

Destiny 1311

Chapter 1311 The Bug Tribe (Part 1)

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While things on the side of the Maze Forest were going a little smoother, Diablo finally caught up with the Dragon Centipede after following the traces that it left behind.

During the entire journey, he encountered the scouts from different organizations that seemed to be tracking the giant centipede. It was clear that they were planning to take advantage of the current chaos to hunt down the Dragon Centipede or use it to destroy the kingdom.

Most of the scouts came from the forces that were invading the Sacred Light Kingdom. They were the people that Heckles had sent to track down the giant centipede so that they could control it and use its powers to destroy the Maze Forest.

The rest were the scavengers that came from the forces outside the Sacred Light Kingdom, wanting to catch some benefits in the middle of troubled waters.

Understanding their thoughts, Diablo did not hesitate to eliminate all the scouts that he came across. He even slowed down his search for the Dragon Centipede so that he could clear all the scouts in the entire area.

After making sure that he did not leave anyone behind, he continued his search and arrived at the peak of a mountain.

This mountain looked like a volcano due to the deep pit that it had on its peak which resembled the mouth of a volcano. It was so deep that all Diablo could see from the top was total darkness.

Squinting his eyes as he activated his ocular skill, he tried to peer through the darkness and see what was hidden underneath.

But despite how good his ocular skill and eyesight were, he was still unable to completely unveil the darkness shrouding the mouth of the mountain.

After contemplating it for a moment, Diablo decided to explore inside. He jumped straight into the pit without hesitation. Right after he fell into the darkness, his surrounding was immediately shrouded with it.

He also noticed that his senses were getting duller as he went deeper into the pit. Realizing this, he quickly covered himself with his unique mana, protecting himself from the foreign energies that seemed to be trying to invade his body.

After an unknown time, Diablo was finally able to see the bottom of the pit. He quickly adjusted his body in the air, twisting and somersaulting multiple times in midair to lessen the momentum of his descent.

When he was dozens of meters away from the ground, he suddenly took out a huge crossbow from his inventory and fired a bolt toward the nearby wall below before firing another to the opposite side.

He then quickly kept the crossbow before stretching his arm and catching the rope attached to each end of the arrow bolts that he fired earlier.

Catching the rope, he suddenly flipped a couple of times in the air, seemingly using it as an armbar used by acrobats.

He then threw himself in the air and flipped multiple times before landing steadily on the ground.

He quickly put his guard up as he knew that the giant centipede must be hiding somewhere. He did not know what it wanted from this place, but he could tell that it must be something big or important given that an Emperor Class Monster wanted it.

Diablo did not dare to light up a fire or use an illuminating stone to brighten up the surroundings as he was afraid that he would attract the attention of the monsters residing there. No matter how he looked, he felt that this place must be a monster lair or something similar.

Fortunately, his Demon's Eyes had already adjusted to the darkness, giving him enough vision that he needed.

After a couple of turns, he noticed that there was a huge hole in the wall nearby. It looked like a cave, but from Diablo's observation, he could tell that it was made by the Dragon Centipede that he was chasing.

He suspected that there might be a car here previously, but it was enlarged by the giant centipede for some unknown reason.

After thinking for about a minute, Diablo decided to enter and explore it. He was already here, so it would be a waste not to continue.

He did not encounter anything special along the way, but he felt a little uncomfortable due to the foreign energy that was filling the air.

After a close observation, he noticed that this energy was starting to become much denser and transforming into a dark haze. It was hard to notice in the darkness, but his special eyes made it possible for him to notice them.

It was at that moment that he realized that this miasma was coming from the deeper part of the cave. Noticing this, Diablo quickly increased his speed and even sprinted when he was about to reach the end of it.

He could see a faint light coming from the other side.

Swoosh!

He quickly slowed down when he was about to reach the edge of the cave. He leaned closely to the wall while peeking outside.

It was at that moment that he saw a very spacious area outside. There was nothing special in it aside from the dark and crimson runes engraved on the walls.

These runes covered the entire cave up to the ceiling. They seemed to be alive as they were emitting a sanguine light with a constant rhythm. They looked like a beating heart that had a rhythmic pattern.

Following the runes all the way up in the ceiling, Diablo finally saw something that sent shivers down his spine.

He saw the Dragon Centipede curled up into a ball up there. It seemed to be coiling around a spherical object that was attached to the ceiling and connected to the crimson runes drawn in the cave.

Diablo did not know what the giant centipede was doing, but he felt that he had to stop it if he did not want something bad to happen.

But before he did anything, he decided to contact Shin first since he felt that the latter might have discovered something. From their earlier conversation, it felt like Shin had realized the real plot that the Pandemonium Troupe was scheming.

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Ding

Shin, who was observing the battle between Leonard's group and the forces of the Big Three, suddenly received a message.

When he glanced at the sender's name and saw that it was Diablo, he immediately got the idea of what it was about.

But when he opened the message and skimmed through the contents that it had, his eyes suddenly turned wide. It was as if lightning struck him as he realized something.

To make sure that his suspicion was right, Shin asked Diablo to send him some images of what he had sent.

Ding

Not long after, Shin received the taken images from Diablo. When he saw them, he finally found the final piece of the puzzle. He now found where Paimon and the rest of the Pandemonium Descendants were storing the stolen life forces.

"This must be their storage space, and whatever that Dragon Centipede was coiling must be the core that will store all the life energy that they will be getting from the purification ceremony," mumbled Shin.

He then realized what the Emperor Class Monster was planning to do. "It must want to use the life energy from that core to elevate its strength to the next stage. If it was successful, then-..."

Shin did not dare to think of the outcome when it happened. At the current stage of the game, the highest rank of that monster that most people were aware of was the 'World Bosses' which were a notch higher than Emperor Class Monster.

If it was a monster of that level with the Third Evolutionary Stage (Tier 3 Monsters) was born, then the consequences would be much more dire than their current situation.

Shin now had another problem that he had to solve. The first two cases had a clear way to solve them.

The problem with the Corrupted Cult was much easier to solve since they only had to prevent them from reaching the main base and destroy it. So long as they held on to their positions persistently, they would be able to stop the spreading of the corruption called the 'Withering'.

As for the problem with the Demonic Churches, it was a little tricky since they had to consider the success of the purification ceremony as well. They had to stop it so that they could prevent them from harvesting more life energy, which would also help the Corrupted Cult somehow.

Now, he had another problem which was the evolution of an Emperor Class Monster. This was similar to the previous two problems but was equally troublesome. After all, dealing with such monsters was not that easy, especially when they greatly lacked the manpower.

Since he now knew where the core was located, he could at least solve the root of the problem. As long as he severed the connection between the core and the land of the Sacred Light Kingdom, they would be fine.

They could proceed with the original plan.

Thinking about this, Shin quickly raised his head and looked at the elven seer, who was kneeling in front of the altar and seemed to be praying with a series of elven chants.

There was also a series of glowing runes in elven language floating around the elder, revolving around him and moving at a constant speed.

After watching the process for a couple of moments, Shin turned toward the elders who were kneeling on the ground behind the elven seer and around the altar.

He was keeping a close eye on them as he was afraid that the traitor would make his move at the most crucial moment. He became even more concerned since he would have to leave this place to help Diablo with the other side.

He was concerned that the traitor hidden among their ranks would make his move once they learned about the destruction of the core and interrupt the purification ceremony instead as a backup plan.

Thinking about that, Shin turned to his side. "Sister Adept Hands, I have to leave for now and deal with another problem. I will be leaving this place in your hands."

Hearing that, Adept Hand suddenly raised her brows and complained. "Eh!? What do you think of me? I am not like my sister! I am not good at managing things and dealing with this war tactics thing. I will only mess up your plans."

"Don't worry, I will inform Lorraine to lend a hand," said Shin, trying to reassure her.

But Adept Hand was still concerned. "I don't think that she will be enough. Even the scale of the battle and the current state that we are in, I'm afraid that it is too overwhelming for her."

"She is only a Commander of an Adventurer Team. I don't think she has enough experience to handle such a situation and carry such a burden."

Shin chuckled as he said. "That is why I am leaving you to take over my position."

Adept Hands rolled her eyes and refused. "As I said, I am not my sister. This is not my thing. I can't do much."

But Shin still insisted. "You don't have to do much. Just guarding this place and keeping an eye out for any kind of ambush that can interfere with the purification ceremony. That will be more than enough."

"As for commanding the forces on our side, you can leave it to me and Lorraine. I will keep an eye on the state of the battle through the command channel and control everything remotely as it has always been."

"But you must promise me that you will take serious precautions against the traitors," he added with a serious warning. "This will determine whether our mission here will fail or be a success."

Adept Hands was still wearing a deep frown as she was still not satisfied with the arrangement. But Shin immediately ignored her expression and walked toward the pair of siblings not far away.

"I will be leaving this base in your care. Can I trust you with the tasks on this side?" he asked Samael.

Samael was slightly taken aback before slowly nodding his head. "You can count on us."

Seeing his serious expression, Shin smiled before turning to Huahua and patting her head. "Support your brother well. I will gift you something good when I get back."

Huahua pouted when she saw Shin treating her like a child, but still let him pat her.

After that, Shin walked toward the exit of the base before contacting Leonard. "Leo, stop toying with your opponents and finish them off, then leave the rest to Legolas, Aragorn, and Tinker."

"We have another playmate to entertain. I will be sending the coordinates," he then ended the call without waiting for the other response before contacting Diablo.

"We will arrive there in a couple of minutes at the very least. Don't do anything for the time being and continue to observe the situation. Leave if anything dangerous happens."

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Chapter 1312 The Bug Tribe (Part 2): Truth of the Seven Devils

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Atlas World, at the edge of the Aurora Continent.

Paimon was currently sitting leisurely inside the command tent while waiting for his efforts to bear fruit. He had already arranged everything in the Sacred Light Kingdom, and he was now waiting for it to yield some positive results.

Looking at the time, he felt that it was about time for them to harvest the field.

He then took out an orb from his inventory and placed it on the table in front of him. This orb was as big as a basketball while releasing a light that was full of life. There was also a white mist leaking out from it, seemingly releasing the residual energies that the orb could not contain.

Seeing the mist, Paimon took out a bunch of smaller orbs before placing them around the bigger one, arranging them to form an octagram star. It was at that moment when the invisible runes engraved on the table released an illuminating light before it was absorbed by the orbs.

Then the mist leaking out from the bigger orb at the center of the table spread out and got absorbed by the surrounding smaller orbs.

Looking at his work, Paimon nodded in satisfaction before leaning his back on the chair and crossing his arms. It seemed like he was waiting for something to happen.

Swoosh!

It was at that moment when the entrance of the door opened followed by the appearance of a man in mage clothes.

This person was Belial, one of the major leaders of the Pandemonium Descendants. He walked over to the table before sitting across from Paimon, who was leisurely waiting for something to happen.

"You seem pretty relaxed despite knowing that accidents can happen," said Belial while staring at the glowing orbs on the table.

Paimon smirked when he heard that before saying. "There is no need to be too concerned about the things that have yet to happen."

He then paused for a moment before casting his gaze at the biggest orb sitting at the center of the table. "We are only waiting for the extra benefits to happen, anyway. There is no need to be too invested in it."

"We have already accumulated enough life energy for opening the gate, but it will never hurt to get a little more, am I right? If this is successful, then we will be able to make the gate bigger faster and summon the 'Lord' much faster."

Belial shook his head before saying. "You are underestimating the 'variable' a little too much. They are called as such because they always yield unexpected results."

"Even Lucifer is not too optimistic about this. It is better to take this slowly by steadily," he added.

Paimon quickly refuted. "As I said, there is nothing to lose whether it succeeds or not."

Belial shrugged his shoulders when he heard that and did not pursue the subject. Instead, he changed it with another. "The 're-shuffling' seems to be coming up a little earlier than expected."

In their previous meeting, it was addressed that some matters in the organization needed to change.

Paimon smirked when he heard that. "There is no helping it since they are constantly making trouble due to their recent failures."

"The forces under Beelzebub and Mammon will have to change. They will return to their previous post and leave the other two seats empty. We must find suitable people to replace the seat of 'Sloth Devil' as soon as possible before the 'Lords' descended."

Belial nodded his head as he commented. "There are a lot of things that leaked from our side. One is our position that is discovered by Zero. Even though the other people don't know what it stands for, they will learn about it sooner or later, especially when Diablo is already getting closer to other 'variables.'"

