SPELLCRAFT 411

SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar

Chapter 411: Jared's Original Magic

As I floated above the devastated Elf City, I noticed everyone keeping their distance and watching my lone figure.

Their eyes contained several emotions, but the constant one was curiosity.

'Well, then, shall we begin?' I smiled, taking a deep breath.

I could feel everything around me—around the city—thanks to Spellcraft.

The immense Mana of the land resonated with me, and I took in the sensation until it became one with my senses.

It was now time to proceed.

"Original Magic..."

A blinding gold light formed around me and surged at an overwhelming rate.

Swirling all over my body was a calcified amount of Mana that condensed more and more.

The golden Mana gathered in a single location, forming something in front of me.

—A Book!

The golden book looked like a Grimoire, having intricate designs embedded all over it, and its pages were unlimited.

The cover was golden, and it was constantly shrouded with an immense amount of Mana. The power it emitted was already in the realm of transcendence.

This book was none other than my Original Magic.

"... [Great Sage's Memoir]."

The moment it appeared, the surrounding Mana connected to the book—all linked to it.

Spellcraft could be easily used to achieve any goal at this point.

In simpler words, I was one with everything around me, and everything was one with me.

But, that wasn't the essence of my Original Magic.

"Shall we begin?"

The golden book flipped its pages until it arrived at a particular page.

Symbols and circuits were displayed there, all glowing golden as a result of the book's activation.

>SHIIIIIINNNNNGGGGGGGGGGG!!!<

Instantly, Mana brimmed from the book, and sparks of Mana Particles in the air began rising.

Like fireflies, or glimmering stars, they all began popping from the air.

All over the city, the little orbs of Mana manifested, causing a bizarre sight of illumination that could be described as nothing short of beautiful.

>WHUUUUUMMMMM<

The light particles began dispersing, merging with every structure in sight, and then the golden Mana from my book pulsated and enveloped the entire area.

Then—

"N-no way..."

"This is...!'

"Unbelievable...!"

That's right.

-The buildings and devastating structures started repairing themselves—down to the smallest rubble.

It wasn't exactly as though they were being repaired.

No, it was more like time reversal.

My Original Magic allowed me to store any kind of Magic. As long as I understood the concept and had enough Mana to execute it, there was no Magic I couldn't perform.

Not only could I execute whatever Magic I inscribed in my Original Magic, but the Great Sage's Memoir served as a form of an independent entity by itself.

Like an automated system, it was capable of reacting to situations and acting accordingly. Like a computer, it was encoded with numerous Spells and codes as part of its protocols.

It could instantly connect to the environment and utilize Spellcraft at will.

It could use whatever Spell in its arsenal according to whatever the situation demanded.

Mana consumption would be from the environment, using Spellcraft, and also my personal Pool.

The most important part of my Original Magic was its efficiency.

Since I could choose to automate it at choice, there was no need for me to handle any difficult Magic every single time I wanted to cast it.

My Memoir would handle everything, and I only had to enjoy the show.

Other than the Mana I contributed, there was really nothing else for me to do.

'The Great Sage's Memoir is neurologically linked to me. Any and every action I could ever think of taking has been recorded in it.'

Since it was also more like an automated system, it could respond even faster and more accurately than I ever could.

Humans had their limits, after all. In contrast, my Original Magic was versatile, powerful, and independent—the perfect tool.

It was an even better version of the Arcanas.

That was the true essence of [The Great Sage's Memoir]!

'I'm currently utilizing the Time Reversal function of The Hermit's Arcana.'

All the Arcanas I had were already recorded in the Memoir, so I could use them with or without the Cards themselves.

For The Hermit, since its Mana Cost was too high, and the process was very complicated, I didn't have access to every single function.

However, just reversing time was more than enough.

>SHWUUUUUUUUUU

Like Magic—which it was—the landscape returned to its usual state.

The glorious city of the Elves was restored, leaving no single scratch behind.

As promised, it was as though the Demon Beasts had never invaded. Still, though...

'This isn't the end!'

According to the bargain, I would be resurrecting every single Elf that died here.

It sounded impossible, considering their numbers were over three thousand.

But, did anyone really think I didn't know that already?

The Automatons I sent before the Elven Massacre had captured the deaths of every single Elf that perished.

They recorded every single detail of the situation, allowing me to know the exact estimate of the number of fallen Elves.

'Three thousand two hundred and fifty-six.'

It was a hefty number.

Still, I didn't take action even with those figures because I knew one truth.

Even if all of them had perished, it would still pose no problem for me.

'Time for round two!'

The book's pages flipped to another side, and it shone in activation.

The surrounding Mana vibrated, and the several Automatons in the air descended.

'I've been saving Mana for this moment, but, as expected, it's taking quite a lot...' I smiled with determination.

There was another fact that no one knew, and that was the only reason I was confident in this plan working.

'Time to summon them-the dead Elves.'

Utilizing the Arcana Circuit embedded in my Memoir, I was going to reverse the causality of life and death.

Arcanas stood at the pinnacle of Transcendental Magic, and so they defied the normal laws of the world.

One of them was a simple fact that the dead could not return.

Once the body and soul were not present—or if even one of these elements were absent—even Resurrection Magic couldn't work.

But, this very principle was about to be shattered.

'Good thing I have an audience to see it.'

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Chapter 412: The Hanged Man

I had four Arcanas in my possession.

The Tower

The Hermit

The Sun

The Hanged Man.

Of these, my favorite was the first one. The reason was simple.

'It's the easiest.'

Manipulating space was by no means an easy feat, but the process was simple.

Besides, the Arcana did most of the work. All I needed was to infuse it with Mana.

The consumption rate was also reasonable.

However, just because I preferred [The Tower] didn't mean I couldn't utilize the others.

Though I lent [The Hermit] to Neron, I could still use it with my Original Magic—at least, to an extent.

Then, what of the other two?

I had some plans for [The Sun], so it was best not to bring it out now. However, [The Hanged Man] was the most important Arcana at this juncture.

Each Arcana defied a law in the world. [The Tower] was in charge of space. [The Hermit] controlled time.

As for [The Hanged Man]... it interfered with the law of Resurrection.

Body and Soul

They were the two most essential parts of a human.

If one part was absent, the human was as good as dead.

Even if Resurrection Magic was to be used, there was a need for both elements to be present. Magic was simply supposed to act as glue to bind them together.

However, in the current predicament, the Elves had been so mercilessly killed that their bodies were in shambles.

Perhaps a few arms and legs would have remained after being gruesomely killed by Demon Beasts, but the Miasma would have corroded them beyond recognition.

Their bodies were as good as non-existent.

Fortunately, I was able to dispatch Automatons to retrieve their Souls.

Before they dissipated and were corrupted by the Miasma, they used the magnets I developed for such situations and absorbed all the souls of the fallen.

