

World Mall 271

Chapter 271 Reactions

The story about Libation Fiesta immediately spread over the Skynet. The people were quite surprised that there was such a strong group consisting of three Tier 2 explorers.

Obviously, they began investigating the entire group.

It didn't take too long for them to find out about Jay and Kanaria due to the nature of their backgrounds.

On the other hand, it was a bit hard for them to figure out Clovis and Melody's identities. Melody had been erasing all her traces from years ago, so no one would find out about her and harm her younger brother. Meanwhile, Clovis's identity was completely empty. It looked like he was an orphan who managed to achieve recent success. He inherited his house from his parents. But that was about it.

Because he had just become an explorer, there wasn't much they could dig up about him.

Hence, their eyes were focused on Ragna. People were familiar with him due to his infamous constitution. A lot of companies had abandoned him, while Clovis actually picked him up.

Some people thought his existence would drag down this team. Some believed he had transformed into a big contender.

Unfortunately, there was no proof. The only thing they could do was wait until they fought in the main competition.

As for the footage of the preliminary matches, all the groups noticed one peculiar thing.

Imemine.

"Hoho! It seems that they haven't gone all out yet. Then again, no one is going all out in the preliminary matches. I wonder how much strength they've been hiding this whole time." Erwin grinned.

"We have gotten the bracket for the main tournament." His friend came into his room while projecting the bracket.

"This is... interesting." Erwin smirked.

...

Bloody Rose.

Aileen's expression turned a bit grim while watching the footage.

Lana approached her while asking, "Do you find anything?"

"Yeah. This Libation Fiesta should at least hide fifty percent of their true strength."

"Fifty?" Lana looked shocked. "Doesn't that mean..."

"From what I can see, Clovis, the captain of the team, is a super Tier 2. His overall strength is most likely at the peak of Tier 3, even close to Tier 4. Jay Havenson is also extremely good, especially that strength. I don't think anyone in our group, including me, can stop the swing with his full strength."

"Even you?"

"I don't have Muscle Affinity, so it's only natural." Aileen shrugged. "I don't know about this Kanaria Renvolt though."

"Ragna's background is very clear, but this Melody is rather mysterious. All the records regarding her from 18 years old to 24 years old are gone. We couldn't find anything."

"She must have hidden it herself for some reason. It's not that weird for an explorer to take a break from their job." Aileen shook her head. ""So, what are you doing here?"

"This is the bracket for the main competition."

"Mhmm?" Aileen frowned. "Is this rigged?"

"Hmm." Lana shrugged.

Aileen seemed to be concerned about it.

...

Unlike Aileen, Rafael approached it in a different way. In fact, his father actually called him.

"Is there something wrong, Father? I hope that I haven't disappointed you during the preliminary match." Rafael carefully approached his father.

"Have you seen the bracket?"

"Yes. I'm in Group C."

"In that case, I will only tell you one thing. In the semifinal, if you have to fight against the Libation Fiesta, do it as fairly as possible. If you fight the Imemine, do whatever you want."

"Huh?" Rafael was confused. He thought that his father would ask him to do everything possible just to win. "Does Father know something about the Libation Fiesta?"

His father paused for a moment before saying, "Don't ask too much. The only thing I can tell you is that their captain's identity is rather sensitive. If you want to fight him, do it fairly. If you don't... this entire city might be wiped out from the map."

"Huh?" Rafael had never seen his father act this weak. He was the commander of the city, a Tier 7 human. To think that he would be scared of this person.

Still, his father had indirectly implied that he shouldn't learn about Clovis's true identity. Because he was raised as a soldier, his father's words were like a command. He had some curiosity but didn't have the intention to disobey him by investigating Clovis on his own.

Rafael politely nodded his head. "I understand, Father. I'll do my best."

"Go." His father simply waved his hand.

When he left the room, Rafael's expression turned grim. He muttered, "Whoever it is, I'll just crush them with my strength."

...

Libation Fiesta Group.

"Hahaha. This is insane. To think that we would be facing him this quickly..." Kanaria chuckled.

Melody furrowed her eyebrows. "There are a total of four groups in the bracket. Each group will contain one seeded group. In our group, there is Imemine. But looking at this situation... we'll be facing Imemine in the quarterfinal, Eight Swords in the semifinal, and Bloody Rose or Dragon Fist in the final."

