

Strongest 711

Chapter 711: My Offer Is Always Available

Two days had passed since William had talked to Aamon in his temple.

The Half-Elf had a meeting with Emperor Leonidas, and told him about his decision to leave the Kraetor Empire to go to Hestia Academy.

Surprisingly, the Emperor didn't forbid him from doing so, and even insisted that he take Princess Sidonie and Chiffon along with him on his journey. William was quite happy with this development, because his two wives would be coming with him to the academy.

"Hestia Academy is the biggest learning institution in the Central Continent," Emperor Leonidas said. "This is where the elites of the younger generation gather. My sons have all studied there at one point in time. Unfortunately, my grandchildren weren't able to do the same due to... conflicts in familial interest."

William knew better than to ask what this conflict was. Emperor Leonidas would soon step down from his throne, and his sons were all gunning to take his position. Because of the political struggle amongst the members of the Royal Family, the Princes and Princesses decided to stay in the capital to help their parents win the Emperor's affection.

"Since you are already part of our family, you better do your best to stand out in Hestia Academy," Emperor Leonidas patted William's shoulder. "You are very famous right now, but that won't stop a lot of people from wanting to know your true strength."

"Also, your wives are very beautiful. I'm sure that many young men will feel jealous of you, and this will cause them to make your life difficult in the academy."

William smiled and didn't say anything else. He was more than happy to dump a ton of night soil on the faces of anyone who wished to cause harm to him and his wives. The Half-Elf was sure that after they saw him in action, they would be too disgusted to even look at his face!

Emperor Leonidas had given him two flying carriages pulled by Gryphons to make the journey towards the testing area of the academy easier. Those who didn't want to, or didn't have the means take the backdoor, had to take an entrance exam.

Just like the Hellan Royal Academy, any student could enroll in it. However, they would need to pass a trial before the gates of the academy would open to them.

The fun part about the trial was that it was open year-round. Anyone who wished to take the test could visit the Island of Antilia. This island was managed by Jophiel, who was tasked with supervising all promising students who planned to enroll in Hestia Academy.

"You are not allowed to fail the entrance exam," Chloe said with a serious expression on her face. "You are my Disciple, so failing is not an option. If you fail, my reputation in the academy will take a hit."

"Sixth Master, is there an easier way to enroll in the academy without going through the trial?" William inquired. Although he was confident that he would pass the test, he felt that it was too troublesome to start from scratch.

Chloe nodded her head in acknowledgement. "Of course there is. Do you think that some of those spoiled and arrogant nobles have what it takes to pass the trials? Naturally, there is an easy way to enter the academy and that is by paying two million gold coins per person."

"That's it!" William clapped his hands together. "Wait here, I'll go ask Emperor Leonidas to give me a few million gold coins."

William was about to go and see Emperor Leonidas to get the VIP ticket to the academy when a teasing voice reached his ears from behind. Clearly, the Emperor didn't plan mention this to him when they had their talk.

"There's no need to go and see grandfather," Princess Sidonie said with a smile. "He has already given me six million gold coins, so Ian, Chiffon, and I, can enter Hestia Academy through the backdoor."

"Um? Why only six million? What about me?"

"Grandfather said that you are already rich. He added that you should pay for your own education. You are already the owner of many floors in Babylon. Paying two million gold coins is something you can easily afford."

William scratched his head because he couldn't refute her words. The only problem was that he didn't have any cash on hand. All of his money was handled by his grandfather. Knowing the old coot, the latter would fight him to the bitter end if William asked him to give him a few million for enrollment.

There was also the issue with Zhu and Sha, since both of them had just arrived in the world of Hestia. Although they had raided a bandit headquarters, along with Sun Wukong to gain some funds, it was still lacking and didn't even amount to half a million gold coins.

Lilith, who had "accidentally" walked in on their discussion, offered William an alternative.Â

"I can pay your enrollment fee," Lilith commented. "I can even pay the enrollment fees of your two friends. All you need to do is come with me to the Ares Empire, so I can withdraw some of your seed— I mean, withdraw some gold coins from our treasury."

William snorted and ignored Lilith's proposal. He was not a fool. The Half-Elf was aware that the moment he entered the Amazon Empire, he would only be able to come out after he was milked dry, and his hips dislocated from too much snu snu!

"No thanks," William replied. "I can handle this myself."

"Okay, but if you change your mind, my offer is always available," Lilith leaned on the wall and gave William a teasing smile.

William went to find Kenneth and told him what he was planning to do. The delicate-looking Elf replied that this issue was already taken care of in their end.

"Princess Eowyn is scheduled to enroll at Hestia Academy in order to learn more about the world," Kenneth explained. "The expedition in the Southern Continent opened up her eyes and it made her realize how big the world was. The Royal Family supports her decision because they believe that they can't stay cooped up in the Silvermoon Continent forever."

"All of those that participated in the tournament, excluding me, were to become the Princess' guardians during her stay in the academy. Their enrollment has already been paid for."

William eyed his ex-roommate with a confused look on his face. "Then how about you? Why didn't they pay for your enrollment?"

"There's no need to do that. I will take the test with you," Kenneth replied.

He didn't want to tell William that his relationship with his family was very bad. They would not bother spending anything, let alone two million gold coins, just to let him study in the Human world.

"I see. Well, I think the trial won't be an issue. Although I don't know how strong you are, Sidonie told me that you came second place in the Tournament of Champions."

"Compared to your achievement, being a runner up isn't something to be proud of."

While the two of them were talking, Kenneth suddenly felt dizzy and unconsciously grabbed on to William to steady himself.

The Half-Elf supported his body in concern because Kenneth's face had become extremely pale all of a sudden.

"What's wrong?" William asked. His tone was laced with concern which secretly made Kenneth happy.

In truth, Kenneth didn't know if William still thought of him as a real friend, and was merely being civil with him because he was Lady Arwen's disciple.

"I'm fine," Kenneth replied as he took a step back from William. "This is a normal occurrence, so there's no need for concern. When are we going to leave?"

William didn't pry any further because he could see that the silver-haired Elf's face had regained its color. He told him that they would leave in two days and head towards the island of Antilia in order to take the test of Hestia Academy.

After making sure that Kenneth was really fine, William set out in order to prepare for their journey. He was only one trial away from fulfilling his promise to Est, Ian, and Isaac, so he was looking forward to meeting Shannon in the academy.

'I just hope that her problem isn't too hard to solve,' William thought as he walked along the hallway of the palace. 'Est, wait for me.. I miss you.'

Chapter 712: A Battle Of Unprecedented Proportions Was About To Begin
Hellan Kingdom...

"Young Master, what's wrong?" Isaac asked as he looked at Est with concern.

Est shook his head as he picked up the book that had fallen on the floor. "Nothing. I just thought I heard William's voice."

Elizabeth, Est's mother, smiled as she looked at her daughter with a knowing glance. This was not the first time that her daughter's thoughts had wandered when she was alone and had nothing to do.

She knew that Est had wanted to travel with William to the Kraetor Empire, but King Noah had prevented her from doing so. After Prince Lionel had been executed, and Prince Rufus exiled from the kingdom, only Prince Ernest was left.

King Noah had decided to raise him as the next ruler, and Est became his study partner. Since she was unable to accompany William to the Central Continent, Est tasked Ian to take her place and keep the Half-Elf safe.

Although she knew that William had a legion of Beasts to protect him, she was still worried about his safety.

"Young Master, My Lady, we should be leaving for Lont soon," Isaac reminded Est and Elizabeth.

They had been invited to celebrate Eve's seventh birthday. The nobles of the Kingdom were doing their best to form a good relationship with the Ainsworth Family, but James was aloof and ignored their advances.

Only a select few, like Est, had managed to keep close ties with William's family, and this was largely due to the Half-Elf's influence.

"Is everything prepared?" Elizabeth asked.

Isaac nodded. "Yes, My Lady. Sir Herman and Lady Nana have just finished preparing the carriage. We can leave anytime."

"Let's go," Elizabeth replied. "Arriving early is also a good thing."

This was not the first time that Elizabeth had visited Lont. Due to William's invitation, she would go there at least once a month to breathe some fresh air, and play with the adorable Eve, who was growing into a fine young lady.