"To think that Mammon will get his seat back. It is quite intriguing how he managed to get acknowledged by that 'Lord' once again."

Paimon smirked as he heard that before shaking his head. "I must say that Beelzebub has gotten lucky since right after being placed back to his original seat, the 'Lord' that he represents will be the first one to descend."

As they were discussing, the expression on Paimon slightly changed. He paused and raised his brows as he sensed something.

It took him quite a while to regain his composure before turning to Belial. "It seems like you are right. There are still some accidents that happened despite all the meticulous arrangements that I've made."

"Tsk! That idiot from the Corrupted Cult messes it up. All he needs to do is buy enough time, yet he still fails and even lets the Dragon Centipede run amok."

"Now it becomes the 'compass' that the other side will follow to find where I hid the core," he repeatedly shook his head as found it a pity. He felt that it was a huge waste since the purification ceremony was about to reach its peak.

"That means Amon has failed too," commented Belial as he remembered the other matter that they had to deal with.

"That is to be expected since Diablo's Demon Eyes have improved greatly. Even the leader is wary of such ability. He should have at least gathered enough data for us to analyze it," said Paimon smirkingly.

"So what is your plan?" asked Belial.

Paimon cast looked at the other side and said. "What's the point? Everything already crumbled, there is no longer any point in keeping that core. I will leave it to the Dragon Centipede and let it promote to the next level."

"Then it will destroy everything," he added with an evil grin.

"No wonder you insisted on getting the Corrupted Cult to get involved with this and chose Lodhir to be the 'head' of the operation. You are after the Dragon Centipede all along," said Belial.

Paimon took it as a compliment and shrugged his shoulder. "There is nothing I can do. I have to prepare backup plans after backup plans if I want to reap the most benefit that I can get."

"Unfortunately, I have gotten enough for the next step," he added as he felt that it was a waste not to get that energy core.

Belial shook his head. "You should have taken the seat of 'Greed Devil' instead of 'Mammon'. Your greed sure knows no boundaries."

"Let's forget about it and proceed to the next step," Paimon stood up and collected the orbs on the table. "Now that we can't get more life energy, we can settle with these for now."

"One 'Lord' is more than enough," said Belial as he also stood up. "We should inform the elders of the church now and ask them to prepare to welcome the 'Lord' and his army."

Paimon extended his arms and stretched his waist as he stood up. "I wonder how strong the Bug Tribe of the underworld is."

Sacred Light Kingdom

At the pit where Diablo had found the traces of the Dragon Centipede, Shin just arrived and met up with Diablo inside the cave.

When Shin saw the scene in front of him, he could not help but knit his brows deeply before commenting. "I feel that something bad is going to happen."

Seeing the crimson and black runes engraved on the walls and ceiling of the cave that were rhythmically releasing a pulsing and sanguine light, Shin sensed how dangerous to stay in this place.

He then directed his gaze at the center of the ceiling and saw the giant centipede curling and coiling around a huge core, covering it entirely and not letting any part of it be exposed.

There was also a black miasma being emitted from the massive body of the centipede. Shin could sense an immense threat coming from that miasma that seemed to be getting stronger with every passing second.

As Shin was observing the place, Diablo suddenly asked. "Where is your friend? I don't think that we will be enough to handle this overgrown bug."

Shin shrugged his shoulders as he answered. "He enjoyed playing with his playmates there a little too much, so he will be quite late."

Before Shin and Diablo could continue, Solus' voice suddenly sounded inside Shin's head.

[You must be careful when facing that thing, my liege.]

Raising his brows, Shin signaled Diablo to wait before talking to his Elemental Spirit Companion. "Do you know that overgrown thing?"

There was a brief silence before Solus continued.

[If I am not wrong, it is a descendant of the Bug Tribe, a powerful tribe from the underworld]

"The Bug Tribe?" repeated Shin in confusion.

Beside him, Diablo, who heard his words, trembled. He looked at Shin and wanted to say something before. But when he saw that Shin was seriously conversing with his Elemental Spirit Companion, he chose to remain silent for a moment and waited for them to finish.

[Yes, the Bug Tribe. Each member of the tribe is as powerful as the Mythical Creatures here in the lower plane, especially the Bug Queen and the Bug King. Those two are equivalent to Sovereign Beings of this realm]

[If I am not wrong, this centipede must be trying to evolve into its original bloodline. It is using the power of that core to 'return' to its origins, the Grand Centipedeus.]

[It is a leader-level creature of one of the families from the Bug Tribe, the Centipedeus Family. They are known for their strong defenses, sharp claws, and venoms. A leader of the bug family is as strong as a peak Enlightened Being when it's fully grown.]

[Even though this centipede is only a larva covered to the real members of the Bug Tribe, it still has the strength to rival the Ascended Beings of this realm when it competes in its evolution.]

At this point, Solus' voice suddenly grew heavier, containing a serious graveness.

[But what is more problematic about this is the one behind the Bug Tribe. They are known for another matter. The Bug Tribe is the army directly working under the reign of the 'Lord of the Flies' – one of the strongest beings in the underworld and a prince of hell – Demon King of Gluttony, Beelzebub.]

Hearing that, Shin could not help but turn to Diablo, who was looking back at him.

Shin remembered that one of the members of the Pandemonium Troupe had the same name as this Demon King mentioned by Solus. It could be a coincidence, especially when the 'Beelzebub' that he knew was known as the 'Greed Devil', not the 'Gluttony Devil'.

But seeing Diablo's expression, he thought that there must be something more to it.

Understanding the meaning behind Shin's eyes, Diablo knew that Shin must have guessed something, but was not sure if it was true or not.

Diablo nodded his head. "Your thoughts are right. They are somehow connected to those 'Lords'."

Shin was confused as he asked. "But from what I can remember that guy is supposed to have the title of 'Greed'."

Diablo shook his head. "That is right too, but that information that you have gotten from Zero is not that accurate. You guys don't even know why they have such titles on them."

He then paused and explained patiently. "The 'seats' of the 'Seven Devils' of the Pandemonium Troupe is quite special. Anyone can snatch whoever has those seats as long as they are powerful enough."

"There is also a matter of re-shuffling, which directly concerned these seats. If someone continuously fails their mission that is meant for those seats, then they will most likely be demoted or challenged by other candidates to take over those seats."

"Beelzebub is quite a greedy fellow. He wanted to take over two seats by himself and hold it until the time the 'Lords' descended to this realm."

"He snatched the seat of 'Greed' from Mammon while the latter settled with the empty seat of 'Sloth' while gathering his strength. It is not against the rules of the Troupe, so Lucifer just let it be."

"From that time, Beelzebub neglected the missions for the seat of 'Gluttony' and focused on the missions for the seat of 'Greed'. That is how Zero came to know about those seats but have not learned much about their meanings."

"From the most recent intel that I have gotten, Beelzebub must have been kicked out of the seat of 'Greed' by Mammon and settled back in his original seat."

Shin listened intently before asking. "But what is the connection between those seats to the 'Lords' of the underworld?"

"It is as the name suggests. Those seats represent the corresponding 'Lords'," said Diablo before adding. "Each seat corresponds to the 'Seven Princes of Hell' and the players who hold those seats will gain the power of those 'Lords' once they descend to this realm."

"Then how can their names be the same as those 'Lords'? It is not a coincidence from the looks of it," said Shin, voicing out his suspicion.

Diablo nodded. "Of course, it is not a coincidence. Lucifer used a special method to change the names of the players that he had scouted for those seats."

"I don't know how he did it or how he learned about the names of those 'Lords', but he scouted the players that he thought suitable for those seats before leaving them to do the missions meant for those seats."

"He doesn't bother whether the members fight against each other or snatch the seats from other candidates. He just leaves them to do whatever they want until the day of the descent comes."

"At that time, he will decide whether he takes back those 'names' and grant them to others, who are more worthy of it."

"But from the intel that I have gotten, it seems like there is nothing much that has changed. All those scouted by Lucifer still held onto those names and they returned to their respective seats."

Listening to everything, Shin felt that the Pandemonium Descendants were not as simple as they originally thought. They were much more troublesome than what they had expected, especially the ones that were chosen to be a Troupe Member.

It was at that moment when he heard Solus' voice once again.

[My liege, there is another thing that you must know. Once the Bug Tribe starts appearing in this realm, the descent of the 'Lord of the Flies' is near.]

"Does that mean that he is about to arrive?" asked Shin in a solemn tone.

Based on the information that he had just gotten, he could guess that this so-called lord was as strong as a Divine Being from the higher plane. Its subordinates – the Bug Queen and the Bug King – were at least a Sovereign Being after all.

"But how can a Divine Being enter this plane?" he mumbled in confusion.

He heard from Dacula that the Divine Beings would be restricted by the rules of the world, the Heavenly Principles. They were forbidden to step foot on this plane.

[The 'Decent' does not exactly refer to it literally. They are finding a suitable champion that will represent them for the time being before their 'main body' arrives.]

"That is when the Seven Devils of the Pandemonium Troupe step in," he said in understanding.

[Then they are going to open the portal that connects this plane to the Underworld and spread the Demonic Energy that will contaminate the mana of the realm until it becomes a second Underworld.]

When Shin heard that, he could not help but feel that the Pandemonium Descendants were getting more and more mysterious, especially its leader, who had built it.

"Lucifer – this guy must have known a few of the secrets of this game," he muttered to himself as he started to grow more cautious of this mysterious player.

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Chapter 1313 The Bug Tribe (Part 3): Choice

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Looking at the giant centipede coiled around the energy core above them, Shin could not help but say. "Don't you think we have to do something about this guy and prevent him from being promoted to the next rank?"

He knew that it would be very difficult for them to defeat this monster of the Bug Tribe if it were able to successfully promote itself, so they had to prevent it with everything they had to avoid the worst-case scenario.

Diablo, who was standing beside him, could not help but nod his head in agreement since he could already see the consequences when such a monster was to be unleashed into the world. He might not know what an Enlightened Being and a Sovereign Being exactly, but he could have a rough idea of how strong they were just by looking at the solemn expression that Shin had.

From their perspective, stopping the evolution of this monster would be the most logical conclusion that they had.

But Solus seemed to disagree with the idea of stopping this monster now. [I suggest that you cease the idea of directly interrupting it, my liege. It is because you will cause a more dangerous disaster if you do.]

[From what I can see from those runes, this entire underground cave is connected to the entirety of this kingdom. That is why it can absorb all the life energies from this land along with the plants, monsters, and other living creatures residing here.]

[Once you interrupt this evolution process, the already chaotic life energy within that core due to this descendant of the Bug Tribe will cause an explosion strong enough to wipe out everything within this kingdom. It is no different from erasing the kingdom from the map of this world.]

[Moreover, you will not be able to approach it due to the dense demonic mana coming out from its body. That residual mana that it can't properly digest is being ejected from its body, which will become its cocoon later.]

Shin frowned deeply as he felt troubled. "Then what do you suggest? If we leave this guy be, then it will be most likely to evolve into a higher being. That is no different from letting that explosion erupt."

"It may be a larva for now, but once it is successfully promoted, then there is a high chance that it will accelerate its growth and become an adult bug tribe, which is equivalent to the peak Enlightened Being of this plane."

"The current energies may not be enough for its full evolution, but once the purification ceremony kicks off, it will surely have enough to promote itself up to its adulthood."

[There are only two solutions right now, my liege. The first is to cut off the energy supply that the core has. At that time, it will only be able to absorb the energy left in the core, which is not enough for the complete evolution. Even if it happens, it will only be in an incomplete state or lesser larva of the Bug Tribe.]

Hearing that, Shin quickly scanned the entire cave and looked at the crimson and black runes engraved on the walls and the ceiling, closely observing them. These were the ones that were making it possible for the energy core to absorb the life energy of the kingdom, so he believed that once they got rid of them, things would be solved.

The problem was, that he could tell how sturdy these walls were after being reinforced by the runes. Shin was not confident that they would be able to get rid of all of them before the purification ceremony started purifying the land of the Sacred Light Kingdom.

Thinking about that, Shin decided to hear the other solution. "What about the second option?"

[That is to forcefully take away this descendant of the bug tribe and transport it to another location, my liege.]

Shin raised his brows and could not help but ask. "And how are we going to do that? And where are we going to take it?"

