

## SPELLCRAFT 441

### SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar

#### Chapter 441: Violent Anticipation

Everyone could see Desgarion's anger subside.

As always, only the Demon King was able to control the beast that was the Crimson Demon Lord among them.

"Will they be strong?" Desgarion asked, his eyes unwavering.

There was no point in fighting if the enemy was weak.

In response to this, the Almighty King Abellion smiled on his throne.

"Yes. They will be. And if you're lucky... you may end up clashing with the Mastermind himself."

"Oh? Is he strong, though?"

"According to Legris Damien, Jared Leonard is stronger than him. He also can't fathom the depths of his power." Zenkiel answered Desgarion's question promptly

"Who cares about a mere Lower Seat of that Cult? I want to know if he's really strong." Desgarion growled, causing Zenkiel to jack off.

"I didn't realize it until Zenkiel said his name, but this Jared Leonard is the same person who fought against the Headmaster of Ainzlark—a man said to be on an equal level as a Grand Mage," Lydia added, fighting to maintain her composure as she spoke.

"Oh? And who won?" Desgarion's curiosity was piqued.

"Jared Leonard won."

The Crimson Demon's eyes widened instantly.

>VWUUUUUUUUUMMMMMMM<

An intense wave of bloodlust filled the room as the monster among Demons grinned with excitement.

"I suppose that means you'll be staying behind, then?"

"I will." Desgarion smiled, his grin akin to a rabid beast.

"I will fight with him... Jared Leonard."

While there were still objections to Desgarion's attitude, none could object or correct him.

At least, he was able to agree with their King's order. That was the relief they all clung to.

"Alright, then. Let us make preparations..." King Abellion rose to his feet and gave a wide smile filled with charisma and authority.

The Demon Lords instantly went on their knees in a bow of reverence.

They awaited the words of their supreme leader in complete silence.

"... We're going to war!"

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We stayed in the Fairy Sanctuary for three days.

Jane needed to settle some things before our Alliance could be solidified.

I was in no hurry, so we patiently waited for her to finish.

The problem with a Republican System of Government was the bureaucracy involved.

A monarch simply needed to give an order, and it would be executed, but the Fairy Sanctuary had strict protocols that needed to be followed.

According to Jane, it was to ensure the absence of tyranny and abuse of power. While I understood certain aspects of the means of leadership, I found the process annoying.

Still, since it was something everyone was content with, I had no say in the matter.

The vote elections were held on the second day, and I had to give my public proposal through a manifesto.

I addressed the Fairies with respect, leveraging on the knowledge I had of them in the past.

Fortunately, I knew the faces of many of the people I spoke to—considering the fact that they couldn't die.

The votes were cast, and our proposal for an Alliance went through.

It took an extra day for the process to be finalized, and both representatives of the respective nations—in essence, Jane and I—had to sign an agreement and shake hands in public.

'Weird culture...' My thoughts trailed as I smiled wryly.

Still, it was a refreshing experience. Since I wasn't very pressed for time, I could also allow these laid-back activities.

After three days passed, we were ready to go to our next location.

'It's been a week since I gave Ana that project of hers. I wonder how she's doing...?' I smiled internally.

There were other things in the works, but the time wasn't ripe yet.

It would probably take a few more days before the Demons would complete their preparation and rally against us.

Before then, I needed to gain the support of the Beastfolk and Dwarves.

'Can I accomplish that in three days? I guess we'll have to find out.'

Our group of delegates hadn't changed, but Lemi was staying behind to hang out with Jane for a little while.

Apparently, the Mad Witch wanted to examine the half Elf's peculiar constitution.

Since she had never seen Miasma coexisting with Mana before, it was pretty predictable that this would happen.

I was her initial choice, but I was currently occupied with saving the world, so Jane had her sights set on the next target.

'Huu, good luck, Lemi!' I almost burst out laughing as the Half-Elf innocently bid our little group farewell.

She had no idea of the horrors that awaited her as a test subject. Well, it wasn't all bad, but...

Shuddering at the thought, I left the Fairy Kingdom with my team, holding a letter from Jane herself.

It was addressed to the King of the Therianthropes—a means of formality—though we both knew it would do no good with regards to what I wanted.

In the place I was headed, might made right. To assert myself as someone worth attention, I would need to prove it.

Jane's letter was just to get the bothersome explanation part over with.

"I have a business relationship with them, so they won't treat you guys harshly. Since I can't come with you guys because of my duties, this is the least I can do to compensate." My dear friend had said.

It would have been nice if we could explore the world outside, the way we used to, but I was well aware of the current reality.

'Maybe some other time...' I consoled myself, placing the letter into my special space.

Taking one final glance at the advanced metropolis that was the Fairy Sanctuary, I bid farewell to the place.

By my side were both allies and enemies, but I wasn't worried in the slightest.

'Things just got easier.'

And so, we all departed with a flash of blue and white bursts of energy as I activated my Teleportation Spell.

>VWUUUUSSSHH<

In the blink of an eye, we appeared atop a very high cliff—one of the many mountains surrounding us.

It was filled with warmth and the smell of tropical plants.

The sun burned our skin, and the warm breeze could sway a person off-balance.

Still, I inhaled the fresh air and looked beneath the summit we stood on.

My grin broadened when I laid eyes on my target location.

'Found you! Alright, let's do this!'

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### **Chapter 442: King Of Beasts**

Surrounded by several cliffs was a large settlement that was larger in size than any city I had ever laid eyes on.

It was at least three times the size of the Royal Capital, and the land was flourishing with goodness.

Trees were in abundance, like well-watered gardens, and streams flowed across the rich land.

I spotted two lakes as well, each glistening with the beauty of nature.

This Nation, located at the epicenter of nature, was bustling with activities... as well as denizens.

The Beastfolk—also known as Therianthropes—were beings who appeared to be a mix of humans and animals.

In simple terms, they were akin to hybrids.

Unlike Humans, though, they possessed immense capabilities—even from birth.

Since there were many variations among them as well, Beastfolk had a very rich and diverse set of cultures.

Even from my heights, I observed the mix of several subraces. The way they interacted with each other—going about their businesses—was intriguing.

Unlike Humans, Elves, and Fairies, that lived in set habitats, Beastfolk had peculiar areas in their Nation attributed to various members of their community.

Beastfolk belonging to the cat family had their preferred habitat compared to those who had attributes of milder animals.

In the same vein, fish species like Mermaids dwelled by the lakes and had their little community there.

Bird-like Beastfolk also lived in more elevated areas, so their Nation was a mix of various peculiar kinds of sights.

