

Destiny 1181

Chapter 1181 'Daylight' Robbery

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Shin watched the battle continue for at least more than half an hour. He could not help but become a little surprised that the forces of the Black Market were able to hold this long despite being repeatedly beaten by the two Overlord Rank Monsters.

What was even more intriguing about this was the fact that this battle was rather entraining to watch. Surprisingly, or rather unsurprisingly, Shin was somewhat enjoying that the opposing party was struggling to fight the two overlords of this cave.

They also learned a few more things from Arlott and Illumi on how to properly control the players of the raid. Even though he was confident that he could do way better than them, he was rather surprised that the two leaders of the two teams dealing with the overlords had unique methods that he did not think about.

Out of all the people brought by the Black Market, the only ones that survived up until now were the trio of Arlott, Illumi, and Izumi along with the remaining DPS (Damage per Second) players, which were the mages, archers, a couple of swordsmen, and the ones with thief-related classes.

There were still a few healers that survived, but most of their tanks had already been wiped out. Aside from two or three from each team, the rest were already lying on the ground and waiting for the obvious outcome of this battle.

At first, when the two overlords went on a rampage after their sudden transformation, the two teams dealing with them were thrown into panic as chaos overwhelmed their ranks.

Fortunately, their leaders were quite competent to be able to handle the situation and lead their respective teams to continue the battle.

Then they realized that their attacks were not actually dealing any damage to either the monsters. They threw everything they had and tried all the things that they had in mind, yet none of them gave the result that they desired.

It was only later that they discovered that the aura barrier covering the two monsters was gradually weakening as more attacks were thrown at them. And when they realized what was happening, they started throwing everything they had to the two monsters, completely abandoning their defense.

This resulted in huge losses on their forces but it at least gave them enough leeway that they could use. They also lowered the durability of the two aura barriers to almost a fourth of its original state.

But despite that being the case, Arlott, and Illumi were still wearing a grim expression on their faces as they completely understood that they would only get annihilated if they let the flow of the battle continue.

They had to do something to change the tides and turn it in their favor.

Both of them knew that it was time to use their final card. They no longer care about the possibility of the Stoneback Gorilla appearing out of nowhere during the most critical moment. After all, their main priority was to survive first before anything else, and this was already their last stand.

"We are going to use that thing!" shouted Arlott, finally deciding that this was the only way to survive.

Illumi did not voice out any complaint as he knew that there was no other way. He just nodded his head and signaled Izumi to start preparing.

Seeing the signal, Izumi did not even hesitate as he ordered his unit to quickly disengage in battle. Along with their retreat, Illumi led his unit to lure the Ironhead Chimpanzee toward the direction of the Steelfist Ape.

They were planning to group these two monsters together before using their final card.

From the side, Shin suddenly became interested when he saw the sudden change in the formation of the Black Market. He could not help but fix his position to a more comfortable position, quite intrigued with what they were planning.

Then he saw the unit being led by Izumi form a circular formation from the distance, surrounding the two monsters while the rest of the Black Market people lured the two overlords toward a certain location.

Not long after, the carefree expression on his face suddenly disappeared as he saw the unit from the distance set up a familiar-looking device. Or at least very similar to the ones that he had seen somewhere.

"Don't tell me-..." When he was about to voice out his thoughts, the answer was quickly presented in front of him as he saw a bunch of cannons being set up by those people.

"Those advanced types of machinery are almost comparable to the ones that Tinker is making," he mumbled as he remembered seeing the gadgets on display in his personal laboratory of Tinker when he visited it before.

He clearly remembered seeing such heavy cannons in that place.

It was known to everyone that Tinker was the number engineer within the game and was truly out of this world when it came to having amazing ideas about creating advanced gadgets and special tools.

Because of this reason, it was not strange for him to possess futuristic and very advanced tools and gadgets within this world filled with sword and magic.

Out of every engineer within the game, Tinker was the only one who had such things and even created them.

Shin had not seen anyone who possessed similar things or even reached the same level. Even in the online forums, he could not find anyone to reach the same level as Tinker when it came to engineering, much less magic engineering, which was a notch higher.

But right now, he was seeing the Black Market taking out such machinery on par with the ones that Tinker had created.

He must admit that he had underestimated this organization. He did not expect them to reach this level of technology in such a unique and one of the most difficult classes.

"They have hidden themselves a little too deep. I guess they are planning to use these tools when they are already on their wit's end during the war with the Hand of Midas," Shin was thinking about what could have happened if the war between the two sides continued without the Hand of Midas knowing about this.

Thinking about that, he did not forget to increase the number of spying crystals in the surroundings to further enlarge his scope when recovering everything that he was seeing.

This was going to be good material later for Thinker and an important piece of information for the Hand of Midas for the bigger war that was already around the corner.

After this, he slowly stood up and gently stretched his body. It was finally time to make his move.

With a snap of his fingers, three figures suddenly came out from the shadows behind. One bowed respectfully, the other was wearing an indifferent expression as if he was the most important person in the world while the last one remained standing with a nonchalant expression on their face.

They were his Dark, Crimson, and Shadow Reapers respectively, which were Blackie, Vladimir, and Grimrace.

Blackie waited patiently for Shin's instructions. Vladimir was still uninterested in everything other than himself while Grimrace seemed to be somewhat unsatisfied about something.

"Get in position and wait for my signal. Once give it to you, kill everyone in sight," said Shin before quickly adding. "Don't get too near those two monsters so that you will not be forcefully unsummoned."

"And make sure not to damage those magic cannons. I need them for something."

"Leave the two overgrown monkeys to me. I will handle them," he instructed as he waved his hand, telling them to move.

Blackie respectfully bowed before slowly retreating and merging with the darkness of the cave. She then disappeared without leaving a trace.

Vladimir's body liquified first before he turned into a pool of blood as he sank to the ground. Then that crimson pool was quickly absorbed into it without leaving a single drop.

In the meantime, Grimrace was like a ghost as he vanished without making any sound, making it like he had never been there in the first place.

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Not long after, the people from the Black Market were able to finally lure the two overlord monsters on the spot that they desired. And right on that instant, Arlott and Illumi used a large-scale skill from their Tier 2 arsenal.

They used it with a combination technique that made their individual skills fuse together. They even used a series of scrolls to make sure that the power of these skills would amplify to an unimaginable degree.

Black chains sprouted out from the ground and wrapped themselves around the two monsters, locking them in place.

Some of them snapped as the two overlords fought back and started pulling the chains and uprooting them from the ground. But those black chains were quite stubborn and sprouted out a few more from the ground and started to tightly wrap the limbs of the humongous monsters.

At the same time, spears with the size of huge stone pillars started descending from above and fell on the Steelfist Ape and Ironhead Chimpanzee.

Some of them landed the bodies of the two overlord monsters and forced them to lower their bodies. The impact was so strong that it even forced the two overlords to kneel on the ground.

The rest of the huge spears that failed to hit the two monsters landed on the ground around the two monsters, stacking together and forming an entrapping formation that prevented the two Overlord Rank Monsters from moving freely.

While that was happening, the surviving members of their team quickly retreated, putting as much distance as possible. When everyone reached a safe location, Arlott and Illumi, who were already sweating bullets due to their keeping their respective skills active, finally gave the signal.

Seeing that, Izumi did not even hesitate for a second and quickly shouted his order. "Fire!"

With his words echoing within the cave, the mechanical cannons that they had set up surrounding the two huge monsters, finally charged up their powers before unleashing a devastating beam forward.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

The beams of light flew straight to the two overlords, not giving them the time to react to what was happening.

They even brightened the surroundings as they left a shining trail on their path.

Boom!

Not long after that, the head of the beams finally reached their destination and hit the two monsters in the distance.

A very strong explosion quickly erupted as the dome of blinding energy appeared at its center.

The entire cave shook violently due to the impact. The walls trembled while the ceiling started to show some signs of collapsing. The stalactites on the ceiling even started to fall one after another, piercing the ground below and adding to the destruction that the explosion had created.

Fortunately, the cave still held out and prevented everyone from being buried alive.

Everything was thrown into chaos as the people from the Black Market used their remaining lifesaving skills one after another to save themselves. They had already expected this to happen, so they were pretty much ready for it and braced themselves for the impact.

Everything settled down, and the surviving people of the Black Market gulped a mouthful of saliva as their eyes were filled with anticipation.

They knew that the two monsters were still alive somehow since they had not received any notification about their deaths.

They all raised their heads and started in the direction where the epicenter of the explosion was located.

The thick cloud of dust and dirt was starting to subdue at that time.

They did not have to wait that long before they saw a pair of huge silhouettes standing in the distance. And when their line of vision was finally clear, they found that the two overlord monsters indeed survived, albeit barely hanging with their lives.

Looking at their health bars that there was only a sliver of points left, they quickly became motivated and almost cheered for their approaching success.

But they were still able to hold themselves back as they knew that this 'sliver' of health still represented a huge amount in terms of numerical value.

Arlott and Illumi were already exhausted, but their eyes were burning with excitement. Izumi, on the other hand, was already ordering his unit to start preparing for the next round of attack.

Their mechanical cannons might be powerful, but they still needed some time to charge their energy before they could fire another shot. It also needed to cool itself down since it would self-destruct if it tried to fire a series of attacks consecutively.

All they needed right now was to buy five more minutes before this struggle could finally end.

The three leaders were about to give their orders when they noticed that someone was actually standing in the middle of the two overlord monsters.

It was an unfamiliar figure that had never been with them before.

It did not take long for them to register that it was not someone from their group. It was also at that time when they realized what that person was trying to do.

"Bastard! Stop that guy!" shouted the three leaders, waking up the rest of their group.

But instead of answering their call, what responded to them was the cries of their dying comrades one after another.

It was at that moment when Arlott, Illumi, and Izumi that they had been working their asses for someone else benefit.

What was worse about it was the fact that it was already too late for regret.

Chapter 1182 Divine Constellation (Part 1)

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Arlott, Illumi, and Izumi would never have thought that the one who would rob them in this raid was not the third overlord monster, but instead another monster disguised as a player.

What was even more insulting about this was the fact that they were being robbed straightforwardly yet they could not do anything about it.

They could do nothing but watch their comrades die one after another.

It was very humiliating.

From the time when Shin first appeared, they were never able to respond properly since there were three powerful elemental spirits that appeared out of nowhere.

The units that were being led by Izumi were quickly slaughtered by the shadows within the cave. They seemed to have been swallowed by the darkness before disappearing one after another.

It happened to all the players responsible for operating mechanical cannons. They were not even able to respond in time when the shadows behind them moved and devoured them.

The Izumi tried to do something, but he was immediately obstructed by a gorgeous woman with a stunning body, who suddenly appeared out of nowhere and obstructed his path.

The darkness seemed to be dancing around her. They seemed to be worshiping her as she stood there while staring coldly at him.

Izumi was suddenly frozen in place as he stared at her. He could feel an immense threat coming from her. His instincts were even warning him not to fight her and to run as fast and as far as possible.

At the same time, the units being led by Illumi were currently being slaughtered one-sidedly by a clown-like person who was wearing a dark green butler suit.

This person seemed to be enjoying himself, listening to the music that only he could hear. He was swaying his body left and right, dancing along with the unheard music while waving his hands on its beat.

Following the movements of his hands, the daggers made from the shadows danced along with that silent rhythm.

This crazy person was acting like a conductor of an orchestra while slaughtering the enemies surrounding him.

A few distance away from that place, a handsome guy with smooth skin and pale complexion was walking leisurely with his hands crossed behind him. He seemed to be having a casual walk in the park on the surface, but behind him was a gruesome sight that could leave anyone in horror.

As he walked forward, the people behind him were turning into a pool of blood one after another. They did not know how it happened, but their bodies suddenly stopped moving before they slowly turned into a crimson liquid that fell down on the ground, forming a sticky pool.

When stopped walking, nothing was left behind but a little river of blood.

These were the scenes that the three leaders saw. All they could do was to stand on their respective spots totally frozen in place, unable to move a muscle.

This was the clear distinction between their strength and their opponents. The gap was too big to bridge so their instincts were kicking in and preventing them from moving.

It was already too late when they recovered themselves and regained their bearings. Before they could even make their respective moves, the three elemental spirits already finished everyone, leaving just the three of them.

Blackie was waiting for Izumi to make his move, giving him the chance to at least retaliate before ending his life.

Grimace just finished his 'performance' and was currently looking at Illumi with an evil grin, seemingly inviting the latter to come at him.

