

## SPELLCRAFT 711

### SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar

#### Chapter 711: Edward's Path

"J-just how old... are you?"

Edward didn't know why he was blurting out such a question. He was at death's door, and this information would do nothing but sate his curiosity before his inevitable demise. Regardless, he asked away.

"Who knows? I remember about seven centuries." The Martial Blade God shrugged.

He didn't seem overly interested in his age—or in that of others too. What held the utmost value to him was one thing... Martial Arts.

Or, rather loosely; strength.

"Why then, do you side with the Nether Cult?"

"What do you mean?"

"You're not evil. I can see it. You wouldn't kill unless it was required... at least I would hope so. This philosophy of yours about life... How does it apply to the Nether Cult?" Edward didn't know how to articulate his thoughts, but he had a major problem with the Martial Blade God's involvement with the Cult.

Somehow... it ruined the sanctity of his focused life.

"It is because the Cult is necessary. If it wasn't, I wouldn't have joined—or rather, depending on the circumstances, I would have struck it down." The Martial Blade God gazed upon the heavens and inhaled deeply.

"This, also, is a result of my selfishness. Do not consider my path to be that of virtue. It is trodden with corpses and death. It has led to the death and destruction of many—so much unfathomable peril. Even I, am left empty now that I stand at the pinnacle."

He then looked at Edward with sincere eyes. His gaze felt kind and warm, yet also very distant. Edward could not comprehend the depths to which they went.

"I desire to transcend even this state I am currently in. To reach the primordial waters and advance in strength."

Edward understood his reasoning. This was the very drive of every Martial Artist; growth, transcendence, breakthrough. Yet, the more he conversed with the Martial Blade God, the more he realized something.

"But, after that... what next?"

Edward realized the futility of the pursuit.

"There exists nothing after the primordial... at least none that I am aware of. If there is, I shall seek that too. I simply cannot remain stagnant."

Edward realized the ironic loop—one in which even he was currently trapped.

'Seek strength. Find strength. Get strength. Seek more. Find more. Get more.' On and on, again and again.

This process continued until one finally reached the zenith.

Unfortunately, any who had trod the path for so long would be dissatisfied unless even more power—more heights—existed for them to reach. They needed this for a purpose.

'He seeks even more power despite having unfathomable abilities.'

In the end, what would await an immortal, invincible Martial Blade God? Edward knew the answer to that.

"This path I tread... can only lead to absolute despair." The Martial Blade God told Edward as soon as the boy was done figuring it out.

That's right. Once he reached the end of his journey—unable to live on and incapable of succumbing to death—an emptiness called despondency awaited him.

Both Martial Artists understood this as they stared at each other.

"However, I cannot stop. Not until I see... not until I feel for myself, the very essence of the primordial heights."

Edward nodded—both in respect and in sorrow.

This man had killed his friends and would kill him for the sake of this pursuit of power, yet Edward could feel no animosity. He could feel no anger, rage, or fear. He was simply enthralled by the life of the Martial Blade God... as well as repulsed.

'I... I...'

"What is your answer, young lad? What is your purpose as a Martial Artist?"

Edward already realized that he could never be as strong as the Martial Blade God. He didn't have the resolve to begin a path that led to ultimate emptiness. He could not throw away his friends. He could not abandon his life.

He could not forget his love.

"I want to live as a strong person, but die happy."

In the past, he had always announced his desire to be the strongest. However, now? Now, he began to realize where that road would lead him... and what awaited him at the end.

Ultimate power, alongside ultimate boredom.

"Well, considering all I have seen now... I would say you've fulfilled that well."

Edward mulled over the words of the Martial Blade God as he watched him unsheathe his blade. Something about the man's fluid movements, as he brought forth his blade, captivated Edward. Regardless of this, he could not fight away his thoughts.

'Did I live strong? Am I dying happy?'

Edward knew the answer to at least one of those questions... and it was a NO!

"NO! I'm not happy yet! I haven't raised Martial Arts to the status it once had in my Kingdom. I haven't helped my friends to achieve their dreams yet! I haven't had my rematch with Jared! I haven't confessed to Lemi yet! I haven't felt the warm touch of a woman on my lips. I haven't had a wife... or children. I haven't built my family or seen the family of my friends. I want all of these things and more!"

His desires were far more complicated and elaborate than the Martial Artist's goal of simply being the strongest. However, Edward realized something as he battled the Martial Blade God. As much as he sought strength, he could not... would not... reach the very peak he once admired.

"Enough power to maintain my happiness and protect the ones around me. That is what I crave."  
Edward let go of his blade as he stared at the Martial Blade God.

His face was filled with resolve, and the tension in the air suddenly ceased.

The cloudy sky suddenly cleared up, revealing two men floating in the cloud. They simply remained there, suspended in the air.

"Very well. So, for your final trial... are you ready?"

"I'm ready." Edward closed his eyes, inhaled deeply, and awaited what was to come.

Neither of them spoke another word to the other. Such things were meaningless in the event that was about to unravel.

All that remained now... was action.

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#### **Chapter 712: Enlightenment**

Edward let himself feel the domain that surrounded him.

His eyes were shut tight, but his mind was open—expanding far beyond his body, spreading to things around him.

To things seen and unseen.

Edward found something as soon as he chose this path... he found sight!

'I-I can see!'

A third eye had formed! Not a visible one, of course—no, not at all. It was the eye of the mind. Edward, despite shutting off his vision, found himself able to see everything. It was just as before—no, even far better!

This was his mind's eye, and with it...

"I see them well."

... He could finally see the Mind Blades.

They were as real to him as anything. They littered the sky in their hundreds—each having enough power to grievously injure him. With their multitudes, and in his exhausted state, Edward found himself incapable of avoiding them all.

He lacked enough power to defend himself as well. The situation seemed helplessly impossible, even for him.

But, what was this peace that enveloped him? Now that he had let go of his blade, what was this tranquillity that stirred his soul? Could he explain it? It felt like a pebble had fallen into a pool of water, creating a beautiful ripple that surged through him.

Suddenly, his mind became much clearer and his vision sharper. At that moment, and in that instant, he had an epiphany. At that point...

... Edward Karl Leon knew exactly what to do.

>WHOOOOOOOOOSSSHHHHHHHH!!!<

Like sharp drops of rain, the blades descended upon Edward. Like a storm, they assailed him from every direction.

Their sharp edges gleamed with danger, and just a moment was enough to rid Edward of life. But, rather than fret at this knowledge, Edward revealed a smile.

After all, he now understood.

"That energy..." He exhaled, forming his will and manifesting them as reality.

Edward opened his eyes, causing them to glow with blue energy. His body was covered with the same aura, and everything around him was influenced in the same manner— everything, including the many blades that were just about to make contact.

