

## Once Human 591

### Chapter 591

With only he and Zodiak on the 6th floor, Arthur didn't encounter any problem and caught as many as 30 rabbits all thanks to the treant appearance, which didn't alert any of the furry and adorable white animals .

Moreover, as this forest is vast, he has not heard or saw any signs of fighting which can only mean that Zodiak is either far away or had already finished the randomly given quota . Unlike the rest, Arthur was not in a rush and wanted to wait a bit for Lucy just to see how she's doing .

Obviously, he's not going to openly interact with her, nonetheless, it wouldn't hurt to go a bit slow . He managed to catch thirty rabbits in half an hour, which equals to one per minute, a decent pace, or so he thought .

There was no warning from the system that other contestants have passed the 5th floor, meaning that 'Haven' is not as simple as it seems .

Just like that, an hour quietly and peacefully passed and Arthur managed to reach half of the quota while wandering around and discovering new areas, which didn't look any different from the rest . There were just a few pine trees and a staggering amount of bamboo trees that kind of hindered his movement due to his size .

Anyway, at some point, Arthur stumbled upon two rabbits nibbling some half-grow grass, unaware of the parasite lurking close to them . Arthur maintained a safe distance and used his long-reaching vines that moved underground and swiftly attacked the unsuspecting animals .

Unfortunately, unlike earlier, the situation didn't proceed as smoothly . Arthur expected such an unfavorable outcome when he saw two rabbits at once and, as the tower said, two rabbits can bite .

The meaning is peculiar but enough for the parasite to tread with cautiousness and maintain what he deemed as a safe distance to escape or properly react in case something happened .

The vines that sprung from the ground touched naught but air as the two rabbits magically fused together and became a horned rabbit with a green fur . It was then that Arthur heard a whistling, almost ear-piercing sound, followed by an abrupt dizziness .

A monstrous force had sent his large body flying to the back, breaking all the bamboo trees and stopping only after a whopping kilometer . Arthur's treant form distorted and reverted back to his human appearance, which was all bloodied with his two arms bent to the back .

In just a few seconds, the arms returned to their normal state but Arthur, who was still processing what just happened, was stupefied to see 70% of his health gone . His high recovered quickly restored his health but the mental and physical shock remained for half a minute . He only snapped out of it when he heard the tower's voice speak directly to him .

\*Contestant Arthur MoonStar, you completed the necessary requirements to hear more details about the rules .

Two rabbits can bite; A green(50%) bites once, an orange(30%) bites twice, a purple(20%) bites thrice .

Once fused, rabbits attack the nearest source of danger . \*

After pondering for a few moments, Arthur changed into a White Tiger that was rather small in size, spiraling lightning appeared under its feet as it roared then vanished, its speed simply astonishing .

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\ "Teacher, what's the purpose of Haven? \ "

Saly handed a large bowl filled with popcorn to the Joker while asking him .

\ "Well, they're all strong but there is something even a powerful person does not have . \ "

The Magician smirked and winked at the white-haired innocent beastmen .

\ "What is it? \ "

Her eyes grew wide from curiosity and her tail was wagging left and right, clearly showcasing her impatience .

\ "Luck, my dear student . It's luck . \ "

...

Back on the 5th floor, many grew bored and frustrated as the tower informed them of no task or rules . Many roamed the barren land in search of clues but even after a two hours, which is more than enough time to go around the area more than ten times, not a single soul discovered something of interest .

Forne, G'am Tir, 'X' and Celes were grouped together and waiting for instructions while Lucy and the Void Behemoth were going around .

Unbeknownst to the Black Seat and his party, there was a pair of eyes watching them from a distance . Even with Forne and X's high perception, they failed to notice the gaze of the stranger, who was a woman with a black hair that reached her ankles . She entered the tower alone and none bothered her as she was average in terms of appearance and strength .

She had the cultivation of an average Overgod and excelled in melee combat though she never used any flashy techniques . This unfamiliar woman was, in fact, a terrifying being, the master of Stealth and the founder of necromancy, Xyktia the Assassin .

Her devoted follower wanted to tag along but there was a big chance that Forne would recognize the former White Seat so, in the end, she was left outside .

Unlike the rest of the contestants, Xyktia knew the way to the next floor but refrained from going first to avoid arousing any suspicions . Her identity must be kept a secret until she reaches the last floor and any unwanted attention will be problematic . Sure, she is strong but if she goes around defeating everyone, the Joker will definitely not stay still and she's not someone who can beat him in her current state .

Being imprisoned for thousands of years definitely weakened her and forcefully leaving the prison like this is affecting her, which is why she can't be out forever . If this matter wasn't so urgent, she wouldn't have hurriedly come here .

Fortunately, she didn't have to wait that long as a bulky contestant who wasn't wearing any top luckily found a trigger which enveloped him in light and teleported him to the 6th floor .

The rest went to his spot but it instantly returned to normal, sadly . Nonetheless, pretty much every one kind of understood the way to the next floor . There are hidden spots which can be accessed by stepping on them with moderate force .

All they needed was to find the hidden triggers and go up, which turned out more difficult than they imagined . In the next few minutes, six to seven people found triggers and were also teleported, which only riled up the desperately searching contestants .

"Ahh this is too boring for a task!"

Maxine grumbled while going around and randomly stomping spots in the barren ground, a sigh escaping her mouth every ten seconds . The armored dwarf was nonchalantly drinking alcohol, The thief was invisible and searching for a trigger while Tula, the young and quiet magician remained standing like a pillar, his hand clutching his magical staff . He was trying to use his high magic sensitivity to find the triggers, which won't work, unfortunately, as this task relies purely on luck .

The only reason Xyktia was able to locate triggers is because of the magic used to create the tower is the same as the creation magic all the Twelve have and this allowed her to see the constantly moving triggers that are being moved randomly every three to four seconds .

Fifteen minutes after the first lucky contestants were teleported, the Assassin also stepped on a trigger and went to a higher floor, unwilling to waste more time than needed .

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"Ha!"

Zodiak raised his staff and conjured a sturdy black barrier which completely negated the supersonic attack of a green rabbit . Whether it fails or succeeds its attack, the rabbit automatically disappears, however, before it was gone, Zodiak quickly captured it, earning two points .

While Arthur's quota was 120, Zodiak was not that fortunate . The old man needs exactly 790 rabbits, a relatively high number to reach, especially if more contestants arrive .

Arthur won't purposely hinder him but he knew of a few individuals who are antagonistic such as that lancer who pulverized thousands of Cthulhu alone .

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"Is there something on my face?"

Vyncent, who shaved his beard and fixed his dirty and unkempt hair, frowned upon seeing the little girl's intense gaze .

He was busy devouring the freshly roasted meat to fill his rumbling stomach and only noticed her stare a second ago . He wasn't acquainted with her and only knew the brown-haired man, who was actually the Black Devil, Timos .

Thanks to Timos' interference, Vyncent was saved and got some much-needed rest . Surprisingly, the little girl used Water Magic to heal all of his injuries and get him back to a healthy state, further invigorating him .

Obviously, the young man was grateful but confused about why Timos or the girl would help him .

"Nothing, I just sense a bad aura from you . "

After thinking for a moment, Vyncent retrieved a strange coin from his pocket and flipping around in order to show it to the curious girl .

"That's some dangerous thing you got . "

Timos came from the side and sat opposite of the blue-haired girl while commenting, though his eyes were focused on the fire at their center .

"I got it from Elias . "-Vyncent

"I'm neither demanding an explanation nor in need of details about the coin . It's yours so do it what you see fit . "

"I don't know what it does, though . "-Vyncent

Although he managed to acquire it after Elias died, he still doesn't exactly know its functions . It just felt eerie and seemed inexplicably evil .

"Lass, what do you think?"

Timos grinned and asked the quiet girl, who examined the coin from a distance .

