

Destiny 521

Chapter 521 Arriving At The Primal Kingdom

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Atlas World, Primal Kingdom

This was one of the smallest kingdoms known in the game. It only had a couple of regions which were the Bestial Mountain, Forsaken Valley, Endless Swamp, Deceiving Forest, and Thrall Jungle.

Obviously, this place was meant for the players who had Beastman Race. But compared to other Beastman Kingdoms, this was the sole neutral place among all of them.

Obviously, the majority of the players residing in this place chose Beastman as their race. Especially that the regions of this Kingdom were perfectly fit for these races.

At the same time, this place was also quite famous for certain things. And that was the rare type of resource that could only be found in this place.

Due to this, a lot of Powerhouse Guilds and Organizations were targeting this kingdom. Unfortunately, this place was truly a Heaven for all of the independent players and Adventurer Teams as this particular Kingdom really followed the rule of the jungle.

There were no particular cities or towns in this place. Aside from the common outposts scattered around the whole kingdom to supply some basic necessities for the player, there was practically no real place for the players to truly relax.

It was true that there were some huge bases at the center of each region that was acting as the 'Capital City' of this Kingdom. But those places were NPC-based territories where only a very few capable individuals were qualified to enter and stay in such places.

Due to this reason, the majority of the players residing in the Primal Kingdom chose to build their own camps in the wilderness after getting some supplies from the outposts.

Due to the harsh environment of this place, things like robberies and player-killing were pretty much common in this place. Especially when some of the rivaling organizations came in contact with each other.

There was never real peace in this place as a lot of battles were occurring from time to time. Even hunting in the wild was pretty much troublesome since the players always needed to be on guard not only on the Monster that they were facing but also against the hidden threats lurking around and looking for a perfect time for an ambush.

But despite that being the case, the large organizations were still eyeing this place for the fortune that they could find in his place. It didn't matter if they couldn't take the whole place, just gaining control over a certain territory was more than enough for them to have a stable harvest of rare resources.

At this point in time, the Primal Kingdom was currently gaining a lot of attention due to a piece of certain news that exploded in the online forums just recently.

The Sky Island

The said floating island in the sky was discovered in this place when the system unexpectedly announced its appearance on this place.

Due to that event, a lot of Powerhouses residing in this place immediately mobilized their respective scouting units to look for the legendary place. And since these organizations and guilds were quite greedy and wanted to take everything for themselves, there was no news about their discoveries.

After all, this was very important information that might be able to change the flow of the game. So, these Powerhouses seemed to have a tacit understanding of not revealing anything to the public and put a tight rope on their information gatherers.

Whoever messed up with their jobs and leaked such game-changing information, would surely receive severe punishment from their respective superiors.

Meanwhile, the independent players and some adventurer teams who were lucky enough to find the way towards the Sky Island were keeping their mouths shut since they all knew that it was a very rare opportunity for them to be ahead of others.

In the meantime, in a certain part of the Primal Kingdom, Shin and the others finally arrive in this place with the help of a special Teleportation Formation of an Outpost at the border of the Kingdom.

And right after they walked out from the portal, their group immediately attracted a lot of attention due to the heavy presence surrounding them – a single look at them was more than enough to tell the others not to mess with them.

Shin and the others didn't care about the thoughts of the people staying in the area. They ignored all of the gazes directed to them and headed towards the exit of the outpost with Leonard's lead.

"This game sure is realistic – to think that each Kingdom and Empires have their own customs? It is really interesting," muttered Shin as he curiously looked at their surroundings.

From what he could see, this so-called outpost was pretty much similar to the temporary bases that were set up by the Military in the real world during their special missions.

"First, a lawless city. And now, it is an unruly jungle? I wonder what is the next place that we are going to visit after this one," added Shin before turning his head towards Leonard while asking. "You are originally staying here, aren't you? How about telling us a thing or two about this place?"

Leonard didn't bother to stop his tracks and just continued walking forward while replying. "There is a long list of unwritten rules in this place, and it will take us quite some time if I start listing them out."

"So, it is better if I take the lead in his mission, so that we can save a lot of time," he added after taking a quick look at the players eyeing them from the dark.

"So, how are we going to deal with those guys who are seemingly planning to rob us?" asked Arthur with a tone that seemed to be quite eager to teach those guys a lesson.

Pak!

Unfortunately, the response that he got was a hit on the back of his head coming from Cloe. "I told you not to cause any more trouble! You guys already have a lot of enemies, don't tell me you still want to add more?"

"But there are the ones who keep on provoking us. They will think that we are pushovers if we don't show them our might," refuted Arthur.

A few moments later, the group finally arrived at the entrance of the outpost. But right after they set their feet outside the entrance, they immediately sensed the hostile gazes locked at them.

Shin and the others were about to get ready for the battle when Leonard suddenly removed the hood of his cloak while also removing the invisible mode of his lion's head helm.

When the players eyeing them saw that Leonard 'announced' his identity, they immediately took a step back and abandoned the idea of attacking the group.

They might be greedy because they were not foolish enough to rob this Primordial Beast who reigned supreme among the players residing in this place.

Moreover, he was currently not alone. The War God himself was already a walking disaster. So, provoking him now was practically asking for their own deaths. Especially that he was currently walking alongside a group of people who were seemingly as dangerous as him.

"Woah! You really are famous here," teased Shin chucklingly.

"Tsk! Famous my *ss, it is more like notorious," refuted Arthur bitterly. That kind of scene was one of his signature moves to announce his presence in a certain place, but it seemed like Leonard stole it from him and even benefited from it.

Meanwhile, Leonard ignored both of their comments and continued leading the group. "Let's go. I don't want to stay in public places too much because there are some annoying flies that are going to disturb my peaceful time."

Arthur suddenly became energetic when he heard those words because he felt that Leonard was proving his claims by saying those.

He then turned his head to the others while proudly raising his chip up. – "See? I was right!" – were the words that were being reflected from the expression of his face.

Seeing that, the others couldn't help but shook their heads helplessly before leaving him behind.

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In the meantime, what Leonard did earlier also informed his rivals and enemies about his return. And due to that, all of them started making preparations for their revenge.

"This time, it is your turn to be hunted."

"Finally, I give you the taste of your own medicine!"

"Start making preparations, we have some debts to collect."

"Call the boys, it is payback time!"

Different organizations, guilds, and adventurer teams started making their respective moves as they all knew that the time that they were waiting for finally arrived.

Alongside them, some of the peak experts that Leonard had defeated before also moved out from their hideouts before heading in a certain direction. All of them were expecting to have a rematch against this monster who was crowned as the greatest 'hunter' of the Primal Kingdom.

And due to this, the atmosphere surrounding the whole Kingdom took a sudden change as if it was getting ready for the storm looming around the corner.

A storm that was known to locals as 'the Hunter and the Hunted'.

Chapter 522 Mister Jiang's Workshop (Part 1)

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Leonard led the group to a certain place in the Deceiving Forest.

The place was quite deserted with a lot of aspen trees around which was also making the place quite spooky. Especially with the eerie sounds that could be heard from time to time. And due to that, Cloe unconsciously moved beside Shin while grabbing on his cloak.

"Huh?" Shin suddenly knitted his eyebrows when he noticed that before starting to tease her a little.
"Why? Still afraid of those supernatural things?"

"And whose fault is that?" refuted Cloe with glaring eyes.

Meanwhile, Leonard suddenly turned his head to the side, looking over his shoulders. "Will you please stop acting like a pair of love birds for now and focus on following me? It is easy to get lost in this place due to its natural barrier."

He then took a brief pause before adding. "The trees in this forest are pretty much identical with each other which easily confuses all of the players who were trying to enter this place. So, you better not get distracted before you lose your way."

"So, how are you able to navigate in this place and make sure that we are on the right path?" asked Arthur who was feeling a little skeptical at Leonard's words.

Hearing that, Leonard pointed at his nose before replying instantly. "By using my sense of smell."

Pfft!

Arthur almost burst out laughing when he heard that replying before saying. "What are you? A dog?" while trying his best to suppress his laughter.

"What?" asked Leonard threateningly as if he was inviting Arthur for a little spar.

Seeing that the situation was starting to escalate into another matter, Shin decided to jump in the middle of the two, trying to calm these two monsters down before they could even wreak some havoc in this place.

With that, the group resumed their walking until they arrived in front of a strange wooden house.

