

## Vile 1121

### [Chapter 1121 "What Is A Woman?"](#)

Eren couldn't read Maya's thoughts even with his soul sense.

That's because she didn't have a soul, to begin with. Maya's artificial intelligence came from Sage Lehan's array algorithm—something that was planted deep inside her.

As a result, Eren's soul sense wasn't able to decipher her thoughts. According to his soul sense, Maya hovered between life and death. But she was unlike the undead he was used to summoning.

Undead were once living beings that had either been forced to or wanted to be part of life. As such, they had vestiges of their souls embedded in them no matter how insignificant.

Maya on the other hand seemed like an already dead entity that had managed to knock on life's door. She didn't have any vestige of a soul attached to her even if her body was lifelike. It was as if her body was kept alive by a different source than the source of life.

Maya was like an illusion that was so lifelike that she felt real. Yet, she appeared as a picture puzzle with only one piece missing. Such nuances set her apart from Homunculus who had genuine souls.

Eren couldn't read Maya's intentions. But he could read her face. He could analyze her behavior retrospectively to come up with the right set of words to say to her. The schemer in him just had a knack for coming up with apt conversation starters.

Maya also seemed interested in the discussion she seemed to be having with a stranger who was looking at her with his mesmerizing emerald green eyes. She tilted her neck and adjusted her posture and thought to herself out loud.

"What are my dreams, you ask?"

Maya looked at the vast golden expanse that was the sky above her. She stared at it for a bit before continuing with somber expressions and a voice full of emotions.

"I want to cultivate a soul, Eren.

I want to become a real living being. I want to become a woman who is bound by the rules of life and death."

Eren followed Maya's gaze and looked at the sky as well. He narrowed his eyes before asking her his second question.

"Is that Sage Lehan's wish as well?"

Eren simply wanted to ask Maya if what she thought to be her dreams and goals were something that was given to him by her creator. He considered it to be a possibility because of how artificial intelligence algorithms work.

The butcher didn't know much about creating someone like Maya from scratch. But he knew a lot about creating homunculus. He could connect some dots and come up with his own theories about the subject.

Eren's question didn't make Maya feel weird. In fact, it only strengthened his position as a researcher in Maya's eyes. She took a deep breath before confirming Eren's doubts.

"That's right. My dreams were my father's wishes when he created me. He gave me a purpose and showed me the way. I want to make his wish come true.

I also want to meet up again when that happens. You know, show him my accomplishments and make him proud. That's the least I can do as his daughter."

Eren smiled lightly. He was able to understand how Maya's thought processes worked as an artificial existence. Cultivating a soul was her creator's wish and she was roped deep into her existence by him. However, the thought processes that were related to achieving that goal were all hers.

Maya could choose to work on various ideas as long as they were in line with her creator's wishes. She was free to select a path as long as her destination didn't change.

The butcher had said that Sansara Sage was a top-notch researcher. He had basically made a question come alive by breathing consciousness into it. He then demanded that the question find its own answer.

If Eren wasn't wrong about Sansara Sage, the loyalty Maya showed towards Sansara Sage had also been implanted into her. The Sage might have created various existences like her to find the true genesis of life. And he was hoping at least one of them would find him and give him the perfect answer he was looking for.

Eren thought of many things at once before deciding to try his luck with Maya. He had come to understand that he wouldn't be able to influence her with materialistic possession. He had to use Sansara Sage's algorithm to convince Maya.

The butcher quickly came up with a way to achieve his goal. He turned his neck to Maya before asking her the question in a serious voice.

"Lady Maya, what is a woman?"

Maya raised her eyebrows when she heard Eren's question. She looked at him questioninglyâ€" looking him in the eyes. The butcher didn't turn away. He caressed his chin and scratched it a bit before expounding.

"I mean... What is a living breathing woman to you? How do you define her existence? And what makes you different from her aside from the fact that you can't give birth?"

Maya was caught off guard by Eren's question. She didn't have a go-to answer to questions like these.

"I... I think..."

Eren cut her off right when she was struggling to come up with an answer.

"Yes... "I think--". That's your problem, Lady Maya.

I am assuming your thoughts are based on Sage Lehan's planted memories. You haven't interacted with real women enough for you to draw your own conclusions from them.

You haven't really seen life prosper outside this artificial world. No offense to Sansara Sage" but the world he has created lacks life.

Sansara World is like a bouquet of paper flowers. The flowers look real and can't really die. But they fail to exude the liveliness that real flowers are born of.

You can't stay here if you want to pursue your dreams, Lady Maya. You need to step into the real world and see how life unfolds."

#### [Chapter 1122 \[Bonus \] Cultivating A Soul](#)

"Step into the real world..."

Maya mumbled to herself as she stared at the sky. It was as if a fire had been lit up inside her mind. Her eyes started exuding a peculiar light.

When the iron was hot, the butcher decided to hammer it again to cast it.

"Lady Maya, you ought to understand what your existence as a woman entails. You need to feel their joys and sorrows. You need to understand what excites you as a woman" no matter how shallow or profound it is.

Only after doing something like this will you be able to understand what it means to have a real existence. And only after developing an understanding of this matter will you be able to cultivate a soul for yourself."

Eren looked at Maya intently before asking her something radical.

"Let me help you, Lady Maya. I'll turn you into a real woman."

Maya seemed to be lost in her thoughts while hearing Eren speak. She took a while to develop a suspicious expression on her face. She looked at Eren angrily and straightened herself" only for him to cough before making his stance clear.

"\*Cough. I mean... I'll help you cultivate a soul for yourself.

I don't know what it means to cultivate a soul for oneself. But I am damn sure about the fact that nobody can do it while sitting isolated in a fake world.

The Sansara World has become your prison. It prevents you from growing up. Only life outside this bubble of comfort can make you understand what it means to be alive."

