

Destiny 1551

Chapter 1551 The First Exploration (Part 1)

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'Yoh! What do you think about forming a contract with him,' said Shin to Uno inside his head.

[Are you planning to let your elemental spirits devour that guy? That is not going to be easy, though.]
Uno replied as he understood Shin's plan.

Among the Elemental Spirit Companions under Shin, three of them were qualified to absorb the powers of this Demon General. They might have some risks, but it would be worth it so long as they were successful.

After a brief moment, he also added. [Are you not going to consult the so-called council that you want to get rid of this guy? I doubt that they will.]

Shin chuckled as he answered. 'I have a plan about that. But we do have to make some preparations just in case.'

Shin then looked at Noir before saying. "Your proposition, we will think about that. Give us a bit of time."

After that, he turned to Hano and continued. "I guess we have gathered enough information for now. Let's go back first and discuss this matter with the council."

"You report our findings to your superiors while I do the same for the Church of the Sun and Moon," he added.

Hano tried to open his mouth, unwilling to go back yet. After all, this was the first time in ages since they managed to get some information from this Demon General. He felt that it would be a waste to leave just like that.

But after putting some thought into it, he somewhat agreed with Shin. After all, they did not have the authority to decide about this matter.

"I understand," replied Hano after careful consideration.

Shin then turned to Noir once again and said. "We will meet again later."

Noir, the Demon General, started grinning evilly as he heard that response. "I will be waiting."

He had been locked in this place for quite a long time already, so waiting for a bit more would be nothing for him.

He watched the backs of the group as they left his prison cell while maintaining the grin that he had.

Clank!

The moment when the group left, Hano released the barrier that was protecting them before turning to the trio. "Thank you for your cooperation, esteemed guests. I am sure that the higher-ups will be happy about this news. We have finally gotten something after such a long time."

Shin waved his hand as he said. "Don't thank us yet. There are still a lot of things that we have to deal with. And that 'calamity' the Demon General is talking about is still our utmost concern."

"We also deeply apologize for how we treated you when you first arrived at our city," added Hano as was quite ashamed of what happened previously.

Shin waved his hand once again when he heard those words. "It is fine. It is nothing but a misunderstanding anyway. And you have accommodated us quite well, so we can forget about it already."

'Also, it is my fault as well since I have used that ancient teleportation formation without considering anything. Moreover, I don't know that my special title will make me a Noble in this continent will only take effect once I have revealed them,' he added inside his head.

Hano led the trio to the entrance of the prison dungeon before bidding his farewell. "I will make sure to inform you as soon as possible once the higher-ups have concluded what they want to do."

Then fished out something from his pocket and presented it to the tree. They were communication stones that were used by the NPCs in the Awakened Continent to communicate with one another.

It was something like phones or advanced watches from the real world.

"These were the special communication stones issued by our Headquarters. We will communicate with you using this once the higher-ups are done with their discussion," he said, introducing the items to the three.

Shin and the other two took each before storing them in their respective inventory bags. Then they turned around to leave, waving at Hano.

Hano watched the three leave before quickly turning around and immediately running toward the office of his uncle. All the information that they had just gotten was of utmost importance, so they had to act as soon as possible before disaster struck down the entire Atlas World.

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In the meantime, the trio were walking along the streets while planning their next course of action.

"So, what is the plan now, Shin Bro?" asked Leonard.

"Of course, it is my turn now! Help me retrieve that piece of my Divine Armor!" Arthur was the one who answered as he was already getting impatient.

Shin sighed when he heard that before saying. "There is no need to rush. Let me report to the Church of the Sun and Moon first before we start moving."

"There is no need to worry. Given the nature of the quest and the gravity of the information that we have just gotten, it will take quite a while before the council comes up with a decision, so we will have ample time to do your quest," he added before Arthur could even complain.

He then paused for a moment before asking. "But more than that, let me hear your update first. How is the group doing right now?"

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Shin was walking in the corridor of the Church of the Sun and Moon and could not help but be in awe after seeing how lavish and fancy the entire place was.

He could also see multiple statues from different corners of the church that represented his predecessors. Most of them were the previous envoys of the church while the others were the previous popes.

There were also some individuals from the Elven Race and some distinguished figures of Humanity, who represented the church.

That was when Shin remembered that the Church of the Sun of Moon was a religion that worshipped the Moon Goddess of the Elves, the Altas God of Humanity, and the fallen Sun God, who was the father of Zepthus – the first envoy of the church.

As he was thinking about this, he also suddenly remembered something. "Now that I think about it, I still have that scroll that Sir Longinus has given me."

The [Scroll of Eclipse] the special instance dungeon scroll that Longinus had given him was an extra reward for not only passing the trail that he had prepared but also clearing it with flying colors.

Based on the description of the scroll, he would be able to find the [Ring of the Brilliant Sun] in that place, which was a set with the necklace that he was wearing – the [Proof of Eclipse].

"Maybe I should explore that place once I am done helping Arthur with his quest. After all, I have already surpassed the minimum requirements for it," he mumbled as he arrived in front of the office that the priest was leading.

"The cardinal is inside, Sir Envoy," said the priest respectfully as he bowed and made way for Shin.

Shin briefly nodded while thanking the priest before knocking on the door.

"Come in."

Not long after, an aged voice sounded from inside the room, inviting him to enter.

Shin carefully opened the door and entered the room. He was quite prepared this time as he activated the Jade Kirin Scripture to harden his will for what was about to come.

Given his past experiences with Cardinal Ronald, the latter liked to test him whenever they met, so he had to be prepared this time and not get pranked once again.

Bang!

Just like he had expected, extreme pressure quickly descended upon him, attempting to bring him down to his knees.

In response, Shin quickly summoned the Powers of the Brilliant Sun and Abyssal Moon and enfolded his entire body with them.

But when he realized that it was still not enough to withstand the pressure, he quickly fused the two powers and transformed them into the Primordial Lightning.

Crackle! Crackle!

The electric sounds quickly reverberated throughout the entire place as the black and white flashes of lightning clashed against the pressure that was trying to crush him.

This lasted for a couple more seconds before the pressure disappeared without leaving a single trace.

"You never fail to surprise me, Sir Envoy. You always show me something amazing whenever we meet," that was when an aged voice awoke Shin from his concentration, making him retrieve his Primordial Lightning.

"It seems like you have also touched the powers of origin as well. You have become much stronger since the last time we met each other."

As Shin was trying to recover himself, he raised his head and saw the familiar old man sitting behind the desk in the distance while smiling at him.

Sigh~!

After regulating his breathing, Shin smiled in return and complained. "You still like to test, Sir Ronald."

At the same time, Shin also could not help but have a careful look at the cardinal as he could feel an overwhelming power coming from the latter.

He was not sure if this was because he was currently facing the real body of Cardinal Ronald unlike in the past when he was only taking with his clones, but the holy aura that the old man was passively emitting was overwhelming Shin.

Among all the NPCs that Shin had met, only Kentas would be able to match the current cardinal.

The Demon General Noir that he had met earlier was already very powerful, but Shin could feel that even that ancient demon was nothing compared to Cardinal Ronald.

'I guess I have underestimated the council a little. If even a cardinal is already this strong, how powerful are those leading each church?' he could not help but think to himself after seeing the holy aura enveloping the cardinal.

"Take a sit first so that we can have a chat. It seems like we have a lot to discuss," Cardinal Ronald smiled at Shin before gesturing for him to sit on the chair across from him.

After hearing those words, Shin could finally snap out of his daze. He then awkwardly smiled as he walked toward the chair and sat across the cardinal.

At this moment, Cardinal Ronald wore a slightly serious face before asking. "So, what have you found out?"

Shin first organized the information inside his head before starting his report.

Chapter 1552 The First Exploration (Part 2)

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Shin walked out of the Church of the Sun and Moon with a somewhat tired face. He felt that conversing with Cardinal Ronald was always tiring, especially when the old cardinal always wanted to give extra jobs while saying that it was the task that an envoy was responsible for.

Fortunately, Cardinal Ronald did not give him any extra task, saying that they had to wait until the Council of the Righteous Churches came up with a decision. After all, the plan that Shin was trying to draw was quite concerning for them.

However, the old cardinal also promised him that he would support him fully, especially when he trusted their envoy for everything he did. After all, Shin had done quite well at every task that was given to him and even surpassed their expectations multiple times.

At the same time, he had also been rewarded with a couple of Tier 3 Skills after finishing his report.

He was quite lacking in terms of Tier 3 Skills. Although the one that he had in his arsenal was quite powerful, the conditions when he could use it were quite limited. It was also hard to trigger those conditions, which was quite troublesome.

His other Tier 3 Skill, the 'Doom Blade and Aegis Shield', was also quite powerful. However, he barely had the chance to use it, especially when its cooldown was quite long just like his Tier 3 Domain Skill.

What he needed right now was a Tier 3 Skill that he could use multiple times during battle due to having a very low cooldown.

However, such a problem was already covered by the most basic skills from Tier 1 to Tier 2. There were also combat techniques that could be used alongside them, which were further strengthened by the special combat states that the player had.

But who would refuse to get an additional Tier 3 Skill in their arsenal? An extra trump card would always be welcomed by everyone.

Class Specific Skill: Grim Reaper

Skill Name: Primal Breathing (Passive)

Skill Level: Tier 3

Skill Rank: Special

Description:

- Increase your understanding of the surrounding energies and amplify your mastery over the higher forms of mana under your arsenal.

