

Once Human 691

Chapter 691

Right outside the golden metropolis, Arthur stared at the passage, which heavily shook for some time. He was pondering whether to go inside or not. He knew that Lucy, which he considered his slave, saved him from something but he can't just sit around and do nothing.

He desperately wanted to restore his memories to know how he obtained those stats and what happened with Lucy in the past. He felt like there was a forgotten gap in his memories and that made him uncomfortable and unable to roam around and do whatever he wanted like he previously wished so.

After thoroughly weighing his options, Arthur entered the passage and flew in a straight line before appearing in the city again. The moment he appeared, he transformed into what he deemed the best host to defend himself in, the black turtle, which was one of the four Divine Beasts he can transform into.

The ginormous black turtle conjured a translucent yellow barrier and its thick scales were enveloped by a green defensive layer. Although the current Arthur isn't as efficient in using the good skills as the old one due to his inability to get accustomed to his cultivation and Realm and the sheer amount of skills in his arsenal, all which seem overpowered.

After making sure he is well-protected, Arthur looked around and apart from two falling buildings, everything else seemed perfectly fine.

The huge Divine Beast slowly descended toward the broken golden building and in no time, Lucy's figure could be seen. She was laying in a pool of blood and was unconscious, a bit of small rubbles had fallen on his left shoulder and thighs.

A distance away from her, in mid-air, there was a crimson silhouette bound by black and grey threads. The moment Arthur caught wind of it, his body froze. It was easy to guess that this was the source of what happened.

The parasite warily circled around the bound Headless Soldier before floating closer to Lucy from the other side.

The serene and calming Life Energy wrapped around Lucy and healed her while Telekinesis raised her in the air and pulled her closer to the gigantic black turtle.

Once he had gotten hold of the unconscious white specter, Arthur left the area, heading deeper into the shiny yet eerily quiet city. Strangely enough, the passage was littered with the dangerous buzz-sized machines but the city's machines were either unresponsive or are doing their job without bothering with the intruders or 'visitors'.

In a breath-taking open plaza decorated with silver ornaments and statues made from dark gold, a black turtle, which became smaller in size, landed on its center.

Arthur used Telekinesis and put down the unconscious Lucy, his Life Energy was slowly healing her but the damage done by the Mythical Being was more than it was shown.

Normally, Lucy's high recovering ability along with Arthur's Life Energy would heal her back to full within minutes but even after a whole hour, Lucy was still wounded.

With nothing in particular to do, the parasite sat down next to Lucy and gazed at her face, his mind lost in thought. No matter how much he tried to remember, the memories wouldn't come up, which, sometimes, made him wonder if everything that was said by Lucy was just a lie. Then again, as his slave, she cannot lie, moreover, his high stats and his current state is proof that many things happened after he killed himself back on Earth.

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Even more time passed but Lucy showed no signs of waking up so Arthur just put a barrier around her before leaving the plaza to explore other areas of this hidden golden metropolis.

The city wasn't that big, especially for the parasite, who can move around very fast and can even teleport, nonetheless, he decided to wander around slowly so as to not alert the busy machines. Plus, he didn't come here to cause trouble and only hoped to find a way to restore his memories.

The reason he came here was because the race which built this city is known for its exceptional intelligence so it was safe to assume that they crafted something that allows the user to peek through his past memories.

Arthur, back in his human form, entered a special district with dome-like houses and a frightening amount of humanoid machines, all armed to the teeth. They held rifle-like black objects and tight golden armors which made them merge with their radiant environment.

The amount of gold in this city would make anyone on Earth drool with greed but, for Arthur, it was unnecessary and uncomfortable to look at. Even without the artificial sun hanging way up, the illumination of the golden city is enough to see everything.

All was well and calm for Arthur but it didn't continue to be so, of course. He abruptly stopped marching and groaned while holding his head. A splitting yet momentary pain assaulted him and it brought with him a joyful thing, something that he hoped but did not expect right here and right now.

They were vivid images, memories of the past but they were brief. They depicted a golden city a bit different than this one, a gigantic snake that spits fire, a fire giant and...

"Black Rose? Red Seat? When was this?"

Arthur tried to remember but those images vanished as fast as they had appeared, making the parasite slightly disappointed, nevertheless, he didn't give up and kept looking around, trying to find some clues.

It seems that he visited a place similar to this one in the past so there's a strong chance that he'll experience the same thing again the more he ventures in.

Five minutes later, Arthur was assaulted by the pain again and saw other memories, which explained to him a few more things. Like how that golden city was in a world called Green-Leaf and used by one of the sects there.

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While Arthur was touring the golden metropolis, the Headless Soldier was soon about to break free. The grey and black threads originating from the Joker's card were being ripped one by one and some even turned blurry, seemingly unable to handle the pressure.

The Mythical Being, which was missing his head, angrily growled, his hand clenched the bloodied rusty sword.

Author's note: Hello, I just wanted to say that this volume isn't long but is necessary for the next one, which is the conclusion of Arthur's adventures and the next step for the grand final of the story. Thanks for reading and stay tuned!

Chapter 692

Bit by bit, Arthur was remembering past and forgotten things. Every image, every sensation was as vivid as it can get and it would last for a brief moment before disappearing, however, he ascertained his suspicions.

The silver-haired woman who was so affectionate to him and wasted no opportunity to show her love did indeed appear in those memories, which means that what she said, or, at least, part of it, was true, or so thought Arthur.

After 6th time, the parasite no longer experienced this strange occurrence so he decided to go back to Lucy and check on her. As he walking back with rapid steps to the open plaza, Arthur felt a suffocating pressure that alerted all his instincts.

All kinds of alarms were ringing inside of his head and before he could grasp the situation, a crimson silhouette flew into the sky, not towards him but at the plaza, where Lucy was.

The parasite also shot from the ground and tried to clash with the Headless Soldier but he was a slower than his target, nevertheless, when he approached the mythical being, it automatically changed its target to him.

One would expect precise and strong blows from the strongest mythical being but it was a far cry from that. The Headless Soldier was like a crazy dog, attacking relentlessly and blowing things up left and right.

Arthur blown up away with the first strike and when he managed to stabilize his body again, he was flung away yet again. His Health Pool decreased with every hit but he recovered it almost instantly and, when he was going to be struck for the third time, he was able to retaliate.

His fist enveloped by a green lightning, it clashed with the Soldier's sword, however, the result was no different than the rest. Arthur's body, like a kite, crashed into one of the building, crumbling it.

He coughed blood and struggled to get up but a rusty bloody sword penetrated his chest, impaling him. The Headless Soldier pulled out the sword and slashed again, cutting off Arthur's left arm.

Thanks to the Pain Immunity Passive, the parasite didn't feel pain but he was at death's door and even his crazy regeneration and Life Magic weren't quick enough to negate the massive damage he was suffering every second.

Feeling helpless and restrained, Arthur went all-out, using a Fire Rizaki and [Heavenly Arrow], which were unleashed three seconds after the second slash of the enemy.

He had only 20% Health left and his body was in a mess but, fortunately, the Rizaki blew up just in time. The golden city was overshadowed by dark red flames which dominated the skies and cascaded on the mythical being, blowing him up away from Arthur.

The Heavenly Arrow followed after the Rizaki, made from Void Magic and Lightning, it whistled and twirled in the air. The Headless Soldier tried dodging it but it followed him wherever he dashed and, in the end, he was forced to take it head-on.

Arthur vomited lots of blood then got up and used his right hand, which emitted a blinding white light which covered him and healed his injuries. His cut-off arm grew within ten seconds and his Health was recovered to full after half a minute but the Mental Power he used was not so easily restored.

Instead of flying at the opponent, Arthur wanted to return to the plaza and see if Lucy had woken up. They had more chance to survive if they gang up on the Headless Soldier, who Arthur didn't know and was confused on why he's attacking them.

Sadly, Arthur had just flown a small distance when a crimson light blocked his way, a rusty and unimpressive sword incoming towards him. A crimson pillar of light was unleashed from the sword, to which Arthur unsheathed Makaze and swung it horizontally.

The two blades violently clashed but Arthur was unable to keep hold of his partner, which flew out of his hand and disappeared within a split second. The pillar of light continued its rampage and struck the parasite, who was able to raise a barrier just in time to resist a bit of the damage.

Arthur followed with [Faster Than Death], teleporting next to the enemy and whipping with his leg, accurately hitting the soldier's hand and also forcing the sword out of his hand.

From then on, the battle turned into a dog fight, the two became totally mad, throwing punches and kicks without restraint. No flashy attacks or ultimate moves, just a bloody brawl in which the mythical being was dramatically getting stronger.

One of the downsides of fighting the Headless Soldier is that, the longer the fight lasts, the stronger the mythical being becomes. If he fights long enough, the soldier can even defeat the strongest person in existence, the Nameless Knight.

The golden metropolis, once majestic and full of radiance, was turned into a place no different than hell itself. The dark red flames burned down everything to cinder and the clash between the crazed dog and the angry wolf transformed this place into ruins.

Arthur would punch the soldier's chest, blowing him hundreds of meters away then, in retaliation, the mythical being would kick the parasite in the air then grab his leg and smash him on the ground. This inhumane and savage brawl continued for about fifteen minutes before it was interrupted by a freezing energy which made the Headless Soldier stop mid-charge.

He tried to back away but the Yin Energy spread too quickly and turned him into a statue, which intensely shook and was about to break only for a massive blooming lotus to appear above it and solidify the ice again, trapping the enemy inside.

