

Reincarnated With Three Unique Skills

- Chapter 141 – 160

Chapter 141: Chapter 141: Slave District

“Kekeke... What do we have here?” A sudden cackle echoed through the air.

Aengus and Bella turned to see a demon with four hands, gazing at them with greed and ecstasy.

“So, the demon god hasn’t abandoned me yet. He sent me these two half-breeds as gifts. Kekeke...”

Bella furrowed her brows. “Hey, let us out of here, mongrel, or we’ll destroy it ourselves.”

The demon laughed heartily. “Kekeke! You must be joking, beautiful. We’re going to sell you two, and then you can go wherever you wish. Although, I doubt they’ll ever let you go. They would definitely like the taste of a Succubus for sure. So accept demon God’s will obediently.”

He took out two slave collars in his hands.

“Now, please, put the collars on yourselves and save me the trouble of using force,” he offered magnanimously.

Aengus narrowed his eyes, feeling the intensity of the demon’s greed and arrogance. The four-armed demon, cackling like he had already won, approached with the two slave collars in hand.

Bella’s face twisted in disgust as she stepped in front of Aengus, her eyes blazing with fury. “You filthy mongrel, I don’t think you understand the situation. If you don’t release us this very moment, you’ll regret it.”

The demon tilted his head back, laughing heartily once more. “Kekeke! The arrogance of you two half-breeds is amusing. But no one has ever escaped my clutches. You’ll fetch a fine price. Now, put on the collars, and let’s avoid any unnecessary trouble.”

Aengus, calm but serious, took a step forward, his voice steady. “You should rethink your options. For your sake.” His hand subtly glowed, energy gathering as he prepared to destroy the cage if needed.

They were trying to not to gather that much attention on themselves. In this City the half-breeds are seen as inferior, like plaything after all.

The demon, unaware of the rising threat, continued grinning and waved the collars. “Oh, you think you’re scary? Let’s see how—”

Before the demon could finish, Bella flicked her wrist, and a pulse of destructive energy surged outward, shattering the ground beneath them and sending a shockwave through the air. The demon stumbled back, eyes wide with shock as the collars got destroyed to ashes.

“Oops,” Bella said with a mock smile. “I guess we won’t be needing those collars anymore.”

The demon’s expression twisted into rage, and his hands glowed with Nether energy as he prepared to fight. “You insolent half-breeds! You’ll regret this!”

But Aengus, already prepared, stomped his foot lightly, unleashing a burst of Hellfire.

Bang! Clatter!

The sturdy iron cage melted away from the front.

Bella grinned. “Hubby, if you’re doing this, let’s finish it quickly.”

Aengus nodded as the demon trembled in fear, realizing they were no ordinary half-breeds.

He dropped to his knees. “Please, spare me, my lord! This will never happen again!”

The commotion started drawing curious glances from the onlookers in the slave market.

“What happened, Boss? Why are you kneeling?” a few of his lackeys asked, approaching the disturbance.

In a hurry, Bella conjured bright Phoenix flames, ready to burn them all to ashes.

The boss demon nearly wet himself in fear, while his lackeys, not understanding the danger, charged forward, intent on attacking Bella.

“Fools!” the boss demon cursed, his worst fears realized.

Swish!

Sizzle, sizzle...

The unending flames engulfed them all, their miserable howls echoing through the streets as they were being burned to a crisp.

“Oh, Lord!”

The human slaves and spectating demons shivered, quickly diverting their gazes, not wanting to attract trouble.

“Let’s go, hubby!” Bella said, looking at the charred corpses with disgust.

Aengus walked beside her, ignoring the humans still trapped in their cages. They both knew that even if they freed them, the slaves would likely be hunted down or captured again. This city was a dangerous place for them, no matter what.

“Was it too excessive?” Bella asked, glancing at the devastation they left behind.

Aengus shook his head. “No. They deserved it after what they said about you. I would have killed him myself if you hadn’t done it.”

“Hehehe...” Bella smiled, feeling satisfied.

Just as they were about to leave the scene, a sharp, piercing human voice called out from behind them.

“Hey, wait... Please release us!”

Aengus and Bella turned toward the voice, spotting a girl dressed in ordinary hunter’s clothing. She had likely been a hunter in the human world before her capture.

“Do you realize you’ll be caught again if we release you?” Aengus asked calmly, his tone neutral.

The girl’s expression was desperate. “We know, but at least we’d have a chance to survive. Please, release us all from the cages.” She gestured to the other humans, who stared at them with newfound hope.

“Please save us! You must be sent by the gods!”

The pleas echoed through the crowd of men, women, young, and old alike, all begging for their freedom.

Aengus and Bella exchanged a glance, silently reaching an agreement before nodding.

Without hesitation, Aengus melted the iron cages with his Hellfire, while Bella used her powers to break the slave collars binding the humans.

“Now, go and try to survive!” Bella instructed the group.

“Thank you, thank you!” they all shouted in gratitude, exchanging hopeful glances before scattering into small groups and quickly leaving the area.

The girl gave them one last lingering look, her eyes filled with a mixture of gratitude and understanding as she slipped into the shadows of a nearby alley, her future uncertain. Bella felt a pang of guilt for not being able to do more, but they both knew that staying any longer would only increase their risk.

Aengus, after briefly scanning the bodies of the slave merchants and finding no useful abilities to absorb, he sent them to his Dimensional Space for breeding.

“We need to move, Bella. We can’t worry about their safety, not in our current condition,” he said, his voice cold and pragmatic.

Bella sighed but nodded. “I know. Let’s leave the slave district first. After that, we can search for what we came for,” she replied, her tone more resolute as she took the lead, guiding Aengus through the chaotic streets.

Aengus followed closely behind her, trusting her instincts in this unfamiliar city. Their movements were swift, their sprinting speed turning them into little more than blurs, too fast for the ordinary demons around them to track. The city’s laws prohibited flying, forcing them to remain on foot as they navigated through the narrow alleyways and bustling streets. They weaved through the crowds, careful not to draw any unnecessary attention to themselves.

“We’re almost out,” Bella whispered, her eyes scanning ahead for any obstacles as they neared the edge of the slave district.

Chapter 142: Chapter 142: The Witch

“Ehehehe... Where are you two going in such a hurry?” a mocking voice was heard from behind.

Aengus and Bella’s steps faltered. They stopped in a deserted alleyway and turned around to face the source of the voice.

A demonic woman stood before them, her hideous face marred by deep scars. A grotesque third eye, dark and unblinking, sat ominously on her forehead.

“So, two half-breeds, eh? Not bad. You two will do just fine as compensation for the damage you caused,” she cackled, her voice dripping with malice.

Bella remained calm despite the sight of the Archdemon blocking their path.

“She’s a witch,” Bella remarked, her tone casual. “They’re known for their curse powers and dark arts.”

Aengus, already aware thanks to his Appraisal ability, nodded, his eyes narrowing. He conjured Death Claws, dark tendrils of energy forming into sharp, menacing shapes around his hands, and unleashed his Darkness King’s Authority.

“Don’t block our way, witch. Your men got in the way first,” Bella spoke coldly, her tone authoritative.

The witch’s laughter was abruptly cut off as she coughed, gasping for breath. “Cough! W-what’s this? Power of Darkness?” she wheezed, struggling to speak.

Invisible chains of darkness wrapped around her body, binding her tightly like shackles, imprisoning her with an overwhelming force.

Aengus stood before her, his aura crushing her spirit, leaving her paralyzed in terror.

She couldn’t even breathe, let alone use her curse powers.

Bella stepped closer, her lips curling into a dangerous smile. “What were you saying just now? Can you repeat it?” she asked mockingly.

The witch’s eyes widened in fear, her arrogance completely shattered as she realized the true strength of the half-breeds before her.

She could have never believed that those inferior half-breeds could be this powerful.

“Now, tell us, have you captured those humans again that we just release or not?” Bella demanded, her voice sharp and commanding.

Aengus loosened the binding around the witch’s mouth, allowing her to speak.

“N-No... I haven’t,” the witch gasped, barely able to breathe.

“Lies!” Aengus’s voice turned cold, his All-Seeing Eyes piercing through the truth hidden within her.

Bella’s eyes darkened as she prepared to unleash her flames. “Looks like you don’t want to live. Goodbye!” she declared, her fire igniting to incinerate the witch.

“Ahhh!” The witch’s agonized howls echoed through the alleyway as the flames licked at her skin, reducing her to nothing but misery. No one would have thought it possible for an Archdemon to meet such an end, but that was exactly what was about to happen.

“Wait, Bella,” Aengus called out, stopping her just before the witch was reduced to ashes.

Bella turned to him, her expression questioning. “What are you up to Hubby?” she asked, wondering why he would spare such a vile creature.

Aengus’s lips curled, “Don’t forget, I can help you gain her bloodline curse abilities—if that’s something you’d want,” he offered.

Bella’s eyes widened, realizing his intention. “You’re right,” she said with a sly smile. “That could be very useful. I don’t mind, just make sure my face remains the same.”

She extinguished the flames, leaving the witch’s burned lifeless body.

Aengus raised his hand, beginning the fusion of Bella with the witch’s cursed bloodline. Bella groaned in pain, her body resisting the changes, and Aengus’s hand trembled slightly.

He wasn’t sure why—perhaps it was because of his growing affection for her?

But he was sure, he couldn’t bear seeing her in pain anymore.

He focused, trying to make the process as gentle as possible.

After what felt like an eternity, the fusion was complete. Bella stood before him, a new third eye on her forehead, dark yet strangely captivating. She looked stronger, more powerful, and her aura radiated with newfound energy.

Bella, feeling the surge of strength coursing through her, hugged Aengus tightly, her joy evident.

And, For the first time, Aengus wrapped his arms around her in return, placing a hand on her shoulder and back. Bella was surprised at first, but her surprise quickly gave way to happiness.

Once their emotions had settled, they rifled through the witch’s belongings, finding a spatial bracelet filled with horrific remnants—disgusting human flesh and similarly grotesque things. They removed the valuable cores, totaling several hundred thousand, and burned the rest without hesitation.

As they prepared to leave, Bella noticed Aengus’s unrest. “Do you want to go and save them?” she asked gently.

“I don’t know. I’m confused,” Aengus admitted, his mind conflicted.

Bella smiled knowingly and tugged him in the direction they had come from. "I know you, Aengus. You may act like you don't care, but it's the opposite. Let's go check on them. After all, we owe them for bringing us closer."

Her words brought a sense of clarity, and Aengus nodded, allowing her to lead the way.

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After some investigation, Aengus and Bella found their way to the witch's den. It resembled more of a prison than a residence, a dark and oppressive underground hideout where human suffering thrived.

Along the way, they encountered numerous demons working for the witch. Each one tried to stop them, but their attempts were futile.

Aengus absorbed them into his Dimensional Space for breeding them as his Legion as they provided neither good abilities nor stat points—hardly worth his consumption using Gluttony.

As they descended further, they reached a grim chamber where hundreds of humans were enslaved, their conditions dire. Many were dead, while others bore signs of severe torture.

"Hey, who let you in here?" a demon guard barked, noticing the two unfamiliar figures approaching.

With a flick of his finger, Aengus attached death strings to the demon, draining its life force. Once the demon was on the brink of death, Aengus waved his hand, storing the nearly lifeless body in his Dimensional Space.

After neutralizing the remaining guards, Aengus and Bella began freeing the imprisoned humans. Some of them were the same ones they'd encountered earlier, though not all were present. It seemed the others might have hidden themselves well in the chaos.

"Let's go, Aengus. Everything here is done," Bella said, her eyes scanning the dimly lit hallway one last time.

"Huh! Where are you going?"

Bella muttered suddenly, seeing him going near a wall of hard concrete.

Chapter 143: Chapter 143: Acquittance From The Past

Bella watched as Aengus touched a specific section of the stone wall and pushed it, causing the entire underground prison to tremble.

With a grinding sound of stone against stone, a hidden door slowly revealed itself as he pushed it further.

“Ohh, a hidden passageway?” Bella muttered, intrigued. “So secretive! What did that witch hide in here?”

Aengus, already aware of what lay within, couldn’t hide his disbelief.

There, in the middle of the dark room, stood a special prison made of sturdy metal bars and surrounded by an isolating barrier of some sort.

At the center of the cage lay a grotesque giant demon, its form a mass of writhing tentacles and a jelly-like body.

The demonic creatures were tied by chains, that appears as if sucking away his life slowly.

[Appraisal:]

[Name: Kylian Dilo

[State: Demonised, bloodline not assimilated]

[Age: 59]

[Level: —]

[Rank: Greater Demon]

[Abilities:

1. Blood Devouring
2. Gorvath Tentacles Demon Body (incomplete)

His name stirred old memories.

He was the same old man who had helped him escape from the prison in Arcadia City, back in the human lands. Aengus couldn’t comprehend how this old man had ended up here.

“Have you met this creature before?” Bella asked, noticing the way he stared at it with a mix of recognition and confusion.

Aengus snapped out of his thoughts at her question.

“Yes,” he replied, a hint of reminiscence in his voice. “I met him once in Arcadia City, before the catastrophe. He helped me escape from prison. But now... he’s a demonized human.”

Bella blinked in surprise. “A human becoming demonized? That’s certainly interesting. I’ve heard about them. They use demon blood and cores to make medicines for that transformation. But those foolish humans don’t realize it never guarantees control over the body.”

She tilted her head, studying the grotesque figure with renewed curiosity. “And now, he’s nothing more than a mindless creature...”

Rustle, rustle.

Suddenly, the creature stirred, its tentacles rustling against the chains that bound it. The sudden intrusion of light into the dark room made its movements jerky and unnatural, as if it was struggling to adjust.

Aengus stepped closer, only a few centimeters away from the cage, with Bella following behind. He leaned in, trying to see if the creature would recognize him, though he knew his appearance had changed—his horns were different from the last time they met. He hoped there was still something familiar about him.

The creature’s movements grew more frantic, its tentacles twitching as it stared at Aengus with a mix of curiosity and apprehension. Then, all of a sudden, it fell silent. Its gaze, however, remained locked on Aengus, as though something in it had finally clicked—recognition.

“Well, there you go, Aengus. It seems it recognizes you. Now, what are you going to do? Help it somehow?” Bella asked, her tone laced with sarcasm, trying to predict his next move.

Aengus didn’t hesitate. “I don’t know, actually. But let’s free him first.”

With a determined grip, Aengus tore at the bars with his bare hands, the sound of metal creaking under his strength echoing through the chamber. With a flick of his fingers, hellfire surged from his palm, and the chains melted under the intense heat, clattering to the ground with a final clank.