Elizabeth's health gradually became better thanks to her short vacations to the countryside. Usually, the trip from the Capital to Lont would take four days, but after the war, James had built a teleportation gate in the center of his three territories, which were managed by his son, Mordred.

Since then, the trade in the countryside had increased and several merchants had made the place more lively.

Once they passed through the teleportation gate, it would only take half an hour to reach Lont when using a flying carriage. This was why Elizabeth could enjoy her short vacations in Lont, and not worry about the exhausting travel from the capital to the countryside.

When they arrived, they saw several familiar faces as well.

William's two knights, Dave and Conrad, were already there and having a lively conversation with Matthew, who had recently become a father to a beautiful baby girl.

Leah was in the kitchen helping Helen with the celebration dishes that they were going to serve for Eve's birthday party.

"Grandma!" A lively voice greeted Elizabeth as soon as she strolled towards the garden.

Suddenly, a seven-year old girl with long red hair ran towards her with a big smile on her face.

"Eve!" Elizabeth hugged the treasure of the Ainsworth family and kissed both of her cheeks. "Did you behave like a good girl while I was away?"

"Un!"

"Good girl."

Ariadne, Eve's mentor, walked towards the two, followed by seven ducks and a white goose, who served as Eve's protectors.

Just like always, no one could remember what she looked like. Only Eve was able to see through her ability, and not forget her appearance.

"Good day to you, Lady Elizabeth," Ariadne greeted.

Est's mother looked up at the approaching oracle, and nodded her head in acknowledgement.

"Miss Ariadne, I pray that you have been well since our last meeting."

"Well enough to be able to catch that mischievous girl whenever she plays truant and does not attend my classes."

Elizabeth giggled because she had already expected this answer. Eve was a free spirit and she would always do things depending on her mood. She had been raised with love and care, and although she was not really a spoiled child, everyone was willing to pamper her since she was loved by all.

"Everyone, lunch is ready," Helen said as she stepped into the garden to fetch Elizabeth, Eve, and Ariadne. "Eve, come with me for a bit. I made a dress for this occasion."

"Un!" Eve bid Elizabeth and Ariadne goodbye as she followed Helen back to the house.

Her dress was dirty because she had been out in the fields, playing with the ducks. If not for the fact that today was her birthday, she might have gone on an adventure, bringing the ducks and goose with her.

Elizabeth sighed after Eve entered the house.

"Are you really going to take Eve to the Central Continent half a year from now?" Elizabeth asked Ariadne who was standing beside her.

The Oracle of the Herd nodded her head. "She has learned almost everything that she can learn here in Lont. We need to go on a pilgrimage to the Central Continent, so she can officially receive the blessing in the Main Temple of the Gods.

"All the Oracles that have come before her have done the same. It is only a matter of time before her powers are fully awakened."

"But, isn't it still too early?" Elizabeth asked. "She had just turned seven. Can't that pilgrimage wait until she's a bit older?"

Ariadne shook her head. "The prophecy of the Elves is reaching maturity, and soon, the Dark Prince will reveal himself. Eve needs to receive the blessing of her Patron God, so she will be protected from the

threat that will cover the entire world in darkness. If she misses this chance, it may never come again. So, although she is still young, it is imperative that we go to the Central Continent."

Ariadne's tone was firm. She had seen things in her vision that she couldn't share with anyone. The reason she would wait half a year before journeying to the Central Continent was because King Minos would be sending his sons, Icarus and Daedalus, to accompany them on their journey.

The two Beasts were about to have a breakthrough in their strength and, according to King Minos, it would take them half a year to consolidate their powers.

Although the white goose was strong, it was only at the peak of the Millennial Rank. Only a few could match it in the Southern Continent, but its strength would only be average in the Central Continent.

In the place where the major powers of the world congregated, there were many crouching tigers and hidden dragons that lurked within its vast landscape.

Only the power of Myriad Beasts would ensure Eve's safety, so Ariadne was willing to wait for the two minotaurs to upgrade their strength, so they could serve as Eve's bodyguards.

"I will miss her terribly," Elizabeth sighed for the second time. "Lont will never be the same without her."

Ariadne shared Elizabeth's opinion, but she was someone who could see the bigger picture. Eve's fate wasn't tied to the Southern Continent because this stage was too small for her.

Ariadne knew that the fleeting peace that they were experiencing right now would soon come to an end, and a battle of unprecedented proportions was about to begin.

Chapter 713: Let's Keep A Lookout On The People Who Are Going To Die

After a week of travel, three flying carriages arrived at the island of Antilia.

Lilith had a carriage all for herself, while Kenneth and Pearl shared another.

As for William, he shared his flying carriage with his lovers, alongside his sixth Master Chloe. Zhu and Sha, who had stayed inside the Thousand Beast Domain, were being given VIP treatment by Charmaine, and the rest of the Elves in William's Villa.

The two Demons had been very curious about the Dungeon of Atlantis, so they decided to explore it together.

Chloee had told William everything she knew about the administrator of the island, Jophiel. As for the Entrance Exams, Chloee didn't know much about them because all of them were random.

"Although he doesn't get along with the majority of the Professors in the academy, he is still the ideal person to manage the entrance exam because he is the fairest of all," Chloee said. "He will not fail anyone as long as he sees their potential. This is also why he is called the Gatekeeper of Hestia Academy. It is not bad to form a good relationship with him."

William nodded his head in understanding. "Don't worry, Sixth Master, this exam is a walk in the park for me."

"That's the spirit!" Chloee placed her hands on her waist and eyed William with appreciation.

Elliot and Conan were relaxing on the couch. They, too, thought that the exam would not pose any problems for them. After all that they had been through in the Dungeon of Atlantis, the two familiars had already perfected their teamwork with William. They were more than ready to face any kind of difficulty that the examiner would throw at them.

"For some reason, this exam takes me back to when I first enrolled at Hellan Royal Academy," William said softly as he patted Chiffon's head. "It has been many years since then, and to this day, I still haven't experienced the happy academy life I envisioned."

"Kekeke, indeed, you still haven't experienced a fulfilling academy life," Conan agreed. "So many things have happened, and your youth passed by so quickly."

The corner of William's lips twitched as he eyed the devil familiar who was eating some butter cookies. His words implied that William was no longer young, but in reality he was only eighteen years old. The years he had lived on Earth didn't count!

"Well, we should do our best to enjoy this opportunity," Elliot said as he lazily leaned on the cushy pillow like a king. "After all, this is the last academy arc of this series."

Before William could ask Elliot what he meant that this was going to be their last academy arc, a knock was heard on the door of the carriage.

"Will, the administrator is starting to gather the examinees. We should head over as well."

Kenneth's voice was not too loud, but it was more than enough for William to hear his voice. After telling Kenneth that he would be there shortly, the Half-Elf talked to Zhu and Sha via telepathy, and told them that it was now time to leave the Thousand Beast Domain.

Five minutes later, William, Zhu, Sha, and Kenneth, walked towards the open area where the introduction would be held.

Only the examinees were allowed to enter the area, so Princess Sidonie, Ian, Chiffon, and Chloe could only wish him luck on the exam. The little fairy also told William that they would be waiting on the final island, where those who passed the exam would appear.

Soon, a middle-aged man with short blonde hair and blue eyes stepped on a raised platform to address everyone that had come to take the Hestia Academy Entrance Exam.

"Good day to all of you. My name is Jophiel, and I will be your supervisor in the upcoming exam," Jophiel announced. "There are more than two thousand of you gathered here today, but only a few will be able to enter the academy grounds."

"Those who want to back out now, can still back out. After you sign the death waiver, there is no turning back. You only have one life. Do not throw it away just because you've dreamed about entering Hestia Academy."

Jophiel scanned the surroundings, but all he saw were determined faces. The people that had gathered at Antilia Island knew that there was a chance of death during the trials.

Although the Academy had stepped up to prevent any casualties, there were still many young men and women who had died taking the exam, which had raised Jophiel's notoriety among the populace of the Central Continent.

"It's your funeral," Jophiel stated. However, he didn't try to dissuade them again. All he did was ask everyone to sign the Death Waiver before the start of the exam.

