

Vile 1081

[Chapter 1081 Machinations Of A Slumbering Goddess P1](#)

The Sage's hall fell silent once again.

Eren sighed as he understood why the half-blood clans of today hated the Anfang Alliance and all the establishments of today. He couldn't blame them because their hatred was justified.

It was one thing to hate the half-bloods for their demonic origins. But the Anfang Alliance made use of the half-bloods before killing them for its own safety. It was no wonder that the half-blood clans from the Last Blood Bastion would involve themselves in cultist activities to create unrest in various kingdoms.

The half-bloods from the Last Blood Bastion knew about their past. They knew how the alliance had played them and used them to further its own cause. So trying to overthrow the establishments and the alliance by proxy was their way of settling scores.

"What... what happened next?"

Eren asked while looking visibly shaken by the information Nira Nightshade provided him. It didn't take much effort from the butcher's part to play this character in front of a Sage because he could put him in their shoes just fine.

Nira reclined on her throne once again before adding further.

"Well... you know the continent-spanning isolation array exists, right?"

It has managed to keep invaders away for so long now. So we can trust history's narration that says that the sacrifice worked. Meaning the goddesses' plan worked. The trap not only killed the half-bloods but also the titans present at the scene.

Even the titans weren't expecting something like this from the Anfang Alliance. I mean who would hurt their most capable fighting force and then burn all their bridges with it? As such, the denizens of Allansia also lost a lot of their capable members that day. It was a huge blow to the titan invaders with the kind of attack the Anfang alliance had managed to launch."

"What happened to Sage Eliza?" Eren asked immediately. Nira Nightshade replied.

"Eliza had supported the alliance with all her heart until this point. It was she who ignored the rift that was being created between the half-blood clans and the alliance. And it was she who convinced the half-blood clans to participate in the all-out war against the titans with all their might despite their newfound differences with the alliance.

But all of Eliza's efforts came back to haunt her as she watched the half-bloods dying inside a trapped array furnace. This was an array trap setup under a goddess's command so there was nothing most of the half-bloods could do about it.

They say that only Eliza managed to get away from the trap the goddess and the alliance had set up in conjunction. She forced her way out of that trap with brute strength alone at the cost of using a forbidden technique.

Sage Eliza's wrath knew no bounds at the time. She killed many powerhouses from the alliance's side at the cost of injuring herself even more. Many in the alliance had become scared of her after witnessing the feats she was capable of. In fact, what I'm telling you about Eliza was documented by one such eyewitness from the Anfang Alliance herself.

The Witch of Enderflame would have killed more rankers from Anfang's side as well. However, she decided to retreat after her condition kept getting worse. Nobody could stop that dragon half-blood if she wanted to retreat. Nobody dared to.

The eyewitness to the whole event also wrote that before disappearing from the site, Eliza claimed that she would settle her score with the alliance in the future. That she would do everything in her power to get back to them for what they had done to her and the half-blood clans.

Nobody knows what happened to her after that. Some say Eliza died after escaping. Others say she lost her Sage rank and died as a non-ranker after using the forbidden technique.

Either way, she died."

'Um... I have got news for you.'

Eren thought to himself.

He had always been wary of Eliza ever since he met her. She was the first Sage he had ever come into contact with. Even then, he could subconsciously tell she wasn't merely a Sage. She was endowed with natural talent, a powerful bloodline, innate elemental comprehension, and exceptional weapon-handling skills. Plus, an unmatched drive to be the most outstanding in her generation. Even while she was hanging between life and death, her presence was overwhelming.

Eren understood why Eliza was bitter when he heard her story. She considered herself responsible for leading the half-blood clans to their doom by agreeing to the alliance's deployment. And that bitterness had given her the will to survive all these years.

'She wants to purge the Anfang alliance after resurrecting. And by helping her return, I will have to make myself her accomplice. Or at least that's how I will be seen if things blow out of proportion.'

Eren had a grim look on his face as his deep thoughts led him to various conclusions and deductions. His surface-level thoughts, on the other hand, were like calm lake water that hardly had any ripples in it.

He looked at Nira curiously before asking another question.

"Sage Nira, did you find out why that goddess was so against the half-bloods? I mean she could have just asked for the sacrifice of other rankers along with the half-bloods. Why did she only focus on half-bloods?"

Nira pursed her lips and nodded before answering.

"The messenger could read some of the slumbering goddesses' intentions while communicating in a non-verbal manner. It was an eyewitness to the event who contacted the goddess' messenger to find out exactly what you were asking for.

The messenger had said that the goddess was provoked when House Samael started working on the Primer Matter research. She didn't like the possibility of someone creating such a groundbreaking matter for some reason.

The messenger said that the goddess was also wary of half-blood clans for some reason regarding a certain prophecy. Of course, the messenger didn't have the privilege or any reason to ask her goddess about the prophecy.

The goddess wanted the Anfang alliance to get rid of all of the half-bloods completely. So she put forward various conditions in the isolation array itself, which would influence the alliance to suppress and kill the remaining half-bloods even after the isolation array had been erected."

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'Hmm? A prophecy?'

This was the first time Eren had heard about a prophecy that could spook a goddess into taking extreme measures. He looked at Nira Nightshade with a puzzled expression, nudging her to explain further.

"As a result of these conditions in the isolation array, half-bloods are oppressed in the land of Anfang, Eren. The goddess couldn't kill the half-bloods on the land of Anfang completely due to the cause-and-effect fabric of the world deeming it to be nearly impossible.

So she chose the next logical thingâ€" suppressing them to near extinction.

The very first condition in the isolation array was that it would start to deteriorate if the descendants of the sacrificed subjects crossed a certain number in the population. It would suppress and harm entities who talked about half-bloods and topics related to them.

The isolation array also prevented demons from entering the world easily. It almost completely restricted rankers from taking the demonic path and turning themselves into demonic rankers.

The isolation array couldn't completely prevent the demons from possessing the bodies of mana beasts. But it prevented the genesis of a new line of half-bloods.

Meaning no matter how much the demons' soul fragments tried, they couldn't sire a new line of half-bloods on the land of Anfang anymore."

