

Destiny 451

Chapter 451 Meeting Again

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In the Eastern Sea International Airport, a young man was attracting a lot of attention from the girls who were walking past him.

He was wearing a long coat in deep blue color which somehow matched his grey-colored hair. Moreover, he also had sunglasses which made him an eye candy for every girl who was passing by. Though, his real purpose of putting those glasses on was not to attract those unwanted attentions.

Seeing that actually had an opposite effect, the young man couldn't help but shook his head bitterly as he started to feel uncomfortable at the gazes that were being thrown at him. He felt like a panda being displayed in the zoo.

The young man looked at his Advance Watch and saw that he was already waiting in there for more than one hour.

"Tsk! She said that she is going to arrive around an 8 a.m. – it is past 9 a.m. already, so how come she hasn't arrived yet? Don't tell me her flight got delayed?" muttered by the young man on himself while frowning his eyebrows. And so, the young man turned out to be Shin.

Shin endured the 'suffering' for another half an hour before a sweet voice suddenly called out from a distance.

"Shin!"

The corner of Shin's mouth suddenly twitched quite stiffly when he heard that voice. He was very familiar with that voice so it was natural for him to recognize its owner without even looking back.

But he was also too ashamed to turn his head towards that direction because she shouted his name quite loudly. And due to that, she attracted a lot of attention from the people who were present in the area.

Adding the fact that she was actually a head-turner, it was impossible to avoid the attention of the other guys who were looking at her. And if ever he turned around, those gazes would surely be redirected at him.

"Hiss! This girl, Cloe!" Shin gritted his teeth while shaking his head a little when he realized the current situation. Because of his annoyance, Shin chose to ignore her for a moment.

Unfortunately, that decision resulted in an even more 'disastrous situation'. The owner of that particular voice started shouting Shin's name repeatedly with an even louder voice. And that led her to create a scene that attracted even more attention.

"Shin!"

"Shin! I'm here!"

Hearing that, the expression on Shin's face suddenly turned weird as he didn't know what to do. "Hiss! She let me wait for one and a half hour, and this is what I am going to get?"

If he continued ignoring her, he was sure that she was going to continue shouting his name until he turned his head at her. But if he chose to turn his head right now, then the attracted attention of the people present in the vicinity would surely be going to be directed to him.

Caught in that difficult dilemma, Shin failed to do anything until Cloe finally arrived behind him.

"Hey! Shin! Are you deaf or something? How come you can't hear me no matter how hard I yell?" said Cloe with a very annoyed tone.

Hearing that, Shin slightly tilted his head to the side before turning around to look at her.

"Heya!"

But right after he turned his body around, Cloe suddenly hopped forward and quickly hugged him. She was aware of Shin's 'Immediate Response' talent, so she was only relying on these kinds of situations to catch him off-guard.

Unfortunately for her, Shin just got back from a hellish training which was why this kind of trick was not going to work on him anymore.

Regardless, he still chose not to dodge nor prevented her from doing what she wanted because he felt guilty for ignoring her earlier.

Then the soft body was pressed him.

"Hehe, I got you this time! Did you wait that long for you to ignore me?" said Cloe in an apologetic tone since she knew that Shin had waited for her longer than he had expected since her flight was delayed earlier.

And that was when Shin looked at her face directly.

Shin was a head taller than Cloe. His greyish hair showed more of its color in the passage of time making his skin paler. Cloe somehow wondered how Shin was able to keep his creamy skin despite the rough training he had suffered just recently. His jaw turned sharper and refined. However, there was still a bit of youthfulness.

But what made Cloe stumped was Shin's grey eyes under those glasses. They were discerning and piercing. Those two grey eyes seemed like it had gone through mature times.

She blinked.

'How come Shin changed a lot?' Thought Cloe to herself as she felt that the chest that she was hugging was broader and wider than before.

Cloe realized then that Shin had truly become...a man.

She quickly let go of him as her heart was somehow starting to beat faster.

"Yeah, I waited for more than an hour. My legs seemed to be hurting. How would you make up for it?" lied Shin. Of course, he would not make a fuss about making him wait. He just wanted to see how this naughty friend of his would react and 'compensate' him.

Cloe looked at the side, calming her heart. And quickly after that, she immediately answered. "Is that so? Then I supposed I owe you a date?"

Shin was stumped for words. 'A date...? What a date would do?'

Being able to read what was running inside Shin's head, Cloe couldn't help but pout her lips a little before starting to walk away. "Hmph!"

Shin was stunned at Cloe's sudden change of behavior. Not understanding what she was thinking, he could only release a helpless sigh before catching up to her. "Let's go together. I know that you are also tired."

After that, Shin took her luggage from her and started to walk alongside her.

Seeing his actions, Cloe suddenly narrowed her eyes as she was thinking that Shin was a man truly hard to conquer. His denseness was really on a whole other level.

What should she do to make him see her as a woman? She was quite upset. But seeing how Shin waited for her more than an hour and dragging her luggage did her heart turn soft.

"Fine, I will just do the job by myself. If the man is so dense, the woman had no choice but to push forward." She muttered.

"What?" Shin turned his head to her when he heard her muttering.

"Nothing!" said Cloe before turning her head away for another time.

"..." This time Shin became too speechless at her quick-changing mood.

"By the way, what's gotten to you earlier? You could easily dodge me if you wanted to," asked Cloe all of a sudden.

"I can't react that time since my legs are hurting for standing too long," replied Shin almost immediately. Though, he actually did not want to admit that he was guilty of ignoring her earlier which was why he let her do what she wanted.

Cloe's heart felt guilty. She clung on his arm while saying. "Come on~! Don't be upset now. It is not my fault that my flight got delayed~."

Shin couldn't help but chuckle when he heard that. But since her mind was still bothered by what he did earlier, it made him want to tease her a little. "But you could just have informed me earlier, so that I didn't have to stand there for more than an hour."

While the two of them were walking away, Shin suddenly felt some gazes that were locked at them. He was sure that the owner of those gazes were not people sent by Cloe's father since he was already familiar with her bodyguards' auras.

Moreover, he could also feel some ill intentions from those gazes which made him frown his eyebrows a little.

But what troubled him even more was that those gazes suddenly disappeared the moment he sensed them. It was as if they knew that he became aware of their presence.

Feeling that there was something wrong with Shin, Cloe suddenly tugged his arm and asked. "Hey! What's wrong? You seem to be dozing off."

Coming back to his senses, Shin immediately put up a smile and replied. "Oh! Sorry, I just suddenly remembered something."

"What is it? Is it a girl? You dare to think of another girl when a beautiful girl is right beside you?" said Cloe rapidly as if she was interrogating Shin.

Hearing that, Shin couldn't help but chuckle and immediately forget about those gazes that he felt earlier.

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Meanwhile, a man in black suit suddenly walked out behind a concrete wall and watched Shin and Cloe walk away.

A moment later, he tapped the earpiece on his right ear to answer a call.

"How was it?" asked someone from the other side of the call.

"I am sorry, Sir. But it looks like the job that you give us is going to take some time," answered the man in tux without removing his eyes at Shin and Cloe.

Hearing that, the man that he was talking to from their other side of the line suddenly yelled. "What are you talking about! I need you to wrap it up as soon as possible! What is the point of sending you there if you can't even do this job?"

The man in tux immediately lowered his head and apologized for another time before explaining their current situation. "I'm really sorry, Sir. But an unexpected variable suddenly showed up. Aside from that mysterious dude that we still can't see, all of her bodyguards hiding in the dark shouldn't be a problem- ..."

Then he trailed his words for a moment to look at Shin's fading figure before continuing. "But this new variable doesn't look so simple either. So, we need to observe for quite some time before making our moves."

"I don't have time for any excuses! All I need are results. And don't you dare f*cked this up, or else you are dead," said by the man from the other side of the line before ending the call.

After that, the man in black suit took another look at Shin's back before a cold guilt suddenly flashed on his eyes.

Chapter 452 'Unexpected' Neighbors

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Shin arrived at their neighborhood not long after he left the Airport together with Cloe.

"You didn't look surprised. Did you already expect this?" said Cloe as she looked at Shin from the passenger seat.

Hearing that, Shin raised his eyebrow a little before replying. "Do I even need to be surprised? Given your father's personality, I am sure that he is going to choose the place near us."

"Heh! And how can you be sure about that?" sneered Cloe while looking at Shin with an amused expression on her face.

Shin looked at her for a moment before turning his head back on the road while replying with a smirking tone. "Because we are the only guys that your father trusts."

Hearing those words, Cloe couldn't help but giggles. "You are talking as if you guys are actually close."

"Are we not?" responded Shin instantly, trying to tease her.

And because of his words, Cloe's face suddenly turned red as she quickly turned her head towards the window. "This dummy!"

Meanwhile, Shin chuckled a little as he found her actions cute. And not long after that, the two of them finally arrived at their destination.

Shin parked the car at the villa next to theirs. It was because Cloe was going to stay there. And while he was taking out Cloe's luggage from the car, Shin suddenly asked. "Your dad really brought the house next to ours, huh?"

Hearing that, Cloe couldn't hold back any longer and immediately said. "Who said that dad brought this house? I am just going to freeloader here since I am invited by its owner."

Shin suddenly became stunned when he heard that. "Eh!? He did not? Then-... who-...?"

He started stuttering a little as he was trying to figure out who was the 'house owner' that she was talking about. But the more he looked at the meaningful smile that she was giving him, the more unease he felt within his chest.