[We can take it to a place where no one can intervene when we are taking it down. If we can take it away from this place, then it will not be able to absorb any energy from this place anymore.]

Hearing that, Shin could already guess the answer to the first question that he had. "You want me to use the dimensional token that I've gotten Kentas and re-crafted by Berlin?"

[That is the only way, my liege.]

"Will it break once we use this method?" Shin could not help but ask as he felt a little worried.

From what he had experienced and based on what Berlin had said to him, crafting the dimensional token, which was also a special key that could let him enter and exit the independent world where the rebirthing place of this Elemental Spirits Companions was located, cost them a lot of resources.

It was only because of his close relationship with Berlin that they were able to afford it without paying much.

There was also the matter of the Chronomancer that Berlin had invited. He was not sure how the Saint Blacksmith had convinced that friend of his, but Shin could tell that he must have paid quite a huge price in exchange.

Knowing the concerns of her master, Solus reassured Shin with full confidence. [Don't worry, my liege. As long as we have enough energy, Hanzo, Astaroth, and I will be enough to do the job. We will also be able to lessen the burden for the token once we borrow its powers.]

[It will not break altogether once it happens. Instead, it will only exhaust some of its powers and will have to recover for the time being before being used once again.] She added to make sure that she thoroughly thought about this plan.

Hearing the confidence in her voice, Shin felt that this plan had more chance of success than the other.

After thinking for a moment, he suddenly asked. "So, which place are we going to transport it?"

[The Phantom Island is the most ideal. Transporting it to our rebirthing place will have a lot of risks, especially with it coiling around such a powerful energy core. With that kind of energy source, it can cause a dimensional collapse that will put us at risk when trying to travel between this world and our independent world.]

[It will be better to connect two places within this world since the dimensional tunnel will be more stable and much studier that way.]

[Since a powerful Chronomancer has set a strong formation on it, the previous restriction on the original token has already been lifted. So long as we have enough energy during the transport, we will be fine.]

Shin could already guess the plan that Solus had prepared and said. "So, you want us to wait until the purification ceremony finally reached its peak, where the World Tree grew, and a Spring of Life is formed."

"You want to borrow the energy that it will release as our power supply while using this place as the main catalyst for the formation of the dimensional tunnel."

Thinking that this plan might be plausible, Shin agreed and summoned the three Elemental Spirit Companions.

"My Liege!"

"My Lord!"

Solus bowed deeply while Astaroth quickly kneeled in front of Shin as they greeted him with the same 'enthusiasm' and level of worship as always. On the other hand, Hanzo remained calm and wore his usual indifferent attitude.

Shin felt cringing once again when heard the two. He was still not used to them addressing him that way, especially with that kind of tone.

Diablo, who was watching from the side, felt a little strange when he saw the scene. He had seen quite a few Elemental Spirits before, he even had quite a couple with him, but this was his first time seeing them act this way.

On his side, he had to constantly grant their wishes for him to ask for their help. But from the look of it, Shin did not have to do anything for these elementals to do his request – more like he could command them freely.

Diablo could not help but feel a little envy, especially when he recalled that these elementals could give their hosts or masters special quests related to their respective backgrounds.

After summoning the three Elemental Spirits, Shin waved his hands and let them do their thing while also handing the dimensional token to Hanzo.

However, he felt a little unsettled with it since he still needed to head over to either the Phantom Island or the Reaper's Realm to further his training for his newly formed style and study more about his innate attributes.

But since there was nothing they could do, he had to this little sacrifice.

Fortunately, he had already familiarized himself with his new style and possessed decent control over his three innate attributes. Moreover, the Reaper's Realm also did not have the other elements that needed, so he could set aside training there for the time being. He had to wait until he awakened the other two attributes before heading to either of those two places.

As he was busy with his thoughts, the three Elemental Spirits were already busying themselves.

Hanzo sat in the center of the cave while infusing his mana on the dimensional token while Astaroth was changing the terrain within the place while also adjusting some earth formations and building a couple of stone pillars to form an altar.

Solus, on the other hand, was busy observing the runes engraved on the walls and the ceiling of the cave before gathering her Eternal Flame and focusing them at the tip of her right index finger. She then started using it as a pen or an engraving tool to write a series of ancient divine runes.

She did not change the crimson and black runes that had already been engraved, nor overwrote them, since they still needed them to gather the incoming energies later. Instead, she formed an extra layer of runes and wrote over those already written runes to form a new sequence and formation.

Her actions were so fast that she was able to already cover almost half of the wall where she stood within a couple of seconds. Given her speed, it would not take that long before she was able to fully write the magic sequence that she was writing and formed a new magic formation.

Since she was able to arrange another formation without destroying the array that had already been set up, showed how skilled she was in this area.

Shin could not help but feel amazed while watching her do her work.

On the other hand, Diablo, who was silently watching from the side, could no longer hide his envy. He was curious how Shin 'trained' his elemental spirits for them to be this obedient. From the look of it, it was also clear that they were quite independent and did not need to follow any instructions from their master. They could do their respective jobs just fine and execute them well.

This became another reason for him to be closer to Shin. He wanted the latter to teach him how to train an elemental spirit.

Little did he know that these elemental spirits of Shin were the abnormal ones. But their master was also an abnormal monster, so they happened to click somehow.

While the three elemental spirits were busy, someone they had been waiting for finally arrived.

Shin did not even need to turn his head behind him as he already knew who it was. "You are quite late, don't you think?"

Leonard, who just arrived felt a little awkward and scratched the back of his head. "Well, don't blame me too much. I just feel a little excited when I can test my new strength. Those two Maverick Gods are perfect sparing partners."

"So, how is it?" asked Shin nonchalantly.

"It is not that bad, but they are quite disappointing since the gap between Tiers is a little too large. It will be a little different if they are in the same tier, but unfortunately, it is not the case," said Leonard before adding. "So, I've dealt with the few corrupted monsters and demonic creatures that undergo their respective third evolution that the other side has brought."

"No wonder you take too much time," commented Shin.

"So, do I have missed anything special?" asked Leonard as he stood beside Shin.

"Not that much. I can tell you about it later when we are done with this guy," said Shin before saying. "We have to wait a little longer due to certain circumstances, so you rest for a moment."

"I will contact the others to inform them about the changes in our plans. We will be leaving the kingdom later," he added.

Leonard had no idea what Shin was trying to say. But since it was what the latter had said, he had to trust it. He knew that Shin had already planned everything, so there was no need to question anything.

Little did they know that the next course of events would lead to another change within the game.

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Chapter 1314 The Bug Tribe (Part 5)

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Sacred Light Kingdom, Maze Forest

Adept Hands, despite complaining strongly earlier, was doing the task entrusted to her by Shin. She was constantly sweeping her eyes in the surroundings, sharply glaring at the elders and other elves surrounding the altar.

She specifically paid close attention to the elder kneeling the furthest in front of everyone. This elder was the elven seer who was responsible for the purification ceremony. He was kneeling in front of the altar and constantly chanting a series of prayers through elven language.

Glowing runes seemed to come out from his mouth before floating around him while forming an incomprehensible text in the air.

These runes then flew toward the branch and a glass bottle in the hands of the elder, seemingly blessing it.

Rune after rune poured out from the mouth of the elven seer and entered the branch and the water in the glass water. This lasted for an hour until the two sacred items finally showed some signs of reaction.

The branch trembled while the water in the glass bottle turned gold.

Seeing that, the elven seer slowly stood up before climbing the altar and placing the two sacred items on a stone table filled with engravings of elven language.

When the two sacred items were placed on it, those engravings glowed in golden light that illuminated the whole place.

Seeing that, the elven seer took out the next relic, the Crown of the Ruler. He then put on the head of the statue of the first elven king standing behind the stone table.

Swoosh!

Right after the elder did that, the eyes of the statue suddenly released a blinding light that spread in every direction.

Seeing this scene, the elves surrounding the altar started lowering their heads and bowed as they kneeled. Their foreheads were already touching the ground, yet they continued to chant the elven prayers.

With their palms resting on the ground, they channeled their mana into it as their voices grew louder with every passing second.

In the meantime, the elven seer, who was leading the ceremony, took out the next relic. The Moonlight Chalice of Purity was placed at the center of the stone table, which quickly released an intense wave of mana.

It then started sucking all the mana in the surrounding, creating a violent vortex that pulled everything into it.

In this scene, the chants and prayers of the surrounding elves grew louder, almost making their united voices resemble a strong explosion.

Samael, Huahua, and the other people from the Hand of Midas who were left to guard the place were forced to retreat and distance themselves away from the altar as they were afraid that they would be pulled by suction force and got swallowed by the chalice.

Adept Hands, on the other hand, continued to stay in her position while crossing her hands in front of her bosom. She was attentively watching what was happening while also keeping a close eye on every elf.

From what Shin had said, the traitor was most likely among these elves, so they had to put their guard up until the purification ceremony was over.

The success of the ceremony and her presence could give the traitor a lot of pressure on their tasks. As long as she did not move and waited patiently, Adept Hands knew the time would come.

On top of the altar, the elven seer took the branch of the World Tree and put it on the Moonlight Chalice before pouring the water of the Spring of Life from the glass bottle.

The moment when the water was released from the glass bottle, dense mana of great holiness and sacred purity filled the surroundings. But it only lasted for a moment before it was sucked by the Moonlight Chalice of Purity.

Along with the dense mana, the water filled the entire chalice. But the water from the glass bottle seemed to be endless as it continued to pour out from it. The water from the chalice also started spilling as it could not contain it.

The water continued to spill and spread on the stone table before falling onto the floor of the altar.

It then spread in every direction before covering the entire floor but strangely unable to get out of the altar. This scene continued for a few moments before the elven seer took out a box from the chest pocket of his robe.

He slowly opened the box, revealing a glowing seed inside. The moment that it was revealed, the already dense mana spilling into the air became even denser.

The elves raised their voices while the players felt suffocating due to this immense amount of mana, which was also much purer than what it was supposed to be. The players felt like they were suddenly submerged in the deep sea made of liquified mana.

Even Adept Hands started to feel uncomfortable due to this. Fortunately, it did not last long as the mana filling the air was suddenly sucked by the chalice when the seed was dropped at it.

That was when the players saw an amazing sight.

The seed that was just dropped absorbed all the mana that was within the chalice and started to grow rapidly. In just a few seconds, it spouted into a small plant before gradually becoming a sturdy tree.

It greedily absorbed the mana, seemingly not wanting to leave even a single drop of it. But the water from the spring of life seemed to be endless as it was still spilling out of the chalice.

When the seed was slowly becoming the tree, the water on the floor of the altar started overflowing. It poured out of the altar and fell into the ground, purifying it while assisting the growth of the Tree of Life.

When the tree grew dozens of meters high and spread its branches wide, everyone within the scene saw the golden lights that it was releasing.

It spread in every direction, forming a gust of wind that resembled a giant tidal wave. It first filled the Maze Forest before spreading in every direction.

The players and NPCs fighting outside the forest immediately noticed the strange phenomenon, making them pause their actions and making the chaotic battlefield a calmer one.

Swoosh!

Then everyone saw the wave after wave of purified mana coming out of the Maze Forest and swept over them.

The wilting plants and trees beyond the Maze Forest were immediately purified when the wave of golden mana swept through them. The slowly dying leaves and drying branches turned into dust while new ones started to sprout.

The forest started to regain its vitality as the life energy that was within the golden mana poured into them.

The players and NPCs sensed a sudden increase in their power while the corrupted monsters, demonic creatures, and players belonging to the evil faction all became weak due to the exposure of such a sacred mana.

The leaders of each group defending the Maze Forest quickly regained their composure and immediately reacted. They started issuing commands and ordered everyone to launch an attack.

They knew that this was their chance to turn the tides around. It was now their turn to push the opposing side back and strike them when the initial wave of the purified mana swept through the battlefield.

"This is our chance! All units charge forward!"

"Give your all and dispose of these ugly and cursed beings!"

"Boys, on me! We are going to send these disgusting creatures back to their maker!"

Seeing that everything was in their favor, Ithilien and Owen could finally heave a sigh of relief. They were getting a lot of pressure earlier since Shin had left them with such an important role. They were afraid to make mistakes that would lead to their failure. Fortunately, Shin still supported them while they were overseeing the battlefield.

The leaders of the Titan Guild and the HeadHunter Guild also started to relax when they saw what was happening. But they still did not let their guard down since they knew that this was still far from over.