Eren got up from his seat and stood in front of Maya" blocking her view. He looked her straight in the eyes before continuing.

"The risks, the heartbreaks, the successes, and the failures. The feelings of pleasure and pain. Fulfilling experiences and heart-wrenching upsets. All of these are integral parts of life.

As you sit here, how can you experience such facets of life? How can you live without doing something worthwhile to live for?

It's like you have been told to make complex cuisine that has multiple ingredients. And you sit here with only meat, salt, and pepper" trying to find a way to make things work with the limited ingredients you have."

Maya kept a low level of awareness of Eren's words. But deep down, she had already come to understand what he was trying to say. Her facial expressions signaled to Eren that his talk was working. So he decided to give her a final push in the right direction.

"Look... I have as much respect for Sansara Sage as you do. And I acknowledge your existence as well.

So forgive me for saying this" but he didn't create this world for you. He didn't create you only for you to stay locked up inside it.

He might not have said this explicitly. So I'm guessing he wanted you to come to this conclusion on your own. You were meant to step out you have always been.

You were meant to explore this world and the many possibilities that are within your reach. You can shape the experiences that you gain from such explorations into a soul- your soul.

Don't you want to meet your father? He may not always wait for you, you know."

Eren gave Maya a sense of urgency to come to a quick conclusion. His words always had a profound effect on most people, as if they were whispers from the devil. But they started having an edge like none other as he grew up as a ranker.

Maya couldn't stay immune to Eren's influence either. She looked him in the eyes before softly stating what he wanted to hear from her.

"I... I need to get out of Sansara World."

'Bull's eye.'

Eren thought to himself and flashed a bright smile. But his smile quickly faded when he heard Maya's next words.

"I need to step into the real world, indeed. But what makes you think that I need your help?"

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Maya could guess that Eren probably had his own interests linked to her exit. She didn't need to know about them to authenticate their existence. One had to say that Sansara Sage had given her enough gray matter to think for herself.

Maya had access to the known information available in Edinburgh's records about all the participants. She quickly updated herself with Eren's information as she listened to his words.

Maya had to say that Eren's on-paper portfolio was impressive. A young and low-key Expert ranker who was the owner of a rapidly emerging city. He was a certified potioner and businessman.

The potion manufacturing division of his guild had been given various contracts by the kingdom itself to manufacture various explosive potions for the upcoming war. He had an impressive academic record and his army service was spotless.

There hadn't been much interaction between Maya and people outside the Sasara World. Just like Eren had assumed, she was born inside the Sansara World right after Sansara Sage created it.

After Sansara Sage left the continent of Anfang, Maya kept in touch with various correspondences from the kingdom. She was not involved in Edinburgh's matters directly. But she was exposed to a lot of things and developed her own understanding of the world outside.

Eren could only offer Maya monetary gains, she thought. He had his connections. But they weren't deep or old enough to help her for the most part.

Or so she thought.

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Eren was a bit taken aback by Maya's words. But he quickly recovered from his initial shock before making her understand something she hadn't thought of.

"Hehe. You don't need my help, do you?"

Things are not as simple as you are made to believe, Lady Maya. You lack certain experiences in your life that have sheltered you from such obvious problems.

You might think that I am not useful in your endeavors. And maybe you are not completely wrong.

But have you considered what might happen when you try to get outside the Sansara World?"

[Chapter 1123 Ideal Starter Pack For A Runaway](#)

"What do you mean?"

Maya asked Eren with a sense of puzzlement. The latter chuckled before answering her.

"Think about it.

You are the creation of Sansara Sage. He even called you his child.

Do you believe that you can just walk out of this world and there will be no ripples in the kingdom? Do you think the kingdom of Edinburgh will let you roam around everywhere with that kind of significance attached to your name?

Sansara World and all that it contains are not the only Legacy Sansara Sage has left behind in the land of Anfang. You, as his daughter, are also part of his legacy."

Eren's words struck like a clap of thunder in Maya's mind. And it wasn't like the butcher was making things up to further his agenda. He indeed had his own stakes involved. But at this point, he could predict how the kingdom of Edinburgh would react to Maya's possible disappearance.

Sansara Sage was a cut above the other Grad Dukes. He made many contributions to setting up the kingdom's societal, hierarchical, and political fabric that exists to this date. The kingdom viewed all its creations as its possessions.

The butcher looked at Maya with a tinge of pity and sighed deeply before continuing.

"The kingdom doesn't care about your cultivation of the soul, Lady Maya.

Your disappearance is something it won't tolerate under any circumstances. It would worry about attracting Sansara Sage's wrath should anything happen to you. It would be afraid of you falling into its enemies' hands even more.

Therefore, the kingdom of Edinburgh will do everything in its power to keep you locked inside Sansara World. If you come clean to them regarding your exploration, they'll first give you the excuse that the situation outside is tense because of the approaching war. Which is a valid excuseâ€" I am not going to lie.

But it will happen over and over again. When you push more buttons after a while, the kingdom will employ Grandmasters and Sages to ground you.

The truth is, there will never be an ideal time for you to roam outside Sansara World. As far as the kingdom is concerned, you can only serve as Sansara World's caretaker.

Even if you manage to escape from the kingdom's clutches on your own, it wouldn't be long before its forces managed to track you down. What can you do against an entire kingdom's resources invested in locating you and getting you back in here?

Don't get me wrongâ€" the kingdom of Edinburgh will never try to mistreat you. Your existence is too special for it to try anything too extreme on you. It would offer you all the ranking resources you needâ€" provided you stay inside Sansara World.

But is that what you want? You must have realized by now that those resources are not helpful to you in cultivating your soul.

You should take risks and find your own way instead of following a safe path that leads you nowhere. Spread your wings and take a leap of faith."

