

Undead 1121

Chapter 1121: Something's Wrong (1)

Several minutes ago.

"As I said before, you already have the tools to do this on your own. [Soul Sense], in particular is going to be of great use, and with this new body of yours, I don't think you will have much of a reason to expect failure," Serenity said, temporary killing Replicus' shock at the inner world of the Empyrean Bosom.

It was truly magnificent!

Serenity, along with Replicus and his Apostles had used a key to enter the Warmoth's demesne, but looking around and noting every single detail wasn't at the top of the priority list, as shocking and interesting as this place was.

There was still the matter to do with Actuass' soul.

Serenity had told Replicus that there was a better way to put the necromancer to good use, and that was by safely extracting his soul and forging it into a weapon.

After reining in the Warmoth's Progeny's attention, Serenity began explaining some necessary details involved in the process she had prescribed.

"The soul we have here is rather potent. It contains bits of multiple other souls which were by no means ordinary, giving it an absurdly powerful and robust presence. We could forge something very useful with this," she said.

"Don't we need some kind of base or conduit? Like something that this soul will be attached to? A sword, or something," Replicus said.

"No. I assume that is the means you know to create weapons from this world. It will be ineffective in this case. Souls are mostly made in the same fashion throughout reality. They are a concept that reality cannot work without. Their components aren't as intangible as most think.

Souls have the capability to become as solid, and interact with physical matter without much strain. It's quite like how souls can become independent from the body when one breaches through Divinity and reaches even greater heights past mortality. I'd say you even saw this necromancer exercise some of the true power of a soul."

Replicus narrowed his eyes as he looked at Actuass' soul which was trapped in the cage Serenity had made earlier.

The necromancer's soul was large and luminous. Because of everything that now made it up – Rayn's soul and a portion of Jerthrax's – it hardly looked like it could have belonged to a mere Incandescent Stager.

"I'm assuming this method you are proposing to do this...doesn't actually have to do with me reaching Divinity, right?" he asked.

"Not at all. It's actually simpler because this soul is imbued with a variety of characteristics and has been strengthened by Divine energy. It won't break during the process. It's using a vessel to try and contain or control it that would make the job harder. With that method, you'd have to account for compatibility and several other factors, but here, there is no such hassle.

The soul itself will take the shape of a weapon."

Replicus nodded.

He supposed that made sense.

With [Soul Sense], he could confirm more than just the presence of Actuass' soul. He could vaguely see the intricate details imbedded within it, some that looked like skills, and some that looked like odd crests and brands; other variations of power, perhaps Blessings.

This was odd. Skills weren't etched into the soul. They were branded to the body.

The principles pertaining to the soul seemed to still be foreign to Replicus.

'Funny,' he thought. 'I suppose this is what Incandescent Stagers see when they look at the soul. It's very odd that a simple skill like this – [Soul Sense] – is so hard to acquire even before reaching the Incand—'

Suddenly, Replicus came to a halt.

A thought came to mind that shook him.

'Wait. I'm not able to imbue skills that I extract with [Wealth of Spoils] into living things unless I access their brain from a young age. What if—' he began, but...

"Let's get started," Serenity said and began teaching him how to weld Actuass' soul and give it the desired shape.

Present time...

The Warmoth's Progeny loosened his arrow and the mountain top seemed to explode, violently shaken by the power that was released.

Sause and Aurolio who had been forced to kneel were stunned. The radiant arrow seemed to disappear from sight before they could even see Replicus' fingers release the string of the bow spear!

It vanished into the clouds and then...

BOOOOOOOOOOM!

Replicus' yellow eyes brightened.

It was hard to tell if the target had been hit or not as it was so far away.

He had instructed Yuyui to rush back if the job had been done, but since she hadn't returned, he had to assume that the false Null Devil King was still alive and that she was still acting as a beacon using the Hollow Dusk Prison.

The fact that the Null Devil King could survive two arrows from his new weapon seemed infeasible though.

Said new weapon, the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow – as Replicus had ended up naming it – was a genuine Transcendent grade weapon!

As Sause had pointed out, the arrows it shot out were capable of erasing souls from existence, plucking them at their very roots, as though they had been uncreated!

This was only its basic attack form, of course.

Replicus only decided to use this weapon against the false Null Devil King freely after he confirmed that he wouldn't be putting Ferex, who was currently the Null Terror, in danger.

His Apostles didn't have souls, but the Null Terror did. If one of his arrows hit, it would purge the BoneTender's soul and leave Ferex's body intact, after all, aside from colliding with effects that protected the target's soul, the arrows from the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow, did not interact with physical matter directly.

'Something's wrong,' Replicus thought, and he turned to Sause whose body had started to heal.

He then looked at the shrine.

"Is this really the source of it?" he asked.

It was clear exactly what Replicus meant to Sause.

He narrowed his eyes.

"It depends," the Giant said with a hefty breath. "What do you intend to do with that knowledge if I confirm or deny it?"

Replicus looked on ahead to where he had sent his arrow.

"I have yet to decide what I will do."

Sause huffed and looked at the shrine.

"No," he said.

Aurolio, only a dozen or so meters away, looked horrified when he heard this.

He promptly pieced together what these two were talking about.

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN IT'S NOT HERE?!" he screamed as he forced himself to stand.

Sause looked at him with a triumphant grin.

"It means,ahaha..." he said. "You fell for a simple trick."

Chapter 1122: Something's Wrong (2)

Replicus was somewhat amused by Aurolio's reaction.

Right as he reached Edagon, Serenity had explained to him the key information he had found himself to be missing ever since he saw the false Null Devil King, Aurolio and Sause rush towards Edagon following the forced deactivation of [Consecutive Realm Transmission].

Rich Worlds.

What did it really mean for a world to be called Rich.

The answer had certainly surprised Replicus, but he wasn't as taken aback by it as Aurolio was when he found that he and the false Null Devil King had been deceived.

The shrine made with red jade wasn't the source they were looking for.

It wasn't really surprising that they had been caught by the lie. Both Aurolio and the false Null Devil King didn't really have an understanding of worlds other than the ones they were used to, after all. Sause used this to his advantage and made them believe that the shrine was what they were after, that within it was something that painted Aigas as Rich.

Right as Aurolio, who donned a viciously furious visage, made to roar at Sause, Replicus drew on the string to his bow again.

He felt it. Yuyui was moving!

However, she wasn't moving in this direction. She was going further ahead.

'What is going on?' he thought.

He couldn't, or rather wouldn't approach recklessly.

Replicus wasn't going to underestimate the Null Terror in the Null Devil King's body. The bastard hadn't used any of his true powers yet, and with everything that Replicus gleaned from the descriptions of the six evolutionary options he had been given, he knew to not take the title of the Four Authorities for granted.

Thus, he opted to continue with the plan he had arranged with Yuyui.

It didn't only assign her as a beacon, after all. In fact, the strategy had largely been Yuyui's idea. Replicus had accepted the fact that there would be some margin of error., that nothing was ever certain.

Thus...

Reverberations sounded in the background. Replicus sensed the Hollow Dusk's Prison taking damage.

Yuyui was battling the false Null Devil King.

The lime-haired girl had wanted to fight him one-on-one without the help of the Yagrina and Bassbion whom she tasked with staying with the Unlimited just in case.

It seemed she had frustrations she wanted to deal with, and in the process, she hoped she could distract the Null Devil King long enough for Replicus to launch a sure strike with the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow if the initial plan to take down the Null Devil King failed.

Replicus felt the Hollow Dusk's Prison get obliterated and then a moment later, it was restored.

When Yuyui revived after death, everything on her person, regardless of grade and quality would be restored as well. She had died just now, but she kept on!

Replicus narrowed his curved, yellow eyes.

He raised his one free hand, and a porous ball of gleaming purple-gold crystals wrapped around it.

Sause gave this strange phenomenon a keen look. This was what killed Jerthrax.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

"Waiting for the right moment," Replicus replied, much to the Giant's confusion.

