

Vile 1091

[Chapter 1091 + Ranger Class](#)

Eren was ready to offer his team most of the other resources he had obtained from Nira's legacy. The ones he had no use for.

He was also willing to give Renita Nira Nightshade's transcendent-grade bow. After all, with Alephee around, he didn't have any problem upgrading his weapons at all.

However, he was intending to use the array disk himself.

His bloodline and constitution allowed him to gain multiple classes. He would be foolish not to add them to his repertoire.

Eren was seen standing inside an array.

The array was expanded around him as soon as he sent his mana sense into it and imbued it with his mana. In the next moment, a peculiar mana pulse was released in the surroundings before the array started operating by itself.

Eren had already used his white-haired transformation. His tribal tattoos exuded a faint light. It was as if they were responding to the changes happening around him.

'*Sigh. It's going to hurt like a bitch again.'

Eren thought to himself before pressing his lips against each other. He then sat cross-legged in the center of the array which was considered the array eye. He closed his eyes and clenched his hands in anticipation of what was coming for him.

The last time Eren received a summoner class, it had given him mind-numbing pain. After all, even with his unique constitution, he was transitioning to being a summoner from being a close combat expert. So he had to face the repercussions of introducing major changes to his mana circuits.

Eren had been through a severe form of mana control training under Alephee's guidance. As a result, his tolerance threshold was much higher than a regular ranker's. Still, he was unable to ignore the feelings of suffering completely.

'Fuccccccck!'

Eren cursed in his head as his mana circuits started getting reforged inside the array. The array started destroying his mana points and mana pathways, forcing him to experience extreme forms of pain.

Eren started sweating all over his body. The skin over his exposed torso and limbs started to rupture, and he turned into a bloody mess all over again. The only reason he didn't scream like a madman was that he had sealed his lips using a simple rune.

Eren's constitution started adapting to the ongoing changes in real time. His body started healing his injuries and forming new pathways and mana points, which were more complex than before. They were also more malleable than before.

A pool of blood was created around the butcher. He still had his eyes closed. His expressions were distressed, indicating that he was suffering from some form of torture. However, one could also see a tinge of excitement hidden in his expression. The excitement of getting a new class.

Eren lost track of time in the process. When he finally opened his eyes, he felt like he was in a completely different body.

"Hmm? There are indeed visible changes."

Lightning struck and Eren stood up. However, he felt like he was faster than before. The fluency of his movement spells had increased.

"Let's see."

Eren started analyzing himself as he stretched his limbs. He started disappearing from one place only to appear in the other corner of the hall.

"I am naturally leaner and taller in this form. My agility has increased. And I can see more clearly than before. My mana sense is also sensitive to long-range activities.

My mana circuits feel different as well."

Eren started using Ken's Fist Arts to gauge his strength and found out that it had deteriorated. He also felt that he would have trouble executing his close combat moves with his changed physique and altered mana circuits.

The summoner class Eren was using before this hadn't introduced many visible changes to his looks. But that was because the summoner class didn't focus on a ranker's physicality at all. It focused on enabling the ranker to summon better creatures who would fight the summoner's battle.

However, the ranger class was different.

Changing into the ranger class meant that Eren had to focus on executing his long-range attacks all by himself. He didn't have the ferocity of a close combat expert at his disposal. So he needed to maintain a safe distance from his opponents.

On the other hand, Eren would be able to target multiple targets simultaneously using long-range attacks in conjunction with the ranger class. He would be able to take care of his enemies without having to face a frontal clash. That is if he used his cards correctly.

"Hm. I have various battle styles at my disposal right now. But none of them would allow me to make full use of this new class.

I need a comprehensive set of spells, weapons, and moves to get the best out of this class."

Afterward, Eren spent a few minutes moving around in the hall. He felt like the more powerful he became, the more fields of study were opening up to him.

Eren had devoured the experiences of a few rangers by this point. So the transition to the Ranger class wouldn't be too difficult for him anyway. He just needed to fine-tune those experiences to make them fit his needs.

The butcher was glad for his bloodline at this point. The fact that he could accommodate multiple classes was not the only reason. But he was also glad the fact that he did not have any conflicts with any element he chose. As a result, no matter which class he unlocked for himself, he would be able to use a variety of spells to bring more variation to his battle styles.

Eren felt excited about the work that he was supposed to put into honing the new class. He clenched his fists before speaking to himself.

"I am the least prepared to use the ranger class to its fullest potential today. So it will be tough to get used to it. Still, I have a feeling all my efforts will be worth it.

Keke. One down. Three more classes to claim."

[Chapter 1092 Lufthansa](#)

"Haash. Finally absolved of all involvement."

Eren said after he was done cleaning his most recent crime scene. He knew the kingdom of Edinburgh would try to find the culprit who had eradicated the vestige of Sage Nira's soul.

Thankfully, he had the infiltrators of Layos to blame things on. The first thing he did was get rid of his presence as much as he could. Then he decorated the crime scene with fake evidence, scattering the mangled body pieces of elf infiltrators all around inside the hall.

Of course, Eren didn't have to erase his presence from the scene completely-- just make it much less apparent than it was. After all, he was one of the participants in the Sansara array who had entered the Sage's Castle to claim Nira's legacy. So it was fine for his presence to be registered here like the rest of the participants who had appeared here with him before Nira sent them on a wild goose chase.

Eren took a long breath after he was done processing the scene. Sighing, he looked around to admire another of his handiwork. The butcher just wished that the next world he visited wouldn't make him suffer from petty troubles like these.

The butcher turned into his original form before changing into a new set of clothes.

He faced some difficulties while doing class shifts. But they weren't enough to phase him anymore. He knew that it would only get easier to change into Ranger class with time as his unique constitution would eventually get used to it.

"Time to leave this place for good."

He glanced around him for the last time before walking towards a spatial tunnel that had been kept open for his exit.

Day 23: Sage Youffie Loxley's Den.

A giant underground space with cave-like entrances and exits. There was just enough light for the contestants to see their own hands. Even their mana senses were compromised.