Eren's stunned expression was evident when he heard what the goddess had set up in the isolation array. She seemed paranoid about half-bloods or someone born from them.

'Well... At least Argo can carry on with his activities without having to worry about anything.'

Eren thought in his head. He felt that the isolation array had done Argo a huge favor by preventing him from siring children. The Prince Of Gluttony alone would have made a substantial contribution to the half-bloods' existing numbers if it wasn't for such restrictions.

Only now did Eren understand why the establishments were okay with the existence of the tamed demon beasts as well as why they were not worried about the future line of half-bloods getting sired by

them. The goddess had stopped the new line of half-bloods. With such conditions on the isolation array, she intended to cull existing half-bloods as well using the alliance as her tool.

Due to the alliance's backstabbing of half-blood clans, they wouldn't let the isolation array deteriorate. The alliance's long-term efforts would be ruined. So it did exactly what the goddess had expected it to do. It employed strict measures to control the relay of information related to these topics.

The alliance also influenced the establishments working under it to hunt and kill the remaining half-bloods in their respective territories after the isolation array was set up. Half-bloods were forced to seek shelter in the Last Blood Bastian, disappearing completely from open society. They started living in the shadows.

As a result of the isolation array, the invaders were prevented from entering Anfang. It cursed the children of Echidna that tried to force their way into this world and made the infiltrators go insane. That's the reason they needed to awaken the "clarity" hidden in their bloodlines to function as normal beings.

Things didn't change much for those who originally belonged to the land of the fey and had decided to stay here. They had supported the alliance and remained part of the establishment. The land of the fey stopped sending infiltrators to Anfang completely after the isolation array was raised. They concluded that their efforts were not worth the potential gains they would receive from them.

Labh Salem decided that it would remain neutral as an organization. It would not try to keep tabs on what was going on in the land of Anfang. But it would allow its denizens to do what they wanted to do.

The titans had humongous physicalities and they were adept at casting basic magic spells as well. But they weren't an advanced civilization like others. Plus, they had never thought of settling down in Anfang peacefully.

Furthermore, the isolation array was specifically made to stop the titans' infiltration. Thus, they ceased to exist on the land of Anfang. Never to be seen again.

Establishments began following the guidelines of the Anfang alliance. The former stayed in the background and allowed establishments to take the lead.

The establishments openly hunted demonic rankers and cultists alike at that time. The alliance wanted nothing to do with the gods or demons after the activation of the isolation array. All of them from both sides were culled.

The establishments used a variety of methods to hunt half-bloods. The Historian class was invented so that the establishment could track and kill such targets. This is why it is unique to the land of Anfang. This class doesn't exist anywhere else.

After the talk of half-bloods died down, these forces continued to operate in the shadows. This was how the establishments started maintaining special units like Edinburgh's Blood Punisher Force.

'Eren, I can bet you anything that the goddess this elf is talking about is the same harlot you encountered in Sienna Slughorn's shell. She is the only one who is capable of doing something like this.

You are the inheritor of the same man she is afraid of. A resurrection that she wanted to prevent at all costs.'

Eren heard Alephee's voice when he was about to say something to Nira. Another of his doubts was confirmed at this point. But the butcher wasn't interested in prophecy at this point. He was not concerned about goddesses. They were a problem for him to solve in the distant future.

What he was concerned about at this moment was Alephee's current location.

'Forget about that goddess, Miss Timeless. There's no need to worry about her here. I'll tap her ass when the time is ripe. One step at a time.

The bigger question is... are you ready?'

Eren asked while being closely watched by Nira Nightshade. The latter chuckled at his comment about the goddess before replying affirmatively.

'Yeah. I found it. Just tell me when.'

[Chapter 1083 Trying To Get More Out Of The Deal](#)

'That's good.'

Eren said to Alephee and pondered for a bit. He looked at the Sage archer before deciding to extract more value out of her.

'Just wait. Let me see if I can get something more out of this bitch.'

Eren said to Alephee. In the next moment, he felt that the atmosphere around him had suddenly gotten tense and suffocating. He looked at Nira Nightshade to see that she was looking at him angrily.

"Did you... did you just call me a bitch in your head?"

Eren gulped empty air and raised both his hands in a defensive position before speaking up in a careful tone.

"Wait... what? There must have been some misunderstanding. I was thinking... the whole situation seems like a bitch to me. I mean for half-bloods like me.

We are not accepted by the kingdom of Edinburgh even though it was demonic rankers like you who established it in the first place. We are targeted by the Blood Punisher Force. The isolation array prevents us from leaving this world easily.

It's like we are forced to take a beating. If we cry about it or make our presence known, we get beaten up some more.

And all of this when we are the reason this world is experiencing a time of peace. It was our lives that were sacrificed for this world to get here.

Ain't that a bitch?"

The butcher hated the fact that Sages could read people like an open book with their soul sense. It looked like their souls would pass through some form of cleansing along with their bodies at the time of breaking into the Sage rank. Their souls would be strengthened and their soul sense would be more potent.

This amplification of soul sense at the time of breakthrough into the Sage rank was dependent upon how early it had gotten awakened in a ranker's journey. The earlier the soul sense got awakened, the more profound its impact would be at the time of the Sage breakthrough.

As a result, Alephee found it tremendously significant for Eren to awaken his soul so early on in his ranking journey. As a result, he had more time to refine his soul sense before it would undergo a metamorphosis at the time of the Sage rank breakthrough.

Eren didn't want to remain helpless against a Sage ranker's soul sense use.

He felt naked in front of Eliza when she deciphered almost all his thoughts as if reading a written note. He felt like he would not be able to do anything against her if things didn't change.

Eliza's soul sense was overwhelming, just as her other qualities were. Eren didn't want to get too stunned to act in front of the mummy again. So he had started taking steps to train his soul sense as well. And that training had paid him off when it came to having a conversation with Nira Nightshade.

Only rankers with soul sense can hope to shield their thoughts from those with soul sense. They needed fine control over their soul sense to do that.

