

Destiny 1071

Chapter 1071 Esteemed Guests

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While waiting for the waiter to come back, Shin and the others picked up the menu on the table and started noting down the food that they wanted to try.

He was still confused about what was happening and what the Heaven Taste Restaurant wanted to do. But from what they could see, it seemed like players who were regular customers of the Heavenly Resto-Bar within the game would receive something good from them.

"I wonder what kind of privilege are they talking about," muttered Arthur as he put down the menu back on the table after noting note the ones that he wanted to try.

Jillian and Molton were very interested in this matter. They were also players of the current most famous game, «Destiny's Fate» Online. But since their base of operation was in another Kingdom and quite far from Saint Heaven Kingdom, they did not know about the said in-game restaurant.

And from what they had heard, the so-called privilege seemed to be somewhat special.

Lorraine was also the same. She was also from a different kingdom, so she was not able to play with the group. Moreover, she was currently a commander of the adventurer team under her family, so she could not join them in any of their adventures, which also made her very sad and disappointed.

Now, she was curious about the said resto-bar that they were frequent inside the game.

Before the others could even respond, someone suddenly entered the room and quickly greeted the group.

"Good morning, young masters and misses. Welcome to Heavenly Taste!" greeted the person as he gave the group a respectful bow.

He then saw Jillian and Molton, who were their regular customers and became somewhat surprised. From what he had heard from the waiter earlier, the customers in this room were VVIPs of the Heavenly Resto-Bar inside the game.

This twin was their regular customer, so how come they never heard that these two were playing that game?

This person was the head manager of Heavenly Taste, so he was able to quickly regain his composure and realized what was going on. He cast his gaze on the other members of the group and understood that the customer that he was looking for was one of them.

He smiled at them and carefully asked. "Can I ask who among you is the esteemed guest of our place?"

When he said the word 'place', he was obviously talking about the Heavenly Resto-Bar within the game and not this restaurant from the real world.

Arthur thought for a moment before replying. "That should be me."

But after a brief pause, he quickly added. "But is the privilege only for a single person or others can get it as well? I mean, they also have the same level of customer ID as I am."

Hearing that, the head manager became stunned and could not help but doubt his ears. Getting such an ID was very hard to accomplish, so he doubted what he just heard.

But after seeing the seriousness on Arthur's face, he could not help but become astounded. 'Since when that 'ID' is being given out like cabbages?'

He quickly recollected himself and walked forward while saying. "C-can-... I take a look at your IDs, our esteemed guests?"

Shin and the others knew that he was trying to verify their identity. He, together with Leonard and Cloe, stood up and opened a virtual screen with their respective watches, projecting their respective IDs.

The head manager stepped forward and scanned the IDs projected by the virtual screens one after another. And when he saw the details displayed on the screen of his advanced watch, he could not help but inhale deeply.

Shin and Leonard's IDs were on the same level as Arthur's. Not only that, Shin even had a slightly higher customer level than Arthur, who was already a VVVIP.

'NS? Non-standard? This means he is not just an important customer, but also an information and materials supplier?' thought the head manager while reading through the information on the screen.

Cloe's ID was also not lagging behind either. She might not be as high as the other three, but it was still at the VIP level.

'What kind of group is this?' the head manager could not help but become curious about this group.

Forgetting about Jillian and Molton for a moment, given only their appearance, he could easily tell that they were very young and the same age as the twin. And with it, he could easily tell that they were the rumored students chosen to take part in the school's special program.

He could tell that they were all talented and possessed a pretty good background.

But that did not necessarily mean that they could easily get the special IDs from the Heavenly Resto-Bar. The background in the real world would not affect their treatment of players inside the game.

Thinking about this, he could tell that this group did not only possess a powerful background in the real world but also had a very good standing within the game.

Unfortunately, he could not look at their real in-game names with the customer IDs alone, especially with such a high level of importance. If not, he would not be able to suppress his curiosity and spy a little on their information.

After calming himself down, he faced the group once again and bowed before flashing a bitter smile. "I must apologize, esteemed guests. We don't expect this situation."

"I come here only expecting to receive an important guest and orient them with the rules and the special privileges that our humble place can offer. But I don't expect that there is more than one guest with the same level of importance."

"According to the rules, we are supposed to distribute a diamond card membership to a person. But since you are clearly in a group, the membership card we are supposed to give you is at least at the black card level."

The head manager smiled awkwardly before continuing. "I must admit. I don't have enough authority to release it."

Shin could not help but furrow his brows when heard everything. He was also starting to get more interested in these so-called privileges. From the mystifying act that the head manager, Shin could somewhat guess what it was.

'An information merchant group?' guessed Shin before quickly shaking his head. 'No, it is not as simple as that. They must be offering something more.'

"If that is the case, then can we just proceed to our main purpose of coming here? We are quite hungry and we only have forty to fifty minutes before our afternoon class," said Shin, trying to change the subject and save the head manager from the awkward situation.

The head manager understood what Shin was trying to do and quickly thanked him silently. "Obsoletely, sir! We can proceed with the orders and help you prepare everything."

With a snap of his fingers, a group of servants suddenly entered the room and started taking their orders one after another.

At the same time, the head manager walked forward and got near Shin. After observing the group since he arrived, he could easily tell that this young man was the heart of the group.

He slightly leaned forward and whispered. "A file will be sent to your in-game account through your customer ID. As for the membership ID that you will be receiving in the real world, it will be sent to you immediately after we have discussed it with our boss."

Shin fell into deep thought as he quickly picked up something. The head manager emphasized the 'customer ID' when it concerned their in-game persona while using 'membership ID' if it was about the real word.

The differences might be minimal, but Shin could tell that the Heavenly Taste was taking the matter seriously.

It made me more curious about why it was the case. From what he could tell, this particular restaurant was taking matters inside the game more seriously. The fact that they cared more about the in-game background of the group rather than their backgrounds in the real world.

Shin slightly nodded his head, signifying that he understood. He then saw the head manager extend his hand secretly, making him raise his brows. And when he took it and looked at what it was, his eyebrows rose even higher, making him fall into even deeper thought.

Arthur and Leonard quickly noticed the change in his mood and gave him an inquiring look. It was very rare for them to see Shin have that kind of look.

Shin did not answer directly and just passed the item that the head manager had given him. And when the two received it and took a look at it, both of them also could not help but frowned deeply.

Shin quickly kept the item that he was holding and hid it from the servants that were sending them a curious look while leaving the two to be in their thoughts.

"Why is such a thing in the real world?" – this was the question that appeared inside the heads of the two the moment they took a peek at the item that Shin was holding.

Chapter 1072 Clues

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The group ate everything that the Heavenly Restaurant had prepared for them including the ones that they had ordered. The head manager said that since he inconvenienced them, he had to give them at his this much compensation, especially when they were important customers of the place within the game.

There was a feast within their private room, making Arthur salivate just by looking at them. It was the same for Leonard who could not take away his eyes from the whole roasted turkey sitting at the center of the table.

The girls were still doing fine as they were able to keep their composure while Molton still managed to calm himself down due to the practiced discipline that his family had engraved to his mind and body.

In the meantime, Shin just absentmindedly stared at everything before sighing. He then signaled everyone to start eating since they only had limited time until their next class.

It did not take long for the group to sweep everything on the table. They were able to clean all of the plates, eating to their heart's content.

Given that they were Martial Artists and Mentalists, who constantly consumed their energies whenever they practiced and trained, their bodies demanded them to eat more to replenish their energies.

Arthur and Leonard did not care about table discipline as they continuously ate whatever cuisine their hand touched. Their plates were constantly being filled while they were eating.

The girls were still able to eat calmly and in an unhurried manner, but the speed at which they ate couldn't be said slower than the two. They might be worried about their figures but it wouldn't be a problem as long as they burn all of the calories later.

It did not take long for the group to finish their meal and immediately stood up after a few moments of rest. Then Arthur paid on the counter, stubbornly insisting that he wanted to pay. Shin and the others did not mind while Jillian glared at him for some unknown reason.

The feast was good and it could be said satisfying. The exquisite and delicious meal pretty much satisfied the group. Even Shin admitted that the name of the place fit it very well.

Unfortunately, despite that being the case, Shin and the others could not completely enjoy their meal because of a single item that the head manager had given him. And before he could even ask what it was, the head manager quickly exited the room, leaving the group hanging.

Arthur wanted to curse the head manager but his attention was quickly attracted by the set of meals presented on the table.

After exiting the place and walking toward the activity field, Arthur quickly walked toward Shin and asked whisperingly. "Hey, don't you think it is just a prop or something? Maybe they are imitating some of the items from the game as accessories and or figurines?"

Shin did not say anything as his mind was still occupied by the item. Instead, it was Leonard who rebuked those words. "You can say that if it only resembled those items, but how can you reproduce those ancient auras that were enveloping the item."

"At the very least, we can easily say that it is a genuine treasure – an antique, an artifact, or a relic," he added while frowning deeply.

Hearing that Arthur nodded his head and repeatedly nodded his head. "Right? That is also what I am thinking. How can they replicate such an item too realistically?"

It was at this moment that Shin finally opened his mouth. "Unless it is the other way around."

He paused, then continued. "Some of those items that we saw inside the game are either experimented items reproduced by some people and test them inside the game... or they are originally from the real world."

"What do you mean? Are the items from the game real?" asked Arthur with doubt.