As a result, I was in possession of the souls of all the Elves who died.

The issue was their body.

'That's where you come in!'

The books flipped quickly, showing the Magic Circuit of [The Hanged Man] shining bright.

Controlling the Automatons hanging in the air, I deployed the souls of the dead Elves. My Memoir automatically utilized Spellcraft to ensure that the Souls didn't dissipate into thin air.

Since they were all present, the condition for Resurrection was complete.

Even though [The Hanged Man] defied the law of Resurrection by not needing both elements to be present, it still required one aspect.

Without any specific essence to trace the source to, it was impossible to Resurrect a being.

If there was no base, [The Hanged Man] couldn't operate.

But, with the Souls of the dead ones all present, and the abundance of Mana available to conclude the ritual, I brought everything to a perfect close.

'And so... it ends.'

The bodies of every single Elf were constructed by [The Hanged Man] Magic Circuit in my Memoir.

Using the information from their respective Souls, their exact bodies were made—having no flaws.

It was a miracle to many shocked eyes, but this was simply the work of Magic—albeit at the Transcendental Level.

One by one, the living Elves were made... until not a single individual was left unaccounted for.

And just in time too.

My Mana Pool had almost dropped to critical condition.

Barely hanging on to thirty percent of my Mana after this whole ordeal... it took quite a toll on me, after all.

Fortunately, everything worked out.

"Haaa... how exhausting."

As I descended from my heights, my lips murmured those words.

Clara and her soldiers had gone to take care of the naked Elves, so only the ones I arrived with were waiting for my return.

"I did it, just as promised."

The Elf Royalty was stunned beyond words. I could see pure reverence in their eyes, a d some were emotional to the point of shedding tears.

Derius was one of the latter. He was always an emotional one, after all.

"Y-you really did it..."

"You did the impossible."

"Are you alright?"

"Are you even human anymore?"

"As expected of my Betrothed's protege."

"Is this truly Magic?"

"Thank you so much!"

Many more words filled with cheer, disbelief, praise, and concern assailed my ears at once.

I could only smile and laugh with everyone surrounding me.

And then, before I knew it... everyone was in an uproar to celebrate what would be the turning point in history.

A single Mage who had yet to reach adulthood, raising over three thousand Elves from the dead.

It was absurd, but true.

Even if I decided not to venture any further, my name would forever be embedded in history.

I had both Humans and Elves as witnesses. Surely, I had created an irrefutable legend.

However...

'Not enough!'

... I still wanted more.

Until I achieved everything I could in Magic, there was no way I could be satisfied yet.

I had lots of limits at the moment.

The ones who were weaker than me couldn't notice, but my abilities were lacking.

What if a hundred thousand people died next time? What if I was meant to repair an entire continent with my Magic?

In my current state, that was impossible.

Which was why I had to get even stronger. Strong enough to surpass the limits of Magic.

Only then would I be satisfied.

"Let's have a feast in celebration!"

In response to Aurora's bold words, everyone present raised their voices in enthusiasm.

"YESSSSSSS!!!"

I couldn't help but chuckle. A threat was looming, yet these people could only think about fun.

Still, they weren't entirely wrong.

Thousands of lives had been saved. Surely, it called for celebration.

'Well, I'll use the feast as a chance to bring up the two-pronged assault that'll be coming our way.' A smile formed on my face.

From my calculations, the Demon Beasts would invade the Elves from the Northern Border and the Western Borders respectively.

Those two were respectively the most guarded and least protected territories.

For the Eastern Kingdom, the invasion would be coming from the North and East.

By attacking the strongest and weakest strongholds, Zenkiel will be able to surmise our level of power and act accordingly.

That was the plan.

'Well, then ... let's see how it goes.'

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Chapter 413: The Man Dwelling In The Mountains [Pt 1]

Bu' was a Demon General serving under the mighty Commander-In-Chief of the Demon Forces.

He respected his leader with every single ounce of energy in his body and was devoted to bringing the best of results.

To be honest, though it was blasphemous, he idolized the Demon Lord of Vert more than the Demon King himself.

Perhaps it was because he had never had the privilege to serve under King Abellion that he had this bias, but Bu' couldn't change the way he felt about Demon Lord Zenkiel.

As a member of Zenkiel's Nine Stars, Bu' was a Demon General granted immense privileges and had enough power to boot.

Yet...

"Why was I the one sent here...?" He murmured.

Bu', a reptile-shaped Demon had four arms. His face was more akin to an alligator than a dragon, and his tail was uneasily dangling as he moved.

Placed acutely on his back were four distinct weapons that served as Bu's choice means of attack.

While his physical capabilities were extremely high, he supplemented them with his mastery over weapons.

As a result, he was known as Bu' Of The Four Armaments.

Still, this prestigious and highly ranked Demon General was in an emotional slump. He sighed as he dragged his feet.

The reason behind his displeasure was quite obvious when one looked around him.

'There's nothing here!'

Even though Bu' was armed with his exquisite armor and four swords--even having an army of a thousand Demon Beasts--there was no challenge to welcome them.

Just a vast landscape of ruined mountains was in view.

These mountains had weird shapes. Their disfigured forms and unique appearances made for an interesting sight, but nothing else about them was special.

To be frank, Bu' was a little let down by this development.

"Four of us were supposed to invade the Humans and Elves. I was assigned to the Eastern area of the Human nation, but..."

Another emotion began growing alongside his displeasure--worry!

'Was I sent here because Lord Zenkiel thinks I'm not useful?'

Anxiety coursed through the Demon General's body as the worrisome thought of being relegated to such an uneventful area filled his mind.

Sure, among his comrades in the Nine Stars, he wasn't the strongest member. But, Bu' wasn't exactly weak either.

In the rankings placed in the Alligator-like General's head, he placed among the top five. So why was he chosen for such a mundane task?

In his mind, Bu' had proven himself more than worthy to challenge bigger challenges. Surely his master recognized his potential, right?

As he had these thoughts, Bu' led his army across the valley--surrounded by many devastated peaks and broken-down mountains.

Hoping he would encounter an army to prove his superiority and vent his turbulent emotions, the Demon General pressed on.

Fortunately, he finally sensed a being in sight.

"Haaa...!" For a moment, Bu's crimson eyes widened in excitement.

However, the feeling fizzled out almost immediately when he realized it was only one single entity that he sensed.

"... Tch!"

His annoyance rose to an unprecedented degree and he directed his attention in the direction of the being.

'You dare make me raise my hopes up?!'

As though he had sensed Bu's bloodlusted frustration, the being began moving.

The Demon General thought he would flee, but the strange entity drew closer to the horde of Demon Beasts, with their leader being none other than the mighty Bu'.

'Is he crazy? He's coming here?'

Soon, the silhouette of the individual appeared before the surprised Demon General.

