

Once Human 621

Chapter 621: 621

As things started getting heated, the situation on the 49th floor wasn't getting any better either . Arthur and Lucy met with three other contestants but they didn't fight as they were too preoccupied with the meteor shower and the thing that's trying to escape from the breaking scarlet moon .

A wheel made of blue lightning was floating next to the couple, this was Raad, the lightning spirit and one of the contestants . In addition to the spirit, there was also Demon Lord Setros and Hach'ara, who both were frightened .

The ginormous wings which stretched from within brought with them dread that scared even the most powerful individuals . Arthur looked at the trembling Lucy, not understanding what the fuss was really about . It was then that he discovered that he was unable to feel any kind of fear so he wasn't affected by the aura of the monster inside the moon .

"T-that can only Sigradzomr, the Elder Dragon . "

"Sigradzomr?"

Arthur had never seen a living being this big, moreover, this one didn't seem to belong to any of the three dragon races . The upper part of the wings was made of a yellow-ish armor while the rest had an illusory red shade . The sheer size of the wings alone is enough to cover all of the MoonStar city, if not more .

"Supposedly, he's the father of the Dragon Emperor . He disappeared a long time ago, I never thought he's imprisoned here . "-Hach'ara

"He's a supreme entity which had existed ever since the Era of Beginning . If it's really him, we better leave immediately . "- Setros

The Demon Lord, which, for the sake of his title, always behaved elegantly and wore a black suit, glanced at the large wings and commented . With the exception of Arthur, everyone was shaking from head to toe, it was the kind of instinctive fear that everyone feels when they meet an entity that is superior to them .

Arthur held Lucy closer to him and raised a few barriers of different attributes just in case . The moon was slowly being destroyed and the figure of the Elder Dragon started showing up . The contestants were afraid but no one used the Escape Ticket as they wanted to reach the top floor and receive the prizes .

Apart from this group, several other contestants were currently freaking out and getting as far from source of danger as possible .

Meanwhile, things were getting pretty rough in the World of Darkness . In addition to Forne and Zodiak, Celes also appeared and started helping the old Dark Magic-user .

The Black Seat of Death was still dealing with the white-haired undead girl, who was very strong and was able to defend against the violent Destruction Magic cast by her enemy .

The Grey Seat of Decay charged at Sol'khin and tried to grasp his hand to use her ability, however, when she got close to her target, she was blasted to the other side by one of Leiu's fingers .

Sol'khin released a formless force which easily countered the incoming enemy, then he jumped back, easily dodging a large hand made of Dark Magic .

"Come on, Zodiac, do you really think such childish actions are going to work? We're supposed to think alike..."

In response, the old man snorted and took out several talismans, which he then split in two, causing his body to be enveloped by Dark Blue flames, his aura also increased by several folds .

"Go help Forne!"

He motioned for Celes to aid the Black Seat while he vanished from his spot and instantly appeared before the grinning Sol'khin . The dark blue flames cascaded upon the armored youth, who raised his hand and blocked a part of it but when Zodiac spun in the air and kicked him, the attack dealt enough damage to push the surprised enemy .

"Kekekeke you're really lively today . "

He calmly retrieved Anduril from his back and swung at Zodiac . It was a simple attack but the power unleashed by the two-handed sword was more than enough to extinguish the wave of flames and sent the target flying hundreds of meters away .

Sol'khin played with the black sword in his hand, pleased to see it demonstrate such destructive and unstoppable power . The expressionless face of Leiu became disgustingly twisted as he licked his lips and hysterically laughed, basically, a typical cliché of how an evil person should act .

Zodiac's body rolled a few times on the ground but he managed to stabilize himself as he was enveloped by a black tornado . Very soon, he revealed himself, covered in the same dark blue flames and ready to attack again as if nothing had happened .

A distance away from them, Forne and Celes were ganging up on the undead, whose sole duty was to protect Leiu, even if he wasn't fully conscious now . Despite being in a disadvantage, she managed to hold on for a quite some time and even inflict some damage . Forne's destruction magic acted like some sort of defense layer which pushed off any nearby enemies, however, Celes' Physique wasn't so practical so she ended up being hit by the girl's sword . A deep slash wound appeared on her chest and though she managed to heal some of it using her Death Magic, the sword essence sunk deep into her bones and will only be removable using external and efficient means like miraculous pills or an even superior sword essence .

"[Death Touch] isn't working?" Questioned Forne while furrowing her brows and throwing red orbs which exploded after crossing some distance . He was basically blasting away the undead each time she rushed at either of them .

"She's an Undead! Of course it's not working!"

Celes inwardly cursed him for asking a dumb question, she retrieved some grey ash and put it on her bloody wound before getting up and activating her physique to the fullest . Her figure became illusory and her skin became decomposed, making her look quite ugly .

She floated high up in the air and stretched her hand, from which two massive skeletal heads appeared . They screeched loudly as they slowly made way to the undead girl, which was trapped into a small area due to the continuously exploding Magic of Forne, done purposely to momentarily lock her in place .

Unfortunately, Arthur and co weren't able to get that far away as the rest of world was obliterated into nothingness . Many of the contestants gathered up, finding it safer to group up and join hands in case something bad happens, which will most likely happen judging from the current dire situation .

"I don't mind it fighting, you know . "

Unlike her fellow peers, Maxine was excited as her eyes gleamed every time she looked at the enormous wings high up in the sky . She was afraid but the urge to fight an ancient dragon surpassed the instinctive dread .

"You, no, we don't stand a chance against him . "

Losha healed most of her injuries but her complexions wasn't looking that good . Like all the rest, she didn't want to give up after coming all this way but once Sigradzomr is freed, there's no telling what will become of them .

Sure, they were strong but this was an Elder Dragon and just the mere sight of it made them shake in their boots . Only Arthur remained oblivious and didn't feel threatened by the monster, in fact, he felt nothing but numbness .

"It's not like we attacked him so there's no reason for him to come after us . " Said Sickle Bart while shrugging his shoulders .

"He's been imprisoned and enslaved for millenniums, he'll attack anything that moves and I don't want be there to witness that . "

The Saber Saint was nervous as he caressed his weapon and stole a couple of glances at the crimson moon, he seemed about to leave the Red Tower at any second .

"There must be a way to get to the next floor safely . "-Arthur

"The task was to survive so I don't think it'll happen . "-Setros

"No, the task is to survive but the tower didn't say that it's the only way to proceed to the next floor . Considering the current circumstances and that Elder Dragon, I reckon that the path is somewhere near it, perhaps even above it . "

Chapter 622: 622

The concept of time was born when Arthur traveled to the past, exactly when the Twelve just came into existence . His appearance changed many things and allowed them to distinguish themselves using

magic or names . He taught many things, beginning from energy to magic to creation, which they learned quickly and perfectly .

At that time, Bilgart, also known as the Watcher, was present and he, too, was fascinated by the things Arthur said . He was born before the Twelve but his knowledge was limited due to his age, which didn't increase as there was no concept of time before the parasite's arrival .

He watched from afar and mastered everything Arthur talked about, be it the dreadful Shadow Magic or the laws of space, which allow you to teleport and even mess with the space-time continuum . He also learned that there are many things that can threaten him, like the Time Wraiths, for example, which are remnants of past victims who succumbed to the punishment of the Time Laws .

The Watcher very much wanted to travel to the future but he refrained from doing so and gave more priority to the Twelve, which he considered as his children... the next generation that will pave the way for all the weaker races that are bound to appear .

Actually, it wasn't much after Arthur's departure that Bilgart witnessed the appearance of foreign races, creatures that have limitless potential, and hold great power . Xyktia and Dmitra tried imitating those races but the result was neither satisfactory nor strong enough to please their creator . Two of these races are the Dragons and the Vampires, the former had a greater number and were quite arrogant but the blood-sucking race was extremely secretive .

They held no enmity against Bilgart when he went to visit them and even spoke of their former world, a plane of existence separate from the multiverse they were in . As for the dragons, at first, only four appeared and they were respected by all the rest . The most memorable was a humongous Elder Dragon by the name of Sigradzomr and the father of the other three, which were, respectively, a Geo Dragon, a Black Dragon, and an Emyrean Dragon .

