

Virus 481

Chapter 481 - Recreation Training Center

"Hahaha, your situation, of course! You must have one shitty luck to be put in here the moment you showed up in Ricando." To the old man, Virus' luck was a cause of much hilarity.

"Can you talk in a way we both understand?" Internally, Virus was now thinking about whether to smack this senior citizen to kingdom come if he continued behaving so tiresome.

"Sigh... well, we're all going to die soon anyway, so let me just do you this little favor as a final act of grace, who knows, maybe the heavens blessed me after my death due to my kindness." Releasing a pronounced sigh, the old man's mood sunk further.

Then, with a vacant stare, he proceeded, "You see, the so-called Recreation Training Center is famous and known for another name amongst the ordinary people of Ricando living in the outer section."

"And what is that?" His eyes wide open, Virus anticipated the incoming retort.

"The Arena of Death."

Tilting his head downward, the old man's depression seemed to have elevated to another degree, "It is the Recreation Training Center for those inner disciple bastards from the Inner layer since they just come here to have some fun and train their techniques on the unlucky citizens of the outer layer."

"What do you mean? Can they do that? Is there no law in this city to prevent that kind of treatment toward the ordinary citizens?" Virus was bewildered immediately. He could not comprehend how such a city would even last until now.

Swiftly denying it with a wave of his wrist, he corrected Virus' misunderstanding. "Of course not. Don't get me wrong, the inner disciples can't touch the citizens ordinarily, it is forbidden and those who disobey it will be punished severely."

The dark circles under his eyes together with the pronounced lines over his face signaled the fatigue of the old man who added, "Well, there is a bit of history behind that. In the past, there were no laws to stop the inner disciples from committing all kinds of atrocities in the outer layer, however, seeing that it was getting out of control as it was harming the overall development of the city itself, the previous governor forbid the disciples and everyone else from harming the common people of the city."

At this moment, while clenching his jaws, veins were pulsing on the elder's temple who exuded a horrible hostility aimed at his next sentence's target, "Alas, the Poison Deity

clan required living dummies to at least hone their disciples, thus, that same governor put down another rule, a law if you will."

"What is it?" Immersed in the story, Virus asked for more details.

"Every month, ten people will be randomly chosen and sent to the colosseum and the disciples can use those chosen ones in whatever way they desire." By now, the elder's body was trembling due to the rage that was coursing through his veins and heart.

"Damn..." Fascinated, Virus muttered.

Gnashing his teeth, hatred was boiling to the climax within the elder's eyes. "Yeah, they can do whatever they feel like doing to those ten people every month be it testing a new poison they've developed or a technique they've learned recently, it doesn't matter. They can dismember, poison, and even kill those ten people in the most horrific manners imaginable."

"Anyway, that woman you're talking about, I believe she was one of us unlucky people, and yet, she was clever enough to fool you into this situation." Raising one brow, he didn't fail to mention this particular part as well.

By now, a contemplative glimmer was occupying Virus' countenance. 'Hmm, it's not that she was clever enough to fool me though, rather, I chose to be fooled on purpose.' Though he didn't open his mouth to deny it out loud since there was no significance in doing so.

"I have a question, old man." Promptly, a razor-sharp glint gleamed through Virus' sight. His following question was going to determine his next course of action.

"Go on." Initiating and maintaining eye contact, the senior citizen said.

"Are you insinuating we can't retaliate against the disciples? Are we supposed to just watch them murder us like chickens?" A hell-freezing coldness was radiating off of Virus' being at this point as he patiently waited for the old man's response. The elder's answer was going to dictate the difficulty of his subsequent plan.

Listening to his question, the old man cracked up once more before replying in a single breath, "Of course not, to make it 'seem' fair, the governor declared that the chosen ones are also permitted to retaliate and kill the disciples and even vowed that there won't be any repercussions or grudges held from the side of the clan. Ah, actually, they encourage it even and reward the chosen one that succeeds in killing a disciple with a hundred first grade Qi Ingots."

"Oho, this just got much more entertaining, then!" A vicious grin abruptly crept over Virus' visage.

Meanwhile, feeling irritated, a notion was flickering through his brain, 'To hell with that bitch. If she had just described the situation from the get-go, I would've willingly jumped at the idea of coming here and raking in some money! I can't believe she left me in the dark, making me worried for nothing all this time. What a bitch, payback is in order for her.'

In the meantime, the old guy merely scoffed at Virus' naïve bravado, "That's impossible though, mortals like us can't possibly dream of going against cultivators, that's an unshakeable truth of this town."

"Well, we'll see about that, anyway, old man, I'll be the first one to go out first when the door opens, are you four okay with that?"

"Sure, who am I to stop a fool's death." Although the old man was happy to agree and live a bit longer, the other three didn't exhibit any reactions whatsoever. They didn't really care.

'I suppose that means yes.'

...

'How much longer will it take?' Virus was just starting to get drowsy when the noise of the door unlocking itself traveled to his ears.

Click~

"That's it, old man. See you soon." After some hesitation, pushing it open, Virus walked out.

"Haha, I don't think you will, but I sure as hell hope you do." Was the elder's only words in return.

In the meantime, just as Virus passed through the small entry, his pupils went into overdrive trying to adjust themselves to the abrupt light that had just flashed into his eyes, thus temporarily leaving him sightless and blind. The source of the light was of course the sun of the planet.

CLAP! CLAP-CLAP~

CLAP! CLAP-CLAP~

BUZZ! CLANK~

BOOOO~

CHEER~ CHEER!

Much to his stupefaction, while Virus gradually regained his sight, he found himself in the middle of the colosseum with tens of thousands of spectators cheering and clapping in harmony!

"What the...?" With his pupils shrinking, Virus was confused, "Why are they cheering so excitedly? Weren't the common citizens supposed to abhor the Arena of Death?" Due to the tone and the way the elder explained the Recreation Training Center before, Virus had mistakenly surmised that everyone in the outer layer loathed it.

... but maybe he was wrong?

Chapter 482 - Binn

As Virus found himself in the middle of the colosseum filled with a smooth ellipse of sand, speechless, Virus gazed at the thousands of spectators screaming and cheering for the one-sided match to begin.

Focusing on specific voices, Virus listened to some of the conversations they were having.

...

"How do you think Binn will kill his prey this time?"

"Well, I put all my Qi Ingots on him dismembering all his limbs before taking out his heart, that's how he usually does it, so there is a high chance I'll make a fortune out of this!"

"What about you?"

"Me? I feel like he will scoop out the eyes first, honestly, I heard someone claiming to be Binn's aunt's grandmother's father's brother's son was a distant cousin of his, according to him, Binn personally told him he would scoop the eyes out first this time!"

"Is that so? Damn, why didn't you tell me?"

...

From another direction, he perceived a new conversation.

"I wagered one of my houses on him poisoning the chosen one! I got inside intel that he will do that. I can guarantee it!"

"Are you an idiot? Why would you do that?"

...