Maya's face became devoid of any expression when Eresn finished speaking. She had to say that whatever he was speaking about made sense. After all, she had interacted with correspondents from Edinburgh in the past.

She could remember that these contacts were always wary of Maya leaving Sansara World. This was when she hadn't said anything remotely related to her exit from Sansara World.

Maya looked at Eren with eyes that said she was looking for answers from him. The butcher smiled before nodding at her.

"There is indeed a way to skip all the trouble.

I wouldn't have suggested this if there weren't Layos' infiltrators involved in the equation. After all, I like to save my own hide before I make a mess.

But now that the infiltrators are in, anything we do will be pinned to them. Hehe. They could be our scapegoats and your ticket out of prison at the same time.

If we proceed with my plan, you can safely exit Sansara World. There wouldn't be anyone chasing you down because they'd doubt the forces of Layos.

Of course, we will have to take some countermeasures. But those can be discussed after you agree to my plan. Rest assured, you'll get all the help you need from me after you step outside.

To put it simply, I'm offering an ideal starter pack for a runaway like you."

The butcher did what he did best - strike a deal with anyone he could control in some way to avoid trouble in the present and the future.

The opportunist in him was a firm believer in the quote "a problem well stated is a problem half solved."

He first identified the problems he had regarding his month-long stay inside the Sansara World as well as the deeds he had performed during this time. He then laid out Maya's problems for her.

In the end, the butcher made Maya understand how they could help one another in their current situations.

Eren and Maya started devising a plan for her exit. He told her straight away that he wanted her help in understanding and altering certain parts of the soul-related arrays.

Apart from that, Eren wanted Maya's help in keeping his hands clean of the mess he was about to make at the end of the ongoing test.

Of course, he assured Maya that she should only help him if and when he wins Sansara Sage's test. And that he would not ask her to help until she declared him the winner herself. This will allow her to conduct the test just as Sansara Sage wishes her to conduct it.

Eren came clean by admitting that he indeed had his own motives for getting Maya out of the Sansara World. He also told her that she would be well compensated for her efforts.

Basically, it was going to be a mutually beneficial partnership that they both could make use of.

#### [Chapter 1124 Protagonist Halo?](#)

Eren's persuasion was very effective.

Maya was made to realize that she needed someone from the outside to help guide her.

She had almost all the knowledge about the continent of Anfang itself. Her creator made sure to equip her with various kinds of information before leaving her to her devices.

However, it had been a long while since Lin Lehan had left. And there was a difference between what one knows from firsthand experience and what is learned through other mediums.

At first, Maya thought that she didn't need Eren's help. But the more she talked with the butcher and the more he told her about the consequences of her exit, the more she realized how naive she was. As a result, Maya subconsciously started relying on Eren's input in her escape from Edinburgh's clutches.

Maya was very perceptive.

She had all the intelligence she needed to understand what Eren was saying to her. And she had to say that she couldn't come up with the kind of plan the butcher had made on the fly.

The chronic planner in him just had a talent for using others to his advantage.

The fact that Eren's own interests were linked to Maya's escape assured her of his commitment. Being the daughter of Sansara Sage himself who was known as a one-of-a-kind genius in array creation, Maya was quite an expert when it came to the field of arrays. As a result, she didn't feel it was too bothersome to help Eren with his problems.

It wasn't like Maya was completely swooned over by the butcher's words either. Certainly, she had some concerns about Eren's plan. She was especially uncomfortable doing something so radical with Sansara World.

However, she understood the potential repercussions Eren warned about if she did not follow his steps. So she decided to cooperate with the butcher under the condition that he would provide her with much-needed shelter until the heat around her disappearance died down.

Maya had come to realize that Eren was probably the only ranker who could dare plot against the kingdom of Edinburg while staying inside it. Technically, his assistance in Maya's escape would be treated as treason if it ever came to light.

Still, it didn't feel like Eren was afraid of the kingdom's potential retaliation. It was as if he had been adding to Edinburg's turmoil for a long time. And treason was just something he was used to doing on an uneventful Tuesday.

Eren and Maya talked for hours on end finalizing the nuances of the escape plan. The butcher also allowed Maya to think in silence. By the time Maya decided to say something, a new dawn had arrived inside Sansara World.

"You... How long have you been planning this?"

Maya looked intently at him as she asked him.

She was trying to figure out Eren's intentions - looking for anything that could help her learn more about him. There was a part of her that was intimidated by Eren's plan. She had to convince herself that she needed to prioritize her own soul cultivation to stick to the plan.

Eren pursed his lips and scratched the back of his head before answering her.

"Honestly? Not for that long.

I mean I always planned to do something about covering my tracks. But it wasn't anywhere near what I planned to do now until I met you.

I only dared to pitch this plan after making sure that you could benefit from it in some way. Otherwise, there was no point in coming here to talk to you when I was supposed to participate in the test.

All living beings are selfish creatures at their core. I don't think you would have agreed to my plan if there was nothing in it for you as well."

Eren responded casually. There was a certain unshakable confidence in his voice.

He found out that Maya was still a bit tense about what she had agreed to do to Sansara World and saw the need to lighten up the mood. Chuckling, he added further.



"Hehe. Don't worry. I have experience rescuing damsels in distress. You will be fine.

Besides, the look of worry doesn't look great on your cute face. A beautiful mademoiselle like you is better off smiling or maintaining an icy vibe like you used to."

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Eren was making a comparison between Kirin and Maya in his head when he talked about rescuing damsels in distress. He made such a comparison because both girls had some unresolved issues with their fathers.

Kirin was not sympathetic toward her father. But she honored the monster's traditions and followed his every command to a T.

Maya, on the other hand, was an artificial human whose planted loyalties compelled her to see her creator as someone to whom she needed to show her achievements. But in the end, they both needed to step outside their comfort zone so that they could grow.

