

## Undead 1251

Chapter 1251: Forging The Strongest...(6)

There were three requirements to reaching Divinity.

Limit breaking.

Mortal Binding.

Ember Tasting.

These requirements took different shapes depending on the world an aspiring combatant was born on, but the path usually looked similar.

There was no order to completing these requirements, but most experts completed Limit breaking first.

Limit breaking was simply the process of reaching the peak of the established power system in the world one was born in. But of course, this only applied to Rich Worlds. Only they could nurture a power system with enough value for Limit breaking. This was why worlds like the one Luserus built could never produce a Divine combatant and were subdued easily by the Immoral.

In Aigas, Limit breaking meant reaching the peak of the Beyond The Veil Stage: Level 100.

Fulgardt had accomplished this during his run of terror, but hadn't know what else he had to do to reach Divinity. This is where Sause had come in.

He told the Immoral about Mortal Binding and Ember Tasting. The two were closely related.

Mortal Binding required an expert to infuse their precious essence – whatever form it took – into a large number of powerful beings, powerful, blessed beings. The purpose of this was to achieve a state of pseudo-permanence.

If one shared their essence with a vast number of people – at least the right way – they would ensure that even if their body was destroyed, a part of them would remain, however vague it was.

The meaning behind this?

Well, the first 'gift' one earned when they reached Divinity, was the equalisation of body and soul. The body became as vital and rich as the soul, and the soul became as powerful and self-sustaining as the body. This quality wasn't gifted for free, unfortunately. Mortal Binding ensured that an expert familiarised themselves with the feeling of permanence by existing within others.

Normally, hundreds days were needed for a common expert to get a feel for this, and the step would be considered complete.

Fulgardt had done this with all the people he had enslaved using [Evil Darkness] and [Just Light] in his hall, though he ultimately chose not to free them afterwards.

The third requirement, Ember Tasting, related to the blessed part of the beings that the aspiring expert had infused his essence into.

Blessings were a very important component to anything related to Deities. They weren't simply given powers. They were signatures of the Deities that intimately connected with mortals. They emphasised the difference between mortality and godhood through the bond a Deity shared with their creations.

In Aigas, an individual would be given a Blessing containing the essence of the Deity they favoured most, after all.

The unique properties of Blessings explained why they had been essential in unlocking the Extreme Formula – the seal that kept the Under separate from Aigas.

Aspiring experts had to recognise these signatures (Blessings). Creating powers similar in likeness to Blessings would be an option they would have when they reached Divinity and beyond, and Ember Tasting allowed them to get a feel for it before that; they would get to understand the difference between mortality and Divinity.

With all this in mind, the phantoms had every reason to celebrate.

For Limit breaking, they had as good as conquered it. Skullius didn't have to strive for the Beyond The Veil Stage. His Warmoth body took after the traits of the beasts of Aigas; it did not need to power up the same way humans did – with Stages – and at present, Skullius had long surpassed the strength of any beast in this world.

For Mortal Binding and Ember Tasting, before even considering that his alter had used Masterpieces to try and fulfil this requirement already, Skullius had already bonded himself to hundreds of other individuals: the Stark Troops.

The Stark Constellation he branded on all of them created an intimate bond between him and his subordinates already, and his alter's efforts were simply the last piece to complete how Skullius was already tethered to many blessed beings.

Beyond that, Skullius was already halfway through Ember Tasting because of the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow. He had experience creating many Blessings on his own, after all.

What truly made the phantoms joyous, however, was the fact that even though they were only inches away from completely fulfilling the conditions to Divinity, the unformed 'body' they were crafting had already crossed the threshold for normal Divine power.

It could hardly be contained, and they had yet to finish the rest of the configurations they had in mind.

Skullius couldn't understand this, which was why he instead focused on how to repair the cracking seed.

"What can we do to fix it?" he asked.

Oddly, the phantoms were stumped on this.

[Static Limbo] suspended the seed's destruction, but it likely wouldn't hold for long. The skill had evolved after Skullius reached Tier Four, but he didn't want to place too much confidence in it.

Serenity offered a suggestion.

"You could use [Unbound] on it?" she said.

The phantoms and Skullius were dumbfounded.

"[Unbound]?" they said.

"I understand that you fear that you may lose some of the more intricate mechanisms you instilled in the seed, but trust me, you won't. Using [Unbound] on the seed will affect the general product, not alter its intrinsic values. This is especially true with the current stage of [Unbound] you are able to access," Serenity explained.

Skullius and the phantoms felt some semblance of reassuring truths in this. Skullius was currently able to use [Unbound] at its best: Permanent Max Evolution.

To increase the value of the Harmonic Ember back then, Skullius had used 50,000 units of Null Life Essence to enact Temporary Max Evolution, which birthed the External Fragment of Realised Choices for a few minutes.

The last stage of [Unbound], which cost 100,000 units of Null Life Essence for each use, allowed for Permanent Max Evolution. Essentially, if Skullius had had access to this, he would have been able to keep the Harmonic Ember in its realised state permanently.

Skullius had used this quality of [Unbound] on some of his Unlimited Stars' stats.

The ashen seed cracked, instilling urgency back into Skullius and the phantoms.

"Let's do it!" Skullius said. "We really don't have anything to lose here."

"Right. I agree," a phantom said.

"Me too."

"Ditto! Wait, what does that mean?!"

Quickly, Skullius mobilised 100,000 units of Null Life Essence and used [Unbound] on the seed.

[Permanent Max Evolution has been determined]

[Evolution process begins...]

[...]

[...]

[...]

[...]

[Evolution process complete]

At once, the seed... turned black.

No radiance and no trace of anything even remotely close to divine leaked from it.

Skullius and his phantoms would have gulped nervously.

Permanent Max Evolution was terrifying. Skullius usually refrained from using it because he feared conjuring something with a consciousness of its own, like the External Fragment of Realised Choices.

But for things like this, he didn't think he needed to worry as much.

Permanent Max Evolution usually evoked the properties of some transcendent, similarly profound entity from the Null Verse on his target.

That seemed to be the case now, but he was rather terrified to investigate. The same was true for his phantoms.

"So... uh, shall we continue? Should we uh..." Skullius stuttered.

"Y-yes. Let's do that."

"Yah. I...uh, I don't see why not. Right?"

Chapter 1252: Forging The Strongest...(7)

Skullius and the phantoms tried a lot of tinkering, tunkering, and tonkering. It didn't work.

The Fruit of World Myths wouldn't budge.

They wound around, reversed their logic, sought perspectives inside and outside the box, but all of it yielded nothing.

They simply couldn't pry anything out of the Fruit of World Myths. What was presented by the guidance field was all they had to work with. They could not make the flower-shaped mark edify their expertise in manipulating [Evil Darkness] and [Just Light] at all.

A crippling silence ensued.

Skullius would have shaken his head and thrown his hands out in resignation.

"There's nothing we can do about this then?" he said.

"Apparently not," a thought phantom replied with the same degree of sullenness Skullius had.

There was another pause.

"Well, we do have another option," another of the phantoms said.

Everyone else perked up.

"What?" Skullius asked, a little hopeful.

"We could try checking the WILLS for clues."

"..."

"No."

"No."

"Flesh, no."

Skullius had been left speechless and the other phantoms flatly rejected the idea.

That was too risky.

Even though Skullius was confident and stood by what he had said before – that in a contest of resolve, he wouldn't lose to the WILLS of Fulgardt – he didn't think he should actively make an effort to poke at the hornet's nest. While he was on the path to Divinity himself, it would be foolish to underestimate the antics of someone who had thrived in that state of power for longer than him.