+100% Mana Sensitivity

+75% Elemental Control

+50% Willpower, Wisdom, and Intelligence

Class Specific Skill: Grim Reaper

Skill Name: Primal Reset

Skill Level: Tier 3

Skill Rank: Epic

Description:

Upon activation, all the skills that are in cooldown time will become available once again.

All class-specific skills under Tier 3 will have no cooldown time and can be used repeatedly so long as you have enough concentration upon the activation of this skill.

- Special Skills under the category of Class Fighting Style and Fusion Skills that were related to your main class will have an additional 50% cooldown reduction during the duration of this skill.

Duration: 3 minutes

Cooldown: 3 hours

Shin liked these new skills quite a lot particularly the latter one since it could let him spam his skills during the entire duration. This could also mean that he could use it under the state of Reality Manifestation, which would be quite a hellish experience for his opponents.

The only problem was it would be burning his concentration quite a lot during the activation of the skill, which had to be careful of.

After all, he already had quite a lot of things that required his high-level concentration during the battle such as his Elemental Possessions, Nephilim's Wings, Reality Manifestations, and others.

If he was not careful, he would only be over-exhausting himself during the battle, which would put him at a disadvantage.

Regardless, the skill itself would provide him a lot of assistance when used properly.

As for the other skill, it was quite a powerful passive in its own right. The boost in his mana sensitivity alone would provide him with quite a lot of things. This, alone, would let him use his skills much easier and execute them twice as fast as he normally did. It would also amplify the effects of the skills by a great margin, making him more powerful overall.

The boost on Elemental Control would let him communicate with the elements much easier and enhance his mastery over the higher forms of mana under his arsenal. This alone would be good enough to make the skill quite broken.

As for the final benefit, an additional boost in stats would always be welcome regardless of how low it was, much less a value as high as 50%.

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Shin walked along the streets of the city while appreciating all the scenery around him. "What a large city. It can already be considered as a region by itself given its massive size. I wonder how many secrets it possesses."

The size of the city would mostly be proportional to the number of quests available within it. This included the hidden and special quests that could only be triggered after meeting certain conditions.

A city as massive as the Divinity City, where a lot and different kinds of NPCs gathered, would always be overflowing with available quests that were waiting to be triggered.

It took him quite a while to reach the gates of the city, where he would be meeting with Arthur and Leonard.

"No wonder there are a lot of short-distance teleportation formations in different parts of the city. Walking will take a lot of your time just to reach a certain spot," he commented after reaching his destination.

"This also explains why roads never lack a carriage or carts running back and forth to their destinations," he added as he looked at the merchant caravans entering the gates of the city.

"You are finally here," said Arthur after seeing Shin walk out of the gates.

Shin smiled bitterly and shrugged his shoulders while explaining. "I don't know that the distance is that far."

"So, where are we heading?" he quickly changed the topic when he saw Arthur about to complain once again.

This would be their first time exploring the Awakened Continent, so he was quite excited about this. He wanted to see just how powerful the monster of this place was.

He remembered Longinus that those absurdly strong monsters that he had met during the special trial to test his qualifications were nothing but infants when compared to the ones on this continent.

He wanted to see if it was true. Or at least experience how powerful they were.

Now that they had fully adjusted themselves to the mana density of this place and were able to move freely, they could finally try to put everything they had learned into practice.

"The location is quite far from here, so we will be needing our mounts to travel there," said Arthur before adding with full seriousness. "But we also have to be careful since the monsters in the surrounding areas are quite strong."

"I have already investigated the place along with some hired NPC Escorts previously. The entire place is infested with Level 175 Elite Monsters with some Special Elites in the mix. I have paid them quite a lot just to hire them, you know?"

He then paused for a moment as he found it strange that they had to be careful of 'Elites' and 'Special Elites' given their respective strengths when those King-Class and Emperor-Class Monsters in the previous continent were no different from normal mobs in their eyes.

Then, again, the monsters on this continent were absurdly strong in comparison to those monsters.

"We also must avoid some areas that are ruled by Chieftain Rank Monsters. Given our current strength, we will only be asking for our deaths if we try to come across them," he added while projecting a virtual map before them.

Shin studied the map and the path that Arthur had drawn before asking. "Are you sure that we can proceed just like this? I think we need to at least have a healer on our team, don't you think?"

"Tsk! Do you think I don't think about it? But Cloe is currently on a special quest right now, so we can't just ask her to come with us," Arthur clicked his tongue as he complained.

Not having a scout would not be a problem for them since these three were quite experienced at sneaking in different places given their backgrounds in the real world – a military family trained two while the other grew up by surviving in the streets. They had fully understood how to move stealthy and discretely in such situations.

Shin thought for a moment before suggesting. "How about inviting Samael and Huahua to join us?"

"Are you planning to train them in this situation?" Arthur immediately understood what Shin was planning after hearing those words.

Shin then shrugged his shoulders in response. "It will not hurt to make them stronger since they are already a part of our team. Moreover, they can also be of great help to us during this trip."

"Samael is a Paladin, so he can somewhat heal and give us some buffs during the battle. Even if it is not as good as the dedicated support of a healer class, it is still better than nothing."

"There are also the buffs that Huahua's totems can provide us. She can also curse the monsters we will encounter along the way, lowering their stats to a certain degree."

"So long as we are careful and patient, they will not drag us down," he added, trying to convince Arthur.

"We can also make them stronger in the process, which will be a great help for us in the long run," injected Leonard as he chimed in.

Arthur thought for a moment before sighing. "Alright. Let's invite them. It is better than not having any support, after all."

Chapter 1553 The First Exploration (Part 3)

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After waiting for quite a while, Shin finally saw the pair of siblings running toward them.

He immediately spotted them and waved his hand in their direction. That was also when he realized that an extra person was accompanying the two.

Seeing that person, he could not help but laugh before turning to Leonard. "Yoh! It seems like you will have some problems this time."

Leonard looked at Shin confusedly before turning toward the direction of the city gates. That was when he saw Lorraine jogging toward them. The corner of his mouth twitched as he saw her before sighing helplessly.

"At least, she is not doing anything excessive inside the game," he said.

Shin raised his brows when he heard that before asking. "Excessive? Like what?"

Leonard could not help but groan when he heard that as he knew that he had dug his own grave. "It is nothing."

Seeing that Leonard was trying to dodge the topic, Shin grew suspicious and squinted his eyes. "Wait a minute. Don't tell me-..."

Before Shin could even complete his words, Leonard quickly denied it. "It is not like you what you think!"

"Let's just say that she finally managed to crack the stone heart of this dude?" Arthur quickly chimed in, joining the fun.

Leonard quickly turned toward the other side and glared at Arthur before saying. "You-... How about you also tell Shin the hidden story behind you and Flouree?"

Arthur frowned as he responded. "I have already told you everything about it, don't I?"

Leonard shook his head and quickly added. "That is not what I've heard from our old friends in the Earners Mercenary Group. They are also from the old team that you worked with Flouree."

"They are just making up something!" Arthur tried to deny it.

But the stronger he denied it, the clearer for Shin and Leonard to know that there was more to it than the so-called 'promise' that Arthur had told them.

Shin shook his head as he saw the two start bickering with one another. They were even about to start a fight as they were pulling out their weapons.

Fortunately, Lorraine already reached the trio at that time alongside Samael and Huahua, preventing the fight from breaking out.

"What are you guys talking about? It sounds like a gossip!" said Lorraine as looked at the three with her suspicious gaze.

But after seeing that they had no intention of answering her, she put all her focus on Leonard. "How can you forget about me when you guys are about to go out and have some fun!?"

"You are the reason why I insisted on coming here!" she added, not bothering to hide her intentions and feelings at all.

Samael looked at the scene with a stunned face, still unable to believe how Lorraine proactively chased after Leonard despite seeing such a sight whenever he saw the two meet each other.

Huahua, on the other hand, looked at Lorraine with admiration. She was thinking that this big sister was quite impressive for being so open about her feelings.

Shin ignored everything else and turned to the pair of siblings. "We are going quite deep in the wilderness, so there is a high chance that we will encounter quite a lot of powerful monsters."

He paused and pointed at Lorraine, who quickly snatched Leonard's arm and hugged it. "But since this big sister of yours is around, we don't have to worry much about your safety."

"Eh~!? You want me to babysit them during this adventure!?" complained Lorraine, understanding what Shin was trying to say.

"You are already here, so it will be more efficient if you look after them. This can let the three of us focus on dealing with the frontlines," refuted Leonard as he was trying his best to retrieve his arm from being squeezed between two soft mounds.

Unfortunately, Lorraine refused to back down and continued to cling to it.

Shin ignored them once again and continued to explain their formation to the two. "The two of you will only be focusing on supporting us."

"Samael will be providing the healing and buffs at the backline while Huahua can summon her auxiliary totems to further enhance our strength and cast a couple of curses whenever you have the chance."

Hearing this, Huahua quickly added. "I can heal too, vice commander! I have learned quite a lot of healing spells during our last mission in the Sacred Light Kingdom! I have even learned how to summon a Healing Totem and Mana Totem from the elves!"

Shin smiled and patted her head as he said. "That's good then. But make sure to follow your big brother's lead during the battle."

"And you don't have to call me Vice Commander. Just Big Brother Shin of Big Bro Shin will do," he added.

"Un!" Huahua nodded while smiling.

Shin then turned to Lorraine. "Since you have experience in being a commander, take command of these two during our battles. I want to focus on fighting since I have to consolidate my newly improved techniques as well."

"You can leave it to me! I will train them well!" said Lorraine with confidence.

Then Shin turned to Samael and continued. "We will also find a good time to let you fight in the frontline later, so you have to be prepared when that opportunity arrives. It will be a part of your training."