Although Kirin and Maya shared a similar sheltered environment, they had distinct personalities. Kirin liked to keep to herself. Whereas, Maya was willing to go to any length to cultivate a soul.

Maya could change her behavior as per the person she was talking to and the circumstances in which she found herself. She had a very malleable nature— as if her artificial intelligence was trying to accommodate and learn from every form of conversation.

Maya's personality came from her innate drive to make her father proud. And all her decisions were also influenced by her dreams— allowing Eren to easily predict and dictate her intentions.

'My my! Rescuing damsels in distress, are we? Could have fooled me.

Do you perhaps think that some of the protagonist's halo has rubbed off on you now that you have devoured Ken?'

Eren scrunched his nose in annoyance but ignored Alephee's unwarranted teasing. He guessed that the homunculus was probably frustrated by her current situation. And she was taking that out on him by making comments like these.

Of course, Eren had to admit that Alephee was not technically wrong as well. What he was describing as "rescue" might not be the right word for his actions.

He was basically zeroing in on such "damsels" in the first place so that he could make use of them in some way. In a way, he was preying on their vulnerable positions.

The fact that they could benefit from his intervention was only a byproduct.

### [Chapter 1125 \[Bonus \] Betting On The Dark Horse](#)

Maya's hand was subconsciously raised on its own before she tucked the locks of her hair behind her ear. She was taken aback by Eren's ninja way of complimenting her.

There was some part of Maya that was pleased with Eren's compliment. She could only blame Sansara Sage's perfection in artificial intelligence for her self-appeasement.

However, she quickly decided to retaliate against her feelings by criticizing Eren while looking him in the eyes.

"Hehe. Are you trying to flirt with me?"

You are a hundred years too young to do something like that, Eren."

Eren's trick worked. Maya's tension was diffused by his comment. The butcher chuckled before replying.

"Heh! As I promised, I would provide you with a variety of life experiences. This is part of my commitment to you.

Besides, age is just a number."

'Yeah... and prison is just a room,' said Alphee in Eren's head right away.

Eren had it with Alphee at this point.

'Alright. You certainly seem to have a bone to pick with me. You know what? Deep dive into that damn blood pool of yours and don't come out until you are completely healed.

And stop talking to Argo. That guy's a terrible influence on everyone.'

Saying this, Eren severed his mental connection with Alphee while the latter cackled in the background. He then looked at Maya with hopeful expectations only for him to receive a heads-up from her.

"Alright. Jokes aside. Your plan is worth a shot, Eren.

But it all depends on the assumption that you win my father's Legacy. There's no cooperation between us if you can't win.

And speaking of winning— here comes the guy who almost won the Legacy for himself."

Eren turned around to see that a spatial channel had appeared not too far away from him. A slightly exhausted man stepped out of the spatial channel.

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Someone had finally found the array key.

This guy was looking over his shoulders. His wary eyes were trying to locate threats that he was yet to feel.

This participant needed to personally hand over the array key in his hand to Maya. Only then could he finally claim Sage Lehan's Legacy for himself.

This was none other than Gondel the geek— the metaphorical dark horse of the test Eren had bet on.

Gondel had worked hard to find the array key. He had made use of every bit of knowledge he had regarding the field of arrays to overcome countless obstacles.

Gondel was sure that nobody among the participants would be able to achieve what he did. Despite this, he felt that his efforts would be in vain. He could only curse at the way the whole test was structured.

Gondel's frustration wasn't baseless. His position appeared on the Sansara interface of other participants free of charge as soon as he laid his hands on the array key. The previously inactive mapping function suddenly became active, directing the rest of the participants toward Gondel.

Even the shadow creatures, who were easy to deal with for Gondel before finding the key, had suddenly gotten too aggressive with him. They attacked him in groups and his previous tricks weren't as useful as they were before.

At first, Gondel felt that he was completing the test in easy mode. But he soon found out that there was a nightmare mode that he would be forced to play in after he was this close to winning the whole thing.

Gondel prioritized escaping over engaging with anyone. He knew that engaging with shadow creatures was useless. And fighting approaching opponents would land him in even bigger trouble.

Thus, Gondel started using spatial channels to his advantage by summoning the array fabrics near them before interfering with their parameters.

Gondel wasn't that skilled at altering spatial runes. So he couldn't completely control the spatial channels' destinations. The most he could do was make sure he didn't get teleported outside of the city. So he started using random spatial channels to keep his enemies on the toe.

Gondel's live location was tracked by the Sansara interface. As a result, the participants knew exactly where he was at any given point. He constantly appeared and disappeared across the map, forcing the participants to change their routes to get to him.

Gondel also ran into a participant after using a spatial channel with a random destination. He had to run for his life and use various Trump cards he had to get rid of his pursuer.

In the end, he finally found a spatial channel he could use to teleport straight to the city square— the destination he wanted to travel to.

Gondel knew that time was of the essence. Other participants could use various Perks at their disposal to get to him if they found out that his location was unchanging for more than a few moments. Hence, he hurriedly approached the fountain in the city square, with a bit of excitement on his face.

Gondel was jubilant when he found out that Maya was still where he had last seen her. However, he was forced to stop in his tracks after finding out that there was another participant accompanying her.

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"I can only hope you stick to our plan, Lady Maya."

Eren said to Maya while looking at Gondel from a distance. The butcher had a welcoming smile on his face as he looked at the geek. His back was facing Maya.

Maya chuckled before commenting.

"Don't worry. I have your back."

Eren gave a nod to Maya without turning around. He started walking towards Gondel the geek while staring at the array key in his hand.

"Gondel... Hahahaha... I finally found you."

A participant appeared at the scene out of the blue. The butcher wasn't surprised that someone had teleported directly into Gondel's vicinity using a Perk. He continued his stride toward Gondel without worrying about the incoming participants.

