

## SPELLCRAFT 751

### SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar

#### Chapter 751: The Crash

"Hahahaha!"

>VWUUUUUUSSSSHHHH!!!<

We flowed with the destruction, wreaking even more havoc as we relentlessly fought our opponent.

Karlia died two more times, but we also managed to land a decent hit on him before he healed up again. This was the biggest stalemate I had ever seen.

Well, almost.

'It feels like he's not giving it his all yet.' I thought to myself as I stared at the beast of an enemy.

Despite all the precautions I took—all the buffs and debuffs, as well as strategy—we were only able to land a few hits while protecting our lives.

'Damn. If only someone like Neron was here to tilt the scales a little...'

Unfortunately, he was still nowhere to be found.

Karlia did tell me that he was with Legris Damien, so at least that gave me an idea of where he was. The problem, however, was that I was even more surprised.

'Legris has the power to hold Neron for this long? Where could he have taken him?' It seemed that for every plan I initiated, Legris was always going to interfere.

And this time, it was by taking one of our most pivotal pieces.

'So he was that strong, huh? I still can't wholly comprehend that guy...' I decided to leave my thoughts of Neron and instead focus on what concerned me at present.

How to deal with the Martial Blade God.

~The plan is almost complete. One more round should do it~ Karlia's thoughts assured me, causing me to break into a huge grin.

Relief washed all over me, considering how tired I was. My body ached too. As much as the fight was thrilling, it also drained too much strength from my body.

'Constantly speeding up my time at such a rate is bound to negatively impact my body.' Besides, all the accompanying stress also had to be taken into account.

Thankfully, the fight was almost over.

"Alright! Let's... uh?!" My senses instantly told me that something was approaching.

I wasn't the only one who sensed this, though. It seemed Karlia and the Martial Blade God felt it as well. The approaching 'thing' was a person, though...

And I recognized the presence.

>BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM!!!!<

Crashing into the ground, a good distance from our fight, was a woman who was covered in several wounds. Smoke rose from the crater she

formed, and the destruction her landing caused was by no means little.

The issue was... I recognized the fallen one.

"A-Aloe!" My eyes widened, and I swiftly abandoned the fight to run in her direction.

~Lewis, what are you doing?!~ Karlia's voice echoed in my head, but I was in too much of a panic to respond.

From what I just saw and sensed, Aloe had landed after being thrown here from a very far distance. The huge crater, coupled with her tattered outfit, dirty blond hair, and scathed body... showed just how much she had suffered.

"Aloe! Are you okay?"

Rushing towards her, I met her at the base of the crater. Instantly using Magic, I cleared away the dust that pervaded the area.

"What in the...?!" Upon closer inspection, I realized just how bad her wounds were.

Her body seemed like it was completely battered without mercy. Cuts and bruises that were even more deadly than mere flesh wounds—I saw them all and wondered just how Aloe had gotten them... as well as who she was fighting.

I had made contact with the first and current second seat—Karlia. According to what the latter told me, Legris was busy with Neron, and Stefan was the one leading the invasion. There was no other Cult Member on the island.

UNLESS...!!!

My eyes widened and I didn't want to begin imagining such a possibility. Looking at how she was badly wounded and corrupted with Nether, I could only assume that the opponent was extremely powerful.

But, wouldn't it be too extreme to say that she fought the Cult Leader? However, that seemed like the only plausible explanation.

"Aloe! Aloe! Aloe! Can you hear me?!" I began healing her with my Magic—using [Strength] to grant her more Aether as resistance.

Healing Magic wasn't my Forte. Fortunately, I had a few Familiars who could help me out with that.

Once I enveloped her with energy, I saw her stir a little. At least, she wasn't dead—though that in itself was a miracle, considering the amount of Nether that currently infected her. Still, since her condition would stabilize soon, I could finally—

~Are you crazy, Lewis? How could you leave in the middle of a fight?~ Karlia's voice emerged loudly within me, and she swiftly came to me in the crater.

It didn't take a few seconds before she noticed Aloe, and then gave me a somewhat dangerous look.

"Oh? You abandoned me on the battlefield for her, didn't you? Who is she?" Even though Karlia was now smiling, my senses were tingling that all was not as it seemed.

"She's one of my teammates, and she's badly injured." I responded honestly, though, from her narrowed gaze, it didn't seem like she completely believed me.

"Cheat..." I heard her mutter, drawing closer to Aloe's badly battered form. "Allow me."

Karlia stretched forth her hand, and in an instant, the Nether was out of Aloe's system, and her body healed so rapidly that my eyes couldn't believe it.

In a flash, she began to recover.

'Amazing!' I thought as I looked at Karlia. Not only was she an expert in offence and defence, but also in healing.

She was the perfect all-rounder!

'I would have used my pills on Aloe, but I haven't created one that actively dealt with Nether-based wounds. I had been too busy.' Thankfully, Karlia was here to save the day.

"What about the Martial Blade God?" I asked, now realizing the kind of situation we were in.

"I am right here." I heard a voice emerge from above me. It belonged to the enemy, and he currently stood above the crater, staring up into the sky.

"Do not worry. I will not harm you. There is no longer any need anyway." His voice was composed, but his eyes were distracted.

I wondered what he meant, but I could see that his blade was already sheathed, and his gaze no longer contained any lingering attachments to our battle. I didn't know if I should have felt relieved or insulted.

Most likely the former.

"Do not celebrate, young boy." The Martial Blade spoke the moment I heaved a sigh, causing me to freeze in place.

"Your struggles are just beginning."

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**Chapter 752: Emergence Of The Cult Leader**

"U-urghhh..."

As soon as Aloe stirred, I took my gaze off the Martial Blade God.

What he said still bothered me, and his presence was just as unsettling. However, the Martial Blade God would never resort to sneak attacks or any other tricks of such kind. As a result, even as I was distracted by tending to my friend, I was sure he wouldn't harm me.

Aloe's eyes slowly opened, and she looked at me with such sadness and pain that it felt heartbreaking.

"I'm... I'm so sorry..." Her voice broke, and tears began to flow from her eyes.

She seemed so sad and so guilty. I couldn't understand why, considering she was the one who was severely injured. Wasn't I the one who was meant to be apologizing to her?