Shin shook his head and clarified. "Not exactly but not that far either. Or more specifically, some of the items from the game are actually 'real' and can be found in the real world."

"Maybe the items such as this," he added as he took out a small marble from his pocket.

It was the item that the head manager had given him. It was a semi-transparent marble with a tiny creature trapped and frozen inside. This small and seemingly insignificant item was emitting a dense and ancient aura, that could make the trio frown deeply.

If it was before, then they would not be able to quickly identify such a mysterious and strange item. But after they went through the annoying and long Empire Quest, they received quite a few similar items along the way.

The appearance was practically the same as well as the level of auras that they were emitting. From the game, they learned that these things were called proof of qualification or inheritance marble.

Shin was thinking if this was the only thing that the Heavenly Taste had, but from what he suspected, it was most likely not the case. He was thinking that this particular restaurant could provide something more.

These things were not that strange in the real world. After all, there were similar treasures that had similar effects such as martial inheritance tomes that could pass down the knowledge about particular martial art styles and practices, or grand steles and inheritance tomes that contained forgotten knowledge of the ancient times.

But it would be a little different if the Heavenly Taste still had other things that were 'from' or had similar uses inside the game.

"So, they are really some sort of merchant group or something. But also a very special and mysterious one," muttered Shin.

Then Cloe finally hopped to his side and suddenly asked. "But why did that place give you such an item? And why is it only you when we have similar levels of membership."

Shin thought for a moment before shaking his head. "I am not sure either. Maybe because it is some sort of clue and because my membership level is a little higher and somewhat special than the others?"

"Now I am starting to view the game differently," commented Arthur from the side before quickly adding. "Before, I've brushed off those mystifying words that Big Sis had told us that night. But it seems like there is really something going on in the game."

Cloe could not help but be curious and asked. "Big Sister Shiella? What did she tell you? Tell me! Tell me!"

Shin shook his head and rejected. "Maybe next time. Big Sis told us that we will naturally learn more about it when the right time comes-... and that time is supposedly when we reached a certain level of martial or mentalism attainments."

"The peak of Ethereal Opening Stage or the perfected stage of the Grandmaster Realm, to be exact," he added while wearing a deep frown.

"Then why is that manager giving this to you if Big Sister Shiella told you that you are not qualified yet?" asked Cloe once again, repeating her question.

Shin thought for a moment before continuing. "Maybe it is because of some sort of misunderstanding-... or because my membership level is somewhat special."

He was rather suspicious about this too. But since he could not pinpoint what exactly the reason was, there was no point in dwelling on it. He would learn about the reason sooner or later, anyway.

Alice was currently silent and contemplating what they were talking about. She was also surprised when she saw an item in Shin's hand. She was even considering that she had to talk about it with her father or even her grandfather. Given their respective strength and statuses, she refused to believe that they did not know anything.

Lorraine, Jillian, and Molton were only listening from the side. They were not sure what they were talking about. Even though they were quite curious about it too, they could not ask about it directly.

Even though Lorraine was close to them and was almost together with the group all of the time, she still did not know everything about them or what they were doing. Especially inside the game, which made her feel bitter and dejected.

If only her family were not forcing her to hold the position of the adventurer team working under them, then she would definitely be enjoying the game and exploring different places alongside them.

Adventuring with friends was more enjoyable and exciting than leading a group of players that she was not that close with.

Thinking about that matter, she could only sigh helplessly and feel disappointed.

In the meantime, Jillian and Molton were just known in the group, so they could only remain silent and listen to what the others were talking about. Though, they were also quite curious about their experiences and adventures inside the game.

They were also players and very skilled too. They wanted to compare their experiences inside the game with people who were known as gods of the virtual world.

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As the group walked away from the Heavenly Taste Restaurant, a person watched their back from the room on the second floor of the building. He was feeling quite conflicted as he saw their figures grow farther away.

He then sighed deeply as he continued to stare outside the glass window. Behind him, the waiter, who received the group earlier when they first arrived at the place, was currently kneeling like a knight with lowered head.

After a few moments, the waiter could no longer hold himself back and asked. "Are you sure about this, sir? Even if it is only a hint, disclosing such information to them this early when they are still in the middle of growth can cause them a disastrous outcome."

"It is not that I don't understand that," said that person as he shook his head. He then sighed once again before continuing. "It is what the Boss has decided. Even the young master agrees to it, so there is nothing I can do."

"This may cause unnecessary pressure for them if it is handled rashly," said the waiter.

The person standing at the window shook his head. "Pressure is not necessarily bad. It can even accelerate their growth. And with the polishing of the academy, they can immediately become shining gems."

"Then what about the higher-ups? What are we going to do if they discover our movements?" asked the waiter back.

That person shook his head once again before answering. "That is not our problem. The Boss will take care of that while the young master will create a diversion."

"Our just is to follow their orders and act according to their arrangements," he paused for a moment and looked at the sky outside the window before continuing. "What comes after that is harvesting all of the fruits that are produced in the process."

Chapter 1073 A Scary Old Man

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Shin and the others arrived at the activity ground designated for their class. When they arrived, there were already a lot of students in their class minding their own business.

Some were doing mild exercises to digest their food faster, not minding the observant eyes of the others. Another group was leisurely sitting on the side and watching their classmates do their thing while the rest were either taking a quick nap or chatting with people in their group.

When Shin and their group arrived, they briefly caught the attention of the other students for various reasons. But it was only a short episode as the others went back to doing their own thing.

Shin led the group to a corner to sit in while waiting for their class to start. Their minds were still somewhat occupied with the matter that they just experienced earlier, but it was immediately erased from their minds right at the next moment.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

A series of swooshing sounds reverberated in the air as every student in the class sensed something. An intense and horrifying killing intent filled the activity field, seemingly threatening every one of them.

The students who were in the group stopped what they were doing and quickly went into defensive formation while cautiously sweeping their gazes at every corner of the field.

The ones who were originally having a nap quickly woke up and stood up while taking up a stance. The others went to their respective group while the ones that were alone constantly turned around while maintaining their combat stance.

Shin's group was already in formation right after the killing intent spread throughout the activity field. But unlike most of the class, who did not only where to look, their group was facing a certain direction while maintaining a solid rear, where Leonard and Molton positioned themselves.

The groups of the top-ranked students were in a similar situation.

The twin from the Sun-Moon Continent, Mavin and Marie, were covering each other's backs as they faced in opposite directions. The former was holding a pair of pistols in his hands while pointing forward while the latter tucked her hand on a dimensional pouch behind her waist.

The famous Three Kings of the Academy – Jean Camus, Thomas Brook, and Simone Barolomeo – kept a simple triangular formation with the two-meter guy standing at the forefront. They were facing a seemingly ordinary-looking tree in the distance as they circulated their energies within their bodies silently.

Flacon Hawkins stood in front of Diel Hendrickson, seemingly protecting his young master against a powerful foe. He was holding a rapier in his hand while pointing it forward, directed to the shadow under the nearby tree.

Ezio Williams tightly gripped a pair of daggers as his eyes squinted narrowly while staring at a certain corner of the field. His figure was starting to flicker as he was getting ready to attack at any given moment.

Dylan White calmly placed his hand on the hilt of his sheathed sword as he stood a few distances away from Ezio. He was facing the opposite direction where a thick bush was located behind a tree. His sword might still be on its sheath but his sword intent was already being released in a steady manner.

These top students of the class had a clear target in mind, unlike the others who were still looking around and trying to find the owner of the killing intent filling the field.

But what was strange about this situation was the fact that they were looking in different directions when there was supposedly a single enemy. The killing intent that they were currently sensing should belong to a single person yet it was coming from multiple places.

The top students could not help but wear an expression full of worry as they stared at the 'source' of that killing intent.

This situation lasted for a couple of minutes, making the students feel pressured. Some of them were losing their focus and concentration of being 'bathed' in such an overwhelming killing intent. Most of them were already sweating bullets for keeping a sharp and focused mind while being tensed for such a period of time without happening.

Exhaustion was starting to kick in. Their stamina was rapidly draining for keeping their current state despite not doing anything.

This situation lasted for a few more moments before the killing intent finally disappeared, making some of them slightly relaxed.

But despite that being the case, most of them still held out and kept their guard up while waiting for a few more moments, making sure that there was nothing going to happen.

"That should be enough. Good job everyone."

Then a calm voice suddenly sounded at the center of the activity field, right in the middle of the class.

Contrary to the calm and collected tone of that voice, the entire class felt like lightning struck right in the middle of the field, catching them completely off-guard.

Their eyes turned wide while their instincts quickly kicked in and simultaneously moved their bodies, distancing themselves away from the source of that voice.

This included the top students, such as Shin and the others, who did not lower their guards even for a moment. They found it hard to believe that someone managed to sneak past their senses, especially with such a supposedly large formation.

Even though they were not familiar with the other groups and the rest of the students, they were still elite students.

They instantly knew what they needed to do and which side needed to cover, especially the leaders of each group, who already took note of the positions of the other groups and solo individuals.

With them having a tacit agreement, they let their respective groups cover a certain area.

But with such a formation, someone sneaked inside completely unnoticed.

Everyone created an encirclement while still maintaining the original formation of their respective groups. They surrounded the person who suddenly appeared in the middle of their ranks.

And when they raised their heads, they saw an ordinary-looking old man, who seemed to be gentle and harmless at first glance.