Freed, the tentacled creature seemed to come alive, its body expanding and contracting as it let out a low, demonic growl. It looked at Aengus and Bella as if it was trying to communicate, but no words formed, only primal sounds escaping its grotesque form.

Bella chuckled. "Looks like it still has some rationality left. What are you going to do now? Why don't you show off that incredible power of yours again?" she teased, her eyes glinting with amusement.

But Aengus considered her suggestion seriously.

"Well, I can give it a try," he said before extending his hand toward the creature.

"Universal Synthesis!"

Instantly, a bright ethereal blue light covered the grotesque creature.

Bella watched the magical process, never bored of it.

After expending nearly 1,000 mana, the synthesis process was complete, and a humanoid figure stood where the creature had been.

"Ooh, that was real easy," Bella commented. "You can do anything, can't you, Aengus?"

"Not really. There are still many things I can't do," Aengus said nonchalantly.

Bella remained silent, not wanting to delve into a subject that could lead to something she didn't want to hear.

Cough! Cough!

Their attention turned to the spot where an old man with a pair of horns was coughing, gasping for breath, and looking disoriented as if waking from a terrible dream.

"Oh, it's an old man. I thought it was something else," Bella remarked.

Kylian steadied himself and studied the duo, his gaze locking onto Aengus, filled with astonishment.

"Hahaha... Boy, is that you? Ethan, right?" The old man suddenly laughed, remembering everything as if it had all happened yesterday. Because, all this while he had been moving purely on instinct.

Bella's face darkened at the mention of "Ethan." She knew it was Aengus's previous name from his time in the human lands—a name tied to someone she didn't like.

Aengus nodded, "Yes, it's me."

"Did you turn me back to normal?" Old man Kylian asked, his memories still blurry.

"Yes," Aengus confirmed.

Kylian was astonished. The young man he once knew had become unfathomable.

“Boy, what happened to you? Who is this demoness beside you? How did you turn into a ‘demon’? Where are we? Isn’t this the human world?” Kylian bombarded him with questions, his curiosity getting the better of him.

Bella was visibly annoyed, while Aengus began explaining the fate of Arcadia City, the fall of its people, his journey to the demon lands, his connection with Bella, and their shared goals. He carefully omitted any mention of his more sensitive abilities.

As they talked, the group began making their way out of the underground prison.

Aengus’s explanations were vague, and Kylian could sense there were reasons behind it. He didn’t press for more details, understanding that some things were best left unsaid. He was simply grateful for regaining his rationality and receiving a new identity, something he desperately needed.

With each step, the old man felt a sense of hope he hadn’t experienced in years.

Chapter 144: Chapter 144: Parting

“So, old man, how did you become demonized? I’m curious as to why you did it right when I went into the prison?” Aengus asked as they walked at a moderate pace, almost out of the Slave District.

Old man Kylian, feeling the suppressed pressure from the two beings walking beside him, shivered unknowingly. He knew full well that he was in the presence of two individuals with tremendous power.

He sighed in reminiscence and answered honestly, “Sigh, that is a long story...”

“Then make it short, old man,” Bella cut in from the sidelines rudely.

Old man Kylian didn’t mind Bella’s interruption; he had seen worse. He continued,

“My wife died a few years ago, leaving me alone with my son, his wife, and my lovely granddaughter in our village. They were ordinary farmers, while I was a hunter, risking the rest of my life to make their future a little brighter.

But it all came crumbling down when I heard the news of their kidnapping during a demon raid on our small village. I was out on a mission at the time, so I couldn’t save them... I failed as a father.”

His eyes reddened, but he pressed on.

“They were the reason I lived until now. I decided I would save them myself, with no help from anyone. But my power was insufficient, so I turned to demonic practices, eating human flesh to increase my strength. As a consequence, I was stripped of my blessing from the gods. But I didn’t care because demonic power was giving me more strength. And then... I became greedy for more.

One day, I found a vial of demon blood that could make me even more powerful through demonization. I didn’t understand the consequences at the time.

The next day, I was caught by the Knights of Arcadia City and imprisoned for practicing dark arts. The rest of the story, you already know.

I used the vial, hoping to make the best use of it for us. Foolishly, I thought I could retain my human form again. But it was all a hopeless assumption.

Until now, I’ve been living in some kind of nightmare.”

His voice cracked slightly at the end, the weight of his words heavy in the air.

The tragic story of the old man ended, and they found themselves outside the slave district.

“I see...” Aengus nodded, piecing together everything.

“So, you still don’t know if your family is alive or not, isn’t that right?” Bella asked, her tone pragmatic.

Old man Kylian hung his head low. “No, I don’t. But as long as I have life in me, I will search for them. I’m grateful to you both for bringing me back and giving me a new identity and power. You’ve made my path easier.”

“Do you have any clue?” Aengus inquired. “You must’ve investigated a little, right?”

Aengus wanted to repay the debt he owed, even if it was small.

“Yes, I found a clue, but it leads to the Demon Lord of Envy, the 4th ranking demon lord—Leviathan’s domain,” Kylian replied, his tone casual, but the seriousness of the matter showed in their faces.

“If that’s the case, old man, you have a long way to go. Our paths don’t match yours, at least not for now,” Bella said bluntly.

“I know already, Lady. Your goal is to destroy Beelzebub, the 5th ranking demon lord,” Kylian responded.

“Old man, if you want to find them, you should join us. We’ll eventually reach there,” Aengus offered, extending a helping hand.

Kylian shook his head. “No. I know you have incredible powers, but I need to find them as soon as possible. They’ve been suffering for too long, and I can’t wait. I need to save them.”

His resolve was clear.

Aengus remained silent. If Kylian was so determined, there was nothing more he could do.

Bella chuckled, “Old man, you don’t know what you’re missing. Anyway, just make sure you reach there alive,” she mocked sarcastically.

Kylian, unshaken, responded, “I will... I need to.”

Aengus paused, then took out the Spatial Ring from the old witch and handed it to Kylian. “Old man, there are 100,000 mid-grade demon cores inside. It’s all I can give to help on your journey. Use them to increase your strength and for whatever else you need. May we meet again.”

Kylian accepted the ring, understanding its immense value. The time had come to part ways.

“Thank you, boy. I hope we meet again too. Goodbye.”

The old man disappeared into the crowd of demons in the street, a solitary figure on a journey of his own—a story waiting to unfold.

Bella, still holding Aengus’s hand, said, “You’ve done enough, Aengus. Now it’s up to him. You can’t interfere or help everyone.”

“I know. But life seems so unfair for some,” Aengus said, his eyes lingering in the direction Kylian had gone.

“The world was never fair from the beginning,” Bella replied, her gaze steady. “If you want to change it, you’ll need power, Aengus.” She looked him straight in the eye. “And I know you can do it.”

Her words lit a fire within him, sharpening his focus on his ultimate goal.

“But before that,” Bella said, pulling him from his thoughts, “let’s look around the market for what we came here for.”

They entered the bustling marketplace, filled with various items and curiosities, each more unusual than the next. Their mission was clear: to find something related to souls.

They stepped into an old shop filled with treasures and mystical artifacts. Magical lamps hung from the ceiling, giving the place a more welcoming atmosphere compared to the dark, cluttered shops around it. The air hummed with faint magic.

“Hello, do you have anything related to souls, like Naga pearls or something similar?” Bella asked, her voice firm but casual.

Behind the counter stood a humanoid hound, its dog-like head tilting slightly in surprise at the sight of two half-breeds. It wasn’t illegal for them to shop here, but it was rare to see them in the streets, let alone shopping so freely.

The hound demon’s shrewd eyes quickly assessed them. Their confidence and aura suggested they were more than just ordinary demons—they were likely high-ranking demons, or at least held considerable power.

“Yes, we do, my lords,” the hound replied, his tone respectful, eager to assist such distinguished customers.

Chapter 145: Chapter 145: More Chaotic Situation

“Yes lords, We have Naga pearls of Greater Demon ranks. How many do you need?” the hound demon asked, his voice low and gravelly.

Aengus and Bella exchanged glances.

“Don’t you have anything else?” Aengus furrowed his brows, unsatisfied. Greater Demon rank Naga pearls would hardly suffice for his needs. He required higher-rank materials or, at the very least, a large quantity.

The hound demon hesitated, his large eyes shifting nervously. “Ah, we’re very sorry, lords! We don’t have anything better at the moment. And to be honest, you won’t find many items related to souls more potent than these pearls here. Only humans and half-breeds can use them, so demand is low in these parts.”

Bella sighed softly, realizing they had little choice. “How many do you have?”

The demon leaned in closer, lowering his voice as if sharing a secret. “We have 20 of them. They cost 500 low-grade demon cores each.”

Aengus’s expression remained calm, but his mind quickly calculated the total. Without a word, he gestured, and in an instant, 10,000 low-grade demon cores materialized in front of the demon, neatly stacked in a small mountain by an invisible force.

The hound demon froze, his wide eyes glued to the cores, barely able to contain his excitement. His heart raced as he stared at the shimmering pile, his voice momentarily lost.

“Hey, what are you doing? Take them all out,” Bella ordered, her tone sharp but calm, breaking the demon’s trance.

“Y-Yes, yes. Give me a second,” the hound demon stammered, rushing inside and quickly returning with a small chest containing the 20 Naga pearls.

Aengus calmly placed the pearls into his storage bracelet and left the shop, Bella following closely behind. As they walked away, the hound demon counted the demon cores, his eyes gleaming with excitement.

“Heh, heh! What fools! They don’t even know how to bargain,” he muttered to himself, feeling a rush of greed. “Sigh, if only I had hundreds of them, I wouldn’t have to worry for months to come.”

Unbeknownst to him, Aengus and Bella hardly cared about the small number of cores. To them, it was merely pocket change. They continued their search, moving through several shops and collecting nearly 200 Naga pearls of various qualities.

“Hubby, I think we need to head to the inner district if we want something more useful,” Bella suggested, her tone slightly anxious.

“But that would put us right under Demon Lord Crimson’s nose. If he senses mana inside us, it could spell trouble.”

Aengus nodded thoughtfully. “You’re right, but first I need to use these pearls. They might just do the help,” he said, gesturing toward a dark alleyway nearby.

Bella followed without hesitation, her eyes scanning the surroundings cautiously. Aengus stopped in the shadows and began taking out all 200 Naga pearls. One by one, they hovered in the air, suspended by an unseen force as their gravity seemed to shift, the shimmering glow of their energy filling the dim alley with an eerie light.

“”Synthesis, Synthesis””

Aengus muttered under his breath repeatedly as he worked quickly, fusing the 200 Naga pearls into 35 Archdemon-ranked pearls—the highest rank he could achieve with synthesis.

[Appraisal]

[Naga Pearl]

[Rank: Archdemon]

[Effects: Slightly Increases Consumer's Soul Strength]

Aengus inspected the result, his face tense. The pearls would likely boost his soul's strength, but they wouldn't repair the damage or chaotic imbalance within it. With a heavy sigh, he resolved to go through with it anyway, hoping it could heal it somehow.

He began swallowing the pearls one by one. Each pearl dissolved as soon as it reached his stomach, flooding his body with the stored soul energy. A surge of power coursed through him, but something felt wrong.

Bella observed closely, her eyes widening as Aengus's aura fluctuated wildly. His presence grew more elusive and powerful on an astral level, but the underlying chaos in his soul became more apparent, more volatile. His body trembled as he struggled to maintain control.

Clenching his teeth, Aengus fought to suppress the chaotic state of his soul. Over time, the constant use of skill synthesis and the extreme strain caused by his Gluttony ability had fractured his soul, leaving it damaged and erratic. The flood of new soul energy from the pearls was only making things worse.

Bella's concern deepened.

"It didn't work? Are you okay?" she asked with worry as she saw the pain on his face.

Aengus grunted, his body shaking.

"Bella, I think It made things worse," Aengus rasped, his voice strained and weak.

Bella's face filled with concern as she knelt beside him, touching his shoulders and checking for any sign of physical deterioration.

"Can you hold on longer, Darling?" she asked, her worry deepening.

"I'll try..." he muttered, his breathing labored.

He sat down slowly, crossing his legs and closing his eyes, attempting to suppress the turmoil in his soul. His hands trembled as he focused inward, trying to reach the depths of his being where the chaos was surging.

Bella stood beside him, scanning the area with cautious eyes, her nerves on edge. They were in a dangerous district, and she knew time was slipping away. But her focus kept returning to Aengus, watching him struggle to maintain control over the storm within.

Aengus sank deeper into his consciousness, reaching toward the core of his soul. Every creature had a soul, a core of energy and identity—whether demon, undead, dragon, or phoenix. But the quality and strength of each soul differed vastly. His was both tangible and intangible, a flickering presence that seemed to shift between being whole and shattering apart.

He had always known the soul was a fragile thing, something elusive and beyond control for most. Even in Mythrالدor, it was doubtful if anyone had successfully unlocked the true secrets of the soul or reached its pure form.

“Master, I can help strengthen your consciousness for a while,” Manas’ ethereal voice suddenly echoed through his mind.

Aengus nodded, and immediately he felt his willpower increase several-fold, which shouldn’t have been possible by any means...

He wondered what kind of changes Manas had undergone into ever since she arrived. He decided to look into it in the future.

But for now, he focused on the task at hand.

Chapter 146: Chapter 146: ZERO, Zytherion Omniversal Ruination Extremity
With heightened consciousness and strengthened willpower, Aengus finally navigated through the chaotic storm within his soul. What he saw made his eyes widen in terror, and his heart raced violently, as if he were witnessing the greatest miracle of his life.

There, in the depths of his being, lay an illusive, incorporeal figure in a dormant state, or at least it seemed so. He wasn’t sure, as he could barely make out the full figure—his soul was so vast and beyond comprehension that it defied any understanding he had.

“Is this really me? Who am I?”

It felt as though his soul was an entire universe unto itself, boundless and immeasurable. The sheer scope of it overwhelmed him.

But as he continued observing from his third-person perspective, he noticed something deeply unsettling. His soul was riddled with countless cracks, as if it could shatter at any moment.

Aengus could feel a subtle connection to the form, realizing that it was indeed his own soul. Yet, despite this connection, doubt gnawed at him—he questioned his very existence. Everything around him seemed incomprehensible and cloaked in an unfathomable mystery.

Outside, Bella, seated beside Aengus, watched in growing alarm as his body trembled and his heartbeat pounded like a drum.

“Darling? Aengus?” she called, her voice filled with concern. “Come back!”