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A graceful figure dressed in a long blue dress landed next to Arthur. Her Yin energy enveloped him and expelled the crimson aura out of his body.

"We can't beat him... we should leave."

Arthur stared at the frozen mythical being before nodding his head, his right hand emitting an abundant amount of Life Energy, which healed him.

Lucy glanced at Arthur and noticed a subtle difference but decided not to ask for the time being. The longer they stay here, the more dangerous it'll become.

There was something which confused her about this situation. The Headless Soldier knocked her unconscious with a couple of attacks but Arthur was able to contend against it, which isn't logical.

In his current state, he is definitely not as strong as she is so how could he battle the mythical being?

'Did he purposely weaken itself in order to fight Arthur? Or does he scale depending who he's facing?'

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The couple didn't linger there any longer than they should have. With the Headless Soldier temporarily frozen and the golden metropolis now in ruins, there was no reasons for the parasite or the white specter to stay, especially with the mythical being behind their backs.

More or less, Arthur got what he wanted and, after experiencing those vivid flashes of memories, he was sure that most of what Lucy said was true. It could be said that the negative feeling and distrust he harbored towards her had dramatically diminished but it didn't completely disappear.

"Are you alright?"

The moment the two left the golden city and appeared in the forest at the edge of the small world, Lucy checked Arthur from head to toe with an overly worried expression plastered on her face.

In response, Arthur tried shrugging her off but after two unsuccessful tries, he just stood there, a bit confused and slightly embarrassed now that he's aware that she's not faking her extreme affection.

"If... if all what you said is true then we're actually married."

"Mhm! That's right!" Lucy affirmed with an enthusiastic nod and a bright smile which can entrance any man. Arthur faked a couple of coughs and turned around.

He changed into a cleaner outfit, a long azure robe with silver lines on it before speaking again,

"Let us go."

"Where to?"

She peeked her head from the side, a smile still aimed at him.

"Take me to familiar places so I can recover all my memories."

Unexpectedly, Lucy didn't immediately agree with him like usual. She gazed at the gloomy and darkening sky then explained,

"I'm afraid that's not possible at the moment. Before we ended up here, we were attacked by the System's spaceship and if we were to leave right now, it'll most likely locate us and we won't be able to defeat the sheer amount of fighting robots it can dispatch."

"Then what do you propose?"

"We're not in a hurry so you can do whatever you want. I, as your loyal and loving slave, I'll follow you everywhere."

She tried to link his arms with his but Arthur stepped away and threw a piercing glare at her before jumping in the air and flying East.

What happened over the course of the next two weeks couldn't be said to be interesting. Arthur and Lucy traveled from one place to another, discovering new places and occasionally fighting monsters which were basically killed with one skill.

Arthur no longer cared about possessing those monsters, which had pathetic stats and, instead, aimed to recreate past events in order to remember what he had forgotten.

In one fateful night, a memory clearer than all the rest flashed inside the parasite's head. He was quietly meditating while Lucy was sitting opposite of him and wearing only a sexy red nightgown, obviously, trying to seduce him.

Ever since that night when she jumped on him, the two didn't do anything obscene as Arthur showed a great amount of restraint and didn't want to succumb to his carnal desires, nonetheless, Lucy attempts were completely futile either.

While Arthur was trying to calm his racing heart and turbulent mind, a memory from long ago appeared in his head and it was coupled with the head-splitting pain.

It showed him a brief fight with a silver dragon then a blinding blast which blew him and Lucy. He saw how he was nursed and how his relationship with that woman deepened due to that incident.

Their first kiss and so on... it was so realistic that he momentarily fell unconscious and let out a painful groan. When he came back to his senses, those memories disappeared but strangely enough, like its predecessors, he remembered some of them, not in the normal sense but he just knew that this and that happened.

When he opened his eyes again, the parasite found himself laying on Lucy's lap, her relatively small hand on his forehead.

"It's okay, I'm here. Just rest for a bit."

Her gentle voice, which can only be heard by him, made him close his eyes again and caused his consciousness to drift into the abyss as he fell asleep, genuinely feeling very tired.

The very next morning, when he woke up, he was sleeping on the bed with a half-naked beauty practically hugging him like a pillow. Both her arms wrapped around his chest and her head glued to him, inches away from his neck.

Not used to this, Arthur tried to push her away at first but the woman wouldn't let go so, in the end, he resigned and just remained like that, a bit stiff as he gazed at her sleeping face and wondered many, many things.

The world Arthur and Lucy were in is a nameless place in the middle of nowhere but it's still considered inside the System Universe.

After the couple fled from the spaceship, which was aiming for the parasite, the System dispatched even more robots and players to apprehend the targets but everything ended up with a devastating failure.

Out of nowhere, the Nameless Knight appeared and destroyed two of the large-sized spaceships along with all of its passengers before warning the System to stop its pursuit.

Unfortunately, his warning didn't work at all and even though he's the strongest existence, the System was hell-bent on getting its hands on Arthur.

Apparently, its adamanance on getting the parasite was due to what happened recently. Someone who looked exactly like Arthur invaded many of the System's factories and had stolen important test subjects so the System assumed that it's him after running many tests.

The truth isn't far from everyone's assumptions. The Arthur who appeared at that time is indeed the parasite Arthur but he's not from this timeline but, for now, only the Joker, Leiu, and Timos were aware of that.

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After searching for a bit more than two weeks, the System managed to locate the hiding couple but it didn't launch an immediate attack.

Two spaceships, no smaller than the one from before, positioned themselves around the entrance and exit of the small world and countless robots readied themselves. In order to catch the parasite, the System was ready to annihilate the whole world with just one cannon blast.

The cannon was called 'Bio Blasted' and though it doesn't cause any apparent damage, the advanced chemicals inside the blast will kill every living being in that world.

The robot in charge of this, a unique kind called the G-1 type, had all the information it needed on the couple and calculated the likelihood of their survival. Although they may be close to death, it'll still count as a success.

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Five more days passed and the vision, or more accurately, the vivid memories of the past became much more frequent, to the point that Arthur could barely rest.

The head-splitting pain would come out of nowhere and would last much longer, causing him to be bedded almost all day long with Lucy nursing him. Furthermore, he became more open to his wife though he still refused skinship but it's not like he could stop Lucy as he could barely move.

There was one more thing which was drastically changing and experiencing things a bit similar to Arthur, it's none other than his partner and blade, Makaze.

At first, it was calmer than water but a few days ago, it started intensely vibrating and damaging the inn's room, so Lucy had to relocate to a safer and more secluded hideout.

There were no black flames emanating from the dark blade but another, more dangerous thing spawned off of it. It was wind, pure wind energy which was sharp enough to cut everything in its way. There was lightning too, a bit of crimson lightning very similar to the one Arthur faced when he was attacked by the Celestial Tribulation, the very same Astrith can use.

"Are you feeling better?"

As she wiped the sweat off his forehead, Lucy leaned closer and checked his pulse before putting another blanket on him.

"I... I really don't know but I'm starting to know why this is happening."

"Oh, why?"

The parasite didn't answer his question and closed his eyes, preferring to rest. It's like there is some sort of barrier around his heart, rendering him unable to trust anyone, including this silver-haired woman, whom he ascertained she's his wife.

Maybe because the tragic memories of the past are still lingering in his mind or the fear of experiencing the betrayal again. Nevertheless, the current Arthur didn't want to get involved but it's a bit too late to think that.

Lucy, who was about to use her Yin body to cool his burning body, suddenly stood up and gazed at the dark ceiling of the cave. She unleashed her sense and immediately caught sight of numerous robots flying in the air.

She didn't attack them immediately as she knew there is an even stronger power behind them, moreover, it'll expose their locations. Opting for a safer way, she followed one of the robot squadrons and discovered that they were dragging the inhabitants of this planet away.

In just five to ten minutes, a blinding white light would envelop a city or a town and then everyone would disappear.

After seeing this process three times, Lucy hurried back to Arthur as she kind of guessed what the System wanted to do but, unfortunately, a few kilometers away from what her husband was, she was intercepted by a tall robot holding a lengthy metallic spear with a sharp black tip.

"Lucy MoonStar... Target confirmed. Proceeding to capture the target."

The robot spoke with an emotionless voice as its eyes shone with blue light. It grabbed its spear and pointed it at Lucy, who dashed at it and violently punched it using her devil arm.

A large amount of steam emanating from the specter covered the area and a devastating clash occurred when her fist clashed with the black tip of the spear.

Lucy managed to blow the robots thirty or so meters away but it quickly stabilized its body and jumped at her only to be frozen mid-air by nine blooming lotuses, which quickly spun around the woman.

Half of the forest was frozen in a split second and when the robot managed to break free, Lucy had already fled and retrieved Arthur, who woke up.

The parasite was confused but he readied himself when he saw Lucy's panicked expression. He stored the unstable Makaze and, once he left the cave, he transformed into a massive and majestic azure dragon, which rose in the air with a terrifying speed.

Lucy stood atop the dragon and fired the silver revolver multiple times, shooting down countless robots which were charging at them.

At this point in time, they were already discovered so it was futile to use Stealth.

Arthur listened to Lucy's advice and charged high-up in the sky, wanting to leave this world before more reinforcements arrive.

Unfortunately, the Divine Beast bumped into an invisible wall, which pushed it back and forced Arthur back to his human form. He unleashed a Heavenly Arrow infused with Void Magic at the unseen wall while Lucy shot a 2nd-grade bullet at it but the two attacks did no damage at all.

