

Strongest 311

Chapter 311: Sancus and William's Fated Meeting [Part 1]

William looked at the beautiful Goddess in front of him with a smile on his face. His eyes glowed with power as his Incubus Class reached its Max Level.

Because his powers had been unsealed before his battle with Carter. This allowed Eros, the Goddess of Lust, to teach William how to utilize his newfound powers to their full potential.

Just like the Special Domains that Issei and Lily used to train William, Eros had also taken him to her own Domain to be trained. Three months inside the Domain was equivalent to three days in Hestia. Aside from training William to resist her charms, Eros also taught him how to wield his demonic powers.

The Incubus Job Class allowed William to make and control illusions, enter a person's dream, drain the life force of others, and also a very rare ability that had a chance to copy a person's special skill through love making.

This copying skill was the skill he gained after absorbing the blood of the Goddess. Even among the Incubi that existed in the multiverse, only a handful had this ability. These were the people that had been personally blessed by Eros to become her champions.

Being an Incubus wouldn't be complete without the power of seduction. Naturally, William also gained an ability that was similar to Charm. This skill was called "Kiss of Seduction". However, since he was still a Pseudo-Incubus, he was unable to use this skill.

Unlike the other Job Classes that he acquired, the Incubus Job Class didn't have any advanced classes.

William didn't mind because he didn't have any intention to take the Incubus Class to a higher stage. For him, being an Incubus was no different from being a full-fledged womanizer. Belle had told him that she would only allow him to have nine wives. Since that was the case, the incubus Job Class wasn't a good option for him to explore.

Still, this class also came with many benefits. It allowed William to gain access to the Dual Cultivation Skill, which allowed him, and his lovers, to gradually become stronger after they cultivated together.

It also gave him a +100 Enhancement Bonus to all stats while the Incubus Job Class was equipped.

Being an Incubus didn't give him immunity to Eros' Charm Skill. However, William was still able to resist it to a certain extent. For Eros, this was already good enough because even Gods would have a hard time resisting her Divinity if she unleashed her full powers.

"Well then, this will be the end of your training, Little Will," Eros smiled as she patted the boy's head. "Make sure to keep your promise, okay?"

"Thank you, Your Excellency," William replied respectfully. "I will keep my promise."

"Good. It's quite unfortunate that you can't be my follower because you already have Gavin. Even so, make sure to visit my Temple after you've come of age. If you don't do that, you'll be sorry~"

"I will keep my promise, Your Excellency."

Eros was quite satisfied with William's character. Because of this, she wished that her daughters would pick him to become their lover in the future. Truth be told, Eros didn't train William just because her daughters took a liking to him.

The Goddess of Lust wasn't that generous. All the Incubi and Succubi in existence were handpicked by her personally. She wouldn't bestow her powers on just any random passerby. Even if William was favored by four Gods, that wasn't enough for Eros to make her move.

If not for the direct order she had received from the most "Ancient" Primordial Goddess, she wouldn't have a reason to get in touch with the boy.

The order of the Primordial Goddess was simple.

Turn William to a Pseudo-Incubus and train him to resist Charm and Mind Affecting Spells.

Because of this order, Eros' interest in the boy was piqued. Since her daughters already had him in their sights, the Goddess of Lust thought that it would also be a good opportunity to get to know the Half-Elf.

However, after training William for three months, she finally understood what kind of boy he was. Eros had a nagging feeling that William would bully her daughters in the not so distant future. Because of this, she made William promise her something, and the boy agreed to it.

After exiting the Domain, Eros suddenly remembered the promise that she had made with the God of Contracts, Sancus.

"William. Are you familiar with the God of Contracts?" Eros asked.

"No," William replied. "However, I always ask him to preside over the contracts that I make in my world."

Eros nodded her head as she looked in the distance. She immediately felt Sancus' presence right after she had left her Domain. It seemed that the God of Contracts was very anxious to meet with William before he reunited with Issei, Lily, and David.

"Wait here for a while," Eros said. "It seems that the God of Contracts wants to meet with you."

Eros didn't wait for William's reply before she disappeared from where she stood. She reappeared a few seconds later in front of her palace and faced Sancus who was standing outside the gates.

The Goddess of Lust waved her hand and the gates opened wide to allow Sancus to enter.

"Remember, you are not allowed to harm him in any way," Eros warned. "If you do something funny, you will definitely regret it."

Sancus smiled and nodded his head. "I won't harm him. I just want to talk."

"Fifteen minutes. I'll only give you fifteen minutes."

"Thank you."

Eros moved aside and allowed Sancus to enter her palace. Although she was curious about what Sancus wanted to tell William, the God of Contracts wanted a private meeting.

Since Incubi and Succubi also used contracts to bind the oaths of mortals, Sancus was a business partner that she had to get along with. This was why she respected his request and allowed him to meet William.

Also, it was a good opportunity to have Sancus owe her a favor. Since the God of Contracts had already promised not to hurt William, Eros had no reasons to prevent him from seeing the boy.

The Goddess that was seated on the black throne frowned, but she didn't make any moves to intervene. Even though she was an Ancient Primordial Goddess, there were certain rules that she had to adhere to in order to keep the peace within the Temple of the Ten Thousand Gods.

'This is just a minor issue,' The Goddess thought as she continued to observe William from afar. 'This will not affect the bigger picture.'

The Primordial Goddess only cared about the result and not the process. As long as William's current course didn't change, having a few bumps along the way could still be tolerated.

Chapter 312: Sancus and William's Fated Meeting [Part 2]

"Little Will, we finally meet face to face," Sancus greeted with a smile. "We don't have much time, so I'll cut the long story short. I am Sancus, the God of Contracts, and I am very pleased that you always choose me to preside over the oaths that you have made in Hestia."

"The pleasure is mine, Sir Sancus," William replied. "I am also very happy to meet you."

The two exchanged a few more pleasantries before Sancus decided to tell him the purpose of his visit.

Sancus patted William's shoulder, "It was quite unfortunate that I wasn't here in the Temple when you arrived. If I was here, I would have also given you a parting gift before you entered the Cycle of Reincarnation. Fortunately, another opportunity has arrived so I'm here to give you the gift I wasn't able to give you before."

Sancus waved his hand and a wooden box materialized out of thin air. He held it with both hands and presented it before William.

"Inside this box is an amazing and very powerful artifact," Sancus explained. "However, it is currently sealed so I can't show it to you right now. But, rest assured that this artifact will be of great help to you in the future. Once you equip this artifact, you will practically become immune to depression."

"Immune to depression?" William's face became serious. "Such a thing exists? This sounds like a very powerful artifact."

William of all people understood how hard it was to fight depression. When he was suffering from his disease, he was constantly depressed. If not for his brothers and sisters, who were always there to encourage him from the orphanage, he might have already given up.

Sancus' smile widened as he continued his explanation about the benefits of his "artifact".

"Not only immunity to depression, but it also raises your stamina and vitality drastically. You can even say that you will become peerless after you use this artifact. But, wait! There's more!"

Just like a scammer, Sancus used his expertise as the God of Contracts to close the deal.

"If you accept this gift of mine, I'll also throw in a freebie," Sancus waved his hand and a golden Rubix Cube appeared in his hand. "This cube is called a Pocket Cube that will allow you to catch any monster of the Centennial Rank and below. You can only use it once, so use it wisely."

William wasn't a fool. Although the God of Contracts was giving him gifts he knew that "No Lunch was free in the world". This is especially true in a place like the Temple of Ten Thousand Gods.

"Sir Sancus, what is the catch?" William crossed his arms over his chest. "You are giving me these precious artifacts, is there something that you want from me?"

William understood that there is not a free lunch in this world, especially coming from a God.

"Yes, there is," Sancus replied honestly. "I want you to keep this as a secret between the two of us. Don't tell this to anyone. Not even Gavin, Issei, Lily, and David."

"Why?"

"Because, you are my only hope."

Sancus sighed as he looked at the red-headed boy. His pleading gaze was so pitiful that William couldn't help but scratch his head. On one hand, he didn't want to offend the God of Contracts. On the other hand, he felt that the sealed artifact was something very dangerous that he didn't dare to accept it.

Seeing his hesitation, Sancus decided to use his trump card.

"Okay, how about we compromise?" Sancus proposed. "I will send this artifact to you through the God Shop using an anonymous name. I will be honest with you, this artifact cannot stay in the Temple of the Gods because the seal will be undone in four years.

"I also don't want it to be released in a random world because it will cause civilizations to multiply at a rapid pace. This is something we Gods don't want to see. As long as it is inside your mail, it will remain inside it even after the seal is broken."