"It's to be expected. We're nobody, so they will definitely do it like this." Jay shrugged. "Besides, we will be able to fight three out of four seeded groups. Shouldn't we be thankful to them for giving us this opportunity?"

Jay looked raring to go.

Clovis agreed with his opinion. The bracket shouldn't be rigged, especially since they paired them with Imemine, which ranked fourth among the seeded groups.

"However, don't forget one thing, Jay. Tomorrow, we will be fighting twice, so don't forget to conserve your strength for the second match against Imemine. The semifinal and final will be held the day after. It's going to be extremely exhausting, but I hope that you all will fight with that in mind," said Clovis with a serious expression.

"Fiuh! So we're fighting with the assumption of going to the final? As expected of you, Clovis, very optimistic." Ragna smirked.

Clovis just ignored that remark and glanced at Melody, asking, "That's right. Do we get any information about the main tournament's concept and rules?"

"That's..."

Chapter 272 Introduction

The next day.

Shion shouted excitedly, "I welcome everyone to the main tournament of the Rising Star Competition! I'm sure that everybody is hyped for this competition, I'm the same. I have had a hard time containing my excitement since last night.

"Today, we'll proceed to the main competition! During the preliminary matches, everyone can definitely see that the beasts are not the only ones we have to fight.

"Yes! I'm sure that everyone has been waiting for it. In the main competition, it will be a direct clash between each group. We'll be able to see which group is stronger.

"This is the bracket of the main tournament." Shion raised her hand, projecting the bracket for everyone to see.

"The match will be split into two: individual and group matches. As the name implies, the individual match will be a clash between personal might, while the group match would include all the members in this group.

"First, let me explain the layout for the group match. I'm sure that everyone is curious about the size of the stadium, since the field is 200 meters long and 100 meters wide. That is for a reason!" Shion lifted up her hand. "Rise!"

Suddenly, the field trembled as people heard a lot of gear sounds coming from underneath the area.

All of a sudden, a lot of pillars appeared from the ground.

"Hologram!" Shion clapped her hands with a cheerful expression.

Those pillars turned into trees. Even a part of the barren field had been covered with grass.

"Uoohh!" The people became excited, never thinking that they would find something this cool.

"Hehe. Everyone can't contain their excitement like me." Shion chuckled. "But this is it! This is the reason! This is the arena for the group battle. Please take a look at the elevated ground on the two opposite corners.

"These are the bases for each team. There will be a flag there later. The team will get 3 points if they manage to get the other team's flag, and it will mark the end of the battle. However, during the battle, you will be rewarded by one point every person you defeat.

"In other words, you can get a maximum of 9 points, depending on the number of the group's members.

"Once we're done, we'll head to the individual competition. There will be a total of three matches, with 2 points for every victory.

"However, there is a catch. If you manage to have more than a six-point gap, the team will automatically advance to the next round due to the mercy rule.

"And if you think that the individual competition and the personal battles in the group competition are the same, they are not! In the latter, you are able to fight together with your team members to take down the opponents.

"That's all the rules for the competition. And now, let me introduce the three referee for the competition! Let us welcome..." Shion pointed to the side as the first person entered. It was a bald middle-aged man.

"Uooohhh!" The people cheered as they recognized him.

"Looking at everyone's reaction, I believe you have known him. That's right. The first referee will be Mr. Yasha, a Tier 6 explorer. The second referee is..." Shion presented the next person, who turned out to be an old man.

The cheers erupted even bigger.

"Hahaha. Look at everyone's excitement to greet our Mr. Dilk, also a Tier 6 explorer. Last but not least..." Shion grinned.

This time, the cheers were so big that the entire stadium was shaking.

"Ooohh!"

Everyone looked even more energetic as a middle-aged woman. Despite her age, she still looked like she was in her thirties, which gave her a mature yet enchanting beauty. She was more popular than the other two for a different reason.

"Miss Lifa has taken the stage. These are the three referees that will oversee the entire battle. Hence, all participants can rest assured and fight with all their might. The referees will stop you from getting injuries that will ruin your career or life.

"Now that everyone has understood the rules, let's welcome all sixteen groups into the stage and wish them the best."

The audience cheered. Due to the number of fights during the first day, they had no choice but to immediately start the match.