"A-Aloe... take it easy. I'm sorry for—"

"Jared... I'm sorry... I couldn't stop it..." Her voice trailed weakly, further plunging me into a state of confusion.

'Stop what? Did she face the Cult Leader? If so, how could she have hoped to win?'

"It's not your fault, Aloe. Just try to—"

"I-it's too late now..." Her eyes showed me a deep-seated regret, as well as undisputed despair.

Her trembling tone and hot tears showed me just how strongly she felt about whatever had happened, but I was more concerned with healing her than anything else at the moment.

'Once I get Aloe, Edward, Ciara, and Lemi will be the only ones left. The Martial Blade God also seems distracted. We can use this to our advantage...' My thoughts trailed as I looked at Aloe.

"Uh... Jared?" Karlia's voice called out to me.

"What is it?" I asked.

A part of me thought she would bring up the whole Aloe issue again. I didn't know why, but I felt like explaining myself to Karlia—that nothing was going on between me and Aloe.

However, one look at Karlia's worried face told me that there was no need for my consideration.

"It seems... that it's finally time." The Martial Blade God's calm voice echoed in my ears, and his gaze was fixed on something high above—far into the sky.

It seemed Karlia was turning in that direction too, though her expression wasn't as pleasant as the Martial Blade God's.

Before I was further plunged into confusion, I suddenly sensed an overwhelmingly powerful presence. Far more powerful than anything I had sensed since coming to this place!

The power was crippling, and I sensed it emerging from a single direction.

"T-there!" My eyes widened as I looked into the distance and saw a being draw closer to our location.

He resembled a boy not much older than me, and his flowing dark hair matched his pitch-black eyes. He had pale skin and was coated in darkness as he hovered in the sky.

"I-is that... the Cult Leader...?!"

The most shocking—or rather, scary—thing about this sight was not the presence of the Cult Leader, but rather the twenty-one objects that hovered around him.

Cards floated around him, all glowing and brimming with power. I didn't want to believe what I was seeing, but I recognized the signatures of some of the cards around him. I had studied their wavelengths, after all.

As I watched the twenty-one cards dance around the Cult Leader, I only had one thought... and it was scary!

"Arcanas?! But how...?!"

All twenty-one known Arcanas were with the Cult Leader!

'I... I don't understand!' Beads of sweat fell from my face as I watched him confidently halt in the air.

He was still a considerable distance from the rest of us, but not unreasonably so. However, his distance allowed me to feel the overwhelming powers of the Arcanas... including [Strength], which was still in my possession.

'How can he have them? Are they duplicates? Is there more than one copy? I don't understand!' Unfortunately, I didn't have the luxury to dwell on these thoughts.

The Cult Leader seemed to be up to something and with the joint effort of these Arcanas, his power was more overwhelming than anything else!

"You sure are taking your time, Martial Blade God. Why are you yet to kill off that pest—and the traitor beside him?" The Cult Leader spoke, his tone exuding authority.

His gaze on me was cold, and I could sense a special animosity directed at me.

"They were more formidable than I thought."

"They should have proved no problem for you regardless." The man in the sky insisted.

"Indeed. However, I am saving my strength for what is to come. Per our agreement." The Martial Blade God's response seemed to put a lid on the argument.

"Very well, then. It doesn't matter now, anyway. You held them down for long enough. The Arcana set is complete."

'WHAT? BUT HOW?!' He didn't seem to be bluffing, but how was this possible?

According to Karlia, she still had possession of her Arcana. Even if we were to exclude the Arcanas that were with the Nether Cult Members, my Arcana was still with me, and so was Serah's. Aloe seemed to have lost hers, which was probably why she apologized.

Still, if we added the ones Neron possessed and the ones in the allied Nations, then there was no way this guy could have obtained a perfect set. Yet, not only did he claim that to be the case, but his Arcanas all seemed genuine.

I had never been this confused in any of my lives. This seemed like a paradox, and it betrayed all my existing knowledge of the Arcanas.

'Ah, wait... there is one more Arcana! [The World]! He doesn't have that yet!' My eyes widened, though my discovery didn't change much.

Having twenty-one law-bending tools at his disposal already made him invincible—more invincible than even the Martial Blade God.

"It's time to put an end to this charade..." The Cult Leader declared, staring at me specifically.

"This is your loss, Singularity."

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#### **Chapter 753: Help Arrives**

I felt a chill the moment my eyes met the Cult Leader's.

Staring into his eyes felt like looking into an eternally swirling abyss of darkness. Still, I held my ground. His condescending smile and cold gaze couldn't move me.

After all, even though it was something one had to dig very deeply to find, there was still one Arcana missing. Even I hadn't yet discovered its location.

'[The World]... He doesn't have it yet! It's not over!'

According to what I knew, the Nether Cult needed all the Arcanas to utilize a Spell that required their union. As long as one was missing, it couldn't function.

"Am I really at a loss? I don't know how you gathered those counterfeit Arcanas, but there's still one missing." I responded with a daring smile, but my instincts were anything but confident.

'Even without one more Arcana, he's too powerful now! He's like a god!'

"Oh? It seems you do not know. I must have overestimated your knowledge." The Cult Leader grinned at me.

'W-what?!'

"Jared... there are 22 Arcanas indeed, but... you only need 21 of them to summon the final piece." Karlia whispered to me.

'E-eh?!' This was the first I had heard of it.

"He has all twenty-one. And I can tell that they're genuine. He's going to summon the final piece and fulfil the goals of the Cult." She added.

How could this happen? It seemed I had to eat my words.

'It's... my loss...?!'

I still couldn't understand why, but I knew it was. What was happening right before my eyes was proof of that.

"He's going to fulfil the goals of the Cult? Not if I can help it!" I smiled nervously.

~Count me in!~ Karlia's voice resonated within me, and I was grateful for her support.

"Your pathetic resolve sickens me. Clinging onto hope when there is none... how amusing." The Cult Leader's words struck a chord within me, but I did not let it discourage me.

"I have all 21 Arcanas. The power to alter space, time, life, death, power, and so much more. Yet, you think you can stand against me?"

