

SPELLCRAFT 581

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

Chapter 581: Strange Elements [Pt 2]

"What is this place?" I murmured as I stepped into the devastated room.

It was dark.

No Mana Stone glowed, and the the atmosphere seemed dreary.

My [Unknowable] effect ceased the moment I stepped in, same as Maria's. There was no longer any need for speaking through thoughts, so I abandoned that approach.

If not for the glowing card that floated in front of me, we might have as well been in pitch black darkness.

"Are you okay, Maria?" I glanced to my side, observing Maria's trembling body.

"I-it's the same... the same energy. Don't you feel it, Jared? The same as that time... the same one Stefan had. This feeling..."

It was true that the ambience felt dreadfully tense, and I could feel a strange darkness creep upon me, but I wasn't affected at all.

'Is it because I'm wielding the [Strength] Arcana?' My eyes watched the warbling card.

Maria was without protection in this oddly mysterious atmosphere while I had the warm power of [Strength] keeping me safe.

'That's not right. Hold on...'

I accessed my Subspace and brought out the second Arcana in my possession.

"Here. Take this." Taking Maria's shivering hand, I placed the [Pope] Arcana in her grasp.

Suddenly, a white glow manifested and the light intensified all around Maria.

I could also feel it from where I stood—a warm power that seemed to ward away the darkness enveloping us.

"A-ah... I feel much better. This is... amazing!"

It was no surprise that Maria felt the same. Both [Strength] and [The Pope] gave off a different energy from anything we had ever experienced.

'Could the other Arcanas be the same way? I never felt this kind of power when I used them, though...'

Perhaps it was because I approached the use of the Arcanas with Mana, so they responded to me in kind.

'That means... each of the Arcanas has this new power within them?!'

Just what had I missed out on!

It was possible that the Apostles of Aether discovered a new source of energy—something different from Mana and Miasma.

'I've been so close-minded all this time. This warm energy around me, and this vile power pervading this room... they're in different realms from what I understand.'

Mana and Miasms were currently obsolete. The Magic I had pursued my whole life was non-functional in this new territory.

I was nothing more than a lay man.

'Lay man... lay man? Someone told me that. Lay man... S-Solomon?!'

My eyes widened as a spark of memories appeared in my mind.

"A-argh!" Grabbing my head in both discomfort and confusion, I made a shout of pain.

"Jared, are you okay?" I heard Maria's voice, but I was too overwhelmed to speak.

'Solomon said that... Solomon! What is... this...??!'

"Jared! Jared!! Jared!!!" Maria's voice seemed more distant as I could feel something wash upon me.

It didn't come from my head, but from something deeper.

My Soul!

As if that wasn't enough, I heard footsteps approach us. They sounded hurried, as the echoes of their boots hitting the ground caused me even more discomfort.

"Gahhhh!" My eyes tightened and more agonizing groans leaked out.

The footsteps got closer, and before I knew it, silhouettes of people emerged.

'Where did they come from? Is there some other door? Gahhh!' I clutched my chest and my head tight.

"J-Jared, hang in there!" Maria's voice was trembling now, and my blurry vision couldn't make out her face.

Was she crying? I had no idea. My mind was a blur, and new flashes of memories appeared.

"Intruders!"

"They appear weakened now!"

"Let's end them quickly!"

I could hear voices manifest around me. The silhouettes brought out weapons resembling staffs.

The staffs had an obsidian glow, and they seemed like even more concentrated forms of the murky darkness surrounding us.

'No... you can't hurt me. You can't hurt Maria too...'

"KILL THEM!"

They fired shots of dark flames at us. My mind was too disoriented for a counterattack, but I pleaded within myself... I pleaded to [Strength] for help.

>VWUUUUUSSSHHHH!!!<

Instantly, a wave of even stronger flames appeared from the Arcana as it warbled more intensely.

'T-thank you...' I smiled, now feeling my body growing numb.

My vision was getting darker, and my Soul was unraveling.

It felt like distant memories that were bottled inside slowly started taking form.

'Haa... Solomon, you bastard...' My thoughts trailed as the image of a golden-haired man flashed in my mind.

He was adorned in several jewels, and a floating crown hovered above his head.

An eternal smile was locked on his face, and his pure white attire was captivating beyond measure.

'... What the hell did you do to me?'

"JAREEEEDDD!!!"

>BOOOOOOOOOOMMMM!!!<

After that, everything went blank.

'Jared! What's wrong with him? Jared!' Maria's heart was racing as she watched the young boy fall unconscious.

He seemed to be in great distress, but she was powerless to help him.

She tried healing Magic, but Mana didn't avail her.

[The Pope] Arcana glowed brightly as she held it, but she didn't know how to use it. The power around her was growing, and it seemed to beckon on her to take action.

But... what could she do?

'More footsteps? More people are coming?!' Maria's eyes widened as she glanced at the far end of the dark room they were in.

Another door seemed to open in a corner, and people were pouring out.

The bright light in her grasp granted her enough vision to see the people who were desperately charging at her and the unconscious Jared.

'They're esteemed citizens of the Kingdom. I recognize some of them!'

Some were brilliant researchers, while others were powerful Mages. They had all claimed neutrality, so Maria wasn't expecting them to be in cohorts with the Netherlores.

Now totally confused—torn between caring for Jared or protecting the both of them—Maria felt her mind collapsing.

The white light around her glowed brighter.

Amid the despair and creeping darkness—the seemingly overwhelming situation—pure energy surged even more.

And so, as they pointed their obsidian staffs at her, Maria felt the embrace of power whispering to her.

"Have faith..."

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

Chapter 582: Ray Of Hope

>WHOOOOOSSSHHHHH<

Suddenly, in a burst of white light, Maria ascended into the air.

Her body was doused in an unquestionably radiant light. It covered her, like a sphere, developing her immediate surroundings as well.

Jared's unconscious body also got bathed in its warmth, and the creeping darkness all around began to dissipate.

"W-wha—?!"

"H-how is she—?!"

"T-that's now possible!"

"She's using Magic?!"

"I-it's not—!!!"

The mysterious men clad in black were beyond shocked when they observed the power Maria commanded.

It was enough to make them shudder in despair, and their hands nervously trembled even as they gripped their staffs.

"K-kill her! Hurry!!!"

Heeding the command of the one who seemed to be their leader, everyone gained some measure of their composure and powered-up their dark rods.

"DIEEEEE!!!"

The darkness in the rods swelled, seemingly corroding everything in its path.

Certainly, their joint attack of corruption would be more than enough to get rid of the girl. Having these thoughts, they widened their eyes and curled their lips as the devastating blast neared the target.