Sancus came clean because he could tell that William wouldn't accept the wooden box until he revealed everything to him. Clearly, he had underestimated the boy's intelligence and decided to just spill the beans.Â

"But why me?" William asked. "Can't you send it to other people?"

Sancus firmly shook his head. "I don't trust others, as much as I trust you. After all, you are someone that has received the blessings of Four Gods. I am not a good judge of character because I am the God of Contracts. I must be impartial at all times.

"However, Gavin, Issei, Lily, and David are my friends. I believe that all of them have better eyes than me and are good judges of character. This is why, I can only ask this of you, William. Safeguard this artifact for the sake of the entire multiverse."

William glanced at the wooden box in Sancus' hands and sighed. "Sir, since you already said this much, can you please, tell me, what is inside the wooden box?"

Sancus nodded his head. "The name of this artifact is..."

William started to sweat buckets as Sancus revealed everything to him. In the end, William decided to flee, but the God of Contract grabbed his leg and wailed like a child. No matter how much William tried to get rid of him, the God stuck to him like a leech.

In the end, William and Sancus reached a compromise. The red-headed boy agreed to allow Sancus to send him the artifact through mail. William had no intention of retrieving it no matter what happened, and Sancus was fine with that.

The God Shop Mail had no expiration, so they didn't have to worry about the artifact breaking free even after the seal expired.

As additional rewards for William's consent, Sancus gave him five more Pocket Cubes that would allow him to capture any Beast that was Centennial Ranked and below.

"Sir Sancus, I have a question," William said with a serious expression. "You said that the Pocket Cubes can capture beasts that are Centennial Rank and below. Can it also capture Demigods?"

"Demigods?" Sancus rubbed his chin in contemplation. "Aren't Demigods usually of the Calamity Rank? This is only good for Centennial Ranked Beasts."

William decided to explain his meeting with Kasogonaga, while the God of Contracts listened with great interest.

"Even though they are Demigods as long as their strength regresses below the rank of Centennial Beasts, they can be captured," Sancus said after careful consideration. "However, I advise you to not catch Kasogonaga."

"Don't worry, I have no intention of catching it," William stated. "Kasogonaga had already been imprisoned for thousands of years. I don't want him to be imprisoned again. It is so pitiful."

Sancus nodded his head in appreciation. "At least you have a conscience. As expected of the boy that my friends have chosen. Well then, please, don't tell this to anyone."

"Understood." William promised.

Sancus patted the boy's shoulder one last time before disappearing from the palace of the Goddess of Lust. William sighed because he had become the owner of a hot potato. Of course, he had no intention of retrieving the artifact from the God Shop Mail.

The God of Contract told him that if an item wasn't retrieved from the God Shop after a hundred years had passed, it would be automatically returned to its sender.

By then, Sancus would have gathered enough Divinity from his followers to seal the artifact once again for another thousand years.

After weighing the pros and cons, William agreed to the condition because the Pocket Cubes were a temptation that was very hard to resist. It gave him an option to capture beasts that didn't belong to the herd.

Also, Sancus said that it would always succeed in capturing any beast as long as the target was of Centennial Rank and below.

William had the uncanny ability to always face strong monsters out of the blue. Even with his powers, fighting these beasts would require a lot of effort on his part. If he could capture these beasts from the get go, it would save him a lot of effort and time in order to subdue them.

Chapter 313: Sacrificial Offering

Roars and explosions reverberated in the battlefield as the two armies collided.

Hundreds of thousands of Ant Type Beasts burned en masse as the Mages of the Hellan Kingdom unleashed their spells. The smell of burning flesh was thick in the air, but the defenders didn't bat an eye and killed more.

The Knights headed by the Sword Saint, Aramis, charged at the Ant Horde fearlessly and cut them apart like bamboo trees. Their war cries rumbled like thunder as they bulldozed their way towards the center of the Army's ranks.

Seeing this unstoppable onslaught, the Great General of Aenasha ordered his men to retreat. However, Aramis didn't back down and pursued them along with thousands of Hellanian Warriors who were out for blood.

Only a quarter of the warriors remained inside Ravenlord Citadel, while the rest accompanied their Sword Saint to kill as many enemies as they could. The Gryphons and Hippogriffs in the air slaughtered the flying ants with a vengeance.

The Knights of the Angorian War Sovereign had also joined the fray. In just a few days, the young knights had been baptized by a real war between Kingdoms. They had seen the deaths of their comrades in the battlefield, and this brought a massive change to their mentality.

The Angorian War Sovereign, which used to number over a hundred, was now reduced to seventy. Even though Priscilla did her best, it was unavoidable to not have any casualties in a war of this magnitude.

Two hours later, Aramis signaled to stop the pursuit. He knew that it would be a folly to continue and ordered everyone to return to the fortress.

This was their third day of defending Ravenlord Citadel from the invasion of the Aenashaian Army. In these three days of fighting, over a million lives were lost on the battlefield.

The majority of deaths came from the Ant Army that numbered in the millions. The Great General of Aenasha, Magnius, treated the Ant Army as cannon fodder. However, the deaths of his human soldiers also numbered over a hundred thousand.

It was then when Magnius realized that taking the capital of the Hellan Kingdom would not be easy, because the defenders were putting their lives on the line to repel them. Soldiers weren't afraid to die on the battlefield. However, fighting against enemies who didn't fear death gave them a different kind of pressure.

The bombardment from the Mages and Archmages alone was like looking at the destruction of the world.

Firestorms and Hurricanes would ravage the battlefield and turn everything in their path to ashes. As a Dynasty that focused on Martial Strength, fighting against Mages was a very hard thing to accomplish.

Naturally, the Aenashian Army also had a few Archmages in their ranks, but they couldn't compare to the Archmages of the Hellan Kingdom who numbered in the dozens.

If not for the Ant Army, that was supporting the bulk of their army, Magnius wouldn't have the courage to wage war on the Hellan Kingdom, who was known for their Martial and Magical Military Forces.

'Just where are those bastard Zelanians?!' Magnius gritted his teeth in anger. 'How come they're still not here?!'

While Magnius was cursing his situational allies one of his subordinates entered his tent to give a report.

"Sir, over half a million warrior ants have just left the Nest and are now headed here to serve as reinforcements," the subordinate reported. "At most, it will take them two days to arrive here."

Two days was enough time for his army to rest. He would just wait for the Ant Army to arrive and whittle the numbers of the defenders down little by little.

Magnius nodded his head after hearing his subordinate's report. He then handed the soldier a sealed scroll and ordered him to get one of their Ant Riders to travel towards the Zelianian Encampment to pass the scroll to the Old Executioner.

He didn't know why their allies hadn't arrived yet. According to his estimate, the forces of the Zelianian Army should have regrouped with them a day ago. However, they were still out of sight and it was making Magnius agitated.

He knew for certain that the Hellan Kingdom would have no chance of resisting if the Aenasha and Zelian Dynasties formed a united front to bring down Ravenlord Citadel.

'Just what is taking them so long?!' Magnius pounded the wooden table inside his quarters, breaking it apart.

"Your Majesty, the enemy has been successfully repelled." Aramis bowed.

"You did well, Aramis," Noah replied. "Rest for now. I'm sure that they won't be back for a few days after this disastrous defeat by your hands."

"As you will, Your Majesty." Aramis pressed his fist over his chest before leaving the commander's quarters.

As soon as he left, Prince Lionell stepped inside the room to see his father. He had also participated in the war and fought on the front lines among his private army. He was the Crown Prince of the Kingdom and the soldiers needed to see that he was not a coward in order to gain their respect.

Prince Rufus had joined the rank of mages of the kingdom and fought the flying ants using his powerful spells. Both Princes' had shown everyone what they were capable of doing and received praises from the nobles and soldiers alike.

Prince Lionel didn't fight on the battlefield just to gain the recognition of the nobles and the soldiers. He fought because he wanted to impress the Third Princess of Freesia, who was also within Ravenlord Citadel.

As their ally, she was there to oversee the Aerial Cavaliers of Freesia, who fought bravely alongside their allies in this war against the Aenasha Dynasty. Unfortunately, aside from casual banter, Prince Lionel could tell that Princess Sidonie was not interested in him, which made him very frustrated.

Since the battle had just ended, he thought that this was the perfect opportunity to see his father and initiate his plan of action.

"Your Majesty, congratulations on your victory," Prince Lionel said with a serious expression.

King Noah nodded and made a gesture for his son to sit. "What brings you here today, Prince Lionel?"