"Conan, you don't have to sign that Death Waiver," Elliot said as he scratched his head. "As long as we don't use 100% of our power, we won't die even if we are killed."

"Kekeke, you don't understand Elliot," Conan replied as he signed a Death Waiver. "Although we can't die, that doesn't mean that we can't follow the standard operating procedure of mortals. Isn't it more fun this way? Um? The words of this dotted line are suspicious... it said that all items that we possess would be confiscated by the academy on the condition that we die during the trial."

"Really?" Elliot read the spot where Conan was pointing at and chuckled. "Doesn't this mean that we can also confiscate the items of those who died?"

"Oh... when you put it that way, it is indeed possible."

"Great. Let's keep a lookout on the people who are going to die. Let's split the items fifty-fifty."

"Kekeke. Sounds like a plan. Let's do it!"

Conan flapped its wings and waved the waiver in his hand. He then raised his voice so that he would be heard by everyone who were currently signing their Death Waivers.

"Everyone. Do not worry. I, Conan, hereby swear that I will take responsibility for your possessions when you die," Conan declared. "I won't allow the academy to profit from your deaths. So, please, rest in peace!"

Elliot smacked his forehead when he heard his twin's declaration. "My Goodness, you shouldn't tell this to them face to face. Can't we just quietly steal— I mean, safeguard their possessions once they kick the bucket? Um... you sir over there, I just saw how you will die. Do you mind if I accompany you later during the trial?"

Everyone drew in deep breaths as they stared hatefully at the two Familiars who were already eyeing their possessions even when they were still alive. The man that Elliot had called out earlier, immediately tore his Death Waiver and left the premises.

For some reason, he felt that the Angelic Familiar's cryptic announcement had unnerved him, so he decided to try again next year!

William, Kenneth, Zhu, and Sha, walked away and pretended that they didn't know the two suicidal familiars who had earned the ire of everyone. Although William was confident in his strength, he didn't want to antagonize thousands of people.

"Miss beautiful, it would be best if you don't take the exam," Elliot said as he flew over a pretty lady who seemed to be in her late teens. "The thought of a monster eating you whole breaks my heart."

"Will I really die?" the pretty girl asked with an anxious expression on his face.

Elliot nodded. "Yes, but if you want to survive, I am selling lucky charms. They can help you survive this calamity. They are very cheap, just one gold and a kiss on the lips, and your chances of dying will decrease drastically. Take note that the only refund I will give back is the kiss, the gold coin is non refundable."

Elliot's sweet talking and suaveness was quite effective and the pretty lady bought one lucky charm and gave him a gold coin, and a kiss on the lips.

After getting the lucky charm, the lady went away with a sense of security. Some of the participants felt that the familiar was just scamming them, but the thought of dying was something that they couldn't push away in their mind.

A gold coin and a kiss was cheap compared to their lives, so more and more people were starting to get tempted by Elliot's proposal.

"Give me one Lucky Charm," a teenage boy who had freckles on his face approached Elliot.

Elliot looked at him with a serious expression and shook his head. "I only sell my lucky charm to girls. All of you guys can just roll over and die for all I care. Ah! Miss beautiful with the pink dress, can I interest you in some lucky charms?"

Elliot flew in the direction of the girl wearing a pink dress and left the boy with an awkward look on his face.

The young men who saw this scene cursed Elliot in their hearts, and vowed to target him during the exam.

The angelic familiar didn't give a hoot about what they thought. He was not easy to kill, and even if they succeeded in doing so, William could summon him again after twenty four hours.

"... Your familiar sure is something," Kenneth said with a complicated expression. "According to Lady Celeste, Familiars were born with traits belonging to their master. So, you have this kind of side to you that I didn't know about."

"You might have misheard her," William replied with a face filled with righteousness. "Do I look like a womanizing skirt chaser to you? I am like Conan. Straightforward and honest. I don't have a hobby of picking up girls and asking for a kiss. Isn't that right, Conan?"

"Yes. William isn't like that," Conan patted his chest like a trustworthy person. "He just kisses women in his dreams, and makes love to them every night. He had been doing it for yea– mpph!"

William hurriedly grabbed the whistle blower and covered the devil's mouth tight. Conan kept on struggling in his grip, but William held him in a vice-grip, preventing him from spilling his secrets.

Kenneth looked at him weirdly, but didn't comment more about the matter. He just closed his eyes and waited for Jophiel to start the entrance exam. What William did with his lovers was none of his business.

Half an hour later, all the waivers had been gathered. Jophiel gave William a long, hard, stare after he received the Half-Elf's waiver and seeing the red-headed teenager's name on it. A minute later, he turned around and made an announcement.

"Everyone, follow me. We are going to the exam's location," Jophiel declared. No one could see his face, but a glint of something ominous passed his eyes for a brief moment. 'Looks like this year's exam is going to be interesting.. I look forward to your performance, William Von Ainsworth.'

Chapter 714: Meeting An Old Friend

The forest floor seemed to be trembling as thousands of people ran at the same time.

Jophiel, the lead examiner, ran in a carefree manner followed by the aspiring students of Hestia Academy. In the beginning, there were several people who wanted to show off their prowess and ran ahead of him.

Jophiel didn't mind because he had already told everyone their destination. He said that those who were able to reach the northern tip of the island, would be able to pass the first stage of the exam.

The only condition was that they had to run towards it. Anyone who flew, used spells, artifacts, or rode beasts would automatically be disqualified.

Those who ran ahead of Jophiel, and the rest of the examinees, felt very smug. They were confident in their physical prowess, and wanted to leave a good impression on the lead examiner. Unfortunately, they underestimated this simple marathon, and were soon panting for breath when they reached the quarter mark of their journey.

Their running course was 1,181 miles long. Every quartermark of their journey, their body weight would increase by a hundred percent (only the original 100% will increase and not the increment).

This in itself was not a big deal, but there were wild beasts that would occasionally attack the runners using ranged attacks, especially if they were running solo. Although these beasts were not that powerful, the constant harassment made the already difficult run more difficult.

In the end, these runners waited for the main group to arrive and ran alongside them. There was safety in numbers and they had learned it the hard way.

William and his group were not normal individuals. They were all quite strong, so they paced themselves properly. They just followed behind Jophiel and kept the examiner in their sights.

When the main group reached the half-way mark, the lead examiner increased his pace, which surprised the majority of the runners who were following behind him.

There were several repeaters in the group, so they already knew that this was bound to happen. They had even given this course a name and they called it the "Beginner Killing Course".

Most of the first timers would drop at this stage, and all of them would start training for a few months, before going back to Antilia Island to take the examination again.

These veterans ran at the rear of the group and allowed the "first timers" to run ahead of them.

In cycling, there is a trick called "Drafting". The lead cyclist would be the one pushing against the wind pressure and create a pocket of air behind him. The cyclist following him would suffer less air resistance, and match the lead cyclist speed using less effort.

If you use this technique, you will save a lot of energy. This was why a team of cyclists took turns in taking the lead position, so that others could rest behind them, allowing the group to have enough stamina to send their ace to reach the finish line in one mad sprint for victory.

"I guess that time we spent running in hell is finally paying off," Zhu said as he controlled his breathing.

Sha nodded his head as he saw another examinee fall behind the group. More and more people were falling behind, and some of them couldn't even run anymore due to exhaustion.

They had been running for four hours, and they estimated that it would take them at least ten to fifteen more hours to reach their destination.

"Are you okay?" William asked Kenneth who was starting to lag behind. He could tell that something was wrong with the Elf because there were instances when he would suddenly falter as he ran beside him.

"I'm fine," Kenneth replied as he rubbed his temple. He was doing his best to stay awake, but the drowsiness he felt was getting stronger with every hour that passed.

William frowned and he asked Zhu and Sha to look after Kenneth for a while as he sped up to the lead to talk to Jophiel. There was a question he was meaning to ask, and he wondered if the lead examiner would allow such a thing.

"Sir, excuse me," William said as he ran side by side with Jophiel. "There are several restrictions placed on this trial. However, there is no rule that states that you can't carry a person to the finish line."

Jophiel glanced at William and nodded his head. "There is indeed no rule that forbids anyone from carrying someone to the finish line."