"It seems like a soul transmitter . "

When hearing that, The Strategist chuckled and corrected her:

"Not quite... but close . "

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An hour or so after transforming into the White Tiger, Arthur caught a decent amount of rabbits, reaching the 90 mark, however, he didn't close to the two or three rabbits he stumbled upon . Even with his high stats, there was a high chance he'll get blasted . Sure, he can try to pass through the attack using the divine beast's unique ability but take a risk and see if it actually works .

Till now, Arthur doesn't know if it's a mental, soul, or physical attack . His consciousness wasn't affected but when the green rabbit sent him flying, a huge chunk of his health was depleted and it wouldn't be surprising to see the orange or purple rabbit straight out one-shot him .

If his health reaches zero due to a physical attack, he won't die but that doesn't mean it doesn't affect him at all, which is why he behaved with such wariness . It was long after catching the 95th rabbit that Arthur started sensing the presence of other contestants actively seeking targets . Moreover, the number of rabbits in the vicinity was slowly declining, making it more problematic not for him but for his wife, who has yet to arrive on the 6th floor .

What made matters worse is Zodiak, who crazily unleashed an absurd amount of Dark Magic, capturing a lot of rabbits all at once and immediately moving to the 7th floor . Arthur is also able to showcase such destructiveness using Rizaki or the other ultimate skills but, in doing so, it'll further decrease the chance of Lucy clearing the task . Furthermore, there's no need to act like that as he's almost done with the quota and is only lingering in the area for his wife's sake .

Zodiak's Dark Magic blast engulfed about 1/4 of the whole forest and turned into a corrupt place covered in a deadly fog . The rabbits weren't the only ones affected, two other contestants were hit but didn't die, nevertheless, they suffered heavy damages . One was a scythe-wielding man from the Heaven and Hell Universe while the other was cultivator originating from the 'Treasure' High-Realm .

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He was an elder from a sect called the Soaring Star sect and was a peak Overgod, because of what he unintentionally did, things became quite chaotic on Haven . He was delighted to see his foot step on a trigger and a light appear but that happiness was all but brief as there was an explosion which erased him from existence . The only thing left was a small piece of his taoist clothes falling from the sky .

Such an esteemed and powerful individual was killed in a split second due to the trigger, which was supposed to teleport him to the 6th floor . The spectators first felt confused then understood that there are two kinds of triggers, lucky and unlucky ones .

Most stopped carelessly stepping everywhere and readied themselves for a violent impact . Zoln, the dwarf in Maxine's party was pretty lucky as he was teleported to the Land of Rabbits unwillingly . He was sitting on a corner and chugging one bottle of alcohol after the other only for his butt to press a random trigger, enveloping in light and taking him elsewhere .

Seeing her comrade gone, Maxine got triggered as she wants to go too but she could only frustration by mumbling a few inaudible curse words . The thief, Tula, and the Shaman already went ahead and only she and the priest remained, further incensing the player .

The rate of which the contestants were getting teleported drastically increased, leaving only a few behind . Plus, the exploding traps became more abundant therefore increasing the fatality rate and endangering the remaining unlucky ones . Amongst the Black Seat's group, only he and Lucy were still on Haven, unable to find the right spot even after going around the area multiple times .

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\ "So... what do we do?" \

With his eyes focused forward, the thief asked the mage Tula, both of them gazing at a growling White Tiger that had electric currents dancing around its feet .

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\ "...\" \

The young man raised his staff and started injecting Mana just in case Arthur attack, which he didn't . He crossed paths with them yet again but this time, none initiated a battle . They just appeared on the 6th floor and the parasite was in no mood to fight these two players .

After a long round of staring, the divine beast turned blurred before vanishing from their sight . It dashed in the opposite direction, easily bypassing the countless bamboo trees and continuing its hunt of rabbits .

Only ten were left to finish the quota and he was planning to leave only one or two before comfortably waiting for Lucy . Her late arrival was making him worry and hesitate on whether to stay or head to the 7th floor, which is, presumably, a free for all meant to reduce the still ballooned number of contestants and, basically, fish out the tough ones .

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The reincarnator, Losha, was just about to grab a fleeing rabbit only for a white shadow to pass by her and swiftly steal the target, making her frown and give chase for a few seconds before realizing who it actually was .

Seeing the White Tiger and its absurd speed, she managed to easily guess its identity and gave up on mindlessly chasing a troublesome target such as Arthur . She had no enmity with him but she did dislike him and want to beat some sense to him but it wasn't the right place, just like last time .

As for Arthur, he, of course, did that on purpose just to irritate the female blacksmith . He was just passing by and saw her thanks to his map so he decided to do such a childish thing, which turned out to be not that hard since Losha wasn't really taking this 'hunt' too seriously, after all, she's neither activating her Physique nor taking out her Divine Sword, also known as, Grail .

Less than a minute after encountering Losha, the leaping White Tiger was stopped by a rapidly flying light lance heading towards it .

The parasite activated the beast's unique ability, which caused the lance to pass right through his body, however, doing so made the projectile hit two rabbits, which instantly fused .

Arthur turned to look at the man wearing a big white hood and holding a lance made of Holy Magic . He was the same lancer that was pulverizing Cthulhu back on the 4th floor and, from the looks of it, the lance was aimed at him and not the rabbits .

Speaking of the rabbits, an orange one appeared the moment the spear got close . Sadly, the lancer's attack disintegrated when it made contact with the rabbit, which glared at the tiger close to it .

Seeing the rabbit preparing to attack again, Arthur ignored the assailant and instantly changed forms . The White Tiger was replaced by a black tortoise double its size and covered in black shells that emitted a pure Earth Energy .

Fortunately, Arthur made just in time to block the rabbit's first attack, which, unlike last time, didn't fling him far away and only pushed him dozens of meters to the side, breaking a few trees on the process . Some shells cracked but none were destroyed, moreover, his health decreased by a meager 5% .

Now, Arthur was further away from the rabbit than the lancer was so, the small orange-furred animal unleashed its last attack on the man, who threw a couple of lances at Arthur only for them to explode when hitting the unbreakable earthen layer surrounding the Divine Beast .

Noticing the drastic change in the situation and the direness he was currently in, the man tried to turn around and flee only for his body to fall on the ground due to the abruptly changing gravity . His muscles bulged as he tried to resist but his surroundings distorted and his senses were lost as Arthur cast a realistic illusion which bought enough time for the rabbit to attack .

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The lancer didn't have an incredibly high defense like other, neither could he take the form of the Black Tortoise, which is famous for its unbreakable body, so it didn't come at a surprise when he was blasted far, far away, leaving only a trail of blood in his way .

He was sent flying so fast that Arthur could not follow him with his eyes, nevertheless, the result was positive, as he expected from a blow from the orange rabbit . Even with the Holy Attribute, the man focused purely on the offensive and was not fast enough to evade or block a supersonic blow hence his miserable and fully deserved demise .

His body became a bloody rag as it rolled on the ground dozens of times before stopping near the feet of a black-haired woman, who snorted and crushed his head as if it was nothing . He couldn't even groan from the pain or beg for mercy and ended up dying like a dog .

After confirming that the man was directly hit, Arthur paid him no attention and left the area, without forgetting to return to the White Tiger form, of course, as it is more practical in this crowded terrain .

Meanwhile, just when the lancer perished, things became a bit chaotic outside of the tower, which was no longer empty and, instead, was filled with several rows of Holy Knights, priests, Bishops, and Cardinals .

\ "Edd died . \ "

A middle-aged woman wearing a clean set of white armor reported the death of her comrade to a calm young man standing in front of her . He was admiring the shining Red Tower, unaware of the unwelcome gazes he was getting from nearby cultivators .

Many people waited in the vicinities of the tower, hoping that their clan or sect member succeeds in obtaining good rewards . However, their number paled in comparison to the staggering army stationed all around the massive tower . The pope ordered for the army to seize Arthur MoonStar alive and bring him to the Holy Cathedral situated in their HQ but this righteous looking youngster who was in charge of this operation had no interest in capturing the parasite .