"Where... where the fuck is he?"

"Damn... this is the place from which we began the test. Don't tell me Gondel won."

"Hahaha. Wrong. That geek is right there. Look! He is holding the array disk as well. We arrived at the perfect time."

Two more participants appeared at the scene at the same time. In another second or two, four more participants appeared out of the blue. By the time Eren stopped in his tracks, all the participants had come to "greet" Gondel.

Eren opened his arms and spread them in a welcoming manner as soon as he found out that all the participants were present at the scene. He looked at the participants intently and smiled before activating his Ability.

"Mark of the Seven Sins: The Domain of Gluttony."

The butcher activated his Ability right away without further ado.

#### [Chapter 1126 Prior To An All-Out Showdown](#)

Gondel was surrounded by the rest of the participants in no time.

The geek gulped as he found himself on the receiving end of so many aggressive stares. He knew that things would become extremely dire for him if all the participants decided to attack him at the same time.

Gondel and other participants were getting ready for a showdown. Some participants had decided to attack Gondel. Some others had decided to attack the ones who would be taking on Gondel— catching them by surprise.

There was unmasked greed evident in all the participants' eyes and expressions as they prepared for an all-out fight. Things were coming to a tipping point.

But all the participants stopped in their tracks at the same time when they felt otherworldly energy surrounding them. They all turned towards the source of the energy that was standing not too far from the city square fountain.

'This... this is intent mana... someone's using intent-based magic... forbidden magic.'

One of the participants thought to himself as he felt the effects of the domain he found himself in. He was from Royal Ren and had an influential family background. The participant quickly understood the source of Eren's Ability as soon as he was subjected to it.

The participants kept dealing with Gondel on the back burner and focused on Eren. They knew that Gondel had the array disk but he was still far away from claiming victory. As long as they made sure that Gondel didn't hand over the array key to Maya, the winner of the test would remain undecided.

Maya didn't look like she would intervene in the participants' fight. She had already stated the test's rules. It was clear that Sansara Sage was executing a scenario like this toward the end of his test.

Sansara Saage would have preferred his legacy to be inherited by an array creator like Gondel. In addition, he had to be equally capable as well. There was no point in giving his Legacy to a weak array creator.

The array creator needed to prove himself that he was worthy of standing up to other rankers despite the challenges he faced in a frontal clash. Only then could they elevate themselves from being labeled geeks.

As he was faced with the biggest challenge of his life, Gondel also realized Sansara Sage's intentions. But instead of rising to the challenge, he took mental satisfaction in cursing everyone around him.

Eren took the spotlight from Gondel after he activated his domain-type Ability. He didn't know much about intent-based magic. So he wasn't that spooked by Eren's Ability. The geek just took a breath of relief after finding out that he was not in immediate danger.

Unlike Gondel, Eren wasn't nervous about being stared at by all the participants. He gave them a bright smile before speaking up.

"Welcome and well fought, my fellow participants.

My name is Eren Elijah Idril. Most of you know me by my name at least. But today I will show you I'm more than what they say about me.

I also wanted to try this Ability of mine inside a safe environment. So I'll thank you all in advance for serving as my test subjects.

For some reason, I'm a bit peckish at the moment. So you'll have to forgive me for keeping our introductions to a minimum."

Eren addressed all the participants casually as if he was giving a speech. He then focused his gaze on Gondel and gave him a warning.

"Gondel, right? You better stay where the fuck you are. Let me get rid of all the participants first. Rest assured, it shouldn't take long."

Eren's voice started sounding deep and mysterious mid-speech. His black hair turned white and tribal tattoos appeared on his skin. His eyes turned blue and there was a shift in his mana signature all of a sudden.

Eren's provocation was deliberate. He wanted the rankers to attack him with all their might. After all, the Domain of Gluttony worked best when other participants attacked him with their elemental spells.

Eren's Domain of Gluttony could be activated by biting his tongue slightly.

He knew that it wouldn't take long for him to activate his Ability on a whim as well. But he needed to increase his proficiency in using it.

Just like the Domain of Wrath, Eren's new Sin-Series Ability was multi-faceted. Meaning it could be used in a variety of ways.

The gluttony mana was summoned into existence inside the domain. Due to its peculiar nature, it could not be used by other rankers.

The butcher wanted to test the Domain of Gluttony as soon as he could. He had the same level of excitement about using it as a new owner of a flying vehicle inside Edin. But he couldn't test it openly on other participants because of Sansara World's introspection system. To use it, he received much-needed assurance from Maya that she would cover for him.

The participants were too stunned to speak after seeing the change in Eren's presence. They all came to realize that he was no normal ranker. Most of his eyewitnesses started assuming him to be a cultist that had infiltrated the event.

Eren's warning made Gondel freeze in his position. He knew what the butcher could do. Eren had killed his three teammates without breaking a sweat after all. Thus, the geek decided that he would not intervene between Eren and the other participants' fight unless he had to.

The participants came to a silent agreement among themselves that they would not target Gondel. He was to be approached by the last ranker standing at the end of their brawl.

Gondel, on the other hand, preferred if all the participants got critically injured or died fighting each other. Or at least get so busy grabbing each other's throats that they forget about him. That way, he could secure his win without having to be part of the mess.

The geek clenched his fists and used his movement spell to move back from the potential battlefield. He knew that he would only be attacked if he tried to approach Maya. Thus, he didn't want to attract that much heat by doing something so foolish.

Gondel the geek decided to wait for the right moment.

#### [Chapter 1127 Hero's Heart + Life Drain](#)

'Is this a Sin Series Ability?

Why does it feel different? As if it was so much more than that?

Perhaps... an Authority?'