"So, is it allowed?"

"It is allowed. However, very few do it. The weight increase will still affect the person that is being carried. Meaning, the burden of the one carrying that person would also increase drastically as we near the finish line."

"Thank you for answering my question," William gave Jophiel a brief nod before going back to his group.

Jophiel gave William a side-long glance before once again looking in front of him. He had witnessed many people do the same thing in the past. Among them, those that succeeded didn't surpass the number of fingers on his left hand.

Whether William would be able to accomplish that feat, he would only know once the Half-Elf crossed the finish line.

"I'll carry you," William said. "Don't worry. I'm confident that I can carry you all the way."

After a brief internal struggle, Kenneth accepted William's offer. He was really at his limit, and the power of his Divinity couldn't be denied. The Half-Elf carried Kenneth in a princess carry, and marveled on how light he was.

Half a minute later, Kenneth closed his eyes to sleep. Those who held the power of Sloth weren't really built for long marathons. The silver-haired Elf had already gone above and beyond his capability. He was even surprised that he managed to last this long in an event that required constant physical activity.

The hours passed, and only a few hundred were still following behind Jophiel. The sun had already set, and the surroundings were quite dark. If not for the fact that Elliot used his powers to create several balls of light to illuminate the way, some of the survivors might have already tripped on the ground due to how dark it was.

William had no problem seeing in the dark because he was a Half-Elf, and was blessed with Dark Vision.

William estimated that they were almost at the last quarter of their journey. However, something unexpected happened.

Just as they made a turn in the path, Jophiel suddenly disappeared. He literally vanished in front of everyone, and even William didn't know how the Lead Examiner accomplished such a thing, right under his nose.

Suddenly, a loud howling sound was heard in the distance. William assumed that it came from a wolf, because the howl was quite distinct. As if to answer the call, hundreds of howls erupted out of nowhere, and it made the survivors frown.

All of them were quite proficient in fighting, so they weren't afraid of a battle against wolves. However, their confidence collapsed when they heard an earth shaking howl that held considerable power behind it.

Only William, Elliot, Conan, Zhu, and Sha were not fazed by this powerful presence who seemed to be the Alpha of the wolf pack.

Optimus had already identified the source of the howl, and had shown the information to William in his status page.

When the Half-Elf saw the name of the Millennial Beast, a smile appeared on his face, as if he was meeting an old friend.

It was none other than a Thunder Horned Wolf. A Millennial Beast that was at its peak stage, and the same beast that William had killed back in Lont, alongside Ella when the Wolf Tide descended upon the Hellan Kingdom.

For the examinees, this was a creature that was out of their league.

Jophiel looked with indifference at the thousands of Dire Wolves that were charging towards the examinees' direction.

This was not included in the Trial, but the Wolf Pack suddenly appeared out of nowhere. If William wasn't in the group, Jophiel would have faced this wolf army alone to protect everyone.

However, since William was already there, he decided to just watch as the battle unfolded. He wanted to know the abilities of the person that had gained so much fame after his achievement in the Tower of Babylon.

This was also in alignment with the order of the Headmaster of Hestia Academy. As the person that was in charge of the entrance exams, Jophiel was given full authorization to gauge William's current strength.

Just like everyone else, he was very curious about William's combat ability. If he managed to pass this trial with flying colors, the academy would definitely welcome him with open arms. They were always in the lookout for promising individuals that would help safeguard the world of Hestia, in its entirety.

Chapter 715: My Words Are Law [Part 1]

Screams erupted in the forest as the examinees found themselves face to face with thousands of Dire Wolves, and their leader, the Thunder Horned Wolf.

None of the teenagers were weak. Even though they were completely outnumbered, they had the ability to overcome the ferocious Dire Wolves that were eyeing them with greed. The only problem was that none of them were strong enough to fight against a Millennial Beast at its peak stage.

If it was only a Centennial Beast, they could probably beat it. But, a Millennial Beast was too much for these examinees, and the mere sight of it unnerved them.

"You can put me down now," Kenneth said as he opened his eyes.

He awoke because he felt something that could potentially threaten his life. After looking at the Beast Army in front of him, Kenneth knew that William was enough to easily defeat all of the Direwolves, including their leader, even if he fought alone.

"Okay." William nodded his head.

Just as soon as Kenneth's feet touched the ground, the Thunder Horned Wolf roared and the thousands of Dire Wolves attacked en masse.

William didn't care too much about the Dire Wolves because he believed that the examinees were strong enough to handle them. However, he still gave an order to Elliot and Conan to keep the teenagers from getting killed by the Wolf Army.

"Do you need help?" Zhu asked.

William shook his head. "I am more than enough to play with this thing."

"Okay. We'll just look after the others," Zhu commented. Just like William, he wasn't worried about a mere Millennial Beast. He was not aware that the Thunder Horned Wolf's last resort was strong enough to wipe out an entire capital of a kingdom when push came to shove.

The Thunder Horned Wolf's final attack, Storm Annihilation, was as powerful as a full-powered attack by a Myriad Beast.

Among all the Millennial Beasts, only this particular wolf was capable of doing that. Only those with complete confidence in their abilities would actively provoke this sinister beast, who was notorious for mass destruction.

William flew towards the Thunder Horned Wolf to prevent it from joining the fray and hurting everyone.

The two forces clashed and the battlefield became extremely chaotic.

Howls, grunts, shouts, roars, and screams reverberated in the air as the examinees fought with everything they had.

"Ahh!" The pretty girl who bought Elliot's charm was hit by an Air Blast from an Alpha Wolf, and her body slammed to a tree.

She had been seriously injured. Her face became instantly pale when she saw the two-meter wolf charging in her direction. The examinees who were fighting near her were too busy, fending off other Dire Wolves, so no one was able to give her any support.

Just as the wolf lunged at the girl to bite her head off, a lightning bolt hit its face, and sent it flying a few meters back.

"Miss Beautiful, worry not, for I, Elliot, am here to save you," Elliot said as he floated between the wolf and the pretty girl.

Lightning sparked around his body and a powerful wave of energy erupted from his fingertip.

"Chain Lightning!"

A lightning bolt that was as thick as an electric pole, obliterated the Alpha Wolf, turning its body into a piece of charcoal. However, it didn't end there. Just as the name suggested, the lightning passed through the other wolves that were near its location.

The pretty girl's mouth hung open as she looked at the unbelievable scene in front of her. She never expected the little familiar, whom she bought her lucky charm from, to easily kill the Alpha Wolf that almost ended her life.

"All those who bought lucky charms from me are under my protection," Elliot said as he flicked his hair in arrogance. "Girls, stand behind me. I'll deal with these small fries. As long as I, Elliot, am around, I will not let them touch even a strand of your precious hairs."

Elliot fired a barrage of lightning bolts at the Dire Wolves that had panicked after one of their leaders had died.

The Alpha Wolf was a Rank C Beast, and the other Dire Wolves were Rank D.

For Elliot and Conan who had faced stronger opponents in the Dungeon of Atlantis, this battle was a walk in the park and carried no suspense.

"Shield Bash!" Conan summoned a shield and slammed it into a Dire Wolf who had escaped Elliot's powerful attacks. Just as he was about to look for another target, he heard a call of help coming from a teenage boy who was being assaulted by six Dire Wolves.

"Help!" the teenage boy screamed in desperation as the wolves tried to attack him in every direction. He could handle two wolves at a time, but six wolves was something way beyond his abilities.

Just as he was about to be attacked from his blindspot, a round shield flew in the air and smashed the head of the wolf who used a sneak attack on the boy. It then flew towards the other wolves, hitting them all in the head, and giving them serious concussions.

"Shield Boomerang!" Conan summoned more shields and hurled them in different directions. Although he specialized in defense, the Devil Familiar had learned two offensive skills after William had reached the max level of the Familiamancer Class.

Although its damage was not as powerful as Elliot's lightning bolts, Conan's attack skills were strong enough to deal with weaker beasts that were Rank C and below.

Zhu casually swiped his nine-toothed rake at the Dire Wolves that had targeted him, and ended their lives in a heartbeat.

Sha, on the other hand, was already holding a gourd in his hand. Sand flowed from it and became deadly weapons that ended the life of all the Dire Wolves that were unlucky enough to be within twenty meters around him.