"Your Majesty, the enemy won't be back for a time, so I decided to use this opportunity to ask a favor from you."

"A favor?"

Prince Lionel nodded his head. "Since I gazed upon the Oathkeeper Key, I have been constantly researching in order to find the location of the Hidden Domain. According to the records that I've read, the clue for how to find the Domain lay on the key itself."

King Noah smiled. Of course, he also knew this information. He even spent a lot of time studying the Oathkeeper Key to find the location of the Hidden Domain because it was the duty of each King that received the inheritance.

At first, he thought that he would be able to find this elusive Domain during his reign, but after many years had passed, he had already given up on finding it. Now, seeing Prince Lionel mention this discovery, King Noah already knew what his son was going to ask of him.

"Your Majesty, if I may be bold, can you please lend the key to me for a few days?" Prince Lionel asked. "I do not know what the outcome of this war will be, but I feel that I will regret it for the rest of my life if I don't try to decipher the secrets hidden within the Oathkeeper Key."

King Noah pondered for a bit before summoning a small ornate box from his storage ring.

"Here, take it," King Noah said as he handed the box to his son. "Return it to me once this war is over."

"Thank you, Your Majesty," Prince Lionel bowed respectfully. "I promise that I will do my best to find the Hidden Domain that belongs to the Royal Family."

Just as soon as Prince Lionel said these words, a knock was heard on the door. A few seconds later, it opened and the Second Prince of the Kingdom, Rufus, entered the room.

When Prince Rufus saw the ornate box in Prince Lionel's hand, his gaze clouded for a brief moment before returning to their normal calm. He controlled the emotions in his heart as he bowed to his father and said the reason for his visit.

"Your Majesty, I am here to submit the detailed report of the casualties and losses that we suffered today," Prince Rufus said as he handed a black ledger to King Noah. "I will now take my leave, Your Majesty. I still need to raise the morale of the mages of our kingdom."

King Noah extended his hand to pat Prince Rufus' shoulder, "You did well today. Continue to inspire and support your comrades in battle."

"Yes, Your Majesty," Prince Rufus placed his fist over his chest and gave a brief bow before leaving the room.

The Second Prince of the kingdom knew that he was a step late in acquiring the key. Fortunately, he had already prepared a Plan B in case Prince Lionel managed to get the key before him.

'You can have the key for now, Big Brother,' Prince Rufus sneered inside his heart. 'Because you won't have it for long.'

Prince Rufus knew that Prince Lionel was not aware that The Organization had also approached him. Using this fact, he had plotted against his Big Brother so that the key would land in his hands.

If King Noah only knew that both of his sons had already decided to betray the Hellan Kingdom, he would have definitely refused to hand the key over to either of them.

Unfortunately, he was not aware, and so the next phase of The Organization's plan, to take over the Southern Continent using Noah's Kingdom as a sacrificial offering, began.

Chapter 314: The Next Stage Of The Shepherd Job Class

Great Chief Evander personally welcomed the arrival of Prince Ernest and his Granddaughter to the Kyrintor Mountains.

The Oracle had informed him a day ago that representatives would arrive from the Hellan Kingdom and they should be treated as VIP Guests.

After the last incident with William, Great Chief Evander had regained his calm and understood what he needed to do.

The residence of the Great Chieftain was located at the Middle of the Mountain, while the rest of the tribes were near its base. They only went to the Third, Second, and First Peaks during special events, so they spent most of their days within their corresponding strongholds.

Great Chief Evander didn't say anything when he saw William's current state. He just made sure that the order of the Oracle was carried out properly. Also, in order to prevent any mishaps, he ordered his second son, Connal to go to Cadell's stronghold at the base of the mountain to prevent anyone from entering their domain.

The Oracle had given all the Tribes explicit orders to not leave the mountain while the war between the Hellan Kingdom and the Two Dynasties was taking place. This was in accordance with the decree that was passed by their Sovereign, which everyone in the Kyrintor Mountains obeyed with reverence.

Ian was in the midst of changing William's clothes when the little loli, Brianna, barged inside the room.

"Oh, sorry," Brianna said when she saw Ian taking off William's shirt. "Please, don't let me disturb you. Carry on with what you are about to do."

Ian couldn't possibly allow the little girl to see his lover's naked body, so he decided to ask Brianna the reason for her visit.

"Is there something you need, Lady Brianna?" Ian asked.

The little loli smiled mischievously as he approached William's bed. "Do you need help taking his clothes off? I can help you do that."

"I can manage them myself, Lady Brianna. Please, don't bother yourself with the Commander's needs because I will be here to take care of him."

"Is that so..."

There was a hint of disappointment in Brianna's voice. Even so, her disappointment didn't last long as her small hands caressed the sides of William's face.

"I haven't had the time to see him after the incident at the Grand Coliseum," Brianna commented as she marvelled at the softness of William's face, which was the complete opposite of his rough hands.

"Ernest gets jealous easily, so I didn't get the chance to check his condition up close while we were inside the carriage during our journey. How is he? Do you know when he'll wake up?"

"He's recovering," Ian replied as his eyes focused on Brianna's hands that were caressing William's cheeks. He was very tempted to pry the little Loli's hands away, but he knew that he couldn't make a scene inside the Great Chieftain's residence. "As for when he will wake up, I have no clue. I hope he wakes up soon."

Brianna nodded her head sadly. "I hope for that as well. Big Brother is a good person. If he hadn't been there during the ceremony, I don't know what might have happened to me by now."

Ian sighed internally and cursed the unconscious Half-Elf who was being pampered by the Tribes' little princess.

After a minute had passed, Brianna's hands had moved from William's cheeks to his ears then to his neck then back to his cheeks.

For some reason, Ian felt uncomfortable with other girls touching William so intimately. Especially girls whom William hadn't acknowledged as one of his lovers. Although he knew that Brianna and William shared a close relationship, it was more of a "brother and sister relationship" than lovers.

"Say, do you like him?" Brianna suddenly asked as she shifted her attention to the older boy.

"I do," Ian replied without batting an eye.

Brianna nodded as if she had already expected this answer from Ian.

"I can see it in your eyes. The way you look at him is that of tenderness and affection. However, does Big Brother know?"

"Yes."

"Really?" The little loli's eyes sparkled as if she had discovered a very juicy piece of gossip. "Big Brother is fine with it?"

"Yes," Ian replied.

"I see." Brianna smiled before reluctantly pulling her hand away from William's face. "You and Big Brother are our special guests. If you need something, don't hesitate to ask. The residence of the Great Chief will do our best to accommodate your needs."

"Thank you." Ian nodded. "I will take note of it."

Brianna gave William one last glance before leaving the room. She couldn't stay for long because she knew that Ernest would come looking for her. The Youngest Prince of the Hellan Kingdom was very wary of William.

Prince Ernest was afraid that the Half-Elf would take his Big Sister's affection away from him, and make Brianna his fiancée. Because of this, the Prince was feeling anxious which made Brianna, as well as Simon, shake their heads helplessly.

Five minutes after Brianna left the room, Ian resumed changing William's clothes into more comfortable ones. He then laid beside William and used Synchronization.

It was unsafe for her to transform inside the residence of the Great Chieftain, so she just settled with having her mermaid form inside William's Sea of Consciousness. She hoped, more than anything, that the boy she had loved for four years, would once again open his eyes and hold her in his warm embrace.

Meanwhile in the Temple of the Ten Thousand Gods...

"You look more manly now, Big Brother," Lily said as she eyed him up and down. "I guess being trained by the Goddess of Lust would turn even the meekest of sheep into a raging bull ready to battle."

William smiled and patted the loli's head. "And you're still as cute as ever, Lily."

Lily giggled as she allowed William to pat her head. It had been many years since a mortal had done that to her and it made her feel nostalgic.

"Very good." Issei nodded in appreciation. He also felt the change in William's aura and it made the red-headed boy look more confident. After entering Eros' Domain, the Teddy Bear that was used to hold William's consciousness, had been remodeled to become a near-perfect replica of his body.

Because of this, he didn't need to return to his "cuddly form" in order to continue his training.

David cleared his throat and made a gesture for William to follow him. He was the boy's final instructor, and the last hurdle before William could return to his own world.

It didn't take long for the two of them to arrive at David's Residence. Issei and Lily followed David because they were curious about what kind of training the God of Shepherds would give William. David didn't mind them tagging along because they were his good friends and William's supporters.

The God of Shepherds took them to a room where a golden portal glowed brightly.

Seeing the portal, William remembered when he stood beside the Cycle of Reincarnation. If not for that incident with Truck-kun, he might have entered a different portal and lived a different life than the one he currently had.