"Mister Jiang's Workshop? Why would someone build a workshop in the middle of a forest? Much less in a maze-like place like this," said Arthur right after reading the words written on a signboard in front of the wooden house.

"Stop yapping already and come inside," said Leonard while walking towards the door of the house.

But before he opened the door, he suddenly turned his body towards the group before explaining a little. "My personal informant is staying here. And he is the only person who can help us in this situation. So, hurry up and get in!"

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Inside the workshop, a young boy who seemed to be thirteen years old was currently cleaning all of the weapons displayed on the racks one by one when the door of his workshop suddenly opened followed by a familiar voice immediately after.

"Hey! Crazy Jiang! I come here for a visit!" said Leonard as he entered.

Hearing that voice, the man who was addressed as Crazy Jiang by Leonard, immediately stopped what he was doing before turning around and running towards Leonard without any hint of hesitation. "Big Brother! You are finally back! I really missed you!"

But he suddenly stopped his tracks when he saw that Leonard was not alone. "Eh!? You brought some visitors with you?"

He then swept his gaze at the group for a moment before saying with a surprised tone. "And each of them is strong!"

Meanwhile, Arthur was currently looking at the young boy with skeptical eyes. "A brat? Are you telling us this brat is your personal informant?"

"Heh! Brat you say? You are only years older than him," sneered Leonard while crossing his arms in front of him.

After that, he turned his head toward Crazy Jiang before saying. "These guys are my friends that I'm talking about."

"Oh! I see. Now I know why I'm getting the same level of threat coming from them," replied Crazy Jiang noddingly.

After that, he invited the group to have a seat on the wooden chairs inside his workshop. "Please have a seat. Though, I would like to ask your forgiveness about my shabby workshop."

And when Shin and the others sat down, Crazy Jiang immediately said to them. "Since Big Brother Simba is only coming here for business, then I will not waste your time for chit-chatting and immediately go straight to the topic."

He then looked at Leonard and asked. "Do you guys come here to ask for the location of the Sky Island?"

"Precisely!" answered Leonard noddingly.

"Then that is going to be easy!" said Crazy Jiang before running towards a certain cabinet inside the workshop before taking a small bag from it and immediately throwing it towards Leonard. "Catch!"

"And this is?" asked Leonard right after catching the small bag.

"Don't tell it is some sort of bean that can grow into a massive vine that could pierce through the clouds?" added Arthur sarcastically.

"Of course not! That story is way too old to be used by developers of the game for such an informant quest," replied Crazy Jiang chucklingly.

But contrary to what he had said, Leonard and Arthur saw a heap of strange beans inside the small bag when they took a look at it.

Being able to understand what they were thinking, Crazy Jiang immediately explained. "As for those, they were some sort of special items that you will need to initiate the quest that will lead you to the Sky Island."

"So, you indeed knew where we could find the entrance towards that place?" asked Leonard.

Hearing that, Crazy Jiang suddenly felt proud of himself before crossing his arms in front of him smugly. "You are talking as if you don't know me? There is no place or quest in this Kingdom that I'm unaware of."

After that, he immediately opened a three-dimensional map in front of him, showing the whole Primal Kingdom.

"There are quite a few new regions discovered in the Primal Kingdom since the time you left," said Crazy Jiang while sending a copy of the 3D map to Leonard.

He then made a few taps on the virtual map in front of him, zooming towards a certain region. It was a rocky mountain with a lot of stone formations, stiff peaks, and sharp peaks.

"This is one of those newly discovered maps, the Crystalline Peak," said Crazy Jiang while pointing his chin at the virtual map in front of him.

Hearing that, the group focused their attention on the virtual map before listening closely to Crazy Jiang's next words.

"There are a lot of puzzles in this mountain and each puzzle will give you a different set of quests. And one of them is going to help you find the way towards the Sky Island," said Crazy Jiang.

"It sounds a little troublesome, but since we have this smart-ass here, it shouldn't be a problem," said Arthur while looking at Shin meaningfully.

"But how are we going to identify which puzzle is related to the Sky Island?" asked Shin, ignoring what Arthur had said.

But those words only made Arthur feel prouder at what he just said and quickly added. "Heh! See? He is already asking about the most important things."

Pak!

And that was when he received another strong smack on his head from Cloe. "Can you stop fooling around for a second? We are discussing some important matters here!"

"I'm just making the atmosphere a little livelier alright? You guys are too tense," said Arthur while rubbing his head. 'I should put my helmet on so that this violent girl can't hit me whenever she wants.'

Meanwhile, Crazy Jiang immediately answered Shin's question. "About that, you should find a Special NPC in the Crystalline Peak and get a quest from him."

"As long as you are going to correctly answer all of the puzzles in the quest that he is going to give correctly, then you will reach the Sky Island along the way," he added after a brief moment of pause.

"And we are going to find him with the help of those beans?" asked Shin while pointing at the small cloth bag on Leonard's hands.

Hearing that, Crazy Jiang nodded his head repeatedly, implying that Shin got it right.

"Is that all we need to know?" asked Shin to make sure that they were not going to miss anything.

"Well, that's all. At least from what I know," answered Crazy Jiang immediately after hearing it. He then took a quick pause as he suddenly remembered something. "Ah! Yeah! There is another thing!"

"If you are going there with just a few of you, then make sure that you guys are ready for war. Because there are a lot of strong players, powerful organizations, and powerhouse guilds heading in that place."

"After all, I'm not the only person who knows about this," added Crazy Jiang.

"Tsk! So much for acting all-knowing earlier. He talks as if he is the only person who knows about this so-called secret quest," commented Arthur from the side.

This time, the group chose to ignore him and chose to listen to Crazy Jiang instead.

On the other hand, the young man cleared his throat a little before continuing. "And if you want to get the maximum benefits from that place, then it is better if you pull those 'two' to your side."

"Though, it is not going to be easy," he added with a mystifying tone.

Hearing that remark, the group couldn't help but feel a little curious. And when Crazy Jiang saw that, he started grinning from ear to ear before asking. "Want some information?"

"Well, that is a confidential one, so I can't give it to you for free. But I will give some information about them if you pay me handsomely," he added while rubbing his thumb and middle finger.

Chapter 523 Mister Jiang's Workshop (Part 2)

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"I'll give some useful information about them, but only if you pay me handsomely," said Crazy Jiang while rubbing his right-hand fingers together.

Seeing that sudden change in his attitude, Arthur suddenly clicked his tongue before saying. "Tsk! Where's that friendly attitude earlier? "

Hearing that, Crazy Jiang pursed his lips a little before refuting. "Come on~! I'm still running a business here, so I can't just give you some free candies."

He then paused for a couple of seconds to point his chin at Leonard while saying. "Even if I am close with Big Brother Simba, that doesn't mean that I need to give him some important intel. At least, I need to earn some money to survive in this game."

On the other hand, Leonard just waved his hand and spoke. "Ignore that guy, Crazy Jiang. Just tell us the information that we and I will cover the cost just like old times. But you need to make it quick since our time is quite tight given what you just said earlier about our competitors."

"Wait, we can't just go with our old terms. This information really is quite different," said Crazy Jiang while waving his hands in front of him.

"Just tell us what you want, we can't afford to waste our time here, can we?" said Shin who was now showing some signs of annoyance.

Taking the 'hint' from Shin's tone, Crazy Jiang put up a smile to calm Shin a little. "Alright, relax, relax. I'm doing this for a living, so please understand."

After that, he didn't wait for the others to ask what he wanted and immediately told them about it. "I'm not going to ask for a powerful weapon nor money. What I want is to become famous just like you guys!"

"I already have everything that I need, except for one. And that is fame! I'm supposedly the best Information Merchant in this Kingdom but no one knew about me! Aside from Big Brother Leonard, there is no other player who is aware of my greatness," he added while trying his best to stop his eyes from tearing up.

"Eh~!?"

Shin and Cloe started making a weird look on their faces the moment they heard that; they couldn't believe what they had heard just now. "What the heck?"

On the other hand, Leonard was suppressing his laughter when he heard those words as if he was already expecting that Crazy Jiang was going to say that. And right beside him, Chaotic Luck was also trying his best not to laugh and didn't know what to say.

Seeing their reactions, Crazy Jiang was about to fail at suppressing his tears for feeling dejected. Especially when he thought about Arthur who kept on giving him some negative remarks since earlier.