When the Cult Leader put it that way, he made a good point. There was no natural reason for me to even have a sliver of a chance at beating him.

Besides... even the Martial Blade God was present, and I doubted he would let us ruin a plan he endorsed. All in all, things had turned really shitty.

"I am surprised, Karlia. I thought of you as one of the most loyal to our cause. Yet, when you were so close to receiving your reward... you betrayed us. How foolish of you."

I glanced at Karlia to see the kind of reaction she would make, but to my surprise, she didn't seem all too disappointed or regretful.

"I no longer need the Nether Cult. My wish has already been fulfilled." Her response was surprising, but so was the way she looked in my direction when she made the statement.

"I see. While I do not care to understand what you just said, it is rather unfortunate for you. You, the Singularity, and every single one of our enemies will perish on this very day."

An immense pressure surged from him, causing me to tremble in response. It was as simple as a gust of wind, and it didn't even seem like the Cult Leader had done anything, yet... I felt the overwhelming power down to my bones!

"No, Jared. Calm yourself!" I gritted my teeth as I stared at the enemy and his Arcanas.

My brain went into overdrive and I wondered how exactly I was going to achieve victory in this situation.

'I could use Spellcraft to resonate with the Arcanas. That seems like my only choice. If I leak enough Aether into the air, I can create enough of a connection between myself and the Arcanas in his possession.'

If it worked, I would be able to share the powers he possessed. Even though he would have a bulk of the power, I could gain the advantage in skill. If Karlia could just hold the Martial Blade God down for some time, then perhaps it would be worth a shot.

Of course, this plan was not without its problems.

'It all hinges on the assumption that I am more skilful than the Cult Leader, or that Karlia can hold the Martial Blade God all by herself—especially with what is at stake.'

Honestly, I was so outnumbered and outmatched that this situation felt hopeless. Aloe Vida still seemed to be recoiling from the shock, even though her body was completely recovered.

I couldn't even count on her to help me, considering that she didn't have her Arcana anymore. Perhaps she could help support Karlia, but wouldn't she be more of a liability?

'Damn... if only I had more allies with me!'

"Oh? Looks like we have some visitors..." I suddenly heard the Martial Blade God speak, and his gaze was directed behind me—far beyond the crater.

"JAAAAARRRRREEEEEEEDDDDD!!!"

Far up in the sky were a bunch of people who rushed at me. Their bodies were glowing with Aether, and I could tell that they were moving at max speed based on the amount of distance they were covering.

"Tch. More insects." The Cult Leader clicked his tongue.

Almost as soon as he said this, the cavalry arrived. To my surprise... the very thing I wished for suddenly landed in the crater and surrounded me.

Allies!

Jane Ursula and a good number of faces I recognized all gathered around me. Even Ciara, Edward, and Lemi were present. They had most likely been found by Jane's team and brought along.

'I don't see Elrich and Maria. Could it be... NO! Now is not the time to think about that!' I chastised myself.

Merely seeing these people converge around me was more than enough to push any distracting thoughts from my head and instead make me focus on the most important thing at the moment.

The Nether Cult!

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#### **Chapter 754: The Pit Of Despair [Pt 1]**

Jane, Aurora, Dulum, Z'ark, Gerard, Jerry, Ivan, Asa, Maro, Beruel, and Ana—all of them gathered around me in an instant. Edward, Ciara, and Lemi were also present

To say that I was relieved would have been an understatement.

"Jared, we're here! Are we too late?!" Jane spoke first, and the rest of her party members stood behind her.

Apparently, she had already established a hierarchy within the team. As expected of someone as meticulous as her.

Unfortunately, about her question...

"Yes. You're late. They've gotten their hands on all the Arcanas."

"WHAT?! HOW IS THAT—!"

Beruel, Edward, Ciara, and Lemi were especially surprised to hear this. They searched themselves for their Arcanas and found them, thus driving them into more confusion.



"He must have used Magic. We can't think too deeply about how it was achieved and waste our time. The fact that he now has all the cards is what matters most." Karlia stepped in, sighing as she stood beside me.

"L-Lewis, that's a member of the Cu—" I noticed Beruel suddenly flare up, pointing at Karlia in an accusatory manner.

His eyes were wide with indignation, and I could tell from a glance that he didn't like her. Or, perhaps he was just being a good friend by warning me about Karlia, and her affiliation to the Nether Cult.

"It's fine. She's on our side now. There's no time to explain, we have to stop—"

"You are all fools." The Cult Leader's voice finally put an end to the fun, little reunion I was having with everyone.

His pressuring voice had enough weight to silence our words.

"More of you have arrived, but that changes nothing. In the end, you have all come here to be extinguished. I suppose that makes this all the more satisfying."

The more I observed the Cult Leader, the more I realized something about him. Perhaps it was irrelevant, but...

'He sure likes to gloat.'

Despite the hopelessness of the situation, there was no way I could ignore what was happening. No matter how many times he talked about how pointless our resistance was. In the end, I would still use all the cards I had to fight for victory.

'It's going to be hard, but...' With more people serving as backup for Karlia, while having a few to also support me, we had a decent chance.

It still seemed impossible, considering we were dealing with a mysterious entity who had the complete set of the Arcanas dancing around him.

'Alright, guys...' I used Resonance to communicate with Ciara, and she used her Mind Magic to link everyone together.

I could also pretty much achieve a similar effect, but having Ciara do it lessened the burden on me. I would be needing all my focus for Spellcraft, after all.

'We'll be divided into two major assault forces. One will focus on supporting Karlia as she faces the Martial Blade God. The second team will focus on supporting me as we fight the Cult Leader.'

~But, Jared, where's Neron?~

Perhaps this was the wrong time, but I noticed how Jane kept calling me Jared and not Lewis. It felt a bit off, but I still felt it was a good thing. As for her question...

'Neron isn't here. We'll have to orchestrate a plan without him present. Ah, also...'

I brought Serah from my pocket dimension, and I swiftly briefed her by feeding her all the information using Magic.

'There's no further time to spare!'

It was dangerous to dawdle for much longer, all things considered. I didn't know why the Cult Leader hadn't summoned [The World] yet, but I hoped it was because he hadn't fully acclimated to the combined power of the Arcanas in his grasp.