But despite how deceiving this old man looks, the entire class would never be fooled by his appearance.

The fact that this old man appeared so soundlessly as if he was a ghost, had already proven that he was not an ordinary old man.

eaglesnove1,coM In fact, those who were too sensitive to threats and possessed a much sharper sense than everyone else was already sweating much harder than earlier.

Shin, who already awakened a powerful Spiritual Sense, could see much clearer than the others. From his perspective, this old man seemed to be a monster hiding beneath a human appearance. He was even seeing an illusion of a creature that was staring at him with a gaze that seemed to be looking down at everything.

Arthur, who possessed an ancient and majestic bloodline, was seeing this old man as a creature no weaker than dragons. Even someone like him, who was from a family said to be a descendant of a dragon, could not help but be wary of the old man.

Leonard, who gained the Bestial Instincts after his bloodline was aroused by the previous incident that happened to him, was sensing an immense threat coming from the old. His senses were telling him to run away as far as possible since there was a predator in front of him that stood at the peak of the food chain.

Dylan, Jean, Diel, and the rest of the top students were feeling the same. They could clearly see how strong this old man was. Any form of resistance was meaningless in front of him.

It was not like they hadn't seen anything with a similar level of strength. Given their background, they already met a couple of apex experts that could destroy anyone with just a gaze.

But this was the first time they were seeing something with that kind of power, who was seriously trying to kill them. The pure and strong bloodlust alone was more than enough to suffocate them to death.

In their eyes, this old man was the personification of the words 'absolute strength'.

But despite that being the case, these talented individuals of the younger generation refused to submit in front of such power. To them, everything was possible as long as they did not give up.

Even though their bodies were trembling violently due to them forcing their bodies to move despite it being frozen by the immense threat that was coming from the old man.

They gritted their teeth and forced their frozen bodies to move despite the great difficulty.

In the meantime, the old man, who was the subject of the fear that they were sensing, was calmly and leisurely standing on his spot, not showing any sign of movement.

He just stood straight with his hands crossed behind him while watching the little cubs that were surrounding him struggle to regain their control over their bodies.

And after observing the students for a couple of moments and confirming the powerful strength and strong will of a number of individuals, the old man could not suppress the corners of his mouth from rising.

He was completely satisfied with this batch of students that were sent to him. He could not help but feel a little bit excited for their futures.

But before anything else, he had to whip these little ones into shape and turn them into polished gems. For now, he had to show them the real face of this world.

Chapter 1074 Old Man Lin

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As the old man continuously released the pressure pressing on every student, his gaze was constantly sweeping at everyone as he took note of their performances.

He was occasionally nodding his head in satisfaction as he looked at certain individuals, particularly the top-ranked students. But he was also seeing a couple of good seedings at the lower end of the rankings. He found those students that caught his eye were those students at the bottom ranking but had a solid foundation.

In his eyes, these students were more worth investing in since the ones that were ranked at the top were already strong and talented enough to be ahead of the others.

Not long after, the gap between the students started to appear. The students with lesser foundations were slowly getting exhausted and collapsing one after another. This continued until they were only half of the class remained standing.

It was only at that moment that the old man retrieved the pressure that he had before slightly nodding his head. "That is much more than I have expected."

Shin and the rest of the students who remained standing were finally able to relax their muscles and started collapsing on the ground one after another. Arthur even let himself fall on his butt while breathing heavily as he tried to catch his breath.

The others were not in a better position either as they were in a similar or worse situation. Jillian and Molton looked like they were about to die as their chest continuously went up and down due to hard breathing.

Lorraine and Alice were in slightly better shape but they were not far from the twins lying beside them. And surprisingly, Cloe was doing pretty fine as she was only too exhausted to move her body. Her breathing was heavy but not as bad as the others. Though, she could feel that she would not be able to move a muscle for an hour or two, which was worse than the rest.

Leonard and Shin were slightly better than them which indicated how strong their bodies were and how large their stamina was. They could at least make a few more rounds of sparring matches as long as it did not involve using their Internal Qi and Mental Energy respectively.

Arthur should be as strong and as tough as them, but since he was standing at the forefront of the group during their formation, he was the first to receive the tide of pressure that the scary old man was releasing. He was protecting the others, who were standing behind him, so it was pretty natural for him to be in his current state.

The old man observed the students for a few moments before finally introducing himself. "I will be the training master that will supervise your physical training and exercises for the upcoming years."

"As long s you stay and continue to study in the academy, under the special program, I will be your Training Master."

"You can call me Old Man Lin, just like the rest of the students that are training under me. I am just a retired old man, who is treating training a couple of students as a hobby."

Hearing the latter words of the old man, Arthur could not help but click his tongue while silently refuting. "Retired old man my *ss. You are clearly an old monster that is disguised as a regular instructor in the academy."

"Are you obsessed with those fantasy novels or something?" he muttered with a mocking tone.

His voice might be too quiet that his words could only be heard by himself. But unfortunately, the old man possessed sharp senses that could not be measured by ordinary means.

The old man did not do anything but Arthur felt something falling from the sky and fell exactly on his stomach, making his arms and feet instinctively bounced off the ground. It created a comical sight that made Shin and the others laugh at him.

The old man ignored Arthur and continued. "What took place just now is just a form of test that I personally created just for you."

"The first part is to test your reaction speed and insight when faced in front of an unexpected situation. It is also to see whether your senses are sharp enough to clearly pinpoint where the threat was coming from."

He swept his gaze at everyone as he continued. "I've already noted down the names of the students who performed well during this part."

"Ah! Before I forget. There is only one who managed to see through the illusion that I've created and manage to find the source of killing intent," he added before turning to a certain direction and nodding.

The students were somewhat able to move their bodies at this point in time. They forced their heads to turn their heads and look at the location of the person that Old Man Lin was looking at.

In a corner, Ezio Williams was sitting casually on the ground while receiving the gazes directed at him.

Old Man Lin nodded his head and commented. "Should I say that it is to be expected of a young assassin trained by that 'place'? You are too familiar with the 'aura of death' and able to find the real threat among everyone else."

"Continue training hard and sharpen your blade. Then you will be able to see what is at the end of the road in the Path of Assassination," he added before continuing. "You scored the highest in the first part of the exam. You will be receiving fifty extra merit points for that."

After that, he turned his head toward another direction where Jean Camus and his group were located. He directed his gaze at Thomas Brook, another talented young assassin within the class, before saying. "Your blade is sharp but it did not contain conviction. You possessed a weapon but did not have a cause. You have a deadly dagger but don't understand its purpose."

"I must say, I am pretty much disappointed. I don't know what is confusing you, but if you continued to be distracted that way, you will be surpassed by others and left in the dust."

Thomas silently nodded his head and began contemplating the words that the old man had said. He fully understood that Old Man Lin was talking about his talent, background, and potential.

Old Man Lin was also telling him that Ezio was slightly behind him but could potentially surpass him if he continued to slump in his previous setback.

The old man nodded his head once again when he saw Thomas' response. He was fully satisfied.

After that, he continued. "As for the second part of the test, it was to test your foundation and measure your stamina."

"I will be designing a unique training regime for each one of you, so I have to fully grasp your potential and have a better understanding of you."

"I must say that the outcome is much better than I am expecting. There are even some who perform very well and become much better than what the papers are saying about them. There are even a couple of students who give me quite a few surprises," Old Man Lin was clearly saying that he was not trusting the data that the academy had provided and wanted to personally see what they were capable of.

"There is even someone who surpassed my expectation."

Given the expression that he was making, it was pretty clear that he was very satisfied with their performances. He was even looking in a certain direction, making the students become a little curious.

And when they cast their gaze toward the direction where he was looking, they realized that he was looking at Shin's group, giving them a certain idea.

That particular group was famous within the academy after a few days. They were also composed of top-ranked students so it would be natural for them to perform better.

But who exactly he was looking at was still a mystery to everybody.

They did not have the time to find out who it was as the old man quickly continued. "As for the one who will take first on this part of the test will be..."

He trailed his words for a couple of moments before continuing unwillingly. "That stupid lizardman over there."

He was clearly talking about Arthur given the direction he was looking at and the brief description that he gave. He also gave Arthur an additional fifty points before proceeding.

He snapped with his fingers and created a sound that seemed to have cleansed the minds of everyone before continuing. "I will be dividing the class into two groups first before we proceed."

"The first group will be the ones who collapse first right before the end of the second part. This group will be focusing on building up their stamina and solidifying their foundations."

"I don't care what you want to say, but you have to follow my arrangements if you want to continue attending my class. And in exchange, I will guarantee a huge benefit that will satisfy all of you."

He then paused for a moment and continued. "The next group will be the ones who remained standing until the end. You will be focusing on the circulation method that I am going to give you."

"It is just a bunch of average circulation methods, so there is nothing to make a fuss about. I will just confirm a couple of things before proceeding to the next step for your personal training regime."

"The first group will be joining the second group when they pass a test that I will be giving them. Otherwise, they have to continue with basic foundation training until I am satisfied."

He then looked at the sky, seemingly measuring the time through the position of the sun before saying. "I will be giving you a whole hour of rest. After that, we will begin our class."

The moment when he said that, the class started looking for a place to rest. The ones who were unable to move were being supported by the people of their group. All of the students that did not belong to any group were strong enough to be included in the second group that Old Man Lin had mentioned, so no one was left alone at the center of the activity field.