Of course, those who could interact with one another did so, so it wasn't a disorderly society.

My comrades and I spent a moment of silence, simply staring at the expanse beneath us.

I watched how the little ones played games among one another, and how an especially pretty one was being courted by several men.

The men fought one another to assert their dominance, and the fox girl simply smiled in Glee as she watched the suitors prove themselves.

'Some things never change.' I grinned to myself, focusing my gaze on a particular structure located on a precipice—some sort of hill that was elevated and conspicuous for everyone to notice.

The hill was higher than any other, and a large compound was constructed on it. A few houses were in the compound, all serving various purposes.

However, there was one main building that gathered the respect and awe of any who would lay eyes on it.

While the houses of the other Beastfolk were simple—though not shabby—the massive house atop the hill was of a different breed entirely.

This was the habitat of the one who served as the glue that held all the many races together.

It was none other than the residence of the Beast King.

"I wonder who it'll be this time..." I whispered, looking at how my comrades were captivated by the sight before us.

"What now, Jared?" Serah was the first to speak.

She was smiling widely, already noticing that I was already aware of from the start.

"Now? We storm the Palace." I returned her excited smile.

"Really?" Her eyes widened even further.

"I told you before we went on this journey, didn't I? You're going to have fun."

The 'fun' I was referring to wasn't simply the exotic view of various new places, as well as quality time with comrades.

No, there was one thing Serah considered to be more fun than anything else.

—Combat!

"They're all... so strong!" Her eyes returned to the denizens of the nation.

That's right, every single Beastfolk was strong beyond reason.

Even the kids would be able to win against experienced Mages. The power balance was unfair and absolutely ridiculous.

Their degree of strength was what allowed them to live in such peace and stability—considering the fact that they were at the very top of the food chain.

Of course, the culture of Beastfolk also exploited their absurd level of power.

Tournaments, Challenges, Fight Festivals, etc. were organized to test the capabilities of their members—also nurturing the young ones.

The female members of this society generally picked the strongest male as her mate, and strength was valued above all else.

Despite how crazy it all seemed, the way of the Therianthropes was the simplest to live by.

The Strong protect the Weak.

The Weak serve the Strong.

As such, the ironclad rule of the Beastfolk was enacted.

It was not written on any stone tablet, neither was it documented on a piece of parchment. No, this law was engraved into the hearts of every resident of this community.

The principle—

Might makes Right!

—was supreme.

"We have Jane's letter of introduction, and it'll be troublesome to walk down the streets of their very active neighborhood, so..."

Serah's face showed me how much she was anticipating my words.

"... We're heading for the strongest man around here!"

That was none other than the Beast King.

"And when we get there..." I stared in the Grand Mage's direction.

"... You're going to beat the shit out of him."

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Gerard was lying down on a mat, staring at the bright blue sky layered above him.

He stretched out his hands to reach it, but it seemed so far out of reach. Somehow, that seemed to describe what sort of existence he was.

"Shit..."

As a Rareborn Beastfolk—one who had access to more than two Beast Traits—he was always at the top.

He was even better than Mixed Breeds, and far more powerful than their advantage of possessing abilities from both sides of their parents.

It was as though he was born to thrive at the pinnacle of everything.

Gerard, even as a child, bested adults who were meant to be superior to him.

It was no wonder that he had managed to become Beast King when he was still in his youth.

'I'm currently 39 Years Old... sigh...' He had no words to express his emptiness and constipation regret.

Even though he had enough power and allure to obtain as many mates as possible, Gerard only accepted the best of females to bear his children.

He needed a superior breed, after all.

Unfortunately, none of those who were his seed had nearly as much power as he did. They were all strong in their own right, but compared to him when he was their age, all fifty-one children were weak.

'One is an exception, but...' He sighed at the hopeless situation.

That was why Gerard decided not to bother any longer.

He had gotten past the point of caring at this point.

"Huu... when will 'it' happen, I wonder? Any time from now..." He mumbled more words to himself.

Would he just stagnate this way until his death? Gerard thought about this as he closed his eyes and waited for the day to come and go—same as every other.

However...

>BOOOOOOOOMMMMM!!!<

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#### **Chapter 443: Serah Vs Gerard [Pt 1]**

>BOOOOOOOOMMMMM!!!<

The earth rumbled, causing Gerard to awaken from his daze in a flash.

"Who's the boss around here?" A loud and imposing voice called out.

It sounded feminine, but the Beast King had no idea of any of the females who would dare cause a ruckus this unpleasant.

From the penthouse where he was peacefully lying, he groaned while getting to his feet.

'Shit... who the hell...'

Grumbling lazily, he stood.

"You on the roof! Yeah, I can sense you. You're the strongest here, right?"

It was impressive that she had been able to sense his level of power even though he was yet to make his appearance.

That was what went on in Gerard's mind as he quickened his pace to reach the edge of his penthouse so he could get a good look at the intruder.

'A female... being this imposing? Hmm...' The Beast King finally arrived at the edge of his residence's roof, only to see a being he never expected.

'Human? A human woman?'

The lady that filled his vision had crimson hair, and her eyes were glowing violently. It was enough to faze Gerard for a moment.

Her teeth were displayed as she grinned widely.

"You're the Beast King, right? I challenge you!" She suddenly spoke, pointing at him with utter disrespect.

It had been a while since Gerard received such treatment, so he was a little slow to catch on.

No warrior had challenged him in years, and none of those who came before were females—talkless humans.

The human woman who stood beneath him was quite brave. He gave her full marks for that.

'But, she's too naive. How can she expect me to—' Gerard thought to himself, tired of the many weaklings he had been dealing with ever since he attained recognition.

Rather unfortunately for him—or rather, everything around him—the Beast King was unable to complete his thoughts.

>BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM!!!<

The compound settling upon instantly cracked apart, shattering the summit where the woman stood.

The house, where Gerard was so proudly watching from, turned into blocks of debris. The other buildings suffered the same fate, collapsing instantly.

The broken buildings and devastated hill caused an imbalance around them, but that was simply settled by the human woman's next move.

>VWUUUUUUUUSSSSHHHHHH!!!<

Everything ended up being consumed by her crimson energy, turning into dust.

The luxurious compound and homes that were specifically built with the best materials—serving as the supreme residence of an absolute being—were so easily devastated beyond recognition.

"According to that kid, if you don't accept my challenge, I'm meant to resort to this..." The red-haired woman was now looking at Gerard with determination.

With no platform to stand on, she was suspended in the air—the same as Gerard.