The WILLS were a form of Fulgardt's existence that bore his memories and consciousness. In their purest form – as they had been isolated from Skullius' body – they were likely more potent, more dangerous.

The thought phantom to suggest the idea of messing with them muttered something angrily.

Another expressed a point that made the group pivot in their thinking.

"Honestly, perhaps we should just hope that the fusion between our Hybrid Luman vessels and their respective affinities will grant us a higher affinity with [Evil Darkness]. I'm sure we are guaranteed to at least reach an A rank affinity after all is said and done. We can then just use the affix on the Bashful Abomination to increase the affinity to S," the phantom said.

"Besides, I don't think there is a way to use the Fruit of World Myths to help us with this. Wouldn't our possessed self have used it if that was the case?"

"Fair point," another phantom said.

At present, Skullius had all the memories that his clone self and his original had had. The snippets of Fulgardt's memories that the original had possessed, were in his hands now, and none of them revealed anything related to the subject at hand.

"Fair enough," Skullius said. "What should we do with the WILLS then? Can we just throw them away?"

"Probably. I see no reason to keep them."

"I'm surprised [Restless Storm Companion] was able to isolate them from our body in the first place. I suppose Supreme Skills are just that powerful, huh?"

"I imagine that wouldn't have been the case if our possessed self had inherited all of Fulgardt's WILLS. I can only imagine the process of assimilating WILLS would have continued until a perfect, Fulgardt-Festos blend was created with all the Immoral's memories intact."

Soon, the group moved on other projects.

Skullius' two souls were seamlessly applied to the now black seed, and the phantoms were relieved when it showed no sign of cracking or quaking.

They were emboldened. They started on Skullius' mana cores and affinities.

During the battle between the two versions of Skullius, his Warmoth body had adapted powerful essence like Integral Time and Genesis Pull into his mana cores. He had applied the same complexity of the Nature Bound Malleable Form Core for this.

Skullius had expected his phantoms to try and apply the same principle on the cores again, since his possessed self had obliterated most of them in his Territory during the battle, but they didn't. They zagged completely. They kept the mana cores as they were, and instead tinkered with the essences derived from concepts Skullius had affinities with.



Again, Skullius was astounded by how much far the planning of the phantoms went.

He was forced to shut up and complete yet another schematic which needed 100,000 Creeds to fulfil before adding it to the seed. After this, his phantoms finally turned towards his Territories.

Skullius was excited about what they had in mind for these.

"Even if we've thrown the idea of forging more Phantasmic Retainers to chance, I believe we can make do with the one we are currently able to create – the Noboboyama," a phantom said. "Now, the Noboboyama can only hold two Seeds of the Fruit of World Myths at a time. I believe that should be plenty for what we need. It can act as a sufficient carrier, don't you think?"

"No. These two Territories aren't simple. I doubt even three Seeds of the Fruit of World Myths would qualify as equals to Aphotic Catacomb of the Daemon, much less Purified Cadaver's Impartial Felicity."

"Alright. Then what's the compromise?"

"Hold on!" Skullius suddenly butted in. "You... You mean to tell me you want the Phantasmic Retainers to hold our Territories?"

"Well, yeah," a phantom said matter-of-factly. "If we can make the Retainers hold our Territories, we can have them exert the Primary, Secondary and even Tertiary effects of the Territories outside them, like they do with the Seeds of the Fruit of World Myths."

Skullius was stunned.

"That's just like how I apply Purified Cadaver's Impartial Felicity's powers; having some of its effects apply outside rather than inside. That's genius!"

"Indeed, we know. It would cost us a lot less to cast, especially with Purified Cadaver's Felicity. Its drain on reserves is still something to be studied. Besides that, if we can contain these Territories in their dormant states long enough, we'll get access to their Tertiary effects. Eventually."

Skullius found himself nodding furiously – in consciousness.

This was quite the idea.

Even his Fulgardt-possessed self had had to work around the fact that he didn't have a Tertiary assault function to his Territory. There were no shortcuts to creating it. The living things that naturally grew within the Territory determined the nature of the attack.

So far, Skullius remembered seeing only two individuals with such advanced Territories: Azila, the Great Mane Mountain Ape, and Rayn. The latter was on a completely different level though. There was an entire city of full-grown humanoid beings in his Territory.

"Well, since we might have a capacity problem depending on how the result of the merge comes to pass, I might have a solution," a phantom said.

The other phantoms and Skullius pricked their hypothetical ears.

"Fractional Territory Expulsion. How does that sound?"

Chapter 1253: Forging The Strongest...(8)

"Fractional Territory Expulsion?"

Skullius and the other phantoms were surprised, but not particularly confused. The name the phantom had suggested made it rather easy to understand what it was getting at: partially expelling a Territory.

But was this possible?

Could a simple skill issue be the one hurdle in the way of developing this?

"How exactly would we go about doing that? We can't slice a Territory into thirds now, can we?"

"That's exactly what we need!" the phantom with the idea exclaimed. "Of course, rather than tactlessly dividing our Territories, we'll split the effects and even the Imaginary GeoScape for good measure and infuse the parts into the Phantasmic Retainer!"

"Oh, that's brilliant actually. The Imaginary GeoScape has a mass of its own. If we divided the effects of the Territory, but kept the Imaginary GeoScape as is, the Retainer probably wouldn't be able to hold it still."

"I see. But if we are cutting up the GeoScape as well, we are going to need a lot more than just skill here, right?"

"Oh, absolutely."

Skullius once again felt like he had to butt in.

"My brothers in Somanda's demise, aren't you forgetting something here? If we temper with our Territories like this, won't it affect them when we actually need them whole?" he asked.

Skullius was still relatively new to Territories.

He had indeed created one, which taught him a lot of things, like the reason behind why a Territory was 'expelled', for instance: A Territory – after one decided how it would work and what it would look like – actually existed in a metaphysical form within the user's body before they cast outward.

The two Territories that had been isolated from Skullius because of the process facilitated by [Restless Storm Companion], were in their metaphysical states.

It was this bit of enlightenment about the state of Territories in one's body that made Skullius apprehensive about tempering with them. Wouldn't that damage them?

"Prime, relax. That's why we had you duplicate all our abilities. We don't intend to experiment with both the duplicates and the originals, you know?" a phantom answered Skullius' concerns.

And indeed, earlier, Skullius had been told to use Creeds to duplicate all of his skills and abilities. This had applied to everything including the Seeds of the Fruit of World Myths and the Majestic Territories.

"I see. If that's the case then alright. I assume we need Creeds to enable this ability to fractionally expel our Territories?" Skullius said.

"You know it."

And the phantoms once again revealed an elaborate schematic. The process that followed... was staggeringly complex.

Skullius summoned the Noboboyama and the phantoms worked with the Fractional Territory idea and an ungodly amount of Creeds to create several variations of Fractional Territories. A series of failures preceded the eventual success that followed.

It seemed the phantoms had been right in thinking Aphotic Catacomb of the Daemon and Purified Cadaver's Impartial Felicity were too much to handle for the Spirit of Blind Drowning. In fact, even their halves were too much for it. Quarters of both Territories seemed to be ideal, moreso for Purified Cadaver's Impartial Felicity, of course.

A perfect, functional Fractional Territory was infused into the Noboboyama successfully and then a series of adjustments which required Creeds were added to the whole thing, much to Skullius surprise; he couldn't say the adjustments weren't necessary though. Once again, he applauded the ingenuity of the phantoms.