A millennium after their arrival, a new Dragon Lord was appointed, it was the Geo Dragon; Vizumat . The Black Dragon was his older brother Xedieg, and the Emyrean Dragon was the little sister Fryzai, though the age difference wasn't that big . The reason a new Dragon Lord had arisen was because Sigradzomr after a devastating fight with a highly intellectual civilization . When their battle over, the civilization completely vanished, leaving only their advanced machines and luminous golden cities, likewise, the Elder Dragon couldn't be found .

This was when the Twelve were creating their Races and Realms and familiarizing themselves with their powers . Bilgart wasn't interested in creating something special and only wanted to imitate Arthur, the time traveler who taught him everything .

At first, the result was pleasant as a baby male human was created but the Watcher couldn't calibrate the newborn's powers and ended up giving him many blessings .

"What's this? Is it yours?"

Timos happened to stumble upon the baby and the crow next to him, he inspected the crying baby before asking Bilgart .

In response, the crow flapped its wings and answered:

"It's just an experiment . "

"Well, it can't be an experiment if the result is perfect, and in the first try, too . "

After a brief silence, Bilgart said: "I created a flawless thing but 'he' wasn't devoid of faults . "The mistake Bilgart made was that he made the young Arthur too perfect, he granted him everything and equipped him with every possible attribute and power that had ever existed . For most, the result was pleasant but the Watcher wanted to imitate the adult Arthur and not create a perfection test subject .

"It doesn't seem that you'll keep it so how about you give it to me?"-Timos

Bilgart didn't reject the Black Devil's offer and ended up giving him the baby so he can raise him . It was only a few years later that the crow went back to Timos to retrieve Arthur, finally realizing his mistake after pondering for quite some time .

Unfortunately, the baby drastically changed and was affected by the Cthulhu's savage aura . Timos also never expected the innocent newborn to be easily influenced and after only a couple of years, a monster was born inside of the young Arthur, totally changing his nature, twisting to an unimaginable degree .

Obviously, Bilgart was infuriated with Timos and ended up locking him into Riarravar as a punishment but the latter freed himself sometime later . As for the baby, which was named Sol'khin by the Strategist, he was taken by the crow .

Getting rid of the corrupted part was impossible without killing the victim so Bilgart had to use extreme measures . He separated the soul in two and sealed the evil part then brought the other part to a place that wasn't affected even by the Time Laws .

That second part was the very same Arthur raised by Bilgart, that courtyard was a separate plane in which Time didn't flow hence why his young appearance never changed even after a long time passed in the outside .

"If we were to talk about your adventurous journey through time, there is a lot to talk about . " Explained Arthur's copy, who sat opposite to him in this peaceful courtyard that existed everywhere and nowhere .

Arthur was more and more surprised the more he heard . To think that his last piece of soul was actually Sol'khin, the very same thing that Forne and Zodiak want to kill . It also explains why the Joker and Leiu refused to do anything and allowed the Black Seat and his group to come at them .

"You went back to the Era of Beginning twice . The first trip was when you taught the Twelve and the reason behind the second is... a bit complicated and better not spoken right now . Anyway, the soul is not split 1/3 for each, nay, you have 1/4, Zodiak has 1/4, and Sol'khin has 1/2, which is why he's able to absorb all your powers and can even control your dear brother . "

"You said that Leiu is the reason I can't break free from my cycles... why is that?"

"He's fully capable of killing Sol'khin but if that were to happen, do you think you'll still exist? Each part of your soul is essential and without it, the rest will slowly disappear too . Considering that Sol'khin has

1/2 of the soul, if it were to vanish, the smaller parts will dissipate sooner or later . He knows that by killing the enemy, he'll end up killing his brother too . "

"So what do you suggest doing?"

"Combine it together, of course . You and Zodiac can overpower Sol'khin and absorb half of the soul but only if it's inside Leiu's body . When Sol'khin's host dies, the soul will be severely weakened and it'll be the perfect time to attack . "

"Are you telling me to kill Leiu?"

The man shrugged his shoulders and retorted: "It's one way or the other . There's no outcome where you both survive . "

BONUS: LORE

Arthur Bilgart: Created in the Era of Beginning by Bilgart (The Watcher), a being that's very similar to the human race but internally different . He was the perfect creation, surpassing even the Twelve and in possession of every magic that ever existed . Later on, he was given the name Sol'khin by Timos and ended up being corrupted by the savage and violent aura of the Cthulhu, his personality and appearance drastically changed and became very twisted . He was the incarnation of true evil and were it not for The Watcher's intervention, Sol'khin would've cause a big mess .

The soul was split in two, one was sealed and the other was taken to a special dimension, where it went back to its original and innocent appearance .

When the separation occurred, Arthur was no longer a perfect being and the abilities were split between the two souls . After an inordinate amount of time, Arthur was taken to Earth, where he was raised as an orphan in the Philippines . He grew up to become a successful businessman but, unfortunately, his end was tragic and miserable as he killed himself after months of torture planned by his wife, Claudia .

However, death wasn't the end for Arthur, who was reincarnated into Astria thanks to the Joker and the Nameless Knight's interference . They went to Heaven and threatened Fate, who forcefully put reincarnated Arthur to the world designated by the crazy assailants, who almost killed her .

Arthur was given a new as a parasite and as destiny would have it, he met Lucy, who will later become his eternal partner . One event after the other happened and the parasite evolved more than a few times, becoming a Soul Parasite, which is a Race that's slowly erasing his humane emotions .

Dark Soul Parasite: A new Race automatically created by the System when Arthur reached the necessary requirements . It's able to obtain double the stats of any hosts possessed and it allows the user to transform into anything(n the catalog) without needing a real corpse . Additionally, soul parasites cannot be killed by physical attacks, However, if their Health reaches 0 due to a physical attack, they will be severely weakened and their stats will significantly decrease for at least a day .

Soul parasites can avoid any physical attack if they remain in their soul form, however, they become very vulnerable to Soul and mental attacks so it is not advised to use this ethereal/soul form .

Chapter 623: 623

"This is going nowhere, Zodiak . "

Sol'khin swung Anduril at Zodiak, sending him flying for the nth time but the latter would just charge again, regardless of the injuries he suffered . It was a one-sided beating, no matter how much Zodiak strengthened himself, he wasn't able to inflict any damage to Leiu's armor .

On the other side, the undead girl finally started showing signs of weakness as Forne's destruction magic was becoming more violent . The sparks which exploded upon contact were cracking the bone longsword and slowly rendering her incapable of moving as fast as a few minutes ago .

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"Tell me again, how is this supposed to work?"

Maxine was questioning the plan told by the lightning spirit . All the contestants present on the 49th floor were holding hands in a circle with Raad in the middle .

Apparently, he'll use them as fuel and strike Sigradzomr, who was close to being freed . More than half of the moon was gone and the frightening and massive body of the Elder Dragon could be seen high up in the sky . Its sheer size brought shame even to the Titan Race of the past, who boasted of size similar to planets, though not all of them preferred being big .

The Elder Dragon had a yellow body with some parts seemingly transparent with a bit of a red shade . His eyes were not open yet but his enormous wings were twitching and affecting the prison-like moon, which caused a meteor that transformed the 49th into a chaotic place utterly void of a steady ground . The sight of this place was even worse than Hell itself, the sky was filled with falling meteors and the ground no longer existed, it was just a bottomless dark abyss .

"This is ridiculous . "

None of the contestants wanted to actually hold hands like little kids but from what Raad said, this method has a high probability of working . They just need to pour their unique magic into the spirit in their center, which will combine their energies and unleash a powerful joint attack .

Unfortunately, they neither had the time to think about it or hesitate as the dragon was almost free and wasting any more time will only complicate things . Arthur held Lucy and 'X's hands, Lucy held Losha's hand, who, in her turn, held Maxine hands, et cetera . .

It was a comical thing to witness but after a few seconds, all kinds of colorful energies emanated from the 13 contestants and were sucked into a lightning vortex created by Raad . There was Dark Magic, Yin Power, Fire Magic, pure and sharp Sword Essence, Space and Time Magic, Wind, and Dark Matter... they all went through the center of the vortex, disappearing within .

After one minute passed, Raad, who had the appearance of a head made of blue lightning, merged with the vortex, which expanded in size and pushed away all the contestants, forcing their hands apart .

At the very same time, an ear-piercing reverberated across the floor, causing everyone to hold their bleeding ears and kneel down, unable to handle the pressure or the wild sound waves .