"Woah, I'm so thrilled to see some blood spilled, it's the best feeling ever, watching someone die via the most horrific methods imaginable."

"Yeah, yeah! At first, it nearly sickened me, but now I don't think I can do without coming here every month!"

...

Observing the abnormal mania nearly everywhere, Virus was amazed.

"Have these people gone mad in excitement and euphoria?" Honestly, the behavior of the crowd seemed insane to Virus.

At the same time, he concluded that there were probably two kinds of people in the city, the people who secretly thought the monthly random pick was a hateful and terrifying event and the people who assumed it to be an ordinary event, something that had nothing to do with them and was probably never going to. The belief had sunk into their root that the monthly ten deaths were just like a fatal disease everyone may catch in their lifetime but the fate was probably never going to implicate them per se.

A transparent instance would be the numerous deadly car accidents that happen every day on Technology Earth.

Until the moment one experiences that accident, that person may have the false impression that in all probability, it wasn't going to happen to him.

True, the person might have fear of a car crash or something similar, however, they still continue driving, accepting the risk because deep down, they don't truly believe they will be involved in a car accident as long as they are careful enough.

Or the same example of catching an incurable illness. Up to the realization of having it, although the individual was always aware of the existence of such an illness, he just didn't think such tragedy would befall them.

People just determine that when there is a low probability of them being afflicted with certain rare sickness, they aren't going to be ever entangled with it. Thus, it's simply better to ignore it or don't even care about its existence.

Virus mused that was perhaps what was happening here today in this arena. The old man and the three others had truly awakened to the realization of how bad this event was in essence, now that they had been involved personally, while everyone else was still deeply asleep.

While such notions were passing through his mind, Virus' eyes spotted someone standing at some distance from him as he smirked evilly toward him.

He had long orange hair and a pizza face filled with acne. All around him was surrounded by various weapons such as spears, swords, etc.

"Hahaha... you must be the chosen one, you should feel proud to be lucky enough to get picked for this event."

"Huh? What the fuck is he talking about? He's not just a pizza-face, but also a pea-brain? A retard, huh?" Declaring that out loud, Virus checked and saw that the opponent's cultivation was merely at the twelfth level of Energy Disentanglement, which was still too much for a mortal citizen.

"Did you just insult me?" His eyes wide open in instantaneous rage, all feeling of casualness left the man. Now that he was insulted as a retard, the pizza face wielded two spears on both hands as he was about to charge in Virus' direction.

Meanwhile, cheers and boos reverberated everywhere.

"Yes! He's going to turn that dude into a sieve! It's my lucky day today! Heck yeah, my gamble paid off at last!"

"Boooo! Poison him! Poison the bastard, come one!"

"Noooo! My whole life depends on this bet, please cut off all of his limbs!"

As everyone was mentioning, supposedly, the colosseum had a betting section where everyone could bet on a few options such as the various methods the disciple would use to murder his prey.

Of course, there was also the choice of the chosen one winning as well but no one was foolish enough to burn their money on that one.

"I was going to show you some mercy and kill you a bit more gently, but now that you seem not to understand your situation, let me send you off by making you experience the feeling of tens of holes being forced on your body!" Gripping the shafts of both spears tightly, the pizza face put one foot ahead of himself. He was about to dash forward, like an arrow that was released from the string!

"Would you look at this bitch?"

Smiling broadly, Virus' image promptly vanished before his reappearance behind pizza face.

BOOM!

It was only after his reappearance that a sonic boom reverberated in the arena as it was followed by silence.

"What just happened? How did he-"

Before confusion could even spread as to what was happening, like a broken doll, pizza-face's head, arms, and legs abruptly detached from the trunk of his body as they all fell on the ground while massive blood covered the sand!

"..."

"..."

"..."

THE GOD VIRUS

Chapter 483 - Silence

Utter silence.

Like a miracle, despite the existence of thousands of spectators, an unexpected quietness descended upon the arena to the point you could hear a pin drop!

Dumbfounded, dazed, startled, and lost, every single one of those feelings mingled together, resulting in the birth of many complex emotions. No one could comprehend the event that had taken place before them for a long time. It was as if they had just witnessed something impossible.

"What now? Do I just go back?" Virus murmured, scratching his head addled.

Meanwhile, in the most luxurious area of the colosseum which had been designed solely for the nobility of the Poison Deity clan, several dark faces were scowling as they stared down at the scene of pizza face getting beheaded so easily.

"That trash! How could he die like that and leave a stain on the names of the disciples of Poison Deity?" One of the individuals sitting in that VIP area claimed indignantly.

"Well, trash like that better be dead." Sitting on the best available seat, the person with the most expressionless countenance remarked. He was adorned with an extravagant robe engraved with dragons and tigers.

"True. You are wise, senior brother." The same indignant person calmed down at once and complimented the extravagant man before proceeding, "But we can't let the name of our Poison Deity clan be seen as anything less than the name of a god in the hearts of these filthy citizens or they may grow arrogant, that is our responsibility to the clan as its loyal disciples... so we better prove it to them by ripping that person who killed the orange-head to a thousand pieces."

However, shaking his head, the extravagantly dressed man rejected the proposal. "That's not possible. Every chosen one is required to fight just once and they can leave afterward if they desire to... that is the law and there's nothing we can do about it."

Gnashing his teeth, the other man asked, "Then, what do we do, senior brother?"

"Nothing we can do to him unless he's unlucky enough to be picked as a chosen one again in the following months... that or we wait for..." Stopping at that point, the man didn't proceed, however, his meaning was delivered perfectly clear.

"I see. But we should do something to at least alleviate the mess that idiot created for us, what do you offer?"

"Simple, just finish off the next chosen one using the goriest method." As if nothing was ever going to disrupt his relaxed body language, the extravagant man advised.

"Alright. You, go! You know what to do." Pointing at one of his own few lackeys tagging along with them, he ordered coldly.

"Yes, boss."

...

On the other side, after Virus was finished defeating the opponent, he returned to the waiting space in a laid-back manner.

However, the moment he stepped into the room, he was faced with four pairs of eyeballs that were about to pop out of their sockets.

"W-what? Hh-h-how are you still alive?" The old guy was the first to question him in utter disbelief and astonishment. He was bowled over.

"Huh? Was I supposed to die to a weakling bitch like that? Didn't I tell you I'll see you again soon? Did you think I'd break my promise? I'm a man of my word, old man." Smirking at the senior citizen in amusement, Virus commented.

"W-what? Y-y-y-you're not a mortal, are you? You're a cultivator!" Comprehending what was up, at last, the old man shouted awestricken.

"I suppose I am."

"..."

"..."

Faced with the silence of their stupefaction, Virus merely suggested, "Well, anyway, can I go instead of you next, old man? Since I'm in need of some urgent cash. That's doable, right?"

Exhaling a deep breath in an attempt to calm his nerves, the old man remarked. "Phew... yes, it can be done... but are you sure?"

"Yep, I told you I need some Qi Ingots. Just don't come denying later on saying it was your cash." Grinning like a Cheshire cat, Virus declared.