She shook him lightly, her face tense with worry.

Suddenly, Aengus gasped for air, breaking free from the deep state of consciousness. His chest heaved as he caught his breath, feeling as though he had just run a marathon.

“Are you okay?” Bella asked, sighing in relief as she saw him return to normal.

Calming down, Aengus nodded. “I’m fine, for now. I managed to suppress the chaos inside, but I don’t think I can hold on much longer. And these small soul items won’t be enough to heal the damage.”

From what he observed, Aengus realized that his soul was vast and incomprehensible. So it could not be injured by the minor scratches he initially thought.

Instead, it seemed to have been wounded long ago by an unknown force. The recent events had only worsened the delicate balance it was maintaining till now

.

“Ohh! Let’s go the inner district quickly, if we still don’t find what we need there, I will tell father to look for them using his network,” Bella said and they started their walk.

Aengus on the other hand checked his status feeling something should have changed.

[Name: Aengus Degaro]

[Age: 18]

[Title: Cursed Witch Slayer]

[Race: 2/3 Human 1/3 Demon]

[Level: 36]

[Occupation: Supreme Leader of Liberation Army]

[Class: None]

[Bloodline Lineage: Beelzebub (Partial-Royal), Death Leviathan (Half-Noble)]

[Special Trait: Energy Converter (Artificial)]

[Soul: ZERO, Zytherion Omniversal Ruination Extremity (Damage: Unreadable)]

Physical Stats: >

[Strength: 1256]

[Agility: 1282]

[Defense: 1355]

[Mana: 65,000/130,000]

[Nether Energy: 65,000/ 130,000]

[Attribute points: 0]

<Skills:>

– [Active: Doomscale Dragonification -2(B), All-Seeing Sovereign -5 (B), Elemental Graviton Surge -5 (B), Elite Human Transformation (B), Dragon Fusion (B), Spectral Blade Storm -5 (B), Venomous Flash Strike -5(B), Inferno Overlord's Descent (B)]

– [Passive: Enhanced Stamina (C), Critical Strike (C), Poison Resistance (C), Quick Reflexes (C), Melee Combat -10 (C), Blazing Purge -12 (D), Predator's Instinct -37 (E), Health Regeneration -45 (D)]

[Special Skills: Monster Breeding (Level- 5)]

[Demonic Abilities:

– Peak: Heart of Darkness, Hellfire Leviathan Of Death

– Intermediate: Gluttony of Darkness, Darkness King's Authority

– Basic: None

[Unique Skills: Appraisal (Basic), Nullified Mental Attacks (Rare), Rapid Cast (Rare), Mana Harvest (Rare), Skill Absorption (Mythic), Universal Synthesis (Ultimate)]

[Equipment: Space Bracelet (B), Lord's Blade of Judgement (B)]

“Omniversal Extremity? Zero?” Aengus thought inwardly, perplexed.

He had heard the name Zero from MANAS many times, yet its identity still remained a mystery.

Just what was he?

Was he Ethan, Aengus, or Zero? He was puzzled.

He understood there was something more than what met the eye: his mysterious death, his missing parents on Earth, the unknown force behind his reincarnation, the identity of Aengus from the Higher Realm, the arrival of MANAS, and lastly, the identity of ZERO—all were shrouded in multiple layers of mystery.

Nevertheless, he casted all the worries away, not wanting to waste time on them without any clues.

That didn't matter for now, because his soul felt fragile, as though it was on the verge of shattering, and he doubted if anything in this world could fully heal it. The severity of the damage, and the sheer scope of his soul, felt otherworldly.

But he couldn't just sit idly by. He needed to find a solution.

Suddenly, a thought flashed in his mind—General Leon had once mentioned a place: The Ancient Land of Treasures.

"If we can't find anything here, I need to go there," Aengus decided firmly.

In the inner district, Aengus and Bella cautiously searched the big shops for anything that could help his soul. Most shopkeepers, unimpressed, gave them disdainful glances, but Bella used her mind control abilities to ensure they cooperated. Still, it was all for naught. None of the shops had anything useful.

As they wandered, an old Archdemon passed by. Catching sight of Aengus and Bella, he paused. "So, you're looking for something related to the soul?"

Aengus and Bella exchanged glances before Bella responded urgently, "Yes, do you know where we can find it, old man?"

The Archdemon looked them over but made no comment about their mixed heritage.

"Ah, child, such treasures are snatched by nobles the moment they appear. How do you expect to find one? Yesterday, I heard that General Zod obtained a valuable soul treasure from the Auction House. I'm afraid there's none left," he said before turning and leaving them alone.

Bella clenched her fists in frustration. "Argh! There's no way we can confront a Demon General. We're not strong enough to take them on."

Aengus placed a hand on her shoulder. “Forget it, Bella. Let’s go back. I’ve found another place to search for.”

Bella turned to him, surprised. “Where? Is it nearby?”

“No, it’s in the Human Lands—Araknis Kingdom, Kairos Empire. There’s a secret land that’s about to open there. I might be able to find what I need in that place.”

Bella furrowed her brows. “Hubby, You’re going there alone? I want to go with you too.”

Aengus shook his head.

“Bella, I know you want to visit the Phoenix Empire, but now isn’t the right time. I have to go alone and infiltrate the Araknis Kingdom in disguise. The Transcendentals there might recognize you, but my high human form can cover up my demonic bloodline. I’ll blend in more easily.”

Bella nodded, though unease tugged at her. “I understand, but... what about me? Won’t I be left alone without you?”

Aengus gave a faint smile. “Who said I’m leaving you alone? I’ll leave my doppelganger behind to accompany you. You can begin the next phase of our plan—conquering nearby territories and growing our forces.”

Bella’s face lit up with a smile. “Oh, why didn’t I think of that sooner? That could work. But, can you maintain the connection with your doppelganger from so far away?” She asked, a hint of doubt in her voice.

“Yes, I believe I can,” Aengus replied confidently.

“Alright then, let’s find a Spatial Gate quickly!” Bella said in hurry as she pulled Aengus towards the bustling district. Time was of the essence, and they needed to move fast.

Chapter 147: Chapter 147: Spatial Teleportation Disk

After looking around for a while, they found the whereabouts of the Spatial Gate service. It wasn’t difficult, as it was well known for extorting cores from travelers.

“Huh, you half-breeds, where do you two want to go?” one of the staff asked rudely in front of the massive Spatial Gate.

There was a long line of demons and other creatures, each holding a ticket to pass through the hulking guards. Only after showing their tickets would they be allowed to cross the gate to their desired location.

Bella clenched her fists, angered by the rude remark, but Aengus calmly placed a hand on her shoulder, silently asking her to stay calm.

"We need to go to the Lust Dukedom's capital. How much is the fee?" Aengus asked, his voice steady.

The demon raised an eyebrow. "That's really far away. What are you going there for? What's your business in the Lust Dukedom?"

"I don't think we need to answer that, do we?" Aengus replied coldly.

He released his dark aura, and everyone in the area was immediately overwhelmed, collapsing to their knees under the pressure. Only one old demon seemed unaffected, his eyes widening with curiosity.

"Oh, ho, what do we have here? Two fellow Archdemons, and half-breeds at that?" The old demon chuckled, stepping closer.

"You two are certainly interesting. May I ask, what your identities are?"

Bella's voice was icy and indifferent as she replied, "I am Belial's daughter, and he is my partner. Do you still wish to question us?"

Her words carried a clear, invisible threat.

The old demon's face stiffened immediately.

The name "Belial" carried weight in the demon world, a name not to be trifled with.

"Ah, no, no. I wouldn't dare," the old demon quickly shrank, his voice suddenly respectful.

"I didn't realize you were General Belial's daughter. I've heard stories of you, but never had the honor of seeing you in person. Now that these old eyes have, it's a true pleasure to meet you, Miss Bellfrost, and your partner as well."

Bella gave a curt nod, her expression unchanged.

"If you recognize us, then send us to our destination without delay. If payment is needed, we won't mind covering the cost."

The old demon chuckled nervously. "Heh, heh... There's no need, no need."

Despite his refusal, Bella had no interest in owing anyone favors.

"Hubby, pay him and let's be done with this."

Aengus, with a nonchalant air, reached into his Spatial Bracelet and poured out nearly 100,000 low-grade demon cores onto the ground.

The surrounding demons were struck silent, their jaws slack with disbelief at the sheer amount of cores. Envy filled the air.

The old demon's eyes gleamed with satisfaction as he swiftly scooped up the cores in one smooth motion, ignoring the envious gazes of those around him.

"Here you go, lady Bella. The destination is set for the Lust Dukedom. You may enter now," he said, gesturing towards the activated Spatial Gateway.

Bella and Aengus exchanged a glance before stepping through the shimmering red portal, leaving the stunned crowd behind.

Aengus and Bella appeared on the rooftop of a building, making Bella's brow furrow with exasperation.

"Not again!" she grumbled, shaking her head.

"At least we reached the right place this time. If not, I think I'd have to slap that old demon to death."

Bella landed gracefully on the ground beside him.

Aengus glanced at her. "Your father seems to be quite popular, Bella."

Bella turned to look at him, her expression softening slightly. "Yes, he is."

"But I'm sure you'll be even more popular than him." she added with a smile.

"You have too much faith in me, Bella. What if I fail?" he asked.

Bella grinned confidently. "Hehehe, of course, you can fail. But I know, even if you stumble, you'll rise again."

Aengus fell silent, his thoughts clouded by memories of the mysterious state of his soul. He was dealing with forces far greater than anything he had ever encountered—higher beings whose power seemed to stretch beyond his understanding.

Sensing his quiet reflection, Bella changed the subject with a sly smile. "Aengus, what about our wedding if you leave? I won't marry your doppelganger."

Aengus, feeling a pang of guilt, sighed. "I'm sorry, Bella. We'll have to wait until I return, if you insist."

Her playful demeanor shifted slightly as she gave him a stern warning.

"And remember, don't go falling for any human women while you're gone, or I'll be very disappointed."

Aengus blinked, then smirked. "Don't worry, but in return, no funny business with my doppelganger either. You'll have to wait for the real me to come back."

"Hahaha.."

Bella burst into laughter, her long lashes fluttering playfully. "Hubby, you're getting really shameless."

"I'm just being practical," Aengus replied with nonchalantly. "Besides, you're a bit excessive about certain things."

"Of course. I am a succubus, remember," she grinned.

"Fine, fine, I'll behave," she said with a mischievous wink. "I don't like duplicates anyway. But you better return soon—I won't wait forever you know."

He gave a small nod. "I will."

"So, now can you tell me how to cross into human lands, like you did when you brought me here?"

"Mm... for that, you'll have to give me a kiss first." Bella stopped, bringing her cheek closer.

Aengus sighed and leaned over to give her a kiss on the cheek, but Bella kissed him on the lips instead.

After their kiss, Bella licked her crimson lips seductively.

"Let's go. I'll give you the treasure that will help you reach the human lands through space teleportation."

They entered the Duke's mansion, and Bella took out a special disk from a secret chamber.

"It belongs to my father, so take care of it, darling."

Aengus glanced at the disk, intrigued by its delicate craftsmanship and the intricate runes that adorned its surface. His mind immediately activated the appraisal ability.

[Appraisal:]

[Spatial Teleportation Disk (S-Rank)]

[Description: A unique artifact created by Demon Lord Belial himself. The disk allows the user to open a stable spatial rift, traveling vast distances across boundaries, including restricted human territories.]

[Cooldown: 72 hours]

[Usage Limit: 2/10 uses]

[Condition: Bound to Belial's bloodline; can only be used by those linked to his lineage or with his permission.]

[Additional Effect: Minor spatial defense during teleportation.]

Aengus raised an eyebrow, impressed. He didn't know Belial could create something like this as well.

"This is... quite powerful and expensive. Are you sure it's okay for me to take this, Bella?"

Bella smiled and waved off his concern. "Of course. You're my husband, after all. Besides, I trust you to bring it back safely."

Aengus nodded, "I'll take good care of it, Bella."

Bella grinned and playfully nudged him. "You better, or he'll be coming after you himself."

Aengus shrugged and asked, "How do I activate this thing, and where is the location set to?" He furrowed his brows, frustrated that his Appraisal skill didn't provide the information either.

"Just imagine where you want to go, and it will lead you there. There's a magical spatial map engraved on it," Bella explained.

Aengus felt intrigued. "Can I directly reach the capital city of the Araknis Kingdom with this?"

"Yes, but only the place within the map."

Chapter 148: Chapter 148: Hank

“Yes, just as I said earlier. But it has limited uses—probably 2 or 3 times at most. Make sure to bring it back. My father can recharge it.”

Aengus nodded in understanding and began his preparations to leave. His Doppelganger was ready. He had transferred most of the demonic cores to it and to Bella, keeping only the high-grade ones for himself.

He then changed into his High Human form and turned to the duo, feeling strange seeing his Doppelganger and Bella standing side by side. Fortunately, he could sense Bella’s presence, reassuring him that the Doppelganger would take care of things while he was gone.

Though the Doppelganger only had about 70% of his strength, it was still formidable.

“Take care, Bella,” Aengus said before activating the Spatial Disk. A map appeared in his mind, allowing him to choose the location. He selected the capital city of the Araknis Kingdom.

He turned to take one last look at Bella before stepping into the spatial rift behind him and vanishing from sight.

“Be safe... Husband,” Bella muttered, her voicing becoming low. “And, Don’t get swayed by those bi**ches.”

“I am here, Bella. I can hear you, you know,” Aengus’s doppelganger said, leaning closer to her ear.

Bella stiffened for a second, clicking her tongue at her mistake. But realizing who it was, she cooled down.

“Hmph. So, what? Now let’s go. We have some hunting to do.”

“Do you have a specific plan in mind, Bella?” he asked.

Bella, confident and domineering, replied, “Yes. We’re going to destroy the temples first, then secretly claim other territories until we have enough power to ignore the demon lords.”

They faded from view, their destination set on Fortress City, with goals ambitious and far-reaching.

—

Capital City Market, Araknis Kingdom

“Sir hunters, would you like to try our potions?”

“No, no, customers, check out our armors and swords!”

“Customers, take a look at our fine leather, perfect for comfortable hunting clothes.”

“We have the best skill books and monster body parts, please have a look.”

The market was bustling as news of the secret realm’s real opening spread like wildfire, thanks to an unknown source. People from other kingdoms and empires swarmed the city in groups and forces.

No one wanted to miss the opportunity to enter the secret realm, which King Milphomor had tried so hard to hide.