A few seconds later, the odd ball around Replicus' bottom right hand, spiked, gaining a tremendous burst of radiant light, and the Progeny shot his palm forward!

Now was the time!

From Replicus' hand, an attack that was fifty times the speed of light shot out with the kind of fierce immensity that could disrupt the order of the world, heading towards the general location where Yuyui was!

Sause was stunned by the speed.

Its effects on the environment were... treacherous!

Aurolio was also looked bewildered by the power of [Neutral Acumen]. This was his first time seeing it, and the fact that it was faster than those ungodly arrows Replicus had just shot left a deep impression on him!

There was bombastic boom in the distance, and Edagon trembled!

A severe amount of damage had been dealt somewhere out there!

Finally, Replicus stormed forth himself, Ju`wtte blasting the remains of the mountain he had been standing on!

He streaked across a massive chunk of distance while riding yellow-red lightning like a surf board, and soon, he had the devastation he had just caused in his sight!

A great portion of Edagon had sunken into itself and water was storming out like a fountain!

Within it, Replicus spotted Yuyui reviving on top of a large rock. She had evidently died to the attack just now, which was something she had been willing to accept.

The Null Devil King on the other hand, looked worse for wear.

His armour still held, three deep, ghastly indentations in it, but his face was scraped, torn and shredded, dark blood leaking from it profusely.

He lay in the great crater that was quickly filling up with ocean water, a hateful... yet fearful look on his pasty face.

Right when Replicus spotted him, he drew on his bow spear and another arrow appeared.

Yuyui had executed the plan perfectly.

Replicus had used [Neutral Acumen] to catch the Null Devil King off guard while he was battling Yuyui, and deal him some damage. He didn't go for another arrow because he feared that if he hit Yuyui directly... she might actually die, permanently.

Transcendent grade artefacts seemed to be anomalies, after all, and he couldn't rule out the possibility that they had the ability to put down even Yuyui.

But now that the Null Devil King was down...

An arrow swiftly left Replicus' bow spear and streaked directly towards the Null Terror's head!

It was over.

This was it!

...!

But....

Replicus frowned deeply.

Right before the false Null Devil King was hit, he heard him shriek:

"WE HAD A DEAAAAL!"

BOOOOOOM!

The arrow hit at close range, almost guaranteeing that this time, it wouldn't be hindered by the integrity of the Null Devil King's armour, like before, but Replicus didn't like the feeling he got just now.

Edagon groaned as a great portion of it sank below and kept grunting as it descended.

'Something's wrong,' Replicus thought.

His thought phantoms concurred.

He narrowed his eyes, waiting for the chaotic, flying rubble and dust to settle.

The sight that then revealed itself to him, baffled not only Replicus, but Yuyui as well.

She recoiled.

...

A familiar figure appeared in her version. It was a tall, spindly, robed figure with a great blue orb of flame for a head!

It was kneeling on the ground, hunched over in fright, and beside it was the false Null Devil King... or perhaps, he was false no longer.

"Y-you!" Yuyui screamed while pointing at the tall, spindly figure, but it didn't look her way at all.

Replicus, on the other hand, felt a surge of agency in Serenity.

"Skullius! Brace yourself! I'm afraid your opponent has changed drastically!" Serenity exclaimed, just as the Null Devil King stretched his neck and looked down at the BoneTender kneeling beside him.

"Relax. I mean you no harm. In fact, I'm rather elated. So much so," he said as a truly creepy pressure wafted out from him like a storm, different... far different, in fact, from the one that had been screaming from his body for the last month!

Chapter 1123: Unneeded Devotion

The Null Terror, the Full Deck BoneTender, was an unusual existence.

Null Terrors were odd creatures feared by all and almost always placed in the top five spots on the Universal Purge Banner in the Null Verse. They usually possessed powers and intelligence that allowed them to cheat higher level existences, corrupting or manipulating them in treacherous ways.

They were something akin to calamitous phenomena, but with high enough keenness of mind to act autonomously.

One such Null Terror was responsible for corrupting the Canon Men, turning them from do-gooders who helped the Four Authorities maintain balance in the Null Verse to maniacs who opposed the very balance of Serenity's treasure.

The BoneTender had been far removed from such treachery, however.

He was a devoted, loyal believer who spread the goodness of Serenity to all he saw, using his powers – which allowed him to grant the wildest desires of any creature he met – in service of Serenity within the Null Verse. His exploits had been so grand that Serenity had, at one point, decided that the BoneTender deserved a post higher than that of the Four Authorities.

Given that she had never spread the influence of Null Life outside the Null Verse, she thought the BoneTender would do. He had shown more than enough devotion.

She thought that for her mission against Emmae and Void, he would serve well... until she suddenly changed her mind.

The BoneTender was devastated and enraged.

He had been discarded. He had been abandoned.

Even when he turned billions of Null Lifeforms to believe in Serenity, something that was uncommon because of how Serenity herself never desired to be a known, worshipped figure, the BoneTender's work was rendered moot.

Thus, burdened with glorious purpose, he looked for ways to serve Serenity anyway. Somehow, he had to find a way to leave the Null Verse and serve Serenity's cause still.

Unfortunately, there had been no way to do that. He had found no loopholes to exploit. No worthwhile channels. He had even searched for other Null Terrors, asking for advice, yet nothing useful cropped up.

But, as chance would have it, the Null Devil King made a deal with the BoneTender after learning of his desire to leave the Null Verse. He had the same goal.

The powerful Authority said there was a method they could attempt, but it would take at least a million years to complete.

The BoneTender had been left with no choice but to agree and wait.

...But Direction seemed to have other plans.

Ferex, Replicus' Apostle, had a Flaw that tied the BoneTender to him. When it activated, the Apostle, sadly, was hijacked by the BoneTender, who was delighted at the unexpected bout of fortune.

Since he no longer had to wait for the Null Devil King, the BoneTender advanced with his own plans and used his unusual abilities to call the Authority outside the Null Verse. He then pleaded for the Null Devil King to commit to his end of the bargain, even though the plan had deviated somewhat.

Said bargain was: The Null Devil King had promised his vessel to the BoneTender should they manage to leave the Null Verse. After having lived for nearly ten million years, the Null Devil King, for reasons he never disclosed, wanted to end his existence outside the Null Verse, and he assured the BoneTender he wanted nothing more than that.

As it appeared now, that didn't seem to be have been the case. Not entirely.

...

"Relax. I mean you no harm. In fact, I'm rather elated. So much so," the true Null Devil King said with a dignified smile.

It wasn't just his presence that was boundlessly richer and more frightening than that which the BoneTender had exuded while in his body. Even his appearance seemed to have changed.

His damaged and bleeding skin was suddenly healed after a ferocious amount of Null Life Essence washed over it, and the same was true for his dark armour which featured a golden, choking mist, its entirety faintly expanding and contracting as though it were alive. It seemed to carry a bit more heft to it now.

His long, creamy hair that might as well have been trails of light, looked a lot more beautiful, as did the silver crown growing from his temple.

The BoneTender cowered by the true Null Devil King's side.

He didn't dare voice his concerns.

The Null Devil King was kind enough to address them, though.

"I did not mean to deceive you. I truly wished to meet my end outside that wretched bubble. I truly did, until I decided that I could perhaps see a bit more of the world outside through your eyes as you went over your obsessions. Hmm. I was both disappointed and intrigued," he said before looking at the four-armed creature piercing him with a sharp gaze for the first time.

"This was worth suspending my extinction."

Replicus felt the attention of the Null Devil King so vibrantly. Those dark eyes that might as well be hollow, dark sockets expelled something more potent than just a regal form of Null Life Essence!

'Yeah. The opponent is vastly different alright. This is real deal,' Replicus thought, recalling Yuyui's narration of the events where she met the BoneTender. Now it all made so much more sense.

At that moment, a great blue flame sprang out of Replicus and floated beside him.