>BOOOOOOOOOOMMMM<

"U-uh?!"

The dark surge of power never reached their designated target.

Rather, it clashed with the barrier of light around her, causing the former to instantly get crushed.

"N-no... she... but how?!" Everyone was about to go mad with confusion.

The ultimate power that surpassed even the concept of Mana... was easily destroyed by a mere child?

The scientists were beyond appalled. They were mad with confusion and rage.

"No way! No way! No way!"

The group desperately tried again and again, but their efforts all ended in futility. The darkness kept growing thinner and thinner, and the bright light kept expanding.

The men watched as their obsidian staffs slowly lost their color, preelessly seeing the source of their power fading.

Their years of dedicated research.

Their quest for transcendent power.

Their sacrifices for absolute strength.

Everything went down the drain in that single moment.

>WHOOOOSSSSHHHH!!!<

The light swept through them, filling them with such overpowering energy that they screamed.

Their bodies overflowed with the foreign surge, and they felt something leave their system.

Everything went blank, and the ferocious individuals became docile beings—as though they were marionettes whose strings had been cut.

>THUD!<

"They're all unconscious now. They won't hurt anyone again..." A soft whisper escaped the lips of the perpetrator.

Her eyes gently looked around her, seeing every last ounce of the disgusting darkness already gone.

>SHUUUUUUUUU<

Slowly, the swelling light began to reduce. It dimmed—shrinking in size and power—as it let Maria down from her height.

Before long, the bright sparks faded, and the remnant energy returned to the card the young lady held in her grasp.

"Haa... haa..." Her body shuddered as she hugged it tightly.

Never before had she felt the sensation she had just experienced.

It was like she was one with everything—a state of absolute control... of purity and transcendence!

Maria's breathing stabilized, but her legs were too weak, so she fell on her butt while yelping slightly.

"T-that was... amazing..." Her eyes moved in Jared's direction, watching as he still remained unconscious.

"Ha... Jared." Maria was a small distance from the young boy, so she began drawing close to him in her drained state.

Her eyes were brimming with hope and passion. It felt like if she would touch him, then everything would be alright.

The way the boy peacefully slept almost made him appear dead, but Maria did not allow such thoughts to cross her mind

She simply wanted to remain by his side.

"Jare—"

"Fools! Fools!! Fools!!! All of you are fools!!!" A voice suddenly bellowed.

An ominous energy suddenly took over the room, and the darkness that had vanished instantly returned.

"A-ah?!" Maria's eyes widened as she looked behind her.

A man stood there, clad in a dark suit and a researcher's attire.

He had glasses on, and his roughened dark hair made him appear a madman.

His slumped stance added to that aesthetic—same as the way he mumbled unintelligible words and seemed increasingly irritated.

"You fools! You worthless fools! You could not use the power well! Fools! You insult the power! Fools! Why can't you do anything right? Fools!!!"

His screech was beyond annoying. It peaked until it reached a frightening degree.

Suddenly—

>SQUELCH!<

—He stomped his boots on the head of one of the unconscious people, killing him instantly.

"Worthless!"

>SPLOOSH!<

Blood splattered all over him and the area as he crushed another one.

"Fools!"

Another died in the same way.

"You're all!"

Yet one more head easily caged in as the man's weight burst the brain and shattered the skull.

"WORTHLESS!!!"

At this point, upon seeing such carnage being wrought before her, Maria was petrified with fear.

It wasn't simply because of the mayhem, but also because of the despairing darkness around her.

Her body shivered endlessly, and the flow of sweat did not cease.

Her gaze shifted to Jared, and she watched him remain motionless.

Even if they were simply a short distance away, it suddenly felt like they were miles apart.

That frightened her beyond belief!

"ARGGHH!!!" Her maddening scream pierced the air, drawing the attention of the mysterious murderer.

His head mechanically tilted in her direction, and his bloodshot eyes displayed a murderous gleam.

"YOU..." A deep, vengeful voice followed.

The man's tone was as unpleasant as metal scraping metal.

"This is all your fault. It's your fault. Yours!" Now focusing all his killing intent on Maria, the insane researcher only had one expression displayed.

He resembled the personification of pure, unbridled terror!

"L-lord Stefan told me... he warned me you would show! But it was too late! You were too early. Not enough time to research. Not enough time to run. No. Flee. Run. Stay. Kill. Arghhhhh!!!" The man was now itching his head in agonizing conflict.

"Should I kill you? No... I should not. No, I should. Young Helmsworth lady. Feeling superior to our Master. The one who is most compatible. The child of darkness. The one who is one with the abyss. Netherlore is his name!!!"

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

Chapter 583: A Step Closer To The Truth

The man abandoned his glasses and approached Maria, exuding the very darkness that made the poor girl shiver endlessly.

At this point, she was closing her eyes tightly, curled up in a ball as she struggled to stay afloat.

Any little resistance, and Maria felt like she would sink into despair.

"Y-you... you would dare compete with Master Stefan?! You think you're better?! You know nothing. Ignorant nonentity!"

His steps were slow and haggard, almost as if he was on the brink of death. Still, he had enough oppressive presence to make the entire area tremble.

"E-eek... e-eek..." Hot tears flowed down Maria's cheeks as she sobbed.

She didn't understand the man's words. His mere presence, and the grating sound of his voice simply drove her insane.

She prayed for salvation, but even her Arcana no longer responded.

"You bitch! You cur! You sow! You in—!"

>SWOOOOOSSH!!<

Suddenly, in a white blur, something sharply moved.

The grating voice stopped, and the oppressive aura vanished. It was as though there was now a dead calm in the raging sea.

"Haaa... so noisy." A familiar voice rang in Maria's ears, causing her to open her eyes.

The first place she turned to look was Jared's position. He wasn't there!

"A-ah...?!" More tears streamed down her eyes as her face moved in the direction of the approaching man.

"Y-you're awake..." Maria's whisper contained relief and gratitude.

Jared was currently standing right in front of the insane researcher—holding a blade that ran through his opponent's body.

"Y-you... you bastard!" The researcher coughed blood—dark, corrosive blood.

"You should shut up." Jared's voice was commanding and cold.

His eyes showed pure disgust, and a deep-seated hatred could be found just far within them.

"I would have made you suffer the same kind of pain you put her through, but I don't have the luxury of time."

"M-master Stefan told me you'd come... Jared. You aren't good enough... but he considers you a rival. You inferior... your Mana... your Magic. inferior... In the end..." The man's murmur was strained, but he spoke anyway.

"I don't care."

>SWISH!<

In a quick slash, his body was rend into two, and then Jared burned everything to a crisp with a busting glow of white energy.