They floated in that sky for less than a minute but hundreds of robots circled them, leaving not even a tiny gap in between.

"Just why are they after us?"-Arthur

"..."-Lucy

Lucy activated her White Specter transformation, causing an illusory flaming white tail to appear, her two eyes were covered with white fire too. The devil arm scaled changed in colors, becoming grey and the steam became crimson.

"You're in no condition to fight. We'll have to create an opening and escape."

"How are we going to do that?"

Lucy smiled at him and replied, "Just blast everything."

After saying that, she flew high in the sky and let out her Godspirit, which was an enormous ice lotus. The Godspirit instantly bloomed and released an unstoppable wave of Yin, powerful enough to freeze all the nearby robots, albeit momentarily.

Arthur followed with a fire Rizaki and Space Magic. He broke the space, making the enemies disoriented before the deafening fire explosion erupted, causing the sky to turn red and the Hell flames to cascade on the unmoving robots.

As they had no feeling of fear, the countless robots advanced forward and sacrificed each other to get close to their targets. The couple's attacks were truly strong and defeated more than a thousand robots but even more came in their places.

"They're not attacking us..."

Lucy was perplexed by the robots' behavior but she had no time to contemplate things. Both she and Arthur chose a direction and charged at the mass of enemies.

The Godspirit froze everything while she used the golden crow flames to scorch the metallic machines.

As the two were equipped with deadly attacks, it wasn't hard to break through the encirclement. Furthermore, the robots weren't individually strong, they just had a lot of numbers.

Sadly, the moment of relief lasted only for a split second as the couple heard an ear-splitting sound which made them fall from the sky and crash into the burning forest.

When they managed to get back to their senses, all the robots had stopped functioning and rained down from the sky but this wasn't the end.

Twenty seconds of silence passed before Lucy and Arthur, who were thousands of kilometers away using Arthur's Space Magic, abruptly stopped and fell on the ground again.

Arthur was the first to be affected. He grabbed his throat and seemed to have trouble breathing, his energy was totally out of control and his health was decreasing rapidly.

Lucy felt the change fifteen seconds after him and, like him, her body limply fell on the ground and she couldn't breathe anymore.

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Time slowly passed and, before even the couple succumbed to the cannon shot called 'Bio Blaster', the rest of the inhabitants of the world, those who weren't dragged away by the System's teleportation, died in five seconds or less.

The trees withered, rivers dried, and the small organisms vanished from existence, killed by the toxic attack launched by the System.

In five minutes, the world didn't resemble its former peacefulness and became a barren land full of death and eerie emptiness.

Arthur and Lucy laid next to each other, both unconscious for a prolonged period of time as the System refrained from dispatching any robot to retrieve them until the effect of the blast lessens a bit and becomes non-lethal.

One day passed and the first to somewhat wake-up was Arthur, who had a lot of difficulty breathing, much less properly moving, nevertheless, he tried his best to sit-up and move a bit closer to Lucy, checking if she's still alive or not.

Fortunately, the silver-haired woman had a bit of life in her but it was rapidly diminishing and if she were to remain in this fatal environment any longer, she'll definitely die.

Unlike her, she doesn't have countless resistances to poisons and all kinds of stuff so the attack affected her more than him despite her high cultivation.

The parasite raised his head and saw the massive spaceship covering the grey sky. Its shadow was enough to cover hundreds of kilometers and it was giving multiple red lights which seemed like alarms.

Even the wind which blew on his face was inexplicably hot and highly toxic. The ground under him was lifeless, the trees withered, the branches fell down and the leaves were nothing but ash.

'Just what do they want from us?'

Arthur tried to use Life Magic on himself and Lucy but it didn't work. In fact, after making a couple of simple movements, he fell back down and lost consciousness again.

One more day passed and when Lucy was truly on the verge of dying, a sudden phenomenon occurred around the couple. It all began with Evil Wind, which left Arthur's storage and started letting out desperate cries while circling around Arthur and Lucy.

It used its black flames to protect Arthur but Lucy was still exposed and perishing. Her skin was turning green and blood was oozing out of all of her orifices. The sentient Dark Blade's cries became extremely loud, almost deafening and when night was about to fall, it hovered above Lucy.

The sharp tip of the blade was pointing at her chest and, slowly but surely, it stabbed the white specter but it didn't want to kill her, quite the opposite, it was saving her life.

When half of the blade penetrated Lucy's chest, her eyes fluttered and after a few breaths, she came back to her senses, heavily panting.

She looked at Arthur then at Makaze, which didn't stop and, seeing her in a better condition, completely entered her body, causing the woman to cry from the agony she was going through, nevertheless, she didn't resist the Dark Blade.

A period of total silence passed before, in the middle of the night, a burst of blue light exploded forth, reaching the spaceship and freezing a small portion of it in a split second.

Back on the ground, next to Arthur, Lucy was back on her feet, her clothes were cleaner than ever and her complexion was back to normal, however, her appearance had drastically changed.

Her right arm, the Devil Arm, had much smaller crystalline scales and, instead of the steam, there were black flames in a circle around her feet. Her silver hair grew much longer, almost reaching her feet and both her eyes were now sky-blue.

Her right hand was tightly holding Makaze, which had drastically changed in appearance. The blade wasn't curved anymore and resembled a straight one-handed sword, its black handle now silver with a blue phoenix wrapped around it. Furthermore, it was emanating Lucy's fusion flames from its tip.

"I never thought that you'll be the one breaking the oath but..."

She looked at the sword in her hand, smiled and added, "I have to thank you for trusting me. Now then, shall go kick some ass?"

Nine silver lotuses were spinning around Arthur, creating a sphere which was impenetrable, even by the toxic air lingering in this world.

Like a shooting star, Lucy shot at the spaceship, leaving a trail of beautiful silver particles in the air. She stabbed the sword to the front, releasing a beam of pillar of blue light which became larger and struck the spaceship, which retaliated with its countless cannons.

Unfortunately for it, the cannons weren't able to stop the sword tab, which, when it reached its target, ripped through the ship's metal and caused dozens of large explosions. Moreover, it froze anything it touched while the fusion flames followed by turning anything in its way into nothingness.

Lucy's one strike caused the spaceship to naught but a destroyed scrap, which slowly started falling downwards. The White Specter, with an inconceivable speed, she appeared inside and slashed horizontally with Makaze then let go at the very last second.

The sword slash was so strange that it cut everything in its way and, from outside, it looked like the spaceship got cut in half. But, this wasn't the end as the sword released an ear-splitting screech and literally transformed into a majestic blue phoenix, which wielded its ice Magic to freeze half of the ship and all its passengers before spitting blue flames.

As for Lucy, she couldn't join Evil Wind as her path was blocked by a tall and domineering robot. The only one which wasn't affected by the earlier attacks. This was the perpetrator behind the Bio Blast and the one commanding this mission.

Lucy glared at the silent robot and coldly said,

"I just need one touch and you'll be gone."

"Target, Lucy MoonStar, ready to-"

Before it could finish talking, Lucy appeared before him like a ghost and stretched her right hand, which was glowing with a blinding blue light.

The robot swiftly jumped back but it wasn't as far as Lucy and, before it managed to land, Lucy's right hand had touched its elbow.

The moment it made contact with her freezing cold fingers, the commanding robot, which was supposed to be as strong as an Exalted God, was turned into an ice statue, which fell down from above and shattered into thousands of pieces.

Seeing the fall of their leader, Lucy snorted and continued disposing of all the rest, planning to let none escape this place.

Down below, Arthur, who was unconscious, was experiencing the last stage of this supposed test given by Ventus Malum. It didn't require him to have a lot of power, after all, it tested his heart, his feelings, and his cherished memories.

The Gale Devourer empathized that the strongest thing is and will always be love. It is what motivates everyone and you can't achieve what you want if you forsake it.

He wanted Arthur to fall in love again, he wanted him to experience that feeling again so he may never forget it. Of course, slowly recovering his memories was part of the test but memories are not enough for you to love someone, some may even ignore them or erase them, however, Arthur did not.

And although he didn't really fall in love with Lucy again, it can't be denied that he cares for her a little now and, from Ventus' point of view, that's the first step.

From within the sphere put by Lucy, the sound of a beating heart could be heard and it was getting louder and louder. The parasite's chest started glowing with a golden color and a harmless heat surged inside of his body, traveling from part to another until it covered him whole.

"Lucy... Saly..."

Arthur groaned as he muttered his name, his eyes opening abruptly and his body twitching once every two seconds.

Each words he muttered carried a strong and unstoppable wind which ripped Lucy's sphere and cut down the ground under him, reaching deep inside.

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The glow emanating from Arthur's chest became brighter and brighter then it took the shape of the same MoonStar he and Lucy used outside of the Red Tower.

Arthur, who's been unconscious for some time, finally opened his eyes wide. His right eye glowed with a blue light while his left one was a mix of blue, red, and grey.

Slowly but surely, his body floated in the air, the winds raging around him became calmer but a lot deadlier. Their whistling totally quietened down but their range dramatically increased, reaching thousands of kilometers away.

All of a sudden, Arthur's figure vanished and almost instantly reappeared next to Lucy, who was busy disposing of the remaining robot fighters.

"I'm sorry for arriving so late."

The cold expression he constantly had on his face was no longer present and, instead, a sweet smile blossomed on his usually stiff face. He grasped her delicate and small hand and brought her closer to him.