The competition started from Group A.

Due to the gap between the two teams, Bloody Rose dominated the entire match, as they ended up crushing their opponent with 9-0 scores.. The Bloody Rose advanced to the next round right away.

The second and third matches took a bit longer since they had to compete in the individual competitions. While they were not as famous as Bloody Rose, a lot of people still knew them. There were a lot of cheers from the audience.

As expected, the seeded groups were the main attraction. Still, there was one more variable they didn't take into account. It was Clovis's group.

Due to the sudden appearance of a dark horse, the crowd became even more excited as time went on.

That was the reason why Clovis's group was placed last in the schedule. It was so that people didn't leave the stadium.

In the end, this was a competition that required a lot of money. The organizers obviously tried to get as much money as possible by making the competition exciting.

The Dragon Fist and Eight Swords managed to destroy their opponents like Bloody Rose.

However, Imemine actually lost one point to their opponent during the group match. Even though they managed to win, it didn't change the fact that this one point made them different from the rest of the seeded group.

Still, the reason for that one point was due to the number of members. Just like the Libation Fiesta, Imemine had five people instead of six in their group. One person was defeated after getting ganged up by three people at once.

Finally, the last match for the first round had arrived.

"Clovis. It's time to go up!" Kanaria pointed to the stage.

"Yeah." Clovis nodded with a serious expression.

Chapter 273 Clovis

"And this person..." Kanaria abruptly stopped her explanation regarding the enemy. "Is there something wrong, Clovis?"

Clovis seemed to be in the middle of deep thought as if there was a big problem in their plan.

Clovis remained silent for a minute before saying, "I'm thinking about ending the first battle by myself."

"By yourself?" Kanaria furrowed her eyebrows. "Are you serious?"

"Yes." Clovis nodded.

"If you do it that way, it means that the rest of us will remain on the base, protecting the flag. But if we do it that way, you will be targeted by our opponents. More importantly, you have to show your power..."

"I know. I've got some plans in mind. And I want to ask you all to trust me."

Kanaria furrowed her eyebrows and glanced at the others. "Well, I don't really mind. Even if your plans are not perfect, you always think carefully about all of them."

"Are you going to have all the fun for yourself?" Jay clicked her tongue.

Clovis shook his head. "This is to win... especially against that Erwin. I don't think he is a mere Tier 3. In exchange, how about I let you fight against the Eight Swords' captain tomorrow?"

Jay's expression brightened. He wanted to fight against the other team's captains. The fact that Clovis gave him the chance to test his strength against a Tier 4 opponent meant he was planning to advance to the final since Rafael was the first Tier 4 they would encounter in this tournament.

"Fine." Jay harrumphed. "I'll let you do whatever you want. I will become the bait so that you can conserve your energy in the third round and face that Tier 4 woman in the final."

Clovis smiled. As expected, Jay fully understood what he wanted just from those hints alone.

"I don't really mind." Ragna nodded. "All I want to do is win. As long as it can help us defeat our opponent, I don't really mind."

"In that case, I will support you from the back, giving their locations and paths." Melody shrugged. She cared more about reaching the high tier and getting a doctor for her brother than glory anyway.

Clovis smiled.

Remembering the agreement, everyone from Libation Fiesta except for Clovis remained on the base. Only Clovis stood several meters in front of them, waiting for the signal to begin.

"!!!" Everyone in the stadium couldn't help but widen their eyes, seeing that confident look from Clovis.

"Is he..." Rafael furrowed his eyebrows.

"No way. Is he insane?" Aileen crossed her arms.

"Hahaha. Interesting! Is this a direct challenge against me, my rival?" Erwin grinned because his group lost by one point. This one point could be considered Clovis.

He was indirectly saying that he would go alone so that he didn't have to lose one point to their opponent.

"What is this? Clovis is going alone?" Shion's reaction flared up even though her words didn't get transmitted to the speaker in the stadium to avoid giving away information to all parties involved. "This is insane. Their opponent is Raging Bull, who has five Tier 3 and one Tier 2 members on their team. Still, for Clovis, who is only Tier 2, to challenge all of them, he is too reckless.

Are we going to be shown the strength of the Libation Fiesta's captain?"

The other party didn't understand what was going on. They were just stretching their bodies while waiting for the signal.