"You're the true fool..."

Maria watched as Jared's eyes slowly transformed into that of pity and pain. There was a profound wisdom locked within that she couldn't fathom.

It was almost like he was a different person.

"... You dedicated yourself to a lie." Jared's lips finally closed, and he turned back to look at Maria.

A delicate smile was planted on his face. It showed how happy, yet sorry he was.

The young girl who watched him knew something was different. The person standing in front of her was Jared, but... he wasn't the same person she knew.

There was something about him that was different.

"J-Jared...?"

"Yes. It's me... but I understand why you're confused." As he began moving closer to her, the blade in his grasp vanished in a blue spark.

"W-who... what are you now? I don't understand..."

Maria didn't know how to feel.

Her body was trembling as he drew closer to her. It wasn't out of fear, but a different feeling. It was an overpowering feeling of reverence.

Jared currently didn't feel human—the same way Maria felt when she wielded the power of [The Pope].

"It's still me, Maria. I'm just borrowing some power from [Strength]."

Suddenly, the aura around Jared dissipated, and he felt the same way as before. Still, though...

"There's still something different." Maria murmured, noticing a glow in his eyes that weren't present before.

The young girl didn't have the words to describe it, but—

"You really are very perceptive, Maria."

—Jared had changed.

"What happened to you? Why did you fall unconscious? Why are you different now?" She asked, and then Jared drew even closer to her.

Before she could say or do anything else, he draw her closer to himself, and both of them were locked in an embrace.

Maria felt sweaty and dirty, but she could not resist the urge to wrap herself around him. Her shivering body slowly calmed, and she felt much better then before.

After they hugged for a minute—maybe two—Jared withdrew himself and locked eyes with her instead.

'S-so close...'

Having the face of the boy she had feelings for so close to her made Maria feel like drawing much closer, but she controlled herself.

'N-no! I can't be certain it's really—'

"Don't worry, Maria. It's still me." Jared suddenly answered her worries with a smile.

Maria froze. She was too captivated by his charming smile that she forgot to do much else.

All the despair that assailed her in the past were drown in the vast sea of forgetfulness. At the moment, it was just her and Jared that existed.

"I just... had something returned to me." Jared's voice was soft and calm.

His eyes narrowed, and his smile grew broader.

"I finally understand what's going on."

"Eh?"

"I'll explain everything soon, Maria. First, though, we have to act quickly."

Maria was still confused, but she decided to listen to Jared.

"The Netherlores have access to something very dangerous. Even I can't comprehend how it got into their grasp, but its not supposed to exist here."

"O-okay..."

"We need to destroy it. I'm afraid you were right, Maria. Stefan is already affected—maybe more than I can comprehend."

"Affected by what? Is this also related to the monster that attacked our Estate?"

Jared nodded, causing Maria's eyes to widen.

"I didn't think too much about it initially, but... the name 'Netherlore' bears a keen resemblance to 'it'. Why didn't I notice sooner?"

"Jared, what are you talking about? I don't understand."

At this point, Maria was exasperated. She hated being left out, especially when she wanted to help.

Grabbing the boy by both arms and drawing close to him so he could see her eager eyes, Maria asked with all seriousness.

"What exactly is going on?!"

Jared sighed, instantly raising his hand to acknowledge defeat. Once he did this, she loosened her grip and stepped back a little.

"It's about the Netherlore family. They're involved in something that shouldn't exist in this world."

Maria's eyes widened, awaiting more from Jared.

"They have access to Nether."

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

Chapter 584: Discovery Of The Forbidden

I observed Maria's expression after giving her my assertion.

"N-Nether...? Isn't that what you said Merlin warned you about?" She mumbled thoughtfully.

"Indeed. I wouldn't have thought that the danger itself was in the Eastern Kingdom—especially a Noble household."

Was the Nether Cult also in possession of the same element? If that was the case, then it could be a war on two ends.

'First things first, though...' I had to get rid of whatever abyss they found to access Nether.

According to both Merlin and the Pope, the world would be destroyed if I allowed Nether—an energy not meant to exist on this plane—to thrive.

"We have to act fast, Maria!"

Things could have progressed past the point of no return, so it was best if we moved as quickly as possible.

"But what exactly do we have to do?"

"First, we get enough information on the Netherlores and what they are up to..."

Deducing from the incident that happened to Maria so many years ago, the Netherlores had been involved with Nether for a while.

'Also, since they separated from the Helmsworth and took on the name of Netherlore, it must have been caused by their exposure to the element...'

"The Royal Family might eventually get involved in this. In the worst case scenario, the Netherlore household could be purged from the Eastern Kingdom."

I heard Maria give a surprised gasp. I understood she didn't understand the severity of the situation.

Even I didn't—at least, not until I received my locked memories back.

'It looks like I won our bet, Solomon.' A slight smile formed on my face, but it didn't last long.

I calmly grabbed Maria by the shoulder and stared into her eyes.

"I know you're confused. Everything is happening very fast, and there's a lot you don't understand. Don't worry, I'll explain everything as soon as we wrap this whole thing up."

"Everything?"

I nodded at her question.

"We just have to hope that everyone else is fine with their search. We're going to be quite busy with this mess..."

Thankfully, Maria was quick on the uptake. I could still sense worry locked in her eyes, but she pushed it back with determination.

"I understand! Let's do this, then!"

A smile formed on my face, and then I noticed something glow from Maria's grasp.

"Is that—?"

"Ah! Yeah... it's [The Pope] Arcana. It sort of helped me for a bit when you fell unconscious."

'Ah, I see...'

"Here." Maria pointed the card at me, but I quickly shook my head and clasped my two palms on her hand.

"No. Keep it."

"E-eh? Why?"

"Trust me, okay?"

"A-alright..." Maria didn't argue.

I heaved a sigh of relief, happy to have such an understanding partner.

'She must be so confused and shaken right now. I'm surprised she hasn't broken down despite all the overwhelming power she just experienced...'

It showed that Maria had potential. Perhaps she too would develop a connection with the source?

'No. I can't be too sure. Maybe she's just compatible... like Stefan is.'

Too many unanswered questions swirled in my head, but I had to shove them away at the moment.

Layers upon layers of overlapping memories also surfaced. My time with Solomon and Lilith especially reared their head.

The situation demanded I remained focused, though, so I pushed them down.

"Alright, Maria. Let's go."

A bright blue flash of light appeared, and space instantly distorted.

'This place is a research facility used for the purpose of Nether. I'm sure it goes deeper than this. First, I'll clear the building, and then take my time to explore the results they've reached.'

My Automatons had already gotten most of the building's layout, and I knew just where my enemies were situated.