"T-there is no way I would do that! In fact, I swear to call you boss if you do me that favor!"

"Alright, then guess that's that. Though no need to go as far as to call me boss." Virus stated with a relaxed brow free of frown lines.

...

Around fifteen minutes later, the door unlocked itself for a second time since Virus' arrival.

"That's my cue I guess, see you soon, old man." Waving the elder goodbye, Virus ambled toward the entrance.

"Yes, boss!" Bowing respectfully, the senior citizen greeted and escorted Virus to the door.

"Huh... you're a funny one, old man."

Click~

Pushing the door open, Virus materialized in the middle of the arena once more. The instant he was in everyone's line of sight, however, a brief silence and then nonstop noise of chatter filled the surroundings.

Meanwhile, in the VIP section, the extravagant man felt surprised, yet, no emotions were exhibiting on his face. "Oh, so he came back on his own. I suppose that makes things easier."

"Hahaha, yes, this is great for us!" The previously indignant man was now all smiles and sunshine.

"What's the cultivation level of the man you sent down?" Next, the extravagant man threw a simple question at the beam of sunshine beside him.

"No worries, my lackey's definitely going to win since he's already in..."

...

In the meantime, examining the cultivation level of his opponent, Virus realized it was a stronger one this time. 'The third level of Liberation, huh?'

...

As for the crowd, already having the knowledge that the new disciple was on another league compared to Binn, they began muttering confidently, "I don't know why he returned, but that chosen one is overestimating himself after one lucky win, he should've left when he had the chance. Now that he's against Lim, he's dead for sure!"

"Yep, anyway, what did you bet on in this round?"

"Well, since they said Lim, the famous skinner, was going up next, I thought he may display another one of his 'skin the chosen on alive' kind of view for us, so I betted on that."

"Well, yeah. Knowing Lim, that's not unlikely."

...

While Virus was studying the opponent's weapon which was a machete, Lim talked, garnering Virus' undivided attention. "Huh? We thought it's a pity since you'd surely be too scared to return anymore... but it seems we were sorely mistaken, who could've known a foolish one has shown up this time."

'We? So the disciples have a gathering of a sort somewhere, huh?'

Simultaneously, Virus examined the surroundings until he spotted the most luxurious section of the colosseum.

Gazing into the eyes of the extravagantly dressed man, he determined, 'There, so that's their little gathering and that man seems to be the most respected one amongst all of them.'

"Well, I guess that's wonderful news for me anyway. Now I can put on a grand show for everyone to appreciate and fear." Spreading both arms, Lim started laughing out loud, "Hahahaha..."

"Another retard, huh?" Shaking his head in some disappointment, a line was inflamed in him.

'Unnamed Virus Technique, First Form – Impulse!'

THE GOD VIRUS

Chapter 484 - Of Course Not!

Immediately, Virus' silhouette was gone at once as he approached Lim at a lightning-fast pace, took his sword out of his spatial container, and slashed at his body a dozen times!

When he was done and stopped, much to the stupefaction of the spectators, Lim's body transformed into a pile of meat that fell on the sand. Virus' sword was also stored in his container already.

Up to this point, amongst the mortal crowd, no one had been even able to catch a sight of Virus' weapon.

"..."

"..."

...

Meanwhile, in the VIP area, a frown of displeasure had, at last, crept over the extravagant man's forehead who commanded the previously all smiles and sunshine guy who was once more the indignant man. "He'll come back again, go and kill him yourself."

"I couldn't ask for more, senior brother. Just watch me skewer him for our barbecue night tonight!" With rage contorting his face, the indignant man exclaimed.

"Ew, that's disgusting, do you want me to eat human meat? Wait, don't tell me you've been doing that all this time? Is that where you got all that meat from?!" The extravagant man's eyelids were about to snap as he questioned the indignant man in disbelief.

"Ah... o-of course not, senior brother. I was just saying a sentence to make this sound more horrible." Beads of sweat were long rolling down the indignant man's forehead who thought in retrospection, 'Phew... I nearly revealed it myself, this mouth of mine...'

"Is that so?" Glaring into his pupils in some doubt, the extravagant man asked rhetorically.

"Absolutely!"

...

Returning to the waiting area again, funnily, Virus was against the bulging eyes of oldies and teenagers.

"Stop that already!" Yelling in frustration, Virus was getting sick of this repetitive reaction now.

"Oh, my great boss! Thank you for saving my life! I, Archie, shall be your most loyal servant until my last breath!" Kowtowing in worship, Archibald, smashed his forehead on the ground and swore allegiance to Virus.

"Oi, oi, oi, old man, don't be like that, why are you swearing to follow me out of nowhere without permission! I don't need an old man following me around so stop. It's not like I did it for you, I just need the money, so..."

"Ah, is that so? Then, if you don't need an old guy like me, just kill me here and take the life you granted yourself."

"Have you gone senile, old man?"

"I've never been more enlightened in my life, sir! Boss!"

"Sigh..." Letting out a helpless sigh of annoyance, Virus decided to just ignore the guy.

Instead, looking elsewhere, he wanted to jump on his next course of action, when he was faced with three more adoring stares that already had stars shining in them.

"Boss! Please save us too! We swear allegiance as well!" All three, one old and two teenagers, smashed their foreheads on the tiled floor so hard that a wound cracked open there.

By now, the three others who were despairing earlier were looking at Virus with eyes filled with vigor and hope!

They had miraculously discovered an opportunity at life!

Although Virus was initially just about to ask whether he could take their place and participate in their stead for some quick buck, now, seeing their worshipping gazes as if they were looking at some god, Virus felt hesitant.

In the end, though, shaking his head powerlessly, he agreed, "It's not because of you guys I'm doing this, it's because I require the money."

"Yes, boss!" All four screamed from the bottom of their hearts, so happy they didn't care about the bleeding wound on their foreheads.

"Sigh..." Rubbing the back of his neck in exasperation, Virus shook his head and left the room without further ado.

Returning to the colosseum, Virus noticed that the man that had been sitting the closest to the extravagant person was standing in front of him this time.

'So, the second-strongest person around is here.'

At the same time, excited cheers and exhilaration were heating up the arena as the spectators looked forward to the upcoming show of slaughter.

"I-It's Wae for real! Wae is here to personally take care of the chosen one!!!
Damn! I didn't think we'd get to see him show up for real!!!"

"Yes! Dammit, now I'm looking forward to how he deals with the chosen one,
it's gonna be a great show."

"Yeah, I would've been uncertain whether the chosen one would win the next
match as well if it wasn't Wae, but now that Wae is here, the chosen one is
dead for sure!"

Observing Wae together with a yawn, Virus determined his opponent was
someone that had just broken through to the Sublimity Emergence stage.

'Well, I admit this one's better.' That notion had just transmitted through his
mind when Wae faded away like someone that had just vaporized!

"Die! You disgusting citizen!"

Boom!

The following second, he was already beside Virus as he tried kicking Virus'
body to the side.