Maya thought to herself as she observed Eren's domain with an artificial mana sense available to her. Being the creation of a demonic ranker, Maya obviously knew about the existence of the Sin Series Abilities.

Before the continent-spanning array's existence, the Sin Series Abilities were being used on the land of Anfang. As a result, Maya knew quite a lot about them through old records.

Thus, Maya conjectured that Eren had received an extraordinary power from the demonic altar the likes of which she hadn't read in previous records. After all, domain-type demonic attacks were unheard of.

She also wondered how someone could be so blessed by the demon realm. And what kind of acts must they have done to get such high recognition?

'I had an inkling he wasn't like the rest. But maybe I managed to underestimate him still.'

Maya had another thought as she looked at Eren's back. She had been given a heads-up by Eren regarding his usage of the Sin-Series Ability so she wasn't caught off guard. She had kept a safe distance from him, allowing him to handle the matter as he saw fit.

The silent stalemate among the participants didn't last long.

"Hahaha. This cultist punk thinks he can get rid of all of us with his weird parlor tricks. I alone am enough to shatter his pride."

One of the participants came forward from his position and looked at Eren provocatively. He belonged to one of the teams that tried to Target the White Raven crew.

It wasn't that this participant underestimated Eren. It was just that he was incredibly confident in his skills and accomplishments as a ranker.

Eren was used to being called a cultist whenever he showed his white-haired transformation to anybody. So he wasn't bothered by it. Lightning struck and he disappeared from his position.

Multiple spells and abilities were launched at once.

Blitz Steps

Sedating Gaze

Sedated Perception

Stunning Speed

Total Control

Life Drain

Bzzt. Swoosh. Pichuk.

The participant, who had come forward and boasted about how easy it was for him to dispose of Eren, suddenly found himself staring into the butcher's completely white eyes. A chill ran down his spine as a result.

Due to the effect of the Sedating Gaze, the participant could not move. The butcher had also cast his time element spells separately to expedite his movement as well as the effects of his spells and Abilities.

The butcher willed his right hand to turn into a semi-shriveled form. The nails on his fingers grew before turning black. There were various runic symbols etched over his fingers as his hands developed wrinkles all over them. It was as if the butcher's hands had aged quite a bit due to the lack of Life Force in them.

Life Drain.

He had activated this Ability of his after a long time. It was an Ability Eren had gained from his time in Purgatory.

After Eren broke into the later stages of the Adept rank, he never had much use for this Ability because he could dominate his opponents in other convenient ways.

Furthermore, extracting Life Force from his opponents was not useful to him as he grew up as a ranker. After all, he could only use it to heal himself and recover his vigor and depleted stats. The temporary boost he received from extracting Life Force from his opponents wasn't useful for him after turning into a Liquid-stage Adept.

However, under the influence of the Domain of Gluttony, Life Drain had leveled up. Plus, it could be paired up nicely with another Ability the butcher had taken from Ken.

Eren wanted to make the participants attack him as a whole. And the easiest way to do that was to make an example of the participant who dared to raise his voice against him.

The participant felt that his stomach had been punctured by something very sharp at various points. He couldn't move or do other forms of actions against Eren's surprise attack because of being subjected to his ocular Ability.

In the next moment, the participant had his Life Force siphoned out of him. His body aged rapidly before his skin started looking like that of Eren's hands.

Under the effects of the Gluttony Domain, Life Drain had turned into a deadly Ability. The ranker who had been at the receiving end of the butcher's attack died on the spot. His body turned into a still-standing mummified statue before it crumbled down.

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The butcher had used Ken's Ability to boost his body stats. His heart rate would skyrocket whenever he used this Ability. As such, he called it Hero's Heart.

Hero's Heart was a very peculiar Ability. That's because it used a rare form of fuel.

The Life Force was a very important physical attribute. Under normal circumstances, it would recover after taking sufficient rest. But if a ranker used it to fuel their Ability, it would decrease dramatically. After it drops down beyond a certain level, the depletion would start to harm a ranker's body.

Ken would use his Ability sparingly because it would tap into his Life Force reserves. His Ability was easy to use and had a wide range of uses. But the Fist Saint knew that if he abused it too much, it would backfire on him mid-fight.

Unlike Ken, however, Eren didn't have to worry about overusing Hero's Heart. That's because he found out that he could pair it with Life Drain.

Hero's Heart made use of the additional Life Force Eren had extracted from his enemies using the Life Drain. The two Abilities complemented each other nicely, enabling Eren to use them without suffering any form of consequences.



The butcher felt energized after using Life Drain and Hero's Heart at the same time. It was as if he was indulging in a sumptuous meal and immediately converting it into pure energy and vitality.

Eren remembered his fight with the old hag from whom he had robbed Life Drain. It made him wonder whether the old hag was a demonic practitioner while she was alive.

That's because Life Drain felt like it was an Ability granted to demonic rankers devoted to the Prince of Gluttony. There was no other way for the butcher to explain how Life Drain was so potent under the effects of the domain of Gluttony.

Unknown to him, Maya had come to a similar conclusion as well.

'It's unbelievable... As far as I can remember, there was a mention of a witch in Lab Salem who was capable of doing it in the past. How did he get this Ability for himself?'

### [Chapter 1128 Mouths Of Gluttony](#)

"What in the..."

The participants looked at Eren's recent victim's remains with shocked and terrified faces. In the blink of an eye, the butcher had managed to completely neutralize his opponent using the most bizarre power possible.

The power to devour Life Force and vitality to the point that the mortal shell that housed it would cease to exist. The witnesses to this scene couldn't help having goosebumps on their skin when they looked at Eren's bemused expressions.

"Let's see... who's next?"

Eren looked around as he asked a casual question. The participants also decided to retaliate against the butcher.

"This fucking cultist...."

"Let's... let's kill him."