"... Is mine."

The Mind Blades were all suspended in the air—now shrouded in Edward's blue energy—his Aether. They were no longer for any other person to control. These hundreds of invisible, absolute blades now belonged to their progenitor.

Edward himself.

"Well done. You have obtained enlightenment." The Martial Blade God smiled and nodded.

Edward's gaze met his, and both found themselves bowing to the other.

"You can now access it, can't you? You can also see it all around you... the very nature of this world—the building blocks of existence."

Both men now spoke at the same time, as they had knowledge that was hidden to most people. They called this the source of everything that existed...

"... Aether."

Edward nodded in understanding, and the Martial Blade God did the same in pride.

"You are the first of my descendants to have gained access to Aether this early in life. I suspect it has something to do with our interaction, as well as that Arcana of yours, but... it is an impressive feat nonetheless."

"Thank you. It's a shame you'll be killing me now." Edward smiled.

"Don't act so smug. You know I won't be doing that. Besides, now that you can see with your mind's eye, have you not noticed already... that your friends are not dead?"

Edward's eyes widened instantly!

Perhaps it was because he was still a novice, but Edward hadn't noticed anything of the sort until the Martial Blade God spoke about it. However, now that he was well aware, he could finally see his friends.

Ciara and Lemi.

They weren't yet dead.

They were right beside him! They stood right beside him, just like the Mind Blade had been above him before.

"I simply made them one with nature. One of your allies, the Beast folk—Asa—possesses an inherent talent that can do the very same thing. Usually, those in the natural plane cannot interact with those who have become one with it. However, with Enlightenment, you can see them with your Mind's Eye. And, with transfiguration, you can touch them."

Edward had simply begun his journey as a newly enlightened Martial Artist. He knew this was simply the beginning. However, if there was something he feared, it would be—

"Do not worry. Once your mind's eye is opened, it can never be closed. Enlightenment cannot be returned. Even after this battle is over, and even after your Arcana's effects run out... you will remain on this level. You have now advanced to the Transcendent Realm, Edward."

Indeed. Even as he deactivated all of his buffs and returned to his original state due to exhaustion, Edward realized that he was still in the Transcendent State.

"The distance between the lower level and the middle level of transcendence far exceeds the distance between the Basic level and your current status. It is nearly unfathomable. And the higher you go, the more you will realize this."

Still, Edward did not understand one thing.

"Why are you telling me all this? Why are you helping me?"

The Martial Blade God simply smiled and warmly answered "Because it is necessary."

"M-may I ask one final thing? What level are you on in the spectrum of power?" Edward's heart throbbed with excitement for some reason.

It was almost as though he had become a little kid at this point—leaping with joy and excitement at the sight of something beautiful.

"You do not need to know. It is unnecessary for the path you have chosen... and the path that I am threading."

In response to his words, Edward nodded, instantly realizing his error—but also noticing something even more significant.

'The Martial Blade God... he respects my path!'

"It is time for our farewell. I cannot let you interfere with the scheme at work, so you and your friends will pass out as soon as I leave your presence. You will not wake up until it is necessary. And once you do, all three of you will find each other safe and sound."

Edward responded with a light nod. He was already more than grateful for the fact that his life, and that of his friends, had been spared.

"You three hold value. You will all grow. And that will indeed be worth seeing."

The Martial Blade God was correct. To be honest, if Edward had to be more grateful for anything else, it would be his encounter with this man.

"Thank you, Martial Blade God."

The auburn-haired man nodded and decided to take his leave.

As he turned his back on Edward, the boy felt relief course through him. They had fought for quite some time, after all. Even if they hadn't been able to subdue the Martial Blade God, his team did their best in stalling for time and holding him down.

'At least...' Edward fell to the ground—a smooth surfaced ground, which was different from the devastated landscape he had known just a moment before.

However, he was too far gone to consider just why and how such a thing could be.

'... We held him for as long as we could. Jared, everyone, please do your best!' Closing his eyes, Edward finally rested.

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#### **Chapter 713: Enemy Encounter**

"Where am I?"

Serah Crimson found herself in a strange location, all alone and not sensing anyone around her.

Her crimson hair danced slowly as she began to walk around—refusing to stay idle for any reason at all. Finding herself in a strange region, surrounded by white sands and recognizing nothing, Serah realized that she needed to be on the move.

'Where did everyone go? Was this caused by the enemy?' She suspected something similar could have happened to Neron.

If the enemy was capable of interfering with their teleportation, then it only followed—or at least, it was possible—that Neron could have been caught off-guard the same way.

'But, even in Timeless World?'

Ultimately, though, Serah knew that simply asking questions would get her nowhere. As such, she needed to investigate the area.

Her heart was pounding in both fear and worry. The plan was going wrong before it even started. However, she refused to give in. She had to rejoin the group, but there was something more that weighed heavily on her mind.

Something she resolved to do no matter what.

'Neron... I'll find you no matter what!'

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Serah considered following Jared's initial plan of a stealthy advance, but after realizing that the enemy probably knew their position—since they were most likely responsible for their sudden division—Serah decided to resort to more drastic measures.

>WHOOOOOOOSSSSHHHHHHH!!!<

Flying at an immense speed, she swept past the white expanse, looking around her for any sign of Neron. It felt like the island was much larger than she had been led to believe. Even though she had reduced her speed to better allow her to process her surroundings, Serah was still moving very fast.

Yet, it seemed like the landscape was endless.

Fortunately, her doubts were quelled by the facility she finally saw in a distance.

It looked like a massive dome, and something about its aesthetics told of a research facility. Serah was glad to finally see an observable structure—something more substantive than sand and the endless sky.

She rushed towards the structure, her eyes widening in anticipation, and her mind prepared for whatever she might find. And then—after a moment—she made her descent.

'Should I first investigate the outer parts before venturing in? Something about this building prevents me from seeing through or sensing anything within it.' Serah wasn't specifically a sensory Mage, but her instinctual abilities and immense proficiency in Magic made something like this basic.

Yet, she found her senses being blocked by the material.

'I should be cautious, but...' She took a step forward, determined to get what she wanted.

'... I'm going in!'

"Hold it right there." A voice commanded from above Karlia, instantly halting her in her tracks.

She swiftly leapt from her location, coating herself in dense energy as she looked up to see someone floating above the massive dome.

This entity was a female with crimson skin, black hair, and violet eyes hidden behind her glasses. She donned a white lab coat, but that did very little to hide her big bust—one which appeared even bigger than Serah's—and her overall attire made her look like a scientist.

However, this entity's large wings that flapped behind her, as well as her dangling tail—coupled with her red skin and sharp fang-like teeth—made it apparent that she wasn't human.