Now that the secret had leaked, the capital city was on the brink of crisis, overflowing with people. A breakout war with the kingdom’s forces seemed inevitable.

Tension was evident, but store owners seized the moment to profit.

A chubby hunter with a mace in hand waddled through the crowd, his large belly swaying with each step.

He stopped by a small blacksmith shop, where the piercing sound of hammering hot metal echoed loudly.

Placing the heavy mace on the counter, he asked, “Brother, how much to re-enchant this further?”

The muscular, tanned blacksmith glanced at the mace and replied nonchalantly, “It’s a C-Grade weapon, so that’ll be 1,000 gold coins.”

“So much!” The chubby hunter’s eyes widened in shock. “That’s nearly 10 million copper coins! Are you trying to rob a poor man like me?”

He quickly countered, “How about 200?”

The blacksmith scoffed, his face darkening at the audacity. “Humph... 1,000, and that’s final. Take it or leave it.”

“Brother, why don’t—” the chubby man wanted to continue, but suddenly his heart skipped a beat. He looked at the blacksmith and noticed a similar reaction.

It was a mixture of fear and respect.

The chubby man followed the source of the strange feeling and spotted a young man in black clothing hovering in mid-air.

The young man had an extremely handsome face, a chiseled jawline, battle-hardened muscles that looked like iron, and an air of cold indifference.

People nearby instinctively lowered their heads, feeling an inexplicable sense of suppression in their bloodlines.

The young man gracefully landed on the street, and suddenly, everyone felt normal again.

“Hey, what just happened?”

“Who is that young man? I felt like my father was standing there.”

“Yeah, you felt that too?”

“He just teleported, didn’t he? I swear I saw it!”

“Me too, me too!”

“Well, his clothes are definitely strange!”

The street was abuzz with curiosity and apprehension as people observed the young man.

Aengus, having just suppressed the aura of his high human bloodline, turned towards a nearby open clothing shop. He intended to buy some normal hunter clothes to shake off any lingering ties to the demon world.

“Give me the best, most comfortable, and agile clothes you have,” Aengus said, his voice calm but commanding as he addressed the leather clothing shop owner, who seemed momentarily distracted by his striking features.

Aengus furrowed his brows, and the store owner quickly snapped out of his daze, nodding frantically like a chicken pecking at rice.

“Y-Yes, Sir Hunter! Please wait a moment.” The owner hurried to the back of the shop, intent on fetching the finest garments available, fearing that offering anything less would be a grave mistake.

As Aengus waited, a chubby hunter approached him with a smile, his mace still in hand. “Hello, brother. My name’s Hank. What’s yours?”

Hank reached out, intending to pat Aengus on the shoulder, but he froze mid-motion, a sudden chill running down his spine. A terrible premonition seized him, and he quickly retracted his hand, his heart pounding.

Aengus turned slowly, his gaze cold and unwelcoming. "What do you want? What's your intention in approaching me?"

His voice was indifferent, almost icy, and Hank's face twitched, recognizing the unapproachable aura surrounding the enigmatic man.

"Nothing, brother. I was just asking casually. Can't we be a little friendlier?" Hank sighed in exasperation, though his heart still raced.

Aengus studied him for a moment, his expression unreadable. Judging Hank's intentions as genuine, his tone softened slightly. The man could be useful for gathering information, after all.

"Zero. You can call me Zero."

He decided to use the name to not make a connection to the demon world with his same name. Sooner or later the name Aengus would be popular, which might attract attention of higher ranks.

Hank's eyes lit up with curiosity and excitement, a wide smile forming on his face. He had heard stories about high humans and their incredible abilities, and now, standing before one, he was thrilled to witness it firsthand.

"Nice to meet you, brother Zero!" Hank replied, still marveling at the man who had appeared out of nowhere like a king descending from the heavens.

Chapter 149: Chapter 149: New Party

"Here is the fine clothing for you, Sir Hunter. It's made of the finest leather and wool, with a smooth texture and flexibility, along with some minor defensive properties. I hope you like it," the shop owner said, smiling proudly as he presented the garments.

Aengus inspected the clothes carefully and gave a firm nod of approval. "How much is it?" he asked.

"Nothing much, just 499 silver, Sir hunter. I'm sure it's worth the price," the owner added with a sly grin.

Hank, standing nearby, couldn't help but interject. "What nonsense!" he barked. "You're obviously overpricing this brother. I'm sure it's worth no more than 200 silver. Don't take us for fools, old man!"

“No—I haven’t!” the store owner stammered, momentarily speechless. “I made this clothing myself, Sir Hunters, and I know it’s worth the price,” he retorted, trying to sound convincing.

“Alright, stop, you two,” Aengus interrupted, his tone casual yet firm, cutting off the brewing argument before it could escalate to something annoying.

Aengus tapped into his space bracelet, which immediately caught the attention of both Hank and the store owner. Their eyes widened in shock—space bracelets were rare, reserved only for powerful individuals.

“Whoa! Brother, you have a space bracelet! Well, considering who you are, it must be nothing short of astonishing,” Hank muttered, as the realization dawned on him.

Without paying him any mind, Aengus calmly took out a D-Grade Holy Sword, a flash of divine energy radiating from its blade. He didn’t have gold coins on hand, so he decided to exchange the sword instead. He had plenty of weapons and armor stored in his spatial bracelet.

“Here, take this. I don’t have money at hand, so let’s exchange it. You can give me the remaining balance,” Aengus said, extending the sword toward the shop owner.

“A Holy Sword for payment?”

Both Hank and the store owner were dumbfounded.

“Are Holy Swords just lying around like cabbages these days?” Hank exclaimed, eyes wide in disbelief.

“Th-this...” The old man stuttered, completely stunned.

Hank quickly seized the opportunity, stepping forward. “Brother, forget him. Exchange it with me! I’ll give you 500 gold coins,” Hank said with a wide smile, eagerly taking the sword from Aengus’s hand.

Without a word, Aengus let go of the sword. He didn’t care, as long as his bottom line wasn’t crossed.

The store owner’s face flushed with frustration. “Hey, that was mine! You’re bullying this old man!”

“Hehehe... What are you going to do, old man? I’ll use it to kill demons, but it would’ve been better if it were a mace,” Hank teased, relishing his small victory.

“Sigh... Anyway, here’s your money, brother Zero,” Hank said, handing over a pouch filled with gold coins, counting them out one by one.

Aengus accepted the money, handing ten gold coins to the sulking store owner as a gesture of goodwill keeping the rest, before heading inside to change into his new clothes.

As Aengus disappeared, Hank was left standing, locked in a fierce stare-down with the fuming old shopkeeper..

Aengus emerged from the shop, now dressed in a casual leather T-shirt and pants. Despite the laid-back attire, his muscular build made it clear that he was not to be underestimated. His sheer physical strength alone could easily crush C and even B-Rank hunters.

“Nice look, brother. Now you really look like a true hunter,” Hank praised, though he silently gulped in fear, his eyes drawn to Aengus’s steely muscles.

Hank compared his own chubby physique to Aengus’ imposing build and smirked to himself. “Nah, My body is still the best,” he boasted inwardly.

He was a C-Rank hunter proficient with a mace, and Aengus had already looked at Hank’s Skills.

Aengus gestured for Hank to follow, and without hesitation, Hank smiled and tagged along, clearly hoping to gain some benefits from the association. Aengus noticed the faint greed flickering in Hank’s eyes but chose to remain silent.

Greed could be useful when controlled, but in excessive amount would lead to ruin.

“So, Hank, do you have any news about the secret realm?” Aengus asked, his tone calm but focused.

Hank eagerly nodded. “Ah, so brother Zero is also here for the secret realm? Now everything makes sense. My party and I are also trying to get in, but we don’t have any of their emblems either.”

Aengus’s brows furrowed. He had lost his own emblem as well. “So, they won’t let us through?”

Hank smirked knowingly.

“Well, they tried to keep it exclusive. But someone leaked the news, and now hunters from all over the world are gathering here—mostly younger ones. I guess they’ll have no choice but to let everyone through now,” he said confidently.

Aengus absorbed the information. “And when will it open?”

Hank scratched his head thoughtfully. "Most likely in two days—that's what we've heard. But anything could change before then. Nothing is set in stone yet."

Aengus nodded, thankful that he had arrived just in time. Two days would give him enough time to prepare.

Aengus needed to find a party to blend into and, if possible, secure an emblem in case things got dire.

"Hank, you mentioned you have a party, right?" Aengus asked, glancing beside him. "Mind if I join you guys temporarily?"

Hank raised an eyebrow. "You came here alone, brother Zero?"

Aengus nodded.

"I see..." Hank seemed to be contemplating. After a moment, he asked, "Forgive me for asking, but I can tell you're of the high-human species. Why would you want to join us, brother Zero?"

"You know High Humans?" Aengus asked, a little surprised.

"Yes, I do. I have graduated from a Hunter Academy from Silverwood City," Hank replied with a grin.

Ohh. Anyway, I just want to spend the next few days having fun. I'd be bored to death if I stayed alone. Besides, I'm sure you guys already know the capital city better."

"Haha, that's why! You're welcome to join our party anytime, brother. I'm sure the others will like you too. With you, we'd become a formidable force to compete with the others." Hank extended his chubby hand for a handshake.

Aengus forced a smile and shook his hand. "Thanks for the warm welcome, Hank."

Hank tried to probe Aengus's strength by gripping his hand tightly, but Aengus's hand felt like an immovable mountain. Hank's face turned red with exertion, but Aengus's hand didn't budge.

Hank quickly withdrew his hand, breaking into a cold sweat as he noticed the faint smile on Aengus's face.

"Let's go, brother Zero. I'll introduce you to the team," Hank said awkwardly, his face flushed with embarrassment.

Chapter 150: Chapter 150: New Party (2)

Entering a small residence, Aengus now stood before Hank's gathered party members.

There were five people, excluding Hank: three young women and two young men.

They scrutinized Aengus from head to toe.

Aengus looked handsome, strong, and sharp, but there was a flicker of coldness they all noticed.

"So, Hank, you went to fix your mace and came back with a new member? That was some trash work there. Do we even need another team member at this point?" the bronze-skinned, busty girl asked doubtfully.

The others nodded, seemingly in agreement.

"Now, now, Alisha. Don't be so quick to judge Brother Zero. You have no idea how strong he is," Hank cautioned.

Alisha's eyes gleamed with interest. "Oh, strong, huh? Can he satisfy me in bed?" she teased with a mischievous smirk.

"Alisha, all you think about is a man's 'thing.' Don't you have anything else on your mind, you dirty girl?" Mara, a tall girl with fair skin, knocked Alisha on the head in mock reprimand.

Hank sighed helplessly, seeing that no one was taking the situation seriously.

"Guys, Brother Zero is a High Human, and even I'm no match for him in terms of strength," Hank revealed.

"What!" Alisha and the other four looked stunned.

They studied Aengus more closely and began to recognize some traits that matched what they'd heard about High Humans.

"You weren't kidding, Hank. Now that I really focus, he does seem like one," Mara, the tall girl with a slender figure, remarked. She turned to Aengus with newfound respect. "Zero, right? My name's Mara. Nice to meet you!"

Aengus accepted her handshake, trying to stay friendly. "Glad to meet you too, Mara. I came here from the Hero Empire alone. I'm hoping to join a party to enter the Secret Realm. When I met Hank, I decided to tag along with you guys."

“Oh, the Hero Empire? That far?” Lark, A lean-built young man with dual swords strapped to his back interjected, his voice laced with suspicion. “Zero, how did you manage to travel such a long distance?”

Aengus remained calm. “I had something to help me along,” he replied, clearly not wanting to go into details.

Sensing it was a personal matter, they chose to change the subject.

“Did you meet any of the Heroes from the Empire, Zero?” the icy blue-haired boy asked, his eyes lighting up with excitement. “Are they really as powerful as people say? I’d love to challenge one!”

“Hey, shut up, Ice Cube. You think way too highly of yourself. Maybe grow some balls first,” Alisha mocked, earning a glare from the boy.

“You—you horny succubus!” Nate seethed, clearly angered by her remark.

“Stop it, you two,” the last member, a slender girl with snowy white hair, stepped in between them, her calm demeanor restoring silence.

Sofia turned to Aengus, her expression serious. “Zero, I’m Sofia, the party leader. I know you’re a High Human, but before you join us, we need a small demonstration of your strength,” she offered, and the rest of the group nodded in agreement.

“A test of strength?” Aengus chuckled, amused. “Sure, I’m always ready.”

His eyes scanned the group: Sofia, Alisha, Mara, Hank, Lark, and Nate. All of them were C-Rank hunters, some with impressive backgrounds and skills. They were a bit older than Aengus, but that didn’t concern him. He knew he was far stronger than all of them.

Alisha grinned, stepping forward confidently. “Alright, hotshot, I’ll handle the assessment!” she said, flexing her muscles and showing off her ample assets.

Aengus remained unfazed, while the others shook their heads at her flirtatious display. Despite her obvious beauty and boldness, he showed no reaction.

They were all impressed by his composure. Alisha was a stunning, voluptuous woman, and most men would at least flinch under her gaze, but Aengus remained indifferent. Of course, they didn’t know he had a greater succubus demoness waiting for him back home—someone far more alluring than Alisha.

Alisha grinned seductively, eyeing his muscular frame, and extended her hand. Her right hand was tough and calloused from years of training.

“Zero, if you can resist her tug for one minute, you’re in the party,” Sofia said from the sidelines.

“Alright,” Aengus replied calmly, extending his hand, which was notably free of any calluses.

“Let’s start, hotty,” Alisha teased as she clasped his hand and suddenly pulled with all her strength. But to her surprise, Aengus didn’t budge an inch.

She gritted her teeth and gradually increased her force to the maximum, but it was no use. He remained still, like an immovable mountain.

Hank burst out laughing. “Haha, I told you guys! Brother Zero is a monster!” His chubby cheeks jiggled with his laughter.

The rest of the group hadn’t expected the gap between them and Aengus to be so big.

“Are High Humans always this strong and talented? Isn’t that a little unfair?” Mara muttered, watching the display in disbelief.

Lark chuckled, wrapping an arm around her. “Life’s that unfair, baby. But at least we’re better off than most of ordinary people out there.”

As the couple shared a tender moment, leaving the single members of the group feeling envious, Nate cast a longing gaze at Sofia, clearly infatuated.

Sofia noticed and shot him a sharp glare.

“What?” she snapped.

Nate gulped nervously. “N-nothing, Captain!”