In the meantime, Shin and the rest hid under the shade of the nearby tree. They were resting when Old Man Lin suddenly walked toward them, making the group look at him with confused and curious gazes

When he arrived, he stopped in front of Cloe and asked. "Little girl. What is your name."

Cloe hesitated for a moment before answering. "I'm Cloe Cilvana, Sir."

"Hoh! So, you are from a family without any Mentalism or Martial Arts background," commented Old Man Lin before continuing. "Which department have you chosen to join, or which one of them chose you?"

Cloe became even more confused and could not help but turn to Shin out of habit. And when she saw the latter nod his head, she quickly answered. "I am chosen by the Auxiliary and Support Department – and I choose to join them too, Sir."

Hearing that, Old Man Lin suddenly clicked his tongue and commented. "Tsk! That old hag sure is fast."

Hearing those words, the corner of the mouths of the twin suddenly twitched since he was clearly talking about their grandmother. She was the head of the Auxiliary and Support Depart and given the strength of this old man, he could only be talking about her.

"Anyway, you haven't officially joined them, right? I am even guessing that you haven't met that old hag too," Old Man Lin continue to ask, making the group to further frown their brows.

At the same time, Cloe instinctively nodded her head since what the old man said was true.

Old Man Lin nodded in satisfaction after seeing her response before continuing. "That's good, that's good! So, what do you think about being my disciple?"

Then there was silence. A silence that was silent enough to make it somewhat deafening.

The group did not know how to respond.

Chapter 1075 Martial King Lin Huang

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Shin and the others stared at the old man, who shamelessly tried to snatch Cloe from the Auxiliary and Support Department. They did not know how to react to what he just said.

It was even true for Cloe, who could not help but stare blankly at Old Man Lin, not knowing what to do, or what to say.

Not long after, the old man coughed a little to snap the group out of a daze before repeating what he just said. "Little girl, I am asking you if you are willing to become my disciple."

Cloe flashed an awkward smile before saying. "I am sorry to say this, sir. But don't you think it is quite inappropriate? Even though I haven't been in the Auxiliary and Support Department, I am already a part of it. I am already an official member of that department."

Realizing the mistake in his words, Old Man Lin laughed before quickly clarifying. "I am sorry for the misunderstanding. But what I am saying is if you want to be my personal disciple."

"This did not concern your joining that department. You can still go and attend the classes and training in there while studying under my tutelage," he added, further clarifying his intention.

The group became speechless once again, not knowing what to say. Even Shin, who was the fastest to recover himself, did not know how he was going to react. He could only stare at the scene with an astounded look on his face.

Seeing that there was still no reaction from Cloe, Old Man Lin continued. "Little girl, there is nothing to lose if you train under my tutelage. I may not be the strongest within this academy, but I can confidently say that none of those old foxes will dare to fight me."

"Moreover, no one is more suitable to teach you than me," he added before taking a brief pause to look in a certain direction.

After that, he continued. "Within the academy, I am the one who has the greatest understanding when it comes to training people. Why else did they want me to train this class and turn all of you into polished gems."

"I can instantly tell the potential of a certain individual and know the direction of their future. I can immediately make the perfect training regime just by looking at a person."

"Within the academy, there are only two people who can rival me in this area, but since both have responsibilities that they needed to take care of, I am assigned to his job."

"If you want to learn how to use that strength of yours to the fullest, then there is no better master for you than me."

This time, Shin was finally able to open his mouth. "Can I ask Sir why you want to take her as your personal disciple?"

Old Man Lin turned to Shin and gave the latter a meaningful look before answering. "Because I am the perfect master for her, and she is the perfect disciple for me."

"If she became my discipline, she will be able to reach a height that she will never imagine. And of course, I will be able to pass down my legacy to a perfect successor," he added while turning his head back to Cloe, who sheepishly kept her head low.

Lorraine seemed to be not satisfied with the explanation that Old Man Lin had given them and asked. "Can Sir elaborate more?"

Old Man Lin saw the cautiousness in the eyes of everyone and could not help but chuckle a little. He thought for a moment before continuing. "If we are only talking about a specific reason why I want to take her as my personal disciple, then it is because she is not talented enough."

"But she is hardworking enough," he quickly added before the group could even say anything. "In my eyes, being hardworking is more important than being talented."

"If we are only talking about talent alone, then she can be ranked at the bottom of the entire class. And in this class where everyone possesses an amazing background when it comes to Martial Art and Mentalism history, she doesn't have one."

"If you put all of it together, she is very unremarkable. But despite all of that, she manages to bridge the gap produced by the background and lack of talent with her hard work alone."

"She managed to build a foundation much tougher and more solid than the rest of you who already have the head start called talent. In my eyes, she is more amazing than any of you."

Cloe kept her head lowered as she felt her face turn hot for being flattered and plastered by the praises that Old Man Lin was giving her. She was not used to being at the receiving end of such praises.

While the group and the old man were waiting for Cloe to calm herself down, a whooshing sound could be heard as something flew in their direction at an insane speed.

The group heard the loud sound of the wind, making them turn their heads toward that direction. Then they saw a silhouetted rapidly approaching from the distance.

Bang!

Not long after, someone suddenly landed on the ground a few meters away from them, throwing dust and gravel in the air and creating a loud explosion.

The commotion attracted the attention of the other students in the class, making them turn toward that direction and cast curious gazes at the same time.

Then they saw an old woman wearing an ancient and traditional set of clothes. She was standing at the center of a small crater created by her previous actions. With her hands crossed behind her, she walked forward and went straight to Old Man Lin.

This was Professor Luvenia Potter, the head of the Auxiliary and Support Department. She went straight to confront Old Man Lin, who was trying to snatch the little girl that she caught her eye first. "I know that this is going to happen the moment when you see that girl, so I've been keeping an eye on her since the time she entered the academy."

"Forget about it. It is your loss for not attending that selection process. Since you are too lazy to attend, then there is nothing left for you to choose from," she added, clearly saying her intention.

"Heh! You haven't taken her as your personal student yet, so there is no need to react this way, right?" replied Old Man Lin smirkingly.

He then pointed at Jillian and Molton, who already stood up to greet their grandmother, before continuing. "Moreover, you already have these two amazing grandchildren, so there is no need for you to take another unpolished gem."

After that, he pointed at Cloe once again before continuing. "And most importantly, this kind is clearly a regular martial artist while you are a mentalist, I think there is no need to discuss who will be the better candidate to teach her."

"My specialty is not only limited to mentalism. And given the characteristic of her Martial Arts and the goal that she has, which is taking on the supporting role in battle, my tutelage is more suitable for her."

Old Man Lin shook his head and flashed a bitter smile before refuting. "You are wrong. The real potential of this little girl will only be realized if she studies under me."

He then turned to Lavenia Potter and continued. "Moreover, she can still study that art of yours since I will not be getting in the way of the arrangements that the academy has made for them."

"Don't get too ahead of yourself, Lin Huang," said Granny Lavenia, accompanied by a threatening tone."

But despite being intimidated, Old Man Lin gave her a mocking smile before saying. "Ah-ah! You just committed a grave mistake."

The mistake was that the old man was talking about his name being mentioned by the other party. And when Granny Lavenia realized what she had done, it was already too late for to take back what she just said.

On the other hand, the entire class could not help but have a different reaction after hearing the name that Granny Lavenia had mentioned.

"Lin Huang? That Lin Huang? That Martial King Lin Huang?"

"Is that old man the legendary Martial King?"

"Holy! We are being taught personally by Martial King Lin Huang? For real?"

"No wonder he is so scary, so he is that legendary figure."

At the same time, the group was also having a similar reaction.

"This old man is Martial King Lin Huang? He is in the same generation as my grandfather," muttered Arthur, whispering to Leonard, who was sitting beside him.

But unlike the Demon Fist General Samuel Springfield, who built up his reputation in leading the military forces and fighting against foreign forces, Martial King Lin Huang was known for being one of the strongest body cultivators of the current era.

Moreover, he built up his reputation by hunting the most powerful monstrous beasts discovered by humans and treating them as a hobby, challenging the strongest Martial Artists and Mentalists known by everyone when he didn't have anything better to do, and slaughtering an underworld organization for fun.

He was like an idol or a model to the younger generation, but for the older generation, he was nothing but a complete madman.

Even if there were a couple of experts who could gain a similar level of respect on the current generation – such as Dragon King Nathan Springfield, Hundred Beast Joaquin Geovanni, Sword Immortal Eugene White, and Warrior Sage Elias Stuart – his reputation was still implanted in the minds of the younger generation.

Though in the eyes of the older generation, Martial King Lin Huang resembled another person when it came to personality and might – Adam, the Heavenly Demon.

Even though the reputation of the Heavenly Demon Adam was currently unknown to most of the people of the current generation, the people of the older generation were too wary of him.

And since this so-called retired expert, who resembles that person very well, was suddenly planning to raise a personal disciple, the older generation would start to worry about an upcoming storm.

Now that the older generation was starting to gain their respective successor, these wise experts would see this as some sort of omen.

It even became more evident when she saw the sudden seriousness in the eyes of Martial King Lin Huang. She could see that the latter felt something was happening in the shadows and he could no longer stay hidden in the walls of the academy.

Understanding the intention of Old Man Lin for taking a personal disciple, Granny Luvenia could only sigh helplessly and purposely forgot about her original purpose for coming here.