This was a labyrinth-like place that was difficult to navigate using one's senses or logic. The air inside the den was putrid and sulfurous in nature. Standing motionless, one could feel a subtle sense of danger emanating everywhere around them.

There were a few artificial sources of light present in the surroundings. But for some reason, they only added a touch of mystique to the place instead of illuminating it for better visibility.

The participants who wanted to claim Sage Luftahansa's Legacy had been summoned to this mysterious den. This was the last week of the graduation ceremony. And at this point, a significant number of teams had dropped out of the event.

The rankers were not happy with how Sage Nira's Legacy test turned out to be. Some of the most prominent teams had sent their capable members to attend Sage Nira's test. However, the night elf forced them to fight each other before eventually kicking everybody out.

It seemed that there was some sort of problem with the whole test. That's because the castle remained unresponsive to even the moderators' request to enter it after they requested permission from Sage Nira.

The participants didn't have much time to dwell on Sage Nira's test results after Sage Luftahansa's test site became visible on their maps. The teams prioritized getting rewards from the new test site instead of crying over spilled milk.

The moderators who were truly working for the kingdom of Edinburgh also had their hands full identifying and neutralizing the infiltrators while the event was active. So they decided that they would check out Sage Nira's castle later on and focus on their current predicament.

The White Raven Crew also decided to focus on Sage Luftahansa's Legacy. However, its crew members were the only lucky ones who had received significant rewards from Sage Nira's test.

Usually, the teams would change the participants they wanted to send to the test site depending on the kind of test they thought was going to be at the targeted location.

For Sage Luftahansa's test, teams sent their assassins and close combat experts. That's because they thought that only such rankers could perform better on the test given by Sage Luftahansa who was an assassin.

Eren decided to enter the second test site as well. But that was not because he was a close combat expert. The butcher had already made it clear to his team that only he would enter the test sites created by the founder Dukes of Edinburgh, who wanted to pass down their legacies.

"What are we supposed to do here?"

"Should we take those paths and see where they lead us?"

"That's an excellent idea. Why don't you go ahead and check one of the caves out for all of us?"

"Haah! I'm not doing this alone. If I do it, we all do it. And we do it together. That's the deal. I'm not going to serve as an example of what not to do in Sage Luftahansa's test."

"Why talk big if you don't have the balls to follow up on your own ideas?"

"What did you say? Listen here you mo..."

Eren listened to some of the boisterous participants verbally assault each other with carefree expressions. He neither needed nor wanted to intervene among them.

Plus, the butcher liked watching other rankers fight each other. Especially if a group of participants was targeting a select few. It was a fun activity for him-- like watching a roadshow.

The last time he had this much fun watching an entertaining show was when he saw Ken getting beaten up by Lensa's clansmen for something he did.

'Haah! Those were the good times.'

Eren thought like an old man as he watched the young participants almost brawl with each other just for the silly remarks they had said against each other. He also wished Ken was alive so he could cause trouble for the guy once again.

"Looks like you guys are excited to experience death."

A deep male voice of unknown origin suddenly reverberated in the den. The person speaking seemed to be present at multiple locations at the same time. That's because the voice seemed to be coming from multiple directions.

An assassin's presence could not be felt. There was no bloodlust, no mana signature, and no threat in the person's voice. Still, the participants subconsciously felt that they were in a life-threatening situation just by hearing this voice.

[Chapter 1093 Find Or Die](#)

Sage Lufthansa's words stopped the verbal brawl between participants.

"The test is simple.

You have to find me. The one who finds the real me first wins my legacy. Easy isn't it?"

Participants stared at each other when they heard how Sage Lufthansa wanted to conduct a test. They all couldn't help having light smiles on their faces when they realized how simple it was.

"So we... Sage Lufthansa... we are supposed to take random paths for ourselves and find you, right? But..."

One of the participants gathered the courage to speak.

"Pardon me if I didn't understand this clearly. But would it be fair to all of us if we did that? These caves... What if some of them happen to be dead ends? Should we be punished for having bad luck by selecting the wrong choice?"

'Logical question. But he shouldn't have asked this here.'

Eren thought in his head as he heard a participant standing not too far away from him raise his question. He appreciated the guy's efforts. But he would never put himself in his crosshairs just to satiate his curiosity.

From Eren's experiences so far, Sages were eccentric creatures. Not necessarily because they wanted to or made conscious efforts in that direction. But their individualities would not only power their spells but also their actions.

These individualities would make them highly vindictive or extremely honest. The Sages wouldn't be able to change who they were even if they wanted to after these individualities had become a part of their ranking path.

The high-ranking entities would find out that their individualities had been compromised if they started behaving opposite to them. This lack of synchronicity between individuality and act might also pose a bottleneck since these individualities were correlated with their ranking paths.

Of course, there are always exceptions. And individuality was just a vague concept that became tangible only for high-ranking entities. And as such, there were a myriad of individualities as well as ways to cultivate them.

A Sage's individuality would mold their behavior in an in-depth manner, making them see things in a different light than normal people. This was also the reason the S-rankers were called Sages. Their views about the world started to differ from their old mindsets.

Eren would never willingly serve as a litmus test to gauge Sage's individuality. Especially someone like Sage Lufthansa who was an assassin. Thankfully, there were some rankers present around him who happily took on that role.

Surprisingly, Yuffie Loxley didn't get angry at a participant who expressed doubts about his test to the point of calling it unfair. He chuckled before responding.

"Who said caves had dead ends?"

They all lead somewhere, don't they?"

It's up to you to figure out where you want to go. In theory, you can find me no matter which path you choose for yourself.

Of course, there are easier paths that you can use to find me without suffering much. Then there are difficult paths that will become headaches for you.

However, easy paths wouldn't necessarily mean that you would come across me. And difficult paths don't raise your chances of finding me. The paths you choose can only make your journey easier or more challenging. But they all have the same destination. It all depends on how far you are willing to go to find me and claim my legacy.

So you can say that the test is fair by making it potentially unfair for all of you.

Are we on the same page in this matter? Or do any of you want to question the fairness of the test I created for you one more time?"