"Fuck... we can worry about the test later. We need to first get rid of this monstrosity."

The participants decided to create a united front against their common enemy. They looked at each other and came to a common understanding quickly. All of them were veteran rankers. They didn't need to think much to initiate team play.

Eren looked at his opponents and smiled. A pair of matte black daggers were summoned in both his hands before he raised them in front of him in a defensive stance to counter the incoming attack.

Blitz. Clang. Shook.

Eren successfully managed to block the incoming sword attacks one of the participants launched at him. However, his flying sword slashes were too potent and forceful for him to kill them while staying in his position. They managed to send him in the air away from where he stood originally while clashing with them.

Eren had to say that the sword master's mastery of his craft was truly impressive. Although the butcher was able to block his attacks, the swordsman didn't seem to want to escalate the situation. His only job was to send Eren to a particular location where he would be dealt maximum damage.

Wind-element projectiles.

Fire element slashes.

Water element weapons.

Earth element summons.

Spatial barriers that restrict movement.

Attacks powered by various elemental and Aspect fusions.

Restrictive spells.

Debuffing spells.

Elemental and non-elemental attacks -- launched with the help of Perks.

Before Eren knew it, he was bombarded with various offensive moves at once in mid-air. Participants had launched a sync offensive on him that was nearly impossible to dodge.

The participants watched with glee on their faces as their attacks sealed Eren's exit. Their timing and cooperation were as flawless as could be. Plus, some of them had enhanced the various aspects of their attacks with the help of the Perks.

Boom. Boom. Boom.

Eren was bombarded with a barrage of offensive spells at once. He was forced to disappear amid their sheer intensity and quantity. A mana cloud was formed around Eren as a result which kept on expanding. It didn't take long for the mana cloud to descend on the ground following Eren's supposed trajectory.

"Heh! Was that guy a one-hit wonder? He didn't even retaliate."

One of the participants voiced his thoughts with a suspicious look on his face. He had to wait for the wild mana fluctuations in the surroundings to cool down a bit before he found anything about the target.

"Don't let your guard down. Prepare for..."

There was a female ranker who wanted to warn her allies about their common enemy. She felt that he couldn't be taken down with a single barrage of spells alone. However, she stopped her speech midway because she started seeing something through the mana cloud.

They were mouths.

Human and inhuman-looking mouths.

As the mana cloud shrouded Eren's supposed image, spectral mouths of various shapes and sizes surrounded it. Some of them showed that they had teeth inside them. Some looked like they were the mouths of beasts and monsters.

Their spectral lips also had long tongues sticking out. These tongues would move and lick the lips from which they came out. It also looked like the mouths were mocking their viewers.

These mouths could change their size depending upon the attack they were inflicting. They could be as imposing as an elephant and as small as a hummingbird's beak. It looked like they could appear anywhere inside the Domain of Gluttony, making them as omnipotent as the air in the surroundings.

It was gluttony mana that made these mouths.

Because their mouths were made from gluttony mana, they reeked of their intent. It felt like these bodiless mouths had been starving for centuries on end. And no matter how much they ate, their hunger would not be satiated anytime soon.

Their appearance shocked Eren's opponents-making them more terrified of his Ability.

The participants didn't understand the effects and uses of the Gluttony mouths. But they became wary of Eren's retaliation all the same. Some of them had also started feeling hungry after being exposed to the Gluttony mana. Intent-based mana was trying to enter their bodies, making them feel an unsatiated hunger rising from within them.

It didn't take long for the participants' elemental attacks to completely disappear. Their elemental manifestations ceased to exist after the mana that was used to power them was devoured by their mouths.

It seemed these mouths could even nullify the non-elemental attacks to some extent after devouring the very vector force behind them. However, the physical shocks the non-elemental attacks produced were enough to distort them to some degree.

"No way... our attacks were neutralized just like that?"

Another participant saw their elemental and non-elemental attacks being devoured by these mouths. These Gluttony mouths were the ones creating half of the mana clouds in the surrounding area by literally eating the spells and exhaling the residual mana.

Maya also observed Eren's bizarre Ability. She had no idea that he could devour the spells of his opponents inside the Domain of Gluttony. The spectral mouths devoured elemental spells relatively easily.

The Gluttony mouths were increasing the quality and quantity of gluttony mana inside the domain as they devoured the participants' attacks. But Maya had a feeling that was not the only thing they could do.

#### [Chapter 1129 Life Drain For Assassinations](#)

'No... something is wrong.'

Maya acted as an aloof spectator to everything that was happening inside the Domain of Gluttony. She started coming up with her own theories as she watched Gluttony's mouth digest the participants' spells.

'Mana can bend the law of equivalent exchange, but Eren can't break it outright. If he has devoured all of those elemental spells then the devoured mana has to be utilized in some form.'

Maya's eyes shone with brilliance as she looked at Eren's image shrouded in the mana cloud. She was looking forward to what the butcher could do with his demonic Ability.

Some of the participants started feeling an unbelievable amount of hunger all of a sudden when the quality and quantity of gluttony mana inside the domain began increasing. Their mental faculties started getting affected because of their sudden urge to devour something— anything.

"I... fuck... what is happening to me? This... This hunger."

"Damn. You... are you feeling that too? It's like my hunger is taking over me... Aaaaargh!"

"Kill him... let's kill him before it gets any worse."

A bunch of participants closed in on Eren. They launched some more attacks at him while approaching, forcing him to step out of the mana cloud and react in some form. They needed his reaction to continue with their assault.

In the wake of the newly launched attacks, the previous gluttony mouths vanished, and new ones appeared out of thin air to receive the new attacks. The wide-open mouths devoured everything that was thrown in their direction before producing a subtle munching sound.