Nira thought that she was reading Eren's mind with her soul sense. However, Eren let her read only what he wanted her to read. He could partition his thoughts into multiple segments to keep surface-level thoughts separate from his deep thoughts.

Even normal rankers could keep their surface-level thoughts separate from their deep emotions and mechanization if they really tried or made conscious efforts. However, a Sage like Nira would be able to gauge the true emotions of such rankers under normal circumstances.

That's where rankers with soul sense would have an edge over those who don't. Soul sense awakening was not about sensing the world around oneself on a deeper level. It was also about becoming more aware of it.

Elites would be separated from normal rankers with their soul sense as it gave them the ability to layer their thoughts on multiple levels depending upon their proficiency. The soul sense also enhanced the intellectual acuity of rankers, allowing them to keep up with their multi-layered thought process.

The added effects of the soul sense weren't technically a profound boost to a ranker's powers.

Soul sense, however, can be used to cast dual, triple, and quadruple casting spells and beyond with increased precision. The profound awareness that soul sense brought to rankers could be utilized to bolster their offense and defense at the same time if it was used right.

Eren had been training his soul sense by making use of these added effects over and over again. He could fight an entire group of opponents with enhanced efficiency than before. And he sustained relatively less damage while doing it.

Of course, he would be mentally exhausted while using his soul sense like this. But he felt his efforts would be worth it if they could give him the ability to stand against Eliza in the future. At the very least, he didn't want to be too stunned to act the way he once did.

Eren had been using his soul sense in a subtle way against Nira Nightshade. The efforts he had put in to train his soul sense were one reason behind his success with Nira so far. The other was the fact that it was only a vestige of soul left by the archer elf on the land of Anfang.

Eren had come a long way from the first time he had awakened his soul sense. However, he had rare slip-of-thought moments as well. Thankfully, he could always rely on his art of bullshittery when in pinch.

Nira Nightshade looked at Eren suspiciously for a few moments before retracting her soul sense. She eased her expression before nodding at him.

The butcher didn't feel any shame in playing the victim card of a generational trauma he hadn't felt this entire time. Thankfully, whatever he was trying to sell was bought by the Sage simply because she didn't think that he was capable of swindling her.

[Chapter 1084 House Samael's Origins](#)

Eren took a breath of relief before deciding to dig up some more information about Eliza from her.

"Sage Nira, can you tell me more about Sage Eliza? Anything that you might have found on your search. I would like to know more about such an existence that is an inspiration to all the half-bloods before the deal between us is concluded."

Nira felt like she had already accommodated Eren so much by giving him all the information he needed to understand the lost history of Anfang. She didn't want to force her way onto a C-ranker and sully her pride as a Sage after all. But the guy in front of her just kept pushing his luck.

Nira took a deep breath and controlled her irritation, supposedly preventing herself from ruining her chances of getting the Spirit Beast. She pondered for a bit before giving the butcher what he wanted most of all.

"I cannot tell you more about Sage Eliza because that's all I have on her. But I can tell you more about her clan."

Nira Nightshade said, a bit exasperated before speaking further.

"The House Samael was always ahead of its competitors in research related to bloodlines and potioning. It was the most influential clan when the half-blood clans were well-established in the land of Anfang. That's because it was already a well-established clan in the world of Labh Salem.

The House Samael and other half-blood clans only carried on with their traditions from Labh Salem after settling here. They were just branching out into different worlds, you could say.

But there's a significant reason why Eliza's clan was so prominent and acted as the head of the half-blood clans in both worlds. The reason lies in the clan's true genesis."

Nira Nightshade kept her right hand over her chest and spoke some demonic chants. In the next moment, a second layer of isolation barrier was erected before a pulse of otherworldly mana was spread around her and Eren.

The butcher was familiar with this mana. That's because it was related to the Sin Series Abilities.

"The one who established the clan of Samael in the world of Labh Salem is none other than the Demon Prince of Wrath. He possessed a great red dragon and took humanoid form before mating with several witches.

The witches in Labh Salem were practicing demonic rituals and he responded to their summons. And as a gift for the witches' devotion, he sired many children through them.

This was how the Samael clan was founded. In fact, the name Samael highlights the clan's origins better than anything. After all, one of "his" most popular names throughout many worlds is Samael."

Nira Nightshade's voice started to echo as she spoke her next words in a hurried speech.

"The Demon Prince of Wrath has many names just like the other six Princess. However, he is considered the strongest of them all.

It is also said that he has the ambition to be the leader of the other six."

Nira Nightshade's spectral rendition started getting blurred when she started talking about the Demon Prince of Wrath. It felt like she was trying to avoid the side effects that would come from speaking about him in the land of Anfang. She resisted the urge to give in to her wrath and lose her sense of being. But she was possessed by an unknown fragment of consciousness nonetheless.

Nira Nightshade rose from her throne-like chair and started levitating a few meters away from the ground. Her spectral image started fluctuating and her limbs were turned in odd ways. Her eyes shone with red brilliance as she looked at Eren strangely before saying Samael's various titles in demonic language.

"Demon Prince of Wrath

Satan.

Samael.

The Serpent.

The Dragon.

Prince of Darkness.

Prince of Lies.

Venom of Gods.

The Prosecutor.

The Arbiter.

Tempter...."

Eren understood most of what Nira was trying to say to him about the Prince's titles just fine. This was even though she had switched to a demonic language halfway through.

The event lasted for a short period. The Sage archer got hold of herself after chanting some demonic chants a few times.

The isolation barrier she had built was dispelled by Nira Nightshade as she removed her hand from her heart. She looked a bit exhausted after maintaining the first barrier for so long.

She was brought back to the floor with a distressed expression. Nevertheless, she decided to raise both barriers at once and finish everything in one go.

"Ugh... I hate it when this happens."

While experiencing a killer headache, Nira Nightshade talked to herself. The butcher was sure that had she been in the C-rank like him and had her body present here, she would have sweated buckets just by doing what she had done.

Nira shook her head and her eyes returned to normalcy. It seemed the effects of the demonic chants she had said earlier had kicked in and her vestige of soul was prevented from getting consumed by the wrath mana.