It was a human.

'A human? What's a human doing here all alone?'

The most amazing part of the human was that he was approaching Bu' and his army without flinching for a second.

No hesitation could be found in his steps as he fearlessly approached.

This made the Demon General shocked beyond measure.

'Is he an idiot? Can he not see?'

The man in sight looked haggard. He was covered in a ragged outfit, walking barefoot on the rocky surface surrounding him.

He was holding a massive sack while walking--obviously showing he was a traveler of some sort.

The rags he wore contrasted the well-made sack, but they were ultimately possessions of a destitute.

'Is he a madman?'

That was the only explanation Bu' could form in his head.

Still, madman or not, the Demon General didn't care a single bit. His mission was to kill any human in sight and destroy everything around.

Even though his opponent was a hopeless vagabond, that didn't change what he had to do.

Still, killing the human before him didn't have to be performed by Bu' himself.

He was a Demon General for crying out loud. Such meager tasks had to be done by the army he led.

"You. Go kill him." Per his instructions, the Demon Beast closest to Bu' moved in the direction of the human.

Instantly, he stopped.

The human didn't move a single step further from his position.

He muttered some words, but Bu' couldn't understand human speech, so the words simply went over his head.

'Why would I bother conversing with lower life forms?'

At this point, the Demon General was just waiting for his Demon Beast to finish the job so they could continue marching.

The human dropped his heavy sack and began opening it.

Even when the massive Demon Beast steadily approached him.

None of his movements displayed any form of hesitation or fear. The man simply focused on the task at hand.

Once the sack was opened, lots of blades could be seen within it. They appeared unlimited, but that was simply because of their sheer number.

However--

"Broken blades? Why is he carrying around broken blades?"

Every single blade that could be seen in the sack was broken--shattered beyond repair.

Bu' could not understand the logic of a madman, though he attempted to.

After realizing it was a simple waste of time, he ordered the Demon Beast to hurry with its job.

"Just end it already!"

As a result, the massive creature lunged at the human who was fishing out something from the sack.

>VWUUUUSSSHHH!!!<

The winds parted and the air reverberated. The grounds shook with every step that the dashing monster took toward its prey.

In a moment, the vagabond's life would be extinguished.

However--

>SWISH!<

--In less than that moment, the Demon Beast was cleanly sliced into two pieces.

Its enormous form vertically split into two equal parts, sending both ends crashing to the ground.

Dark blood splattered in the direction of Bu' and the rest of his troops, oozing on the ground.

In a flash, the Demon Beast's life was abruptly put to a close.

'E-eh...?'

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Chapter 414: The Man Dwelling In The Mountains [Pt 2]

Unexplainable silence.

After witnessing the sight of something impossible, Bu' was confronted with perfect decorum.

The air became heavy, and the putrid smell of corrupted blood filled the air.

It wasn't so much fear as it was shock.

The Demon General was simply amazed that a human had been able to cleanly slice a monster who was at least ten times bigger than he was—all in the blink of an eye.

It was utterly confusing, but Bu' couldn't allow himself to get distracted by such emotions.

'I can easily do the same...' Was what he used to justify the absurdity.

It was unfair to compare himself to a single human destitute, but since the yardstick was still within his realm of understanding, Bu' was able to overcome the initial surprise.

'Okay, so he's strong. That explains why he's all alone here, and why he could confront us without fear...'

The man whom Bu' now actively watched was holding a blade.

This blade wasn't shattered like the rest, but it was in pretty bad shape too.

Judging from the weapon's age and the numerous chips it had, it was only a matter of time before it also joined the rest in their shattered state.

As a weapons expert himself, Bu' understood the blade's durability more than anyone.

In a few more swings, the weapon was done for.

'Should I just send Demon Beasts in waves to make sure he exhausts the weapon's integrity? Once that's done, it'll be a simple matter to end him.'

Moving faster than he could retrieve another blade, Bu' was determined to personally end the human's life.

Carelessness was a sin! Such were the teachings of his master—Lord Zenkiel himself.

Both overestimating and underestimating an opponent could lead to defeat, so Bu' was prepared to sacrifice a few Beasts to achieve his goal.

If they ended up killing the man, that would prove that his worries were in vain.

However, if the man prevailed, his weapon wouldn't last much longer. That would be his window to strike.

Either way, Bu' was assured of victory!

"Attack. Kill him!"

At this command, a few dozen Demon Beasts charged at the human, who was already in a stance.

He muttered some words, but Bu' still didn't understand any of them.

>SWIIISH!!!<

In a single flash as well, all the Demon Beasts were felled.

Blood spurted out of them, and their lifeless bodies crashed on their blackish bloody pool. They, too, were defeated by the human.

'What? How is this happening? They were at least thirty of them ...'

So far, he had lost approximately thirty-five Demon Beasts.

Bu' still had lots more to spare, but meaninglessly sending them to die would be a waste.

The Demon General racked his brain to figure out the best strategy to use in defeating the unflinching swordsman.

'Haa, I've got it!'

"Surround him on all sides. Cover his flanks and rear!"

The human was indeed very adept at fighting a straight-on battle, but he would surely lose against an overwhelming number attacking from all sides.

Those were the thoughts of the exceedingly brilliant Bu'.

As commanded, the Demon Beasts circled the swordsman.

Their large numbers were fifty—and their hulking figures made it pretty obvious who the victor of the round would be.

Even if a human was skilled... he still had limits.

There was no way-

>VWUUUUSSSHHH<

An instant burst of Mana surged from the human.

"Wha—?!"

Before Bu' could utter another word, the Demon Beasts that had completely trapped the destitute in the center were eliminated.

Their bodies were diced into large chunks and blood splattered everywhere.

The Mana of the swordsman was retracted as soon as the deed was done.

Now standing atop at the center of a scene of carnage, the human stared undauntedly at Bu', waiting for yet another challenge.

"Grrrrr...." At this point, Bu' ground his sharp teeth with rage.

The Demon General was no fool, so he already realized that sending in more Demon Beasts would be a waste of resources.

Almost a hundred had been killed by this single human.

While he would have loved to see his limits, he couldn't allow any further deaths.

'As annoying as this is... I'll handle him myself.'

Bu' stepped forward, drawing one of his four weapons—a longsword.

He could wield all of them with his four arms, but doing so for a single target was a disgrace to him and his master.

'It's shameful enough that I have to even fight him directly...'

Any further, and Bu' wouldn't be able to handle the blow on his ego.

"Be grateful, human. You'll gain the privilege of dying by my hands."

In response to the General's obvious taunts, this human smiled—no, he chuckled.

'He dares—!!!'

The swordsman uttered more words on his tongue, smiling as he spoke.

There was a limit to Bu's patience, so he took his stance and infused his blade with Miasma.

Strengthening his body with Demonic Energy, the enraged monster was ready to make his charge.