Jophiel nodded his head in appreciation because he wasn't expecting William's group to be very strong. As one of the Adamantium Ranked Warriors in the academy, he could tell that the Dire Wolves posed no threat to them whatsoever.

Kenneth stood still and held a short sword in his hand. He didn't actively participate in the battle, and only attacked the wolves that had chosen to attack him. As the runner up of the Tournament of Champions, mere Dire Wolves were not enough to phase him.

If William wasn't busy dealing with the Millennial Wolf, he would definitely say that Kenneth was currently in "Energy Saving Mode".

The moment Sha, and Zhu, joined Elliot and Conan in protecting the examinees, the Dire Wolves ferocious charge was put to a complete stop.

If they didn't die from Elliot's lightning bolts, they would find themselves coming face to face with a shield that would knock them unconscious.

If they survived those two attacks, they would have their bodies torn apart by Zhu's nine-toothed rake.

If ever they were truly lucky, and survived this three layered attack that protected the students, they would find themselves encased in sand and have their bodies squeezed until they burst apart.

The examinees looked at their four saviors with respect and admiration. They believed that if Elliot, Conan, Zhu, and Sha, were not present, all of them would have died in the first stage of the Entrance Exam.

The five-meter wolf crashed on the ground with a bloody nose, after receiving a powerful kick from William.

William had equipped his Zen Master Job Class, and pummeled the Thunder Horned Wolf's face with punches and kicks that made it realize that the red-headed boy was way stronger than it expected.

After being beaten black and blue without having the ability to fight back, the Leader of the Wolf Pack gave a loud howl before running away in defeat.

The remaining Dire Wolves also turned tail and ran after their leader. They thought that they were dealing with easy prey, so the Thunder Horned Wolf ordered the attack. They didn't expect that they were about to kick a steel plate, and would suffer terribly from it.

"That's it?" William blinked in disbelief as he watched the Thunder Horned Wolf and its lackeys run for their lives.

The Half-Elf scratched his head in disappointment.. He was waiting for the Big Boss to launch the Storm of Annihilation so that he could deliver the coup de grace on its bum, and make it regret it was ever born.

Chapter 716: My Words Are Law [Part 2]

The Thunder Horned Wolf was still in the prime of its life and didn't have the intention of using its ultimate move. Even if it survived its suicidal attack, it would be greatly weakened and would become the prey of the other strong Beasts on the Island of Antilia.

It would not allow itself to become the prey of others, so it decided to retreat instead of continuing a losing battle against the Half-Elf, whose evil smile made it clench its chrysanthemum subconsciously.

After the battle ended, everyone tended to their injuries.

Elliot was holding a rejuvenating balm in his hand, and busied himself in administering first aid to the ladies. Instead of asking for gold coins, he only asked for kisses, which made the boys draw deep breaths in jealousy.

A few minutes later, Jophiel re-appeared and clapped his hands to give applause to the survivors. There had been no casualties, due to everyone's efforts and this was enough to gain his approval.

"With the power vested upon me by the academy, I hereby declare that all of you who stayed to fight, passed the first stage of the exam," Jophiel said. He then used a magic spell to magnify the power of voice and shouted to those that had chosen to escape and save their own lives during the battle.

"Those who ran away will be disqualified from taking the exam. The academy has no need for people who would abandon others in the face of danger. Teaching them would just be a waste of time and resources."

When the deserters heard this, they immediately regretted their decision. They then returned to the group and argued with Jophiel that they had no obligation to fight a losing battle. Also, they pointed out that they didn't have strong ties with the others who were also participating in the exam.

Since they were strangers, they had no reason to endanger their lives for the sake of others.

"All of your reasons are justified," Jophiel replied to the group of deserters. "But, since I am the Chief Examiner, my words are law. If I say you failed then you failed. Of course, if you feel that I am in the wrong, feel free to fight me. Those who win will no longer have to participate in the next set of exams, and will be directly enrolled in the academy."

Jophiel crossed his arms. "I am giving you deserters a one-way ticket into the academy. All you need to do is beat me. So, who wants to try first? No scratch that. All of you come to fight me at the same time. If I can't even win against a bunch of cowards, I will immediately resign from my position."

"You are abusing your authority! Don't think that we are afraid to fight you!" one of the deserters said in anger.

"That's right! If you want to fight then let's fight! We're not afraid of you!"

"Who's scared of who? Just don't whine that we bullied you, Mr. Examiner."

"Everyone let us all fight together! We are being treated unfairly. Let us prove that we are not cowards!"

More than seventy people encircled Jophiel and summoned their weapons. They believed that with their numbers, they would be able to defeat a single individual. Jophiel was not a Saint. Although he was strong, the group of deserters believed that they had a chance of winning against him.

Jophiel just smiled and made the "Come and get me" gesture to the aggrieved examinees. William's earlier battle made his blood boil, and this was the perfect opportunity to vent out his pent up adrenaline.

The Examiner had long accepted that he couldn't do anything about the rich and influential people from using the backdoor by buying their way into the academy. This was why he had high standards for people that were trying to enroll normally.

What he hated the most were cowards, so he would not bat an eye when it came to disqualifying those whom he deemed unworthy to enter the academy gates.

Fifteen minutes later, all the deserters were lying on the ground and groaning in pain.

"Send the rescue team," Jophiel said through a communication crystal. "The first stage is over. Out of almost three thousand examinees, only one-hundred-twenty-three remain."

"Understood," a woman's voice replied. "Where will you take those who passed the first test?"

Jophiel didn't reply right away and seemed to be making a big decision on the spot. A minute later, he opened his mouth and told his superior about his decision.

"I intend to divide them into two groups," Jophiel reported. "The power levels of the one named William and his group, far exceed those of his peers. It would be unfair to bring them onto the same stage, so I decided to ask my subordinate to watch over the first group, while I personally monitor William's group."

The tapping sound of a finger hitting a table could be heard on the other end of the communication crystal. Clearly, Jophiel's superior was weighing the pros and cons of this sudden change of plans.

"Very well, I approve of your decision," the woman said. "Report to me if anything out of the ordinary happens. Celeste is already aware that William is taking the entrance exam. She is now heading towards your location. At most, it will take her a day or two to arrive."

"Understood. Thank you for the clearance."

"You're welcome. I look forward to your next report."

Jophiel closed the connection and wrote something in the small notebook in his hand.

"Excels in hand to hand combat," Jophiel said softly as he wrote in his notebook. "Able to easily fight against a Thunder Horned Wolf without using any magic power. Based on the technique he used, he is either a brawler, a monk or, a martial artist that had designed his own fighting style."

"He has two familiars. One specializes in pure offense, and wields the power of lightning. The other familiar, on the other hand, specializes in defense, but is also able to use offensive attacks using shields. Although the offensive damage of these attacks isn't lethal, it is strong enough to deal medium damage to Rank C Beasts and below."

After writing his initial thoughts about William and his two familiars, Jophiel returned the small notebook inside his storage ring. He then crossed his arms to wait for the support team to arrive. It is part of their procedure to pick up the stragglers, and take those that had been disqualified back to their main camp, before proceeding to the next stage of the Entrance Exam.

The Entrance Exam only had two stages. The first one was the trial of endurance, and the next one is the trial of strength.

William had already shown Jophiel that he was able to contend against Millennial Beasts, so he had prepared a special test just for him and his group.

The island next to the Antilia Island was home to a troublesome race that was starting to pose a serious threat to the local population.. Jophiel was planning to send William and his group to this location and order them to help the locals deal with the threat that was looming over their heads.

Chapter 717: When Lust And Chastity Collide

A day after the First Trial had ended, William and the rest of the examinees were taken to a sea port for their next exam.

"These two ships will take you to the examination grounds," Jophiel explained. "The Red Ship on my left will take you to the Normal Exam area. Once you pass this exam, you will gain the opportunity to become a student of Hestia Academy.

"The Black Ship on my right, is a ship that will take you the Special Exam. The difficulty of the exam in that area is very hard. Take note that there is no special reward for passing this trial. Just like the normal trial, those who will pass this exam will have the opportunity to become a student of the academy."