She was a Crimson Demon.

"The Succubus Demon... are you the 3rd Seat?" Serah asked, her glare intensifying as she maintained eye contact with the demon.

"Kido is dead, so I got promoted." The floating demon spoke, almost as though sighing.

She descended from her heights, landing on the ground with her classy, heeled shoes. Something about her rang of a dedicated, official lady. Someone who simply wanted to get back to work.

"I know you. You're one of the invaders, right? Serah, the Grand Mage. Though, this is surprising..." The Succubus murmured, looking quite thoughtful as she placed her fingers under her chin.

"What is?" Serah was already prepared for conflict.

Her Arcana was ready to be activated, and she could instantly conjure her other abilities to handle the threat. Serah still had no idea if she could win, but...

'I have to try!' Her mind echoed in resolve.

"The Martial Blade God should be the one taking care of you. I find it highly improbable that you escaped his surveillance." The Succubus replied.

However, after appearing to be in thought for a while, she simply sighed and shrugged the whole thing off. She muttered something like; "Who could possibly know what he was thinking?"

"Hey, can you just pretend you never saw me? I'm actually very busy right now. You could just keep going straight down, and I'm sure you'll spot some of your friends."

Serah couldn't believe what her opponent was saying.

'Isn't she a member of the Cult? Why wasn't she engaging her? I'm her enemy, no?' Serah found all of this incredibly suspicious.

Could it perhaps be that this wasn't the Succubus Beruel had told them about? No, she matched his description quite well.

'Her eyes, her outfit, her looks... her chest.' Serah felt somewhat intimidated by her enemy's slightly superior knockers, but she tried her best not to dwell on that.

There were more important things to consider.



"Look, I don't want any trouble. It's like I said, I'm busy. Don't worry, I won't harm you. I'm pretty sure you'd end up facing my colleague along this path. Your allies are also in that direction, so it would benefit you to just ignore me and move on."

Serah found the whole thing even more suspicious. Why was this lady so adamant about convincing her to pass through? Could it be—?!

"What exactly are you busy with? You don't want me to intrude on your research facility, it seems."

"Obviously."

"But why? What do you have hidden there?" Serah narrowed her eyes.

"Personal stuff. None of your business. Now, just go." The Succubus appeared tired already.

She adjusted her glasses in the right position since they slipped out of place thanks to her constant sighing.

"I can't just leave." Serah's resolve intensified as she prepared herself even more for a direct confrontation.

"What?!"

Serah's crimson aura shrouded her entire body, and she swiftly began running many strategies through her mind. Possibilities swirled within her mind, but one primary motivation kept her from leaving her opponent.

'Neron... Neron could be here!'

"You won't find anything here. Really." No matter what the Succubus said, it only made Serah suspect her more.

"It's nothing personal, but... not only are you a member of the Cult, but you might also be holding the man I love."

Thus, Serah prepared herself not to show any mercy or hesitation.

"I have to fight you!"

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#### **Chapter 714: Karlia Versus Serah**

'Is this woman an idiot?' Karlia thought to herself in exasperation.

'You don't have to do anything. Just go... like, really.'

This was what made her tired of people in general. Why couldn't they simply listen? It puzzled her to no end.

Karlia, the Succubus, was very busy with her work. Even the Nether Cult understood its value. They knew not to waste her time, and they even allowed her to do her research and everything else in their territory.

That was how important this stuff was to her. Yet...

'She really is an idiot.' Karlia sighed to herself.

Still, she didn't want to engage in pointless conflict. As someone who despised violence, she preferred experimenting and developing new things to further her goal. Not only did she see fighting at first glance as barbaric, but she also considered it to be counter-productive.

Of course, people like the Martial Blade God had her respect because they simply lived by their philosophy, and their goals required them to fight. If her goal was the same, she would be the same.

'But, I'm really not into this.'

Karlia didn't remember the last time she had killed someone. She didn't like the idea of killing without due reason—especially when it wasn't her job.

'The Martial Blade God can contact me at any time, so he would have told me to handle it if he couldn't...'

That meant this woman was his to handle. She didn't want to have anything to do with it.

'She'd have to go through him to get to the leader too.' That left the whole matter out of her hands.

If there was something that piqued her curiosity, though, it would be the fact that Serah Crimson was all alone.

'Why are they scattered around the island like this?' Karlia asked herself.

Still, she could simply chalk it down to a fault in their plans... or perhaps they chose this approach to cover more ground. The latter seemed stupid and dangerous to her, but what did she care?

'I want to get back. I'll try convincing her one last time.'

"Listen, human, I do not wish to fight you. You are searching for people, no? You also have a mission you must complete, right? Why bother with me? You'll only find our exchange to be a waste of time, really."

Karlia watched how Serah Crimson's eyes narrowed further in suspicion, and she observed how her determination grew. That was when it struck the Succubus.

'Damn! She'll fight me regardless of what I say.'

Trying to convince her any further would only be a waste of time on her part. If she wanted to get back to her important tasks, she just had to give the human what she wanted.

A satisfying fight.

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'I'll have to go all-out!' Serah realized she needed to use her full power due to the nature of her opponent.

This Succubus was now the Second Seat within the Cult. That made her extremely powerful!

'Beruel warned us about her, but even he doesn't know the full depths of her power since he was weaker.' She braced herself, ready to use all the cards at her disposal.

'Original Magic... INVINCIBLE!'

>BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM!!!<

Her body instantly surged with fiery power, and she was doused in it. She instantly took on the form of energy, shimmering with crimson radiance.

'Not yet!'

Now utilizing the power of her Arcana, Serah fused [The Sun] with her transformation—causing her bright form to take on a darker shade instantly.

She turned dark crimson, and all over her body was a brighter radiance than before. It appeared like she was covered with the sun itself, and her body was as unbreakable as the strongest substance. This heated form of hers was... Truly Invincible!

Yet, she wasn't done!

'Mage Mode!'

>BOOOOOOMMMMMM!!!<

Around her flowed several shimmering balls of light that seemed to dance in response to her will. They seemed like stars, but each had heat and pressure that burned brightly—each of them suns in their own rights.

Now, in this form, Serah was confident of a good fight.

'Let's go!'

>WHOOOOOSSSHHHHH!!!<

Serah zoomed past the distance as though she had simply teleported.

She closed the distance between her and Karlia in a flash, creating a blade the instant she stepped within range. In an instant, a crimson longsword appeared in her hand, and she swooped it down to cut through her opponent.

>BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM!!!<

Everything around suffered the brunt of the damage.

In just one hit, the area had become a sea of flames. What appeared to be molten magma now served as the new landscape, and a blazing heat covered the area for at least a mile. However...