Following the loud dragon cry were unstoppable gales produced by the moving wings . They moved once yet they released wind waves that could even injure an Overgod . Fortunately, Raad was finally done, the lightning head opened its mouth and fired a multi-colored beam which became larger in size the more distance it crossed .

After it crossed half the distance, the colors separated and each took a form . There was a flame snake that spit freezing ice, a black dragon covered in Dark Magic, a spinning sword which periodically turned invisible, and an arrow covered in Raad's blue lightning . They simultaneously hit the humongous Elder Dragon, resulting in multiple loud explosions . The massive target was even pushed a little bit and the rest of the moon shattered, sending its large debris all over the place .

The lightning spirit tried to use its magic to take the others to the slightly visible portal above the dragon but the moment they got close, Sigradzomr's wings started flapping again . Wind blades that were a kilometer in length covered the sky, they were innumerable and unstoppable as they hit the thirteen contestants .

Although they did defend themselves, the wind blades were too sharp and only Ber Von Xin was able to fully block them using his sword, though he was still pushed back .

Right after doing that, the Elder Dragon spit a literal black hole which surprisingly didn't affect its surroundings and, instead, pulled the people on the 50th floor to this ravaged world .

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Zodiak, Sol'khin, and the rest were busy fighting only for a miniature black hole to appear out of nowhere and pull them towards it . Regardless of their power, none, including the Joker, were able to resist the suction force and in a few seconds, they ended up being taken to the 49th floor . Despite what happened, The Trickster didn't seem surprised as he backed away the moment he appeared in the middle of the crimson sky, he played with his cards while eyeing the ginormous and dreadful dragon .

Some contestants were confused and others were surprised . Most were far from the awakened dragon but could still its overwhelming aura . The first one who acted was Sol'khin, who didn't seem afraid of Sigradzomr .

"Did you seriously think we'll fight? We were frie-"

Before he could finish, the dragon's large mouth struck him, literally sending him dozens of kilometers away . Leiu's jet black armor wasn't damaged but Sol'khin, the one controlling him, didn't seem completely fine as he held his chest and coughed some blood .

Just from that one attack, he appeared quite angered as he glared at the vengeful dragon .

"So, you were saying?"

The Joker smirked and pointed at the dragon, which seemed to disregard everything and attack Leiu, for some reason . Seeing the incoming dangerous beast, Sol'khin held Anduril and flew at Sigradzomr... their clash was on a different scale to anything that ever happened in the Red Tower .

The two were just too strong, whether it's the Darkness wielded by Leiu or the Elder Dragon's Wind and Fire Magic . The sky was no longer scarlet as it was split into two sides, one was an inky black night while the other was a literal sea of fire that dominated both the non-existent ground and the blinded canopy .

Despite its absurd size, the dragon was able to move with a fast speed, it clashed with Anduril dozens of times but the black sword was able to inflict serious damage . Each time Sol'khin swung his sword, a huge chunk of the dragon was cut . Things got even more flashy when Sol'khin used one of Leiu's skills, he held the sword with both hands and slashed horizontally, resulting in a black arc to cover the sky and hit the dragon from the neck all the way to its stomach .

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Sigradzomr's body was sent flying to the bottomless abyss as a bloody sword scar appeared on his body . He released loud shouts as he flapped his wings and stabilized his body only for Sol'khin to strike again, this time throwing Anduril, which transformed into a small but fast black dragon that spun around as it descended upon its target . Without any resistance whatsoever, the sword went through the Elder Dragon, leaving a gigantic hole from which a lot of blood gushed out .

While smirking, Sol'khin raised his hand, signaling Anduril, which obediently flew back to his owner . He watched the struggling dragon, which wasn't able to attack anymore before turning his head and staring at the small group of contestants watching the unfolding events from far away .

The pair of inky black eyes focused especially on Arthur, who couldn't feel fear but still felt mildly uncomfortable .

BONUS LORE : The system to rank the weapon users is universal and applies for most of the commonly used weapons in the multiverse .

If one is in possession of the System and has maxed the Level of the sword mastery, then that person is considered a Sword Apprentice .

If you can wield Sword Essence then you're a Sword Master . (Sword Master=\u003e Sword Grandmaster)

If you can develop your own unique Sword Essence then you're a Sword King . (Sword King=\u003e Sword Emperor)

If you can coat your whole body with your own unique Sword Essence, and also cut down God spirits, then you're a Sword Saint .

The last rank is known as Sword God and only a few people have reached it . Apparently, you need to enter a special kind of enlightenment to reach that stage .

So far, only one person managed to reach a stage beyond Sword God but said stage still remains nameless .

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Sol'khin ignored everything else and charged at Arthur, prioritizing him over everyone else . As Arthur was significantly weaker than Zodiak, it'll be much easier to get his soul .

Within a split second, a dark shadow manifested itself in front of Arthur but Sol'khin didn't strike with his sword, instead, he stretched his arm toward the parasite's soul, attempting to stab his chest .

This swift attack was almost successful were it not for the interference of several individuals, the first of them being Zodiak, whose body became bigger and unrecognizable as Dark blue flames covered him from head to toe .

The old man held Leiu's hand and tried to fling his body far away but an unusual kind of unstoppable darkness enveloped Zodiak, isolating him for some time . Sol'khin snorted and used his the other hand to block an incoming sword . Surprisingly, this sword managed to cut the youth's hand and even pushed him back a few meters .

The Sword God, Ber Von Xin, appeared in front of Arthur and swung his sword again, releasing a pure white sword essence that partially canceled Leiu's darkness and blasted him even further away . Losha and Maxine also attacked, each using their full power in order .

Grail, the Divine Sword, emitted a pillar of light which hit the target's right side while Maxine's sword stabbed the empty air, magically forming three floating green circles directed at Sol'khin . The circles slowly rotated for a second before unleashing a waterfall-like attack which was made of shiny green energy .

The two attacks simultaneously hit Sol'khin, dealing enough damage to send him flying but, unfortunately, weren't strong enough to pass through the thick black armor .

Excluding those who knew about Sol'khin, the rest of the contestants were perplexed and didn't know who was the enemy and what must be done to clear this floor .

"Long story short, something evil is controlling the Nameless Knight and if we get rid of it, we clear the Red Tower . "-X

Seeing the dumb looks everyone was having, 'X' spouted gullible lies to trick them into helping him . Sigradzomr was almost back into the battle but from the previous exchange, it was clear that Sol'khin has the upper hand thanks to Leiu's overwhelming power .

While some believed the blurry-faced man, there were others who were skeptical of his words, like Losha, for example .

"Yeah... I don't think you're right . You want us to defeat him? I think the real problem is that thing . "

She pointed at the humongous dragon rising in the air and preparing to attack again . The Elder Dragon's eyes focused on the youth wearing black armor and seemed ready to strike again .

...

"What do we do?"

Lucy whispered to Arthur while witnessing the unfolding events . She didn't know who to side with, especially now that things got very complicated .

"Let's standby, for now . "

He wrapped his hand around her waist and used skill provided by the Space Bender title, quickly turning invisible along with his wife, and disappearing from everyone's view . He made sure to activate his stealth abilities to their full so that Sol'khin won't be able to locate him amidst the chaos .

Even though he was using his brother's body, he wasn't accustomed to the power nor the skills, moreover, it won't be easy to track him down with all these people attacking from all directions .

"What do you think Zodiak will do?"-Lucy

After a short silence, Arthur sighed and replied: "I really have no idea . "

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He turned his head and looked at the big dark blue silhouette rushing at Sol'khin . In addition Zodiak, Sigradzomr also descended upon the relatively small Sol'khin, however, contrary to his allies, the dragon didn't care about anything else and unleashed attacks that hurt both his target and everyone else .

Zodiak was a step faster than the dragon as he wielded the dark blue flames and relentlessly attacked Sol'khin, who used Anduril to block the fire and negate the corruption effect of Dark Magic . As for the Elder Dragon, its threatening descent was stopped by a black-haired woman . She stepped in the air as if it was the ground and wielded dual long red daggers, she was crazy fast and all you could see was her dissipating after-image .

By the time the dragon reacted, its left-wing was shredded by countless red flower petals that came out of Xyktia's daggers . Even after damaging the massive left-wing, she didn't stop as she danced in the air and filled the sky with countless raging rose petals which hit the dragon's head, blinding it for a few seconds .