Vladimir, who just turned everyone into a pool of blood, stopped right in front of Arlott with an indifferent gaze and seemed to be telling him that he was nothing but an insignificant being.

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All of those things had nothing to do with Shin as he was currently standing in front of the two fully enraged overlord monsters that were trying to recover themselves.

These two were on the same level as the Stoneback Gorilla that he had faced before. On normal occasions, he would not dare to fight either of them head-on, much less face them together.

But since they were currently in a heavily wounded state after receiving the combined attacks of those mechanical cannons, Shin felt that he could at least give it a try. Especially when they were already out of their special berserk mode and even with their extremely 'low' health bars.

This would also be a very good chance to test out a few things that he just learned from the books provided by Professor Henry.

"Let's do this!" he mumbled before summoning Solus and quickly using Elemental Spirit Possession with her. "Solar Reaper!"

The old professor had told him that the Elemental Spirit Possession could help him familiarize himself with the innate attributes that he had in the real world. It could also help him discover his other innate attributes once he studied a particular element within the game to a certain degree.

But since he was not aware of his other elements, he would rather use the one that he currently had both within the game and in the real world, which was the fire element.

Based on what David had said to him before, the properties of his Fire Innate Attribute were from Destruction and Creation. And since the Solar Flame of Solus was somewhat close to those properties, the Elemental Spirit Possession with her was perfect for him.

This was the perfect opportunity to become fully accustomed to this innate attribute that he possessed.

Swoosh!

Flame suddenly shrouded Shin from head to toe once Solus broke free from the revolution of specks of lights around him and merged with his sword.

The raging flame lasted for a moment before they were sucked toward the sheathed sword and fused with it.

It did not take long for the sheathed sword to enter its transformation.

Both the hilt and the sheath turned white.

The cord wrap of the handle was completely white while the diamond-shape patterns were in different shades of orange color.

The guard of the sword turned into a beautiful pattered of a dancing flame ember, carrying the different shades of orange and yellow colors. The reflection that they were making was creating an illusion that made the sword guard look like a living flame.

Shing!

The resounding sound of metal quickly reverberated within the whole cave as Shin pulled out the katana from its sheath.

Swoosh!

Then the raging flame quickly came out from the sheath alongside the blazing blade of the sword.

When the flame finally receded, it quickly revealed the now blackened blade that it had while the sharp edge was in deep red color. The pattern of the sharp edge even carried the blazing flame design that made it look like a real flame.

'Elemental Spirit Possession: Divine Constellation'

This should be his first time using this Elemental Spirit Possession, so he was not too familiar with it. Due to that, he could not help but briefly glance at its basic description from the ability information panel.

Elemental Spirit Possession

Type: Weapon Possession

Details: Summon your Elemental Companions and fuse them with your designated weapon, improving the skills and effects of that weapon by 100% while also giving you extra abilities at the same time.

Solus (Solar Reaper): Divine Constellation – special swords and heirloom swords.

-Increase the magical powers and magical affinity by 50%

-Increase flame control by 100%

-Deal a continuous burning effect every time you land a clean hit on the opponent, which stacks after a repeated strike. When the stacks reach a certain limit, you can ignite it and let it explode to deal a huge amount of damage to your opponent.

He did not care much about the extra skill that it provided. What made him interested in it was the increase in flame control, which clearly reflected the words that Professor Henry had said.

He was sure that it was not there before, so it was most likely added during the recent update of the game.

He knew that this was not the best element to utilize his current sword-drawing style, but since his goal was to increase his familiarity with his innate attribute and explore its other applications, he had no choice but to use this form.

Shin twirled the katana a couple of times before putting it back inside its sheath.

He then immersed himself in the current feeling that he had after activating this Elemental Spirit Possession. He felt that the surrounding fire elemental mana was completely under his control.

It was a familiar yet also unfamiliar feeling.

When he entered his state of Reality Manifestation, this particular feeling suddenly intensified, making Shin slightly addicted to it.

After suppressing that strange urge that he felt after activating the Reality Manifestation, Shin turned his attention back to the two overlord monsters, who were now able to recover their footings.

As if taking that as a cue, the Steelfist Ape suddenly threw a punch forward that flew straight to Shin.

Swoosh!

Shin quickly kicked the ground and launched himself in the air, gracefully dodging the incoming fist with the size of a house. He then flipped over it before landing on the arm of the Steelfist Ape and running through it.

Ta-ta!

Swoosh!

Based on all the information that he had gotten from watching the earlier battle, the strongest and toughest part of this monster was unsurprisingly its arms while its weakness was its head.

Shin traversed the short distance without an instant and leaped forward to reach the face of the Steelfist Ape. When he was right in front of it, he suddenly unsheathed the katana and swung it in a horizontal manner.

Shing!

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Quick Draw (Flame Form) – Solar Flare'

Swoosh!

A blazing energy was released from the tip of the sword as it drew a beautiful arc in the air. It continued to move forward before heading straight to the face of the Steelfist Ape.

It was already too late for the huge ape to dodge at that time, so all it could do was close its eyes to protect itself from the blazing energy heading on its face.

Boom!

Roar!

The Steelfist Ape cried in pain due to the attack as huge crimson numbers appeared above its head.

It tried to slap Shin with its other arm waving it in front of its face. Unfortunately, he was able to avoid the slap by skillfully twisting his body in the air and flying over it.

At the same time, he gathered the fire elemental mana toward his sword before using the generated momentum from his turn to throw a slash in the air.

He then used one of his extra skills, the 'Flame Burst', as the base to execute another complex skill from the real world through Reality Manifestation.

'Four Symbol Scripture: Celestial Vermillion Bird Method – Blazing Talons'

Swoosh!

Boom!

Yet another clean hit with yet another painful cry of the monster ape. It was also followed by another string of crimson numbers appearing over its head, signifying the damages that it suffered.

The Steelfist Ape covered its face with both of its hands while trying to move away from Shin for a moment.

Shin was about to give a chance by using one of the charges of 'Mondi's Jump' when he suddenly sensed an attack from the side.

He quickly adjusted the angle of his kick in the air to change the direction of his jump, barely dodging the beam of light that was sent by the Ironhead Chimpanzee.

Realizing that this was going to be a little tricky, Shin decisively decided to use his flying style for more mobility in the air and faster traveling speed.

'Equipment Skill: Dawn's Mantle (Cloak) – Wings of Freedom'

Swoosh!

With that, the black cloak that he was wearing suddenly morphed and turned into a pair of wings with obsidian feathers, which let him fly.

Right after their appearance, Shin quickly did a series of aerial maneuvers to dodge the barrage of attacks coming from the mouth of the Ironhead Chimpanzee.

A few moments later, he suddenly paused as the overgrown chimpanzee seemed to have realized that its attack was useless in front of Shin and just glared at him.

The Steelfist Ape had also recovered at that time. It was also glaring at him, seemingly cursing his entire family tree given the expression that it was making.

Shin hovered in the air for a couple of moments before flapping his wings and launching himself down, seemingly resuming his assault.

Chapter 1183 Divine Constellation (Part 2)

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The Ironhead Chimpanzee opened its mouth once again and started gathering the mana from the surroundings and compressing it into a ball of light. Then it started firing a series of earthen energy beams at Shin, who was in the middle of diving down from above and headed toward them.

As Shin dived down from the air, he left a series of afterimages as he constantly flapped his wings to change his speed and direction from time to time. He did it to avoid the barrage of attacks flying his way, doing complex aerial maneuvers while dodging.

With such an irregular pattern, it was hard to predict his movements, much less catch him.

During that time, the Steelfist Ape suddenly dug its hands into the ground before grabbing a huge chunk of boulder from it. It raised it over its shoulder before throwing it in the air, flying straight to Shin.

Shin chuckled when he saw the flying boulder heading his way. He then purposely positioned himself behind it, hiding from the view of the two monsters, and used it as a cover from the barrage of earthen beams.

After that, he used two charges of the 'Moonlight Steps' to fly forward with an increase in speed.

He turned into a streak of light that pierced through the boulder and arrived in front of the Ironhead Chimpanzee in the next instant.

At the same time, he was also pulling out the [Yamato] from its sheath before stabbing its blazing tip at the opened mouth of the monster.

Shing!

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Quickly Draw (Fire Form): Blazing Final'

Swoosh!

The trail of light that he was left behind seemed to have been ignited by a raging flame as he continued moving forward.

It was already too late for the Ironhead Chimpanzee to close its mouth since the tip of the blazing sword already reached the compressed earthen mana in front of it. That ball of mana quickly shattered upon collision, releasing beams of blinding light from the gaps between the cracks.

Shin took that opportunity to quickly blink away by using 'Void Steps' and appearing a few meters in the distance. And as if it was not enough, he also flapped his wings to propel himself even further while also using the final charge of his 'Moonlight Steps'.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

Boom!

Not long after, the shattered ball of mana was detonated as it could no longer suppress the disrupted balance that it had.

The Ironhead Chimpanzee released a deafening howl as it received a huge chunk of damage due to the explosion. Since the explosion erupted right in front of its face, it received a direct hit that could not be avoided.

Fortunately, its head was its strongest point, so it was able to negate most of the damage. If not, then it would not be surprising for it to get one-shotted by such a powerful explosion.

However, the injuries that it already had suddenly worsened. It struggled a bit more before it could even regain its footing.

The Steelfist Ape, on the other hand, was able to get away from the center of the explosion in time due to its sharp instincts. Instead of looking at the outcome of the explosion, it chose to sweep its gaze at the surroundings and look for the culprit of everything.

When it saw the rapidly retreating figure from the distance, it quickly started chasing after it, aggressively charging alongside its gradually increasing speed.

It did not take long for it to catch up to Shin. And when it did, it suddenly leaped into the air while raising both of its arms over its head.

Swoosh!

Roar!

With yet another deafening roar, it rapidly dived down from the air and headed straight to the spot where Shin was about to stop.

Right before descending, the gigantic ape slammed its steel-like fists on the ground.

Seeing the rapidly magnifying fists descending at him, Shin held his sword in a horizontal manner right in front of his chest while releasing the blazing mana that he was circulating within his body.

In the next instant, he released the blazing mana toward his surroundings and created a dome of energy that protected him from any harm coming from the outside.

This was one of his defensive skills within the game, which was modified by infusing the power of Solar Flame into it.

Swoosh!

'Slayer Skill (Modified): Blazing Eclipse Pulse'

Bang!

The barrier shook intensely as the pair of huge fists landed on the blazing barrier. The force from the impact was even transferred into the ground, making it tremble as if an earthquake was currently shaking it.

Cracks started to spread from the point of impact as the barrier continued to shake. But fortunately, it was able to withstand the heavy force pressing on it and continued to stand strong.

After that, Shin suddenly swung the blazing [Yamato] in a horizontal manner while detonating the barrier.

'Slayer Skill (Modified): Blazing Eclipse Counter'

Bang!

Upon activation, the barrier exploded while carrying a force doubling the strength that the Steelfist Ape when it attacked earlier.

It forced the arms of the ape to rebound back to the air as it was forced to stumble back to nullify the impact.

It then received huge damage from the explosion, cutting down another chunk of its almost empty health bar.

Bang!

With a powerful stomp, the Steelfist Ape stopped itself from moving further away. It then strengthened its back before raising both of its fists. A moment later, it started throwing a series of punches forward, bombarding Shin with an unstoppable barrage.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Seeing this, Shin quickly put the [Yamato] back to its sheath before assuming a sword-drawing stance. He then gently put his right hand on the hilt of the sword before suddenly unsheathing it and swinging it multiple times.

Shing!

His arm turned into a blur as he swung the sword in the air, leaving a blazing trail on their path. The crisscrossing trails of the air formed a spherical barrier around Shin, giving off an illusion that a miniature sun was formed to protect him.

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Quick Draw (Fire Form): Blazing Firmament'

Bang! Bang! Bang!

When the barrage of punches came in contact with the blazing barrier, it produced a series of explosions that signified the strength behind each collision.

Their movements were way too fast for the naked eye to see, but if it was in slow motion, then it could be seen that Shin was actually hitting the fists of the Steelfist Ape with great precision and perfectly deflecting each of them with every strike.

Bang!

And when the exchange finally ended, Shin and the giant ape were separated from each other.

The Steelfist Ape was forced to take another series of steps backward due to the accumulated stress that it got from the series of strikes from its opponent. It struggled a bit and almost stumbled on the ground, but it was still able to regain its footing in the end.