The examinees began to murmur among themselves. They didn't understand why there had to be two ships instead of one. Some of them had taken the test several times, and this was the first time that they saw the Black Ship in the sea port.

Naturally, Jophiel could understand their confusion, so he decided to stop beating around the bush and start his plan.

"You, the young man with red hair and a stupid expression on his face. Step forward," Jophiel said as he pointed in William's direction.

William looked behind. He was very curious who the red-haired person was, and wanted to see the stupid expression on his face. After checking the hair color of everyone, William realized that there wasn't anyone with red-hair among them.

The corner of Kenneth's lips raised slightly as he eyed the confused Half-Elf who was still looking for the person that Jophiel was pointing at.

"No need to look behind you," Jophiel said after clearing his throat. "Your name is William, right? If yes, step forward."

William glanced at Jophiel in disbelief. "Are you referring to me?"

"Of course." Jophiel nodded. "Do you see any other person among your peers who has red hair and a stupid expression on his face? Clearly, I was talking to you."

William crossed his arms over his chest and refused to budge. He refused to acknowledge that he had a stupid expression on his face.

"With all due respect, Sir. How can someone as handsome as me look stupid in your eyes?" William questioned. "I think it is about time that you visit an eye specialist. It is best to handle this kind of problem during its early stages then let it become worse over the passing of time. Also, I planned to take the Red Ship instead of the black one."

"Step forward or I will fail you. If you question my orders again, you will be banned from entering the academy and will not be allowed to step through its gates, even if you resort to paying the two million gold fee."

William snorted and reluctantly stepped forward. Although he was unwilling, he knew that having a falling out with Jophiel at this point in time was not a good thing.

"You will take a separate test from the others," Jophiel declared. "Of course, if any of you want to join him, feel free to do so. Just know that the chances of you losing your life are higher compared to the normal exam."

Kenneth stepped forward and stood beside William. Zhu and Sha did the same.

They were there to accompany William, so they would naturally stick with him as he took the special trial that Jophiel had prepared for him.

None of the other examinees stepped forward. They recognized William's group, and somehow understood what the Head Examiner was trying to do. Even though they didn't want to admit it, they understood that William and his companions were way above their league.

The battle against the Thunder Horned Wolf and the Dire Wolves was the best proof of their outstanding battle prowess.

After waiting for a few minutes, Jophiel deemed that no one else was bold enough to join William's group. He then raised his hand and asked the remaining examinees to board the Red Ship, so that they could sail towards their destination.

After all the examinees had boarded the ship, he then looked at William's group with an indifferent expression.

"All of you are coming with me," Jophiel ordered. "Let's board the Black Ship."

He didn't wait for anyone's reply and walked towards the ship. William sighed as he followed behind Jophiel.

The Half-Elf had a feeling that this Special Exam of his would be a pain in the bum.

After the two ships departed, Celeste finally arrived on the island of Antilia. As a Professor, she had the privilege of monitoring the examinees who planned to enroll at the academy.

The beautiful Elf met Chloee, Princess Sidonie, Ian, and Chiffon on the final island. This was the place where those who passed the two exams would gather. There were other professors on the island as well.Â

Their purpose was to look for promising individuals to join their faction. Princess Sidonie, Ian, and Chiffon had been scouted by these professors beforehand.

The beautiful Princess of Freesia had warned Ian and Chiffon that they shouldn't outright reject the offers of the professors, so that they wouldn't take offense. The excuse that they had given to those who invited them into their factions was that they wanted to see what the academy had to offer before they made a decision.

The professors accepted this reason, and didn't try to push the issue. They only said that the girls could approach them once they had settled in the academy. Also, Chloe's presence was more than enough to intimidate these recruiters.

The little fairy was infamous for its notoriety inside the academy. Only those that hid under a rock, inside Hestia Academy, wouldn't know who Chloe was. You either liked her, or hated her. There was no middle ground when it came to the little fairy, who liked to speak to others by using her fists!

"It's good to see you again, Chiffon," Celeste said with a smile.

Chiffon briefly nodded her head, but didn't say anything else. The pink-haired girl had kept her distance from the beautiful Elf. Although she didn't dislike Celeste anymore, that didn't mean that she planned to have a close relationship with her.

While Chiffon kept Celeste at arm's length, her relationship with Chloe was good. The little Glutton and the little familiar often ate pancakes together for breakfast. Due to Chloe's straightforward personality, it was very easy for Chiffon to get along with her.

Princess Sidonie on the other hand, looked at Celeste with great interest. Both women were very beautiful. The Princess was the epitome of youthful beauty, while the Elf's beauty had a sense of maturity in it.

She noticed that Celine and Celeste looked like they were in their early twenties, and were blessed with the good looks of the Elven Race.

One represented Lust, the other Chastity.

However, her Divinity reacted at the presence of her counterpart's Divinity and soon a subtle clash of power ensued between the two. One actively sought out otherworldly pleasures, the other kept her innocence intact.

There had been many cases in history when the maidens of these two divinities would often clash against each other. This was a common occurrence when Lust and Chastity collided.

Princess Sidonie and Celeste kept a tight leash on their Divinities, and prevented them from causing chaos in their surroundings. Although the Seven Deadly Sins and Seven Virtues were the opposite of each other, that didn't mean that they were enemies.

Conflicts may arise every now and then, but this was only natural among those who held such great powers. However, unlike the Seven Sins who sometimes went out of their way to antagonize each other, the Seven Virtues were always united.

They would never harm each other, and would even offer their support, if one of their members needed assistance. This was also why the Holy Order of Light was founded.

This was the main difference among the Chosen Maidens that carried the power of Sins and Virtues.

"I've heard many things about you, Celeste," Princess Sidonie said as she extended her hand for a handshake. "It's a pleasure to finally meet you in the flesh."

"Likewise. I have long wanted to meet you, Princess Sidonie. It seems that your beauty matches the power of your Divinity," Celeste took Princess Sidonie's hand and shook it twice before letting go.

"Are you here for my husband?"

"Husband?"

Princess Sidonie smiled sweetly as she placed her hand behind her back. "Yes. William and I got married a few weeks ago. Feel free to write a letter to your sister and inform her about this matter."

"... I will do that," Celeste replied. She did her best to retain the calm expression on her face, while deep inside, she was cursing William for being a womanizer. As the virtue of Chastity, she was not a fan of a man who took more than one wife.

Celeste was still on the fence about William, but her sister had already given her maidenhood to the Half-Elf, to test whether he was the Prince of Darkness or not. So far, the results were negative, and because of this, Celine was willing to give William the benefit of the doubt.

The Maiden of Chastity just found it hard to stomach that the Half-Elf had married two of the Seven Sins, while her sister was in the Demonic Continent looking for her Master.

'Sister, the man you chose is scum,' Celeste sighed inside her heart. 'The way things are going, I wouldn't be surprised if he continued his streak and married more women. I better correct this attitude of his when he is in the academy. I will not allow my sister to be tied up with a womanizer!'

For the sake of her sister's happiness, she would do her best to teach William that being a skirt-chaser was a very deplorable profession.

Chapter 718: Stonescream Stronghold's Class S Mission

The Black Ship traveled for a full day before docking into a port.

During the journey, William just slept because he hadn't gotten a good rest since he left the Kraetor Empire.

After Malacai had parted ways with him, the Half-Elf busied himself in upgrading his Job Classes to their maximum level limit.

So far, the only Job Class that had met the full requirement of the Jack of All Trades was the Ice Sovereign. This was William's first Job Class that had reached its Max Level, and right now, he was focusing on the Elemental Lord's final class, which was the Elemental Archon.

Although his Einherjar Job Class was powerful, William wasn't too keen on using it unless he had to. He was afraid that after he had lost all of the memories of his life on Earth, the next memories he would lose would be his memories of Asgard.

When those, too, were gone, would he lose the memories that he currently had in this world?

William didn't even want to think of such a thing.

He wouldn't allow such a thing to happen.

As William walked behind Jophiel, he eyed the people that lived in the outpost. The adults seemed to be on edge, but when they saw Jophiel, they all greeted him with respect. The Half-Elf also noticed that there was also relief in their faces.