Yes, he was definitely curious about this rising enigma who caught the interest of many powers but he found it ludicrous to try and capture him alive and bring him back . Such an infamous individual is bound to have powerful allies just like he has terrifying enemies and repeatedly provoking him will only bring a disaster upon the Holy Dominion .

On the outside, the young man didn't object the Pope's direct order but his real opinion on the matter has yet to be voiced and, as a matter of fact, it'll for sure anger the leader of the dominion and make him regret sending this young man named Seraph, titled 'The Light General' .

While the few individuals with a rank lower than Seraph were nervous about the lancer's death, a funnily-clothed man walked up from afar, unperturbed by the suffocating Holy energy lingering in the air

. He wore an over-sized hat that had multi-colored feathers like a peacock, purple pants that looked like sacks and a flute on his right hand .

\ "Sup . \ " The troubadour raised his hand in greeting whilst smiling at Seraph, who remained expressionless . Unlike the Light General, many didn't know of Aneirin and found his casual behavior rather impudent, which led to one of the higher-ranked Holy Knights to step up to the bard . Sadly, before he could finish the second step, the woman behind Seraph blocked him with his hand and signaled him to return to his position .

\ "But Com-\ "

Before he could finish, she snapped out him by saying: \ "Go back to your position and wait for further instructions . \ "

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The cause of this problem was chuckling while witnessing the comical interaction . He sized up Seraph from head to toe then said:

\ "My my, aren't you a handsome dude . \ "

In response, Seraph frowned and retorted:

\ "Bard, what is it that you want?\ "

Usually, the youngster was a calm person but, unfortunately, he didn't have a sense of humor and disliked people who seek attention .

Aneirin pointed at himself, confused about the question .

\ "Me? I don't remember asking for anything . Anyway...\ " He whistled as he glanced at the large army behind Seraph before continuing: \ "These are some fancy armors . The Dominion really has fat pockets . \ "

The woman, a commander under Seraph creased her brows and angrily said:

\ "It is not a place for you to wander around . \ "

Hearing this, the poet laughed and walked toward the woman, stopping inches away from her .

\ "So... what are you going to do about it? Are you going to hit me?\ "

He leaned his face closer and motioned for her to hit it .

\ "Come on, do it! I dare you! I double dare you to touch me!\ "

In the end, the woman remained motionless but her face was flushed from embarrassment and rage . She was gutting for him, especially what he just did but she couldn't bring herself to do anything .

\ "Tsk! No balls . Even with such a big army, you're still all bark but no bite . Though, at least you're wise . \ "



He removed some dust that accumulated on the commander's shoulder guards before retreating and shifting his attention to Seraph, who kept his cool and expressionless .

"I presume all of this is for my friend Arthur? Woaah, it really is a big surprise party . I expected no less from you guys...'always' one step ahead . "

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"What are you doing here?"

A very handsome man with long blond hair and wearing a white and golden armor flinched upon hearing the familiar voice come from behind . He turned around only to see a crow stare back at him, making him sweat and open his mouth a few times, trying to speak but the sudden shock rendered him momentarily mute .

"Since when has it been your hobby to watch mortals?"

The crow spoke again, this time with a more aggressive tone .

It was at that time that Sedos remembered Timos' warning but then again, it's too soon for the Watcher to appear .

"Y-you see... I, I'm just looking around . "

"Kid, don't try that trickery with me . I know everything about you and it's very clear for me what you're doing . Stop it while I'm still being civil . "

Feeling desperate, Sedos got on his knees and bowed his head while pleading:

"Bilgart, p-plea . . "

Before he could finish, a darkness enveloped him and made him cry before disappearing into a very distant place . The only thing left was the Crow, which stared at the massive red tower for a while before disappearing too as if nothing had happened .

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Fortunately, no one attacked or bothered Arthur after the lancer's death, making the rest of his hunt worry-free . He stopped at 118 rabbits and started thoroughly searching for Lucy, though it didn't take much longer to receive a pleasant notification .

\*Contestant Beatrice Lokmov invited to join her party . Do you accept?\*

Arthur immediately accepted as he knew that Beatrice is Lucy's cover name . Actually, you can purchase a one-time used item from the Luxury Store that allows you to party with others to increase efficiency and facilitate the completion of a certain task, which may require cooperation .

Just like a game, Lucy's name was added to the side and her location now shown on his map . They can't communicate yet but he felt relieved that she finally arrived on the 6th floor .

Hopefully, the number of rabbits she needs to catch is not staggeringly high as many contestants already arrived and it's not as easy as before to find the tiny white animals .

Less than five minutes later, Arthur and Lucy met up in a spot like any other . Bamboo trees were still abundant and you could notice one or two thick pine trees in the area, as for rabbits, there were no signs of them .

\ "Hey . \ "

Arthur lightly hugged the excited Lucy then caressed her head as she smiled . Her face and hair were different but her reactions didn't change, giving him a sense of the usual familiarity .

\ "Did you receive the quota? \ "

\ "En! It's 200 . \ "

\ "Hmm it isn't much . \ "

Arthur looked around, stretching his Sixth sense but found only a few scattered rabbits .

\ "There's no point searching for every rabbit individually . \ "

Hearing this, Lucy creased her brows, not quite following him .

\ "What do you propose then? \ "

\ "Well, Zodiak used a very effective method . If we blast the whole place, you'll instantly reach your quota and we'll both advance to the next floor . \ "

After thinking for a couple of seconds, Lucy said: \ "Forne and the rest are also here . They'll notice us for sure . \ "

\ "Yes, they'll notice me but they don't know we're in a party . I'll be the one destroying things, you just need to stay put . \ "

The White Specter frowned, disliking his idea . Not because it wasn't good but due to what he said a second ago... about her not doing anything . She doesn't want to be too reliant on Arthur, especially when she has enough power to complete the task by herself .

\ "How about this? \ "

She leaned closer to Arthur and whispered something to him, soon making him change the plan . What Lucy proposed is that, instead of incurring the wrath of almost all the contestants by blowing up the floor, it'll be better to act as if the two were fighting .

After all, to the public, the two were strangers so it won't be surprising to see two contestants fights, plus, the tower didn't forbid battles .

\ "The rest won't be suspicious but Forne will know about us . \ "-Arthur

\ "Yes, he probably will . \ " She shrugged her shoulders, appearing rather unperturbed: \ "But so what? It's not like he can do anything . You're part of Black Rose and my role was to stop you . I don't think he'll openly do anything because he knows he can't face us both . \ "

\ "There are also 'X' and the rest . \ "-Arthur

\''X'? He most certainly will never involve himself with you . He finds you to be troublesome and not worth the effort . Contrary to what you might think, he's actually lazy and never takes unnecessary risks . The behemoth only cares about Sol'khin and G'am Tir isn't that powerful . Only Celes is will follow Forne in times of need . \"

\\"Alright . You used the Party Ticket, right? How much points did you gain from the last floor?\"

\\"5,700 points . The ticket only costs 200 . There's also a ticket that can force you out of the tower if you ever wish so . It'll be used in emergency situations but the weaker groups . How about you?\"

\\"A little bit less than 60,000 points . Apparently, defeating Sol'khin netted me and Zodiak a lot of points but I found nothing of use to me in the store . If you need anything, do let me know . \"

Lucy chuckled and shook her head, also considering the Luxury Shop as not that useful, especially if you have a small number of points . The really good and miraculous artifacts cost exorbitant amount and they'll not be able to get their hands on those anytime soon .

Honestly, she wanted that Ice Phoenix Blood but it can wait for later . The Yin Power can merge well with the phoenix' ice and boost her powers by a significant amount, perhaps even allowing her to break through to the Exalted God Realm .

The couple initiated their plan ten minutes later in a populated area of the forest that has a large number of rabbits . In fact, excluding Arthur and Lucy, there were a few contestants fighting for various reasons, which most are idiotic . Though, the more powerful ones such as Ber Von Xin were going around and hunting one rabbit at a time without minding the nearby conflicts .