If that was the case, we needed to strike in his moment of weakness.

"Fools..." As soon as I was done with my plans, and we were all ready to move, the Cult Leader's words echoed in my ears.

He suddenly stretched his hands and in a whisper, mentioned something even I couldn't quite understand.

'Is he going for a distraction? Stalling for time?' I asked myself, deciding that my team should attack immediately before he could achieve his goal.

However, just as I thought of this, and both sides were about to strike, a sudden pulse spread around us—originating from the Cult Leader. The wave of unknown power went as far as my senses could take me, and after the wave spread, everything around me felt a little odd.

'H-huh? What just happened?' I asked myself, swiftly infusing myself with Aether, and—

'W-what?!' My eyes widened as I realized something utterly devastating.

"Wait, what...?"

"What's going on?"

"How can this be?"

"Why can't we..."

I heard the voices and whispers of my allies, and I understood their plight. After all, I was experiencing the same thing.

'We can't use Magic!'

The moment I tried to infuse my Aether into my body, or tried to generate a Spell, it just wouldn't work. I was beyond confused—especially because I was using Aether!

Just as I had these thoughts, I saw the Cult Leader smiling. Above his outstretched palm now stood something like a white orb. It was small, but it was ever-growing in size; however, that wasn't the most spectacular thing about this orb.

The Aether in it was massive!

'Damn it! Is he siphoning all the Aether we're using onto his palm?!'

My Aether came from my Arcana, not from within. That meant I had to infuse the energy before I could use it. Thus, anytime [Strength] was to send power through me, or I wanted to manifest its power, the Aether vanished—taken by the Cult Leader, no doubt.

If things had taken this turn, I had to say goodbye to my initial plan—especially to the use of Spellcraft. At this point, I had to give props to the Cult Leader.

He was right.

'This is looking hopeless...'

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

#### **Chapter 755: The Pit Of Despair [Pt 2]**

Our current enemies—The Cult Leader, and the Martial Blade God—were incredibly powerful opponents.

Even with a solid strategy and the full power of the team, our chances of victory were still small. However, now that we couldn't access our powers at all... there was no chance.

None in the slightest!

"Hahaha! Look at you all. Pitiful, inferior beings. You have only come here to die." The Cult Leader began to gloat once more.

Unfortunately, we couldn't do anything except listen to him. Teleporting out of this place was even a completely different matter.

"Lewis, what now?" Karlia asked me. "You can't use your Magic, can you?"

"I can't. You?"

I just asked a useless question. If I, and everyone else, couldn't use our powers, how could she be capable of—

~I can.~ Her voice suddenly echoed in my thoughts.

"W-what?!" My eyes widened in shock.

~It's a simple trick. That orb with him absorbs the pure energy of Aether all around. Even the slightest whiff and it's gone. However, by mixing Mana and Miasma together, I can create a different kind of effect.~

'Anti Magic?!'

~Correct. By creating a field around myself with Anti-Magic energy, I can block off the effects of his absorption, and then freely use Aether within my domain." Karlia shrugged. "I'm sure you'd have figured out the trick soon enough.~

I was astounded by what she said. Frankly, I never even thought of things from that angle at all.

'Mana and Miasma have become so redundant as of late, so I never thought of them as an option. But with this...!' A smile formed on my face.

>VWUUUUUUSSSSHHHHH!!!<

I created a field of Anti-Magic to surround my friends and me. It enveloped all of us, and before long, I realized I could access Aether within the domain.

'Anti-Magic doesn't work on Aether, so it won't interfere with our Spells. It's genius!' I smiled at Karlia, who simply shrugged.

I honestly didn't know what I'd be able to do without her. Unfortunately, not everyone could utilize this method since you'd need to have perfect control over Mana and Miasma to achieve this.

Only Lemi had access to them both, and even she wasn't entirely proficient at using the two at once. Besides, this wasn't simply creating a wave of Anti-Magic, but rather stabilizing such a phenomenon to form a dome.

It was beyond her level.

'Besides, she's been spending most of her time training with Aether since it's more effective on the enemy.' There was no way she could have learned Miasma and Mana by the side.

Ultimately, only Karlia and I could use this new method.

"Oh? That's a nice workaround. But it's too late. The preparations are complete..." The Cult Leader's voice grew stronger, drawing our focus to his ever-wide grin.

>VWUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM!!!<

Suddenly, the entire island vibrated, and it seemed like the air itself was trembling.

Everything around me seemed unstable, and it seemed that—beyond the anti-Magic sphere that shrouded me and my friends—the world was collapsing.

Space didn't just warp. It was breaking apart.

"Even if you tried now, there is nothing you can do." His malevolent voice echoed, and I honestly began to feel fear surface within me.

Looking around and seeing the distraught faces of those around me, I realized the feeling was mutual. Stuck within the massive crater, while having Aloe in my arms, I felt completely paralyzed by fear.

"Convergence of the laws of existence, create the one thing that culminates your purpose and power." The Cult Leader whispered.

Everything around us seemed to tremble more violently as we watched in utter paralysis. In the presence of such an ominous presence, what could any of us do?

"N-no... no.... Must... stop him. The end... of the... world..." Aloe had been acting like a vegetable for some time, but this time, her body trembled violently.

"I WON'T ALLOW YOU!!!"

Before I could say or do anything, she shot away from my arms and ascended to the sky—swiftly launching herself at the Cult Leader.

I was shocked to see that she could still use her power beyond the Anti Magic field, and also by the sheer magnitude of her Aether. When had Aloe ever displayed such a frightening amount of power before?

>VWUUUUUUUUUUUSSSSHHHHHH!!!<

Her speed warped space and time itself, and she aimed straight at the Cult Leader. If she succeeded, then—

"Hehehe..." Her target chuckled, releasing the orb that was in his grasp—the one that had an unbelievably dense amount of Aether.

'N-no way! If it explodes, then—!' Before I realized it, I swiftly flew into the sky to intercept the blast.

My body moved on its own, and my mind quickly tried to catch up. Fortunately, my Anti Magic barrier was still active, so I could forcefully use short-range teleportation to get as close to the blast as possible.