Thanks to the commotion we caused here, a good number of them had to be headed to this location already.

If I didn't act fast, they were going to interrupt my investigation.

A smile formed on my face as I calculated the time and distance it would take for me to finish everything.

The most optimal solution presented itself, and I nodded in approval.

'Alright... why don't we greet them instead?'

>VWUUUUSSSHHH<

Maria was important for another mission, so I dropped her off there before assuming my position in the extermination of the vermin closing in on me.

It honestly didn't take me very long to handle everyone.

Thanks to Anti Magic, I shut down everyone's use of Spells within the entire building. None of them could even detect me, or offer much resistance when I appeared before them.

The problem was that they were scattered like cockroaches, each group in a different location from the rest.

Those who used regular Magic stood no chance, but a few had access to Original Magic.

Of course, I chose to be careful with those who had achieved such heights of Magic. Not only were they going to be experienced Mages, but their Original Magic's abilities were unpredictable.

As a result, I decided to observe how they functioned by using my Automatons as probes.

Gawain was still under repair, so I used a few of my other reliable Automatons to deal with them.

Most of the enemies were able to go down with sufficient effort since their Original Magic were of no consequence to my creations.

The only few who were challenging were the ones who had portions of Nether with them—either as stages or as darkened rocks.

I had to handle those myself, using the power of [Strength] to face off against them since Mana and Miasma—even Anti-Magic proved ineffective.

Within an hour—most likely even less—I was done cleaning up the entire building chock full of powerful Mages.

Considering the trouble they gave me, they were probably among the elites of the Netherlore Noble Household.

I killed them, of course, and stored their souls with 'The Collector', my trusty Automaton.

Once that was over and done with, I finally returned to the core of the crime—the place emanating the strongest amount of darkness that caused even me to shiver.

"It's a good thing Maria isn't here for this..." I gave a nervous chuckle as I opened the door.

Right before my eyes was the very stuff of nightmares.

"She just might freak out."

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

Chapter 585: Nether Beast [Pt 1]

Nether.

I first encountered the concept in the later years of my past life as Lewis Griffith.

It was the knowledge of this strange element, as well as its counterpart, that finally put an end to my search for the Arcanas.

I never wrote a single entry on it in any of my books, though. There were two reasons for that.

One was that it was not a concept I discovered. I was simply taught. I was shown. The knowledge wasn't something just anyone could encounter.

It was the product of countless centuries, if not Millennias of research and study by an entire Race.

It wasn't mine to give.

As for the second reason... I couldn't remember any of it.

That's right.

In exchange for such profound wisdom, Solomon—the leader of his people at the time—sealed my memories away the moment I stepped out of their society.

I didn't have a clue about Nether after that moment.

Even when Merlin and the Pope warned me, I had no idea what they meant. Until finally, thanks to the only condition I managed to fulfill, they returned to me.

I was currently in a large room resembling a lab.

Several experimental objects, vials, tools, and chemicals could be seen around me—orderly placed on labeled shelves.

I even saw an entire shelf dedicated only to staves and staves. Gleaming stones filled another angle.

'That must be where they infuse Nether with tools...'

The room, unlike the other areas, was well-lit. Of course, it wasn't done by the use of conventional Magic.

Somehow, they had managed to convert the abominable energy they were harvesting into power. Enough power to generate their twisted form of Magic.

The stones that radiated evil shone brightly ensuring everything in the room was clear—including the beast that was right in front of me.

Years ago, the Helmsworth Estate was attacked by a mysteries beast.

It wreaked havoc, claimed lives, and then vanished into thin air.

Till date, no one could decipher the identity of whereabouts of the strange and powerful creature that could potentially ruin an entire superpower of the Eastern Kingdom.

At least... until now.

"You must be the one Maria saw..." I smiled, walking closer as I observed the 'thing' in front of me.

The monster was at least ten meters tall, and it was within a glass-like confined chamber.

Its body was obsidian black, and it gleamed with light and darkness as it remained stationary at the center of the room.

Numerous pipes and tubes poked its body, and mist-like energy flowed through them. The creature's body morphed with every passing second, and it thumped like a beating heart.

Its malleable body became as liquid like goo for a moment, and then turned solid like metal the next.

Eyes would pop out of its body at certain intervals, and then at other times it was nothing but a lump of blackness.

As I observed the creature, a myriad of emotions coursed through me. This wouldn't be the only time I laid eyes on one before, but it was my first in this body.

"A Nether Beast... but look at you."

Unlike the ones I saw in the past, it was awfully malnourished. Clearly, the Netherlores hadn't taken proper care of the thing and were only interested in taking from it.

"I reckon it'll die in a few more decades..."

Personally, I felt nothing for the creature. It had no real sentience, and only followed instinct.

It was also a being of mass destruction, so I could only consider it a threat.

'So this is where they got their Nether from. But where did they find something like this? Could it be...?'

There were two possibilities.

One was that it involved the Nether Cult.

Considering that they had been the malefactors of several terrible incidents already, I couldn't put it past them.

Also, since Stefan was also among their ranks, the possibility only increased.

As for the second, my focus centered on a particular member of the Cult—someone who was even more menacing to me than the group as a whole.

'Legris Damien. Did he cause this too?'

After putting several pieces together, it seemed to me that Legris wasn't entirely acting in favor of the Cult.

His lackadaisical behavior, and the way we had related in our few encounters only solidified that suspicion.

'Did he act out of the bounds of the Cult to provide them with this specimen?'

But... that wasn't possible.

The Netherlore Noble Household dated back over a century.

It was possible that Legris could have lived that long—no doubt—but I wasn't certain of that yet.

Plus, the major cause of separation that occurred between the Helmsworths and Netherlores must have had something to do with their exposure to Nether.

'Could Legris have been the cause of that too?'

I somehow didn't want to believe it.

Perhaps I was worried that if that truly was the case, then the man was an even bigger threat than I initially calculated.

Too big a threat for me to handle with my current capabilities.

'Still, Legris has some connection with Nether. That repulsive aura I felt from him... it's similar to this...'

Except Legris' power was definitely more warped. I couldn't explain it in words, but that man was really dangerous.

'I don't understand him and his motives either...'

That was what made him even more frightening.

"The Cult or Legris... I should act with the assumption of both. It's official now. The Nether Cult has a major hold on the Eastern Kingdom thanks to his family..."

Since Stefan was in their higher ranks, he had to be the one in control of this household.

The researcher said so himself—that Stefan warned them of my arrival.

'I hope Maria sorts out the issues I placed in her hands. As for me...' I glared at the Nether Beast.

It still remained stationary, as though nothing bothered it.