'H-huh?!'

Her opponent, the Succubus, seemed perfectly fine.



"I am truly immortal. Nothing in this world or in any other can kill me."

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#### **Chapter 715: Unstoppable Force Vs Immovable Object [Pt 1]**

Karlia was regarded very highly in the Cult for her vitality and durability.

That was perhaps why whenever she really had to fight anyone. She could just take all of their attacks and remain standing while they tired themselves out. Of course, she still had immense combat potential, but that wasn't what she took pride in.

"I have absolute immunity to damage and negative status ailments." Karlia announced to the astounded woman in front of her.

They were both floating above a sea of flames, yet neither of them focused on what was happening beneath them. As for Karlia's dome, it safely remained stationed in place.

Thanks to the materials she had used to build it, as well as its sturdy foundation, not even a thousand of Serah's blows would be enough to devastate it. As such, Karlia remained confident in the defensive ability of the dome.

"W-what are you talking about?" Serah murmured in surprise.

"It means nothing affects me negatively. My cells are built to completely adapt to any change. They instantly nullify any negative status ailments like freeze or burns. They are also sturdier than any attack you can dish out, and they can adapt to any attack that comes in contact with them. I also have instant regeneration, so my cells immediately heal in the unlikely scenario that I get hurt. Which, as I said before, I can't."

Serah was astounded! Her expression depicted absolute shock.

It seemed very impossible that such a being like Karlia would exist. It was more realistic to believe she was bluffing, but she wasn't.

"You... can't die? Don't screw with me. Even if your body is sturdy, your soul will be—"

"My Soul, eh? Which one?"

"H-huh?"

"I have infinite lives, my dear. Just as my cells are resilient enough to regenerate instantly and can adapt to anything. My soul can do the very same. Besides, I have a stockpile of infinite duplicate souls within a special dimension that will instantly activate in a scenario whereby the original is extinguished. They multiply every second, and even I don't know how many souls I have now. That's why they're infinite!"

Karlia's explanation felt rushed, and she glossed over the most important points as if she was simply telling Serah what she'd had for dinner. Everything she had spoken of sounded impossible. No living being could be without limitations.

"No one can be that perfect!" Serah responded.

"Of course not. I'm not perfect. I never said I was. But these abilities of mine are real. At this point, I don't think you can kill me. I'm not even sure if the Martial Blade God can. I did the calculations, and even if this world explodes and turns to ash... I won't perish."

Serah's eyes narrowed in concentration. She truly didn't see a way out of this one. However, she couldn't just turn tail and run now.

'Is Neron really in that building? Maybe I should ask her? No! Who's to say she'll tell the truth? But... she has been honest thus far.' Serah was still contemplating whether or not to retreat when Karlia sighed heavily.

"Since this situation seems hopeless, why don't I let you in on the only weakness I have? You look pretty, and you're strong too. I don't want to discourage your efforts too much."

'Huh? Weakness? What is she talking about?'

"What do you say? Do you want to know?"

"You're just going to tell me? Just like that?"

"Listen carefully. I'll only say it once."

"My weakness is... that I have no weakness. Hahahahaha!"

Veins instantly appeared all over Serah's energy-based face, and her eyes burned with fury. Karlia had simply been making fun of her from the start.

"Tch."

"Look, I mean, if you could try restraining me, that could work. As long as it doesn't negatively affect me, it should be effective. With that said, I'm pretty strong, so it still won't guarantee you victory. You're someone who relies on brute force, though. You can only destroy stuff, so I doubt you'd be very skilled at sealing and all of that."

Serah's eyes bulged instantly. It wasn't out of rage this time, but simply recollection.

'How could I forget.'

She had been so distracted by Karlia's grand abilities that she forgot about hers. It was a bit early, but...

'I'm going to use my Trump Card on you!'

"Do you have a Familiar?" Karlia suddenly asked.

For a moment, Serah flinched. Something about Karlia's question shook her at her very core. It was unbecoming of a woman of confidence, so after a few seconds, she shrugged it off.

"That's none of your business."

"Okay."

"I'll be getting serious now."

"I already told you. There's really no—"



She had completely rendered time useless and had even been able to fight a Neron who couldn't use his time abilities.

All the time around her burnt up thanks to her abilities, and he was left with only his other abilities. Of course, Neron still won, but in Serah's defence, she hadn't gotten the hang of her abilities yet.

If she had, no matter what Neron threw at her, it would have been rendered meaningless by her unstoppable power. After practising it and learning how to apply it to her other abilities, Serah finally found a name for this power—UNSTOPPABLE.

Combined with her INVINCIBLE, and Mage Mode, Serah found the perfect name for this new combination of hers...

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"INVINCIBLE: UNLIMITED!"

"Nice name." Karlia commented in response to Serah's declaration.

"Thanks. Everyone said it sounded repetitive."

"Nah. It's cool. Mine is called Perfect Immunity. As if immunity doesn't already mean perfect resistance."

As both ladies spoke to each other, they understood more about these abilities of theirs—as well as their personalities. Before long, they realized something.

They were both curious!

"I want to see... just how far you can go!" Serah grinned devilishly.

Of course, she considered her power to be invincible. She knew it was capable of destroying anything and everything. This opponent of hers would suffer the same treatment that everything around them would get.

Utter annihilation.

"This is worth studying. When I win, I'll be taking that Arcana to study it. I wonder if I can tap into the secrets of unlimited energy through it." Karlia's smile was just as malevolent.

She had thought this encounter would be a waste of time, but her mind changed the moment Serah revealed this trump card of hers.

'I am yet to possess perfect offensive abilities—just passive defences.'

"One more question before we fight. Why do you not use your Arcana to fight? It could help, you know?" Serah asked with both curiosity and excitement.

She didn't want any holds barred. Her confidence reigned so high that she was guaranteed victory even if Karlia used every arsenal at her disposal—Arcana included.



"Ah, that. I actually have."

"What?!" Serah was surprised.

Had there been any effects that she hadn't noticed yet? Or, could it be...?

"It's not exactly what you think. You see, my Arcana isn't an offensive type. It's called [The Lovers], and its essential function is to completely merge two properties and make them one or perfectly separate the distinct properties of an object—Thus, it can also reverse its effects. I mean, I could use it in combat as well, but I prefer to use it for my research and experiments. Alchemy can be pretty useful when attempting to—"

Karlia stopped before she could finish her sentence, after realizing that she was already getting carried away with her explanations.

Her Arcana was actually back in her facility—as it was serving its function. She could summon it at any time, but what was the point of disrupting the process?

"It's thanks to the Arcana, I was able to merge all the various resistance and abilities I obtained over the years, granting me Perfect Immunity. I've also merged several other abilities to make them more powerful, so... I don't really need it in a fight."