Shin, on the other hand, was pushed backward after striking the final punch from the monster. He strode back while maintaining his last striking position. He also left a deep and long trail on the ground as he moved back.

He was about to jump forward and continue attacking when he sensed that the ground underneath his feet trembled.

Without any hint of hesitation, he quickly jumped in the air while also flapping his wings to ascend as high as possible.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Right after his feet left the ground, huge earth spikes suddenly shot from the ground and spread in different directions.

Fortunately, Shin was fast enough to escape from its area of effectiveness and managed to avoid being pierced by them.

But despite the sudden ambush, Shin still hadn't forgotten his previous thoughts. He drew a beautiful arc as he flipped in the air.

Then he dived with an unstoppable momentum while flapping his wings repeatedly during his descent. He almost turned into a beam of blazing light in the air as he headed toward the Steelfist Ape waiting for him on the ground.

During his rapid approach, he also used his previous signature combination to attack – consecutive 'Mondi's Jump' to further increase his momentum alongside his extra skill 'Falling Lightblade' while swinging his sword down.

Swoosh!

Shing!

The trail of blazing light was left in his wake as he struck down the [Yamato].

'Four Symbol Scripture: Celestial Vermilion Bird Method – Sunlight Corona'

Swoosh!

There was a brief pause in the cave as if the time had come to a sudden halt.

Then there was an explosion of a blinding light that briefly illuminated the dark cave before condensing into a diagonal line that was passing through the neck of the gigantic ape.

After that, the head of the ape could be seen rolling in the air, flying toward a certain direction.

Shin could feel a certain sensation when he completed that attack. It was as if he was entering the state where he was in constant enlightenment – just like when he fought against that particular young executioner recently.

Unfortunately, he did not have time to dwell on that feeling as he sensed the enraged Ironhead Chimpanzee in the distance.

It threw a series of earth spells, targeting him who just killed its comrade.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Shin flew slightly above the ground while doing toward the remaining overlord. He was maintaining a speed that was neither too fast nor slightly slow to have better control during his flight.

He continuously flipped and rolled in the air as he continued moving forward while dodging the series of attacks coming from the Ironhead Chimpanzee.

One of the reasons why he chose to kill the Steelfist Ape first was because it was easier to finish it off due to its simple and straightforward attacks.

Moreover, he had already figured out its weakness, so he was confident that he could kill it much faster than the other overlord.

Other than that, the Ironhead Chimpanzee was a magic-type beast monster, which was weaker when facing a speed-type player such as Shin himself. He would be able to dispose of it quickly as long as he took care of the Steelfist Ape.

Seeing that Shin was still rapidly approaching it, the Ironhead Chimpanzee seemed to have started to panic, especially when it saw what happened to its fellow overlord just earlier.

Its unease was further intensified when it remembered that even the Stoneback Gorilla was killed just recently.

With its improved intelligence, which was slightly better than most of the beast AI, it could sense the rapidly approaching death that was coming for its life.

Realizing that it might really die in the end, it suddenly started beating its chest while roaring at the top of its lungs.

It then started hitting the ground repeatedly, sending the huge pieces of earth in the air that were flipping over.

Then the Ironhead Chimpanzee suddenly spread its arms wide, seemingly communicating with the rich earth element within the cave. When the connection was finally stabilized, the overlord monster suddenly clapped and put its hands together in front of it.

Following its actions, the huge rock boulders floating in the air suddenly started spinning and revolved around the huge monster. It then formed a huge tornado that was spinning with a speed that shredded everything in its path.

Seeing the storm of rock boulders, Shin could not help but halt his tracks before rapidly retreating. He knew that he would instantly die if he tried to force his way into it.

He would be beaten by those huge pieces of rock and crushed by them if he tried to dive inside it.

When he thought about that, Shin felt that this was the end of trying to apply his fire control to his skills and sword techniques.

It was time to end this.

At the same time, it was also the perfect opportunity to use the Elemental Skills that he got from Solus when he contracted her to be one of his retainers.

"Time to end this," he muttered before holding the 'Divine Constellation' form of his sword with both of his hands, positioning it right in front of front of his chest in a horizontal manner.

Chapter 1184 Divine Constellation (Part 3)

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As Shin stood with his fighting posture, a layer of blazing mana appeared on the surface of his body while flowing upwards. It also flowed through his sword, covering it with a blazing layer that continuously moved on its blade before dissipating in the air.

The temperature around him started to rise as the blazing mana continued to flow. The ground underneath his feet started to show some signs of melting due to the fiery aura that he was releasing.

'Elemental Skill (Solar Reaper): Blessing of the Sun'

This was one of the skills that he had gotten from Solus after he formed a contract with her. It was a buff skill that gave him the ability to increase his affinity to the Fire Element and also gain better control over Fire Elemental Mana.

This elemental skill also enhanced all the fire-related attacks that he had upon activation, boosting his offensive power to a much higher degree.

And since this skill was being used under the state of Reality Manifestation, the effects that it had reached better heights.

After this, Shin slightly twisted his waist while pulling the sword back and raising it over his shoulder. He also widened his stance by spreading his feet out – one was pointing forward while the other was behind to support his balance.

He wanted to enter the battle state that he learned just recently where he was in a constant state of enlightenment during the battle, but he just discovered that it was much harder to do than he originally thought.

Using that technique inside the game was much harder than entering the Reality Manifestation alongside his advanced martial arts skills and mentalism techniques.

With that thought, he could only go to a natural way of doing things.

He guided the flow of mana within his body according to the flame breathing technique that he had practiced these past few days while also combining it with the Celestial Vermillion Bird Method of the Four Symbol Scripture.

Once he did, the mana within him seemed to have boiled while flowing through his meridians. What followed was the sharp increase of temperature within the cave as if it was turning into the mouth of a volcano.

'Elemental Skill (Solar Reaper): Decent of the Primordial Sun'

He was using this second elemental skill that he got from Solus as a model for the advanced mentalism technique that he had from the real world.

With his current real, this technique was impossible to execute with his current realm in the outside world, but it was a different case within the game.

He could achieve what he could not in the outside world as long as he had the perfect model for those advanced techniques and skills here inside the game.

With the help of Reality Manifestation, he would be able to achieve the expected result if not better.

Bang!

The air around Shin failed to withstand the increasing temperature and suddenly exploded as the blazing mana covering his body suddenly intensified a miniature sun behind him.

Then, when the accumulation of power reached its peak, Shin suddenly charged forward by stomping his foot on the ground and sent himself flying toward the storm made of thick dust and flying rocks of different sizes.

Bang!

He transformed into a blazing stream that pierced through the storm ahead melting everything in his path.

Swoosh!

As he continued advancing forward, the strength of the storm intensified. There were also rock boulders of larger sizes to greet him, trying to stop his advance.

But while they were approaching, most of them were being melted by the intense heat surrounding Shin before finally exploding after failing to withstand such temperature in the end.

They all turned into molten lava that spread out, seemingly creating a path for Shin instead.

Shriek!

A deafening cry of a bird could be heard as he broke through the final blockade of the storm and appeared a few meters away from the Ironhead Chimpanzee.

The monster seemed to be a little surprised at his appearance before an enraged expression quickly washed over its face.

It opened its mouth and roared, gathering the remaining strength that it had to form a compressed earthen mana in front of its mouth.

It was summoning its final card for this final stand.

Bang!

A golden beam suddenly shot out from its mouth and headed toward Shin, who was already about to reach it.

Shiek!

At the same time, the blazing mana surrounding Shin seemed to have gathered before forming an illusionary image of a fiery bird around him.

It opened its beak wide, releasing yet another cry as Shin swung the blazing sword down, leaving a trail of beautiful arc of flame on its path.

'Four Symbol Scripture: Celestial Vermillion Bird Method – Pheonix Purgatory'

As Shin slashed down with his sword, the incoming beam sent by the Ironhead Chimpanzee was suddenly cleaved in halves. It then created a path for him to continue advancing forward.

With a flap of his obsidian wings, he charged ahead and swung the blazing sword in a horizontal manner, leaving a trail of flame behind.

Swoosh!

From the spectator's point of view, the huge bird that was enveloping Shin's body seemed to have devoured the monster. This scene lasted for a moment before a blazing light passed through the neck of the overlord before severing the huge head from its shoulders.

It rolled a couple of times before landing with a soft thud in the distance.

Ta-ta!

As Shin landed, the image of the huge blazing bird receded before turning into a blanket of flame that faded away.

After that, Shin quickly exited the state of Reality Manifestation and Elemental Spirit Possession almost simultaneously.

He then stabbed the [Yamato] on the ground using it to support his body and prevent himself from falling. His breathing also became slightly labored due to fatigue.

By far, this was the most exhausting state that he was in after using both states simultaneously. He felt that a long time had already passed even though the battle only lasted for a few minutes.

He must admit that the tricks that Professor Henry had mentioned earlier and the teachings that he got from the books that he had read really increased his proficiency at using his elemental powers under the state of Reality Manifestation. And using the element that he had already awakened in the real world gave him more freedom during the battle.

However, it was also as exhausting as hell. It drained both his stamina and willpower to an unimaginable degree.

He did not have to worry too much about those two since his body inside the game had an infinite amount of mana while the willpower provided by his bloodline was almost inexhaustible.

The problem was it put a great toll on his mind, which resulted in his over-exhaustion. If he insisted on staying in those states for an extended period of time, he would most likely die of exhaustion rather than getting killed by his opponents.

Moreover, there was also another special state that he hadn't used yet. If he also added it to the mix, then he could already imagine how great the toll that he had to bear when using all three of them at once.

"I guess I still have a long to go. I need to practice a little more and explore my bloodline a little further," he muttered to himself.

He knew that the key to this was to understand the full extent of his bloodline that could give him such powerful willpower. As long as he had a strong mind, then he would be able to withstand the burden of using the three battle states together.

After organizing his thoughts and evaluating his performance a little, he started tidying up the whole place. He naturally did not forget that this place was a mine where a huge Mana Crystal Vein was located, so he understood very well how important the place was.

At the same time, he also had to gather the materials from the body of the two overlord monsters, particularly their most important part. The arms of the Steelfist Ape and the head of the Ironhead Chimpanzee.

He was not sure why, but he felt that he would be up for a surprise once he gathered these materials alongside the hind of the Stoneback Gorilla.

After dissecting the bodies of the two monsters and gathering all the useful materials, he proceeded to collect all the items and equipment that were dropped by the people on the Black Market.

As for the trio of Arlott, Illumi, and Izumi, he had already forgotten about their existence since he fully trust his three elemental spirits, particularly Blackie. As for the nutjob and narcissist, Grimrace and Vladimir respectively, Shin knew that those two would either torture or kill their opponents within an instant.

Once he was sure that he did not miss anything, he unsummoned the three elemental spirits before summoning Astaroth.

Then he took out the three huge Beast Cores that he had gotten from the three overlords alongside the others that they had gotten from the other monsters in their previous hunts.

The difference between the cores was very distinct as the auras that they were releasing were very different from each other, particularly the ones from the three overlord-rank monsters that were releasing the brightest glow.

Shin observed the Beast Cores for a few moments before turning to Astaroth, who was currently kneeling near him. He could tell that this hybrid elemental spirit was currently suppressing its excitement.

"Go on. It is your reward for all the hard work," he said, gesturing to the elemental spirit to take the cores.

"This unworthy servant will humbly accept your grace, my lord!" responded Astaroth as he lowered his head further in his kneeling position.

Shin could not help but shudder at the words that the elemental spirit had uttered. He still could not get used to these words.

After that, Astaroth stood up and walked toward the pile of cores before taking the three largest ones. Then he retreated and bowed at Shin once again.

Seeing that, Shin could not help but slightly knit his brow before asking. "Is that all? All of these are yours. You can take all of them alongside those three."

In response, Astaroth shook his head. "This is more than enough for me, my lord. Anything more than these will not be helpful to my growth."

"The power of earth containing these three cores is already too abundant for me to absorb. It will take a lot of time for me to absorb everything by normal means. But with the help of this place, I can at least absorb them with a greater speed and digest everything immediately after."

He hesitated for a moment before continuing. "It may take some of the energies from the Mana Crystal Vein, but it will be negligible to its overall amount."

"This servant wants to ask permission from my lord," he added as he kneeled once again.