Lorraine, who was leading her team, could also relax a little after seeing the change on the battlefield. She and her group were the busiest among everyone, so it was natural for her to be too exhausted.

Fortunately, she was already used to these kinds of situations, which was why she was able to hold her ground up until now.

In the meantime, at the back of the Maze Forest, Legolas and Aragorn instantly noticed the change. They had already heard it from Leonard earlier, so they were somewhat expecting this to happen. But they were still a little surprised when they saw how powerful the wave of purified mana that swept through the entire forest.

Then they started charging forward and led their group to continue their assault. It was time to wrap up this task.

Tinker, who was overseeing their battle and providing a timely assist every time, felt that the group would be able to handle themselves. He could now go back to the main base and join with Adept Hands and help her guard the altar.

Even though the purification process was already ongoing, it would still take quite a lot of time before the whole Sacred Light Kingdom regained its former vitality.

This had to continue for at least a couple of days (In-game Time) before everything went back to its original state, so they could not leave the elven seer unprotected.

With that in mind, Tinker left a few people from the Hand of Midas to assist Legolas and Aragorn before heading back to regroup with Adept Hands.

When he returned, he quickly met with the chief alchemist of the trading firm. He saw her attentively watching over the entire ceremony without moving an inch from her position.

Her eyes were sharply watching everyone, not willing to leave any kind of opening.

"You should relax a little. You will only exhaust yourself if you continue to be in this state for a couple of days," commented Tinker as he stood beside her.

"What can I do? This is the most crucial time of the purification ceremony, which also happens to be the perfect opportunity to strike. When that happens, everything will crumble," refuted Adept Hands without turning her head.

"Moreover..." she trailed her words before pointing her chin head. "...look at those guys."

When he cast his gaze toward the direction that she was pointing at, Tinker saw a few elves that were acting somewhat strangely.

"They can no longer wait, huh?" commented Tinker when he noticed that those elves seemed to be getting agitated and anxious despite them continuing to pray and chant.

"Those are just a distraction if you ask me," said Adept Hands before casting her in another direction.

When Tinker followed the direction of her gaze, he saw the four elders kneeling at the forefront of everyone, which was right below the altar.

Not finding any fault or strange actions from those elders, Tinker could not help but raise his brows a little. "What's wrong with those old elves."

"If you looked at them like any other else, then you will not notice it. But if you use these, you will understand what I mean," she said as she passed an elixir to the chief engineer.

Tinker raised his brows before taking it. He looked at its details for a moment before turning back to Adept Hands. "What's this?"

"Drink it and you will know what I mean. It is one of the ongoing projects that I am working on because of the recent activities of the Demonic Churches, especially because of the recent incident in the Saint Heaven Kingdom," said Adept Hands before adding. "But I don't expect that it will come in handy in this situation."

Tinker had a slight doubt before dirking the elixir. When he did, he felt the mana within his body suddenly surge before gathering in his eyes.

He then turned toward the elven elders at the forefront of the rest and saw something completely different compared to earlier.

He now saw an overwhelming difference from before. "Eh! What is that smoke coming from them? And..." he paused for a moment as he followed the flow of dark smoke toward the sky. That was when he saw something that sent shivers down his spine. "...-why the heck is there a huge demonic face forming in the sky... yet no one notices it?"

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Chapter 1315 The Bug Tribe (Part 6): The Grand Centipedeus

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As Tinker was starting to panic due to what he was seeing, Adept Hands suddenly put her hand on his shoulder and said. "Don't worry. It is nothing but an apparition. Aside from looking at us and what is going on here, he can do anything."

Tinker frowned as he turned to the alchemist beside him. "That? An apparition? But how come the aura that it has is so dreadful that it can suffocate anyone just by staring at it?"

"It is because it is a higher entity than us. Looking at it can kill us due to its authority," she added before pointing her chin at the growing tree at the altar. "Fortunately, we are being protected by the Tree of Life here."

Hearing that, Tinker was finally able to heave a sigh of relief. He thought that they were going to fight such a powerful monster that they could not hope to defeat.

Then he suddenly asked when he realized something. "How are you able to know about that information? Did the young master tell you about it?"

Adept Hands shook her head. "That's not it. I immediately contacted the young miss when I saw that demonic face in the sky. Then the 'Bookkeeper' contacted me and told me to show that face through a shared vision."

"That is when she told me that it is nothing but an apparition of a higher entity," she added as she gazed at the sky once again.

"The 'Librarian' of the firm? If it is her, then it is reliable information," commented Tinker as he became reassured.

He then paused for a moment as he became confused before asking. "But why is that thing gazing at us? Or more specifically – why is it gazing at this kingdom?"

Adept Hands shrugged her shoulders as she also did not know the answer. "I don't know. But the Bookkeeper says that it must be a dreadful premonition that is supposed to warn us about what is about to come."

"Don't tell me it is a new update? Is it a big one? But we just have such a major update recently, how can there be another one?" muttered Tinker in a low voice.

Adept Hands shrugged her shoulders for another time. "How can I know? I am also quite confused."

She then paused before adding. "But I think the young master knows a thing or two. After all, he is the one leading the operation right now. Whatever he is doing on his side, I guess it is related to that thing in the sky."

...

On another part of the Sacred Light Kingdom.

A couple of moments before the purification light swept through this place, Shin's three Elemental Spirit Companions simultaneously opened their eyes.

They all sensed the incoming purification at the same time and quickly sprung into action.

They positioned themselves on three corners of the magic array that Solus had drawn on the ground while preparing themselves to activate it.

Shin, Diablo, and Leonard were asked to stand at the center of the altar that Astaroth had built earlier for this situation. When they saw what the three elementals were doing, they instantly realized what was going on.

"It is coming, kiddo. Prepare yourself and activate the token."

Shin held the dimensional token in his hands and activated it as Hanzo instructed him.

The dimensional token floated from his palm and spun rapidly while releasing a purple light that illuminated the whole cave along with crimson and black runes engraved on the wall.

A few moments later, outside the mountain where they were located, the purifying light suddenly swept through the place before continuing to head forward.

But the evil formation that Paimon and the Pandemonium Descendants left behind immediately activated at that time.

Swoosh!

A powerful suction force was suddenly formed from the pit at the peak of the mountain and started to suck all the purification light greedily along with the dense life energy that it contained.

Shriek!

The Dragon Centipede that was coiling around the energy core tightened its clutches and clumped its sharp claws and legs on the core with more strength.

It also seemed to be excited about what was about to come. It could feel that it was about to evolve into a higher entity as it absorbed the life energy.

But before it could rejoice further, Solus immediately made her move. She closed her eyes and channeled her Eternal Flames into the formation that she had drawn earlier.

Swoosh!

The rune sequence drawn on the ground shone brightly before spreading in every direction. The runes that she had drawn earlier started to shine one after another along with the ones on the wall.

The runes shone in golden light and overshadowed the crimson and black runes that were underneath them.

Taking that as a signal, Hanzo took out his weapon stabbed it onto the ground, and channeled his Void Powers into it. His unique mana spread in every direction, following the patterns of the magic array.

It was the same for Astaroth as he took out his greatsword and stabbed it into the ground while channeling his earth and mental elemental mana. Earth rampant also appeared one after another in certain spots of the magic array, seemingly guiding the spreading mana that was coming from the previous two elementals.

Diablo and Leonard watched everything unfold from the top of the altar and could not help but be amazed. The former was already feeling this way as he watched how Shin's elemental spirit companions worked earlier, but this was on another level. The latter, on the other hand, somewhat expected this to happen. He knew that Shin's elemental spirits were different from his, but what he was seeing still gave him an idea of how he would utilize them in the future.

Not long after, the dimensional token floating in the air suddenly absorbed the life energy that the formation had snatched from the one that the Dragon Centipede was taking.

Shriek!

The Dragon Centipede released a deafening cry when it sensed that someone was robbing the life energy from it, but it could not do anything since it could not afford to leave the energy since its evolution would also fail once it left it.

Resonating with the magic array that Solus had set up, the dimensional token was immediately activated and released a powerful dimensional energy that spread in every direction and covered the entire cave.

Swoosh!

Within the next few seconds, Leonard and Diablo watched everything within the cave sucked by a dimensional tunnel that that token had summoned.

They closed their eyes due to the blinding light that it released before sensing that their bodies were being pulled toward the dimensional tunnel. They instinctively wanted to fight, but they quickly regained their composure and let the suction force pull their bodies.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

When they reopened their eyes, they found themselves standing in the middle of an unfamiliar place. They could sense the dense mana that was filling the air, which was making it a little hard to move. But they were able to quickly adjust themselves within a few seconds before sweeping their gazes at the surroundings.

They found Shin standing a couple of meters away from them while staring at the sky. The three elemental spirits could no longer be found since Shin had unsummoned them as he knew they exhausted quite a lot of energy from what they had done earlier.

When Leonard and Diablo cast their gazes toward the direction where Shin was looking, they found a Dragon Centipede still suspended in the air and coiling around the energy core.

The cave was nowhere to be found. It had already collapsed during the transfer, so the formation that Paimon and the Pandemonium Descendants had left on it also disappeared along with it.

The trio watched everything that happened next and closely observed the changes with the Dragon Centipede.

It no longer had the support of the formation, so its absorption of mana could no longer have supported its evolution. But it still stubbornly wanted to continue. It absorbed the remaining life energy that was left in the energy core until it could no longer take anything from it. Not even a single drop was left.

Crack! Crack!

That was when the three heard a series of cracking sounds coming from the body of the Dragon Centipede. When they looked closer at its exoskeleton, they noticed that its smooth surface was now filled with tiny cracks that were spreading at a rapid pace until it covered its entire body.

The gaps between the cracked exoskeleton released a black smoke that contained a dense demonic mana and an eerie aura that immediately affected the surroundings.

Along with it, they also saw that the claws and legs that it had seemed to be turning into a golden brown color that resembled the earth.

Then they watched broken pieces of scales fall onto the ground like a solid rain.

Shin, Leonard, and Diablo, who were watching closely simultaneously moved and spread in three different directions.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Bang!

Right after they left their previous spot, a black energy that resembled a whip suddenly landed and sent a strong aftershock that spread in every direction.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

It did not stop in there as more and more black energies flew in different directions and continued to bombard the land.

The trio immediately got busy as they dodged every black energy that was whipping in their direction. They could sense the dense demonic mana containing those black energies and they understood that they could not afford to let them touch their bodies or the consequences would be dire.

This lasted for a couple of moments until the Dragon Centipede finished its evolution.

Bang!

It landed on the ground with its heavy body, sending another shockwave that swept through everything in every direction.

The trio, who were standing a couple of distances away from it, planted their feet on the ground and prevented themselves from being swept away.

A thick and tall cloud of smoke could be seen in front of them, hiding the monster's appearance.

Seeing that, Leonard suddenly inhaled deeply before shouting with every ounce of his breath, sending a strong gust of wind that cleared the cloud of dust.

That was when they saw the new appearance of the Dragon Centipede – or to be more specific, it was its evolved form.

This new monster had a length that expanded up to hundreds of meters while it was filled with hundreds of legs that resembled earthen spears given their current appearance.

The head of the centipede had hundreds of eyes while the pair of antennae that it had moved like whips that seemingly sensed its surroundings.

They could also see that the legs that it had near its head were much larger and thicker than the ones attached to the rest of its body. They were much sharper and more like pinchers rather than calling them legs.

They were also a pair of smaller versions on each side of the mouth of the centipede. Its mouth was full of sharp teeth and a dark green liquid continuously dropped. When these liquids dropped on the ground, a hissing sound could be heard as smoke could be seen from the spot where they fell.

It was a highly corrosive venom that seemed to be able to melt anything.

Seeing this monster, Shin and the other two quickly used their respective ocular skill to inspect its details.

Diablo slightly frowned as he did not get much information, but Shin and Leonard, who were in the third tier of their respective class had gotten more detailed information.