Unfortunately, things became messier when a miniature orange sun rose into the sky and attracted the attention of most of the present contestants . The sun released an unbearable heat and shone brighter than the artificial sun hanging in the sky . It rose two to three hundred meters, became two times larger than violently exploded .

Many were alarmed and hastily retreated to not get hurt by the explosion or the spreading vermilion flames . The trees were incinerated and many rabbits died but the caster of this sun, Arthur, wasn't teleported to the next floor even after finishing his quota .

As he was in a party, he was given the option to remain and help his teammate, which he obviously accepted . Furthermore, the sun didn't hurt the nearby Lucy, who should have been injured but thanks to party buff, which rendered deactivate 'friendly fire', she escaped unscathed .

Nonetheless, to make the act more believable, she purposely burnt part of her clothes and coughed some fake blood . The deafening exploding sun caught the attention of many people like 'X', the Sword God, Losha, and even Xyktia .

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\\"Greetings, milady . \"

A brown-haired man bowed before a prison cell while smiling . On the other side of the bars, with chains binding every part of her body, there was a woman with black and purple hair, some flashy muscles and a unique and eye-catching beauty . She was one of the Twelve, also known as, Zaaarae .

\ "What are you doing here?\ "

Timos lifted his head and acted hurt, uncaring about the gazes he was getting from two identical youths that were locked inside the cell adjacent to Zaarae's .

\ "Is that a way to greet an old friend?\ "

The Parasite Empress burst out in laughter as she saw him act so intimately .

\ "Tell me, Black Devil, when have we ever been friends?\ "

\ "Huh, you still got that venomous mouth . \ "

\ "What else would I have in this filthy place?! \ "

She wriggled around, trying to make herself more comfortable but that only made the magical chains restrict her even more and inject weakening fluids that are very effective against her .

\ "Yes, it is indeed an unwelcoming place . I've thought a lot before coming here... I cannot say that I didn't hesitate . \ "

\ "... \ "

Zaarae only gazed at Timos, not saying anything for a long while .

\ "What is it that I, the one imprisoned here, can do for you that makes you come all the way here? If it's you, I doubt it'll be something simple . \ "

\ "Oh please don't get me wrong! I'm free after such a long time so I came here to see an old friend who's still struggling in solitary confinement too . Back then, didn't you do the same?\ "

He paused for a split second before clearing his throat and resuming:

\ "Unlike me, you're more active person who seeks and provides help . I'm just wondering if your beliefs have changed . \ "

\ "Why does it matter?\ "-Zaarae

\ "It truly does, very much so . \ "

He walked closer to the cell, took a strangely long and deep breath before crouching down and meeting the woman's stare .

\ "You remember Arthur, right?\ "

The moment he uttered that name, Zaarae flinched but didn't say anything . Timos chuckled and spoke again:

\ "I suppose you do . It was foolish of me to think you forgot about him, after all, you and Moriah were particularly fond of him . \ "

\ "Hmpf! It depends which Arthur you're referring to . \ "

\ "Well of course the one who gave us our names! Hahahaha . \ "

\ "Get to the point!\ "

The Black Devil passed through the cells as if they didn't exist and stopped in front of the bound Empress . Though she disliked his way of talking, the two weren't really enemies, so Zaarae merely watched him with a frown on her peerless face .

\ "That day... I bet you remember it as vividly as I do . And, unlike the rest of us, you clung onto him... what is it that you called it? Ah, yes! Love . \ "

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\ "Ugh can't you two lay low for one damned floor?\ "

'X' grunted and retreated away from the sea of fire . He teleported hundreds of meters away and clicked his tongue, unhappy that he got forced out of a good spot, nevertheless, he didn't interfere in their fight and quickly resumed the hunt .

Ber Von Xin remained rooted in his spot, uncaring about the fire which did touch him but did close to no damage . He was admiring the fire bird stretching its beautiful and wide wings while releasing a wild screech which shook the whole forest .

The Divine Beast dived from the sky, flying directly at a pink-haired woman who counter-attacked using Earth . Using Lava against the Vermilion Bird's fire is a waste of Mana as it's vulnerable against special kinds of fire, still, Lucy managed to properly defend herself by raising a thick and tall wall that momentarily stopped the incoming beast .

A minuscule human and a massive bird clashed with each other but it ended up with Lucy being flung in the air then hit with an absurdly big flame tornado which turned the whole area into ashes . Arthur purposely made it this big and devastating so that the rabbits are 'caught' instantly .

In just a minute or so, the damage he did was enough for Lucy to reach more than half of the quota and force the other contestants out of the area . No one wanted to meddle into their affairs and very few had ample time to watch this flashy spectacle .

After staring at Arthur for ten or so seconds, Xyktia became uninterested . Her figure turned invisible and her steps became soundless as she merged with the environment and wandered the forest, not particularly in a hurry to reach the given number .

In the end, everything proceeded smoothly and as planned for the couple . Lucy caught the necessary rabbits and after a confirmation from the red tower, both the specter and the parasite were teleported to the next floor, however, right after they went up, another more brutal fight broke out .

It wasn't as destructive as what Arthur did, nevertheless, the two parties were top powerhouses and very famous in their Universe . It all began when Hach'ara stole a couple of rabbits from Maxine, which triggered the high-leveled player .

Even after half an hour, they were still going at it with the insect and poison master having a clear advantage . Even after chugging numerous potions to negate the dreadful poison of Hach'ara, Max was still unable to completely resist it and was ended continuously being attacked when her senses when weakened .

The ugly-looking old man never got close and controlled his various sized insects to hinder the relentless woman, who swung her sword around, unleashing one blast after another, killing hundreds of those small creatures at once .

\*\*\*\*\*

Unlike most of the mysterious floors of the Red Tower, the 7th floor was publicly known . Of course, they didn't know how the world looked but what's sure is that it's a battle royal to decrease the number of remaining participants .

Only a hundred people were needed from the 8th floor onwards so the goal of the 7th floor was to eliminate the extra ones . It is bound to be a bloody and difficult battle as not one of the contestants is considered weak and everyone will probably fight seriously .

As they were still in a party, both Arthur and Lucy appeared near each other and, like all the rest have arrived before them, the tower briefly explained what the 7th floor is all about .

It is called 'The Art of Stealing and the Beauty of Murder' and it was indeed a battle royal . Each contestant would have a small flag on their body and if you manage to steal someone else's flag, you get 25,000 points . If you kill another person without taking their flag, you get 5,000 points, and if you steal the flag of someone who has more than one, the value of each flag in his possession will be increased depending on the number of flags .

For example, you steal from someone who has two flags then you'll get 100,000 points, each gives 50,000, and if you steal from one who has three then you'll get 75,000 points for each flag .

In addition, the floor was kind of a massive chess board with white and black areas, each one has a width and length of 20m . When a player is on the black area, the number of flags in his possession will be shown above their head and his stats or cultivation will be increased by 20%, however, when they are on the white area, the number of flags will be hidden, including their own and they'll get no buffs whatsoever .

Basically, standing on the black areas is risky but advantageous, especially if you've stolen a considerable number of flags . The 'game' was complicated but the rewards are generous and with enough points, one can buy really good items from the Luxury Shop .

When only 100 participants remain, everything will end and they will be teleported to the 8th floor . Although not everyone completed the quota on the 6th floor, it didn't stop the event from starting, putting Arthur and Lucy in danger .

There appeared small white flags on their chest, near their heart, and since they were standing black area, their flags were openly shown . Before the couple could talk or think of a strategy, an invisible figure materialized behind Arthur .

It was the thief from Maxine's party, he was aiming at Arthur, precisely the back of his neck . He didn't want to kill him but stun him so that stealing the flag becomes easier . Right before the dagger could hit Arthur, the latter clicked his tongue and mumbled

"It's about time you're thrown out ."

The parasite snorted and activated his Time ability, dramatically slowing down the thief's movements and rendering him defenseless .

\*\*\*\*\*

"Teacher, why is the name of the floor so strange?"

