

Destiny 1461

Chapter 1461: Infiltration and Precautions (Part 1)

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Uno had been stalking the nobles of the Dark Cloud Kingdom that he had seen earlier for an entire day (in-game time). He had yet to find crucial evidence that would link them to the Demonic Churches, but he had found some conspiracy after following them.

However, he was not interested in those since his main interest was to find a link between them and the Demonic Churches.

From what he had seen, these people were too careful of their movements due to the rumors of him and his achievements. After he had slaughtered quite a few key units from the army along with the special forces meant for important operations, the officials of the Dark Cloud Kingdom were taking necessary precautions.

They had set up quite a few traps for him, but he did not bite any of them since they were not worth the trouble.

He might look like a crazy slaughter, who would kill everyone on his face, after what he had done. But he was very patient when stalking his prey.

He did not show any unnecessary actions when he was following the nobles, making the NPC Officials and players who were looking for him quite confused.

He did not make a move for quite a while, making those people waiting for him to take action think that he had already retreated.

Regardless, none of them were willing to let their guards down and continued to observe the situation.

This lasted for a few more days, making these people think that Uno had left.

Well, in a sense, they were right. Uno had left the game a couple of times to eat and train outside the game, satiating his hunger and stretching his body.

Even if he could stay inside the gaming cabin for quite longer due to the special serums, he chose to log out from time to time to not miss a single training routine.

He did not encounter Arthur, Leonard, or Cloe during the entire time as they were still attending the funeral of Bernard and supporting Arthur, who was quite devastated after his father's passing.

This funeral would last for a couple of days as they were trying to wait for Shiella to come back from the exploration of the tomb.

Uno did not attend as he was not Shin. Moreover, it could cause some unnecessary conflict or misunderstanding if he went there. That was why he chose not to attend and decided to do his own thing.

After doing what he needed in the outside world, he would log back inside the game and continue stalking the nobles and other officials that he had found.

After days of patience, his efforts finally paid off as those people from the Demonic Churches could no longer delay their progress.

Since he had not shown any signs of movement after these past few days, these people finally decided to continue their operations.

That was when they showed Uno what he wanted.

The nobles and high officials of the Dark Cloud Kingdom had shown their contact with the Demonic Churches and even did some rituals as believers of those churches. They even showed him how they converted some of them into demons after sacrificing some innocent people.

All of these were recorded on the spying stones that Uno had prepared, catching every moment from different angles.

But he was still not satisfied with this evidence as he was not sure if there were spies at the Storm Kingdom that could turn this against him. Even if he would be getting Commander Taiga's support, he wanted to make sure that everything would be going smoothly.

He was preparing to capture these nobles and high officials.

But he also did not want to capture just any one of them. His targets were some people high up in the position and social status that would make an irrefutable link between the Dark Cloud Kingdom and the Demonic Churches.

If possible, he would want to capture their king. But he was aware that it would be impossible given his current strength.

He had to settle with the other nobles and high officials for now.

As he was stalking these people, he suddenly heard something from their conversations.

"The Elder has told us to gather everyone so that they can finally start the ritual. It seems like they want us to hasten the opening of the portal before they wage war with the Storm Kingdom."

"I see. Then let's call everyone to gather at the ceremony hall."

"The King will be leading the ritual, so we have to make sure to set up heavy security to prevent any rats from infiltrating us. Quite a few people are getting in our way recently after all."

"Alright, we will be heading to the ceremony hall while you summon the others."

"What about our people at the Storm Kingdom?"

"Let them do their job. Their roles over there are also important. But you must send a messenger that will inform them about our activities so that they can match our movements."

"Then I will send our messenger birds."

As Uno listened to their conversation, he could not help but grin as a new plan was formulated inside his head.

He then summoned Hanzo and Blackie and instructed them. "You two, follow that guy to the place that they are talking about and find a way to infiltrate it. The sooner we get there the better since that is when their security will be the weakest."

Hanzo slightly frowned his brows but did not say anything and just disappeared from his position through 'Void Steps'.

Blackie also did not say anything and just stepped into the shadows of the night and melded with them.

As for Uno, he would be following the other noble, who would be sending a message to the spies of the Storm Kingdom as he was planning something else.

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A few moments later, he arrived at a secret residence after following the said noble. It was a luxurious mansion in the middle of the forest with quite a lot of guards patrolling its perimeter.

But since Uno had arrived at the same time as the noble, he was able to sneak inside through his stealth as the latter 'distracted' the guards for him.

He then continued to stalk the noble inside the mansion while using all his enhancing skills for his stealth, and the passive abilities of the Phantom Swordsman Class were showing their worth.

Along with the carelessness of the noble for being too confident as he was inside his mansion, Uno was able to infiltrate the place without encountering any problems.

He continued to follow the noble as they entered a secret room.

The noble did not waste any time and looked for a sheet of paper laid it on the table and was about to write on it.

But before the plume could even touch the paper, the noble suddenly halted his actions. His eyes also turned blank as if they had lost their focus.

That was when Uno walked out of the shadows along with Grimrace, who was stretching his right hand and his palm facing the noble.

From the look of it, he was releasing his psychic powers to control the noble through special means.

Uno stared at the noble a couple of times and commented. "This mind control sure is handy. It must be derived from Mentalism Techniques meant for illusion in the real world."

He observed the noble with great interest before turning to Grimrace. "Can you control him to write something that I wanted and send it to those spies at the Storm Empire?"

"Heh! That is a piece of cake," said Grimrace as he added. "If it is someone with the stronger mental strength to resist my 'Mind Domination', then it will be impossible to easily control them."

"But he is not just weak but trash as well – such a thing is not that challenging," he continued before proceeding to what Uno wanted him to do. "So, what do you want me to have to write?"

Uno grinned. "Make him write – that all the spies of the Storm Kingdom must gather to their 'usual' place. As for when... let's settle with two days from now. We must finish our business in this place first after all."

Grimrace started grinning as he could read what Uno was planning to do. "Hitting two birds with one stone? I like it."

He could tell that Uno wanted to sweep through everyone in a single move. Moreover, he was quite ruthless, which was why Grimrace liked him more than Shin.

After controlling the noble, Uno then instructed. "Put him to sleep for now as we search the room. Who knows if we can find something interesting before meeting with the old man."

This secret room was not only filled with books as the section adjacent to it was a room full of treasures.

"Should we rob this treasury and not leave anything behind?" suggested Grimrace as he saw the overflowing amount of gold within the treasure room and the artifacts and other things filling the room.

Uno frowned as he said. "With such an amount of treasure, I don't think it will fit into my inventory. It will be different if the old man is here."

With Hanzo's manipulation of space, he could create a pocket dimension where they could put such treasures.

"I put it inside my Shadow Realm," suggested Grimrace.

Hearing that, Uno could not help but look at the elemental spirit suspiciously before saying. "You have never taken the initiative to help Shin. What are you plotting?"

"Tsk!" Grimrace clicked his tongue as he replied. "Let's just say that I like you more than the other."

"That ruthlessness of yours when slaughtering those trash is satisfying," he added as he recalled how Uno cold-heartedly killed someone within blinking an eye.

Uno eyed Grimrace suspiciously before pointing to the noble. "Taking these treasures as it will create some trouble. Can you manipulate that guy's memories and let him forget about them for the time being or something?"

Grimrace frowned a little before replying. "That shouldn't be a problem. But given my current strength, such technique will easily be dispelled by someone slightly stronger than me."

Uno nodded and instructed. "That shouldn't be a problem. He has never seen us anyway, so it will be fine."

"Moreover, we only need him to forget about his treasures for a few days. At least until we finish our business here," he added.

Grimrace felt somewhat disappointed that Uno was not planning to stay here and continue slaughtering more people.

Regardless, he still followed the instructions given to him. He first manipulated the memories of the noble before heading to the treasure room and enveloping everything with a mantel of shadow.

Swoosh!

Not long after, everything disappeared as Grimrace kept them inside his shadow.

After that, the two walked around the rooms to make sure that they had not missed anything important before leaving the place.

...

They then headed to where Hanzo and Blackie were located as Uno was planning to hide there until the so-called ritual led by the king of the Dark Cloud Kingdom would take place.

He would not be planning to capture everyone gathered since it was an impossible task. All he needed was to capture everything with spying stones before capturing a couple of important officials and nobles once everything was over.

He had already formulated the plan inside his head, and all they needed was to execute them properly.

But not everything could go according to his plan as there were a couple of variables that appeared along the way.

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After meeting with Hanzo and Blackie, the two elemental spirits led him inside a cave that was hidden deep within the territory of the capital of the kingdom.

The entire place was concealed by a huge formation, which made it impossible to notice from the outside. Moreover, it was also heavily guarded by powerful NPCs, making it hard to infiltrate.

Fortunately, he had sent Hanzo and Blackie ahead of time to follow the other noble earlier, who had led them inside.

Now that Hanzo had some access inside, he was able to create little gaps from the formation without being noticed. However, they also immediately repaired it right after Uno joined them.

Uno paused for a moment right after entering before turning to Hanzo. "Do you think you can create an emergency escape route that we can use if some accidents happen later?"

"That shouldn't be a problem, but it will require us some time. And I also need the Fallen Goddess' help with it," answered Hanzo.

"That's fine. We have more than enough time before they start. Let's make sure to take necessary precautions before heading inside," nodded Uno before turning to the deeper parts of the cave while squinting his eyes. "I have a bad feeling about this place."

As he shared a vessel with Shin, he also possessed the 'premonition' ability that the latter had.

These instincts were telling him that there was something terrible waiting for them inside, so it was necessary to take some precautions before continuing.

He might be confident about his abilities, but he was not foolish enough to be overconfident. He knew when to advance and retreat, so he would not be jumping in that place unless he was fully prepared.

Chapter 1462: Infiltration and Precautions (Part 2)

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After making their preparations, Uno unsummoned the rest of the elementals aside from Hanzo, who would be keeping themselves from being discovered by the formation within the entire cave using his unique stealth-void technique.

With a special veil surrounding their bodies, Uno and Hanzo seemed to be walking between the void dimension and the physical world, which made them dodge most of the defenses of the opposing party.

As they traversed the cave, the two were able to sense the eeriness shrouding the entire place. The walls seemed to have eyes that could peer through anyone who was passing them.

If not for them being veiled by Hanzo's technique, Uno felt that they would be instantly discovered. Fortunately, he was careful enough to take advantage of the Elemental.

But as they went deeper, something strange made the pair halt their steps.

Further ahead, they did not feel the walls 'eyeing' the pathway. Instead, there was a powerful formation that would instantly discover any Elemental who would dare to step into it.

There was also a strong pressure similar to the 'Spirit Awe' skill that players and powerful monsters possessed, which would force the Elemental Spirits to be unsummoned.