[Monster Name]: Grand Centipedeus (Incomplete Larva)

[Title]: Leader of the Bug Tribe Family

[Rank Classification]: World Class Arthropod Monster

[Monster Type]: Arthropod Monster, Demonic Monster

[Life Rating]: Bug Tribe (Mid-High Class Demon)

[Level]: 185 (Weakened due to the incomplete evolution)

[Class]: N/A

[Tier]: 3 (Had fallen due to failing to meet certain conditions)

Health Points: 25,000,000,000

Skills:

- Physical Skills

1. Exoskeleton Hardening (Passive)

2. Thousand Blades (Passive)

3. Strong Slam

4. Sweep

5. Thousand Earth Spikes (Ultimate)

- Pison Skills

1. Corrosive Saliva (Passive)

2. Venomous Claws (Passive)

2. Spitting Venom

3. Exploding Venom

5. Venom Mist (Ultimate)

-Summoning Skills

1. Call of the Bug Tribe (Venom Centipede Family)

2. Shadow-Venom Tentacles

3. Venomous Aura

4. Thousand Mimicry

5. Venom Manifestation (Ultimate)

The expression of the two immediately turned grave as they saw the set of skills that the monster had.

They both knew that this was not going to be an easy battle, especially when they only had three people on their side.

While they were lost in thought, a set of notifications from the system suddenly interrupted them.

Ding

System: A member of the Bug Tribe of the Underworld has appeared on the Lower Plane!

System: The connection of the 'Lord of the Flies' to this realm has become stronger!

System: The portal between this realm and the Bug Tribe can now be established.

...

Chapter 1316 The Bug Tribe (Part 7): Gate Summoning

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Ding

System: A member of the Bug Tribe of the Underworld has appeared on the Lower Plane!

System: The connection of the 'Lord of the Flies' to this realm has become stronger!

System: The portal between this realm and the Bug Tribe could now be established.

At the same time, Shin, Leonard, and Diablo received these notifications from the system, Paimon and the rest of the Pandemonium Troupe had also gotten the same message.

Paimon smirked when he saw that before standing up and walking out of his tent. He had been expecting this to happen, so they could now proceed with the next part of their plan.

"Finally! We can now proceed with the opening of the portal."

This was not exactly what he wanted since there were a couple of accidents that happened, making their preparations a little awry. But since he had already prepared for such scenarios to happen, he had left certain preparations for their plan to go back on the right track.

He just did not expect that the Dragon Centipede would evolve into a real member of the Bug Tribe of the underworld.

Outside the tent, Belial, Amon, and Baal were already waiting. They looked at him before nodding their heads.

They had already been informed that Lucifer could not join them for the next step because of certain matters that prevented him from playing in the real world, so they could only put extra effort into the tasks that were left to them.

They then went toward the edge of a cliff where a dark and eerie valley was located. They looked down for a moment, looking at the valley before exchanging glances at each other once again.

With a nod, they went to their respective positions and stood at the four corners of a demonic pentagram on the ground. There was an empty corner, but that did not matter much since there was a statue of a demon placed on it – it was the statue of the 'Lord of the Flies' and the Demon King of Gluttony, Beelzebub.

There was a spherical gem attached at the center of the forehead of the statue, which greatly resembled the energy core that the Dragon Centipede had, but much smaller. However, despite its size that it had, the life energy that it contained was much richer and denser than what the centipede used for its evolution.

At the same time, after taking their respective positions, the four took out an energy core from their respective inventories and placed them at the center of the stone table slab in front of them.

Then they took a slight step back before chanting a series of demonic incarnations while channeling their demonic mana into the pentagram beneath their feet.

Not long after, the energies from those cores sipped to the pentagram before heading to the center.

Swoosh!

Then a purple pillar of light suddenly shot toward the sky, seemingly trying to pierce toward heaven.

"Urgh!"

"Argh!"

The four could not help but groan painfully due to the rapid draining of their mana. They felt like they were being sucked dry by the pentagram and it would not stop until they were dead.

This lasted for a couple of minutes before the phenomenon finally calmed down. The purple pillar of light gradually receded toward the ground until it completely disappeared. But it left a tear in the air that looked like a dimensional rift.

This spatial tear was quite small, but the aura that was leaking out from it was hard to ignore as it could make the surrounding mana become contaminated within an instant. Looking a little closer, someone could see a spiraling mana within the tear.

The four commanders of the Pandemonium looked at the tear for a couple of moments before finally stopping to channel their mana into the demonic pentagram after seeing that it could now sustain itself and work properly.

It was at that moment when Paimon and the rest received another message solely for them.

Ding

System: The portal of the Bug Tribe of the Underworld is now established.

Ding

System: Quest Update – guard the dimensional gate until the Bug Tribe arrives.

Estimate time – 90 Days

Seeing the estimated time, Baal could not help but frown his brows deeply and complain. "A whole month's worth of time in the real world? Isn't this a little too long?"

"We can't do anything about it since we failed to capture enough life energy from the Sacred Light Kingdom. You should be thankful that the entire operation works after all the mishaps that happened," said Paimon.

"Tsk! Tsk! Those guys from the Empyrean Talon sure know how to mess with us. Should we constantly target them too?" asked Baal as he was quite eager to try fighting the said adventurer group.

"This is not the time yet. For now, we must proceed according to the plan that Lucifer has given us," said Belial as he started walking away. "My job here is done. The rest is up to you."

Baal clicked his tongue repeatedly before complaining a little more. "Tsk! Tsk! Why is guarding this place have become my task? I am supposed to do with my other job."

"Leave those tasks to the other members of the troupe. They have been idle recently, so it is only right for them to pick up their pace," said Paimon as he also left.

Amon did not say anything and also left. He did not get along with Baal well, so it would be better to avoid any conflicts that could affect their missions.

Real World.

World Gaming Organization Headquarters.

The people from the monitoring department slumped on their respective seats as they saw everything unfold on the big screen projected in front of everyone.

"Argh! We failed. They still failed! The portal is about to open."

"We are doomed! More work is about to descend! More overtime is about to come!"

The people of the department were mumbling to themselves as they kept lifeless expressions on their respective faces.

Seeing this, Carlos shook his head and smiled bitterly. These guys still did not know that they had already avoided most of the disasters that they were supposed to face.

He clapped to attract the attention of everyone while saying. "Alright! That is enough for your complaints. Let's return to our usual selves and continue with our work."

"We have already overcome the most dangerous part and even avoided it. We should be thankful that the portal opening is delayed a little longer than expected. A month's worth of time is already plenty enough for the other departments to do their thing."

"They will not be able to blame us now since we have been doing our jobs very well as we spotted everything and reported to the higher-ups the entire event."

"We have already brought them more than enough time. The rest is for them to deal with," he added to encourage his people.

He paused for a moment before turning to Longhengrin standing beside him. Understanding the meaning of that gaze, the latter quickly smiled and nodded. "That's right, everyone! The time that has been given to us is more than enough for the Events Department to conduct the United Cup without problem."

"We can still redirect the attention of the public and let them continue to improve themselves before the next update arrives."

"Moreover, it is just a single portal. It will not do much to trigger another major update unlike what we have expected. At most, this incident will only become another big event."

Hearing those words, the members of the monitoring department finally regained their confidence and composure. They then straightened their backs and resumed their respective work.

Seeing this, the two leaders of the department nodded their heads.

"The only problem now is that Grand Centipedeus," whispered Longhengrin to the department head while adding. "The longer it stays in the Atlas World, the stronger it becomes. If it becomes a true member of the Bug Tribe, it will become a medium that will connect the two worlds and hasten the opening of the dimensional gate."

Department Head Carlos understood this, but there was nothing they could do since they could not get involved in the game.

All they could do was leave everything to their miracle boy and their friends to solve this problem.

The only concern that they had was the 'hope' in front of them was not strong enough to face such a creature. They were not at the level where they could fight such monsters, whose level and grade were beyond the current level of the players.

But since these three people were listed and labeled as Miracle Players, they could only hope that they would be able to create yet another miracle.

At the same time, he also hoped that the Righteous Churches would also make their move, or at least prepare for what was about to come. After all, the top-ranking members of their respective organizations should have sensed the appearance of the pillar of light.

The game should still have the balance. Since the Evil Faction was moving rapidly and making great progress with their Faction Quests, the Righteous Faction should be doing the same given the setup that the developers had.

The clues that the NPCs had left to the players with Transcendent Races and Classes about the living armors were one of them. But Carlos hoped that these players would discover more.

Thinking about it, he could not help but look at the certain figure projected on the screen. This particular player was one of the people that he hated the most, but recently the young man had become his beacon of hope.

"Please continue to make a miracle so that we can hold out for as long as we can."

Back in the Virtual World; the Atlas World

Phantom Island

Shin, Leonard, and Diablo were looking at the Grand Centipedeus with grave expression on their faces. The monster was one of the reasons, but the other was because of the notification that they had just gotten.

Diablo, as someone who used to be a member of the Pandemonium Descendants, had a clearer view of what was going to happen. "This is bad. We must take down this monster no matter what if we don't want the world to be flooded by the Bug Tribe."

He went silent for a moment before continuing to explain to Shin and Leonard. "If I am not wrong, Paimon and the rest must have summoned the portal. Although, I am not sure if it will still need to take some time until it fully opens."

"But given that the system has not given us any kind of additional information about the invasion of the Bug Tribe, I can confidently say that they have failed to fully open it."

Leonard tilted his head to the side before asking. "So what is the relationship between this guy and that portal that we have to kill it right here and now?"

Diablo pointed his dagger toward the Grand Centipedeus before continuing. "Because that thing over there will become a bridge that will connect the two worlds. Or at least become the nutrients that will strengthen the connection that they have which will hasten the opening of the portal."

"You sure know a lot of inside information about these things, huh?" commented Leonard as glared at the Grand Centipedeus.

"I used to be one of their higher-ups, after all," said Diablo as he wielded his daggers.

In the meantime, Shin was still observing the Grand Centipedeus closely while asking for more information from Solus.

But since she did not participate in the war between the Supreme Gods and the Great Demon Kings back in the Primordial Era, she had no idea how strong the forces of the opposing side were and did not know how to properly deal with them.

It was at that moment when the voices of Whitie and Blackie sounded inside his head.

[Master, use us for the possession this time.]

[Master, let us help you fight this filthy creature.]

...

Chapter 1317 Battling the Grand Centipedeus (Part 1): New Elemental Spirit Quest

...

[Master, use us for the possession this time.]

[Master, let us help you fight this filthy creature.]

Shin raised his brows when he heard the voices of Whitie and Blackie. He was about to refute when Blackie suddenly added.

[Master, we know that you plan to use Goddess Solus since her Eternal Flame is effective against demons. But given her current state, you should know it is not a good idea.]

Shin snapped out of his hesitation as he remembered that Solus, Hanzo, and Astaroth must have exhausted themselves due to them forcefully transferring them and the centipede to this place. The three elemental spirits were currently in a hibernation state and recovering themselves.

Even though he could still use their respective possession, their power could not be as strong as their peak strength.

At this point, the rest of his reapers were the only ones in perfect state, where Blackie, Vladimir, and Grimrace were slightly weaker than the three elemental spirits that completed their evolution. These three remaining reapers were still in the middle of evolving to reach the current level that Solus, Hanzo, and Astaroth had.

As for Whitie, this White Tiger and a Light Elemental Spirit were still far from reaching their levels as he had yet to be promoted.

As he was pondering to himself, Blackie continued.

[I am not sure about this, Master. But we felt that our powers were also the bane of this filthy creature. We can sense the deep disgust in our blood and soul, which is trying to tell us to get rid of it as soon as possible.]

Shin raised his brows when he heard that. He could understand if it was Whitie since this guy possessed the Light Element, which was indeed the bane and natural enemy of Demonic and Corrupted Creatures.

But to think that Blackie and her Darkness Element were the same, Shin felt a little doubtful. But since it was what Blackie had said, he trusted that there must be a reason.

Shin was not planning to use the 'Yin-Yang Swordsmanship' inside the game for the time being since he wanted to further polish his current sword style, the 'Myriad Transformation Swordsmanship'. But given

that the three strongest elemental spirit companions that he had could not help him, he felt that this must be the most rational choice.

Being able to read his thoughts, Whitie suddenly said.

[Don't worry, Master. This time, we will lend you our real capabilities.]

[And I feel like I will be able to drag out all the hidden powers hidden in my bloodline because of that overgrown bug.]

Shin was slightly confused at first, but he suddenly heard an unexpected notification from the system.

Ding

System: Elemental Spirit Quest has been triggered!

System: Elemental Spirit Evolution Quest has been triggered!

System: Initiating the Quest Generation.

Ding

System: A New Quest has been added to your Quest Panel. For more information, please check the details of the quest in the said panel.

...