Samael nodded his head repeatedly, feeling quite excited. From his perspective, this was a good chance to officially become a member of the Empyrean Talons.

"Alright, let's go!" instructed Shin as he summoned Whitie, who was currently in his white tiger form.

The others also summoned their respective mounts before dashing toward their destination.

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After a couple of hours of journey, the group finally left the 'safe' area surrounding Divinity City.

What they call 'safe' was the border between the regions that were filled with regular monsters and the one infested with higher-rank monsters.

For their group, regular monsters of this place were nothing. After all, four of them could handle one or two monsters on their own despite these 'regular' monsters having the strength of King-Class Monsters from the Aurora Continent.

The group grinded a couple of monsters along the way. But since they were quite in a hurry to reach their destination, they had avoided some monster nests or packs along the way.

Arthur was already familiar with the topography of the region since he had already investigated the place previously, so the group had an easier time when advancing.

But they drastically slowed down when they reached the region where the Elite Monsters were located.

"This should be the place, but we still have to advance a little deeper since the cave where my quest is pointing us is at the inner region of this map," explained Arthur as he reached the edge of the map.

Shin observed the place with his enhanced senses along with Leonard before saying. "Tsk! This is quite troublesome. This region is indeed infested with a lot of Elite Monsters."

Elite Monsters of the Awakened Continent were comparable to Emperor Class Monsters of the Aurora Continent, so the group had to be extra careful when advancing since they would not want to be surrounded by a group of such monsters when they were advancing.

"We will stay on formation. We will be treading our way as slowly as possible to avoid any accidents," said Shin, warning the group.

This was where the real challenge would start.

They just spent a couple of minutes traversing the forest when they encountered their first Elite Monster on this continent.

Monster Name: Iron-Skinned Wild Boar

Rank: Elite

Life Rating: None

Level: 165

Health Points: 1,000,000,000

Description:

A wild boar that has evolved through a high concentration of mana. It has mutated to have an iron-like skin due to the high density of metal elements in the habitat where it lives.

It has a very sturdy defense due to the iron skin that it possesses and a strong charging power.

Its tusks possess a deadly power that can pierce through boulders and crush any rock.

Note 1: Its skin and tusks were good materials for creating armor and weapons.

While the flesh is inedible for humans and other races; it was an ideal food for dragons or metal-related creatures.

Note 2: Due to this creature living in a place filled with a high density of Metal Elemental Mana, there is a high chance that it will form a Beast Core (Metal).

Seeing the basic description of the monster, Arthur's eyes could not help but turn bright as he realized something. "These updated features when observing the monsters through ocular skills will be very helpful in the future."

"It has become more convenient since we can now know which are the possible materials that we can harvest from every monster we encounter."

After the most recent update, gathering the materials from the hunted monsters became more common, especially when hunting in the wild.

After all, high-level and high-quality equipment and weapons were required to be crafted as the monsters could no longer drop any items or equipment after dying. Unless they were humanoid monsters that wielded certain tools before they died in battle.

Items, weapons, and pieces of armor could only be found in the wild through chests and humanoid monsters, which was why the monster materials became in high demand after the most recent patch of 'World Metamorphosis'.

However, the conditions in the Awakened Continent had become somewhat different compared to the Aurora Continent.

Instead of listing out the skills of the monsters, the players now had to figure out the possible skills of their targets, which would make the battle a little trickier.

"Go test it out," said Shin to Arthur, waking up the latter from his fantasies.

"Tsk! Isn't it just a wild boar? What's the need to make a big deal out of it?" complained Arthur as he walked toward the monster after making sure that it was alone.

"Don't underestimate it. Don't forget that you almost died in the hands of a little bunny earlier," Shin chuckled recalling how a single bunny managed to sneak an attack at Arthur earlier.

Arthur groaned when he recalled such an incident. "Don't worry. I will not let my guard down this time."

He then glared at the wild boar in the distance and said. "This big guy should be decent enough to test my current style."

Chapter 1554 Monsters of the Awakened Continent

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Right after Arthur stepped into the 50-meter-range radius around the iron-skinned wild boar, he immediately attracted the attention of the monster.

"Eh!? Isn't the aggro range of this monster a little too absurd?" he commented when he saw the angry boar facing his direction.

From the monsters that they had encountered earlier, the aggro range that they had seen up until now was averaging between 25 to 30 meters, depending on what kind of monster it was.

Those aggro ranges alone were already absurd enough given that the monsters from the Aurora Continent only had a range of 5 to 20 meters depending on what type of monsters they were. Even those monsters from the Overlord Rank and above only had a maximum of 35 meters.

They had only encountered the monsters raging from common up to elite rank, yet their aggro range was already this wide. Then what about those monsters with higher ranks?

Even though the terrains and topography of the maps could also affect the aggro range of the monsters like a forest where the trees could block the vision of the monsters or the grass plains where nothing could be hidden from the eyes of the monsters, the basic range of the monsters' aggro was still a little too huge.

The weather conditions of the regions could also be another factor, but even that would also make it harder for the players to fight, especially when the monsters' abilities could also be enhanced based on these conditions.

"It looks like this is going to be a bit trickier for the players to hunt in this continent once they start flooding here," mumbled Arthur as he readied himself for the battle while shouting to the other. "Ready the buffs! I want to try facing this one head-on."

Hearing those words, Shin knew that Arthur wanted to test the limits of his tanking abilities – he wanted to know which level or rank of a monster he could tank by himself on this continent.

Shin signaled to Samael to not hold back anything and to use every buff he could give aside from the special ones and the trump cards that they needed to save for emergencies and had quite a long cooldown.

Samael quickly raised his sword and pointed it in the sky while chanting out some prayers unique to the Church of the Sun and Moon.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Golden light quickly befell on Arthur, enveloping him with glowing specks of light that resembled the stars in the night sky.

There was also the moonlight glow that shone upon him from the sky, further enhancing the already high stats that Arthur possessed.

Aside from these, some additional buffs that came from the common paladins befell Arthur one after another, further strengthening him.

"Pretty decent," complimented Arthur as he took the initiative to charge toward the wild boar.

These buffs might not be as broken as the ones that Cloe provided to the team, but they already surpassed the common standards of the players and somewhat reached the level of top Titled Rankers.

As Arthur was charging toward the wild boar, the monster seemed to have taken a battle stance as it suddenly widened its front hooves and firmly planted them on the ground.

It then started scraping one of its front hooves on the ground, kicking dirt in the air, while glaring at the incoming player.

Bang!

Swoosh!

Then, all of a sudden, the wild boar started charging at Arthur with an absurd speed along with an unstoppable force, which resembled a bullet train in the real world.

The pupils of Arthur's eyes immediately contracted when he saw that, especially when he could sense the wind blast being produced by the monster during its charge.

"Sh*t!" he could not help but curse as he could see that this charge could give him a lot of damage if he did not take it seriously.

With that, he quickly enveloped his entire body with his unique mana manipulation technique, which quickly turned into the huge head of a golden dragon that opened its mouth wide while charging toward it.

It was one of his signature techniques!

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

Roar!

Boom!

The collision between the two sides resulted in a powerful shockwave upon the impact.

Swoosh!

Arthur was pushed back by the collision, skidding backward and leaving a pair of deep trails on the ground with his feet.

(-100,245)

A huge chunk of his Health Bar had also been taken out as the glaring red numbers of six digits flashed above his head.

Even if his health bar was currently in a couple of millions due to his top-class equipment along with a bunch of buffs cast upon him, such a number was still quite huge, especially when his defense should be quite high as well.

After recovering his footing, he quickly raised his head and looked at the wild boar opposite to him, which was currently taking a couple of steps back due to the previous impact.

Aside from a dozen of thousands of health that were taken out by the recent collision, the monster seemed to be relatively fine compared to him.

"Tsk! I guess this is going to be a little troublesome," he commented after realizing that an Elite Monster of his continent was way different from what they had expected.

It was even slightly stronger than an Emperor Class Monster from the Auror Continent and somewhat bordering the level of a World Boss Monster from that place.

"But this is also quite good!" he added as his blood boiled in excitement due to the challenge.

It had been a while since he felt this feeling when hunting a monster. This reminded him of when he found his first monster when he just started playing a virtual-reality game as well as his previous experience when the «True Era» Online was first released before.

He stared at the wild boar with a burning gaze before shouting. "Let's go!"

Bang!

He then kicked the ground and started charging at the monster, taking the initiative to attack once more.

Seeing the player was provoking it, the wild boar seemed to have become enraged and roared before charging at Arthur for another time.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

The ground seemed to have shaken from each stomp of its hooves while charging toward the little creature rushing toward it.

BOOM!

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Repeated explosions occurred as Arthur and the wild boar clashed against each other, producing overlapping shockwaves for every collision.

What was surprising about this scene was how the monster fought against Arthur. The wild boar was not just doing some regular charging attacks, unlike the other boar-type monsters that every player had encountered in any game.

Instead, this monster seemed to be using some sort of 'combat technique' while fighting as it was regularly using its hooves to stomp on the ground to produce strong ripples that interrupted Arthur's footing and sent huge debris in the air as if it were shooting bullets.

At the same time, the wild boar was also using its tusk as some sort of weapon and it repeatedly swung them to clash against Arthur's spear and shield.

Shin and the others, who were watching this scene from a certain distance could not help but become a little surprised as it was way different from their previous experiences when they were traveling toward this place.

The regular monsters that they had encountered earlier might be strong, rivaling the peak predators of the previous continent, but they were still somewhat following the common features of a monster based on their species.