The two paused for a moment as Uno fell in deep thought. It would be risky, but Uno had to expect this much if he wanted to infiltrate further.

Moreover, it also did not mean that he did not have any other methods to reach the deeper parts of this place.

"Void," mumbled Uno after finding a safe spot where they would not be able to be seen or sensed by anyone.

He activated the 'Dimension Traveler' Elemental Spirit Possession before quickly using the same technique that Hanzo had used to veil his presence. It might be inferior and weaker than what the old spirit had, but it would be more than enough for him to traverse this particular pathway that would most likely lead him to his destination.

To further enhance this technique, he even used the stealth skills from the Phantom Swordsman Class to further hide his presence, which also triggered the secondary combat class's passive abilities.

After making sure that he was ready, Uno stepped on the pathway and traversed the cave with full caution.

"Hum~!"

A few moments later, he started hearing simultaneous chants coming ahead. The chants were fast but followed a certain rhythm. Moreover, it was also sending an intense chill to those who heard it.

Uno could not help but frown deeply as he felt something shaking within him. It was as if his soul was being shaken by these chants coming from the deeper parts of the cave.

This feeling was somewhat familiar to him as he regularly got it somewhere yet also different at the same time.

As he drew closer to the source of the chants, this feeling was getting more intense, making his steps somewhat heavier each time he moved forward.

Not long after, he finally reached his destination.

He stood closer to the walls as he looked down at the huge hall where a lot of people had gathered. These people were kneeling on the ground and fully focused on their chants.

All of them were wearing a hood, which made it hard for other people to recognize them, but it was clear that every one of them was from the Demonic Churches given the intense Demonic Energies that were coming from their bodies.

As they continued to chant, the demonic energy that they were releasing was also getting stronger.

These energies could be seen by the naked eye as they continued their chanting before converging toward an altar situated at the center of the hall.

Uno thought that he would find the portal in this place, but it seemed like he was wrong.

Right above that altar, at the center of the ceiling of the hall, situated a huge cocoon that was emitting a purple light. This light was pulsing with a certain rhythm, which resonated with the chants of the people surrounding the altar.

As he continued to observe this cocoon, Uno finally realized why he felt the familiar feeling after hearing those chants.

The aura that was coming from their bodies and the pulsing light that the cocoon was releasing was similar to the wicked and sinister aura that the Seed of Hatred was emitting.

Even if there were clear differences between the two, they also shared a lot of similarities – or at least the principles behind their wicked and sinister aura came from the same roots.

Aside from that, the Mark of Evil God was also somewhat emitting a similar wickedness it was it was first form, making Uno somewhat curious about what was inside that cocoon.

As Uno was getting more focused on the cocoon, his thoughts were suddenly interrupted by the sudden appearance of a person climbing the altar.

Snapping his thoughts, Uno quickly released a bunch of spying stones and spread them to different parts of the cave after applying the same techniques to hide them from the eyes of other people.

He wanted to capture this scene from different angles so that his evidence would be stronger.

Not long after, the person who was climbing the stairs of the altar finally reached the top of the platform.

He took off the hood hanging over his head so that he could have a clearer view of the cocoon directly above him.

He stared at that cocoon for a couple of moments before closing his eyes and spreading his arms. Then he also joined the chanting of the people beneath the altar.

The moment when he opened his mouth, his voice quickly dominated the entire place, overshadowing everyone.

But instead of stopping, the people kneeling on the ground increased their voices, resonating with the person standing on top of the altar.

As their chants grew louder, the entire cave started to shake as a powerful gust of wind appeared out of nowhere. It swept through the entire hall and formed a small cyclone with its circular movements.

This wind grew stronger along with their chants, making the hoods that they were wearing intensely flutter and suddenly get taken off. This also revealed their faces, but they did not care and continued to chant.

As their voices grew louder and the gust of wind became stronger, the cave shook more intensely. Dust and small fragments of rocks also started to fall as some cracks spread on the walls and ceiling of the cave.

But everyone ignored all of these as they were too focused on their chants.

Crack! Crack!

Not long after, Uno heard a crispy sound coming from the cocoon situated at the center of the hall.

A black miasma started to leak out from the gaps of those cracks. But instead of spreading and filling the place, this miasma enveloped the cocoon, forming another layer over it.

Uno was confused about what was happening, but he was getting a bad feeling coming from this cocoon.

[What audacity are these heretics thinking!]

As he was lost in his thoughts, Solus' voice suddenly rang inside his head. Given her ferocious shout, it was clear that she was very angry.

"Do you know what they are doing?" he asked as he also frowned.

[They are trying to summon one of the Great Demon Kings of Hell! Or to be more precise... they are trying to summon an incarnation of that Great Demon King!] she replied as she was getting angrier.

She paused for a moment, seemingly trying to calm herself a little, before continuing. [These crazy heretics don't know what they are doing! They don't know the terror of a Great Demon King can bring to this world even if it was just its incarnation.]

"Or they are clearly aware of it and just don't care about the consequence," commented Uno as he stared intently at the cocoon.

[Regardless of their reason, the consequences of their actions are going to be dire.] She said before adding. [If an incarnation of a Great Demon King descends on this realm, the great balance will instantly collapse, bringing great destruction.]

[Forget about the war between the residents of this world and the invading demons – once a Great Demon King nurtured its incarnation in this world enough and filled this realm with enough power to withstand the presence of a higher existence, its true body will be able to descend to this world.]

[Once it happens, more and more beings of their level will be able to enter this world as its limit will also increase.]

[If that day truly arrives, then another war between higher existence will break out, wiping out a majority of this world. Worst – this world can also be erased along with its original residents.]

Hearing that, Uno could not help but recall a piece of information from Shin's memory. 'Isn't this that patch update that glasses guy is talking about, where other realms (Server) will enter this main world (server) as a form of expansion?'

But after careful thinking, he quickly rejected the idea as the 'higher existence' that Solus mentions was definitely about the 'Gods or Divine Beings' of the higher realm and the 'Great Demon Kings' from hell, which were their counterparts.

Then he focused on certain phrases that Solus had mentioned. 'Filling this world with enough energy to withstand the presence of a higher existence. I see~! it is a process to transition to another patch.'

'Then it is inevitable,' he realized that it was pointless to stop the 'arrival' of the Great Demon Kings.

'But it will not hurt to delay it a little longer to buy me more time to explore this world,' as his thoughts fell along these lines, he finally decided to interrupt this ceremony. "Let's find a way to stop this ceremony."

Sweeping his gaze at the surroundings, he marked the positions of the guards who were overseeing the safety of everyone.

Wiping out everyone here was impossible since he could tell that those guards were much more powerful than himself. Anyone of them would be able to kill him in an instant.

But cutting the numbers of these heretics would not be impossible if he used a large-scale attack, which would also interrupt this ritual if he was successful.

He also had to grab a few of them the use the prison prism in his hands to bring them away and present them to the Storm Empire as 'evidence'. The more important the person, the better.

The king was out of the question since he was on top of the altar. Forget about capturing that person as trying to approach that altar would already be impossible for his current level.

"I need someone with a high position or social status, but also weak to defend themselves," he mumbled as he looked for a suitable target.

He had already investigated them through the information merchants during the time he was roaming around the Dark Cloud Kingdom and sabotaging their operations, so he was quite familiar with most of them.

After a few moments, he finally found someone that fit the requirements that he needed.

He first formulated a plan and simulated the entire process inside his head before setting everything in motion.

When he was done, he collected all the spying stones and stored them inside his inventory.

Huu~!

He then regulated his breathing entering a state where he could hide his presence to the best of his abilities before silently heading in the direction of his target.

...

At the same time, outside the cave, a group of players were currently gathered on a part of the formation protecting and sealing the entire place.

Belphegor observed that part of the formation for a couple of seconds before rubbing his sleepy eyes. He then turned to the person standing beside him. "It has been breached, and just recently too. Even if they can repair it to hide the traces perfectly, I can spot it easily."

"Their perfect repair and concealment are what made it obvious," he added before lazily riding his witch broom. "Can I go back to sleep now?"

Paimon ignored his last words as he was too focused on his thoughts. He then grinned before turning to Amon beside him. "It seems like we have some rats inside. Alert everyone and report to the elder."

"We have to make sure to capture this one," he added as his grin grew larger.

Chapter 1463: A Monster (Part 1)

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Uno was able to reach his main target without being noticed due to the series of stealth-enhancing techniques that supported his stealth skill.

Adding that everyone was too focused on their chants and the ritual itself, he was able to walk past everyone and stood at the center of those he was targeting unnoticed.

But there were still a few people who noticed his very unnoticeable presence the moment when he had to briefly remove the 'Void Veil' so that he could take out the prison prism.

The king of the Dark Cloud Kingdom, who was on top of the platform of the altar, sensed Uno's presence but could not do anything as he had to dedicate all his focus and energy to completing the ritual.

On the other hand, those nobles with the highest hierarchy beneath the royal family, quickly responded. "Intruder!"

The other believers did not stop what they were doing and continued to chant, leaving everything to the guards.

Those guards were slightly slow to react as Uno was already standing at the center of everyone. If they dared to jump at him or throw a powerful attack, the other nobles and believers would be caught in the crossfire.

All they could do was sprint at him, planning to capture him.

But given that they were still quite far from him, Uno was able to summon a prison prism at the center of some nobles with decent standing. Before they could even respond, the tiny cube that he had thrown suddenly expanded and grew up to a ten-cubic-meter cube, which captured everyone with it.

All the nobles that were inside that cube were sucked by the prison prism before it shrunk and returned to its original size. It then flew back to Uno as he grabbed it and put it back inside his inventory in a single motion.

Everything happened a little too fast, making everyone unable to respond to his actions.

Swoosh!

But at that moment, there was a person, who was able to reach Uno from the foot of the platform.

It was an archduke, who was also a knight at the same time. Moreover, he was also of Ascended Class and approaching to become an Ascended Race.

If it was on regular time, Uno would be having a hard time fighting this guy, especially when the latter was already a Level 200 Commander and comparable to a Level 200 Lord Rank Monster.

"Got ya~!" said Uno as he turned his head and looked straight to the archduke's eyes who suddenly appeared beside him.

The archduke was in the middle of swinging his sword when he suddenly sensed something was wrong. But before he could even retreat, he found that his body was completely restricted.

That was when he saw crimson strings wrapped in different parts of his body, restraining his moments, while there seemed to be an invisible hand clutching on his body and preventing him from exerting any strength.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

Then he saw a pair of figures walking out of the void and standing on each side of Uno. One was an extremely handsome man with a noble air surrounding him, who was also donning a set of exquisite crimson clothes meant for the royals of a kingdom, while the other was someone in green butler clothes and a magician hat.