Sadly, the Lady of the Darkness wasn't able to do more than that as she faltered and was hit by a beam of golden light emitting from the top of the Sigradzomr's right-wing . Her body was sent flying like a kite across the sky and fell into the bottomless abyss .

"Tsk tsk... the things we do for love . "-The Joker

Despite her disappearance, the sharp and deadly petals didn't vanish and kept attacking the Elder Dragon, leaving it no choice but to cover itself with its remaining wing to lessen the suffered damage .

As the contestants were backing away, unwilling to involve themselves in a this fight, which was beyond their capabilities, Zodiak was becoming stronger the longer he fought . Anduril and Leiu's darkness were slowly but surely having little effect on the transformed old man, whose sole goal was to get rid of Sol'khin .

"Hahaha Zodiak! It's no fun if only the two of us are fighting!"

Using Leiu's body, he wielded the thick dark sword, swinging it left and right, continuously, deflecting the dark blue flames and pushing away the madly attacking Zodiak .

After one last exchange, Sol'khin threw Anduril in a specific direction... the sword crossed dozens of miles within a second and when it reached its target, Leiu appeared behind it with his hand tightly grasping it .

A loud sound of two metal clashing with each other echoed across the floor as Arthur was forced out of his stealth . The parasite was clenching his teeth and holding a normal-looking sword while facing Sol'khin, who was smirking at the distressed Arthur .

Were it not for the mysterious sword given to him by Timos, he wouldn't have been able to block that seemingly normal attack . In fact, Arthur's sword remained unscathed even after coming in contact with Anduril, which is supposedly the strongest sword in the multiverse .

Thanks to his sky-high strength and the sword, Arthur was able to block Anduril for three seconds before someone interfered . Lucy and Ber Von Xin attacked at the same time, the latter used her left hand to clench her right wrist and unleashed a small wave of white fusion flame, as for the Sword God, he raised his sword to the sky and swung down, releasing a devastating strike which split the sky and any type of energy in its way .

The flames hit Sol'khin's front while the sword attack accurately hit the target's head, dizzying Sol'khin for a split second . Arthur jumped a little to the back then slashed with his sword... Although he didn't use any skill, the attack blasted both the nearby Lucy and Ber Von Xin but it, fortunately, didn't damage them .

It passed through the wide Anduril and hit Sol'khin in the chest, causing him to stagger a few steps and even cough some blood . For a few seconds, he stood there, dazed, as if he couldn't believe he was injured by Arthur .

BONUS LORE

Darkness and Dark Magic .

Many people think that these two are the same thing because, on the outside, they have many similarities, however, the truth couldn't be more wrong .

Dark Magic is reliant solely on Dark Mana, which is actually converted normal Mana . It affects and is affected by emotions and it is able to corrupt material and spiritual things such as Earth, Water, and even ghosts . Once it invades a target's body, Dark Magic can weaken their energy circulation and slowly corrupt their Dantian, it is like a ticking bomb which can be detonated at the user's will . Only its caster can cancel its effect and very few attributes can resist its potent effect .

Void Magic, Dark Matter, and Antimatter are all able to cancel or even reverse the effect of Dark Magic .

Darkness, or Darkness Magic, is something unique which is rarely used by cultivators or even high-leveled players . Mastering Darkness Magic is very hard and finding or creating skills suited for it is close to impossible due to its nature . Not only is it easily countered by many attributes, but it can also backlash if the environment is not favorable . What most people know about Darkness Magic is it that it revolves around curses and debuffs, however, that is only a portion of it .

The true darkness is when you can shroud the sun and turn the sky blacker than night . It is when you wield the real darkness however you want, whether it's making a powerful skill vanish or erasing things from existence . Anything in existence emits light and the role of darkness is to get rid of that light so, essentially, Darkness is one of the strongest, if not the strongest, attribute . However, ever since the Era of Beginning, there are only a few who mastered and a handful who displayed its true deadly potential .

Chapter 625

Disabling safety options... 100%

Enabling auto-destruct mode . . 100%

Enabling auto-battle mode . . 100%

Mana and Nether Energy conversion . . 100%

*AXYT-022 ready to engage in 5 . . 4 . . 3 . . 2 . . *

The two robots which fused into one finally made their appearance though they looked very different from the last time they were seen . The big cannon which replaced their head was nowhere to be seen as they changed into a humanoid dark figure . The body was made of black metal, very similar to the ARK, and there were 1s and 0s rotating around the waist .

It levitated above what little was left of the ground and locked its focus on Sol'khin, which is its sole threat, and the only reason it climbed the Red Tower . Most of the robots that belong to the System obey only to one thing and it's the main control hive, they followed the orders unconditionally and are basically immortal so they can be repaired endlessly if parts of their bodies get destroyed .

When Sol'khin was hit by the joint attack, he didn't have enough time to dodge the incoming robot . AXYT-022 flew towards its target and raised its hands, from which a new and dominant type of energy was manifesting itself .

It's a very rare and hard to produce kind of energy, also known as Antimatter . Its sole purpose is to cancel every obstacle it meets, it doesn't devour like Void Magic but it negates everything . When a spell is being cast, a type of energy flows in a certain way for the spell to be successfully unleashed, however, Antimatter purposely goes against the flow . In fact, there has never been a case when a living being was able to control it due to its uncontrollable and self-harming nature .

The System's robots can barely manipulate it and that's at the cost of thousands of failed experiments . Anyhow, Antimatter was, at first colorless, and when a large quantity was cast by the robot, tiny white sparks surrounded the metallic hands and quickly spread around the flying machine .

Whether it's Von Xin's sword essence or Arthur's strike, they all vanished without trace . Even the eternal darkness revolving around Sol'khin was nowhere to be seen . Unfortunately, that's all the robot could do, and if it actually wants to defeat its target, its shallow control of Antimatter is not enough, not at all .

It managed to reach Leiu within seconds and strike with its heavy body, attempting to crack the black armor defending its user . Sadly, the machine bounced off the moment it made contact with Sol'khin, who pointed his hand at the robot and fired a strange black light . It penetrated the robot's chest and

momentarily turned off all its functions and that is when Sol'khin raised Anduril and casually swung it at the unresponsive machine .

Just by slashing down his sword at a faraway target, he was able to produce a powerful attack filled with Darkness and highly refined Sword Essence .

Arthur felt a bit conflicted as Sol'khin was attacking him but he didn't really want to side with Forne and Zodiak because they only want to kill Sol'khin and it doesn't matter if Leiu perishes with him . Nevertheless, the circumstances were pushing him to battle against his 'brother', especially now that the enemy was focusing on him .

It was obvious that Sol'khin wanted to get his soul as that will greatly strengthen him but it won't be easy even with Leiu's body as most of the contestants, including Sigradzomr, were ganging up on the evil being .

Speaking of the contestants, some chose to back away and watch while others were trying to hit Sol'khin, though their attacks were easily deflected by the ominous darkness surrounding him .

The only people that forced Sol'khin to move and properly block were the Sword God, Zodiak, and the Elder Dragon . Ber Von Xin only attacked when a good opportunity arises while Zodiak and Sigradzomr were going all out .

Moreover, the two seemed to have reached a mutual agreement as the dark blue flames merged with the dragon's wings... Zodiak stood atop the Elder Dragon and prepared himself . A spear that was over 5 meters in length was held by Zodiak, who tapped the dragon's head, signaling for it to begin .

In response, Sol'khin repeated his unpleasant laugh and held Anduril with both hands . He disregarded everything else and jumped into the air while swinging his weapon at the colossal dragon which covered his view and pretty much the entirety of the sky .

Sol'khin's sword slash was supposed to wreak havoc and stop the Elder Dragon, however, it suddenly vanished as tiny white particles surrounded the armored youth, locking him into place and canceling all of his powers . It was then that Zodiak and his new companion struck with all of their powers, the former threw his spear, which was embedded with all of his Dark Magic, whilst the latter opened its mouth and used its unique breath .

Illusory yellow flames pushed the dark blue spear, making it faster as it struck Sol'khin within a second, as for the dragonic flames, they engulfed him, pushing him into the bottomless abyss . This wasn't the end, however, as the robot dove into the darkness and initiated its self-destruct, ready to trade its own life to kill the enemy .

Everything happened so fast and by the time Arthur and the rest realized what just happened, a blinding flash came down below, followed by a staggering amount of Antimatter which canceled everything and caused most of the contestants to fall from the air as they were incapable of flight .