Shin was stunned for a moment before chuckling. He then nodded his head and said. "Go! It is us who find it to begin with, so it will not hurt to secure a few of them before handling the whole mine to our comrades."

After that, he kept the rest of the cores while thinking how much he would sell them to the Hand of Midas alongside the high-quality materials that he just gathered. He would surely be able to fetch a good price from it. He could also use it as another bargaining chip when negotiating with Shiella later.

Alongside this huge mine of Mana Crystal, Shin felt that it was already guaranteed to secure the upper hand in this upcoming deal.

These thoughts put him in a good mood before he went to the side to rest.

As for Astaroth, the elemental spirit was already heading to the center of the cave, walking toward the portion of the Mana Crystal Vein.

It was already impressive for the hybrid elemental spirit to suppress its urges up until now. It was clear that it was very excited about this upgrade.

He then sat cross-legged before entering a meditation state.

At the same time, the three Beast Cores floated around him before revolving in a steady phase. They released the energies that they contained before being absorbed by Astaroth, making him grow stronger and more powerful.

From the distance, Shin could already feel how powerful this elemental spirit would become based on the aura that it was releasing.

From what he could guess, it shouldn't be much inferior to both Hanzo and Solus. It surpassed the rest by a great margin with just a single promotion quest.

Not long after, his eyes were quickly bombarded by a series of notifications informing him about the great success of his quest and the successful promotion of Astaroth.

He was about to check them when he received another set of notifications. But this time, it was a message from Harmony, informing him about their successful capture of the entire territory.

They had won the war by a great margin thanks to his intel. The Chief Tailor of the Hand of Midas thanked him for everything.

He chuckled a little before casually replying before proceeding to rest. He had to recover as soon as possible before he continued with the rest of his business.

Chapter 1185 The Gaming Community Uproar

.....

Ding

System: Congratulations! You have successfully cleared the quest 'Challenge of the Earth Element'.

System: Your Guardian Reaper, Astaroth, was currently undergoing an evolution!

System: Congratulations! You are the first player to promote an elemental spirit into a Supreme Elemental!

As a reward, you will be receiving the Medal of Elements! Present this to the hall of Elementarists in the Awakened Continent in exchange for your desired item.

...

Shin read through the string of messages and could not help but slightly knit his brow when he read the final notification. It was saying that he was the first player to promote an elemental spirit into a Supreme Being, but he had never gotten a similar notification when he completed the quest related to the evolution of Blackie and Vladimir and got promoted to a Monarch Spirit.

This could only mean a few things.

First, it was possible that he was not the first player to promote those Elemental Spirits into a Monarch. From what he had heard from Hanzo and Solus, it was said that the Supremes and Monarchs of Elementals were somewhat different from each other even though they had similar levels of power.

But from what he could remember, Grimrace was definitely a Supreme Being in his current status, yet he also did not receive the notification at that time.

Then it could only be another explanation. Grimrace had not yet reached his full potential peak potential either. He most likely had yet to become a real Supreme Elemental and was still in the process of evolution.

Then it was the same for Blackie and Vladimir, who were also had not yet become a real Monarchs of their respective elements.

Hence, he had yet to receive the rewards for promoting them.

But there was still a possibility that there was another player out there who had managed to promote their Elemental Spirits into a real Monarch.

Shin thought that it was most likely though. At least that was what he believed.

But if there was really a person who progressed faster than him in regard to this matter, then it was most likely a player with a class closely related to Elementals.

Shin thought about Alice, who was known as Elemental Goddess Charlotte within the game, as this idea crossed his mind. He was suspecting that she might have promoted her Elemental Spirit Companions into a Monarch before him if there was indeed a person to overtake him in this matter.

Maybe he had to ask her about it when they met again. He could also use that opportunity to ask for her help regarding the way to discover and study innate attributes.

He was also considering asking Faker about it. However, after some consideration, he thought that it would be better to study such a method with Charlotte first before sharing it with the others.

After all, her class was a powerful Elementalist, which was closely related to Elementalism and Elemental Spirits.

If they managed to study and polish this method, then the help that they could provide to others would be much more bountiful.

But for now, threw these thoughts at the back of his mind temporarily since he did not have the time for it yet. He had to deal with his current business first before considering it again later. He could ask her about it once all members of the Emyrean Talons were gathered once again.

With that, Shin started organizing the items and equipment that he had gotten from the people of the Black Market while waiting for Astaroth to complete his evolution.

He was also checking his mailbox occasionally to see if there was an important matter he needed to attend. Fortunately, there was none, so he could focus on his own problems more.

Even Harmony had stopped contacting him after their last discussion. He was thinking that she might be busy organizing their forces outside the game, taking all the strategic territory within the outer region of the Starry Spears Mountain Forest.

It was in order to prepare themselves for the next war with the reinforcement of the Black Market. But at that time, the forces of the Hand of Midas would also arrive, so he did not have to concern himself about it.

He had also told her about another entrance toward this place, so there was nothing for him to worry about.

He could finally focus on his own business.

...

The evolution process of Astaroth was taking longer than he had expected. It was already an entire day within the game, yet the hybrid elemental spirit was still in the process of absorbing the Beast Cores of the three Overlord Rank Monsters.

It was at that moment that he realized that Astaroth was not exaggerating when he told Shin that those three beast cores were more than enough for his evolution.

Shin was already getting bored at that time. He was done organizing the items within his inventory ages ago and even finished evaluating his performance in earlier battles. He also meditated enough to regain his peak form, so he did not have anything to do at the moment.

Bored, he opened his virtual screen and logged in to the online forums of the game. He wanted to see how the players were reacting to the current update of the game and was quite curious about the other news with the community.

Sure enough, the top topics that the players were discussing were all about the Ascended Classes and Beings. For them, this was the most exciting part. A lot of people were hoping to get promoted from their respective tier 2 classes and reach tier 3 as soon as possible.

Unfortunately, they were quickly hit by reality and awakened from their dream.

Looking for the 'proof of qualification' was already hard enough as there were only a couple of them within the market and each one of them had sky-reaching prices. Only tycoons would be willing to spend on such items.

Buying the Proof of Qualification was just one matter. The other thing was the quest itself. It was so hard that those people who bought such an expensive item regretted their decisions quickly after.

The quest difficulty was so hard that even the Titled Rankers were struggling to clear it. Even the Godlike Players, who tried their luck, also failed to clear such difficulty.

Up until now, there was no news about any player who cleared these unreasonably difficult quests.

Forget about these Ascended Classes, even those players, who chose to follow the conventional path to reach the orthodox Tier 3 of regular classes, were having an even harder time.

No, even that might be an understatement. It could be said that the quest for these paths was much harder than attaining the Ascended Classes. It was practically impossible to complete according to the high-rank players who tried then, and some of them were also famous Godlike Players.

After seeing some of the leaked videos regarding those quests, the players quickly started filing a petition to the Gaming Company.

They were saying that those promotion quests were unreasonable and could be described as nothing but a living hell. They were saying that there was no player who would be able to clear them.

Complaints started to pile up from hundreds to thousands to tens of thousands in just a few moments. Then it grew from hundreds of thousands to millions after just an hour. But the World Gaming organization seemed to turn a blind eye to this matter.

However, they indeed released a single phrase to respond to the players. They said that it was not their fault for the players to have the wrong approach when taking those promotion quests.

Other than that, the company did not release any more statements.

The average players could not do anything about it but continue their bitter complaints.

On the other hand, the huge guilds and powerful organizations started doing their respective research. From their perspective, the last statement that the World Gaming Organization released was a crucial clue that would lead them to the right answer on how to clear those unreasonably difficult quests.

As long as they found the right answer and cleared the mystery of these quests, then they would be ahead of everyone else when exploring the Awakened Continent.

Meanwhile, Shin and the others who were aware of certain matters had already figured out the answer to this problem.

"Tsk! Tsk! The Gaming Company sure is cunning," muttered Shin as he shook his head repeatedly.

From what he suspected, the answer to this issue was the special states that the World Gaming Organization had mentioned right before the long maintenance – with the Reality Manifestation and Hyperactive Immersion being two of them.

The players just forgot about them since they were too focused on the matter that they were currently seeing. They were too blinded by the promotion quests and rewards that came along with it.

At the same time, they were also too confined to the conventional approach regarding the game. They seemed to have forgotten that this game was too different from the rest that they had played before since it was closely approaching reality.

But there was also another problem with this. Very few people could enter either of those two states, which were the most talented people. If the company followed this path, then most of the mainstream players would be left behind, particularly the most average ones.

This would break the game's balance, quickly leading to their demise. They would suffer the same outcome as the other games if this was really the case.

With that in mind, Shin was suspecting that the World Gaming Organization had already found a way for the players to reach those states or at least the inferior versions of them.

This led to a single problem and that was finding these methods that would make the players enter those states even with their average talents.

"This is rather tricky, but I am sure that the answer is somewhere out there," muttered Shin as he thought hard about this matter.

It was not because he was facing similar problems as those players. After all, he could enter the state of Reality Manifestation whenever he wanted.

He was trying to find the answer to this problem because he was worried about the rest of the Empyrean Talons, who were slightly inferior to them when it came to this matter.

Thinking about that, he was suddenly reminded of the quests that he currently had. And when that thought crossed his mind, something clicked inside his head.

He then started grinning widely before muttering. "D*mn! This game company sure is sly. They are hiding the answer behind those quests."

With this line of thought, Shin thought that these developers had created a series of quests that targeted the completion of these unique states. It might not be as strong as the real Reality Manifestation and Hyperactive Immersion, or even the others that were still unknown, but he was expecting that it would have a similar effect.

The main issue now was how to find those quests. There were a lot of quests within the game, some were trivial while the others had a huge impact. There were also other types of quests that could be repeatedly cleared for basic rewards such as experience points and basic to rare materials. Players called such quests as Daily Quests or Errands.

Looking for the quests needed to unlock those special states was already troublesome enough, much less identifying them from the rest of the regular and trivial quests.

But with this, Shin could at least have a general direction on how he was going to help the rest of his companions. Hence, he added this to the list of must-do tasks that he had to complete.

He would investigate this later once he was done with his own quests.

While he was lost in his thoughts, a sudden explosion of powers suddenly erupted from the distance – in the location where Astaroth was currently located. And when he turned his head toward that direction, he could not help but smile.

Along with this, a sudden notification popped out in front of his eyes.

Chapter 1186 Quest Completion (Part 1)

...

Ding

System: Congratulations! Your Elemental Spirit Companion, Astaroth, has successfully evolved into a Supreme Elemental!

System: Your Guardian Reaper Astaroth has evolved into an Obsidian Earthen Spirit!

Ding

System: The Elemental Skill, 'Heart of Stone', has fused with a new Elemental Skill, 'Heart of Steel', due to the evolution of your Elemental Spirit.

System: A new skill has been generated! 'Metal Synergy' Elemental Skill was created, please look at the information panel to read more about its details!

Ding

System: The effects of the Elemental Skill, 'Pulse of Earth', are further enhanced due to the evolution of your Elemental Spirit. Please look at the information panel to read more about its details!

...

Shin felt a little strange as he read through the system notifications right in front of his eyes. He was not sure how to feel about the new and improved elemental skills as he was no longer too reliant on them.

Regardless, having an additional card under his arsenal would never hurt. It could always help him in certain situations.

Given that, he opened his skill window and turned at the elemental skills panel to take a look at them.

Skill Name: Metal Synergy

Skill Type: (Passive & Active) Elemental Skill

Skill Rank: Special

Skill Details:

Passive 1: All your defensive capabilities will improve by 100%, boosting their maximum potential.

Regenerative abilities will be doubled. You could now regenerate your Health Bar even within combat.

Passive 2: Your movements will not be too restricted when wielding heavy weapons.

Their weights will be reduced to a fourth of their original weight as long as they are either made of metal or earthen material.

Active 1: After activation, you will be immune to all kinds of Crowd Control Skills aside from grappling and grabbing skills.

Duration: 3 minutes

Cooldown: 5 minutes

Active Skill 2: Upon activation, All kinds of metal in your surroundings – within a 50-meter radius – will be in your absolute control. You can reshape or manipulate them according to your will.

Duration: 3 minutes

Cooldown: 5 minutes

The corner of Shin's mouth could not help but twitch when he saw the information of the skill. Aside from the ones that he had gotten from Solus, this elemental skill was the most broken out of them all.

Not only did it have too many passive skills, but it also had two more active skills. Moreover, the effects of the previous skill 'Heart of Stone' were also included in it.