These were Vladimir and Grimrace, who Uno had hidden with his 'Void Veil' earlier.

Tak!

Right after the archduke was held in place, Uno casually threw a special prison prism underneath his feet, which quickly expanded and captured him.

Swoosh!

The Archduke, who was so imposing and powerful just earlier, was captured as if he was some sort of monster from that certain show.

Right after retrieving the prism prison, Uno turned to those noble elders standing at the foot of the altar before waving at them.

After provoking them, he suddenly hopped back and entered the void gate that just materialized with impeccable timing.

Vladimir and Grimrace, on the other hand, threw a series of random attacks in every direction to cause chaos before following him.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Boom! Boom!

A series of explosions erupted everywhere as the blood weapons and shadow daggers bombarded the nobles, who were still too focused on completing the ritual.

"Capture them!" shouted by one of the elderly nobles, who was emitting a very powerful aura.

He did not make a move earlier as he was assisting the king in controlling the demonic powers filling the entire place and pouring them into the giant cocoon.

But after what Uno and the two Elemental Spirits had done, he had no choice but to break free from his trance and turn to everyone.

His voice was like a clap of thunder within the cave, shaking the entire place.

Hearing his voice, the nobles snapped out of their daze alongside the guards, who were supposedly guarding them.

They quickly moved and entered all the caves, chasing after Uno.

The king, on the other hand, remained completely still as he continued to focus on the ritual. His chants did not pause as his voice grew louder with each passing second.

Now that the others were forced to stop their chants due to the disturbance that Uno had done, this ritual was solely reliant on him. If he lost even a hint of focus or if his concentration slipped even for a moment, then everything that they had done up until now would be all for naught.

There were also four royal guards, who remained to protect him. They were facing different directions while also using their respective means to survey their surroundings with their eyes, making sure that the same carelessness would not happen once again.

Uno, who did not leave the place yet, could not help but click his tongue when he saw that. He was originally planning to trick those people that he left the scene as soon as he had achieved his goal.

Then he would wait until the security within this place was at its lowest to try something that could stop the ritual altogether.

...or even assassinate the king if possible.

But if it was that easy, then this quest wouldn't be at such a high difficulty in the first place.

"Tsk! I guess it can't be helped. Let's go with Plan C then."

Right after he said those words, Solus suddenly materialized beside him and quickly transformed into a ball of fire that flew straight to the cocoon.

Swoosh!

Seeing her rapid approach and sensing the pure sacred fire that she was emitting, the people who remained in the hall quickly responded.

"Stop that thing! Don't let it get near the incarnation of the Great Lord Beelzebub!" shouted the elder right after noticing Solus.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

Two of the royal guards left the side of the king while the remaining two were left to activate their respective sensing skills to the fullest, making sure that no one would take advantage of this situation to assassinate the king.

Unfortunately, they were slightly off the mark this time.

Seeing that she had successfully lured two of the royal guards from the altar, Solus did not even hesitate to halt her advance before transforming into a rain of fire that bombarded the entire hall and threw those below in panic.

Those tiny 'droplets' of fire might look harmless, but they carried a dense sacred energy, which was also the bane of their demonic powers.

As the believers of the Demonic Churches and the followers of the Glutton Demon King of the Flies, their powers were highly restricted by this kind of attack.

And while everyone was busy dealing with Solus' rain of fire, a streak of light suddenly flew across the air and appeared right behind the altar.

Whitie, who was currently emitting a pure sacred aura, stood before the altar while taking a stance.

Bang!

The air around him seemed to explode as he focused all his mana into his fist, charging it with everything he had.

His intention was clear, and that was to destroy the altar with his strike – or at least seriously damage it.

Even if this demonic altar was sturdy and hard to destroy, it would still crumble in front of the mighty fist of a sacred being like Whitie.

Swoosh!

Not wanting him to do what he was planning, surrounding nobles with decent fighting capabilities rushed at him without any hesitation.

Bang!

But before they could even approach him, a huge and bulky figure suddenly fell from above and landed on the ground with a huge explosion.

Astaroth, who was currently wearing a set of earthly armor filled with ancient runes, blocked their path. He stood like a mountain in front of the incoming nobles while looking at them with a fierce glare behind his knight's helmet.

Vladimir and Grimrace also ran rampant on the other parts of the hall, killing anyone that they encountered.

This was Uno's other plan, if he could not stop the ritual by assassinating the kingdom, then destroying a great portion of the place and killing as many believers would at least delay the descent of the Great Demon King's incarnation by quite a lot.

"Such impudence!"

As everything was going according to plan, a powerful voice suddenly resounded and intensely shook the entire cave.

This voice was much louder than earlier as the noble entire released all his powers this time around.

The surrounding mana also seemed to come to a sudden halt as he filled the surroundings with his presence. This also resulted in forcing the Elemental Spirits to be unsummoned.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

They all turned into specks of lights that returned to their host in an instant.

Boom!

But at the same time, before Whitie could be unsummoned, he managed to release his powerful punch that blasted a huge portion of the altar.

"What audacity!" the noble elder became even more enraged when he saw that.

It might not be strong enough to make the altar collapse. But it was at least enough to damage a portion of the demonic formation drawn on the floor of the hall and a part of the array on top of the altar, which disturbed the ritual.

Cough!

Due to this, the king, who was too focused on finishing the ritual, suffered a backlash that forced him to cough out a huge amount of blood.

"Your Majesty!"

Seeing that, the two knights that were standing beside him quickly approached him. Their shouts also attracted the attention of the nobles who were still recovering under the altar. Even the noble elder also turned his head toward that direction.

Uno did not care about what happened next as he was already running at full speed toward the exit.

He seemed to transform into a gust of wind that blew through the pathways of the cave as he flew toward the escape route that he planned out.

Swoosh!

But right after he reached the exit, he was suddenly greeted by a huge crowd that seemed to be waiting for him for quite a while, given the solid battle formation that they had.

In front of these people, there were three people, who were emitting the greatest threat to him.

These people were Paimon, Amon, and Belphegor.

Belphegor, who was usually lazy and always sleepy, could not help but snap out of the dream world as he sensed something.

When he opened his eyes and turned toward the source of the uncomfortable feeling that he was getting, an intense shudder suddenly washed over his entire body.

He warily looked at the other party and warned Paimon and Amon. "That guy is dangerous."

The two did not need him to tell them as they could also feel such a threat coming from Uno. What surprised them even more was they could only feel this kind of pressure from a single person that they knew.

"It looks like we are wrong," mumbled Paimon with a grim look on his face. "It is not a rat, but a real monster instead."

Chapter 1464: A Monster (Part 2): Thinking Reed

...

Bang! Bang! Bang!

"What kind of monster is this? And where did he come from?" Amon could not help but ask as he clashed against Uno.

The battle only started for three minutes, yet the people they had brought with them had already been wiped out.

Aside from Paimon, Belphegor, and himself, everyone else had already been killed in the process.

What was even more frustrating about this was they all had been caught by the wide-range attacks that Uno had thrown during his exchanges with the three. These 'stray' attacks killed all the surrounding people who could not protect themselves in time.

Belphegor, who was usually lazy, was quite diligent in this battle as he was doing his best to block those attacks and save their people. But all his efforts were futile as Uno skillfully avoided him and his defensive skills, targeting other people.

On the surface, Uno was throwing some random attacks when clashing with Amon and Paimon, but he was constantly calculating his every move before swiftly choosing the best and most efficient route in the middle of battle.

Every move he took was meticulously calculated, seemingly making him 'see' the future as if he possessed foresight.

This was what made it hard for the three apex experts from the side of the Pandemonium Descendants to stop him.

Those 'stray' attacks might look like random attacks on the surface, but they were actually a calculated move to catch them off guard.

Belphegor was the first to notice this, so he gave up on protecting the pathetic trash and focused on taking down Uno along with Amon and Paimon. Aside from him being too lazy, he also did not want to waste his precious energy trying to stop something that he could not.

He would rather go back to sleep than take care of those babies that were impossible to save from the jaws of this monster in front of them.

However, he was also quite curious how this person was able to 'see' that far from the future.

"Does he have the 'Prudent Ace' talent or something similar that focuses on the mind?" mumbled Paimon as he also came up with the same conclusion as Belphegor after observing every move of their current opponent.

"No, he is not just 'thinking' or 'calculating' the future," said Amon as he also started to see what kind of monster they were facing. "He 'instinctively' knows what the 'future' is or what is about to come his way."

Bang! Bang!

After forcing both Paimon and Amon to retreat, Uno suddenly stopped and looked at them. "You guys sure are underestimating me a little too much, don't you?"

"To think you will dare to chat while fighting me? This feeling sure is new," he mumbled as the air surrounding him suddenly changed. "Should I stop playing with you? I am planning to use you as a training dummy to adjust myself to this body since it is rare to find such decent test subjects, but I guess that should be enough."

The faces of the two suddenly turned grim as they heard those words. Whether those words were just meant to provoke them, it still did not feel good being looked down on by someone when they boast of standing at the peak of the game when compared to other people.

Given their experience, they would not be provoked by those words easily. They were more than that.

They were able to calm themselves down and about to prepare for another assault.

Boom!

Right after those thoughts crossed their minds, an intense and heavy pressure suddenly descended from the sky out of nowhere, binding their bodies.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

Their instincts quickly kicked in at that moment and swiftly retreated with their respective movement skills to create enough distance away from Uno.

When they felt that they were safe enough, they raised their heads and looked ahead of them.

That was when they saw a crimson aura enveloping Uno. It was a unique aura or anything, but a condensed killing intent. It was so potent that it could be seen by the naked eye.

"What the!? Just how many people did he kill to have such an intense killing intent?" mumbled Amon as sweat started to form on his forehead.

Fear – this was the first time in a while he felt this feeling.

And as if it was not enough, the intense killing intent that they were seeing from Uno seemed to move according to his will before forming a pair of wings behind him.

"What kind of insanity is this?" Amon mumbled as his instincts quickly kicked him.

His body moved according to his instincts and subconsciously summoned his Demon Contract.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

It was the same for Paimon and Belphegor, who also felt an intense shiver down to their spines.

The three of them put their guards up and looked at Uno with full caution. They even went to form a triangular battle formation where Belphegor stood a little far behind the two while Amon and Paimon closely watched every minimal movement of their opponent.

The three of them were on high alert – putting themselves at the highest alertness possible. But all of these were futile as something astonishing happened at the very next second.

Amon did not even dare to blink as he was afraid that he would be killed in the very instant that he did.

But his pupils suddenly shrunk as Uno disappeared from his previous location and appeared right beside him within an instant. "Son of a bit-...!"

He was still in the middle of cursing when he raised his sword in front of him.

Bang!

It was at that moment that a powerful strike struck him and sent him flying in the opposite direction.

