touches the ground, you're out . Even if you're part of the winning team, it doesn't mean you'll directly pass to the third level . Everything is calculated based on performance, meaning that if you do nothing and get hit at the beginning, you're most likely going to be sent out of the garden .

For people with their status, playing such a childish game may be humiliating or demeaning, however, none dared to object . This was the Paradise Garden and they have to follow the rules, no matter how absurd they were .

The levels are always random and will never be the same as the ones in the past, nevertheless, Arthur never expected to play dodge ball in here .

Knowing the physical strength of everyone here, it won't be a normal match of dodge ball, still, it's bound to be fun with Lucy's sister as the enemy .

They were given special clothes to distinguish themselves from the other team . The number of players is a bit high but the place of the match is considerably wide too so it had no problem fitting thirty-six people .

Arthur and Lucy remained at the back, gazing at the back of their teammates . Through a simple coin flip, it was decided who'll get the first shot, their team, luckily .

Being the most powerful and famous ones, Emily and the princess took the lead . Amidel's daughter looked cute as changed her hair to a ponytail and even wore tight sports clothes . The princess stood next to her friend, her tall blond hair mesmerizing many of her teammates .

The match smoothly started, the lively girl didn't hold back as she hit the nearby enemies, not letting them enough time to escape .

Although it was a normal ball, it was strengthened by her Nether Energy thus it was stronger and faster, and that's while excluding the force behind her throw . After hitting four cultivators, the silver-haired woman finally joined the fight as she jumped in the air and snatched the flying ball, which was about to return to Emily .

The woman's body spun in the air as the ball turned illusory, it whistled in the air as it made its way toward Emily .

The girl swiftly jumped to the side, easily dodging the ball only for it to pass through the cultivators that were just behind her and hit two unsuspecting females, which were teleported out of this place the moment the ball fell on the ground .

Some cultivators wanted to show their strength in front of the two beautiful girls only to fail miserably as the silver-haired woman took the lead, not letting the others get a glimpse of the ball .

She would catch it mid-air and send it back with double the strength . Her body was flexible as it dodged the ball by a hair's width .

She hit nine people before Emily and the Princess started retaliating . Using their powers, they would slow down Lucy's sister before getting rid of the weaklings .

In the end, Emily's side had six people remaining . As for the other side, only the silver-haired woman and Jace were left .

Speaking of the muscular black man, he participated for a bit and killed three then retreated to the back, unwilling to disturb the excited Silver-haired woman, who seemed to enjoy playing .

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Her indifferent face was a bit red, either from excitement or tiredness . The secret Realm greatly weakened and she had been doing her best to resist the two girls for more than two hours .

They weren't a short pause to rest so they went at it for more time than they had initially predicted . Emily, the princess, Arthur, Lucy, and two others, who were quite decent, started to cooperate .

Jace, however, remained motionless, like a statue or a thick pillar . He was far away from Emily's team, who didn't pay him much attention and focused on hitting the fast woman .

She made great use of her Dark Void Physique as she would pass through the ball every time they think they hit her .

Arthur and Lucy would stay at the back and merely dodge, they haven't thrown the ball even once . Emily and the princess were a bit selfish as they would always snatch the ball and attack, not passing it to them so they could try their luck .

Well, it's not like it mattered, they'll act when these two girls are out . As it was taking more time than necessary, Arthur decided to lend a hand to the enemy .

The silver-haired woman stretched her hand and caught the spinning and fastball, which pushed her three or four meters but was still unable to escape from her hands .

She ran toward the two girls before swinging down her hand, throwing the explosive ball at them .

The princess side-stepped to the side, barely dodging the ball, which strangely deviated in the air and flew toward Emily .

Who tried to dodge only to land in front of the flying ball . The girl raised her hand, trying to hold the ball only for it to deviate again, hitting her right in the face .

Arthur, who was behind this, inwardly snickered, enjoying the show .

'Serves you right . '

It was a team game yet these two girls only thought about themselves, it wasn't fair and the other teammates didn't dare to talk .

The gravity suddenly increased, causing the ball to quickly fall on the ground . The princess, who manipulated her mysterious pink energy, trying to catch the ball, was left surprised as Emily was teleported out .

The blond-haired princess grumbled as her expression changed, she picked the ball and glared at the enemy . She crouched her body then shot up like a rocket, she only stopped when she reached the line separating the two teams .

The body, infused with an abundance of the pink energy, zigzagged in the air as its traveled toward the silver-haired woman .

From out of nowhere, a tall and muscular black man, who had steam emitting from his whole body, jumped in the air and grabbed the spinning ball . His large hand tightly held the ball, which caused him to be pushed back some distance but he still safely landed .

He cracked his neck and heartily laughed before taking a deep breathe and throwing the ball, not bothering to aim at any of his enemies .

The ball wasn't fast but it cracked the ground under it, leaving a trail similar to the one left by an earthquake . Without a doubt, Jace wanted to get rid of them all at once .

Arthur, Lucy, and the two other teammates jumped in front of the back, each one supporting the other . The one at the front was Lucy, who bravely used her hands to catch the ball .

Obviously, the destructive ball wasn't able to injure her and if she wanted to, she could easily stop it from advancing but that'll ruin the good act .

Through good cooperation, the four managed to stop the ball but the one at the back was pushed out of the ring, instantly disappearing . This leaves four one time and two one the other .

For the first time since the beginning, Lucy had the ball in her hand . The princess stared at her but didn't demand the ball .

Calmly, she walked toward Jace and her sister (supposedly) and swung her arm, sending the ball flying at the enemy .

She didn't use any energy or skills, just pure physical strength . Unlike the others one, this throw didn't look threatening so when Jace jumped to receive it, he didn't expect to be hit by a monstrous force, sending him out of the ring .

The ball fell on the ground and was only be picked ten seconds later by a surprised and excited woman . She knew that Lucy was good fighter but her strength was truly monstrous .

Jace was a powerful body cultivator yet he was so easily sent flying, in fact, Lucy didn't seem to be trying that hard when she threw that ball, it seemed casual .

Left alone against four people, the woman didn't seem worried . She greatly enjoyed this match of dodge ball, more than she expected, actually .

Who would have thought that a challenging game of dodge ball would be more thrilling than those boring fights . Most of her battles are short and unexciting, which why the silver-haired woman drastically changed during this 'fun' game .

Her two black pupils focused on Lucy, the brown-haired big sister . The ball turned purple and half-illusory, affected by the Dark Void Physique .

Like a roaring dragon, the ball flew toward the roof before descending like lightning, heading toward Lucy . Just as it was about to hit her, it changed direction, crazily spinning as it flew toward Arthur at the back .

Unfortunately, just as it was about to hit him, it was sucked by a space crack only to appear in front of the woman's face .

The ball hit her pretty face, surprising her, however, she was still able to catch it before it touches the ground . She never expected the use of Space Magic . She wasn't exactly sure of who it was but she suspected Arthur and the other cultivator that still remained .

Arthur walked up to the princess and shyly mumbled something to her ear . The girl pondered for a moment before resolutely nodding her head .

...

Three minutes later, the match ended with the win of Arthur's team . His plan perfectly worked and the silver-haired woman couldn't block the last blow thus she was teleported away .