"I'll kill you!"

However, just as he was about to strike, the human's Mana erupted to an even greater degree from earlier.

It was only for a moment, but even Bu' felt terrified by the sight of such an overwhelming force.

And then—

>WHOOOOOSSSSHHHH!!!<

-Sound caused lots of flesh being dissected echoed in the air.

Bu' was still standing, but he could hear lots of bodies heavily falling to the ground.

Blood flowing like water suddenly swept through the Demon General's feet and their gory odor invaded his nostrils.

The blackish pool of blood wasn't his, but Bu' had a rough idea whose they were.

Slowly turning his head, the self-proclaimed top five of the Nine Stars looked behind him.

His eyes bulged as he realized his fears were true. Bu's body trembled thanks to the horrid sight he witnessed.

Replacing the Demon Beasts he had as troops was a scene of carnage and gore.

Mangled and sliced flesh littered the ground and not a single one of the Demon Beasts was left standing.

They were all dead—killed by the human's blade.

'Over nine hundred... in an instant ... ?'

Bu' looked forward, at the end of the massacre, and spotted the swordsman.

The blade in his hand had shattered, but he was looking even more menacing than before.

The terrifying Mana he exuded vanished, and the destitute's sight now locked with Bu's.

The Demon General gulped upon receiving the frighteningly calm gaze of his opponent. The feeling of moderate caution was slowly being replaced by a stronger desire for survival.

It was instinctive—primal!

Before he knew it, Bu' had already unsheathed all his weapons.

Now, the human looked at him with a more serious gaze.

His lips parted once more, and even though Bu' couldn't understand the words, they still echoed in his ears.

"Martial Blade God Technique... Martial State."

SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar Chapter 415: Martial State 'Weak!'

That single thought echoed in the mind of the one who held his shattered blade.

Even after cutting down over nine hundred beasts in a flash, he had not gotten his fill of violence.

'They're all too weak!'

He had been training for nearly six months, isolated in the mountains for that long.

After spending so long tempering his body, the man had expected some sort of experience to stimulate him—allowing him to test the limits of his ability.

When he sensed the Miasma approaching him from the valley, he had been excited.

'It's different from the one I felt back then, but...'

This destitute had definitely felt Miasma before.

Even though he had been much younger and inexperienced, the swordsman couldn't forget the sensation that permeated him back then.

Compared to the intensity of the Disturbance he experienced in the past, the wave of negative energy that tickled his skin was far greater.

That was probably why he had raised his expectations.

He halted his rest and dragged his sack containing all the blades he had gathered for his training.

All of them—but one—had all broken apart due to training.

Their durability was simply not good enough.

When he saw the horde, the swordsman had been ecstatic.

Finally, he would be able to test his strength against formidable foes.

Their bloodthirsty aura did not bother him in the slightest. Why would it?

All he needed to do was move his body and swing his blade. That was all he had been doing for so long that his mind and body were numb to almost any other feeling.

Yet...

>SWISH!<

... Even then...

>SWOOOOSH<

... After getting all worked up...

>WHOOOOSSHHHH<

... None of them stood a sliver of a chance.

At this point, the swordsman stood in silence, surrounded by piles of corpses.

His gaze was locked on the last opponent standing. It seemed to be a strong one—at least more formidable than the others he had eliminated.

And so, ignoring the carnage he had wrought, the swordsman dropped the last of his ruined blades and focused his attention on the final enemy.

The Demon was done drawing all four weapons in his possession—a longsword, a battle-axe, a scythe, and a broadsword.

Each weapon had its advantages, and if a master could utilize them in tandem, it was possible to cover the minimal weakness they possessed.

For defense, the Demon had a very tough hide, as well as an enchanted armor that blocked damage.

Unlike the Demon Beasts, the opponent he was facing was definitely very experienced in the art of battle.

Upon seeing that, the swordsman didn't realize when his lips parted to form a grin.

'Maybe this one ... will be different ...'

The mountains that took several strikes to break were no longer able to resist his blade.

After training in this place for so long, the swordsman realized that there was no longer anything that could stop his strike.

Everything in his path had been long conquered.

But, perhaps this opponent would be different from the others!

That was probably why he felt like going all out.

A Technique that made Martial Artists transcend the limits of their capabilities, granting them access to even greater power—albeit temporary.

For Magic Users who were parallel to this, they also had a similar state. It was referred to as Mage Mode.

However, complex principles concerning the manipulation of Mana to form spells were beyond the reach and interest of those who constantly tempered their bodies and honed their skills.

For Martial Artists, a form that exceeded their current condition also existed.

It was known as Martial State.

And the young man—though a hardened warrior—wanted to unleash this power on his newfound target.

"Martial Blade God Technique... Martial State!"

The mountains were not able to bear the explosive pressure, and instantly made way for the overwhelming power that was concentrated on a single human.

He could hear the opponent utter words, but the swordsman could not understand any of them.

He didn't understand the language of Demons, after all.

At this point, even if he did, nothing the monster said would matter to him.

All that the swordsman cared about was the fight to ensue.

A massive chunk of the energy that was dispersing swiftly gathered and formed a blade.

It was white as snow, yet it contained an unforgiving glint that could make any shiver at its sight.

It was a Mana Blade, but unlike any other.

Any Technique performed by a warrior while in Martial State was forcefully raised beyond its limits.

The same applied to the gleaning white blade.

"Huuu..." The swordman's rags tore to pieces, unable to bear the pressure.

Only his pants were protected from the blast, revealing his bare flesh and well-toned muscles.

The swordsman's auburn hair was now white, and his irises donned the same color.

"... Here I come."

Taking a proper stance befitting a warrior, the human prepared his strike, watching the Demon also prepare all four weapons to deal his own blow.

'The fastest one strikes first. The strongest one wins!'

The answer was that simple.

It was a risky venture, but he had not come this far to consider safety at this point. While he hadn't been expecting a Demon assault, the young swordsman was certainly thankful to the heavens for it.

After all, he would be able to test all 12 Ultimate Blade Forms of his newly attained state.

'But first... shall we test the waters?' Smiling, the swordsman controlled his muscles and took a step forward, ready to launch himself.

"... Now!"

The environment ruptured as soon as he dashed in the direction of his foe.

Ignoring the stinging sensation of the air, the chilly breeze of the environment, and the multitudes of emotions that assailed him, the swordsman only had one goal.

One strike!

And so, he went for it!

Raising his blade and swinging it to strike, the swordsman watched his opponent steady all four weapons of his in defense.

'He's going to block my assault? Very well!'

While the swordsman wasn't aware of how durable his opponent was, he assumed that the Demon would at least be able to tank one hit.

He had all four weapons to protect him alongside the armor and thick hide. Certainly, this Demon would prove more sturdy than the devastated mountains around him.