He was not sure about the other skill named 'Heart of Steel', but he could at least guess their effects given the information this new Elemental Skill had.

What amazed him a little was that absolute control over metals within a certain radius. It was somewhat similar to the Elemental Skill, 'Blessing of the Sun', that he had gotten from Solus, but also somewhat different at the same time.

That skill from Solus gave him a huge boost when it came to sensing and controlling the Fire Elemental Mana within surroundings, but this particular skill granted him control over metals.

He was not sure about the weapons that his opponents would be wielding, but he suspected that even if he could not control them, he could at least influence their movements to a certain degree.

"Regardless, this skill is still way too broken," he commented as he shook his head while reading the information about the skill.

At the same time, another idea flashed through his mind while thinking about this. He thought that his particular skill would work well with his other Elemental Skill, the 'Telekinesis' skill, that he had gotten from Grimrace. "Maybe, I have to look for a time to test it out later."

After that, he proceeded to look at the improved effects of his other Elemental Skill.

Skill Name: Pulse of Earth

Skill Type: (Passive & Active) Elemental Skill

Skill Rank: Special

Skill Details:

Passive 1: +500 STR +500 VIT

Active: After activation, you will be able to sense all the movements within the 100-meter radius away from you as long as they are standing on the ground; every player in stealth included.

Duration: 3 minutes

Cooldown: 5 minutes

Passive 2:

1. If the first active skill of the 'Metal Synergy' is activated during the activation of this skill, 50% of the incoming damage will be converted to your HP.
2. If the second active skill of the 'Metal Synergy' is activated during the activation of this skill, its range will be extended to 100 meters.

Note: You can only activate one of the effects of this second passive at a time.

Seeing this, Shin could not help but shake his head. "Of course, since the partnered skill is already broken, its pair will naturally have to be broken too so that it can be 'balanced'."

He was chuckling at himself while seeming to want to mock the developers. Or more accurately, the AI that was controlling everything and generating these broken skills.

Unfortunately, such skills would no longer be too important in the battle due to the current update. After all, real Martial Art Skills and true Mentalism Techniques were also too broken in their own right.

Regardless, these skills would still be helpful in certain circumstances.

After that, he finally turned to the information window for his Elemental Spirit Companions and looked for the new details about Astaroth.

Spirit Name: Astaroth

Status: Reaper's Retainer – Guardian

Race: Hybrid Elemental Spirit (Earth and Metal)

Bloodline: Obsidian Earthen Spirit

Purity: Supreme

Transformation: Earth Warden

Ability Status: Temporarily Sealed

Tier: Current 3 (Potential 5)

Level (Sealed): Adjusted to 170 (Max 500)

Shin slightly nodded his head as he found it somewhat similar to what the rest of his elemental spirits had.

But the noticeable difference that Astaroth had compared to the rest was the special border that his information panel had like the ones that Solus and Hanzo possessed.

He also had a unique border for himself!

Shin could see that the border that Astaroth was filled with earthen design. It had cracks that were releasing metallic luster from time to time, seemingly a pulsing heart given the rhythm that they had.

Fragments of small rocks were being peeled off from the earth-like border before falling down and dissipating like specks of dust.

Shin now confirmed that this special border reflected the strength of an Elemental Spirit. Having these special borders indicated the overwhelming strength that they had.

This also confirmed that the other three Elemental Spirit Companions that had been promoted recently were still not at their peak form and are currently in the middle of their evolutionary stages.

Once they were done, they would gain their respective special borders that were designated just for them.

After that, he closed the information window and turned to Astaroth, who was currently walking toward him.

He observed this hybrid elemental spirit for quite some time and did not discover any distinct changes. Aside from the slightly darker skill and brighter light that his golden tattoos were releasing, Astaroth was not different compared to before.

At least, appearance-wise.

But when it came to the pressure and aura that he was passively releasing, Shin could tell that this so-called Obsidian Earth Spirit was way more powerful than his previous self.

Shin repeatedly nodded his head as he watched Astaroth walk over. "Not bad. Not bad at all."

At that moment, the hybrid elemental spirit finally arrived in front of him and suddenly knelt down. At the same time, he shouted with a booming voice. "This unworthy servant will be forever grateful to the grace of the lord!"

The corner of Shin's mouth suddenly twitched when he heard those words, not sure how to respond.

At the same time, the entire cave also shook due to the powerful voice that Astaroth had. Fragments of rocks fell from the ceiling while the cracks that the cave started to grow larger and spread in every direction.

Afraid that he would be buried here alive, Shin just nodded his head at his Elemental Spirit Companion and unsummed the guy immediately after.

He was not in the mood to entertain this troublesome attitude. He had a more pressing matter that he needed to attend right now.

He first stretched his waist before sending a message to Harmony that he would be leaving. His business here was already done, so he had to proceed to the next one.

Now that he finally completed all the necessary materials for the upgrade of his main weapon, he could now visit that blacksmith dwarf after a very long time.

But before anything else, he first checked on the quest one more time to make sure that he had missed anything and completed everything.

Quest Name: Peak Potential of [Yamato]

Quest Type: Special Gathering Quest.

Quest Difficulty: Chaos (Highest Difficulty)

Quest Details: You've heard from Grandcraftsman Berlin how to recover the peak form of the [Yamato].

Quest Conditions: Gather all the required items for the upgrade of [Yamato] before going back to Grandcraftsman Berlin so that he can reforge it for you.

Quest Progress (100%):

- Fruit of Nirvana 1/1

- Lunar Essence 1/1
- Sunfire Fragment 1/1
- Moonfrost Shard 1/1
- Ancient Void Metal 6/3
- Heart of Abyss 7/5
- Lava Cores 8/5
- Earthen Charcoals 30/10
- Meteorites 50/20

Quest Reward:

+5 Levels

+20 Skill Points

+10 Legacy Points

[Yamato] Obsidian Rank

?????

Quest Penalties:

None

He did not care about the rest of the rewards as they were not as important as before. What he really wanted from this was the promotion of his main weapon, which would have a direct effect on his overall strength.

Moreover, he was also quite excited about this since he would be the first person to own an Obsidian Rank item within the game.

That was if his calculation was right.

But given the timing and the current stage of the game, it was most likely the case. He did not have to worry too much about it since even the top gods within the game like Arthur, Leonard, and Zero did not own a single piece of Obsidian Rank Equipment, much less a weapon.

Even the suspected wealthiest player in the game, the guild leader of the Hand of Midas Trading Firm, the Frost Goddess Snow White, was the same.

His chances of being the first player to own this kind of weapon were infinitely high. And he was very excited about it.

It was strange, but it seemed like he was finally starting to understand what Arthur was feeling when playing the game. That excitement when discovering new places and creatures, owning special and unique equipment, and learning about new things was starting to really hit him.

It seemed like he started to understand Arthur's addiction to playing games. And it looked like he was starting to get influenced by it.

Laughing at himself, Shin shook his head before pulling out a city-return scroll from his inventory and crushing it immediately after.

Swoosh!

He then turned into a stream of light that pierced through the ceiling of the cave and flew through the sky, heading toward the direction of the nearest city.

Bang!

When he appeared at the teleportation hall of the city, he was immediately greeted by a huge crowd of players.

He looked around and saw that these players were also new arrivals just like himself. Moreover, there were more players that were arriving at the teleportation hall, making the place fully packed and crowded.

Slightly confused, he observed everyone and saw that most of these players seemed to come from the same organization. And based on the emblems that they wore on their chests, he immediately understood what was going on.

"Looks like the next war is getting near," he muttered as he saw the players affiliated with Black Market arriving one after another.

He could also spot the members of the Hand of Midas, who were wearing the special cloaks that were covering their appearances.

They could hide from most of the players, but Shin, who was both a regular consumer and a special guest of the trading firm, was very familiar with these unique cloaks.

They were the cloaks that were specially designed by Harmony by using his [Nightwalker's Cloak] as the main model. How could he not recognize such a design when he was wearing one, or at least the better version of it?

After looking around for a few moments, Shin shook his head and walked back to the nearby teleportation circle. "This is none of my business anymore. They can already handle themselves."

He then re-activated the circle and set its coordinates to the Holy City of the Saint Heaven Kingdom as his destination.

Not long after, his entire body was swallowed by the light of the teleportation circle before disappearing.

A few moments after his disappearance, a group of players appeared in the nearby teleportation circle one after another. When they arrived, they approached a figure in the distance, who was clearly waiting for them.

One of them noticed that the player was looking at the teleportation circle near theirs and could not help but ask curiously. "What are you looking at? Did you see a pretty chick or something?"

The other player turned to him before replying. "It is nothing, Susanoo. I just found an interesting fellow. He is quite strong, and I want to exchange a few bouts against him."

"Too bad he already left," he added before turning around and leading the rest outside the Teleportation Hall.

The previous guy suddenly became interested. "Eh!? Really? The mighty Martial God Ashura is interested in fighting someone?"

"Who is it? Don't tell me it is Sword God Zero? Or Dragon God Siegfried? Maybe War God Simba? Come on! Tell me, tell me!" he bombarded Ashura with a series of questions.

But unfortunately, the latter totally ignored him and continued to walk ahead, leaving him helpless.

Regardless, he could not help but feel a little interested in this mysterious person, who made their battle-crazed commander want to fight them.

Chapter 1187 Quest Completion (Part 2): Changes Of The Holy City

.....

Swoosh!

Swoosh! Swoosh!

When Shin arrived at the Teleportation Hall of the Holy City, he was immediately greeted by a scene that was similar to what he had seen in the previous city. But it was clear that there was no war going on. This was just a regular scene of this place.

The flood of players that were coming in and out of the hall was almost causing human traffic already. The entrance was close to being overcrowded if not for the city guards who were keeping everything under control.

What was more surprising about this was the fact that this particular hall was much larger than the one that he was previously on. Its size was at least thrice, if not four times, of the previous Teleportation Hall.

The number of teleportation circles within the hall was directly proportional to the size of the hall. He could also see some special chambers that could simultaneously transport a huge number of players without a problem.

These chambers seemed to vary from different sizes, which indicated the number of players that they could accommodate.

Naturally, the price of using these special chambers was much higher than using the regular magic circles that the players usually used when going to or coming from the city.

After observing the hall, Shin walked toward the exit, following the line of players that was moving outside the hall. And when he reached the huge doorway, he was immediately greeted by a sight of a busy plaza filled with a variety of players.

There was a huge spot where players, who set up their stalls, were gathered. That place was very organized, making it look similar to the huge bazaar from the real world.

The players that were walking through the aisles of each line of stalls were creating a flow of players that were constantly moving forward. Some of the players were stopping in front of a stall from time to time, but they were not disrupting the natural flow of people walking behind them due to large the space of the place.

There were also city guards and patrolling paladins walking by who were keeping everything in order. And with their presence, no one from the players would dare to cause any trouble, especially when they could see how high the levels of these guards and paladins were.

A single of them was already an Elite NPC with their level reaching the 170 mark. There were also some Special Elites and Commanders passing by from time to time, who were on similar or much higher levels.

Provoking these NPCs was not much different from committing suicide.

Opposite that side, Shin could also see multiple rows of carriages with different ranks. Most of them were the ones that the players regularly used when traveling across the city, but he could also spot some luxurious and exquisite ones on the other rows.

At the same time, he could also see some carriages with many fancy and noble designs passing by the road. They were creating a constant flow that was making the scene similar to the busy roads in the real world.

The streets and sidewalks were also the same as players were constantly moving through them.

Casting his gaze at the distance and looking at the buildings within the surroundings, Shin also discovered that the city also improved in this area.

There were a lot of huge buildings now, making the scenery no different from the big cities in the real world. Even though there were no skyscrapers and other towering buildings, the ones that the Holy City currently had were by no means small.

There were also a variety of establishments around, making the whole place much closer to reality.

After observing everything, Shin could not help but mutter to himself. "I guess the Holy City has successfully promoted into a Capital City."

He then started wandering around the city while heading to the blacksmith shop of Grandcraftsman Berlin. He went to the spot that he remembered. But with the current size of the city, which without a doubt had gotten much larger, he was not sure if the other places that used to be there would most likely be redeveloped or transferred to other places.

And sure enough, when he arrived at the place where he remembered the blacksmith shop of the Grandcraftsman was located, he found nothing but an unfamiliar place.

The blacksmith shop was supposedly in the secluded part of the city. It was not in a total outskirts, but it was at least in an unpopular region. But right now, this place was currently in a busy street where a lot of players were passing by.