And when Cloe's smile turned into a smirking one, Shin's heart suddenly skipped a beat as his thoughts seemed to become a reality. 'It can't be!'

Seeing the stunned expression on Shin's face, the laughter that Cloe was holding finally burst out before running towards the villa.

Meanwhile, Shin was smiling bitterly as he shook his head in a helpless manner. "I got a very bad feeling about this."

"We're here!" said Cloe with a loud voice as she opened the door.

Shin also entered the house, closely following her. And the moment he entered, he was immediately greeted by a scene where Arthur and Leonard were busily moving up some furniture.

And that was when Shin suddenly heard a familiar voice which also crashed his hopes of having a 'peaceful' high school life.

"Oh~! You two are finally here? Then hurry! Help us fix some things."

Turning his head towards the direction where that voice came from, Shin immediately saw Shiella who was 'busily' ordering Arthur and Leonard as she was double-checking whether the furniture that she had brought had damaged or not.

"Eh! You are still not done yet? I thought everything was already fine?" asked Cloe as she entered.

"Yeah, we are already done yesterday but I feel like there is something off at the positioning of the furniture, so I asked these two to help me reposition them," answered Shiella.

After that, she turned her head at Shin and immediately asked. "What are you standing there? Hurry up and enter so that you can start helping us."

Hearing that, Shin could only smile stiffly before nodding his head. "Yes, Big Sis."

Then he turned his head at his brother and asked through some eye signals. 'What happened?'

When the two saw that, they immediately shook their heads while shrugging their shoulders, indicating that they also didn't know.

'She suddenly appeared in front of our house the moment Uncle Sam was done checking your floor plan,' added by Arthur.

Shin was about to ask a little more when he suddenly felt a vase flying towards him with great speed. Out of his reflex, he quickly raised his and caught the vase before looking at Shiella.

"Enough with those eye signals! Do you think that I can't understand what you guys are talking about?" asked Shiella while looking sharply at the trio.

"If we don't finish this before the sky turns dark, then you three are going to work overtime at the Resort," she added threateningly before going back to work.

At this point, Lorraine walked down from the second floor while saying. "Relax, Big Sister Shiella. You will get an early wrinkle if you keep frowning that way."

Meanwhile, the trio could only shake their heads helplessly. They couldn't understand why it was their fault if they didn't finish everything up.

Releasing another helpless sigh, Shin picked up Cloe's luggage and was planning to go upstairs together with Cloe.

But before he could even take a step forward, someone suddenly rang the doorbell which made him halt his steps. Then he swept his eyes at the others inside before knitting his eyebrows.

"Are you still expecting someone, Big Sister Shiella?" asked Cloe as she only knew that she was staying with Lorraine and Shiella.

"Ah! Yeah! After all, it is going to be a waste if we leave the other rooms empty, so I invite someone to fill the numbers," answered Shiella before turning her head at Shin while saying. "Hurry! Open the door, she is one of my juniors before."

Hearing that, Shin slightly tilted his head to the side before turning around to open the door behind him.

Clank!

He was about to greet the person outside but he was suddenly stunned right after he saw who it was. "Oh!"

In front of him was Alice who was dressed stylishly. And naturally, she was also quite surprised when she saw Shin open the door. "Eh!? You? What are you doing here?"

"Why are you still standing there?" asked Lorraine as she suddenly got curious about the identity of their last housemate. And naturally, she was also stunned when she saw her. "Alice Stuart!? You are Alice Stuart, the idol, right!?"

"Eh!? Alice Stuart!?" both Arthur and Leonard who overheard what Lorraine had said, couldn't help but look at each other with wide-open eyes.

'This is bad! What are we going to do?' asked Leonard through some eye signals.

'What we are you talking about? It is not our problem at all. Let him deal with it on his own,' replied Arthur in the same manner.

Meanwhile, Shiella was only planning to watch on the side and wait for what was about to unfold.

On the other hand, Cloe suddenly squinted her eyes as her girl's instincts were telling her something. Especially when she felt that sudden change of the atmosphere inside.

Being suspicious, she hopped beside Shin while asking. "Did you two know each other?" trying to prove something.

"Ah! Yeah. I met her when I was helping Auntie Jane and Big Sis with a particular event. She is a special guest during that time," replied Shin nonchalantly.

"Oh~! So, she is only an acquaintance," muttered Cloe noddingly before extending her hand to introduce herself with a smile. "Hi! I'm Cloe! Nice meeting you! We are going to be housemates starting from today."

"Oh! Alice Stuart. It is nice to meet you too. Please take care of me," answered Alice as she shook Cloe's extended hand.

Though, she was thinking a little differently deep inside. 'Who is this girl? Why do I feel that I can't afford to lose to her?'

At the same time, Cloe was also thinking similarly. 'There is something off with this woman. Seems like I can't let my guard down.'

There seemed to me a pair of invisible sparks clashing in the air as their eyes met while looking at each other.

In the meantime, the others who were waiting at the side to watch the show, couldn't wait any longer at how the scene would unfold. Arthur and Leonard were even making a bet on whose side would Shin lean onto.

Unfortunately for them, Shin didn't live up to their expectations and only walked away from the 'ongoing battle'.

"Big Sis, should I prepare something for us to eat? You guys seem to be hungry," asked Shin while walking towards the kitchen.

Shiella was too dumbfounded to reply to him and just nodded her head, letting Shin prepare whatever he wanted. After all, anything that he made after stepping into the kitchen was going to become a masterpiece.

But at the same time, both Arthur and Leonard immediately became Shin's 'worshiper' right after he did that. Because the 'colliding storms' immediately calmed down the moment he walked away from the door.

'Where did he learn that skill?' asked Arthur with a stunned look on his face as he couldn't believe what he just witnessed.

'It seems like a natural talent of dense people,' answered Leonard almost instantly.

'Hearing that', Arthur couldn't help but look at Leonard with a weird expression on his face while thinking sarcastically to himself. 'Says by someone who is not dense.'

Chapter 453 'Paying Up'

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The next day, everyone did the usual daily routine early in the morning.

Shin already accumulated quite a lot of fatigue due to the series of events that happened just recently. Doing a top-notch military mission, finishing his special training, and completing all of the requirements for the special recruitment exam.

Fortunately, he still had a couple of days to relax his mind and body before the said exam could even start.

Or so he thought.

Because the moment he walked down the stairs towards the living room, he was immediately greeted by a 'lively' sight. Everyone had 'gathered' once again, waiting for something.

"Oh! Hey, Shin! We come to freeload again!" said Lorraine with a smiling face the moment she saw Shin walked down from the stairs.

"You are making breakfast, right? Make it quick, Mom wants me to join her for a meeting later," said Shiella as she browsed at the virtual screen in front of her to check her schedule for today.

Beside her sat Alice silently and seemed to be dragged in here by Shiella.

On the other hand, Arthur and Leonard were currently busy doing an arm wrestling on the side. Their 'battle' seemed to be quite intense on the surface, but Shin could tell that they were just putting an act to dodge his gaze.

Seeing all of those, Shin started to doubt his decision of learning how to cook for the first time in his life.

"Looks like, my upcoming days are going to be much busier than before," muttered Shin to himself after taking a deep sigh.

And that was the time when Cloe hopped on his side while leaning her body in front of him. "What's your plan for our breakfast today? Can I help?"

Seeing her energetic face made Shin smile a little. So, he patted her head for a brief moment before messing with her hair. "How can you help me? You don't even know how to properly cut some veggies."

After that, he started walking towards the kitchen and left Cloe who was stunned at his actions. But after a few seconds, she finally recovered herself and yelled. "Hey! How dare you mess with my hair! Do you know how much time I spend to fix it up?"

Shin started laughing when he heard that and continued walking toward the kitchen, ignoring her.

Seeing that, Cloe suddenly became even more furious. "Hey! How dare you ignore me! I will remember this! Now, you owe me three dates!"

Hearing that, Shin suddenly halted his steps before turning his head towards her. And when he looked at her, he immediately saw her brightly smiling at him. That was when he suddenly realized that he once again had fallen on one of her schemes.

Cloe started laughing when she saw the frowning look on his face. Then she immediately ran away and left him stunned.

Shin chuckled a little when he saw that and could only shake his head. And when he was about to turn around, he suddenly felt that someone was looking at him.

Looking at the direction where that gaze was coming from, he saw Alice watching them with a poker look on her face.

Shin suddenly felt awkward when their gazes met. So, he could only flash a smile and nodded his head before walking back towards the kitchen.

Alice squinted her eyes a little before turning her attention back to what Shiella was talking about.

Meanwhile, Cloe was also squinting her eyes as she watched that brief interaction between the two. And after a few moments, she muttered to herself. "Sure enough, there is something suspicious between these two."

"What's more, I felt like I've seen her before," she added while falling into deep thought.

Then Lorraine suddenly appeared beside her and commented. "Isn't it obvious? She is an idol after all."

Hearing that, Cloe shook her head and immediately responded. "No, I am sure that I've seen her somewhere before I even knew that she is an idol."

After taking their breakfast, everyone immediately went on their way to do their own things.

Meanwhile, Shin was currently feeling aggrieved because he was left by the others to deal with the dishes. "D*mn! Am I these guys' housemaid or something? I prepare a good breakfast for all of them, yet none of them have any conscience to help me clean these up?"

That was when Cloe jumped from behind while saying. "Then that means I am the only one with a conscience."