Merely raising a single-arm, however, Virus easily blocked the kick without
budging from his place in the least. Simultaneously, a contemplative notion
was passing his mind, 'Hmm, it doesn't hurt, not even a bit. This dude is
nothing compared to the enemies I faced in the Invisible Ancient Fortress
World. It's as if they're on totally different realms of power.'

"What?" Briefly shocked silly by the act of Virus effortlessly defending against
his foot strike, Wae was just about to slash at him using his saber when Virus
beat him to it by internally activating three forms one after another.

'Unnamed Virus Technique, First Form – Impulse!'

'Unnamed Virus Technique, Second Form – Friction!'

'Fountain Bow Cut!'

Swish!

Abruptly, Wae froze still, no longer moving in the least.

Watching this scene, everyone was confused as to why Wae had suddenly stopped moving altogether instead of assaulting the chosen one even more savagely.

However, that was only until Wae's head rolled off his neck as it fell on the ground. At the same time, a fountain of blood shot up from his headless frame that had yet to fall on the sand.

"..."

"..."

"...."

THE GOD VIRUS

Chapter 485 - Complement

"Damn..."

"The chosen one did it again. Just who is he?"

"Are such strong citizens even allowed to participate in the monthly competition?"

"What then? Should only weak citizens be sent to be slaughtered like chickens? Did you forget about the fair clause of the event? It doesn't matter, as long as it's a citizen, it is fine."

"Right?"

...

Concurrently, while everyone was expecting Virus to retreat into the resting room again, Virus suddenly stupefied everyone by yelling toward the VIP seats.

"I don't need to go back, I've already gotten permission to replace the other two remaining chosen ones, but enough of the weak-ass opponents." Indeed, the previous times Virus went back to the room, it was only because he didn't have consent to replace the chosen ones, and that's why he had to go back. But now that they had all approved of him participating in their place, Virus didn't need to waste more time.

Instead, directly pointing a finger at the extravagant dude, he provoked, "You! Get down here and face me, fool! Or are you going to continue sitting there while every one of your fellow disciples gets hacked down into pieces?"

"..."

Immediately, everyone felt their heart was about to burst into their mouths as they realized who Virus was signaling at.

"I-I-It's Cray! He's talking to Cray!"

"Damn, just what kind of balls does he have to instigate Cray's hostility... Cray's the most bloodthirsty warrior that is present today!"

"That idiot, just when I was thinking he's unstoppable, he had to go and offend Cray!"

"Whatever happens, that chosen one has earned my respect today."

Meanwhile, Virus urged the extravagant individual, Cray, to come and battle him.

The sole reply that derived from Cray, however, was, "Huh?"

Then, standing up on his feet, much to the bewilderment of everyone, Cray straightly threw himself off that VIP balcony without a second thought.

Pssst!

Landing on the sand of the colosseum, Cray began walking toward Virus in an easy-going and cool style. When he was upon him at last, keeping his bearing, he said. "You... dare challenge me?"

After a short pause, he continued, "You think you are worthy?"

"What the fuck? Another retard? Why can't I just get a single normal dude to fight against?" Grabbing his head using both hands, Virus messed up his hair faking intense frustration.

Seeing Virus' act, darkness disguised Cray's expression. Never once in his entire life had he been treated as a fool, but here it was, someone who didn't bother answering his question while outright addressing him as a retard.

"What I was trying to say is, you are not-"

"Why? Why can't I get a single adversary with a few brain cells." Stumping one foot hard on the sand, Virus shouted further.

By now, many tics of wrath were pulsing on Cray's face who opened his mouth again after being interrupted.

"What I'm trying to say is, it's going to be one-sided beating and not an actual fight where-"

"Is this the doing of the so-called heavens cursing me with idiots? Moreover, it's a talkative retard at that, just when will he shut up, I wonder."

"At least listen to me!"

Angered to the point of speechlessness, giving up on his little speech, Cray picked the hammer from his back and instantly vanished from every mortal's sight.

'Unnamed Virus Technique, First Form – Impulse!'

Subsequently, with his sudden emergence behind Virus, he heavily smashed the hammer at Virus' back!

Bam!

As the force of the impact made contact with his body, Virus was thrust toward Cray's earlier position.

To be honest, it would be a lie to say Virus wasn't surprised by this sudden development.

'He's not just a newbie in the Sublimity Emergence stage! It must've been a while since he broke through.'

Until now, 'nearly' all of the opponents Virus was capable of defeating were cultivators that had been newly introduced to the Sublimity Emergence.

However, now receiving the great blow from Cray and calculating the burst of speed, Virus concluded he was incapable of reacting to it with 'Impulse' alone!

While being thrust through the sand like a broken doll, various contemplations were going through Virus' brain.

At the same time, Cray didn't seem to be finished as he vanished more.

'Unnamed Virus Technique, First Form – Impulse!'

'Unnamed Virus Technique, Second Form – Friction!'

Prior to the arrival of Cray, before his physique was even done sliding over the sand, Virus landed on his feet forcefully and activated both forms of his movement technique.

Simultaneously, his sword became visible for everyone to see at last as he raised and blocked!

BAM!

Suddenly, Cray's hammer connected to Virus' sword before his frame gradually emerged in everyone's line of sight!

Bam! Bam! Boom!

Following quickly, an intense battle ensued as wave after wave of sand was erupting all around the colosseum.

Unfortunately, the clash was happening so quickly that none of the common citizens were able to witness the fight firsthand.

All they could observe were some afterimages and collision noises happening all over the place.

One time an eruption of sand rose from the left side of the arena while the next instant the right side of the arena turned into an utter mess!

"Damn... I can't see anything, can anyone tell us what's happening?"

"I'm not catching a single thing as well."

"This isn't a battle we can understand or perceive anymore."

In the meantime, Virus dodged the hammer and finally decided to attack for the very first time!

So far, he had done nothing but defend while gauging the limits of his opponent, but now he was getting bored.

'Fountain Bow Cut!'

"Hmph!"

As the bow cut unleashed right at Cray's neck, letting out a harrumph filled with contempt, Cray immediately pulled back his hammer and blocked!

Wham!

"You thought that's enough to-"

'Fountain Arrow Cut!'

Pierce~

Alas, before he could even finish the sentence, the complementary strike was perfected in that window of opportunity as a sword full of energy penetrated through Cray's heart.

"Guess it was enough, eh?" Virus said grinning viciously.

"Argh..." Feeling a sting in his chest, Cray unconsciously tilted his head down to see the source of the sting that was getting worse by the second.

The moment he caught the sight of the sword, however, fear overwhelmed him while his eyelids went wide open and his pupils dilated to the extreme.

Of course, that state of shock didn't persist for long as Virus pulled out his bloody sword and watched Cray drop on the sand floor before starting to bleed mortally.

It only took seconds before death overcame Cray as he drew his final breath in the world.

"..."

"..."

"..."

Even though no one was capable of seeing the process of confrontation, everyone was perfectly clear as to what had occurred at the final moments as Virus easily pierced Cray's heart and killed him!