The Null Devil King and even the depressed BoneTender turned to it.

"LADY SERENITY!!!" he screeched, his long arms attempting to reach for her from afar.

Serenity did not show any reaction. This wasn't her first time seeing the BoneTender on Aigas, after all. She had seen him when she was in Skullius' body during the attack on Genhuis City, but back then, she didn't have the means to freely manifest herself since Skullius had only been at the Second Tier, in addition to the fact he had been in his Hybrid Luman form.

Her true thoughts on the BoneTender remained hidden behind her faceless figure.

Only Direction knew how much she teetered between wanting the creatures she made in the Null Verse to remain stagnant, and desiring for them to keep growing. The latter led to things like this happening, and she didn't have the ability to stop it, as much of the authority laid with Wyrrim.

She sighed.

"I should have given you a reason as to why I no longer desired for you to stand as my bearer," she said to the visibly shaking BoneTender. "I should have spoken to you. Yet I didn't. However, I hope your ambitions will be put to rest here. What you desire for me, isn't what I want."

The BoneTender trembled, his flaming orb of a head flaring furiously.

"WHY DID YOU ABANDON ME? I HAVE SERVED YOU BETTER THAN ANYONE YOU KNOW! WHO BUT ME WAS EVER WORTHY OF STANDING BY YOU WHEN YOU FIGHT AGAINST YOUR ENEMIES?! EVEN NOW, I WISH TO GIVE THIS WORLD TO YOU!" he roared.

Serenity floated upward.

"I never asked for your service. I never asked even the Four Authorities to kneel to me. You could have offered your reverence on your own, and not made it a cultish desire. That was your own wrong. At first, I thought it would be worth it to reward you for it still, but no," she said, knowing full well that the BoneTender would not accept it.

And truly, he did not.

He emitted a sound akin to sparks of lightning from his head. He bellowed.

The BoneTender wanted to speak out some more, but the Null Devil King spoke over him.

"As uncaring as always, Serenity," he said as he languidly took steps forward. "I don't truly care for what you intend to do. I believe I relinquished my powers as one of the Four Authorities when I left the Null Verse, right? That should earn me a bit more indifference from you."

Serenity was unsettled.

"What do you mean by that?" she asked.

The Null Devil King cackled and turned to Replicus.

"That. I truly hope you will allow me to interact with it before I finally pass on."

Chapter 1124: To Spite You

"That. I truly hope you will allow me to interact with it before I finally pass on."

Serenity had had the feeling that, different from the BoneTender, the Null Devil King was deeply interested in Replicus. That was all that seemed to keep him from purging himself after he discovered that Aigas perhaps wasn't the best choice as a world to explore after leaving the Null Verse.

It was painfully average.

But Replicus, on the other hand...

The Null Devil King scrutinised every aspect of his body thoroughly.

"I knew there was something odd here. Is that Ju`wtte? Hahaha! This is outrageously hilarious! To think the Warmoth's powers were still hidden away somewhere!" he said with a wide grin. "Are you playing favourites, Serenity?"

There have been many scouring the Null Verse for anything to do with the Warmoth for millions of years. I did not peg you for one who would cheat, even for this... creature."

Serenity would have frowned if she could. Rather, she did, but none could see it.

She loathed being blamed for Wyrrim's choices. She had no control over which evolutionary options would appear for Replicus after all.

"I'm standing right here, you know?" Replicus suddenly said. "How do you wish to interact with me, exactly?"

The Null Devil King didn't reply immediately.

He massaged his neck first.

"It is most unusual for a creature so young to address me as though we are equals. If not for your unique racial prowess, I would not have hesitated to extinguish your body and soul at once. The fact that I have vested some interest in you should have humbled you a bit more," he said before looking as though he'd realised something. "But ah, of course.

You are too young and much too ignorant to know who I am, much less the girth of the Null Verse, all of which I know like the back of my hand."

Replicus narrowed his eyes.

He raised his hand and a bolt of grey lightning swiftly swam through the air and smote something a few meters from the Null Devil King.

It was Yuyui.

She then appeared behind the Colossus Warmoth's Progeny, huffing in an attempt to catch her breath.

Replicus had noticed that since the true Null Devil King appeared, she had become restless. Something about his presence was intolerable to her, and she had just been standing like a statue away from him despite looking like she could punch the BoneTender next to him.

"Is your ancient age the reason why you want to die so badly?" Replicus said to the Null Devil King as he began walking on the Ju`wtte that slithered from the Ju`wtta on his arms. It carried him through the air until he was ten meters away from the Null Devil King.

"Sorry, but being old enough to be my planet isn't something you should really be too proud of. Also, isn't all your blabbering just a roundabout way of saying, 'Hey brat, I want to fight you so badly that I can't rest in peace without doing so?'"

The Null Devil King looked both amused and offended by Replicus' remark.

Serenity swiftly sank back into Replicus' body. She had nothing more to add. Things were escalating.

"You have quite the mouth on you. But ah, the Warmoth was said to be rather bold as well. Did you inherit his personality too?" he said as his presence blazed like massive bonfire, a kind of Null Life Essence Replicus had never felt before fuming outward. "I'd be glad if you did, I fear. There's nothing quite like fighting someone with witty remarks."

Replicus chuckled.

So did the Null Devil King.

"Show me everything that emboldens a youth like you," the Null Devil King said in a sharp tone. "I have no title right now. All I have is my age and the strength that has come with that age. If you can crush even that, then this overly ambitious cretin beside me was never worthy of Serenity's attention at all. If you can't... Well, I will not only rend this world and extract what makes it Rich.

I will offer it to Serenity's enemies before I die as well. That is fair, is it not?"

The BoneTender shook, as did Serenity. She couldn't believe the Null Devil King would rebel to that extent.

Why was he so bitter?

He would offer something so precious to Void or Emmae? Why? Just to spite her?

Replicus, on the other hand, smirked. He didn't this matter much attention.

"No title you say? I see. Now that I think about it, one of my Apostles nearly got your 'Dominion' when he was born," he said.

Right then, mana gushed out of him like a great tide that seemed to affect even the waters around all of Edagon. A baleful gust of wind whipped around the area the Colossus Warmoth's Progeny and the Null Devil King were standing.

Replicus' many cores churned out the mana in them, but it was all amplified by the passive effects of the Warmoth's Spine!

"You don't intend to fight me with something as crude as that, do you?" the Null Devil King said with a rather disappointed expression.

Replicus chuckled. The bastard was referring to his mana.

The veil over his Warmoth's Spine was lifted, revealing its massive and frightening appearance just as Replicus offered a response.

"You have some of the poorest judgement I have ever seen," he said.

"Is that so?" the Null Devil King said, and he manifested the Bastard Sword of the Hedonist.

Replicus suddenly grinned maniacally, and one of his free hands sprang forth, pointing at the former Authority of the Null Verse and...

"Brunt Divide."

The Null Devil King's sword was forcibly removed from his hand, much to his surprise!

But as this occurred, he realised too late that Replicus had already reached him, and one of his fists was aimed not for his face – which was unprotected – but his chest plate instead, shining blinding white with mana!

There was such a staggering volume, nearly 50,000,000 units of purple quality mana reinforcing the Warmoth's Progeny's physical might from within... on top of the Warmoth's Spine's added 500% to all damage dealt... not to mention the Crush and Pop damage... not to mention the effects of many other skills!

However, all this – as terrifying as it was – wouldn't have made the Null Devil King don the look of genuine shock he wore when he received the hit right into his treacherously powerful black armour!

As though to spite him, Replicus had done something to the mana which he struck with first!

First, it was radiant white, a product of its quality!

But then, it flashed blackish-grey... as though baptised to the 'other side', converted into something cruel, and sinister...

[Author's Note]

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[Warmoth's Spine]

-Pseudo Transcendent-

Made from a miniaturized section of the Warmoth's thoracic spine, the Warmoth's Spine is an artefact bearing a portion of the true essence of the Colossus Warmoth. It is naturally resistant to the effects of all concepts and is especially generous to all those who carry the will of the Warmoth through its Legacy and the Ju`wta.