However, the moment I appeared in front of Aloe while running into the blast myself, I was reminded even more of how dangerous the little sphere was. We were definitely going to get vaporized if it erupted—there was no way around it.

However, the moment I had these thoughts, and watched the white light glow brighter, my instincts took over!

"SPELLCRAFT!"

I stretched my hand in the direction of the ball of power, fusing my Aether with it to gain control of the haywire cluster of energy.

The fundamental principle of Spellcraft indicated I fused my Mana with the surrounding Mana to gain more energy to use. It was the same situation here, except... it was with Aether!

"ARRRRRRRRHHHHHHH!!!" I screamed, trying my hardest to control the overly powerful orb that seemed impossible to subdue.

"Do it... boy!" Suddenly, I heard Aloe's voice whisper into my ears and felt her touch from behind.

'G-guh!' A massive rush of Aether flowed through me.

It was so bountiful, but since the Aether flowed into me, I directed it to the orb, finally bringing it under control.

"STOP HIM!"

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#### **Chapter 756: The World**

"STOP HIM!" I heard Aloe shout from behind me.

Her voice resonated with desperation—deep-seated desperation that told me not to mess things up. I only had one chance—one shot to end all of this.



The devastation covered the heavens above, and my heart screamed in regret that it couldn't have affected the Cult Leader.

'And it's all because of him!' I glared at the man who interfered with my plans.

He was none other than the Martial Blade God!

"You haven't forgotten about me, have you?" He calmly spoke, sheathing his blade as he spoke.

"Hehe. Well done, First Seat. They surprised me for a second there... though you know I could have taken care of things by myself, don't you?" The Cult Leader grinned devilishly.

"If you say so. I just didn't want to take any chances."

"Tch..."

The Cult Leader finally ceased discussing with the Martial Blade God, returning his focus to his Spell—one that was already in its finishing stages.

"N-no... NOOOOOOOOOO!!!!" Aloe's scream reverberated throughout the vast expanse, causing me to feel both the fear and unrest that seemed bountiful within her.

I didn't exactly know what she dreaded so much, or what would come of the Cult Leader's Spell. However... I knew I had every right to feel afraid.

"Here it comes!" The Cult Leader smiled, and we all witnessed the twenty-one Arcanas glow to a blinding degree.

Suddenly, a card manifested because of their combined glow. It seemed like all the Arcanas resonating birthed this new card, as it shone with multiple colors, looking far more beautiful and radiant than the others.

Plus... it was HUGE!

The Arcana was slightly bigger than the size of a person, and the illustration on it appeared to be that of an entity.

This entity was pierced with long metal pegs on both hands, and they were shrouded with a ragged-looking attire. Their pose was all-embracing, and I could not tell whether the person was meant to be a man or a woman.

Wrapped in ragged attire, with the pegs in both hands, this entity in the Arcana was grinning, and a bright light shone from behind it. Watching it from my low estate, I could almost feel like the illustration within the Arcana was alive.

"Thus, it begins... [The World]"

All the hair in my body stood, and I could feel a strange sense of submissiveness to the Arcana above me. My weary knees felt like giving out, and I nearly felt like my will was lost.

One by one, my allies collapsed to the ground. They knelt in obeisance to this higher, but I kept fighting.

"Damn it... so this is [The World]." Karlia mumbled as she walked to my side.

It seemed she was also able to fight the pressure.

"Yeah... this must be their goal. I can't even begin to fathom the depths of the power locked within that thing. So this is what ultimate power looks like..." I murmured.

Honestly, I had never felt this hopeless before.

"You're wrong. This isn't their final goal." A voice came from my other side.

It belonged to Aloe, who—just like Karlia—was also fine. I would have been surprised, especially because she didn't even have an Arcana, unlike the others who had given in to the power, however...

'After witnessing all she can do, and experiencing the kind of power she possesses... it's possible.' I sighed.

"They seek to use this power to bring forth something." She added, right as I was about to ask what the goal of the Cult was.

At this point, though, I could guess what they wanted to summon.

"The Nether?"

"Correct. And it's too late now..." Aloe sighed as she looked above.

No, I had to stop calling her that. After conversing with her for some time, and experiencing how she had been all this time, the pieces slowly started coming together.

"You're not Aloe, are you?" I glanced at her.

"I'm not." Her response was surprisingly honest.

It was just as I thought. This was an imposter—one who had been in our midst all along.

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

#### **Chapter 757: The Gate Opens**

I began to have my suspicions about Aloe back when she first awoke and started acting a bit strangely. However, I easily chalked it down to many other factors.

Training also revealed a lot of inconsistencies in her character, but I gave excuses for those too. Besides, I had checked her using Magic, and there was nothing suspicious about her in the slightest.

Then, when we teleported to the Nether Cult's headquarters and got separated; I slowly began formulating explanations for the cause of the incident.

There was a strong likelihood that my Spell was interfered with as we teleported. Thus... suspicion fell on a member of our team. Once the inconsistencies added up, a justifiable basis of suspicion was formed.

Now that it had been confirmed by the recent series of events—as well as the direct confession of the party in question—I no longer had any doubts.

'This is Aloe's body, but... she's not Aloe!'



"Won't you ask me who I am?" She asked me, most likely confused about my silence.

"If I was to guess, I'd say you're one of the Apostles of Aether. You possessed Aloe's body, and you're currently using it to your ends. Am I wrong?"

"H-how did you know all that?" Aloe, or whoever was inside her, returned my distracted gaze with surprise.

Now wasn't the proper time for this, but just to make us on the same page, some explanations were necessary.

"You are too strong. You know too much. And you are too afraid. Once you piece those three together and understand the situation that led to Aloe's strange behavior—her coma when trying to find [The Moon] Arcana—I can basically make that guess." I sighed.

"So, am I wrong?"

"No. You're spot-on correct. My name is Kazen, an Apostle of Aether."

"Well, Kazen, I have many questions and reservations about this. However, now is not the time."

As much as I did not approve of her actions—and I was plenty upset about how she messed up my plan—I also recognized her desire to eliminate the imminent threat.

'Also, she's more useful than Aloe. In terms of importance, it's better to have Kazen on our side.'