"William, your Shepherd Job Class has reached its max level, correct?" David asked as he looked at the Golden Portal at the center of the room.

"Yes," William replied.

David turned his head to look at the boy with a smile. "Since that is the case, you need to 'Upgrade' your Job Class to its next stage. Usually, Shepherds are not supposed to have any Advanced Classes or anything, but since you are a good boy, I prepared three Advanced Classes that you can choose from."

"Thank you, Sir David." William grinned. 'I always wondered what the next stage of the Shepherd Class would be. Now, I will finally see it with my own eyes.'

David waved his hand and three choices appeared in front of William.

The boy excitedly checked the new classes that David had given him with a big smile on his face. He felt blessed that David had taken his time to prepare special classes just for him.

However, a few seconds later, the smile on his face became stiff as he finished reading the information of the classes that were presented to him.

[Advance Job Classes]

[Option 1]

< Big Daddy Shepherd >

"Spank me Daddy One More Time."

[Option 2]

< Big PP Shepherd >

"The Bigger they are, the Harder they are!"

[Option 3]

< Small PP Shepherd >

"It's not the Size that matters. It's the Performance!"

William almost spat blood then and there after reading the information of each Job Class. He would rather keep the Shepherd Job Class in its basic state than choose any of the horrible classes that David had prepared for him.

Chapter 315: What Is A Shepherd?

"I've thought long and hard about choosing the best Advanced Class for you." David patted his chest with pride. "In the end, these three Job Classes stood out. No need to thank me. Just pick anything you like."

"Sorry, but I'll pass," William replied firmly. 'Who would choose any of these Job Classes? I'd rather unlock my Prestige Classes rather than pick one of these choices!'

William would not accept it.

He would never accept it!

He would die of shame just looking at this Job Class, leaving him no choice but to ask the system to lock it forever!

"Eh? But I worked hard to choose these Job Classes for you!" David replied with a pout, which made William look at him in disdain.

Issei and Lily also backed away as their expressions turned to disgust.

'Yuck! An old man trying to act cute is disgusting!' Lily covered her lips with her hands. She was afraid that she would say her thoughts out loud if she didn't do so.

Issei, on the other hand, was also covering his lips, but it was for a different reason. He was doing his best not to laugh out loud. The Harem God was the one that gave these recommendations to David in order to prank William.

"Sir David, are these three the only choices I have?" William inquired. He was hoping that the God of Shepherd was just pranking him. "There are still more, right?"

"Well, if you don't want to choose from these options then we can generate a Job Class randomly." David admitted. "However, the Job Class you will get is random. You will not be able to change it because it is a permanent Job Class. Are you fine with that?"

William nodded his head. He believed that the random Job Class would be loads better than the three options that were presented to him.

"Understood. However, before we do that, let me ask you something, William," David looked at the boy while playing with his beard. "Tell me, what is a Shepherd?"

"A Shepherd is someone who tends goats and sheeps?" William answered. "Someone who watches over the herd?"

"You're not wrong, but you're only half right." David chuckled. "Listen, William. A Shepherd's primary responsibility is the safety and welfare of the flock. This is true. However, you don't need a flock or a herd to be a Shepherd."

David patted William's shoulder and looked at him with a serious expression. "A Shepherd's role is to watch over, look after, or guide somebody. They don't necessarily need to be a member of the Herd or a Flock. Those who will follow you, and stand by your side, are the members of your herd. Remember this, and remember it well."

William nodded his head. He half understood and half doubted David's words. Still, he knew that the Old God wouldn't say these words if they didn't have a purpose.

"Where are my manners?" David patted his forehead as if he had forgotten something important. "Sit first. There are still a few things I need to tell you before your trial starts."

David waved his hand and several wooden chairs appeared in front of William, Issei, and Lily. When everyone was seated, he gave William a lecture about the secrets of the Shepherd Class.

"Tell me, William. What do you think the most loyal beast within our Herd is?" David asked.

"A sheep?" William replied with uncertainty. "Or maybe a dog?"

David chuckled as he played with his beard. "William, you can never trust a sheep. Because some of them are wolves in sheep's clothing. As for dogs, although they are man's best friend and loyal to a fault, they are not the most loyal creature of the Herd."

"Are they perhaps goats?"

"No. Goats are moody creatures. One moment they are licking you, the next second they are eating your clothes. Also, they like to butt heads with everyone."

"I see." William nodded. "Then which animal is the most loyal member of the Herd?"

David rested his wooden staff over his lap as he closed his eyes. "The most loyal member of the herd is not actually an animal, but a monstrous beast. They are the beasts that swore eternal loyalty to me thousands of years ago. They also lived in your previous world, Earth, at one point in time, but now, they can only be seen in fantasy books."

William gulped as he waited for the continuation of David's explanation. He wondered what kind of monster David was referring to and why the God was telling him this information.

David opened his eyes and smiled. It was as if he was remembering the image of a dear old friend that he hadn't seen for thousands of years.

"The most loyal member of the herd... is actually the Minotaur Race," David stated. "They are our eternal protectors and because of this, they will never, ever, hurt us. Even if you kill them, they won't fight back. That's why, William. No matter what happens, no matter the situation. You are not allowed to harm them and their race. Even if they are the enemy. Can you promise me that, William?"

William thought about it and reluctantly nodded, "I promise."

"Good. Now I will tell you why you need to ascend to your next Job Class," David pointed at the golden portal at the center of the room.

"Your trial lies in that portal. You can only leave this place once you enter the Gate of Heaven. Naturally, it won't be easy because it is guarded by the Celestial Army. William, only the souls of the dead can come to the Temple of the Gods. The only exit in this place is the Cycle of Reincarnation."

Issei and Lily, who was seated beside William, nodded their heads in agreement. David didn't lie. Only the souls of the dead can come to the Temple of the Gods, and they had already broken a few rules by bringing William's consciousness over.

Actually, the one who proposed to bring William's consciousness to the Temple was David. Issei and Lily didn't support his idea because they knew that once William was brought to the Temple, he would not be able to leave, unless he entered the Cycle of Reincarnation.

However, David assured the two Gods that he had a way to let William go back to his world safely. This was why Lily used her powers to pull William's consciousness from Hestia and sealed it inside her Pink Teddy Bear.

That way, William would be able to materialize on their plane of existence even with an incomplete soul.

"I'll be honest, unless you advance your Shepherd Job Class, you will not be able to leave this place," David explained. "Well, I don't mind if you stay here, but can you really leave your family and friends behind?"

"Of course not," William replied firmly. "But, Sir David, can we compromise on the Job Classes? Can't you give me a cool sounding Job Class?"

"Actually, those three Job Classes were just my way of joking with you. Hahahaha!"

"Hahaha... but you're half serious, right, Sir David?"

David grinned. "William the second stage of the Shepherd Job Class relates to your soul. It will automatically adjust itself to the most compatible setting for you. No matter what you get, know that this is the most appropriate Job Class that will ensure your growth. That's why, you can rest easy."

"Right! I knew that Sir David only thinks of my well being."

"Of course. I am the God of Shepherds. I can't possibly bring harm to you, right?"

Issei and Lily watched this nonsense exchange from the side. They didn't believe David's words because he was one of the most notorious pranksters in the Multiverse. The only thing that the two Gods could do was light an incense candle for William in their hearts because he was about to get pranked really hard.

"Now William, enter the portal," David gestured. "It is time for you to unlock the next stage of the Shepherd Job Class."

"Yes!" William bowed his head to David, Issei, and Lily. After paying his respects he walked towards the portal with a determined expression.

His family, lovers, friends, and acquaintances were still waiting for him in Hestia. He needed to get back to them as soon as possible. He was also worried about the current situation of the war because all news was cut off from the mortal realm.

The moment he entered the portal, he found himself standing in what seemed to be a mountainous region. After scanning his surroundings, his eyes automatically locked on a Giant Gate that was shining in the distance.

'That must be the Heaven's Gate that Sir David was talking about,' William thought. 'That is where I need to go in order to go back.'

William clenched his fist and was about to use his magic powers in order to hasten his travel when he felt that something was wrong.

The Half-Elf frowned and pointed at the ground beside him.

"Ice Bullet!"

He waited for a time but nothing happened.

"Void Arrow!"

"Firebolt!"

"Waterball!"

"Stone Bullet!"

William sighed because his conclusion was right. He was unable to use his Magic Powers in this trial and had to rely on his physical strength and Divinities to reach his destination.