The swordsman smiled, deciding to pour his strength into the attack.

Without using any of his Twelve Ultimate Arts, he went with the flow and sharply swing his blade.

Swift and precise, the attack was initiated.

And then—

"Eeeeekkkkk!!!"

-an eruption followed.

SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar

Chapter 416: Melancholy Of The Strong

'What is this? This power?!'

Bu' was in both awe and fear.

Unlike most of his companions, he was a Martial Artist.

While he knew certain spells that enhanced his body, Bu' was solely focused on raising his personal ability.

He had finally stepped into the Peak state after so much effort and several centuries of dedication.

However, even at that, he couldn't fathom the depths of the power that confronted him.

If he had just arrived at the peak of a hill, then there was an even bigger—taller mountain that now stood before him.

It was so impossible that Bu' fell into despair.

In the face of such a devastating difference, he could do nothing but cover himself with all his might.

And so, he did.

With all his weapons, armor, and willpower focused on defense, Bu' shrouded himself with all he had.

'l can't...'

He knew the despairing truth.

'... I can't fight that!'

And so, the blade of light came crashing down.

Disappointment.

Pure, unbridled disappointment permeated the insides of Edward.

As he stood all alone in the devastated landscape, the Mana around him dispersed.

Feeling melancholic and sullen, he stared at the spot where his enemy once stood.

No trace of him could be found any longer.

"He didn't last a single move..." Were the whispers that proceeded from his mouth.

The mountains all around him had been vaporized.

As though a crater had fallen and pulverized the vicinity, everything around was leveled—razed to the ground.

Every semblance of the fallen Demon Beasts or Demon General had now faded from sight.

At the center of everything was the lone Martial Artist.

"... I should have known." A sigh of despondency leaked out.

He didn't want to admit it before, but Edward now had no choice but to admit it.

He had become too strong.

"There's nothing here that can prove to be a challenge to me..."

Still, a faint glimmer of hope remained in his heart.

'If they invaded this place, and in such a large number, does that mean the Demons have begun their move?'

Edward had isolated himself for nearly six months, so he wasn't abreast of the current affairs of the Eastern Kingdom.

Still, he had an idea that they were preparing for war against the Demons.

The fact that he just clashed with an army of them proved that something was in the works.

If that was the case, then surely...

'I'll meet someone strong!'

After pursuing the oath of the blade for so long—pouring every essence of himself into it—the young man's ideals had slowly changed.

From the righteous ambition he had as a child, Edward's path was now that of the blade.

An endless quest to get stronger—that was the root teaching of the Technique passed down to him.

'I wonder...' A faint thought popped into Edward's head.

A certain boy appeared in his thoughts.

'... Just how strong have you become, Edward?'

To find the answer to that, he had to leave the mountains—correction, flatlands.

"Maybe I'll return to Ainzlark. Or, should I go to the nearest military base? The capital would be nice too. Hmmm..."

~Why not just go to Ainzlark? You have friends there, right?~ A deep voice pierced his mind as he deliberated.

The owner was none other than the Familiar of Edward—a Dullahan.

"Ah, that's true. It's been a while since I've seen Ana, or anyone else for that matter."

Making up his mind, Edward smiled and decided to pay a visit to his longest friend.

~Ah, I think you're forgetting something...~ The deep voice reminded Edward, causing him to halt.

"Hm?"

~You don't have anything on you. Surely, you do not intend to return like this... do you?~

For the first time, Edward paid attention to himself.

He was wearing no cloth, so his ripped muscles and perfectly toned body were in view.

His pants were still on, but even they weren't enough to hide the marvelous body Edward had cultivated.

"I see nothing wrong with how I look, though..."

Becoming too fixated on Martial Arts had caused some of Edward's cognitive functions to deteriorate—especially when it came to the area of common sense.

~Of course, you don't... sigh. You've become quite hopeless, you know?~

"I'll take that as a compliment."

~In any case, we can't have you looking like this. Let's go to the nearest settlement and ask for something to wear.~

"Ah, well, that's a good idea."

~Do you have any money?~

"...."

At this point, both Host and Familiar fell dead silent.

After a few moments of uncomfortable decorum, the Familiar—being the more sensible one among them—spoke once more.

~Then, we'll just have to pretend we're beggars and ask for raiment.~

"Why don't we just perform a task for them in exchange for clothing?"

Silence prevailed once more.

~That's actually... not a bad idea...~

Finally, the young Martial Artist was using his head.

Perhaps the thought of returning to civilization was restoring vestiges of the common sense he had lost when he relentlessly pursued the path of the blade.

"Well, shall we get going then?"

~Indeed. So, a Demon Invasion, eh? Should be fun...~

It wasn't just the Host who was happy about the prospects of a worthy challenge.

"You sure are excited, uh? Well, I don't blame you."

After all, not only Edward felt constrained by how much power they had not yet displayed.

Bond Abilities

Fusion Techniques

Martial Fusion State.

There were yet many abilities left for Edward and his Familiar to explore and utilize, but there was no one to use them on.

Which was why...

"... Let's hope we run into more enemies!"

With that enthusiastic statement fully supported by the Dullahan Familiar, the partners walked beyond the devastated area in hopes of something more stimulating.

Since war was brewing, their wishes were certainly going to come true.

"I-impossible-!!!"

Rheas, a Demon General among the Nine Stars unconsciously leaked out her thought as she witnessed one of the most horrific displays of one-sided violence.

It was too extreme that even with her status, the Demon Lord felt utterly overwhelmed by what was happening—and the one who was wreaking such havoc.

It was a single human—and she was merciless!

Rheas had expected the Northern Border of the Eastern Kingdom to be tougher than the others, but she had never thought a single human would push them so far.

Unbelievable as it was, that was exactly what was playing out.

"H-how can this be ...?"

The other humans were at a safe distance, observing the situation.

A particular rash boy was also trying his hardest in the battle, but there was really no need for him to interfere.

The girl's power was enough to decimate all her foes.

Rheas had met many monsters in her long lifetime, but this was by far the worst.

She was a true harbinger of destruction.

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Chapter 417: Monster In The North [Pt 1]

A few hours earlier, Rheas had been quite confident.

Her slithery green body and snake-like body from her waist downward made it clear she was a Lamia.

She had flowing black hair, and on her hand was a staff that had a crystal at the very top. The black stone glowed malevolently as she slithered with her army in tow.

As one of the strongest members of the Nine Stars—officially ranked third in power—most Demon Generals wouldn't even stand a chance against her.

It was for this single reason that she was sent to the Northern Border of the Eastern Kingdom.

It was their greatest stronghold, and so she was meant to test their security.

If things got too dangerous, all she had to do was retreat. That was what her master—Lord Zenkiel—told her.

However, Rheas knew that wouldn't be necessary.