Eren narrowed his eyes when he heard Sage's explanation. It looked like two or more participants could take the same path. However, their difficulties would increase according to the number of participants entering one of the caves.

So everyone came to a tacit understanding that each participant would select a single cave entrance to enter and see where it leads. No two people could trust each other after all. It was better to try their luck alone. They were relieved by the fact that they did not have to fight each other.

Yuffie didn't take much time explaining the rules of the game. The rankers were immediately forced to act as a result of his voice disappearing.

The one who had raised a question for the first time chose a cave entrance for himself and entered. A bunch of other participants started entering the cave entrances one by one.

The butcher chose to wait after selecting his cave entrance. He decided to pay attention to the results of other participants as well.

"Aaaaaargh!"

"Wh..."

"Somebody is trying to sneak...."

"Aaaaaaaah! Hel..."

Eren had a stoic expression as he heard the screams of participants who had entered the cave entrances that looked like the face of a beehive. He had a feeling that someone like a Sage assassin wouldn't give the rankers a full picture of the test. At least not right away.

Eren also realized that the participants who had asked about the fairness of the test were the first to scream before his presence completely vanished from the scene. It seemed that Sage Yuffie had subtly silenced his critique by cranking up the unfairness for him specifically. Just like an assassin should-- without making a fuss about it.

A chuckle was heard before Sage Lufthansa spoke again.

"And oh yes... did I tell you that you'd have to face assassination while you are trying to find me? My shadows are personally executing this assassination. So you'd be dealing with nerfed versions of me.

Of course, you'd be sent to the Life and Death Altar after you die here. And if you can clear that, you'd have to start looking for me all over again. By selecting a different cave entrance.

I can tell you that each one of you is going to die at least once in this test.

This test is not really about finding me. It's about your mental fortitude.

How many of you have the guts to come back and keep on dying until you can find me? Hehe... I guess we'll soon find that out."

[Chapter 1094 Life And Death Altar](#)

'Mental fortitude, my ass.

Who the fuck is this guy kidding? He just wants to have fun one-shotting the participants.

Damn it. That night elf was much better to deal with than this two-faced bastard.'

Eren scoffed in his head when he heard how Sage Loxley wanted to conduct his test. If Alephee wasn't focusing on recuperating herself, she would have commented that Eren just didn't like interacting with people like him.

The butcher wasn't as handicapped as most of his competitors because he had his soul sense. He could feel Sage's presence all around him. It was just that it was difficult to find the real deal in them.

Eren could feel that Sage Loxley just loved his job as an assassin too much.

Furthermore, since he spent so much time inside, the soul that remained was bored. The graduation event served as an excellent opportunity for him to entertain himself. That too, doing what he always liked doing— assassination.

The participants knew that the test Sage Loxley was conducting was going to be unfair to them. No matter how nerfed he told them the assassination attempts carried out by him were going to be, the participants couldn't possibly defend themselves for long against a Sage. That too on his own turf— a place suitable for assassinations.

Yet, nobody tried to object anymore. They observed what had happened to the participants who had questioned Sage's method. They didn't want to make the same mistake and make their task twice as difficult as it already was.

Sage Loxley didn't have an awakened soul sense like Sage Nira Nightshade. However, his soul had been strengthened by the Sage rank breakthrough. The Sage's soul could interact with the world around him on a subconscious level. As a result, Eren couldn't use his soul sense on the assassin to pinpoint his location anyway.

The participants that were waiting outside the hive of cave entrances looked at each other before making up their minds. All of them were veteran rankers at this point. They knew what to do.

Eren watched as the participants around him started entering the caves they had chosen for themselves. He sighed before walking towards one of the entrances.

Eren found himself inside a large underground space after moving cautiously inside the cave for a couple of miles. He found that there was an underground river flowing at a distance from where he stood.

The sound of flowing water could be heard in the distance. Plus, the ground was riddled with various small and big puddles.

Eren found it troubling that no attack had been initiated by Sage Loxley even though it had been quite a while since he had entered the cave entrance. He remained vigilant all the time. His senses were working overtime. But they too had their limits.

A game of patience was necessary for the assassination. The timing of the attack was as critical as its lethality. And the most appropriate time to attempt an assassination was when the potential victims exhausted themselves anticipating an attack.

Perhaps this was the reason Sage Loxley declared that he was planning to assassinate the participants through his shadows. It wasn't to give the participants an advantage. It was to make them mentally fatigued from the moment they entered the test grounds.

It was either that or Sage Loxley was simply sadistic, bullying the younger generation and making them give up on obtaining his legacy. After all, the difference between him and the participants was just too big despite any nerfing conditions he had placed on himself. The guy's weapon mastery alone would allow him to kill almost all the participants effortlessly.

Eren reckoned that the Sage could launch his attacks on the participants anytime he wanted and still be able to land a lethal hit on them. There was no need for him to worry about timing. He just liked seeing the participants get frustrated.

Eren knew the psychological nuances behind the assassinations just fine. However, it didn't make him immune to their effects. Plus, the chronic planner in him actually made things worse by trying to anticipate every subtle clue that wasn't really a clue.

And just when Eren tried to relieve his stress by downshifting his mental gear, it happened. He had his heart pierced by an anelace— a long dagger manifested into existence by water-element mana.

The butcher didn't know what had hit him. He experienced the same level of surprise most of his victims had experienced before their dying breaths. Fortunately, there were no participants around him. So there was plenty of time for the defense mechanism to kick in, allowing him to "die" relatively peacefully.

When Eren opened his eyes, he knew that he was being judged by the Life And Death Altar. That's because a familiar scene unfolded in front of him, which had once become the source of his sleepless nights.

For the first time in a long while, Eren found himself back in his nightmare world. The kind of recurring nightmare he was used to seeing when he had just gotten out of Purgatory.

The wraiths surrounded him. They made teeth-grinding and bone-cracking noises while walking toward him slowly but surely. They had various weapons in their hands and were as strong as him— all of them.