Nira knew that Eren had a Sin-Series mark on himself as well. There were a few mystic ruins on the land of Anfang he could have gotten it from, she thought.

So she wasn't surprised by seeing Eren's stoic expressions that bordered on nonchalance. She stabilized herself some more before speaking about Eliza's clan.

"So... where was I?"

Yeah...

It should come as no surprise why House Samael is one of the main forces in Labh Salem even now. And why Eliza's clan held so much importance even here in the land of Anfang in the past.

I don't want to undermine Sage Eliza's own efforts and diligent work. But I guess it is only natural that someone from her clan would achieve so much success.

I know that one of Satan's soul fragments is also roaming the land of Anfang these days. His name is Ottoman de Montmorency. They also call him Demonmir."

Nira Nightshade ignored Eren's shocked expression and continued.

[Chapter 1085 \[Bonus\] Reason Behind Levine's Hatred For Demonmir](#)

Nira Nightshade ignored Eren's shocked expression and continued.

"They say that House Montmorency was doing some sort of demonic ritual as an experiment and summoned the soul fragment of Satan by accident. He possessed the body of the original Ottoman de

Montmorency. After his demonic possession, Ottoman is said to have killed a lot of members of his own clan before finally obtaining control of the soul fragment.

Frankly, I doubt how much control this Ottoman guy has over his current body. But since the Anfang Alliance has decided to keep him around, I don't want to raise any doubts.

Anyways... I heard that the possessed Ottoman killed the head of the clan right after the ritual was completed. So his daughter Levine de Montmorency hates Ottoman for it. This effectively divided the clan into two factions. And since there was a demonic ritual involved, none of them could talk openly about it to any outsider.

Ottoman was merely an Ace ranker at the time of the demonic ritual. And he was still able to kill a Master-ranked entity that was Levine's father with intent-based magic under the influence of his wrath.

The point I'm trying to make here is that you should stop seeing House Samael and Sage Eliza from your limited perspective. If someone like Ottoman can pull off such feats just because of his connection with Satan, House Samael and its most venerated scion Sage Eliza could be considered to be capable of a lot more."

Nira Nightshade looked blankly in front of her and pondered something before concluding the matter.

"I think the goddess's unusual interest in Anfang is also shared by the Demon Prince of Wrath. As the eyewitness to the lost history points out, everything seems to be connected to some prophecy.

The only question is... what is it that they both are looking for?"

'Or who...'

Eren thought to himself and smiled wickedly. At this point, he felt that he had gotten everything he could from the Sage.

Only now did Eren realize why Levine didn't tell him the whole story about Demonmir. And why she hated the man's guts.

He and Alephee could also guess that both the slumbering goddess and Demon Prince of Wrath were still active on the land of Anfang because of the prophecy about him. Or more like... they had cast their net wide and this was one of the worlds they had zeroed in on.

However, both the slumbering goddess and Satan had different intentions. The slumbering goddess wanted to prevent Eren from inheriting the Elder Ichor bloodline. She wanted to prevent his existence altogether.

Satan, on the other hand, wanted to confront him after he had inherited the Elder Ichor. If Alephee's guess was right, the Prince of Wrath wanted to rob Eren's bloodline's authority so that he could take the Emperor's throne for himself.

So while the goddess was doing everything in her power to prevent Eren from inheriting the bloodline, Satan was busy crafting his own plans. He had the title of the Wicked One, after all.

Aleph also made Eren understand that titles like Beelzebub and Satan were not linked with demons on an individual level. Whoever demon was in charge of one of the Seven Planes of Seven Sins would receive such titles. As such, they were transferable.

Eren smiled mirthlessly in his head after understanding both the divine and demonic sides were his enemies for the most part. They may want him dead for different reasons. But they both wanted him dead nonetheless.

Eren was also shocked by House Samael's origins. But it made him realize various things about the clan as well as Eliza.

It also explains how Eliza got possession of the seven-headed serpent statue. It was probably brought into this world from Labh Salem before the isolation array was activated.

Eren guessed that Eliza was a user of intent-based magic. She had to be. And a very skilled user at that. With her clan's profound demonic origins and expertise backing her, she would have mastered the use of intent-based magic very early on in her life.

He could not understand how Eliza could harbor so much wrath inside her mind. The wrath hidden in her bloodline had given her such an undying will to survive and take revenge.

He could understand how she could perform unbelievable feats like killing a quasi-Saint rank titan right after breaking into the Sage rank. Users of intent-based magic were able to perform feats that exceeded their rank's potential after all.

Plus, he could also conclude that Eliza had at least a single Mark of the Seven Sins powering her attacks. After all, her bloodline made her highly compatible with it. He was also aware that she could be compatible with even more Marks if his luck was any worse than he imagined it to be.

Know thy enemy.

The butcher always wanted to learn more about Eliza before he took on the Lazarus project. He could never underestimate her. However, he felt that his cautious nature would end up being useless if he didn't have any information about her.

There is no point in being cautious about potential fuck-ups if one doesn't have the plan to avoid them or get over them. And to plan, one needs the right amount of information.

The butcher immediately thought of honing his Domain of Wrath to perfection in the coming years as the Lazarus project stayed active.

He had learned a bit about the Sin Series Abilities and his bloodline powers.

The Elder Ichor bloodline gave Eren certain authority over the Sin Series Abilities— the likes of which nobody but Demon Princes could exert. In fact, his authority could even supersede the Demon Princes' under the right conditions. That is if he wanted to.

Eren didn't want to antagonize Satan at this point. But he could always make his Ability more potent than before by understanding it better. By using it more often. On various test subjects.

Furthermore, the butcher was more confident about using the Domain of Wrath than any of his other Abilities against Eliza. That's because he felt more in control of his surroundings when he was inside the Wrath domain.

If he played his card right, the butcher would have an edge over Eliza with his Domain of Wrath. He also saw the need to get all the Sin Series Marks from the Seven-headed serpent statue. wto

Eren thought of many things in his head after receiving information from Nira Nightshade. He was glad he had pestered her about it to this point. And now it was time he ended his charade with her.