Meanwhile, Aengus gave a gentle tug, pulling Alisha toward him with ease. Before their bodies could collide, he swiftly sidestepped, letting her momentum carry her forward, but caught her by the back just before she could hit the ground.

Alisha, her breath labored from the exertion, stared at Aengus in astonishment. Her physical strength was well above average, yet she couldn’t even make him flinch. Despite her embarrassment, there was also a gleam of excitement in her eyes—she had finally found someone who matched her strength. Of course, her insatiable flirtatiousness never goes off.

“Zero, wanna go for a night?” She offered boldly.

Aengus looked at her and his reply was sharp.

“No.”

“Tsk...” Alisha clicked her tongue at the rejection, but she didn't mind.

“Alisha, I am here for you. I can accompany you, ” Hank stepped between them with a smile.

“Go away, fatso. Lose your weight first,” She scoffed in disdain.

Hank's smile stiffened.

Chapter 151: Chapter 151: Ancient Dwarvania

“Alright, welcome to the party, Zero. I'm Sofia, the party leader,” Sofia said, giving him a firm handshake.

Aengus smiled. “Glad to join you guys. Please take care of me in the future.”

One by one, he was introduced to the rest of the party, who accepted him into the team.

They knew the situation in the Capital City was becoming chaotic, and they would need all the help they could get. Zero was strong and friendly, not like the arrogant higher breeds.

“Hank, show Zero to his room for now. We'll head outside to gather intel and news about the Secret Land,” Sofia instructed.

“Got it. Come on, brother Zero. I'll show you your room, though the conditions are crude compared to your background,” Hank smiled as he led the way.

“I don't care about all that. Just having a place to stay is fine for me,” Aengus said.

“That's good, that's good,” Hank replied, visibly relieved.

As they left, Sofia and the others contemplated the new addition to their group.

“He's as strong as a monster; I can feel it,” Lark commented, his expression serious.

“Sofia, isn't it risky to accept him into our team so casually?” Mara asked with uncertainty. “What if he turns against us?”

Sofia sighed, “I know. But we have to take a gamble. He could be a great asset if everything works out. Besides, we need to be ready for the worst. The people from the Dragon Empire will definitely show up, and we know how arrogant they are. We need to prepare for anything.”

“Oh, the Dragon assholes? I completely forgot about them,” Alisha cut in. “But will any of the Heroes come here?” she asked, curious.

“Hmph, just because they’re called Heroes doesn’t mean they’re saints. Sometimes, they’re the most arrogant ones out there,” Nate added with an icy demeanor.

“Well, not all of them are bad,” Sofia replied with a nod. “And yes, they might come as well. The temptation of the Secret Land is too great to ignore.”

Alisha grinned, “We’re all here with the same goal in mind. I just hope they let us through peacefully.”

“I’m sure they won’t have much of a choice when faced with the Empires and the Holy Cathedral. Even Emperor Kairos would have to think twice.”

“Whoa! That means the situation inside the Secret Treasure Land will be dangerous,” Alisha remarked, her voice full of unease. “Hope we make it out alive.”

—

Once Aengus settled into his room, he focused on sensing the connection with his Doppelganger. Yes, it was still there, and he sighed in relief, overhearing the conversation with Bella even from here.

Next, he took out the Spatial Disk from his Space Bracelet. His goal: attempting to absorb its ability. After all, trying couldn’t hurt, right? He could never fully trust a device to work when he needed to escape the most.

As for Belial’s threat, he didn’t care. He was confident Belial wouldn’t go too far.

Aengus touched the Spatial Disk and activated Skill Absorption. The void-like energy from his hand attempted to latch onto the runic mechanisms within the device, but notifications of failure rang repeatedly in his mind.

[Error! Skill Absorption Failed.]

[Error!...]

Aengus furrowed his brows. “So, man-made abilities can’t be absorbed?”

“Master, you could use Universal Synthesis to fuse it with your body, like you did with the Energy Converter. I’m sure it would work,” came Manas’ ethereal voice, echoing in his mind.

“I know, I was already thinking the same,” Aengus replied.

“Do you need help, Master?” Manas offered.

Aengus shook his head. “No, I can use Universal Synthesis better than before.”

With that, Aengus activated Darkness Shroud to conceal any prying eyes. Then, he placed the Spatial Disk against his chest and initiated Universal Synthesis.

An ethereal blue dome formed around him, and the process began.

This time, the process was quick.

[You have acquired a new Special Trait: Greater Spatial Teleporter.]

[Greater Spatial Teleporter: This trait allows you and your allies to travel through Quick Spatial Rifts to chosen locations available on the map]

[Limitation: Can be used unlimitedly, but the energy cost varies depending on the distance of teleportation.]

Aengus could feel something new inside his body, connected to his Energy Converter through a magical integration.

He read the description and felt satisfied. “With this, I can be more assured of my safety,” he thought.

With that settled, Aengus addressed Manas.

“Manas, show me your stats. Let me see how much you’ve changed,” Aengus ordered.

Manas Complied obediently, “Yes, Master.”

[Name: MANAS (Melania Ava Norah Arabella Seraphine)]

[Race: Seraphim]

[Rank: S]

[Type: Loyal Assistant]

[Description: MANAS is unique intelligent entity from higher dimensions, capable of doing task with unmatched intelligence]

Abilities:

- Prediction
- Higher Information Processing
- Ultra Comprehension (Assist)
- Basic Information Archives (Mythraldor)
- Telepathic Communication

“So, Manas, you still don’t remember your origin? Or the connection with me... or should I say, ‘Zero’?” Aengus asked thoughtfully.

Manas replied, her voice soft but resolute, “No, Master. I still cannot remember anything related to your name or my identity, but I do remember that I have a mission—to assist you in any way possible.”

“I see...”

Aengus pondered for a moment. He suspected that Manas might be tied to the same higher realm from which many Unique Skill holders, like himself, originated. There were too many mysteries surrounding his reincarnation and the powers at play.

“So, do you have any information on this ‘Secret Land’ everyone’s talking about?” he asked, remembering that Manas had the ability to gather knowledge about the world.

“Yes, Master. I have gathered some primary history and information available in this world,” Manas answered confidently.

“First, the place is called Dwarvania. It’s where the Ancient Dwarfs once lived. They were renowned for their artifact crafting and incredible treasures. However, by some mysterious intervention, the realm fell into ruin, and now it’s scattered with hidden treasures, making it a hotspot for treasure hunters.”

Aengus stood by the window, absorbing the knowledge. “Can I find any soul-related treasures or items there?” he asked, his tone soft. “You’ve seen the condition of my soul, right. Tell me the truth.”

“Yes, Master,” Manas replied seriously.

“There are records of soul-related treasures within Dwarvania. You may indeed find something that could help your condition. But, be cautious Master. The wild beasts there are formidable, and the unpredictable nature of the realm has led to many casualties in past expeditions.”

Aengus nodded. “It seems like we’ll be entering Dwarvania soon, then.”

Reincarnated With Three Unique Skills - Chapter 152 - Chapter 152: Chapter 152: To The Royal Colosseum

Chapter 152: Chapter 152: To The Royal Colosseum
The Capital City was really big, housing nearly 100 million people.

And After the secret of secret land was leaked, even more people, either in groups or traveling solo, entered the city in droves. Knights and guards patrolled the streets, trying to maintain order, but with the increasing crowds, it seemed almost futile.

Various magical flying creatures roamed the skies, ridden by individuals in regal clothing, who landed gracefully and confidently on the ground.

The vendor streets bustled with life, teeming with activity.

Aengus and his party strolled through the stony asphalt streets, enjoying the afternoon. While some, like Sofia and Nate, remained cautious.

Aengus made small talk with others, trying to be friendly.

Alisha leaned in closer with a grin, "So, Zero, when are we having that duel?"

Aengus replied with a calm expression, "Anytime, Alisha. But don't cry when you lose."

"Come on, you seem like a battle maniac too, Zero," Nate, the blue-haired boy, sighed. "Do we really need to deal with two of you now?"

"Nah, I just like challenges. It's been a while since someone defeated me," Aengus said casually.

"Oh, that confident!" Nate exclaimed.

"Do you want to fight me too, Zero? I haven't used my dual swords in a long time," Lark grinned, gesturing to the blades strapped to his back.

"Brother Zero, why don't you show us your weapon?" Hank chimed in, his round figure jiggling with every step as he hefted his mace.

"Brother Zero must have a holy weapon at least," Hank added.

"We all have holy weapons, Hank. You're the only one who doesn't, and you said Zero sold you one, so it's nothing special to get excited about," Mara remarked, rolling her eyes.

“Alright, guys, calm down a little,” Sofia cut in, noticing the growing bickering.

“If you’re so eager to fight, let’s head to the Royal Colosseum. You can fight there and maybe we could gather the latest intel on the Secret Land there. We need to stay a step ahead.”

Alisha grinned, her bronze skin glistening under the sunlight. “Alright, let’s go, Zero. Let’s kick some asses.”

The group exchanged glances and moved to follow the plan.

“Buzz... Buzz!”

Just as they were about to quicken their pace, a crushing, overwhelming aura descended upon them from the sky.

“Agh!”

Their knees buckled under the immense pressure, and despite their efforts to resist, they were forced to the ground, gasping for breath, their hearts pounding with fear.

But, Aengus stood unaffected for a brief moment, but realizing the need to blend in, he crouched down, pretending to struggle like the rest of his party.

From the corner of his eye, he spotted a massive, fiery dragon hovering over the city, its sheer size blocking sunlight in a large scale. On the dragon’s back stood a man and a younger figure with fiery red hair, both radiating a domineering presence.

It wasn’t just their party—everyone nearby was brought to their knees by the oppressive aura.

The powerful man’s hawk like eyes glanced at Aengus for a brief second before looking away, seemingly dismissing him as insignificant.

The man knew Aengus was a high human but didn’t care. The young man beside him raised an eyebrow, but a sneer of disdain formed on his face noticing Aengus.

After a brief pause, the massive fire dragon flew toward the direction of the King’s Castle, seemingly in a hurry.

As the oppressive pressure lifted, everyone slowly got up, wiping cold sweat from their brows. Aengus and his party wore expressions of shock, disbelief, and anger.

Aengus, though displeased, knew the other party was far stronger than him. Even in his Leviathan form, he doubted he could take on the fire dragon, much less the man riding it.

“That arrogant asshole!” Alisha cursed, glaring at the distant dragon.

“Hey, Alisha, keep it down. Don’t you realize he’s probably an S-Rank powerhouse? He could hear you,” Nate whispered, his voice full of caution.

Sofia added seriously, “I know that man. He’s the Helios— Fire Dragon King from the Dragon Empire. He governs an entire estate under the Dragon Emperor.”

“F-Fire Dragon King?” Alisha and the others gulped, fear creeping in as they processed the name.

Aengus, however, was more intrigued by the younger man. He had seen the hostility and arrogance in his eyes. He wanted to use his Appraisal ability but didn’t get the chance before they had flown out of sight.

“Who was the guy beside him?” Aengus asked, still curious.

Sofia’s face grew solemn.

“That was one of the Dragon Princes of their kingdom. He’s the best among the best, and his arrogance runs deep. We must be especially cautious around him.”

Hank and others exchange glances.

“Man, Dragon Princes, Heroes, Demi-human Royalties, Phoenix Royalties... who knows what else we’ll have to face these days,” Nate sighed, clearly exasperated.

“Yeah, whatever,” Sofia responded, rallying the group with determination. “But we can’t give up.”

Alisha grinned mischievously. “If you’re scared, Ice-Cube, send them to me. I’ll take care of them.” She brandished her heavy greatsword with confidence.

“Oh, Don’t cry when I do, Horny Succubus,” Nate shot back, his icy demeanor cracking just a bit.

“Hey, you two, don’t start again,” Lark interjected with a sigh. “Let’s continue where we were heading.”

The group continued their way toward the Royal Colosseum, their steps steady on the rocky asphalt streets.

After just a quarter of an hour, they arrived at the grand, circular structure, gleaming under the sun's rays. Its imposing architecture filled them with awe. It was Royal Colosseum, where arranged duel happens and people come to watch fights in large numbers.

Once inside, they made their way to a nearby counter to register and buy passes.

"Hey, beautiful lady, give us seven passes, please," Hank said with a wide grin.

The lady behind the counter smiled warmly. "The show's free today, everyone. It's Princess Delilah's birthday. Go and enjoy yourselves."

"Princess Delilah's birthday?" Hank's eyes lit up with delight. "Do we get a chance to see her, by any chance?"

The woman scoffed, waving him off playfully. "You wish, fatso. Now shoo, shoo."

Sofia shot Hank a glare, her patience wearing thin. "Miss, please don't mind him. We'd like to arrange a few duels instead."

The lady's interest piqued. "Ah, duels! You should've said that earlier." Her eyes sparkled with excitement as she handed over several forms. "Fill these out, and I'll arrange your matches immediately."

Sofia passed the forms to the group one by one, but when it was Aengus' turn, he shook his head.

Chapter 153: Chapter 153: Intimidation Power

"Sorry, everyone," he said with an apologetic smile. "I don't fight to entertain others. But I'll be cheering you all on from the sidelines."

"Ah, why Zero? It would've been enjoyable." Alisha felt disappointed.

The group exchanged looks, a mix of understanding and disappointment, before a few turning back to their forms.

"It's fine Zero, me and Nate won't be joining either. We would be gathering information from the Crowds if possible," Sofia said nonchalantly.

"Yes, only Hank, Alisha, Mara and Lark would fight and earn us some coins heh heh. We would just enjoy the show." Nate smiled, patting Aengus's shoulder.

—

Nate, Sofia, and Aengus made their way to the spectator's area, while the rest of their group headed to the waiting area for their turn to fight.

The atmosphere in the colosseum was lively, buzzing with excitement. Though the fights were not death matches, accidents could still happen, making the tension all time high with their nerves on edge.

The trio settled in the furthest seats on the back, because the massive arena was already packed to the brim with people of all kinds. Their shouts and cheers echoed across the vast space, blending into a chaotic symphony.

Aengus scanned the crowd and noticed the diverse crowd. There were even demi-humans of all shapes and sizes mingled with the other spectators. Cat people, rabbit folk, wolves, elves, dwarves, and even a few fox people filled the seats, each cheering for their favorite combatants.

"So many people! It feels like we're at a festival," Nate remarked, smiling brightly, his icy blue hair catching the sunlight.

Nate's good looks, along with Aengus' physique and Sofia's striking snowy white hair, quickly drew the attention of nearby onlookers. Even in a crowd this diverse, they stood out, radiating an aura of uniqueness and quiet power.