"We need to find a way to win. As much as it pains me to say, that Arcana seems invincible. I'm out of ideas." I shot her a curious look. "Got any suggestions?"

Kazen shook her head in a sigh. Her brows were crinkled with worry, and she bit her lip helplessly.

"Our only hope is probably to gather every single Arcana to form our own amalgamation. Unfortunately, the Cult is in possession of some original Arcanas—mine included. Unless... you could make Arcanas from scratch?"

"H-hold on, is that what the Nether Cult did? Is that how they were able to overcome their shortage of Arcanas?" I gasped in shock.

Something bitter permeated my mouth.

"Yes. You figured it out."

"Ah, I see. Damn it!" Now it was my turn to bite my lip and clench my fist.

I was overwhelmed with anger... at myself!

'My Original Magic studies spells, analyzes them, and can replicate them! Why did I not think the enemy could do the same? If they could see us using our Arcanas and simply extract all the formulae and information they need, then... DAMNIT!'

How could I have been so shortsighted? How could I not have seen this bit of obvious information? How could I have let such an oversight occur?

If I planned better... if I prepared a bit more, then none of this would have happened!

"Even if we miraculously gather all the Arcanas, it's too late. They're way ahead of us in the process. Besides, at best, we'd be evenly matched. However, not only are those two more powerful than we are... there's also Ciel. It's impossible to win."

Once I heard 'Ciel', my mind sparked. The Apostles had been warning us about this being ever since we found the [Strength] Arcana.

"Ciel? Isn't that—?!"

"Besides... it's already too late. Now that the final Arcana has been created, we can't stop what will come next." Kazen whispered, her body trembling as she spoke.

I could see the sky darken, and despair slowly began to take form.

The air suddenly turned cold and stale, and dark clouds hung all over us. Malevolence filled the air, causing violent chills to assail my body.

"My friends and I witnessed this same thing many millennia ago..."

The massive Arcana shot a large burst of energy into the dark clouds, creating an impossibly massive shockwave.

Karlia, Aloe, and I braced ourselves as we watched all that was going on.

The multicolored beam of light spread across the dark cloud, instantly forming a huge swirl of dark space in the sky. The swirl increased in size, forming something big—like an all-consuming black hole.

However, unlike a black hole, the massive blot in the sky didn't take anything in. Rather, it seemed like something was about to come out!

"Back then, we banded under Merlin and fought it off. We barely won, and a lot of my friends were sacrificed in the process. But now..."

Despair dawned on me more and more, as a certain embodiment of Nether began emerging from the void. Its misty hand came forth—massive and immensely overwhelming.

"... There aren't enough powerful heroes in this world. There aren't enough Arcanas to go around." Aloe's trembling whispers pounded within my ears.

The gigantic legs of the misty Nether entity came next. It was coated in purple energy, and its overwhelmingly powerful manifestation nearly caused me to pass out. My head pounded so much, but I used all my willpower and Nether to remain standing.

Soon, the rest of the body came from the massive hole, revealing its complete body—the very embodiment of darkness given the form of a being.

"The world will end now that the Nether is here."

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

**Chapter 758: Return Of The Nether [Pt 1]**

"He's here! He's here! He's finally herreeeee!!!"

I began to notice subtle changes in the Cult Leader. He was always a talkative, but he had this condescending and composed vibe.

However, now he was simply gushing and laughing like a madman. His eyes widened, and his loosened jaws flapped as he laughed and declared the presence of the almighty cluster of despair, given form.

'Haa... would you look at that thing...' I couldn't take my eyes off it.

This personification of all the world's malevolence was, at least, a hundred meters tall. It had a somewhat incorporeal body, consisting of purple and black mist. Its purple eyes glowed from its deep darkness, though, a bone-chilling experience.

I felt myself shudder in the presence of the Nether, almost falling to my knees. Fortunately, Karlia held me and pulled me together.

"[The Pope]..." Fortunately, with enough support from her, I was able to cast my Original Magic and utilize the stored Arcana ability within.

Mixed in with [Strength], it was filled with Aether, and I used the dome of light of [The Pope] to grant me and my friends sanctuary.

The bright white dome chased off the pressure I felt, though I still felt scared just by looking at the towering figure.

"MOTHER! Did you see everything? I did exceptionally well, did I not?" The Cult Leader yelled into the air, a brilliant gleam in his eyes.

'Eh?'

Even though he had all twenty-two Arcanas currently at his disposal, and he still had a terrifyingly strong presence, it seemed like he was a different person. His personality had ben warped too much.

"Indeed, you have..." A voice suddenly appeared.

It was calm and soothing, feminine too.

I felt like I could get entrapped into those words as I heard them—and even more in the woman who spoke them.

Donning a white robe, and having pristine beauty, a woman manifested from thin air. She drew closer to the Cult Leader and buried him in her bosom, smiling with delight as she hugged him. Her pure expression remained unsullied, though a pink hue permeated her cheeks.

"You did well." She whispered.

To call me confused, at this point, would be an understatement.

Firstly, the towing Nether simply stood still—unmoving. As for the exchange between mother and child—which confused me even more—I simply could not fathom it.

"What's going on Kazen? Why isn't the Nether attacking? And what's going on between those two?"

Could this be our moment of opportunity? The perfect time to strike? Their trump card was docile, and the enemies seemed distracted. Wasn't this the best time to attack?

'Wait a minute... no. Why would they be so relaxed right now? They must be confident. Even the Martial Blade God...' My gaze went to a patch of land beyond the cater, where the Martial Blade God currently sat.

'... Is he meditating?'

His eyes were closed, and he was completely still—so immersed in whatever he was doing.

With him out of the picture, and in such an ideal situation, it would be most advantageous to strike. Unfortunately, the whole set of circumstances seemed far too convenient.

'Damn it! What's going on?'

"That's... the Nether is still because it's being assailed by Aether. That's the last resort. It's a foreign being from another world, so this one is rejecting it. As for the woman, she is... Ciel."

My eyes widened as I focused them on the loving mother above. That... was Ciel?!

I would never have expected it in a million years.

"Now, then, my child. It is time for your reward. Are you ready for your inheritance from your father?" Ciel placed her hands on the Cult Leader's face, her smile widening with each syllable.

"Yes. I am!"