The Joker chuckled and replied:

"It's the name of an old book I've read . I actually met the author too . "

Saly pondered for a moment before asking again:

"So just because you read the book you created a floor for him?"

"Hahaha of course not! I've met that man . He was the best thief that has ever existed . "

His hand, which was empty, was now holding a card sideways while grinning at his young student .

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Saly curiously stretched her hand and snatched the card . When she looked at it, she saw nothing but a white flag, visually unimpressive .

"He was fond of flags and when stealing, his targets are always random . He would distribute the flags in an unorthodox way and the ones who got a white one got robbed . The few unlucky ones who received a red flag were killed too . I found his method quite interesting and overall, he wasn't a bad person... if you exclude his psychopathic actions . "

"Ehmmm so why did you create this floor?"-Saly

"Each floor has a meaning for one or many people . This one is about Trickery and is perfect to see who's a good thief amongst those participants, who consider themselves noble and even righteous . "

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The thief who planned to sneak-attack Arthur using his Stealth didn't know that the parasite's Sixth Sense is constantly active and warns him of any incoming danger . Unless it's an opponent that can attack as fast as the rabbit on the 6th floor then Arthur will definitely react in time . His Agility is way above his peers and, only the ones who broke through the physical limit or using a skill or a technique that greatly boost speed can match him .

The thief did two things that were wrong, first, he attacked someone whose perception of the surrounding is very sharp, and, second, he engaged in a battle alone while being a squishy thief . With no one of importance around, Lucy didn't need to hold back, especially after seeing some aiming for Arthur . Just as the thief's movements were slowed by the Time skill, Lucy quickly spun and kicked the poor assailant .

Her leg struck the side of his abdomen, sending him flying like a kite, however, before he could stabilize his body, his ankle was grabbed by an irritated Arthur, who smashed his body on the ground, breaking many bones in the process .

By now, the only thing the thief could do was groan as he tried to reach into his pocket to retrieve something but a sudden burst of Dark Magic invaded his body and forcefully stopped all his body functions rendering him paralyzed .

The parasite crouched next to the wide-eyed thief, who didn't expect it to go this bad, and said:

"We've got no enmity so when you attack me once because of the task given by the tower, I don't really mind but..." He took a deep breath and leaned closer, his eyes flashing with a cold glint: "Your persistent attacks on every floor are getting annoying . I've got enough things to handle right now so your childish attacks are really no fun . "

Arthur's hand snatched a white flag from under the thief's clothes then he gripped his throat, about to kill him . The competition was never a fair one to begin with and keeping him alive would only complicate things later when he leaves the tower .

Just as Arthur was about to snap the thief's neck, a powerful Mana explosion came from out of nowhere and was about to hit him only for it to clash with a wall of golden flames . The flames completely blocked the Mana combustion and protected both Arthur and its caster, Lucy .

Dozens of meters away, there stood a robbed young mage with his staff out and ready to attack again .

"Stop!"

Tula was not a talkative person but when he saw his teammate half-dead, he was forced to open his mouth . Surprisingly, Arthur listened to the youngster as he stood up and lifted the weakened thief in the air .

The parasite stared back at the distressed Tula, who didn't dare attack again for fear of losing his friend .

"Spare him and we will leave the tower . "

"Spare him? Don't you think your request is absurd . "

The mage raised threw his staff on the ground and raised his hands . He had a distressed expression and didn't dare try anything sneaky lest Arthur does something heinous .

"I'll give you my flag and we'll use the Escape Ticket . There's no need to bloodshed . "

Slowly, Tula marched toward the couple, his eyes leaving the thief suspended mid-air . When he got within a meter of Lucy, she pointed her index at his chest and released a blue beam which made him stop his walk . A freezing energy invaded his body and wrapped around his heart, making the young man cough some blood .

"Try anything and you're dead . "

With a pale face, Tula nodded his head then glanced at the expressionless Arthur .

"Like you said, we share no enmity so please let it remain as so . We'll forget about all that happened here and won't cross paths again, hopefully . "



Just as said that, a loud and unpleasant shout came from the side . A short figure engulfed in raging flames shot at Lucy, aiming at Arthur . It was the axe-wielding dwarf whom Arthur faced on the lower floor .

He didn't aim at Arthur but just wanted to separated the latter from the thief in order to save his comrade . Tula was about to stop him but a swift figure lunged at the incoming dwarf, stopping his crazy charge and pushing back a couple of steps .

The flames enveloping the short warrior was overpowered by Lucy's golden flames, which melted the massive axe and forced the dwarf to take out magical items that poured Holy Water that extinguished the suffocating golden crow fire .

"Hot hot hot!"

He spun around like a lunatic while trying to put the fire off, he didn't even notice that he worsened the mood by attacking out of the blue . Unfortunately, just as he got rid of Lucy's fire, a cold beam struck him and, just like Tula, Lucy's Yin Power invaded his body, rendering him unable powerless .

"So... three flags, is it?"

Arthur talked to the young mage, who's expression became much worse after the dwarf's unwanted and unsuccessful interference .

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"Yes, please . "

Tula bowed his head and begged, sounding very sincere . Though, Arthur didn't accept the plea immediately . Personally, he didn't want to keep such troublesome people alive, however, their leader can be more than problematic, especially if starts another revenge cycle .

"Maxine is one of the top players in the System Universe . I don't think we should take the risk... . Let's just drop it since it didn't escalate much . "

Lucy telepathically talked to her husband, finding it better to accept Tula's request . Forne and the rest are more than enough to handle and, if Maxine also becomes an enemy, the couple won't be able to defend themselves .

In terms of strength, Maxine is above even the Black Seat and if she really puts her heart into it, she'll catch up to Arthur and fight him in no time .

Three minutes passed by and Arthur still has not made a decision . As for Tula, he was extremely nervous and apart from his heavy breathing, his expression wasn't so good either .

At last, Arthur let go of the thief, whose face became flushed due suffocating for some time . When he saw his friend safe and alive, the mage breathed a sigh of relief and walked up to him but before he do anything, Arthur stopped him and said:

"The flag . "

The young man pulled a small white flag from under his robe's sleeves and handed it to Arthur, uncaring about the consequences . He forced the panting thief to chug a Healing potion then used the Escape Ticket to leave the area . The dwarf was the last and his unwillingness was apparent as he spat on the ground in anger and inaudibly cursed . While shivering because of Lucy's Yin Power, he threw the flag on the ground and used the Escape Ticket, his eyes glaring at the couple looking back at him .

Chapter 597: 597

The three flags they just received were all given to Lucy as she's less likely to be attacked by strangers . Arthur was infamous amongst the contestants and there could be more people like the dead lancer who are aiming for his life .

"This event won't last for long so let's get more flags . "

Soon after, Lucy jumped on Arthur, who transformed into a big Azure Dragon . In such a large body, it won't be that easy to steal the flags from him, furthermore, this Divine Beast can use many ultimate skills such as the Dragon Breath or the Dragon Words, which some sort of absolute authority that no one can resist .

Due to their little act on the previous floor, Forne most likely knows about their reunion but he won't try anything funny . Arthur and Lucy decided to remain together and clear this floor by eliminating the other contestants and stealing their flags .

With the two of them joining hands, there is only a few individuals who can stop them, one of them is the Sword God, who Arthur abstained from even getting close to . Yes, the they recently become friends but this is a competition and there's not a convincing reason for Ber Von Xin to not steal the parasite's flag, or even Lucy's .

Two minutes after Arthur started flying over the massive chest board, he found the next target, a lone figure standing on the white area . Surprisingly, he was the scythe-wielding man from the previous floor, the one who got hit by Zodiak's Dark Magic .

Apparently, he managed to recover and seemed to be in a healthy state . His lengthy and curve scythe was vertically facing him while he had his eyes closed . Unfortunately, the peaceful experience he was in didn't last long as a dragon came flying at him, startling the man .