In the meantime, Shin suddenly stood in front of Cloe and suddenly said. "Are the seniors forgetting about the most important thing? Can't you hear the decision that she is going to make?"

"As the person who is the center of all of this, can't you hear about her choice," he added while looking at the old experts, who seemed to forget about the existence of everyone.

His words pulled back the old experts to their senses and turned to Shin, who was calmly looking at them despite their statuses and difference in strength.

At that moment, when they simultaneously turn to him, a silhouette of a person seemed to overlap with Shin, making the old experts stare at him blankly for a moment.

Luvenia Potter raised her brows in surprise while Lin Huang lifted the corners of his mouth into a smile. It was at that moment when they were reminded about something that they had almost forgotten.

Martial King Lin Huang could not suppress his laughter and burst out laughing to his heart's content before saying. "It is the same! It is clearly the same!"

'They are really the same!' he added inside his head while giving Shin a meaningful look.

Chapter 1076 Resemblance

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Martial King Lin Huang laughed wholeheartedly as he saw a silhouetted of a certain individual overlapped with Shin's body. He could clearly see the resemblance between the two despite having little differences in their personalities.

He remembered that time when a talented individual showcased his talent for the very first time in the world and shocked everyone. Every power desired that talent and wanted to take him under their control.

The government of different nations even put a lot of pressure on him, trying to force him to choose them. But during that time, he fearlessly faced all the leaders of those nations and refused every offer that was presented.

At that time, when that individual just stepped on the Void Manifestation Stage, faced the experts that were already at the peak of the Domain Realm without showing any hint of fear.

As one of the active experts of that time, Lin Huang, the Martial King, witnessed how that person stood at the center of the battle arena while soaking in the pressure that the peak experts of different nations and the World Government unfazed.

He neither kneeled nor bowed his head in front of the pressure but let everyone pressure him as he stood unmoving at the center of the arena.

Lin Huang could not help but nod his head repeatedly as he saw Shin fearlessly in front of him and Luvenia Potter who were elders at the peak of Domain Realm and Venerable Realm respectively.

He could see the resemblance between Shin and that person, making him think to himself. 'Is this little kid related to that scary little guy.'

On the other hand, Luvenia Potter was frowning her brows for a similar yet also different reason. She was already aware of Shin's background, so she was not as surprised as Lin Huang. What made her frown was the fact that she saw a different silhouetted overlapped within Shin's body.

At that time, when the peerless genius Adam made his name in the Battle for Supremacy and beat all the other geniuses around the world, another person appeared on the other part of the globe and built up her own reputation.

If Adam was said to be the unrivaled martial art genius of the generation, then this person was a mentalism genius that could only appear after a thousand of years.

Luvenia Potter, as a peak expert, witnessed the rise of countless geniuses in her years. But it was only at that time that she saw what a real genius looked like.

The Conference of Mentalism, a special competition that the Mentalist Families with a long history of greatness had organized every five years, every genius in the field of mentalism was gathered to prove themselves.

That was when the peerless genius of mentalism, Evangeline Rose appeared and introduced herself to the world. She beat all the so-called mentalism geniuses of different Mentalism Families or individuals, who managed to build up their reputation after achieving countless of amazing feats.

Luvenia Potter could clearly remember the figure of an individual standing at the center of the arena while everyone else was lying on the ground.

The air that surrounded Evangeline at that time clearly resembled the air that Shin was emitting right now. It was the air that could only be seen around the real geniuses, who could look down on the others.

With Shin standing in front of her, the Lotus of Death, and the Martial King Lin Huang, Luvenia Potter could not help but recall that time when Evangeline Rose stood in front of the leaders of the Mentalist Families around the world without showing any emotion, nor being drowned by the pressure that they were emitting.

...

After briefly reminiscing about the past, Lin Huang chuckled a little before saying. "Right, you are right. How can we forget about such an important matter?"

"She is the one who will be studying, so she has the right to choose who she wants to learn from," he added before turning to Cloe, who was behind Shin and said. "Little girl, you don't be afraid to voice out your thoughts. We will respect your decision."

Cloe was silent for a moment as she shifted her gaze between Lin Huang and Luvenia Potter. She was having a hard time picking between the two.

Just like what Luvenia Potter had said, she could train on the path that she was pursuing the entire time – being the supportive force of the group, particularly being the perfect support that Shin could rely on.

On the other hand, Lin Huang was offering her to walk on a completely different path. It was to become as strong as the others. It was a path that could let her stand shoulder to shoulder with geniuses like the others instead of just taking on the supportive role.

In a sense, the answer to her dilemma was very much obvious. She could just choose the Martial King, Lin Huang, and continue learning under Luvenia Potter in the Auxiliary and Support Department.

While hesitating, she instinctively turned to Shin, seemingly asking for his opinion. Then she saw him smile gently and nodded his head.

Seeing that, Cloe nodded her head, inhaled deeply, and closed her eyes, having finally made her decision.

After that, she turned to Luvenia Potter before bowing and apologizing. "I am so sorry, ma'am. But I think I will be following the path that Sir Lin Huang is presenting."

Hearing that, Luvenia Potter gave an understanding smile as she was already expecting that choice. She was planning to make Cloe the best supporter of that group by focusing on her, but since she attracted the attention of a crazy guy like Lin Huang, she could understand her choice.

After that, she nodded her head to the group and smiled at her grandchildren before glaring at Lin Huang as she left.

Old Man Lin gave her a smirk before turning Cloe. "Since you choose to become my disciple, then you have to brace yourself for hardship."

He then saw that Cloe was about to give him a bow to acknowledge him as her master. Before her knee could even bend, he suddenly waved his hand and sent a gentle wind that prevented her from kneeling before saying. "There is no need for formality. I don't care about such things."

He then glanced at the other students in the class, who were watching everything unfold before continuing. "Moreover, this is not the right place and time for such things."

He crossed his hands behind him as he walked away from the group while saying. "We will be following the arrangements of the academy. We will be having your personal training during the weekend."

"I will be arranging your training regime much tougher than what the class will be having, so you better prepare yourself. But at the very least, it will be able to complement the training that you will be having during the classes."

Cloe quickly nodded her head and bowed. "I understand, master!"

Old Man Lin could not help but raise his eyebrow a little when he heard her words. It was strange to hear someone addressing him as master. It was his first time accepting someone as a disciple, so he had to take some time to adjust himself and get used to it.

After that, he turned to the other students in the class before yelling. "We are going to start the physical training after a few minutes. Get ready to experience hell personally."

Hearing his words, the students quickly retracted their gazes and turned away from the old man. They were too scared to stare at Lin Huang because his gaze alone was more than enough to wet their pants.

In the meantime, a couple of individuals were sneakily looking at the sight with different thoughts. Some of them were looking at Cloe with envy, throwing hostile gazes at her while the others were full of surprise and disbelief.

That was the Martial King that they were talking about. Being his personal disciple was certainly something big. Different powers represented by these students would definitely take this matter very seriously.

...

"It looks like something big is going to happen," muttered Diel as he stared at the group in the distance. He was squinting his eyes as he thought about something.

"This may affect the mission that the organization has given us, young master," whispered Falcon with a solemn tone.

Diel shook his head. "You don't have to worry. It will not happen. The higher-ups will arrange a plan for that. What we must focus on is not play our role and be good students."

...

On the other side of the field, the so-called three kings were also looking at the scene with complicated gazes. It took them quite some time before they manage to calm themselves.

"What now, Jean? This is something unexpected," said Simone with a solemn tone.

Jean Camus shook his head and replied. "It is indeed unexpected to see the legendary figure here. We all know that there are a lot of hidden dragons living in this swap called Magic Ace Academy, but to find such a big old dragon as the Martial King? It is indeed a big surprise."

Thomas Brooks knitted his brows slightly before asking. "Are we not going to...?"

But before he could even complete his words, Jean immediately cut him off. "We are not going to concern ourselves in other things other than the task given to us by Master."

"We have to find the person that he is looking for and report to him as soon as possible," he added while sweeping his gaze at every student as he looked for the 'sign' that his master was talking about.

But after not seeing anything, he shook his head and went back to taking a nap, not concerning himself with what was happening around him.

Chapter 1077 A Crazy Obstacle Course (Part 1)

...

After the time set by Old Man Lin had ended, the entire class quickly gathered and stood at the center of the activity field like a platoon of soldiers. They stood patiently while waiting for the old man to give his instructions.

Not long after, Old Man Lin stood in front of the group and examined their respective states with his gaze. And when he confirmed that all of the almost regained their peak forms, he nodded his head before extending his hand in the air and doing a downward pulling motion.

Bang!

Then a huge wooden box suddenly fell beside him out of nowhere. And with a flick of his wrist, the lid of the box was suddenly opened.

When the class peeked at what was inside the box, they saw a bundle of things that resembled a handcuff used to restrain criminals and prisoners.

There was a curious look on their faces before an idea suddenly flashed in their mind. And before they could even react, those handcuffs suddenly flew in their direction and swiftly attached themselves to their wrists.

"What!"

A lot of them were caught off-guard, unable to do anything. The others with faster reflexes tried to dodge instinctively, pulling their arms to avoid those handcuffs. But unfortunately, the speed of those handcuffs was a little too fast, making them unable to avoid getting caught.

Clank! Clank!

The panic and surprised shouts of the class and the clanking sounds of the metal cuffs could be heard in the field for a couple of seconds before everything calmed down.