It was as if Jophiel's presence was enough to make them feel safe and secure.

Chloee had told William many things about the Hestia Academy, and this information had greatly piqued William's curiosity.

According to his Sixth Master, Hestia Academy was no ordinary academy. It was a territory that encompassed vast swaths of lands and, when you combine all of these lands together, it was more than enough to found a kingdom.

For such an academy to flourish it only meant one thing. It had a very powerful backing.

None of the Empires, Kingdoms, or other influential Factions, dared to set their eyes on the academy's territory. It was a neutral power that everyone wanted to be on good terms with.

This was why most of the Royal heirs, and high ranking nobles in the Central Continent, enrolled in the academy to form powerful connections with people in high places. Such connections would definitely prove to be helpful in the future when they graduated and succeeded their parents' positions.

Jophiel took them to the outpost town known as Stonescream Stronghold. This was the town that had been built on this island, which was under the government of the Academy of Hestia.

This outpost had less than ten-thousand people, and most of them were refugees who belonged to the various ethnicities of the Central Continent. With no place to go, these people traveled all the way to the Free City of Rhea, where most outcasts and refugees gathered.

"Sir Jophiel, our hunters had reported increased activity coming from the direction of the colony," the Commander of the outpost reported.

Although he was the commander of Stonescream Stronghold, he was very polite and respectful when talking to Jophiel, which showed how important the Head Examiner was in Hestia Academy.

"Did they attack any of the hunters?" Jophiel inquired. "Did they try to come near the outpost?"

The Commander nodded his head and his face became very serious. "Our Hunters have experienced harassment. Although no one on our side received any lethal injuries from these conflicts, they did suffer minor injuries.

"There are also sightings of their scouts observing our outpost from the edges of the forest. Perhaps, they are observing our defenses, and looking for any kind of weakness that they may exploit."

Jophiel nodded his head in understanding. "Don't worry. These people behind me have come to help. Send all the information you have about our 'neighbors' to our quarters. We will discuss how to best solve the current problem, without resorting to full-blown hostilities."

"That is for the best," the Outpost Commander replied with a strained smile. "We are completely outnumbered, and war is the last thing we want to happen."

Jophiel asked some casual questions about the Outpost's current condition, before taking William and the rest to the quarters that were meant for the envoys of Hestia Academy.

As soon as they arrived at their destination, Jophiel gave them a brief summary of the problem that was currently plaguing Stronescream Stronghold, inside a conference room.

"Our Academy helps to relocate people that have nowhere to go," Jophiel explained. "This island is one of the locations where we planned to build a flourishing city that would cater to the refugees, outcasts, and other wandering nomads that have no place to settle. Unfortunately, this island has... unique inhabitants that makes our expansion very slow."

William crossed his arms over his chest, as he listened to Jophiel's explanation. Although the Head Examiner used the word expansion, the Half-Elf immediately understood the gist of the problem.

"Sir, are you planning to colonize this island?" William inquired after Jophiel finished his vague explanation.

Jophiel eyed the red-headed teenager before shaking his head. "You got it wrong. There are no people on this island. When the explorer team of the academy visited these lands. They had confirmed that there were no humanoid creatures, in any form that inhabited this land. And this information held true until recently."

The Head Examiner placed a crystal in the middle of the table and a projection appeared in front of everyone.

"A foreign race had become stranded in this land, and their numbers have increased drastically as the years have passed," Jophiel stated as the projection showed the appearance of the problem that they had to face. "At first, these foreign guests posed no threat to the outpost. You could even say that we were not aware of their existence until something unexpected happened."

Jophiel tapped the crystal twice and a new image appeared in front of everyone.

"These creatures have a terrifying ability that allows them to evolve and, if not solved immediately, could pose a threat, not only to the people in the outpost, but to the entire world as well. We are afraid that if they were to find a means to leave this island then a calamity might befall upon the entire world.

"Gentlemen, the Academy considers this incident a Class S Mission. If you are able to find a way to help solve this problem, you will not only pass this exam, but you will also be greatly rewarded by the academy. Do any of you have any questions?"

William had a complicated look on his face as he looked at the creatures that were in the projection. He didn't know if he should laugh or cry at the Class S Mission that the academy had presented to him.

If it had been other people who were sent to the island, he believed that they would have a problem dealing with the evolving creatures. But, for William, this wasn't a big deal. Since that was the case, he asked Jophiel the only question that he had in mind.

"What are they called?" William asked.

Jophiel cleared his throat before answering William's question.

"They are called... Requiem Antz.. A race that is said to have come from one of the forbidden lands of the Central Continent, The Eternal Evergarden."

Chapter 719: It's Time To Say Hello To Our Future Friends

William read the information about the Requiem Antz and scratched his head. He was currently inside his own room with Elliot and Conan, and reading the data that was given to them by the Commander of the outpost.

According to the data, the antz had slowly evolved over the years.

After bringing back the bodies of small dead animals to their nest, their queen had given birth to Antz that possessed similar abilities to the creatures that it had consumed. Every generation of the Antz not only became bigger, but stronger as well.

According to the report, the Antz had managed to salvage the body of a Rank E Beast that had died of old age, near their nest. That was the trigger that had allowed the next generation of Antz to evolve into beasts that could destroy the ecosystem of the island.

Although Rank E Beasts were in the lowest Power Ranking, this power classification could be ignored if there were enough of them to overcome a strong enemy through numbers. According to the data that William received, a Rank E Beast would give the Requiem Antz Queen the ability to produce three Rank E Antz, with that beast's characteristics.

These three Rank E's hunted other Rank E's until their numbers increased. Then, when they numbered in the hundreds, they started hunting Rank D Beasts.

They evolved at an alarming rate, and none of the Human Hunters dared to hunt alone. A month ago, the Hunters spotted a handful of Requiem Antz who had the strength of Rank B Beasts, hunting other Rank B Beasts in the island. They believed that there could be more that were hunting on the parts of the island that they hadn't explored yet.

This discovery prompted the Top Brass of the academy to start putting together an evacuation plan that would take the villagers off of the island. This was also why they had sent Jophiel, and a few other Adamantium Ranks to Stonescream Stronghold to prevent any kind of invasion from the race that was starting to flip the balance of power on the island.

"Kasogonaga will have a field day if you set him loose on the island," Elliot said as he read one of the documents that had been spread out on William's table.

"Right now, the strongest fighting force they have are Rank B Beasts that could possibly number in the hundreds," Conan commented as he sat on William's shoulder. "Will this be enough to prompt our Rainbow-Colored Deity to make a move? Maybe Kasogonaga will think that it is far beneath it to dine on low-class creatures."

William rested his chin on the back of his clasped hands and stared into space.

"Elliot, Conan, don't you think that this whole Requiem Antz business is fishy?" William asked.

Elliot tilted his head in confusion. "Fishy? What do you mean fishy?"

Conan, who was seated on William's shoulder, chuckled as he realized what William was thinking.

"I see, there is this angle as well," Conan nodded in approval. "They really know how to take advantage of the situation."

Elliot looked at William and Conan with a frown. He didn't understand what was strange about the current situation.

Seeing that his twin was still clueless about the situation, Conan decided to speak out, and explain the strangeness of the circumstances that surround the threat Requiem Antz.

"If the Academy really wanted to exterminate the Antz, they could easily do it by sending Adamantium Ranked Warriors, headed by a Saint or two," Conan said with a smirk. "Hestia Academy is a powerhouse in the Central Continent."

"Do you really think that it will be hard for them to nip this threat in the bud? Since they didn't do it, it could only mean one thing. They have other plans regarding the further evolution of these Antz. Tsk tsk, their appetite is quite big."

William nodded his head in agreement. "Perhaps, the academy wanted to evacuate the people in the outpost in order to turn this island into a breeding ground for the Requiem Antz."

"Frankly, I would not be surprised if the academy started feeding them Millennial Beasts in order to produce Millennial Antz that could become their Super Soldiers, which would then serve as troops for the academy."

Conan snorted. "The only thing they needed to do is to make a soul contract with the Ant Queen, and make her brood obey their every command. With such a convenient pawn at their disposal, they could easily build a military power that wouldn't lose to the Empires in the Central Continent."