'We got all we need. Do it.'

Aleph received Eren's message. In the next moment, she executed what she was supposed to do.

[Chapter 1086 Power To Suffer The Consequences Of Saying No](#)

"I have completed my end of the deal, Eren. Now bring out the Spirit Beast."

Nira Nightshade's eyes shone with unmasked greed as she thought of cultivating a potential God Spark. Plus, this was a God Spark from her native world. It would allow her to make the most of it.

Nira Nightshade didn't understand how Eren got hold of a Spirit Beast. However, she neither wanted to know nor cared about its origins. This was the most appropriate use of the vestige of her soul she had kept in the land of Anfang, she thought.

Eren smiled innocently at Nira Nightshade before speaking.

"First of all, I need to thank you, Sage Nira Nightshade. I don't know how many years it would have taken for me to learn about the lost history if it wasn't for you.

I also need to thank you for providing me with valuable information about that mummy. Frankly, this was more significant to me than learning about lost history."

Eren's smile turned grim after he said this. He narrowed his eyes at an expectant-looking Nira Nightshade before speaking further.

"Unfortunately, I have stopped negotiating with Sages. I now have the power to suffer the consequences of my "no."

As Eren spoke to Nira, she looked puzzled. She wasn't sure what he was talking about at first. But in the next moment, the entire hall started shaking as if someone was destabilizing the castle's foundation.

"You..."

The Sage archer couldn't believe what was happening. She felt like she was witnessing a dream for the first time in a long while as she watched her entire hall shake with intermittent quakes.

She understood that someone was trying to break the array that was located at the base of the castle. The array that hosted and protected the vestige of her soul.

Someone had not only infiltrated her castle and found the array but also had the power to mess with it.

Nira looked at Eren with a horrified expression before voicing her suspicions.

"You... did you sneak in a Sage ranker with you inside the castle somehow?"

Nira Nightshade believed that the array that housed her vestige of the soul could only be found and interfered with by another Sage ranker like her. Therefore, she treated the intruder as a Sage ranker. She immediately activated her soul sense in conjunction with the castle's mechanisms to find out who was messing up the array.

A spectral image of a girl in an elegant dress was rendered on the hall's ceiling. With the help of her grimoire spells, this black-haired Gothic-looking girl eagerly operated the array. A black-haired girl seemed to possess powers close to a C-rank, to Nira Nightshade's disbelief.

Various runic lines danced around this girl as she raised her hands and started modifying them on the fly. Her grimoire was levitating in front of her-its pages turning rapidly under her commands. The runes written on the pages of the grimoire came to life before taking various elemental forms. These runes would then merge with the already existing runes of the array, unlocking it slowly from within.

Nira Nightshade couldn't believe a homunculus, with her synthetic body restricted to C-rank, could do something like that. However, she decided to get over the shock immediately. She felt it was a sign of disrespect that two Expert-ranked entities had dared to act against her. This was utter disrespect for Sage's honor, she thought.

"Insolent brat... do you think you will get away with reneging on the deal? Think again."

Nira spread her soul sense wide in a domineering manner and tried to put pressure on Eren. She also controlled the castle's mechanisms to prevent the homunculus from messing with the array.

Eren felt like he was being attacked with a rain of arrows all of a sudden. And these arrows were piercing every organ in his body. He felt like even his bones were being targeted by these arrows and overloading his pain receptors.

This was the manifestation of Nira Nightshade's soul sense.

Even a vestige of the soul of a Sage could produce such powerful mental pressure on Eren. He felt like his body would really start bleeding if he stayed exposed to such intense soul pressure emitted by the Sage archer.

The butcher used his own soul sense to fight off Night Nightshade's pressure. Thanks to it, he wasn't as helpless as before.

"You... Do you think you are the only one who was holding back? Hahaha."

The butcher managed to laugh even in the difficult position he was in. His body was turning red and he felt like he was burning inside an oven. He had beads of sweat on his forehead and his eyes had turned red. He couldn't move his limbs freely and he felt like somebody was putting huge pressure on his shoulder to make him bend his knees.

However, this exposure wasn't enough to get him down. It almost looked like he was enjoying the misery he was subjected to, as if he were taking some kind of mental pleasure from confronting a Sage.

The butcher's body also reacted to his will. It started accommodating itself to his misery, making it easier for him to remain standing on his two feet. Even his soul sense was improving after clashing with Nira Nightshade. It was using the pressure emitted by Nira as a whetstone to sharpen itself.

Eren looked at Nira fearlessly before speaking in a grim tone.

"I have taken enough shit from you Sage bitches. There's no fucking way I'll agree to whatever any of you say this time. Not anymore.

Kekeke. If you think I'll turn over my Spirit Beast to you after you make me understand its worth, you're deluding yourself. So what if you are a Sage? If you believe rankers' etiquettes are still implemented the same way they used to be back in your days, you are stuck in the past.

Or maybe it is just me who has stopped giving a fuck about it.

Either way, I'd rather get rid of you here than regret losing something so precious later on."

[Chapter 1087 Eren Vs Nira Nightshade P1](#)

"I'd rather get rid of you here than regret losing something so precious later on."

Eren raised his one hand with difficulty and made a "come here" gesture with his index finger after pointing it at Nira. His green eyes shone with determination as he challenged the Sage.

"Come... If I can't even face Sage's husk at this point, I might as well pack my bag and call it quits."

Nira Nightshade was pissed, to say the least. She didn't even take a second to launch her attacks on Eren after she heard his words.

"Aaaaargh!"

Eren cried in pain as he was struck by real arrows this time. Or as real as they could be. They were manifested by Nira Nightshade's soul sense, after all.

A large spectral arrow that looked like a javelin pierced his stomach. The arrow's tip had also pierced the wall behind him, pinning him onto a wall at one end of the hall.

Soon, the arrows that had pierced Eren's front from every angle disappeared into thin air before another batch of arrows pierced him. This time, the impact of the arrows was so strong that the wall behind him was broken into spiderwebs before it caved in.