The excitement from the two made the nervousness I felt seem like a dream. With such tension permeating the air, wasn't it unfair that this was going on right before my eyes?

"Very well. I am so proud of you..."

Suddenly, the first twenty-one Arcanas converged on the Cult Leader's body. The cards all plastered themselves on his body, glowing brightly as they all seeped into him.

"GAAAAHHHHHH!!! IT HURTS! MOTHER, IT HURRTTSSS!!!"

"It should." The woman called Ciel responded with her usual smile, causing a shiver to run down my spine.

>VWUUUUUUSSSSSHHHHHHH!!!<

The Cult Leader's power rose to a terrifying degree—like he was the personification of all the Arcanas. No, this was even more threatening than that!

The final and biggest Arcana, [The World], also sped toward him, completely melting into him. I heard constant screams from the boy, yet Ciel remained smiling.

"Hush, my boy. It will all be over soon. It will all be over." The Cult Leader seemed to be holding everything in, trying his possible best to smile back at his mother.

"You just need to take in one more..." Her gaze traveled as she spoke, and I followed it.

Ciel's line of sight... was heading towards the Nether itself!

'What? She's going to stick it to him too? It's too big!' My eyes widened.

At this point, multicolored veins were already appearing all over the Cult Leader's body. His body was surging with so much power that I feared it would destroy him.

But then—

"Take your place, my master and one true love. The vessel is ready!" Ciel raised both hands and loudly declared toward the purple mist.

"What?" My voice echoed across the area. However, it wasn't just me that expressed surprise.

No, even the Cult Leader's eyes widened in shock.

"V-Vessel? B-but I thought we—"

"Yes, my son. This way, you and your father will become one. And I can love you both forever."

Her twisted words caused even me to tremble.

"B-but you said—"

>VWUUUUUUUUUUUUUUSSSSSSSSSSSSHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!<

The mist swiftly moved in the direction of the young boy—all hundred meters of it—and enveloped the shocked Cult Leader. Tears fell from his eyes as his body was swallowed by darkness—a darkness so deep that it swallowed him whole.

"T-this isn't... what you promised..." His voice vanished deep inside the dark mist—gone forever.

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

#### **Chapter 759: Return Of The Nether [Pt 2]**

Never before had I seen such cruelty.

Even though her son screamed while being drowned by the purple mist, his mother didn't move an inch. Rather, she seemed to be enjoying every second of it—her eyes even gleaming with anticipation.

It soon made me realize what kind of person Ciel was... and why the Apostles warned us so much of her return.

"Yes... just like that..." She whispered, all her focus on the Nether's convergence on the boy.

"No way! She's going to use the boy as a vessel for the Nether! If she does that, then—" Kazen's eyes bulged, and her body trembled.

It seemed like she was once again reminded of her past—or perhaps something awful that happened back then.

"We have to stop i—"

"TOO LATE!" Ciel grinned widely—her face becoming uglier with how twisted her smile had become.

She stood right in front of the mist, almost as if defending it so the process wouldn't get interrupted by any of us.

"You can't stop it. Why should you even dream of it?"

"You're terrible. Using your own child like that... I knew he was another expendable pawn to you." Kazen growled, her eyes narrowing in hatred.

As much as I despised the Cult Leader, and would definitely kill him if I could, I had to agree with Kazen. Ciel's actions didn't belong to a mother, but rather a monster.

"What are you talking about? My son is not an expendable tool. He's special. He always has been. He always will be. Who else can take in all of the Nether's power and it would stabilize?"

"You... monster!"

"Unlike that last time, he will be completely at home in this vessel. I ensured it would be that way."

'Using your own son like that... Merlin was right about you!' I added.

While I didn't know of the past of the Apostles, or of Ciel, it was obvious who the evil person was—though I couldn't say Kazen wasn't too far off. She did steal Aloe's body and put all of us in danger.

'She's a momentary ally, but I can't say it'll remain that way forever...' As much as I would do my best to cooperate with her to take down Ciel and the Nether, I couldn't trust her.

"You misunderstand. I only gave my son his rightful inheritance—the indwelling of his father."

'Twisted!' My thoughts echoed.

"He was born of the union between his father and me. No one is worth more, and no one is better suited than he is. That's why he's so special. Because he's his father's son." Ciel grinned.

I couldn't tell if I was the only one thinking it, but this woman was definitely crazy. She was the worst!

"Haha... you do not need to give explanations to fools." A deep, terrible voice suddenly emerged from the darkness.

My eyes bulged, and my body nearly jumped in fright. I also felt paralyzed.

"A-ah, Master!" Ciel frantically turned back to respond to the voice.

Before all of us could even react, all the Nether converged in the Cult Leader, and his body underwent a drastic change.

Suddenly, black and purple armor emerged from his body, and a thick cloud of Nether swirled around him. He looked like a warlord far more deadly than even the most grotesque demons. Purple and black flashes of lightning spread across his body, and he appeared to be the very embodiment of everything evil in life.

"Haaa... I am finally back into this realm." The Nether spoke, his dark tone warbling with each syllable.

"Master!" Ciel bowed to this monster, even though they both floated in the air.

Merely watching this scene play out above me nearly caused my head to cry out in pain.

"My darling, it's been too long. I have missed you greatly." The Nether beckoned on Ciel to approach him, which she did.

"You look different from before..."

He took her hand and drew her close to him. Wrapping its armor-coated arms around her, he stared deeply into her eyes.

I wondered how Ciel was able to endure contact with so much Nether, but after seeing her facial expression, I abandoned the thought.

'Is she... moaning?!' Disgust spread all over me.

"D-do you like it? My new look? Master..." Ciel smiled as she enjoyed the embrace he gave her in her twisted, perverted way.

I bet she was a masochist, and she was simply enjoying the pain caused by being exposed to so much Nether. I couldn't even imagine if I was going to survive beyond the shield I generated around me and my friends.

The atmosphere was just too thick with Nether.

"I love it! Haha!" The Nether's voice seemed to bring her satisfaction, causing her to squeal in delight.

Both of them seemed to be in an exquisite mood. I could only hope they chose to spare this world as a result. Or, was it too late...?