"You..." The Beast King growled, flapping the enormous wings behind him.

His deep frown slowly transformed into a wide grin—matching the woman who was before him.

The bored and apathetic look in his eyes was no longer anywhere to be found. Instead, his energy swelled with power, and his muscles bulged as a result.

"... You crazy bitch!"

Now having the eyes of a predator ready to devour his prey, Gerard focused his gaze on the stranger.

'I'll beat the shit out of you!'

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'Perfect!'

I was watching the battle from a safe distance, along with everyone else on my team.

After Serah destroyed The Beast King's compound—and supposedly with everyone inside—I was certain that he would be more motivated to fight.

'I transported every person in the houses, though, so they're safe...'

The Beast King didn't know this, though, so he wouldn't be holding back at all.



I had finally set the perfect stage to watch Serah engaging in unbridled combat.

'I'm sure you prefer it this way too, Serah. You get to show your full capabilities—no rules!' My grin broadened as I looked beneath me.

At this point, all the denizens had halted their activities and now looked above them.

Their focus was on the two figures that floated in the sky.

One was none other than their Beast King, then the other was an unknown human woman.

The people all watched, as though ready for entertainment.

No one felt any sense of unease—of course, except for my team members.

"I-is this really alright? We just entered the territory of our potential allies and you pull this off?"

Freya was the one speaking.

She couldn't comprehend why I would choose the path of violence. But, there was no need for her to.

"You'll understand eventually. Just watch." I spotted Maria staring at me from the corner of my eyes.

"Observe this fight too, Maria. Serah Crimson was your superior in the Imperial Forces, right?"

"Y-yeah. What about it?" Her tone was slightly flustered.

"Well, have you ever seen her go all-out?"

"No. No one throughout the Kingdom is a match for her in combat, or so I've heard."

I nodded, then turned in the direction of the floating beings, observing as they readied themselves for combat.

"Well, you might get to see her do that now."

"Is the Beast King that strong?"

I wanted to burst out laughing, but controlled myself. Maria's question was stemming from ignorance, after all.

"Beast King is the title given to the strongest Beastfolk around. Heredity or Lineage had nothing to do with it. Absolute strength is all that matters. An Average Beastfolk can best a Mage or Intermediate Martial Artist in combat, so just imagine what their most powerful elect would be like."

Though that was probably the only thing going for them—power.

Their animalistic traits, as well as their superior bloodline, gave them the perfect bodies suited for violence.

Even the Demons feared them to an extent. The Dwarves who preferred solitude above anything else had to form ties with the Beastfolk because they recognized the power of their neighbor.

Judging by how the War was going to turn out, this would be the last place the Demons would siege.

The reason was common sense.

Still...

"That's why this fight is the best." I smiled.

A match where absolute power would collide; even I was slightly throbbing in excitement.

'Now then, show me, Beast King! Show me just how powerful you are!'

### [SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

#### **Chapter 444: Serah vs Gerard [Pt 2]**

Powerful people exuded a certain aura that was impossible to dismiss.

Perhaps it was because of his earlier nonchalance, but Gerard was finally noticing that about his opponent.

In his mind, he thought, 'She's strong!'

The depth of her strength was unknown to him, but it was still ridiculous to consider that he might lose.

However... Gerard was determined to see just how much she would be able to keep up with him.

'No need to ask for her name or give her mine. Let us see what she can do first!'

>BOOOOOOOOMMMMM<

Like a flash of lightning, the Beast King lunged from his position.

His speed was both deafening and impossible for normal eyes to keep up with.

>VWOOOOOOOSSSSSHHHHH<

Closing his distance with Serah, in midair, he flapped the large wings that had emerged from behind him and coated himself with immense energy.

'Let's see if you can handle this much!'

Brandishing his fist to form a heavy strike, Gerard threw out a punch in Serah's direction. It was quick, precise, and extremely powerful.

However—

"How boring."

>BOOOOOOOOMMMMM!!!<

Before he even reached her, an immense wave of crimson energy poured out. The pulse was so heavy that the Beast King himself was swept away by its pressure.

Despite his velocity and momentum, he was pushed back—unable to land a hit on her.

"If this is your full strength, then I'm sorely disappointed."

Gerard felt the insult he just heard resonate deeply within him, along with the surprise that he couldn't land a hit.

'I was holding back, but still...'

It was at this point that the Beast King realized that he had been insulting his opponent. Since she was strong, it was best to fight with optimal strength.

"Very well. I'll fight you with everything I have. But first, can you tell me your name?"

"Serah." The red-haired woman shrugged at the question.

She didn't even bother asking for his. It was like, to her, he was nothing more than The Beast King—an opponent she wanted to defeat.

'Well, I suppose this is how things should be!'

"My name is Gerard, Beast King of my people. And so, with my life and pride on the line, I'll be fighting you seriously."

He felt like he was being too impatient, but Gerard somehow had an inclination that the woman before him could keep up.

If she couldn't, then that would only mean her demise.

>VWUUUUUUUUUMMMMMMM<

The air vibrated as Gerard released the vast amount of Mana within him.

It was like the atmosphere was undulating as a result of the pressure, and even those who watched from beneath could only shiver in response.

The intensity of the emerging Mana surrounded the whole Beastfolk Kingdom. The savagery was enough to drive a person mad.

However, this was merely the start.

"I am a Rareborn. Unlike Hybrids that can access only two aspects of Beasts, I have the capacity to take in more qualities depending on how I cultivate my energy."

His opponent could have taken this as a madman's ramblings, but this was akin to a lady warning that he was giving the woman.

If she wanted to back off, now was the time. However, considering the fact that she had come to challenge him, Gerard doubted she would run.

No, he hoped she didn't.

"At my current state, I have access to ten different Beast Traits."

From the flying birds, to the strongest of land beasts, to even aquatic creatures filled with special properties, Gerard had honed his body to accept and culture various traits.

According to the history of the Beastfolk, he was the first to have attained such a status.

As a result, he was most likely the strongest Beast King to ever exist.

With the attribute of ten Beast Traits, Gerard was rapidly transforming himself as his energy swelled even more.

And now...

"Why don't we begin round two?"

Sharp long ears, nine tails behind him, flaming skin, six wings, seven horns, stripes, and various tattoos on his body, and a much larger physique—Gerard was now in his Joint Transformation State: Phase 1.

By combining all ten attributes, he was able to attain a level no one could.

The ominous Mana swirling around him, as well as the immense power he still had locked inside him, was enough to drive anyone to the edge of insanity and back.

However, the woman did not back off.