Skullius then boldly added the Noboboyama to the black seed and was relieved when it showed no signs of cracking. He then added the rest of the combinations of Fractional Territories from the duplicate Territories, and then the original, whole ones – which the merging process fused together – to the seed.

"Goodness, I wonder what exactly that Permanent Max Evolution did to the Seed. It's barely even reacting and I can't sense what's happening inside it. Is that a good thing?" Skullius said. He couldn't help but get concerned.

"We're just going to have to believe that everything is going to be fine,

a phantom replied. "Besides, after we are done with everything, we will be going into the seed ourselves. We can confirm the situation then. Speaking of 'done', there's only one thing left."

Indeed.

One thing remained when it came to crafting the perfect body.

The Stolen Angel.

"Crazy..." Skullius said. "Our possessed self was about to substitute this thing for our soul."

"Yeah. That was crazy," a phantom said with a course laugh.

The possessed Skullius, upon seeing that his counterpart had gotten a hold of his soul had attempted to destroy it. Now that Skullius had his memories, he understood the full reason: the bastard had believed that his body had obtained enough knowledge on the soul to qualify as both a body and a soul, hence rendering his actual soul obsolete.

Well, he had also believed that the Stolen Angel would become akin to his soul.

It was a wild idea.

"Well, we don't really need the Stolen Angel, do we? We have already isolated its skills."

"It doesn't feel right getting rid of it, does it? I mean, it's essentially a version of us. Its eyes might be useful too."

But these arguments by the phantoms were only half-hearted.

The Stolen Angel had extraordinary regenerative abilities and could copy physiques and fighting styles with its eyes. Both these qualities were good, but the phantoms didn't think they justified keeping the Angel.

In its current state, it was only slightly more powerful than the average Stark Troop, and that was a generous estimate.

"I have an idea," Skullius said. "Maybe we don't need it, but someone else might."

Right then, both Skullius and the phantoms looked at one of the few things remaining in the space around them.

It was a consciousness which had been isolated from the Hybrid Luman body.

It was rather weak, so weak that it couldn't express itself like Skullius. How hazy it was, barely showing signs of solidity, demonstrated its pitiful nature.

Skullius drew close to it. If he had hands, he would have cradled it gently.

"It's time you had some autonomy, Sila. You've earned it," Skullius said to the Tower General.

Indeed, the Tower General deserved a reward.

He had gone from attempting to steal Skullius body all the way back then, to helping him reclaim it today.

Because of the other set of memories, Skullius now had vivid memories of Sila sacrificing his soul to restore Skullius' own, which had been breaking apart after his battle with Rayn, and how the General had tried to save Skullius from Fulgardt's influence.

The Tower General had never ceased being the voice of reason in the possessed-Skullius' mind, nagging him constantly, hoping he would come to his senses.

It was for Skullius' sake that Sila was in this state – strange as it was that he was still kicking in such a form.

For this, Skullius couldn't be stingy.

At once, he activated [Graceful Monolith of the Eminent] and added the Stolen Angel and Sila's consciousness into one seed.

"Hopefully, this will work for you," Skullius said.

Once this process was complete, Skullius turned away.

It was time to taste Divinity and its benefits!

#### Chapter 1254: Tasting Divinity (1)

"Alright. Let's get this done. Even though our possessed self established millions of beings for us to Bind ourselves to, we are going to have to complete the process," a phantom said.

And indeed, this was the case, but Mortal Binding was supposed to take several hundred days for the average combatant. It only made sense, as normal individuals didn't get to experience things that touched upon the boundary of Divinity so often, unlike Skullius.

And speaking of this comparison...

"It shouldn't take us too long, right? Our possessed self already had experience with Mortal Binding and Ember Tasting because of Fulgardt. I believe the only thing that was stopping him from crossing to Divinity was because he was still at the Incandescent Stage," another phantom theorised.

"I suppose, but the scant experiences of Fulgardt we have received through our alter's memories are a little diluted because of our own memories being mixed in. Either way, it shouldn't take months, or days for us to get a hang of Mortal Binding or Ember Tasting."

"You guys are pretty confident with this one," Skullius remarked.

"We don't really have a reason to doubt now, do we? We were already on the threshold to Divinity. It shouldn't be a problem to crossover after all we have been through. I should remind you, we also have quite a lot of experience with inhabiting other people's bodies. That should contribute somewhat too, I think."

Skullius would have nodded in agreement.

Even discounting what Fulgardt's memories were bringing to the table, he also had rich supernatural experiences.

"Alright. Let's do it," Skullius said. "So, I suppose I'm going to have to infuse more of [Just Light] into the Masterpieces scattered across the timelines?"

"No," a phantom said. "Let's start with something close. Let's infuse both [Evil Darkness] and [Just Light] into the Stark Troopers first. If that proves insufficient, we can then extend our reach to the Masterpieces. We should probably make sure to release them afterwards though. I dread us becoming... immoral."

"Oh, I see. Sounds good," Skullius said.

The phantoms grew silent and he set to focus.

Some of the duplicates of the skills he had made were still exposed outside the seed. Skullius would have them imbued into the black seed after he was done using them, and join in himself.

But for now, the floating conscious activated [Greatest Antiphon of Malignance] and [Benevolent Melanoid Prince]. The basic skills responsible for allowing Skullius to manipulate darkness and light had been mixed into these skills.

Skullius immediately connected to the Stark Constellations branded onto his Stark Troops' foreheads.

The Stark Constellation was a brand that reinforced the ideals of each of his subordinates, and shielded their bodies and souls from adverse influences. It also went without saying that Skullius was connected intimately to anyone with the Stark Constellation, and could pass on gifts or even control their actions completely if he wished.

Such a potent power was indeed terrifying.

The Stark Constellation had taken the same level of ingenuity that the phantoms were showcasing today to manufacture. It took the properties of Ju`wte and abused them to shield his subordinates, but to forge its extensive range of abilities, Skullius had used five Rules created through the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow during his time in the Timemould Mirror Box.

These Rules' effects used Ju`wte as a base for the protective effects he instilled.

Skullius concentrated deeply.



Slowly, he felt himself exit the Empyrean Hatcher as a kind of idea without a tangible or visible form. His pace quickened once he was outside, and then he felt himself get torn between more than a hundred locations.

His consciousness was shared among all the Stark Troops, most of which were casually relaxing themselves, taking slow baths, chatting, lying down or eating. Unlike the Unlimited Stars, Skullius hadn't really needed to introduce them to his guests urgently.

Only the Unlimited Stars managed to feel the presence of their master strongly, but it was hardly an odd thing. They didn't pay it much heed.

'Alright. None of them seem to be in any vulnerable positions. Though, I suppose what I'm about to do might detract from what I ordered the Unlimited Stars. I could have Araeyn keep an eye on Elita in the worst case. Now...' Skullius thought and then with a simple desire, he had [Evil Darkness] and [Just Light] funnel through all the Stark Troops.

...!!!

There was a shocking rumble across the Empyrean Bosom.

The Stark Troops were flabbergasted.

Darkness and light in terribly vast volumes poured into them voraciously, and soon, they became akin to water vessels, overflowing.

The majority of them would have panicked, but they knew this was their master's doing and he would never hurt them without cause. Well, none of them were actually being harmed in the first place.

The general Stark Troops ceased what they were doing and sat down, backs straight. They calmed themselves, took deep breaths and surrendered control of their bodies. The Stark Constellations on their foreheads sparked fiercely with Ju`wtte.

Skullius felt their collective will and it warmed his heart.

'You socketholes. I didn't ask you to do that,' he thought to himself, but joy bubbled within him. This level of trust...