"I'll take the job of putting you out of your misery. I don't have enough knowledge or control over this power to capture you alive."

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

Chapter 586: Nether Beast [Pt 2]

>VWUUUUSSSHH<

A surge of pure, unadulterated energy coursed through me.

The room trembled, and the glass separating me and the beast began to vibrate violently.

The power I wielded wasn't Mana... but a different kind.

It was the same one I had sensed from Kuzon's Familiar back when we fought. I couldn't fathom it at the time, but now I understood.

I allowed [Strength] to grant me reign over the supreme ability that defied everything else. And so, as a bright white light surged from me, I noticed the Nether Beast move.

Its body instantly morphed into an extremely dangerous size.

"GURRRRUUHHUU..."

Now almost twice its initial size, spokes protruded from its body and it seemed to be entering its assault mode.

'So, you finally see me as a threat now!' It was too late, though.

With the power of [Strength] on my side, I could tell the difference between me and the beast.

While this monster would give most of the seasoned Mages I knew a run for their money...

... It was still inferior to me.

"This should be a start. Let's see what you can do!"

>BOOOOOOOOOOMMMM!!!<

The glass wall separating me from the beast shattered, and the pure darkness it radiated escaped.

>WHOOOSSHH<

I instantly vanished from my position, seeing the entire area get devastated a split second later.

"GURRRROOOAHHHH!!!" The Nether Beast was now out of its cage, roaring like a creature afflicted with insanity.

It had multiple bloodshot eyes on its face, and its huge jaws salivated with gooey black drool.

I could sense a huge concentration of malice from it, and everything around the monster began decaying—turning to ash.

"Let's take this outside!" With a burst of light, I took to the air and flew off.

>BOOOOMMMM!!!<

The entire building trembled as the monster chased me with violent fervor.

As I left a trail of blinding light in my wake, it devastated its path with corrosive darkness.

Everything came to ruin as I escaped the beast's numerous attempts to crush me.

It generated multiple spikes to mutilate my body, sending them charging with blinding speed.

Fortunately, I evaded most and destroyed the rest of them with pure blasts of contradicting energy.

"GRRRRRRRR!!!" This only made the Nether Beast more upset, and it resorted to a more violent approach.

'We're almost out of here!' I navigated my way through the underground structure, paying close attention to the monster chasing me from behind.

Suddenly, a dangerously immense concentration of Nether gathered in its mouth, and it steadied its aim in my direction.

The calcified Nether Blast was going to overwhelm me in my current state, so I had to act quick.

'Not on my watch!' As the energy gathered around its mouth, I condensed a good amount of energy and aimed it at the Beast's throat.

>WHOOOSSHHH!!!<

The bright arrow I launched pierced the monster, sending panging pains coursing through it.

Thanks to this distracting pain, the blast it was preparing was foiled, and the Nether dispersed once more.

"GRAAAAUUUHHHHH!!!" Pained screeches leaked out of its large mouth.

The Nether Beast's body hissed, and a portion of it got corroded. I watched how its cells died off and crumbled away from the rest.

'It let go of the affected parts of itself to save the rest of the body. Not bad...' I kept observing the monster.

It was my first time fighting something like this, so I had to gain enough experience.

'If the Netherlores got their hands on this, it's possible that there could be others. I can't be too careful.'

>WHOOOSSHH!!!<

Enhancing itself with more Nether, the Beast now increased its pace and slowly closed the distance between the both of us.

'Too late!'

>BOOOOOOOOOOMMMM!!!<

Generating a pulse of power, I destroyed the luxurious ceiling of the Netherlore household, flying out in a flash.

Not long after I emerged, the beast appeared as well—donning wings behind it as it looked even more terrifying

Twisted horns protruded from its body and its gleamy skin generated more spikes.

Ominous power oozed from its body as we both saw the outside warmth.

'Interesting....' I noticed what was happening thanks to my Spellcraft technique.

The Nether Beast was infecting the surrounding Mana with its energy, causing the particles to die out.

'So that's how it works...'

It was no wonder that normal Spells couldn't work on something like this.

'Nether easily destroys Mana and Miasma. It's like a virus...'

Using Spellcraft was impossible when facing something like this.

Mana and Miasma were out of the picture.

'I can't use normal Spells too... since they operate with either Mana or Miasma.'

The result of using them would ultimately lead to the same thing.

'It won't work!'

The most regrettable aspect of facing the Nether Beast was the ineffectiveness of my Original Magic.

I used Mana to conjure my [Great Sage's Memoir].

All the Spells stored within required Mana to function. As such, none of them were going to be effective on this creature.

My only saving grace was the Arcana I currently wielded—[Strength]

'I'm learning more and more of its abilities as I use it.' A smile formed on my face as I observed the Nether Beast.

It was about to make yet another move. But, that wasn't all.

'Looks like quite a crowd is forming...' I looked all over the Netherlore Estate and noticed the many people that were watching me and the Nether Beast.

Some pointed in disbelief, while others had faces indicating fright.

'This is what I wanted! By bringing this fight to the open, I'll be exposing the Netherlores for what they've been up to...'

The attack on the Helmsworth Estate was something that still remained shrouded in mystery.

Even though the Nether Beast killed a great deal of their forces, the Helmsworths couldn't do a single thing.

'This way, they'll have the proof they need to take down the Netherlore family.'

Once the secrets of their underground facility was exposed, it would be over for them.

I just had to put on a good show with the Nether Beast and wait for the perfect opportunity to finish it off.

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

Chapter 587: Takedown

The Netherlore Family was going to be branded as a criminal Household.

Their crimes not only included the horrible incident that occurred when Maria was little, but also involved the illegal experimentation and non-disclosure of the harmful element—Nether—to the Kingdom.

It was treasonous, to say the very least.

For harboring and researching something that could potentially bring the entire Eastern Kingdom to ruin, the Netherlores were officially screwed.

'I just have to put on a good show.' I smiled at the ominous creature.

We both ignored the people beneath us. It was a threat to me, and I was a threat to it. That was all that mattered.

>FWHOOOSSHH<

Flapping its massive wings, the Nether Beast lunged at me with incredible bloodlust.

With its body shrouded in Nether, it killed off all the Mana around while charging straight for me.

I could choose to defend or run, but none of those options seemed appealing at the moment.

'Time to fight!'

Taking in more power than earlier, I increased my capabilities and focused most of [Strength] in my fist.

>BOOOOOOOOMMMM!!!<

I swiftly evaded the monster's brutal chomp and responded with a heavy blow on its face.

Space distorted even more and a massive shockwave spread across the sky where we fought.

I could hear the screams of everyone beneath us as the impact was enough to make even them tremble.