"This is a state I hardly show, and no one has managed to survive it. I hope this will be enough for you to be satisfied."

The woman only grinned more widely.

'Is she mad?' Gerard asked himself.

He was currently about 9 feet tall, having attributes of various Beasts.

Not only did he have access to all ten, but his Mana density was also enough to devastate anything around him.

Surely, she understood that she stood no chance in her current state.

"No... this is fine. I'll handle it myself." Gerard watched her murmur to herself.

It didn't seem like she was speaking to anyone in particular, so the Beast King wondered if she had finally gone insane.

"Beast King... is this your peak?" Serah Crimson asked him out of the blue.

'Is she mad?'

His current state was beyond frightening, and no one had ever bested him while he was in it. Even if he had another form, there was no way he would resort to that as it put a heavy strain on his body.

This much was more than enough for him to finish any opponent that challenged him.

"You are not worth using my peak on." He answered frankly.

Her power was incredible, but this was a level that no one could attain—at least, not a human.

A full-powered blow of his could decimate the city beneath him. That was how strong this form was.

"I see. Oh, well, I've been patient enough..." The woman called Serah murmured, finally clashing both fists together.

Her Mana spiked to another degree, but it was still inferior to his.

Gerard didn't see himself losing in the slightest.

The clouds around the city had already dispersed, and tremors filled the air. The Mana that was manifesting in this area was enough to tear apart any vestige of common sense.

"... I'll just go ahead and enjoy myself."

Something about what Serah said seemed dangerous, but Gerard ignored it.

'An ignorant statement from an ignorant human!'

He prepared himself, ready to hit his opponent in a way that would minimize the damage done to his Kingdom.

If he could take the fight elsewhere—beyond the mountains—then he would be able to display even more of his superiority.

"Original Magic..." Words emanated from the woman's lips.

>VRRROOOOOOOOOOMMMMMM!!!<

Gerard shivered, same as the entire atmosphere.

He suddenly felt confined—no, suppressed.

This was the first time he had such a feeling. As his body quivered, he finally noticed the menacing smile and bloodthirsty grin of the woman before him.

And the Mana that was manifesting—climbing at an incalculable rate?

It was... immeasurable.

"... [INVINCIBLE]!"

[\*\*SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar\*\*](#)

**Chapter 445: Invincible**

"Original Magic... [INVINCIBLE]"

The moment those words were uttered, reality seemed to shatter, and a newfound concept broke forth.

Magic on a transcendental scale was implemented, and the being called Serah Crimson ascended to the very pinnacle of said Magic.

Her body was shrouded in crimson. Her clear skin took on the color of fierce energy, and her red hair floated and flickered like flames.

It was as though she was living energy, yet beyond the realm of understanding.

As her body glimmered in such concentrated Mana that would be impossible to calculate, the power still kept rising at an unbelievable pace.

With every second, the woman was growing stronger.

Far far more powerful with the time that passed, capable of breaking any barrier, or tearing down any opponent... that was the power Serah Crimson now donned.

"I-impossible..." Gerard murmured to himself as he stared at the being before him.

It was no longer a woman.

"Let's roll! I'm going to beat the shit out of you now!"

It was more akin... to a god!

>VWOOOOOOOSSSSSHHHHH<

Faster than his eyes could see, much less process, the god of destruction brought her fist to his stomach, giving him a blow that completely shattered his resistance and defenses.

His hard, impregnable hide was rendered obsolete in the presence of true power.

>BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM!!!<

Gerard felt his body fly in the direction beyond the mountains, away from his people.

He felt relief, even though his body was assailed with unimaginable pain.

'The people won't be harmed!'

"Don't worry about them!" Serah's voice appeared again.

She gave another hit, sending him crashing among several small hills.

Everything in the area got destroyed in an instant, receiving the full brunt of the descending Beast King.

Serah Crimson, now in her Invincible state, floated above the crash site, waiting for her opponent to rise from the debris.

As stipulated, her Original Magic: Invincible allowed her to attain a state beyond the reach of humans.

Since her body was coated with such dense Mana, she was resistant to all attacks—Magic or not.

Nothing could even make her flinch at this point.

She was capable of breaking down any barrier or resistance, destroying anything she desired—Magic or not.

She was truly invincible. The perfect being who excelled at absolute offense and defense.

That was why she was revered as the strongest.

However, using this form came at a very horrible cost for Serah Crimson. It was easy to decimate her opponents with it, but there was a reason she avoided using it.

The price she had to pay was immense.

"Haa, so boring... I can't stand this!"

Yes, that's right. Absolute boredom was the consequence of using absolute power.

Being Invincible meant no one could stand a chance against you. And so, Serah, who was now at the pinnacle of existence, felt an immense solitude that no one could comprehend.

And the worst part was that she was still growing stronger with the passage of time.

"You... guff... you're strong..." A voice emanated from the scarred landscape.

Amid the smoke and rubbles caused by the earlier crash, was a being who was in the process of evolution.

"Oh? You're still alive? Impressive." Serah smiled, happy that the side effect of using her Original Magic was beginning to dissipate.

Perhaps she could entertain herself even further.

"I was wrong about you. And that's why... "

The air undulated and the thick smoke cleared instantly, revealing a new entity.

"... I'll use my full power on you."

Gerard, now a completely different being from earlier, spoke with a beastly grin.

His head was akin to a dragon, and he had ten horns on his face.

Eight wings and a tail swerved behind him. He had six arms, each having various attributes, and his skin was burning hot—seething with hot ember.

His nine eyes and beastly jaw were menacing, and the physique he donned was akin to a giant.

He was at least 15 meters in height.

"This is my Joint Transformation State: Phase 2."

No one had ever fought him in this form.

This power was one that he designed to signal his final fight. It was unfortunate that no one had appeared who was worthy of it, but now...

'I can see it! This is how I die! How utterly glorious!' Gerard thought to himself in both gratitude and glee.

"Let us end this!" The Beast King of carnage roared, increasing the destructive pressure of his Lava-like Dragon body.

His cataclysmic stomp devastated the area even further, causing his environment to surge in heat.

>BOOOOOOOOMMMMM<

He spared faster than ever, lunging at the smaller figure of his opponent.

Utilizing every muscle in his body, and every ounce of energy he could muster, Gerard was determined to fight till the very end.





His massive body was sent crashing to the ground with a kick from the ferocious woman, causing his body to spasm in agony.

One final hit was all it would take for his life to end, even in his current state.

"Guark!" Coughing out heated blood, he looked above him to see the vastly superior being hovering with another punch being prepared.