Swoosh!

It was at that same instant when Paimon jumped in and trusted his spear at Uno. But the latter was so quick that he was able to 'dodge' before the former could even act.

It was as if he was already expecting Paimon to move in that same movement and 'dodge' ahead of time.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

But before Uno could even take advantage of that situation, Belphegor sent a series of spells in his direction, preventing him from pursuing Amon.

Uno quickly adjusted his movements accordingly and avoided each spell with the smallest margin possible.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Leaving a series of explosions behind, Uno reached Belphegor, who had already set up a defensive barrier to protect himself.

Clang! Clang!

But before Uno could even approach him, Amon and Paimon quickly caught up and simultaneously swung their weapons at him.

Uno responded accordingly and swung his swords to deflect and block their attacks respectively.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

After a brief pause, the four quickly moved at extreme speed exchanging moves that could not be seen by the naked eye.

The three launched a coordinated attack one after another, trying to suppress Uno to the best of their abilities. Their teamwork might not be as flawless as those top players who had been working together and great partners for a very long time, but as apex experts themselves, they were able to execute something similar or create the same result with their abilities and vast experience alone.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Swoosh!

But despite all of that, they were still unable to break through the defense of their current opponent.

Moreover, Uno was only counterattacking not just once but constantly and repeatedly in every exchange.

Despite being besieged in every direction, Uno was calmly defending himself and even returning the favor whenever the opportunity presented itself no matter how small it was.

His illogical responses and unthinkable responses all came within an instant, making it hard for the three to respond. The three of them could not understand the movements of Uno as if he was not following the 'script' that they were supposed to have.

No matter how hard they bait, trap, or suppress Uno, he always had a response that seemingly coming from out of nowhere.

At times, they could not understand the decisions that he was making, which threw them into such predicaments.

It was at that moment when the three realized something.

They first thought that Uno was someone who belonged to the group of people who used his head when fighting. The type of fighter who would think constantly during battle and swiftly calculate every outcome and possible result led by the flow of the battle.

Such people could easily be countered by bombarding them with a continuous and relentless series of attacks that would not give them the time to think. Once their rhythm was broken, it would be hard for them to pick their pace and get overwhelmed by a wave of attacks.

But they quickly realized that they were all wrong the more they exchanged blows with him.

But it was also not 'instincts' either as there seemed to be a certain 'reason' in every move that he made that they could not explain, which they only realized when it already passed.

His battle techniques were so detailed that they were barely able to realize until it was already too late.

...

These three were somewhat right about their line thoughts, but also slightly off the mark as what they were currently experiencing was Uno's talent – or specifically his combat talent.

For 'Normal' smart people, were using a part of their brains where they process their 'reasoning'. Some more talented people even took advantage of this part of the brain more than others and even could use them in a much faster way compared to the rest.

For these people, they were utilizing this part of the brain – their frontal lobe or more specifically their prefrontal cortex, which intelligently regulates an individual's thoughts, actions, and emotions – which was also used for reasoning.

Then there was also a part of people who were relying on basal ganglia situated at the center of their brains, embedded deep in the brain hemispheres.

This particular part of the brain was primarily responsible for motor control, motor learning, executive actions and behaviors, and emotions – this was also where the source of a person's intuition was located.

As for Uno, he fell on the latter group who relied more on their intuition, more specifically in battle.

To be more precise, Uno was not thinking during the battle. Instead, he was more like fighting intuitively.

But at the same time, it was also a little different from Shin's battle instincts that came from his 'Battle Genius' combat talent.

Even if they were somewhat similar, there were still some distinct differences between them.

Shin's instinctive battle style came without thinking as he continued to follow this 'feeling' that he had whenever he was fighting, which was also constantly growing as more time passed.

On the other hand, Uno's style was more intuitive style which followed a certain response without specific logical reason. It was more like an automatic thought rather than a 'feeling'.

In other terms, 'instincts' was where the body talked and controlled an individual while 'intuition' was where the brain was talking which was based on the previous experience that the individual had encountered.

Uno's combative talent was based on this, where his vast experience was helping him. This accumulated experience was the base of battle style.

Everything that he had experienced gathered inside his head, where he could intuitively choose or pick whenever he responded according to the situation that he was in.

He could scan his surroundings, analyze everything, and find solutions intuitively to the point that it had become second nature to him.

It was as if he was constantly thinking that he could do things instinctively. He had fully mastered this technique that he turned into a true thinking reed.

'Thinking Reed' – it was a combat talent where someone could think without thinking or move without thinking. Intuition was their main weapon, and the more experience they accumulated, the stronger they became.

...

Bang! Bang! Bang!

After a few more minutes into the battle, the trio from the Pandemonium Descendants had experienced hell.

They were beaten to the point that they were almost losing their confidence.

Amon, who was one of the best combatants of the troupe, was currently in a terrible state that he had lost that majestic and domineering air that he usually possessed.

Paimon might not be as strong as Amon when it came to combat since it was not his strongest point, but that did not mean that he was a weak fight either. He fell into the category of players, who he used his brain the most during the battle.

But in front of this monster in front of them, all the confidence that he had disappeared as he was in a more terrible state than Amon.

Belphegor, who bore the title of Sloth Devil within the Pandemonium Troupe, had lost his interest in this battle. Given his lazy personality, it would be better to let the other party kill rather than waste his energy in this futile struggle.

He was lying on the ground and waiting for Uno to finish him off as he could no longer find any energy to fight.

Uno, who did not even use any Elemental Spirit Possession in the battle, stood at the center of the battle with a slight frown. The battle was quite good, but it was far from being enough, especially when he was just starting to feel himself.

He was using the Reality Manifestation during the entire battle, which meant that he had showcased most of his Martial Art Skills that he had been itching to try since the time he had taken over Shin's body.

As he was feeling a little disappointed for not having enough, he suddenly sensed a presence that just arrived at the scene.

Raising his head and turning toward the source of the aura that he was feeling, he saw a person in a swordsman's equipment set while an ancient-looking robe was placed over it.

Using his version of 'True Sight' he was able to see that the other party was a player, especially when the latter was not even bothering to hide their information.

But what made Uno squint his eyes was this certain feeling that was coming from this person. "You! What are you?"

"You have this familiar feeling, yet also different," he added as he saw the somewhat familiar face of the other party.

That person walked out from the shades of the trees, fully revealing their appearance.

They were calmly taking each of their steps despite the current state of the battlefield. They even had their hands crossed behind them as they walked forward.

With slightly raised brows, he stared intently at Uno before smiling. "What a coincidence! I also happen to have the same question."

Chapter 1465: A Monster (Part 3): Limitless Savant

...

Uno squinted his eyes as observed the person who just arrived. They had handsome features, especially with those long purple hair. They also had this noble and domineering air that could suppress anyone in the surroundings. Their presence was so strong that made those around him feel insignificant.

But that was not the only reason why Uno was wary of them, but because of the abilities of this person that he could sense through his unusual senses as a special alter ego of Shin.

As someone or something that had been born from Shin's fear along with the fragment of the Seed of Hatred, the Divinity Grade Mental Energy, and the Primal Demonic Powers, Uno gained quite a few special abilities.

Setting aside the talents that had been divided from Shin's original talents, Uno had also formed a few abilities after combining them with the talents that he inherited from Shin.

Right at this point, through his special eyes, he was able to see something unusual from the other party.

"You... you are a Savant," said Uno with a somewhat solemn tone.

They were people who demonstrated exceptional aptitude in a certain domain such as art, mathematics, sciences, and others. However, people who had these abilities had a significant social or intellectual impairment.

They were naturally gifted in areas that concerned memory, arithmetic, music, and spatial skills like visualization.

These people had a rare condition called savant syndrome, thus they were called in this era 'Savants'.

But despite their unrivaled talent in a certain area, they were only limited to those areas and could not perform well in the other disciplines.

In this era where multiple disciplines such as Martial Arts, Mentalism, and Swordsmanship dominated the world, these Savants were somewhat in a strange position.

They could either be strong and unrivaled or useless due to the limits that they possessed.

Savants of this era were those who could be considered as another form of 'Son of Heaven' since they were existence capable of breaking the mortal limits of their abilities.

Whether it was issues of stamina, limits of concentration, or lack of mental strength, they did not have to worry about any of these. It was not because of their being talented in these areas, but rather because the 'Force of Nature' was naturally fueling their bodies and every action.

If those people with unrivaled talents still needed to comprehend the 'Force of Nature' and turn them into unique energies dedicated to their respective disciplines, Savants did not need such a thing as they could just use the 'Force of Nature' as they please.

Whether they wanted to form an 'Internal Qi' and turn them into their 'Natural Force' or nurture their 'Mental Energy' and create their 'Spiritual Force' or hone their 'Sword Qi' and transform it into 'Sword Force', everything could follow their will.

They were naturally blessed by Heaven with unrivaled abilities that the other people could only hope for.

However, they were still limited to a single form of energy that they could major in while the rest were already outside their abilities. But they possessed absolute control over that particular energy that they had chosen.

But despite possessing such talents that could make the 'Force of Nature' obey them, they could only be good in one particular field or task.

Outside their abilities of naturally controlling the energies around them, they were unable to learn other things such as practicing the major disciplines of the current era such as Martial Arts, Mentalism, or Swordsmanship.

But with their powerful and absolute control over energies, did they still need such supplementary strengths?

But there was also an exemption to all of this-...

"You are not the typical Savant either," continued Uno as he further squinted his eyes. "But there is something wrong with your soul."

He paused for a moment as tried to put his thoughts in words before adding. "It is fragmented?"

Listening to the words that Uno had said, the other could not help but smile. In return, he also evaluated Uno. "You are not an ordinary existence either-... a very peculiar one on top of that."

"You are neither a Demon nor Spirit, but you possess unique thoughts and personality," he added as he commented. "A very peculiar one indeed."

Uno shrugged his shoulders before turning to the cave behind him. He slightly raised his brows behind the mask before turning back to the other person. "I want to continue this discussion, but it seems like I am already out of time."

Hearing that, the other person smiled. "Do you believe that you can leave this place when I am here?"

Uno looked at the other party skeptically before sneering. "Are you telling me that you are going to stop me? You? A mere fragment? Come back again when you merge with your original host."

The other person smiled even wider when heard that. "You want to fight 'us'? Are you sure about that? I don't think you will stand a chance when that time comes."

Uno could not help but laugh out loud when heard those words. "It seems like you are telling me that you will become the 'Limitless Savant' of the legends once you merge with your original host."

"Or are you telling me that there are multiple of you who carry a fragment of your soul? What kind of immoral experiment are you people doing in the real world to achieve such a feat?"

He then paused as his lips curved into a smile behind the mask. "A Limitless Savant, huh? Interesting."

Swoosh!