"Fuck! He killed Cray as well! We're talking about 'that' Cray! 'The' Cray!"

"I must be dreaming, damn!"

"Today's monthly battle is something else... I'm mind-blown."

"Just who is that person? What's his name?"

"He's like the god of slaughter in the arena. Everyone expected him to be a sheep, but he was a wolf in sheep's clothing all along!"

THE GOD VIRUS

Chapter 486 - Archibald

Now that he had won, instead of leaving, seemingly proud, Virus raised his head and shouted in a provoking tone, "Is there no one else? No one courageous enough?"

Indeed, since there was still a chosen one's slot remaining, Virus attempted to arouse a disciple's honor in hopes of another one stepping up to confront him.

He wasn't just going to miss the opportunity to earn an additional hundred first-grade Qi Ingots.

Unfortunately, even after an entire minute was gone, not a single disciple was stirred into motion.

Apparently, Cray had been the strongest disciple to be present in the Recreation Training Center today.

Meanwhile, seeing no one daring to volunteer to go against this charismatic dark horse, the crowd was filled with sensations of admiration and amazement while a loud cheer of applause targeted at Virus boomed the colosseum!

CHEEER~

WOOOOAAAH~

YEAAAAAH!

Nonetheless, seeing no one daring to accept his challenge, releasing a disappointed sigh, Virus concluded, 'Seems like I can't earn the final one hundred Qi Ingots.'

Hence, since no one plucked up the courage to come forward, it meant the last chosen one could return home without even participating in the event today. He was passively saved.

Since everything had been dealt with, there was no point in remaining in the middle of the arena, thus, Virus retreated into the waiting section.

When he returned, four zealots greeted him, "Welcome back, boss!"

Gazing at the fanatical glimmer within the four's pupils, Virus only let out a helpless sigh and announced, "You four are all saved now, you may go back to your homes. But the money is all for me to take, so don't go back on our earlier promise."

"Boss! Not talking about money, even this old Archie is for you to take. I belong to you now." An uncompromising shimmer glaring back at Virus, Archibald declared stubbornly.

"Get the fuck out! What would I need an old bag of bones for? Also, why do you make it sound so wrong!?" Virus was on the verge of slapping the old dude dead any seconds now.

"Just kill me then, boss!" Kowtowing on the ground, like a servant asking his king for death, Archibald implored to be murdered exaggeratedly.

Immediately, Virus unleashed some of his murderous intent and urged the oldie, "Then come here, Imma slaughter you for real!"

"Have mercy upon this fragile underling of yours, Boss!" Comically, while remaining in that kowtowing pose, Archibald retreated instead of getting closer.

'Should I kill him and be done with it?' By now, veins were pulsing through Virus' neck, when abruptly, the other door was unlocked and pushed open.

Click~

Subsequently, the same buffed-up middle-aged guy made an appearance as he throw a pouch in Virus' direction who caught it effortlessly.

"You killed four disciples; therefore, you'll be rewarded with four hundred first-grade Qi Ingots. Take it and leave." Then turning toward the other four, he commanded, "You four are also permitted to leave. So, leave!"

Then, without looking back, the buffed-up guy left.

Inspecting the items inside the pouch, Virus was faced with the view of hundreds of small stones, radiating slight Qi from themselves.

"So, these are Qi Ingots." Truthfully, Virus was already aware of the existence of this famous currency of the Cultivation Multiverse of Qi prior to even returning to the past.

Alas, the Qi Ingots in his possession were only the trashiest first-grade Qi Ingots in existence. Above the first grade, respectively, there existed the second grade, the third grade, the fourth grade, and so on.

However, one detail worth mentioning about the term 'Qi Ingot' was that it was just a general and an overarching term used for a 'variety' of Qi Ingots in existence. If one looked at it in a more specific manner, there were various types of Qi Ingots with their own particular names and tags.

Albeit, no one wanted or cared enough to waste their precious time on memorizing the title of each specific Qi Ingot in the world which were simply too many!

Thus, the cultivators came up with the universal name of 'Qi Ingot' which encompassed all types. All they had to do was determine the level and the quality of Qi the mineral possessed and then proceed to grade it accordingly.

The variety of Qi Ingots was such a broad field that even when it came to the first-grade Qi Ingots alone, apparently, there were several types of minerals that formed in nature while each had its own specialized title.

For example, when Virus visited the Cultivation Earth for the first time, at the final match between him and Rossefin, many disciples had gambled various types of gemstones such as Peridoto Qi Gemstone and Jasper Qi Gemstone on the probability of Rossefin winning and becoming the champion of the Martial Contest. Those gemstones were in fact generally incorporated as first-grade Qi Ingots.

"My heavens! Never in my entire pathetic life have I seen so many Qi Ingots together! You're a nouveau riche now, boss!" Suddenly, an additional old head popped right beside Virus's ear, gasping in astonishment.

Feeling annoyed, Virus transferred the pouch into his spatial container much to the shock of Archibald.

"Boss, where did the Qi Ingots go to? Did someone steal it?" Being ignorant about spatial containers, Archibald screamed in alarm. "Who! Who dares steal my boss's money?!"

"Shut up." Irritated by the old man, Virus left the room and moved toward the outside of the colosseum.

Tap~ Tap~

As he got closer and closer to the exit, however, more veins covered Virus' forehead as he paused at last and queried, "Why do you four keep following me? Don't you have any family members or a home waiting for your return? Just go back."

To that, Archibald was the first one to tilt his head down in some sadness before proclaiming, "Sigh... boss, this old man is all by himself, my dear wife

has long since left me alone in this cruel world. Moreover, there had been no children between us. You're all I have now, so don't abandon me please."

Even though it was hidden well from the other three, when Archibald mentioned his wife, Virus spotted a tinge of sadness accompanied by rage which confused Virus.. Obviously, there was more to the story of his wife than meets the eye.

THE GOD VIRUS

Chapter 487 - Thats That Then

Afterward, it was the two teenagers' turn to talk, "The two of us are brothers. Our parents exchanged us for some cows with a slave trader who in return auctioned us off as slaves to other rich chosen ones who needed a replacement to die in their stead. So, we don't really have a place to go back to since we were supposed to die today."

'What shitty parents.' While deliberating that line, out of curiosity, Virus interrogated, "Huh? What about your parents, don't you wanna go back to them?"

Gritting their teeth, however, the two rejected at once, "They are better off and much happier with the cows." It was clear they could not forgive them just yet. Furthermore, who could say for sure they wouldn't we sold off for a second time if they went back.

As for the last old guy, he merely said, "Ah, I'm actually a homeless guy, I was just sitting beside my bonfire when I felt sleepy all of a sudden and passed out, when I came to my senses, I was already in that damned room, waiting to die."

Listening to their stories, Virus felt speechless at their tragic stories while murmuring, "How can they all happen to be living such miserable lives?"