-Damage-

1,890,000-3,000,500

-Durability-

975,000-990,000

[Special Effects]

-Weightless to the user

-Allows the user to adjust their size

-Gives the user a fragment of the Colossus Warmoth's regal aura

-Can veil itself when needed, limiting its interaction with the material world

-+500% to Ju`wtte production and Ju`wtte skill efficiency

-+500% to all energy reserves

-Each swing applies triple the maximum attack speed of the user

-Each attack has a chance to deal 500% additional damage

-Each attack contains 100% Crush and Shock damage

-Each of the six vertebrae blades (spinous process) can be used separately from the Spine with just the user's will.

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[Skill: Honoured Lacerance]

By infusing 500,000 units of Null Life Essence, the user can unleash a vertical slash that WILL NOT fail to cut through any foundation or entity existing within the dimensions of a world and below.

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[Skill: Full Spine]

For a limited time, the user can unleash the full length and girth of the Warmoth's Spine, amplifying its powers. Usable only once a day.

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[Skill: Warmoth's Peal]

By infusing units of 100,000 Null Life Essence, the user can unleash a devastating sonic and Ju`wtte blast.

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[Full Release: Locked]

Chapter 1125: Six Minutes (1)

The moment Replicus' mana flashed blackish grey, all the other effects of his punch – his physical innate properties, boosts from skills and artefacts – were voided. Only the effect of the darkened mana took hold, absolutely horrifying the Null Devil King, who had nearly dismissed the attack as it been directed towards his armour.

The physical might behind it was extraordinary, but things turned out to not be as simple as he had thought when light disappeared around Edagon, and a warping feeling erupted from Replicus' fist, attempting to turn him extinct by way of... causing the very concept of his EXISTENCE to collapse in on itself!

...!!!

While the unceremonious darkness reigned, behind the Null Devil King, everything seemed to ooze of steam, and then a vast stretch of the land, including the gorges, hills and all, groaned and sank inward as though a fat giant had fallen from the sky and sat on it! It was as unusual as it was baffling!

Land masses large enough to be considered small countries rising exploded as they sank, water bodies around them evaporating in an instant and the skies... the skies turned skewed, the clouds painted over them whirling and vanishing with a poof!

Everything containing a trace of mana was challenged and defeated by the aftereffects of a punch that the Warmoth's Progeny had flung... and it went without saying that if there was a being that relied on mana standing before Replicus' fist, unless they were a step away from Divinity or greater, they would have been crushed by the force of his darkened mana!

The Warmoth's Progeny grinned while the Null Devil King spat blood and vanished from sight, reappearing in the skies just as light once again graced Edagon.

He took a breath and felt his chest where the heavy blow just now had landed.

He was not pleased.

A fist-shaped hole had been made into his dark armour, twisting the chest plate unnaturally. The pale, pasty skin of the Null Devil King, heavily bruised, could be seen through it.

A single punch had destroyed a portion of his armour when not even Jerthrax had been able to deal any substantial damage to it!

As dumbfounded as the Null Devil King was, he couldn't have missed the mocking visage Replicus wore in light of the feat.

The rumbling of a massive portion of Edagon crumbling and popping like fireworks persisted even after the heavy influence of the Progeny's powers waned.

'It worked. It actually worked!' Replicus thought ecstatically, as did one particular thought phantom who had suggested the mad idea to begin with.

The Colossus Warmoth's Progeny had used Reversion on his mana.

Maximum Catalyst allowed its user to cause a forward or backward evolution of a target and produced a result even if one didn't naturally exist in reality

In this case, the result of using Reversion on mana, was what Replicus called Inverted mana!

Everything to do with the power system ingrained in Aigas told Replicus that mana was the basis of many things. Mana became Aura and it became Nitros, which was able to create whole environments in the form of the Imaginary GeoScapes of Majestic Territories. Mana was also present in Sacred Forests where beasts thrived and also in Clusters.

Sure, it wasn't the source of everything. Man, beast and the world were made from a collection of Rules and Divine energy, but mana acted as a support within them all. An integral support.

Inverted mana was nothing like this.

Primarily, it dismantled the support that kept everything sturdy, pure mana in particular. That was why everything was crumbling within the range of Replicus' attack. The vicious amount of mana he had transformed into Inverted mana was enough to kill all living organisms on Aigas if hit directly.

Aside from this, without any complex application, Inverted mana was much more vicious than mana. Replicus was thrilled to find that in terms of physical reinforcement, it was at least three times as effective when it came to bolstering his physical attributes!

But of course...

'It's extremely draining...' Replicus thought.

That one use of Reversion had chugged down 97% of the mana reserves in his Nature-Bound Malleable Form Cores, and that was with the effect of [Resource Vault] – which optimised the cost of casting skills – active.

If not for the fact that he had [Mana Centurion], Replicus would have considered this his last use of Maximum Catalyst in this battle, but his reserves were rapidly regenerating.

Another negative point to Inverted mana was that it cancelled out all the other effects applied to his attacks, even those of his stats!

'That's an odd side effect. I can only use Inverted mana on its own...' Replicus thought, but that did not dampen his excitement. Not one bit. After all... 'I suppose we can proceed with using Inverted mana to power all skills. Delicate work that's going to be, but it should work. I wonder what the effect of this on my skills will be.'

But all this was for a bit later though, and it was going to be for the phantoms to execute.

Replicus wanted to explore the other facets of his powers first.

The Warmoth's Spine finally left his shoulder where it was perked while being wielded by his top right hand.

The Null Devil King didn't miss Replicus' intent. His stance was only going to get even more vicious from here.

"I see even the Warmoth's successor has inherited the same will. Took me by surprise. I was never afraid of Ju`wte, but whatever that was.... Consider me wary of it," he said with a chuckle and Null Life Essence ran through him and his armour, healing him and repairing it swiftly. "It's an honour."

The Null Devil King's hand whipped out towards the ground and the Bastard Sword of the Hedonist hurtled towards him.

Once it slotted into his grip, however, Replicus' pointed a free hand forth and...

"Brunt Divide."

The sword flew out of the Null Devil King's grip again, but this time, he didn't relax. His figure vanished... or perhaps turned invisible, and in a blink, he had gripped the spinning sword again, a grin on his face!

Replicus was taken aback!

That movement...

That couldn't possibly have been...

'It's like the Astral Blizzard Corridor!' he thought just as the Null Devil King raised the damned sword, chanted, "Rune of the FIRST!" and swung it in the Replicus' direction!



...!!!

Replicus heard a rip and his arm holding the bulky spine flashed with Ju`wtte as it rose dextrously, bringing the Pseudo-Transcendent weapon up for a timely guard!

Replicus felt the tremendous might of the force that came down, but it hardly felt like that from a sword.

Rather...

BOOOOM!

It slammed onto him like an accursed boulder and then...

[The effect of the 'Rune of the FIRST has been applied on you who have struck the first blow in your clash against the Null Devil King 'Caxellac']

[Due to the effect of the 'Rune of the FIRST, Null Devil King 'Caxellac' has all his abilities increased and accelerated by 450%]

[A timer has begun]

[Due to the effect of the 'Rune of the FIRST, if you cannot defeat the Null Devil King 'Caxellac' in six minutes, you will lose 50% of all your abilities and stats permanently]

Chapter 1126: Six Minutes (2)

The [Rune of the FIRST].

Replicus had seen this before.

He had not only spotted it on multiple other evolution options he had chosen to forgo in the past. He had seen it among his own newly acquired abilities as the Warmoth's Progeny as well!

Back when he acquired his abilities, he had gotten a staggering understanding of them all, except the Runes. They were not powers exclusive to him, after all.

However, that said, the use of the [Rune of the FIRST] seemed to become clear as explained by the guidance field.