Shadows moved toward Uno as he stepped into the darkness of the night, disappearing to the sight.

At the same time, his voice reverberated in the forest. "Let's meet again next time and see which one is stronger-..."

"....a Savant without any limit or restrictions or 'our' perfected vessel and unified 'selves'."

His presence disappeared along with the receding echo of his voice.

It was at this moment when Amon and Paimon were finally able to pick themselves from the ground and stand up.

They then forced themselves to walk toward the person, who was converging with Uno earlier, before bowing respectfully. "We greet the great leader."

As for Belphegor, he was too lazy to move right now, so he stayed on the ground and continued to sleep.

The other person, or more especially Lucifer – the Pride Devil, the leader of the Pandemonium Descendants, and the strongest member of the Pandemonium Troupe – merely nodded his head to acknowledge their existence.

He swept his eyes at the surroundings along with a special technique that seemed to be able to see what transpired in this place through the traces left behind by the previous battle.

It took him quite a while to 'watch' everything before smiling. "He is not all talk after all. Quite capable indeed. And he is even using you as a training dummy to adjust himself with his 'body'."

Paimon waited for a couple of moments before forcing himself to ask. "Are we going to let him leave just like this? He sabotaged the ceremony and even captured quite a few nobles who became the believers of our church. It is going to be a little troublesome if he reported us to the Council of the Righteous Churches."

"Heh! What can we do when your incompetence leads us to this situation?" sneered Lucifer.

He then paused for a moment and stared at the spot where Uno disappeared before continuing. "But he is also right. I can't stop him by 'myself'. 'We' at least need half of 'us' before 'we' can stand a chance against him."

Amon and Paimon exchanged glances in shock when they heard those words. They were aware that Lucifer was not talking about the members of the Pandemonium Troupe when he used 'us' and 'we', but something else.

But for their powerful leader to have such a very high evaluation for Uno, proved how powerful the person they had fought earlier.

Lucifer ignored their reaction and brushed past them, walking toward the back. "Let's go. We have a lot of things to prepare for the upcoming war."

"Now that we have another variable that we have to look out for, things are going to be a little more troublesome... or interesting." He added as he disappeared into the cave.

Amon and Paimon glanced at each other once before following their leader. But before taking more than two steps, the former suddenly remembered something before turning to Belphegor, who was still sleeping sound.

Clicking his tongue, Amon was forced to pick up the Sloth Devil as this lazy guy refused to wake up no matter how much he kicked.

At the same time, right outside the sealed territory, Uno suddenly emerged from the darkness.

He then released the 'Elemental Spirit Possession: Yasha Transformation' that he had used to leave the scene earlier before turning his head back. "Shattering the soul of a savant and putting each fragment in a different host, huh?"

"Things that people will do for power sure are unbelievable. Human greed sure is limitless."

After that, he turned around and walked away.

This time, his destination was the Storm Empire, so that he could complete the annoying quest of Shin and be free to do what he wanted.

Chapter 1466: Return

...

Right after getting what he needed, Uno quickly went back to the Storm Fortress to report to Commander Taiga. After all, he would not be able to get an audience with the Emperor of the Storm Empire with his status alone.

Even if he could use his title as the Envoy of the Church of the Sun and Moon, it would be better to use the connection that he had to have a stronger voice when he was standing at the council.

Moreover, there would be no stronger 'voice' right now than Commander Taiga, who was also the loyal subject of the empire and the guardian of the Storm Fortress that had protected their land for generations.

But Uno also did not know if the commander had already come back from the capital.

He was thinking about these when he reached the Storm Fortress. And to his surprise, the soldiers stationed at the gate seemed to be waiting for him.

"You are back, Sir Envoy! The commander is waiting for you!"

Hearing those words, Uno could not help but raise his brows before shaking his head at the setup of the system. "What a great timing."

...

Not long after, Uno was led by the soldier at the commander's office, where Shin had first met Commander Taiga.

Right after stepping inside the room, Uno instantly felt the immense pressure that was directed at him, seemingly trying to bring him to his knees.

But that was only for a moment as he was able to instantly adjust himself and swiftly prevent his body from falling.

He then turned to the source of the pressure and saw Commander Taiga staring at him with squinting eyes. "Heh! What a warm welcome. Quite interesting too."

Hearing those words, Commander Taiga further narrowed his eyes before saying. "You-... who are you? You look like that brat yet also feel different at the same time."

Uno continued his steps before sitting comfortably at the nearby chair while also putting his crossed feet on the wooden table. "Don't worry, we are the same. We just happen to have different personalities."

Commander Taiga was still unconvinced, but he also could not deny the fact that those words were true. Even if he could feel that this person was different from the envoy that he had met earlier, he could still sense that familiar aura, which was slightly fierce and somewhat wicked.

After observing Uno for a moment, Commander Taiga calmed himself down and sat behind his table. "It seems like you have gathered the evidence you seek."

Uno did not answer verbally as he just took out a bunch of items from his inventory space and threw them on the table. He was too lazy to explain the entire process as the evidence itself was the only important thing for them.

Commander Taiga slightly frowned when he saw those actions but did not say anything else. He then turned his attention to the items that Uno had taken out and saw that they were a bunch of spying stones and a pair of prison prisms.

He peered through those items using his powerful mental strength to see their contents. A moment later, he could not help but raise his brows.

After checking everything with his spiritual power, he turned back to Uno before commenting. "You are quite bold for diving to their den alone, and also somewhat capable of getting out of it in one piece."

Uno shrugged his shoulders, seemingly indicating that it was only natural.

Seeing his actions, Commander Taiga grinned a little as he was somewhat starting to like this version of 'Shin' as well.

"This should be enough to convince the council," he said while standing up. "Are you coming with me as well?"

Uno tilted his head slightly before asking. "Do I have to come with you?"

Commander Taiga slightly frowned before replying. "You don't have to if that is what you want. But it will be hard to get you the corresponding rewards if you don't come along."

Uno shrugged his shoulders, seemingly saying that he did not care much about the reward. Since the question would be completed without him being present, he would still get the quest rewards from the system.

As for the extra rewards that he could get, he did not care about them. He could even compensate Shin with all the treasures that he had gotten from that particular noble that they had used to lure out the spies of this empire.

Speaking of which, Uno suddenly remembered about them. "Ah! Before I forget, I have also gone to the trouble of finding out their spies within your kingdom."

He then extended his hand to use the 'Demonic Telekinesis' to pick up a piece of paper and a plume from the commander's table.

After that, he started writing the location and the time when the spies would gather. "As for this piece of information, I think it is only right for me to ask for a necessary reward, don't you think?"

Commander Taiga stared at Uno, who was waving the piece of paper in between his fingers, for a moment before laughing. "If that is accurate information, then you will naturally get your reward."

"I don't need to come with you for this one as well, I guess?" asked Uno.

Commander Taiga paused for a moment as he stared intently at Uno, seemingly trying to figure out what this young lad was planning to hide the fact about his achievement. But he quickly threw it at the back of his mind as he could not read the thoughts of the latter.

"For this, you will be an anonymous informant. I will take care of it," said the commander as he used his spiritual powers to 'take' the piece of paper from Uno.

He then slightly raised his brows when he saw the contents, particularly the date when the spies would be gathering.

He quickly stood up and prepared to leave. "Since we only have a short time, I will be leading this operation personally."

Uno turned his head at the commander before waving his hand. "I will be staying here and waiting for the good news."

Even if he wanted to explore the game, he also still had some matters that he had to attend in the real world – more specifically his job at looking for 'Shin' who was still in deep slumber within their Sea of Consciousness.

Based on the 'schedule' this was the time to do that.

He would be logging out for a moment while waiting for Commander Taiga to finish his job.

Commander Taiga did not care about entertaining Uno any longer as he had to quickly head to deal with those spies as soon as possible before they could get the wind of what had happened at the Dark Cloud Kingdom.

He also had to report to the Emperor and prepare for the war that was about to come. Since they now had the evidence that would prove the connection between the Dark Cloud Kingdom and the Demonic Churches, the war would now be inevitable.

With too many tasks at hand, he had to make haste to not waste any time.

Uno watched the commander of the fortress rush out of the room before turning his head to the bookshelves within the room.

He briefly glanced at the digital clock from the corner of his eyes before mumbling. "Since I still have some free time, let me read a book or two to relax."

On this day, the tomb of the ancient cultivator was finally opened once again and the people that were exploring inside came back.

There were a lot of people waiting outside as the news about what was inside the tomb had already been revealed to different organizations when the first batch of returnees came back.

The rumors about the legendary tree had already been circulating within different circles, making the people pay more attention to this place than anything else.

Even the World Government had already set their people to 'welcome' everyone who was returning. There were barely a handful of people or organizations who would dare to provoke them, so those with a slightly weaker background had no choice but to follow the representatives of the Federal Forces before they could even come in contact with their superiors.

Shiella, who was walking alongside Mariel and Elijah, had also been blocked by these people.

"What is the meaning of this? You people are supposed to meet with your representatives, not us," said Shiella in a cold voice when she saw the armed group that was blocking their path.

She might not be scared of them as her background alone was more than enough to make these people wary of her.

The problem was she did not want to create any commotion given the current situation. If she tried to fight back, then chaos would quickly break out, causing an even more disastrous result, especially when those sly foxes from other organizations would also take advantage of the situation to 'complain'.

Mariel and Elijah were also in a dilemma and were not sure what to do. They were also quite exhausted after going through all the trials within the tomb.

They might not have gotten what they were looking for within that place, but they had gotten a crucial clue about finding it, especially when their group was the ones who had reached the end of the trials.

Sweeping their gazes on the surroundings, they could also see the greedy eyes of the other forces were giving them.

They were sure that these people had already received the news from their people through telepathic messages. They were sure that they would do everything to hold them in this place.

As for the World Government, they would without a doubt try to drag them toward their headquarters for 'questioning'.

"What are you talking about, Miss Shiella? We are just concerned about your safety and are here to escort you away," said the man leading the Federal Forces.

Given the badge on his shoulders, his rank was at least a Captain of a Special Unit.

'B*llsh*t!' Elijah could read their thoughts, especially with those greedy eyes that they did not even bother to hide.

Shiella was about to release her powers when a group of people suddenly descended from the sky.

"Is that so? Then there is no need to trouble the Federal Forces as we can take care of our family members," said Samuel Springfield in a domineering manner.

"Students and faculty members of the Magic Ace Academy, follow this old man. We are heading back," said Lin Huang straightforwardly, not caring about the Federal Forces.

"Mariel, come to your grandmother. I will bring you home," said Luvenia Potter as she appeared along with the two old men. Her momentum was not the slightest bit inferior compared to them.

The auras that these three were emitting were so strong that the surrounding people could not help but make way for them.