But contrary to what he was expecting, Arthur was actually doing the complete opposite. His eyes were also starting to tear up and seemed to be sympathizing with Crazy Jiang's feelings.

Crazy Jiang was about to say something when Arthur suddenly appeared right beside him and said. "I see that you are also a man who pursues the spotlight. Don't worry, I know exactly how you feel since I also started in that place," while patting his shoulders.

Hearing those words, Crazy Jiang couldn't hold back his tears any longer and started crying. "Big Brother!"

Seeing that strange scene in front of them, the other others couldn't help but look at them with a weird expression on their face as they couldn't keep up with the sudden turn of events.

A few moments later, Arthur suddenly turned his head at Leonard and asked. "I never knew that you are actually such a heartless guy. To think you are letting such a poor kid rot in the darkness? Given your fame and reputation, you should have helped him build his name, especially that he is calling you Big Brother!"

"Yeah! I asked for his support countless times already, yet he never helps me no matter how desperate I am," added Crazy Jiang as he cried on Arthur's shoulder.

On the side, Cloe facepalmed as she couldn't believe that she was currently surrounded by a group of idiots.

"I don't like where this is heading," she muttered to herself before tugging Shin's shoulders to tell him to do something about their current situation.

Sigh~!

Seeing that, Shin could only release a helpless sigh as he also couldn't watch any longer. He then stood up from his seat before walking towards Arthur and grabbing the back collar of his brother's armor, dragging him back towards his seat. "Enough of your drama. We are currently in the middle of an important matter, so give it a rest already!"

After returning their seat, he immediately forced Arthur to sit before giving Cloe a signal to cast a binding spell to lock the troublemaker in his place. And to make sure that Arthur was not going to talk anymore, she even added an extra spell to prevent him from talking.

Then he turned back towards Crazy Jiang before saying. "Me and Leo are not good with social media as we don't have extra time to waste on them. So, that is probably why he couldn't help you with your favor."

"This idiot, on the other hand, is quite experienced in it. So, he will deal with your 'demand' later when we are done with our current task at hand," he added while pointing at Arthur.

After that, he pointed to Cloe who was sitting on his other side before continuing. "So, can you please start briefing us about the matter that we are asking? After all, our muse is really about to lose her temper."

Hearing that and feeling the heavy pressure coming from Shin, Crazy Jiang immediately recollected himself and nodded his head before apologizing. "I'm sorry about that, Big Brother."

He then became a little silent for a couple of seconds before he finally recovered his composure. "Before I tell you about the duo who discovered the Sky Island, let me inform you that they are also the first players who arrived at the Crystalline Peak first."

"Eh!?" The group was suddenly taken aback when they heard that.

"Now this is becoming a little interesting," said Leonard while crossing his arms in front of him as he started to become excited.

On the other hand, Cloe nodded her head and commented. "That means those two are not only lucky and just discover the Sky Island by chance; both of them should be skilled at the very least."

"But from what I can see, those guys are targeting the Sky Island from the very start," said Shin as he felt a little suspicious of that certain information.

"After all, it is too much of a coincidence that both of them discovered two of the regions in this place. And it is in the same place no less," he added with a knitted brow.

Beside him, Arthur was trying to say something but couldn't voice it out since his mouth was covered by some sort of cloth that prevented him from talking. "Hm! Hm! Hm!"

On the other hand, Crazy Jiang was currently nodding his head repeatedly while acknowledging Shin's words. "And both of you are correct."

"Those two are really skilled and they were able to beat the forces of 'Monster Hunting Unit', one of the strongest groups in this Kingdom."

"And from the information that I've gathered, those two are originally not a resident of the Primal Kingdom. Instead, they came from the neighboring country, the Azure Kingdom."

Hearing those words, Shin was starting to put some pieces together and mumble with a soft voice. "Then, maybe they got the clue about the Sky Island from their original Kingdom?"

"Exactly!" said Crazy Jiang while also snapping at the same time.

Seeing his reaction, Cloe suddenly knitted her eyebrows while asking. "Are you telling us to head over the Azure Kingdom first before we proceed looking for the Sky Island and whoever those two are?"

"Originally, yes," answered Crazy Jiang noddingly. "After all, those two are quite cautious towards anyone from this Kingdom."

"Huh? Why is that? Is it because they are originally not from here?" asked Leonard curiously.

"Partially, it is a yes," responded Crazy Jiang instantly before quickly adding. "It is because a lot of players from this place are either hunting them down to rob all of everything from them or find those two to invite them to join their side. Either way, both reasons are not pleasant for those two."

"But at the same time, there was actually another reason behind it."

"But at the same time, there was actually another reason behind it. And that is because of the quest that they are currently doing."

Hearing yet another unexpected piece of information, the group became even more interested in this topic as they all knew that this was going to be much more interesting than they originally thought.

"So, how about we stop beating around the bush and immediately tell us about it already?" asked Shin with a serious expression on his face while also leaning his body forward.

Hearing that, Crazy Jiang gulped a mouthful of saliva before nodding his head and started talking. "The truth is, those two and the locals of this Kingdom are currently at war with each other."

Chapter 524 Gathering Information

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"What do you mean of being in war with each other?" asked Shin curiously.

Crazy Jiang thought for a couple of moments before replying. "Well, from what I know, every player that is able to arrive in the Sky Island will get a special quest where they are going to choose a particular tribe to become their ally."

"The tribes of the Wingmen residing in the Sky Island are currently hostile with each other and keep on waging wars to other tribes to gain more territory."

He then paused for a moment as he opened a virtual screen in front of him where a certain list was being displayed.

"There are a lot of Wingmen Tribes in the Sky Island but there are five particular tribes that stood up among the rest – and they are the Silver-winged Tribe, One-horned Tribe, Five Talon Tribe, Scavenger Tribe, Freedom Tribe," said Crazy Jiang while highlighting the tribe names that he just said."

"If a player is lucky enough to become a part of either of these tribes, then the benefits that they are going to get are without a doubt going to be massive," he added before looking at the group silently as if he was waiting for their question.

"If every player is going to choose a tribe among that list, then what do you mean about those two Pioneers being at war with all of the players?" asked Shin once again.

Already expecting that, Crazy Jiang tapped the virtual screen a couple of times, moving all of the tribe names to the side while adding another name on the other side of the screen, written in large font.

"It is because all of these tribes have a common enemy, the overlord and true ruler of the Sky Island, Garuda," said Crazy Jiang while pointing at the large text on the other half of the virtual screen.

"I see, then that means all of the tribes want to overthrow this 'Bird King' or something, right? But they can't do it on their own, which is why they are asking some help from the players," said Leonard, thinking deeply.

"Then does it mean those two Pioneers are on Garuda's side while the players of the Primal Kingdom are with this so-called Wingmen's tribe?" asked Cloe for a little clarification.

"Precisely, Miss," said Crazy Jiang noddingly.

"So, you want us not to choose any tribe when you arrive at Sky Island," said Cloe.

Hearing that, Leonard nodded his head while commenting. "It may be quite dangerous for us since we are going to venture on that place with a lot of enemies surrounding us. But at the same time, it is better to move that way since we don't have to worry about anything else."

"And it is easier to be friends with those mysterious Pioneers too," added Cloe while nodding her head repeatedly before turning her head to Shin. "What do you think?"

Unfortunately, Shin seemed to be distracted about something else and didn't hear what they just said.

Seeing that, Cloe felt a little annoyed and quickly tugged his arm with her elbow before asking. "Hey! What are you thinking this time?"

Shin snapped out of his distracted state and immediately turned his head to look at Cloe before wearing a bright smile while replying to her. "Sorry about that, I'm just thinking that we may have missed something important."

"And that is?" asked Cloe with a knitted brow.

But instead of answering her, Shin turned his head towards Crazy Jiang and asked. "Are there any other guys who knew about what you said to us? That certain information about not choosing any tribe?"

Hearing that, Crazy Jiang thought a couple of moments before giving his reply. "About that-... Maybe there are a few people who figure out not to choose any tribe if they want to befriend that pair of Pioneers. After all, I'm not the only one who is interested in studying the myths and legends of this game."

Shin then nodded his head and replied. "I guess, I need to investigate it personally."

A couple of seconds later, he suddenly asked. "May I know where you get all of your information about Sky Island?"

"Don't worry, I will keep it confidential – we can even sign a contract if you want to," he quickly added with a serious tone.

Crazy Jiang felt a little uncomfortable answering that question. After all, for an information merchant such as himself, the source of information was like their own life. So, it was natural for them not to share it with others.