Perhaps this was why the Null Devil King hadn't countered Replicus' from before, but... the Rune afflicted the one to deal the first blow in a clash. It gave its user a 450% boost to their powers and gave the opponent a six-minute time window to defeat its user, otherwise they would permanently lose half of their powers!

But of course, there wasn't only one activation condition for the Rune.

Replicus didn't know it, but if the user of the Rune was the first to land a blow, the [Rune of FIRST] would also work the exact same way. If the Warmoth's Progeny had known, he would have understood just why many races sought to learn this power from the Elder Sages of Penetration!

'Six minutes?' Replicus thought with a frown as the crushing might from the attack just now, faded.

He saw the contours and strokes of a massive Rune made from Null Life Essence vanish from all around him, and he couldn't help but lament the fact that he didn't thoroughly study the Runes in his arsenal. He hadn't had the chance, what with being entranced by the Empyrean Bosom, creating the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow, and planning how to save Stylla and Ferex.

"Don't mind it, Replicus Prime!"

"We have more than enough power to beat that bastard even with the unfair boost."

"Yeah. Remember, we aren't just spectators anymore. We can participate too. You can never get overwhelmed."

"We are your eyes, ears and brains. Flesh knows you need that last one more than anything else right now."

The reassurance from the phantoms came right before a ferocious presence barrelled down on Replicus from the skies!

The Null Devil King, empowered tremendously, stormed down while unintentionally warping the fickle space about!

His speed was outrageous, and his bastard sword, intent on sinking into the Warmoth's successor, displayed a similarly outrageous drive!

However, the Progeny was not helpless.

[Warmoth's Fortitude], a passive Super skill in Replicus' possession, kicked in. It boosted the efficiency and power of his Ju`wtte by 300%, and sent the yellowish red bolts of crackling lightning snaking out to counter against the Null Devil King!

The sheer brightness and destructive power of the Ju`wtte was demonstrated by how most things within one hundred meters of Replicus started to melt; not even the air or ambient mana were exempt from this!

The Null Devil King was not deterred, however.

With a grin that almost seemed to connect to his eyes, he pushed against the thousands of bolts of Ju`wtte and they were held at bay by a brand of Null Life Essence Replicus had never seen wafting furiously from him!

The Bastard Sword of the Hedonist then flashed through, aiming at Replicus' neck at impeccable speed!

The Progeny didn't pay it any mind, but a phantom of his did.

Because of the new nervous system Replicus had installed in himself with the Personal Configuration, his phantoms were able to exercise authority over his limbs freely!

And thus...

One of his free hands whipped out, gathered Ju`wtte in its palm and used it to block the incoming swing!

The clash caused the ground to ripple like a spectrum, and for the third time, Brunt Divide was used to strip the Null Devil King of the damned sword.

While this occurred though, Replicus gathered the might provided by his Null Core – over three million units of Null Life Essence – and sent his fist flying into the Null Devil King's face!

Every attack of his, because of the Warmoth's Spine, possessed 500% additional physical damage and 100% Crush and Shock damage!

And the result of these buffs...

Right as the fist connected, a deafening impact resounded and the shockwave it released first sent out a wave of heat, then cool which would have guaranteed an ordinary, unguarded Incandescent Stager instant death with but a graze! (Well, Yuyui, who was nearby was instantly incinerated.)

But that wasn't all.

'This sensation...' the Null Devil King thought, wary.

A chilling feeling traced through his body, seeking something, but before it could find whatever it was looking for... twenty huge pulsing blobs of yellowish lightning lit up around him right after the punch landed... and then they exploded one after another in rapid succession!

BOOOOOM! BZZZZT!

BOOOOOM! BZZZZT!

...

The explosions were crisp and critical!

One was enough to crack the Null Devil King's armour. Twenty left it looking like a hideously cracked vase moments away from crumbling to pieces!

This was Crush damage!

But then...

The Null Devil King felt a disconnect between his body and mind. His senses wobbled around, unable to focus on Replicus or anything for that matter. Ju`wtte ran along his body, hampering his ability to move and think clearly!

This was Shock damage!

Replicus didn't let the momentary opportunity slip.

He instantly brought down the Warmoth's Spine with all his might, intent on ending this battle right then, nearly quarter of a minute since the timer from the [Rune of the FIRST] began!

However...

The Warmoth's Spine had only dropped an inch towards the Null Devil King's head when a whipping wind bashed into Replicus... along with the head of a large, mighty beast!

Replicus couldn't have described the force that rammed into him.

He only remembered his body being overwhelmed by the force a physical blow, and the noise from the collision, and then he was sent flying hard and fast!

'What the...?'

Much to his confusion, whatever hit him seemed to detonate right after it delivered the mighty strike!

Replicus quickly steadied himself as he flew, but his phantoms alerted him of danger!

The Null Devil King was upon him in less than a fraction of fractions of time, the Bastard Sword of the Hedonist in his hand!

'He recovered already?!' Replicus thought, frustrated.

The Bastard Sword left a white trail as it cut at him, but at the same time, the Null Devil King extended his free hand towards Replicus and...

The Warmoth's Progeny was dragged from midair towards the Caxellac!

'Null Extraction?!' Replicus thought.

The Null Life Essence in him was being drawn forcefully, and by extension, his body followed!

He had seen the BoneTender do this to Jerthrax, but the application wasn't exactly the same!

Hastily, one of Replicus' free hands whipped out to grab the Null Devil King's sword, but the bastard had anticipated it. He opened his mouth so wide that he hardly looked like he had anything more than a deep maw decorating the front of his head.

Then a familiar, searing flame blazed, furiously surging into the Warmoth's Progeny!

Chapter 1127: Six Minutes (3)

After dying to the whipping, electric, scorching impact left by one of Replicus' punches, Yuyui didn't hesitate to run away when she revived.

She couldn't help in this battle between the two titans of the Null Verse. She could hardly even see it when they moved their limbs, much less their whole bodies. If she remained here, she was convinced she would face a tragic end one way or another.

The levels of unbelievable monstrosities on this side of Aigas were atrocious, and as time passed, she became convinced that some of them probably had an answer to her immortality.

'I need to help with something else!' Yuyui thought as her eyes zipped this way and that from the safety of the Hollow Dusk's Prison.

An instant later, she caught a glimpse of the BoneTender storming his way back to the position he had been dragged from by Replicus' arrow earlier!

"There he is!"

At once, Yuyui used her Eye of Moving and dashed after the tall, Null Terror.

\*

A flicker of red lightning shone by Sause's side.

He turned to see Benzard who looked up at him with concern.

"Took you long enough. I would have thought you'd come along with the others after the deed was done, ahaha," Sause said, his legs squelching during the final renderings of new skin.

"Sorry," Benzard said with a dark face. "I was just giving the proper farewell to a friend."

He then looked into the distance, past the clouds around the mountaintop.

There were many radiant flashes and booms occurring in rapid succession, causing Edagon to tremble vehemently.

Benzard furrowed his brows.

"Just what in the world is going on here? I even saw Edagon turn dark on my way to you," he said.

"Yes, well, the enemies fighting right now are in a different league, ahaha. Thankfully, I managed to stall long enough to create this situation – one where I didn't have to be in the thick of it. Now, I'll have to bet on HIM."

Benzard sighed.

Betting on Replicus...

After what he had seen that creature accomplish with nothing but his presence, he had no doubt that whatever enemy had left Sause in this state would at least have a tough fight.

The brown-haired man finally turned to the right where Aurolio was sitting with a dark look, staring into the sparking distance, not too far from him the unconscious Stylla.

Before Benzard could ask what Sause intended to do with these two, a bright flash from a great flame cast the clouds in a deep, reddish-purple hue!

But then a scream was heard, interrupting the urgency that might have been introduced by the conflagration. Something was hurtling towards the group on the mountaintop.

"TELL ME WHERE IT IS! TELL ME! TELL ME!"