The Federal Forces wanted to say something as they needed these three to come with them as they were the ones who had explored the deepest parts of the ruins, which also indicated that they had discovered more compared to the rest.

But with these three monsters of the Elder's Council present, they could not do anything but let them leave.

Even the forces behind them were unwilling to provoke those old monsters – even the World Government itself.

They could only watch as Shiella, Mariel, and Elijah were taken away by the forces supporting them.

They could only exchange glances at each other with helpless looks on their faces and accepted their fate. "It seems like we have no choice but to accept the punishment later."

...

In the meantime, Shiella, who was following her grandfather sensed that there was something wrong. She could not put her fingers on it, but she was sure that it was not something good.

"What's wrong, grandpa? Is there-..."

She was in the middle of talking when Samuel had cut her words off. "You will know about it later. For now, we have to hurry back home."

After that, Samuel summoned his powers to envelop Shiella before flying toward the direction of the Central Region.

Shiella did not resist either as she let herself get carried by her grandfather. But at the same time, there was this tight and suffocating feeling within her chest that she could not explain.

She placed her hands on it, trying to suppress it. She then looked in the direction where they were heading and realized that something must have happened at home.

That was when she heard the soft and apologetic voice of her grandfather. "Shiella. I am sorry."

Chapter 1467: Burial

...

Right after coming out of the gaming cabin, Uno suddenly turned his head toward the direction of the bed and saw David standing there, seemingly waiting for him for quite a while.

"Finally willing to come out of that thing?" said David as he greeted before pointing to the set of clothes laid on his bed. "Fix yourself up and wear those. We are attending Sir Bernard's Burial."

Uno frowned slightly and asked. "Do I really need to come? I also need to check on our guy later."

"What do you think?" asked David in return.

"Tsk!" Uno clicked his tongue as he knew that there was no way David would let him slack off. "Alright, alright. I'll look for him later."

Uno unwillingly stood up and headed to the bathroom for a shower as David waited for him patiently.

...

Not long after, they arrived at the place where the burial was going to be held.

According to the customs passed down to the Springfield Family since the first generation of their ancestors, their bodies had to be cremated through the Original Emperor Flame that was said to come from the Solar Dragon itself when it was still alive.

They believed that whenever those flames burned the dead, their sins, regrets, and any other unfinished business in the physical realm would be burned along with their bodies – cleansing everything, including their souls.

The Original Emperor Flame was a rare treasure that existed since the end of the Ancient Era, making it one of the greatest treasures of the Springfield Family.

Usually, when someone from the direct line of the Springfield Family died, their bodies were required to be brought into their ancestral land – the Dragon Valley – for the final cremation ceremony, especially when their ashes had to be brought to the burial grounds of the family which was also located on the same place.

But due to the special circumstances of Bernard, the Original Emperor Flame was to be brought here by their top experts. Both experts were one of the great elders of the family and also possessed unrivaled powers not only within the continent but also in the entire world as well.

The two experts were at the 'Transcendent Realm', which was said to be the pinnacle of modern martial arts.

One of them was Mondragon Springfield, the previous leader of the Springfield Family and the father of Samuel Springfield; Benard's and Nathan's grandfather, which also made him the great-grandfather of Shiella and Arthur.

As for the other person, he was Shenyong Springfield – also known as the great ancestor of the family, who came from the same generation as Mondragon.

These two experts had escorted the Original Emperor Flames to the current Springfield Household.

Naturally, they did not immediately reveal the treasure to everyone as its presence alone was more than enough to attract the attention of the other experts within the continent.

These two Transcendent Realm Experts first set up multiple layers of isolation and protection barriers to surround the entire household before putting another series of them to enclose the place where the burial ceremony would be taking place.

Right after arriving, Uno immediately sensed the overwhelming presence of the powerful experts present in the place.

Forget about those apex Domain Realm Experts, the presence of those two old monsters was already enough to encapsulate the entire place and erase the presence of other people present.

And since his existence was very sensitive to the energies related to the 'True Origin', Uno was able to tell how close those two monsters at reaching that power.

However, the word 'close' was still infinitely far from the 'True Origin'. Uno just thought that they were close to it as he could sense that these two could somewhat control a very tiny portion of that power given their current strength.

As Uno could not help but stare at them, who was standing at the platform where Bernard's body would be cremated, Shenyong seemed to sense something and turned toward his direction.

Swoosh!

Right after he cast his gaze at Uno, the latter was immediately thrown into a mental realm where no one but him was present.

Inside this illusionary world was filled with darkness and stars, making it resemble the universe. This scene reminded Uno of his first encounter with the Blessings of the Solar Dragon when he entered that independent space where Evangeline was staying.

Roar!

Then, just like that experience, Uno found himself standing in front of a giant golden dragon, albeit it was weaker than the first one that he had encountered.

He also subconsciously used the same Aura Manifestation, where a monster from the deep abyss was slowly manifested.

But before it could even form, he was suddenly dragged out from that mind realm by a powerful force, returning him to reality.

That was when he found himself sweating profusely. His skin also looked like it was bathed under the sun for a very long time, making his sweat evaporate.

When he raised his head, he saw the back of a woman, who was standing in front of him and blocking his view of the elder.

When Shenyong saw the woman standing in front of Uno to protect him, he could not help but slightly raise his brows to be surprised.

His eyes then glowed with a golden light as he activated his 'Dragon Eyes', which was a unique technique based down to the Springfield Lineage.

In front of these eyes, all truth would reveal themselves.

But to his surprise, even with these eyes, he still could not uncover the disguise that the woman was using to hide her real appearance.

When he was about to use a stronger technique, he saw Evangeline briefly release her technique so that the elder could see her appearance before instantly casting the technique on herself once again.

The eyes of Shenyong widened for a moment before nodding in understanding. He then turned his eyes back, acting as if nothing had happened.

But at the same time, he was also somewhat stunned at the abilities that Evangeline had shown.

He could tell that Evangeline had still yet to reach the 'Exalted Realm', but her skills were already enough to make him wary of her.

"A monstrous couple indeed," he could not help but comment as he also recalled what happened during the incident that occurred in the Ace City. That time when Adam purposely released his aura to make his presence known to the entire continent.

That power was so overwhelming that woke up all the Transcendent Realm Martial Artists and Exalted Realm Mentalists within the continent.

That crazy man was so peerless that he dared to pull such a stunt just to announce his presence.

What Evangeline had shown earlier might look trivial on the surface, but to be able to pull it off in front of an expert on his level was more than enough to prove her strength.

He was just curious earlier when he sensed a gaze directed at him earlier and saw a hint of Seed of Hatred right after he saw a young man staring peerlessly straight into his eyes.

When he was preparing to erase that existence, Evangeline suddenly appeared and prevented him from doing anything.

Hearing his comment, Mondragon, who was standing beside him could not help but turn in his direction.

Sensing the gaze, Shenyong smiled as he said. "I just greeted a little lass who has become so powerful that even these old bones have a hard time recognizing her."

Mondragon seemed to have realized something and turned his gaze toward the direction where Shenyong was looking earlier. That was when he saw Evangeline in disguise, who greeted him.

After nodding his head to greet him back, Mondragon turned his attention back to the ceremony while mumbling. "Amazing."

He then thought for a moment as if he recalled something and said. "Then does that mean that the kid behind her is their rascal? The kid that Arthur and Nathan keep on mentioning to us during the special training."

"Most likely," nodded Shenyong before saying with a solemn tone. "But his state seems rather unstable."

As they discussed with one another, Evangeline turned to Uno and warned. "You can't just look at anyone in that realm. They can erase your existence whenever they want."

"Though, it will also be quite hard for them given that you have already integrated your existence with Shin's quite deeply," she added before walking toward the furthest row where the direct family and close friends of Bernard were located.

Uno and David were left behind as they did not have that much position within the family. However, it would be a little different if Shin was the one in control of his body.

But since Uno was currently out, it would be better to leave him behind to prevent any unnecessary trouble.

As Uno followed her figure, he suddenly saw Shiella, who was quietly standing at the forefront of the rows and silently staring at the lifeless body of her father.

She was usually calm in front of every situation, but it looked like she was having quite a hard time suppressing the turmoil of emotions boiling within her chest.

She was biting her lower lip quite hard, almost making it bleed. Her fists were tightly clenched, making her nails dig deep into her palms.

Uno slightly frowned as his eyes glowed with a mysterious light. "She is quite in a mess."

He was not talking about her current appearance since she was still as beautiful as ever despite her almost crying face.

He was talking about the current state of her Internal Qi where the two opposing energies were somewhat clashing against each other due to her current emotions.

Clicking his tongue, he suddenly mumbled. "Since you call her your sister, I will help her fix those energies. But she has to take care of the rest since the only thing I can give her is the cultivation technique I have developed."

"Fixing her constitution is entirely dependent on herself."

Chapter 1468: Burial (Part 2)

...

The initial stage of the ceremony lasted for quite a while, especially when one of the elders had to lead everyone in a unique prayer of the Springfield Family meant for these kinds of occasions.

This lasted for at least two hours before they went for the main ritual, where they had to cremate Bernard's body.

"Ancestors, the Original Emperor Flame, please," said the elder as he stepped to the side to make way for Mondragon and Shenyong and bowed.

The two ancestor-level experts slightly nodded their heads as they stepped forward while carrying a huge golden box that had scale-like patterns engraved on its surface. There was also a golden dragon

figure sitting on its top, which greatly resembled the dragon statue right at the fountain of the Springfield Household.

There was a solemn expression on everyone's face as they watched the two ancestors climb the platform.

Bang!

The moment this pair of top experts placed the golden box down, an intense shaking of the ground could be felt despite how gently the two had done it. It was as if whatever that box contained, it was so heavy that it could cause a brief earth earthquake with such simple actions.

"Pay your respects!" said Mondragon as he turned to everyone.

As most of the people present were part of the Springfield Family, they quickly complied and started kneeling on the ground and lowering their heads and bodies.

Uno frowned deeply as he did not like it, but he was forced by David to comply as it would be a great disrespect to the ancestors of the Springfield Family.

After seeing everyone paying their respects, Mondragon turned back to the golden box and took off its cover alongside Shenyoung.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

The four adjacent segments of the box simultaneously fell and landed on the ground, revealing the ball of flame that was contained inside.

Boom!

Once the multicolored flame was revealed, it suddenly floated in the air before releasing a powerful aura that quickly filled the entire place.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

There was also a strong gust of wind that swept through everyone along with the hot current that it was releasing.

Those who carried the bloodline of the Springfield Family felt comfortable despite how hot these air currents were. They also felt that their bloodline was growing stronger as if they were being baptized by the flame.

On the other hand, those who did not carry the blood of a Springfield were somewhat suffering from the presence of this flame. They felt that the surroundings were getting stronger in every passing second – as if the sun itself was approaching the earth.