But at the same time, he also couldn't bring himself to refuse Shin since his instincts as an information merchant was telling him that Shin would be able to discover something that he couldn't uncover.

Caught in a dilemma, Crazy Jiang could only look at Leonard, trying to ask what needed to be done. After all, Leonard was his sole customer since there were no other people willing to work with him because of the previous incident that he had caused before.

Seeing Leonard nodding his head, Crazy Jiang gritted his teeth before replying. "Okay, I'll tell you. But I need you to form a contract with me where you can't disclose the location that I'm going to tell. You are also obligated to tell me everything that you are going to discover in that place whether I already know about it or not."

"That shouldn't be a problem," answered Shin instantly and not even showing any sign of hesitation.

After signing the contract with the system, Crazy Jiang immediately sent the coordinates of the place where he got the information about the Sky Island to Shin alongside the map that would lead them to it.

Meanwhile, Shin took a look at it before closing it immediately after.

He then turned silent for a couple of moments before asking all of a sudden. "How about some useful information about those two?

Hearing that, Crazy Jiang immediately shook his head while answering instantly. "Unfortunately, I don't have any more useful information about them."

"No. It is more accurate to say that no one really knows about those two," he immediately added.

After that, he started thinking for a few minutes before continuing. "Aside from their genders and class, there is no other information about them. They are a pair of a boy and girl with similar age as us while their classes are Archer and Magician respectively; which also seem to be special classes at the same time."

"Their races are still unknown, but the guy most probably belongs to the Wingmen Race since he shows a pair of wings during all of his battles. And it is not a skill either since it seems to have no time limit as long as his stamina can handle it."

Shin knitted his eyebrows for a moment before asking. "How about their skills then?"

"The Magician Girl is as strong as the common Titled Rankers at the very least while the mysterious Archer can stand against the top experts of the Powerhouse Guilds in this Kingdom on an equal footing," answered Crazy Jiang almost instantly.

"Do you have a copy of their battle videos?" asked Shin.

"Of course! It is a part of my job after all," answered Crazy Jiang.

Hearing that, Shin started grinning from ear to ear before saying. "Send it to me then."

After that, Shin asked a few more questions about the Powerhouse Guilds of the Primal Kingdom alongside the other organizations and powerful Adventurer Teams that could stand against them.

Crazy Jiang was quite confused at why Shin was asking about them. He thought that it might be because the latter wanted to know about his opponents first before challenging them.

Having that in mind, Crazy Jiang answered each of Shin's questions honestly while also adding a few details that only a skilled Information Merchant could put their hands on.

The discussion lasted longer than they had expected. But at the very least, it was also much more fruitful than what they originally thought.

Shin stayed silent for a few more moments as he organized all of the information that he just got inside his head. And at the same time, the other also turned quiet while waiting for Shin to finish formulating his own plan.

After some time of thinking, Shin finally raised his head and looked at Crazy Jiang before saying. "If you did not forget anything, then we are going now. Thanks for the info – we are going to handle your demands later after we are done with the current matter at hand."

"See yah~!" he said before walking towards the door to leave.

Seeing that, the others also stood up and followed after him after bidding their farewell to Crazy Jiang.

Meanwhile, Crazy Jiang was looking at the group with a weird expression on his face as he watched them walk out of his workshop one by one. He only snapped out of his daze when he suddenly heard an explosion not far from him.

Boom!

"Ahh!!! Godd*mmit! How dare you forget about your brother and leave him behind! I will murder all of you when I catch up to you!" shouted Arthur right after freeing himself from the binding spell that Cloe had cast on him.

He then charged through the wall of the workshop to get outside and chase after that group, not even bothering about Crazy Jiang's current feelings.

On the other hand, the poor Information Merchant was staring blankly at the broken wall of his workshop before muttering to himself with watery eyes. "M-my W-workshop."

Chapter 525 Garuda And The Serpent (Part 1)

...

Shin jumped off a rock boulder, falling right in front of a ruined metal gate. "This should be it."

"Hiya!" Cloe fell on her feet beside Shin before asking. "We finally arrived?"

Not long after, Arthur, Leonard, Chaotic Luck finally arrived and stood behind the two. And right after that, Shin looked over his shoulder and said. "Luck, summon a couple of your undead and let them roam around the place. We need to find if there are other players in the vicinity."

Chaotic Luck immediately complied with Shin's words without any hesitation. He made a snap with his fingers, summoning his special undead monsters and ordered them to scatter around the place.

After that, he asked Leonard to group with Chaotic Luck to scout the other area that Crazy Jiang pointed out to take note of. "Report it to us if you discover something noteworthy."

Then he teamed up with Arthur and Cloe to explore what was behind the ruined gate. And right after forming their groups, they immediately went to separate ways to do their respective tasks.

"Hmph! Why does Arthur need to be here? Can we at least 'investigate' this place with just the two of us?" complained Cloe to Shin with a noticeable sign of annoyance.

"Sorry for being the third wheel," responded Arthur almost immediately before turning his head to Shin. "So, what do you want to know about this place?"

Shin didn't immediately answer that question and instead asked. "Didn't you say that the game is based on the Real World, right? Then does it mean that the lore that you find in this game is also based on the legends and myths that we knew?"

Arthur thought for a couple of moments when heard that before nodding his head repeatedly while answering. "Well, yeah. Most of the quests and other hidden missions that you are going to encounter in this game are quite related to those myths and legends. They are just a little different as they are only a variation of those."

"It is no different to other games that I've played before," he added after a quick moment of pause.

Hearing that, Shin immediately nodded his head as his suspicions about the so-called war in the Sky Island seemed to be right.

"If my guess is correct, then there must be a definite reason why the Wingmen Tribes are currently revolting against Garuda. In our legend, he is supposedly a powerful god or something, so he should have absolute control over his subjects," he said before falling into deep thought.

Hearing that, Cloe suddenly pursed her lips a little before saying. "So, either there is someone who corrupted the minds of the tribes or they become tired of worshiping their leader."

"Obviously, it is the former. Legend says that Garuda is the enemy of the Serpent," commented Shin almost immediately right after hearing that.

"And given some dictionary definition of a snake, such a sly creature will surely do some dirty tricks to outsmart their opponents," he added before stopping his steps right in front of a wall where a lot of ancient murals were drawn.

Seeing the murals in front of them, Arthur gulped a mouthful of saliva as he could already do what Shin was planning to do. "Are you sure you want to study all of these? Do you think we still have enough time for that?"

Hearing that, Shin couldn't help but chuckle a little as he knew how much Arthur hated studying. "Don't worry, this is still just a game, so it shouldn't be that hard."

Meanwhile, Cloe clicked her tongue from the side before 'suggesting'. "How about you just get out of her and leave us behind? We actually don't need you here."

"No, thanks!" refuted Arthur before finding a corner where he could sit and take a rest.

'If I can't enjoy staying here, then I will make sure that we are going to suffer together,' thought Arthur while giving Cloe a provoking expression on his face.

Cloe was really annoyed with that look but she knew that she couldn't do anything about it since the dense guy beside him was already immersed in his own world while studying the murals drawn on the walls.

Sigh~!

All she could do was to release a helpless sigh before taking a seat beside Shin and helped him decipher the meanings behind the murals.

On the other hand, Arthur leaned on the wall a little while putting his hands behind his head, planning to take a nap.

"Since he decided to study those drawings, then there is nothing for me to do but to relax," muttered Arthur before adjusting himself into a more comfortable position.

...

Meanwhile, Leonard and Chaotic Luck just arrived at their destination and immediately started working.

"What are we doing here, Senior?" asked Chaotic Luck as he ordered his undead monsters to survey their surroundings.

Leonard didn't immediately reply to him as he was currently focusing sensed to feel their surroundings.

A few moments later, he turned his head towards Chaotic before saying. "Shin Bro asked us to look for some traces related to serpents as it can lead us to another clue."

"So, immediately report to me if you managed to find anything," he added before planning to head to another spot.

But before Leonard could even take a couple of steps, Chaotic Luck suddenly saw something from his shared vision with one of his undead monsters.

"Are Nagas considered as serpents? But I heard those guys are called 'Fishmen' by most players of the game." asked Chaotic Luck with frowning brows.

Hearing that, Leonard immediately stopped his tracks and immediately turned his head towards Leonard before asking. "Nagas, you say?"