"I see..."

To be fair, even in the eyes of an invincible being like Serah, Karlia was just too impressive. She seemed to have too many abilities at her disposal—none of which she had even seen yet.

Still, no ability could stand a chance against invincible power.

"Here I come!" Serah's grin widened, and her eyes turned bloodshot as she sped towards Karlia.

Even the wind was nonexistent—sound as well—as Serah appeared before Karlia. There was no oxygen or any other element around. The only things present... were these two.

'Normally she would have been destroyed, but her resistance is strong. A direct hit should do it.'

In one swift thrust, Serah sent her fist flying in Karlia's direction.

However...

"I didn't say I would let you hit me, though."

Karlia was right behind Serah.

'I didn't even... see her move!'

Space should have been warped so how did she do it? Teleportation was impossible, movement should have been greatly impeded due to spacial and gravitational malfunction.

How could she have gotten behind her so fast despite all that?

"I simply moved. I told you before... I'm strong."

'Tch!' Serah had to admit that her opponent was powerful.

Ultimately, she needed to also do better. Be faster. Stronger. Quicker. Karlia was avoiding her attacks because she knew the damage they would cause.

In essence, her Perfect Immunity wouldn't work!

'One hit... I only need a hit!' Moving swiftly —much faster than before—Serah launched another attack.

This time, Karlia didn't get out of the way—perhaps she couldn't due to the sheer speed—causing her attack to connect. However, it didn't hit Karlia directly. Rather...

'An energy wall?!'

A wall of power blocked Serah's fist. Such a thing should have been impossible for a mere energy wall, as her attacks would have eaten right through it. However, Serah recognized the properties of the shield.

'T-this is... [The Sun]!'

"Hope you don't mind. I borrowed some of your energy to deflect the attack. I have to say, though... it's hard to even take any." Karlia's smug smile vexed Serah.

"Rarrrrghhhhhh!!!" In a fit of rage, her power increased—intensifying to the point whereby even someone as powerful as Karlia wouldn't dare to take power from it.

"Yikes..."

In a brilliant move, Serah ascended to the sky. She joined her palms together and created a massive blast of energy. One that would utterly envelop the entire region in pure, unstoppable power.

"Eat thissssss!!!!"

A brilliant, yet dangerous orb of light manifested at the edge of Serah's joint palm, and it was pointed at Karlia.

This time, though, the succubus appeared worried—thus, giving Serah the sign to release the energy. And then...

With nothing in its path, the ball of concentrated power went straight for Karlia.

Rather than attempt to escape, Karlia hurriedly charged in the direction of the blast—a determined expression on her face.

'I can decide to escape its range. I'm fast enough, but...' Her gaze went to the massive structure beneath.

It was her research building!

'It most likely won't survive the blast!'

As such, Karlia decided to make the ultimate sacrifice—take on the blast, and try her best to contain the explosion.

'Whatever happens... happens!'

Thus, both the Succubus and the ball of destruction clashed... creating the most devastating silent explosion ever.

It lit up the entire island—no, the whole world.

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

#### **Chapter 717: The Immovable Object**

The brilliant detonation flashed throughout the sky like a flare, illuminating everything around for miles.

Just as Karlia intended, she was able to contain the blast so well that it barely scraped the top of her building, consuming everything else around it. In a single strike, everything dissipated into nothingness... Karlia included.

Serah's eyes widened in both shock and relief as she saw nothing left of Karlia. She was utterly consumed, after all.

'I won! I... won!' Inasmuch as she had forged a kind of bond with Karlia over the short span of their conversation and their fight, they were still enemies.

Serah knew that what she did was just—hence the relief.

"Haa..." Serah huffed, finally releasing herself from her INVINCIBLE state.

Her Original Magic began to have a strain on her once it reached a particular threshold, but it wasn't simply the power that exhausted her. It was [The Sun].

'The overwhelming power is still a lot. I can't control it for very long.' Serah heaved.

She was still floating in mid-air, staring at the havoc all around her with both a sense of pride and dread.

'That last attack should attract the enemies to me—as well as my allies.'

Now torn between staying to reconnect with her allies, and fleeing in the direction Karlia had shown to her so she could encounter her comrades, Serah stared at Karlia's building.

'First of all, I'll need to inspect it...' That was the main rationale behind fighting Karlia, after all.

The moment Serah moved from her position, she suddenly felt something behind her.

'E-eh...?'

The feeling was chilling, to say the least. Serah found herself paralyzed for a few seconds, simply because of the dread she felt oozing from behind her. And then—

"I told you already..."

—A very chilling touch caressed her shoulder.

An entity was right behind her, whispering into her ears as she oozed the very stench of danger that petrified Serah.

"I can't be killed."

>WHOOOOOSSSHHH!!!<

Quickly mustering her strength, Serah swiftly propelled herself forward, escaping the reach of the whispering figure. Upon putting a considerable distance between herself and the enemy, she twisted mid-air to spot who it was... though she already had a fair idea.

"Y-you?!"

That's right! The crimson demon stood right in front of Serah—completely unscathed.

"Even after telling you countless times, you won't listen, huh?"

"H-how?" Serah was sure she had completely consumed Karlia in her concept-destroying blast.

By all means, Karlia was meant to be dead by now.

"I told you already. With [The Lovers], I already defeated the concept of death. Even in the very unlikely situation where I am supposedly killed, I have infinite souls."

A human needed either a Soul or a Body to be resurrected—considering either served as a tether for the other. The dynamics between the two concepts made it possible for revival to be possible as long as one was present.

"Even if it's just my soul, I can be revived instantly thanks to my Absolute Immunity. My body also adapts to the changes and causes of death just like the previous time, so it doesn't experience it again. So congratulations, you've given me one more thing I'm not going to die from. So, I can't die because of that blast again."

Serah had to make the blast more potent and dangerous, or alter something about it to ensure that Karlia would even have as much damage as before, let alone death.

"On another note, you really shouldn't invade my research facility. I also told you this before, but you have no business there... not that you'd be able to get very far inside, anyway." Karlia smirked while shrugging.

The Cult Members were all aware of how much Karlia valued her privacy, so none even dared or bothered intruding on her safe space. It wasn't just due to courtesy, though.

"My facility is poisonous to anyone who isn't me. You'll simply die before even realizing it."

Serah was still amazed by how her opponent was alive, so she didn't hear that last part. It wasn't important either, considering she was not going to be intruding anytime soon—or ever.

"Well, I've seen what I wanted. I'll be taking your Arcana now. No hard feelings, okay?"

Serah felt an unknown source of anger surge from within her. Could it be due to her wounded pride, or perhaps the fact that her opponent so casually wielded such power?