There were also quite a few establishments around where players were constantly coming in and out. Some were bards and pubs while the others were obviously an inn that were providing similar services.

There were a few shops around that were owned by moderately wealthy players while the rest were from NPCs.

Looking around, Shin could not help but become somewhat impressed. He was occasionally nodding his head as he observed the establishments around while walking down the street.

Not long after, he finally found the blacksmith shop. And he became surprised once again at what he was seeing. The shop was far from what it used to be. Its somewhat rundown appearance that it had before was nowhere to be seen as it was now a proper shop where players were constantly visiting it.

At the same time, he was also seeing a number of experts visiting the place, which indicated that this was no longer an 'unpopular' place. The experts and large organizations might have discovered the named NPC staying in this place, particularly the Grandcraftsman Berlin.

Artisans and Blacksmiths in that rank were not only few but very rare. Even the top blacksmith within the game, Black Hammer, who was also the chief blacksmith of the Hand of Midas, was still quite far from that rank.

Shin did not find it strange that these experts both from large organizations and independent individuals visited this place on regular occasions.

He would also not be surprised if Berlin had already reached the rank higher than he was previously given his talent and the time that had already passed.

What troubled Shin right now was the long line of players waiting outside the shop. Given the situation, it was impossible for him to just overtake everyone and enter the store. Aside from being impolite and rude, he would also provoke the pair of NPCs guarding the entrance.

He did not care if he would provoke the players outside since he was confident in protecting himself against them. The problem was those two guards since their strength far surpassed his.

He could not see their information even with the use of 'True Sight' Ocular Skill, so he could not see their levels, much less tell how strong they were. But at the very least, he could guess how powerful they were.

Both seemed to be in Commander Rank based on the auras that they were emitting, so their levels shouldn't be too low. These two guards were much stronger than the three Overlord Rank Monsters that he faced earlier, or at least comparable to them.

But since these two could be considered humanoid creatures, their set of skills and arsenal of techniques would definitely be huge. Picking a fight against them was practically impossible.

But then again, when he looked at the long line of players, Shin felt a little discouraged since he did not know when his turn would be given how long it was.

His time was limited, so he could not waste it by standing there and waiting for who knew how long.

Thinking about that, Shin decided to use his influence within the game. He was an official envoy of the Church of the Sun and Moon. His status would definitely be high.

On top of this, his noble title was also promoted to Duke just recently as one of the rewards that he had gotten from the previous Empire Quest.

He was sure that he would be able to take advantage of all these to bypass a couple of restrictions.

Having this thought, Shin nodded his head and walked toward the shop without caring about the gaze of the players around him.

Some of them gave him a death glare that seemingly warned him from going forward while the others were looking at him with scornful eyes. Some seemed to be mocking him as they could tell what he was trying to do while the rest were waiting to watch a good show.

Since they were here to stand waiting for their turn, they would not reject such entertainment to relieve their boredom.

But regardless of their thoughts, none of them dared to voice them out due to the two powerful guards guarding the entrance.

Shin was slightly nervous due to the two guards not showing any kind of reaction. But he could sense the overwhelming pressure that they were emitting. He felt like he was walking on a thin thread right between life and death.

Shin was confused at first, but he later understood that this must be some sort of test. He could sense that one of the guards was closely observing him while the other was looking at him with interest.

Not long after, he reached the door where the two guards were standing. He stood in front of the two NPCs and waited for them to say something.

As if taking that as a cue, the guard standing on the right suddenly opened his mouth. "Greetings Lord Evoy, and the Great Duke of the Sky Deceiving Valley."

Shin was slightly taken aback at the respectful tone of the guard as he was not expecting such a polite tone. And as if that was not the end, the two powerful NPCs gave him a respectful bow followed by a unique salute for the members of the Church of the Sun and Moon.

As a response, Shin instinctively returned the bow and salute respectively.

One of the guards quickly followed after the greeting. "Can we ask why the esteemed lord the purpose of his visit?"

Shin was confused at first before replying with a polite tone. "I am here to visit Grandcraftsman Berlin. I have a special relationship with him, and he entrusted me with a couple of tasks before, so I am here to tell him my progress."

Hearing that, the same guard seemed to have remembered something and suddenly said. "Ah! That is right! Sir Berlin has instructed us that if the esteemed lord pays him a visit, we are to let him in."

At that moment, the door of the shop was suddenly opened as a young blacksmith NPC stood behind it. Based on his size and appearance, it was clear that he was from the dwarven race.

The young dwarf looked at Shin for a moment, seemingly observing him closely. It felt that he was not seeing the other people around as his focus was entirely on Shin.

Shin could not help but feel a little awkward from that gaze and unconsciously retreat by a step.

The two guards, on the other hand, quickly step to the side and let the young dwarf observe Shin more clearly.

A few seconds went by, and the young dwarf finally nodded his head. "Not bad. Our Great King sure has a good eye for people. You are much better than those trash that come to visit under the endorsement of the elders."

He then turned around and signaled Shin to follow him. "Let's go. Master is already waiting inside his workshop. He has waiting for you for a long time already while keeping his body in shape."

"You just come at the right time since he just broke through from that threshold a couple of days ago. This is the perfect time to craft a masterpiece," he added with a voice that only Shin and himself could hear.

Shin was stunned for a moment before quickly chasing after the young dwarf. Behind him, the door of the shop was quickly closed, leaving the players waiting outside completely stunned.

They were not sure which topic to discuss as everything that the NPCs had mentioned was all too stunning.

An Envoy of a Church? A Duke with a personal territory? A friend of a Grandcraftsman? A chosen individual of the Great King of Dwarves?

Each title that they heard was amazing in its own right. And all of it was owned by a single person!

Just who was that guy to be treated politely by those high NPCs?

Too many thoughts were running inside everyone's head, making them unable to voice them out. Due to this, a strange atmosphere filled the air, creating a strange scene.

Even the players walking in the street nearby could not help but pause their steps due to their curiosity after seeing what was happening outside this famous blacksmith shop.

Then it was followed by a deafening silence due to everyone unable to speak or choosing to remain silent.

Chapter 1188 Quest Completion (Part 3): Meeting Grandcraftsman Berlin Once Again

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Shin was led by the young dwarf toward the innermost part of the blacksmith shop. As he walked through the shelves and racks containing different weapons, he immediately discovered how much difference it had compared to the first few times that he had come here.

Having a closer look, he could see a variety of weapons laid in rows. They were adequately organized and categorized by their types.

Polearm weapons could be seen together while being divided by their types – spears, halberds, staffs, and other kinds of polearm weapons were grouped together. Then each of these types was further categorized based on their fighting style like pointed spears used for more stabbing and thrusting while the bladed spears were commonly used for slashing and cleaving attacks.

Looking further, he saw a rack of blunt weapons of different types such as mace, spike clubs, and others. Right beside it was a row of swords with different varieties like bastard sword, versatile sword, whip sword, greatsword, shortsword, rapier, and more.

On the other side of the shop, opposite those weapons, were rows of equipment used for defense such as a variety of shields. A few racks away from it were sets of armor categories from heavy and light ones alongside the ones with the mix of leather and plated armor.

Aside from this, he also discovered that the place was much cleaner than it used to be. Not even a speck of dust could be seen on either of the racks or the weapons and armor that they contained.

He could not help but shake his head a little when he realized this. It was true that changes were bound to happen as time went by, especially when constant progress was involved.

As he was lost in his thoughts, he did not notice the strange gazes that the players within the shop were giving him. They were surprised to see this personal apprentice of Berlin come out from the hole that he had been hiding all this time. After all, he was one of the special NPCs within this shop that piqued the interests of large guilds and in-game organizations.

Most of these players were here to meet this NPC since he was not only good at crafting and forging top-class equipment and weapons, but he was also the only key on how to meet one of the Legendary Grandcraftsmen of the Kingdom, the dwarf Berlin.

All the large organizations situated within the Saint Heaven Kingdom were paying close attention to this particular shop due to this matter. They even dare to provoke the four powers reigning supreme within this city, the Titan Guild, Wings Alliance, Assassin Union, and Hand of Midas just to station their people here.

However, all their efforts were in vain due to how hard it was to meet this particular apprentice, much less find Berlin himself.

But right now, right in front of their eyes, they were seeing an unbelievable scene that they only could dream of.

Not only did this young dwarf apprentice come out from his dwelling, but he also personally escorted Shin to meet the grand craftsman himself. Moreover, he seemed to be being treated as some sort of VIP.

What kind of sh*t luck did this guy step on for him to be treated like that?

Even though they could not believe it, they had no choice but to accept the reality as it was already present right in front of their eyes. All they could do now was to report to their superiors and wait for further instructions.

"Do not go out of that shop without learning the identity of that player!"

"We will investigate this matter thoroughly, so stand there and wait for further instructions. If he leaves before that, then you have to follow him."

"Standby and wait, we will investigate this matter."

"Interesting. Wait there and find an opportunity to get close to him. This might be our chance."

"Do not provoke that person under any circumstances. Lend a hand if he needs it. Befriending him is our best choice."

Naturally, Shin was unaware of what was happening. He just continued to follow the young dwarf to the inner parts of the shop. It did not take long for him to reach an isolated room where not a single person was permitted to enter, both customers and staff of the shop.

The young dwarf stood at the center of the empty room for a couple of seconds while sweeping his gaze at every corner of the room. After confirming that there was no other person inside aside from them, he suddenly put his palms together before stomping on the wooden floor.

Bang!

Shin was confused at first as he did not understand the actions of the young dwarf. But he remained quiet and waited for what was about to come.

Swoosh!

Then it happened.

The entire floor was shown, revealing a magic formation that was familiar to Shin. It was a teleportation formation that was similar to the ones that the Teleportation Hall had, but also somewhat different at the same time.

Looking closely at it, Shin discovered that the language used by the two formations was different.

He knitted his brows as he muttered. "Is that the dwarven language?"

As he was thinking about this, the whole room was illuminated by the magic circle, followed by the pulling sensation that he felt.

Swoosh!

Shin closed his eyes due to how blinding the light that the magic formation was releasing. Then his entire body turned into particles of light before disappearing from the room alongside the young dwarf.

...

Swoosh!

Bang!

A few moments later, Shin found himself falling toward the ground. But with his fast reflexes, he was able to adjust himself in midair before landing on his feet in a steady manner.

"Where is this?" was the first thought that entered his mind as he found himself in the middle of a dark place.

But not long after, his very question was instantly answered by the intense heat coming from every direction. At the same time, he could also see some fiery red lights coming from the distance, which was seemingly the end of a cave.

While he was thinking what that light was, the voice of the young dwarf suddenly sounded from his side, interrupting his thoughts. "Follow that path and you will find Master. You can ask your questions to him later."

After that, he turned around and walked in the opposite direction of that fiery light, seemingly indicating that he was able to see in the dark without a problem.

Shin wanted to say something, but before he could open his mouth, he felt that the presence of the young dwarf had already disappeared. This shocked him a little as from his estimate, the dwarf only took one or two steps before completely disappearing.

"I guess, there are still some stronger NPCs around that I can't notice," he muttered while shaking his head. He did not expect that the young dwarf was that powerful.

But now that he thought about it, it seemed like it was true. He hadn't felt anything from that young dwarf since the first time they met in front of the blacksmith shop.

When this thought crossed his mind, the young dwarf seemed to be becoming more and more mysterious. His presence was entirely kept, making it impossible for Shin to notice despite him not putting his guard down.

Moreover, it seemed like he could not see the details of this NPC either. He was too occupied with other things earlier, but it seemed like he let his guard down without him knowing after meeting the dwarf.

Thinking about that, Shin could not help but reevaluate the young dwarf once again. "Is he an assassin-type? A dwarven thief? That is interesting."

After regaining himself for a few moments, he turned around and walked toward the exit of the cave that he was in.

Not long after he reached the end, he could not help but slightly close his eyes and placed his hand in front of them due to the sudden exposure to intense light. Then it was quickly followed by a scorching heat that seemed to be trying to burn his skin.

Due to the sharp rise of the temperature, Shin unconsciously circulated the energy within him according to the Celestial Vermillion Bird Method. His fire affinity quickly rose as the mana within him resonated with the fire element coming from the outside, making him adapt to the heat of the surroundings.

When he finally adjusted, he tried to open his eyes in a slow manner. Moments later, he was immediately greeted by a stunning scene.