She was about to extend her hand to help Shin clean the dishes when the latter suddenly yelled with some panic. "Don't you dare lay your hands on them! I don't want to owe you any more dates."

Hearing that, Cloe suddenly stopped her actions and clicked her tongue before glaring at Shin. "Tsk! What do you take me for? Of course, I am doing it for 'free' – I am not going to 'charge' you this time, alright?"

Though, she was having a different thought in mind. 'Tch! Looks like this trick will never work again.'

After that, she suddenly pouted her lips while turning her head away. "Hmph!"

Unfortunately, Shin was able to read what she was thinking since he already knew very well. "My whole schedule is already packed. So, how do you think will I bring you to a date that you want if I don't have much time?"

Hearing that, Cloe immediately turned her head back to Shin while saying with an excited tone. "Then you can pay up now! You don't have any plan for today, right? Then let me use one of my dates now!"

Then Cloe immediately started cleaning the table before Shin could even reply.

Seeing that excited look on her face, Shin couldn't bring himself to crush her hopes by rejecting her. So, he just overlooked the fact that he fell on one of her traps once again and started taking care of the dishes.

When they were done, Cloe immediately looked at Shin and said. "I am going to change my outfit, alright? So, make sure to dress properly too, okay?" while pointing her index finger at him.

After that, she immediately ran towards the door. But before she could even get to the door, a sudden thought flashed in her mind which made her stop her actions.

She turned around and looked at Shin before taking back what she said earlier. "No, you can wear anything you want as long as it is quite decent. As long as it is not going to attract a lot of attention, then it is fine."

Then she quickly turned around once again and ran out of the house.

Meanwhile, Shin watched her with an amused look on his face while shaking his head. But that look was immediately swapped with a serious expression on his face before calling out Arthur and Leonard, who were hiding upstairs. "Oi! You two can come down now. I need to tell you something first."

Hearing him, the two walked down from the second floor while wearing an embarrassed look on their face. But those looks only lasted for a moment before the two of them suddenly wore a serious look on their faces too.

p "You want us to be a lookout for those guys, right?" said Arthur with a solemn tone.

"But those guys seem to be skilled. They are most likely some professionals; their hiding skills are quite high," added Leonard while taking a quick peek outside.

"Yeah, I know. Big Sis even called out some of her people to deal with them but none of them got caught," said Shin as he fell into deep thought.

Seeing that, Arthur and Leonard turned their heads at each other before sending some eye signals. 'We can't let these b*st*rds ruin this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.'

"Alright, alright. Let us deal with them. So, you better start preparing now before Cloe comes out," said Arthur while pushing Shin towards the stairs.

At the same time, Leonard suddenly added. "What's more, Sister Cloe also has her own secret bodyguards. Even that mysterious uncle gave us a visit last night, so you don't have to worry about it."

"Just focus on your date and make sure to act as normal as possible so that Cloe will not notice anything, alright," said Arthur, urging Shin to go upstairs.

Arthur and Leonard watched Shin climb up on the stairs and waited for his back to disappear. And after they made sure that Shin really went to his room, the two of them turned their heads at each other while wearing a determined look on their face.

'Let's make sure that this date is going to be a success,' said Arthur through their special eye signal.

Leonard nodded his head a couple of times before replying. 'Let's destroy these guys who dare to plot a scheme on sister-in-law.'

After that, they make a special handshake unique to them before shouting while suppressing their voices.

Chapter 454 A Date

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Shin was currently leaning on his car while waiting for Cloe in front of their house. He was currently wearing the 'casual' clothes that Arthur had suggested.

It took him quite some time to get out of the house since Arthur and Leonard kept on asking him to change his clothes every time he walked out of his room. In the end, Arthur walked inside the room and chose the set of clothes that he should be wearing.

Unfortunately, their tastes for clothes were quite different which led them to have an intense argument.

When Leonard couldn't take it any longer, he suggested that they were going for the majority votes instead.

Right now, he was wearing a blue-colored long sleeve shirt with a deep V-shaped neckline that was extending until the middle of his chest. Underneath that shirt was a long sleeve polo in grey color.

The ends of each sleeve of that polo were single-folded outwards which was slightly covering the end-sleeves of the shirt that he was wearing on top.

Due to the double-layer shirt that he was wearing, his clothes seemed to be fitted on his body and highlighted his perfectly shaped build.

As for his bottoms, he was wearing black jeans which were slightly fitted on him while partnering them with a pair of grey-colored shoes to complement the colors of the shirts that he was wearing.

His current look might be stylish, but he was actually quite uncomfortable. After all, it was his first time wearing his clothes this way so it was natural for him to not be used to it.

Moreover, the sun was currently high up in the sky so wearing a double-layered shirt would naturally make him feel the heat even more.

This was actually one of the reasons why he got in an argument with Arthur earlier. But the answer that he got was something that even Shin couldn't easily refute.

"I*diot! A great girl of fashion once said, If you want to look beautiful, then you need to feel uncomfortable."

"So, stop wimping right now and wear these!"

Those words even made Leonard agree with him since he also found it reasonable. And due to that, Shin had no choice but to agree with the two.

"Tsk! Those busybodies. They are acting as if they are the ones who are going to wear it," muttered Shin to himself as he checked his clothes.

"Fortunately, I got a few tricks from the Mentalism Runes that I've learned," he added while closing his eyes and focusing his senses at the Rune Sequences that he wrote on the different parts of his body earlier.

If not for these runes, then he was already covered with sweat by wearing this double-layered clothing in sunny weather.

Clank!

And that was when Shin finally heard the sound of the door being opened from the neighboring house.

"Hey! What took you-..." Shin was about to scold Cloe for making him wait for a long time again. But he couldn't help but trailed in his words a little the moment he saw her. "...so long."

Currently, Cloe was wearing a turtleneck white long sleeve shirt. It was quite fitted on her body accentuating her every curve.

The lower part of that shirt was tucked in her red pleated mini skirt that had a checked design. Whereas her legs were covered by black stockings.

Her current appearance was giving a mixture of youthful and mature vibe which made Shin to be a little stumped. Cloe wore a thick long jacket yesterday in the airport, hiding the exquisite figure under the huge thick clothes. But right now, it was revealed under his eyes.

Even though he already saw her dressing similarly when they were younger, her current look was giving him a strange impression that he couldn't explain.

Cloe hopped in front of Shin who seemed to be dumbfounded and said. "Why are you dozing off? First time seeing a beauty?"

And that was when Shin finally recovered himself and wanted to refute. But he immediately rejected the idea after seeing her smiling face.

So, he just smiled at her and opened the door of the car behind him before gesturing to her to get in the car in a teasing manner. "Yes, my lady."

Cloe started laughing when she saw Shin's actions. Though, she was actually feeling satisfied deep inside. 'I guess this dummy is not a senseless rock after all.'

A moment later, Shin sat on the driver's seat and said. "Put on your seatbelt."

Cloe was about to comply when a sudden thought flashed inside her head and smirked a little. She extended her hand and pulled the seatbelt beside her. But it seemed like she couldn't pull it properly, no matter how hard she 'tried'.

"Eh! What's wrong with this thing? Why can't I pull it?" said Cloe as she 'continued' to pull the seatbelt.

Hearing that, Shin couldn't help but turned his head at her to take a look. He squinted his eyes and looked at her suspiciously, trying to see if she was pulling another trick.

Unfortunately, Cloe was also familiar with Shin. So, she made sure that her acting was perfect. And since Shin couldn't see any flaw in her actions, he had no choice but to lend her a hand.

"Alright, move aside. Let me do it," said Shin.

Hearing that, Cloe quickly sat properly and waited for Shin to lean his body forward. But her plans and hopes were immediately destroyed the moment she saw his next actions.

Shin waved his hand to release a fraction of his Mental Energy before controlling it to fix Cloe's seatbelt.

Cloe was surprised at first when she saw that and immediately became dejected a moment later.

Seeing her pouting lips, Shin couldn't help but laugh out loud before asking. "So, where do you want to go?" while starting the car.

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The first stop that Cloe chose was...

"Amusement Park?" asked Shin with a twitching face while staring at the rides in front of him.

"What? Getting cold feet already? So much for being a Martial-Artist." asked Cloe with a provoking tone.

Hearing that, Shin couldn't help but shook his head while saying. "That is exactly what I am talking about. As a Martial-Artist, do you think that I will still enjoy riding those?"

"What with the sissy attitude? This is not like you at all!" commented Cloe before grabbing his arm and dragging him towards the first ride that she saw.

Shin could only chuckle as he watched himself being dragged by Cloe who seemed to become a kid.

Then he looked up front and saw that the ride that Cloe had chosen was a 'Swing Ride'.

Seeing that, Shin couldn't help but frown his eyebrows a little as he turned his head at Cloe; practically on the mini skirt that she was wearing.

With that look, Shin turned his head and looked at their surroundings before seeing a clothing store not far from them. Then he forcefully halted his steps which caused Cloe to be pulled back at him and bumped on his body.

"Hey! What are you doing?" asked Cloe annoyingly while glaring daggers at him.

But before she could complain even more, Shin suddenly said. "You go fall in line first. I'm just going to buy something."

He was about to walk away when he suddenly felt that Cloe tightened her grip and strengthened her arms.

Shin stopped his steps due to being pulled and turned his head back to her. And the moment he saw her squinting eyes and suspicious look on her face, he couldn't help but chuckle. "Don't worry, I am not going to run away. I am really going to buy something from there," while pointing at the clothing store that he saw.