'The journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step,' William thought as he took a step forward. 'Wait for me, everyone. I'll be home shortly.'

Chapter 316: Little Brother, You Are Far Too Naive

David chatted with William as the boy made his way towards the Giant Gate in the distance. According to the God of Shepherds, William needed to clear twelve trials before he could challenge the Heaven's Army that was guarding the Gate of Heaven.

Each checkpoint would unlock part of William's power. The First Trial would allow him to upgrade his Shepherd Job Class to its next stage.

David didn't tell him what the trials were. He only pointed in the direction that William must travel. After walking for a day, William arrived at a small clearing surrounded by stone pillars.

At the center of the clearing stood a two-meter tall Goblin Shaman. With just a glance, William was able to determine that the Goblin was not a regular Goblin Shaman. It was a Goblin Witch Doctor that was two stages higher than the Goblin Shaman.

"Class A straight off the bat," William frowned. "As expected, this isn't going to be easy."

"When has life been easy? Defeat him and you will be able to ascend to your next stage," David said using telepathy. "Goodluck!"

William summoned his wooden staff and walked towards the clearing with steady steps. He felt the irony of this trial because the first ever monster that he had faced in his life was a Goblin.

It was his first life and death experience after being born in Hestia and, because of that incident, he became a Shepherd.

The Goblin Witch Doctor started chanting and created two shadow copies of itself. The three Goblins chanted and summoned six pairs of spectral hands that hovered around them.

William knew that he had to fight seriously in order to overcome his First Trial. For some reason, the bracelets on his wrists and ankles had also been replicated when Eros used her powers to mold his body.

The Half Elf removed the bracelets and tossed them aside. This was the first time that he was going to fight with his full power, using only his physical strength. Truth be told, William was also curious to know just how strong he was now.

For him, this trial was the perfect opportunity to test his progress without holding anything back.

Meanwhile inside Ravenlord Citadel...

"Your Highness, we've succeeded!" a pretty maid reported as she entered Prince Rufus' room. "My cousin managed to retrieve the box that the Crown Prince had been safeguarding."

"Very good," Prince Rufus replied with a smile. "Give it to me."

"Yes, Your Highness." The maid bowed and presented the ornate box to Prince Rufus with both hands.

The Second Prince of the Hellan Kingdom took it and checked its contents. He grinned when he saw the key inside the box. The years he had spent bribing the Crown Prince's personal maid attendant had finally paid off.

This was why he was confident that he could acquire the ornate box from his Older Brother's hand. Outside, Prince Lionel was the perfect image of a gentleman but behind closed doors, he would torture his subordinates to vent out his stress and anger.

Most of them hated Prince Lionel, but they were helpless against him. They were afraid that if they disobeyed him, they would be dead the next day.

This gave Prince Rufus the opportunity to gain these servants' loyalty and have them secretly spy on his Older Brother.

The Oathkeeper Key that Prince Lionel had managed to acquire from his father was now in Prince Rufus' hands. The Second Prince couldn't stop himself from grinning because he could tell how mad his Older Brother would be when he woke up the next day.

The Crown Prince's personal maid had served Prince Lionel a tea that contained a very potent sleeping drug that Prince Rufus had acquired before leaving the capital. This was his backup plan just in case Prince Lionel managed to acquire the key before him.

After gaining the key, he immediately contacted the agent that was assigned to him by The Organization and asked for a meeting.

An hour later, Prince Rufus, along with a man wearing a black robe, entered one of the secret passageways of Ravenlord Citadel that led outside the fortress. It was too dangerous for them to meet inside the Citadel where the Hellan Army was on high alert from the invasion of the Aenashaian Army.

In a spacious artificial cave that was hidden a kilometer away from the fortress, several men wearing black robes stood behind a man sitting on a black chair.

Prince Rufus walked towards the man seated on the chair and presented the ornate box to him.Â

The man seated on the chair smiled and took the box, but he didn't open it right away. He made a gesture and one of the men behind his back moved forward to take the ornate box from his hand.

"Check it if it's genuine," the man ordered.

"Yes, My Lord," the black-robed man opened the ornate box and used a monocle to check the "Oathkeeper Key" that Prince Rufus had brought with him.

Prince Rufus didn't say anything and waited for the examination to be over. After checking the key, the Black-Robed Man whispered to his Lord and backed away with the ornate box in his hands.

"Prince Rufus, you did well in stealing the Oathkeeper Key from your Big Brother," the man praised the Second Prince. However, his next words made Prince Rufus' jaw drop in disbelief.

"However, the key that you presented to us is only an imitation," the man continued his explanation. "Isn't that right, Your Highness, the Crown Prince?"

"That's right."

A black-robed man entered the cavern and glanced in Prince Rufus' direction. He then removed the hood hiding his face and sneered.

"Little Brother, you are far too naive," Prince Lionel said in a teasing tone. "Do you really think that you can bribe my subordinates? This is just wishful thinking. Isn't that right, Isabella?"

The Crown Prince's personal maid servant appeared behind Prince Lionel and looked at Prince Rufus with ridicule.

"Your Highness, Prince Rufus, please, don't think bad of me," Isabelle said with a smile. "I am the Crown Prince's personal servant, and my loyalty belongs only to him."

Isabella looked at Prince Lionel with an infatuated gaze, and the latter smirked, pulling her closer to him.

"Little Brother, I find it funny that you tried to bribe my woman," Prince Lionel stated. "Isabella had been my bed warmer for years. You really think she would switch over to your side just because you promised to give her a thousand gold coins? Ridiculous."

Prince Rufus gnashed his teeth in anger. After thinking about it rationally, he had really been naive in thinking that he could bribe his Older Brother's personal maid servant to switch sides.

Also, it didn't take him long to realize that this whole incident was a set up by his Big Brother in order to lure him out of the Citadel.

"You got me good, Big Brother," Prince Rufus said through gritted teeth. "Are you going to kill me now?"

Prince Lionel rubbed his chin as he gazed at his Little Brother who had always been butting heads with him.

"It is a very tempting offer, but I don't like to dirty my hands by killing my own kin," Prince Lionel replied. "Sir, please imprison my brother and make sure that he will be there to witness my coronation when I become the Emperor of the Southern Continent."

"Done." The man seated on the chair nodded his head. "Take him away, but treat him as a guest instead of a prisoner. Although he failed in his attempt, he was still loyal to The Organization. We do not treat our accomplices badly."

Prince Rufus wasn't the type to sit idly as they tried to capture him. He invoked his strongest spell in order to kill everyone inside the cavern, but The Organization was not full of fools and had already anticipated his action.

All it took was a single chop at the back of his head to knock Prince Rufus unconscious. He was then dragged away by two black-robed men to be imprisoned in one of their private dungeons.

Prince Lionel watched as his little brother was taken out of the room, but he didn't show any signs of remorse. Instead, the Crown Prince looked at the man seated on the chair and asked the question that mattered.

"When will you honor your end of the bargain?" Prince Lionel asked.

The man smiled as he stared back at the Crown Prince that betrayed his own Kingdom.

"Three days from now, Your Highness," the man replied. "In three days, the lands of the Southern Continent will never be the same again..."

Chapter 317: Heroic Avatar

William supported himself using the wooden staff in his hand. His clothes were dyed with blood and his breathing was ragged. The battle against the Hobgoblin Witch Doctor had just ended, and it was a very close call.

Floating not far from him was a golden Beast Core, which proved that he had slain the Class A Monster.

"Congratulations, William," David said via telepathy. "Now, touch the Beast Core and unlock the next stage of your Shepherd Job Class."

William forced himself to stand and used his wooden staff to walk towards the floating golden core.

"Finally," William muttered as he reached out his hand to touch it. Immediately, William was bathed with a golden light. The Half-Elf closed his eyes as he felt a new kind of power wash over his body.

It didn't take long before a system notification broke him out of his daze.

< Ding! >

< Congratulations! Your Shepherd Job Class has Ascended to its Next Stage! >

< New Job Class: Quick Shot Shepherd >

< Quick Shot Shepherd >

"... It hasn't even been five seconds."

-- In ancient times, when demons stirred and evil spread across the land... there wasn't enough time to... do things in a "proper manner". This was how the Quick Shot Shepherd was born...

-- He was the hero that many needed, but not the one they deserved. A shepherd who roamed the lands and shot "Pew Pew Pew" to girls and foes alike.

William spat blood and collapsed on the ground as he read the introduction of his new Job Class. Tears streamed down the sides of his face as he raised his middle finger towards the heavens.