"GURAAOOCKK!!!" I heard the Nether Beast scream in pain, most definitely feeling more of its body eroding.

>VWOOOSHHH!<

It flapped its wings and retreated backward, probably trying to create more distance so it could launch a long-range attack.

I wasn't going to let that happen.

>FWHOOOSSHH<

Enhancing myself with power, I launched my body toward it and gave another blow to its chest.

"AAARRRKKKK!!!" It coughed a dark, vile substance as its body got propelled backward.

Not wasting any time, I sped to the powerless Beast's destination before it could get there, sending yet another powerful strike to it.

>BOOOOOOMMMM!!!<

Shockwaves spread across the area, and the destructive power of my some strikes caused every cloud in the vicinity to spread apart.

Nothing but the vast blue sky could be seen close to our vicinity, and even that was distorted by further strikes from me.

>WHOOSHHH<

>VWOOOMMM<

>FWUUUUSSHHH<

I kept increasing my pace with each strike, ensuring the Nether Beast could not react before another hit sent it flying again.

'Its durability is higher than I thought. Such tenacity...' My mind wandered as I felt myself tiring out.

Using [Strength] too much was not good for an inferior body like mine.

As someone who wasn't used to such power, I was going to expire soon if I wasn't careful.

'I'll have to end this soon. I'm just waiting for Maria!'

Fortunately, as I was making this thought, several flashes of blue light appeared underneath me.

Warps in space popped all over the place, and people began coming out of them.

'Finally!' I smiled in satisfaction, happy Maria was able to complete her mission.

I spotted Elrich Lendertwale, King Albion, my Father, the head of the Crimson Family, and the Head of the Helmsworth household.

Of course, several Imperial Warriors and Mages also showed up, all donning their gear as though ready for war.

'Alright! Looks like I can finally close this act.'

"GUURRRRRRAAAHHHHHH!!!" The Nether Beast roared, causing everyone and everything in the vicinity to tremble.

The power it expressed, though weakened, spoke volumes of its character. This was a true harbinger of destruction.

Once again, I watched the Nether Beast gather a great amount of its repulsive energy in one spot.

This time, it was even greater than the last. I understood that it saw me as an even bigger threat and desired to end me without further delay.

'It's a lot weaker now, but it still expends so much power...' I was truly amazed by the creature's tenacity.

Unfortunately for it, games were over.

Energy concentrated within my grasp, and a glowing blade was formed.

>VWUUUUUUUUUMMM<

The power within it was unrivaled, and I could sense the atmosphere quivering as a result of the amount of energy that dwelled in it.

My body was also feeling extremely overwhelmed, but I endured.

"Your power is truly something, I admit." My lips moved and I exhaled a heavy breath.

However—

>SWISH!<

—It was not enough to change the results of our match.

>SWISH<

From my distance I gave a cross slash—sending both horizontal and vertical attacks flying toward the enemy.

The speed at which it traveled was too fast for even me—the assaulter—to comprehend.

The only thing I noticed... we're the results.

"G-GUU—!!!"

The Nether Beast's body instantly divided into four clean bits. Usually, it would glue itself together and heal—or break away the dead cells.

However—every the energy poured into the strikes sent the Beast's opposite energy coursing through its body.

>BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMMMMMMMM!!!<

It ruptured, as a result—turning into nothing but ash and embers of death.

As I watched every fragment of the Nether Beast decay and evaporate, I noticed a tiny darkness gleaming at the center.

It shone obsidian, and despite the rest of the monster dying off, it remained intact.

'Hmmm?'

I considered the jewel worth investigating, but after considering the dangers of the Nether Element, I decided against it.

"Die off." Sending a thrust of concentrated energy straight at it, I whispered.

The gleaming crystal turned to dust as well, disappearing without a trace.

With that, the Nether Beast was gone forever—at least this one.

Heaving a sigh of relief and exhaustion, I looked beneath me and noticed the Imperial Forces establishing a perimeter around the Netherlore Estate.

They were also arresting every single member of the household and securing the area—just as instructed.

Since Elrich—a Grand Mage—was supervising the whole thing, I didn't expect much resistance.

Plus, the other top Noble Families were also present—even the King. I didn't need any more confirmation.

Things would be playing quite nicely from this point onward.

'Are you watching this, Stefan? I hope you are...' I looked up at the sky and smiled.

I hoped the troublesome boy was.

After all, he was next.

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

Chapter 588: Third Wheel

"So... they failed, uh?" A voice called out from the darkness.

It belonged to a young man.

His eyes were crimson, and he stared into the vast night sky.

All alone, he felt the loss of the subordinates he had warned. To think they still failed despite his help.

"It's just like Jared to get in my way..." His eyes narrowed as he replayed the battle that happened on a screen created by Magic.

The panel showed how Jared fought against the Nether Beast, not missing a single thing.

"So he can even handle one if those things. Impressive."

The boy in the darkness was Stefan, and his lips curled up in a smile while rewatching the fight one more time.

"I guess this is the end of the Netherlores. They were useful, but I really shouldn't consider them family."

As his voice echoed into the silent night, his gaze fell on the blond boy once more.

"Still, Jared... you took your time facing off against just one of those."

Stefan, who comfortably sat on a high cliff, looked beneath him.

Several monsters prowled about—emitting the same wave of energy one could classify as Nether.

They numbered in hundreds, at the very least. Stefan watched as their bodies morphed into various shapes and sizes.

The beasts mindlessly lumbered around, littering the ground like filthy animals. In the end, Nether Beasts were just unintelligent monsters.

"If this is the best you can do, Jared, then..." Stefan's smile widened as he closed his eyes.

The battle he had with Jared replayed in his memory, and he could see just how much he had been overestimating the boy—compared to the underwhelming results he now saw.

"... How can we call ourselves rivals?"

"Okay, this place gives me the creeps. Is it just me?"

Three people walked down an empty hallway. Their different sizes and shapes told of how unique the trio were.

One had a slender build and long hair—obviously a girl. Her pointed ears showed she was an Elf—no, Half Elf.

The man beside her was huge. Having bulging abs and glistening biceps, he made sure not to draw too close or too far away from the lady.

As for the last person, he was a simple fellow. Having red hair and a plain face. His body was also normal—no extraordinary features at all.

In raw words, he was an ordinary human, or at least he appeared to be.

"D-don't you worry, Lemi! I'll never leave your side, no matter what!" Edward smiled bravely.

His auburn hair danced in his head as he walked, always keeping his senses open for any danger that might befall any of them—Lemi especially.

"Thank you, Ed. Can I call you Ed?"