Shin felt a sudden sense of déjà vu when he heard those notifications. He felt that a similar thing happened to him when he was in the Starry Spear Forest.

At that time, he triggered the 'Challenge of the Earth Element' Quest for Astaroth's promotion, which was also an Elemental Spirit Evolution Quest.

Without any hesitation, he quickly checked on the quest that he had received and skimmed through the details.

[Quest Name]: The Power of the Chaos

[Quest Difficulty]: SS – Hell

[Quest Type]: Monster Subjugation Quest

[Historical Note]:

Your Darkness and Light Reapers had sensed the powers within their bloodline awakening. They had sensed that they had an intense disgust for Demonic Creatures of the underworld.

Legend says that during the first epoch of the Universe, there was a Mythical Creature that roamed around the three realms freely.

It was called the 'Three-Eyed Chaos Tiger'.

This tiger was said to be a colossal monster that could devour planets in a single gulp and treated Dragons and Void Beasts as its snack.

It was a being that could live in the chaos beyond the borders of the three realms, the Primordial Chaos.

During that epoch, the Grand Cataclysm had descended. All the Primordial Creatures have fought against each other to survive and become part of the new incoming era.

During this time, the first Devil Ancestor emerged.

He killed and devoured everything that stood in his path and led his creations to mass destruction.

His spawns scattered everywhere and started a slaughter and destruction everywhere. Their goal was to be the strongest race that would reign throughout the next epoch.

Unfortunately, their plans did not undergo smooth sailing. Creatures with the same level of authority as the Devil Ancestor took action and started to fight, leading to more chaos.

The injured Devil Ancestor, who was running with its injuries, ran toward the Primordial Chaos along with his spawns. But during their escape, they accidentally stumbled upon the territory of the 'Three-Eyed Chaos Tiger', which led to another great war.

The enmity between the Devil Ancestor and the Three-Eyed Chaos Tiger had transcended time. They had become the nemesis of each other, and their descendants became mortal enemies.

The spawns of the Devil Ancestor of the Devildom and the Underworld – the Great Devils and True Demons – and descendants of the Three-Eyed Chaos Tiger of the Primordial Chaos and Pre-historic Era – the Voidwalkers and the Primordial Tigers.

[Quest Details]:

Your Reapers, Whitie and Blackie, had discovered the powers of their bloodline, that could be tracked up to the first epoch. The two beasts-turned-elementals possessed the bloodline of the Three-Eyed Chaos Tiger.

They had felt that the Demon in front of you was one of their nemeses, a demon of the Bug Tribe.

[Quest Condition]:

Use the powers of the two Reapers to defeat this Demon of the Bug Tribe.

Note: You can't use the powers of your other Elemental Spirit Companions once the quest has started.

[Quest Reward]:

Promotion of Whitie and Blackie into True Monarchs of their respective elements.

[Quest Penalty]:

-True Death of Whitie and Blackie.

-Promotion of the Grand Centipedeus from an incomplete larva into a true member of the Bug Tribe.

As Shin skimmed through the details of the quest, he could not help but feel amazed at the background of Whitie and Blackie. He was also reminded of the first time he had gotten them and became his pet.

Reading the background of their bloodlines, he could not help but feel a little bad for giving them such names. But what was done was already done, he could no longer change it. Even if he wanted to change their names now, he would only feel strange and unfamiliar when calling out their names.

As Shin was reading the details of his quest, he noticed that Leonard and Diablo seemed to be staring blankly in the air. It immediately clicked into him as he realized that they must have received a similar quest.

"What do you guys get?" asked Shin.

"I just received a Racial Quest. It says that an Ancestor of my Race used to be an enemy of the Devil Ancestor," said Leonard a little absentmindedly as he felt that the background of his Transcendent Race had become more amazing.

Shin felt a little interested since Blackie and Whitie seemed to be similar. "An ancestor of the Primordial Beast, which one?"

"The details say that it is called the 'Primordial Divine Lion'," answered Leonard.

Shin then nodded briefly before he turned to Diablo with an inquiring gaze. The latter immediately realized what was happening and said. "Mine is also a Racial Quest. But does not mention the Devil Ancestor. It just says that the first Shadow Elf, the Shadow Queen, is an archenemy of the Demon Race – something like that."

As the three were discussing among themselves, the Grand Centipedeus suddenly raised a fourth of its body like an angered snake while looking down at them. It was clear that it had already adjusted to its new body and could finally move properly.

The three immediately assumed a battle-ready stance, preparing for the battle.

But before the battle fully broke out, another set of notifications flashed through the eyes of the three. Then they heard the familiar voice of the system in their ears.

Ding

System: Conditions have been met! A special Quest Scenario is initiated!

Ding

System: You have met all the conditions, and the slumbering power within you is partially awakened. The Power of the Primordial Eclipse is now filling your entire being.

...

As Shin heard those words, he immediately sensed the sudden change within his body. He could feel the new power filling his mana channels and flowing through his meridians.

He had almost forgotten about this power that he had received previously since he did not have the time to fully explore it, so he did not know that it remained dormant up until now.

What amazed Shin even more was that he felt that this power was quite familiar yet also unfamiliar at the same time. He subconsciously compared it with the power of eclipse that he had before when using the power of the sun and the moon during his early progression in the game.

He could sense the differences between them. They were similar yet also different. This new power was much stronger than the previous power of eclipse and Shin felt that it was somehow related to the Powers of the Brilliant Sun and the Abyssal Moon.

He felt like this new power was the union of those two powers, but it also included another mysterious power that he could not put his finger on.

Regardless, it was still an amazing power that he could temporarily control freely due to the current quest scenario that had been triggered.

Then, he was reminded of the certain Elemental Spirit Technique that he had seen from Arthur and Leonard before. The technique lets them use two different possessions at the same time and fuse their powers in the process.

He wanted to do it with Whitie and Blackie previously, but he could not find the trick. He was unable to fuse their powers properly as he found that there was a missing link that would let them merge.

But with his current state, he felt that he could give it a try this time.

"Light Reaper, Darkness Reaper," muttered Shin as he summoned the two.

Immediately after that, Whitie and Blackie broke through the cycle of the elemental spirits, revolving around Shin, before manifesting their humanoid forms behind him. It lasted for a brief moment before they turned into lights that entered the [Yamato].

There was not much change in the appearance of the sword unlike the other Elemental Spirit Possession that he had, but he could feel that the possession went smoothly. He could also feel the overwhelming powers that were filling his body, making him think that he could do anything.

Ding

That was when he received another notification.

System: New Elemental Spirit Possession is added. Elemental Spirit Fusion: 'Chaos Slasher'.

There was an alternating black and white flame covering Shin's body. The [Yamato], on the other hand, was releasing an intense power that was similar to the aura that he had.

When Shin glanced at the other two, he noticed the changes in their bodies.

Leonard used a similar fusion technique with his Elemental Beast Companions. From the look of it, he was bold enough to fuse the Crimson Lion and the Wolf, Lycan, together.

The power and momentum that he had was not weaker than Shin in the slightest. Shin had suspected that he had also received a boost from the system due to the quest scenario that had been triggered.

But the one that surprised Shin greatly was Diablo. From what he could sense, the latter seemed to be temporarily elevated by the system into a Tier 3 Class. Shin could feel the power of the Shadows surrounding Diablo, which seemed to be following his command.

Shin knew how amazing these quest scenarios given that they had already experienced them during the Empire Quest in the Frozen Kingdom. But he could not help but be more amazed at the current situation. It felt like as long as they had met the right conditions, everything would be possible.

Shin could not check on the two any further since the Grand Centipedeus seemed to have gotten the cue from the system. It no longer watched them and immediately made its move, finally initiating the battle.

Shriek!

.....

Chapter 1318 Battling the Grand Centipedeus (Part 2): Trust

.....

Shriek!

With a loud cry, the Grand Centipedeus suddenly slammed into the ground, sending a huge shockwave that moved forward. The impact of its actions seemed to have trampled the land, making the ground have multiple cracks before the surface flipped and moved toward the trio like a tidal wave.

Shin and Diablo suddenly disappeared as they moved away while Leonard bravely took a step forward. He inhaled deeply, expanding his chest with the air filling his lungs. He raised his head along with his actions while crossing his arms in front of him.

Then he stomped forward with a force that made the ground explode, sending shockwaves in every direction. Along with that, he uncrossed his arms and lowered his head while releasing a deafening shout that sent a strong force that moved forward.

Roar!

That shout sounded like the roar of a lion that reverberated in the entire island. It shook the land while the incoming wave from the opposing side clashed against his.

Boom!

As an explosion erupted due to the collision of the two sides, a thick and tall cloud of dust and dirt was formed at the center of the collision. Dirt and rock fragments flew in the air before starting to fall like rain.

Swoosh!

The thick cloud of dust was suddenly separated as the Grand Centipedeus charged through it. The veil that the dust and dirt had created moved away as the giant centipede charged toward Leonard.

Rumble!

Bang! Bang! Bang!

The sound of its hundred feet felt like huge pillars that were slamming to the ground due to how heavy and strong each of its steps was. There seemed to be an earthquake as it ran forward, making the ground shake intensely.

Shriek!

It then opened its mouth wide, revealing its sharp teeth, seemingly wanting to devour everything on its path.

Leonard did not hesitate and jumped in the air, avoiding the charging centipede.

As he was about to fall back to the ground, the Grand Centipedeus suddenly took a turn. Its long and large body followed, making a curve that looked like a giant whip that was flying straight to Leonard, who was about to land.

Swoosh!

At that moment, Shin suddenly appeared in front of the head of the giant centipede with his signature sword-drawing stance.

The black and white aura covering his body burned more wildly as the sheathed [Yamato] was filled with the dense Power of Primordial Eclipse.

Shing!

As he unsheathed the sword, and the blade of the sword was slowly revealed, a blinding light illuminated the whole place. Then Shin swung the sword forward, sending a powerful energy that turned into a huge tiger that was charging toward the Grand Centipedeus.

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Quick Draw – Eclipse Tiger Draw'

Roar!

Given the current size of this giant centipede, the huge tiger was still dwarfed by it, making it look like a small cub charging toward a huge boulder.

Regardless, the tiger that was formed from the Power of the Primordial Eclipse still bravely charged forward and opened its mouth wide while it slammed at the giant centipede. It bit one of the antennae of the Grand Centipedeus and swiped its claws at it.

Boom!

It was a direct hit but the damage that it dealt barely moved the huge health bar that the centipede had. It was so pitiful that the damage that this attack dealt was barely noticeable.

But at the very least, it slowed down the movements of the centipede, giving Leonard enough space to maneuver around and escape his predicament.

"Tsk! What a tough defense. This is not going to be easy," mumbled Shin as he saw how little his attack dealt.

He then quickly sheathed his sword and jumped high up in the air, avoiding the incoming centipede.

When he was in midair, he suddenly adjusted his posture, making it more comfortable and relaxed. He curled his body a little and assumed another stance before using 'Mondi's Jump' to kick the air behind him.

Pa!

He then flew straight to the passing body of the giant centipede that looked like a moving train from above. He turned into a streak of light that fell from the sky.

Swoosh!

The mana within him moved as he channeled it toward his sword for another time. But instead of pouring all the Power of the Primordial Eclipse, he tweaked it a little, making the darker mana which was a form of the Abyssal Moon Powers.

The streak of light then turned into a black line that fell from above as he unsheathed the sword once again and swung it forward.

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Quick Draw – Moonlight Splitter'

Shing!

Clang!

Unfortunately, despite how powerful his attack was, the sword only produced some blazing sparks before its blade bounced off from the exoskeleton of the giant centipede.

Shin quickly adjusted just body as the sword bounced off. He then spun rapidly in the air before he tapped his foot on the moving body of the Grand Centipedeus and flew toward the distance.

When his foot touched the ground, he suddenly sensed the intense vibration that was coming underneath and quickly hopped away.

Bang!

Right after he got out from that spot, sharp and thick earth spikes suddenly sprouted out from the ground.

Shin continued to move backward, repeatedly dodging the spikes one after another until it could no longer reach him.

In the distance, he saw Leonard engaged with a Giant Centipedeus once again while using a pair of gauntlets that seemed to be made from a higher form of mana like the Power of Primordial Eclipse.

Leonard repeatedly punched the claws and pincer-like jaws of the giant centipede while continuously moving backward. It was clear that despite how strong Leonard had become, there was still a huge disparity between his stats and their opponent.