It flickered with unquantifiable heat—the fist that would bring about his end.

Gerard could not move fast enough to evade it, neither did he have the defenses or any offensive maneuver to match it—not like he desired it.

'This is... truly the end.' He cracked a twisted smile on his pummeled face.

His death was going to be grander than he had ever imagined. And so, he had no complaints.

>WHOOOOOSSSHHHH<

The god of destruction drew closer with her glistening body and unstoppable force.

Serah's blow was already nearing the Beast King, ready to render him into nothing but cinders.

However—

"Haaa..."

—She suddenly stopped.

Gerard was shocked—no, disappointed—by her sudden refusal to fight any longer.

"W-wha—?!" Why wouldn't this being end what she started

"... I guess this is it. I won."

"—Eh?"

Gerard struggled to understand what was going on, but he desperately pleaded for his death. His expression told her not to let such a glorious moment go to waste and simply end him.

There was no way he would get a better chance than this.

This was the time when he could go down in the blazes of glory! It was the precipice of his entire existence.

"P-please kill me!" His voice was hoarse, and his body lacked enough energy to last much longer.

Getting one final strike from her to send him off was what the Beast King now desired with all he had

"Hm?"

"I know it is not my right, as the loser, to make a request from you, but..."

Winners called the shots. The strong decided the fate of the weak. Gerard knew that quite well.

However, this was something he wanted more than anything. That was why, even though it was shameless, he begged with every ounce of his weak body.

"... Please, kill me with your power."

Nothing would give him greater pleasure.

"I see. You badly want this, uh?" Serah Crimson, still in her [Invincible] state, asked the pathetic Beast King.

"Yes." He managed to utter.

After looking at him for some time, the lady sighed.

>VWUUUSH<

The energy coating her completely vanished, and she was back to her normal form.

"W-wha—? Please wai—!"

"I would have loved to grant your request, but that's impossible this time around. We're here on a mission, and your existence is integral to that."

It was like a complete switch from her bloodthirsty nature, the way Serah spoke with formality.

"Besides, even if I could kill you, it'll be a waste to do so..." Serah smiled at the defeated Beast King.

Of course, she didn't forget the fact that one kid in her group could simply resurrect him if he suffered death. But, Serah simply didn't want to end the life of such a promising man who was in his prime.

"You are strong. Even if it was for a while, you could match my power. Plus, you can still grow stronger than this. Why would I end your life now?"

Upon hearing her weird compliment, Gerard's heart fluttered.

But, even though he was happy to have been praised by such a woman, he couldn't bring himself to be happy.

A bitter smile crept up on his face.

"I actually... can't grow beyond this." He murmured.

"If this is an excuse to make me kill you, I've said it already... I won't do it." The redhead spoke, slightly frowning.

"N-no, it's not like that..." Gerard didn't know how to phrase his words well.

The complicated emotions within him made it hard to form words properly, and his severe injuries impeded his words.

How could he tell the woman before him that—

"He's going to die very soon."

Before Gerard could finalize his inner thoughts, a voice appeared.

It sounded like that of a young boy—a third party.

He lifted his gaze and noticed the presence of a blond boy, watching as he descended from his heights.

The boy had a smile on his face, and a somewhat innocent expression, but Gerard could tell that a deep and complicated power resided within him.

"What do you mean by that? Is it because of our fight?" The woman called Serah turned in the direction of the boy, appearing panicky.

It was the first time he had ever seen her look so flustered, so Gerard thought she was pretty cute.

Such a strong and powerful female besting him... the Beast King could only imagine how strong their child would have been.

'If only she was my Mate...' It was a shameful thought for him—who was a loser—to make.

But, he couldn't ignore the feelings in his heart that produced such an appealing prospect.

"No. It wasn't because of you... though I suspect that your fight merely quickened the result. Am I correct?" The boy was now looking in Gerard's direction.

"How do you know about that?" The Beast King asked, staring at his unassuming face.

The boy said nothing.

"Fine. Yes, you're right... I don't have long for this world. I could have lived for some months longer, maybe even a year, but... this fight has strained me already. I'll probably not last the next ten minutes."

That was why he desired death so much. While he still lived, he wanted her almighty power to send him off.

Serah stared at his body with surprise, but the boy didn't seem fazed at all. He looked as if he already surmised that much.

Still, Gerard was too caught up with his desperate desires that he couldn't think of much else.

'I want to die at the hands of this woman!'

Was that being too greedy?

No! This was what every member of his race would dream of. As their King, it was also what he desired above all else.

To die by the hands of one more powerful was the desire of every Beastfolk. That way, they would live their lives with exhalation and excitement—spending their last moments in pure exhilaration.

The most pertinent reason for their desire, however, was so deeply rooted in them that everyone lived their lives desperate for such an end.

After all...

... It was better than expiring as a result of the Curse.

## [SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

### **Chapter 447: The Beastfolk Curse**

The Therianthropes were regarded as the strongest Race—at least when it came to physical ability, as well as their raw power.

The reason was because of their special physique.

From birth—no, probably before they were born—Beastfolk had the natural ability to absorb Mana.

They absorbed energy at a remarkable rate—with or without their volition. If they focused on absorbing this energy, the rate became even stronger.

Still, this passive intake of energy made them extremely powerful, even without any real effort.

Their Mana Cores naturally formed within a week, and they could keep absorbing Mana throughout childhood.

By the time they grew to the age of early adolescence, most Beastfolk were already at the Red or Purple Core Grade.

Their bodies also naturally got strengthened by taking in so much energy.

And so, even if they did not undergo any formal training at all, Beastfolk would still turn out to be strong.

They were the perfect Race built for combat.

But... with such great power came a steep price.

—Lifespan.

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"Most Beastfolk don't get to live up to 40 years. The more powerful and talented a Beastfolk is, the younger he dies as well." I said, in response to Serah's question.

"W-what? For real? I don't understand." She exclaimed.

Of course, she would be surprised. I was the same when I first heard of this from Dom.

Many Races would be jealous of the Beastfolk and envy their natural ability to absorb Mana at a rapid rate.

Some would even wish they were Beastfolk.

However, their line of reasoning would be flawed. The same body that gave these people such power was the same that caused their greatest pain.

"Mana Overload. That's what happens when you take in more Mana than you can handle. The Mana Core shatters and a disastrous effect invades the body." My lips curled grimly as I said this.

I remembered the face of a comrade of mine—and the scene where I experienced the concept firsthand.

"The body feels like a prison, and it feels like every internal organ is exploding at the same time."