"Wow! So handsome and hot!" a few girls exclaimed, their eyes gleaming as they gazed at Aengus and Nate.

"Yeah, right. I like the blue-haired one," a beautiful girl remarked, armed with a weapon.

"I like the black-haired one. He looks so manly and cold!" another added with fascination.

Sofia chuckled at the naive girls' expressions.

"Someone seems popular," she remarked, glancing at the duo beside her.

Nate smiled lightly. "Don't be so sour, Captain. Look, those guys are ogling you too."

Sofia seemed disinterested, but one timid guy appeared in front of her.

"Hey, miss, you look really beautiful, especially your hair. Can I talk to you?" he asked nervously.

Sofia furrowed her brows. "No, I'm not interested. Please go back to your seat," she replied politely.

But another red-haired guy rudely interrupted, "What's with the arrogance, b**ch? My brother asked politely, didn't he?" he spoke with force.

Aengus and Nate immediately turned serious, sensing the situation escalating.

Sofia remained unshaken. "And I turned him down politely. But what's this got to do with you?" Her expression hardened.

The polite young man tugged at the red-haired man, "It's fine, bro. Let's go."

"No need to go anywhere, little brother. You've finally liked a girl after so long, and I can't let you be insulted like this."

Nate interrupted, "Oh, was he impotent all this while?" he mocked, clearly unafraid. His hand gathered icy particles. "You want to fight? Come on!"

"Who's afraid of who, boy?"

The red-haired man wasn't afraid at first because his companions quickly came to back him up.

Aengus stood up calmly and released his crushing aura little by little.

The red-haired man and the others sensed the aura, and their hearts skipped a beat.

With cold and ruthless eyes, Aengus came closer and looked at them, his aura increasing with every passing moment...

Gulp!

The other men swallowed hard and began backing down, one step at a time, leaving the red-haired man standing alone.

"Leave!" Aengus said with a single, commanding word.

"B-Bro, let's go. I don't like her anymore," the timid guy pulled his brother, and the red-haired man allowed himself to be dragged away, trembling slightly under the killing intent of the other party.

Nate and Sofia looked at Aengus speechlessly. They had thought Aengus was strong, but this was something else. Even though they weren't the targets, they could still feel the shivers from his aura.

Nate gave a thumbs-up and returned to his seat with a smile.

“Thanks, Zero,” Sofia said as she took her seat.

Aengus replied, “It’s nothing, captain. We’re a team now. Besides, I just felt like meddling. I knew you could have handled them on your own.”

Sofia shook her head, “No, you may be right, but it would have been more of a hassle if you hadn’t subdued them so easily.”

“Hey, if you’re done talking, look at the stage. It’s our Hank’s turn now,” Nate said, looking at the center of the arena.

Aengus and Sofia turned their attention to the fight.

Hank, with his big mace ready in hand, was fighting an opponent wielding a longsword.

Everyone watched with excited faces, shouting their names and cheering.

There were also VIP guests present in a separate section.

After a while, the match ended with Hank’s victory. Hank wasn’t weak. It seemed he had some tough skills rivaling same generation.

“Alright, with that done, Nate, go and use your shrewd brain to gather some information for us. Offer them money if needed,” Sofia said, taking her eyes off the stage.

Nate grinned and stood up, “Okay, Captain. Let me try. But I can’t guarantee anything.”

Sofia and Aengus were left alone, creating a bit of awkwardness between them. For a while, neither knew how to initiate a conversation.

The people nearby remained cautious around them after witnessing Aengus’ earlier intimidation.

“So Zero, can I ask why you’re going inside? And do you fall under 20 like us? I heard they won’t allow us to enter if you’re older than that,” Sofia asked casually.

High humans had longer lifespans, so their age sometimes couldn’t be judged by their appearance.

Aengus replied in a neutral tone, “Yes, I’m 18 this year. And I’m going inside to find something important. Sorry, Captain, but I can’t say more than that.”

Sofia didn’t mind, “It’s fine, Zero. Everyone has their secrets. I just hope you won’t go back on your word.”

Aengus reassured her with a faint smile, “I won’t.”

Chapter 154: Chapter 154: A Glimpse

They watched as Alisha, Lark, and Mara fought their matches in between breaks as they conversed.

Except for Mara, both Alisha and Lark won their matches, leaving the spectators in awe of their skills.

Aengus observed with interest, allowing himself to relax slightly.

“Hey, miss me, you two?”

Nate returned, a faint smile on his face.

“Nate, did you get any good news?” Sofia asked.

Nate leaned in closer and whispered, “Yes, I heard they’re going to open it tomorrow, right at the west outskirts of the city. Though the news isn’t confirmed, it’s got the highest chance of being true.”

“Oh, that’s good. Any news on what we’re going to face besides the other contenders?” she inquired.

“No, I haven’t heard anything about that yet,” Nate replied. “But I did hear that we’ll be spending 15 days inside. It’s going to be a long time, and the chance of survival is extremely low for ordinary hunters.”

“Huh, that’s a long time. I hope we can get through this by staying together,” Sofia said softly, concern flickering in her eyes as she considered their uncertain future.

After watching the matches for another hour, Alisha, Hank, Lark, and Mara joined them one by one. They had won the majority of their fights, though there were a few losses.

Overall, their performance couldn’t be considered bad.

“Let’s go, guys. We’re done here. Tomorrow is the day we’ve been waiting for,” Sofia announced solemnly, walking beside Nate as she led the way.

“Tomorrow?” The word echoed in their minds, heavy with the weight of the unknown.

The next day would determine their fate and destiny. Tension filled the air, but they knew they couldn’t falter now. Each of them had their own aspirations, dreams, and fears.

Aengus was no different—he too had a purpose, though it may differ.

After taking their money from the counter, they headed outside and saw it was already late afternoon.

As they walked, Aengus glanced at the six of them, suddenly reminded of the first party he had ever joined. That had ended in tragedy, a catastrophe that haunted him still.

Their faces came to his mind, and for a split second, he thought he saw Aria and Yona crossing the street far away in the opposite direction, like a fleeting illusion.

He shook his head and joined the group as they left for their residence.

—

Meanwhile, in the opposite direction, a different scene was unfolding.

Aria and Yona were actually there, walking along the same street.

“Hey, wait, you two!”

Drake suddenly appeared from the sidelines, followed by a stern-looking knight and a graceful young lady with a happy smile on her lips.

Aria suddenly stopped, feeling someone’s gaze on her from behind. It felt strangely familiar.

But when she turned around, the crowd of people made it impossible to catch sight of the disappearing figure.

“What happened, Aria? What caught your eye?” The graceful young lady stopped beside her and asked with a faint smile.

Aria blinked and returned to her senses, her emerald-green eyes appearing lost for a second. Her silvery hair fluttered in the afternoon breeze, making her a picturesque sight.

She turned to Yona and the young lady.

“Nothing, Princess Delilah. I just thought I saw someone familiar from the past,” she said, her expression distant.

“Don’t tell me you’ve seen Ethan again? Ohhh.. Come on, sister Aria. He’s long been... well, you know what I mean, right?” Drake said softly, careful not to incur her wrath.

“Who are you two talking about?” Princess Delilah asked.

Yona answered, "Your Highness, he was our companion once, but he became a victim during the Arcadia City incident. Lady Aria had a special connection with him. She had just fallen in love at that time, which might be why."

Princess Delilah looked sympathetic. "Ah, I didn't know you had such a tragic experience, Aria. May the gods bless him."

Aria squinted at Yona but remained silent, helpless at her friend for revealing personal matters.

"I'm fine, Princess Delilah. Just some old memories... that's all I have now. But sometimes, I feel like he's still alive out there," Aria said, her voice carrying a mixture of emotions.

Princess Delilah smiled warmly. "Well, if he is alive, I'd surely like to meet him someday to understand what caught your eye, Aria."

Aria's spirits lifted slightly, and a faint smile played on her lips as she remembered the old days. Though her time with Ethan had been brief, she had fallen for him, without fully understanding why. There was something deep and inexplicable that drew her to him, as if they shared a bond beyond space and time.

That thought rekindled a flame of determination in her. She had to uncover the truth about Ethan—whether he was truly dead or still out there alive somewhere. And to do that, she needed to become stronger, stronger than she had ever been.

The knight accompanying them cut in.

"Your Highness, forgive me for interrupting, but we need to move soon. We have to return before evening falls," he reminded, keeping their task in mind.

"Yes, I know," Princess Delilah replied. "Let's go, Aria. We need to get prepared before we enter Dwarvania."

"Yes, let's go," Drake added in enthusiastically. "We need to make our weapons—stronger and more powerful."

Aria and the others had come to the market to enhance their weapons with the help of a special blacksmith.

Princess Delilah had followed them out of longing for outside world. It was Princess Delilah's birthday, and since the king couldn't host a grand banquet due to all the recent chaos, he had allowed her to come along. With protection of course.

When Aria, Drake, and Yona first sought help from General Leon, they unexpectedly met Princess Delilah for the first time. Delilah, being around the same age as Aria, immediately connected with her, and the two got along well.

General Leon, known for his strength and fairness, welcomed them into his home and provided shelter at his own residence near the castle. He recognized their potential and the dangers they faced, so he personally ensured their safety by assigning his most trusted personnel to guard them. As a further measure, he gave them a communicator, a direct line to him and his forces, should any trouble arise.

The knight who followed them was S-rank, and a few special shadow guards blended into the environment, ensuring their safety.

Though the two groups had headed in different directions, it wouldn't be long before their paths would cross again, each fighting for survival and fate.

Chapter 155: Chapter 155: Heroes

After the night of preparation, Aengus and his party found themselves heading toward the west outskirts, to enter the sacred land.

"Whoa! There are a lot of people. We're going to have a lot of competition, guys," Alisha commented as soon as they arrived at the location.

The place was bustling, crowded with hunters, nobilities, and common folk, who were watching the spectacle from a cautious distance to avoid getting entangled with the 'elites,' as they called them.

"Get ready, Nate. We might see your idol, General Leon, here. You two have similar Ice skills and bloodlines, after all," Lark said, patting Nate's shoulder.

Nate looked happy like a child.

"Haha... I'm also hoping to get some guidance from him on how to achieve higher ranks. Of course, I'm talking about S-Rank. The Transcendental Rank seems like an impossible dream to me," Nate added with a defeated expression.

"Man up, Ice-Cube. With that mentality, you'll never hope to cross the threshold. Didn't the teacher at the academy tell you that?" Alisha mocked.

"Of course, I remember, but reality teaches you to be more realistic," Nate sighed, lacking the energy to bicker with her.

"Hey, if you're done, let's settle down near that tree and wait," Sofia suggested, spotting a relatively remote tree near the crowd.

The others nodded in agreement. Aengus matched their pace, glancing around at the crowd, who were eagerly waiting for the gate to appear.

They began readying their weapons, checking their gear, and ensuring their potions were stocked in their spatial rings and bracelets.

Aengus took out his blade, Aegis, from his spatial bracelet and held it in his hand, preparing for the confrontation ahead. Aegis hummed in response, expressing a childlike joy at being wielded once more.

Even though the blade remained sheathed in its scabbard, it still caught his teammates' attention, as they could feel the faint purifying holy energy emanating from it.

"Zero, nice blade you got there. What grade is it?" Lark asked, assessing the weapon with a curious gaze.

Aengus held the blade and answered, his eyes on the weapon, "It's a C-Grade, a holy weapon. I named it Aegis."

His teammates exchanged glances, clearly unconvinced. The power radiating from the blade suggested it was much more extraordinary than he let on. However, they chose to remain silent, respecting his need for secrecy. After all, they had only known each other for a day, so it was understandable if he wanted to keep certain things private.

In fact, they were more impressed by his restraint—unlike others nearby, who were showing off their weapons and abilities with little hesitation.

"Hey, look, guys, a flying ship!" Hank suddenly exclaimed, his voice filled with astonishment.

"What are you talking about?" Sofia asked.

They followed his gaze and saw a massive airship in the distant sky, slowly descending. The sheer size of it was comparable to a small mountain, that left them awestruck. Its roar of arrival was grandiose and mighty.

"So...big," Alisha muttered, her eyes wide as the ship's silhouette reflected in them.

Aengus squinted, activating his All-Seeing Eyes, zooming in on the descending ship. His gaze locked onto the bold flag fluttering in the wind, emblazoned with the name Hero Academy.

Rumble.

The earth shook slightly as the ship descended, its massive size casting an overwhelming shadow on the ground. People all around gaped in awe and disbelief.

“Hey, it’s a ship from Hero Academy!”

“Ooh, the real one?”

“Are there real Heroes inside?”

“Nah, probably the younger generation of Hero classes. We’ve got one more set of contenders to deal with now.”

“Still, there’s bound to be a few actual Heroes inside, right? They surely wouldn’t leave their students unprotected!”

Aengus and his group approached the massive ship, noticing a crowd of individuals clad in intricate white robes adorned with elemental symbols—each representing different elements. The aqua blue for water, red for fire, brown for earth, light grey for air, and many others stood out vividly.

“Tsk, look at them—the ‘chosen ones’ are here,” Alisha muttered under her breath, her voice filled with both annoyance and jealousy.

“They’re so arrogant! They don’t fall behind the Dragon Princes when it comes to pride. Just because they received the Hero Class, they think they’re superior to everyone else.”

Aengus quietly observed the newcomers, engraving their appearances and behavior in his mind. His attention also lingered on the conversations around him, confirming what he had suspected—there was indeed an entire academy dedicated to nurturing Hero Classes of different elements.

Leading the group of young Heroes was a middle-aged man with an imposing presence and striking purple hair. His aura radiated holy authority, and he seemed to command respect effortlessly. He was clearly one of the Hero Academy’s elite, perhaps a protector or mentor to the group of hopefuls who represented humanity’s future.

Despite being far from the middle-aged man leading the Hero Academy group, Aengus could feel the threat he posed.

As for the young Heroes, Aengus didn’t sense any immediate danger from them—except for one.

A young man with striking purple hair, emanating an unmistakable Holy Lightning element, caught Aengus’ attention. His Appraisal skill activated, and Aengus quickly assessed the youth’s abilities, locking the information away in his memory.

The young Holy Lightning user exuded a quiet confidence, glancing around with pride as he followed closely behind the group leader.

Meanwhile, their group drew curious glances from the surrounding crowd. Some bold individuals attempted to approach the young Heroes, hoping to introduce themselves, but they were met with cold rejection. It seemed as though the Hero Academy group was waiting for something—or someone.