The BoneTender appeared, its spindly left hand stretching towards Sause, its flaming head flaring furiously, and on its right arm, a figure in a starry armour attached!

\*\*\*

The flame to bellow out of the Null Devil King's mouth was dreadful to say the least, and it took Replicus by surprise. It whipped and smote into his ceramic skin with searing intensity, and for a hot moment, the Warmoth's Progeny thought he was done for.

He was well acquainted with the flame that surged onto him after all.

It was the [Ungodly Flame of Debauchery] or perhaps, a much more sinister variant that instantly started to make him feel a surge of emotions he wouldn't normally feel. All of a sudden, Replicus felt as though he could be pulled apart by the ferocious emotions that exploded from his body.

Lust, greed, longing, fury...

Replicus had never been on the receiving end of this flame before, and as Direction would have it, he was having it worse.



His mind turned numb, clouded by intense sensations. They bore down on him like a tide.

The Null Devil King grinned, his teeth, each half as long as his face showing from what might have been his true visage when he was fired up.

The Bastard Sword of the Hedonist was swung at light speed while Replicus was dazed.

MBIIIIING!

Yet again, it was intercepted, much to the Caxellac's puzzlement.

'Again? How is he doing this in such a state?' the King wondered only momentarily at the sight of the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow blocking his sword.

Thankfully for Replicus, the phantoms weren't affected as much by the surge of emotion. They acted like separate, secure minds with minimal access to Replicus' body. Even though he had granted each full control of one of his arms, that wasn't enough to implicate them seriously in the attack just now!

The glowing spear pushed against the Null Devil King's sword, pushing it away, but before another one of Replicus' free hands could point to it and use Brunt Divide, the Null Devil King flashed upwards... and then behind Replicus!

"We have to avoid getting hit by the sword at all costs!"

"I know, damn it!"

"Use the Reincarnator's Shadow to save Replicus Prime! We can't assume control of his body for long periods, especially with all the emotion building up! I hardly countered that damned sword in time!"

"We all know that, sockethole!"

The phantoms sprung to action.

There was a reason Replicus was taking every precaution to keep the Bastard Sword of the Hedonist away from him.

He, like Skullius back when he faced the BoneTender in Caxellac's skin, recognised the damned sword. He had used it before. A lesser version of it. As a matter of fact, he had used a discount version of the Null Devil King's armour before too.

The Null Devil King's body exploded with a storm of Null Life Essence and he swung his bastard sword with enough force to obliterate a small continent!

"Damn it! The Ju`wtte that's supposed to defend is being warded away by the Null Devil King's immense Null Life Essence reserves! Guard now!"

"On it!"

Before the Bastard Sword could touch Replicus, a shroud of purple-gold crystals exploded around him, encasing him protectively!

[Neutral Maximum]!

BAAAAM!

A harsh shockwave ensued when the Bastard Sword failed to penetrate the shield.

As powerful as it was, it couldn't affect Replicus. Under the influence of [Neutral Maximum], no external stimuli could affect his body, changing its state in any way. Not even the basic function of a Majestic Territory!

A microsecond later...

"Now!"

As a phantom yelled, the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow's blue glow coursed through Replicus' body and turned it radiant!

The Null Devil King's face returned to normal, and he used it frown.

'What is this?' he thought as he drew back. 'I sense an immense amount of soul energy...'

And indeed it was.

But before Caxellac could endure more speculation, the radiant figure of the Warmoth's Progeny suddenly brought two of its free hands together and an unbelievably quick stream of purple-gold sped from them, smashed into him and travelled with him so far into the sky in less than a millionth of second that in a blink, he had nearly reached the shattered, melded skies of Aigas!

This was [Neutral Acumen]!

But that wasn't all.

The attack was strong, but its selling point was its sturdiness and speed, nothing else.

The next attack, accurate and on point, was the one meant to finish off the Null Devil King swiftly!

Six ghostly arrows meant for the soul followed, heading for Caxellac's head, behind them their master following with the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow for a secondary volley of devastating attacks!

Chapter 1128: Six Minutes (4)

[Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow]

-Transcendent-

Forged using the soul of the man named Actuass Seinold Fe'krel, which was melded with that of the ancient Deity vessel, Rayn, and the Herald Jerthrax, the Vision of Misery, the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow is a powerful object with powers centred around eradicating and edifying souls as well as the deeper application of Divine energy and Blessings.

-Damage-

1,567,450-2,900,500

-Durability-

920,340/920,340

-Divine Energy Reserve-

50,000,000/50,000,000

[Special Effects]

-Can adjust its size

-Strengthens the user's soul by 7,500%

-Increases resistance against soul attacks by 9,000%

-Deals 7,000% soul damage with each physical strike

-Allows the user to freely interact with foreign souls by direct touch.

-Can release arrows of light capable of extinguishing exposed souls

-Can remove status ailments on the body by temporarily increasing the grade/potency of the user's soul

-Allows the user to give life and unfathomable strength to their shadow

-Allows the user access to the Divine Blessing, 'Brunt Divide'

-Stores and passively generates genuine Divine energy

---

[Skill: Divine Blessing Creation]

By expending 10,000,000 units of Divine energy, the user can create a Divine Blessing with at most two stipulations. Only two Blessings can be created in one day.

---

[Skill: Rule Creation]

By expending 50,000,000 units of Divine energy, the user can create a Rule that affects the world or a separate enemy. After a Rule is created, the passive generation of Divine energy will be stalled for an hour before re-commencing.

---

[Skill: Soul-Body Coalescence]

Using 5,000,000 units of Divine energy, the user can augment their physical properties a hundred times over while adjusting their souls accordingly. Effect lasts for one minute. Cooldown lasts for ten days.

---

[Skill: Territory Reflection]