He then started grinning from ear to ear before saying. "The players are mostly calling them fishmen because most of them are residing in the sea. But they are originally serpents with human features."

"So, what are we going to do?" asked Chaotic Luck.

The grin that Leonard was currently wearing curved further upwards before saying. "What else? Of course, we are going to 'check' what they are doing."

After that, he immediately grabbed the back collar of Chaotic Luck and lifted him up from the ground before saying. "Lead the way."

He didn't even wait for Chaotic Luck to reply at him as Leonard quickly leaped from the ground, carrying the poor lich with one hand.

At the place where Chaotic Luck saw the group of Naga Players was staying.

This group seemed to be getting ready for something as they were checking up with their weapons, trying to see if they were in perfect condition.

Unknown to them, a strange undead was currently observing them from a distance while hiding behind the dense bush of the forest.

"How long are we going to wait for the Boss? Are the preparations still not complete?" said a Naga player who seemed to have a Class of Spell Caster.

Hearing that, another member of the group seconded his complaint. "Why is the boss taking so long? I thought everything was already set in motion."

"I'm not sure. I guess those two from the Azure Kingdom are really giving the boss some trouble," said a player who was carrying a shield on his left hand and a longsword sheathed beside his waist.

"Should we lend him a hand?" asked the Spell Caster of the group.

"I guess that is not going to be a good idea since it may affect the plan," said a Naga Enchanter.

Hearing that, the knight nodded his head and added. "The boss will surely punish you severely if you mess up with his plan."

,m "Tsk! This is quite boring staying in here," complained the Spell Caster.

After that, the group turned silent as they suddenly sensed a dangerous feeling from a certain direction. And when they turned their head towards the source of that threatening feeling, what they saw was a 'hungry beast' walking towards them.

"So, how about I entertain you a little? Don't worry, I'll make sure to make all of you occupied," said Leonard while wearing a huge grin under his lion's helm.

Since Leonard didn't bother to hide his identity this time, the opposing group was able to immediately identify him which led them to wear a solemn expression on their face.

"War God, Simba," muttered the Spell Caster while signaling his teammates to get ready for battle.

"Tsk! Why is this guy here?" said the Enchanter while positioning himself behind his teammates.

"Should we report this to the boss?" asked the Knight as he pulled out his sword from its sheath.

Boom!

But before his teammates could even reply, all of them suddenly paused their tracks as a sudden gust of wind passed through them.

Then they simultaneously turned their heads behind them and saw Leonard holding the face of the Enchanter of the group with one and raising him from the ground.

He then looked back at the group and crushed the head of the Enchanter while saying. "But in return, please make sure to entertain me in return."

Chapter 526 What Lies Behind The Clouds

...

In the sky above the Primal Kingdom, there was a floating island hiding behind the thick clouds. And this particular island was constantly moving along the clouds which were why it was practically hard to find it.

This was the legendary Sky Island where the Wingmen Race was currently residing.

At this point in time, there were quite a lot of skilled players who managed to arrive in this place due to their own means.

Some of them reached this place after completing a certain quest, some arrived through special means when they reached the summit of the Crystalline Peak. And the others used a certain Teleportation Formation that was directly connected to this place.

And currently, Sky Island was under the violent flames of war.

Due to unknown reasons, the Wingmen Tribes wanted to overthrow their ruler, Garuda. While also waging war against each other.

There were a lot of rumors about why these tribes were fighting against one another and wanted to overthrow their own leader. But the players didn't care less about any of it since all they wanted was the rewards that they could get from the missions that they got from the respective tribes that they chose to ally with.

Among the Wingmen Tribes, there were certain groups of Wingmen who stood might compared to the others.

The Silver-winged Tribe had a pair of glowing wings on their back. Those wings were like blades of lights that could cut through everything while their feathers were similar to razor-sharp daggers whenever they were sent towards the enemies.

The One-horned Tribe – as their name implied, they had a long horn at the center of their foreheads which was curving upwards. This tribe boasted their strengths and power which was why they were known as the mightiest Wingmen living on the Sky Island.

Among the Wingmen Tribes, the Five Talon Tribe was known to have the sharpest claws on the Sky Island. Their nails could grow longer, which were their main weapons during their battles. Their combat prowess was also considered as one of the strongest techniques in this place – second only to the One-horned Tribe.

Meanwhile, the Scavenger Tribe was known as the hunters of the sky and land, and the stalkers of the night sky. They were masters of preying on their targets and always striking their opponents at the most unexpected time. And due to their cruel methods of killing, they were the most feared tribe of Sky Island.

And last but not the least was Freedom Tribe, they were the fastest group among all of the Wingmen Tribes residing in the Sky Island. Similar to the Scavenger Tribe, this particular tribe was also skilled at catching their targets off-guard. But instead of stalking their prey in the dark, they were striking fast with a speed that their opponents could not react to.

These five tribes reign supreme in Sky Island as they overwhelmed the other tribes with their might. And due to that, a lot of players wanted to be on their side since it would give them a sure success.

Unfortunately, they couldn't casually choose those tribes to be their ally since they naturally had to meet certain requirements to become worthy enough to side with them.

And it was already too late for most of the players to know about that information since they could only choose a tribe once after arriving at Sky Island.

That could only mean a single thing, they needed to meet those requirements before they could even arrive at Sky Island.

Due to that discovery, a lot of players became broken-hearted as they felt that their efforts to get in this place were all wasted.

On the other hand, there were still some capable individuals who were lucky enough to stumble upon the quest that would lead them to become part of those powerful tribes. There were also some strong players from the Powerhouse Guilds and other organizations who used their connections to get their hands on those quests.

.....

In the meantime, at the center of Sky Island, there was a flying castle floating above it. This was the place where Garuda was supposedly residing.

At the very edge of this castle, there was a certain guy who was sitting on top of the castle walls and currently looking down at the island below.

He possessed a pair of round eyes which were similar to an owl with golden pupils. The strands of his hair were silver grey and were fixed with a style that was similar to an owl's ear tufts. There were also some triangular tattoos under his eyes which were extending on his cheeks.

There was a pair of leather straps wrapped around his neck which was making his appearance look like a delinquent in the eyes of other people, especially with the round earring on his left ear.

Based on the equipment that he was currently wearing, it was pretty obvious that he had an Archer Class. Especially that he was holding a bow with his right hand alongside the quiver full of arrows hanging behind his waist.

But the most noticeable feature that he had was the pair of silver wings on his back. And this practically meant that he belonged to the Wingmen Race.

Despite the race still unavailable to other players, this particular player was already a Wingman which was proving his luck and skills.

He was one of the pioneers who discovered the new regions of the Primal Kingdom, the Crystalline Peak, and the Sky Island.

He became quite famous recently due to his victories against the famous players of the Primal Kingdom and a few Titled Rankers who challenged him.

Behind this player stood a beautiful young woman who was patiently waiting for the young man to finish watching the sight below the floating castle.

Unlike the young man in front of her, she didn't have any noticeable features that could make her stand out among the other players. Her race was even the ordinary Human Race which was practically nothing special compared to the young man. It was the same for her class since she was only an ordinary Magician of that particular race.

But contrary to her innocent looks and common class, anyone who already crossed paths with her would surely be going to think differently. And it was especially true if they already experienced her battle prowess.

Despite having an ordinary class and race, she was able to hold her ground against the powerful players of the Powerhouse Guilds of the Primal Kingdom and stand against them on an equal footing. In fact, she even defeated some of their most skilled experts.

These two currently had the spotlight in Sky Island as they were currently against most of the players who were siding with the Wingmen Tribes.

After a long time of staring on the Island, the young finally opened his mouth and spoke. "It should be about to start. What are your thoughts, Daulla?"

The Magician Girl who was named Daulla thought for a couple of moments before giving her reply. "I'm not sure if we can still fight them when that time comes. Especially, that the Guild Leaders and other top experts of those Powerhouse Guilds are starting to arrive at the Sky Island."

He briefly paused for a few more moments to think before continuing. "I suggest we find some players that we can work with. After all, we are only two people, so we can defeat all of them with the two of us alone; there is still a limit on what we can do."

"But finding players we can trust is close to impossible. Especially that we have a 'slice of a pie' that everyone wanted. All of them are just going to take advantage of us," refuted the young man instantly.

Hearing that, Dualla knitted her brow a little before asking. "So, what is your plan? Just wait here until those people complete their preparations?"