The dragonkin beasts were his second line of opponents. They eyed him as if he was a delicacy they had all been waiting for. They spewed green flames from their mouths from time to time, attesting to the fact that they had harnessed the power of Enderflames.

Standing amid all these entities was a young woman in battle armor.

Her green eyes sparkled with a peculiar brilliance as she looked Eren in the eyes. She was beautiful yet dangerous. She looked peaceful and yet had chaos running through her veins. She had a light smile on her face— a smile that could bewitch anybody that saw it.

This woman had her arms folded under her bosom. Her aloof and domineering presence alone was enough to frighten her opponents. As if calm before the storm, she stood proudly.

Eren had goosebumps on his skin when he looked at this woman. However, that didn't stop him from having a slight smile on his face. He felt that his fear couldn't shackle him any longer even when he found himself in his nightmare.

"Long time no see, Eliza."

[Chapter 1095 Nightmare Domain](#)

Eren knew that Eliza wouldn't be able to reply to him.

Just like the nightmares he used to see in the past, the Eliza he saw was not real. She was just a figment of his imagination generated by the Life Death Altar using his own memories.

Within the special place created by the Life and Death Altar, Eren did not have a physical body. Only his consciousness had been pulled into the nightmare world. His real body was recuperating inside an isolated healing array, tending to his fatal injury.

Eren could see a grand domain being created around him and his opponents. This was the Nightmare Domain.

Eren was provided with information about the Life and Death Altar the moment he opened his eyes here. He needed to survive inside the Nightmare world for seven days straight to qualify for revival.

The butcher didn't have a physical body inside the nightmare world. So technically, he couldn't die no matter what his opponents did to him. But he could feel pain and other shades of emotion just like in the real world. It also meant that he would have to face a constant barrage of attacks from his opponents and bear the suffering that comes with it.

This was an open battlefield with no space to hide for defense or launch gorilla attacks from. Eren had to face his opponents head-on— all of them— all at once. A perfect way to make any normal participant see the much-needed respite in quitting.

The area outside the domain was foggy and difficult to see through. It seemed that the Life And Death Altar didn't bother rendering the rest of Eren's nightmares.

Eren could opt out of being judged by the Life and Death Altar anytime he wanted. He just needed to step out of the Nightmare Domain and his miseries would end. However, it also meant that he had forfeited his claim to be in the Sansara World.

Eren's body would be regenerated even after stepping out of the Nightmare Domain. However, he would be sent outside the Sansara World, making him give up on Sage Loxley's test by default. He also wouldn't be able to participate in the tests that would be conducted by the remaining two Grand Dukes of the kingdom.

"Seven days, huh? Yeah. I can do that."

Eren said to himself and smiled despite feeling nervous about the whole thing. He wasn't scared of his nightmare anymore. At least not enough to stop him from moving.

However, there was a nagging in his brain that told him to run away from this fight. His instincts told him that his efforts would be futile. And he couldn't shut those instincts up in his head.

There were no Sansara Perks inside the Life and Death Altar. However, participants could use their own imaginations to craft support items for themselves. Of course, this allowance had its limits.

Eren closed his eyes and pictured two Shamshirs in his head. He held the swords he knew well enough at this point- the Rigour Mortis Set. He swung them around him and charged them with his imaginary mana to get a feel. He found that the laws inside the Nightmare Domain were mostly the same as in the real world.

It meant that he could use his attacks and spells inside the Nightmare Domain. He could choose to fight as a Novice, Ace, Adept, or Expert and his opponents would match his rank.

Even though he couldn't die inside the Nightmare Domain, he could feel the same level of exhaustion as in real life. He could also run out of mana, preventing him from casting spells. In such a case, he would become a live and harmless target for imaginary opponents.

The Life and Death Altar would send his body back to Sage Loxley's test after Eren completed seven days inside the Nightmare Domain. And he would find that only a few seconds had passed outside. It meant that as long as the participants cleared the Life and Death Altar conditions, there was practically no time loss.

There was a catch to using the Nightmare Domain as a safe zone. The time required for one to spend inside the Life and Death Altar would only increase if and when their consciousness was brought there for the second time. Participants would only see an exponential increase in the required time to be spent inside the Nightmare Domain if they kept on dying in the Sansara World.

The default period of seven days was already too long for most participants. They couldn't live in their nightmares for more than a few hours. As a result, most of them who forced themselves to stay inside the Nightmare Domain eventually became insane when they got out of it.

This was the warning Hansen had given to all the participants at the beginning. The Sansara World's true dreadfulness lay in how difficult it was for the participants to clear the Life and Death Altar and make a comeback.

Those who were judged by the Life and Death Altar and succeeded in clearing its conditions would have no problem gaining the exceptional rewards and glory the Sansara World had to offer. And those who didn't know about their limits and forced themselves to get the desired rewards would eventually be driven mad.

Nobody really knew their own limits until they were put in difficult situations like these. And the most talented rankers participating in the event were curious by nature. So being sent to the Life and Death Altar was going to leave some sort of mental trauma for all of them.

"No... this is not just a fight for Sage's legacy."

Eren mumbled to himself, walking towards Eliza. All his opponents were closing in on him. Eliza stood at her place as if knowing full well that she was the butcher's first target of attack.

"This... this is an opportunity."

Eren clenched his grip around his charged Shamshir set. Red and violet lightning sparks and orange flames started manifesting all over his body. The Wind-Fire Wings were spread behind his back.

"This is an opportunity for me to see where my efforts are lacking. An opportunity to see if the Trump cards I have gathered are enough or not. I should make use of this Life and Death Altar to its fullest to sandbox all my plans against her."

[Chapter 1096 Eren Vs Illusory Eliza](#)

Blink.

Blitz. Swoosh. Clash.

Two lightning-charged swords clashed against a sleek and simple gladius coated in Enderflames and sparks flew. The gladius was handled in such a way that it perfectly countered the pair of Shamshirs. And the swordswoman showed that she was effortless in her weapon handling by making complex moves look simple.