...

~~~

The Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow was extremely powerful, so much so that Replicus had been dumbfounded by its abilities after he created it. It embodied the abilities of Actuass and everyone whose soul he had fused with his own.

This was why he was able to use Brunt Divide, the Divine Blessing which belonged to the strongest Paladin Champion whom Actuass had bested in combat and enthralled for his goals.

Replicus, keenly prepared for the likely possibility of the six arrows he had just sent failing to reach Caxellac, readied all possible avenues of attacks from his both his weapons and Maximum Catalyst.

As expected, in a shocking series of movements while in midair, the Null Devil King twisted his body impeccably to avoid three soul-obliterating arrows and knocked the last three away with the Bastard Sword of the Hedonist!

His dark sockets then focused on the Warmoth's Progeny, and his reserves of Null Life Essence spiked.

Replicus didn't allow him to move first for an attack. His phantoms, who had successfully saved him from the horrendous attack of emotion just now, sent forth the effect of Brunt Divide once again, but not at Caxellac's sword. The activation of the Divine Blessing was not only ridiculously quick, it also featured one million units of Divine energy to make it stronger!

At once, behind the Null Devil King, space was squeezed apart!

Brunt Divide made a treacherous attempt to dismantle the foundation of the world behind Caxellac... and it actually worked... for a split second!

When the sky, intangible space, mana and all were stripped from the very foundation they were laid on, a cruel void was temporarily released, and to even Replicus' surprise, a staggering vacuum suction was established.

Its vicious pull threw the Null Devil King off.

...!!!

He turned in surprise only to find that the world eagerly mended itself rapidly, and there was no consequence to this move by Replicus .

'That was a distraction?' Caxellac thought, surprised.

Indeed, it was.

Because Replicus was upon him in the next instance, and instead of attacking at once and risking a failed opportunity to use the miniscule pocket of time in which Caxellac wasn't in a position to properly attack or defend, the Warmoth's Progeny... grabbed the Null Devil King!

It might have sounded rather underwhelming, but the fact that Replicus suddenly became ten times larger than he was fragments of incalculable time before, made his action infinitely more impactful!

Using one of the primary effects of the Warmoth's Spine, Replicus had adjusted his size, and the Null Devil King was now a small figure in his tight grip!

'And now...'

Replicus then raised the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow which had increased in size to match his own and stabbed it into the gap in his enclosed palm where the Null Devil King was trapped, promptly!

The massive bow spear was just as powerful as the arrows it let out when striking an enemy, and Replicus had wanted it to smash into Caxellac's head, destroying or severely wounding his soul!

But...

A micro moment later, Replicus' fist exploded into a storm of bloodless chunks that flew everywhere!

The Null Devil King expelled extremely sharpened Null Life Essence to cut his way out of Replicus' entrapment before the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow could touch him.

The Warmoth's Progeny was undeterred, however.

His Warmoth's Spine was already blasting through the air at triple his normal, personal attack speed, intent on cleaving the Null Devil King with a mix of raw slicing force, mana, Brunt Divide and several relevant skills!

However, the Null Devil King had an answer to that as well.

In the time it took for one to begin to blink, a wall of large square, turquoise, transparent tiles erected themselves before the Null Devil King and Replicus' lateral slash with the Pseudo-Transcendent weapon was rendered moot!

It was still devastating, though, so much so that space and the skies rippled before it even connected, but the slash simply slid off the giant Null Life Essence tiles, leaving a deep, lengthy mark!

'That's... an advanced version of [Reflective Null Cage]?' Replicus thought, amused.

But once again, he was undeterred. His third arm moved, unleashing a phenomenon that was unavoidable; one which moved at fifty times the speed of light!

Reversion was used on the tiles, and a moment later, they were gone, dialled back to a time in their evolutionary path when they didn't exist!

While the Null Devil King was belatedly surprised, Replicus' fourth arm was already moving.

The skill [Soul-Body Coalescence] from the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow was activated, and Replicus' physical properties were temporarily bolstered one hundred times!

His fist connected after suddenly being loaded with unreal strength and speed.

Soul damage blazed through it!

Crush and Shock damage went livid when it reached Caxellac!

...!!!

In this circumstance, even the Null Devil King's outrageously powerful armour didn't help much. He found himself amassing nearly all of his Null Life Essence reserves just to stop himself from getting torn to shreds!

Caxellac flew at terrible speed back to Edagon where he had come, leaving a stark trail of black where his body, which was constantly followed and assaulted by the crackles and pops of Crush and Shock damage from condensed Ju`wte, erased the stable space temporarily!

The massive continent of Edagon nearly leaped up when the Null Devil King landed.

Shockingly, he landed in one of the large cities, demolishing structures as he fell, but the city, built upon a great mountain, didn't topple over as it should have.

The Null Devil King managed to survive, but was barely recognizable. His armour was mostly gone, and so was his body. He looked like a puddle of black blood with a half-crushed skull visible from it.

A funny smile would have shown from him if his features were arranged right.

'Well. I suppose fighting outside the Null Verse seriously requires some work. Haha. I vastly underestimated how much losing my Dominion would impact me. Hahahahahaha. Work.

Work harder. Will this be a first?'

Right then, Replicus landed with a terribly loud crash.

He hadn't decided to let up.

He raised the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow again while still maintaining his immense size, his Reversion at the ready.

He was overwhelmingly fast. Much faster than the Null Devil King was.

However...

Speed didn't seem to matter when it came to the highest applications of power in the Null Verse.

Chapter 1129: Six Minutes (5)

The Null Devil King had roughly 400,000,000 units of Null Life Essence at his disposal.

This number would have been at least two hundred times higher if he retained his Dominion and was fighting in the Null Verse. However, because Serenity had made it so that any attempts to rebel by leaving the Null Verse, for instance, would result in the Four Authorities losing much of their powers, Caxellac as the Null Devil King was left with nothing but his innate prowess as a Null Lifeform.

The ability to freely control the sections of the Null Verse he ruled over, quite like how Incandescent Stagers and above had full reign over their Imaginary GeoScapes, would have also helped, but Caxellac didn't have such a luxury.

It had been lost, and thus, for the first time in his life, he actually had to work hard for something.

The BoneTender had fully mastered the physical properties of the Null Devil King's body, but had been nowhere near matching Caxellac's skill in Null Life, Class and all.

A simple example of such a difference was...

...!

Time seemed to come to a stop.

The many, massive buildings in the city – clearly built to house beings innately larger than the normal ones on Feinheath and Opungale – Caxellac had come crashing into, were suddenly stalled midway through their fall. The tonnes of rubble and debris still flying all over while awash in great bursts of heat, hung in the air.

A great pool, mysteriously persisting against the desolation in the city, located in the centre of it, turned so still that it might have actually become a broad layer of glass.

Dust, flying mandatorily in the wind because of the destruction also came to a hold, and it was as though the entire airspace was painted with a hint of brown.

Replicus, who had been coming in for another critical attack against the Null Devil King frowned. His body wasn't stopped in its tracks like everything else, but he found that his vicious burst of speed was tempered with adversely. His immense body suddenly got relegated to approximately two-fifths of its amplified speed granted by the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow!

It was as though he was suddenly traversing through pools of thick jelly!

'What is it now?!' he grumbled furiously, only to realise that the Null Devil King was rising from the crater he had been lying in. 'Is this Static Limbo?'

Null Life Essence washed over Caxellac again, and in an instant, it was as though he had not been roadkill plastered in a ditch a moment ago!

'Damn it!' Replicus cursed just as he managed to drop the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow on his opponent.

The Null Devil King flashed out of the way and appeared over one massive building which looked quite like a gazebo. It too was frozen midway through its pitiable fall.

He twiddled his fingers and cracked his neck.

"You know, there was a better way for me to capitalise on my advantage with the [Rune of the FIRST]. I could have spent the next six minutes running around, making it hard for you to actually engage me in any meaningful combat. I am, after all, a King. I have the luxury of forfeiting battles as I wish and resuming them when I wish.

It doesn't matter that you are the successor of a prestigious figure in our world who was once an Authority," he said with a chuckle right before a great arrow of light flew and obliterated the gazebo he was standing on.

Next, Caxellac flashed before the giant figure of Replicus.

"I decided against that. I no longer hold a title, as difficult as that is to swallow. And as a general Null Lifeform, I can't show myself to be a coward or engage in cowardly tactics. But then again..."

The Null Devil King hurried to raise a hand to defend right when Replicus' large fist, no longer as fast as it was before, came down like a twister with Ju`wte crackling around it, intent on smashing him to bits!

His palm was tinged in an intense blue glow and he used it to block the Progeny's attack with a terrifying degree of ease!

...!!!

Replicus' frown turned deeper.

There was hardly any feedback.