Even their attack patterns were very similar but twice or three times stronger than the regular monsters of the same type.

But this particular boar in front of them was showing them a whole other level of combat prowess that indicated how high the level of the AI that they possessed.

The ceiling of this monster was absurdly high, especially when its battle instincts were put into consideration.

Now, Shin fully understood what Longinus, the Leader of the Mysterious Instructors, meant when he told him that the monsters from that special trial were nothing compared to the ones on this continent.

After Arthur fully secured the aggro of the monster, Shin finally gave the signal to the group to get ready to join the battle.

"Lorraine, take over the command for the support. Leo and I will be joining in," he instructed before dashing toward the battle alongside Leonard.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

"Little Huahua, keep your pace. Just make sure to not let Arthur's health fall below 50%. Samael, you also support her with your healing spells," instructed Lorraine as she pulled out her sniper rifle.

After loading her specialized magazine filled with armor-piercing bullets, she took her aim while saying. "I will only be giving you a few instructions later when it is needed, but I will let you do your job on your own most of the time."

"Since this journey is meant to test and train the two of you, I want to see to what extent your current abilities can reach – whether you are truly worthy of investment."

"I want to see how you are going to respond under pressure and test your judgment during such an intense battle."

She paused for a moment as she thought of something before adding. "The previous monsters that we encountered earlier are a little lacking in doing this, so this is your real test right now."

She then turned her attention back to the battle as Shin and Leonard were about to join Arthur on the front lines.

Chapter 1555 Monsters of the Awakened Continent (Part 2)

.....

Sensing the presence of the two dashing before behind, Arthur clicked his tongue as an unwilling expression flashed on his face.

He wanted to face this monster by himself, but he knew that it would take quite a lot of time, especially when he was in a hurry to find the fragment of his Divine Armor.

Moreover, he could also feel the rapid draining of his concentration and mental strength after exchanging blows with this wild boar.

If he insisted on fighting it by himself, then it would not take that long for him to be mentally exhausted even if he successfully defeated this monster.

This was just the first monster that they were facing in this region, so he had to be patient and save as much strength as possible since they still had a long way to go.

"Switch!" he said, telling the two that he needed to take a breather for a moment.

Swoosh!

He then dodged the attack of the boar and hopped to the side, letting the monster brush past him.

"Hold my beer!" Leonard shouted as he suddenly appeared before the wild boar while carrying his pair of war axes.

Boom!

He swung them down, clashing on the monster's head and forcing the boar to crash to the ground.

(-20,235)

A pretty decent damage appeared above the monster's head, indicating that Leonard's attack was a bit effective.

At the same time, Leonard quickly flipped in midair before landing on the head of the wild boar and jumping high up in the air.

Raising a pair of war axes above his head, Leonard gathered his crimson mana in them before he fell from the air like an unstoppable meteor.

Swoosh!

'Supreme Blood Sutra: Descent of the Crimson Destroyer'

Roar!

A huge lion's head was formed as Leonard's mana blazed violently around him during his rapid descent.

Boom!

(-255,245)

Huge numbers appeared on the head of the wild boar as Leonard struck it on its head, taking a huge chunk of its health bar.

Roar!

Seemingly enraged by the attack, the boar quickly recovered itself and stood up while releasing a powerful shockwave along with its roar.

Then it glared at Leonard, who was still in midair after bouncing off from the previous impact. The wild boar quickly charged at him with loud noises produced by its hooves.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

It opened its huge mouth, planning to devour Leonard, who was still trying to regain his balance in the air.

Bang! Bang!

Swoosh! Swoosh!

But before the monster could even reach its target, a series of gunshots could be heard from the distance, accurately hitting the inside of its widely opened mouth.

Oink~!

The wild boar cried in pain as the armor-piercing bullets embedded themselves in the mouth of the monster after hitting its mouth.

Ta-ta!

It was at that time that Leonard finally landed on the ground.

Bang! Bang!

He then squatted his hips as he tightened his muscles while holding the war axes. After concentrating all his strength, he suddenly swung the war axes upwards, sending a strong gale that somewhat pushed the giant body of the wild boar toward the air.

'Destroyer Skill (Tier 2): Planetary Lifting'

Swoosh!

As the wild boar was thrown in the air, Shin suddenly leaped alongside it while maintaining his signature sword-drawing stance.

Crackle! Crackle!

The black and white flashes of lightning danced around him, producing a series of electric sounds, while he was channeling his mana toward his sheathed sword.

Click!

When the familiar subtle sound reverberated in the air, Shin's right arm disappeared as he pulled the [Yamato] out from its sheath and swung it at the wild boar, creating multiple sword flashes intertwining with one another while focusing on a single point.

Shing!

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Quick Draw (Lightning) – Flash Requiem'

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

(-266,552)

Despite landing a clean hit on the monster, Shin could not help but frown deeply when he saw the damage that he had dealt.

Despite using one of his strongest single-target skills, he only dealt such a 'pitiful' damage to the monster.

This indicated how strong the defenses of the wild boar were before them.

It will still take them quite some time before they emptied the huge health pool of this monster.

...

Understanding what Shin was thinking from the distance, Lorraine quickly instructed. "Little Huahua put up the strengthening totems along with the debuff totems."

"Also, summon a few of your ghost soldiers that can put more curses on that monster," she added after a brief consideration.

The little shaman did not dillydally and conjured a few wooded items from her palms before throwing them in the air.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

These wooden sticks swiftly grew into huge poles with strange faces engraved on each of them as Huahua chanted a series of incantations.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Some of the totems landed meticulously to surround the wild boar while the others landed near Shin and the other two.

The former group of totems released an ominous aura that spread in every direction before engulfing the huge body of the wild boar while the latter group of totems released a warm light that basked Shin, Arthur, and Leonard to boost their respective stats.

Wail~! Wail~!

At the same time, there was a pair of huge gates appeared behind Huahua as she pointed toward the monster in the distance.

These gates released a flood of ghosts that launched themselves on the wild boar.

The ghosts did not deal that much damage to the monster, only showing a bunch of single-digit numbers above its head. But alongside it, a series of icons appeared under the health bar of the monster, indicating the status effects and debuffs that those ghosts had given it.

But that was not the end as a huge female spirit appeared behind Huahua, wearing tattered white clothes along with messy hair hiding a pair of crimson eyes underneath.

It was a banshee!

Shriek~!

Without further ado, the banshee released a deafening scream that reverberated in the entire place, shaking the soul of the wild boar.

Fortunately, the scream was contained within the area as the surrounding totems blocked the sound and prevented it from spreading anywhere.

Lorraine could not help but glance at Huahua as she found that the spells that the little shaman had used seemed to be quite high-level.

She was about to say something, planning to give Huahua some advance not to just that many high-level spells carelessly and save them for emergencies when the little shaman suddenly said to her. "Big Sister Nala, do I also need to use my high-level debuffs?"

Lorraine stared at the little shaman for a couple of moments before asking. "Those are just regular spells?"

Huahua innocently nodded. "Un! They have a few minutes of cooldown time but compared to my advanced spells that need hours of cooldown time, these are nothing."

"No-... there is no need to use the advance spells should be enough," said Lorraine before turning her attention back to the battle.

Regardless, she could not help but say to herself. 'How broken is the class of this little girl? I am afraid that even those three will be scared if such numbers of debuffs are cast on them during the battle.'

She then recalled something before shaking her head. 'Well, there is no one who is not ordinary among the members of their team. Every one of them possesses an absurdly broken class.'

"Well~! It is not like I am an exception as well," she mumbled to herself before providing some cover fire for the three.

...

The 'raid' lasted for almost thirty minutes before the group was able to take down the iron-skinned wild boar, making the group somewhat troubled.

"This is quite problematic. If we have taken such a lot of time just to take down a single boar, then I can't imagine how long are we going to take before we reach our destination," commented Lorraine as she sat on the nearby boulder.

"It feels like we are raiding a boss monster rather than elite," she added with a slight frown.

Given the strength of their team and the quality of their equipment, taking such a long time just to take down a single Elite Monster was quite long, especially when their team was composed of three Godlike Players and a Maverick Ranker rivaling a Maverick God.

Leonard nodded in agreement before turning to Shin and Arthur, who were busily disassembling the corpse of the wild boar that they had just taken down.

Shin paused his actions for a moment and thought of something before replying. "The hunting time is quite problematic indeed, but the experience points that we have gotten are quite decent given our current level."

"Moreover, these materials that we have harvested from it are quite good as well," he added while raising the 'leather' that they had gotten after skinning the corpse along with the Metal Elemental Beast Core he had gotten from its abdomen.

"The only problem is our supplies. Our potion will be running out before we know it if we continue at this pace," he considered before adding. "Repairing some of our tools and equipment that require it will not be a problem since we have a blacksmith and tailor, but crafting a potion will be a problem since we don't have any alchemist in our team."

"If we are not careful at using our potions, then we will most likely run out of supplies before we reach the cave that Arthur is talking about."

"Moreover, we also don't know if that place has a dungeon or not, so it is another problem," he then paused before turning to Arthur. "How about we avoid fighting as much as we can for now and rush toward the location?"

"Then we will investigate whether there is a dungeon in that place or not. After that, we will decide whether to call the others to clear it as fast we can."

Arthur thought for a moment before agreeing. "Alright, let's go with that for now. I also feel that we have to save our stamina and mental strength as much as possible given that there are still some places where we can't avoid the monsters inside the region."

After discussing their next course of action, the group rested for a few more minutes before proceeding to their adventure.