Eren was seen covered in various wounds. Some of them were bite wounds. But they looked red and horrible to look at but no blood came from them. It was as if the wounds were displayed to make him understand how beaten up he was.

It had been more than five days since Eren's consciousness was summoned to the Nightmare Domain. He had technically died tens of times and had countless near-death experiences during this period. And yet, his illusory body showed him that it still had room to accommodate more pain.

The dragonkin beasts mauled him and attacked him with their claws and tails. They showed their fangs at him before breathing Enderflames on him. They stopped all over him when he was at his weakest and fighting with other opponents.

The wraiths ganged up on him and bit him. Their hordes made him experience the pain of his flesh getting eaten in front of his very eyes. They used their weapons on him all at once. It was even possible for some of them to have their spells equipped. The wraiths also used their bones to launch counter attacks that he couldn't see coming.

However, none of them managed to make the situation miserable for Eren. All except Eliza.

"Aaaaargh!"

Eren was forced to retreat once again by Eliza. The latter handled all of his sword attacks, parried them effectively, and launched a counter at him in a series of moves that looked seamless. They made her look like she was playing with a kid who knew nothing about the battle arts.

It was as if the Life and Death Altar had breathed real life into Eren's imagination through the analysis of his memories. It had a lot of permutations and combinations recorded inside the array. These combinations suit the illusory Eliza's profile, allowing her to fight like the real Eliza through the use of artificial intelligence.

Eren could read Eliza's movements just fine. She wasn't doing anything unique if he really thought about it. After all, every form of sword art was nothing but a series of slashes and swings at its core.

However, the way Eliza moved and handled her gladius made Eren question his qualifications to battle with her. Because he couldn't block them no matter how easily he could see them coming. The Witch of Enderflame would just introduce a slight variation in her move midway that would change the whole equation of their exchange.

Eliza seamlessly switched between offense and defense. Sometimes, her offensive moves doubled as an invisible wall that Eren couldn't penetrate.

At first, Eliza hadn't cast any elemental spells on him yet. That was because her rendition was based on Eren's memories of her.

The butcher hadn't seen Eliza cast any offensive elemental spells. The appearance of Enderflames he had seen was just her Way of the Elements interacting with the world around her.

Eren was not happy that Eliza standing in front of him was nerfed like that. He wanted to have a serious clash with her inside the Nightmare Domain. The conditions inside this illusory world made it ideal for him to try out a lot of his combinations on her.

The masochist in him did the only thing he knew best—add to his miseries by manually making the nerfed Eliza stronger. He started imagining spells she could cast, and the Nightmare Domain eventually picked up on his imagination.

By this point, Eren had started to understand the Nightmare Domain bit by bit. It wouldn't offer him a respite from constantly battling against his nightmarish opponents by default. But there were ways he could make the most of the time he had to spend in his imaginary world.

For example, he could let go of his sword and imagine obtaining support items like recovery potions. He could use them before summoning his sword once more, which would allow him to battle continuously inside the Nightmare Domain.

It seemed Life And Death Altar had no problem fulfilling requests like occasional recovery potions. That is if the subjects it was judging wanted to add to their miseries.

Eren wasn't provided with additional buffs other than the sporadic use of potions. It kept him standing on his two feet and allowed him to fight for five days straight without any respite.

Eren killed countless dragonkin and wraiths. The more he killed the more their numbers would grow back. It was an endless cycle of death, destruction, and suffering. He had become numb to the wraiths' cries and the beastly growls.

The feeling of hearing his own heartbeat had become a norm for the butcher at this point. His senses had been put on autopilot for the most part, turning him into an emotionless puppet who knew nothing more than to kill or get killed.

However, Eliza's attacks made the butcher understand his own mortality, preventing him from turning into a mindless killing machine. The pain was the reality check he needed to make sense of the battles. It grounded him and allowed him to see his limits.

Eliza started casting Eren's fire-element spells empowered by Enderflames whenever he tried to maintain a safe distance from her. The butcher didn't regret his choice of empowering the Witch of Enderflames with his own fire-element attacks. But he had to say that the results were more dreadful than he had anticipated just because of Sage's peculiar Ability.

"Aaaaaaargh!"

Eren cried in pain when he was bathed in a wave of Enderflames. It started burning his skin and affected his cognition due to sensory overload. He forced himself to get close to her so that he suffered less from exposing himself to Enderflames.

[Chapter 1097 Necessity To Neutralize Enderflames](#)

Enderflames.

Eren felt like the green flames had a mind of their own. They were so powerful in intent that they were practically able to incinerate any object they encountered.

The green flames carried Eliza's wrath. They easily overpowered Eren's fire-element spells by incinerating the orange flames themselves.

And this was when Eren was keeping things restricted to Adept rank where he was most comfortable using his spells. As a result, Eliza's attacks were also restricted to the same rank as his.

The butcher had just broken into the Expert rank. If he chose to face his opponents while using his original rank, Eliza would have a significant advantage. She would have a much more capable platform to express her individuality through the Enderflames.

This was why Eren decided to make use of the option the Life and Death Altar provided him and kept the battle limited to the Adept rank. He wanted there to be tough opponents for him. But empowering them too much would prevent him from learning from them.

This peculiar fire-element Ability from the dragon half-blood was so strong that the green flames would sometimes get pixelated, affecting the rendering of Nightmare Domain as a whole. It indicated that the Life And Death Altar was having a hard time rendering the Enderflames based on Eren's memories as their foundation.

Eren had realized by this point that his biggest hurdle in confronting Eliza was the Enderflames. He suspected one of the major reasons the Witch of Enderflames could punch above her weight and still manage to win was because she had unlocked an exclusive Ability for herself.

Even normal water-element spells didn't work against Enderflames. The water bodies of the water-element spells would have most of their mass evaporated as soon as they came into contact with the green flames.

Eren tried various spell combinations. He made full use of his multi-element compatibility. And after doing everything, he came to a singular conclusion. Eliza's intent-based magic was just too strong.

"Fuuuuck!"