“When will the gate open? I can’t wait any longer!” Alisha complained, her impatience bubbling to the surface.

Despite her grumbling, it was clear the situation wasn’t going to change anytime soon.

“Alisha, don’t you see? The Dragon Princes, the Phoenix people, and the others haven’t arrived yet. They’ve probably made an agreement to open the gate at a specific time, once everyone’s gathered,” Sofia explained calmly.

Just as she finished speaking, a large group of people appeared in the distance, soaring through the sky on the backs of massive Dragons. The Dragon Princes had arrived, their regal presence unmistakable.

The Fire Dragon and the young Dragon Prince were also present in there.

Following closely behind them were the Phoenix people, their fiery ashes coloring the sky in a deep, glowing orange as they made their entrance.

Lastly, a contingent of demi-human nobility arrived, riding colossal land monsters. The ground trembled with each heavy step as they approached in a precise and formidable formation. The air was thick with tension, anticipation growing as more elite groups gathered.

Chapter 156: Chapter 156: Assembled
Noon.

The west outskirts of the Capital City were now packed with hundreds of thousands people, mostly young, between 18-20 years old, as it was already known that those over 20 could not enter the Ancient Treasure Land. Still, a few older individuals attempted to try their luck, hoping to find a way in.

The place was in constant chaos, with occasional brawls breaking out among rowdy groups.

At one farthest corner, stood Aria, Drake, Yona, Princess Delilah (wearing a mask), and two unfamiliar young men, forming a small group.

Though Aria's group was distant from Aengus, if he had wanted to, Aengus could have spotted her using his All-Seeing Eyes. However, he was preoccupied, focused on the arrival of various powerhouses and had no interest in anything else.

Meanwhile, Aria and her group chatted. The young man standing beside Aria, who shared similar features to Princess Delilah—golden hair and tall stature—was attempting to flirt with her. He carried a regal air, his handsome face radiating royal confidence.

Despite the young man's persistent efforts, Aria remained unmoved. Her pretty face was filled with annoyance.

"Prince, I beg your pardon, but please leave me alone. Why don't we rethink our strategy instead?" she replied hiding the annoyance, attempting to be as polite as possible.

Prince Mikail felt a bit embarrassed but maintained his composure. "Oh, of course, Aria, we should," he said, backing away slightly. His tone was affectionate, as if they were close friends, the lack of honorifics of his address spoke the rudeness of it.

Basically, he was like a fly that started bugging around her a lot.

Princess Delilah, witnessing this exchange, shook her head helplessly.

"Brother Mikail, Aria is right. We should focus on how to regroup after the separation when crossing the gate. That should be our first priority. If we can use that to our advantage, we can hope to stay ahead and stronger than others."

"Ah, okay," Prince Mikail responded, though his eyes never left Aria's profile.

Delilah wanted to say more, but their attention quickly turned skyward suddenly hearing flapping sounds and air pressure.

Two figures appeared floating in from the direction of the King's Castle.

"Oh, it's General Leon and General Felix," Drake muttered loudly enough for everyone to hear, his face brimming with admiration.

Aria watched as the duo approached, riding magical wyverns, their powerful aura overwhelming the crowd.

On the other side, Aengus observed General Leon's arrival but remained silent. He wasn't in a position to introduce himself to the general just yet. He could sense the invisible pressure they exerted, a clear sign to remain quiet.

The crowd immediately hushed as they recognized the famous Ice Guardian and Fire Guardian. Their reputations were legendary, spreading far and wide, and the nearly million-strong crowd now waited in tense anticipation for the gate to open.

General Leon and Felix landed gracefully at the front of the crowd, their presence commanding respect from all.

“Leon, you finally showed up with that pathetic face of yours,” the purple-haired man sneered as he arrived, his tone dripping with disdain.

It was Zillion, the Hero of Lightning, and his words drew the attention of many powerful figures, including the Fire Dragon King and other influential leaders from the five empires. They gathered, anticipating a brewing confrontation.

General Leon’s expression turned ice cold, and the very air around him froze into tiny shards, glimmering like ice particles in the sunlight. His voice, however, remained steady.

“Zillion, as the Hero of Lightning, I expected more than such trash talk from someone of your rank. It doesn’t suit you,” Leon responded with a calm, authoritative tone, almost as if educating a junior.

Zillion remained unfazed, his smirk never leaving his face. “Is that so? But I heard a little bird say that our esteemed Ice Guardian couldn’t even protect a city of a hundred thousand lives, right under his nose. That’s quite the reputation you’ve earned, wouldn’t you agree?” he said, locking eyes with Leon, his words like venom.

Despite the insult, General Leon maintained his composure. But General Felix, standing beside him, was less patient.

“Oh, and where were our esteemed Lightning Heroes and the other so-called protectors of humanity when Beelzebub attacked the city?”

Leon fought valiantly while a few attempts were made to destroy our Kingdom while you heroes stayed silent. Where were you all?”

“Hypocrites, all of you. Don’t tell me you didn’t sense Beelzebub’s presence. So, where was your precious aid when the city needed it? Is there something happening in the Hero Empire that you’re keeping from us?”

General Felix’s voice rang out, cutting through the tense atmosphere, his eyes glowing with a fiery intensity.

Zillion's smirk faltered for a moment, but he said nothing. The crowd watched in silence, feeling the tension rise as Felix's power flared, casting a visible pressure around the area. His gaze narrowed, daring anyone to challenge him.

"You don't need to teach us how to conduct our matters, Felix," Zillion snorted, choosing to say nothing further. He was fully aware that now was not the time to escalate the confrontation.

General Felix clenched his fist in anger and retorted, "But you people certainly don't have any shame, do you? Why are you demanding the key then? Just because Emperor Kairos is a coward, doesn't mean we are. If you want a fight, I'll fight till my last breath. If you continue to insult us and rub salt in our wounds, no one will leave here unscathed."

His voice was cold and loud, ensuring that everyone could hear him.

At that moment, a queen from the Phoenix Empire stepped in gracefully.

"Now, now, there's no need to go that far, General Felix. Although we don't agree with Zillion, we aren't here to make unreasonable demands," she said. Her beauty and grace captivated everyone as she continued in her smooth, calm voice.

"We simply seek entry to Dwarvania and want our younger generation to fight fairly. We've already provided ample compensation to Emperor Kairos, and this is for the good of humanity as a whole."

"I agree with Sky Phoenix Queen. The Great Holy War is upon us, and we must seize every last chance we get," one of the S-Ranks said, with others echoing the sentiment.

As for the SS-Ranks like Zillion and Sky Phoenix Queen, who were fewer in number, they seemed to care little for the Araknis Kingdom.

Chapter 157: Chapter 157: Demons Arrivals

The Ice Guardian and Fire Guardian didn't say anything else. They knew it would be all futile.

Instead, General Leon turned to the crowd and spoke loudly, his voice carrying over the entire assembly.

"I know many of you have traveled from far away to participate in this hunt, hoping to change your fate. Whether you are from this kingdom, neighboring lands, other empires, commoners, or royals, remember this-you are risking your lives by entering there.

As per the agreement between the five empires, we will not be held responsible for any deaths or scuffles between the younger generation,” he said, pausing to let his words sink in before continuing.

“So, be careful and think twice before you decide to enter. Especially those who are older-if you attempt to enter, you will be erased from existence, as is written in the records,” he added sternly, his eyes sharp and piercing.

His words were met with small nods from the higher powerhouses and Transcendentals, confirming their truth.

General Leon’s warning sent a wave of panic and unease through the crowd. The older participants, who had been hoping for a chance, exchanged glances -some began to back away, while others remained, still intending to try.

Sofia and her team listened, but their resolve didn’t waver; they had been aware of these risks beforehand.

“General Leon is right, losers! If you want to quit, you should do it while you still have the chance,” a young man shouted, his face full of killing intent.

“Hmph! We’re no cowards. Let’s see who survives, you silver spoon sucker!” some battle-hardened participants sneered in response.

“Heh, we’ll see when we meet in the treasure land. Anyone who dares to hinder our way will be killed without mercy!”

The atmosphere turned instantly hostile, and the tension rose. The higher powerhouses and Transcendentals furrowed their brows. If things continued this way, who would lead humanity in the coming Holy War if all the young talents ended up killing each other?

The powerful figures exchanged glances, seemingly coming to a decision about what to announce next.

“Silence!”

Sky Phoenix Queen’s voice rang out, regal and commanding, piercing through the crowd.

The hundreds of thousands of young participants instantly fell quiet, waiting for her to speak.

“We have made a new rule on the spot—anyone proven guilty of killing fellow humans, especially in mass killings, will be treated as a traitor to humanity. This proves that you value nothing but your hunger for power and greed. He or she will be executed

accordingly. But remember, you are free to defeat others, just refrain from killing or crippling them. Keep that in mind.”

Her gaze swept across the crowd, making sure her words had impact.

“And for those who are unaware, I suggest you form groups. There is safety in numbers. Once you enter the treasure land, you will be spawned at random locations, so the first thing you should do is find your teammates. Communication with the outside world, or even between groups, will be impossible using artifacts,” she revealed, a secret that had been kept until now.

Most of the participants felt a sense of relief hearing her first rule, but the advice and revelation about random spawns left many groups, including Sofia’s, awestruck.

“Hey, we didn’t know we’d be spawned randomly! How are we supposed to get back together in an unknown place?” Nate asked, looking to Sofia and the others.

Sofia responded, “Well, That is unexpected. We should have gathered more information. Without maps, we’ll have to rely on Mara’s mental communication skill, but her range is only 5 kilometers. All we can do now is hope to survive until we meet again.”

“Zero, you’re the strongest among us. Please try to find us if possible,” Alisha requested.

Aengus, also known as Zero, replied, “I’ll do my best, but be prepared for the worst-case scenario.” His tone was serious.

Everyone turned to Mara, who was feeling the pressure of the situation.

Lark, her boyfriend, gently reassured her, “Don’t worry, babe. I’ll find you soon,” he said confidently.

His words soothed her nerves a bit, and she smiled. “Don’t worry, everyone. I’ll send mental messages to find you all once we’re inside.”

“That’s good. Stay strong, everyone,” Sofia added, trying to maintain their resolve.

Visibly relieved, they turned their attention back to the sea of people and the powerful figures standing at the front.

General Leon took out a small, circular object adorned with the image of a shining star. Though worn and mysterious, it commanded attention. The higher-ranking officials’ eyes were immediately drawn to it—the Key they had heard about.

Without hesitation, General Leon tossed it into the air, and as it ascended, he began channeling his mana into it. General Felix quickly joined him, lending his power to the effort of opening the gate. In an unspoken agreement, Zillion, the Sky Phoenix Queen, the Fire Dragon King, and a few other S-Ranks also channeled their energy into the key.

The process was slow, tense, and laborious. As the combined energy surged into the object, it finally reacted.

“Rumble!”

Suddenly, the sky turned dark, an ominous presence thickened the air, and the world seemed to tremble.

“They’re here!” General Leon’s voice cut through the tense atmosphere, as if he had foreseen this all along.

“Hurry! Open the gate quickly!” General Felix urged, sensing the danger building around them. Everyone channeled even more energy into the key, straining to finish before it was too late.

Aengus watched the scene calmly.

“How can everything go so easily?” he mused, knowing this trouble was expected.

Just as his doubts settled in, several space portals and rifts began to appear, ripping open the sky. Demons poured through the tears in Space, their monstrous forms imposing. Some tore through the atmosphere with sheer power alone, forcing their way into the world.

“Oh, fu*k! Demons!” Alisha cursed, panic creeping into her voice as she and the others realized the gravity of the situation.

“How could we forget about them?!” Nate shouted. Their group panicked a little.

Cries of fear and alarm spread quickly through the crowd.

“Oh, god! The demons are here!”

“I bet there are high-ranking demons present too!”

“We’re dead!”

“Hey, shut up, peasants! We have Transcendentals here—what’s there to fear? You cowardly rats!” A brash voice retorted from the crowd.

“Y-You...Bastard!”

Despite the growing dread, the younger generation readied their holy weapons for the clash. The air became thick with tension as they prepared to face their worst nightmares.

“Buzz! Buzz!”

Then, a loud crackling sound echoed through the area. The void barrier between worlds began to tear apart.

“The gate is opening!” someone yelled.

“Haha! Forget about the demons. Once we’re inside, we’ll be safe!” another shouted.

“Yes, let’s go! Hurry!”

“Guys, let’s move to the gate, quick! These demons are bad news, and if we fall behind, we’ll become cannon fodder,” Sofia urged, sprinting toward the gate that had just opened.

It a massive, transparent, dark square-shaped portal.

Aengus and the others followed closely, moving with speed, their gazes fixed on the swarm of people already rushing toward the gate. The gate was large enough to allow thousands to pass through at once, but the sheer number of people made the scene chaotic.

Chapter 158: Chapter 158: Familiar Gaze

Glancing back, Aengus saw Towering demonic creatures continued to emerge from the rifts. Among them were six humanoid demons who stood out like emperors, each radiating a powerful, sinister aura. Their eyes gleamed with cruelty, their presence dwarfing that of the other demons.

One of the Demon Lords raised a hand, summoning an enormous ball of nether energy. The blast, dark and menacing, shot toward the retreating humans.

“Wall of Nifelheim!”

General Leon’s conjured a massive wall of ice out of thin air to block the incoming nether energy blast. The impact shook the continent, but the wall held firm.

Leon, walking confidently in the air, showed no sign of fear. The S and SS Ranks quickly joined him, their powers flaring as they prepared to engage the Demon Lords.

“Hmph! Six Demon Lords... Seems your kind places great importance on this secret realm,” the Lightning Hero scoffed, preparing his Holy Lightning Powers.

While the high-ranking combatants engaged the Demon Lords, Aengus noticed an elder demon heading straight for their party.

Sofia and Others heart skipped a beat.

“Run faster, everyone!” Sofia shouted, pushing herself to move even faster, her speed unmatched by the rest.

Amid the chaos, Aengus remained focused. In an instant, he activated his All-Seeing Eyes, pinpointing the elder demon’s weak points and blasting it to pieces. The sound of the demon’s destruction echoed behind them, but none of them stopped to look back.

They glanced behind briefly, seeing no trace of the elder demon. Confusion filled their faces. Who could have killed it so effortlessly?

Their gazes shifted toward Aengus, or rather, Zero.

But he seemed utterly nonchalant.

“What?” Aengus asked, feigning ignorance despite the obvious hint.