Large bursts of Ju`wte surrounded the Null Devil King from the raging impact, but this time Replicus noticed something concerning.

Thick tiles of glass-like Null Life Essence appeared around Caxellac just as the harbingers of Crush and Shock damage emerged.

As they erupted one after another, the advanced Reflective Null Cages – or tiles – blocked much of their intended damage, keeping the Null Devil King perfectly safe!

Caxellac grinned viciously and looked up at Replicus' large, stunned face.

"...then again, you, PROGENY OF THE WARMOTH, have yet to ignite the fire of thrill that comes with senseless, unwarranted, barbaric battle in me! At this pace, I might as well stay alive for longer than I intended!" he shrieked just as Replicus raised his top arms and struck the Ju`wta wrapped around them together.

MBIIIIING!

The sound of two metallic entities clashing resounded, and then Replicus became encased in a great ball of thick, eager bolts of Ju`wte!

The Null Devil King's grin turned even more twisted.

The city the two were battling in was overwhelmed by a yellowish red radiance and the intact structures close to the burst of Ju`wtte were turned to dust!

The mountain onto which the city was set on obtained intense cracks that had Ju`wtte running through them, and finally, it started groan, crack and tilt!

The intense light faded, and Replicus' massive figure emerged, its missing arm restored and his skin which had been torched by Caxellac's flames earlier mended perfectly!

This was a result of the skill [Ju`wtta Resounding Restoration]!

Whenever Replicus knocked the bracers known as the Ju`wtta together, all bodily damage he had suffered would be healed instantly regardless of how severe!

The Null Devil King took note of this.

"DON'T MAKE MY LAST MOMENTS DULL, WARMOTH!" he cried jubilantly.

In the next instance, Replicus threw his free fist down, then his other!

The Null Devil King blocked with his palms packed with so much Null Life Essence they were glowing. Many Reflective Null Tiles also appeared around him defensively.

Replicus didn't let up.

He threw a flurry of deadly punches nonstop with his bottom arms and Caxellac met them all without taking even a shred of damage!

Great popping and booming noises erupted in the thousands, demolishing the great Giant city as it fell off.

Mana was eradicated as hundreds of thousands of exchanges ensued.

Great gusts that only grew worse with time rolled all over Edagon, whipping about with such great force that they eroded the landscape at a terrifying rate.

The clouds above turned tenebrous, dropping bolts of regular lightning and rain on the land of Giants as it suffered.

But Replicus and Caxellac didn't care.

They kept their engagement alive for the better part of ten seconds, a blistering heat building up around them!

'Damn it! This bastard is unbelievable!' Replicus thought begrudgingly. 'He's using Static Limbo, not to freeze a living thing like I'm used to, but to freeze the surrounding space! Even with all the strength I can master, I can't assume my full physical capabilities anymore!'

'To make matters worse, he's condensing Null Life Essence so finely in his palms that my punches are barely doing anything, much less the Shock and Crush damage which he's beating with the Reflective Null Tiles!'

Replicus was both impressed and terrified.

But he couldn't have been more mortified by the Null Devil King's skill than in the next moment.

Midway through the exchange, he saw the Null Devil King's hand quickly swipe the air as an intense blur... and his upper right arm – where one of his Ju`wta grew from – went flying!

...!!!

Was that... was that a slash from condensed Null Life Essence?

Replicus couldn't ponder over this, even in his horror, because Caxellac immediately drew back, extended his hand forward and pulled on the Null Life Essence in Replicus, drawing the Progeny in his direction!

Null Extraction?!

His grin then covered his entire face once more and he then applied his Class, the Forcemancer, in a way that the BoneTender could only ever dream of!

Chapter 1130: Stampede!

Right as the minute mark to the battle chimed, Replicus, pulled brusquely by Caxellac's activation of [Null Extraction], was suddenly met by a counterforce that rammed him in the chest!

It was like an unreal blast of wind that somehow had a pair of large horns and a lively fit of rage attached to it.

Well, this was accurate. Replicus managed to glimpse the sight of the sudden assailant. It was a massive bull, nearly five meter tall and three meters wide, and built like a lumpy potato. It was ruby red in colour, with eyes and horns that mirrored the same hue, as though to demonstrate its rage.

The beast had charged into Replicus after appearing from nowhere, the speed it had, along with the odd force of wind that accompanied it knocking the Null-living breath out of Replicus. The Progeny was sent blasting a thousand kilometers away after a deafening shockwave... and a splat from the bull exploding into a mess of blood!

With a great deal of damage – two holes and crushed bones – Replicus bore through a large mountain and six hills all the while ploughing through the sturdy, rough lands of Edagon before finally coming to a stop. He groaned.

The Null Devil King had got him.

Replicus felt as though his insides had turned to mush. That destructive power from the bull... He had felt it before, though it had not been quite as lethal.

'So that's what knocked me when I had the Null Devil King stunned by Shock damage...' Replicus thought as he forced himself to a stand. 'It was a physical creature. That explains why it exploded after it hit me.'

Replicus didn't know what kind of power the Null Devil King was using (the guidance field wasn't particularly useful given that the King was leagues ahead of him power-wise), but he understood why twice now, these creatures he summoned were destroyed promptly after landing a hit.

It was because of his Empowered Trigger Build!

Initially, after using [Unbound] on his Endurance stat, Replicus' body had become able to reflect physical damage below a certain threshold, sending it back to the user at seven times the intensity. Now, his amped physique could return the damage at a maximum of fifty times to an opponent, if it fell short of his physique's limits.

Because the bulls obviously had an atrocious amount of power behind them, they still dealt damage to Replicus, but some of that damage was reflected back, killing them instantly!

While that was a potentially significant positive, Replicus' travel across a vast distance opened his eyes to a pressing concern he had had in mind.

Even now, as he was so far from the Null Devil King, he still felt that Static Limbo was active. Caxellac had covered a wider portion of Edagon than he had anticipated, freezing everything and making it harder still for Replicus to move at his best.

GRRRRUUUUUM!

The ground rumbled.

Replicus looked to where he had come streaking from.

The horizon turned dark.

A mass of black was swiftly approaching while making it seem as though the world was ending!

Tens of thousands of the ruby red bulls were charging towards him, a whipping gust so fierce that it shredded great rocks, hills and mountains with ease, warping around them!

Some of the bulls charged in the air, making a full sweep towards Replicus in a curved formation!

The Warmoth's Progeny frowned.

The enemies were moving at no less than the speed of light!

If Edagon wasn't at least ten times as sturdy as Feinheath and Opungale, it would have broken apart from just this stampede.

Replicus narrowed his curved eyes from which a soft yellow glow issued.

A string of Ju`wtte had been pouring from his finger all along, at its end, his arm which Caxellac had severed a moment ago attached. His phantoms had managed to retrieve it right when he was hit by the bull.

'That bastard hasn't figured out my Flaw, has he?' Replicus thought, a little concerned.

He then drew his arm to one of his hands and knocked it against his other upper arm which held the second Ju`wttta. Showers of Ju`wtte sprayed everywhere aggressively, and once more, the Warmoth's Progeny was whole, keenly prepared for the stampede no less than a kilometer away now!

In an instant, Replicus swiped across with all his might using the Warmoth's Spine, and the surroundings – which were by no means his target – cried, exploding and cutting themselves from just the force released by the Pseudo-Transcendent Fond Calamity!

A lengthy slash was sent forth towards the horde of enemies, visible as a soft, glowing, sharp line.

However, when it reached the first line of bellowing behemoths, the erect, lateral slash turned wobbly, like a string of spaghetti, and then shot upward towards the sky where it ripped a ghastly tear in space!

...!!!

Replicus was more affronted than shocked.

What the hell had just happened?!

However, he didn't have the luxury of pondering.

He felt Caxellac zoom in behind him as though he had been travelling in an alternate dimension until this very second. The Null Devil King grinned, and using his Bastard Sword, which was finally back in his hand, he sent another keen slash of condensed Null Life Essence like before towards Replicus' upper arm!

Again, Replicus' arm went flying, but he didn't forget to retaliate.

His free arm shot forward, and with its determined hand twisting as though turning a large knob...

"[Null Extraction]!"

...!!!

And indeed, it worked!

Caxellac was surprised when he felt his immense Null Life Essence reserves churn, his body then spinning in place violently!

At the same time, another one of Replicus' phantoms called forth mana and activated [Null Life Demesne] – a greater version of [Null Life Aura] – conjuring a field of stable Null Life Essence that did as Replicus had hoped; to struggle against Caxellac's Static Limbo!

Replicus felt a small safe zone of roughly three meters in radius around him where his hundredfold empowered speed from the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow finally returned!

However, just as he revelled in the feeling...

The spinning Null Devil King sent a flurry of glowing, blue slashes zipping out at random, hoping to catch Replicus with at least one of them!

Because of the freedom, however, Replicus managed to react promptly.

Using Spatial Lightning, he teleported himself far away from both the charge of the bulls and Caxellac without forgetting to retrieve his severed arm which held tight the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow!

Right as he landed, though, the Warmoth's Progeny soon found that there was no easy escape, because the large bulls materialised all around him in a great oval formation, shredding winds hissing all around them!

They all charged angrily, closing on his location with bellows of triumph!