Arthur quickly changed into the Azure Dragon and helped Lucy and the nearby Ber Von Xin and Losha . The three stood atop the wide and majestic dragon as it rose into the air, trying to avoid a powerful blast which heavily injured everyone without exception .

Even the Joker was forced to use one of his cards to protect himself . He was stepping on a floating card while clicking his tongue, clearly unhappy with what the robot just did .

Sadly, when everyone came to their senses and thought that this was all over, a sinister laughter reverberated across the floor . Arthur noticed a red light emerging from his chest, it was none other than the card given to him by his brother . It was meant to summon the Joker in case he met one of the Deadly Sins but it automatically activated itself when a life-threatening danger befell on the parasite .

"No good!"

Losha was panicking as she felt shills down her spines, she retrieved the Escape Ticket and hurriedly said:

"We must leave now!"

She ushered Lucy to leave then, without any hesitation, left the Red Tower . The Sword God, despite his exceptional prowess, didn't lag behind either as he could feel that whatever was coming should not be faced head-on . With the exception of Forne and his group, all the other contestants swiftly left .

A thick pillar of crimson light shot down from below and, most unexpectedly, behead Sigradzomr before he was even able to do anything . The Elder Dragon's humongous head along with its body instantly turned into black ash and dissipated . A second attack made its appearance, going straight at Zodiak, who trapped himself in a large dark blue cube, which shattered the moment it made contact with the red pillar .

The old man's body was directly hit and all the dark blue flames were extinguished .

These successive and terrifying attacks were nothing but the beginning as as darkness crept from the abyss and dominated the whole tower, making it violently shake as it's about to collapse at any moment .

This was one of Leiu's signature attack, it's called [The Blackest Night] and it can even kill someone like Timos or Xyktia .

Speaking of the Lady of Darkness, she also left the Red Tower but her undead was able to seriously injure Celes and Forne before she 'died' . The two members of Black Rose were barely in a condition to fight but they still didn't leave the tower . 'X' used his Time Magic to freeze himself in a separate special, rendering him immune to everything for a short period of time .

The darkness released a deep and chilling growl as it covered everything on the 49th floor and even affected the lower flowers . Even the tiniest speck of light was gone as Sol'khin cast one of his host's strongest attacks . It wasn't destructive or loud and didn't last long either, apart from that growl, there was nothing but the cold darkness, which lasted for about a minute before everything went back to 'normal' .

However, those who remained, with the exception of Arthur and Lucy, who were protected by the Joker's card, and the Joker himself, everybody else was heavily if not fatally injured .

Forne was holding his chest and coughing one mouthful of blood after the other . Celes was shaking and about to collapse at any second while 'X' lost his arm and was trying his best to heal himself .

He didn't look as miserable as his companion but that lost arm can never be restored, even with his Time Magic . G'am Tir and the Void Behemoth were floating next to each other, both bloodied .

The big purple beast was roaring and unleashing Void Magic, trying to purge the darkness from within its body but it wasn't working at all as its skin was slowly turning jet black .

From down below, a fast figure shot into the sky and stopped a distance away from Arthur and Lucy . Sol'khin's armor was shattered in several places and his complexion didn't look good . Zodiac's spear and the robot's self-destruction clearly did significant damage .

"The meddling outsiders were taken care of so how about we chat for some time... for old times' sake, eh?"

BONUS LORE : The Eras

When Arthur traveled to the past, he brought the concept of time with him and made things flow linearly, sort of . The first phase of history was called the Era of Beginning, it was when the Twelve showed themselves and started creating planets, star systems, and realms . Throughout the whole history, the Era of Beginning was by far the longest and it built the foundation for the next eras .

A new era is born was a disastrous calamity affects the whole multiverse and that's exactly how the Era of Beginning came to an end . The war between the light and dark factions lasted a long time and when the final battle occurred, many of the Twelve disappeared and the people of that time named the new age; the first era .

Arthur's cycles mainly revolve around the 6th era, which is the present, though Zodiac's lived in mainly in the 4th and 5th era .

The 4th era, also known as the Void Era, was a harsh one for all inhabitants of the multiverse . The Void Magic spread across every star and realm and greatly diminished the amount of energies, whether it's Nether Energy or the natural elements, this rendered the cultivators unable to reach the God or Overgod Realm . The players were also unable to level up, so it was to be expected that the number of experts significantly decreased as many died trying to forcefully strengthen themselves .

Many speculate that the Void Era was caused by Castra Obis, the Omega Universe, which exploded, killing every single person in it . The death count was in the trillions and the only supposed survivor vanished without a trace, appearing only in the far future .

To be continued...

Chapter 626: 626

"What? You don't want to talk? I reckon you have a lot of questions in your mind . "

Sol'khin grinned at Arthur, he seemed unbothered by the glares he was getting and raised his hands innocently .

"Talk, Arthur, tell me what troubles your mind?"

He walked closer to the couple while adding: "It's understandable that you don't want to associate with me but you can't change the truth . "

Lucy, who was standing next to Arthur, was perplexed as she still doesn't know the secret between her husband, Zodiak, and Sol'khin . She furrowed her brows and readied herself to fight only for the enemy to glance at her and say:

"Missy, I presume you're Arthur's wife, eh? Are you sure you want to get rid of me?"

In response, she tilted her head, becoming even more confused . She looked at Arthur but his expression was stiff and filled with internal conflict .

"I suppose there's no harm telling her, right?" He flashed a disgusting smile at Arthur before pointing at his chest and explaining:

"You see... I, he, and Zodiak are actually one person! Hahahaha"

He spoke with a joking tone but Lucy could tell that he wasn't looking by seeing Arthur's grave expression . Zodiak, who was panting heavily and trying to fly in the sky, heard everything but was powerless to do anything . The last attack heavily injured him and he has to spend a bit of time recovering using his Dark Magic .

"You don't seem surprised . "

He saw that Lucy wasn't as surprised as he expected . It didn't take her long to piece this and that together and Arthur discovered this not long ago or else he would have told her so Lucy didn't fuss about it and although it's a big revelation, that doesn't make Sol'khin an ally .

"You want to save your brother and I want your soul so how about a trade . "

"Not gonna happen . "

Lucy immediately rejected him and took two steps forward, her hand releasing a white flame that had the characteristics of both Ice and Fire . The enemy was impressed by the magical flames but didn't feel the least bit threatened .

Just as he was about to talk again, the space around his arm shattered and the jet black armor was actually destroyed . The spatial tear was even able to deeply cut Leiu's arm, from his elbow all the way to his palm .

This was the handiwork of 'X', who quickly stopped time around Sol'khin and attacked using the blade hidden within his cane . Unfortunately, before it managed to cut off Leiu's wounded arm, the cane was engulfed by a creeping darkness, which also froze 'X' mid-air .

A lightning-fast hand grabbed his neck, suspending the blurry-faced man mid-air .

"Honestly... aren't you tired of this?"

Sol'khin sounded very angry as he tightened his grip around the helpless 'X'. He tried freeing himself but the monstrous strength was beyond his capabilities so all he could do was flail his arm and try to escape .

From afar, a blackened beast roared and lunged at Sol'khin, its long claws ripped the air and devoured everything in their ways . The Void Behemoth, despite its weakened state, was able to force its target to release 'X' and retreat . It was apparent that Sol'khin was very wary of Void Magic, unlike Dark Magic, which he can control just as well as Zodiac .

Sadly, the timely intervention was all the behemoth could do as shortly after, he was flung away just by one Sol'khin punches . Using the Nameless Knight's swift and resistant body, Sol'khin struck the monster with several punches, breaking a lot of bones and completely trashing it, basically beating it into a pulp .

When it was time for the finishing blow, a deafening explosion came out of nowhere and pushed away Sol'khin, separating him from the behemoth for a few seconds . G'am Tir, the weakest one of Forne's weakest teammates . He isn't as strong as the rest but he's still a clone of an emperor . For the first time since he entered the Red Tower, he unleashed his true power against their one and only enemy .

A brief golden light enveloped G'am Tir then he transformed into a shooting star which purged the darkness emanating from Sol'khin . The star went through Leiu's body, breaking the chest part of his armor and going through his body, leaving behind a gaping hole .