Eren was wounded not only physically by these arrows. They also tried to affect his soul. The butcher would have been sent into a vegetative state if he didn't have a strong awakened soul to fight off Nira's direct soul intrusion.

Bzzt. Swoosh. Jump.

A shadow coated in lightning jumped away from the caved wall, leaving more rubble behind it. A bloodied and unrecognizable figure of a human male stood a few meters away from an angry-looking Nira.

This bloodied figure had numerous wounds on his body. His lower rib bones were exposed due to severe injuries. A large chunk of muscle was missing from his right shoulder, exposing his clavicle and scapula.

It seemed like this bloodied figure had concentrated on strengthening the defenses of his vital organs. And in doing so, he had to let his other body parts suffer in the one-sided assault of his enemy.

The man also had a mangled face. Still, he managed to show his bloody teeth to the Sage archer, indicating that he was laughing at her. His green eyes shone with brilliance as he eyed his attacker.

Snap.

Instant Reset.

Eren let his Ability and his bloodline powers work in conjunction. And within a few seconds, he was back to normal, with most of his injuries healed. Even his most severe injuries weren't able to prolong their stay in the face of such an accelerated healing process.

"Kekekeke. That's all you got? I thought Sages were some untouchable beings. Come on, attack me for real already."

Eren said while mocking Nira Nightshade. Normally, he wouldn't say something boastful like this. But he recognized the effects they would have on one's opponents. Especially if the opponent was strong and one wanted to not let them gain any mental satisfaction from winning.

The words also acted like some form of self-hypnosis. The butcher was willing to use any physical and psychological tactic in his battle against a Sage.

The first thing Nira Nightshade did after finding out that someone was trying to destroy the array where the vestige of her soul was stored was to get rid of the person. She disappeared from the hall and appeared right where Alephee was.

However, Nira soon found out that she had greatly underestimated the grimoire-using homunculus. Alephee had rewritten the rights of the defense mechanism used to protect the array long before she even started interfering with the main array.

Therefore, Alephee was able to use the Sage-level defense mechanism against the husk of the soul the array was supposed to protect in the first place. Meaning the Sage ranker couldn't touch Alephee until the latter was done with whatever she was doing.

Nira immediately understood that Alephee was not someone she could take lightly. She even doubted that the land of Anfang could produce someone like her in the first place. However, this was not the time to admire the enemy's work. So Nira got back to where Eren was, trying to force him to stop doing what he wanted Alephee to do.

The fight between Eren and Nira's vestige of soul had been going on for a few minutes by this point.

Eren tried attacking Nira with various elemental spells. He also tried attacking with his weapons. However, Nira Nightshade did not have a physical body, to begin with. Even if she did, Eren's C-rank spells would not have done any real damage to her anyway.

Thankfully, Eren's ranking status wasn't suppressed inside Nira Nightshade's castle as it was a special zone inside the Sansara World. But that didn't really help the butcher either. All it did was make him a long-lasting punching bag.

Eren was basically forced to receive a one-sided beating from Nira Nightshade. She would have killed him at this point. However, the butcher had Instant Reset to rely on. He kept healing himself from even the most fatal of injuries, denying Nira the satisfaction of killing him in the goriest way possible.

This was Eren's 7th time healing himself from near-death injuries. Alephee was working as fast as she could to destroy the array and the vestige of the soul it was housing. So all he had to do was survive against a Sage who was thoroughly pissed at him for playing her like a fiddle.

"You.... How the fuck can you heal like this? You have preposterous Abilities.

But your constitution... And then there's that homunculus.

Who... who the fuck are you?"

Nira Nightshade couldn't believe what she was looking at. She had to say that the C-rank specimen in front of her was like an undying cockroach.

She couldn't use her go-to elemental spells because she didn't have a physical body. But her soul sense attacks alone were enough to take care of an Expert ranker like Eren. At least that's what she thought.

However, Eren's existence had shaken her.

[Chapter 1088 Eren Vs Nira Nightshade P2](#)

'Unbelievable. Do these powers really belong to a mere C-ranker?'

Nira Nightshade started doubting if there was a fundamental difference between the Expert rankers that she knew of versus the Expert rankers of the current generation. Eren had broken the conventional mold with his survivability alone.

Eren healed himself completely except for his torn clothes. He ran his fingers through his hair before rotating his neck. He stretched his limbs, made some bone-cracking sounds, and jumped on the spot a few times to check his well-being.

'I feel.... Hungry.'

Eren slapped his now-healed tummy a few times as it was making rumbling noises. His bloodline powers were at their peak, shooting his metabolism to insane levels because of constant cellular destruction and construction.

He felt like he could kill for some meat.

The butcher felt liberated. Not because he enjoyed the fact that he was being beaten up. But because he had faced his fear of standing up to a Sage ranker.

He felt like he had overcome a huge mental block at this point. The fact that he was facing the vestige of a Sage did nothing to stop him from feeling a sense of accomplishment.

"Who am I?"

Eren looked at Nira Nightshade and smiled. This wasn't the first time he had been asked the question. And he had a feeling it wouldn't be the last.

"Hehe. I am whatever I need to be."

Eren clenched his hands and turned them into fists before raising them in front of him.

"You know... this is the first time I've seen soul sense getting used like this. So these are what they call soul spells, huh?"

You don't have a mortal shell and no mana core. And yet, you can use magic without using mana. Witnessing things like these makes me realize I still have a lot to learn and a lot to see. A lot to comprehend.

I'll have to thank you once again for broadening my horizons, Sage Nira."

Eren said and bowed a bit in front of the night elf. When he straightened himself up, he had a genuine smile on his face.

"I am getting a few ideas from watching you use your soul sense. Let me try some of them on you."

Blink.

As Eren said, he disappeared from the scene. Sage Nira seemed unfazed by the butcher's moves. He could not hurt her using his traditional spells. And he did not have the power to harm her using his soul sense.

At least that's what she thought.

Eren appeared right in front of Sage's apparition and let his punch fly. The latter thought that his physical attacks were just going to go through her non-materialistic image and hit empty air. However, she soon realized that the butcher had imbued his fists with his soul sense.

Eren had decided to use soul sense in conjunction with the Fist Arts he had learned from Ken.