Shin threw a curious gaze at the cuffs wrapped around his wrists, examining them. Then he suddenly noticed that he is unable to circulate his Mental Energy within his body. The group around him also noticed the same time which was quickly followed by the entire class.

While the class was currently recollecting their thoughts and regaining themselves, Old Man Lin quickly explained. "As most of you have guessed, these are called the restraining cuffs. It is usually used to restrain criminals and prevent them from circulating their energies."

"But unlike the common restraining cuffs used by the police and military forces, the ones wrapped around your wrists are slightly modified by me."

"Instead of completely restraining your energy, these restraining cuffs are only disrupting the circulation of your energies within your bodies."

"Restraining cuffs are indeed a good tool for capturing people, but when it is modified to a certain degree, I can be a good tool for training your energy circulation."

He let everyone try to circulate their respective energies within their bodies and explore the changes that the modified restraining cuffs had made before continuing. "These restraining cuffs have different levels of restrictions, and I will adjust their level depending on your progress."

"Once you got used to the current restrictions that it has, I will adjust it for you, so that you can continue your training."

"With this kind of training, you will naturally be able to improve your control over your respective energies and become more familiar with it. You will also be able to discover a couple of things that you have not noticed before."

Shin slightly knitted his brow while muttering to himself. "So, it is really related to the earlier class. It is for us to explore our respective energies and discover our innate attributes and their natures."

His voice was soft and quiet, but since the entire class was currently listening to Old Man Lin the entire time and not making any sound, everyone was able to hear his voice.

Before he fell into an awkward situation, Old Man Lin nodded his head and quickly followed. "It is like what that smartass over has said. The purpose of this training is still to explore your respective energies and understand them more to awaken your innate attributes and discover their unique natures."

"But it will be too boring if we just do it that way. And it will also take quite a lot of time before you are able to fully discover everything."

"And since your schedule is very tight, I prepared a training course just to make everyone a little faster," he added before waving his hand. "Group yourselves according to the two groups that I've said earlier."

Then he made a snap with his fingers while immediately followed by a series of movements in the field. And when the class looked over, they saw that the ground was moving on its own and slowly forming an obstacle course that varied from the simplest to the most complex design.

Before everyone could even feel surprised, Old Man Lin quickly continued. "Those in the first group will have to go through this entire course for as long as they can."

"Heh! Don't try to act lazy and slack off while running through the entire course. We will never be able to trick my eyes. You can go and give it a try, but I guarantee you that will regret it for the rest of your time staying here and training under me."

He paused for a moment and turned to the other side before continuing. "As for the other group, don't think that you are safe either. You must regularly run through this obstacle course for at least 5 laps before going to the meditation training that I am giving you."

The old man did not even wait for everyone to recover themselves as he quickly instructed them to run. "What are you all waiting for? Run!"

His shout was like a thunderclap that struck the middle of the field, making everyone snap out of their daze. And before they could even respond, they suddenly found themselves flying in the air before landing flat on a certain part of the obstacle course that seemed to be the starting point.

The class slowly stood up and was about to start running when they suddenly noticed something. They just found out that not only their energy circulation was being disturbed, but the restraining cuffs seemed to be also able to increase the weight of their bodies which made it hard for them to move freely.

Not only that but there was also a series of stabbing pain that kept on stinging their bodies as they tried to move their bodies. It was as if a thousand bees were stinging their bodies every time their muscles moved.

The expression of the entire class immediately turned dark as they realized their predicament. If it was just the restriction of their energy circulation and the sudden increase in weight of their bodies, then it would still be fine. After all, all of them had already experienced something like it. The disruption of their energy circulation might have changed it a little bit, but the overall experience was still somewhat similar.

But if they added the stabbing pain that assaulted them as they tried to move, it was no different from torture. In normal circumstances, they would be able to suppress the pain by circulating their energies or using special techniques to nullify the pain.

But since their circulation of energies was currently being disrupted by the restriction cuffs, they could not do anything about it. Moreover, due to their energies being unable to circulate properly, the pain that assaulted them became even more effective and somewhat heightened.

The corner of Shin's mouth kept on twitching as he tried to suppress the stabbing pain with sheer will. But aside from that, he was relatively well compared to the others, who were having a hard time to even moving a muscle.

Leonard was the second fastest to adjust himself among the group. There was still a slight discomfort on his face, but other than that, he was relatively fine. The torture experienced that he had suffered after getting kidnapped to one of the laboratories of the Shadow Alliance, made his tenacity and willpower to become much stronger and more solid than the others.

Arthur was in a similar situation. He was able to quickly recover himself and adjust to the pain. But unlike the other two, he relied on his bloodline powers and the innate powers of his body. This level of pain was nothing to him and treated it as some tickling sensation after adjusting himself to it.

One after another, the other students were starting to recover themselves. This was where the gap between the class started to show itself.

The ones with a much solid foundation and tougher bodies were able to quickly recover their free movements and adjusted their bodies to the pain.

Seeing that, Old Man Lin nodded his head in satisfaction despite already expecting most of it to happen. But quickly after that, an evil grin suddenly flashed on his face as he muttered. "I've already told you; I will let you experience the living hell personally as long as you train under me."

The class did immediately run toward the obstacle course as they tried to adjust themselves more to their current states. And when they were ready to move toward the course, they immediately that there was something wrong with it.

They were unable to take another step forward as they looked at the obstacle course in front of them with weird and stunned gazes.

"D*mn! What a crazy old man."

Chapter 1078 A Crazy Obstacle Course (Part 2): Start Of The Race

...

The entire class stood at the start of the obstacle course, staring at it and unwilling to move. It was because they could feel the overwhelming threat that it had. In their eyes, this obstacle course seemed to be alive.

No one wanted to be the testing subject for the others and check what was wrong with the course. They continued to stand in their places, waiting for someone to make the first move.

Seeing that from the distance, Old Man Lin clicked his tongue before muttering to himself. "Tsk! This is why it is troublesome to deal with clever kids."

Understanding what everyone was thinking, the old man quickly yelled at them. "Hey! What are you brats waiting for? Move!"

"I will be evaluating your performances, so you better not slack off!" he added with a slightly frustrated voice before continuing. "The ones who finish that finished the first five laps the fastest will be receiving a bountiful amount of merit points, so stop being lazy and start moving!"

Unfortunately, given how clever the group was, they still refused to take the first step and continue to wait.

At this point, Jean Camus looked at Simone Bartolomeo and tilted his head toward the course, telling the latter to get ready to move.

But before they could even make their move, someone in the class stepped forward and headed toward the obstacle course alone.

"Cowards," he said as he moved ahead. He was ranked in the middle rankings of the class, so his skill shouldn't be that bad. But when compared to the top rankers, his skill, and performance were not that significant.

Because all of the attention was always being attracted to the top rankers, he was rather upset. They were supposed to be in the same class, so he felt that he should be at the same level as them.

At the same time, he was also quite jealous of those students at the top of the rankers, especially Cloe, who attracted the attention of such a legendary figure as Martial King Lin Huang.

He could not understand why someone less talented as Cloe attracted the eyes of such a distinguished figure. From his perspective, she was only able to be ranked at the top of the class because she was lucky enough to be acquainted with such talented people as Shin and the rest.

He wanted also to prove himself and this situation seemed to be the perfect time for that. Having that in mind, he flashed a mocking smile to the others before confidently stepping on the obstacle course.

He was slightly nervous at first as he could also sense the danger coming from it, but after taking a couple of steps without having anything strange happen, he quickly built up more confidence and started advancing in haste.

They just heard from Old Man Lin that the ones who finished the first five laps first would be receiving merit points, so he had to take this opportunity to create enough gap between him and the rest.

He was laughing inside and mocking the rest for being too cowardly in front of this obstacle course when there is nothing wrong with it aside from the dangerous feeling that they were sensing from it, which he suspected to be something fake.

Clack!

Then he suddenly sensed that he stepped onto something, making him pause his actions for a moment. A dangerous air quickly swept through his body, making his body freeze momentarily.

Boom!

What followed was a huge explosion that blasted him toward the air, turning his entire body into human charcoal as he fell back on the ground with a loud thud.

The corner of everyone's mouth could not help but twitch after seeing his outcome. They now understood that the air looming around the entire obstacle course was this heavy. Moreover, they could sense that there was more to it aside from those landmines.

"Landmines? This feels like we are in a military training ground," commented Arthur as he fixed his eyes on the spot where the landmine had exploded.

It was at this moment when Old Man Lin suddenly shouted from a distance. "You guys don't have to worry. Anything that is installed in that obstacle course can't kill you."

"Though, it will give you a lot of pain – enough for you to feel like dying," he added while wearing a creepy smile, which signified that there were more surprises waiting to be uncovered by the entire class.

Bang!

That was when Simone Bartolomeo made his move. He stomped strongly on the ground before launching himself forward, charging through everything without hesitation.

During his charge, he purposefully made large and heavy steps that destroyed the path that he was taking. And due to his actions, the broken ground sank and created a lot of inclining boulders that revealed the landmines hidden underneath.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

A series of explosions quickly followed as his actions triggered the landmines behind him. But despite that being the case, Simone continued to charge forward, crossing his arms in front of his face to block the fire embers and shrapnel produced by the explosions.

Simone Bartolomeo used the toughness of his huge body to charge through the explosions as he created a path for Thomas Brooks and Jean Camus, who was following behind him at a considerable distance.