What was in front of him was a huge river of magma!

Looking at its surface, Shin could instantly tell how hot it was, especially when he saw how this molten rock boiled with crimson bubbles popping out on its surface and the scorched smoke that it was releasing.

In the distance further away from where he was standing, he could even see huge falls made of burning magma.

It was a stunning yet also scary sight to see.

From what he could tell, he must be inside the mouth of a volcano. And it was a very old and ancient one at that, especially with the mixture of rich earth and fire elemental mana filling the surroundings.

While he was lost in amazement, he suddenly heard a familiar voice that he had never heard after such a long time. "Amazing, isn't it?"

Snapping out of his thoughts, Shin turned toward the source of the voice and saw a bulky dwarf with thick and long facial hair that was almost covering his mouth.

"Sir Berlin!" he greeted right after recognizing the old dwarf.

"It has been a while young envoy," Berlin nodded as he scrutinized Shin with his gaze. "And it seems like you have grown into a fine man. You grow quite strong and powerful."

"You even find some good blacksmith and tailor to craft your equipment," he added after noticing the unique equipment set and cloak that Shin was wearing.

After that, he turned around and followed the path stacked on the walls of the magma cave. "Follow me. I am sure that your business here is for me to reforge that sword of yours."

"Let's get down to business and get this over with. I still have a lot of projects that I have to finish after this one."

He paused for a moment before chuckling. "You are actually in luck, young envoy. I just broke through to the Saint Rank just recently. Your sword will definitely be reaching a much higher height than what it used to be at its previous peak."

"Though, you also can't be too excited since it will not break through the Obsidian Rank. But it will still be at the very peak of that rank," he added with a somewhat excited tone.

A few moments later, Berlin led Shin to the bottom level of the volcano cave. The heat in this place was so high that even the walls were releasing a scorching temperature. Some of them were even reaching the melting point and started to turn into their liquified state.

But for some mysterious reason, they remained intact and stayed at that temperature without increasing any further.

When he took a closer look at it, he discovered that it was because of the magic formations drawn on the walls, ceiling, and floor of the cave. These formations were keeping the temperature within a certain range.

At that point, Berlin reached a certain part of the cave and stood right in front of an anvil with a burning furnace on the wall beside him. He turned around to face Shin and said. "This is one of the ancient secrets of our raise. It is a technique that turns this entire cave into a forging furnace."

"Us, dwarves, like to live under the ground, within the mountains, and even inside a volcano. It is because that way, we can be much closer to nature. We can also feel the 'heat' this way, making it much easier for us to forge equipment or weapons. The resulting product is also much better than the ones made from normal means."

"The techniques that we have for forging and blacksmithing are quite unique. And if we reach a certain level, we can even use these techniques in battle."

He paused for a moment and stared at Shin with meaningful eyes before continuing. "I originally wanted to pass these techniques to you since you have helped this kingdom greatly, which also indirectly helps our race."

"But it is a pity that you are not from our race. It will only be useless for you."

"Moreover, it will not be suitable for the path that you are already taking. It will only confuse you further and lead you astray if you try to learn it."

Taking another pause, he signaled Shin to come a little closer while also gesturing for the latter to take out the materials that they will need for the re-forging process of the [Yamato].

Then he added. "Instead, I will teach you something that will be more helpful to you."

After saying that, he started circulating the energies within his body by using a certain breathing method. Then he took the [Yamato] from Shin and quickly dismantled it with a quick motion before throwing its crushed blade at a metal container.

He turned to Shin and said. "I will let you watch closely, young envoy. What you will pick up will be all up to you."

Chapter 1189 Quest Completion (Part 4): Berlin's Personal Forging Technique

...

Shin was completely caught off guard by the words that Berlin had said. He was not sure how to react, especially with some conflict from the words that the old dwarf had said.

Unfortunately, he did not have any time to dwell on it since the grandcraftsman, who was already at the Saint Rank of Blacksmithing, was already starting to work.

With that, he could only focus his gaze and used his 'True Sight' Skill to make sure that he would not be missing anything. At the same time, he also remembered one of the Legacy Skills that he had long forgotten – the 'Duplicator's Eyes'.

He activated one of the effects of the Legacy Skill, which was especially used when he was 'learning'.

Under his gaze, he watched and observed every movement that the old dwarf was making. He particularly focused on the breathing that the dwarf was using the entire time. But what he could see, it was a special breathing technique that the dwarves used.

From what he could tell, this must be the technique that Berlin wanted him to learn the most. The old dwarf must have sensed that Shin had a high affinity when it came to fire elements, especially how he was able to withstand the heat inside this place.

Hence, Berlin wanted him to learn this technique too to have much better control over Fire Element.

Unknown to Shin, he started to subconsciously imitate the breathing technique of the old dwarf with the help of the 'Duplicator's Eyes'. He even copied the circulation of the energy within the dwarf's body without him knowing.

He was too focused to notice those changes.

On the other hand, Berlin, who was supposedly busy with his work, was able to notice the sudden change within Shin's body as well as the air surrounding him.

"Not bad," he muttered with a satisfied smile before continuing with his work.

At the same time, he also started explaining without caring whether Shin was able to hear him or not. In a sense, he seemed to be talking to himself while doing his job.

"This blade is originally forged from two metals with different properties to complement the elements of its first wielder, which were the Powers of the Brilliant Sun and Abyssal Moon."

"To reawaken those properties and return it to his former self, we need materials with the same properties and their purity must be on the same level too. This is why I ask you to get these high-quality materials," he added as he pointed at the materials laid on one of the forging tables while waiting for the blade of the [Yamato] to be fully melted.

On that table, the materials of the best quality could be seen. The Fruit of Nirvana and Sunfire Fragments which contained a lot of fire elemental energy, and the Lunar Essence and Moonfrost Shards that were reached in ice elemental energy were releasing a pulsing beat with their mana.

"With the best materials, it is hard to reforge such an item. Melting its blade alone is going to take a very long time. This is the reason why I have chosen this place as my main forging ground."

While saying that, the old dwarf took the Earthen Charcoals from the table and threw them at the blazing furnace, making the heat that it had to further increase and intensify.

Bullets of sweat flew down from his forehead as he patiently waited for the blade to melt down properly.

The temperature within the furnace continued to soar as Berlin continued to put more Earthen Charcoals in it. He had yet to use the special ones that Shin had secured, so the dwarven blacksmith was relatively relaxed while waiting.

When the blade was finally melted into a perfectly liquified state, Berlin finally continued his lecture. "Fusing materials with different properties was very difficult, much less the ones with opposing properties, so finding a metal that could perfectly contain those opposing elements and keep them under control is very important."

He then took the Ancient Void Metals laid on the table before continuing. "These metals have special properties that can keep the balance between the opposing powers of Ice and Fire. It will form a perfect vessel that can contain both powers from the Brilliant Sun and Abyssal Moon together with the other two metals that we have here."

He then turned to Shin and pointed at the Sunfire Fragment and Moonfrost Shard laid on the table. "Infuse your mana on these metals. It is to familiarize themselves with you and be able to recognize you as their sole owner once the sword is completed."

Shin nodded his head subconsciously before infusing the mana that he had within him toward the two special metals. This time, he did not use the breathing techniques from his Mentalism but instead changed it with the ones that he usually used for his Martial Arts, the Yin-Yang Breathing Technique.

He even entered the state of Reality Manifestation to make sure that he was using the technique properly. He used powers of the 'Brilliant Sun' and 'Abyssal Moon' within him to imitate the 'Sacred Qi' and 'Demonic Qi' that he had from the real world through the Yin-Yang Breathing Technique.

Berlin could not help but become amazed at what he was seeing. He then remembered something and asked Shin. "Do you have any other weapons that you want me to fuse with these?"

"I remember hearing from an old friend that you also have a pair of sabers with similar opposing properties."

This time, Shin was somewhat stunned when he heard those words. He did not know which old friend Berlin was talking about, but from his confident tone, it was clear that that person knew Shin very well.

Shin hesitated for a moment since the [Dusk Blade] and [Dawn Blade] were part of the set. It was a complete ten-piece equipment set. He would lose the final set bonus if he took away those two from the set.

Seemingly able to read what Shin was thinking, the grandcraftsman said with a very confident tone. "Don't worry, I will make sure that you will still have the perfect set effects of your equipment even though those sabers fused with your katana."

Hearing that, Shin did not hesitate any longer and quickly took out the [Dusk and Dawn Blades] and sent them flying toward the old dwarf through 'Telekinesis'. After all, his hands were still tied to the two metals in front of him as he infused his mana in them.

In front of the furnace, Berlin smiled mysteriously as he caught the pair of sabers before quickly dismantling them and throwing them in the furnace. And since the materials of these two were much weaker compared to the [Yamato], they quickly melted and became part of the liquified metal within the furnace.

"That is enough."

Shin heard the voice of the old dwarf while he was shoving his mana at the two metals. He then nodded his head and complied.

"Judging how much energy imbued in these metals, I can see how much you have grown. You are a completely different person than we first met," commented Berlin gently as he could see with his naked eyes the mana containing the two metals.

This time, Berlin picked up one of the special Earthen Charcoals and threw it at the furnace, where a thick haze was already shimmering.

Bang!

The heat from the furnace quickly soared to greater heights, making it difficult to breathe. And when Shin witnessed that, he quickly shifted his breathing technique once again and copied the one that Berlin was using.

This time, he was completely conscious when switching the breathing technique. He was pretty much surprised when he realized how familiar he had become with this breathing technique despite him only learning it just now.

Berlin continued to throw the special Earthen Charcoals at the furnace with a timely gap in between. When the temperature reached his desired limit, he finally took a few lumps of Ancient Void Metal before throwing them at the furnace.

When they melted and perfectly fused with the liquified metal within it, he then took the Sunfire Fragment and threw it in the mix.

Bang!

The tremendous heat raged and started to melt the metal within seconds.

Spark! Spark!

Fire embers came out from the gap in the furnace as Berlin waited for a few moments. Then took out the half-melted Sunfire Fragment before inserting the Moonfrost Shard.

Crackle!

A mixture of crackling and hissing sounds could be heard as the cold metal was being melted within the furnace. It even created a dense steam in the process.

After waiting for a moment, he also took the Moonfrost Shard out of the furnace when it was half-melted.

He then waited for a few minutes before throwing the two metals at the same time. He waited for a few more minutes until he finally took the other materials laid on the table.

The Fruit of Nirvana and Lunar Essence were the first to enter the furnace, making the elemental properties of the two metals that were previously thrown in it soar and stabilize.

Then they were followed by Hearts of Abyss and Lava Cores one after another, further increasing the resonance between the ice and fire elemental mana.

Then finally, it was time for the crushed Meteorites to be poured inside.

From Shin's perspective, it seemed like Berlin was more like cooking something rather than forging a weapon.

Little did he know that this was just the start.

A moment later, he saw Berlin take out the metal pot from the furnace containing all the materials that were poured in and melted down.

He then poured it into a mold in a slow and steady manner.

Shin squinted his eyes as he saw something strange from that particular mold. Contrary to the very high temperature within the underground workshop, this mold was releasing an intense cold. It only took a couple of seconds before the heat of the liquified metal sharply dropped while its form slowly solidified.

Shin had yet to adjust himself when Berlin took the metal out of the mold before its heat completely died down. Then he found the old dwarf throwing it again at the furnace before pouring the rest of the special Earthen Charcoals inside.

When the lump of metal slowly lost its shape once again after getting burned for a long time, Berlin took it out once again before finally placing it on top of the anvil.

Then Shin felt that the gravity within a certain radius around Berlin seemed to have increased.

He watched the burning lump of metal locked in place on top of that anvil as Berlin took out a pair of hammers before striking down with them.

Swoosh!

Bang!

Berlin's hammering had begun.

"Gulp," Shin swallowed as he watched.

His ears seemed to have become deaf yet also not at the same time. The booming sound that resonated with the entire workshop seemed to have shaken his soul.

Clang!

Then the second strike came!

Shin felt that his entire body trembled. That strike just now made his hair stand on end!

Clang! Clang!

The precise hammering was neither strong nor weak. It was not even slow or fast. It seemed to have a natural rhythm that could not be broken. It looked the same as the natural breathing of people from the moment they were born.

Clang! Clang!

The sound remained constant.

Then Shin felt that he seemed to have been brought into an illusion where he could see the path that Berlin was taking.