As a response to the Enderflames, Eren cut off his own flesh and skin to get rid of them quickly. He then healed the wounds to stop bleeding. The peculiar thing about the Enderflames was the fact that they would refuse to extinguish themselves under normal circumstances. Thus, the butcher had to suffer self-inflicted injuries from time to time to prevent the Enderflames from hampering his moves.

Blitz Steps. Swoosh. Clang.

Another round of close combat exchanges began. He had already invoked his summoner class, preventing the wraiths and dragonkin from approaching him carelessly.

The butcher's summons put up a strong fight against the wraiths. Especially the undead. Dragonkin beasts were easily kept at bay with his earth-element summons. But eventually, the wraiths and the beasts would slip past Eren's summons and manage to hurt him at the most unfortunate of times. He could do nothing to avoid that as the wraiths were supposedly endless in numbers inside the Nightmare Domain.

Eren was also trying out his ranger class in the battle against the nightmare creatures surrounding him. Plus, he was refining his close combat skills slowly by duking it out against the Witch of Enderflames.

Eren soon found out that his ranger class was basically useless inside the Nightmare Domain. First, he did not have class-supporting spells. Second, the Nightmare Domain was spatially restricted. So he couldn't create sufficient distance from his opponents anyway.

Plus, every time he tried to create distance, Eliza's green flames would surround him from all angles through the use of her fire-element spells. So he stuck to using his summoner class for the wraiths and his close combat class for Eliza.

Eren's seventh day inside the Life and Death Altar.

Time flew by and Eren kept on fighting. He couldn't say that he enjoyed his time spent in the Nightmare Domain. However, he took solace in the fact that the whole experience had taught him a lot.

Eren had left no stone unturned in his battle against the monstrous prodigy that is Eliza.

This was even though what he imagined her to be might not be completely in sync with reality. He was sure that the real Witch of Enderflames would be even more of a monster than what he was currently fighting.

Still, fighting with Eliza and experiencing the Enderflames made Eren understand a lot of his shortcomings. He came to realize that the Trump cards he thought he had against Eliza would be of little use to him if he didn't refine them.

He also came to realize that he needed something to counter the Enderflames if he wanted to qualify to fight Eliza. Something that would at least lessen the Enderflames' insane incineration rate, if not outright neutralize them.

Normal spells of any kind or any element wouldn't work on the Enderflames. He hadn't used his Sin Series Abilities on Eliza. That's because he didn't feel comfortable showing that he had the Sin Series

mark inside the Nightmare Domain even though the Life And Death Altar was supposed to be automated by a self-sustaining array mechanism.

However, Eren could feel that his Sin Series Abilities weren't a viable counter to Enderflames in any way. The wrath, gluttony, and lust mana weren't meant to neutralize the green flames.

Eren made full use of the opportunity provided to him by the Life and Death Altar, which other participants considered punishment. In their defense, most of them had nothing to gain from living in their nightmares.

Eren was the only one who had found some use for his nightmares. As much as he denied their existence, one could say that his masochist tendencies had enabled him to find light in the dark.

When Eren completed seven days inside the Nightmare Domain, all of his opponents vanished into thin air. Eliza's image also blurred before disappearing from his vision completely.

Eren felt a cooling sensation all over his illusory body in the next moment. It was as if his hurt soul was receiving some kind of nourishment.

When Eren blinked his eyes, he was back inside Sage Loxley's den once again. Only a few seconds had passed in the real world from the moment he had "died" inside the den.

[Chapter 1098 Time Is The Most Reliable Teacher... Patience Is The Most Valuable Lesson](#)

Eren was seen standing against the hive of cave entrances.

The butcher felt that there was a thin layer of barrier that prevented him from taking the old path he had taken. Meaning he couldn't use his experiences from the previous path to find Sage's location.

"Hmm. Back to square one, huh?"

Eren mumbled to himself as he chose a different route than before. Unlike his first attempt, Eren decided to make conscious efforts in finding the Sage instead of programming himself to defend himself against Sage's assassination.

Eren knew setting up a priority like this was bound to make him more prone to being assassinated by Sage's shadows. However, he wasn't afraid to visit the Nightmare Domain anymore. There was some part of him that was even looking forward to it.

The same cycle repeated itself.

Eren was killed by Sage Loxley's anelace once again. When he got inside the Nightmare Domain, it was shown that he needed to spend a little over two weeks inside it to qualify for his re-entry into the Sansara World.

"Time is the most reliable teacher. Patience is the most valuable lesson."

Eren said to himself and sighed as he looked around, finding himself in a familiar setting. In the next moment, lightning struck and he disappeared from his position. A few wraiths cried in the distance as a storm of lightning and fire appeared in their midst.

This was Eren's sixth revival inside Sansara World.

This was the furthest anyone had gone in claiming Sage's legacy. Nobody dared to face the Nightmare Domain as many times as the butcher did.

Most of the rankers already had mental scars on their psyches that wouldn't heal anytime soon after being judged by the Life and Death Altar. A majority of them failed to survive the default period. And those who did lost interest in Sage's test for some reason.

The fear of death was instinctual. It could be suppressed but not completely eliminated. Nobody wanted to feel the moment of their last breath time and again just so that they could stand a chance to inherit Sage's legacy.

Eren would have won by default at this point. Some participants, however, decided to sit on the fence outside the hive of caves after being revived. So fortunately or unfortunately, Eren kept on getting assassinated.

Eren walked into a different cave entrance this time.

The passage led him to a spacious underground space that was illuminated by radiant stalactites hanging from the ceiling. Exuding light green radiance, they breathed new life into the visual setting that had become too monotonous for the butcher to notice the difference.

Eren had learned a lot about Sage Lufthansa at this point. Especially the way he attacked. He used puddles on the ground as teleportation channels to launch his assassination attacks.

Lufthansa did not have an awakened soul sense. As a result, the vestige of his soul couldn't use spiritual spells. But it turns out that he doesn't have to. He used puppets to launch sneak attacks on all the participants all at once. Those were the shadows he was talking about.

These puppets were an alchemic invention and could be operated using an array mechanism etched onto them. They were the same size and shape as the original Sage Loxley.