"I remember now... I remember everything."

His voice cracked a bit as he felt ashamed about what he did to her and how he treated her. Of course, he knew that she didn't blame him but that doesn't make his past actions right, nevertheless, it's all back to normal now.

Lucy, who's both startled and happy about his arrival, hugged him back but furrowed her brows about seeing the golden glow emitting from his heart. She also noticed how quiet the surroundings became, they became dead silent, forcing her to look around only to see the empty space and countless rubbles, which were actually the remains of the spaceships she demolished.

Apparently, the gales circling Arthur cut down everything, whether it's the tough materials of the ship or the still resisting robots. Everything just ended so quickly and, fortunately, both of them were safe and sound.

However, this only lasted for a brief period, in which the two couples just embraced each other. Just like her husband, Lucy's chest now glowed with a golden radiance and she started feeling a warm and cozy heat enveloping her heart.

The Soul Bind they re-did recently was being subjected to a big and good change. If you look at their consciousness, you would see the two connected by a thick black thread made of condensed Dark Magic but, now, it was different.

The thread was now a mix of gold and blue and the Dark Magic took the form of a black phoenix which wrapped its incredibly lengthy wings. Half of the beast lived inside Arthur while the other lived inside Lucy. Moreover, the strange yet powerful MoonStar was present in both of them, hanging in their lively consciousness, providing them with a new type of energy never seen before.

"It has not ended yet."

Lucy tightly held his hand while standing next to him, both gazing at two massive spaceships making their ways towards them. The spaceships were identical to the destroyed one and they had their cannons prepared and aimed at the couple, which looked smaller than ants in comparison.

"You don't need to do anything. Just watch."

Arthur raised his hand and pulled down Makaze, which instantly went back to its original form but with a new and eye-catching addition. A black phoenix and a black dragon were wrapped around its now dark green handle and the black flames, which could usually be seen around its sharp edges, was no longer present.

Although Makaze was very compatible with Dark Magic, it doesn't mean that it works best with it. Evil Wind was mainly created using Ventus' Gales, which means that the Dark Blade's speciality is Wind Magic, something Arthur rarely used in the past due to it being much weaker than his other attributes.

Now, however, it's different, perhaps even the opposite. With Makaze completed and Ventus' soul fully integrated into the blade, Arthur's Wind Magic is stronger than everything else. The only thing that could probably rival it is the MoonStar which has to be used by the couple at the same time.

The parasite didn't even move, he just held Evil Wind and raised it then slashed down. It was a simple and very slow movement, which didn't cause devastation, at first.

In fact, nothing happened for the couple of the seconds after the slash but, the still far away spaceships didn't remain unscathed. Usually, the amount of Wind Magic outside of plans, stars, and worlds, is meager if not non-existent but now was not the case as a truly enormous tornado appeared and cut down the two spaceships in a matter of seconds.

These two massive machines were like two helpless leaves being carried by the wind. They crashed into each other then were cut down to pieces, literally. By the time Arthur put down his hand, the spaceships were blown far away and the couple were left alone.

"So what do we-"

Lucy wasn't able to finish talking as Arthur planted a light kiss on her lips before wrapping his arm around her waist. By the time she came back to her senses, the two were far away from their previous location. Arthur used Space Magic to open a Spatial Tunnel and teleport to a peaceful but desolate star.

"A moment, please."

Arthur let go of her then took two steps forward before letting go of Makaze, which floated vertically in front of him. Wind whistled and after three breaths, an illusory silhouette with blurry facial features made its appearance.

This was the departed Ventus Malum, he stared at Arthur for an inordinate amount of time before he chuckled and congratulated him.

"I hope, no, I knew that you will succeed. Love is truly a fascinating thing. With my gales at your side, you need not fear anything from now on, for where the wind blows, you will surely follow."

Arthur respectfully bowed his head and replied, "Thank you."

"No need to thank me. It wasn't me who has chosen you but Makaze."

In essence, Ventus and Makaze are the same entity but throughout the years, the Dark Blade became sentient and created its own living soul.

"You two still have a long road ahead of you but don't ever let go of each other's hand. That's all I'm going to say."

Once he finished his piece, the silhouette fused back with Makaze and the blade returned to its sheath after vibrating twice.

Unbeknownst to the couple, there was someone watching everything that happened without interfering. The creature was smaller than a human and was black in one side and white in the other.

"Now that you have the strength to defend yourself, what will be your first step?"

....

The main Arthur and the two clones agreed to meet four months after their separation but retrieving Evil Wind took less time than expected. Nonetheless, with Astria being attacked by the angels, Arthur didn't opt to wait and decided to directly head back to Astria along with Lucy.

With his newfound powers and Makaze back in his possession, he could contribute a lot, especially now that Lucy is accompanying him, after all, two pairs of hands are better than one.

After resting for half a day, Arthur and Lucy wanted to go back to Astria but, surprisingly, the parasite wasn't able to locate the secluded world. He already had the coordinates for it but when he tried creating a Spatial Tunnel, it led to naught but nothingness.

As an alternative, they went back to Earth and tried teleporting to Astria but it didn't work either, confusing the two.

Furthermore, the popular VRMMO Hell Gate apparently caused a huge ruckus on Earth. The virus which caused a lot of people to disappear was a devastating blow to the planet but the mysteries around this game made its founding company, LobiSoft, go bankrupt and its CEO disappear all of a sudden.

When Arthur tried investigating the matter, he was only able to find a few useless clues.

"How about going through Green-Leaf? Isn't there an unstable portal leading to Astria somewhere in the Pigolo Tribe? The one you used with Gutcha."

"We could try that but I suspect that Astria was transported to another place."

"Transported? By whom and for what reason?"

"I'm not too sure. Maybe my clone wanted to trick the angels or something happened. Anyway, it's no longer where it used to be, that's for sure, and without its coordinates, we can't reach it."

Currently, it has been a bit more than forty days since Arthur separated from his clones.

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Jian Si didn't hold back at all, she jumped back and held her sword with both hands then unleashed her crimson Sword Essence.

She raised the sword and used [Heavenly Slash], one of the skills Arthur imparted on her and by far the strongest skill in her arsenal. Unlike Arthur, she doesn't use the System so [Heavenly Slash] is treated as a technique by her and is slightly harder to use, nevertheless, the girl managed to master in such a short amount of time.

Furthermore, the attack didn't resemble Arthur's. While his was a creepy and big flying black skeletal head, Jian Si's [Heavenly Slash] was actually a Translucent red world.

The wolf released a deafening howl before leaping at the two armless robots. The unstable murderous sword essence was uncontrollable, devastating everything in its way and even pushing the two target a distance from the center of the circular room.

...

At the same time, Lucy was struggling against the retaliation spaceship, which no longer dispatched the fighter robots and used the hundreds, if not thousands, of cannons to blast the white specter away.

Her appearance dramatically changed, her spectral flaming tail became lengthier, her clothes were now made of golden fire and the scales covering her Devil Arm were now crystalline blue, emitting small white particles, which, upon a very close look, turned out to be minuscule ice lotuses.

Lucy was about to strike the spaceship again but her body momentarily frozen, causing three cannon shots to hit her, however, they did no damage whatsoever, she was just sent flying a few kilometers below.

After stabilizing her body, Lucy vanished and reappeared a long distance away, a blue leaf appearing under leg. Her movements seemed slow but with each step, she would teleport to another place, rendering the auto-functioning cannons unable to locate her, much less fire.

In just a few breaths, Lucy appeared where the black whirlpool was supposed to be, however, in its place, there was an unconscious Arthur. Lucy quickly checked his condition but he appeared perfectly fine, in fact, he seemed about to wake up very soon.

His eyes were fluttering and he was letting out audible groans. Lucy wrapped her left arm around his waist and 'teleported' again, barely evading no less than nine red lasers coming from all directions.

The nine ice lotuses spun around her whilst her Godspirit took the front, fully blooming and bursting with a bone-chilling breeze which transformed into a violent blizzard that affected this area's weather.

The sky darkened and the spaceship started shaking then was slowly but surely being frozen from one part to another. In less than twenty seconds, the massive floating ship was turned into a block of ice.

Unfortunately, the ice shattered soon after that and the enormous cannon which remained silent ever since its appearance, started letting out unpleasant buzzing sounds.

Black particles appeared around the cannon then fused together and merged with the buzzing artifact. Lucy snorted and raised her devil arm, which released a blue aura that formed a direct connection with the Godspirit, causing it to become double its size and increase its Yin Powers.

A translucent barrier the couple and just as the cannon was about to shoot, it suddenly went silence, making Lucy confused, nevertheless, she used this opportunity to turn around and flee.

With Arthur back safe and sound and Makaze sheathed on his waist, there was no reason to keep fighting the spaceship anymore.

...

Back inside the spaceship, in the secondary control room, Jian Si was heavily panting as she ruthlessly kicked the unresponsive bodies of the defeat armless robots.

She used all of her strength and emerged victorious, fortunately. However, her invasion was finally noticed and countless robots started appearing from all the doors leading to the control room.

Seeing the guns pointed at her, Cold Sword grasped her red sword and mumbled something before jumping in the air and sweeping her crimson sword. A tornado made of sharp red sword essence made its appearance, it slashed apart from the nearby robots and allowed Jian Si to escape through an opening but not even two minutes later, she was surrounded again, this time by an even stronger variation of robots.