Despite attaining her current height with a good amount of effort, how could she meet an opponent who was impossible to beat? It made Serah grit her teeth in anger and frustration. It was quite infuriating.

"If you're this strong... If you have this much power and knowledge... Why are you here?" Serah suddenly mumbled.

"Excuse me?"

"You could make a real difference in the world! Why are you doing all of this? What's making you side with this Cult?" Serah unintentionally raised her voice.

She truly did not know where this anger was coming from. Something about Karlia gave her the presumption of someone incredibly intelligent, and she was also very strong. If she had used all this power and knowledge to help her people—or the world—then wouldn't that have been a more productive venture?

"Ah, that. The thing is... I need the Cult. I have a goal, you see? I lost someone dear to me. I want to bring him back." Karlia suddenly revealed a sad smile.

Her demeanor completely changed, and the floating figure of the succubus suddenly seemed more vulnerable.

"I have neither his Soul nor Body, so I need a miracle. Gathering the Arcanas will give me what I require. That's my reason—plain and simple."

"W-what? Just that?"

"Yes. Perhaps you wouldn't understand, but... do you have someone you care about so immensely that nothing makes sense without them?"

Serah tried to fight the thought that she would do the same for Neron, focusing instead on the damage caused by the actions of the Nether Cult.

Karlia was justifying the deaths and conflict caused by the Cult—events in which she partook because of her selfish interests. There was no way Serah could overlook that.

"Your entire race was doomed to death because of the conflict instigated by your group. Those were your people. They were all massacred!" Serah's voice was surprisingly loud, but at this point, she didn't care.

"The Nether Cult has wreaked so much havoc. Have you grown so insensitive to their actions simply because of your desire?!"

Serah's heart resonated with Karlia's cause, but at the same time, her sense of justice told her it was wrong. What Karlia was doing in the name of her cherished person was wrong—plain and simple!

"I believe you are misunderstanding something here." Karlia suddenly spoke.

Her eyes seemed utterly empty as she made this statement, and her face looked completely blank. With this stoic, unfeeling gaze, she completely alienated herself from the inner turmoil Serah was experiencing.

"I have been spending all of my spare time trying to seek an alternative—even now, I still search for it. However, up until now, there has been nothing."

Karlia's words echoed from a deep abyss that even Serah couldn't fathom. How long... How many years had she been on this quest to revive this loved one of hers?

Serah could not understand.

"Besides, all I want is to bring back the one who gave meaning to my life. That's all..." Karlia's voice trailed as she stared into the sky.

"The world can burn for all I care."

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

#### **Chapter 718: Singularity Conversation**

[Moments Earlier]

"How long has it been now?" I murmured to myself as I looked around me.

It seemed like I was surrounded by an endless expanse of land. I wondered how big the island was, or if perhaps some sort of Magic was at work here.

'It's probably Magic...' I once again felt the chill of Nether course through me, reminding me to not relent in my efforts to protect myself from the hostile energy.

'It hasn't been very long, though. Ten minutes, to be accurate.' Considering the importance of our mission, quite a lot of time had passed since we arrived here.

We needed to converge—and fast.

'But, if I move too fast, I run the risk of alerting the enemy. If I use teleportation again, I could end up at another random location.'

I decided to patiently walk for a few more minutes, making an elaborately new plan as I trekked. Even if I hurried and met my allies, I still needed a plan.

'It's possible the enemy already knows our location due to teleportation, so there might be no point in conserving it. But, all that has happened so far seems to suggest that is not the case.'

If a Cult Member indeed knew where I was, they would come storming here. After all, considering how they had been attempting to kill me since I was a kid, I had to envision some sort of aggressive assault on me, did I not?

'No one has arrived yet, so let's scrap that.' That meant I could probably rely on teleportation.

The only thing bothering me was my ignorance of everyone else's location. If I did, I would have gone to them by now. My senses were already spread out, yet... nothing.

'Everything is going badly. I think we should retreat, but I can't even gather my allies. This was a trap right from the start, huh?'

Maria's words suddenly popped into my head, and I slowly relaxed my hurting head.

This was the best solution, so even if it failed... I couldn't beat myself up too much. That said, I needed to work hard to find out where my allies were, while also devising a concrete strategy for our next move.

"Alright, Jared! Let's do this!"

"There's no need." A voice suddenly emerged, causing me to instantly flinch in surprise.

My vision—no, my entire senses—was left in a state of shock as I noticed a man standing a few meters from me.

'I didn't sense him until now. What in the—?!'

The man had a long, flowing blue kimono, and his long auburn hair danced in the direction of the blowing wind. He had a calm gaze, his eyes filled with resolve.

Based on all I was observing about this man, I could already conclude about his identity.

"Are you the First Seat?" I asked, my body readied for action at any given moment.

"Indeed. I am the Martial Blade God. You must be Jared Leonard. It is a pleasure to meet you." His tone was polite, his words cordial.

It was difficult for me to believe that someone like this was responsible for slaughtering thousands of people—an entire civilization—with a single hit.

'He isn't even oozing unfathomable power. This guy...!' I watched him with both caution and curiosity.

Who was he exactly?

"You look startled. Shouldn't you have been expecting my appearance?" The Martial Blade God, as he called himself, asked me calmly.

He was right. I had been expecting a member of the Cult to come to greet me, but with Neron's disappearance, I was sort of expecting this man to be the one keeping him occupied.

'If he's not the one who is keeping Neron occupied, then who? Could it be—?!'

"Legris Damien is with Neron Kaelid. As for your allies, I have already taken care of Lemi, Edward, and Ciara. And as for Serah, she's about to engage my colleague."

'Legris is the one with Neron?!' My eyes widened.

Could it be that my suspicions about him were correct? Did he have the means to defeat Neron, or at least impede him for so long? It turned out that that was indeed the case.

Unfortunately, this discovery was simply the start of my headaches.

'He took care of those three? Does that mean they are—?!'

"They're alive. They will be fine."

"Huuu..." I heaved a sigh of relief.

If what this guy said was true, then they were most likely incapacitated. According to the vibe he was giving off, as well as Neron's testimony, I saw no reason to doubt his words. Plus, Martial Artists didn't have the disposition to use tricks or be cunning—unlike Magic Users.

Seasoned Martial Artists simply had a straightforward approach to life. The stronger one was as a Martial Artist, the more their responses became straight and simple.

'Only the weaker ones resort to tricks.' I stared at him cautiously, wondering where my comrades were.

Also, how the heck was he completing my thoughts? Could he read minds or something? It wasn't impossible, but...

"You do not need to worry too much about those details. That's because, unlike those ones whose lives I have spared, you will be dying here." His tone was so flat and assured that another chill ran down my spine.