William sighed. His lover, Princess Sidonie had made a contract with the Myriad Ant Queen, and was in command of millions of ants. The Myriad Queen had the ability to give birth to Millennial Ants, but she couldn't do it willy-nilly. At most, the Queen could give birth to one Millennial Ant a month, but that was already a fearsome ability.

If the Requiem Antz Queen could give birth to dozens of Millennial Antz in a week, wouldn't that simply become overkill?

Elliot finally realized the crux of the matter and frowned. He then rubbed his chin as he pondered the reason why Jophiel had sent William to the Outpost.

"So, this S Class Mission is fake?" Elliot asked after organizing his thoughts. He couldn't come up with a proper explanation to what Jophiel was thinking.

William and Conan exchanged a glance before shaking their heads.

"This S Class Mission is real," William sneered. "They just think that an ordinary examinee will not be able to handle this situation. I think Jophiel just wanted us to hunt some of these Rank B Antz in order to cull their numbers. This will be enough for us to pass the exam."

Conan laughed because he already understood what William was thinking. The Devil Familiar felt sorry for the Hestia Academy because they were not aware of his Master's capabilities. Sending him to the Island was something that they never should have done.

Elliot's eyes widened in surprise when he also realized what William and Conan had in mind. If his hunch was correct then this whole incident would bring them an unexpected opportunity!

"My Goodness! Don't tell me!" Elliot's body shuddered in excitement. "You're planning to do THAT?!"

William gave Elliot an angelic smile. A smile that looked so innocent on the surface, but was as black as James' heart underneath.

"Let's go," William said as he stood up to leave the room in a good mood.. "It's time to take a look at these Antz and see what they are capable of."

Chapter 720: I Promise I Won't Eat More... Maybe

"The evacuation will start in two days' time," a middle-aged man whose hair was all white said as he looked at Jophiel's projection. "We have already sent the ships and they will be arriving at the designated time. I expect that you will be able to flawlessly handle this matter, Jophiel."

"You can count on me, Headmaster," Jophiel replied. "It will be done as you envisioned."

The Headmaster of Hestia Academy nodded his head. "How is that boy, William? According to your report, you, him, and his companions arrived on Antilia island four hours ago. Did you already mention the S Class Mission to him?"

Jophiel nodded. "I think that he will start moving when morning comes. For now, he and his companions are resting in their quarters."

"Pass him after he had eliminated a few of the Antz," the Headmaster ordered. "He has already proven himself worthy after clearing the 51st Floor of the Tower of Babylon. What we are doing is simply formalities."

"As you command, Headmaster," Jophiel bowed.

"Report to me if anything happens. Make sure to keep an eye out on the boy. We don't want him to accidentally die on the island."

"Him dying on this piece of land would be a great loss for humanity. Worry not, I will ensure that he arrives at the academy safely."

While Jophiel and the Headmaster of the Academy were chatting with each other, William, and his companions had snuck out of the Outpost and infiltrated the forest, headed towards the nest of the Requiem Antz.

"I've heard about these Antz before," Kenneth said as he ran beside William. "The Elders had captured a queen from the Everlasting Evergarden and decided to raise it in one of their territories. However, they had underestimated the Antz capacity to evolve, and a catastrophe of unprecedented proportions broke out in their clan's ancestral grounds.

"Their plan was to make the Antz Queen a Beast Companion of one of the Elders, but she refused and resisted any kind of spiritual binding. After suffering hardships, the Queen retaliated and ordered her army to raze everything in their path.

"Tens of thousands of Centennial and Millennial Antz started to attack the Elven Clans. It was similar to a Beast Tide, but each Antz was a powerhouse with the weakest at the level of a Centennial Rank. It was simply too much for anyone to resist.

"Fortunately, the Guardians and Lord Sepheron Intervened. The Antz had all been wiped out, and the King decreed that such experiments shouldn't be done ever again. I'm sure that the same thing will happen here if the Humans think that they can control the Antz who hail from one of the Forbidden Grounds of the Central Continent."

William was dumbfounded by Kenneth's explanation.

Tens of thousands of Centennial and Millennial Antz was an obscene number. Without Pseudo-Demigods, and Demigods to guard against an invasion, these Antz could easily wipe out entire cities in the span of an hour or two.

"We should eliminate this threat as soon as possible," Kenneth urged. "They may be weak right now, with their strongest warriors at Rank B, but once they slay a higher tier beast, things will start to get ugly."

"Don't worry. I already have a plan in mind." William chuckled.

William wasn't worried even if it was true that the Requiem Antz couldn't be tamed. Unlike the Elves, and the Humans, William was confident that he could negotiate with the Requiem Antz Queen, with the help of a certain rainbow-colored Anteater.

With such a handy deterrent by his side, no Antz would dare to disobey his orders!

An hour later, the group finally arrived at the Antz Nest. They had masked their presence from the Antz by controlling their aura. However, it would be impossible to do that now because each entrance was guarded by Rank B Requiem Antz.

"What should we do now?" Zhu asked. "Should we just barge right in and make our presence known? If we do that, we might get swarmed by millions of Ants."

Sha nodded his head. "Although they are just small fries, if the commotion gets big enough, Jophiel will surely be alerted. There's no doubt that he will head in our direction at full speed and investigate. That will complicate the plan you have in mind, Will."

William nodded in agreement. He had already formulated several approaches to this problem and none of them was feasible, in the end he decided to use his Trump Card and get it over with.

"Kasogonaga, I choose you!" William said and he summoned the rainbow-colored Anteater from the Thousand Beast Domain.

"Oh? Are we already in the nest?" Kasogonaga looked around in curiosity.

William had informed it beforehand about his plan, and the anteater readily agreed. In fact, Kasogonaga informed William that it had even raised a Requiem Ant Queen in the past.

When William asked what happened to the Antz Queen, Kasogonaga only smirked as if saying "Don't ask questions you already know".

The moment the Requiem Antz Guards saw Kasogonaga, all of them ran towards the entrance of their nest like little crabs on the beach. Kasogonaga walked towards the entrance with an evil smile on its face.

Clearly, it was looking forward to the harvest that it was about to reap.

Unfortunately, William was there to stop it from its gluttonous appetite.

"You're forgetting our purpose for coming here," William said as he grabbed the drooling Anteater, who was very keen on entering the nest.

"Relax, I got this!" Kasogonaga replied as it patted its chest. "Do you think I will be tempted by these low-ranked Antz? I will raise the Ant Queen and feed it Centennial Beasts then Millennial Beasts then Myriad Beasts then... hehehehe..."

More drool escaped its mouth which made William shake his head helplessly. He carried the Anteater inside the nest like a repellant charm for insects who might try to ambush them underneath the earth.

What the Half-Elf didn't know was that the Superior Antz had already run for the Queen's location, in fear of the Anteater who was their natural enemy.

Using the System to scan the underground domain, William headed straight to the Queen's room in order to see whether she was open to negotiation or not. The only Ant Queen that he had seen was the Myriad Ant Queen that had become Princess Sidonie's Beast Companion.

Kasogonaga had told him along the way that Requiem Antz were very primitive creatures. Only when the Queen had evolved into a Millennial Beast, would she start to have human-like features.

After upgrading his Shepherd Job Class, William gained the ability to communicate with any beasts, including Ancient and Mythical Beasts.

"Is it true that you can't tame the Requiem Antz Queen?" William asked the Anteater he was carrying in his arms.

"The answer is Yesn't," Kasogonaga replied. "They can be tamed, but very few are capable of doing that. Fear is one of the most effective means to make someone submit to you. However, these Antz have a very strong tolerance to fear, so not everyone can make them bow their heads in submission."

William smiled. "That is where you come in, right?"

"You are indeed smart." Kasogonaga raised its head in arrogance. "Without me, you have zero chance in making them follow your orders. You should be grateful that you have me on your side."

"Yes. I am truly blessed to have such an amazing companion by my side."

"Um, can I have one of the Queen's legs? I promise I won't eat more... maybe."

William completely ignored the gluttonous Anteater's request.. He had even silently ordered Elliot and Conan to stop Kasogonaga at all costs, if it tried to eat the Antz Queen whom he was planning to add to his King's Legion.