The Unlimited Stars didn't so readily give themselves up, however. They knew if Skullius required that of them, he needed only to command them. Their bodies surged with staggering power, and Elita, who was in their company, frowned.

She felt the same odd signature of energy vaguely all around the Empyrean Bosom. She couldn't understand the purpose and meaning behind it.

"Don't think too much," Grim said to her with a grin, his face practically becoming the sun's cousin. A dark mist whirled around his torso. "This sort of thing happens a lot more often than you'd think."

Elita could only believe Grim.

All the other Unlimited Stars resumed what they had been doing prior.

Skullius was pleased.

'How reliable,' he thought.

Now that all 138 of the Stark Troops were imbued with [Evil Darkness] and [Just Light], he was free to begin attempting to truly grasp this feeling of pseudo-permanence. At present, Skullius existed within all the Stark Troops. He was as Mortally Bound as could be.

Chapter 1255: Tasting Divinity (2)

Divinity expanded the range of one's existence and a mortal had to come to terms with this.

Being extracted from mortality had many meanings, and one of them was that simply existing as one entity that could be obliterated ceased to be the norm.

Even though Fulgardt had perished long ago, he still existed. His body, through a collection of conditions and powers, was able to move on its own within the Labyrinth of the Yoke, following a desire he had instilled in it, and his consciousness had been terrorising Skullius vivaciously.

Mortal Binding helped with making a mortal familiarise themselves with something like this, which would have been extremely unrelatable for most of their life. Feeling the throbbing of their power from multiple vessels, the surge of it promising an existence beyond the blood and veins that they began the journey of life with, was both thrilling and difficult to grasp for the average individual.

But Skullius, upon trying to so hard to relate to this feeling, found it...extremely familiar.

Fulgardt's experiences helped, but Skullius' personal memories and recollection of memories did as well.

Skullius knew how it felt to dwell in more than one vessel.

He had a shocking number of memories that reminded him that he was anything but an average aspirant of Divinity.

In the Labyrinth of the Yoke, in Fulgardt's Hall, he had used [Basic Evil Invasion] for the first time on an Incandescent Stager known as Eldris Traven. The skill allowed him to transfer his consciousness into that of a target and wrestle control over their body. At the time, while Skullius' consciousness had moved into the man's body, his wholeness had remained in his Discount Human body.

This wasn't the only time Skullius had used [Basic Evil Invasion], of course. He had used it again on his first mission as a mercenary of the Guild's Association – when he was invited by Stylla, Bron and Fore.

But Skullius' experiences were not only limited to [Basic Evil Invasion]. He had also existed as two entities on the multiple occasions where he used Crude World Projection. This Seed of the Fruit of World Myths allowed him to project himself as a dark humanoid that could soar and scout while his soul remained in his body.

Yet this wasn't all either. Skullius also had [Basic Evil Sanction] which had helped him crawl into a target like a phantom and extract memories and skills.

But the greatest instance of all would probably be how the possessed Skullius had essentially made a different version of himself in the Preeminent Attegoth, which he funnelled all his skills into, allowing for the existence of two of him at the same time.

While some of these experiences didn't fully meet the requirements for what was necessary for Mortal Binding, they chipped away at Skullius' insufficient experience with the concept of existing in a broader form.

Skullius nearly laughed.

By the time ten minutes passed since he began passing his elements into the Stark Troops, he felt himself breach a threshold of experience for Mortal Binding.

If there was any hiccup at all, it would be that Skullius didn't have enough blessed vessels. As expected, his Stark Troops weren't enough. He needed to expand the sharing of his essence for just a little while longer.

And thus, he did.

With deeper focus, he felt the millions of Masterpieces his other self had created and instantly began funnelling power through them.

The Masterpieces lit up like lanterns.

Some couldn't hold too much of Skullius' power and he had to dial it down.

Some were greedy and demanded more of it subconsciously.

The rapid growth of vessels guzzling at his rich essence immediately pushed Skullius' experience sharply upward.

'I guess my hardships weren't all that bad if they allowed me to experience enough bizarre incidents to reach Divinity only a few months after I arrived here,' Skullius thought. He couldn't help but laugh.

To think that little skeleton from Somanda's mines was so easily doing what others spent centuries trying to accomplish.

The road might have been rough, but Skullius endured, and he could say with confidence that he deserved the boons he was getting.

'And now, Ember Tasting,' he thought.

At once, he sank his focus completely into all the vessels he had drowned in [Just Light] and [Evil Darkness].

They were all blessed beings.

They had inherited Blessings, even though a majority of them were dormant.

Skullius didn't need to search the innards of the Masterpieces or the Stark Troops for these Blessings.

The latter's bodies and souls were already open books to him and for the Masterpieces, Skullius' expertise with the Blessings allowed him to locate the Blessings hiding in his vessels easily.

It was as Actuass had told Revia back then.

Blessings were not branded onto the body or the soul.

They were rather easy to find with the right eye.

Skullius saw their pretty lustre in the Stark Troops and the Masterpieces.

If he were the average expert, he might have marvelled – after days or months of trying to find the locations of all the Blessings.

But through Actuass, Skullius had acquired the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow, which allowed him to create Blessings.

Because of the Transcendent grade tool, Skullius understood the limits of Divine Blessings: the trade-offs one could make in their creation, how to bolster them and many other little bits of information about them.

He understood what it was like to create powers that could be given to the lesser.

He had an understanding of the gap between mortals and gods that steadily grew as he interacted with the Blessings from the Masterpieces and Stark Troops.

The wide chasm that existed between creations and creators, Divine and mundane, was not simply power. It was an appreciation of the higher resources one would be open to, the different myths within the great void that could now be reached without fear, the fellowship with other ascended beings, and the worth of a reality as a whole.

A part of Skullius, in this moment, began to understand why Suzamete had seemed like an arrogant, stuck-up prick.

She did indeed see things through a wider scope.

She appreciated the vastness of the world and her ability to traverse it while Skullius' reasonings had been trapped within the confines of Aigas.

It seemed knowing something, or perhaps even knowing everything, didn't mean much if you didn't understand or grasp the meaning behind each piece of knowledge, or the right way to use it.

This truth seemed so mundane and generic, but the fact that it was so often overlooked and deemed basic was precisely why beings like Skullius couldn't have ascended past mortality before.

Skullius caressed the millions of Blessings he could see once more after what seemed like an eternity, and something seemed to click.

Whatever it was, he didn't voice it.

He didn't even drown himself in analysis and rough thought.

Skullius dragged his consciousness back to the Second Layer of the Empyrean Hatcher. He drew on all the other relevant components left outside of the merging process, and pulled them as he descended to become part of the soon-to-blossom seed.

Chapter 1256: Skullius Festos Dawn

It was dreadfully quiet within the seed.

Skullius could feel his unsaid thoughts spilling out of his limited form into the silence, and getting lost in the crowded expanse. There were tranquil flashes and sparks within it from the continuing fusion process, but they seemed so distant, so far removed from Skullius.

Perhaps that was because despite his consciousness being in the seed, his attention was still stuck within the Masterpieces and the Stark Troops within which he kept his essence flooding.

Enlightenment was at his door and for a moment, Skullius almost got too zealous about his current state. He felt himself cross a boundary that he had never been able to perceive before.

It was this boundary that separated the Immoral and the Discount Human of old.

Ordinary would cease to exist.

Emotions that weren't his, ambitions that weren't his, dreams that weren't his, blasted Skullius from all sides, almost taking over his individuality – his sense of self – but he crushed them all completely and remained dominant. In fact, his will grew larger, greater, more potent.