He also saw Diablo, who became a shadowy figure, dashed in different places, and circled the giant centipede. He also saw that the daggers that the latter had were enfolded with dark mana that was different from demonic and corrupted mana but possessed a similar feeling.

Diablo tried to cut the legs of the giant centipede by attacking the joints, but he discovered that even those places were much tougher than he had expected.

Shin felt like the assist boosts that they had gotten from the system were barely able to help them. "If this is how strong an incomplete larva is, then how strong is a true member of the Bug Tribe."

While Shin was slightly troubled by those thoughts, he suddenly realized the problem after a few more attempts that they had thrown. He noticed that their attacks were inefficient because of their unfamiliarity when harnessing the new powers that they currently had.

They were treating it as a form of mana similar to the ones that they originally had when the truth was it was far from that. They were supposed to use these new powers in a slightly different way to bring out their full potential.

"It seems like the system is not lending us these powers for free," Shin mumbled as he quickly joined the battle. But this time, he was planning to experiment with his powers a little, trying to find the right way to harness the Power of the Primordial Eclipse.

Shin found that this was a good opportunity to learn how to control such powers. Even though he was supposed to polish his 'Myriad Manifestation Swordsmanship' and explore more about his innate attributes, he would want to experience how to wield this kind of power.

This experience would give him enough inspiration when he was going to form his 'Spiritual Force' in the future. Even though he was still lacking two of the attributes that he was supposed to have, he was confident that it would not take that long before he fully awakened them given his current progress.

Experiencing how to properly wield a higher form of mana, which was comparable to the 'Natural Force' and 'Spiritual Force' in the real world, Shin felt that he would be able to form his version of 'force' after learning more about the Power of Primordial Eclipse.

Even though it was more similar to the 'Yin-Yang Force' that Professor Plum had told him about, Shin still felt that this would be helpful for him when forming his 'Spiritual Force'.

As Shin was doing his experiments, Leonard and Diablo noticed similar things. They also realized that they were using their respective powers in the wrong way, making them unable to utilize the full potential that it supposed to have.

Realizing that they would not be able to defeat this Demon without discovering the right way to wield their powers, why not try to find the answer during the battle?

Even though they were not Battle Genuis like Shin, who could learn and grow during the battle, the two were not that bad either as they had their respective edges.

Leonard was naturally gifted for battle and had experienced the cruelty of the streets, which made him a streetfighter. He had unique inspiration whenever he was fighting that he picked up from the streets, which was completely unorthodox.

Diablo, on the other hand, was in a completely different situation. Unlike Shin and Leonard, he was not a Martial Artist or a Mentalist. He was also neither a Streetfighter nor a true Assassin in the real world. He was even below the average fighters. He was nothing but an ordinary person in the real world.

But he was a true gamer. A professional player, who played a lot of games and an expert in the virtual world.

It had been a while since he started playing like this; searching for a way to solve difficult problems and finding the right way to fight. Figuring out how to defeat an opponent while utilizing the limited set of skills that he had under his arsenal was one of the thrills that he missed.

"It has been a while since I feel excited like this," mumbled Diablo as he distanced himself away from the Grand Centipedeus, avoiding the powerful slam that it did.

Pausing briefly, he glanced at Shin and Leonard, who were currently engaging with the giant centipede as they tried to experiment with their skills and newly acquired powers.

Despite them not saying anything to each other, they seemed to be able to read what the other party was thinking. They kept on swapping positions whenever one of them needed to switch. They beautifully juggled the aggro in perfect coordination as if it were nothing.

Diablo also saw how the two threw a series of combinations that linked with each other. Despite the pitiful damage that the two had dealt, their synchronized attacks were gorgeously executed as if they had rehearsed them thousands of times.

The two completely understood each other and knew when they needed to act and when they had to switch positions with each other.

It was not his first time to see perfect teamwork. As someone who played the game since young, Diablo had witnessed and experienced quite a lot in the virtual world. He had seen enough pairs or teams with similar levels of teamwork or combined attacks. Even the Pandemonium Troupe, which he used to be part of, had such duo or teams.

But for some unknown reason, Diablo felt that there was something different from these two. There was this unconditional trust and unexplainable bond from each of their moves.

Diablo did not know how he felt, but he knew that this kind of trust with each other was something that could only be born between people who truly believed in each other without any hint of doubt.

Diablo felt envious by watching the two fight the Grand Centipedeus. He did not know if he would be able to find someone with whom he could put his trust this way. After what he had experienced before, he was not sure if he would be able to do it anymore.

When that thought crossed his mind, he suddenly remembered the invitation that Shin had offered him. He then took out the Martial Manual that Shin had given him and stared at it for a couple of moments before tightening his grip.

"Empyrean Talons, huh? I hope that you guys are different," he mumbled as the expression on his face suddenly became determined.

"Let's try it out," he added as he used the manual in his hand. It then became particles of light that flew in the air while slowly dissipating.

At the same time, sets after sets of information flooded his head, filling it with all the knowledge about the techniques recovered in that book. He also seemed to have experienced the personal experiences of the experts, who used those techniques, along with the inspirations that they had when training them.

When he opened his eyes again, there was a different light that was not there before.

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Chapter 1319 Battling the Grand Centipedeus (Part 3)

...

Bang!

The Grand Centipedeus slammed on the ground sending shockwaves that spread forward, covering a fan-shaped area.

Shin was about to dodge when he noticed that the area around him was suddenly filled with earth spikes. They surrounded him from every direction, preventing him from going anywhere. He naturally could fly in the sky, but he could sense that it was a trap, so he chose to hold his ground and remain in his position.

He then took his stance while channeling the Power of Primordial Eclipse into his sword before unsheathing it.

Shing!

Right after he swung forward, a raging energy was suddenly released, which suddenly formed into a massive dragon.

Roar!

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Quick Draw – Eclipse Dragon Draw'

The dragon was about to fly straight to the incoming shockwave when Shin suddenly tweaked its course by slightly turning his wrist and twirling the [Yamato].

The dragon made of the Power of Primordial Eclipse, suddenly moved in spiral motion as it headed toward the incoming shockwave. It left a blazing trail behind in black and white shade, which turned into a raging storm right after the collision.

Boom!

Swoosh!

Amid the explosion and the cloud of dust and dirt, the Grand Centipedeus suddenly broke through and lunged itself at Shin while opening its massive jaws. The pincers that it had on each side of its mouth also opened wide while revealing its razor-sharp teeth.

Shin remained calm despite the charging centipede. He took a stance and held the sword with both of his hands as he pulled it back, raising it over his shoulders.

He then channeled his powers into it once again and forcefully contained them.

As he took that stance, someone suddenly jumped over the earth spikes behind. It was Leonard, who currently had his entire body covered with Primal Powers of an Ancient Beast.

He flew over Shin as he went straight above the giant centipede. He then suddenly shot down like a meteor, leaving a fading trail behind.

Swoosh!

He then put them together and raised them while stretching his body in an arc. When he was about to land on the head of the Grand Centipedeus, he suddenly swung his clasping hands like a hammer.

'Supreme Blood Sutra: Death Series – Blood Hammer'

Boom!

Right when his hands landed on the head of the giant centipede, the impact that it caused forced the latter to slam into the ground, dozens of meters away from Shin. It also forcefully closed the huge mouth of the monster as it landed.

Shriek!

The Grand Centipedeus quickly picked itself up and opened its mouth once again, releasing a sharp and deafening cry. It also shook its head left and right, throwing Leonard off from its head.

Leonard quickly jumped high up in the air as he prepared for the follow-up attack.

On the ground, Shin, who was maintaining his stance, had already accumulated enough energy and was preparing to attack.

When he saw the Grand Centipedeus open its mouth for another time, he suddenly stomped strongly with his right foot while swinging the [Yamato] forward.

Right after he swung the sword, an energy made from the Power of Primordial Eclipse came out and flew forward.

It was a move that was derived from the in-game skill that he had, the 'Eclipse Slash'. He used it as a model for this move as it was the closest to the ideal move that he had inside his head. It was one of the few moves under his arsenal that used the combined powers of the sun and moon, forming the power of eclipse.

Thus, this skill was a self-created sword technique that he would add to his swordsmanship.

'Myriad Transformation Swordsmanship: Eclipse Slash'

Swoosh!

The energy wave flew straight at the mouth of the Grand Centipedeus with its sharp and pointed tip. It entered the mouth of the monster and exploded inside, making the giant centipede cry in pain.

Shriek!

(-12,402,520)

Shin finally saw the huge damage that he dealt to the Grand Centipedeus from the very first time. "So, your insides are not as strong as your tough exoskeleton, huh?"

He finally found a clue on how they were going to attack.

At the same time, he was also trying to remember how he executed the previous sword technique since he felt that it was the closest to the ideal way to wield the powers of the Primordial Eclipse properly.

With his experience with controlling the 'Sacred Qi' and 'Demonic Qi' as well as the 'Yin-Yang Arts and Swordsmanship' in the real world, Shin felt that he would be able to find the proper way to wield this new power that he had.

Along with his experience in combining the three innate attributes that he had, he felt that the answer was right under his nose and waiting for him to be discovered.

This time, he was planning to incorporate his 'Yin-Yang Swordsmanship' with the 'Myriad Transformation Swordsmanship', applying the concepts that it had to the latter.

The Grand Centipedeus was shaking its head hard with a wide open mouth as it was trying to spit the residual energy left behind by Shin's attack.

But when it was doing that, crimson light suddenly fell from the sky and landed straight on its head.

It was Leonard, who had accumulated enough energy for this attack. He punched the head of the giant centipede, forcing it to slam into the ground for another time and closing its mouth once again.

'Supreme Blood Sutra: Death Series – Sanguine Crush'

(-10,023,055)

Due to his actions, the Grand Centipedeus received another massive damage. But it was not because his attack landed on the head of the monster, but because the already raging residual energy inside its mouth exploded once again due to the sudden impact.

Aside from leaving a decent crack on the exoskeleton of the giant centipede, Leonard did not deal much damage. But that was more than enough, as they had already gotten the clue that they wanted.

Moreover, he also became confident that he would be able to break its exoskeleton later.

He now had an idea of how he would be using this new energy that he had. He could also use the advanced techniques of his martial arts that he usually could not do in the real world.

'Blood Force', the special force that his master had personally created just for him. It was an advanced 'Natural Force' that was different from the others. It was more like a 'Bloodline Powers' that the 'Bloodline Possessors' had from the Martial Arts and Mentalism Families with a long history.

It was a special power utilizing the 'Bestial Qi' used for the personal martial arts of his master and a secret method for the circulation of one's blood.

Utilizing this concept, Leonard was now able to somewhat wield the primal powers that he currently possessed.

He might still have not awakened his innate attribute in the real world and formed this unique Natural Force, the 'Blood Force'. But he now at least had discovered how to use it in the future once he did.

Having a general idea of what he needed to do next, Leonard felt more confident and started applying his special method to his current state.

Unknown to him, he was starting to bring forth the powers of his bloodline and the inheritance of the Thunder Lord that he recently awakened and received to the game.

In the meantime, Diablo, who was receiving the inheritance from the 'Soundless Assassination Technique' Martial Manual, finally digested everything.

The moment when he reopened his eyes, a new light was now present in them as he felt a new form of power inside him. He also felt that the assassination techniques that came from the manual perfectly fitted the powers that he had received from the system.

This Power of the True Shadows that came from the Shadow Queen was not only perfect for assassination, but it also possessed some other applications such as shadow magic, particularly the 'Shadow Manipulation' and 'Weapon Manifestation'.

As someone, who did not have any kind of background regarding Martial Arts, Mentalism, and Assassination in the real world, Diablo was more like a blank slate that could absorb anything the manual had granted him.

The experiences and the inspirations that the previous masters of the 'Soundless Assassination Technique' had become his within a short amount of time.

Adding the effects of the Hyperactive Immersion, this state that he was currently in was enhanced, which gave him the illusion that those experiences and inspiration were his to begin with.

He could not wait to test them out in the battle and familiarize himself with them. Having these techniques inside his head was one thing but applying them in battle was a whole different matter.

If he wanted to master them, he had to constantly train himself and make them his own.

Closing his eyes, he suddenly recalled the techniques recovered in the martial manual before making his move.

He hopped to the side before entering stealth. But this time, his stealth seemed to have reached another level as it hid his presence along with the sound of his footsteps.