He cursed David in his heart as he wept bitter tears. He'd rather fight a dozen Goblin Witch Doctors at the same time than have this Job Class in his system.

'Fck... I should have chosen the Sugar Daddy Shepherd.' William wept bitterly. 'At least, I would be able to tolerate the name.'

The Half-Elf was overcome with regret because he remembered David's words before he entered the portal.

David grinned. "William the second stage of the Shepherd Job Class relates to your soul. It will automatically adjust itself to the most compatible setting for you. No matter what you get, know that this is the most appropriate Job Class that will ensure your growth. That's why, you can rest easy."

"Right! I knew that Sir David only thinks of my well being."

"Of course. I am the God of Shepherds. I can't possibly bring harm to you, right?"

William sighed and wiped the tears in his eyes. Fortunately, no one could see his Job Class, so this stain in his history would be safe from everyone. He would just ignore it and level up his other Job Classes when he got back to his world!

After making his decision, William read the rest of the information of his new Job Class.

< Quick Shot Shepherd >

-- Increase Stamina by 200%

-- Receives +20 Enhancement to all stats

-- 50% Increased Resistance to Debuff Spells

-- 30% Increased Resistance to Nature Spells

-- Host has learned Passive Skill "Quick Shot".

-- Host has learned Passive Skill "Fast Reload".

-- Host has learned Passive Skill "Strider".

-- Host has learned Passive Skill "Favored Enemy".

-- Host has learned Passive Skill "Wild Empathy [Mythic]".

-- Host has learned Passive Skill "Ambidextrous".

-- Host has learned the skill "Heroic Avatar".

< Quick Shot >

-- The Quick Shot Shepherd is the fastest shooter in the world. After finishing a round, he just needs to wait "five seconds" before he can fire again.

-- This skill applies to any "Large" projectile weapon (eg: Ballista, Cannons). This skill also works with spells of any circle.

< Fast Reload >

-- Receives +20 Enhancement bonus to Dexterity.

-- Allows the Shepherd to reload and shoot faster.

-- This passive skill works on anything including spells of any circle.

< Strider >

-- Receives +20 Enhancement bonus to Agility.

-- Grants the Shepherd enhanced mobility on any kind of terrain.

< Favored Enemy >

-- Increase Damage to an enemy of your choosing by 50%.

-- Current Favored Enemy: (None)

< Wild Empathy [Mythic] >

-- Grants the Shepherd ability to communicate with any type of beasts including Mythical Type Beasts.

< Ambidextrous >

-- Allows the shepherd to have equal mastery with both of his hands.

< Heroic Avatar >

-- Allows the Shepherd to use the power of an Immortal Heroic Hero that protects the Temple of the Ten Thousand Gods.

-- This skill only lasts for fifteen minutes. During that time, the Shepherd will be able to wield ALL the abilities of his chosen Immortal Hero. This also includes the abilities of their Battle Regalia and Weapons.

-- This skill can only be used once every 24 hours.

-- This skill duration and overall performance of this skill is subject to change depending on how powerful the Immortal Hero is.

-- Current Heroic Avatar: (No Hero Chosen)

William had a complicated expression on his face after reading the information of his new Job Class.

If he looked past the name of his Job Class, the skills he acquired weren't too shabby. In fact, they were pretty good.

According to his hypothesis, the "Quick Shot Shepherd" was a Job Class that specialized in ranged warfare. The "Favored Enemy" also allowed him to increase his damage against those whom he chose as his "Main Enemy".

It was quite unfortunate that he could only choose one kind of enemy in the list. After thinking long and hard, William decided to not designate an enemy for the time being.

The one that piqued his curiosity the most was the "Heroic Avatar" skill.

"Sir David, are you there?" William inquired.

"Congratulations, William!" David replied. "I was surprised to see the Job Class that you acquired. However, don't worry! I won't judge you. I don't really mind if you can only last for five seconds..."

William rubbed his face with both hands as he tried to calm himself from embarrassment. His injuries had already fully recovered after acquiring his new Job Class. Even his tattered clothes had been repaired and no bloodstains could be found anywhere.

After taking control of his emotions, William inquired about the skills that he had gained from his upgraded new profession.

"Sir David, how does the Heroic Avatar skill work?"

"Good question! Frankly, I didn't expect you to acquire this skill. You really got lucky this time, William."

David seemed to be in a very cheerful mood as he explained the "Heroic Avatar" skill to William.

"Just as the name suggests, the Heroic Avatar skill allows you to call upon the power of the Immortal Heroes that the Gods have recognized," David explained. "Some call them Heroic Spirits, Argonauts, Emphyreans, and Einherjars."

"But, no matter what names they are called, one thing is certain. All of them created Epic Sagas that made their names resound from generation to generation. Now, to answer your question, you need one of these heroes to recognize you and deem you worthy to wield their powers."

"How will they deem me worthy?"

"You don't have to worry about that. The moment you ascended to your Advanced Class, all of these Immortal Heroes became aware of your existence." David chuckled. "Look up, William. All of them are now watching you."

William raised his head to look at the sky. There, he found countless stars shimmering even during the day. Somehow, he felt exposed under the scrutiny of countless gazes and it made him feel uncomfortable.

Seeing his discomfort, David assured him that he didn't need to pay attention to them. All he needed to do was fight his way towards the Gate of Heaven, and complete the trial that was assigned to him.

Chapter 318: I Choose... You!

Three months had passed since William had entered the trial. After many gruesome battles, he finally arrived at the eleventh trial that would allow him to face the end of his journey. William took a deep breath as he stepped into the desert where he would face his next enemy.

"Oink! Hahaha, Good job in getting this far, Half-Elf," a Pig Demon stood holding a nine-toothed rake in both hands. "Oink! It's quite unfortunate that I, the Great Zhu, will not allow you to pass!"

A strong gust of wind blew and the desert sands warped into a tornado. Soon, the image of a terrifying sand demon wearing a brown robe appeared beside the Pig Demon who named himself Zhu.Â

"My name is Sha, and I am the Guardian of this desert," Sha declared as he narrowed his eyes. "It has been many years since I was trapped in this Domain. This is the first time I've seen a Half-Elf venture into this land. I wonder what you will taste like?"

(A/N: There are many types of Beastkin in this story and I will be calling them based on their forms. For example, Dogkin, Catkin, and Foxkin.)

William frowned. Right now, he couldn't use the full function of his system because only a part of his soul had been taken to the temple. Even so, after facing many strong beasts, on different occasions, he was able to assess the ranking of the two enemies in front of him and it made him clench his fist in frustration.

'Both of them are in the initial stages of the Centennial Rank,' William thought. 'If it was one on one, I might be able to win by luck. But against two... it's impossible.'

William knew his abilities very well. Currently, the weapon in his hand was a replica of his original wooden staff. Although it was sturdy, he knew that it wouldn't be enough to defeat the two Centennial Beasts in front of him.

While William was thinking of ways to overcome this hurdle, the Demonic Pig in front of him pointed its rake in his direction.

"Oink! Too bad, Half-Elf," Zhu said with a sneer. "Your journey ends here. We will be generous and give you two choices. The first choice is to accept a swift and painless death. The second one is to suffer a slow and torturous death. Oink! Pick one!"

Sha, the Sand Demon, crossed his arms over his chest. The sands behind William rose towards the sky forming an impassable wall. Clearly, he had no intention of letting their prey escape from their grasp.

"Speak, Half-Elf," Sha stated. "What do you choose?"

William unsummoned his staff and placed both of his hands inside his pockets.

"I choose... you!" William shouted as he took out the gifts that Sancus gave him in exchange for accepting his proposal. "Go! Pocket Cubes!"

William threw two golden cubes at the two Centennial Beasts. Which made Zhu snort at him in disdain. However, Sha felt that the golden cubes weren't normal so he decided to play it safe.

Zhu raised his nine-toothed rake in an attempt to swat it. However, the moment the rake came in contact with the cube, the golden cube expanded into a six-meter wide cube that engulfed the Demonic Pig whole.

Finding himself trapped within the cube, Zhu made a fuss and pummeled the cubes' walls with his nine-toothed rake.

"How dare you try to capture this Great Zhu!" Zhu roared as he brandished his weapon left and right in an attempt to break the Golden Cube that was shrinking ever-so-slowly. No matter how much force he put in his blows, the cube didn't break which made the Demonic Pig very anxious.

The other golden cube hit Sha squarely in his chest and expanded to capture him too. Unlike Zhu, the Sand demon was caught instantly, or so William thought.