"Without further ado, we shall start the match."

The countdown appeared in the form of a hologram hovering several meters above the arena. The crowd was also chanting to show their excitement.

"3!"

"2!"

"1!"

"Start!"

Both Clovis and the Raging Bull group rushed forth, entering the forest area made of dirt and holograms.

"We will go according to the plan."

The Raging Bull let their Tier 2 member guard the flag. Meanwhile, their captain moved in the middle as the remaining four split into two groups and went from the sides.

However, they soon realized something.

"Huh? Captain... The radar is actually showing only one person going out." One of them shouted.

"What?" Their captain was in disbelief. "Are they treating themselves as bigshots just because their team is acknowledged as a dark horse? They're going to pay for underestimating us. Where is that person?"

"Coming to our left side."

"I will intercept him together with those two. You guys move toward us and block any potential attack from their base. And don't go too far in case they are trying to lure us and let their quickest fighters slip past us from the edge."

"Understood."

They immediately positioned themselves accordingly.

"They're good!" Aileen muttered. "They consider possibilities and calmly adjust their strategy. But..."

Aileen looked at Clovis, who was about to encounter the two members of the Raging Bull. The captain would need a few more seconds to reach their positions.

"Here he comes!" One member using a sword shouted. He sped up while saying, "I'll stop him!"

"I will support you from behind." The other member who used a spear nodded.

"It's Clovis!" The sword user recognized Clovis in an instant, warning everyone.

"Their captain is here. Let's defeat him right away!"

They were moving toward Clovis, planning to take him on.

"Even if my speed is not fast enough, I can still withstand all your attacks." The sword user shouted as he stepped forward, swinging his sword.

This battle was a disadvantage for Clovis. It wasn't because of the number, it was due to the fact that he couldn't injure them too heavily. If he could, he would have cut them down, or at least their limbs, first to get an opening.

Hence, Clovis moved from below.

"Haaaa!" The sword user swung his sword downward, planning to overwhelm Clovis.

Sadly for him, Clovis's speed was beyond what he had seen in the video.

Clovis sped up one whole level and struck his opponent's sword before the guy could even apply his weight to his attack.

Cling!

"!!!" The guy widened his eyes in shock, almost getting knocked back due to the momentum.

The people couldn't help but rise from their seats, not believing the speed Clovis had just shown.

Chapter 274 Shocked

Cling!

"Wha—!" The guy gritted his teeth, trying to pull his center gravity down so that he didn't get blown away. He had to do it fast before Clovis could unleash his next attack.

As if not letting Clovis do whatever he wanted, the spear user looped around and thrust his spear, buying some time for his friend.

Yet once again, Clovis surpassed their expectations. He actually managed to swiftly redirect the momentum of his sword and strike down the spear with both swords.

"Kh!" The spear user gritted his teeth, trying not to let go of his spear.

Clovis's eyes turned to those of a beast.

A series of clicking sounds echoed in rapid succession, only having a split second interval. Even normal people could only pick up two clicking sounds on each weapon.

However, those strikes actually knocked away both the sword and the spear from their users.

Without their weapons, Clovis slowed down a little bit and spun his blades, using the flat surfaces to hit the two guys.

"Hit!" The referee suddenly came into the arena like a ghost and grabbed the collars of these two guys, dragging them back. This showed that both of them had been considered dead. But his expression was the same as that of others, as though he couldn't believe what had just happened.

Erwin couldn't help but stand up, his body shivering in excitement. "Are you serious?"

"Erwin..." His friend looked at Clovis with a grim expression.

"Did you see it?"

"I'm not sure. Fourteen hits in one second?"

"No. It's seventeen hits in one second." Erwin shook his head.

"What?" His friend understood what it meant. "A normal Tier 3 is impossible to produce that kind of attack. Only the best of the best among Tier 3 is able to produce those many attacks in one second."

Erwin smirked excitedly.

Aileen and Rafael, on the other hand, clenched their hands into fists, as if understanding why Clovis was a threat in this competition.

Clovis turned around, finding the captain of the Raging Bull.

"What? He defeated them so quickly?" The captain gasped. Still, he had no other choice but to move forward. Even if he couldn't defeat him, he should at least buy some time from him. "I, too, have the Blood Affinity! We'll test who is the fastest among us."