But Cloe didn't buy his excuse and further narrowed her eyes while staying silent. And when Shin saw that, he had no choice but ask. "You don't believe me? Want to tag along then?"

With her nod, the two of them walked together towards the store. And right after arriving, Shin immediately took a black long sleeve shirt that he saw before walking straight to the counter.

Cloe watched his actions with knitted eyebrows as she couldn't understand what he was thinking. But she suddenly came into a realization the moment she saw his next actions.

Then Shin immediately turned at her before giving her the shirt that he just brought while saying. "Tie this on your waist."

"Eh!?" Cloe was suddenly stumped for words right after seeing that. She was too stunned to take the shirt from Shin's hands.

Shin stared at her for quite some time before deciding to tie the shirt on her waist on himself. And those actions made Cloe hold her breath due to her heart skipping a beat.

The smell of Shin with a hint of his soap reached her nose. Even his shampoo could be smelt by her.

'Shin is so close,' She was suppressing her feelings which also made her face turn rosy.

Shin noticed that her breathing turned stagnant, he turned to look at her and saw that her face was red. He couldn't help but ask. "Eh!? Why is your face so red? Are you feeling unwell or something?"

"But you look perfectly fine just earlier," along with those words, he was also raising his hand and planning to place it on her forehead. But before he could even do that, Cloe quickly dodged his hand by taking a quick step backward.

She felt that her heart would explode if that hand touched her forehead, so she needed to dodge it at all cost.

She kept her hand on her chest. She felt that her heart would jump out of her ribcage.

'I need to calm down,' thought Cloe to herself.

Cloe was afraid Shin would hear her loud beating heart. Shin was a Martial-Artist with sensitive senses after all.

Naturally, Shin didn't know the hidden meaning behind her actions which was why he suddenly got confused.

But Cloe didn't wait for him to recover himself and quickly turned her body around while changing the subject. "Let's go! The queue is getting longer."

Then she quickly left Shin while hopping cheerfully while making her way towards the line of people. She pretended to be calm and be in her usual self.

Meanwhile, Shin slightly shook his head as he still couldn't keep up with her quick-changing mood.

Regardless, he could only smile and threw that thought at the back of his head before following after her.

Chapter 455 A Date (Part 2)

.....

Eastern Sea Region, this place was the most populated region in the Soaring Continent since most of the tourists from the other countries chose to come here before going to other places that they wanted to.

This place was famous for its resorts and beaches that a lot of tourists loved. They also had some unique and famous seafood delicacies that could satisfy the taste buds of anyone.

But aside from those, there were also some places here that were quite known to a lot of people. And one of those places was the Ocean Blue Amusement Park.

Since there were a lot of tourists coming to this place, the natives of the Eastern Sea Region were quite busy, especially the ones residing in the 'Ace City' where the Magical Ace Academy was located.

Due to this issue, the government of Ace City decided to build the Ocean Blue Amusement Park so that most of their locals were able to relax and have some fun during their rest days, especially on weekends.

That being said, the Ocean Blue Amusement Park was very busy since it was currently the end of the week. A lot of the people were hanging out in this place which made the place very lively.

Moreover, the shifting sunny and cloudy weather was creating a perfect atmosphere for everyone to hang out.

Friends, families, colleagues, and couples – these were the usual group of people that anyone would see during this time. And amidst these groups of people, there was a certain couple who were attracting a lot of attention.

The girl was dragging the young man who was with her while pointing at every ride that she saw.

Given that the girl was such a beauty, each guy that she was passing by couldn't help but turn their heads at her as they watched her walk away.

Looks, style, and body figure – everything about this girl was making her the perfect ideal girlfriend of all of the men around.

Unfortunately, that thought would only remain as a dream as the man who was currently accompanying this girl was also a perfect partner that every girl could wish for.

If the girl was a total head-turner that could bend the necks of every boy in the vicinity, then the young man who was being dragged by her was an eye candy that could steal the hearts of the girls who were looking at him.

A single glance from him could make the faces of the girls blush instantly as his looks alone could make the girls fantasized about him being their boyfriend.

But alas, he seemed to be already taken given how he was letting himself be led around by the girl in front of him.

Moreover, the two of them were even making a perfect match. Given their looks and how they act so close with each other, no one would surely have the guts to mess with the relationship of such a great couple.

...

"So, what do you want?" asked Shin as he was looking at the choices of ice creams in front of him.

Beside him, Cloe was currently leaning forward and pursing her lips while looking at the choices. And after a few more moments, she finally decided to pick the chocolate and strawberry flavors. "Two scoops of each of these, please?"

Shin chuckled a little when he saw her blinking her eyes repeatedly. Then he patted her head and immediately said. "Alright, little miss. I will buy it for you."

Cloe smiled at him before cheerfully hopping towards the bench not far from the ice cream stall. And when Shin saw her energetic look, he could not help but shake his head a little.

They already rode all of the rides available in the amusement yet this girl was still full of energy as if nothing happened. Even a well-trained Martial-Artist like him was still showing a little bit of fatigue after riding all of those rides. Right now, he really doubted if she was really only a common Martial-Artist who rarely trained.

After finishing their ice creams, Cloe immediately resumed dragging Shin to continue their date. And all Shin could do was laugh bitterly at her after seeing that she still had a lot of energy in her reserves.

,m While they were walking, Cloe's attention was suddenly caught by a certain stall that had a bunch of stuffed toys on display. And she was looking at them, her eyes were suddenly locked at a certain stuffed toy with the cute appearance of a little boy.

That toy had grey hair and sharp eyes which reminded her of Shin. So, the moment she saw it, she immediately dragged Shin towards that stall and said. "Hey! Win that for me!" while pointing at the stuffed toy that she saw.

"A stuffed toy!?" asked Shin while looking at Cloe with a weird face. It was as if he was saying. – "Are you still a kid?" –

Cloe suddenly pouted her lips the moment she saw that look. Then she walked towards the stall while saying. "If you don't want to, then I am going to do it myself."

Shin was planning to watch her a little on how she was going to do what she said. But he couldn't help but shake his head helplessly when he felt the ridiculing gazes that were being thrown at him.

With a deep breath, Shin quickly took a quick step forward before walking past Cloe. "Alright, alright, let me do it."

Then he walked towards the guy who seemed to be the staff of the stall before asking. "I want to try taking it. What should I do?" while pointing at the stuffed toy that Cloe wanted.

The staff didn't reply immediately but looked at Shin's body physique first before thinking to himself. From that expression that he was making, anyone could tell that he seemed to be underestimating Shin.

But they were living in an unpredictable world, so he still asked to make sure about what he was thinking. "A practitioner?"

Since the staff didn't directly ask which discipline he was trained in, Shin just nodded his head as a form of confirmation.

Seeing that, the staff took a pair of wristbands from the stall before giving them to Shin. "Put these on, first. They will start ringing if you happen to use an Internal Qi or Mental Energy."

After putting them on, Shin immediately asked the staff what he needed to do. "So, what's next."

The staff didn't reply to him directly but pointed at a punching test machine not far from them.

Shin turned his head to look in that direction and saw a chart right beside that machine, indicating the necessary scores for the corresponding stuffed toy. And the moment he saw that chart, he quickly squinted his eyes as he was trying to find the particular prize that Cloe wanted.

It took a few seconds to find out that that stuffed toy was actually a limited one-and-only prize. So, the necessary score needed for it was quite high. In fact, it was the current highest score that needed to be achieved on the chart.

"Ten thousand points, huh?" muttered Shin as he didn't think much about it.

In the meantime, the staff couldn't help but smirked at Shin's tone especially when he heard the indifferent look on his face. "Do you think it is not a big deal?"

"Let me give you a piece of advice since you look too young and naive. That machine over there is a specialized model created for Special Forces, so you better not feel too hopeful," he added while looking at Shin with a mocking expression on his face.

"Oh~. I see. But what if I accidentally break it?" asked Shin with an innocent tone.

Hearing those words, the staff started laughing out loud as he found Shin's words ridiculous. Even the other customers who overheard their conversation laughed along with the other staff of the stall.

But Shin just ignored their laughter and just stared at the staff in front of him while maintaining the innocent look that he had. And when the staff saw that, he couldn't help but sneer.

"Heh! Listen, kid. If you managed to break that punch testing machine with brute strength alone, then I promise you that not only you are not going to pay even a single penny, but I will even give you my paycheck for this month."

Hearing that, Shin immediately nodded his head before asking. "Deal! So, can I start now?"

Seeing that Shin didn't flinch even after hearing that, the staff gestured to him to walk towards the punch testing machine while saying. "Be my guest."

Seeing his actions, Shin just nodded his head before walking forward. And when he stood right in front of that punch testing machine, he took a deep breath trying to relax his body.

Then he positioned his left foot in front of him and spread his legs a little while also squatting his hips. After that, he leveled his right-hand fist along with his shoulders while slowly pulling it backward.

In the meantime, the bystanders watching Shin couldn't help but suppress their laughter when they saw him trying so hard to impress his 'girlfriend' – all of them were waiting for Shin to make a fool of himself.

Unfortunately, what happened next made their mouths leave agape.

Boom!

A very strong force was sent forward right after Shin threw his fist forward. And that force not only broke the punch testing machine but also obliterated it.

While everyone was still stunned at what they just witnessed, Shin walked casually towards the stuffed toy that Cloe wanted while asking. "I can take this now, right?"

Too shocked at what happened, the staff could only nod his head slightly to signify that Shin was free to take the stuffed toy now.