Due to his senses being honed through his training and life and death battles, William jumped backwards, just in time to dodge a Sand Spike that formed under his feet. The Golden Cube that captured Sha, spit out a sand clone that the Sand Demon had used to prevent himself from getting captured.

"Oink! Save me! Sha!" Zhu pleaded for his friend's help.

The Sand Demon threw a punch at the golden cube from afar and a Giant Sand Fist formed to answer his call. When the Sand Fist was about to hit the cube, a barrier appeared and repelled the attack from connecting.

"Noooooooo!" Zhu screamed as the golden cube shrank completely. It then flew towards William who held it in his hand.

"You bastard!" Sha roared and summoned a tidal wave made of sand with the intention to crush the boy who dared to capture his friend.

Zhu and him were once Immortal Heroes from the Heavens. But, due to an accident that caused great damage to the Divine Realm, both of them were punished and stripped of their immortality, before being exiled to this domain.

They were given the duty of gatekeepers. Their role was to prevent anyone from reaching Heaven's Gate. This punishment of theirs was set to last for ten-thousand years. After their sentence had been carried out, they would be given the opportunity to enter the Cycle of Reincarnation and have their memories erased, to live as mortals once again.

William didn't hesitate and threw the Pocket Cube towards the Sand Wave that was about to turn him into a pancake. The cube glowed and released Zhu from within.

"Go! Break it apart!" William ordered.

Zhu roared as he decisively swung his rake towards the wall of sand in front of him, dispersing it completely.

"Zhu! What are you doing?!" Sha yelled as he reappeared a hundred meters away from his friend.

"Sha! I can't disobey him!" Zhu explained.Â

Sha glared at the red-headed boy in the distance and shouted. "You enslaved him?! How dare you!"

William didn't bat an eye and glared back at his opponent. "If you promise to help me reach Heaven's Gate, I promise that I will release your friend."

"Don't listen to him!" Zhu shouted. "Just kill me and kill him afterwards!"

Sha quieted down as he thought of a way to rescue his friend. Their duty was to prevent anyone from reaching Heaven's Gate. He couldn't possibly break the oath he had made to the Jade Emperor.

He had already broken his oath once, he couldn't possibly break it again.

In the Heavens above, the Heroic Spirits looked at this scene with various expressions. Some of them were Zhu's and Sha's colleagues and knew them well. These Heros sighed as they watched their former comrades, who had lost most of their powers and Divinity after being banished from the Heavens.

Others, who were their enemies, laughed out loud after seeing their current plight. For them, watching Zhu and Sha suffer was pure entertainment. Some of them were even itching to bestow their powers to[on] the boy in order for the two Ex-Heroes to suffer in his hands.

"I can't break my oath twice," Sha said in a firm manner. "I'm sorry, Zhu."

"I know, Brother," Zhu replied with a sad smile. "Please, kill him for me."

Before Sha could even stop him, Zhu raised the rake in his hand to slam it into his own face. He planned to behead himself in order to prevent himself from hurting his brother.

"Stop. I forbid you from killing yourself."

The rake stopped mere inches from Zhu's head. No matter how much he tried to force his hand to move, the rake remained in place.

When William accepted the Golden Cubes from Sancus, he thought that they were just meant to capture beasts. However, the Golden Cubes were not ordinary "cages" that trapped beasts. They could also trap demonic creatures!

It was imbued with a very powerful contract that would force any Demon or Beast that William captured to obey his every command.

Naturally, in order for this ability to not be abused, Sancus gave it a limitation. Any Beast or Demon that William captured would obey his command for five years. When the five years was over, the cube would automatically release the captured beasts and give them back their freedom.

William was not a fan of slavery, so he felt bad about using this method to make Zhu obey his orders. However, he didn't have the leisure to be merciful. If he didn't capture Zhu, he would not stand a chance against these Centennial Ranked Warriors who used to be Immortal Heroes.

Unable to kill himself, Zhu squealed in frustration. His squeals reverberated across the desert which made the Heroic Spirits who didn't like him laugh in the heavens.

Among the countless stars in the sky, a King looked down at the two while holding a wine cup in his hands. The wine remained perfectly still in the cup. His eyes gazed upon the two warriors before shifting towards William who was looking at Sha with a serious expression.

(A/N: The wine cup is called Ochoko or Choko. Ask Google Senpai what they look like).

"You don't want to break your oath, but I want to reach Heaven's Gate," William said softly. "Since both of us will not change our minds, how about we compromise?"

Zhu returned to the golden cube and William returned it to his pocket.

"Let's fight, one on one. We will only use our physical skills, and abilities. We will not use any spells or magic power. " William proposed. "If you win, I promise that I will release Zhu. However, If I win, you will allow me to pass."

Sha summoned his Crescent Moon Spade and pointed its tip at William.

"I accept your challenge, Half-Elf," Sha agreed. "Let the Gods and the Heroes in the Heavens serve as my witness. I, Sha, will fight with my honor and dignity on the line. I will honor my oath as the wager of this battle!"

Roars of cheers and approval resounded from the sky as the Immortal Heroes acknowledged Sha's vow.

William took a deep breath as he summoned the wooden staff in his hand. He felt admiration for the Sand Demon's character, but he had no intention of losing.

The two fighters faced off against each other with the Gods and Heroes as their witnesses. Even the Jade Emperor, who had exiled Zhu and Sha from the Domain of Heaven, observed the battle from his throne.

His aged-old eyes looked at the Sand Demon who had once served under him. He then glanced towards the distance to look at the King who was still holding the wine cup in his hand.

The King hadn't taken a sip from the wine cup ever since William appeared at the Eleventh Trial. Sensing the Jade Emperor's gaze, the King gave him a brief nod before looking back at the battle that was about to take place.

David watched from his palace with a smile on his face. Although the chances of William winning this fight were slim, he believed that his protege would still manage to... break all the walls that stood before him.

Chapter 319: Quick Shot War Arts

"What is your name, boy?" Sha asked.

"William," William replied. "William Von Ainsworth."

The Sand Demon nodded and took a fighting stance.

"My name is Sha," Sha stated. "And I will not let you pass."

The wind blew over the desert, but the two fighters just stared at each other for a while. Neither of them took the initiative to attack. It was as if they were waiting for a signal before their fight started.

All of a sudden, Sha charged forward and William followed suit. The Sand Demon's weapon, the Crescent Moon Spade shone with a vengeance as the sunlight reflected off the tip of its blade. Sha was once a Heroic Spirit. Although he was stripped off his Divinity and powers, his mastery over his weapon had stayed with him, even in exile.

The weapon he wielded specialized in hook, stab, scoop, sweep, smack, and chop strikes using techniques from spear, staff, broadsword, and trident fighting styles.

It was an all purpose weapon for both attack and defense. Unlike William's wooden staff that looked so plain to the eye, the Crescent Moon Spade was capable of cutting things like a blade.

Although Sha knew how to fight in close combat, he was more of a Sorcerer that specialized in sand spells. Even so, he was stronger than William physically, so he thought that he wouldn't have a problem fighting the Half-Elf one-on-one.

When the two weapons collided, William was immediately sent flying due to the strength behind Sha's attack. As a Centennial Rank Beast, his strength couldn't be underestimated.

Sha didn't follow up his attack and looked at the boy with a calm gaze. "This is the only time that I will show mercy. If you don't plan on dying then you'd better fight me seriously."

William held the staff in his hands firmly as he narrowed his eyes. 'Such strength. My hands are still tingling from pain due to his casual strike. Well then, time to use my skills.'

The Half-Elf took a step forward and charged towards the Sand Demon. Sha stood completely still and waited for the boy to reach his strike zone. When William was only three meters away, the Sand Demon used the tip of his weapon to scoop up some sand and throw it at William's face.

The boy momentarily shielded his eyes with his hand, and Sha took that opportunity to attack. The Sand Demon didn't feel any shame in doing what he did. In the battlefield, when matters of life and death were on the line, there was no such thing as a dirty trick.

He slashed at the boy's body with the intention to cut it in half.

However, his attack completely missed its target. The moment William covered his eyes, he slammed his staff on the ground and somersaulted above the Sand Demon. The Half-Elf delivered a strike in mid-air, aiming for the Sand Demon's head, but he was up against a Centennial ranked beast that couldn't be easily hoodwinked in battle.

The blow was completely mitigated, when Sha used his right arm to block the strike from above. He then turned around and delivered a kick to William's chest which sent the boy flying several meters away from where he stood.

However, before Sha could even follow up his attack, William's staff slapped the side of his face, stopping him in his tracks. William had the ability to infuse his Aura on his weapon to make it attack on its own.