Suddenly, the person experiences such indescribable pain, and the power that they once controlled would run amok.

Compared to this experience, Mana Shock was a breeze.

"The death is instantaneous for most people who experience it since the pain is so severe and the body can't handle the backlash."

Beastfolk, who absorbed Mana their whole lives, would finally reach the point where it would be impossible to grow further.

They would reach the zenith of Mana Cores—Gold Core Grade.

The Core becomes full, and that person's limit would finally be attained at that point.

Most humans never reached this point, so it was probably hard for them to relate.

Once the limit is reached, further meditation or Mana Absorption would be impossible.

But, the bodies of Beastfolk naturally absorb Mana.

That doesn't stop, even when they reach the limit.

That's when the problem occurs.

"I believe the average age when it begins is the early twenties, right?"

A point where most humans would never reach even though they spent their whole lives training, Beastfolk could achieve it in their youth—The peak of Gold Core Grade.

Their limits would be reached, and no further energy would be required.

But... just as how Beastfolk didn't need to initiate their body's natural disposition, they couldn't stop it either.

And so, the energy would run amok within them—growing unstable.

Then, it happens... Mana Overload!

"The first time is always immense agony. The Beastfolk would wish they could die. This episode is quite an unbearable sight to see—watching them scream as their body seems to be tearing apart from the inside out."

Normally, that would mean their deaths.

However... their bodies would never allow them such sweet release.

"Beastfolk have extremely high regeneration. So, as their Mana Core breaks and wreaks havoc on their body, the body responds by naturally repairing itself."

As a result, even the Mana Core is fixed, and the violent release of energy causes the vessel to get purged of the abundant Mana.

But, soon again, the Mana Core gets full, and another episode occurs.

Again and again.

The process repeats in a seemingly endless cycle.

The despair becomes a way of life, and slowly the Beastfolk gets accustomed to it.

Even with the rabid sensation plaguing them, they endure it and acclimate.

However, this doesn't last forever.

As they grow older, repeating the process of regeneration and degeneration, the body begins to wear down.

Regeneration gets slower, and the body begins to break down beyond repair.

And so, when they finally reach a point, the Beastfolk's body can no longer suppress the immense power within it.

It implodes, sending the being into one final dance of agony—apparently more painful than the previous ones.

And then, the Beastfolk does.

"That's the tragedy behind their existence... the sad truth about Beastfolk's Curse."

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Serah was stunned to hear this.

Her body throbbed in slight discomfort, and then she turned in the direction of the dying Beast King.

She could now understand why he was so desperate for his request.

'Should I just kill him?' Her thoughts trailed.

Glancing in Jared's direction, Serah could see the boy shaking his head in refusal.

'But, he's going through so much pain!' She wanted to protest, but Serah controlled herself.

Jared never acted without a reason, so she just had to trust in his decision.

Looking at her opponent one more time, she felt pained from the bottom of her heart. This man had so much potential, yet he would die so soon.

'Is this nature's way of balancing the scales..?'

Serah was well aware of the unfair advantage Beastfolk had from birth. If they did not have such a cruel ending, it was possible that they would evolve to become even more powerful than they were known for.

Without the shackles of overloading, they could potentially take over the world with their might.

Was she anxious, or was she excited about that prospect?

Serah Crimson had no idea.

Unfortunately, there was nothing to be done about such a deeply rooted matter... or was there?

"Beast King, if you become my vassal, then I will cure your Curse."

### [SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

#### **Chapter 448: Mind Games**

"Beast King, become my vassal. If you do, then I will cure your Curse."

The weakened being, on the verge of death, looked at me with surprise.

But, that expression did not last long.

"Why do you want something like that?" His voice was hoarse, and I could tell that he was battling immense pain.

Not only had Serah severely injured him, but the effects of his Mana Overload were beginning to manifest.

I once saw Dom when he was going through such agony, and I knew it was more than enough to drive a person to the edge of insanity.

Despite being hailed as a strong warrior—the strongest at the time—he too couldn't bear the pain.

'I can use this...' My thoughts trailed coldly.

My knowledge of the Beastfolk, the Beast King's defeat at the hands of Serah, and his current agonizing situation. Everything added up nicely.

"You aren't questioning my ability to do something like that?"

"You wouldn't want the fealty of a dead man, would you? Besides, I'm dying... there's no merit in doubting your words."

'Spoken like a truly desperate creature.' I smiled, pleased by his undying will to be free of his curse.

I could have healed him at that moment, but I refused to do such a thing.

Easing him of his pain would cause him to falter in his decision. I needed just the right amount of desperation.

'The more, the better.'

"Beast King—no, Gerard—you have the qualities I desire as a vassal. Rest assured, I will not do anything to hurt any member of your Race, neither will I make you harm them either. I simply want you, and only you."

I said that, but it was merely a pretext. My desire was for the entirety of the Beastfolk to fall under my grasp.

Unlike the Elves and Fairies, their kind was very volatile. I couldn't handle them diplomatically or with levity.

'I will simply bring them under my mighty hand.'

"Why would I choose to serve you? You aren't stronger than I am, are you? I only lost to your friend there..." His gaze shifted to Serah.

'So, he's attracted to her, uh? Should I use that? No... I shouldn't bring Serah into this.'

"I guess you'll never get to find out." I smiled at the dying Beast King.

"You know I'd rather die than let go of my pride. That's how we Beastfolk are." He groaned.

It seemed he was intent on being stubborn.

"Even if you could live twice, thrice, or even far longer than you have already lived? You could achieve even greater heights than ever before."

I sensed hesitation in his eyes, and then glanced at Serah. She was silently observing the situation, no doubt.

'I guess I'll have to use his attraction to her, after all...'

"You speak about pride, yet a female bested you in combat. How laughable."

"H-hey, mind what you say, kid!" Gerard growled, getting needlessly flustered.

"Shut up." I silenced him with a single cold gaze.

At the moment, he was nothing more than a wounded dog who lost to a female—a shameful event for a male such as himself.

"Your pride is meaningless right now. You're worse than the other Beast Kings who came before you. At least, they never got their asses handed over to them as you did."

I saw the King bite his lip, unable to refuse my words.

"Do you know why you lost to her? The answer is simple. You were too weak."

Once I made this bombshell land, I could feel Serah get upset at me, but I ignored her.

'Based on how she obeyed my orders not to kill The Beast King, it seems she respects and trusts me enough not to defy me—at least not openly.'

Besides, I had made good on my promise and showed her a good time. Whatever dissatisfactions she had would be swallowed.