The beast opened its mouth and spat a sea of transparent red flames that fell down on the panicking man . In retaliation, the scythe-wielding contestant did a back-flip while at the same time swinging his weapon, sending multiple green arcs made of concentrated elemental energy .

Whatever the man unleashed, it didn't seem that impressive but those arcs were able to split the dragonic flames in two and head toward Arthur . Just as the dragon was about to get hit, two ice lotuses flew from above the dragon and blocked the green arcs, turning them into countless blue particles that dispersed within seconds .

The cultivator didn't linger there any longer and tried to get away from the large dragon but the latter was just too fast . Despite its massive body, it managed to fly with incredible speed and crash into the tiny fleeing figure .

The scythe was swung yet again, unleashing an even greater blast which locked both Arthur and Lucy for a few moments . The man used this time to attack again, raising the staff with one hand and holding a spiky red ball in the other .

Normally, the effect of the man's technique would last for at least ten seconds but due to the passive Arthur gained from the White Tiger, he was only frozen for five seconds before breaking free . Invisible Nether energy emanated from the dragon and shook the scythe, which showed signs of breaking . Seeing this, the man grit his teeth and stored his weapon before injecting more energy into the red ball then throwing it at the dragon, which opened its mouth, ready to execute its breath .

The red ball in the man's hand started brightening, making him throw it Arthur, who just cast the Dragon's breath and blasted an unstoppable violent fire upon the area before him . The minuscule red ball emitted a red light which seemed to distort reality and suck all the dragon's fire, however, it was only able to do so for a short while before it shattered, causing the rest of the skill to hit the man and fling him far away .

Arthur was about to follow up only for the wounded man to quickly get up, his body shaking all over and burnt . He raised his hand, indicating his surrender .

The dragon's fangs were about to bite down the small human body it stopped at the very last second . Seeing the parasite stop, the man let out a sigh and threw his white flag on the floor while saying:

"I lost . "

He didn't attempt anything and just used the Escape Ticket, soon disappearing from the floor .

"They're really strong . " Commented Lucy as she glanced at a red spot left by the strange red ball . It might have looked like a one-sided battle but the scythe-wielding man was powerful . It's just that Arthur has a wide variety of skills that allows him to counter most enemies . Moreover, he had Lucy with him to provide timely support hence the easy win .

An opponent such as the Black Seat or the Void Behemoth could prove to be more difficult, however . Anyways, after getting their 4th flag, Arthur left the area along with Lucy, who was now in possession of five flags in total .

The Azure Dragon was twirling in the area and looking for another target only to hear a deafening gunshot followed by a blast that sent him crashing into the metallic black ground . His stats were increased and the flags started emitting a bright white light that showed their exact locations .

The unseen attack took a huge chunk of Arthur's help and even broke the Dark Barrier almost instantly . Right after he fell on the ground, a silhouette came running from afar while firing actual laser beams at the Azure Dragon .

The assailant was a real humanoid robot equipped with various technologically advanced weapons . It also had a strange-looking sniper rifle on its back . Arthur changed form and returned to being human, however, the gunshot was visible and would not recover even when he cast Life Magic . It hit the lower right part of his chest and broke some ribs, there was even a lot of blood leaking out .

While holding his chest, he glared at the incoming robot, which lacked any kind of face and its place was some sort of a cannon, which was readying itself .

A graceful and swift figure went pass Arthur and faced the robot, which fired multiple beams, trying to get rid of the white specter . Unfortunately, the beams were stopped by the nine lotuses protecting Lucy, and just when she reached it, a bigger lotus came to life and froze everything around her .

The robot was momentarily frozen but, it broke free within seconds and fired the cannon at Lucy, who was ready to receive it . She stretched her hand and unleashed a mysterious white flame that engulfed the cannon blast and directly hit the robot .

It was only a small fireball but the damage it did was truly frightening . More than a third of the robot either melted or turned into ice and it soon started Livingston, barely able to stand still . Instead of finishing it, Lucy appeared before it and struck with her legs, destroying several parts with each hit until the victim could only wriggle . It didn't feel pain but it was broken beyond repair though Lucy showed no signs of stopping .

A distance away, Arthur was still struggling to heal his injury . At first, Water or Life energy weren't able to get rid of the bullet inside of him so he had to resort to a more forceful way .

He used the minuscule Void Mouths to get rid of the internal damage, disregarding the risks involved . While it worked, the Void Mouths only vanished after devouring some of his organs, further lowering his health .

Nevertheless, he successfully got rid of the problem, and thanks to his high recovery, he went back to full Health in ten or so minutes .

"Master, the bullet had Dark Matter in it . It is superior to Nether Energy and can't be affected by elemental Magic . "

Hearing the Quad-Spirit, Arthur grit his teeth and said: "Yeah, I noticed that . "

After confirming that his body was back to its peak state, he walked to Lucy . She turned the robot into an absolute wreck and was now holding what seemed to be its core in her hand .

The core was a jet black orb that was incredibly heavy... to the point that Lucy was able to hold it only for a few seconds before it fell from her hand .

"I didn't know the robots from the System are also here . "-Lucy

"I did notice a few back in the Waiting Room but I couldn't gauge their power . They also don't seem to be in cahoots with Maxine . "

Chapter 598

"Why did it aim for you? I'm the one with the flags . "

Lucy was confused about the robot's actions, which seemed illogical . Arthur had no enmity with them and as one of the contestants, it's more beneficial to take down the one with the most flags . Even Arthur didn't know why he was attacked, nonetheless, he didn't dwell too much on the matter .

He walked up to the robot and transformed into a small black whirlpool that attempted to enter robot only for it to be pushed back . The robot didn't resemble its original form, however, with Arthur's current race, he just needs a main part of a host to be able to possess it . For example, if he were to

possess a head, the rest of the body will instantly recover, it's an advantage he didn't have back in the day .

Sadly, when he tried to possess the robots, it didn't work at all .

"Not working?"-Lucy

"Apparently not . " He sighed and appraised the robot but the results were unsatisfactory and too little .

"I think it's considered an object and not a living being . It's unfortunate . "

That was the only explanation for the rejections he just experienced . The robot was strong and it had interesting skills, some which can be very helpful to the parasite but it didn't seem he'll be able to get his hands on them anytime soon .

"I've heard that robots such as this one are the main force of the System Universe . The players are not as obedient as those mindless machines... come to think of it, wasn't Lolitta half-human half-machine?"-Lucy

She mentioned the pink-haired little girl who was annoyingly loud and talkative . She disappeared from Earth and up to this day, Arthur has no idea where she went but it certainly had to do with the capsule he entrusted her to safe keep and decipher .

"There's also this core . "

As he had more Strength than Lucy, Arthur was able to lift the robot's black core and inspect it . Appraisal gave no results and the energy lurking inside the ball was ominous and very dangerous . It made his Dark Magic turbulent and momentarily unstable .

"This should be the infamous Dark Matter?"

"En! On the Cloud Sea Universe, Nether Energy is commonly used, followed by Mana and Qi . However, in the System Universe, most players rely on Mana while robots use Dark Matter, a volatile and powerful type of energy . I've heard my sister once mention Antimatter, a unique kind of energy that's very hard to produce and can counter everything . Supposedly, only a few expensive robots can use it in all the multiverse . "

Arthur tried probing the black robotic core using different kinds of attributes but none worked . It couldn't even be stored inside Zodiac's ring so he was forced to give it up .

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When she had beaten the robot into a wreck, Lucy retrieved its flag and once again increased the expected number of points she'll receive when this event is over . Quite surprisingly, even after lingering in this area for ten minutes, there was no one who attacked them or even got close .

It wasn't that people were scared but the place was insanely huge and the number of contestants isn't proportionally smaller . When the couple was about to leave, the voice of the Red Tower rang inside their head .

\*All the rabbits on the 6th floor have been caught . 59 contestants will immediately be disqualified . \*

After a very brief silence, it spoke again .