...And then the silence shattered as the guidance field spawned amidst the flashes and darkness.

[...]

[...]

[...]

[The individual known as 'Skullius | Festos Dawn' is transcending the mortal boundary]

[...]

[...]

[Because you have torn a new Direction for yourself, would you like to revise your name?]

Skullius took a moment.

It was funny that the guidance field would ask him this.

It had been the one to decide on the name 'Festos Dawn' all the way back then, when he had first met Tulnas and the Harem's Guild in the Inhone City.

Back then, he had only been desperate for a name to give that didn't sound as suspicious as Skullius.

Back then, he never would have guessed that the name Festos Dawn would be attached to so many people and events in the future.

Funny indeed.

The current Skullius didn't think he needed any additions or subtractions to his name.

Well, he hadn't really been the best at naming things in the first place. The best thing he could think of at the moment, was to combine his names.

"Skullius Festos Dawn. Let's keep it simple. I don't need anything more than that," he said.

[Acknowledged...]

[The individual 'Skullius Festos Dawn' has reached a state of Divinity]

[...]



[The Voice of Worlds has elevated the functions of the guidance field to Patronage Rank 2]

[The Voice of Worlds has elevated the functions of the guidance field to Patronage Rank 3]

[Information packet received]

[...]

[...]

[...]

[Congratulations! You have opened yourself to the broader, more profound state of existence that transcending mortality brings. Your mind is becoming more open. Your soul is being invigorated. Your body becomes more sophisticated.]

[You have opened yourself to the Common Reality Leagues followed by all that have reached the stage of Divinity before you. No longer are you restricted to the system encrusted to the world you have been residing in. When you measure yourself, you will now do it against demigods, fiends, gods, and genuine celestial calamities]

[The Common Reality Leagues consist of the following:

Immortal Physiques - Soul and Body properties;

Exora Amras (Theistic Ador) - Divine energy stores;

Andori (Technique) - Mastery in special techniques;

Exotic Parlous Natures - Unnatural elemental or conceptual forces produced by one entity;

Wicked and Prime Treasures - Powerful artefacts;

Relevant powers you have cultivated will scale past the boundary of Aigas and be categorized and measured within these five categories]

[...]

[...]

[Immortal Physiques are ranked from World, Realm, Void to Reality. Each rank is split into three Stratus: Stratum 1, 2 and 3]

[Exora Amras (Theistic Ardor) are ranked from World Affluent, Sage Affluent, Realm Affluent, Star Affluent, Void Affluent, Cosmic Affluent to Reality Affluent. Each rank is split into three ranges: Beginner, Middling and Peak]

[Andori (Techniques) are ranked from Grand, Sage, Ascendant to Cosmic. Each rank is split into four tiers: First to Fourth]

[Exotic Parlous Natures as well as Wicked and Prime Treasures, are ranked from World, Realm, Void to Reality]

[...]

[Your budding seed is rich]

[Fusion and mutation process accelerates!]

[...]

[...]

[...]

[Your Well of Exora Amras is being generated]

[...]

[...]

[Effect of the budding seed applies!]

[Your Exora Amras belongs to the Beginner World Affluent tier... Error!]

[Effect of the budding seed applies!]

[Your Exora Amras belongs to the Middling World Affluent tier... Error!]

[Effect of the budding seed applies!]

[Your Exora Amras belongs to the Peak World Affluent tier... Error!]

[Effect of the budding seed applies!]

[Your Exora Amras belongs to the Beginner Sage Affluent tier!]

[Influx of Exora Amras has been received!]

[You currently hold 250,000 units of Exora Amras!]

[...]

[...]

[Congratulations! You are already in possession of powers that are worthy of the Common Reality Leagues. You have proven your worth as a 1 in 100,000,000 Fledling Divine]

[Fusion and mutation process accelerates!]

[Effect of the budding seed applies!]

[Your meticulous, crafty blueprint is edified. Your body is odd, but profound.]

[You have awakened an Immortal World Physique of the Third Stratum]

[...]

[...]

[The fusion process welcomes several skills, Andori and Exotic Parlous Natures!]

[...]

[...]

[You now have access to the Supreme Skill 'Greatest Hegemon of Sorcerous Mana!']

[You now have access to the Third Grand Tier Andori, 'Sagacious Antiphon of Dawnlight!']

[You retain access to the Supreme Skill, 'Infinite Sword God: Primordial Sword!']

[You now have access to the Third Grand Tier Andori, 'King of the Severing Twilight: AfterDark!']

[You now have access to the Fourth Sage Tier Andori, 'Entropy's Harmonising Nimbus!']

[You now have access to the Supreme Skill, 'Fiend's Clairvoyant Fever!']

[You now have access to the Second Grand Tier Andori, 'True Severance: Elusive Meta Carver!']

[You now have access to the Second Grand Tier Andori, 'True Severance: Ruining Cutter!']

[You now have access to the First Sage Tier Andori, 'Legion Eyes'!]

[You now have access to the World rank Exotic Parlous Nature, 'Frigid Time'!]

[You now have access to the World rank Exotic Parlous Nature, 'Maximum Combustion'!]

[...]

[...]

[...]

[You now have access to the Third Grand Tier Andori, 'Instant Embodiment of Perfection'!]

['Instant Embodiment of Perfection' is activated!]

[...]

[...]

[Formation of 'True Body' has begun...]

#### Chapter 1257: The Order Welcomes A Worthy Master! (1)

In order to not give away the directive Skullius commanded them by constantly following Elita as a group, the Unlimited Stars had decided that Yuyui, the most unsuspecting of them, should take Elita on a tour of the Empyrean Bosom. If anything happened, she could notify the others in a heartbeat. Thus, for the last hour or so, Yuyui had been showing Elita the numerous, odd sights in the place.

And now...

"Bubbles?" Elita asked, but her eyes remained on the thing ahead of her.

"Yes. That's his name. Cute, isn't it?" Yuyui said with a big smile. Of course, because of the bright luminance of [Just Light] blasting from her face, it was hard to tell.

She too was gazing at the thing in front of them, but her emotions were significantly more tender than Elita's.

The former Paladin Champion didn't know what Yuyui was referring to: the name she had given the thing, or the thing itself. Neither was cute.

Before them was a large creature, certainly humanoid by some capacity. It was able to sit as a human would on the terraces forming on the walls of the great pit, after all. Elita and Yuyui were standing on the edge of this pit, watching the creature feed.

It had thick, lustreless reddish-black scales all over its naked body. Large, webbed wings around which orbs of blue flame revolved, grew from its back, flapping ever so often. Seven modest, white-hot horns grew over its bald, scaled head, flickers of white fire shooting between them.

The creature was feeding on a large piece of well-cooked steak in a rather uncouth manner. One would have thought it hadn't eaten in years.

Yuyui frowned as the creature only continued to produce vulgar sounds in its feeding.

"Bubbles! I taught you better than that! Where're the utensils I got you? They were specially made, you know?" she rebuked.

At once, the creature, Bubbles, turned its head to reveal a pair of yellow eyes with flaming slit-like pupils.

Yuyui scowled.

From Bubbles' eyes, two beams of searing, orange-pink flame blasted out, hurtling towards Yuyui with a thrum!

Elita was alarmed. She hadn't expected Bubbles to react so violently to – as Yuyui had called herself moments before – his 'mother'.

An eye with dark sclera and an icy blue iris appeared on Yuyui's forehead. As soon as the incoming beams were reflected in the eye, they fizzled out as though drowned in moisture.

"Bubbles!" Yuyui hissed while stamping her foot on the ground. "How rude! We have a guest!"