Their skins were getting drier as their sweats were instantly evaporated due to the temperature. They felt like a bug approaching the sun and getting burned by it.

Fortunately, there were also these powerful experts who protected them from the powers of the Original Emperor Flame.

The members of the Levina Family were being protected by Nathan, who released his aura to soak everything for them while Evangeline used a special technique to protect Uno and David.

As all of these were happening, Uno could not help but look at the wisp of flame floating above the platform. Even if it was releasing a blinding light that could harm anyone who would dare to look at it, Uno still persevered and stared at it intently.

But he was only able to look at it for an entire minute before he took his eyes away from it as his eyes could get burned and blinded by the light that it was releasing.

He also slightly frowned as he could not see the secrets that it was hiding.

At the same time, there was another person who dared to look directly at that wisp of flame, completely unbothered by its blinding light.

Arthur, who was kneeling at the forefront row, felt something calling out for him. When he raised his head, he saw that the flame turned into a huge dragon from his perspective.

He and that Dragon stared intently at each other before Arthur snapped out of his daze and woke up from that dream-like experience.

...

Not long after, the ceremony continued, and the flame burned Benard's body.

The time seemed to flow slowly, particularly to the direct family of Bernard, who was watching his body turn into ashes bit by bit.

When Benard's body completely became ashes, Mondragon and Shenyong collected the Original Emperor Flame and sealed it to the golden box once again.

Then Mondragon proceeded to collect the ashes of his grandson and put them on a special urn before handing them to Shiella, who was waiting at the bottom of the platform.

With that, the burial was finally completed, and everyone dispersed, leaving only the direct family Bernard behind.

...

As Uno was toward the place where Evangeline was currently staying, David suddenly appeared beside him and dragged him somewhere.

"Tsk! Where are you bringing me? I still have something important to do. I need to check on our guy," complained Uno.

"This will not take that long," said David as he led Uno to a certain location.

There, Uno saw Shiella waiting for them with a deep frown on her face.

Uno instantly knew what David wanted him to do just by looking at her. But he also felt that it was a little too much given that they had just attended a burial of Bernard.

"Tsk! This stupid senior brother of ours," Uno clicked his tongue while shaking his head.

Shiella stared intently at Uno when she saw the two, seemingly trying to see through at him. She had already heard what had happened, so she somewhat expected that she would not be meeting Shin but Uno instead.

At the very least, this was much better compared to the worst-case scenario that they were expecting where Shin would be completely overtaken by the Demon of the Seed within him.

With a sigh, Uno approached Shiella before giving her a slight nod as a greeting.

Shiella was still frowning her brows and observing him when Uno suddenly extended his fingers and sent a beam of light that shot toward the center of her forehead.

Shiella was taken aback by his actions and unable to respond, making her stare blankly in the air.

There was a moment of delay when a flood of information flashed through her mind.

This lasted for a few minutes before she was able to recover herself. When the focus returned to her eyes, she found that Uno was already not around and only left David to look after her.

"This-... Did he just-...?" Shiella was trying to ask what just happened when David quickly answered. "That is the perfected version of the 'Yin-Yang Arts' that he had created. You can use it to fix your control over the opposing energies within your body."

"But you still have to rely on yourself to fix your constitution to match them."

"He said that it should be called 'Yin-Yang Cultivation Arts' now since it is derived from ancient cultivation techniques," he added, further explaining everything to her.

Sheilla fell back in her thoughts and reviewed everything inside her head, finding that everything that Uno had passed down to her was not just the improved version of the 'Yin-Yang Arts' that she had learned from Professor Plum, but also a few techniques on how to utilize them properly.

She could also find a special method for how she could perfectly harmonize the two opposing energies within her body without suffering any backlash.

After organizing everything inside her head, Shiella turned to David and said. "Thanks. And... say thank you to him as well for me. I will be going back for now to accompany my family."

David smiled and watched her leave before a serious expression washed over his face.

"Tsk! You have fallen quite deep. I wonder what that Senior Sister will think of this," said Uno as he emerged from the shades of the trees.

David ignored his words before turning around. "You better get ready. A war is coming. Since the Black Serpent Mafia had initiated it, the Springfield Family will not take this lying down."

"Tsk! What does it have to do with me? There are a lot of powerful people out there that can handle everything for us," said Uno with a frown before adding. "But if it is mean to mess up with those idiots, then I am up for it."

As they were walking toward the isolated dimension, Uno seemed to recall something and asked. "Oh! About that game! Do you know some of its secrets? I find that the game itself is hiding too much."

David paused for a moment before glancing at Uno. "You will know about it more if you continue to play the game."

"Though, you will realize its importance sooner or later as the 'war' with the Black Serpent Mafia will surely start in that place," he added before stepping into the isolated dimension, leaving Uno hanging.

Uno, on the other hand, slightly frowned his brows as he thought of something. But he quickly set it aside for the time being as he now needed to check on Shin, who was still in deep slumber.

Chapter 1469: Faction War (Part 1)

...

After entering the isolated dimension, Uno quickly went to one of the rooms and sat cross-legged at its center, meditating.

A couple of seconds later, Uno entered his Sea of Consciousness, which was still in the state of being a White World.

He did not idle for that long as he quickly walked toward a certain direction with great familiarity. Despite having nothing in this place, which was also making it hard to differentiate which direction was which, he was still able to navigate his way toward his destination.

Not long after, he arrived at the place where Shin was currently sleeping.

He slightly frowned his brows as he could see how deep Shin was asleep. This was not the first time this happened, so Uno was not that concerned. But what made this situation worse was the fact that Shin was not showing any signs of waking him.

During the other instances where Shin was in the same state, Uno could still see some signs of waking up. It was as if he was in a state of lingering between being half-asleep and waking up.

What made this situation rather good was that no Seed of Hatred was trying to take over Shin as it was trapped by the newly built and reinforced seal that Evangeline had created.

But Uno knew that even this seal would also not last that long no matter how strong it was given the growing powers of the seed due to its 'hatred'.

Moreover, it was also recently awakened, so its powers were linked to Shin's mood and feelings. Once Shin slipped even for a little, then a situation much worse than what happened previously would take place.

Once it happened, then Uno and Shin had to work together to ward off any attempt of the Seed of Hatred to take over their body.

Uno watched Shin for a couple of moments before shaking his head.

A moment later, he left the Sea of Consciousness and went back outside.

Right after opening his eyes, he was immediately greeted by the sight of David and Alyssa sparing with each other.

The corner of his could not help but twitch when he saw that and said to himself. "What's with these two? Of all the places, they chose to fight where I am meditating?"

Fortunately, the two were greatly holding back their powers, or they would be destroying this place, which would be the last of their worries.

With a sigh, Uno stood up and ignored the two. Even if he wanted to get his revenge match against David, he was currently not in the mood to do anything right now. Probably because of Shin's current state and some unease that he was getting from somewhere unknown.

He walked straight to the door, not caring about the two, and planned to go back to 'his' room that was stolen from David.

"There are still those books that I haven't finished reading. Maybe I will be able to improve my 'Yin-Yang Cultivation Arts' further if I finish everything," he mumbled as he recalled those books that were given to Shin by Old Man Lin and Professor Henry.

Since he did not have anything better to do, he might as well finish reading everything while also playing the game at the same time.

When he walked out of the room, he did not find Evangeline in her usual spot, so he thought that she most likely comforting her friend for losing her husband.

...

For the next few days, Uno spent his time reading the books that he had brought back home while also training his Martial Arts when he was in the real world. Then he would be applying some of them inside the game after logging back in.

Since the classes were suspended temporarily due to the incident that happened previously, the students did not have anything better to do.

His daily routine might sound boring, particularly when he was not doing that much inside the game either as he was waiting for the announcement of the Storm Empire to wage war with the Dark Cloud Kingdom so that 'his' quest could be considered fully cleared.

He was also waiting for Commander Taiga to bring him the rewards that he was promised by the system.

Regardless, he was still not that fazed as he was already used to this kind of redundant and boring lifestyle. He was just a little surprised that Commander Taiga was taking so long to finish his 'job'.

During this time, Uno avoided meeting with Arthur, Leonard, or Cloe as he was too lazy to deal with them. He did not want to waste his time explaining the situation to them and wanted Shin to deal with it later.

However, he must admit that he wanted to try sparing with them as well, especially when he could feel the powers hidden within Arthur and Leonard's bloodline. Those two were worthy of his attention at the very least.

He was also quite curious about Arthur as he could sense something different from the kid after the burial of his father. The latter's bloodline also became a little more different compared to the other Springfields that he had met so far.

Uno would even claim that Arthur had a purer bloodline when compared to those two monstrous ancestors who visited the household and attended Bernard's burial recently.

Uno was getting a little itchy and wanted to test his newly improved 'Yin-Yang Cultivation Arts' in practice. He wanted to spar with David, but this guy was nowhere to be found as he was running some errands for Evangeline.

Alyssa was also quite in question as she did not want anything but to serve her master. She stayed within the isolated dimension along with Evangeline.

It was completely different from what he had heard from David when the latter said that Alyssa was eager to roam around the world and challenge a few geniuses from different places just like what David had done in the past.

He also wanted to try fighting Shiella as he was curious how strong she could be after learning his technique, but that girl quickly went into closed-door training a few days after Bernard's burial.

With nothing better to do, Uno could only continue his boring daily routine.

A few days later, a huge event took place within the game – the Storm Empire waged war against the Dark Cloud Kingdom, joining the already fierce war between the said kingdom and its neighboring nations.

What was even more surprising with this news was that the Storm Empire declared that the Dark Cloud Kingdom was colluding with the spawns of the Demonic Churches, triggering a huge faction-level event.

The was called the 'War against the Demonic Churches', where the players could choose sides that they wanted to join.

Naturally, those who were already on the side of the Righteous Churches were already joining the battle under the banner of their respective factions.

Meanwhile, those who would choose to side with the Demonic Churches would be banned from the kingdoms or empires that were under the rule or protection of the former factions. But these players were free to transfer to the countries that were infested by the Corrupted Cults and Demonic Churches.

They could also join a Demonic Church that they wanted to follow, which would give them different buffs and abilities according to the churches that they had chosen.

With this event, Empire Wars were triggered, and the entire Aurora Continent was thrown into chaos.

Demonic and Corrupted Players also became even more common due to the appearance of the Demonic Churches and the active actions of the Corrupted Cults.

The center of all of these was the Storm Empire and the Dark Cloud Empire.

Those casual and excited players quickly picked their sides and joined the war as this would be the very first worldwide event that the game would be having since its launch.

People who were too bored to do the previous content finally found new activities that they could do and joined the fun.