At the very least, she would decimate the area with Peak-Level Magic Spells until she was satisfied.

The only reason she would ever retreat would be a result of running low on Miasma. If that happened, she would simply utilize the corrupted Souls of those she killed as nourishment.

Zenkiel usually told his underlings never to underestimate or overestimate their foes, so Rheas wasn't acting as a result of overconfidence.

She simply didn't believe humans were worth much.

Her colleagues in the White Tribe told her several times how weak the humans were. Sure it was only restricted to the areas she investigated, but it had to be the same in other places.

Rather than Humans, their focus should have been the Elves and Fairies—then the big guns called the Beastfolk could come later.

But, she couldn't refuse her superior's orders. That was why she was leading an army of a thousand Demon Beast to wreak havoc on the Northern Border.

"Hehehe. Make this interesting for me." She gave a toothy grin, revealing the fangs she had.

'Maybe I'll treat myself to a few male humans... I wonder how they'll taste like inside me?' Her snakelike tongue licked her curled-up lips.

Her disgusting habit of taking in her prey while they were still alive—preferably males—and digesting them with her fluids, was clearly showing in the way she was eyeing the people atop the garrisons that she approached.

Before Rheas was a very tall and sturdy fence.

It blocked any possible routes past the vast seas that connected the Demon Realm to the Eastern Kingdom.

Not only were the walls enchanted with Magic, but they were made with only the best materials.

'Hmm... it's going to take some time to break through...'

Rather than simply wasting her time breaking the wall—which could have some Magical Repair function—wouldn't it be better to simply fly over it?

'Yes, I'll do just that.' Rheas grinned, looking at the obedient Demon Beasts behind her.

Usually, it would be difficult for anyone to cast Magic on people this many, but Rheas was a Demon General, after all.

Casting the [Flight] Spell on all the thousand numbered Demon Beasts wouldn't be too difficult.

Once they passed the barrier of the walls, then they would begin their slaughter.

'Huhuhu. I'll first begin with the men at the garrisons, then proceed to annihilate every military personnel in sight.'

Her goal was to completely devastate the Northern Border.

"Then, once I'm done, I'm sure Lord Zenkiel will praise me himself. Hahaha, I can't wai—"

Before she could conclude her statement, Rheas noticed some movement among the humans who defended the top of the walls.

'What's going on there?'

As she was trying to observe the situation, a girl jumped out of the tall fence and descended with great speed.

Just before she reached the ground beneath the monolith, lightweight Magic allowed her to land safely.

'What the ...?' Rheas struggled to make sense of the situation.

What was a single human doing here? The other soldiers atop the fence didn't even try to stop her.

The looks on their faces displayed that they were scared—worried even—but none of the soldiers tried to prevent the girl from meeting her doom.

'Humans... do you not care about what happens to that child?'

"Wait for meeeee!!!" Yet another voice surged from above, and another person rushed to meet the girl.

This time, it was a boy.

He appeared no older than the girl—these two were most likely young adults.

Rheas couldn't understand humans—and she didn't bother learning their language. Still, she heard the rushed conversation between the two.

"What are you doing Jerry? Get back up!"

"You're not leaving me behind this time! I can defend myself—and the base too!"

"Oh? You think you can keep up?"

"W-well, I'll do my best. I refuse to give up. I'll catch up to you soon."

"Really, now? Looks like you've gotten cocky these past few months. Just because you got your name embedded in Ainzlark's records, uh?"

"S-shut up!"

"Look at you, already talking back to me. Well, I'll just have to show you the difference between us."

It was as though Rheas and her army were invisible as the two young people chattered away.

"That's enough. There's a limit to my patience when it comes to impudence." The Magic User Demon General growled, slithering forward.

Her army followed behind her.

As a result of their sudden movements, the two humans finally looked in the direction of Rheas and the Demon Beasts behind her.

"Let's do this, Ciara!" The boy grinned, readying himself for action.

"Pfft. Please, you're not in my league. Just try not to die."

"I won't! You be careful too."

"Y-you... Hmph! I don't need your worry. I can handle them myself."

"Very well, then. Here I go!"

The boy and girl released their Mana, causing Rheas to be surprised by the intensity.

Still, she didn't falter.

There was a limit to the amount of Mana that a human could summon. All she had to do was cut them down before they tried anything funny.

Preparing her staff, the Demon General readied an Advanced Spell—ready to execute it.

However-

"Mage Mode."

"Elemental Chamber."

-The quality and quantity of the humans' Mana peaked to an unprecedented degree.

It was beyond what she had sensed earlier.

As she looked at the two menacing people, Rheas had a sudden thought within her head.

'I... I think I'll have to go all out!'

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Chapter 418: Monster In The North [Pt 2]

Both humans were shrouded in immense and highly concentrated Mana.

For the boy, a sphere of flames covered him. His entire body was also glowing amber—as though covered by a thin layer of flames, rather than skin.

His previously brown hair now floated in the air, brimming bright red like flames.

The 'Elemental Chamber' he mentioned earlier had caused him to adopt this transformation. Even from where she stood, Rheas felt the intensity of his Mana.

It was terrifyingly hot.

However... that was nothing compared to the person beside him.

Her entire outfit had changed and a Grimoire now appeared before her.

The blue, black, and white energy swirling around her matched the apparel she now wore.

This was Mage Mode—the greatest state a Mage could achieve—allowing them a massive amount of power, though temporarily.

Why did such a young individual possess such strength?

Compared to the boy beside her, she was far more dangerous.

However, since they both emitted great power, it was difficult to ignore any of them. They had to be eliminated together.

Rheas, despite looking cunning and acting sky, was quite straightforward in situations like this.

"Demon Beasts, kill them both!"

All she had to do was order all the monsters to attack them at once until they grew exhausted and fell.

Their transformations wouldn't last forever, and the reason they probably adopted them was so they could boost their power.

'That means if they're out of that state... these two will stop being threats.' That was what she concluded.

And so, using her minions as sacrifices, Rheas observed from the rear.

'Now then, let's see how long you-'

>B000000000000MMMMM!!!<

In a brilliant burst of fire and wind, several Demon Beasts met their instant end.

"E-eh...?"

>WHOOOOOSSSSHHHH<

The boy coated in flames flew high into the sky, using the intensity of the fire on his body to propel him to each target—taking down one Demon Beast at a time.

His capabilities were beyond normal! How could a single strike of his engulf giant monsters in flames?

At a point, he leaped high up and then descended with ferocious speed—like a meteor—decimating the fee dozen monsters around him.

He was like a god that punished Demons—purifying their darkness with his intense flames.

But... his actions were still nothing compared to the girl.

>B0000000MMMMM!!!<

>BOOOOOOOMMMMMMMM!!!<

>B0000000000MMMMMMMM!!!<

Unlike the boy who flew up and about to defeat his prey, exerting himself beyond the limits of normal people, the girl never left her position.