Right after Shin took the stuffed toy, he walked towards the staff who made a bet with him earlier before taking off the wristbands that were given to him.

"As for your paycheck, I am not going to take it from you. After all, I think you need it more than I do," said Shin while handling the wristbands.

Then Shin went to Cloe and gave her the stuffed toy while saying. "Let's go."

"Trying to act cool?" said Cloe while giggling as she took the stuffed toy from Shin's hands before giving him a sweet smile.

After that, she hooked her other arm at Shin's before dragging him once again and left everyone staring blankly at them as they walked away from the stall.

Chapter 456 Being Interrupted

.....

While Shin and Cloe were enjoying their time together, there was a group of three people who were quite busy being a lookout for the mercenaries hired to harm Cloe.

"Tsk! This is quite a trick. We can't even properly pinpoint the locations of those guys," said Arthur with a frustrated tone.

"And with this number of people, we can't even properly fight here," added Arthur while sweeping his gaze at their surroundings.

Meanwhile, Lorraine was currently glaring sharply at the two with her arms crossed in front of her. "So, this is why you asked me to go here?"

"If only I know that this is what you mean earlier then I shouldn't have come with you," she added with a cold tone.

Hearing that, Arthur couldn't help but chuckle a little since it was his idea to ask Lorraine to come with them. And naturally, he also asked Leonard to be the one to invite her.

But he immediately suppressed his laughter when he saw her glaring at him so intensely. He then flashed a smile at her while saying. "Sorry for being the third wheel."

Lorraine became even more enraged the moment she heard that. But before her anger could explode, Leonard suddenly interrupted her by saying. "Hey, time to get back to work. Shin Bro and Sis Cloe are already getting away."

Hearing that, Lorraine couldn't help but rolled her eyes at him while saying. "What is the point of following them now? We already spent almost a day following them but those mercenaries that you guys are talking about haven't shown themselves yet!"

"From the looks of it, they are most likely not going to show up today. As if they are going to create a ruckus in a public place like this? If they did that – not only they are going to attract a lot of attention, but they will also alert the Police and Military forces stationed in this City."

Then she quickly got up from her seat before walking beside Leonard while saying. "So, how about we stop here right now and enjoy the rest of the day?"

She took a brief pause to turn her head towards Shin and Cloe's direction before adding. "Are you not jealous of those two?"

"What do you think? Should we also have a date of our own?" she added while turning her head back to Leonard. But right after she did that, she suddenly discovered that she was actually talking to air right now; both Arthur and Leonard suddenly disappeared.

p Seeing that, she quickly swept her gaze at her surroundings, trying to find where the two ran off.

Not long after, she saw their figures running in a certain direction. And from the looks of it, they were chasing after someone.

"Did they finally spot one of the mercenaries?" she muttered to herself before chasing after them.

In the meantime, Cloe finally got tired of walking around in the amusement park and decided to look for another place.

"Still not tired?" asked Shin chucklingly before adding. "So, where do you want to go now?"

Cloe thought for a moment, trying to figure out where to go next. And while she was thinking, her eyes suddenly caught sight of the sky.

"Ah! Let's go to the off-road beach! Let's watch the sunset!" she said without removing her eyes from the sky.

Hearing that, Shin also turned his head at the sky before slightly nodding his head. "I guess it is a nice idea."

...

Not long after, Shin and Cloe arrived in a perfect spot to watch the sunset.

Cloe was holding her shoes in each of her hands as she cheerfully walked along the shore while playing with the moving waves. And following closely behind her was Shin who was wearing a smile while watching her.

That sight was reminding him of the time when they first met.

He just got adopted by the Springfield Family during that time, so he was still not that close with Arthur during those years.

There was a time where he was dragged by Arthur's mother to attend a party together with the siblings. But such things were not for Shin, so he just sneaked his way out of the party and went outside.

But it was only close to dusk at that time so the party hadn't started yet. And since he knew that he was going to wait for quite some time, he decided to sit in front of the shore not far from the venue and watched the beauty of the setting sun.

That time was peaceful which gave him time to think about the recent events that happened to him.

He might be still a child at that time. But because of the harsh training that he suffered in the training camp and the series of unexpected events that happened recently, made him see the meaning of life a little differently.

Unknown to him, it was also the time when his 'seed of hatred' started to grow faster. It was because of the hate that he felt about the unfairness that he had suffered despite being too young. And due to that, the accumulated weight that he was suppressing within his chest was about to explode.

But before he was swallowed by that darkness, a small yet delicate hand suddenly grabbed his arms and pulled him out from that darkness.

"Hey, why are you sitting here alone? The party is about to start."

And when Shin turned his head towards the direction of that face, he immediately saw the face of a beautiful little girl who was looking back at him innocently.

"Hey, Shin!"

Shin was immediately snapped out from a trance the moment he heard Cloe calling out for him. And that was when he realized that Cloe was staring at him intensely with a pair of squinting eyes together with her pouting lips.

Seeing that Shin finally came back to his senses, Cloe immediately asked with a suspicious tone. "Why are you dozing off again?"

When Shin saw that look on her face, he immediately raised his hand to pat her head and was about to say that it was nothing. But before he could even touch her head, Cloe quickly dodged his hand.

Shin suddenly paused his hand when he saw that and looked at her confusedly.

"Why are you trying to change the subject again? Are you hiding something?" asked Cloe while narrowing her eyes even more.

'Here we go again,' thought Shin as he watched Cloe's quick-changing mood acting up again.

He then took a brief pause and breathed deeply before saying. "Are we going to stay here and continue watching the sunset or are we going to fight? Because if it is the latter, then I guess it is better for us to head back now."

Hearing that, Cloe further squinted her eyes before saying. "That's unfair!"

And right after saying those words, she immediately threw a strong punch at Shin's abdomen with all her might.

Shin would naturally be able to perceive her movements before she could even throw that punch. But still chose not to dodge so that she could calm herself down.

Bang!

"Ugh!"

Though, that punch was stronger than he had expected.

Fortunately, he had a well-trained body. So, he didn't feel much aside from flinching a little due to the strong force behind her punch.

Then Shin chose not to do anything after that. He just stood on his spot and waited for Cloe to calm herself down.

A moment later, Cloe glared at Shin before turning around to continue their walk on the shore. But she only took a single step forward when Shin suddenly pulled her arm and hid her behind him.

Cloe was still in a bad mood because of what he had said earlier, but she immediately hid behind Shin when she noticed a group of unfamiliar people in front of them.

"So, you finally decided to show yourselves, huh?" said Shin as he swept his gaze at those guys, trying to look for someone.

"The dangerous guy that I sensed in the airport is not with them yet," muttered Shin after assessing their strengths.

At the same time, the man who was on the forefront of the opposing side was also trying to gauge Shin's strength by feeling his presence. Their leader told them earlier to be careful of this young man, so they needed to take this matter more seriously.

"We don't have much time; Boss and the others can't hold those bodyguards that long. So, just distract the boy while we are trying to secure our target." ordered by that man without removing his eyes at Shin.

And when the others heard his words, they immediately nodded their heads and started moving to surround Shin and Cloe.

In the meantime, Shin looked over his shoulder and said to Cloe. "Stay in your place. This will not take much time."

He was about to step forward while Cloe suddenly tightened her grip on his arms, feeling concerned.

Seeing that, Shin turned his head at her for another before softly patting her hand and reassuring her with a smile. "Don't worry, these guys can't do anything to me."

Hearing the confident tone of his voice, Cloe could only bite her lower lip while saying. "Just be careful."

Shin nodded his head at her after seeing Cloe let go of his arm.

After that, he started walking away from her as a transparent barrier made of Mental Energy was formed around Cloe to protect her.

Then he raised his head to look at the guys in front of them with cold eyes. And right after that, a chilling glint suddenly flashed on his eyes as a strong pressure was released from his body.

"I don't know your business with her. But I must say that you guys really picked the worst time to act."

Chapter 457 Being Interrupted (Part 2)

...

"I don't know what you want from her, but I'm sure you guys really choose the worst time possible to make your move," said Shin in an aggressive tone while releasing a powerful pressure from his body.

He was quite annoyed by some things that happened just recently. Especially when he was being the personal 'nanny' of the group at home. So, he was quite eager to find a target of his frustration. And these guys happened to come just right in time.

On the other hand, the opposing side started laughing out loud the moment they heard Shin's words. And from the looks of it, they seemed to be unaffected by the intense pressure that Shin was releasing.

After that, one of those guys suddenly said to Shin laughingly. "Kid, don't overestimate yourself. Do you think who we are?"

He wanted to say something more – but before he could even add more ridiculing words, he suddenly heard a cold voice coming from behind that was saying. "Do I even need to know a small fry like you?"

Then he felt that the back of his head was grabbed by the person behind him before planning to smash it on the ground.

Fortunately, they were standing on the soft sand of the shore, so it shouldn't hurt much even if he was smashed on it.

Or so he thought.

Because Shin suddenly created a wall of Mental Energy to cover the soft sand right before he smashed the head of the guy on it.

Bang!

Shin's movement was too fast for the opposing side to react. And that was the reason why they were completely caught off-guard the moment Shin made his move.

But that state of confusion lasted only for a couple of seconds before they immediately recovered themselves. After all, they were still professional mercenaries, so dealing with such things was not new to them.

Given that, they immediately started making their respective moves the moment they saw one of their colleagues was knocked down on the ground.

They immediately went into a formation to surround Shin since they knew that they couldn't easily break the barrier he made to protect Cloe.