For the first time since all of this started, Sol'khin seemed very injured as he knelt down and coughed a lot of blood . He tried to talk but the gushing blood didn't stop, leaving him vulnerable . G'am Tir, who transformed into a man of blinding gold light, didn't stop after this attack .

He charged at Sol'khin again, with the same speed and momentum . Unlike the last blow, Sol'khin managed to raised Anduril and block the empowered G'am Tir, though he was still blasted a couple of hundred meters .

"This damned clone!"

The half-conscious Celes unleashed a last desperate attack in the form of a hideous death wraith which invaded Sol'khin's body while Forne mustered up all of his energy and used his strongest skill . A Blood-red bolt of lightning descended from above and clashed with the raised Anduril . It flung the weapon off Sol'khin's hand then hit his head, as for the wraith, it managed to make him hyperventilate and grasp his chest, clearly in pain .

In just a few seconds, Sol'khin was heavily wounded and bloodied all over . His body rolled on the ground and was soon engulfed by Zodiac's dark blue flames, which quickly bound all four limbs and sealed the rising darkness .

Forne's bolt of lightning did considerable damage, making the target feel dizzy for more than a minute, he was not even able to retaliate or process what happened . It was kind of Sol'khin's fault as he was proficient in controlling Leiu's real power and only knew how to use a few skills .

Celes and G'am Tir weren't able to hold on any longer and left the Red Tower, leaving only X, the behemoth, Forne, Zodiac, and the couple . Arthur did nothing from start to finish and Lucy stood in front of him, ready to do anything to protect him from danger .

Chapter 627: 627

"If it's one thing Sol'khin will want from you then it's can only be your soul . You should be careful around him, especially when your transforming from one thing to another because that split second it takes you to change appearance is when he'll try to get to you . It's not easy to extract your soul if you were to resist, however, the same applies to him and Zodiak too . "

The man with the same appearance as Arthur explained the process to the latter while tapping the table to keep him focused .

"I don't know about Zodiak but when cornered, Sol'khin will definitely try to leave your brother's body even if it's too risky . He would rather flee than die with his host, it's just in his nature, just like any parasite, including you, of course . Zodiak and Forne will try to immobilize Sol'khin and then the former will use a spell that forcefully pulls the target's soul out of Leiu's body but the process can be difficult and long, especially if there's interference, which there will be, by the way . "

Perplexed, Arthur furrowed his brows and asked: "I thought they wanted to kill Sol'khin, not extract his soul . "

"Yes, in order to kill him, it's way easier when he's in his real, spiritual form . Forne's Lightning of Destruction is lethal to immaterial beings, moreover, Zodiak's Dark Magic can act as a temporary prison . I don't know for sure but I reckon they'll first bind Sol'khin then the old man will try absorbing the soul and claim it as his own . "

"What will happen if he absorbs it?"

"Difficult to say, really . Zodiak is, more or less, you and Sol'khin so theoretically, he'll become much, much stronger but that's only if Sol'khin doesn't win the internal battle that's going to happen in Zodiak's consciousness . As it's his territory, there's a big chance he'll win but, in cases such as this, more often than not a mishap will occur . Do not forget that Sol'khin soul is stronger and bigger than Zodiak . "

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"So, if I absorb Sol'khin's soul, the same thing will happen?"

In response, the man shook his head and smiled: "Incorrect . Although you only have a third of the whole soul, you're still the main 'host' and can easily ward off Sol'khin if that were to happen . But, I do not advise you to do that as that will quicken the process of your loss of emotions and though you'll become strong, you'll become an emotionless being . If you want to, then do it after visiting the Garden of Words and evolving your current race . "

Seeing Arthur's complex look, the man added: "Don't be discouraged . You wished for power to protect your family and that's what you got when you became a soul parasite . The lost emotions will go back... in fact, true love can make miracles . Truly . "

Zodiak stopped in front of the bound Sol'khin and stretched his darkened hand, which had dark blue flames enveloping it . He stabbed Leiu's body, precisely where the heart was and unleashed a staggering

amount of Dark Magic which even caused Sol'khin to loudly shout . The Dark Magic directly hit the soul situated in the consciousness, making it continuously flicker and try to escape the flames' grasp .

The old man snorted and widened his reach, causing the flames to spread across a big part of Leiu's consciousness . At some point, the dark blue fire reached another soul inside the consciousness, this was one a mass of strange black light ominously floating in this vast immaterial place, unbothered by anything else . This was owner's soul and something that made Zodiac's flames cower and head into a different direction .

Fortunately, it didn't long for Zodiac to catch Sol'khin and begin to pull him out of Leiu's consciousness . Zodiac regained his normal, old appearance as he focused most of his Dark Mana into the hand that was pulling the enemy, and this made him vulnerable to Leiu's bound body, which started self-retaliating . It wasn't Sol'khin's doing but the body itself trying to survive by getting rid of the nearby danger .

A malevolent darkness emanated from Leiu's eyes and spread across the area, making the ground, air, and space disappear . Even the time was stopped for a second before Forne, who was standing at a safe distance, used his Destruction Magic again . He sucked a deep breath then violently punching the air, resulting in a unidirectional explosion to appear . It traveled faster than the sound and clashed with Leiu's darkness, making the time and space very turbulent as dangerous spatial tears started appearing everywhere .

Outside of the Red Tower, most of the contestant were still present and waiting for the winner to emerge . The army of Holy Knights was still present but a few of the contestants weren't happy with their presence . Maxine, Losha, and even the Sword God frowned upon seeing the large army and the prepared Holy Knights, but for now, they did not act . Seraph, the one leading this army, didn't dare act arrogantly in front of these powerhouses and returned their glares with a friendly smile and slight bow of his head .

A bit after Celes left the Tower, an unconscious G'am Tir and the behemoth appear with the former on the latter's back . Forne, who looked pale and barely able to walk also left the tower, leaving only the couple, Zodiac, Sol'khin, and the Joker .

Actually, the moment Forne exited, the Red Tower started acting strange . It suddenly change color and started shaking left and right as if it was about to take off into the starry night sky . The card symbols were now replaced by three massive symbols . The first was a creepy purple skull, the second was a beautiful blue moon, and the last one was a crimson arc that resembled nothing in particular . Each emitted a unique aura with the third one being the most overwhelming, it was much like the Cthulhu's savage aura and it even affected some of the weak-minded people in its range . The moon emanated a soothing light and basked in its breath-taking luminosity, last but not least was the skull, which only released a dark blue flames that rose into the starry sky, cloaking it with its illusory blue color .

"What's happening?" Mumbled Maxine .

"I feel Yin power!" The thief that was part of her team commented while gazing at the moon's beautiful light .

Unbeknownst to them, things became much more chaotic on the 49th floor . The moon engraved on this colossal sky-piercing tower was but the first part of the symbol as a star started forming inside of it, giving off an aura of death and darkness .

"It's the final showdown..." Contrary to his usual optimism, the Bard Aneirin looked a small black talisman in his hand, appearing quite sad . The talisman was half-gone and beginning to turn transparent, signaling that the life of its owner is withering away as time slowly passes .

"Zodiak, you have to make it out... you have to!"-Aneirin

The few seconds Leiu's body counterattacked was enough for Sol'khin to regain control over it and blast away Zodiak . He was about to lunge at the old man again only for Arthur and Lucy to intercept him .

Lucy's appearance slightly changed as her right arm was covered in scales and emitting steam, an illusory white tail grew and white spectral fire was burning in her eyes .

She activated her eye's time stop ability, momentarily stopping the target mid-air while she punched with the devil's arm, managing to push away Sol'khin and even crack his armor, which was repairing itself at an insane speed . Arthur followed from behind, releasing dozens of white thunderbolts and striking with a large illusory golden palm .

The thunderbolts stunned the already dazed Sol'khin while the palm flattened the enemy's body on the ground . The Quad-Spirit also participated as countless thick black chains sprung from the ground and clustered around Sol'khin, a circle of fire exploded under him and a Death Storm sucked the Darkness emanating from his eyes .

For a few seconds, they managed to bind him, however, Zodiak was not in a good shape as he knelt on the ground and coughed blood . Arthur didn't need to check to know that the old man's soul was weakening by the second, probably because he not only strengthened himself for a long period of time but also because he failed in his attempt to pull Sol'khin soul, which caused a serious backlash .

The parasite went to the old man and crouched, checking on him . A white light emanated from his left hand, healing the bloody old man and quickly getting him back in shape, but, unfortunately, he couldn't do anything about the soul .