A bit after that, Cold Sword was cornered and unable to counterattack anymore. She was heavily wounded and her hand was shaking as she clenched her grip on her sword, afraid to drop it.

Knowing that there was no way out, Jian Si was about to self-destruct her Dantian and kill as many of the enemies as possible but the sudden appearance of a large phoenix covered in fire startled her and the robots equally.

The phoenix screeched loudly then crashed into the hundreds of robots, turned them into nothing but ash. This wasn't the end, however, the fire bird flew again and tore a hole through the spaceship, creating a tunnel leading directly outside.

Before she could react, someone grabbed Jian Si and flew out of there. The phoenix remained behind, spreading its fire all over the already breaking ship.

Only when they were outside did Cold Sword manage to have a good look at her 'savior'. He was a young man with short blond hair, blue eyes and handsome facial features.

Actually, if Arthur or Lucy saw him, they would instantly recognise him. He used to be a very famous figure on Earth but after being inflicted by the virus and taken by the System, he seemed to have simply vanished.

He was none other than Usui, formerly known as the Flame Emperor.

It wasn't just Cold Sword who contributed in stopping the Buster Cannon. Usui also went all out and even betrayed the System in order to help Lucy and Arthur.

As he was very devoted to the System and did everything that was ordered, his companions didn't expect him to suddenly start rampaging and even attack them.

An hour after her fight against the System's Spaceship, Lucy used a special Spatial bullet to teleport herself and Arthur to a random low-realm.

When she exited the spatial tunnel, they found themselves in some kind of a dusty storage room filled with half-filled sacks.

Lucy gently laid down Arthur then checked his condition again and it was at that time that the parasite mumbled something before slowly opening his eyes.

The first thing he saw was a mesmerizing silver-haired woman staring worriedly back at him and, quite unexpectedly, he didn't react the usual way.

In fact, he freaked out and, unable to control his strength, jumped back down. His eyes were cautiously looking around before focusing on Lucy.

"You!! Who are you?!"

Seeing his actions, which didn't seem like an act or a joke, Lucy creased her brow. It was easy to guess what was happening to him but difficult to figure out the reason behind it.

'Was it because of retrieving Makaze? Or did something else happen in Timos' world?'

Whatever happened, Lucy wasn't going to give up or abandon him, obviously.

"Don't you remember? I am Lucy."

She didn't approach him as she saw him glare at her coldly, not a hint of trust displayed in his eyes. It was exactly like when they first met, when he distrusted anyone and anything.

"Lucy? I don't know you!"

From the looks of it, it didn't seem like he only forgot about Lucy. He noticed that black sheath on his waist so he hurriedly unsheathed the sword and pointed it at Lucy, though his form was wrong and not a hint of Dark Magic could be felt.

It wasn't that he lost his powers, he just didn't know how to use them or rather, forgot how.

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Before the proposed tournament, Arthur and Lucy started expanding the city and going through all unfamiliar important figures of the MoonStar Sect.

Fortunately, Sonia was quite thorough and careful in her recruitment so, even after using Appraisal, Arthur didn't find anything suspicious with the current elders.

In total, there were 4 elders, all were old men and their cultivation is between the Immortal and Divine Realms. Three originate from Astria and one from Green-Leaf.

The last one was a traveling cultivator who never associated himself with any of the sect but, somehow, the Vice-master of the sect managed to persuade him. Although he wasn't particularly strong, he was good in handling internal affairs and was very respectful to the parasite and his wife.

He looked like a kind grandpa with long white hair and a small beard. His name was Carl Bulong Arkis, he was over 200 years old and had accumulated a terrifying amount of cultivation books and artifacts, which most were put in the sect's treasury.

Even Arthur, who was in possession of an astonishing amount of books, was dumbfounded once he saw the amount of techniques the old man had. This made him curious about Carl, who remained humble despite his position and never went against Sonia's orders.

Strangely enough, he seemed to care for the young woman and took her side no matter what but it wasn't just the case of 'love at first sight', it seemed to be something more than that.

Anyway, after a quick interview with the four elders, Arthur went to upgrade the city's defense and make it more habitable while Lucy handled the recruitment process and dealt with Isadore to complete the preparation of the tournament in time.

The look that Isadore had on his face when he found out that he'll be dealing with the cold-faced Lucy was truly priceless. Though he brightly smiled, you could see invisible tears running down his stiffening face.

Unlike her husband, Lucy behaved strictly with people she doesn't know, moreover, her Yin power would bring the chills to anyone who stayed close to her. Unless they have a dense amount of Nether Energy, they can't resist the freezing Yin.

"Is this even necessary?"

The bespectacled Robin fixed her glasses and frowned while looking at the parasite, who raised both his hands in the air and caused a slight tremor to assault the city.

"Of course. We have to make sure the city stands even if powerful enemies attack. Better be safe than sorry."

In response to his words, Robin shrugged her shoulders. As for Rey, who matured a lot and looked more like a youth than a kid, stood closer to her. Though he still pales in comparison to Gutcha, Rey still achieved small mastery in Dark Magic and has enough prowess to contend against Divine Beings.

A sky-high wall made of solidified Dark Magic appeared around the newly built city. It was as tall as the one in Astria but stronger as Arthur didn't have time to reinforce the other one. In addition to the appearance of the wall, which already shocked the travelers and new habitants of the flourishing city, Arthur also put three formations, two of which are defense while the last is an offensive one.

Countless silver swords into the sky and shone brighter than the sun, they danced in a circle before exploding into countless silver particles which formed a dome that later turned invisible. This formation was backed by another one, which looked like three massive golden shields.

Last not but not least was a new skill formation he acquired after Makaze was completed. It's called [Dark Dragon Formation] and it is permanent.

*[Dark Dragon Formation](Active Skill): The user 'Arthur MoonStar' can combine his formation skill mastery and Evil Wind, Makaze, to create an offensive formation which deals damage to any hostile targets detected near it.

If the user is close to the formation, his stats will increase by 0.5%

Attack power +10%

Cost: 1000 Mental Power

Cost: 2m Stamina/s

Cost: 2 Creation Points (permanent)

Cooldown: 20 hours.

Right after putting down the three formations, Arthur used his Nature Magic to fill the ground and the mountain surrounding the city with poisonous vines, though they will only react if the city is in real danger.

After ascertaining that everything was in order, Arthur proceeded to other tasks. His Creation stat, which is still hard to explain, has now a new function that is hard to come by.

In addition to being able to create modern weapons and clothes, Arthur now can use Earth Magic, Metal Magic, and Creation Magic to create sturdy and good-looking buildings, no different than the ones found on Earth.

Nevertheless, he didn't abuse this power and just created a sky-scraper which will be the new headquarters of this MoonStar Branch City. The other tower, which was fascinating as is, will be where the top disciples live.

This sky-scraper, which had an architecture so different than one found on worlds like Green-Leaf, caught the attention of almost everyone. It pierced the clouds and was made from black glass with a massive black dragon at its top, its two wings wrapped around its roof. This dragon was the Dark Dragon Formation, though it looks like a statue, the dragon will come to life when it senses danger.

...

After spending almost all day long upgrading the city, Arthur returned to his room and found Lucy still engrossed in paper-work, as usual.

"Rest a bit, will you."

Arthur sat on the bed and took out a moderately small napkin then proceeded to clean Makaze after unsheathing it. He doesn't know why but after the dark blade was 'reborn', he always got the urge to clean it everyday when night falls. It somehow helps him calm himself and collect his thoughts.

"I will... I'm just checking the current top and promising disciples. Look at this."

Lucy stood up and pushed her long silver-hair to the back while walking toward Arthur. Her wet clothes and hair, along with the sweet fragrance emitting from her was entrancing, to say the least.

Arthur controlled his urges and looked at the list presented by Lucy.

"What's this?"

"It's the list of the young cultivators that want to join our sects. Each person has to mention their real name, background, age, cultivation. Most are average but the ones in this list are rather unexpected especially this one..."

She pointed at the third one, which had a picture of a pretty girl with golden hair and breath-taking eyes. Arthur was able to recognize her immediately, after all, he met her on several occasions in the past.

This person was none other than Shu Ru, the top disciple of the Mirage Era Hall.

"Shu Ru? Why is she applying to join our sect? I thought she's the top disciple of the Mirage Era Hall."

Arthur appeared genuinely confused as the description about her before tilting his head.

"I should be asking that. Hmpf! Didn't you spend quite a bit of time with her?"

"Sure but we are not particularly close."

Lucy deeply stared at him before turning her head back to the list and muttering.

"I'll have to 'personally' ask her."

"Hm? Did you say something?"

Lucy sweetly smiled, shook her head and went back to her seat.

Currently, the MoonStar sect has a bit more than 15,000 disciples with 10% of them being inner disciples, who are more privileged than the outer disciples. To become an inner disciple, two factors are needed; one, you have to be at least at the Immortal Realm or higher, and second, you have to swear your loyalty to the MoonStar and sign an exclusive contract, which is quite restrictive of your freedom but it grants you countless benefits, such as the myriad of techniques present at the sect's library.

One week before the tournament, the city welcomed a staggering amount of cultivators, both famous and powerful ones.

As the tournament was going to happen in a newly-built area right beside the city, even the king of Green-leaf personally came.

Kang Amidel and his two children also arrived, but they were accompanied by an esteemed elder of the main branch of the Kang Family. Due to being extremely busy with the preparation of the tournament grounds, Arthur couldn't meet the elder, however, Lucy did but she didn't show the needed respect.