“Nothing,” they replied, though the unease lingered. They couldn’t shake the feeling that there was a greater monster beside them, pretending to be a pig to eat the tiger.

Aengus merely shrugged. Soon, they would be separated in the secret realm, and the truth would no longer matter.

Aengus watched as people flooded into the gate like a swarm of ants, disappearing one after the other into the vast unknown. The eerie hum of the massive portal sent a shiver down his spine, but there was no time for hesitation.

Lark and Mara were the first among his group to step forward. “See you soon, everyone!” Lark shouted as they were swept into the gate by the sea of bodies, vanishing from sight.

The rest of his group exchanged glances—uncertainty, fear, and hope mingling in their eyes. One by one, they too began to enter. Aengus lingered behind for a moment, his mind racing.

Even though he had reassured them, telling them to find him once inside, but in truth, his path would be different. He had a different goal to complete. Something more important than staying with the group.

Just as Aengus took his first step toward the gate, something caught his eye. A figure moves at the edge of his vision. Silvery hair, flowing like moonlight, an oval face, and piercing emerald-green eyes. His usually calm and cold heart stir with emotions, suppressing the darkness around.

He blinked, his vision blurring for a moment.

It couldn't be!

Was this true?

Aria?

But his eyes were telling the truth.

His heart raced as his special eyes confirmed what he was seeing. She was alive. After all this time, she was alive and well. The memories came flooding back—her laughter, her determination, their kiss, and the day they were went Apart.

And now, there she was, moving with lightning speed, her grace seemingly pulling at the strings of his heart.

At the front of Aria's group, she dashed forward, her every step fluid and swift.

All of a sudden, her sharp senses picked up on something—a gaze burning onto her. She turned her gaze sideways to the source. Her movements didn't falter though.

But as she locked her eyes with him, The world seemed to come to a standstill.

Those familiar black eyes, like a void, pierced through her, freezing her in place for a fraction of a second. Could it be?

Her heart pounded, her thoughts in a mess.

Ethan... Was alive? All this while?

That meant her gut feeling wasn't wrong.

She felt genuine happiness welling up inside her. He was alive and just within her reach.

She hurriedly changed direction to meet him, but then she saw Ethan get suddenly pushed by a red-haired boy, causing him to lose his balance and disappear into the gate.

Her movements stopped, and her companions halted beside her with puzzled expressions.

“Sister Aria, why did you stop?” Drake asked anxiously.

“Yeah, is something wrong, Aria?” Prince Mikail wanted to step forward and touch her, but Delilah stopped him, annoyed by her brother’s foolishness.

Aria snapped out of her daze and said, “Yona, Drake, I just saw Ethan! He’s alive. Didn’t I tell you both?” she said excitedly.

Drake sighed with exasperation, thinking she was being delusional again.

“Oh, come on, Sister! You must have been mistaken once again.”

Yona and Delilah exchanged knowing looks, not believing her story at all.

Mikail furrowed his brows, clearly displeased at the mention of another man from Aria’s lips.

“Who is this Ethan you’re talking about?” he asked.

Princess Delilah and the others ignored him, knowing he wouldn’t like Ethan’s connection with Aria, and there was no time for explanations.

“Let’s go, we don’t have time for this. The gate is about to close, and remember to keep in contact using the special skill that Father equipped us with earlier.”

Aria hurried along with them, but her goal had changed. She was determined to find Ethan and discover why he seemed so different.

The younger generation moved on while the older generation continued fighting off the demons with earthshaking force.

However, a swarm of demons also slipped through the gate, as if it had all been planned beforehand.

Even though their goals remained unknown, it would be nothing good coming across them in there.

Chapter 159: Chapter 159: To The Mountain Peak
“Move away, you mongrel!”

Aengus barely registered the voice before he felt the force. The young man beside the Fire Dragon King had attacked him—not just pushed, but with enough intent to end his life.

Thanks to his quick reflexes, Aengus managed to evade the powerful blow, but the force still shoved him through the gate.

His chance to speak with Aria had been shattered by that Dragon Prince.

—

In the blink of an eye, Aengus found himself standing in a dense forest, surrounded by towering trees and rocky boulders. The environment was thick with the scent of nature, and the vegetation seemed untouched by human hands.

He surveyed the area but found no-one near in his vision range. That meant he was all alone. But, that didn't deter him at the slightest.

His gaze fell on the boulder-shaped rocks humming with a faint magical glow on their surfaces. They seemed to pulse with hidden energy, suggesting something valuable inside. Any greedy man would have tried break it as soon as possible.

With a knowing glance, Aengus activated his Appraisal skill. His eyes glowed momentarily, and their information entered his mind.

Then, Aengus approached one of the rocky boulders, acting as naturally as possible. But, his blade behind him was ready to strike.

Swish!

Instantly, the rock knoll came to life, opening its gaping mouth as if trying to swallow Aengus whole.

“Slice!”

Aengus swung his blade, slicing cleanly through the monster's midsection, as though cutting through butter.

[Appraisal]

[Rock Knoll]

[Rank: D]

[Abilities:

1. Camouflage
2. Stone Skin
3. Boulder Roll]

Gu lu u gu... Growl

Aengus watched as the nearby Rock Knolls began to move, rolling toward him with ground-shaking force.

Unmoved, Aengus dealt a few casual strikes, taking them down one by one. Despite their intimidating presence, they were no more than C-Rank creatures at best. He dispatched them with ease, his expression indifferent to the threat.

Aengus quickly left the area, feeling the urgency of his situation. His soul was dangerously unstable, teetering on the edge of destruction. He didn't know what would happen if it broke apart, but it felt like his very existence was akin to a world-ending bomb.

He attempted to take to the skies using his wings, but to his frustration, he found himself unable to fly. There seemed to be some sort of restriction in this realm, binding him to the ground.

But why?

Who is behind all of this?

The history he had learned from Manas about Dwarvania suddenly came to mind. The more he thought about it, the more he realized there were layers of mystery hidden beneath what he had learned.

Aengus stared at a distant mountain, its towering peak piercing the sky and casting a massive shadow that blocked the harsh sunlight. The sight gave him a strange sense of direction.

Shua, shua.

He began running toward the mountain, mentally mapping out the terrain as he moved. He needed a basic understanding of the land to determine his next destination, or perhaps he hoped to find something on the way.

His speed soon surpassed the sound barrier, creating a sonic boom in his path, leaving a clear line of destruction behind.

The low-level monsters nearby quickly hid inside their shells, sensing his overwhelming speed and aura.

He reached a large river, its flow charged with electricity, and water monsters roamed on the surface, their eyes filled with menace.

Splash

Aengus stopped at the riverbank, then with a powerful leap, dove into the water amidst the raging current.

[Doomscale Dragonification]

To counter the strong current and the water monsters ahead, he activated his Dragonification skill, enhancing his stats further. With increased strength and a dragon-like tail and claws, his swimming speed multiplied several times over.

Suddenly, He spotted a Water Serpent approaching, ready to attack.

But he didn't stop.

With sharpened claws, he met the serpent's massive, gaping mouth head-on.

Boom! Splash!

The serpent's head was shattered into pieces, causing the water to momentarily part, allowing air to rush in. The gap quickly closed again, leaving Aengus with the creature's body.

Without wasting any time, He used Skill Absorption on the Water Serpent.

[You have gained the passive skill: Water Breathing (C)]

He needed the skill to remain submerged freely in the water. He didn't absorb anything else, considering the fragile state of his soul.

A passive skill wouldn't affect him too much, as it's usually linked more to the body than the soul.

As Aengus resumed his swim, he spotted another Water Serpent approaching. This time, instead of engaging it directly, he used Darkness King's Authority to influence the creature, taking control over its mind.

Under his command, the serpent turned and swam away, creating a distraction to lure the attention of the other water monsters. Moments later, Aengus could hear muffled roars, growls, and hissing sounds beneath the water, indicating the chaos he had orchestrated.

After diving for another 20 minutes, Aengus finally broke the water's surface and spotted land ahead.

In mere seconds, he was standing on the shore, glancing back at the long distance he had crossed, the dangerous water monsters and menacing fish still lurking beneath the surface.

Aengus moved through the dense jungle of towering trees, and dense grassy land.

"Hey, leave us alone! We got it first!"

A piercing scream stopped Aengus in his tracks.

Up ahead, he saw a noble-looking girl and her teammate standing against a young man with a vicious scar on his face. The tension between them was palpable.

"Fu*k, are you going to give it up or not? Don't think I won't kill you both. You're barely D-Rank, and you two b**ches have the guts to challenge me?" he sneered arrogantly.

The first girl, holding a glowing white orb, glared at him. "Hmph, we are two, but you're alone. Don't think you'll get away without consequences. Once we're outside, my father will make sure to have his revenge. So, back off lowlife!"

The young man's grin widened, revealing his twisted intentions. "Fuk your background! I don't give a damn about your father. I'll fu*k you both and then kill you, and no one will ever find out."

With a swift motion, he pulled out a small vial of pink liquid and smashed it into his hand.

"Haha... Where will you go now?" he laughed with a perverted smile and malice. "I'll fu*k you two to death."

Chapter 160: Chapter 160: Finding A Clue

The girls instinctively covered their noses, but it was too late. The potion's effects were swift and potent.

“What did you do?” one of the girls panicked, her voice shaky as she suddenly felt an overwhelming heat course through her body. A strange, itchy sensation started to spread in her private places.

The young man laughed darkly. “You naïve girls never heard of an aphrodisiac potion before? That’s good. We’re going to have some fun, don’t worry, virgin b**ches!”

He then sneered, his eyes gleaming with greed. “But first, hand over that soul treasure. With it, I can unlock an extra active skill sloy with this.”

As he reached to snatch the glowing orb from the girl’s trembling hand, who was distracted by the effects of the potion, another hand appeared out of nowhere and swiftly took the orb from her grasp, before the young man could get his hands on it.

Aengus stood there, holding the orb, his expression calm and calculative.

The young man looked at Aengus’ handsome face, which irritated him further.

His anger flared. “Who are you? Give it back!” he barked.

The girls, however, were visibly relieved. “Th-thank you for helping us, Hero.” Their eyes were full of gratitude, and they hid behind Aengus, seeking safety.

Aengus showed no expression in response to their superficial gratitude.

“No need. I’m not here to meddle in your affairs. I’ll be taking this. You three can continue.” With that, Aengus began to walk away.

The girls and the young man stared in disbelief.

How can someone not help after seeing such beauty and being in such a tempting situation?

“Hey, where are you going? Where’s your humanity? Please help us!” the wealthy, beautiful girl begged.

However, Aengus’ footsteps didn’t falter.

“How can you have no kindness at all?” the girl finally shed real tears, imagining their future. They had hoped to gather in a large group and acquire incredible items and treasures, but fate was playing a cruel joke on them.

“Shiiiiingg!”

Just as Aengus was leaving, the sound of a blade being unsheathed pierced the tense air. The young man, now fuming with rage and humiliation, stood with his sword drawn, his eyes locked on Aengus.

"You're not going anywhere, pretty boy!" he growled, his tone dripping with malice. "You think you can just walk away with that soul treasure and leave me here? I'll kill you and those b**ches too!"

Aengus paused, turning slightly, but his expression remained indifferent, as if the young man's threats were nothing more than idle chatter.

He gave the girls a quick glance, noticing the fear in their eyes, but he wanted to be true to his earlier words-he had no interest in their affairs.

But the young man's intervention changed everything. He had to be dealt with quick.

The wealthy girl, now desperate, called out again, her voice trembling. "Please, don't leave us! We'll do anything, just save us from him!"

The young man smirked, gripping his sword tighter, clearly enjoying the power he held over the terrified girls.

"Hear that, pretty boy? They're begging for your help. What kind of 'hero' turns his back on women in distress?"

Aengus finally stopped walking, letting out a long sigh. Without turning fully to face them, he spoke calmly. "Hero? You misunderstand. I'm not a hero, not here to save anyone. But if you're looking for death you will get one. It's your last chance to flee from here."

The young man, emboldened by what he perceived as Aengus' looking down on him, charged forward, sword raised.

"Die, you arrogant bastard!"

Swoosh

In a flash, Aengus vanished from his spot, reappearing behind the young man with his blade in his hand. A small, almost imperceptible movement of Aengus' blade sent a gust of air slicing through the space between them.

The young man froze mid-step, his eyes wide with disbelief. He looked down and saw his stomach had been cut cleanly by the waists, as his upper body fell down like sleepers mass.

“Wh-what... how?” he seemed disbelief, his upper body and lowered body laid there. He was a C-Rank hunter for god’s sake. So how could this happen?

“Ahh!” his horror filled scream echoed throughout, sending a chill down at two girl’s spine, their eyes full of dread.

Aengus didn’t even glance back as he resumed walking. “Like I said, I’m not here to meddle with your affairs. You should have thought twice before attacking me.”

The girls watched in stunned silence, their initial fear of Aengus now replaced with deep terror.

Though they were safe, but the cold indifference after killing Aengus displayed left them shaken to their core. The smell of urination spread like wildflower, marking the level of their terror.

Without another word, Aengus disappeared into the dense jungle, leaving behind a dead man and two women caught between relief and dread.

However.

As the girls were about to relax, they saw Aengus returning again. Their breath caught in their throats.

“Why was he returning again?”

“Ahh! Don’t kill us! We didn’t do anything to you! We don’t want the treasure either!” they cried out in panic, their voices trembling.

Aengus looked at them, bewildered by their reaction. “Relax, I’m not here to kill you two. But, if you tell anyone about this, your end will be bad.” He flashed a dangerous smile.

The girls hurriedly replied, relief mixed with fear on their faces. “Yes, of course, of course. We won’t speak a word.”

Aengus considered killing them for a moment, but he knew that if he did, the Heart of Darkness within him would slowly influence his being completely.

Rejecting the idea, he instead asked, “Where did you two find this? I only came here to ask that.”

Aengus glanced at the white orb in his hand.

[Appraisal]

[Soul Core 1x]

[Rank: C]

[Description: The Soul Cores are found in the bodies of Nyx Creatures. Nyx Creatures are capable of traveling through spatial fabrics using their special Soul Body alone. Soul Cores can slightly increase the user's soul power.]

The orb's background intrigued him. Even though it won't heal his soul, he wondered if it could lead to the solution to his current problem.

"That way... we found it inside a cave in that direction, on one of the hilltops," one of the girls said, pointing toward where Aengus had initially been headed.

Using his All-Seeing Eyes, Aengus judged their body language and confirmed they were telling the truth.

He turned and left, and this time, he didn't come back.