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The Grand Centipedeus was already going crazy due to the damage that it received. Even though barely able to move its overwhelming health bar, it seemed to be acting a little strange.

It moved its body like a wave, slamming it everywhere, creating chaos everywhere. It seemed to be doing things randomly, but Shin and Leonard could tell that it was not the chase. The two could tell that was trying to do something, making the pair to be a little cautious in their attacks.

A few moments later, the huge and long body of the Grand Centipedeus was suddenly hidden by a thick cloud of dust.

Shin was not sure what the giant centipede was trying to do, but when he saw what was happening, he realized how cunning this Demon of the Bug Tribe was.

He was not expecting that this monster would be able to think such a move to prevent them from constantly targeting its head, particularly its mouth.

Realizing that this was not going to work, Shin and Leonard quickly retreated and got away from the range of the cloud of dust.

They were trying to lure the Grand Centipedeus out before resuming the battle. But right after they broke through the cloud of dust, they suddenly sensed the vibration of the earth underneath their feet.

They quickly got away from their respective positions, running away from it as soon as possible.

In Shin's previous spot, massive earth spikes, resembling tall pillars, suddenly shot from the ground. They continued to appear one after another, seemingly chasing after Shin.

Seeing how fast they grew, Shin realized that he could not outrun them, especially when he saw that more stone spikes appeared in another area, seemingly trying to trap him.

Shin executed a series of movement techniques, dodging each of the stone pillars while also swinging the [Yamato] cut the ones that he was unable to avoid.

On the other side, Leonard was caught a little off guard when he saw the huge head of the Grand Centipedeus coming out from the ground and charging straight at him.

Seeing that he was still in midair and unable to do anything, Leonard threw his fist in the air beneath him, creating a strong aftershock that propelled him away from the course of a giant centipede.

Bang!

Barely able to save himself, Leonard suddenly took a horse stance while circulating both his blood and energy at the same time.

At the same time, Lycan's apparition appeared behind him, boosting his speed.

He then started executing his foot technique and running in random directions as the Grand Centipedeus constantly came out from the ground, chasing after him.

While running, he suddenly saw shadow brushed past him and headed straight to the centipede. When he looked over his shoulder to see what it was, he saw a pair of shadow daggers hitting the chin of the giant centipede.

They did not deal any kind of damage to the monster, but something strange happened. The Grand Centipedeus suddenly stopped moving like a statue.

Leonard quickly halted when he saw that to have a clearer look. It was at that moment that he noticed that the pair of daggers stuck in the chin of the centipede seemed to connect with its massive shadow underneath.

He did not know what exactly it was, but he could already guess what happened.

"Interesting," mumbled Leonard as he guessed that Diablo must have discovered how to use his new powers and gained a decent understanding of it.

Snap!

He then saw Grand Centipedeus snap the shadow daggers pinning its shadow in place and preventing it from moving. It regained its movements and quickly scanned its surroundings.

Unfortunately, Diablo was still hiding under his stealth, making the giant centipede unable to find or sense his presence.

After failing to find its target, it returned its attention to Leonard, who was currently standing a few meters away from it and gesturing in a provoking manner.

"Let's see how you will play this tag," he smirked, provoking the giant centipede even more.

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Chapter 1320 Battling the Grand Centipedeus (Part 4): Understanding the Origin

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As Leonard and Diablo joined hands fighting the Grand Centipedeus, Shin remained trapped in the rock formation of the demon monster. It was as if the earth itself was alive and preventing him from going anywhere.

Shin could tell that the Grand Centipedeus seemed to understand that it could not let these three join forces and fight it together. It was as if it knew that it would lose if they teamed up and used their powers as one.

Earth pillars and stone spikes continued to shoot from the ground and chased after Shin while his surroundings were blocked by tall rock formations, sealing any kind of escape route.

Some of the pillars and spikes that were chasing after him seemed to improve as time went by. They bent and turned soft as they chased after him, giving them a more flexible approach and versatile attacks.

But Shin was able to either dodge or cut them time and time again. They were not the only ones who were improving, he was as well.

Moreover, he understood the flow of mana within him and learned more about controlling them. He was trying to understand how the Power of Eclipse worked.

When he compared it with how he utilized the Sacred Qi and Demonic Qi before and the Powers of Brilliant Sun and Abyssal Moon, he found out that they indeed shared a lot of similarities.

The only difference that he could find was the missing piece that made the Power of Primordial Eclipse pure and united. It was as if there was something hidden within this higher form of mana that made the previous powers fused.

But instead of finding something that he could not find, he chose to focus on the principles that the 'Yin-Yang Arts and Swordsmanship' and wanted to apply it to his new swordsmanship. He even transformed the [Yamato] into a pair of katana and used the 'Yin-Yang Swordsmanship' while using the Power of Primordial Eclipse.

He transitioned between the two swordsmanship repeatedly as he tried to understand the difference between the two. Even though he could not use the other Elemental Spirit Possessions that he had, he could at least still apply the innate attributes that he already awakened along with the three special breathing techniques.

What surprised him was despite using other methods to utilize his innate attributes, he realized that they could naturally be fused with the Power of Primordial Eclipse seamlessly. It was as if they were returning to their origins and becoming one once again.

There were also a few more things that he had discovered. It was whenever he was using the two swordsmanship. He found out what made the two styles different yet also similar.

Whenever he was using the 'Myriad Transformation Swordsmanship', he realized that he was 'linking' the sub-styles that were within it. He was transitioning between different sword styles by linking them together.

After his polishing, he was able to transition with different styles and energy controls more seamlessly and much smoother than before.

It was because of this 'link' he had during the transitions and between each element that he was able to control them properly and use each style smoothly.

On the other hand, the 'Yin-Yang Swordsmanship' followed another principle linked by their 'flow'. This 'flow' gave Shin, or even Uno, too swift between the two styles within this swordsmanship seamlessly.

The shift between the Sacred Qi and the Demonic was because of this flow, which made everything more natural and easier to control.

"The flow," mumbled Shin before something clicked inside his head.

"I see. So that is how it is," he continued to mumble to himself as he dodged and blocked the incoming attacks with his sword and the Power of Primordial Eclipse.

"I understand the cycle of creation and destruction of the five elements, but I only link them together and do not follow the natural flow."

The more Shin talked to himself, the more ideas and inspirations flooded inside his head. His style was also adjusting accordingly as he applied the new principles that he was getting during this moment.

"It is not like the Light and Darkness don't coexist, they are just but the two sides of the same coin. When one steps forward, the other steps back."

He was also starting to understand more about the Power of Primordial Eclipse as he got more inspirations flashing inside his head.

Yet again, he was gaining enlightenment in the middle of the battle.

It was to be expected since this was the Natural State that he had for his Battle Genius Talent. But this time, he became more aware of what he could achieve.

"When the Light and Darkness merge, there will be an 'Ultimate Chaos'. But when they are separated from one another, they will maintain the balance and restore the 'Absolute Order.'"

"The Order and the Chaos are also the same side of a coin."

As Shin mumbled these words, he separated the [Yamato] once again into a pair of swords. But this time, the Power of Primordial Eclipse followed as it was separated from one another and became the Powers of the Brilliant Sun and the Abyssal Moon.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

But unlike how he usually utilized these two higher forms of mana, Shin seemed to put a link between them while also following the natural flow.

"Just like the Yin and Yang can be fused to return the Origin. The Origin can also be broken down to form the Yin and the Yang."

The blazing white flame and the chilling black light intertwine with one another, cutting all the earth pillars and stone spikes that were trying to approach him.

After that, Shin turned the [Yamato] back to its original form while also fusing the two forms of mana back and turning them into the Power of Primordial Eclipse once again.

Swoosh!

Swinging the sword around, a destructive wave was released from it and swept through everything destroying all the rock formations in his surroundings.

"The Creation is the Order while the Destruction is the Chaos."

He then started applying the new enlightenment that he had gotten to his self-created swordsmanship.

He then proceeded to use 'Mondi's Style' to swap between different sword forms while also using the three special breathing techniques along with it.

Even though the innate attributes of respective breathing did not appear as they seemed to be 'devoured' by the Power of Primordial Eclipse, the principle when utilizing each sword form and innate attributes was still present.

"Everything returns to Origin. The five elements are nothing but a part of the origin."

As Shin muttered these words, the Power of Primordial Eclipse seemed to be broken down into different parts once again.

But instead of the Powers of the Brilliant Sun and the Abyssal Moon, five forms of energy appeared. There were five different spheres behind Shin, which represented the five elements, forming a certain formation – a ball of fire, a clump of earth, a sphere of metal, a drop of water, and a cluster of wood.

As he did this, Shin finally realized why he was more talented than Uno in terms of Mentalism while the other was better than him when it came to Swordsmanship and Martial Arts.

"I am more gifted in understanding the energies."

Then he seemed to have remembered something as a portion of his forgotten memory flashed through his mind.

– "I will be the Light while you will be the Shadow." –

– "We will be the same side of the coin. You are me, and I am you." –

Then Uno's voice suddenly sounded inside his head. [When there is Chaos, there will also be the Order.]

Hearing that, Shin seemed to have realized something. "You have completely mastered the Sacred Qi and Demonic Qi. You must also have successfully combined the states of 'White Dawn Boundary' and 'Black Origin Threshold'."

[Everyone one of us has our respective 'Natural State'. We may be one, but we are also different.]

Uno might not have answered him, but he had already gotten the answer after hearing those words. Uno must have combined his 'Natural State' with the unification of the 'White Dawn Boundary' and 'Black Origin Threshold'.

"How you do you call yours?"

[True Equinox.]

Shin smiled and said. "Then I shall call mine the 'Perfect Zenith'."

As those words left his mouth, Shin seemed to have entered another special state. His mind was calm while his heart was burning. The energy within his body flowed like violent waves of a raging river, yet still maintained a certain order.

He had entered the berserk mode of the 'Black Origin Threshold', but still maintained the absolute tranquility of the 'White Dawn Boundary'.

The five representations of the elements revolved around his body as he suddenly halted his track. He stayed still in his position and waited for the incoming earth pillars and stone spikes to fly at him.

The five elements spun rapidly before gathering at one point and merging once again. But this time, Shin felt a different feeling when they transformed back to the original energy.

That was when the system notified him.

Ding

System: You have harnessed the Power of Primordial Eclipse perfectly!

System: You have mastered the Power of Primordial Eclipse: Origin!

Shin raised his brows as little as he heard those notifications, but he also could not help himself from raising the corner of his mouth. He could not hide his smile as he seemed to have now another clue on how he would advance in the real world.

At that moment, the attacks were about to land at him. But before they could even reach a meter away from him, they suddenly stopped midair before they crumbled and turned into dust.

He did not even bother to look at them as he closed his eyes and immersed himself in the current state that he was in – the new Natural State that he just achieved, which was the product of combining the previous one and the two special states that he had learned from Professor Plum.

'Natural State: Perfect Zenith'

This was what Professor Plum wanted to achieve, but it was also a little different since it was for his Mentalism and personal swordsmanship.

He thought that Uno's Natural State, the one that he called 'True Equinox' might be the one that was closer to what Professor Plum wanted. Although, it was supposed to be called the 'True Zenith'.

Shin felt that Uno and himself seemed to have divided the ideal state that Professor Plum wanted to achieve as they created their own.

"I at least now can share it with the Old Geezer and let him complete his research and achieve his dreams. He also has said that he needs it for some other project, but he never has told me about it."

After that, Shin opened his eyes. He then sheathed the [Yamato] before looking at his hand and the black and white aura that was covering his body.

He stayed like that for a couple of minutes before asking Uno. "Have you also completed the unification of Sacred Qi and Demonic Qi?"

There was a silence for a while before Uno finally answered, albeit indirectly. [Let's talk again when you form your Natural Force.]

Shin raised his brows even further as he had gotten an idea of what was going on. Uno might have not achieved it yet, but he was very close to it.

"Alright," he nodded his head he turned his head toward the direction where Leonard and Diablo joined hands when fighting the Grand Centipedeus.

From what he could see, the two seemed to have been making progress with their respective powers.

But when he was focusing on the two, Shin seemed to have noticed something strange going on with Leonard. It might be his imagination at first, but the closer he looked, the clearer that feeling had become.

He then was suddenly reminded of the time when he first fought Arthur right after the latter finished his bloodline awakening.

"Don't tell me."

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