It was difficult for Eren to use his weapons while imbuing them with his soul sense. The major reason for this was that they were not spiritual weapons. His soul sense would seep through the weapons' composition, not allowing him to enhance his physical attacks in any way.

The other reason was that he had not seen anyone use soul-based spells other than Alephee. So he was missing a reference point.

Of course, Eren's inexperience in using his newly awakened soul sense also had its hand to play in his fumbles. He had to say that Alephee was right in saying that it was too early for him to employ his soul sense in his attacks and defense.

However, taking a beating from Nira Nightshade and getting exposed to her soul sense taught him many things at once. He could analyze her attacks with his soul sense, receiving feedback for every move she made against him. The chronic planner in him took all those observations and deductions into account before finding a way to proceed.

His limbs– his fists– were different from any elemental spells or weapons.

They were a physical extension of his existence. As such, they were a far better carrier of his sense of self than anything else for the current him. All he had to do was find a way to coat his fists with the ethereal form of energy his soul sense was made of. Then he could use his Fist Arts he had borrowed from Ken to hurt the Sage's apparition.

Swoosh. Zoom. Connect.

Eren's fist connected with Nira's apparition for the first time instead of moving through it. He stopped after hitting Nira's stomach. That's because the attacker and his target both were caught off guard by this phenomenon.

They both couldn't believe that the most rudimentary form of soul sense use had worked against Sage's apparition.

Life is simple unless one finds a way to make it complicated. The same was true for the soul sense as well.

Spiritual attacks.

These were the types of attacks one could use with their soul sense. The act of imbuing one's limbs or weapons with soul sense could be considered a spiritual attack. Soul spells and mental attacks performed with soul sense also fall into this category.

Eren remembered Har Jahar appreciating him for his soul sense when he had used it against a monster during the monster festival. At that time, he had only overwhelmed his opponent's consciousness by spreading his soul sense around. However, to the Monster King, it was a big deal. He had said that Eren could be made god's emissary with just this qualification alone.

Eren didn't understand at that time what spiritual attacks were and how they worked at that time. But an altercation with the Sage had taught him many things at once.

Spiritual attacks rely on a different form of energy than mana. They employed spiritual energy that was found in one's soul space. To use spiritual attacks, one needed to establish a connection with soul space.

[Chapter 1089 \[Bonus \] “No Brownie Points For Acting Tough”](#)

Eren had been using his soul sense amateurishly.

What he had been doing before this point was to use spiritual energy in its most basic form— to analyze the world around him in a deeper way. Or to overwhelm his opponents. As such, he hardly made use of his spiritual energy at all.

This was the first time Eren actively sought connection with his soul space. As a result, he finally found a way to employ his spiritual energy in his attacks.

Eren's fists were coated in spiritual energy when he attacked Nira Nightshade. And the attack finally managed to hit the apparition that was the Sage archer.

In the current state of his spiritual energy mastery, Eren could not use the spiritual energy in his elemental spells. But Ken's Fist Arts gave him a way to attack the Sage archer.

After getting over the initial shock, Eren started attacking Nira Nightshade with all he had. He didn't care about his spiritual energy expenditure at all. He just wanted to embrace the feeling of using spiritual energy so that he could make a habit of using it.

Snap.

Eren used his ability again. But he could not heal all of his injuries this time. Instant Reset had hit its limit. What's more? He felt extremely exhausted mentally. As if he hadn't slept for months on end. The over-expenditure of spiritual energy had its drawbacks after all. He was struggling to keep his eyes open and not sleep where he stood.

Nira Nightshade's apparition had gotten blurred so much that her image became translucent. Eren's spiritual attacks paired with Ken's Fist Arts had worked. Plus, Alephee was done with her job too, hurting Nira even more.

"How... how did you lie so fluently to me?"

Nira Nightshade asked with a weak voice that wasn't devoid of her pride as a Sage ranker. She had accepted the fact that she had been defeated at this point. The butcher smiled lightly before answering her.

"Hehe. It's simple. There's a part of me that believed my own lies until I didn't have to."

Blink.

When Eren punched Nira Nightshade's apparition this time, it shattered like a mirror before exploding into a million pieces. Only then did he allow himself to fall to the ground flat on his stomach.

The butcher had a smile on his face as he embraced a well-deserved nap inside Sage's castle.

"Eren..."

Eren heard somebody call his name from a distance. He felt like his consciousness was drifting into an endless void without a sense of direction. The voice that was calling out to him was like a harness that was trying to pull him back.

His eyes opened slowly, only to reveal the blurry figure of a young woman wearing a black dress. She looked at him with a concerned look on her face.

"I told you you were not ready to use spiritual attacks. You would have been dead meat if it wasn't for this safe place."

Alphee's admonishing voice was heard by Eren. However, her reality check failed to wake him up. He was still drunk in his slumber.

"I broke the array but we don't have much time. You need to wake up if you want to claim Nira's legacy for yourself."

These words from Alphee finally did the trick. The urgency forced Eren to awaken from his slumber.

He had swindled a Sage to get information from her. He had destroyed her vestige of the soul to prevent any leak of information about his Spirit Beast. There was no way he would let the rewards of his efforts go to waste after suffering so much.

Eren sat straight and looked around. He was still in a bit of a daze and everything looked blurred to him. He still felt extremely exhausted and he had a killer headache.

It took a while before his vision started returning to normal.

"Let's... let's go and.... woah.... !"

Eren was about to get up from his position using Alphee's hand that was offered to him as support. However, he was shocked by seeing Alphee's current condition, which was horrible, to say the least.

"Fuck... what happened to you?"

Eren channeled his C-rank mana throughout his body and found the strength in him to get up. He immediately got closer to Alphee before taking her in his embrace.

Alphee's flesh was melting.

She was trying to keep the flesh from completely liquefying using her time-element spell. It restored major parts of her body, enabling her to walk and function as normally as she could. However, it was obvious that she was in even more of a pinch than Eren.

"It's... it's nothing. Just some consequences of operating on the Sage-rank array."