Chapter 1556 Monsters of the Awakened Continent (Part 3)

.....

Shin and the others were able to reach quite deep into the map after spending a little over half a day of exploration.

During their adventures, they encountered quite a lot of Elite Monsters, particularly boar-type monsters, along the way.

After battling a lot of monsters during their journey, the group was able to adjust themselves to the new environment and managed to familiarize themselves with the attack patterns of the monsters that they had encountered.

Even though some of these boar-type monsters showed some signs of improving in the heat of the battle due to their high AI and battle instincts, the group was still able to increase their efficiency in the battle.

Not only was their hunting time shortened by a large margin, but they had also grown stronger after improving and polishing their fighting styles on this continent.

Regardless, the group was still quite unsatisfied with the speed they were advancing. They still felt that they were going a little too slow than their ideal pace, especially so when they encountered a group of boars of regular-rank led by a Special Elite Boar.

The group of boars was quite small as it was only composed of three common-rank monsters and one special elite one. But they struggled so hard that they were almost pushed into a corner.

Dealing with the three regular monsters of this continent was not a problem since the monster trio and Lorraine could handle one of them by themselves. But that was their current limit as handling more would be quite a problem even for them.

Then there was the Special Elite Monster, which was a cut above the Elite Rank Boars that they had encountered up until now.

Even for someone like Arthur, holding his ground against such a monster was quite hard, especially when it had a series of unpredictable attack patterns.

In terms of stats alone, then Elite Rank boars and Special Elite ones were not that much different from one another. The only difference that they had was the latter did not follow the regular logic of its species.

The Special Elite Boars did not have a standard attacking pattern, but their movements were still a little restricted by their kind.

However, there were also times when the Special Elite Boar that they had encountered defied the laws of nature and attacked differently from its species just like when it leaped into the air and dived down to the group when it was fighting them.

As Shin, Leonard, and Lorraine were dealing with the regular boars, Arthur was left to deal with the Special Elite boar while Samael and Huahua were providing some assistance from a safe distance.

After also almost lost his life during that battle due to a little mistake that Huahua had made due to the intensity of the battle. She almost crumbled due to the pressure, making her panic and commit some mistakes.

Fortunately, Samael was quite experienced and able to make up for it by using some of his trump cards.

Arthur was able to respond to the situation as well and he used a dual Elemental Possession during that time of crisis.

The group was able to survive that predicament after the other three experts were able to deal with the regular boars that they were fighting and joined Arthur.

...

"Now, now~! Don't let it get into you, Little Huahua. Making such mistakes is quite common in that kind of situation. I also have committed such mistakes before and they are much worse! Don't feel so down, okay?" Lorraine was trying to comfort the little shaman.

"Don't worry about earlier, Huahua. Not will happen even if you accidentally do something. We all are strong, you know? We can handle all kinds of situations, so all you have to do is focus on improving yourself," said Arthur, trying to do the same.

Unfortunately, his words made the situation worse, earning him a sharp glare from Lorraine and rolling eyes from Leonard.

Shin shook his head as well as he saw that Huahua was on the verge of crying. He then walked over to the little shaman after he was done gathering the materials from the elite boar that they had taken down and patted her head. "Huahua, it is fine to have a shortcoming since the other members of our group can fill in the missing areas."

"Just like I can fight in the front lines, you can support us with your spells from the distance. That is why we are a team – we can always rely on each other."

He then paused for a moment to let Huahua digest his words before continuing. "Moreover, isn't your reason for coming here to train with us? You can always improve along with us."

"For now, you can rely on us – big brothers and big sister – then we can rely on you in the future. What do you think?" he asked with a smile.

Sniff! Sniff!

"Un!" Huahua nodded heavily as she wiped the little tears at the corner of her eyes.

"That's right! Huahua is strong as well!" complimented Shin after seeing the resolute expression on her face before turning to others. "Alright, let's rest for now before continuing."

Lorraine stayed with Huahua as she continued to comport the little shaman while Samael stood behind them.

On the other hand, the Monster Trio find a corner to sit on before discussing with themselves.

"Advancing further is getting a little harder. Should we pause for a moment and ask the others if they can join us?" asked Leonard as recalled their previous experience.

Arthur, who had been fully confident since earlier, could not help but admit that the situation was quite different from what he had expected. "Some monsters are starting to gather as well. This doesn't happen when I am scouting the area along with the NPC Escorts that I have hired previously."

"It seems like something is happening in the depths of his map," he added.

As someone who was quite experienced in the virtual world, Arthur's sense of smell when it came to finding treasures and hidden quests started to kick in. "Don't you think this smells like a special quest?"

The other two felt this as well since the monsters they encountered were growing stronger and increasing their numbers.

They were also frequently encountering more monsters as they got deeper into the area. At first, it would take them quite a while before they encountered another Elite Monster, but they were bumping into more monsters after dozens of minutes.

They were even sometimes when they were attracting the attention of the nearby monsters as they battled, making the situation much trickier to deal with.

If they were not careful, they would be attacked by the horde of boars while busily fighting another.

This would likely happen even if they used the safest route that Arthur had provided them.

"Moreover, the situation in that cave can be more problematic than what we are experiencing here outside. After all, there is a high possibility that there is a dungeon within that cave," added Leonard as he leaned on the tree behind him.

"What do you think?" asked Shin as he turned to Arthur.

This was Arthur's quest, after all, so they had to consult him on what he wanted to do.

Arthur also understood their situation and fell silent. He was starting to consider what to do next when he glanced at the digital clock at the corner of his eyes. "We still have a lot of time before we log out. How about we continue a little further to understand the situation a little more?"

"Then we can ask the others if they are done with their respective business before asking for some assistance from them. There is a scheduled team training tomorrow anyway so that we can discuss it after that."

Shin nodded as he agreed. "Alright, let's do that."

After that, they chatted a little before they opened their respective virtual screens to skim through the most recent topics in the online forums as they rested.

"Oh~! It seems like the situation at the Dark Cloud Kingdom is getting worse. More and more Demonic Monsters are appearing in that place as the members of the Demonic Churches are increasing their activities in that region," commented Leonard as he read the hottest topic that he had seen.

"The Big Guilds are also investing more into the Faction War as the rewards are also increasingly becoming alluring," nodded Arthur as he happened to be reading the same topic.

"But I think it is better to put more people at exploring the Awakened Continent," said Leonard as he could not help but recall all the benefits that they had gotten since they came here.

"They will struggle very much once they realize that the real battlefield will be this place. Adjusting in this environment will take a while, so those that are going to be late will be at a great disadvantage in the future," he added.

Arthur nodded once again. "Moreover, we are currently experiencing the pioneering rights as the first adventurers to arrive. They are treated quite well due to our special privileges."

"Those people, on the other hand, will be having a hard time adjusting once we reach the Awakened Continent without any backing. They will most likely be locked in the regular training facilities for quite a while, further delaying their progress."

Shin was reading the other topics when he suddenly received a message from Shiella. He then raised his brows when he read through the contents of the message.

After that, he turned to the two and relayed the message. "It seems like you guys have jinxed it. Big Sis said that she will be coming to the second continent a little earlier along with a selected few people from her Trading Firm and the guild that we are secretly nurturing."

He then paused for a moment as he took another look at the end of the message before continuing. "And it seems like quite a lot of powerhouse guilds have partnered up to do a special quest that gives them special recommendation letters from the Mysterious Instructors."

"It looks like the first big batch of players will be flooding the Awakened Continent sooner than we have expected."

Chapter 1557 Team Training (Part 1)

.....

As the group reached the deeper parts of the map, the challenges that Shin and the others were facing were starting to grow more difficult, particularly when they were starting to encounter a group of monsters more frequently instead of an isolated one.

For the experts like Shin, Arthur, and Leonard, such a thing was not a problem. Lorraine was relatively fine as well since she used to be a commander of a top adventurer team of the game, which regularly went on expeditions.

But it would be different for Samael and Huahua, who were somewhat of a casual player up until now before they joined the team as temporary members.

They had never experienced such a long and tenacious journey, which made them physically and mentally exhausted.

Putting the siblings into consideration, Shin decided to call it a day so that they could rest while also strategizing their next course of action.

The pair of siblings quickly thanked them before logging out of the game.

...

There was nothing eventful that happened in the real world when the group logged out as well.

Shin just went to his usual routine before studying the items that Professor Henry had gifted him, trying to see if he could find the suitable properties of his innate attributes.

He had spent quite a lot of time studying them, but he could not find the suitable properties that he was looking for. But he was not disappointed as it would only take a matter of time before he finally found what he was looking for now that he had already awakened all five of his innate attributes.

He knew that looking for suitable dual properties for his other three element attributes would not be easy, so he had to be patient and not rush things as it was alright right before him.

Shin almost spent the whole day studying the three natural treasures that were given to him with only his mealtime being his rest.

He had also found some time to organize and research some new applications and combinations of his newly improved Mentalism Method – given that he could now complete the entire elemental cycles with his five elemental attributes.

After that, Shin went to take a quick shower before going back to his gaming cabin and logged back into the virtual world.

Swoosh!

But instead of immediately going back to the game, he first logged into the virtual room of their adventurer team to meet with the others.

Today was a scheduled team training, so all of them were expected to be present.

When Shin appeared, everyone else was already gathered. He swept his gaze at everyone before chuckling. "I hope that I am not that late."

The group laughed for a while before Shin turned to Cloe and Arthur. "So, how do you guys usually do the group training?"

He had already read the training plan of the team and how they usually did their sparring matches. He even had watched some of them previously during his free time, trying to understand the team composition and synergies of their team.