From where she now levitated, she was launching highly destructive blasts toward the Demon Beasts.

It was crazy, but she was a literal one-man army.

A single blow could decimate a hundred Demon Beasts in a go—yet she did so effortlessly.

It was a pitiable sight, and Rheas could feel a terrible sense of dread befall her.

In a minute—no, maybe less—it was possible that her entire army would be done for.

'I haven't even... done anything yet...!'

Her eyes were fixated on the girl who was smiling playfully as she destroyed the Demon Beasts that were meant to devastate the Northern Border with her.

Fear coursed through Rheas' body. Still, a greater fear of disappointing her master made her unable to back down at this point.

"Y-you bitch... you ruined my plans." The Lamia growled, glaring at the human girl.

At this point, she too stared at the Demon General. She must have sensed her bloodlust.

"Oh? So you want to play too? Why not wait your turn?"

Rheas couldn't understand the human's words, but she felt like the girl was mocking her.

Her gaze was enough to tell the Lamia that much.

"You... you..." Rheas raised her staff, causing the black crystal atop it to glean even more malevolently.

She hadn't wanted to go this far yet—especially since they hadn't invaded the great walls—but the Lamia could not contain her rage.

She would suffer further disgrace if she didn't resort to her full strength.

-Peak Level Magic

'I'll use that to decimate this little girl!'

Yes, that was the fastest and easiest solution.

"Jerry, take care of the rest for a bit. I'm handling the boss." Even as Rheas began chanting the Spell, the girl had the audacity to look away.

'How dare she? How dare she?! How dare sheeee?!!'

In a few moments, she would be consumed in a flood of Miasma-infused acid. Screaming in despair and agony, the girl would suffer endlessly.

"H-hey, don't start without me!" The boy called out from a distance, still fighting the couple of Demon Beasts that were left.

"Too late. Hehe." The human girl was now looking in her direction.

The expression on her face was so full of confidence that it frightened the seemingly superior Lamia.

'Why are you smiling? You'll die, you know? I'll make sure to kill you and everyone else you care about!'

"What did you just think? You'll kill who I care about?" The air around the girl changed instantly.

Rather than her playful smile, a serious—murderous—look was now evident on her face.

It was frightening, so scary that Rheas didn't even ponder how the human girl was able to read her thoughts.

Still, the Lumia was almost down with her Spell. Any moment now, and-

"I wanted to take my time playing with you, but what you've thought is unforgivable."

The human girl made a pose as if to snatch something, and then spoke words that shouldn't have been uttered by someone so young.

"[Original Magic: Phantom Link—Brain Dead]."

Suddenly, something broke inside Rheas.

Her mind snapped, and she couldn't feel anything and anyone. Her vision darkened and her body helplessly fell.

Before Rheas could even make a final thought, or complete her Spell—before the Demon General could even realize it—she was dead.

As her neural links and core were completely destroyed by the human girl's Original Magic, she was now nothing more than a lump of meat.

"Nooo! You're already done?" The human boy sharply glided to the girl, undoing his transformation in a flash.

"Yep. I see you've finished up too. About time." The girl glanced around and saw that the Demon Beasts were all decimated.

Not a single one was left standing.

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Chapter 419: Protecting The Borders

'Not bad, Jerry. You've really improved. I'm so happy right now!'

Ciara's mind was in ecstasy, seeing the man she loved achieve such a great feat. The fruits of his endless training we're finally showing.

Of course, someone like Ciara would never say how she truly felt out loud—especially with the boy right beside her.

And so, she resorted to the usual way she communicated with him.

"Hmph! You're still too weak."

"Yeah. Yeah. Don't you worry, though. I'll soon catch up to you."

That optimism of his that never faded away, and his constant efforts to achieve that goal... Ciara was lost inside its ecstasy.

Even after so long, none of them had changed in the slightest.

'Yeah... I look forward to that.' She smiled internally.

Of course, she couldn't say that as well.

"You wish! Hahahaha!"

And so, both of them returned to their Base, ready to be cheered for their victorious efforts on the front lines.

'This is what you wanted, right, Jerry?' Ciara smiled as she watched the boy give an exhausted round of laughter.

Truth be told, she didn't really care about protecting the Kingdom.

Ciara simply wanted to be with Jerry. It was his choice to spend his Apprenticeship in the Northern Border—where the conditions were harsher and it was more perilous.

He wanted to get stronger, as well as protect everyone in the Eastern Kingdom.

As a result, Ciara had no choice but to tag along with him.

Despite all his objections, they both ended up in the same platoon and had to see each other every day.

Their rooms were also beside each other, so it was easier for Ciara to sneak into his.

Even after their Apprenticeship was over, Jerry remained in the North, insisting on protecting everyone.

'I just can't say no to him, can I?'

As a result, she too remained.

Even now, when they were hailed as the trump cards of the Northern Border, Ciara didn't exactly feel anything. She didn't care for the praise of others.

"No, you shouldn't thank me. It was all Ciara. She did a wonderful job! I was just trying to keep up."

As Jerry's words of praise sounded in her ears, Ciara felt a wave of satisfaction course through her.

A warm feeling spread inside her, displaying itself on her face.

"Compared to her, I was... I need to work harder!" Jerry smiled, pumping his fist in determination.

'Idiot... you... you've grown so strong already.' Ciara smiled, looking at the man she loved.

His growth was beyond expectations.

That was purely because of his efforts.

'Even though you'll never catch up to me...'

Still, she wouldn't mind it if he eventually did. After all, that would mean his dream would come true.

Either way, as long as he was by her side, Ciara felt like nothing else mattered.

If Jerry wanted to fight, she would fight too. If Jerry chose to side with the Demons, she would also do the same in a heartbeat.

The ball was in his court. And so, she waited for what he would do next.

"We should probably rest, but... I want to train some more. A Demon invasion of that scale means they're definitely taking this war seriously now." Jerry said, turning to Ciara.

"Training, uh? Then, count me in."

"O-Oh, you don't have to... with me..."

"Don't be a wuss. Let's go."

"Fine. Fine. Let's. It should be fun."

And so, the two of them walked away from the crowd who smiled behind them. The people who watched the boy and girl all had the same thoughts pertaining to them.

Ciara ignored them, though.

'Where he goes, I go. We are bound by fate, and we are in love. No one is allowed to stand in our way. As long as I have him and he has me, that's enough.' A wide smile spread across her face.

'After all, I belong to him... AND HE BELONGS TO ME.'

That was all there was to it.

It was all that mattered.

"Looks like they handled things well on their end."

I was just about to address the Elves who were with me, as well as my comrades, when I got a report from the scout Automatons I stationed in the Eastern Kingdom.

Apparently, both assaults had been completely extinguished.

For the North, Ciara was more than enough to handle it.