He saw from the hammering of this blacksmith, who reached the heights that only a few people could achieve, a path that only a true blacksmith could take.

Clang! Clang!

Each strike seemed to be telling him a story of a young blacksmith who reached the peak by just swinging his hammer endlessly.

This story reverberated throughout the heat-filled workshop with the mouth of a volcano.

Shin felt that something was changing within him as he watched Berlin continue to hammer the burning metal.

Clang!

Each strike of the hammers contained a breath of life.

Clang!

Each time they struck down, the metal was being purified. It was constantly cleansing the impurities that it contained.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Each strike contained an unshakable determination and iron will.

Rumble!

Then a sudden enlightenment struck Shin as he continued to watch the old dwarf. Then his breathing shifted once again.

The breathing technique of the Celestial Vermillion Bird Method resonated with the Jade Kirin Scripture, seemingly fusing with one another.

Shin could clearly remember this feeling. It was the same when he first used the Jade Kirin Scripture when using his sword-drawing arts within the game. It naturally transformed the energy within him into the energy that he needed most during that time, which was the wind element.

But this time, it was into fire element.

It also did not stop there as they even resonated with the other breathing technique that Shin just learned – the one that he copied from Grandcraftsman Berlin.

Swoosh!

The energy within him circulated while following this unique breathing pattern. It even resonated with the hammering of the old dwarf as time went by.

Shin started to enter a unique trance that he never had felt before yet was also somewhat familiar.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

The flow of mana within his body moved according to the hammering sound of Berlin, which felt like striking his soul instead of the metal on the anvil.

In this state, Shin felt that his entire body was being purified by the flame within him. It was as if he was really the one being forged rather than his sword.

He felt that his muscles and bones were becoming more and more mature. Then they become even more sturdier alongside the constantly growing mana within him.

Clang!

The hammering sound started to become even stronger as Berlin also became lost in his own world.

In his own immersion, he struck the metal endlessly with his hammer. His eyes were burning with intense spiritual blaze.

Clang! Clang!

He kept on hammering with his mind and soul. And as he did this, the metals, and other materials that he mixed earlier started to mingle with each other as if they were originally a single entity from the very beginning.

The metal started to take shape and become molded as the time went by. The blade radiating with a frightening black and white light started to make its appearance.

Chapter 1190 Quest Completion (Part 5): Solar Breathing

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As Grandcraftsman Berlin continued to strike the metal in front of him, it continued to become purified while also being molded into the shape of a blade.

It also started to harmonize all the energies from the materials that he had poured into it earlier. The broken [Yamato] started to fuse with the fragments of the [Dusk and Dawn Blades] as he repeatedly refined the metal.

When the solidified metal started to lose its heat, Berlin placed the hammer that he was holding from his left hand before picking up an iron tong on the table beside him. When he held the metal with it, he started absorbing the heat coming from the surroundings while infusing it toward the metal to keep it in a state where it could be molded.

The burning red and bright yellow color that it had was maintained as he continued to strike the metal with his hammer.

Not long after, Shin could finally see the shape of a blade from that metal. The black and white light that it was emitting was also releasing a mixture of extreme heat and absolute coldness. They were similar to the heat of a fire and the coldness of ice yet also different at the same time.

He could feel the comfortable warmth coming from the brilliant light, which also somehow contained a dangerous destructiveness. It was gentle yet also violent at the same time. It felt comforting yet also full of rage.

It was complicated to explain.

The black light, on the other hand, was also somewhat strange. It possessed a chilling coldness yet also had a cozy vibe. It seemed to be filled with a freezing chill that could seep down to the bones yet also contained a pleasant breeze of the cold winter.

Shin felt somewhat strange as he looked at it.

The mixture of these two were also creating a strange sight. When the chillness of the black light met the heat of the white brilliance, they were creating black smoke and miasma. But when it was the other way around, they were creating a white stream and fog.

What intrigued Shin about this was he could feel a somewhat strange closeness with them as he watched from the side.

Clang!

When the final strike fell and its sound resonated in the entire cave, Shin quickly felt the completeness of the sword.

Then he saw Berlin too a deep breath before blowing a hot yet also cold stream onto the blade, calming the heat that remained on it.

Shin wanted to walk over and hold the blade, but he quickly realized that he was unable to move. He then discovered that the gravitational field that Berlin had set up earlier now extends toward his direction.

When he was confused, the old dwarf quickly explained. "Even though this blade is complete, it is still an incomplete product overall. It still lacks some polishing and finishing touches. I also have to properly sharpen its edge, so be patient until then."

He then pointed at Shin before continuing. "On the other hand, you have to continue polishing the thing that you just learned."

"Even though it is completely different from our race's breathing technique, it still possesses some of its essence. It is not bad overall and perfectly complements your style."

"You better head at the edge of the magma river and properly consolidate it. It will be very helpful to the path that you are taking. Once you are done, come back here and I will show you the real appearance of this sword."

He paused for a moment before adding with a chuckle. "I may even tell you where you can find something that can help you perfect that style."

Shin was confused at first but still complied. After all, he could also feel that he needed to finish what he had started. He felt that this would be one of the keys to how he would proceed on perfecting his style and achieving his Natural State within the game.

While he was lost in his thoughts, Berlin's words sounded once again. "I still have some unused materials lying around. I guess I can use them to make you a better scabbard than the one you currently have."

"It will be better than having those materials collect more dust. Moreover, this sword needs a better and more durable sheath that can house it. Don't blame me if it turned out a little flashy as I am in a good mood."

"Give me that useless thing and I will make it even better," he said with a demanding tone while pointing at the sheath hanging on Shin's waist.

Shin subconsciously nodded his head and threw the sheath to the old dwarf. Then the latter made a simple gesture with his other hand after catching the scabbard with his left hand.

The poor young man did not even know what happened when he found himself flying toward the exit of the workshop. He was literally thrown out of it as he rolled on the ground after being kicked out.

He even stopped exactly right at the edge of the bank of the flowing magma river.

He gulped nervously as he stared at the boiling molten rock right in front of his eyes sweat dropped down from his forehead toward his chin before finally dropping down at the flowing river of fire.

He knew that the old dwarf had done this on purpose, it was very calculated after all. But he could not help but curse under his breath as a little push was more than enough for him to fall into this magma river and get roasted or even boiled to dust.

Hu~!

After he regained his composure, he quickly adjusted his position at the bank of the magma river and sat cross-legged. Assuming a lotus position, he closed his eyes before entering a meditative state.

His mind then went back to what happened previously when the three breathing techniques merged with one another before finally regaining the new breathing technique fitted for the Celestial Vermillion Bird Method.

At this point, Shin finally understood that this strange Jade Kirin Scripture was somewhat like a bridge. Something that could let him connect different techniques or disciplines with one another and even lead him toward the true nature that they had.

Shin did not get any notification since he was doing everything during the Reality Manifestation. This could only mean that this was something that he could bring out of the game and use in the real world.

This was a breathing technique that increased his fire affinity and even granted him better control over his fire innate attribute.

While he was studying this, he also felt that the mana coming from Solus seemed to have resonated with his own mana. It felt that they were becoming one and entering a state of absolute unity.

It was at this moment that he finally understood what Professor Henry had told him during their previous session. He finally realized the true significance of his Elemental Spirits and their powers.

"Since Solus is closely related to Sun and her powers are mostly coming from it, let me call this breathing technique 'Solar Breathing'. The breath coming from the sun," he muttered as he continued to circulate his energy while following this new breathing technique.

He had to familiarize himself with it so that he could use it whenever he wanted. He must master this breathing technique and make it a second nature to him.

...

A day's worth of time had passed within the game when Shin felt satisfied with his progress. The time he needed to go back to school was also right around the corner once again, so he had to finish this up.

He was sure that he had already given the old dwarf enough time to finish his sword as well as its scabbard, so it must be the right time to go back.

When he arrived at the workshop once again, he immediately spotted Berlin, who was currently in the middle of his relaxation. It was clear that this old was quite exhausted after his continued work.

Seemingly sensing Shin's arrival, Berlin waved his hand. "I knew that you would be done around this time. You really pick up something just by watching me, huh? You are indeed different like what King Orn said."

He then pointed at the forging table in the distance. "Your sword and its scabbard are already there. You can take it and leave. No need to thank me since it is my promise."

"Just bring me some very high quality and extremely rare materials if you ever come across one. A Dragon Heart is not bad. I will also accept a Hydra Heart. Either one of them is really good," he added in a joking manner.

He paused for a brief moment as if he remembered something before continuing. "Ah! Before I forget. Since you created that interesting breathing technique of yours, then you should visit the temple under the forgotten sea."

"I am sure that you will like the thing that you will find in there. Just promise me to bring a good material from there when you come back."

After saying those words, the old dwarf could no longer hold it and collapsed on his seat. He was fast asleep and even started snoring loudly.

Shin shook his head as watched Berlin sleep comfortably under such an environment. He was not sure if this old dwarf would survive if the volcano suddenly threw a tantrum and erupted for real.

"He did not even give me the chance to reply, much less thank him," he chuckled while wearing a bitter smile.

After that, he walked toward the forging table, which now had nothing on it but his newly crafted sword and its scabbard.

Seeing those two properly laid on top of the forging table without anything other than them there, Shin knew that Grandcraftsman Berlin was telling him to treat these two properly.

He smiled and shook his head before observing the newly forged katana. Its blade was slightly shorter than what it used to be, extending a little shorter than the length of a meter and a half.

Based on Shin's body structure, particularly his arms, he could say that this might be the best length for him when using his quick draw style.

Shin could feel the mixture of scorching heat and chilling cold just by looking at the blade of the katana, which was completely black and seemed to be able to absorb the light of the surroundings.

On the contrary, he could feel an extreme sharpness that could cut anything by looking at the shining edge of the sword, where its sharp edge was. The smoothness of the surface of the blade made the silver-white edge shine even brighter under just the light coming from the furnace.

The guard right between the blade and the hilt had a regular rectangular design. But despite its regular shape, Shin could see complex engravings drawn on its surface and edges to make up for it.

The hilt itself was also the same as the blade. It had a mixture of pitch-black and snow-white colors, which gave off a strange vibe of extreme balance and absolute tranquility.

Then right at the bottom of the hilt was a tassel with the same black and white color to complement the overall design.

Shin extended his hand and grabbed the hilt before properly feeling his grip. And after a few moments, he nodded his head before raising the katana and turning it left and right to check the properly polished blade.

The light coming from the furnace was being reflected by the shining black blade while a dangerous glint was being emitted by the sharp edge.

After that, he looked at the scabbard lying in front of him before shaking his head. "He really makes it quite flashy."

This comment was justified as the scabbard was designed rather complexly than the simple katana.

It still had the overall black color, but its surface was full of luxurious design and a rather exquisite engraving. There were even some small patches everywhere that looked like an ember of white flame or flakes of falling snow.

He was afraid that other players would now be able to recognize him in an instant just by seeing this fancy scabbard.

It looked like this was going to be one of his signatures aside from his unique mask.

Taking the scabbard from the forging table, Shin immediately felt its sturdiness. He was sure that it was very tough. He guessed that even his new katana would not be able to cut it down despite him swinging it with all his might.

The weight was also perfect.

Shin could not help but become amazed at the ability of the old dwarf. He indeed created a piece of art with those so-called useless materials lying around his storage.

After that, he sheathed the katana and took a stance. He then ignored the series of notifications from the system, informing him about the completion of his quest, and started doing some sword-drawing attacks to test his newly forged weapon.

This sword would be his new partner from now on.

When he was doing this, he could not express how satisfied he was with this final product. He then turned to the sleeping dwarf before giving the latter a respectful bow. "I will never forget this favor."

After that, he looked around before muttering. "I guess it's finally time to leave."

He would like to check the stats of the sword, but he would rather look at it later when he was back online. He was afraid that he would want to test its new abilities out when he took a look at them, so he had to suppress it for now.

It was time to log out of the game and he did not want to be late for the training session with Benedict.

"Later, I promise that I will test you out later," he muttered before taking out a return scroll from his inventory.

He needed to go back to the city and find an inn before logging out. He just felt that he would need it, or rather the bonus stats that it provided, when he went back online later.

He gave Grandcraftsman Berlin another respectful bow before crushing the return scroll. Then he transformed into particles of light that dissipated in the air after a few seconds.

When he finally left, Berlin suddenly stopped snoring and muttered. "Create a new legend with this sword and shake the heaven with its name."

He then went back to sleep and started snoring once again.