"But, you will get a chance to redeem yourself if you accept my proposal. You'll get as much time to not only live, but get even stronger than you are. Achieving even greater heights while blotting out this shameful failure, this is a chance for both."

The only thing stronger than Gerard's desire to be killed by Serah would be to make her his Mate.

To do that, he had to be stronger than she was.



With the motivating factor I am dangling in front of him present, there was a high likelihood that he would bite.

"Can I... really get stronger?" He murmured with doubt.

"You can."

My answer was immediate, and I showed unwavering conviction in my eyes.

'If you refuse, I'll simply let you die. You will suffer the most excruciating death as your Mana Overload kills you. Then... I'll revive you and let you experience the same thing over again.'

Ultimately, Gerard would break and accept my proposal.

It was nothing personal, but I wanted the best for both sides, while ensuring my goals were met.

"Then... if you can keep my people out of this... if you can indeed cure me and make me stronger, then I wouldn't mind... being your subordinate..." His murmur sounded strained.

'Has the pain started getting unbearable for you?' I eyed his throbbing body.

"Wise choice." I smiled at the man.

Serah's fierce gaze was on me, and I could tell she was questioning what I was trying to do, but I ignored her once more.

'Just be happy I let you play with him. I fulfilled my end of the agreement, so let me take things from here.' My thoughts responded to her silent rebuke.

"It's good to see that I can reason with you. Though, I believe you are wrong about one thing." I continued looking at the Beastfolk as I spoke.

"And what's that?" He murmured.

"Either you or Serah, it doesn't matter. There's no way I'd lose to any of you. Do you understand what I'm trying to say?"

Gerard stared at me in disbelief. Even Serah's gaze now pierced my back. Their opinions didn't matter since it was the truth.

"I'm stronger than you."

A proud Beastfolk, who respected strength above all else, would clearly have second thoughts about serving someone weaker. That was why it was most effective to show him who the inferior one was.

"Now, then, Gerard, I will fulfill my end of the deal. In exchange... you will become mine."

### [SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

#### **Chapter 449: Unbelievable Declaration**

"I accept."

Once the Beast King voluntarily accepted my proposal, I was able to proceed to my next plan.

I knelt by his side and placed my hand on his throbbing body. Instantly, I felt the rabid Mana within him and activated Resonance.

In a moment, I was connected to his body and decided to direct the flow of the overflowing Mana to myself, absorbing the excesses until his condition stabilized.

Once I was done, his boy was rid of all the rampaging energy within him and his Naan Core was fixed.

This was only a temporary solution, though.

"This much should do... at least for now."

I canceled Resonance and stood on my feet. The Beast King had returned to his regular look—a bearded man with brown hair and a rough appearance.

And—of course—he was naked.

"I-is it done?" He murmured, feeling the pain in his body vanish.

"Not yet. I only relieved you temporarily."

"What? Why? That wasn't the deal." The Beastfolk appeared flustered.

He definitely didn't want to experience the same hell he just went through.

"I haven't forgotten our promise."

Using Space Magic, I fished out something from my Special Dimension.

"Here." I threw a pure white substance at the seated Beastfolk.

"U-uh?" He caught the little object, no smaller than a small grain.

The substance was a round pill, glistening with its pure and white color.

"What's this?" The Beast King murmured, observing the pill with a slightly disappointed gaze.

"It's the cure."

What he was holding was the key to liberating the Beast Folk from their endless cycle of suffering.

It was a solvent that expelled the stained Mana within one's Mana Core and transformed it into a White Mana Core.

'He can consider it as a reset medicine that'll return them to the start of his Mana Absorption stage.'

In terms of the quantity of Mana, it would be no different from a White Core Grade—though it would definitely be of higher and more concentrated quality.

But, it still meant that Gerard would be far weaker than before.

'Normally, I'd stop at this and call it a cure. He'll be able to live for another 30 or so years with this.'

By then, I would have achieved my goals. Plus, by supplying a stable supply of the medicine, I could wrap him and his people under my thumb.

But, I wasn't a malevolent individual.

'Besides, I did promise to make him stronger...'

"Eating that Pill will cause your Mana Core to change. It'll ascend to a higher plane, and you'll begin to undergo different training to make sure you get stronger."

Explaining the whole process to him would be a chore, but the goal was to help the Beastfolk create multiple Mana Cores.

That was the simple solution.

By allocating the incoming Mana to several Cores, it was possible for them to create an indefinite number of Mana Cores and Subcores.

That was my intention for him.

"Ah ah, not yet," I said, raising my finger to stop him from swallowing the Pill yet.

"What now?" He grumbled.

'There's that attitude again. Maybe it's because he's no longer in pain, and he holds the cure that he feels this way.'

As I suspected, the best way to control a Beast like him was to break him completely.

'If I can include her as well, then this should work out splendidly.'

Glancing at the woman beside me, a bright idea popped into my head.

"Before you eat that Pill and begin anew, it's best to make one thing clear." I also stared at Serah and gave her a knowing smile.

'If I can secure both of their absolute respect and reverence, then I should have two indispensable allies to use.'

Serah still didn't completely trust me, and it was quite obvious who the superior one among us was.

But, I had no intention of letting that last forever. After all...

"Right here and now, the both of you should fight me."

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One of the reasons I pitted Serah against the Beast King was to determine both their capabilities.

It was the same reason I was excited about the match between Serah and Aurora.

While it was interesting to watch two powerful individuals clash with each other, there was another merit to it.

—The Great Sage's Memoir

My Original Magic allowed me to utilize any Magic I had deciphered, but that meant I needed to record contents within it.

Magic Formulas, Spells, Structures, and Circuits—to the littlest of details—had to be analyzed.

By using Spellcraft while closely observing a match, I could fulfill these conditions and record the Magic I witnessed in the Memoir. My fight with Neron was also to that end.

That was why I waited before utilizing Original Magic.

And so, after watching Serah's match with the Beast King and obtaining the information I desired, I finally realized something.

"She's very strong. Her Mana is incredible too. But... it's too simple!"

Serah Crimson was definitely more powerful than Neron Kaelid, but he would still win if they fought.

She was simply more powerful in a straightforward fight where the victor was determined by sheer power.

Certainly, mere tricks wouldn't be enough to stop someone who could keep getting stronger until they won, but there were many ways to handle it.

'And I can think of one right now.' I smiled, glancing at both Serah and Gerard.

They were both cut from the same simple cloth of destruction.

As a result, if I could beat Serah, I could beat the Beast King as well—after all, he was even inferior.