Nonetheless, the elder, who looked very old and coughed once every three seconds, was always smiling and treated the White Specter with politeness. He even brought a couple of priceless treasures, meant to be offered to the winners of the tournament, to which Lucy nonchalantly accepted.

It was also today that those who applied to join the sect will get their results. Out of the 20,000, only 200 were approved. Those youngsters hailing from rich families or powerful clans weren't pleased but one look at the parasite, whose aura alone gave them the shivers, made them shrink back and swallow their frustration.

As he faced the two hundred new disciples, Arthur, who wore a simple green t-shirt and black pants, appraised every single one of them before nodding his head and saying,

"Welcome to the MoonStar sect. I'm sure you've been warned but I'll say it again, once you join, you cannot just leave the sect whenever you want, especially you guys and girls."

The youngsters remained calm and quiet as they stared at the parasite, who was so infamous that almost all the sects in Cloud Sea heard of him. His attack against the White Specter Clan or his battle in the Red Tower, all of it was spread far and wide.

Although he wields a dangerous power called Dark Magic, many people admired him and wanted to follow in his footsteps, just like Zodiak in the past.

"The information you wrote was all basic and does not determine your real prowess. I came here solely to see what you're capable of and if I'm disappointed, you won't become an Inner disciple."

Arthur clapped his hands, suddenly causing the space to shake and before they could react, the new disciples found themselves standing in a wide green plane. The plane stretched as far as the eye could see and, apart from one lonesome silhouette standing a couple of hundred meters away from them, there was nothing else.

This place was actually an illusion created by Arthur. It isn't unbreakable but Arthur was able to strengthen it using his eyes and a couple of formations. Since he had a bit of time today and the tournament grounds were completed, at last, he wanted to test those newcomers and determine who's qualified.

He took his duties as the co-sect master very seriously and truly wanted to nurture strong people so they could help him in the future. Even if he's not here and a disaster befalls the sect, he won't be worried.

Of course, the MoonStar sect, currently, is protected by many strong individuals. Although Jakob disappeared along with his son, Ragnar, Sonia managed to break through the Mortal Realm a long time ago and even reached the Deity Realm.

Rey was as strong as an Immortal Cultivator and the undead dragons, if together, can equally fight a God. There's also the undead army and its general, Edward, who swept through the wasteland and conquered all of it in a short period of time, allowing Arthur to rest assured about the safety of his and Lucy's sect.

There were other powerful people missing, such as Delia and her friend, which departed a while ago to take care of personal problems. Saly, who's presumably with Arthur's clone in Astria, and, last but not least, Astrith, who's also accompanying the clone to defend against the invaders.

Arthur pointed at the Death Knight standing three hundred meters away from the group, and explained,

"Each one of you has 3 minutes to attack that undead. Just give it your best and I'll be the judge."

He left them with no time to think or question about this sudden trial, he just snapped his fingers, teleporting a startled youth closer to the undead.

The threatening Death Knight was at least 3 meters tall, wore a thick set of black armor and wielded a thin rusty sword and a huge spiky shield with a skull on its center.

The Death Knight was an undead he summoned just earlier. It was incredibly strong, so strong, in fact, that it could face a peak Sovereign. It cost him a considerable amount of Mental Power and, so far, it's the strongest undead he summoned.

Obviously, he ordered it to not go all-out and only counter-attack with light and 'harmless attacks'.

So, like that, each of the two hundred disciples were given three minutes but, in the end, Arthur was very disappointed. Apart from a few distinguishable ones, the rest couldn't even reach the undead and were blasted by its sword, which unleashed a weak wind blast.

Though Arthur regarded it as 'weak', for those youngsters, who were in the Divine and God Realm, the undead was monstrously powerful and resembled a moving fortress with its big size, heavy army, and absurdly massive shield.

"You, you, you, you..."

Arthur pointed at six people and ordered them to move to the side before he sighed and waved his hand, teleporting the rest back to where they were previously.

There was one more reason Arthur was doing this. He wanted the MoonStar sect to win the tournament. Amidel told him that this up-coming tournament has caught the attention of not only the sects of Green-leaf but of all of Cloud Sea.

Isadore did a fantastic job in advertising the tournament, which became known universe-wide. The rewards haven't been disclosed yet but many suspected that they originate from the Red Tower.

So far, three sects originating from the Divine Planet already sent their respective disciples and planned to participate.

There was also something that astonished Arthur. The Holy Dominion sent two youngsters and also wanted to join the tournament. They were hell-bent on killing Arthur so this move was confusing, to say the least.

The two youths were brought by a middle-aged man wearing a long white robe, he was a High Cardinal and had the cultivation of a peak Overgod. This cardinal, named Patrick, brought a 'non-enmity seal' from the pope himself.

This seal was like an oath made by the dominion, swearing not to attack the MoonStar sect during the tournament.

...

Lucy stood atop the eye-catching tower raised by Arthur and gazed at the flourishing city. With the influx of visitors, Arthur spent most of his days expanding the city, which became even bigger than the one in Astria. Even the mountain right next to the city wasn't spared as hundreds of buildings were built on it, as well as cement roads and magical lights put on the side of the main roads.

The population of the city already exceeded 1 million and it didn't seem to be stopping. The only downside was the wasteland surrounding it but even that was being subjected to great change.

Arthur's nature magic was powerful enough to force the dead earth to regenerate. Grass started growing again and flowers were ready to bloom, though the range of his nature magic wasn't big enough to encompass the whole wasteland.

"You have heard my warning and I have given you enough time to think about it. Now that you're here, do not think about leaving or begging for mercy, it's too late."

Arthur faced the six youngsters he picked. The competition is to be held in six days and he had given them 24 hours to think about what he said.

The six youths maintained their silence, their backs straight and all wearing simple training uniforms. There were 2 girls and 4 boys, and amongst them, Arthur recognized three.

The first was the bright and gorgeous-looking girl, Shu Ru. She's supposed to be the next head of the Mirage Era Hall, however, she opted to join the MoonStar sect and learn from Arthur and find out the connection between him and her grandfather.

The second person the parasite recognized was rather odd. It's not that his appearance was strange, his presence here was surprising, to say the least. This youth, who was fairly handsome and had crimson hair, was a former 'enemy' of Arthur.

This was none other than the cousin of the Flame Emperor, his arm was cut off by Arthur a long time ago but many things happened after that, things that Arthur was unaware of.

The young man had forsaken his sect and his former name and, along with his trusted friends, formed a small sect. Formerly known as Elo Huo, Ho Qing, let go of the grudge he bore against Arthur and wanted to learn and become stronger.

Appraisal

*Ho Qing (Elo Huo)(Race: Human): Lv: ???

Realm: 3rd Grade God Realm.

Age: 53

Titles: The Last kindled Flame - Holder of the Phoenix Tear - Unbending Will

Skills: Fire Storm (Upgraded)(Max Lv)(Damage Enhanced by 'Holder of the Phoenix Tear) - Kindled Flames (Max Lv)

Description: One of the former top disciples of a fallen sect, now the head of the Last Flame Sect, an unknown and weak power barely surviving in the wild forests of Green Leaf. He's an exceptional individual who yearns for power to survive.*

'Heh, that's quite a lengthy description.'

Arthur smirked as he looked at the appraisal results. It's undeniable that Ho Qing became a special person but he's still too weak, nevertheless, he deserves a second chance and his brave appearance before him proves that.

The third person Arthur knew was a girl with long purple hair and striking facial features. Her pupils were colored differently, one was pink and the other jet black, she's someone he met a very long time ago. Back then, he had not left Astria and went with Lucy to join the competition. The girl was one of the participants and what made her unforgettable was her unique pink ice magic.

Back then, her participant's name was 'SilentFlower' and she was stronger than the rest.

*Rosea Larist (Race: Half Human/ Half-spirit): lv???

Realm: 5th Grade God Realm.

Age: 40

Titles: Holder of the Flower Yin Physique - Last Noble of Brita Pelv - Last Princess of the Magical Cherry Kingdom.

Description: The 5th princess of the Magical Cherry Kingdom. Now that all her sisters and brothers are dead, she's the next in the line for inheriting the throne.*

'I doubt she remembers me though. I don't look the same.'

The Arthur from back then had a very different appearance than the current one.

Anyway, the remaining three weren't average either. Two belonged to the same sect from a High Realm called Dark Blaze. They were friends, the girl, named Cristina, wields a long black spear and the boy, Bora, has a metallic bow.

Last but not least, a youth with long white hair, grey pupils and a white robe that matched his hair. He introduced himself as Ardor, a lone traveler. He only had a sheathed azure sword on his waist and behaved politely. He's the least talkative one but the strongest of them all.

"I'm not going to discriminate between boys or girls, neither will I care about your status outside of these training grounds. If you don't listen to me, be ready for a beating before I throw you out. Now then, let us begin."

Arthur pointed at Ardor and spoke with an authoritative tone.

"Show me your strongest Swordplay. If you hold back then you're out... I'll also take your sword... mine is quite hungry, you see."

The parasite chuckled as he patted the vibrating Makaze, who wanted to devour the youth's azure sword.

Ardor nodded his head, a serious expression on his young face. He marched toward Arthur and stopped when the distance separating them was thirty meters or less.

With an incredible speed, he unsheathed his azure sword and charged at Arthur, a sharp and dangerous sword essence swirling around his weapon.

'He's able to demonstrate power that's equal to a Fusion Sovereign. Interesting.'