I was surprised to see Jerry Keller in action as well. His growth was beyond what I expected, but that was only natural considering whom he chose as his rival.

'Looks like he even mastered Elemental Chamber and retrofitted it to suit his Fire Attribute.'

It was impressive, to say the least.

But, of course, the most surprising of all, was the incident at the Eastern Border.

A single swordsman defeating a horde of Demon Beasts and a Demon General—devastating the area as a result.

I could only expect that from one single person.

'So you've turned into a monster too, Edward?' A slightly intimidated smile spread on my face.

I was initially superior to him in Martial Arts, but not anymore.

My limit was the Peak Level, but Edward was already in the Transcendent Realm—at least when he used Martial State.

'Amazing. Simply amazing!'

Everyone around me was growing at a phenomenal pace.

'If I didn't train for over a hundred years back then... I would have been left behind.' Once again, I was grateful to The Hermit Arcana.

My talent, compared to others, was very small. Not only that, but I also had many fields to cover.

My goal was not to be simply focused on one area.

Magic. Martial Arts. Alchemy. Engineering. Knowledge. Anti-Magic.

I needed to diversify as much as I could to see a clearer picture.

If I didn't have enough time, it was possible that I would not be able to attain a level of mastery in any area.

'Good thing I did!'

In any case, it was finally time to wrap up the nuisance of Zenkiel's strategy.

'Let's get this over with, shall we?'

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Chapter 420: Two-Pronged Attack

"As you all know, Demons have begun invading your territory."

In the conference room where I was seated with my allies—Humans, and Elves—I addressed the pertinent issue facing us all.

"It's an attack on two fronts. They only have one goal..."

Aurora and the important Elves on her end, as well as my comrades, looked at me as I spoke.

"... To measure our capabilities."

Zenkiel, the Commander-In-Chief of the Demon Forces needed more information on the military might of the Elves and Humans before going any further in his plans to crush both ends.

"So? What should we do? I propose that we hide our strong cards and deal moderately with them." Aurora spoke with caution.

Even though she was the Queen, her experience in Military matters was limited.

As a result, she needed the consent of those more experienced to make a proper decision.

"I agree with the Queen. If we act that way, the Demons could underestimate us, allowing us to win in the long run." Clara—the Elf General—nodded in response.

Freya and her brothers also supported the idea. The Elf King, after seeing everyone agree, had no choice but to also respond the same way.

"What do you think, Jared?" Aurora turned in my direction.

Of course, they would seek my opinion. At this point, I had become an indispensable ally to the Elf Kingdom.

"I am not in agreement."

Surprised gasps and stares were directed at me, but I calmly focused my gaze on the Elf Queen.

"Why is that?"

"Firstly, your points are valid. It would indeed be much wiser to hide our true strength when subduing the Demons. Based on the surveillance of my Automatons, there are only a thousand Demon Beasts each—led by a Demon General."

It was a size that we would handle without going all-out. If we indeed followed the Queen's plan, there would be no real casualty. It would simply take longer.

"T-then—"

"But, that's only when you look at things on the surface." I interrupted Clara before she got a word in.

"Causing our opponents to underestimate us could work, but only that only depends on the type of enemy that's leading the Demon Forces."

Everyone now watched me in silence and surrender, ready to listen to my rationale.

"If it were me leading the Demon Forces, it'll be easy to see through your ruse. We don't know the level of intelligence the Commander of their Forces possesses, so it could be dangerous if we attempt to influence their decision by putting on a show."

I couldn't tell them that I knew Zenkiel, and that he wasn't the type to underestimate his enemies.

"So, what do you propose we do?"

A smile formed on my face as I heard that question.

"It's simple. We do the opposite of what anyone would expect. We hit them, and we do it very hard."

By easily subduing the enemy forces, even Zenkiel would be forced to admit how powerful we were.

Usually, people with limited strength tried their hardest to hide it so the enemy underestimated them. If we used the Queen's logic, Zenkiel would still be able to gauge our capabilities to an extent.

However, there existed a special kind of people who didn't bother hiding their abilities. They were too strong to care.

That was the image I wanted to portray to the Demons.

The Eastern Kingdom had executed things on their end perfectly. Now, it was the turn of the Elves.

"We'll devastate their armies with so much firepower that not even a speck of them will be found."

By exhibiting even more power than necessary, Zenkiel would have no choice but to overestimate our capabilities.

A simultaneous defeat on both ends—and the loss of precious subordinates—would be enough to steer the Demon Lord to the path I desired.

Once pushed to the wall, a creature's instinct to survive goes into overdrive. They would do just about anything to survive.

'That's what I'm after!'

"B-but, if we do that, won't they strike us with full force next time?" Aurora's gaze was full of concern.

Her anxiety was understandable, but unnecessary.

"Indeed. They will strike as hard as possible in their next attack. However, having to deal with both sides with unbridled force will be hard—even for the Demon Forces."

They had limited personnel and resources, after all.

"In order not to be spread too thin, they'll focus their forces on one continent, crushing us with their sheer force one after the other."

The Elves looked even more worried, but my smile simply stretched further.

From the corner of my eye, I observed Damien Lawcroft. He was actively paying attention to my every word.

"Since the Elves will be considered greater threats, I'm certain they'll strike your land first. After completely destroying the Elf Kingdom, the Demons will focus their attacks on the Humans."

"What? T-then why would you even think of instigating such a--"

"While it's true that your people won't be able to bear the full brunt of the Demon's forces, I assure you that there's no need to worry. That's why our Kingdoms are allies."

"A-ah, I see. So our forces will combine and face off against the Demons?"

"Exactly so."

It was the most certain way to rid ourselves of a chunk of the Demon Forces. Why wouldn't I take the chance?

"I see. Then, we will go along with your plan." Aurora smiled at me.

Everyone else in the room agreed, causing me to bow my head in gratitude.

"Now that we've settled that, it's time to split our forces and devastate the Demons."

For the Northern Border, I decided to let Serah go—alongside the other members of my team.

Clara and her forces would also be supporting them, though I didn't really see how they would need so many to subdue a mere thousand Demon Beasts.

Still, I transported them there with my Magic, wishing them the best—not that they needed it or anything.

As for me, I was heading to the Western Border alongside Freya... and someone else.

"Are you ready?" I asked the girl beside me.

Her black and white hair fluttered with the wind as she nodded clinging to my side.

"Alright, Lemi. Don't leave me for even a single moment." I smiled at the Half-Elf.

I could sense a chilly stare from Freya, but I decided to laugh it off.

'I'm just a father taking my daughter on a field trip. Is that so bad?'

Freya decided to stick close to me too, causing me to get sandwiched between the two girls.

Well, this was perfect anyway. After all, I needed to use Teleportation Magic to transport myself and the girls to our destination.

"Alright. Here we go!"