"Those tribes are already beyond salvation since their heads were already poisoned by those serpents and are filled with lies. They fell too deep on their own greed, so nobody can save them anymore," said the young man with squinting eyes.

After that, he stood up from his sitting position before turning around and facing Dualla before saying. "If we really are left with no other choice, then let's just proceed with Plan B and destroy everything."

"A castle with no king is just an empty abode while a country with no ruler is nothing but a lawless island. There is no point in keeping it since its greedy residents will surely set their eyes beyond their boundaries and will try to corrupt their neighboring nations," he added with a mystifying tone as he walked past Dualla.

Hearing that, the magician bit her lower lip a little before asking. "What if someone solves their problems and stops this chaos?"

The young man suddenly stopped his tracks when he heard that and slowly turned around before saying. "Then I'm more than willing to be on their side if they manage to accomplish it."

Chapter 527 Garuda And The Serpent (Part 2)

...

After quite some time of observing the ancient murals on the wall, Shin was finally able to get a gist of the current situation on Sky Island.

"I see, so that's what actually happened," muttered Shin while looking at the certain mural on the wall.

Hearing his words, Cloe suddenly turned her head towards him before asking. "Oh? So, how did they do it?"

Shin pointed at the murals in front of him while replying. "It's simple. It is because of their leaders."

"And what about their leaders?" asked Cloe immediately as she couldn't tell what he was referring to since she couldn't find any leaders in the murals.

"Because they don't have any leaders," replied Shin, which confused Cloe even more.

"Hey! Wait! I can't understand what you are saying this time. First, you said it is because of their leaders and now you are telling me that they don't have one? What's with the irony?" said Cloe with a deep frown on her brows.

Hearing the annoyance from her tone, Shin couldn't help but chuckle a little before explaining. "What I'm talking about is that these Wingmen Race are practically acting similar to the birds in the real world."

"Birds are practically a group of democratic creatures, especially when they are in a flock. For example, if the birds were flying in a v-formation, the leading bird would work hardest compared to the others. That is why they are taking turns taking the lead to prevent anyone from collapsing due to exhaustion. Even the weakest birds are taking the lead sometimes."

Cloe was starting to understand what Shin was trying to say before asking another question. "Then how are they protecting themselves against their predators if there is no one taking the commanding position?"

Hearing that, Shin thought for a brief moment before replying. "It's not that there is no one giving out the commands. In a flock of birds, everyone is the leader and all of them have the responsibility to protect the others."

"If someone senses a threat, then it is going to inform the others immediately. That way, everyone is going to respond with the warning accordingly and prepare to defend themselves."

At this point, Arthur finally woke up from his nap and suddenly appeared beside Shin while asking. "So, how is it related to the Wingmen Tribe on the Sky Island?"

"Finally feeling bored of sleeping?" sneered Shin before answering his question. "It is actually simple."

He paused for a moment before pointing at a certain group of murals where the Wingmen Tribes of the Sky Island were drawn. "As you can see, those tribes are originally segregated with each other and are doing their own things."

"There was no Sky Island before and the Wingmen Tribes are leaving peacefully just like the other Beastmen residing here in the Primal Kingdom."

He then pointed to another mural where a group of snakes suddenly invaded their territories. "But one day, their peaceful lives are suddenly interrupted when the spawns of the Black Snake start attacking them."

"Naturally, the Wingmen Tribes are going to protect their territory and fight a long battle with the Black Nagas that are invading their territories."

"Unfortunately, the Black Nagas are way too strong for them to handle which is why they are being pushed back repeatedly. And since their enemies are blessed with the powers of the Serpent King, the Wingmen Tribes are no match against the Black Nagas no matter how hard they try."

After that, they proceeded to another mural where a certain Wingmen with golden wings suddenly stood out among the rest. He was quite powerful and much stronger compared to the others.

With his help, he managed to defeat a lot of Black Nagas and chased them away from their territory. And when the Serpent King heard about that news, he knew that this certain Wingman was the same as him, a being who transcended into a higher realm.

Due to that, the Serpent King led the next invasion personally and planned to devour this particular Wingman with golden wings.

Then a world-shaking battle between those two transcendent beings broke out which lasted for almost a week. And during that battle, the two even released their true forms which were a Gigantic Golden Bird and a Massive Black Snake.

Seeing the mural of those two titanic beings trying to overwhelm each other, Arthur couldn't help but click his tongue for being too amazed by it. And after a few moments of appreciating the murals, he then turned his head towards Shin before asking. "So, what happened next?"

Shin pointed to the side and showed another mural where the Golden Bird emerged victorious in battle. It swallowed the massive body of the Black Snake and consumed its remaining powers, further strengthening itself.

"With all of those, the great Wingman became the hero of his race and worshiped as their god, swearing loyalty to him. He then named himself Garuda, the King of all birds."

He then proceeded to the next mural before continuing. "And as a reward of their loyalty, Garuda used a part of his transcendent powers and lifted a part of the land towards the sky and turned it into the new nest for the Wingmen Race."

"He then gives his kins his divine blessings and shares a part of his powers to his offspring. And that is when the leading tribes of the Wingmen Race are born."

Arthur started nodding his head repeatedly as if he understood everything that Shin had said before asking. "So, why is it related to birds in the real world?"

And that was when Shin pointed at the mural in front of them where a massive serpent with three heads was drawn.

"A hydra?" asked Arthur.

"Sort of, but not exactly," answered Shin almost instantly while shrugging his shoulders.

At this point, Cloe was quite annoyed at Arthur for interrupting her private time with Shin. She was about to say something when she suddenly noticed something lying below the three-headed serpent.

"Ah!" her startled voice interrupted the conversation of those two.

Looking at her, Arthur slightly knitted his brow before asking. "What is it? Did you see a ghost or something?"

Cloe didn't even turn her head at him as she was too focused at the bottom part of the mural while saying with a trembling voice. "I-is t-that-... Garuda?"

Hearing that, Arthur also turned his head towards the mural and focused on the part that she was pointing at. And when he saw Garuda lying lifelessly underneath the three-headed serpent, he couldn't help but exclaim. "Eh!? Hey, what happened? How come this powerful bird is defeated by this snake?"

Meanwhile, Shin also turned his attention back to the mural. He then took a deep sigh before answering. "I'm also quite confused about what actually happened since most of the murals are quite damaged. But one thing is for sure, Garuda indeed falls under this unknown serpent."

He then took a brief pause before adding. "And now that the light that the birds are chasing is gone, they now lose their destination and mistakenly take a wrong path."

"If a free and democratic group finally finds a great leader that they can follow and lean on, then they are most probably going to chase after his back blindly and become dependent on him without them knowing."

"But imagine if they suddenly lose their leader that they so dependent onto, what do you think is going to happen to them?"

After that, he turned his head at another mural where the leading tribes of the Wingmen Race were drawn. "For such beings who become used to hiding under the wings of a supreme being, they tend to find another leader who can take on the role of being the light and lead their Race to fly higher in the sky."

Then Shin pointed at the cracks on the wall which happened to separate the five tribes from each other. "And that is when the difference in their beliefs and opinions came – which will also lead them to go separate ways."

"That is quite reasonable and explains why those tribes are waging war with each other," said Cloe agreeingly while nodding her head.

But immediately after that, she immediately added with a confused tone. "But what about the matter that Crazy Jiang told us? About overthrowing their previous Ruler or something?"

Hearing that, Arthur nodded his head and supported her question. "If Garuda is already dead, then why do they want to overthrow him?"

"That is what I'm not sure about," answered Shin instantly before adding. "But from what I can guess, maybe his spirit, soul, or whatever managed to survive that disaster and tries to come back to Sky Island. But little did he know that his home is already in chaos due to a power struggle."

Shin then fell into deep thought before quickly adding. "But there can also be another theory for it. And that is those two guys somehow stumble upon the surviving spirit of Garuda and they help him to go back to Sky Island."

"That explains how those two managed to unlock a new region, the Crystalline Peak, and managed to find the way to arrive at the Sky Island at the same time."

"Moreover, it also explains why one of them is a Wingmen," he added while holding his chin with his hand.

After that, he cast his gaze back at the mural in front of them before continuing. "I am still missing some of the important parts, so I can't give my final conclusion. But I'm sure that this Three-Headed Serpent and the Black Nagas are pretty much involved in this matter without a doubt."

And that was when he received a message from Leonard reporting about the suspicious groups that they captured.