Still, I should have expected this outcome.

Just because he spared my comrades, that didn't mean he would show me the same courtesy. Considering the damage I had caused them and the danger I posed to them as a Singularity, it was pretty obvious they would want to eliminate me.

"You know, you're quite an interesting person... Lewis Griffith."

'H-huh...?!' My eyes widened in shock.

Indescribable, unimaginable shock.

'HOW DOES HE KNOW?!'

"We never met in your past life, and this is our first meeting in this one. It is indeed a pleasure." He bowed slightly, still speaking calmly, but none of his courtesy could stem the shock assailing me.

'He knows my identity? Does that mean... the Cult is aware? Do they know of my reincarnation? But that makes no sense! If they did, they would have done things differently from the start!'

I always assumed they simply considered me an anomaly without knowing the exact cause. However, with this, I could already conclude that their members knew who I was.

If that was the case, then this plan had been doomed to fail from the start!

"Do not be startled. I did not know of your identity until I met your daughter, and I knew not of your past until I met you. Though a great deal is shrouded in mystery. It must be the interference of the Root, thanks to your status as a Singularity. Or perhaps... no, this Magic is distinct. It belongs to someone—something."

The Martial Blade God was mumbling unintelligible words that made me more confused than ever. His whispers caused me distress, but I was at least relieved to hear that he had just found out my identity.

'Whether he has relayed it to his headquarters or not is another issue.'

"Jared Leonard, I have discovered something quite interesting about you." The Martial Blade God interrupted my thoughts with a statement that gave me yet another feeling of apprehension.

He smiled slightly and narrowed his gaze at me.

"You are being protected by someone else. This signature... this causal link... its initiator is not Aether herself. It's a distinct entity."



What in the world was he saying? Once again, the Martial Blade God was assailing me with incomprehensible words.

"Have you ever wondered the cause of your reincarnation? If I were to assume, I could simply call it the will of the Root, considering your status as a Singularity."

'H-huh?!' I still didn't know the cause of my Reincarnation.

What did he know? Did he find out the truth?!

"But it seems I was mistaken too. Jared Leonard... someone caused this reincarnation of yours."

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

#### **Chapter 719: Intention Of Execution**

'W-what?!'

My eyes nearly popped from their sockets in surprise, but I made sure to comport myself. Still, the Martial Blade God's words gave me a feeling of shock.

'He sounds so definite. He's been right so far too. Plus, he has no reason to lie.' I was still curious as to how he knew all about me, but... so far he had been telling the truth.

'Someone caused my reincarnation? But who? How?'

Could it be that Jane's many rituals and experiments had some sort of effect on me, after all? No, it felt completely off. Even Jane and I had agreed that her past efforts couldn't have had any effect on my life after death—especially causing something as complex as Reincarnation.

"Certain portions of your Soul contain this signature, but... I do not know its origin and neither can I trace it back."

Hearing that there were certain things he could not do brought me relief. However, the things he could do were overwhelmingly stacked against me.

'He knows my identity, and he's strong enough to easily dispatch Lemi, Edward, and Ciara in such a short time.'

If I assumed that we all arrived at the same time, then this Martial Blade God fought with them for ten minutes max. Could I even hope for such an easy win against all three—especially with their troublesome Arcanas?

'Maybe he swiftly eliminated them before they could use any special move? Did he ambush them? No, that doesn't seem to be his style. So far, he seems to be a strong Martial Artist who believes in his strength.'

Besides, I was more dangerous than them, and yet he did not sneak up on me. This was a man who believed in his strength.

'He could also sense all of us from our respective distances. His senses are extremely sharp. I also can't fathom the depths of his power. As for his level of threat, Neron himself had been unsure of the outcome of a fight between the two of them... and I'm not on the level of either of them.'

Still, before I delved into combat, or changed the topic, I had to learn more about what the Martial Blade God knew about me. This was about my reincarnation, after all.

'Let's also start planning from this point on. My comrades still need me.' With that in mind, I focused my gaze on the stoic Martial Blade God.

"What else do you know about my reincarnation? Do you have any—?"

"Don't bother. It's shrouded in mystery." His response was so flat that it outright rejected the possibility of extensive study. "Besides, you don't need it now."

"Why? You want to fight me?" I smiled wryly, prepared for what might come.

"No. I am here to execute you. There appears to be a difference between the two." The Martial Blade God took a step forward, and I instinctively took a step back.

My gaze never left him, though. I wondered what would happen if he decided to move just a little faster.

"Why don't we converse some more? There are still certain things I wish to know, after all." I cautiously spoke.

"Do you not fear that by stalling for time, you are leaving your friends in a greater likelihood of danger."

A smile formed on my face the moment he said this.

He was right, after all.

The longer this mission dragged on—especially my conversation with him—the longer everyone had to fight on their own. And I didn't just mean everyone on this island, but even far beyond it.

The mission I gave everyone wasn't a walk in the park. I was aware of that. Thus, the wise thing to do would be to try finishing things quickly—for the sake of everyone else.

However—

"There's no need to rush, is there? You've placed us in a special space, haven't you?" The moment I said this, the Martial Blade God flinched.

His eyes contained a hint of surprise, but he smiled and nodded not long after.

"I see. That is impressive, Jared Leonard. The other three, despite how impressive they were, failed to notice this."

'I see. So he probably took longer when fighting them. He simply encased their battle in a somewhat isolated space where the concept of time was different.

My question, however, was... how?!

"You seem surprised by my abilities." He stated calmly.

'Of course! It seems like Magic, at this point—especially Arcana Level Magic.' Even I would need an Arcana for such a complex process.

Sure, this guy was old—and he was most likely the person my friend, Gawain, fought in the past. However, how could he have mastered Martial Arts to the point whereby his results were indistinguishable from Magic?

"Martial Arts is a practice of one's will. It is about controlling yourself, and exerting that control over all that is around you. You use your fists to break rocks, but your fists may also mould the air currents and propel you. The most difficult to control, however, is the mind. With oneness of the mind, and the control of one's thoughts... you can exert dominance and mould your surroundings to suit your will."

I had never heard of such a philosophy regarding Martial Arts before. It was just as his name implied. This man in front of me had transcended what would be called natural for Martial Artists.

'If what he says is indeed true, and he can exert his will due to the full control of his mind, then... he is a god.'

"Now, then, that's enough chatter." The Martial Blade God unsheathed his blade as he stared at me with utter calmness.

"I take no pleasure in this, and fighting you will bring me no satisfaction whatsoever. However... I must fulfil my obligations."

I gulped and readied myself. The man in front of me sought to end my life with his blade—and he seemed perfectly capable of doing so. To win, I had to use all my brains and brawn.