The Half Elf called Lemi gave a wide smile at the obviously lovestruck boy. Her soft hands caressed his muscled hands as she smoothly called his name.

"W-well...!!!" Edward felt his body jerk as he felt every touch due to his peaked sensitivity.

Still, he controlled himself to the maximum. Even as Lemi's hands were intricately tracing their way through his hand, and then bare body.

It felt very ticklish, yet so very... unique.

"Your body is so amazing, Ed. I'd really love to see more of it... with just both of us!" Lemi's eyes were wide with delight and a perverse pleasure.

"A-ah... w-well... Hahaha!" Edward was at a loss for words.

His innocence in these things largely contributed to his inability to properly react to Lemi.

What in the world was he supposed to say when a hot Half Elf girl like her told him about how amazing his form was.

Edward had already been feeling self-conscious among everyone, thanks to how bulky he was. But, the fact that Lemi liked it so much...

... made him drown in an inexplicable emotion.

'She even wants to see it in private! Haa... could this be it?'

According to what he heard from Jared, he couldn't make his assessment on Lemi based on looks alone.

While his very good friend didn't specify her age, Edward could deduce that Jared meant she was older than he was.

'Elves live longer and maintain their youthful forms...' He remembered one of their discussions.

It begged the question of how old Lemi was—not that it really mattered to the young loverboy.

Despite his huge size, Edward was just fifteen years old. He looked much older and bigger than the girl he desired, but he was happy that she was older than he was.

"Hehe... Hehe... look at this perfectly toned skin. Your abs are just so... ah, look at that chest!"

It seemed Lemi had long forgotten the purpose of their mission—or the fact that she said she was frightened merely moments ago—since she was actively fawning over Edward's body.

Her hands just kept rubbing them and feeling the meaty mass. Edward idiotically didn't stop her, as he too derived pleasure from every single thing she did.

It was a win-win situation for everyone... right?

WRONG!

'You guys should just get a room or something!'

It seemed the two have forgotten, but there was one last member of their team.

Sure, he was silent and lacked any significant presence—at least compared to the other two—but that didn't make him nonexistent.

'How much longer can I take this?' Ivan Smith was bordering on the edge of insanity as he had this thought.

He was fine with public display of romance, and he wasn't exactly a wet blanket, but...

... Weren't Lemi and Edward being tok inconsiderate?

'I'm human too, you know? Isn't this too unfair?' He practically withheld his tears as he kept walking.

Ivan had tried everything to distract him from the the shameless display of the two beside him—from active Mana Meditation, or communication with his Familiar—but nothing seemed to quell their very steamy session.

The worst part was that Ivan could not understand why these two would choose to do or stay such sensitive stuffs when he was right beside them.

It made no sense!

'Let's just find the Arcana and get this over with. I want to go home...'

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

Chapter 589: Taking Charge

Edward, Ivan, and Lemi were currently in a tomb.

It was a creepy place, but this was here Jared dropped them off. Once he explained the reasons for his action, and what their mission was, he vanished.

The three had the simple goal of collecting the Arcana that could be located here.

'What did he say the rationale was again? Stuff about an ancient story with the goddess of luck and the devil of probability?'

Jared told them a story about how a certain Goddess who represented Luck, made a bet with the Demon of Uncertainty.

They argued which was more powerful. Was it good fortune, or was it unpredictable scenarios.

Eventually, after arguing for an infinite number of times, they realized the obvious truth.

They were one and the same.

Luck and Probability. Fortune and Uncertainty. One could not exist without the other. Realizing they had found themselves in each other, the Goddess and Demon became one and sunk to the depths of the world to create a foundation of their love... and a tomb for their rivalry.

It was a pretty wacky story, and had a lot of plot holes in it.

Ivan could not understand how Jared was able to make sense of anything from the tale--or how he was sure of an Arcana being in this place because of something so random.

However, according to the blond boy, he cross-referenced the origins and date of the story. It overlapped with the other findings of the Arcanas.

It could have been simple coincidence, but Jared seemed so convinced.

He also said a bunch of other things Ivan did not understand--stuff about causality and anthropological coherence.

In the end, Ivan simply decided to explore the tomb and leave the analysis to the obvious genius among them.

'How did he even get this exact location? Haa... it's best not to even think about that, at this point.'

With the way Jared sounded at times, it was as though he had spent his whole life researching Arcanas.

Ivan could not comprehend it, and he decided not to bother.

Improving himself and becoming a pillar strong enough to live with pride were all that occupied his thoughts.

Well, at the moment, something else continuously bugged him.

"Would you two stop it already!!!" After being unable to hold back his anger, Ivan finally erupted.

Both of them instantly ceased their giggling upon hearing the annoyed boy's roar of dissatisfaction.

"We're on a serious mission, you know? Can't you guys wait till we get the heck out of here before doing stuff like this? Jeez!"

Lemi, who was now on top of Edward for some unexplainable reason, frowned at Ivan's attitude.

"Hey! That's no way to address someone older than you are." Even as she said this, she kept dragging and pinching Edward's cheeks.

Apparently, even those amazed her.

"Then act older! You're behaving like a child right now! It pisses me off!"

"W-wha--?!" Lemi was at a loss of words, quickly looking at Edward from backup.

The muscular boy caught her drift. He understood how affected she must have been due to Ivan's harsh statement.

Truthfully, he understood where his friend was coming from. The redhead wasn't wrong, after all.

Still...

"Maybe you should relax a bit, Iva--"

"Shut it, Edward! You're basically the same as her!" Ivan's words were enough to forcefully silence him in an instant.

Despite the weight, height, and power difference between the two, it was clear who won the contest of words.

Edward melted, unable to fight against Ivan's words, or protect the Half Elf sitting on his shoulders.

"So mean..." Lemi gasped, leaking a tear as she shook her head.

"Indeed..." Edward sniffed.

Suddenly, the tables shifted and the red-haired boy was painted to be the villain. It was two opinions against one, and frankly, Ivan was outmatched.

However--

"Zip it! You think I care? When you were up to your shenanigans, didn't you consider how that made me feel? Bunch of idiots..." He growled.

Just because Ivan had been tame lately didn't mean that was his personality. Anyone who was remotely close to him would have realized it by now.

Ivan Smith's default setting was that of a wild man.

Lemi was weak against harsh words since she never received any when she was younger, and Edward had too pure a heart to handle something so heavy.

Plus, despite how things looked, Ivan was older than the buff boy.

These factors combined, it was pretty obvious who would win if they were to go at it in the manner of speech.

"Now that you've both mellowed down, let's focus on the mission... and Lemi get off Edward now!" Ivan growled, returning his gaze ahead.