The puppets didn't have facial features. They would mimic most of their users' movements and carry out their plans based on their intentions. After recording several movement patterns, they were able to move on their own. Users could also manually operate them by sending their consciousness into them.

These puppets would emerge and leap diagonally from puddles of water, attacking their opponents in one swift motion. They were just copying Sage Loxley's movements and acting on his wishes.

When Sage Loxley used to carry out such attacks with his original body back in the past, he would jump out of the water bodies and kill his enemies in the same manner. And his jumps would make him look as if a crane was taking flight.

Teleportation through elemental bodies like puddles of water using space-element attainments as a foundation. Then using the Ability to jump diagonally out of the elemental bodies and assassinate the opponents.

Yuffie Loxley was given the title of Lufthansa because of his unique Ability, which meant a crane taking flight. Whenever such a diagonal jump was taken which resembled a crane's flight, it only meant downfall for Loxley's enemies.

This was Sage Loxley's unique Ability which he could share with his puppets as well. Almost nobody was able to save themselves when Sage Loxley decided to kill them using his powers.

This was the reason Eren was wary of the puddles of water. At first, he thought that the puddles were created because of the distant underground river. But he soon came to realize that the sound of flowing water in the distance was fake. However, the butcher eventually noticed that it was repetitive.

The Sage was basically making the participants understand his Ability by introducing the repetition of the following river's sound. It was his way of "giving a handicap to the younger generation".

However, there was one problem with Sage's generosity. He didn't take into account the participants' condition at the time of being assassinated by him. Their psyches were so overwhelmed by fear and pressure that they didn't pay attention to the underground river's sound, which kept on flowing sonorously in the distance.

Eren was wary of puddles of water. However, he didn't completely avoid them. He knew the puppets were too fast to be intercepted before they attacked him. Their jumps were too sudden and their attacks were too precise to be parried effectively.

Thus, Eren wasn't counting on intercepting the puppets before they made a move on him. Instead, he was trying to catch them after they had attacked him. He needed to use his own body as bait to catch the puppets in action.

Eren looked at the luminescent stalactites as he walked further to get to the other end of the underground passage. Just when he was supposedly relaxing a bit by exhaling a breath, the attack occurred.

[Chapter 1099 Finding Lufthansa](#)

Swoosh. Zoom. Parry.

A pair of matte-finish daggers appeared in Eren's hands all of a sudden.

A defensive stance was taken in response to the puppet's attack. Eren didn't manage to parry the attack completely. But he was able to deflect it in such a way that his heart was spared from being stabbed by a hair's breadth.

Eren winced in pain. He almost cried in agony when the puppet twisted his anelace inside his chest. However, this wasn't the time to indulge in pain-relieving activities.

The daggers in Eren's hands disappeared as he grabbed onto the puppet's wrists. He couldn't overpower the puppet no matter how much he tried. However, he didn't have to. His job was to find the location of the real Sage. And that's what he intended to do all along by acting as bait.

Eren sent his soul sense inside the puppet's alchemic body and located the array on which it was operating. He forcefully breached the array's basic defense system and followed the trace of consciousness it contained.

The vestige of Loxley's soul hiding inside the den felt as if two emerald green eyes were looking at him from behind. The Sage made an expression of irritation when the fun was over.

"Found... I found you."

The butcher said and smiled wickedly. A trail of blood escaped from the corner of his lips when he did that. The puppet made exceptionally fast moves and took care of Eren in the next moment.

One could say that Sage Loxley liked playing the game of tag. But he didn't like being caught. He killed the butcher for the seventh time, even after he had fulfilled his condition and cleared his test.

Eren appeared at ground zero once again after clearing the Nightmare Domain for the seventh time. He had lost count of how many months his consciousness had been sent inside the Nightmare Domain in total. He even stopped seeing the conditional period after his fourth attempt. That was because he started dreading the period after his fourth attempt. So it was better that he just kept fighting inside the Nightmare Domain and lost track of time.

The butcher was sure that he had been fighting with the illusory Eliza and wraiths for more than two years on his seventh attempt. His body hadn't aged in the real world. But his mind felt like he had been given this test for eternity.

Eren's jaded emotions also affected his bodily functions. He suddenly developed dark patches under his eyes. His presence felt as if he hadn't slept for a very long time despite his body being in the prime condition of its life.

Nightmare Domain was more brutal than Eren's time in Purgatory in more ways than one. However, it didn't feel like that for the butcher because he had stepped into it with a different mindset.

Nightmare Domain also had its advantages.

Eren felt like he had conducted all the tests and combinations he could against the illusory Eliza. He improved a lot of his battle styles and also practiced various classes intermittently.

Eren's soul also had been strengthened to an absurd degree by such a long period spent inside the Nightmare Domain. His bloodlust had become even more potent than it already was. And it was apparent for everyone to see and feel despite the butcher's attempts to mask his presence.

Eren looked at the hive of cave entrances with disinterest after appearing at ground zero of the test. He clenched his fists and started walking in the opposite direction.

There were only a few participants present at this time— all waiting for something to take place. They just wanted to find solace in knowing that nobody could clear Sage Loxley's Legacy until the test's end.

When Eren started walking in the opposite direction, he grabbed attention. The participants looked at each other with puzzled expressions before looking at Eren with pity. They all came to the same conclusion: the butcher had lost his mind after spending his time inside the Nightmare Domain.

All the participants that were present at this time were extraordinary rankers in their own regard. All of them had survived the Nightmare Domain at least once. However, neither of them wanted to visit that place again.

That's why it was easier for them to assume that Eren had lost his mind. They would have stopped paying attention to him and focused on looking intently at the hive of the cave entrances. Suddenly, the butcher did something that shocked them.

He walked towards a seemingly insignificant corner and stopped in his steps. He charged his fists with lightning and fire element mana before landing a punch on the stone wall. In the next moment, the wall crumbled away and revealed a cave entrance.

This cave looked just like the other cave entrances that were behind Eren's back. However, it just felt different to everybody. As if a powerful entity was waiting at the other end of the cave passage.