'Well, it's easier to show than tell... right?'

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"Are you sure about this, Jared?" The Queen of Destruction asked me.

"Of course." I smiled sweetly, glancing at the man who was still stunned by my words.

"I don't want any excuses." With the snap of my fingers, the white pill in his grasp disintegrated.

"If you want your cure, you WILL fight. As for you, Serah... you shouldn't pretend you don't want to."

Serah had already displayed enough emotion to let me know of her interest.

"Aren't you both curious? Just how much power I have to face off the two of you."

Just like clockwork, glimmers appeared in both their eyes.

Naked Gerard rose to his feet, ignored by Serah's gaze completely.

The Grandmaster also stared at me, joining the Beast King to finally express her desire to test my capabilities.

"Now that's more like it. It's high time you both realize the meaning of true power."

Was it a bluff or a genuine fact? Could a young boy like me really rival two of the most powerful beings to ever exist?

'Who knows...' I smiled at the pair.

## [SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

### **Chapter 450: Uneven Odds**

"Original Magic: Great Sage's Memoir" My book appeared and instantly flipped to the appropriate page.

I was linked to it, and it was linked to me. Deciphering the best course of action for the situation, my Memoir functioned on its own.

>VWUUUUSSSHHH<

Releasing a burst of power to the surrounding, I created a Transcendental Level Barrier—Magic that I copied from the Elf Arena.

The barrier spanned a long distance, giving us enough room to fight freely.

Though the landscape had been devastated a great deal thanks to Serah's fight with Gerard, it was still good enough for a fight.

With the stage set, I stared at my two opponents.

"You better give it everything you have. Wasting too much time will simply prolong your suffering." I smiled at Gerard especially.

His desperation to win and obtain the Miracle Pill would cause him not to hold anything back.

"But, if I end up killing you, then—"

"Please, don't make jokes like that, Beast King. I can't imagine how I would be able to lose to you."

He was indeed very strong—and he possessed a sheer amount of Mana, but that was all there was to him.

Having faced very powerful and complicated foes, someone like him didn't scare me in the slightest.

"You want me to go all out... despite seeing all that?" Serah said, observing me to find a motive.

"Yes. Now, enough talk. Let's begin."

I raised my hand and placed it above my floating book, ready to begin the challenge.

The atmosphere was rich in tension, and I could tell that both parties were motivated enough to fight with all their might.

'This will be a nice experience for me too...' I smiled while having the thought.

"I'm ready when you ar—"

>BOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMM!!!<

Before I completed my statement, both opponents charged at me at full speed.

In terms of physical ability, they far surpassed me. I wouldn't be able to evade their strikes on time. However—

>VWUUUUSSSHHH<

—Irrespective of my cognitive and physical limitations, my Original Magic operated beyond what I could achieve.

As a result, I instantly teleported out of their reach in an instant. It was an automatic response done by the interface.

"Slow..." I sneered.

"Did I not say to use your full strength?"

I could sense dissatisfaction arising from Serah and Gerard as they raised their heads to watch my floating posture.

>VWUUUUSSSHHH<

Massive eruptions of energy burst from both of them, causing them to don dangerous states.

Serah was most likely in Mage Mode, considering her appearance changed and she had a more sophisticated appearance.

Having a Mage's cloak, gloves, and a glowing red orb that floated beside her, she gave me an intense expression.

'So, I'm still not worth using your Original Magic on? Very well... I'll have to teach you.'

As for Gerard, he assumed his Transformation State: Phase 1.

Both of them were not going all-out, but their fierce determination to win was still obvious.

'Are they testing the waters?'

>BOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMM<

The ground shattered as they dashed at me with newfound speed.

Still, my Original Magic responded and sent me from harm's reach.

The moment I teleported away, Serah appeared behind me—in my new location—and generated a fist I was well acquainted with.

'Vermillion Burst, eh?'

Throughout the fight, I had been coating myself in immense Mana, but even my defenses were beginning to crumble before such a blow.

It would definitely suck to take one head-on.

But... I wasn't worried.

As soon as she thrust her fist, I instantly prepared my attack and blocked hers. Normally, my brain wouldn't have been able to respond quickly to her strikes, but...

"Too obvious."

Anyone with proper insight would be able to tell that she was quite sloppy. Heightening my body to the limit, I read the direction of her punch and poured a great amount of Mana to replicate my strongest shield.

>KRRRRRRRAAAAAA!!!<

As a result, her hit was negated.

"U-uh?!"

My fist tightened and a vermillion spark flashed as I thrust my hand—not waiting for Serah to complete her surprised yelp.

"Wha—??"

>BOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMM<

I was met with strong resistance—as expected of Serah Crimson.

Her defense were so high that I wasn't able to scratch it.

At that very moment, Gerard sent a destructive charge of Mana at me. The intensity was focused, and I was sure it would sting. Which was why—

"Gahh!"

—I swapped location with Gerard and had him take the hit for me.

With my position changed, Gawain and Serah were now close to each other and I was far away.

'Perfect!'

From my hand glowed a condensed orb of many colors. It contained tons of attributes, and its destructive capacity was unknown to me as of yet.

After all, this was the [Nova] Spell that Neron used before I canceled it out with Anti-Magic.

The massive orb went straight for the two, exploding upon impact.

>BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM!!!!<

As expected, they came out of the attack unscathed.

'Their defenses are quite high. Impressive...'

I didn't have enough time to prepare the appropriate charge, and I was also being frugal with my Mana, but it was still noteworthy that they were both strong in their own right.

"Tricks like this won't beat me!" Serah yelled at me.

"We'll see about that," I responded to her barks.

Both opponents couldn't be defeated by me in my current state, but it wasn't like they could reach me either.

'A stalemate? No... I'm going to do better.'

>BOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMM<

>VWOOOOOOOSSSSSHHHHH<

Brilliant strikes of light and bursting energy filled the area as the two still desperately tried to defeat me.

Even if they were faster and stronger, my Original Magic had already recorded their patterns based on their earlier fights—especially Serah, whom I've seen in battle before.

Since the Beast King was inferior to her and had a similar pattern of fighting, handling him wasn't too difficult either.

In essence...

"W-why can't I beat you?"

"Damn, just stay put!"

... None of them could lay a finger on me.

"Weak. It's because you're too weak."

The correct answer was that they were too sloppy and predictable, but I refused to tell them that.

'Both of them have keen battle senses and immense power. They're learning from the fight and are trying to compensate. If I tell them the problem, they'll evolve further.'

I couldn't allow that until I crushed them and asserted dominance.