Clovis remained silent even though he was planning to face this guy head-on.

"Haaa!" The captain roared and swung his blades at full speed.

The captain produced twelve slashes in one second. It was a pretty good speed even among Tier 3.

Unfortunately, it was not enough to reach Clovis's level. As if Clovis had failed to catch his breath, he only produced fifteen slashes this time.

Even then, it was three more than the captain's attacks. Those remaining three attacks hit the captain's arms and legs, giving him multiple grazes.

"Kh!" The captain gritted his teeth, using everything he had to at least put up some fight. He never thought that a Tier 2 could be this strong. "Huoo!"

Sadly for him, the captain eventually ran out of breath, slowing down significantly.

Clovis was the same, but he still produced several more slashes than him. In addition to the injuries he inflicted, Clovis finally knocked one blade away from their captain's hand.

That clicking sound rang like a bell in a nightmare. His heart skipped a beat, realizing that he had lost after exchanging more than a hundred strikes.

With only one sword, Clovis overwhelmed him with his power and easily knocked down the second sword.

Then, with a step forward, Clovis waved his long sword, leaving a graze on his neck as a sign of the captain's defeat.

The captain's body shook as he was completely devastated. To think that he couldn't put up that much of a fight against a single person from the Libation Fiesta.

"Move back!" The one who saw the radar panicked. "They have been defeated. That person is going straight to our flag!"

"What? If he has defeated three of them and gotten our flag and the guardian... It means a 7-point gap. We will immediately lose!"

Both of them rushed back toward their base camp, trying to outrun Clovis.

"That's him!"

They saw Clovis's back. Their mobile operator pointed his gun at Clovis and tried to shoot him.

However, Clovis took advantage of the trees to cover his movement.

When they were so focused on Clovis's figure, he actually disappeared.

"!!!" The two didn't know where he was, believing that he had stopped behind one of the trees.

The mobile operator hurriedly checked his position while thinking this was a good opportunity to reach their base before Clovis.

"Watch out!" His teammate warned him, who was too focused on the radar.

"Eh?!" The mobile operator reacted too late and stumbled to the ground. He felt something tug at his feet. "Chains?"

Yes, Clovis actually tossed his short sword very low and used the chains to trip them.

After that, Clovis emerged from his hiding spot and kicked the mobile operator in the stomach, blowing him away.

"Gah!" The mobile operator spat some acid from his stomach as he was launched into a tree.

The other guy raised his spear to fight Clovis, but it was impossible to do anything. Clovis struck him sixteen times.

"Kh!" The spear user suddenly froze on the spot as his spear fell from his hands. "Aaaarrgghh!"

His hands were convulsing. Because he struck it so many times, the spear vibrated uncontrollably, making his hands numb. And each attack also packed some power.

Clovis hit his head before doing the same to their mobile operator, who had yet to recover from the previous kick.

After that, Clovis continued toward their base camp, emerging from the forest.

'What am I supposed to do here? Can I actually stop someone who has just defeated five people stronger than me without breaking a sweat?' The last guardian placed his shield in front. "Haaaa!"

He just charged out of desperation. However, Clovis struck him multiple times and eventually struck him to the ground before taking the flag.

The guy wanted to cry but had no tears. He only said in his mind, 'Sorry, guys. I did my best.'

The match ended since Clovis had taken their flag.

The score was 9-0.

Clovis never planned to win with only seven points after all.

However, his performance caused everyone in the stadium to drop their jaws and left them speechless. It might be the quietest moment during the entire competition.

Chapter 275 Reaction

As soon as the match ended, Shion's voice was immediately broadcast to the entire stadium.

"W-what had just happened? Did Libation Fiesta just send their captain and let him single-handedly defeat their opponent?"

"How could this happen? From what I had seen, he had the top speed of fifteen hits per second..." Shion paused for a moment as if she had gotten new information. "I'm sorry. Correction, it was 17 hits per second."

"He struck their weapons multiple times and defeated them in a rather swift manner. No, I had never seen someone be able to defeat their opponents this quickly. Even the three Tier 4 opponents weren't this fast."

"How could this happen? In the first clash, he targeted the two guys on the left side, which caused the captain and the other two members to adjust their position, assuming that their two people would be able to stop Clovis."