The corrosive effect of Nether was already consuming everything around this being. All the sky turned purple, and dark clouds enveloped everywhere. Even the ground darkened, wholly being enveloped by Nether essence.

"Once the world is covered in darkness, he will consume everything," Kazen answered my inner inquiry.

"But, then what? After this world, what next?" It seemed too much of a waste that they would choose to destroy all of civilization rather than rule it, or something.

"There are many worlds, Jared. With the Arcanas under the control, they were able to release the Nether from his world. With the same set of Arcanas, they can gain access to other worlds."

My eyes widened at this discovery.

I always knew there was more to explore beyond the lands spread out before me, but I could not have imagined that things had become so dangerous with such stakes of this scale.

"The Nether will not stop until everything is destroyed. And Ciel, as the only Apostle of Nether, will do everything to support it."

I gulped, my body shuddered, and I slowly realized how despairing the situation was.

"Is there really... nothing we can do?"

## SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar

### **Chapter 760: Return Of The Nether [Pt 3]**

"After eons of waiting on the other side of Origin, I have come once more." The Nether declared.

His words made no sense to me, and I turned to Kazen for an explanation. However, she was so preoccupied with her thoughts and her nervousness that it didn't seem like I would be getting answers from her.

"Once I devour the Root of this world... I shall finally be whole."

The root? Did he mean this planet's core? I had many questions, but I kept silent and observed the whole thing. My mind was constantly working to see if I could find any opportunity to exploit. So far, though, I found nothing.

It was frustrating, to say the least. Frightening too.

'I don't know how, but I have to stop this thing! Damn it! What should I do?!'

All my allies were already stirring from their trance. They would be waking up any time from now, but so what? None of them could stand a chance against that thing.

Even if we attacked together, we would not even be able to make a dent in such an entity. Even Neron... I doubted if his Magic would be effective on such an entity.

"This power... is far above Transcendent Grade." I gulped.

"That's right. It's in the Primordial Realm. The highest, most unreachable point. It belongs only to beings like the Nether and entities beyond our understanding..." Kazen responded to me, beads of sweat falling from her face.

Her face was pale, and it seemed like she was going to pass out.

"Kazen, you... are you okay?"

"Not really. My Magic... is reaching its limits. Without my Arcana, I can't hold on for too long in this body."

It seemed her possession was only temporary. Normally, I would have been relieved, but this was the worst time.

"Shit! Not now... not now!"

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Ciel was happy beyond description.

Her pale cheeks were flushed with so much pink that one would think she was down with a fever. Her breathing was also hot and uneven.



Her body screamed with delight as she felt her master's touch, and she felt like giving her whole being to him.

'The sting of his touch... hurts so good!' She moaned as she wished he would caress her more.

However, Ciel understood her master's desires. Now wasn't the time to indulge in hers.

After receiving a generous reward from him already, they had to get down to business, and she knew the perfect way to kickstart everything.

"Master, I have something to report to you."

The Nether's curious gaze on her nearly made her yelp in ecstasy, but she held it in. She had to control herself. Yes... control.

"A lot of things have delayed your return. You would have arrived much sooner if it hadn't been for the interference of some people."

"Oh? They posed a problem even for you?" The Nether's voice contained surprise and a bit of disappointment.

Once she sensed this, Ciel's heart nearly dropped, and she realized that she was on the verge of letting her master down. There was no way she could allow such a thing!

"N-no way! Never! None of those fools could stand a chance against me—not even that Apostle of Aether down there!" She boldly declared.

"Hoho, is that so? No wonder I sensed such Aether. That human there... she is one of those mortals that sealed me away then."

"Yes. She's possessing the body of a mortal right now, and it seems it won't be long before she fades away. Do you want to have some fun with her before then?"

The Nether grinned with his darkened face as he stared at Ciel.

"You know me well. Some light exercises should be done before the main event. Anything else you have in mind?"

"Well... that's what I was about to tell you. The only reason my plans were disrupted a little bit is because of the interference of one individual."

"Just one?" The Nether's tone showed disappointment once more.

"A Singularity."

Once Ciel said this, his disappointment melted and it was replaced by a measure of understanding.

"So, the Root knew I was coming, eh? Well... I suppose I should have expected it. Since that is the case, then I don't blame you. That Merlin, back then, he too was very formidable."

"Not as powerful as you, master. Not even close. If it hadn't been for the incomplete vessel, there was no way you would have fallen." Ciel argued passionately, her eyes gleaming brightly at her master.

"You think I am unaware? And whose fault was that?" His voice suddenly took a deep plunge into deeper, darker waters.

Even Ciel experienced the chills of the Nether's powerful presence. She felt fear unlike any other, and her body buzzed with its corrupting power.

"A-anng... it was mine, master. Please punish me for that!"

Yes! She loved this sensation the most. Feeling her master's dominating aura wash over her... Ciel was in bliss.

"W-well... maybe some other time." Her bliss was enough to startle even the very personification of evil.

As much as he fancied her, even the Nether had to admit that she was strange.

"In any case, show me this Singularity. I should at least thank him for serving as a delay to our plans." The Nether was successfully able to change the topic, as he excitedly looked for his prey.

"Ah, I've seen him. That's strange. Why can't I see through his soul completely? Something is blocking my sight."

Ciel was surprised to hear this. Her master, Nether, was nigh omnipotent. In the Primordial Realm, he was already above several concepts, and his power was beyond anyone's understanding. What could possibly be enough to impede his all-seeing sight?

"C-could it be that Aether is—?"

"Oh? Hahaha! I see now. So that is what happened. No wonder the memories are overlapping. So, he actually did it. That bastard..." The Nether was already mumbling words that were strange to Ciel's ears, but she couldn't dare interrupt her master.

"Then, is this your plan? Well, since you aren't here to see it through to the end... I might as well end this boy." His rotten smile inspired Ciel, and she was happy to witness the manifestation of her master's power.

Finally, all who had defied him would see his glory.

"I'll eradicate this Jared Leonard. It should prove to be a good gift for you, my bride. He's put you through a lot, hasn't he?"

"Yes. Indeed, master!" Ciel was overcome with joy that her master would seek to reward someone as unworthy as her.

"Then, let's get started."