However, since he was not familiar with how they usually did the training program when they were all gathered, he had to understand them more.

"We usually group ourselves into two teams, dividing our key members equally. Then we will have a straight-up team battle for a couple of rounds before switching teams for another round or two," replied Cloe.

"But even with that, the team which Cloe belonged to usually won the battle," commented Arthur as the group nodded.

Well, that was to be expected since having her would greatly boost not only the survival of the team but also enhance the overall power of the team.

Having top-class support that not only had top-notch environmental and situational awareness but also possessed a series of broken skills on top of everything, especially in the team full of peak experts, was somewhat of a cheat.

"Cloe and I are also forbidden to be on the same team since it was too hard for the other team to deal with," added Arthur with a smug face.

"But since Cloe's team wins all the time, then yours always loses since you are from the opposing side," refuted Shin as he shook his head while Arthur started to show his narcissistic side.

Cough!

Arthur was choked by the next words that failed to come out of his mouth after hearing what Shin had said.

Shin ignored this guy and started considering the state of their team.

What Arthur had said was quite reasonable too, especially when their familiarity with each other was already way ahead of the others. Adding their top-notch skills for being peak gods of their respective roles, being on the same team was indeed a cheat over another cheat.

With Cloe's support, Arthur could freely wreak havoc on the other side. Even if Owen was quite good himself as a tank, the gap in great was still overwhelming, especially when Arthur had access to Elemental Spirit Possession.

Owen did not have a Transcendent Race, which was why he could not form a contract with any Elemental Spirits. Even if he had successfully gotten Justin's Class and became an Ascended Race due to it, there were still some cards under Arthur's arsenal that could easily suppress Owen.

Even if Arthur was banned from using his Elemental Possession, the matchup was still leaning towards Arthur.

This led the team to pull in Leonard while Diablo was taken by the opposing side to balance everything.

Then Alice and Alucard had to be distributed on either team to maintain this balance.

The outcome of the two teams would always be decided by the showdown between the top three members they had – it would be the trio of Cloe, Leonard, and Alice or Alucard against Arthur, Diablo, and the remaining one between those two.

But since the former team composition possessed top-notch support, their advantage was still quite huge. Even if Diablo was constantly harassing Cloe during the battle to distract her, it was still not enough to win the battle.

Now, with Shin's addition, this balance would surely be broken down.

Whichever team he chose, that team would most likely win even if the opposition had a pretty good composition on their side.

He was silent for quite a while before coming up with a conclusion. "Since this is the case, then let's ban her from participating in any kind of team battle when we are doing it ourselves."

"Eh!?" Cloe was slightly taken aback by his words, wanting to complain. But after putting it into consideration, she knew that this was the best course of action given the overall composition of their team.

Even if Huahua could join the other side and provide some auxiliary assistance for that team, she was still too far to match Cloe given the gap in experience.

Cloe could only dejectedly accept it while sharply glaring at Shin, seemingly blaming him.

Shin gave her an apologetic smile before turning to the others. "Alright, we are going to divide ourselves according to the previous arrangement."

"The three of us can't be all in the same team. At least two at most will be fine," he said while pointing to Arthur, Leonard, and himself.

After all, the three of them knew each other for quite a long time and had been a team for multiple secret operations in the real world, putting the three of them together on a single team would be brutal for the other side.

Even if Diablo, Alucard, and Alice were comparable in terms of mechanics and fighting capabilities, the game in terms of team synergy would be huge.

Even if Cloe joined their team, dealing with these three together would without a doubt a huge headache for them.

"The rest will have to draw lots based on their overall roles," he added.

...

Not long after, the two teams were finally decided.

Shin and Diablo were put on the same along with Alucard. Their additional members were Owen and Ithilien with Samael being the sixth-man.

Their team composition of dual marksmen with Owen being the sole frontline alongside two speed-type members was quite balanced given that they were running an all-offensive team.

Their opposition on the other hand was composed of Arthur and Leonard as the main frontliners while a dual mage at the backline with Alice and Daulla. Archimedes was the additional marksman with Huahua being the sixth-man.

Akailu and Chaotic Luck, on the other hand, pulled an empty paper earlier, which put them in the audience seat alongside Cloe. There was also Lorraine, who joined to join the fun.

After that, the two teams were given a five-minute time for quick planning before they started the training.

...

"Should I harass their backline members and focus on the little shaman if they have put her on the starting lineup?" asked Diablo as he walked toward Shin.

Shin thought for a moment before shaking his head. "That will be unnecessary. We are training our synergy for this match, so it is better to practice some strategic plays rather than going for the regular ones."

"Moreover, bullying that kid will not make her improve," he paused as he glanced at Diablo before adding. "With someone like you trying to suppress her, there is a high chance that you will crush her spirit."

"Isn't it better? We can hone her much earlier and build up a good mindset in the long run," said Diablo.

Shin shook his head for another time. "Nah, we can have more chances for that in the future. Moreover, if he tried to make the battle more chaotic, she must decide which side to help first."

"That way, we can train her environmental and situational awareness along with her decision-making. It can also train her to have a firm mind," he paused before asking. "Isn't it better?"

Diablo shrugged his shoulder as he could not find any words in response to that.

Alucard also agreed, nodding his head, before asking. "So, what is the plan?"

Shin thought for a moment as he looked at their team composition before making suggestions. "I do have something that I want to practice. Are you guys up to give it a try?"

The group exchanged glances with one another before nodding their heads. They were quite familiar with Shin and very impressed with his strategic skills, so they would have no objections if he came up with some.

"Alright... listen carefully."

Chapter 1558 Team Training (Part 2)

.....

The two groups stood across each other with their respective leaders. Shin and Arthur stood face-to-face as they extended their hands for a shake.

"Are you ready to get your *ss kicked?" asked Arthur with a smug face. With the current lineup of his team, he believed that they had a slight edge over the other side, especially when it came to firepower.

Moreover, their team had a stronger frontline as Leonard and himself were on the same team. He refused to believe that Owen would be able to hold his ground against the two of them, so Shin had to step up and help the frontline.

As for their backline members, everything would be fine so long as Alice was able to keep Diablo in check since that Shadow Dancer would without a doubt try to harass their backline.

"Heh~!" Shin smirked at Arthur after hearing those provoking words before replying. "Make sure not to cry, alright?"

Shin then looked over Arthur's shoulders to check on their starting lineup and saw Alice, Leonard, Daulla, and Huahua standing in the distance.

"It seems like you are also planning to train that little girl," he commented after seeing Huahua starting instead of Archimedes, who was Daulla's main partner, who was supposed to have a good synergy with one another.

Arthur shrugged his shoulder as he said. "Isn't that that what you want? This match is meant to practice our synergy with the other members of the team and train the less skilled ones."

"Moreover, that kid needs to have a firm mind if she wants to continue following us. We have to thoroughly train her so that she can keep up with our pace."

Shin stared blankly at Arthur for a couple of moments before shaking his head while wearing a bitter smile. He then tapped the shoulder of the latter and said. "It seems like you have grown up a little."

"If it is before, then you will surely try to do everything to beat us. But it seems like you have matured enough to think of your little teammates," he added, chuckling, before turning around.

"In response to that, let me show you something interesting," Shin waved his hand as he walked away to join his team.

Arthur looked at Shin's back suspiciously before heading back to his team.

Seeing the confused expression on Arthur's face, Leonard could not help but ask. "Why? Is there something wrong?"

Arthur was silent for a moment before shrugged his shoulders. "I am not sure either. But given his personal and his understanding of us, I am sure that he is plotting something."

He then swept his gaze at everyone before saying. "We can forget about that for a moment, but we also have to take note of it."

"Whatever that guy is scheming, we must have to keep guards up at all times to make sure not to get off-guard," he added as he signaled to them to get in position.

...

As the other side was forming their battle formation, Shin reached his team and clarified. "Alright. You already know what to do with your assignments, so there is no need to discuss it further."

He then turned to Samael and Owen as he warned them seriously. "But you have to remember that our purpose in this match is to increase our familiarity with each other while also trying to improve our synergy."

"You don't need to stress yourselves trying to defeat the other side. Just stick to the plan and make sure to focus."

He then paused for a moment as he turned to Samael as he added. "If you don't know what to do later, just forget about the rest of us and concentrate on helping Owen. We can handle ourselves."

He then looked at Diablo and Alucard as he added. "Then I will have to rely on you two."

In this plan of theirs, Shin assigned the most demanding and vital roles to these two. It could put them under a lot of pressure, which was quite exhausting as well. But since they found it unique and interesting, they wanted to give it a try.

Their focus here would be their strategy.

After giving them the final notes, the team finally went into formation, which looked somewhat strange.

Owen stood at the forefront of the group, which was something to expect given his role. Then there was Samael standing a couple of distance away from the former, with just enough space to cast his Paladin Buffs and Spells.

After that, Alucard stood at the very rear of the group. He was standing a decent distance away from the other two. But given that he was using a sniper rifle, and his role was a dedicated marksman, such a distance was nothing.

Shin and Diablo, on the other hand, disappeared from the eyes of everyone as they entered stealth.

Compared to the standard formation of the other group, Shin's team looked a little odd as the three stood in a straight line.

"Heh! I knew that he was up to something," commented Arthur as he saw the formation of the opposing team before smirking. "But tricks are nothing in front of absolute might!"

Bang!

Right after saying those words, Arthur could no longer wait and quickly kicked the ground and lunged himself forward.

Swoosh!

Golden aura quickly covered his entire body before transforming into a huge golden dragon with a wide-opened mouth.

Roar!