Alphee tried to sound as normal as she could. But Eren could tell she was struggling as well. And the struggle was not just physical. She had also used a lot of her spiritual energy to interfere with Nira's array mechanism. He wouldn't have been able to eliminate Nira's apparition if it wasn't for Alphee's contribution.

Eren smiled mirthlessly before speaking to her.

"No brownie points for acting tough.

How much time will it take for you to recover?"

Alephee chuckled while being supported by Eren's embrace. She rested her head on his chest and replied.

"Not sure. Maybe a few weeks. Anyhow, I don't see a complete recovery before the event ends.

So I suggest you don't mess with the other three Sages."

Eren chuckled before caressing the back of her head.

"No promises. But I'll try.

Rest now. I'll handle everything here."

Alephee nodded before disappearing into the pendant's abode. She had used a lot of the trump cards she had been collecting to break the Sage array. The homunculus had gone above and beyond in executing Eren's plan. She needed to recuperate after doing what was considered impossible even by Nira Nightshade.

After Alephee disappeared from the scene, Eren shook his head vigorously to get rid of any mental and physical fatigue he was feeling. He regretted the fact that he couldn't use his expensive potions to fix himself instantly due to Sansara World's restrictions.

Despite this, he soon found great motivation, which made him forget about his mental and physical fatigue. He had to say that Alephee had done her job well. She had summoned every precious item Nira Nightshade had stored inside the castle into the hall.

A Sage ranker's legacy was waiting for him to claim it.

[Chapter 1090 Nira Nightshade's Legacy](#)

A mini mountain of Extols.

A variety of spell scrolls and runic stela created by Nira Nightshade.

Precious ores and mana-conductive metal nuggets could be used to craft specialized artifacts. Archer and ranger-specific gear.

Various herbs, ranked items, and other ranking resources could be used in a variety of applications.

And finally, a disk levitating motionlessly in the middle of all these things.

This was what Alephee had managed to take out of the castle's defenses before she hit her limit. Eren saw these items as the Sage archer's legacy, which he had wrestled away from her grasp forcefully.

Eren had to say that Nira Nightshade was relatively easy to handle despite being a demonic ranker. Or it was just that his expectations of Sages were skewed because he met with Eliza.

The night elf had given him valuable information. And he was also able to claim the rewards she was supposed to give him after their deal was completed.

Nira was easy to handle. And what she had said to Eren also made sense to him to some extent. After all, it was true that he was far away from cultivating a Spirit Beast into a God Spark. And the risk of getting spotted by other Sages like her was also there.

This was a huge risk with no immediate reward.

Eren wouldn't have given her the Spirit Beast under any conditions. Nira Nightshade had come to realize that eventually. She couldn't kill him no matter how much she tried. And it was becoming apparent to her mid-battle that the vestige of soul she had left in the land of Anfang was at risk of getting destroyed by Eren.

Therefore, Nira tried to strike a different set of deals with him towards the end. Ones that didn't involve the exchange of the Spirit Beast.

Eren could understand the other side of the coin as well. Technically, it would have been better for him to get Nira Nightshade's legacy in exchange for the Spirit Beast which he had no immediate use for. He wouldn't have to put his and Alephee's lives on the line had he gone with her deal.

What's more? Eren knew that even though he had prevented the information leak, Nira would at least be able to tell who destroyed the vestige of her soul on the land of Anfang no matter where she was at the time.

Eren wasn't sure if the real Nira Nightshade could be called a Sage with her current rank. From the looks of things, she had progressed beyond the Sage rank.

Meaning the butcher had created a powerful enemy out of the elf archer with this move. He was at risk of encountering her after he left the land of Anfang behind him.

However, it was not always about avoiding trouble or prioritizing usable resources. Some conflicts were necessary to get into, just to get peace of mind at the end of them.

This duel with Nira was helpful to Eren in many ways. First, he overcame a mental block that Sages were not to be messed with. Secondly, he kept Nira Nightshade from finding out that he had a Spirit Beast.

The fact that he was able to learn how to use spiritual attack was an unexpected gain he hadn't planned from the beginning.

The butcher had many thoughts swirling inside his mind as he looked at Nira's Legacy all around him. He was a bit overwhelmed by what he was seeing at this point.

He was least impressed by the mountain of Extols. He could always get his hands on money, thanks to his city.

However, the ranking resources that Nira got were priceless. They were not something he would necessarily be able to buy no matter how much money he had.

The butcher started walking through his loot and checked a few items. He had a light smile on his face as he brushed his hands over them, just to get a feel.

"Keke. All of this and I get a powerful enemy in the future as a punishment."

Eren chuckled before shrugging his shoulders.

"Meh! Still worth it. It's not like I don't have powerful enemies to begin with. One more added to the list isn't going to make a difference."

Eren stopped in his tracks and took out his Sativa Stick. His entire body was hurting. And he felt mentally exhausted. He could really use the effects of smoke to get some respite.

The butcher could use the temporary Perks he had bought using Karma points to alleviate his condition. But he had to leave Sage's castle to activate them.

"I need to make use of this before I go out."

Eren walked towards the levitating array disk. He observed it for a few moments and confirmed that it was what he was looking for most in Sage's Legacy.

Eren released puffs of smoke while looking at the array disk. Only after finishing the Sativa Stick did he raise his hands to grab onto it.

"Time to add another class."

Eren said to himself before flashing a smile. The array disk in his hand was an expandable array a ranker could use to reforge their mana circuits. The layout of the reforged mana circuits would be based on Nira Nightshade's actual mana circuits.

This was what it truly meant by Sages passing down their legacies.

Participants were required to claim the rewards for their entire team before offering the array disks to their compatible members. Meaning Eren was supposed to share the rewards he had obtained from Nira with his team.

Ideally, he should have offered the array disk to Renita who was the ranger in their group. She was seen as the most suitable candidate because of her class.

The array disk would have reforged Renita's mana circuits if she had had the chance to use it. It would have fine-tuned her as a ranger and archer.

The array disk was not supposed to be used by members with incompatible classes as doing so would only fry their mana circuits. Eren was the only exception to this rule.