"It was what supposed to happen considering one Tier 2 was fighting against two Tier 3 humans."

"However, the reality was different. Clovis showed unprecedented speed, even among Tier 3, achieving 17 hits was impossible. Unless there was a peak Tier 3, close to Tier 4, that had been training all his life to increase his speed..."

"Yet Captain Clovis had just shown them that he meant business. He showed something everyone here had never seen before, which surprised the enemies.

"He took those two down and had a full blown clash against the enemy's captain. Their battle lasted for more than a hundred rounds, which eventually led to Captain Clovis's victory.

"Then he continued to their flag, which would make the remaining two attackers return as quickly as possible. After seeing such strength, I don't think there are any Tier 2 humans who could actually compete against him. I don't even have the confidence to be able to beat him.

"In that desperate time, he threw his short sword, which seemed to be linked to a chain on his armband. He tripped them, gained a huge advantage, and defeated them.

"Last but not least, he defeated their guardian and took their flag, resulting in Libation Fiesta's victory.

"Strong! Very strong!" Shion explained everything she had seen so that all the people could understand what was actually going on. "The battle actually lasted for only 2 minutes and 54 seconds. The second quickest match was Bloody Rose vs. Juls Explorers, which lasted for 4 minutes and 31 seconds."

"His teammate, Jay, caused an uproar yesterday with his strength that was equal to that of a top tier 3 combatant. But it seemed that their captain was also the same.

"This is the strength of Libation Fiesta. What will happen in the second round... As expected, the most important match would be between the dark horse, Libation Fiesta, and the seeded group, Imemine."

"Oohhh!"

The cheers erupted, causing the stadium to shake. They simply had never seen something like this before.

Clovis had hidden his power and unleashed everything he had to defeat their opponents.

The fact that he won without losing a single point was a direct challenge against Imemine.

Rafael was crossing his arms. He couldn't help but clench tighter after seeing that kind of strength. He remembered what his father said yesterday.

It seemed that Clovis had a scary background that even rendered his father useless. And that background was reflected in his strength.

Aileen couldn't help but furrow her eyebrows. Standing beside her was Lana.

"It seems that your decision not to engage in a fight against them was the correct one." Lana smirked.

"Did you see it?" Aileen asked.

"Yeah. Top speed was at 17 hits, but he managed to maintain 15 hits at a stable rate. But more importantly..." Lana gulped down.

"Yeah." Aileen closed her eyes, finding the same thing.

"He didn't even break a sweat. After giving his all, he wasn't even short of breath... It could only mean one thing, this was not his limit." Lana had a wry smile on her face, not knowing how to react. "Those ignorant people... I'm afraid that his top speed would be equivalent to that of a Tier 4 fighter who focused on speed."

Aileen remained silent.

"Can you defeat him?"

"I'm not sure. Our fighting style is vastly different. Besides, we will be able to measure his true power in the second match. We'll see who will become a threat, Imemine or Libation Fiesta." Aileen nodded.

"Continue to investigate him. See if it's possible to bring him back to our city."

"The others are already on the move though." Hana looked at the scouts mixed in the crowd. They seemed to be busy calling their superiors.

On the other side of the arena, Erwin was grinning nonstop.

"Erwin?" His friend frowned.

"Don't worry. This is just getting interesting. If that's the case, we'll settle this in the arena, my rival. As expected of the person I recognize... Sometimes, I fear my own vision."

"Still too proud of yourself even during this time?" His friend shook his head helplessly. "Anyway, we'll be fighting against their team after this... about three hours from now. It will become the—"

Before he finished, Erwin said, "...the most important match. I know. All eyes will definitely be locked on our match. But that doesn't really matter... we'll do our best. No matter who wins or loses, there won't be any hard feelings. Of course, I'll definitely win, so I will console him by buying him a drink later."

"..." His friend was speechless and just left him alone. Even he didn't expect that there would be someone this strong among the opponents. More importantly, that guy was only 16 years old.

His progress and strength were far beyond his age, so it was obvious that there would be a lot of people getting excited to know him.

Mayor Revan was already clapping his hands while crying. He kept shaking the guy he brought as a trainer out of joy.

To think that the youngest team would actually fight that well and become the pride of the city. He was sure that the people had been watching this battle closely.