Bubbles must have sensed something Elita couldn't from Yuyui, because he suddenly cowered, frightened, but still continued feeding messily.

"I'm sorry about that," Yuyui said to the former Paladin Champion. "He's grumpy because I didn't take along him when I accompanied Master to fight his other self. He's also probably not very happy with his living quarters."

"...I see," Elita said with a sigh. At this rate, she was going to have to buy that Yuyui really was Bubbles' mother.

Yuyui had explained that Bubbles had come one of three eggs that her Master had stolen from a certain Cluster he had conquered months ago. One of those eggs had also become the Apostle Araeyn.

"Is this really that bad of a place to live though? Should I move him?" Yuyui turned to Elita and asked with concern.

Elita struggled for a moment. Even if she couldn't see Yuyui's expression, she could feel her frown.

"I wouldn't say that. It actually looks delightful. But perhaps that's not what... Bubbles, wants," she said.

She was being honest.

She had thought differently about this when Yuyui took her to a small, shabby, thatched building that looked as though it would collapse yesterday. However, her opinion could only have changed once she found an expansive room within this shabby building. It held great, neat bales of fluffy straw, suspended, silver basins of fresh water, and a pit that produced a different kind of meal every hour.

Everyone had been suspicious about the purpose of this thatched building, given its properties, but Skullius never explained. He turned the building into a pen for the mounts and familiars that his subordinates had managed to subjugate from the hundreds of Clusters he had drawn into the Empyrean Bosom.

Oddly, there were layers to this place. Bubbles' own, large room was two floors down.

Yuyui gave it some deep thought.

"Spoiled brat," she muttered. Elita smiled sheepishly.

At that moment, there was a flapping noise – wings beating against the air – and a large, red stork landed on the fluffy straw.

Timmit no longer looked like a common, oversized bird at a glance. Patches of silver and blue steel sat over the branches of his wings, his neck, torso and legs. Powerful energies could be sensed in them. The Stark Constellation crackled mildly on his forehead.

The stork saw Yuyui and rolled his eyes.

"Timmit!" Yuyui cried jubilantly and rushed towards the stork. Timmit took a step back but then realised that he couldn't stop what was about to happen.

Yuyui gave him a passionate hug.

Elita was lost for words. The especially passionless look in Timmit's eyes as Yuyui shook him affectionately made her wonder, for the umpteenth time, just what the deal was with everyone here was.

"Did you miss me?" Yuyui said, her eyes staring first at Timmit's long neck and then his passionless eyes.

"Were you somewhere other than the Mirror Box?" Timmit asked, raising a brow.



Yuyui laughed this off as a joke, but unbeknownst to her... the stork was being serious. He hadn't noticed her departure at all.

"What are you doing here?" Yuyui asked him.

"Oh, how I begged her to send someone else for this," Timmit mumbled secretly before answering, "Kintar sent a few scouts to Aigas to check if the situation has worsened some time ago. They've just arrived. She wants them to report with everyone present."

"Oh, alright. Let's go," Yuyui said. She then turned and hurried to Bubbles who didn't see her coming, and yanked him by the wing. "You're coming along! Get over yourself, brat!"

Elita chuckled. Timmit looked as though he would throw up.

But then...

...!!!

Something made all four of them turn their heads northward, even though they couldn't see past the walls.

Something in the distance had demanded their attention.

Every living thing in the Bosom found itself entranced by an entity it couldn't see.

And everything that couldn't be considered living also careened. The treasures in the Warmoth's Vault could not resist either. The greatest of treasures among them groaned pleasantly.

Chapter 1258: The Order Welcomes A Worthy Master! (2)

Susu'k could hardly believe it.

His attention was wholly attracted to the Second Layer, and as of a few seconds ago, this wasn't by his own will. He was drawn there forcefully.

Something had changed about his master's successor.

The bastard had reached Divinity just now, but there was something else, something unsettling. The giant Strawler had witnessed many beings reaching Divinity in the Null Verse.

Even though the progression and nature of Divinity within the Null Verse could be different from the outside world, as his master often theorised, he couldn't imagine that outsiders could make him feel the way he was feeling right now.

Skullius was not an outsider – he was a Null Lifeform – but he progressed by the established system of this reality for sure, as the first Null Life bearer.

If this was the case, his ascent past mortality couldn't have been... shouldn't have been seemed so.... frightening.

It shouldn't have managed to coerce Susu'k into believing that he was already a rival of his master just now!

It didn't make any sense!

'What did he do?!' Susu'k thought. He felt a sense of panic that he could hardly stifle or understand.

As he gazed into the Second Layer, he saw the dark seed within it, almost insignificant-looking save for the waves of chaotic Amras leaking from it, shake violently and then crack.

CRACK!

Susu'k gulped.

CRACK!

Susu'k's body twitched.

The dark seed exploded and the sophisticated existence it had been forming and perfecting started to take shape.

Before Susu'k knew it, he was diving down towards the Second Layer at top speed. In no time at all, the Strawler streaked through the viscous atmosphere to reach Skullius' forming body. Susu'k then stood with his head hung low, waiting with baited breath.

He wouldn't dare idle in the Third Layer when his new master – who had grown way more monstrous than he imagined, and in less than half the time he expected – was establishing himself in his full authority.

All too suddenly, Susu'k had lost his right to casually defy this master.

Of course, said new master didn't know that Susu'k was here. The guidance field was still spelling out his boons from Divinity, the resounding successful of each of his phantoms' machinations and more unexpected benefits.

[You now have access to the World rank Exotic Parlous Nature, 'Maximum Frost!']

[You now have access to the World rank Exotic Parlous Nature, 'Maximum Pull!']

[You now have access to the World rank Exotic Parlous Nature, 'Maximum Time!']

[...]

[...]

[Effect of the seed applies!]

['Evil Darkness' has been promoted to 'S' rank!]

[Your affinity for SUPPRESSION and DOMINANCE through darkness is elevated. You are an overwhelming, inevitable mass that others must simply melt away before. You dictate everything in EVIL and in DARKNESS]

[The Authority of Darkness is yours]

[The Insurgent Magnus grows...]

[You have awakened the last of the FOUR Seeds of the Fruit of World Myths]

[...]

[...]

[...]

[Effect of the seed applies!]

[All 28,560,691,023 Null EXP units have been successfully expended!]

[Formation of the Primary existence, Default Body complete!]

[Formation of the Secondary existence, War Body (True Body) complete!]

[Your Immortal World Physique, Third Stratum, 'Audacious Chassis of the Ninth Filament' is applied]

[All physical stats are absorbed into the 'Audacious Chassis of the Ninth Filament']

[...]

[...]

[+15% resistance to attacks a single league above the user's defences]

[+10% resistance to malevolent Deific forces]

[+15% to total Exora Amras Well reserves]

[+7% to Exora Amras regeneration speed]

[+30% to Broader Existence Defence]

[...]

[...]

[...]

[Primary existence, Default Body, 'Hybrid Warmoth' awakens...]

Skullius felt himself obtain a tangible form.

He felt refreshed and calm, unnaturally so.

He took a breath.

At once, it was as though all his faculties were activated. They brimmed to life.

He felt his arms, legs, torso and head.

He felt especially light, but at the same, it was as though an otherworldly weight was exerted on the world around him from his body.

Skullius could see everything despite noticing that he was yet to open his eyes. He wasn't employing any sensing technique, but everything was so vivid around him. He could sense everything in the Empyrean Hatcher. Heck, he could sense everything in the Bosom, the Treasury and the Pestilent Vault!

Everything was focused on him.