Given the Mentalism Runes glowing on its surface, they were sure that it would take some time before they could break it. So, their only choice right now was to take down the caster since they were quite in a hurry.

Unfortunately, taking down the current Shin was easier to say than done.

Right after they took their respective positions, they suddenly felt a very strong invisible force that was locking them down in place.

'Mental Energy Restriction?' thought by the leading guy of the opposing side as he looked at Shin solemnly.

Doing such things could only be done by Mentalists who were at the peak stage of the Grandmaster Realm. And a Mentalist on that level was comparable to Martial-Artists in the 'Ethereal Opening Stage'.

Realizing that, the leader of the mercenaries immediately released his own pressuring aura to negate the pressure that was being released by Shin. And due to that, his colleagues regained their movements.

Then they immediately released their respective Internal Qi, getting ready to act.

Shin seemed to be strong but they were still thinking that he was not strong enough to take them down by himself. After that, their leader was a Martial-Artist in the 'middle phase' of the 'Ethereal Opening Stage'.

Unfortunately, that thought only lasted for a second because what happened next didn't give them enough time to respond.

Aside from the leader, all of the other mercenaries were sent flying by an invisible force and knocking them unconscious.

The leader of the mercenaries was too surprised to move after seeing that. He knew that Shin was not that simple given how their boss had warned them, but he didn't expect that he was this strong.

At the same time, Shin was currently looking at him with a cold face while saying with a chilling tone. "We don't have any distractions now. So, you don't have to hold yourself back anymore."

He paused for a moment and pointed at his eyes while continuing. "These eyes are quite special, you know? So, I can tell that you are not with these guys."

"Tell me, who are you? And what do you need from me?" he added while releasing an overwhelming amount of Mental Energy at the same time.

Due to that, a gusting wind suddenly swirled around Shin and created a mini-tornado that made the white sand on the ground fly alongside it.

On the other hand, the guy on the opposing side suddenly started laughing before saying. "You really are something else. Though, I am not obligated to answer your question, right?"

Right after he said those words, Shin suddenly appeared in front of him while throwing his fist forward.

Swoosh!

Bang!

But Shin's fist came into a sudden halt before it could even touch the face of his opponent. It was being stopped by the Internal Qi surrounding his opponent.

Shin knitted his eyebrows when he saw that because he could feel a familiar feeling from that Internal Qi. And his suspicions immediately became true when he saw the changes in the Internal Qi of his opponent.

The said Internal Qu suddenly turned black which made Shin realize that it was right. "Demonic Qi?"

Then the guy suddenly said. "It took us a lot of effort to locate you. Now, you can't either run or hide anymore."

After that, an explosive was released from his body which sent Shin flying backwards.

"A member of 'Shadow Alliance'? You guys sure are gusty. To think that you are still brave enough to show yourselves here? I guess the lesson that you got from that time is still not enough," said Shin right after his feet landed on the ground.

After that, he immediately took his battle stance while thinking to himself. 'During that time, I lost completely against the guy from that place. So, let's see how can I stand against someone in the same level.'

On the other hand, his opponent immediately made his move while Shin was slightly distracted by his thoughts. He kicked the soft sand beneath his feet and launched himself forward.

Boom!

His speed was quite fast as he immediately appeared in front of Shin with his fist in the middle of being thrown at the latter.

But before that fist could even reach Shin, his body was suddenly sent flying by a strong force sent from Shin's body.

Boom!

Swoosh!

And while he was still in the middle of the air, Shin suddenly disappeared from his spot and caught up with his opponent in an instant. Then he quickly swung his arm downwards, hitting his opponent's abdomen with it.

Bang!

The sand below them suddenly sunk downwards and created an inverted sphere crater with the two of them being in the middle.

After that, Shin kicked his opponent who was currently lying on the ground, and sent him flying up in the air.

Then he squatted his hips to lower his center of gravity while placing his clenched fist right beside his waist. And along with his actions, the Mental Energy surrounding was suddenly gathered on that fist and formed a concentrated energy.

At the same time, he raised his other hand in the air and faced it on his opponent in the air before doing a clenching motion. And that was the time when his opponent felt the air surrounding him suddenly contracted and started squeezing his body.

'Four Symbol Scripture: Blue Dragon's Entanglement'

And with a pulling motion, Shin dragged his opponent towards the ground along with an unstoppable force.

The series of movements done by Shin was too fast which made his opponent unable to react to each of his moves. And it was already too late when he realized that this young man that he was facing was completely different from the reports that they got.

All he could do at this moment was to watch Shin's fist greeted him as he fell from the sky.

'Four Symbol Scripture: White Tiger's Departure'

Boom!

Shin released all of the accumulated Mental Energy at the point of impact. And due to that, his opponent felt that his existence was suddenly erased right after getting hit by that punch.

Then his body was sent flying back in the air before falling at the surface of the sea not far from them.

After that, Shin calmly walked towards Cloe before saying with a smiling face. "Let's go. I don't think this is the right time to watch the sunset," while taking her hand.

On the other hand, Cloe just nodded her before letting herself be led by Shin toward his car. But from time to time, she was turning her head at the mercenaries who were lying on the ground.

Sensing that, Shin looked over his shoulder before saying. "I'm not sure what happened at your home, but I must say that I am quite disappointed since you are not telling me anything."

He then took a brief pause and directed his eyes back on their front while adding. "But in case you forgot about your promise – let me remind you that you can always count on me whenever a tough time arrives."

Cloe felt quite secured the moment she heard those comforting words from Shin. But at the same time, she was also feeling guilty for hiding something like this from him. After all, she promised him before that she would always tell him whenever she was in trouble.

Even if it was only a child's promise, Shin was always holding on to something like that. It was because he was always scared of losing someone without being able to do anything.

"I'm sorry," said Cloe with a very soft voice.

Hearing that, Shin suddenly halted his steps and turned around. Then he raised her chin up so that she could look straight at him.

He wanted to scold her a little more but he quickly rejected that idea when he saw the guilt in her eyes. So, he could only pat her head while saying. "What are you sorry for? You can still open it up to me when you are ready. I'm always at ears."

After that, he immediately turned his body around and resumed bringing her towards the car.

Chapter 458 Cilvana Family's Trouble

.....

Back in their place, Shin walked into their house right after escorting Cloe back home.

Both Arthur and Leonard were already waiting inside and were currently sitting on the sofa with serious expressions on their faces.

Sitting alongside them, Shin took a deep breath before asking. "So, what did you guys get? Any useful information?"

"Not really, but Leonard learned something really unsettling," said Arthur with a solemn tone.

Hearing that, Shin raised his eyebrows a little before casting his gaze at Leonard and waited for him to respond.

Leonard remained silent for a moment as he was trying to recall something before opening his mouth. "As you know, my master is an old mercenary veteran. He has quite a lot of contacts in the mercenary circle."

"I asked him about the tattoo on one of the mercenaries that we captured earlier. He said that it was the symbol unique to the members of the 'Ruined Block'," he added.

"Is there anything worth noting on those guys?" asked Shin with knitted brows.

Leonard immediately shook his head when he heard that before continuing. "If it is the mercenary group alone, then we don't need to worry much about them."

He then took a brief pause before adding to his words. "But if we are talking about their 'backing', then it is a whole other story."

"What about their backings? Are they being supported by a powerful group?" asked Shin with a little confusion.

"Sort of, yeah," nodded Leonard before adding. "It is a secret from the public but my master is aware of it."

"Those guys are being supported by the 'Mighty Arms Group'. It is an Arms Dealer Corporation which is also a rival company of Sister Cloe's Dad."

Hearing that, Shin finally came into a realization and nodded his head. "So, it is a business war between those two?"

"Exactly!" nodded Leonard and Arthur.

"Is the state that dire?" asked Shin.

Then Arthur nodded his head before answering. "Yeah. It looks like it is very serious this time. Even the government in their country is having a hard time keeping those two companies in check."

"And according to Big Sis, it seems like Uncle's company is being pressured by all sides. Fortunately, he is doing great at holding on their ground."

Hearing that, Shin slightly knitted his eyebrows before muttering to himself. "And that is why that 'business war' escalated to the point where Cloe and Christian have gotten involved."

After a few moments of silence, he turned his head at Arthur and asked. "Is there nothing our family can do to help?"

Hearing that, Arthur could only shrug his shoulders helplessly before replying. "I asked mom about this matter earlier and she said that they can't do anything about it."

"The Sun-Moon Continent is quite far from here, so their arms can't reach properly there. Moreover, it is not our territory. So, Dad and Uncle Nathan can't do anything to help either."

Shin then knitted his eyebrows before asking. "Then what about Christian?"

"He is with his mom, so there is nothing much to worry about him. All our concern is to keep Cloe safe," answered Arthur almost instantly.

Then he turned his head at Shin before asking. "Sister Cloe didn't say anything to you yet?"

Shin suddenly smiled bitterly and shook his head before answering. "She is still not willing to talk about it. But from what I can see, there is still another issue that's troubling her."

After that, he turned his head at Leonard before asking. "Is there anything more?"

Leonard shook his head, indicating that there is nothing more.

On the other hand, Arthur shrugged his shoulders once again before giving his reply. "Well, we already handed the captured mercenaries to the military. All we need to do is wait for their interrogation to end so that we can get more information."

Then he turned his head at Shin before warning him. "I know that you are worried but I think we shouldn't bother ourselves in this, since it is an adult business. If you want to help, then focus on taking care of Sister Cloe."