The other students of the class quickly reacted and chased after the three, using the path that they had created. They were completely taking advantage of them.

But how could those three let these guys take advantage of their efforts for free? They would naturally prevent the rest from catching up to them. After all, this was still a competition where they needed to prove themselves and showcase their skills.

Thomas Brooks opened his palms and summoned a bunch of metal strings that spread in every direction and attached themselves to the landmines that were not triggered by Simone, who was running in front.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Not long after, he triggered the landmines behind them, preventing the others from completely advancing and catching up to them.

On the other side of that field, Mavin and Marie were casually making their way forward. Marvin was holding a phone-looking device that was telling him where the landmines were located as he lead the way while Marie was walking behind him in a leisurely manner.

There were other students that noticed their movements and tried to follow after them, but before they could even step onto the field that they just took, Marie tossed a coin in their direction which accurately fell on the spot where a landmine was located.

The moment when the coin bounced off the ground, the landmine instantly exploded, making everyone chase after them.

"Tsk! Isn't that cheating?" asked one of the students after seeing that Mavin used a device that could locate the landmines.

He might have blurted it out of instinct, but it clearly reflected his mind. This cost him scornful looks from the others. And due to that, he could not help but lower his head in shame.

Ezio Williams, on the other hand, suddenly disappeared and shrouded himself in the cloud of dust caused by the explosions. And not long after, he suddenly appeared at the forefront of the class, closely chasing after the leading trio.

Meanwhile, Dylan, who was bidding his time up until now, finally made his move. He unsheathed the sword hanging on his waist and swung it forward.

His actions produced a series of sword waves that flew forward and drew a long trail on the ground that triggered the landmines on their path.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

After that, he walked casually as if nothing happened. With his sword waves creating the path for him, he had an easy time traveling on the first section of the obstacle course. He did not even turn his head behind him as he let the others follow him on the path that he created.

Shin and their group watched from the sidelines for a while, observing everything. They did not make their moves up until now as they were gathering information.

"Are we still not going to make our move?" asked Arthur impatiently as he was eager to charge ahead since earlier.

Shin shook his head in response. "This is not only a contest of speed, but also of endurance and performance."

"The old man said that we must finish at least 5 laps. Do you think everything will be this simple?" he added with a scorn look before continuing. "Moreover, this is just the start. There are still a lot of traps waiting ahead of us, so there is no need to rush."

"We must hide our full strengths and save as many cards as we can before the real climax of this 'race' is achieved," said Jillian as she could completely understand what Shin was thinking.

She completely agreed with his plan, but lagging behind the pack a little too much would also put them in a disadvantageous situation. She looked at Shin and waited for his decision before voicing her own idea.

Shin calmly observed the entire class before finally turning to Leonard. He tilted his head toward the course before saying. "Lead the way and we will support you from behind."

Chapter 1079 A Crazy Obstacle Course (Part 3)

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"Let the charge and we will support you from behind," said Shin to Leonard while signaling the others to make their preparations.

From what he could see, this 'race' was not as simple as running through the obstacle course, but it was also another form of assessment. These thoughts seemed to be confirmed after hearing the words of Old Man Lin, especially when the merit points were mentioned.

But at the same time, Shin was suspecting that this was an assessment test that was meant to test not only their individual strengths but also their teamwork.

Yesterday, they were asked to look for a club to join or make their own. Almost everyone in the class already submitted their report about the clubs that they had joined and created. With this, Shin was suspecting that the academy wanted to check on the students that decided to group together and the others that chose to remain solo.

Since they were in a group, Shin had suspected that the academy wanted to see more of their teamwork and synergy rather than see their individual strengths which they had already proven by their current rankings within the class.

Jillian also had the same thoughts as Shin. She was suspecting that this 'race' was supposed to see if their team was good enough to take on missions that the academy would be giving them.

Having that in mind, she had to think about how she would be able to contribute more to the group, as well as her twin brother. They had already worked together with the group twice already but that did not mean that they were already familiar with each other. There were still a lot of things that she had to consider as well as to explore.

Finding the perfect position for her and Molton in the group was their main concern. She could tell that each member of the group had a designated position. Even Alice, who was supposed to be in a similar position with them, seemed to have a better understanding of the group than she was expecting.

...

Leonard quickly stepped forward when he heard Shin's words. He tilted his head left and right, creating a series of cracking sounds. At the same time, he also rolled his shoulders and stretched his legs to relax his muscles.

He then turned to the side and looked over his shoulders before asking. "Is everyone ready?"

None of the group answered him verbally and just nodded their heads, indicating that he could start running as soon as he was ready.

Seeing that, Leonard smirked before squatting his hips a little while focusing his minimal amount of Internal Qi on his feet.

Crack!

And when he focused more strength on his legs, the ground under him cracked as his feet sank on it by half a foot. And on the very next moment, a small explosion could be heard as his figure suddenly disappeared.

Bang!

A shockwave was produced by that explosion, making the dust and gravel fly in the air. Not only that but similar series of explosions could also be heard in the distance as deep footprints could be seen appearing on the ground continuously.

Not long after, the landmines on the path that those footprints were taking started exploding one after another, creating chaos in the middle of everyone that was supposed to be making their way in the obstacle course carefully.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

'Blood Sutra: Devil's Footprint'

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Right after Leonard created a path, Shin and the rest of the group suddenly made their move. They followed closely at the path that he had created, with Shin and Arthur leading them.

Shin waved his hand and sent an energy wave that created a gust of wind that cleared the path in front of them, where explosions were still in the middle of occurring.

Then Arthur charged through it and knocked everyone that was trying to block them away. The same for the others, who were planning to take advantage of the chaos and tried to use the path that Leonard had created – Arthur knocked them all away with the signature move that he loved to use inside the game.

'True Nine Dragon Arts: Breaking through of the Golden Dragon'

Roar!

Alice and Jillian made a series of hand signs as they ran alongside the rest. They positioned themselves on each side of the group and they prepared their Mentalism Techniques. And when they caught behind Shin, they simultaneously clasped their hands together summoning their Mental Energy.

Their Mental Energy spread in the group before forming a barrier that protected them. These protective techniques were very common to see from every Mentalist since it was the foundation of every advanced technique.

It was because of this that the two were able to set it up despite them being not very familiar with each other. But even if that was the case, they were still having a hard time maintaining such a technique because of the restrictions cast on them by the cuffs wrapped on their wrists.

Fortunately, Shin seemed to have more experience when it came to this. As if he was already expecting that to happen, he quickly put his palms together before releasing his own Mental Energy. His Mental Energy quickly mixed with the ones that the two were released, quickly stabilizing the barrier that the two had created.

Molton, on the other hand, was keeping an eye on their surroundings. He was trying to look for the other students, who might give them trouble along the way.

Lorraine and Cloe were doing the same as they readied themselves to get in the action as soon as the situation called for it.

But after seeing how aggressive the group was, none of the other students were willing to be knocked out by them, especially with that kind of momentum. Moreover, this was a group composed of top-ranked students, so they were only asking to be beaten by them if they carelessly provoke such a group.

With that, the group was able to successfully pass through the field of landmines. They did not encounter much as they continued moving forward. But what they encountered next was a field filled with sharp mental spikes that kept on shooting up from the ground.

Not only that but there was also a bunch of iron arrows that were occasionally flying in the air, seemingly covering that area.

Leonard was already waiting for the group at the edge of that field. He was wearing a deep frown on his face as he was thinking about how they were going to pass through this field.

When the group caught up to him, he quickly turned to Shin and asked for his opinion. "This is going to be a little troublesome. How are we going to continue?"

Shin swept his gaze at the field before asking. "Are there any patterns between the metal spikes and iron arrows?"

Leonard shook his head. "It seems like they are coming in random."

He thought for a moment before continuing. "I've watched the others that passed through it, and it seems like the metal spikes are randomly appearing from the ground while the iron arrows will constantly target anyone who is in the air."

"There seemed to be a mechanism in the distance that can target anyone who will be trying to leap in the air. As for those iron arrows that are already flying over, they are just randomly being fired to mess with the tempo of everyone."

Shin slightly knitted his brow before asking. "Did you see how the others pass through it?"

Leonard shrugged his shoulders and replied. "There are already a lot of people who managed to get on the other side when I arrive, but I saw a couple of them passing through it."

"But the ones that stand out the most is that pair of twins that use some kind of mechanical wings to fly over the entire field. They also have a barrier that completely blocks the iron arrows that are that targeted them in the air."

Shin looked over the iron arrows flying in the air before turning to the group. "You guys will not be having a hard time dodging those arrows as long as you have enough footing in the air, right?"

"I will create small platforms in the air while you guys are traveling. Just focus on dodging the arrows and I will handle the rest," he added with a confident tone.

Jillian could not help but furrow her brows when she heard that. She could not help but doubt Shin's words. But when she saw the absolute trust that the others had, she felt that he might be onto something.

Even Alice, who was supposed to be a little new in the group was also showing a similar level of trust.

Then she saw Shin turn to Leonard and Arthur, saying. "Show them the ropes?"

The two were about to nod their heads when Cloe suddenly walked forward and volunteered. "Let me! Let me! This one is perfect for me."

Shin paused for a moment as he was about to reject her proposal. But when he saw her confident eyes, he quickly swallowed back the words that he was about to say and nodded his head. "Alright."