A devastating blast was unleashed by the azure sword as it came stabbing toward the motionless Arthur. The target didn't even move yet Ardor didn't hesitate and used all of his power in his attack.

The figure of the youth was enveloped by a formidable radiance, which transformed into countless white swords which flew at Arthur from all sides, even the air.

Unfortunately, Ardor felt a big resistance the moment his sword reached Arthur. As if he hit an unbreakable wall, the youth was pushed back a few meters but he managed to somersault and land properly.

The numerous white swords disintegrated into nothingness just as they touched Arthur's attire and in just a few seconds, everything returned to normal.

"Your master taught you well."

Ardor stood there, dazed for a few seconds before he forced a smile and bowed his head then retreated back to where the other five were standing.

"I can't criticize the execution but your sword essence is lackluster."

Arthur stated the truth, which made Ardor frown but he didn't retort and quietly listened to the parasite, after all, the man was infamous for his world-shaking power. Moreover, Ardor knew what kind of blade Makaze was and how strong it actually is, though its appearance is a bit different, especially the handle, which had a creature wrapped around it.

"Basically, you are talented and you can perform the difficult and powerful technique very well, however, your energy is lacking and your sword essence isn't honed. Next is you."

Arthur pointed at the spear wielding girl and patiently waited.

Chapter 698: The Rising MoonStar 2

Before the proposed tournament, Arthur and Lucy started expanding the city and going through all unfamiliar important figures of the MoonStar Sect.

Fortunately, Sonia was quite thorough and careful in her recruitment so, even after using Appraisal, Arthur didn't find anything suspicious with the current elders.

In total, there were 4 elders, all were old men and their cultivation is between the Immortal and Divine Realms. Three originate from Astria and one from Green-Leaf.

The last one was a traveling cultivator who never associated himself with any of the sect but, somehow, the Vice-master of the sect managed to persuade him. Although he wasn't particularly strong, he was good in handling internal affairs and was very respectful to the parasite and his wife.

He looked like a kind grandpa with long white hair and a small beard. His name was Carl Bulong Arkis, he was over 200 years old and had accumulated a terrifying amount of cultivation books and artifacts, which most were put in the sect's treasury.

Even Arthur, who was in possession of an astonishing amount of books, was dumbfounded once he saw the amount of techniques the old man had. This made him curious about Carl, who remained humble despite his position and never went against Sonia's orders.

Strangely enough, he seemed to care for the young woman and took her side no matter what but it wasn't just the case of 'love at first sight', it seemed to be something more than that.

Anyway, after a quick interview with the four elders, Arthur went to upgrade the city's defense and make it more habitable while Lucy handled the recruitment process and dealt with Isadore to complete the preparation of the tournament in time.

The look that Isadore had on his face when he found out that he'll be dealing with the cold-faced Lucy was truly priceless. Though he brightly smiled, you could see invisible tears running down his stiffening face.

Unlike her husband, Lucy behaved strictly with people she doesn't know, moreover, her Yin power would bring the chills to anyone who stayed close to her. Unless they have a dense amount of Nether Energy, they can't resist the freezing Yin.

"Is this even necessary?"

The bespectacled Robin fixed her glasses and frowned while looking at the parasite, who raised both his hands in the air and caused a slight tremor to assault the city.

"Of course. We have to make sure the city stands even if powerful enemies attack. Better be safe than sorry."

In response to his words, Robin shrugged her shoulders. As for Rey, who matured a lot and looked more like a youth than a kid, stood closer to her. Though he still pales in comparison to Gutcha, Rey still achieved small mastery in Dark Magic and has enough prowess to contend against Divine Beings.

A sky-high wall made of solidified Dark Magic appeared around the newly built city. It was as tall as the one in Astria but stronger as Arthur didn't have time to reinforce the other one. In addition to the appearance of the wall, which already shocked the travelers and new habitants of the flourishing city, Arthur also put three formations, two of which are defense while the last is an offensive one.

Countless silver swords into the sky and shone brighter than the sun, they danced in a circle before exploding into countless silver particles which formed a dome that later turned invisible. This formation was backed by another one, which looked like three massive golden shields.

Last not but not least was a new skill formation he acquired after Makaze was completed. It's called [Dark Dragon Formation] and it is permanent.

*[Dark Dragon Formation](Active Skill): The user 'Arthur MoonStar' can combine his formation skill mastery and Evil Wind, Makaze, to create an offensive formation which deals damage to any hostile targets detected near it.

If the user is close to the formation, his stats will increase by 0.5%

Attack power +10%

Cost: 1000 Mental Power

Cost: 1m Mana/s

Cost: 2m Stamina/s

Cost: 2 Creation Points (permanent)

Cooldown: 20 hours.

Right after putting down the three formations, Arthur used his Nature Magic to fill the ground and the mountain surrounding the city with poisonous vines, though they will only react if the city is in real danger.

After ascertaining that everything was in order, Arthur proceeded to other tasks. His Creation stat, which is still hard to explain, has now a new function that is hard to come by.

In addition to being able to create modern weapons and clothes, Arthur now can use Earth Magic, Metal Magic, and Creation Magic to create sturdy and good-looking buildings, no different than the ones found on Earth.

Nevertheless, he didn't abuse this power and just created a sky-scraper which will be the new headquarters of this MoonStar Branch City. The other tower, which was fascinating as is, will be where the top disciples live.

This sky-scraper, which had an architecture so different than one found on worlds like Green-Leaf, caught the attention of almost everyone. It pierced the clouds and was made from black glass with a massive black dragon at its top, its two wings wrapped around its roof. This dragon was the Dark Dragon Formation, though it looks like a statue, the dragon will come to life when it senses danger.

...

After spending almost all day long upgrading the city, Arthur returned to his room and found Lucy still engrossed in paper-work, as usual.

"Rest a bit, will you."

Arthur sat on the bed and took out a moderately small napkin then proceeded to clean Makaze after unsheathing it. He doesn't know why but after the dark blade was 'reborn', he always got the urge to clean it everyday when night falls. It somehow helps him calm himself and collect his thoughts.

"I will... I'm just checking the current top and promising disciples. Look at this."

Lucy stood up and pushed her long silver-hair to the back while walking toward Arthur. Her wet clothes and hair, along with the sweet fragrance emitting from her was entrancing, to say the least.

Arthur controlled his urges and looked at the list presented by Lucy.

"What's this?"

"It's the list of the young cultivators that want to join our sects. Each person has to mention their real name, background, age, cultivation. Most are average but the ones in this list are rather unexpected especially this one..."

She pointed at the third one, which had a picture of a pretty girl with golden hair and breath-taking eyes. Arthur was able to recognize her immediately, after all, he met her on several occasions in the past.

This person was none other than Shu Ru, the top disciple of the Mirage Era Hall.

Chapter 699: A Week In Hell 1

"Shu Ru? Why is she applying to join our sect? I thought she's the top disciple of the Mirage Era Hall."

Arthur appeared genuinely confused as the description about her before tilting his head.

"I should be asking that. Hmpf! Didn't you spend quite a bit of time with her?"

"Sure but we are not particularly close."

Lucy deeply stared at him before turning her head back to the list and muttering.

"I'll have to 'personally' ask her."

"Hm? Did you say something?"

Lucy sweetly smiled, shook her head and went back to her seat.

Currently, the MoonStar sect has a bit more than 15,000 disciples with 10% of them being inner disciples, who are more privileged than the outer disciples. To become an inner disciple, two factors are needed; one, you have to be at least at the Immortal Realm or higher, and second, you have to swear your loyalty to the MoonStar and sign an exclusive contract, which is quite restrictive of your freedom but it grants you countless benefits, such as the myriad of techniques present at the sect's library.

One week before the tournament, the city welcomed a staggering amount of cultivators, both famous and powerful ones.

As the tournament was going to happen in a newly-built area right beside the city, even the king of Green-leaf personally came.

Kang Amidel and his two children also arrived, but they were accompanied by an esteemed elder of the main branch of the Kang Family. Due to being extremely busy with the preparation of the tournament grounds, Arthur couldn't meet the elder, however, Lucy did but she didn't show the needed respect.

Nonetheless, the elder, who looked very old and coughed once every three seconds, was always smiling and treated the White Specter with politeness. He even brought a couple of priceless treasures, meant to be offered to the winners of the tournament, to which Lucy nonchalantly accepted.

It was also today that those who applied to join the sect will get their results. Out of the 20,000, only 200 were approved. Those youngsters hailing from rich families or powerful clans weren't pleased but one look at the parasite, whose aura alone gave them the shivers, made them shrink back and swallow their frustration.

As he faced the two hundred new disciples, Arthur, who wore a simple green t-shirt and black pants, appraised every single one of them before nodding his head and saying,

"Welcome to the MoonStar sect. I'm sure you've been warned but I'll say it again, once you join, you cannot just leave the sect whenever you want, especially you guys and girls."

The youngsters remained calm and quiet as they stared at the parasite, who was so infamous that almost all the sects in Cloud Sea heard of him. His attack against the White Specter Clan or his battle in the Red Tower, all of it was spread far and wide.

Although he wields a dangerous power called Dark Magic, many people admired him and wanted to follow in his footsteps, just like Zodiak in the past.

"The information you wrote was all basic and does not determine your real prowess. I came here solely to see what you're capable of and if I'm disappointed, you won't become an Inner disciple."