Hearing that, Shin couldn't help but chuckle a little before replying. "What do you think I am? Of course, I know what I need to do. And you are not in the position to lecture me since you create a lot of trouble that even get the adults involved."

After that, he immediately went upstairs and left Arthur who was looking at him with a stunned expression on his face, together with Leonard who was laughing out loud.

Later that night, Shin was currently in the middle of his usual meditation training when he suddenly felt a presence standing on the balcony adjacent to his room.

Opening his eyes, he stood up from his bed before walking out of his room. Then he immediately saw a middle-aged man.

For some unknown reason, Shin couldn't clearly see the face of the man. But since he couldn't feel any hint of hostility coming from that man, Shin didn't think much thought about it.

"First of all, I would like to apologize on behalf of my master's trouble for bothering a young master," said the middle-aged while giving Shin a deep bow.

On the other hand, Shin just waved his hand at the old man while saying. "What are you apologizing for? What happened is not a bother at all. I will surely get involved as long as Cloe is concerned."

Hearing that, the middle-aged man suddenly smiled at Shin before saying. "Master's eyes are never been wrong."

On the other hand, Shin suddenly knitted his eyebrows as he couldn't understand the meaning of those words.

Unfortunately, the middle-aged man didn't explain anymore and just bowed for another time before saying. "Regardless, I still need to apologize once again."

This time, Shin got a feeling what the middle-aged man was saying. "Is that situation that dire?"

Hearing that, the middle-aged man suddenly wore a bitter smile before replying. "I must apologize once again, young master. But I can't tell you about the details of the situation yet."

Shin decided not to inquire any further when he heard the trouble tone of the middle-aged man. Then he chose to keep quiet and waited for the latter to say what he wanted to say.

Seeing that Shin seemed to understand what he wanted to say, the middle-aged man couldn't help but smile with satisfaction while nodding his head repeatedly. "It seems like the young master already knew my intention of coming here. Since that is the case, then this is going to be a little easier"

"I only come here to check if the security here is able to protect the young miss or not. But from the looks of it, it seems like you guys are indeed capable."

Those words confirmed Shin's thoughts, so he asked. "I guess you are going back now, Sir?"

The middle-aged nodded his head bitterly when he heard those words. And when Shin saw that, he couldn't help but ask. "But what about the dangerous guy who is among those mercenaries?"

"There is nothing to worry about that guy for now, young master. He will keep a low profile for the time being since he already alerted some of the old veterans residing in this Region after he failed his attempt earlier," replied by the middle-aged man.

He then took a brief pause before adding to his words. "He might be strong, but he also has a lot of enemies around the world. So, if he stirs up another trouble, I am sure that those veterans will not take this lying down."

"And I already instructed my men to follow your and the other young masters' orders, so you will not have any problem mobilizing them," he added immediately after.

"I understand," said Shin while nodding his head.

"Then I will leave the young miss's safety in your hands, young master," said the middle-aged man while taking yet another bow.

"You can rest assured that I will take care of her," answered Shin noddingly.

After that, the middle-aged man suddenly disappeared from the balcony.

In the meantime, Shin looked at the neighboring house where the girls were currently staying before taking a deep sigh.

After that, he walked back inside his room before taking a couple of talismans from his bag. Then he quickly jumped out from the balcony before setting up the scrolls in the surroundings of the two villas.

When he was done, he immediately sat crossed-legs on the ground in between the two houses before closing his eyes.

Not long after, a large amount of Mental Energy was released from his body and spread in every direction. Then they started linking the talismans that he hid in the surroundings of the two villas before creating an invisible barrier, protecting the two houses.

This defensive formation was given to him by Grandmaster Benn. After all, Shin and the others attracted the attention of the underworld organizations during their previous mission. So, having a safety measure like this was necessary.

After making sure that everything was completed, Shin went back to his room. This was quite a long day after all, so he really felt a little exhausted from the series of events. And now, he finally could have his well-deserved rest.

"I wonder how exhausting the next day will be," muttered Shin to himself as he closed his eyes while lying on his bed.

Chapter 459 Creating An Adventurer Team

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Shin and the others spent the next couple of days like normal. It was as if the attempt of abducting Cloe didn't happen at all.

The mercenaries were acting lie low because of the security upgrade that the military had set up in the whole Ace City. There were a lot of geniuses coming to this place after all. So, making sure that everything was in check was a necessary thing to do.

Due to that, Shin and the others didn't have to worry much about the mercenaries who were targeting Cloe. Moreover, they also had their own security personnel guarding the whole neighborhood, so making a move on this place would only be the same as asking for their own deaths.

...

Shin just finished his daily morning routine and was about to prepare their breakfast.

But before he could even step on the kitchen, Arthur suddenly called him out with an excited tone. "Hey, Shin! I just got the notice about the upcoming special selection exam."

Shin suddenly halted his steps when he heard that. Then he turned his head at him before asking. "So, what did it say?"

"It says that the exam will be held next week, so we still have a few days to relax," replied Arthur almost instantly.

Shin couldn't help but knit his eyebrows when he heard that before asking. "Isn't it a little late? I thought it was going to be held after a day or two?"

Hearing that, Arthur raised the piece of paper that he was holding before answering. "That is also what I know. But it says here that it was slightly delayed since the exchange students from the other country are still not here."

"Exchange students? What is their connection with the selection exam?" muttered Shin to himself while falling into a deep thought.

"I heard that they are going to be in the special courses too. Maybe that is why they are waiting for them," said Leonard as he walked down from the stairs.

Shin nodded his head after hearing that. But at the same time, he also felt that he forgot about something. Especially when he heard the words 'exchange students'.

Then all of a sudden, Lawless and Faker suddenly flashed in his mind. "Ah! Yeah! I heard that those two are selected to be in the student exchange program."

Hearing that, both Arthur and Leonard simultaneously turned their heads at Shin with a confused look on their faces.

Seeing that, Shin scratched the back of his head while explaining. "About that, Brother Lawless and Brother Faker said that they are a part of the exchange students from the Lost Soul Continent."

This time, the eyes of the suddenly turned wide before making a face as if they were asking – "Then that means they are too strong." –

Understanding those looks, Shin just shrugged his shoulders while saying. "I'm not sure. But from my sparring match against Brother Faker before, he looks like a strong Martial-Artist in the 'Ethereal Opening Stage'."

"And from what I can see, he seems to be much stronger compared to most of the Martial-Artist on the same level," he added as he remembered the final moments of that sparring match.

The explosive speed and power that Faker had shown during that time put a really deep impression on him.

After that, he left the two and immediately prepared their breakfast. Fortunately, the girls were not going to join them now since they left with Shiella earlier.

...

While eating, Arthur suddenly remembered something and immediately said to Shin. "Ah! I just remembered. The «Destiny's Fate» server is going to be up again later tonight. Are you also going back in the game?"

Shin thought for a moment before nodding his head. "I guess so. After all, we don't have anything productive to do for a week."

"Why? Are we finally going to do your 'Empire Quest'?" he asked nonchalantly before going back to eat.

"Nope! I just thought about something," said Arthur while grinning from ear to ear.

Seeing that look, Leonard couldn't help but chuckle a little as he already knew that this guy was planning.

Meanwhile, Shin was also having a feeling of what it was. So, he immediately rejected the idea before Arthur could even voice his thoughts. "If you are still thinking of creating a guild, then you better forget about that. You already know that none of us want to have the responsibility of managing the guild."

"But I am not thinking of creating a Guild right now," responded Arthur almost instantly.

Hearing that, Shin knitted his eyebrows a little before asking. "So, what was it?"

Arthur's grin turned even higher as he answered. "Let's create an Adventurer Team!"

Both Shin and Leonard couldn't help but look at Arthur with a blank expression on their faces as if they were saying. – "Are you nuts? What's the difference? We also need to manage its members." –

Understanding what they were thinking, Arthur waved his index finger at them before saying. "You two are wrong. What I am asking is a small elite group of players where we can help each other."

"We don't need to manage the members of this particular team. All of us can act independently. Though, we are obligated to help each other whenever one of us is in need."

Leonard fell into a deep thought after hearing that before asking. "A casual party? Something like the previous Adventurer Team like 'Dark Hero' and 'Knightfall'."

Arthur repeatedly nodded his head, confirming what Leonard had said. "Such groups are already common on the expert circle of the game. Like the 'Silent Paradise', 'Divine Order', 'Ruined Sanctuary', 'Blood Oath' and many more."

He then took a brief pause before adding. "Not only that, some of the top powers within the game also have their respective elite unit like that. Such as the 'Hunting Wolves' of the Assassin Union, the 'King's Raid' of Central Order, 'Unkillable' of Undying Guild, 'Nine Heads' of Hydra Guild, and others."

In the meantime, Shin suddenly squinted his eyes as he looked at Arthur a little suspiciously. And after a brief moment of silence, he suddenly asked. "How about you get to the point and tell us your real purpose. I know you have a different reason."

Arthur smiled a little embarrassedly before answering. "You know, there is still a limit on what an individual can do. So, it is better for us to be united and work together."

Shin and Leonard couldn't help but rolled their eyes at him when they heard those words. – "As if you really are thinking that way." –

Seeing those look on their faces, Arthur could only sigh helplessly before saying. "Alright, alright. You guys got me. What I actually want is to have a team which is as strong as the 'Pandemonium Troupe'."

"Pandemonium Troupe? What's that?" asked Shin with a confused look on his face.