"I... I remember him."

"Isn't it Eren Idril? The guy who..."

"He... did he find Sage Loxley?"

"No fucking way. I refuse to believe that..."

"Shut the fuck up, Darven. Nobody asked you."

"I... I'll just follow him and see if he has really found Sage Loxley or is he just... bluffing."

"Hahaha. Don't play smart, Harja. Let's all follow him and see who finds Sage Loxley in the end. The test is about finding him, after all. Not the way we used to track him down."

"Let's ... let's fucking follow him then."

Eren heard noises coming from behind him after he broke the wall. He wasn't in the mood to play around with these participants. He turned around and looked at them with a deadpan expression before speaking up in a voice coated in menacing dread.

"I am tired. And I feel like it's been ages since I had an actual conversation with normal people. So let me give you a simple and clear-cut disclaimer.

Be prepared to visit the Nightmare Domain once again if any of you tries to take a single step inside this cave. I might just go ahead and kill all of you for real if you try to attack me in a group.

Capeesh? Meanwhile, I'll go inside."

[Chapter 1100 \[Bonus \] + Assassin Class](#)

The participants were too stunned to speak when they heard Eren's warning.

Everyone wanted to enter the newly appeared cave entrance with Eren. However, nobody dared to take his warning lightly. After all, those who had remained till this point were here because they could sense danger and prioritize their safety first.

Furthermore, Eren's presence was incredibly chilling. Some of them subconsciously took a step back when their eyes met his emerald-green eyes.

"Hehe. This kid has what it takes to inherit my legacy. You can come in, Eren Idril. Everybody else, out."

The participants disappeared all of a sudden with a varied range of emotions painted on their faces. They all understood one thing at that time— Eren Elijah Idril had cleared the test conducted by Sage Loxley.

Eren nodded to the voice's commands before getting inside the cave entrance. A sophisticated three-story house soon greeted him after following the singular path.

Eren entered the courtyard of the house and waited for Sage Loxley to show up. The latter didn't make him wait long enough.

Sage Loxley was a man of medium stature and build. He had an inconspicuous appearance and presence except for the beaked mask he was wearing that hid most of his facial features.

The Sage had cerulean-colored eyes. He was wearing a hooded cape over tailored leather armor. He had a dagger's sheath attached to his waist strap. The Sage carried the actual weapon in his hands. He would play with the knife in his hands as if ready to launch an assassination at any time.

Eren bowed to Sage Loxley as soon as he appeared. He didn't have to wait too long for the latter to speak.

"Hmm. You did good, Eren boy."

Surprisingly, Lufthansa was quite easy to talk to once he stopped being an assassin and came out into the open. He nodded at Eren before speaking up.

"Your presence tells me a lot about you, Eren boy. You are perfectly fit to be an assassin."

'That's the plan.'

Eren thought to himself before saying something entirely different.

"I'll take that as a compliment, Sage Loxley."

Just as Alephee had told him to, Eren didn't want to mess with the remaining Sages. So he was very humble in his manners.

There was a puppet that contained Lufthansa's vestige of soul. It allowed him to operate on the rest of the puppets with ease.

The Sage didn't waste much time. He glanced briefly at Eren before speaking up.

"Hmm. It appears that you are using Unlimited Knife Works, which I created. How was your experience so far using it?"

Eren was shocked when he heard that the Perk he was using inside the Sansara World was actually an Ability from a Sage. He knew what he was supposed to do. He took out his matte finish daggers and executed Unlimited Knife Works in front of the creator of the Ability.

Unlimited Knife Works wasn't just a stand-alone Ability. Sage Lufthansa created special dagger art to work with it. Using the dagger art he knew, Eren executed the Perk.

It seemed that Lufthansa was quite impressed by the way Eren handled his weapons. As a result, he became increasingly interested in passing down his legacy to Eren after he saw how capable the latter was.

The Sage took out his own dagger and charged it with his water-element mana before speaking up.

"Unlimited Knife Works was created for one-handed weapon holders at first. So it heavily relies on an aggressive stance right from the start."

The Sage decided to impart his knowledge along with his legacy to the butcher. He performed a variety of moves to demonstrate how to use Unlimited Knife Works correctly. And Eren decided to absorb everything the Sage Assassin was imparting to him.

Eren and Sage Loxley talked for quite sometime before the latter offered him various items in the end. The very first item Eren received was a runic Steele. This Steele was created based on his elemental attainment, weapon comprehension, and other forms of knowledge as a foundation. It depicted how one could use Unlimited Knife Works in a variety of conditions, using various styles of weapons— not just daggers.

The Sage demonstrated that the Ability did not only accelerate weapons at short distances. Additionally, it could be used to teleport weapons within short to medium distances, increasing the ability's sphere of influence.

The butcher greatly appreciated the Sage's Runic Steele transfer. That's because it would allow him to unlock a similar Ability in the future if he referred to it frequently and practiced.

Eren also received a disk from the Sage which was supposed to fine-tune an assassin's mana circuits. Just like last time, he had decided to use the array disk on himself, unlocking the assassin class for himself.

Eren received a beaked mask artifact from the Sage. It allowed him to mask his presence both physically and otherwise. One could use it to carry out zero-error assassinations. That is if one plays their cards right.

The butcher also received a single dagger from Sage Loxley. It was a simple anelace with multi-element runes etched on it. Meaning it could support the lightning, water, and wind element mana. The dagger felt comfortable to hold in Eren's hands.

Both the beaked mask and the dagger were transcendent-grade artifacts. Moreover, they didn't have to be stored in storage space. A dagger tattoo was created on the back of the butcher's right hand before disappearing. The butcher could summon the dagger anytime he wanted using the tattoo.

A beaked mask tattoo was created under Eren's right earlobe before fading. The tattoo would reveal itself briefly when Eren decided to make use of the artifact to mask his presence.

Day 26: Near the location of the next Sage legacy's test grounds.

Eren made use of the array disk after spending some time alone in the Sansara World. He unlocked the assassin class for himself before entering the spatial tunnel that led to another Sage legacy test.