After that, they prepared themselves for a couple of moments and stood in front of the field before Cloe started running forward.

When she stepped right on the field, the ground beneath her started to shake, signifying that the metal spikes were about to emerge from it.

Without any hesitation, she leaped in the air to avoid those metal spikes. But at the same time, she also became a target of those mechanisms firing the iron arrows in the distance.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

A series of swooshing sounds could be heard as the iron around made its way toward her. It would be hard for her to dodge them given her current position in the air.

But right at that moment, she confidently adjusted her body midair before extending her feet, seemingly stepping onto something.

And right on cue, a thin layer of solid tile materialized in the air. It was made of metal energy that Shin had summoned from the distance.

Pah!

Cloe stepped on it and leaped higher in the air, making her avoid the iron arrows flying at her. And quickly after that, she continued to move forward, stepping on the materialized tiles that came out of nowhere.

From the distance, she looked like running in the air as she continued to charge ahead while dodging the arrows in a very skillful manner. And not long after, she managed to arrive at the other end of the field without any problem.

Shin turned to Jillian, who was showing some doubt earlier, before saying. "Simple, right?"

After that, he turned to the others. "Get ready. We are going together to save time. Just make sure to keep some distance from the others, so that they would have enough space to adjust themselves if some stray arrows headed in their way."

As the rest were making their preparations, Jillian thought to herself if she could do the same level of control over her mental energy given their current forms.

All of them were wearing these same restriction cuffs but it seemed like Shin was unaffected by it after showcasing such a level of control. A single misstep could put Cloe in a dangerous situation, but he calmly and skillfully pulled it off until the end.

Moreover, Cloe's calm and collected movements also impressed Jillian. Especially when she saw the full confidence and trust that she had showcased while traversing the entire field.

"Seems like this group is more amazing than we originally thought," she muttered as she could not help but look forward to what this group could accomplish in the future.

At the same time, she was also looking forward to how much she would grow after working with them together.

Chapter 1080 A Crazy Obstacle Course (Part 4)

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After passing through the metal spikes and iron arrows field, Shin, and the rest of the group continued to advance and encountered a few more troublesome traps along the way.

There was a field where a huge log was rolling on their path. That log was so huge that it covered the entire path and with a height that expanded up to ten meters high. There were also metal spikes attached to it, making it look threatening, especially when it was leaving a bunch of holes on the ground as it moved.

Shin just told the others to jump as high as they could as he also created small platforms that the group could use to ascend higher in the air. But when they leaped over that huge log filled with metal spikes, another one of a much larger size quickly greeted them, forcing them to jump over it once again.

The group repeated that process a couple of times as such logs continued to roll toward their way. And each time a new one appeared in front of them, its size was much larger than the previous ones that they encountered.

Fortunately, the group was able to survive in that field without having any problems. Though, it quite exhausted them in the process, especially Shin who continuously created a solid tile that everyone could use in the air.

Shin was thinking if what their crazy training instructor had said was true. He was doubting that anyone would be able to survive after getting rolled over by such a huge log with metal spikes attached to it.

In the meantime, Molton was curious about where those logs were coming from and going. Not only they appeared out of thin air, but they also disappeared after reaching the entrance of the field.

He was thinking that only Void Manifestation Stage Experts and above could summon and unsummon such huge logs with their spatial abilities. Moreover, it had to be someone who specialized in void and spatial manipulation.

A Mentalist in Ruler's Realm could also achieve such a feat by setting up a special mentalism formation or array that produced a similar cycle of such rolling logs.

The group could not even catch their breaths after passing through such a scary field. It was because the next stage of the course in front of them forced them to move their feet.

The next stage was a field filled with sinkholes and quicksand. The group carefully found their way out of that field, avoiding those two things that would pull them under the ground.

Of course, the group could also use the same strategy that they had used earlier and relied on Shin. He could just create a solid tile above that field as the group traversed it as if they were walking on solid ground.

Unfortunately, such a trick would not work in this field. It was because anything that was traversed above the field without touching the ground would be attacked by humongous sandworms, which was somewhat ironic.

Any form of energy would attract the attention of those sandworms and would charge at the source of energy with unimaginable speed.

With that, anyone who would want to traverse this field had to prevent themselves from using any kind of martial arts or mentalism techniques that needed them to summon their energies outside their bodies.

Aside from circulating their energies within their bodies, they could not summon their energies or any kind of moves that could summon them externally.

At this point, the group really started to doubt the words of the crazy old man watching them from the distance while enjoying their sufferings.

"Is this crazy obstacle course could really not kill them?" – This was the thought that was running through the minds of the entire class.

Instead of being on an obstacle course, everyone was thinking that they were inside an ancient labyrinth full of traps that could take their lives with a single misstep.

Having that in mind, the group could not help but look at Cloe with gazes full of sympathy and pity. They could somewhat imagine how much suffering she would experience while training under such a crazy and scary old man.

The rest of the class, who were showing jealousy and envy toward her earlier, were now thankful that they did not attract the attention of Old Man Lin. They could not imagine what kind of hellish training would they experience if they followed this insane yet legendary figure.

...

Shin examined the whole field with the help of his 'True Sight' technique and Spiritual Sense. From what he could see, this field was meant to test their tracking, sensing, and path-finding abilities as well as their intuition.

It would also test their knowledge and intelligence on how to deal with such a troublesome situation.

Shin was not afraid of those huge sandworms. Given that Old Man Lin let such creatures in the field, he suspected that these sandworms were skillfully trained and would know their limits. They were only following the orders of their master to eliminate the students from the race and not harm them.

Regardless, the sight of someone being besieged by a swarm of huge sandworms could strike fear in anyone who sees it. And naturally, no one would not want to have a first-hand experience with it.

Shin purposely did not lead the others as he wanted them to showcase their own abilities in this area. This situation was a little different from the previous two fields, so he wanted to see how they were going to traverse this field with their respective strengths.

He would not be on their side all the time and always help them solve difficult problems, so he wanted them to solve the problem by themselves. They could always help each other anyway, so there was no harm in trying.

Shin and Arthur would not have any problem navigating their way on such a troublesome field. Given the background of their family, their tracking and path-finding abilities were on the same level as those of soldiers in the military.

Leonard was relying on his Bestial Instincts to sense their danger and his fast reaction speed when he accidentally stepped on a sinkhole or a quicksand. There were also others to support him, so he did not encounter any dangerous situations.

The Potter twins seemed to have powerful Spiritual Senses, which let them find the safest routes that they could take. Shin was even suspecting that they could combine their Spiritual Senses somehow, which let them share what each other was sensing.

Alice was also using her Spiritual Sense. As a mentalist, she naturally had the same ability. But what surprised Shin was her Spiritual Sense being a little different compared to the others. He could not pinpoint what exactly it was since Spiritual Sense could not be seen by the naked eye, but he could feel that hers possessed certain abilities that were different from the others.

Lorraine, on the other hand, was relying on her sharp eyes, which were trained to help her become a marksman. As a family of gunsmiths, the Goldstein Family was famous for their gun-making and manufacturing abilities.

But that was not the only ability that they had – they were also skilled at using all kinds of guns given their familiarity with them. And because of that, members of the Goldstein Family were also known to

be the greatest marksmen in the world, making them one of the Aristocratic Families without any Martial Arts and Mentalism specialties.

They made their way into that rank by relying on the abilities that were unique to them.

As a good marksman, one had to possess sharp eyes and great observation abilities, which Lorraine had inherited from her family. Moreover, she was also a Dual-Practitioner, which gave her good environmental awareness of a Martial Artist and the sharp senses of a Mentalist.

She might not be the perfect Dual-Practitioner like Shin, but she had her own skillset that made her stand out among the rest of her peers.

In the meantime, Cloe seemed to be rather ordinary compared to the rest. Yet, she was also the most efficient among the group if the monster trio was excluded.

She was solely relying on her observation abilities which seemed to be much better than the rest. Her sharp eyes were observing and monitoring the movements of the sand while also feeling the vibrations of the ground with her hand.

With that, she was able to navigate her way in the field without stepping on the sinkholes and quicksand. And if she accidentally stepped on either of the two, she was fast to react and find a way to escape the predicament.

There was even a time when she did not need the others to help her. When a quicksand suddenly pulled her down, she suddenly infused her Internal Qi on a rock and threw it a few distances away from her.

Her actions made a couple of sandworms head over her direction, making the others panic a little. But what they saw next impressed them to a certain degree.

She quickly withdrew her Internal Qi after briefly releasing it. And due to that, the sandworms headed over the rock that she threw earlier since it was infused with her Qi.

The huge body of the sandworms created a ripple in the quicksand, which Cloe used to escape. She borrowed the momentum of the strong ripple to launch herself into the air and land in a safe spot with Shin's little help.

Her quick wit and creativity made Jillian and Molton looked at her in a new light while Alice looked at her with complicated emotions.

It was unknown what this idol was thinking but given that she was secretly clenching her fist after seeing the sight, it must be related to abilities or something similar.

It was only a short episode in their advancement on the obstacle field.

The group quickly advanced and constantly conquered the other fields without a problem. They even caught up with some of the students, who were leading the pack and encountered a few top-ranked students along the way.

Then everyone could not help but halt in their tracks when they reached a certain part of the obstacle course. Everyone stood at the edge of one of the stages of the course, unwilling to take another step forward.

It was because they encountered something that made them think that this was no longer an obstacle course.