Still, he didn't comment about accepting or denying them and instead proceeded on his path to the outside. However, if there was a difference in his behavior, it was the fact that he no longer told them to stop chasing after him.

Following that, when Virus finally reached the previous spot where the cloaked woman had handed him over to the buffed-up guy, Virus couldn't discover any shadows of the cloaked female.

However, he could easily see a woman with tan skin at some distance who was anxiously and yet sadly waiting for something or someone. Her eyes were full of guilt.

Subsequently, the woman's eyes went wide open in shock when it fell upon Virus' frame. She could not believe Virus had returned alive!

Promptly realizing something, however, a glint of relief seemed to occupy her eyes at last as she turned around and was about to leave.

Right before her departure, however, Virus' figure promptly dissipated before materializing beside her.

Bam!

Grabbing her by the neck next, Virus pushed her into the wall.

"Argh...!"

"W-what are you doing?!" After the initial state of stupor, the woman voiced in surprise.

"You really think I won't recognize you without your cloak?" Getting his face closer to hers, Virus' icy stare locked into her pupils.

"Y-you... how?" While her gaze was directed downward, nonstop beads of sweat were dripping from her forehead as she looked at Virus in terror and confusion. The tan lady was incapable of comprehending how Virus had come to be aware of his identity.

"It doesn't matter. What matters is that you had enough balls to try to deceive me. And now, you're going to face the consequences of your actions."

Wearing a smile full of contempt, Virus sneered at the female in his grasp.

"I-I..."

"Go on... try coming up with an excuse, I'm listening." His smile transforming into a quizzical one, Virus waited patiently.

"I-I'm so sorry. That's the only thing I can say. I just can't die yet since I'm all my little sister has left in this world." Maintaining minimal eye contact, she notified him.

"Huh? Am I supposed to care?" Tightening the grip around his fingers at once, Virus choked her so hard that her face turned red and purple.

Argh~ Crrhgh!

There wasn't a shadow of any doubt that she was doomed to die soon in case Virus' palm remained tight around her neck.

Tch!

Clicking his tongue, at last, Virus let go of her neck, dropping her trembling figure which was trying her best to catch her breath on the floor.

Hee! Haa! Hee...! Haa...!

"Count yourself lucky I made a huge profit out of this. Believe me when I say this; if this encounter of ours was anything but beneficial in the end, it would've been your lifeless corpse that would be on the floor right now."

In all honesty, just as Virus was claiming, he had every intention of eliminating the cloaked woman after he was done seeing this little scheme of hers to the end. And yet, since the outcome had been nothing but positive, he decided against that temporarily.

"Hmph, just pay the rest of the promised Qi Ingots."

"I... I apologize, but those ten Qi Ingots I bought your Identity Plaque with were my entire fortune, I could barely get my hands on that much alone after selling all my properties." Her voice breaking up due to both fear and guilt, the sole course of action she could take was to beg for further forgiveness, "I-I'm really sorry."

"Hmph, you being sorry isn't worth shit. Begone this very instant or I may just change my mind and take that worthless life of yours."

Listening to everything Virus had to say, the tan female briefly locked gazes only to realize those eyes were dead-serious. If she delayed any longer, he may truly go ahead and kill him.

"O-okay...!" Therefore, with the horrific image of her lonely sister overwhelming her heart, the tan woman rose to her feet in a rush and walked away in a wobbly manner.

Observing her unsteady amble to the distance while holding her painful neck, Virus merely let out a harrumph of indifference.

Meanwhile, behind him, seeing his cruel attitude toward the tan woman, a shiver went down all four's spine as they unanimously agreed, 'Ah, I better remember to never deceive or lie to the boss... unless I have a death wish.'

With his face returning to its expressionless state at once, Virus started walking again while casually inquiring, "So, what are your names? I know that annoying oldie's called Archibald. But what about you three?"

At once, one after another, the two brothers replied, "I'm the older brother and my name is Luca, boss."

"I'm the younger brother. Please call me Luna, boss."

"Hmm, Luca and Luna, eh? Good names!" Virus exclaimed with an unceremonious nod.

"What about you? Are you ever going to introduce yourself or not?" Targeting the second old man who had been the quietest one so far, Virus questioned.

"Please address me as Augustus, boss."

'Augustus, huh? I wonder what his background was before becoming a homeless person.'

"So... Archibald, Augustus, Luca, and Luna." Contemplating for a bit, Virus became resolved at last. "Alright, you four may follow me as my servants and aids from now on, do you consent?"

"Yes, boss!" All four nodded in agreement without any signs of dissatisfaction whatsoever.

"Bear in mind, now that you are my servants, you have to loyally serve me to death. However, before that, I'll give you one final chance to go away right this instant."

"You better think this through, it's your sole opportunity to quit alive. Henceforth, only death will be your retirement plan." Afterward, Virus proceeded to walk silently, giving anyone who wished to quit to depart at once.

Albeit, none desired to part ways with him as they chased after him tacitly.

"Alright, that's that then, I suppose. Now..."

THE GOD VIRUS

Chapter 488 - We Need...

"Alright, that's that then, I suppose. Now..."

Pondering his following immediate course of action, Virus looked back at the four, "We need a place to stay at before anything else... do any of you have a place we could temporarily occupy?"

To that, feeling somewhat embarrassed, Luca and Luna were the first ones to answer, "We were sold so..."

As it was Augustus' turn to respond, all eyes were focused on him.

"Ah, I'm a homeless person... but I know this great spot we could stay at while enjoying nature at the same time."

"..."

"..."

"..."

"..." Virus didn't even need to consider that suggestion as he turned toward Archibald at once. Most of his hopes were directed at Archibald since the beginning.

"Ah... I... I live in the slums right outside the city. It's a warm single-room cottage, I guess we can go there?" Archibald answered.

Feeling totally numb at this point, Virus merely gazed at the sky above and decided, "Forget about it, we'll stay at an inn for now."

"That's a great idea!" Archibald and Luca agreed enthusiastically.

Afterward, the company of five walked through the streets of the city while searching for any nice quality inn that might pop up along their path.

While they continued ambling in a random direction, the quiet Augustus suddenly opened his mouth, "Boss, if it's not rude of me to inquire... can I ask why you agreed to accept us? Are you taking pity in our circumstances perhaps?"

The second he threw that question, the countenances of Luca, Luna, and Archibald also turned completely serious. Apparently, they were also curious about why Virus was receiving them.

"Huh? Take you in out of pity? Me?" That inquiry, however, dumbfounded Virus briefly before he burst into a peal of uncontrollable laughter, "Hahahaha..."

Sometime later, wiping the corners of his eyes, he answered amusedly, "That was one of the funniest jokes I've heard in a while, haha."

"Ah, if not pity, then why, boss?" It was Archibald this time.

"Hmm, well, that's because I need some people to run errands for me and follow my commands." Touching the base of his neck, Virus' reply was immediate.

Clapping his palms together, Archibald felt enlightened. "Ah, so you basically need someone to do the chores?"