On the other hand, the top experts and powerful guilds were rather calm as they all knew that this event would last for quite a long time, so they focused more on exploring the previous content and get more resources as many resources as possible.

They did not get swept by the hype and remained calm and collected. However, they still sent a couple of units to join the war as they could also not miss the rewards that they could get by accumulating more merit points.

In these kinds of situations, the ones who were flourishing the most were the merchant guilds. As the saying goes – "The more chaotic the war was, the more money would flow into their hands." –

The guild that had benefited a lot from this war was without a doubt the 'Hand of Midas' as more and more players were visiting their shops and other branches to buy all kinds of necessities such as healing potions, mana potions, auxiliary and utility potions. Some were even buying special pills that the guild had recently developed after setting up their branch at the Sacred Light Kingdom.

Some players had earned quite a lot from the war to buy better equipment and weapons, upgrading themselves and their battle capabilities.

The rest on the other hand were buying some tools that the engineers had developed, which could also be helpful in the war such as grappling hooks, mobile mechanical torrents, and explosives.

All branches of the Trading Firms were bursting with activities that it almost caused a huge traffic for players. After all, this place would be the first one to enter everyone's minds whenever they had the money and wanted to look for the best pieces of equipment and necessities.

Naturally, the rivals of the Hand of Midas would want to cause trouble when they saw that their business was bursting like this, but they were all silenced by the overwhelming might of the firm, especially when the firm itself had powerful allies.

All these people could do was to watch their number one enemy to reap all the benefits from war with envy.

With this event, the news and trends were constantly being uploaded to the official forums of the game and different online platforms, increasing the hype even further.

"This should be enough. I should be able to join the fun as well," mumbled Uno as he closed the virtual screen in front of him after reading through the trends from the forums.

He then threw the towel that he was using to dry his hair to the nearby laundry basket before entering the gaming cabin topless.

After adjusting the system, he closed the cabin door before fixing his position.

He then leaned on the cabin chair before closing his eyes. "Initiate game login, «Destiny's Fate» Online!"

Chapter 1470: Faction War (Part 2)

...

Real World, World Gaming Organization Headquarters.

The Department Heads of the organization were in the middle of another serious meeting.

Things were going a little too smoothly recently due to Shin clearing his Tier 3 Promotions Quest, which was quickly followed by the rest of Godlike Players and top Titled Rankers of the game. The flow of the game was on the right track once again.

However, due to the recent incidents that the Pandemonium Descendants had initiated, the progress of the 'Faction War Content' was brought way too forward. This overlapped with the current path that the developers wanted the players to take, making two contents progress at the same time.

But there was nothing to do about it since this was how the game should be going anyway. They could not get involved in the progress of the game and let the players explore its contents by themselves.

The only problem was the game progressing a little too fast, putting pressure on the developers to create more content so that they could upload it into the system and leave the rest to the super AI Chronos.

Although there was already a dedicated path laid for the players to follow, namely the Main Scenario Quests, all the content that they had prepared to be exhausted in no time if they could not keep up with the pace of the players.

This was the reason why the developers were making more content that would sidetrack the players, making them explore more of the game and enjoy the experience.

One of the helpers of the game developers should be the event organizations, especially those who were hosting the huge tournaments that would attract all the players and distract them a little from time to time.

These big tournaments had a long history within the virtual world to the point that they had become a tradition for every player, guild, and organization.

Each huge tournament cup would lead to big events that would bring glory to those who would be able to reach the top.

Just recently, the start of the United Cup had already been announced.

This huge tournament was supposed to fill the gap for the players who were finding it hard to progress with the current content of the game, which was still quite difficult to cross for most of the players, while also an opportunity for those on the top to test how strong they had become.

Everything was going smoothly until two of the miracle players had done something so absurd that they had given the developers another headache.

"What do think about our situation? Given that the players are busy with both the Tier 3 Class Progression and the Faction War, it will be hard to host such a huge event, don't you think?"

"Don't get me started. Those tournament organizers and their sponsors are already pressuring our departments due to this."

"The Event Planning Department is already at their wit's end as everything that they have planned is destroyed due to this game expansion."

"The Creative and Design Department has also thrown everything they have finished to the kitchen sink as well since they have to create more challenging maps since the players are growing much stronger due to the current Faction War."

"The Sales and Marketing Department, on the other hand, is having a field day as their job become easier due to the recent appearance of the powerful and famous players."

"They are having a hard time choosing which teams and guilds to choose to be placed at the seeded groups due to this, though."

"The Production Department are the ones suffering the most due to this as they have to repeatedly cancel and rearrange everything due to the constant changes that are happening."

The people within the room gossiped with the people sitting beside them, 'pitying' those in trouble. Even if they were also busy within their respective departments due to the rapidly increasing tasks that needed to be done, their situation was not as pitiful as these poor departments responsible for organizing the United Cup.

Seeing the gloating looks that their colleagues were throwing at them, the department heads of the mentioned departments could not say anything as everything that they had said was all true.

They were in a great predicament as they did not know what to do anymore. This was why they had asked for this meeting so that they could get some permission from the chairman.

Not long after, the chairman of the World Gaming Organization finally entered the room, silencing everyone.

But all of them still stood up to greet him before sitting one again.

The chairman briefly nodded his head as a greeting before taking his seat. "I have received the report already and read everything on my way here."

"There is no need to prolong this meeting as we all know how busy everyone is right now. I will make it short."

"There is no need to make any major changes. Just continue with your respective jobs and do the usual."

"As for those responsible for the upcoming United Cup, I have already read your proposals. I don't see much of an issue side from the too little number of maps. I hope you can design more maps and make it more challenging so that the competitiveness of the players will grow stronger."

He then paused for a moment before continuing. "As for the deadline, we will proceed as scheduled. We can no longer push it back as we have already switched the United Cup and Hegemon Cup. Another change will make us look unreliable in the eyes of the people."

"Submit me the new map designs as soon as possible."

Hearing those words, the department heads of the 'Creative and Design Department' and the 'Research and Development Department' could not help but groan as more work would be waiting for them right after this meeting.

The chairman waited for everyone to digest what he just said before continuing. "Don't worry about the Faction War. It will only last for a week or two before its hype dies. That is more than enough time for us."

"It will also be a perfect time for us to see which teams and guilds are worthy of the slots for being the seeded teams."

"Moreover, this upcoming United Cup will also be the perfect stage for them where they can prove themselves to everyone."

The meeting continued for a dozen more minutes as they continued to discuss the plans and schedules for the upcoming days.

This supposedly short meeting still lasted for two hours before the chairman dismissed everyone.

The Department Heads also did not linger around for that long as they quickly rushed toward their respective departments to announce everything to their people.

As the game developers were getting ready for the upcoming tournament, the groups, teams, and guilds that were confident to be included in the main stage were currently organizing themselves.

The Sales and Marketing Department of the World Gaming Organization had already made their move after receiving permission from the chairman. They quickly posted the official poster for the upcoming United Cup, arousing the curiosity and excitement of countless people.

Right after the long post was uploaded to the official website of the game, countless fanatics quickly spread them on different online platforms, especially the official forums.

There were countless heated discussions about this in the forums, triggering a lot of arguments between fans of different Mercenary Groups, Adventurer Teams, and Guilds.

The hype exploded to the point where the players started waging a war on themselves within the game.

Due to this, the already chaotic atmosphere within the game became even more of a mess.

Different fan groups and such were fighting against one another, adding more fire to the war between the two major factions of the game.

This situation became more favorable for the side of the Demonic Churches as those fanatics from the other side started fighting among themselves due to their arguments. This somewhat nullified the overwhelming advantage of the Righteous Churches when it came to numbers.

Some people who just wanted to mess with other people also joined the fun, throwing more chaos where they could loot some scraps among the people who were busy fighting among themselves.

Amid all of these, Uno, who just happened to be passing by, overheard the arguments among the players. When he heard them, there was a mocking look on his face as he shook his head. "Idiots."

At this moment, he did not want to use the same persona as Shin, so he swapped all the equipment that Shin was using with his choosing.

He was overflowing with money, so he went to the Hand of Midas Trading Firm and used 'his' VIP status to ask Black Hammer to craft him an equipment set that would match his fighting style.

Black Hammer, who had fully established himself as a high-ranked Master Blacksmith, was so busy with the orders that he was receiving. However, he did not complain due to the experience that he would be getting in his profession after finishing everything.

He was rushing to become a Grandcraftsman, so there was no time to waste.

Even if Uno had used Shin's VIP card, he chose to hide his identity from them, so he used another person when introducing himself.

He even went to swap all the equipment that he was wearing with the ones that he found from the treasure trove that he just robbed when he was in the Dark Cloud Kingdom.

What surprised Black Hammer when he took the order was the details after reading everything. The materials needed to be used, the possible effects that they could get with them, then the overall set effects were also listed in them.

Uno had even provided him a blueprint that Black Hammer could use when forging and crafting the entire equipment set.

Black Hammer believed that this particular customer was quite knowledgeable when it came to blacksmithing or at least about utilizing the best effects of the materials.

Little did he know, Uno had just gotten everything after reading those books from Commander Taiga's library and found them interesting, so he combined all of them to create a new set of knowledge.

The only problem was these materials would cost them quite a fortune. But since it was listed that Uno would be funding everything, Black Hammer did not ask anything and just went out to do his job.

It was a ten-piece equipment set that included the main and off-hand weapons and the cloak, so he had collaborated with Harmony on this project.

After waiting for two full days (In-game time), the full set of equipment was presented to Uno.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that he was wearing one of the top equipment sets within the game as this entire set itself was at Obsidian Rank.

It was comparable to Shin's [Apocalypse Set], but inferior to the special pieces of equipment that Shin was wearing such as the [Yamato], [Death Shadow], [Proof of Eclipse], and such.

Regardless, Uno was quite satisfied with the result, so he had even given the two chiefs some bonus when paying them – not in the form of money, but with Master-Rank Blueprints that would help them improve their professions, which he had also found from the treasure trove.

...

Right now, Uno was venturing within the territory of the Storm Empire after registering himself for the Faction War. He naturally sided with the Righteous Churches since he was already a huge part of the quest.

He had even received a Captain Rank, who was responsible for an independent unit under the flag of the empire. He was even given the authority to recruit his members if he wanted, which he would not be using as he did not want to bring extra baggage with him when traveling around the battlefield.

But that did not mean that he would not be using his special authority to command some people whenever the opportunity presented itself.

He was also free to do whatever he wanted while everyone else needed to follow the respective units that were assigned to them for the organized movements during the war.

Standing on a mountaintop, Uno looked down at the passing army of Demonic Monsters and Players under him.

Despite their overwhelming size, he was grinning quite deviously. "Let's see how good is this new set that I have."

After that, he stepped forward, stepping on the empty air in front of him before falling like a meteor.