'This feels almost as dangerous and unfair as my fight with Neron.'

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"Haa... isn't this great?" A boy with black hair and a dark cloak said with excitement.

His eyes were glowing red at this point, and he floated in the skies while staring at all the landscape surrounding him.

Something about the twinkle in his eyes rang of nostalgia, but also mischief.

"At long last, I'll be visiting the place I once called home."

This boy was Stefan Netherlore. His excitement was obvious—and evident also, were the legion of beasts and men that stood still beneath him.

They stood, motionless, all awaiting his command.

"Your comrades are about to land on the borders of the other nations." Stefan smiled at the substantive army he had under his command.

"We shall now commence the invasion."

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

**Chapter 720: The Nether Wars [Pt 1]**

[WESTERN CONTINENT]

"Here they come..."

The stench of an unstoppable army tingled the noses of all the Elves who stood, prepared to engage with their opponents.

They had determined faces, depicting how willing they were to die for their nation—even with no hopes of a revival.

The Elven army stood right outside their city gate, and they filled the plains that made up the distance between their outskirts and the capital. All the Elf civilians were safely tucked into the Capital, so the soldiers knew full well that the only thing that stood between their enemy and them... was them.

The Elf Queen led the army at the forefront—her daughter and the head of army both bravely standing beside her. Aurora was comforted to have both Freya and Clara with her, but she also wondered what the intensity of the battle would do to them.

Would this be the last time she would see them? Aurora couldn't help but wonder.

Important, yet powerful fighters—like Maya, Claudius, Derius, and all of the Royal Elves—remained behind the queen, ready to support and fight to the best of their abilities. They led various units of the Elf Army, taking the lead as commanders.

However, two people stood out from all of this chaos.

They didn't have pointy ears like the rest of the Elves. One had red hair, and the other had auburn hair. They were both boys—appearing to be the same age. While the redhead had a rough and wild demeanour, his partner had a calmer, more cautious expression.

These two—Ivan and Jerry—were also prepared for the battle to come. Unlike the others, they stood at the forefront of the battle, and beside the Elf General, Clara, herself.

The formation of the Elves was impeccable, but they knew something as technical as that wasn't the most important element in the war they were about to engage in. Their opponents were incredibly powerful, they could sense the dread as they drew closer.

Nether Beasts; creatures made up of a grimy black substance, appearing to be the embodiment of evil itself. They looked incredibly monstrous and savage, some walked on land, while others floated in the air, but these weren't the only opponents.

They also had to fight the 'Corrupted.'

The Corrupted were sentient entities who were granted the ability to use Nether. Thanks to their intelligent disposition, they were leading the Nether Beasts into battle. They all had dark cloaks, and each had obsidian staffs and necklaces—while some had rings—that they seemed to be channelling their powers from.

With the Corrupted leading the group of monsters, and the Elves preparing for a clash, it almost seemed like a massive disadvantage for the latter. Which was why...

"I will protect you all with my life."

... The Elves had backup in the sky.

Gawain, as well as several thousand constructs, floated above the Elves. Their major goal was to reduce the number of casualties the enemies would cause by contributing to the defence, healing, and general support.

This legion of metal, coupled with the Elves and the two human Mages, stood united. Thus, they now had a much better chance of defeating their opponent.

All they now waited for was the order of the Elf Queen. She would lead the charge, and they would all follow—for better, or for worse.

Aurora Vindiel realized this, causing her to sigh. She remembered the faces of her sister and her dear niece. Something about this moment felt sullen, so she closed her eyes. Surprisingly, she felt tears form there, and an unknown sadness assailed her.

She looked to her right and saw her dear daughter. To her left, she saw her most trusted friend, Clara—as well as the humans Jared sent to support them.

'Lewis... it seems like this is it.' Aurora smiled sadly, finally opening her eyes.

Her gaze instantly became hardened, and she raised her staff in resolve. A fine energy shrouded her, and she steadied her first attack which would signal the entirety of her forces.

"May the Spirits watch over us."

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>BOOOOOOOOMMMMM!!!!<

It didn't come as a surprise, but the first strike still packed a punch.

The surroundings were devastated by an immensely concentrated ball of Nether, as it destroyed everything around it.

The Elves had already put up a barrier as a contingency, but as expected of the properties of Nether, the blast ate right through it.

Debris flew around, and the devastation stopped only a few inches away from the elves—thus serving as something of a warning shot.

However, this was the error of the enemy.

"RAAAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRRR!!!!!"

They should have done their best to eliminate as many Elves as possible in their first strike. However, it was now too late.

"Here we go!"

>WHOOOOOSSSSSHHHHHH!!!<

The army advanced swiftly, closing in on each other.

Jerry and Ivan were especially fast—both shrouded in dense Mana.

For the Auburn-haired boy, he was in Elemental Chamber: White Armament, now shrouded with the white flames of Aether he received as a gift. His body was completely covered with the powerful flame, and his eyes were lit with passion—prepared to win.

As for Ivan, he was completely covered in white wax, with balls of flames flying around him like wisps. He was encased in his Guardian Form, completely protected by his extra-dense layer of Wax, but that was only the beginning.

After training for so long, these two had finally developed what made them worthy enough to stand on the battlefield... Mage Mode!

Both Ivan and Jerry now donned Mage Mode, alongside their Fusion Mode, ready to rush their enemies with full power.

The Elves followed behind them, and the Automatons hovered in the air, intercepting the Nether Beasts. Some remained behind, though—like the Elf Queen herself. Someone like her was best suited to attack from behind—with her long-range Magic Abilities.

Especially her infamous Spell: Harbinger Of Rupture. One she had gotten even better at.

Thus, the army charged forward with conviction. They clashed with the Nether Beasts while the Corrupted watched from behind.

The first few seconds usually decided how a battle would progress, but this was too big a mess to understand. Both sides were simply locked in a brutal fight, and only a few outstanding people could be seen amid the carnage and destruction being wrecked around.

However, after the first few seconds, the direction of the battle suddenly shifted... and it was in favour of the Elves.

The Nether Beasts were suddenly getting pushed back, much to the shock of the Corrupted. Their faces morphed into surprise, and disbelief was displayed all over their faces.

They were led to believe that their power was ultimate—unrivalled! Yet... what was this?!

Why were the Nether Beasts getting pushed back?

How were they able to fight against Nether?!

It made no sense! Certainly, this was ridiculous.

The pale expressions of the Corrupted depicted this quite well.

"How are they doing this?!"

"This shouldn't be happening!!!"

"Curses!"

Elves were rich in Mana, and not much else. Yet... the Corrupted were sensing the only power that served as their very antithesis.

And that power... was Aether!