It charged straight to the opposing party like how he usually did.

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

Seeing Arthur's signature move, Owen could not help but shake his head as it went all according to what Shin had expected.

Arthur did not even bother to get some buffs from Huahua or for her to set up her totem formations.

One of the reasons was he was too confident of his strength while the other was he wanted the little shaman to squeeze her potential and force her to keep up with him.

This would surely put the little shaman under a lot of pressure, especially since this was her first time feeling such an intense competitiveness within the group.

While Huahua was starting to panic, Alice's voice sounded beside her. "Don't panic. Just focus on what you can do and maintain your pace."

"Start placing your totems while he attracts the attention of the other side. We will cover you," she added as she quickly waved her hand and summoned a huge group of icicles and fireballs in the air before firing them in different directions.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Bang! Bang! Bang!

The purpose of these spells was not to assist Arthur but to find if either Diablo or Shin went straight to them, trying to eliminate the backline together before their frontlines could respond.

Given the strength of those two and their insane movement speed, it would not be strange to reach their location within a couple of seconds. Even Leonard would have a hard time stopping those two by himself.

Swoosh!

Meanwhile, Arthur was about to reach Owen, who quickly placed his rectangular shield in front of him and planted it into the ground.

Bang!

Then he channeled his energies into it while Samael cast one buff after another to his body, boosting all his stats.

Swoosh!

Not long after, a towering wall manifested in front of Owen, blocking the golden dragon that was about to slam into it.

'Class-Fighting Style: The Great Wall of Heaven'

Boom!

As the two sides collided against each other, Arthur and Owen stood still in their respective positions with the former trying to break through by thrusting his spear forward while the latter struggled to stand firm as he pressed his shoulders on his rectangular shield to withstand the attack.

"Always been predictable," as Arthur was trying to pierce through the towering wall, Shin's voice suddenly rang beside him.

Shin appeared like a ghost as he unsheathed his katana.

Shing!

He then swung it horizontally while leaving a blazing trail in the air. He targeted the most vulnerable side for Arthur with his current position.

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Quickly Draw (Blazing): Flash Horizon'

Swoosh!

Arthur smirked when he saw the ambush before activating one of his defensive skills without any hesitation.

'Dragon Knight Skill (Tier 2): Dragon Absorption Scales'

Boom!

An explosion erupted as Shin's blazing sword collided against the scale-like layer over Arthur's armor.

"Same to you!" said Arthur with a triumphant expression.

Grr!

At this moment, Owen, who was still struggling to stand firm felt a sudden chill on his back. It felt like he was being stalked by a predatory beast in the dark forest.

Roar!

Leonard suddenly appeared behind Owen with his war axes raised in the air. He was planning to kill the knight in one hit so that they could focus on Shin and the others.

'Supreme Blood Sutra: Sanguine Cleaver'

It was a powerful single-target skill fused with Leonard's technique from the real world through the Reality Manifestation.

But before his war axes could fall, he felt that all hair all over his body stood due to the sudden dread that enveloped him.

Without any hesitation, he canceled his attack and ducked to the side.

Shing!

It was at that moment when a shadowy flash flew past over his head, where his neck was previously located. If he did not respond fast enough, his head would most likely be flying in the air now.

"Hey! Hey! Why are you there!? This is not supposedly how it works. You guys are not following the script!" Arthur spat out a series of complaints when he saw Diablo almost ambushing Leonard before disappearing for another stealth.

"Who says we are following a script?" chuckled Shin as he kicked Owen hard enough and sent the knight flying in another direction.

Bang!

That was when Leonard tried to cleave his war axe from behind, trying to complete his failed attempt earlier.

"Hey! Can you be a little gentler!?" shouted Owen as he tried to regain his footing in the distance.

That kick might not have dealt any damage, but the strength behind it was no joke. Owen felt like his innards were being shaken after withstanding the impact.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

At the same time, Shin and Diablo disappeared once again, making the entire arena fall in silence.

Arthur and Leonard did not immediately make their moves as they exchanged glances before cursing.

"F*ck! How dare he use the Shadowing Method of Military Stealth Unit on us!?"

"Hey! Isn't it that thing that we have seen from Military Training before?"

Chapter 1559 Team Training (Part 3)

.....

"Damn it! I should have realized that he is up to something not good after disappearing like an assassin!" complained Arthur after realizing what Shin was trying to do.

The strategic method that Shin was trying to incorporate into their team was one of the special battle formations that the military was using in the real world.

They might have only seen it once after the earlier exchange, but Arthur was sure that Shin was trying to train Alucard and Diablo to play special roles for future battles.

It might be not something new since there were also quite a lot of teams or even guilds that were trying to do similar things in their battle formations.

But what Shin was trying to do was an advanced fighting method that was exclusive to top units of the military not because it was something that only the military forces could learn, but because only those highly trained soldiers could practice it and put them in action.

It was bold of Shin to let his team use this method.

This would put a lot of burden on Diablo and Alucard, especially when they were the ones who needed to match the movements of Owen.

Shin would not have any problem with this due to his background, but the two were still uncertain if they could fully utilize this method.

Shin believed that they could, especially when he could tell that Alucard had a deep military background in the real world.

He believed that this gamble was worth it.

...

In the distance, where the rest of the Emyrean Talons were watching alongside Lorraine, who joined the fun, also heard Arthur and Leonard's voices as they exclaimed a little loud earlier.

"Shadow-... what? What are they talking about?" asked Chaotic Luck as he became curious about it.

As someone who learned quite a lot from Shin regarding battle formations and mobilizing his army of Solar Undead, he became invested in learning more formations.

"I think it has something to do with a military battle technique or method," Akailu, who regularly hung out with Alucard, was somewhat familiar with battle techniques of the military, especially when they also spar with each other during their free time.

Lorraine, who was close friends with the trio and Cloe, heard their conversation and chimed in. "It is the Shadowing Method. It is a battle tactic that is usually used by one of the units of special forces."

"However, they converted it into a battle tactic within the game," she then paused for a moment before continuing. "Instead of using the orthodox method where Shin and Diablo have to harass the backline members of the opposing side, they will be constantly shadowing every move of Owen."

"They will be following Owen's movements and responding to it based on the situation," she added before pointing her chin toward the battlefield.

This was quite understandable, especially when they were supposed to have a weaker frontline compared to their opposition.

They did not know how Shin came up with such a solution, but it was the best choice that they could make given the current situation.

If they went straight to the backline to eliminate the mages and the little shaman, Owen would be left behind to deal with either Arthur or Leonard.

Either one of those two was already a nightmare for Owen, much less the two of them together. The earlier exchange was the best example of this.

If not for Shin and Diablo's quick responses, then Owen would have most likely been eliminated in a single exchange, especially when he did not have Cloe's overpowered buffs and healing spells.

He would have most likely been lying on the ground. Then the two could rush toward Samael and Alucard in the opposite direction, matching Shin and Diablo's movements.

Akailu slightly frowned when he heard this before asking. "Isn't it a little inefficient? Why not let either Vice Commander Shin or Diablo shadow Owen instead of having both of them? Then the other one can harass the backline members of the other group. Isn't it more effective?"

This was indeed the best way to win the battle. By letting either of the two stay behind to help Owen, preferably Shin since that was the most ideal given their team composition.

But just like what he had said earlier, he wanted to train Huahua to get used to such a chaotic pace, where the battlefield was in a complete mess.

At the same time, he also wanted to teach Diablo and Alucard how to synergize with the team. After all, the main issue that their team was facing was teamwork and full trust with one another.

They could also practice a new battle formation that they could use in their future battles by doing this, which could be one of their trump cards.

With this solution, Shin was like hitting multiple birds with one stone – which also explained why he had chosen this method.

Not only it was the fastest way available for them to improve their teamwork, but it was also the more efficient method in Shin's eyes.

But the others did not know this, which was why they were quite confused with the decision.

But it was different from Lorraine and Cloe, who were very familiar with Shin.

"He most likely wants to see if Huahua can keep up with such a chaotic pace. After all, she lacks a lot of experience that can keep her calm and collected, which is quite crucial in battles between highly skilled experts," said Cloe, explaining Shin's line of thoughts.

"At the same time, he also wants his team to learn a different battle tactic, which is uncommon for this stage."

"In a content between groups of experts, the one with more trump cards to catch the opposing side off guard has the higher chance of winning."

"I think he wants us to learn more uncommon battle tactics based on different team compositions available for us," she added before focusing on the battle once again.

The centerpiece of this fighting method was neither Shin nor Diablo as they would only be responding to the difficult situation that Owen was in.

Owen was the key figure in this battle formation as he was setting the pace of the battle. Whatever situation he was in, the other two would always support his back, especially when he was in an inescapable predicament.

But this left the backline members of the opposing side free to do whatever they wanted.

Akailu also saw this and could not help but ask. "If they follow this tactic, where they have to invest almost all of their members to deal with Siegfried and Simba, then Charlotte (Alice), Daulla, and Huahua are free to use whatever cards they have."

"They are free to send all their spells to cover their frontlines, restricting most of the movements of Diablo and Vice Commander Shin."

Lorraine nodded in agreement but quickly added. "And that is where Alucard has to step in."

Alucard was there to oversee everything from the rear, doing multiple tasks at the same time.

He had to make sure that Samael was safe from any ambush while keeping an eye on the backline members of the opposing group. He was to fire at those mages and shaman to cancel their dangerous spells from time to time while also providing some cover fire for the three, who were fighting at the front lines.

This put him under a lot of pressure as he carried a much heavier burden than Owen.