\*129 contestants are on the 7th floor . The event will end when only 100 are left . \*

\*Special notice: Contestant Losha Alpenwatcher was able to kill three rabbits (merged) and earned 2,000,000 points along with a special pass to the 8th floor . \*

"Tsk! I really don't like her . "

Arthur coldly commented, causing Lucy to chuckle at his childish behavior . Though she was only Losha's disciple for a short time, she was eternally grateful and knew that the female reincarnator was a good person despite her grumpy attitude and overbearing arrogance .

...

A couple of minutes later, Arthur and Lucy found two presences, both engaged in a heated fight against each other . One was a familiar middle-aged man with long black hair and piercing eyes, the Black Seat of the Death, while the other was a woman with extremely long dark hair . As she was facing a person using Destruction Magic, the woman was struggling and barely able to defend herself .

Lucy was about to dash at the woman in order to steal her flag but Arthur held her hand, his gaze focusing on the woman .

"What's wrong?"

Even Arthur didn't know why he did that . He closed his eyes and massaged his temples, feeling a bit uncomfortable . It's the first time he's feeling like this but the source was definitely the creation magic handed it to him by Bilgart .

"Let's not interfere... for now . "

Seeing his serious expression, Lucy didn't insist and remained next to her husband, though they didn't get to watch Forne's battle for long as a loud roar came from the side, alarming the couple .

Arthur reacted first, his body became enveloped in lightning as it shot toward the assailant, which a tall and muscular beastmen . His fur was on fire and he emitted a suffocating pressure as he struck with his large fist .

The beastmen looked like a lion except for his humanoid figure, his height was nearly double an average human and his muscles were exceptionally big . Arthur met this giant head-on, also striking with his fist, which was glowing with a green light .

In comparison to the lion, Arthur's fist was going at a slow pace but the force behind it was simply monstrous . It didn't take long for the two to clash, releasing a loud explosion and pushing Lucy a few steps to the back . They remained at a momentary stalemate before Arthur was sent flying a hundred or so meters . Although he landed safely on the ground and didn't seem injured, the very fact that he was overpowered in terms of strength greatly surprised him .

Lucy was about to join in only for him to stop her, signaling her to watch from the side . The lion did attack out of nowhere but his punch wasn't meant to kill and seemed more like a test .

Indeed, just like Arthur had suspected, the beastmen grinned at the parasite and said:

"I've looked everywhere for you!"

Hearing this, the parasite creased his brow and retorted:

"What for? I don't recall meeting you in the past . "

"Hahaha we haven't met but that doesn't mean I don't know you . For body cultivators like me, only parasites, who can steal other people's power, can physically match us so we don't get to enjoy exciting fights a lot, you see . "

As the lion as rambling, Arthur activated Appraisal

Noktox Zhacruc (Race: Beastmen/ Golden Fire Lion Ancestry(99 . 9% Awakened): Realm: Overgod Realm

Age: 1,203 years

Titles: Eternally Chief, King of the Forest, King of the World, Master of Combat, Godly Punch(Active)

Abilities: Godly Punch (Max Lv)/ Enhanced Martial Artist (Max Lv) / Spin (Lv4971)(Damage +590%)(100% Crit)

Short Info: The chief of the Golden Fire Lion tribe and the ruler of Forest High Realm and Green Planet . Exceptionally talented in Body Cultivation and undefeated in 1v1 melee combat, it is rumored that he beat a Calypso parasite in the past but, with enough calculations, it's very unlikely .

Chapter 599: 599

FLASHBACK

"Hey, Wolfram, you still haven't told me about the fourth type of parasites . "

Arthur was facing his brother, the two filling their stomach with some freshly cooked meat . Leiu, as usual, was endlessly swinging his huge sword on the size, not minding the eerie atmosphere or the suffocatingly hot weather .

As he heard Arthur, the Joker seemed to have remembered that topic . He pretended not to notice his brother's intense gaze and slowly enjoyed the rest of the food before licking his fingers then finally answering:

"In terms of Hierarchy, Calypso parasites are considered the highest . There's only three in existence and they are born infertile, one was killed but I doubt the other two will die anytime soon . In fact, Zaaarae only created two types and the rest were born of mutations or copulation between a parasite and a different race . The records mention the Calypso parasites and the Night Parasites . "

"Night Parasites? What a strange name . "

The Joker laughed and continued: "It really is . However, don't be mistaken, they were undeniably strong . Only eighteen were created and they are unable to reproduce either, furthermore, they can only exist in the night . Meaning that any environment that is subjected to the sun's light is deadly for them, extremely deadly . For this reason, Zaaarae put them in a special realm that has an eternal night

and let them live peaceful there . I don't know much about them but from what I've read or heard, they're a strong bunch that does not care about the outside, they properly manage their realm and are hostile to outsiders . "

"Have you met one of them?"

"Hell no! Their individual strength is equal to the Calypso parasites . If I go to their home they'll gang up on me!"

As he heard the much-awaited answer, Arthur pondered for a while before asking again:

"Then what type of parasite am I classified at?"

The Joker retrieved a card, pointed its back at Arthur then glanced between the two of them .

"In my eyes, you have the body of a parasite but the soul of a human . While the body can be replaced, the soul is unique for each living being . Basically, you're a human, at least from my point of view . "

\*\*\*\*\*

"So, what do you want?"

Arthur asked back the energetic lion named Noktox, kind of guessing what he'll hear next .

"A fight, obviously . You and me . "

He pointed at himself then at the parasite, his mouth arching upwards, showing his sharp and deadly fangs . The golden fire covering his back, limbs, and a long tail became bigger, showcasing the beastmen's rising emotions . Honestly, he didn't look like a bad guy and he didn't hide his intentions, something Arthur liked .

Moreover, when he was defeated in that short exchange earlier, he had been itching for a rematch so Noktox's proposal wasn't so bad, after all . With Lucy nearby, there's no need to be cautious of sneak attacks and it's not like their fight would last a long time .

"So, what do you say, parasite?"

Arthur cracked his neck and said: "The name is Arthur . "

"Hahaha I'm Noktox . Let's have fun!"

The parasite smiled back at the beastmen and readied himself, taking a fighting stance . His body was enveloped by the Green Natural Lightning and his hand covered by twirling Dark Magic . The two shot at each other at the same time, their speeds causing loud rumbling that affected their quiet surroundings . Noktox threw a punch again but Arthur jumped high in the air, spun like a wheel before axe kicking the opponent .

His leg was like a thunderbolt, descending on the lion and clashing with the big fist emitting golden flames . The fire and lightning faced each other but in the end, the two disintegrated and what was left was the parasite's leg and the beastmen's fist .



A few seconds passed by before Arthur was forced to jump back, feeling a small numbness from his leg . The enemy also clenched and unclenched his fist, surprised that Arthur's kick affected him, though only slightly .

"You're really the perfect opponent!"

Noktox roared then lunged at Arthur again, his body crazily spinning, resulting in a fire tornado rising in the air . The parasite didn't face the lion head-on and, instead, opted for a safer tactic as the spin was dangerous . If he's carelessly hit, it would cause serious damage . The skill's level was over 4000, something Arthur had never seen .

Sure, he has a variety of skills to counter the spin but when he decided to fight Noktox, he wanted to win using physical advantage and not those absurdly devastating ultimate skills and techniques, such as Rizaki, Dragons words, and so on...

The spinning was becoming faster and the golden fire's range was widening, forcing Arthur to do nothing but retreat for ten seconds . At some point, Noktox started catching up to Arthur as his speed increased with every passing second .

There was no point wasting more time dodging so Arthur used [Griffin's Bloody Switch], converting all of his Intelligence and Wisdom into Strength and Agility respectively . In addition to that, he changed forms, becoming a Tiger beastmen covered in a red medium armor from head to toe .

When the spinning lion got close enough, Arthur used his newly acquired long claws to slash at the opponents . It was a simple attack but it was backed with his insane speed and overpowered brute force, breaking the metallic white ground and sending supersonic sound waves to all sides .