"Yeah, pretty much, I'm going to need extra hands for my subsequent plans since I hate to do the boring stuff myself, and since you guys just happened to wish to follow me, I said why not." Wearing a gentle smile, Virus patiently expounded.

He had to be honest about these matters so there wouldn't be any misunderstandings in the future. "So, don't mistakenly believe I'm welcoming you guys out of the sympathy of my heart. I solely plan on using and taking advantage of you four."

"Ah... I-I see." Listening to Virus' elaboration, instead of becoming sad, the four became oddly jovial and happy. They would appreciate this kind of reason much more than being looked at with pity.

"I understand, boss! I'll work hard so you don't ever regret taking me in!" Luca was the first one to bark in motivation.

"Haha," Patting his head, Virus felt satisfied, "you better keep that promise."

Then it was followed by the determined vows of the other three who were adamant about keeping Virus happy with their services.

"Hmm, although there were a few inns along the way, I wasn't really satisfied with any of them." The moment Virus muttered that, as if he was long prepared for it, Archibald interfered, "Boss, I know a decent inn, it's just that it's in the Deity-Half of Outer Ricando, so we need to pass to the other side of the river."

"Is that so? Lead the way."

Afterward, led by Archibald, the small party went toward one of the bridges that connected the two halves of the city.

Just as they stepped to the other side, however, Virus paused without any warnings.

After nearly bumping into him, the other four felt lost at this sudden stop until they realized where Virus was staring at.

"That's this city's branch of the Blacksmith Alliance, boss." Archibald clarified.

Indeed, currently, Virus was staring at the huge building that's been purely made out of metal alone. There was no timber or even stone used for the construction of the great building in front of him, all that was utilized were various types of metal alone.

Subsequently, examining its entrance, just as Archibald had announced, Virus located a big signboard stating the 'Blacksmith Alliance, Ricando Branch'.

"What's the Blacksmith Alliance exactly?" Since this was the first time Virus had come across such a term, Virus queried casually.

"Ah, you don't know, boss?" Stunned, Archibald didn't know how to brief the target.

Instead, it was Augustus who stepped forward to explain in a detailed manner, "The blacksmith alliance is a kind of organization that controls all the Blacksmiths over the lands. They are rooted almost everywhere in the world. The organization was initially formed in ancient times when the best blacksmiths came together and agreed upon creating a place for all blacksmiths. Ever since then, new generations of top blacksmiths have always controlled the alliance."

"Anyway, in order to become an official Blacksmith accepted by all, one needs to pass the tests of this organization and receive their certificate of rank and identity." In a single sitting, Augustus opened up the matter.

"Is that so?"

"Yes, there is also a Pillsmith Alliance which is very similar to the Blacksmith Alliance."

"Pillsmith? Are you talking about alchemy?"

"Yes, Alchemy masters, chemists, or pillsmiths, they're all the same. But they are most famously known as pillsmiths in most regions."

"I see, it was the unique construction design that intrigued me really. Anyway, let's get going then." Picking up his pace again, Virus was on the move.

Soon, they were standing in front of a poor-looking inn titled Decent Inn. Squinting at Archibald, Virus proclaimed, "This is the decent inn you were talking about? A wrecked inn called Decent Inn?"

THE GOD VIRUS

Chapter 489 - Decent Inn

"Boss... it's not that bad inside, let's go in for now." As if he was in a rush to escape, Archibald charged inside.

Sighing, Virus rubbed the temple of his forehead while resolving to check the interior of the inn first. He wasn't in a mood to berate the old guy anyway.

However, the instant he set foot into it, he was flabbergasted.

"Hahaha, old buddy! How have you been doing recently?" Currently, Archibald was harshly slapping the backside of a hunched old man while greeting him.

"Oh, oldie Archie, what a great day! Why are you here, my friend?" Genuinely jovial about his arrival, the other elder cheered.

"Huh? Why else? Of course, because I brought you some customers! I'm a customer myself as well." Spotting Virus at this point, Archibald began waving and introducing him.

"Boss! Here! This is the innkeeper and he's a good mate of mine, I guarantee he will give us the best services possible!"

The more he heard Archibald talk, the more tics were showing up on Virus' forehead, he was getting on the verge of his limits as he was about to swat this old guy dead.

It was at this time when a rather young woman, walked out of somewhere as she greeted Archibald, "Old man Archie? You're here to visit?"

"Nah, Pira, I'm a customer," Archibald claimed proudly.

Surprised to actually hear that, Pira exclaimed, "Huh? Did you become rich by any chance?!"

"Ah! Uncle Archie, you're here!" At this point, a young boy also made an appearance as he jovially talked to Archibald.

"Anyway, guys, enough with the greetings, see this great man here? He's my boss from now on, he wanted to stay at an inn and I recommended yours since I trust you will take care of us the best!" Thrusting his jaw forward, Archibald displayed a gentle smile.

Meanwhile, while the three were done catching a glimpse of his profile, Pira's sight remained locked on Virus' devilishly handsome face. Still, it was a short pause before she disguised it swiftly.

"Hahaha, welcome, welcome, dear customer! No worries, since oldie Archie put the word out, we'll provide you with the best treatment you could possibly imagine!" Bowing respectfully, the hunched old man signaled Virus to walk beside the counter.

"We usually take twenty gold coins a night for each person, however, since you're the boss of a friend, ten gold coins a night would suffice." The hunched elder declared.

The so-called gold coins were in fact the currency smaller than Qi Ingots.

Every first-grade Qi Ingot was equal to one hundred gold coins.

In fact, outside Ricando, in the areas mainly occupied by mortals, the common people's main currency was in the form of copper, silver, and gold, as they mostly never came into contact with Qi Ingots unless they were very rich.

However, in the areas controlled, inhabited, or governed by cultivators, currencies below Qi Ingots usually lost their value as the relevant region would mostly function with Qi Ingots instead of lower forms of futile currency.

Casually placing ten Qi Ingots over the counter, Virus mouthed, "No need for discounts or anything, money's not an issue with me, just offer us the very best services possible."

While rubbing his hands, the sight of ten Qi Ingots made the old man's eyes radiate joy. "Yes, yes, yes! You won't be dissatisfied!"

Gathering the Qi Ingots, the hunched senior citizen deliberated, 'This old bastard Archie brought me a rich customer this time, I've gotta treat him to something nice sometime.'

"Please follow my son, he'll guide you to your rooms."

...

While on their way to each of their rooms, pretending to be incensed by Archibald's earlier stunt, Virus glared at him, "You want to die? You bring me to your friend's inn when I tell you to bring me somewhere nice?"

"B-boss," Terrified of invoking Virus' wrath after having just witnessed him nearly kill the tan woman, Archibald elaborated, "it's because I truly believe he'll tend to us better than a complete stranger, please believe me. He, his wife, and this son of theirs will give you the best experience of your entire life! The three of them are the best!"

"His wife?" Noticing their age difference, Virus had previously assumed her to be the hunched old man's daughter and not actually her wife.

"Yeah. Her name is Pira. She's quite a beauty, right?"