"This is quite trickier then," commented Akailu as his expression turned a little serious.

Chaotic Luck, on the other hand, attentively listened to their discussion and was very eager to learn. This was another battle tactic that he could use later with his Legion of Chaotic Sun or at least got inspired by it.

...

On the other hand, the battle between the two teams continued.

Arthur was starting to get annoyed with Shin as this brother of his was constantly harassing him. Due to their familiarity with each other, Shin was able to accurately stop him from using his big moves to escape their predicament.

Due to the constant pressure coming from Shin, Owen, who was being assisted by Samael's buffs, he started to regain his footing and put up a better fight against Arthur.

"Hey! Hey! Isn't this a little unfair!? You guys are ganging up on me!" Arthur complained as he fought, trying to find the solution to their current situation.

"Hah! This is a team battle and not a one-on-one duel!" mocked Shin as he disappeared in stealth once again.

"If you can't endure it anymore, then use your Elemental Dragon Fusion!" Shin laughed provokingly.

"You are the one who said that it is banned in this battle!" snarled Arthur as he pushed Owen back with a powerful strike.

He was about to thrust his spear for a follow-up attack, but Shin blocked it once again.

Clang!

"That is why you will be disqualified once you use it!" Shin laughed as he deflected the spear before disappearing for another time.

"Damn it!" cursed Arthur as he turned to Leonard, who happened to be looking at him while fending off Diablo's ambushes.

"You leave us with no choice then! We will let you experience our combined technique then!"

Chapter 1560 Team Training (Part 4)

.....

Bang! Bang!

Owen was first having a hard time keeping up with Arthur and Leonard as Shin and Diablo were purposely letting him train under such pressure. Those two were only appearing at crucial times that could lead to Owen's death.

But after the constant exchanges, Owen regained his confidence and started fighting properly, especially when Arthur and Leonard were not giving Samael any attention.

The two were very familiar with Shin and understood what this brother of theirs was planning. This was why they welcomed the 'roles' he had 'given' them and fought just like that.

They let Samael do whatever he wanted while putting as much pressure on Owen. Of course, they were still annoyed with the constant harassment that Shin and Diablo were giving them.

This led the two to reveal one of the trump cards that they were preparing for future battles.

Swoosh!

Arthur disengaged from the battle to create some space for himself. Then he suddenly stabbed his dragon spear on the ground beside him and put the round shield on his back before clasping his hands in front of his chest.

Bang!

Right after that, the air seemed to have trembled.

Shin, who sensed that something bad was about to happen, wanted to stop Arthur. But Leonard quickly blocked him and Diablo by summoning a pair of beast manifestations that forced them to halt their tracks.

It might be brief, but it was more than enough for Arthur to complete the skill.

"Let me show you the debut of the Tier 3 Skill that I have acquired just recently!" smirked Arthur as he looked at Shin.

'Dragon Knight Skill (Tier 3): (Inferior) Dragon Tongue'

"Quake!" he shouted, which produced intense ripples in both the air and the ground. It was as if a storm and earth earthquake occurred at the same time.

But instead of spreading in different directions, it only targeted what was in front of Arthur, where the opposing side stood.

Shin's team started to lose their balance due to the intense storm and earthquake.

As experts, they were able to find a decent footing despite the current situation. But before they could do anything after, Leonard suddenly did something.

Bang!

Leonard, who stopped Shin and Diablo earlier, suddenly descended from the sky and hit the ground like a meteor.

'Thousand Beast Art: Planetary Destruction'

Boom!

He did not target anyone from the opposing group and instead slammed his war axes on the ground.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

This resulted in a powerful shockwave, which further strengthened the intense storm and earthquake. Moreover, the ground also collapses upon impact, sending huge boulders and multiple rock fragments into the air.

Owen and Samael lost their footing as they were thrown in the air by the flipping ground. This made them vulnerable to any attacks.

Fortunately, Alucard was quick to respond this time. He was already retreating toward a safe distance the moment when he sensed that there was something wrong with Arthur and Leonard.

But instead of focusing on those two, he directed his attention to Alice, Daulla, and Huahua. He continuously bombarded them with his powerful shots that were infused with Vampire Spells.

It was fine not to hit them directly. It was already good enough to hit the area near them. So long as they interrupted them from casting any advanced spells to properly assist Arthur and Leonard, then Shin and Diablo would always find a way to deal with their current predicament.

The two did not disappoint him either as they simultaneously made their moves right after realizing the danger that Owen and Samael were facing.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Diablo transformed into multiple images as he flashed through different boulders in the air, using them as a platform to move freely.

But instead of saving Owen and Samael, he chose to attack Leonard, who was planning to follow his previous move with another devastating technique.

Sensing the danger, Leonard quickly stopped what he was doing and swiftly swung his war axes in multiple directions, sending strong gusts of wind that cut through the illusionary figures that were attacking him from different directions.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Clang!

After cutting all those figures, Diablo's real body was revealed as he blocked one of the attacks that almost cut his body as well.

Regardless, he had already achieved his goal of stopping Leonard. Owen and Samael would be able to hold themselves with the rest so long as Shin stopped Arthur.

"Halt!"

But before Shin could even leave his spot, he suddenly sensed a mysterious power that descended out of nowhere. It pressed onto him, seemingly trying to prevent him from moving.

It was at this moment when Shin realized something. He looked at Arthur with a slight frown before mumbling. "Dragon Tongue?"

It might be different from the 'Dragon Tongue' that he knew from the real world as it was one of the most powerful techniques that the Springfield Household possessed.

From his knowledge, only those at Nathan's level and above could use that technique, but it was at a huge cost. Only those old monsters at the Transcendent Realm could use it out of whim.

It was a special magic where the Dragons infused their powers with words along with the laws of nature.

There were a lot of things included in it that Shin was unaware of and could fully not understand since it was way beyond his current level.

But if he compared it to the things that he had learned from the real world, then it was most likely the same as the Mentalism Method that his Senior Dayna from the Research Department was using – the 'Spirit Speech'.

The functions and purposes they shared were very similar to one another, so he could use to as a basis for his counterattack.

After all, he had already experienced how to get beaten up by that Mentalism Method.

Fortunately, Shin could tell that Arthur was not in complete control over this technique. Adding that the skill itself was not the entire version of the original one, he should still have some hope to counter it.

"Heh! That is such a fancy skill you have there! I wonder how long its duration will last?" he said in a provoking tone.

As he released his 'Nephilim's Wings' without any hesitation along with the berserk skill infused into the [Yamato] – the 'Nephilim's Ascent' – along with the 'Nephilim's Clarity' that removed all kinds of status effects cast upon him.

Bang!

Swoosh!

Freeing himself from the restrictions of the mysterious power, Shin disappeared from his current location and reappeared in front of Arthur, who was in the middle of opening his mouth.

"Stop!"

Bang!

Shin instantaneously halted in the air as the tip of his sword was about to reach its target. He slightly frowned as he complained, "What a troublesome skill."

Arthur was about to give Shin a smug look when he suddenly noticed something. He might not be seeing what kind of expression the latter wears behind that mask, but he could feel that there was something wrong with the tone of Shin's words.

Without any hesitation, he reached his left hand on his back and grabbed the round shield while his other hand extended toward the dragon spear.

Swoosh!

He then took multiple steps backward, trying to distance himself away from Shin as soon as he could.

"Too late!" said Shin as his skill was already activated.

'Extra Skill (Tier 2): Doom Blade'

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

A group of swords fell from the sky and formed a cage around Shin and Arthur, trapping the latter with him.

The moment these swords surrounded Arthur, he immediately saw that his entire skill bar turned gray, which also removed the duration of his 'Dragon Tongue' entirely. "Damn it!"

"Trying to use a Tier 3 Skill that you have yet to master in front of me? Dream on!" Shin laughed as he freed himself from the restrictions of the previous usage of 'Dragon Tongue' earlier.

This time, he charged straight to Arthur not planning to give the latter any time or space to recover himself.

...

In the meantime, Huahua did not know what to do as she was unable to keep up with the pace of the battle. She was having a hard time matching the pace of Arthur and Leonard and was unable to properly support them with her totems.

Moreover, most of her spells had always been canceled by Alucard who had been keeping an eye on them since the very beginning.

He was taking the full advantage that he had in terms of range.

Due to this, the pressure that Huahua was currently facing started to grow stronger. She even started to panic and was unable to make any good decisions.

It was at this moment that Alice gave her timely advice. "Don't panic. Keep your calm."

"Don't waste your effort on forcing to use an advanced or intermediate spell that needed some time to cast. Just focus on the ones that you can use instantaneously."

"What you needed right now was precise timing. Don't force yourself to match their pace in such chaos. Timing is the key. Find the right opportunity to use your spell and which spell can fit that situation."

"B-but-..." Huahua tried to say that she could not use any spell even if she wanted to since she was too busy defending herself from Alucard's harassment.

But she was immediately cut off by Alice. "Don't worry too much about him. We will help you defend against his attacks when we find the right opportunity to use your spells, especially your totems."

It was at this moment that Alice noticed that Arthur was trapped in one of Shin's field skills. She turned at Huahua and instructed. "Ready your cleansing totems. Summon them on that location in my signal."

She predicted the next moves of Shin and Arthur pointed to the next location where they would appear.

Huahua was still very nervous to pick up the instructions quickly and was unable to reply immediately.

Then she heard Daulla. "Trust us. We are a team. We will protect you."

Then the little shaman suddenly recalled what Shin had told her – a team was meant to help fill the gaps of their teammates' shortcomings.

A resolute expression appeared on her face as she nodded. "Un!"