On the other hand, Leonard answered that question for Arthur. "It is a particular elite unit of the mysterious power within the game, the 'Pandemonium Descendants'. I also clashed with the ordinary members of that superpower, but the guys from that unit are on a whole other level."

"Each of them is at least as strong as the peak players in the 'Secret Expert List'," added Arthur noddingly.

"So, that is your real reason for creating your own team?" asked Shin, who was still suspicious of Arthur.

Hearing that, Arthur could only surrender and answered truthfully. "Hiss~! Okay! My real reason for creating an Adventurer Team like that is to become a famous group like the 'Irregulars' of 20 years ago."

"And what the heck is that?" asked Shin while wearing a weird look on his face.

This time, Arthur was currently wearing an excited expression on his face while saying with sparkling eyes. "They are my role models. They are pretty well-known in the entire gaming industry because of the impossible feats that they have achieved before."

Shin sighed helplessly when he saw that Arthur suddenly lost his own world. Then he turned his head at Leonard to inquire a few more information about the said group.

On the other hand, Leonard just shrugged his shoulders before responding. "There are lot of information regarding them on the online forums regarding the virtual games. If you want to know more about them, then it is better for you to read those articles yourself. After all, reading is one of your hobbies."

Then he paused for a couple of moments before continuing. "But one thing is worth mentioning about them. They are known as the greatest Adventurer Team of all time. Moreover, each member of that group is all Hall of Famers."

"There is also a rumor running around the peak-expert players. It says that the 'Pandemonium Troupe' is planning to achieve the same feat as the 'Irregulars'. In fact, it seems like they already considered themselves as equals with that legendary group," he added before turning his head at Arthur.

At that point, Arthur suddenly slammed his hand on the table before saying with a determined tone. "That is why I want to destroy those guys! I can't let them ruin the reputation of my idols!"

Then he looked at the two with a questioning look on his face. – "So, what do you guys think? Want to help your brother out?" –

In the meantime, both Shin and Leonard shook their heads helplessly the moment they saw that look on Arthur's face.

And when they nodded their heads, Arthur slammed the table once again while saying with an excited tone. "Alright! It is decided then! So, let's immediately start brainstorming about the name of our own team!"

On the other hand, the other two could only look at each other with a helpless look on their faces. From what they could tell, this day was going to be a long day to spend.

Though, unknown to them. This day was going to be the mark where a new legend would shake the entire virtual gaming world.

Chapter 460 Emphyrean Talons

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It was already afternoon yet the trio of Shin, Arthur, and Leonard still hadn't decided to pick a good name for the Adventurer Team that they were going to start.

They actually suggested quite a lot of names already. Unfortunately, all of those were either awkward to hear. Given that, they started having a lot of trouble coming up with a good name.

"What are you three so serious about?" asked by a sudden voice that sounded beside Arthur.

On the other hand, Arthur felt like his heart suddenly jumped out of his chest the moment he heard that. And when he turned his head towards the direction of that voice, he saw Cloe looking at the three of them with her knitted eyebrows.

"Since when are you sitting over there?" asked Arthur.

"Since the time your three fell into a deep thinking," answered Cloe innocently. She then turned her head at Shin and Leonard before adding. "Actually, you are the only one that didn't notice my presence. These two already know that I am here since the time I entered."

After that, the expression on her face suddenly turned bright as she asked with an excited tone. "So, what are you three talking about for you to be so immersed in your own world?"

Arthur hesitated for a brief moment before saying with a little embarrassment. "Actually, we are planning to create an adventurer team and we are currently in the middle of picking up a name."

Hearing that, Cloe's face suddenly turned dark as she glared at the three. She raised her eyebrows before asking with a pretty cold tone. "And you are doing that behind my back? Didn't we promise that we are going to do it together?"

Seeing that look on her face, the three reflexively find someone to blame. And naturally, Arthur and Leonard were going to team up and let Shin deal with it. But if ever they did that, Shin would surely not be going to prepare anything for their dinner.

Given that, Arthur had no choice but to 'take responsibility'. "Of course not! We are actually planning to surprise you about it later. You just caught us red-handed."

But Cloe didn't buy his excuse and just stared at him with a frowning look on her face.

It took some time for the three to calm this girl down by explaining everything to her from the very start.

"So, you are planning to create an Adventurer Team that can rival the current 'Pandemonium Troupe' and become as famous as the legendary 'Irregulars'?" asked Cloe after hearing everything.

Then the three nodded their heads repeatedly as they were too afraid that her 'tantrums' would drag even longer.

"But do you guys already have our main members?" asked Cloe with a knitted brow.

"Aside from us, there is no one else. We are actually planning to look for more members when we get back in the game," said Shin almost instantly.

"Of course, the members that are going to be chosen by each of us, need to pass a certain test or criteria before they get the spot," added Arthur while nodding his head.

Hearing that, Cloe took a deep breath before sweeping her gaze at the three. Then she said immediately after. "A literal tank who loves to attract everyone's attention, a total bulldozer who wants to fight everything head-on, and an all-rounder who only believes in his own strength."

"Such an 'amazing' team composition you have there. You three don't have a specific role aside from being a total damage dealer," she added while shaking her head.

Arthur wanted to refute her words but he immediately rejected the idea when he saw Shin shaking his head. So, he could only agree with her while saying. "That is why we are looking for some players to fill the other spots."

"What's more, we already have a very reliable healer. So, filling up the other roles is going to be much easier," added Shin.

Hearing that, Cloe nodded her with some satisfaction before asking. "So, did you guys already have the candidates in mind?"

"I have someone in mind to fill the dedicated tank role. But I'm still not sure if he is willing to join our team," answered Shin almost instantly.

He then took a brief pause before adding. "As for the 'tracer/tracker' role, the three of us can do that job for the time being until we find a suitable person to fill that spot."

After that, he turned his head at Cloe while saying. "And you can be the magic damage dealer and team healer at the same time, right?"

"With all of those, the basic roles that need to be filled are already covered. What we need right now is to think of a good name for our Adventurer Team," said Arthur while nodding his head to support what Shin had said.

On the other hand, Cloe couldn't help but massage her temples after hearing all of that. But she couldn't do anything about it. After all, there was no stopping it when these three decided to do something.

But she was still not fully convinced, so she asked. "Then why not invite Shin's friends to join us to at least fill those missing spots?"

Hearing that, Shin could only smile bitterly and shook his head while saying. "They have their own adventurer team. Isn't it quite rude to ask them to disband their team and join ours instead?"

"Moreover, I already rejected Brother Lawless' offer to join them repeatedly – even after they helped me a lot of times. So, it will only make me quite ungrateful if I ever asked them about this matter," he added with a guilty tone.

Hearing that, Cloe could only sigh helplessly before asking. "So, who is going to be the team commander?"

But she immediately regretted saying that on the very next moment. Because when those words left her mouth, the tree simultaneously turned their heads at her.

"Why me!?" she asked, freaking out.

"You are the most sensible and rational person when we are together," answered Leonard instantly.

On the other hand, the other two nodded their heads repeatedly before Shin suddenly commented. "As you can see, the three of us are all troublemakers. Whenever one of us gets in trouble, the other two are most likely going to follow."

"So, you are the only one that can keep us in check if ever such things suddenly occurred," added Arthur who was still nodding his head.

Cloe was too stunned to say anything the moment she realized her current situation. At some point, she was even doubting if her decision to start an adventurer team with these guys was right.

Seeing the troubled look on her face, Arthur immediately said to her. "Don't worry. I can still be your Vice Commander while Shin is going to be our strategist-..."

He wanted to say some more, but Shin immediately cut his words off after seeing Cloe's worsening mood.

"Alright, how about we resume picking up a good name for our team?" said Shin to lighten up the mood.

Unfortunately, the atmosphere inside the room was still turning lower and lower which forced the three to stay silent.

That state lasted for quite some time until Cloe took a deep breath due to her helplessness. Then she swept her gaze at the three before saying. "Alright, I will take the position like what you guys want. But in one condition – I'm not going to handle the paperwork."

Hearing that, Shin immediately opened his Advance Watch and showed her a file through a virtual screen. "That is the draft of the contract that we are going to offer for our future members. If you want to add something, then just tell it to me and I will take care of it."

He drew this draft earlier since he felt bored when they couldn't think of a good name for the adventurer team.

"I will also ask the opinion of a professional lawyer about it, so you don't have much to worry," he added in a nonchalant manner.

Cloe scanned the draft of the contract for a moment before nodding her head. "Since it was you, then I'm sure that everything is going to be fine."

After that, she pursed her lips for a moment before saying at the three. "As for the team's name, I think I have a good one for us."

Hearing that, the three immediately sat up straight and waited for her to continue with full of anticipation.

On the other hand, Cloe cleared her throat for a moment before voicing out her thoughts. "Since we are going to be the rivals of the 'Pandemonium Troupe', I think it is better for us to have a name that is completely opposite to theirs. So-..."

She trailed her words a little to make it a little mystifying before continuing. "How about 'Empyrean Talons'?"

"If they are the 'Troupe' which represents the underworld, chaos, and disorder – then we are going to be the 'Talons' of heaven that will repel them to restore the peace and order," she added with a proud tone.

"Aside from the meaning behind that name, the name itself sounds cool," commented Arthur while nodding his head.

"Empyrean Talons, I like it," muttered Leonard.

"Then 'Empyrean Talons' it is," said Shin smilingly.

And with that, the 'Empyrean Talon' Adventurer Team was finally created.