A refreshing sort of energy that was both familiar and unfamiliar suddenly thrummed from Skullius.

It felt like genuine Divine energy, but also different. It felt personal and leagues richer.

Oddly, it wasn't contained in a core, and it wasn't stowed in his body, as he could feel with his singular, massive mana core.

There... there was something that Skullius had other than a body and a soul now.

It was hard to place a finger where it was exactly. It seemed like some vague boundary between the soul and body. Quite honestly, it took Skullius some effort to sense it at all. The skill required to perceive this space reminded him of the sensation he felt when he attempted Mortal Binding.

Was that practise specifically so that he would be able to perceive this odd space?

In any case, the Exora Amras he had received, which, through the effects of the modified seed, had been bumped up three times to the Beginner Sage Affluent, was stored in this odd space. It slowly revolved in place like a pool of cool water, bright and crystal-like. Hints of white and blue were prevalent in it.

Skullius found this interesting.

Very interesting.

Exora Amras was the fuel for all exercisable powers outside a world: Andori, Physiques and Parlous Natures and more.

Fascinating indeed.

Skullius opened his eyes.

They still did not perceive a thing. They were blind.

He smiled. He could have chosen to use a Creed to restore his sight, but he didn't bother. That would be a waste of two or three Creeds.

He disregarded Susu'k and began wondering how he should take a look at himself to ascertain the appearance of his new Hybrid Warmoth form.

'Ah. Of course,' Skullius thought.

His soul moved out of his body seamlessly. Despite how small and battered it was, it looked tangible with a blue-ish texture. Pretty gems, Creeds, shone within it, giving it a wondrous, dreamlike appearance. It had some defined features, but its face was oddly... distorted. Skullius felt over it.

'I suppose I will have to claim the other missing piece for my soul to get fully defined,' he thought. 'With Doom Factor 2 approaching, I imagine this really is the case.'

Skullius drifted from his body.

He tilted his head and smiled.

His body reacted the same way, as though it had a mind of its own.

"Well, you look good," Skullius said, stroking his chin and analysing all his physical features.

Chapter 1259: The Order Welcomes A Worthy Master! (3)

The Hybrid Warmoth retained a humanoid body. It had the height of the average human adult, if only slightly taller.

Skullius smiled.

His body was thin, but extremely well-defined. Each of his four arms looked rather intimidating, and the topmost two bore his ever-trusty Ju`wtta glowing in a vibrant merigold hue mixed in with a brass tone.

Skullius' skin was of a smooth, coin-grey colour, shining like ceramic material. Complicated rings of cobalt blue ran under his skin like veins. They were especially prevalent over his bare chest.

This was the effect of the Immortal World Physique, Audacious Chassis of the Ninth Filament.

Despite the blue tone to his skin, Skullius looked a bit like well-made doll. His face looked a bit more mature, with a button nose, slightly sunken cheeks and narrow, blank eyes. Above these eyes were what looked like eyebrows, but with a closer look, it became clear that they were eyelashes – strange, small eyelashes curved at an acute angle and slightly protruding forward.

Over Skullius' head, medium length honey-coloured hair with streaks of vibrant auburn at the sides, could be seen. It was rather shiny, as though jelled, and slicked-black. Traces of merigold Ju`wtte ran through it.

"What do you think?" a phantom suddenly asked Skullius.

Skullius pondered.

"A bit basic, but it's fine. The default body is not supposed to be bombastic, is it?"

The phantoms chuckled like madmen in the background.

"Well, let's at least put on some pants," one of them said.

Skullius chortled.

Right. He was naked.

"Curious. I have access to my Andori even in this form," he said.

And indeed. Unlike his skills, which were branded to his body, his Andori existed in the space between his body and soul: his Broader Existence. This meant either of his states of existence – soul and body – could access and use the Andori.

Thus, Skullius flicked his finger as he activated [King of Severing Twilight: AfterDark] and he felt an insignificant portion of his Amras get consumed.



'It feels weird for this skill to now have essence requirements for the simplest thing,' Skullius thought, a bit annoyed.

Over his Hybrid Warmoth body, a pair of loose, obsidian pants appeared, flame-like darkness blazing on their edges.

The guidance field reemerged with more notifications right then.

[The Fourth Sage Tier Andori, 'Entropy's Harmonising Nimbus' awakens!]

As the notification chimed, a massive lead-grey cloud exploded from Skullius' body and engulfed him.

It looked soft, but extremely dangerous, somehow. Again, Skullius felt a bit of his Amras get expended as the cloud emerged, but that did not concern him. He understood the ins and outs of this Andori; the cost was worth it. The phantoms had put in a lot of work to create the cloud, and that work had paid off.

[Entropy's Harmonising Nimbus] was currently Skullius' strongest Andori, and with good reason.

The lead-grey cloud slowly reduced, and many strings of merigold Ju`wtte began running through it. They formed long stitches that started pulling on the cloud, slowly giving it a defined shape.

Soon, the cloud had become a large, magnificent robe constantly filtering out of Skullius' body. Every inch of it looked like a dream, as though it couldn't possibly be anything profound. When Skullius slotted two of his arms through the two sleeves of the robes, this was disproved, however. The nimbus followed and fitted around his arms perfectly, smoothly.

It hissed like a serpent with each movement.

Skullius really liked this robe.

"The Permanent Max Evolution ended up helping us a lot more than we could have imagined. I can't believe some of the things we had left up to chance are now in our hands, just like that," a phantom said jubilantly.

"I can hardly believe it either," Skullius said and he flicked his finger again.

[Evil Darkness] was harnessed through [King of Severing Twilight: AfterDark] and [Just Light] was expelled through [Sagacious Antiphon of Dawnlight].

The mobilisation of these two similarly ranked Andori was atrociously fast, as was the weaving of the respective elements they produced. It almost seemed as though both had taken place at the same time, even to Susu'k, who didn't dare say a word.

Three, miniature constructs were forged around Skullius and they began floating around him.

One looked like an unnaturally tall, dark and thin creature with innumerable arms sprouting from its torso and clasping together.

It was the Noboboyama, Spirit of Blind Drowning.

The second looked like spherical ball of forty, curved, spindly arms that shot out from a golden white hourglass-like centre. Half of the arms met at the top, and the rest at the bottom.

This was the Ororoborou, Mantle of Smiting.

The third looked like a large, golden white, stocky humanoid with a giant head and six black wings. Its torso was lined with small, dark scales as well, which gave Skullius the idea that it might be in some way, draconian, but he couldn't be sure.

This was the strongest PHANTASMIC RETAINER, Gajjkav, Baleful Remembrance.

Because Skullius' affinity with [Evil Darkness] had reached the S rank, he was finally able to use all the Phantasmic Retainers.

The Noboboyama was the weakest, only capable of holding at most two Seeds of the Fruit of World Myths. The Ororoborou came after it. It could hold two Seeds as well, but had a far greater integrity than the Noboboyama. It seemed like a better version of it.

The Gajjkav was the strongest Retainer. It was the sturdiest and could bear three Seeds at once.

Skullius was especially pleased.

At once, he funnelled the combinations of his Territories his phantoms had created earlier from his body and had them contained in the Retainers. He placed one combination in each of the Retainers, and they were suddenly engulfed by a crushing pressure of Nitros!

Even though Skullius hadn't modified his mana cores, the Permanent Max Evolution had worked wonders on his mana in general. It salvaged the cores that he had left and forged a single one with an ungodly amount of gold quality mana. It was this core that was producing such powerful Nitros!