Reading the contents of that message, Shin started grinning from ear to ear before saying. "Looks like the final piece to complete this puzzle is finally here."

Chapter 528 Garuda And The Serpent (Part 3)

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Not long after receiving the report from Leonard, Shin and the other two immediately arrived at the locations that were sent to them.

After arriving there, Shin immediately saw three players of Naga Race with black scales kneeling in front of Leonard and Chaotic Luck.

Seeing their appearance, Shin was now sure that they belonged to the so-called spawns of the previous Serpent King.

"Yo!" greeted Leonard while waving his hand at them.

"What's the situation?" asked Shin right after arriving beside Leonard.

Hearing that, Leonard turned his head towards the three Black Nagas before replying. "Sorry, I accidentally killed the others; I didn't expect that they were too weak. Fortunately, I managed to keep these three alive."

When the three Naga players heard those words, their faces started twitching uncontrollably, especially Leonard saying the words 'accidentally killing the others'.

Unfortunately, Leonard didn't care about their feelings and immediately added. "As for what they are planning, I'm still not sure about that. But I'm pretty positive that they are scheming something for the Wingmen Tribes of the Sky Island."

Shin immediately nodded his head when he heard that. With that information, he was now sure that it was related to the Three-Headed Snake that defeated Garuda.

Organizing his thoughts, Shin sat on his feet in front of the three Black Nagas before saying. "How about we don't waste each other's time and tell us about your plan?"

Hearing that, the Spell Caster of three Nagas smirked at Shin before saying. "Heh! Do you think we are idiots? We all know that you are going to kill us right after getting the information that you want. So, just kill us if you want – you are not getting any information about us."

"Well, we also don't have a problem with that. But I'm pretty sure that the floating castle in the Sky Island will have more interest in you guys," said Shin smilingly while pointing at the Sky.

And when the three Black Nagas heard that, the expression on their faces suddenly became weird while also showing a clear sign of fear at the same time.

Seeing the expression that they were making, Shin started grinning from ear to ear before adding. "Do you think that we don't know about the schemes the Three-Headed Snake is plotting? What do you think will happen to your accounts when we hand you over to the Spirit of the Bird King, Garuda?"

This time, the three Black Naga players were currently looking at Shin with deep fear. They didn't know how Shin and the others managed to get their hands on those pieces of information that even the residents of the Primal Kingdom and the Wingmen Tribes were unaware of.

Of course, they also thought Shin was only bluffing. But after hearing the matter about the 'Spirit of Garuda' and the Three-Headed Snake, they were pretty sure that this guy was really aware of something.

"Y-you! W-who a-are you? Are you also f-from t-the Azure Kingdom?" asked the Naga Knight stutteringly.

Hearing that, Arthur couldn't help but click his tongue a little before commenting from the side. "Tch! I guess these guys are mountain people who don't give a sh*t about the news online."

The moment he said those words, he suddenly felt a sudden chill that ran through his back. He then turned his head to the side and saw Cloe and Leonard sending him some fierce glare, which was warning him not to ruin the current situation.

Fortunately, the three Naga players took his hint favorably for their side which made the three of them shudder in fear.

– "These guys are bigshots of the game!" – thought the Black Nagas and immediately bowed their heads down, smashing them on the ground.

"We are sorry, Sir! But we are bound with the system contract, so we really can't disclose any kind of information to you regarding our quest," pleaded the Spell Caster.

Shin pursed his lips a little when he heard that before saying. "Then you guys are pretty much useless to us."

After that, he immediately stood up once again before waving his hand to Leonard while saying. "You still have some of those Prison Prisms or something, right? Imprison these three in it – we are handing them to Garuda."

Leonard immediately nodded his head when he heard those commands and quickly took out a black prism from his inventory space, planning to capture the Black Nagas with it.

The three Nagas started panicking when they saw the black prism since they were pretty much familiar with it.

Seeing that Shin and the others were really serious about taking them to the Spirit of Garuda, the three didn't have any choice but to give out a certain piece of information that was not restricted by the system contract.

"But we can tell you about our Boss!" said the Spell Caster pleadingly.

Hearing that, Leonard immediately stopped his tracks before turning his head towards Shin. And when the latter also heard those words, he started grinning once again before sitting in front of the three once again and asked. "How about you start talking now before we change our minds?"

The Spell Caster hesitated for a moment before saying. "He is also from the Azure Kingdom just like the other two pioneers who discovered the Crystalline Peak and Sky Island."

'Just like what I've thought,' said Shin inside his head before gesturing to the Spell Caster to continue.

"We meet him at the borders of the Primal Kingdom and the Azure Kingdom while we are hunting in the wild," said the Spell Caster before asking the Knight to continue.

Seeing that, the Naga Knight nodded his head before continuing what the Spell Caster was saying. "Back then, we were only players with the Human Race. But after we help him with a certain quest, he grants us a special power which gives us an ability to turn us into Black Nagas."

"Is he a player or not?" asked Shin with a deep frown.

"He is a player without a doubt," answered the Knight instantly before quickly adding. "But he has a strange pet that keeps on following him wherever he goes. It has an incorporeal form and looks like a..."

"A three-headed snake?" guessed Shin completing the words of the Naga.

Hearing that, the Knight nodded his head repeatedly before starting to talk once again. "Not only that strange pet is strong, but it can also transform into a humanoid form. It seems like a Naga with onyx-like scales! We see it transform multiple times already, so we can't be wrong!"

Shin started frowning even more when heard that and thought to himself. 'Incorporeal form? Is it the same as Whitie and Blackie who became Elemental Spirits or is it-...?'

He paused for a brief moment to turn his head towards Leonard. 'Or is it the same type of Elemental Spirit just like Leonard's?'

Understanding what Shin was currently thinking, Leonard immediately nodded his head before summoning one of his Elemental Spirits.

"Just like this one?" asked Leonard as a huge lion with crimson furs and blazing mane appeared right beside him. And with a flick of his finger, the crimson lion transformed into a LionKin right after being enfolded with a blinding light.

"Ah!" the three Black Nagas were stunned at the sight before immediately recovering themselves and quickly nodding their heads.

"Yes! Yes! Just like that! That strange snake transforms just like that one!" said the Spell Caster while pointing the LionKin beside Leonard.

'So, it is a Bestial Type Elemental Spirit,' thought Shin to himself before asking another question. "Do you have more information regarding that boss of yours? Like how he looks, what his Class is, or any kind of strange abilities that he can do."

The three Nagas turned silent for a few moments before the Enchanter suddenly opened his mouth. "We don't know what he looks like since he is always wearing a black cloak every time we meet."

"We are also not sure about his strength since he never showed it in our battles. But we suspect that his class is most likely a hybrid of assassin and mage. At least, that is what we have suspected after seeing his previous battles."

"He also has some hypnosis abilities that can control the minds of some NPCs. I accidentally saw him doing that to one of the Wingmen Tribe Leaders," added the Enchanter.

Hearing that, Shin was finally able to get the majority of the pieces that they needed for this mission. 'So, that's how he managed to make the Tribe Leaders wage war to the other times.'

'But such skills are bound to have certain restrictions and it also needs to have some requirements that need to be met before it is effective against high-ranking NPCs. We need to know what it is so that we can help the Tribe Leaders break free from his control.'

After thinking about that, Shin turned his attention back to the three Naga Players before asking. "Anything else?"

And when he saw the trio shaking their heads repeatedly, Shin immediately stood up before saying. "Then I guess we don't need you guys anymore."

"But we can still free you since we don't know if you are lying to us or not," he added before gesturing at Leonard to capture them with the Prison Prism.

The three couldn't even voice out their curses as they were immediately sucked towards the black prism on Leonard's hands.

After that, Shin turned around and looked at the group before saying. "Looks like this is going to be a little harder since that Three-Headed Snake seems to be as strong as Solus previously since it can grant others with special powers."

"Heh! Didn't you also have a powerful Elemental Spirit? You can just summon her to battle that hydra wannabee," said Arthur with a little sarcasm in his words.

"Or we can just use a suppressing skill to forcefully unsummon it," he added after a brief pause.

"Idiot! Of course, it is not that easy," said Cloe with a fierce glare.

Meanwhile, Shin nodded his head at Cloe before explaining. "Solus gave Luck her blessing when she was still in her Partial-Divinity Form, so she can easily take it back even if she is only an Elemental Spirit now."