"No!"

The Half Elf's resistance made more veins appear on the red-haired boy's face. He returned his face in her direction, glaring like a demon.

"I said... get down." A wide smile was plastered on his face, and one of his eyebrows was raised.

However, neither his smile nor his raised eyebrows diminished the obviously threatening reaction he gave.

In fact, it was the opposite.

"EEEEKKK!!" Lemi hugged Edward tighter than before.

It was obvious she was being a big baby. Ivan realized he couldn't deal with her, so he chose the next best thing.

"Isn't that Ana's riding spot? I guess I'll have to tell her that Lemi decided to take her place. I wonder how she's going to take that..."

Edward shuddered once Ivan began speaking. He looked at his dear friend with horror--wondering how someone could be so cruel.

"... Don't you wonder the same thing... Ed?" Ivan's grin grew wider, becoming more threatening than ever.

Edward's muscular body grew rigid, and just like magic, perspiration flowed from the boy's face.

"Ivan... y-you wouldn't."

"Of course not. What are friends for?"

"Whew..."

Edward felt relief wash over him. He was safe.

"Indeed. So, can you do me a solid, you know... as a friend?" Ivan interrupted his sigh with a friendly proposal.

"Oh? What's that?"

Ivan's agreeable face suddenly warped into the most twisted expression. Both eyebrows curled up and his eyes gave the most disdainful and condescending expression. His lips melted downward, hardened in the most threatening manner.

"Get Lemi off your back... NOW!"

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

Chapter 590: The Fortune Wheel [Pt 1]

Ever since he was a boy, Edward had always been rough and stubborn.

He wasn't exactly mannerless, neither was he unjust. He was just very thoughtless.

The one who slowly curbed that habit of his was Anabelle Frederick.

Perhaps it was her cute nature, or the fact that they had such intimate interactions as friends.

Edward slowly found himself changing. And, before he knew it, Anabelle had become something of a limiter he placed on some of his more... excessive character.

In conclusion...

"U-understood."

... Edward removed Lemi from her position and placed her on the ground.

The shocked Half Elf looked at the muscular boy with disbelief, but he simply couldn't meet her gaze.

He could feel a swirl of emotions within him--none of which were inherently negative. Still, he was certain of one thing.

'Does Lemi see me as a wuss, now?' Despite thinking about the girl--if she could even be called that--he still couldn't bring himself to glance in her direction.

"Much better. I'm proud of you, Edward. You did the right thing." Ivan smiled, patting his meaty muscles.

"T-thanks..." The tired and emotionally anxious Martial Artist responded.

He would not have been in this mess if Ivan had just been more understanding. However, he also understood that he and Lemi's actions caused the redhead's outburst.

Ultimately, he couldn't blame anyone but himself.

'Ivan is right. I should focus on this mission!' Steeling himself for the challenge ahead, Edward clenched his fist and bulged his muscles.

The least he could do to absolve himself from his guilt was to actually get results.

The trio kept walking for hours, making sure to do things Ivan's way--concentrating on the mission and the mission alone.

However, after walking in the empty tomb hallway for so long, the group began to feel a bit weirded out.

"Haven't we been walking for too long? Do you think we're walking in circles?" Ivan was the first to speak.

Apparently, the other two didn't want to say anything first.

"I thought so initially, but I've been paying very close attention to the walls and floors. Unless there's a special trick at work, I don't think we're walking in circles."

"Yeah... I've been using this detector for a while now too. We're definitely on course." Lemi brought out a special radio thingy.

It looked wacky, with an antennae on top, but it was the real deal.

Lemi invented it to test Mana Particles in the air, and search for distortions or the locations with the highest amount of power.

"It's not sensing Mana here, so that means we can't be in an illusion too."

"Then what's going on?"

"Let's keep going. There's nothing else to do. Maybe we can speed things up a bit?" Ivan sighed.

To be honest, he was expecting some sort of action--like the time in the Labyrinth Of Despair.

Unfortunately, he was just stuck with nothing to do but walk.

"I agree. We should increase our pace."

"Yeah yeah."

All three of them activated their Mana, and then charged though the hallway. Edward and Ivan still paid rapt attention to their vicinity, ensuring they weren't being misled, while Lemi kept observing her device.

>VWOOSH!!!<

Since it was a tomb, they had to keep their speed within a certain extent. If they went too fast, the facility around them could be destroyed.

After a few more hours, they finally made some progress.

The dull-colored walls and floors assumed different colors. The sudden brightness and colorful ambiance made the transition strange, but the three kept charging.

The bricks had multiple colors--green, red, yellow, blue, purple, orange, etc.--colored on them.

It resembled a playground more than a tomb at this point.

"I still sense no Mana. None at all!" Lemi groaned.

Was her device broken? Did it not work? She was certain it was functioning before they entered the tomb!

Even Jared confirmed it before...

'Tch! Let's not think about him.'

The three finally saw--with their enhanced sight--the end of the absurdly long hallway.

"FINALLY!" They all declared at the same time.

Excitement played on their faces as they prepared to face whatever challenge lay in store for them.

'What will see see? I can't wait!' Ivan's eyes widened as he grinned uncontrollably.

He had been working his butt off to get stronger. It was only natural that he sought who to use his strength on.

Edward, on the other hand, simply wanted to redeem himself in the eyes of Lemi.

They hadn't said an actual word to each other after he removed her from where she sat atop him, and frankly, he was getting worried.

'It's okay! It's not too late. I can impress her by putting these muscles into action.'

Breathing calmly, he set his eyes on the goal.

It could have just been their imagination, but the trio felt their bodies moving faster than ever as they closed in on the target

In a few more seconds, they arrived at the target destination.

Their eyes bulged in surprise, their faces contorted in confusion, and their minds tried to make sense of what they saw there.

"What's this...?"

"It looks like a... spin wheel?"

"W-why is something like that here?"

Right before their eyes was a multicolored circular board that had about twenty two gradients.

Each gradient had different colors--spanning from white, to yellow, to blue, and so on. Then there was also black.

The gradients also had words written on them--but no one in the trio could understand what was inscribed there--or even what was going on.

"I-I don't get it. There's nothing after the hallway... just this wheel?"

It sounded like a bad joke--especially after they had traveled for hours to get here. How could they meet no enemy or clues? The reward for all their efforts was a simple Spin-The-Wheel Game.

"Maybe we should just destroy the walls. There's probably something beyond here." Edward suggested, unable to take it anymore.

Ivan would have readily agreed to his suggestion if he hadn't been using his brains recently.

"No... there has to be a reason for all this." The young man's eyes squinted as he focused on the wheel.

'What could it mean?'