The phantoms had been intending to deal with the mana core issue after the fusion process, in Aigas, where mana was abundant, but they didn't have to bother themselves now.

Skullius' soul then slithered back into his body.

He felt for his limbs and grinned.

His Parlous Natures were brimming inside his flesh and his blood was pumping wildly in his veins, eager.

'Let's take a look at that status,' Skullius said.

Chapter 1260: The Order Welcomes A Worthy Master! (4)

[Name: Skullius Festos Dawn]

[-Default Body-]

Because of the Third Grand Tier Andori 'Instant Embodiment of Perfection', you possess a Default Body for casual living, and a War Body for excessive, violent activity.

---

[Ascension Status: Broader Existence Phase 1]

Your ascension to Divinity has changed your progression. Your overall rise in power will be measured by how you extend and improve your Broader Existence – the delicate space between your body and soul. Each qualitative increase in the Broader Existence elevates the efficiency and power of all Andori, Exotic Parlous Natures, and the Immortal Physique.

---

[AKH: 0/1,000]

To progress to other Phases of your Broader Existence, you have to obtain the required AKHASHA units per Phase.

---

[Null EXP: 0]

[Mana Core: Gold]

[Classes: Nullmancer + Insurgent Magnus]

[Race: Hybrid Warmoth]

[Inv. Status: Doomed x2]

---

[+Stats+]

[Audacious Chassis of the Ninth Filament (World):-]

[DUAL CONCEPT-TRACING IMPACT (III): 237,760]

[JU`WTTE BLIZZARD MOTION (III): 123,980]

[PHANTOM OMNISCIENCE (III): 4]

[EMPOWERED TRIGGER DEVIANT BUILD (III): 76x]

[EMPOWERED PRIME PERPETUATION: 789,876 /789,876]

---

[Exora Amras (Beginner Sage Affluent): 287,450/287,500]

[MANA (III): 745,087,700/745,087,700]

[Null Core: 45,500,880/45,500,880]

[LUCK: 15]

---

[+Andori (Techniques)+]

[Sagacious Antiphon of Dawnlight | Third Grand Tier]

[King of the Severing Twilight: AfterDark | Third Grand Tier]

[Entropy's Harmonising Nimbus | Fourth Sage Tier]

[True Severance: Elusive Meta Carver | Second Grand Tier]

[True Severance: Ruining Cutter | Second Grand Tier]

[Legion Eyes | First Sage Tier]

[Instant Embodiment of Perfection | Third Grand Tier]

---

[+Skills+]

[Fiend's Clairvoyant Fever (Supreme) | Lv.1]

[Greatest Hegemon of Sorcerous Mana (Supreme) | Lv.1]

[Infinite Sword God: Primordial Sword (Supreme) | Lv.5]

[Great Rune Lord (Super) | Lv.1]

[Celestial Hack | None]

[Potions Master (Super) | Lv.1]

---

[+Exotic Parlous Natures+]

[Frigid Time (World)]

[Maximum Combustion (World)]

[Maximum Frost (World)]

[Maximum Time (World)]

[Maximum Pull (World)]

---

[+Oddities+]

[Fruit of World Myths]

---

[+Veneration Arts+]

[Violent Bond]

---

[+Seeds+]

[The womb (1)]

[Master Cataract (4)]

[Crude World Injection (9)]

[Exorbitance (5)]

---

[+Affinities+]

[Evil Darkness – S]

[Just Light – S]

[Distorted Gravity – C]

[Stagnant Space – D]

[Spatial Lightning – B]

[Grand Fire – S]

[Maximum Catalyst – S]

[Coordinated Disruption – C]

[Lambent Phosphor – B]

[Genesis Pull – B]

[Integral Time – B]

[Crafty Wool – C]

---

[+Patronage Benefits+]

[Attachments]



[Marked Spots]

15/15

[Counsel]

4/4

~~~

Skullius was pleased with the look of his guidance field. (It had been upgraded from Patronage Rank 1 to Patronage Rank 3, after all.) It wasn't too different from before, but he liked how it added explanations to things he wasn't familiar with now. That was definitely a wonderful perk.

The Hybrid Warmoth also liked that there weren't too many items listed on his status. He had expected there to be more given the abundance of skills he had between his body. However, between the machinations of his phantoms (which he now wholly understood) and the fusion process facilitated by [Restless Storm Companion] (which appeared to have disappeared), only useful abilities were left.

The first thing that Skullius felt he had to talk about with his phantoms was how all four of his hands were free. The Hybrid Warmoth spread all four of his arms. They swept through the lead-grey [Entropy's Harmonising Nimbus] as though it didn't exist.

"I must say, this is probably one of the best things you ever thought of. Despite having three free arms before, I didn't quite like the fact that I had to keep one hand tied because of the Warmoth's Spine," Skullius said with a chuckle.

"And we heard your cries," a phantom said smugly.

"You're welcome," said another.

The Warmoth's Spine no longer plagued Skullius' hands.

Because it was tied to the Flaw of the Warmoth's Progeny, which demanded that he have it in his grip at all times lest he meet instant death, Skullius had always had to keep it in his hand.

Now, however, with the phantom's genius, this Flaw was being taken care of without any hassle on Skullius' part. Well, at least Skullius' Default Body didn't have to worry.

The Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow was also sharing the same fate as the Spine.

Even though Skullius had cleared himself of this issue, he now no longer had access to these two weapons while in his Default Body, but that was a sacrifice he was fine with.

Skullius turned his attention to the tag, 'Ascension Status'.

Before, it had said Tier or Level, but since Skullius had transcended Aigas' power system, he no longer progressed with cumulative mana experience, Tasks or Trials.

Apparently, the current state of Divinity he was in, was called the Broader Existence Phase 1.

'So that odd space where my Amras Well and Andori are stored is the Broader Existence, huh?' he thought as he scratched his chin.

How odd.

How he progressed from here on out seemed to depend on how he developed this Broader Existence – this delicate space. Even odder was the fact that Skullius' Andori, unlike his skills, couldn't be levelled up simply by acquiring knowledge and using them frequently. They only progressed after he earned enough AKHASHA units for a new Phase of his Broader Existence.

The guidance field didn't elaborate on what AKHASHA units were, but Skullius supposed it was a more advanced version of the cumulative mana experience system from Aigas. Perhaps the Aigas system took after this AKHASHA system.

"Well, that makes things a bit difficult," Skullius said with a frown.

The state of his Andori were probably not going to progress at all in the next coming days. He had a sneaking suspicion that these AKHASHA units couldn't be harvested on a mere world.

"Don't worry about that, Prime. Serenity told us how to get AKHASHA units," a phantom said.

"Yeah, and we already knew about Amras because of her. That's how we successfully created the convenient condition for [Instant Embodiment of Perfection], after all," said another cheerfully.

"Yes, yes. Though, we are really going to need to budget our Amras. It can't be siphoned from the atmosphere like mana, you know? How quickly it regenerates is extremely important."

Skullius nodded. This was good to know. It placed his heart at ease that the phantoms had been given a heads-up by Serenity.

Even more pleasing was the mechanic of [Instant Embodiment of Perfection] which had formerly been [Greater Celestial Counterfeit].

The phantoms had tweaked the skill.

They had added the Warmoth's Spine, the Fallen Reincarnator's Shadow, two-thirds of the total Null EXP and a rather... treacherous blueprint for a technique; a single technique.

Instead of giving him a flesh form for 24 hours, [Instant Embodiment of Perfection] now gave Skullius a terribly powerful body that he could access without any conditions or cooldowns. All that was required, was Amras.

"Let's analyse the other Andori, shall we?" Skullius said.