Unlike the previous impacts, this one was brief and flung both parties in the air . Noktox had bloody slash marks on his abdomen while Arthur, who was in the form of a tiger beastmen, had his left arm and some of his ribs shattered .

Both crashed on the ground but Arthur was able to recover faster than his opponent . Life Energy entered his body and healed the injuries within seconds, as for Noktox, he growled and held his bloody, chanting some incantation . The golden fire burned the claw marks and, slowly but surely, got rid of them .

"Arghhhh so exhilarating!"

Noktox took his usual martial fighting stance and faced Arthur, who changed forms again . The tiger appearance became a humanoid cat with silver and white fur . The cat tribe is secretive and very rare to encounter, nevertheless, Arthur managed to unknowingly possess one of them in the past, allowing him to use their abilities and good and agile bodies .

"Veracity cat tribe, good good!"

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Arthur ignored the lion's comment and rushed at the latter with a speed that defied all logic . Even a body cultivator such as Noktox wasn't able to react in time and ended up getting hit in the chin by a powerful punch which sent him staggering a few steps .

The cat left afterimages as it bombarded the lion with kicks and punches from all sides . In fact, were it not for his tough body, Noktox would've been defeated already .

The lion beastmen crossed his arms and defended his vitals while staying rooted to the ground, receiving the full might of Arthur's super fast attacks . This continued for half a minute before Arthur unleashed a devastating blow in the form of a spiraling kick that hit the lion's knee, forcing him to kneel . The parasite grasped this opportunity and used a skill called [Beggar's mercy], which is a special skill that belonged to the cat he possessed .

He somersaulted to the back a transparent image of a cat appeared before him, it was thrice his size and was facing the kneeling Noktox . Arthur didn't waste any time and unleashed the sky, making the transparent grey cat lunge at the opponent . It was as if a mountain slammed onto Noktox, a feeling that he never experienced . His body was sent flying hundreds of meters away, rolling dozens of times and becoming all bloodied, nevertheless, he quickly got up while coughing blood .

The lion beastmen didn't seem angry or sad, in fact, he was still grinning from ear to ear .

Chapter 600: 600

"Aaaaah!"

Noktox looked to the colorless sky and wildly roared, his muscles becoming bigger to the point that they ripped his cotton clothes, showcasing his massive and impressive body . The golden flames died down but his aura increased by several folds, even his eyes started emitting a red luster as if he was enraged .

'They didn't lie when they said that body cultivators are just muscle-heads . '

"Master, it's because they focus more on strength than any proper education but... don't you prefer simple-minded people . "

'You bet I do!'

After his overbearing and brief transformation, Noktox took large strides toward the humanoid cat . His feet left deep marks on the metallic ground, which is not easily damaged but ended up being treated like sand under the lion's feet . Arthur got on all fours, let out an unintentional hiss before charging at the opponent, leaving a trail of fading stars behind him .

Noktox clenched his fist and punched the incoming parasite while loudly shouting . Unfortunately, his fist went through the cat, which was nothing but an after-image, however, despite his failed attack, the lion beastmen didn't seem troubled as he violently banged his left foot on the ground, causing a golden circle to appear around him and instantly combust .

This area of effect spell forced Arthur of his momentary stealth and revealed his location to Noktox, who wasted no time and used his long tail to attack . The long tail wrapped around Arthur's ankle and slammed his body on the ground right in front of the lion .

The large beastmen was about to kick the parasite but leg went through the latter again but this time it wasn't an afterimage but a clone created at the very last second . It was a shadow clone meant to divert Noktox's attention and it replaced Arthur right after he was slammed onto the ground .

Like a ghost, a humanoid cat appeared from Noktox's side and slammed him with an illusory bronze platform . The first strike only caused the lion to groan, however, Arthur didn't stop and repeatedly used the platform until the target fell on the ground . Instead of finishing him off, Arthur retreated to a safe distance, unwilling to risk it as he knew Noktox isn't easily defeated, especially after he just empowered himself .

Not only did he have ridiculous defense, but his attack power is also extremely high . Just his tail was easily about to fling his body like a rag and decrease 10% of his health bar .

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"How do you know so much about parasites?" Arthur asked his copy, Claud Venice .

It was during the long training session he went through right after his fight against the Divine Beasts . When Claud took hold of his copy, he showed him how a parasite should fight, how to change bodies at the very last second, and choose the right ones depending on the situation and the enemies .

"I've never been a parasite but I've spent a great deal of my life researching them . Knowledge exceeds everything, and after being inside of you, I'm more or less adapted to the parasitic abilities hence my fighting style . "

"I still don't understand how you choose the perfect host in a chaotic battle . I've possessed hundreds of thousands of bodies and each has their unique abilities . "

"Yes, that is true and that is why I said knowledge is important . You need to study everything you possessed, even the weakest ones but they can also be beneficial . A worm can defeat a drake and a cat can defeat a lion, you just need to know how to efficiently use the hosts . Rather than trying to force yourself to understand skills and races, why don't you try feeling it?"

"Feeling it? How so?"

"When you possess a Naga, for example, you're supposed to become a Naga, not pretend to be one, after all, you're no shapeshifter . If this or that host was strong before you possess it, you need to be able to demonstrate the same amount of firepower when you're in control, if not more . In my opinion and after enough calculations, I've concluded that parasites are naturally more suited for long-range combat but that doesn't mean they don't excel in close range . In your case, if you don't screw anything up, you can even face a body cultivator thanks to your stats . "

"How am I supposed to face them?"

The Prophecy Holder shrugged his shoulder and nonchalantly said: "Obviously by using their bane . "

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'This should be enough testing . '

Arthur glanced at the overbearing tiger coming toward him . The cat appearance vanished and its place was a creepy wraith that was missing its lower body . Although not many people are aware of it, most body cultivators are bad at mental and soul-attacks, moreover, only a few of them that wield special equipment can touch spiritual things like ghosts or wraiths .

The parasite was going to push his transforming ability to the limit and properly beat Noktox in a melee-combat . The wraith form will allow him to avoid any physical damage while the cat form will inflict damage upon the lion beastmen .

The enemy leapt at Arthur, using his large feet to feet the wraith, however, he just passed through Arthur, who quickly returned to being a cat and landed on top of the lion . Sharp claws dug deep into the back of Noktox, who jumped in the air then used a wind skill to step on the air and push his body, precisely his back, on the ground in order to get rid of the clingy parasite .

Unfortunately, the cat slipped through at the very last second and before it landed on the ground, it became a grotesque wraith floating in the air . For the next several minutes, Arthur used this dirty tactic and managed to injure Noktox and push him to the limit .

At some point, the beastmen knew that he won't be able to win at this rate so he stopped attacking and said:

"I admit that you're fast but do you dare confront my attack head-on?"

Still in the wraith appearance, Arthur spun in the air as if he was taunting the lion:

"Why would I do that?"

"To see who's stronger, of course! I use my strongest technique and you use yours . "

For some time, Arthur remained silent so Noktox thought that his proposal was rejected, however, it didn't seem to be the case as Arthur returned to his human appearance, an innocent smile plastered on his face .

"Alright, go for it . "

Hearing this, the lion beastmen burst out in laughter, uncaring about his body, which was covered in all kinds of injuries, whether it's slash marks, bruises, or holes . He took a deep breath, faced the motionless Arthur, and raised his fist, which was accumulating all the golden fire inside Noktox .

After three seconds, a shiny golden flame enveloped his fist, the lion was sweating and panting heavily as it seemed to have exhausted his energy . Nonetheless, he charged at Arthur while pulling his hand and readying to perform the Godly Punch, which was affecting the surrounding .

The metallic ground started cracking and the air became tempestuous before the attack was even unleashed . Arthur stood rooted to the ground, not preparing any skill or even crossing his arms to defend .

When Noktox was upon him and the fist was about to hit his body, his figure blurred for a split and by the next second, Noktox's figure was sent flying to the back like a kite . When he landed on the ground far away, he seemed to be unconscious and his whole arm was filled with cuts .