"Huh? That young woman is the mother? But your friend is so haggard he may die any seconds now, and you're telling me he married such a young woman?" Even though Virus wasn't one to judge since he didn't care enough to judge, the stark divergence of age interested him shortly.

As if he couldn't be more eager to gossip on the subject, getting closer to Virus' ear and pointing at the little kid that was guiding them, he uttered, "Ah, yes, and this boy you see is really theirs and not from a past wife or anything like that. My friend has great vigor, right?"

When each of them was shown into their rooms and settled down, Virus ordered a cup of tea to be brewed and served to him together with his lunch. He wanted to taste the tea and the food of the inn.

While waiting for his food, many contemplations occupied Virus' mind.

'Hmm, what should I do now?'

Now that Virus was in Ricando, one might expect him to actively start digging up information on the Poison Deity clan in order to estimate their overall power, weaknesses, and the details regarding what had happened to the Silver Sky Sect and the whereabouts of its survivors.

However, that wasn't Virus' precise plan since it didn't require a genius to know that an active investigation would only result in consequences that would endanger his life at the shortest duration of time possible.. Obviously, that course of action was bound to put him under the Poison Deity clan's negative radar, which was something he wanted to avoid at all costs for now, at least not in that way and not until he was strong enough.

THE GOD VIRUS

Chapter 490 - To Be Relevant

The reason why he was here, to begin with, was to tread the safer route of passively gathering information, denoting he won't go out foraging intelligence without sound justification which may make the clan feel threatened. Rather, he would wait until the information comes to him naturally by itself while he gradually becomes relevant to the city and the clan that controls it.

In order to accomplish that goal of becoming relevant to the city, amongst the several options Virus had come up with, Virus determined the most logical and efficient one was the path of earning a lot of money by becoming a businessman within the city boundaries. Overall, money and the level of authority that came with it were going to open many paths and connections for him all over the city.

Furthermore, without money, there wasn't anything he could do really. Even if he wanted to actively dig up some information right now or even later on, that required money, money that he did not have at the moment.

Without money or in this case Qi Ingots, he was no different from a beggar and no one cares enough to talk and share information with a beggar!

By the time he was over going through some of his surface plans, Virus heard a knock on the door. His food was prepared and they were now asking him to come to the dining table to eat it.

Rising to his feet, Virus casually went down to the dining hall as he sat at a random table. Soon, Luca, Luna, Augustus, and Archibald who were long since starving joined him as well.

Looking at the food on the table, other than the cup of tea, Virus could see roasted mutton and boiled fish together with two tankards of cider prepared.

Nodding in approval, Virus tasted the roasted mutton while the two oldies beside him each took a sip of their cider.

"So, boss, what is your following plan? Are we just going to sleep in this place and do nothing?" Archibald questioned all of sudden.

"You must love freeloading like this, eh? But no, we've got so much stuff to do, that's why I'm down here to tell you about it."

"Oh, what is the plan?" With his pupils emitting light, Archibald exhibited his passion. He was looking forward to the adventure and fun this new boss of him would bring to the table.

"I need you four to do one thing before I decide on my following plans."

Ripping a bite off a piece of mutton, he continued, "Get me the rough cost of buying and renting a shop in the various parts of the city, come back and report to me when you're done."

"Hmm, is that all, boss?"

"For starters, yes."

"But what are you going to sell by renting or buying a shop?" Feeling lost about Virus' intentions, Archibald interrogated. He was having difficulty understanding the picture Virus had fixed his sight on.

"Just do as you're told. You'll naturally come to be aware of everything later on."

"Yes, sir!"

Afterward, sitting around the same table, the party of five devoured their food before Virus returned to his room while the four left the inn in order to dig out the basic pricing of the stores.

...

A few hours later, sitting on a chair in his room, Virus closed both his eyes as he sunk into deliberation.

What he was contemplating right now was about whether he should consume the Absolute Liberation Leveling pill right now and breakthrough to the ninth level of Liberation or rather leave it for a later time and only use it after he successfully breaks through to the ninth level.

Frankly, to Virus, both options had their advantages and risks.

The advantage of taking the Absolute Liberation Leveling later on when he elevates his cultivation to the ninth level was that he would have a good chance of directly breaking through to the Sublimity Emergence stage.

Of course, that wasn't guaranteed since it was said the Absolute Liberation Leveling pill was useless beyond the Sublimity Emergence stage so it may just elevate the synthesis rate to one hundred percent in the ninth level and stagnate there.

On the other hand, since the fusion process of the pathways gets harder after each level, it was crystal clear to him that keeping the pill for later on would be a good option.

However, the risk of doing so was connected to the topic of his current whereabouts. Right now, Virus was on an extremely hazardous planet with danger lurking in all directions.

Furthermore, he was at the very heart of the city that was bound to become his enemy and the target of his vengeance considering that they had annihilated the sect and probably harmed one of the few people in the world that Virus cared about, therefore, the level of danger was even higher.

All those aspects considered, the rational approach for Virus was to take the pill right now and be ready for any kind of unpredictable danger that may pop up along the way.

Thus, while one choice was more beneficial for his cultivation, the other could make his life more secure immediately.

'Which one should I pick?' Truthfully, there wasn't much for Virus to sleep on as he made a decision swiftly, "Well, increasing the chances of my survival matters the most, even if by a tiny amount."

'Moreover, it's not like I'm going to be stuck at the ninth level. All I need are more monstrous beasts and Origin will assist me in breaking through fast! So that little bit of inefficiency doesn't really matter at the end of the day.' That also further dissipated any second thoughts.

Then, taking the pill out of the spatial container, Virus was just about to open the case when his doorstep was knocked.

Targh! Targh!

"Hmm, who is it?"

"Boss, we're back to report." Luca's muffled sound came over from the other side of the door.

"Okay, come in." Storing the Absolute Liberation Leveling case within his spatial container once more, Virus allowed the four to enter.

"So, how were the prices?"

"Ah, sir, first about the rent costs, one detail about the rents was that other than the monthly payment, they all required a rather substantial amount of deposit money as well," Archibald reported calmly.

"Okay?"

"And as for the overall pricing of renting, they varied from place to place. At the cheapest districts that we discovered in this short duration, the rent was set at a hundred first-grade Qi Ingots a month plus a deposit of a thousand of them. However, these shops were extremely remote with no crowd to be found anywhere. The shops around that place were totally empty of any potential customers." Shaking his head in disappointment, Archibald was absolutely against such districts.

"And in regards to the uptown and the main market of the city, the most expensive shops could be rented at the prices of ten thousand Qi Ingots of first-grade a month plus a deposit of a hundred thousand Qi Ingots of the same grade." Inferring from his tone, Archibald was more inclined toward the potential of the expensive stores.

"As for the selling price of those locations, just quadruple their deposit cost and there you have it."

Acting like he was an experienced businessman already, Archibald advised further, "Ah, boss, if you want to have a profitable business, you better rent a shop at the crowded areas where there would be customers around."