After doing his best, Arthur saw Lucy getting sent flying hundreds of meters away and was about to go and restrain Sol'khin again only for Zodiak to pull his arm and mutter with a weak voice:

"What I can do... is only buy you time, Arthur . "

He looked straight into the parasite's eyes and spoke with a serious tone: "Later on, do not hate me, please . "

Chapter 628: 628

Zodiak said his piece then charged at Sol'khin, covering himself in the Dark Magic flames and going all-out . Arthur followed behind him and overtook the old man thanks to his Lightning magic, once he was upon his target, he slowed time and unhesitatingly slashed with his sword .

Anduril was used to block the attack but it wasn't fully able to resist Arthur's strike due to the slowed time, causing Sol'khin to be flung in the air . Zodiac's flames cascaded on Sol'khin, engulfing him entirely and forcing the black sword out of his hand, at last . The last to attack was Lucy, who managed to quickly recover and unleash her fusion flames which overwhelmed Leiu's darkness and actually melt and freeze the thick black armor protecting his body .

The three coordinated their attacks flawlessly, not leaving Sol'khin even a second to take a breather . Lucy's devil arm intensely vibrated then released an invisible and destructive sound wave from her elbow, which cracked the space then headed towards her target, which tried to block it only to be sent flying like a kite .

Arthur used [Faster than Death], appearing behind Sol'khin, he manipulated Gravity to sink the latter's body then he unleashed hundreds of tiny Void Mouths which creepily surrounded the enemy and started devouring everything in their way .

In retaliation, Sol'khin twisted his body and shot laser-like beams from his fingers, disintegrating the Void Mouths and hitting Arthur . Fortunately, before getting hit for the second time by the beams, Zodiac interfered, his body now resembled a black phoenix as it screeched and crashed into Leiu .

A sea of dark blue flames spread across all directions, consuming everything and even pushing both Arthur and Lucy away . The claws of the black phoenix were clashing with Sol'khin's arm, which managed to stop the monstrous force behind this inky black flaming monster .

"This is a matter between us three... so... . "

While blocking Zodiac, Sol'khin spat a minuscule yet frightening black hole from his mouth, which almost instantly sucked him and Zodiac into it . Arthur, who was about to attack, was close enough to be pulled too but Lucy wasn't fast enough to join them as it quickly vanished from the 49th floor .

The White Specter stood there, perplexed, and unable to come up with a solution . She only snapped out of it when the Joker landed next to her and said:

"What he said is actually true... sadly . Don't worry though, Arthur will return safely . You just have to wait outside . "

He handed her one of his special red cards then waved his hand, enveloping her in a white light which teleported the unwilling Lucy outside of the Red Tower .

"Isn't this better? No one to bother us or interfere in our personal matter . "

Sol'khin laughed as he faced both Arthur and Zodiac . They appeared in a world totally opposite to the world of darkness . This place very much resembled the endless white space inside of the ARK but Arthur felt uncomfortable, even Zodiac's flames were slightly suppressed .

Sol'khin looked around in happiness while saying: "Can you feel it? This shackling sensation! It's practically an immaterial prison!"

The old man and the parasite didn't talk and, instead, attacked the enemy from both sides, bombarding him with all kinds of attacks . Arthur transformed into the Vermilion Bird while Zodiac was a black

phoenix, the two divine beasts were much bigger than their tiny target, who wielded unimaginable strength capable of resisting their special flames .

Hellfire and vermilion flame fused together as they covered the sky and strengthened Zodiac's flames, these three types of flames were harmonious and compatible as they descended upon Sol'khin who raised his hand and released an absurd amount of Darkness, which canceled the incoming wave of flames .

Using their massive bodies, Zodiac and Arthur attacked their enemy, pushing him back bit by bit and breaking the armor . No matter how powerful Sol'khin was, he wasn't able to deal with them simultaneously so he ended up being thrashed even when he tried counterattacking with Leiu's darkness, which was neither easy to control nor strong enough to block Zodiac's Dark Magic or Arthur wide variety of skills .

Without needing to communicate, Arthur and Zodiac behaved like one entity, supporting each other and attacking at the perfect moments .

The vermilion bird wildly screeched then transformed into an Azure Dragon which opened its mouth and spat out illusory red flames . As for Zodiac, he created a black cube which trapped Sol'khin inside whilst the dragonic flames engulfed him . Unfortunately, it wasn't enough to weaken the enemy but it did considerable damage to the armor protecting his body, charring it and angering him even more .

"It seems that this body is unwilling to obey anymore... hmpf! Not like it matters!"

While kneeling on the ground, Sol'khin spat some blood then ripped a small piece of armor that remained around his chest before stabbing his chest and pulling a strange object .

"He's going to use his Godspirit... his real form!"

Finally, it was the golden opportunity to attack Sol'khin as he was discarding Leiu's body, however, when Zodiac tried attacking, his body faltered and the dark blue flames quietened down for a few seconds, buying the enemy enough time to complete his brief ritual .

As for Arthur, he found himself immobilized as the emerging God Spirit was affecting his inferior and incomplete soul . A crimson tear which emitted a suffocatingly savage aura appeared above Leiu's body, which fell on the ground the moment Sol'khin revealed his true appearance .

A faceless head showed itself from within the tear, which was like a portal to another dimension . The violent energy pushed away both Zodiac and Arthur, sending them all the way to the end of this strange dimension .

Arthur was able to catch Zodiac's body but when he tried using Life Magic, it wouldn't enter the old man's body .

"It's no use... I'm reaching my time limit . "

Arthur frowned and didn't know what to say . The old man stood up with great difficulty, his breathing was heavy and his body was shaking, clearly not in a state to fight .

What made it worse is that Sol'khin didn't wait for them as the tear released an unstoppable blast which clashed with Arthur, who used the black turtle body to try and block it . The shells disintegrated but they managed to resist the first strike and protect Zodiak .

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Lucy looked around and once she confirmed her surroundings, she took out a small metallic object that she received from a lower floor . In front of her was a monitor which displayed the events unfolding in the white isolated floor where Arthur and co were .

The object she was holding was round and had two colors, one was blue and the other was crimson . It was actually the symbol of their sect, a Moon and a Star .

Chapter 629

Once he showed his true form, all Sol'khin cared about was to get the weakened Zodiak then deal with Arthur . As for Leiu's body, it was ignored and unaffected by anything around it . The broken armor and the bloody wounds were instantly gone the moment the invader left Leiu's consciousness .

The space next to the unconscious Leiu distorted and a mesmerizing woman with a very pale skin and a hair that reached her ankles made her appearance . She knelt next to the youth and briefly examined him before she put him over her shoulder . After one last glance at the fight occurring not far from her, Xyktia disappeared with Leiu, clearly not caring about what's happening on this place .

In just a few seconds, she entered the tower again, alone, and then left with the unconscious Leiu . She swiftly left the planet where the Red Tower was situated but even when in Stealth, her path was blocked by a tall man wearing a strange white costume .

Of course, she instantly recognized him and was forced to stop . The Lady of Darkness glared at the Joker but didn't dare force her way or provoke him .

Wolfram appeared next to her and checked his brother before pressing a black card on the youth's hand then retreating a few steps .

"Let this be our last meeting, assassin . "

After saying that with an unusually serious tone, he vanished into a puff of red smoke .

"*cough* *cough*"

Arthur knelt on the ground and coughed a big mouthful of blood, his right arm and a large portion of his abdomen was gone, though it was self-regenerating . He's heavily injured and even his soul was injured by Sol'khin's attacks, which were very fast to dodge or even block . They were all the same and always strike both his physical body and his consciousness, rendering him unable to continuously block within the short period of time it takes the enemy to unleash the very same attack .

As for Zodiak, he took out his last black talisman and ripped it in half then put it on his chest, enveloping himself in dark flames yet again . To fight against Sol'khin, the old man even took out his Godspirit, which was a massive black and purple skull which emitted a lot of black fog and corrupted everything around it .

The floating skull acted on its own and was even able to block Sol'khin's attacks but still ends up being a bit to the back . Though Sol'khin remained consistent with his attacks, Zodiak soon realized that they were getting stronger and that his soul was being sucked by the savage aura embedded within these invisible blasts .