This didn't look like a showdown among Expert-ranked entities anymore. That's because there was no significant damage to the battlefield and its surroundings. The elemental attacks failed to produce their intended effects. The non-elemental attacks barely managed to cause any disturbance on the battlefield.

It was as if a bunch of Novice rankers were engaging in mortal combat with each other. Unlike the Domain of Wrath which unleashed death and carnage on the battlefield, the Domain of Gluttony looked actually quite peaceful.

The only question was— how long would the peace last?

There was another group of rankers who were not part of the attackers. These rankers were waiting for Eren to show himself. His exit was sealed by these rankers securing a perimeter.

Alas, they did not yet understand that Eren did not plan to run away from them in the first place.

Blink. Swoosh. Pichook.

One of the rankers who was securing a perimeter felt as if somebody had grabbed his neck and made him shut up. The next thing he felt was his neck getting stabbed by something.



The butcher felt as if he was dipping his fingers into a soft and warm chunk of cheese. So when he attacked his recent victim on the neck with his bare hands, his fingers managed to pierce his larynx straightaway.

That's why the puncture wounds were very clean.

### [Chapter 1130 \[Bonus \] Creatures Of Gluttony](#)

Eren's diligent work in trying to accommodate various ways of fighting was paying off.

His inquisitive nature and his will to take risks using his opponents as test materials had allowed him to broaden his horizons so many times at this point. This was the reason why he could use the class of an assassin so flawlessly.

Eren also realized that Life Drain was only this potent because he was using it inside the Domain of Gluttony. He could use the gluttony mana that was all around him to break conventional logic and kill his opponents this way. However, he would be unable to repeat this feat easily if the domain wasn't present.

It would also be possible for him to do the same without having to deploy the domain if he had enough mastery in regularly harnessing gluttony mana. However, he needed to fine-tune his mastery of the Sin of Gluttony for that to happen.

The butcher wanted to experiment with Sin Series Abilities and classes down the line. He had a feeling he could find optimal ways to use Sin Series mana with the various classes he had and will have in the future. The various combinations might allow him to get more out of the classes he was currently using.

The Sin Series mana was very potent. The seven types of intentions that were integrated into it made it feel alive. He had a lot to gain if he found a way to utilize intent-based mana in casting his regular spells, giving them an unprecedented edge.

Eren's ranking status, elemental attainments, bloodline powers, Sin Series Abilities, and lastly his soul sense needed to come together for him to realize his true potential. It would allow him to cast his own blend of intent-based magic.

Of course, this wasn't something the butcher could do on the fly. The most he could do with his current test subjects was to explore the effects of the Domain of Gluttony and field-test the classes he had unlocked at this point.

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Two of the participants died inside the domain without being butchered by Eren's attacks. As such, one could consider them lucky because they didn't suffer in their deaths, relatively speaking.

The no-mess method of killing wasn't objectionable to Eren, no matter how his opponents turned out to be usually. Plus, there was almost nothing he could learn from the rankers of his generation. Therefore, there was no point in dragging the fight.

Gondel gulped empty air when he heard Eren's warning. The geek didn't regret warning the participants. But he hoped that they would be able to get rid of the well-functional maniac who had been like a curse to him and his team ever since they met.

Eren quickly got over the fact that he couldn't assassinate his targets anymore. He quickly became excited about his next move. That's because he had decided to use another class now that he was about to tackle multiple enemies.

The mana fog also cleared up in the meantime, revealing the shrouded Eren's true appearance. The rankers were shocked to find out that what they had been targeting was not their target from the beginning.

They were targeting the creature of gluttony.

The creature of gluttony was unlike the creature of wrath. It had a humanoid body that looked like it was malnourished. The face was blank as if it was awaiting facial features.

The creature of gluttony had an average height and didn't look threatening at all. No threat could be perceived from its limbs, which appeared weak.

However, the creature of gluttony was a lot weirder to look at than the creature of wrath. That's because it had various mouths all over its body. These wide-open, maw-like mouths also had teeth and tongues, which made the creature of gluttony very repulsive to look at.

The creature of gluttony was formed using gluttony mana and the remains of the participants Eren had killed inside the Domain of Gluttony. As such, it had dark red and black blood running through its veins. And the creature's veins could easily be seen through the deathly pale skin he had.

Normal rankers found gluttony repulsive to look at. But that wasn't the case with participants who had been heavily affected by gluttony. As soon as they saw the creature of gluttony, their hunger skyrocketed.

These participants couldn't control themselves from approaching the creature of gluttony. They looked at the creature with their tongues sticking out—salivating at its sight. It was as if the creature of gluttony was an irresistible gourmet dish for them.

The participants approaching the creature of gluttony screamed in joy as they approached it. They ran towards the creature with their hands raised to grasp it. They forgot about their roles in targeting Eren. They even forgot about the test. At this point, satiating their hunger was more important than anything else.

The rest of the participants observed that their feelings of hunger were also taking hold over them ever since they looked at the creature of gluttony. The gluttony mana had not yet affected them severely. As such, they were still in control of their faculties, albeit barely.

These rankers looked at each other and decided to change their strategy. They didn't care about the participants who were a lost cause at this point. Instead, they huddled together to save themselves from Eren's random attacks. Then, they decided to see what the mad-by-gluttony rankers were up to.

It didn't matter to the rankers surrounding the creature of gluttony whether or not they knew each other. They all started biting the creature's body from various angles as if their life depended on it. The creature of gluttony also seemed to welcome the rankers.

The creature of gluttony allowed the participants to eat its deathly pale flesh and drink its dark red blood. The various mouths all over the creature's body also started eating the participants' flesh in return.

Eren also watched with a look of curiosity as the gluttony-struck participants started eating the creature of gluttony and getting devoured by it at the same time. He observed that the more they ate the creature, the bigger it became, both vertically and laterally.

It was a bloody mess.