Arthur clapped his hands, suddenly causing the space to shake and before they could react, the new disciples found themselves standing in a wide green plane. The plane stretched as far as the eye could see and, apart from one lonesome silhouette standing a couple of hundred meters away from them, there was nothing else.

This place was actually an illusion created by Arthur. It isn't unbreakable but Arthur was able to strengthen it using his eyes and a couple of formations. Since he had a bit of time today and the tournament grounds were completed, at last, he wanted to test those newcomers and determine who's qualified.

He took his duties as the co-sect master very seriously and truly wanted to nurture strong people so they could help him in the future. Even if he's not here and a disaster befalls the sect, he won't be worried.

Of course, the MoonStar sect, currently, is protected by many strong individuals. Although Jakob disappeared along with his son, Ragnar, Sonia managed to break through the Mortal Realm a long time ago and even reached the Deity Realm.

Rey was as strong as an Immortal Cultivator and the undead dragons, if together, can equally fight a God. There's also the undead army and its general, Edward, who swept through the wasteland and conquered all of it in a short period of time, allowing Arthur to rest assured about the safety of his and Lucy's sect.

There were other powerful people missing, such as Delia and her friend, which departed a while ago to take care of personal problems. Saly, who's presumably with Arthur's clone in Astria, and, last but not least, Astrith, who's also accompanying the clone to defend against the invaders.

Arthur pointed at the Death Knight standing three hundred meters away from the group, and explained,

"Each one of you has 3 minutes to attack that undead. Just give it your best and I'll be the judge."

He left them with no time to think or question about this sudden trial, he just snapped his fingers, teleporting a startled youth closer to the undead.

The threatening Death Knight was at least 3 meters tall, wore a thick set of black armor and wielded a thin rusty sword and a huge spiky shield with a skull on its center.

The Death Knight was an undead he summoned just earlier. It was incredibly strong, so strong, in fact, that it could face a peak Sovereign. It cost him a considerable amount of Mental Power and, so far, it's the strongest undead he summoned.

Obviously, he ordered it to not go all-out and only counter-attack with light and 'harmless attacks'.

So, like that, each of the two hundred disciples were given three minutes but, in the end, Arthur was very disappointed. Apart from a few distinguishable ones, the rest couldn't even reach the undead and were blasted by its sword, which unleashed a weak wind blast.

Though Arthur regarded it as 'weak', for those youngsters, who were in the Divine and God Realm, the undead was monstrously powerful and resembled a moving fortress with its big size, heavy army, and absurdly massive shield.

"You, you, you, you..."

Arthur pointed at six people and ordered them to move to the side before he sighed and waved his hand, teleporting the rest back to where they were previously.

There was one more reason Arthur was doing this. He wanted the MoonStar sect to win the tournament. Amidel told him that this up-coming tournament has caught the attention of not only the sects of Green-leaf but of all of Cloud Sea.

Isadore did a fantastic job in advertising the tournament, which became known universe-wide. The rewards haven't been disclosed yet but many suspected that they originate from the Red Tower.

So far, three sects originating from the Divine Planet already sent their respective disciples and planned to participate.

There was also something that astonished Arthur. The Holy Dominion sent two youngsters and also wanted to join the tournament. They were hell-bent on killing Arthur so this move was confusing, to say the least.

The two youths were brought by a middle-aged man wearing a long white robe, he was a High Cardinal and had the cultivation of a peak Overgod. This cardinal, named Patrick, brought a 'non-enmity seal' from the pope himself.

This seal was like an oath made by the dominion, swearing not to attack the MoonStar sect during the tournament.

...

Lucy stood atop the eye-catching tower raised by Arthur and gazed at the flourishing city. With the influx of visitors, Arthur spent most of his days expanding the city, which became even bigger than the one in Astria. Even the mountain right next to the city wasn't spared as hundreds of buildings were built on it, as well as cement roads and magical lights put on the side of the main roads.

The population of the city already exceeded 1 million and it didn't seem to be stopping. The only downside was the wasteland surrounding it but even that was being subjected to great change.

Arthur's nature magic was powerful enough to force the dead earth to regenerate. Grass started growing again and flowers were ready to bloom, though the range of his nature magic wasn't big enough to encompass the whole wasteland.

Chapter 700 A Week In Hell 2

"You have heard my warning and I have given you enough time to think about it. Now that you're here, do not think about leaving or begging for mercy, it's too late."

Arthur faced the six youngsters he picked. The competition is to be held in six days and he had given them 24 hours to think about what he said.

The six youths maintained their silence, their backs straight and all wearing simple training uniforms. There were 2 girls and 4 boys, and amongst them, Arthur recognized three.

The first was the bright and gorgeous-looking girl, Shu Ru. She's supposed to be the next head of the Mirage Era Hall, however, she opted to join the MoonStar sect and learn from Arthur and find out the connection between him and her grandfather.

The second person the parasite recognized was rather odd. It's not that his appearance was strange, his presence here was surprising, to say the least. This youth, who was fairly handsome and had crimson hair, was a former 'enemy' of Arthur.

This was none other than the cousin of the Flame Emperor, his arm was cut off by Arthur a long time ago but many things happened after that, things that Arthur was unaware of.

The young man had forsaken his sect and his former name and, along with his trusted friends, formed a small sect. Formerly known as Elo Huo, Ho Qing, let go of the grudge he bore against Arthur and wanted to learn and become stronger.

Appraisal

*Ho Qing (Elo Huo)(Race: Human): Lv: ???

Realm: 3rd Grade God Realm.

Age: 53

Titles: The Last kindled Flame - Holder of the Phoenix Tear - Unbending Will

Skills: Fire Storm (Upgraded)(Max Lv)(Damage Enhanced by 'Holder of the Phoenix Tear) - Kindled Flames (Max Lv)

Description: One of the former top disciples of a fallen sect, now the head of the Last Flame Sect, an unknown and weak power barely surviving in the wild forests of Green Leaf. He's an exceptional individual who yearns for power to survive.*

'Heh, that's quite a lengthy description.'

Arthur smirked as he looked at the appraisal results. It's undeniable that Ho Qing became a special person but he's still too weak, nevertheless, he deserves a second chance and his brave appearance before him proves that.

The third person Arthur knew was a girl with long purple hair and striking facial features. Her pupils were colored differently, one was pink and the other jet black, she's someone he met a very long time ago. Back then, he had not left Astria and went with Lucy to join the competition. The girl was one of the participants and what made her unforgettable was her unique pink ice magic.

Back then, here participant's name was 'SilentFlower' and she was stronger than the rest.

*Rosea Larist (Race: Half Human/ Half-spirit): lv???

Realm: 5th Grade God Realm.

Age: 40

Titles: Holder of the Flower Yin Physique - Last Noble of Brita Pelv - Last Princess of the Magical Cherry Kingdom.

Description: The 5th princess of the Magical Cherry Kingdom. Now that all her sisters and brothers are dead, she's the next in the line for inheriting the throne.*

'I doubt she remembers me though. I don't look the same.'

The Arthur from back then had a very different appearance than the current one.

Anyway, the remaining three weren't average either. Two belonged to the same sect from a High Realm called Dark Blaze. They were friends, the girl, named Cristina, wields a long black spear and the boy, Bora, has a metallic bow.

Last but not least, a youth with long white hair, grey pupils and a white robe that matched his hair. He introduced himself as Ardor, a lone traveler. He only had a sheathed azure sword on his waist and behaved politely. He's the least talkative one but the strongest of them all.

"I'm not going to discriminate between boys or girls, neither will I care about your status outside of these training grounds. If you don't listen to me, be ready for a beating before I throw you out. Now then, let us begin."

Arthur pointed at Ardor and spoke with an authoritative tone.

"Show me your strongest Swordplay. If you hold back then you're out... I'll also take your sword... mine is quite hungry, you see."

The parasite chuckled as he patted the vibrating Makaze, who wanted to devour the youth's azure sword.

Ardor nodded his head, a serious expression on his young face. He marched toward Arthur and stopped when the distance separating them was thirty meters or less.

With an incredible speed, he unsheathed his azure sword and charged at Arthur, a sharp and dangerous sword essence swirling around his weapon.

'He's able to demonstrate power that's equal to a Fusion Sovereign. Interesting.'

A devastating blast was unleashed by the azure sword as it came stabbing toward the motionless Arthur. The target didn't even move yet Ardor didn't hesitate and used all of his power in his attack.

The figure of the youth was enveloped by a formidable radiance, which transformed into countless white swords which flew at Arthur from all sides, even the air.

Unfortunately, Ardor felt a big resistance the moment his sword reached Arthur. As if he hit an unbreakable wall, the youth was pushed back a few meters but he managed to somersault and land properly.

The numerous white swords disintegrated into nothingness just as they touched Arthur's attire and in just a few seconds, everything returned to normal.

"Your master taught you well."

Ardor stood there, dazed for a few seconds before he forced a smile and bowed his head then retreated back to where the other five were standing.

"I can't criticize the execution but your sword essence is lackluster." Please visit freewebnovel.com

Arthur stated the truth, which made Ardor frown but he didn't retort and quietly listened to the parasite, after all, the man was infamous for his world-shaking power. Moreover, Ardor knew what kind of blade Makaze was and how strong it actually is, though its appearance is a bit different, especially the handle, which had a creature wrapped around it.

"Basically, you are talented and you can perform the difficult and powerful technique very well, however, your energy is lacking and your sword essence isn't honed. Next is you."

Arthur pointed at the spear wielding girl and patiently waited.