Unfortunately, Sha's face was thick enough to withstand a full strike from the staff at close range.

"No damage," William muttered as he successfully landed on the ground. "Time to try something different."

William ran away in order to gain distance from the Sand Demon, but he didn't run too far from his enemy. When he deemed that the distance was sufficient, he raised his arm to summon the wooden staff and channeled his aura on its body.

"Quick Shot War Arts... First Form," William said as he held the wooden staff like a flame thrower, aiming its tip at the Sand Demon in the distance. He also didn't forget to firmly plant his feet on the ground as he took a shooting stance. "Destroy everything in your path!"

"Railgun!"

A thunderous clap resounded as a concentrated ball of aura shot out from the tip of the wooden staff. William's face contorted in pain as he skidded tens of meters away from where he stood due to the skill's powerful recoil.

Sha didn't know what the boy did, but his instincts honed in battle made him jump subconsciously to his right side. A second later, his left arm exploded after getting hit by the invisible attack that William had just fired.

The Sand Demon screamed in pain at the unexpected injury he received. Everything happened so fast that he didn't understand how the boy was able to hurt him at that distance. All he knew was that the boy shouted and a few seconds later, his arm was destroyed instantly.

William looked at the Sand Demon while gritting his teeth due to pain. The recoil of the railgun was so strong that William felt that his right arm was about to fall off from his shoulder, due to the searing pain he was experiencing.

The Sand Demon roared and charged at William. Whatever the boy was planning, he wouldn't allow him to do it again.

William wanted to fire another Railgun at the charging demon, but he was afraid that his arm would literally be severed from his body due to the backlash. With his current strength, he could only fire the railgun once.

However, if there was a healer nearby, he could fire it every five seconds as long as his injuries were healed completely.

Seeing that his enemy was closing in on him, William held the staff with his left hand. Due to the passive skill "Ambidextrous", William could use his left hand as if it was his dominant arm.

The two exchanged a couple of blows from each other in close range. William didn't try to parry or block Sha's weapon because the Demon was stronger than him physically. All he did was dodge the demon's attacks, while channeling his aura into his weapon.

William's right hand lay limp at his side as he thrust his staff at his adversary, aiming at his eyes, neck, face, and chest.

'Quick Shot War Arts... Second Form,' William roared internally as he aimed the staff at Sha's body at close range.

"Shotgun!"

Sha's body bent over as a powerful force slammed into his stomach. If not for the armor he was wearing, he might have already suffered serious injuries from the attacks that he was seeing for the first time.

Before William could fire another shot, Sha brandished his weapon filled with his own Aura intent. Although William was a few meters away from the Sand Demon, a powerful force swatted him away like a tennis ball getting hit by a racket.

Blood spurted from the Shepherd's lips as he crashed heavily on the sandy desert floor, creating a dust cloud.

Sha panted as he glared at the red-headed boy in the distance. He didn't expect that the boy had several tricks under his sleeve and had caught him by surprise not only once, but twice. He would be a fool if he allowed William to get his way all the time.

While Sha's reasoning was sound, he didn't understand the mechanics of William's ability. Also, he made a mistake when he attacked William just now.

Instead of closing in and going for the kill, Sha sent the boy away with his strike that allowed the Half-Elf to have the tactical advantage over him.

Naturally, Sha realized this as well, but it was already too late.

He was about to run towards the boy's direction when he saw the Half-Elf with an evil grin on his face. William's staff was firmly embedded on the sand, supported by his left hand, and aimed in Sha's direction.

"Obliterate... Howitzer!"

Sha's body broke apart as William's full powered attack exploded in his face.

(A/N: Howitzer is similar to a cannon. For more information please ask google senpai.)

Chapter 320: You Don't Have Much Time, Will

William spat blood as he was pushed away by the recoil of his last attack. Although the "Quick Shot War Arts" were quite powerful. He still hadn't thought of a good way to withstand the recoils of his stronger attacks.

Also, the more powerful attacks drained his stamina drastically everytime he fired a round. Now, he understood why one of the attributes that he gained from acquiring the Job Class was an increase in his stamina by 200%

With his current strength, he could only fire Railgun and Howitzer four to five times using his original body, before running completely dry. Although the body he was using was strong, it was still only a replica and didn't have his natural attributes.

'I need to find a Job Class that is sturdy enough and has increased stamina recovery,' William thought as he gasped for breath while lying face up.

His body was aching all over and he couldn't even lift his hand to prop himself up.

It was at that moment when a shadow loomed over his body. Sha, the Sand Demon, stood a few meters away from him. William glanced at his opponent's body. There were no signs of the damage that he had caused during their clash.

"You won," Sha said after a full minute of silence. "As promised I will let you pass."

William sighed in his heart and used his thoughts to control the golden cube in his pocket. The Demonic Pig, Zhu, appeared beside William and looked at him with a complicated gaze.

After giving a snort, Zhu picked up William like a sack of rice and carried him on his shoulder.

"Be grateful, Oink!" Zhu commented as he walked in the direction of the last Trial that William was about to take. "I will carry you until we reach the end of this desert. Oink! However, I won't help you fight against the Celestial Guards that protect the Heavenly Gate. You are on your own. Oink!"

"Thank you," William sleepily replied.

This was another downside to using the Quick Shot War Arts, it made him sleepy now that his stamina had been completely drained from his body.

Sha glanced at the sleeping boy that was being carried by his friend towards the Heavenly Gate. He hesitated for a brief moment before deciding to follow behind Zhu.

As one of the Great Generals that once served the Jade Emperor, he knew how formidable the Celestial Guards were.

He wanted to tell William that reaching the Gate was impossible in his current state. Why? Because the Celestial Guards that guarded it were a million strong.

Not only that, the bulk of this army was composed of Gold Rank Fighters. There were also thousands of Platinum, and Mithril Rank Warriors. What was worse was that there were also a dozen Adamantium Ranks that served as commanders for this massive army.

Clearly, William didn't stand a chance of fighting them all, even if Zhu and Sha were to help him battle.

Zhu also thought this way, so he felt generous and decided to bring William to his last trial, so the boy could see the impossible mission he was trying to complete.

After the conclusion of the battle, the King finally moved his winecup towards his lips to take a sip. The battle hadn't progressed how he thought it would due to William's "unique" way of fighting.

The King was amused by the Half-Elf's battle strategy. He could tell that William was proficient in close and ranged combat. However, the ability to use Aura to manifest his unique abilities piqued the King's interest.

The other Immortal Heroes chatted with each other. Watching William fight was like watching a T.V show for them. They found his struggles interesting, especially after watching him clear the trials one by one.

Of course, there were others that were looking forward to his despair when he fully understood the next challenge he was about to face.

What William didn't know was that the trial also had a special meaning. There were certain individuals with strong Will Powers that died in their worlds. These souls refused to enter the Cycle of Reincarnation the natural way.

Since that was the case, the Heavenly Domain was made to give these souls a chance to prove their worth. Any soul that was able to clear the trials and reach the Heavenly Gate would be allowed entry into the Temple of the Gods where they could choose a Patron God and receive their blessings.

What happened to the souls that were unable to clear the Trial? Simple. They were dragged by the Celestial Army out of the Heavenly Domain and tossed into the Cycle of Reincarnation, where their memories would be erased. This was done so they could live their new lives without having any attachments to their previous one.

William was unaware of this rule because David didn't tell him.

The God of Shepherds planned this whole thing because he believed that William would be able to overcome this obstacle. This was why he had asked Lily to "smuggle" a part of William's soul to the Temple and store it inside a vessel.

Also, David wanted William's soul to be bathed with Divine Energy so that when he returned to his world, he would immediately regain consciousness. This way, William wouldn't need to spend a few months in a comatose condition, which was detrimental considering the current situation of his Kingdom.

As much as possible. David wanted William to regain his ability to fight for the sake of the people that were important to him.

'I believe in you, Will,' David thought as he glanced at the countless Immortal Heroes that were watching William's trial. He hoped that one of them would lend him their hand and bestow upon him the power of the "Heroic Avatar".

This way, William would have another trump card that he could use when he fought against an opponent that he couldn't defeat with his current strength.

If one were to classify the Heroic Heroes, who were protecting the Temple of the Gods, all of them could be compared to beasts that were at the peak of the Millennial Rank.

'You don't have much time, Will,' David thought as he looked at Ravenlord Citadel. The defenders of the Citadel were in the middle of an intense battle against the Aenasha Dynasty. The million Ant reinforcements had arrived, and both sides were wholeheartedly slaughtering each other, painting the battlefield with the color of their blood.