At some point, while Zodiak was blocking Sol'khin attacks, a crimson arrow came out from the red tear and headed straight at Arthur, who was still recovering and unable to move properly . He activated his eye ability and tried to stop time but it didn't seem to work on the incoming projectile, which boasted an insane speed and an overwhelming pressure .

Just as it was about to hit the parasite, it suddenly turned blue as it was instantly frozen then disintegrated into countless pieces, soon falling on the ground and vanishing . A graceful white figure descended from above and landed next to Arthur .

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Seeing the long illusory white tail, the silver hair and the glowing blue eye, Arthur was surprised as Lucy was supposed to be elsewhere .

"You thought I'll hide while you have all the fun?" Lucy jokingly said while kneeling next to him and holding his hand while at the same time handing him the circular object . A bit confused, Arthur looked at it, not knowing what it was even when a system notification popped up .

"A parasite does not have a Godspirit but you have a human soul . This will help you . "

Although this object does grant him a permanent Godspirit, it'll still allow the couple to summon a powerful Godspirit . Without wasting any time on needless talks, Arthur nodded his head and clenched the metallic object, which started brightly glowing with a red and blue light .

The parasite and the White Specter were bathed in blue and red light cracked this endless white space and caused everything to start shaking . The strange white sky was replaced by a dark gloom and its center, a blinding moon made its appearance .

It emitted a chilling energy which froze all the ground and pushed away the savage aura coming off the large crimson tear, which was, in fact, Sol'khin's form .

After a few seconds crept by, a red star appeared inside the blue moon, finally completing this abnormal Godspirit, which seemed to drastically change the environment .

Actually the whole place couldn't handle the presence of all three Godspirit and soon started to crumble . Deafening alarms were sounding inside and outside the Red Tower as it slowly yet surely started crumbling from top to bottom .

The process was supposed to be slow but when Zodiak and the couple's Godspirits started clashing with Sol'khin, the tower couldn't handle it . Everyone around it was flabbergasted by the surprising sight as a blinding light illuminated the night sky .

A big crimson tear was clashing with a purple skull and a bright moon and a red star .

Zodiak roared and merged with his Godspirit, further strengthening it and causing an absurd and truly frightening amount of dark blue flames to emit from him and engulf Sol'khin . The faceless head within the tear started evilly laughing as Zodiak got closer and started weakening his target .

As for Arthur and Lucy, they supported the old man with the help of the Godspirit, which used a special kind of energy that overpowered everything in its way and trapped their enemy into a corner .

When everything seemed about to end, the red tear high-up in the sky expanded in size and countless crimson arrows struck the ghastly purple skull, stopping its charge and clashing with the dark blue flames .

In retaliation, the MoonStar started emitting an even more blinding light before unleashing a white pillar of light which deflected all the arrows and hit the faceless head . The MoonStar Godspirit slowly came down from the shrouded sky and got closer to Sol'khin while still unleashing the white pillar .

At the same time, the purple skull opened its mouth and from within, a skeletal hand stretched toward the red tear and started pulling Sol'khin's soul .

To the spectators, everything happened too fast and the battle came to an abrupt end when the Red Tower exploded, blasting everyone away . The Holy army, the contestants, and the spectators were all sent flying to across this planet . Even Arthur and Lucy were not spared, their Godspirit slowly vanished, the same thing happened for the purple skull but not before it successfully pulled a strange black light from the red tear .

Chapter 630

The last exchange between the Godspirits and Sol'khin caused a lot of chaos, furthermore, the exploding Red Tower made things even worse as it spared no one . Apart from very few individuals who retreated in time, all the rest were injured and some were killed on the spot due to not being able to handle the explosive force .

Arthur supported the heavily injured Lucy and looked up to the sky, precisely at a dense amount of black flag strangely twirling around . Only Zodiak wasn't affected by the explosion and, in fact, he managed to pull Sol'khin's soul inside of him but it wasn't the end yet .

The old man's body was convulsing intensely as he clutched his chest and was barely able to support himself and not fall from the sky . Including Arthur, everyone else was watching the unfolding events with curiosity and astonishment .

"C-commander! Those are the tower's rewards!"

The second-in-command of the Holy Army pointed at two bright lights while speaking to Seraph, the commander .

Just as she said that, the attention of all those who were present, focused on two lights, one red and the other white . Upon a closer look, one was a red stone and the other was an immaterial object that emitted a blinding white light, like a star .

They are the Blessing Stone and the Wish Star, two miraculous items that would make anyone greedy . Apart from a selected few whose goal was Sol'khin, the rest of the contestants all craved for these two heaven-defying items . So, it should not come at a surprise to see them go insane when these two items made their appearance after the tower was gone, for good .

As if drawn by something, the Blessing Stone and the Wish Star shot straight at Zodiac . They started spinning around the black fog and waiting for something to finish, however, many of the contestants refused to stay still and started acting .

They wanted to get their hands on these two items and they didn't care about Zodiac and whatever was inside of him . The first ones who acted were Hach'ara and Sickie Bart, two vicious and powerful individuals .

The hideous looking old man controlled his insects while he wielded a lengthy poisoned dagger, as for Sickie Bart, he attacked using his scissor-like metallic limbs .

Neither of the two assailants cared about the unresponsive Zodiac and, from the looks of it, their attacks were about to cause a lot of collateral damage . When they were but a few meters away from the spinning stone and white light, the two were suddenly faced with a colossal black silhouette which blocked their view and sent them flying in a split second .

The sudden appearance of this humongous black-figure brought fear to everyone . The sheer size of this monster was second only to Sigradzomr, its huge inky black wings and the dark scales covering its body made it even more frightening . In every sense of the word, it resembled the fearsome black dragons, the fully grown and powerful ones . The pressure was that of a dragon and its blood-red eyes were a confirmation that it was fully awake and alive .

"My dear guest, remember to not steal its stats . Not only are they more than you can handle, it can also lead to an avoidable backlash . Black Dragons are skilled in mental attacks and even though this one is dead, it can still control anything that invades its body . When the time comes and you have to use this dragon's body, be careful of the enemies outside... and inside . "

Timos warned Arthur while handing the massive black dragon corpse to him . In response, the parasite examined the dragon before saying:

"Who's this anyway?"

"The Black Dragon Xedieg, son of the Elder Dragon Sigradzomr . "

It was the first time Arthur heard of such names and as he wasn't very interested in the matter, he didn't ask the Black Devil anything else related to the dragons, which was unfortunate .

"What's happening? Wasn't that Arthur?"

Forne, who was semi-consciousness and unable to even fly, was currently being carried atop of the Azure Dragon . With the exception of 'X' and the Void Behemoth, everyone else was riding on Arthur, who transformed into the Divine Beast . Lucy was also present but she seemed to be absent-minded as she kept looking back .

...

Going back a few minutes to the past, right after the explosion occurred, Arthur activated his new ability and created clones of himself . One of the clones was sent to take care of the rest while the main body remained next to Zodiak to protect him and finish this once and for all . Although Lucy was a bit unwilling, Arthur managed to convince her to go ahead in order to take care of something for him .

The moment Arthur left the Red Tower, alarms unceasingly echoed inside of his head, they belonged to both the system and the oaths he made in the past . It didn't take him long to figure out what's happening .

Lucy needs to wait for him in the boundary between the System and the Cloud Sea Universe, while this clone will head directly to Astria . There was also a second clone which was tasked with an additional matter .

...

"You owe me now . "

With a deep voice, Arthur replied to the tired Forne, though his words were meant for everyone else, excluding his wife, of course .

"Owe?"

"Yes, and I expect you to return the favor really soon . In a few days, actually . "

After leaving the planet and finding a relatively empty and safe spot, the Azure Dragon stopped its mad flight . A soothing white light enveloped Forne and healed some of his injuries, as for G'am Tir and Celes, their bodies rejected Life Energy so they had to resort to other things . Actually, the Grey Seat of Decay was currently unconscious but she didn't seem to be in danger, though the emperor's clone was turning transparent periodically .

"You still have not told me if Sol'khin is gone or not!"

Forne glared back at the massive azure dragon, wanting to hear a confirmation from the parasite's mouth .

"He will die . You did your best and, honestly, the moment Sol'khin's soul was pulled from the Nameless Knight's body, it no longer became your guys' business . Now then . "

The Azure Dragon swiftly turned around and disappeared from their sight seconds later . As for Lucy, she politely bowed her head to the Black Seat of Death before flying to the opposite direction .