"But this Three-Headed Snake is obviously different since it can still grant others a part of its powers despite being an Elemental Spirit. And maybe it is actually the one controlling the leaders of the Wingmen Tribes."

Hearing that, Arthur knitted his eyebrows a little before asking. "So, you are saying that you doubt that this so-called 'Boss' is not the real boss?"

Nodding his head, Shin immediately answered. "Yeah. After all, it is pretty much impossible for a powerful being to follow the others of a weaker being."

"If I'm not wrong, then this so-called boss and the three-headed snake form a contract with each other where the former can borrow the powers of the latter in exchange for something," he added with suspicion.

"Nah! You must be overthinking about it. You are only making things too complicated," said Arthur.

But Cloe shook her head and added. "No, it can be true. After all, the final wall in that cave is totally ruined so we can't see what is drawn on it. All we know is that the Three-Headed Snake defeated Garuda, but we don't know what happened next."

Hearing that, Arthur immediately turned silent as he also remembered the broken wall right beside the mural of the Three-Headed Snake and Garuda was located.

"There must be a reason why Garuda managed to escape with his spirit and why the Three-Headed Snake is currently an Elemental Spirit," muttered Shin as he fell in deep thought.

And after a few moments of thinking, he turned his head at the others before saying. "Listen carefully, this is how are we going to proceed-..."

Chapter 529 Sky Island (Part 1)

...

Crystalline Peak

This place was currently one of the most famous in the Primal Kingdom because it was one of the newly discovered maps. But unlike the common maps in the game, this particular place was not filled with monsters that the players could hunt.

The Crystalline Peak was known for the series of puzzles that could be found in its area. And solving these puzzles would give a bountiful reward such as players' experience points, reputation points, and fame points.

There were even some puzzles that could give the players some high-rarity weapons and equipment.

In a sense, this place was a huge map filled with quests. And it was currently the place to grind experience points to level up faster.

The Crystalline Peak had a lot of floors that had different difficulties. And each of its floors had a guardian who was guarding the gate to the next floor.

If a player wanted to proceed to the next floor and look for much harder puzzles with better rewards, they needed to pass the test of these guardians first to proceed to the next stage.

But at this point in time, there was a particular pair who was speedrunning all challenges provided by these so-called guardians.

When the players who were grinding in the Crystalline Peak heard about that news, they immediately dropped what they were currently doing to see how this duo passed the tests of the guardians of this place.

They were planning to watch how they took the challenges and see if they could get something from it to also pass for the next floor.

But contrary to what they were expecting, this pair of players were not doing any kind of tricks to pass those challenges. Instead, they took the simplest and most straightforward way to proceed to the next stage.

They were directly challenging the floor guardians of the Crystalline Peak to proceed. Such a brute method was beyond the capabilities of the majority of players in the Primal Kingdom.

Of course, there were still some players who had thought of that method before. In fact, there were a lot of crazy players who tried to challenge the floor guardians directly, trying to see if they could bypass the so-called tests.

Unfortunately, the floor guardians were too strong for them to handle as each of them was a strong NPC with a very high AI. So, not only were they strong, but they were also smart enough to trick the players who were trying to challenge them.

There were even some cases where the leading guilds and organizations tried to conduct a raid against these floor guardians by bringing their most elite groups.

But that was just a terrible mistake since the so-called guardians were becoming much stronger depending on the number of opponents that they were facing. Meaning, the larger the group challenged them, the stronger they became.

Due to that, the players of the Primal Kingdom immediately dropped the idea of challenging the guardians since it was pretty much useless. They were strong enough to overpower a single player, which was also going to become a much stronger opponent when facing a larger group of players.

At first, the players of the Primal Kingdom were thinking that it was practically impossible to defeat the guardians and the only way to proceed to the next floor was to pass their tests.

But at this point in time, they were currently witnessing a pair of players who were slaughtering their way towards the next floor. It doesn't matter how strong the guardians were, all of them were being defeated left and right by these players who came out of nowhere.

And what made the scene even more ridiculous in their eyes, the battles couldn't be considered as a decent battle. Instead, it was a one-sided beating where the guardians didn't even have a chance to defend themselves.

Seeing such a 'strange' scene in front of them, the players even doubted if the guardians were really strong as the previous reports had said.

So, right after the duo proceeded towards the next floor, some of the players who watched from the sidelines tried to challenge the floor guardians. They wanted to see if they could also pass the test in the same manner.

But alas, reality immediately slapped them really hard as they were beaten black and blue. The sight even looked like the guardians were venting their frustrations out of them for being shamed by the duo who were 'passing by' earlier.

.....

Meanwhile, the pair who attracted a lot of attention due to the recent event finally arrived at the highest point of Crystalline Peak.

"Tsk! That guy really loves to give us all of the hard work while he is taking some shortcuts," said Arthur who seemed to be 'complaining'.

Hearing that, Leonard couldn't help but roll his eyes at him since he knew that his guy was actually enjoying all of the attention directed to them. "Stop the act already, we all know what you really want. Just do your job and stop faking some complaints."

But Arthur seemed to be not listening to Leonard's words, as he was currently browsing at the online forums and was currently reading all of the articles written about him. "Yeah! This is what I'm talking about. The great me should be the one attracting all of this attention."

Seeing that, Leonard could only smile bitterly while also sighing helplessly. "There is really nothing that can save this guy."

After that, he slapped Arthur's back hard enough to wake him up from his daze before saying. "I said enough of that already! We are here to do some tasks at hand."

"Ah! F*ck! What's your problem, dude! Can you at least let me enjoy this moment for now? It is quite rare for me to have moments like this since Shin is always stealing the spotlight!" said Arthur while glaring at Leonard.

"Yeah, yeah! Whatever! Let's proceed now. If you want more spotlight directed to you, then there are more of it waiting for you in the Sky Island," said Leonard in a nonchalant manner while walking towards the edge of the peak.

"Tsk!" Arthur clicked his tongue for a moment before flooring Leonard while asking. "So, what are we doing next? Do you even know how to summon that stupid NPC?"

Leonard shrugged his shoulders before saying. "I also don't know. But Shin Bro said that all we need to do is to place this seed in front of the altar and everything is going to be fine," while raising the small cloth bag that Crazy Jiang had given them.

"And where is this so-called Altar?" asked Arthur while turning around as if he was looking for something.

Unfortunately, there was nothing on top of the Crystalline Peak aside from the huge rock boulders with some moss and snowflakes wrapped around them.

But at the same time, the ground beneath their feet started shaking violently as if an earthquake with high intensity was currently occurring right after he said those words.

At the same time, the center of the peak was suddenly split open before an altar slowly emerged from the ground.

"And there is it," said Leonard right after the earthquake stopped. He then walked towards the altar immediately after.

The so-called was quite simple. All it had was a statue of an eagle which seemed to be trying to soar towards the sky with a pair of torches on each of its sides.

Right after arriving in front of the altar, Leonard immediately crouched on the ground while placing all of the seeds in a bowl below it. After that, he did a ritual that Shin had instructed him to do.

The ritual was something that Shin had seen at the murals inside the cave, so he was suspecting that it was meant to summon the gatekeeper or something at the very top of the Crystalline Peak.

And just like what he had expected, a beam of light suddenly shot down from the sky right after Leonard finished doing the ritual.

Swoosh!

Bang!

And when the light subdued, the pair immediately saw a man with a pair of golden wings on his back.

"So, there are new Challengers this time? Moreover, you even summoned me instead of the other keepers. I'm guessing that you two know something about our culture," said the Wingman that suddenly appeared right after being summoned.

Meanwhile, Arthur and Leonard suddenly realized something when they heard the latter part of Wingman's words.

'So, there are different keepers that can be summoned in this place, huh?' thought Leonard and Arthur at the same time.

After that, both of them immediately gave a salute unique to the Wingmen Race. Leonard learned it from Shin while Arthur saw it from the murals inside the cave.

Arthur also learned quite a few things from the murals earlier. And even if he hated studying, he was still interested in the things inside the game. So, he practically knew what to do next whenever he encountered a situation like this.

'It looks like this is a hidden quest waiting for us,' thought the two with a huge grin while maintaining the salute.

And just like what they were expecting, a system notification appeared in their notification panel as the Wingman greeted them. "Greetings adventurers from the other world! As the head keeper of the Sky Island, I'm tasked to test your skills whether you are worthy enough to be invited to our homeland."

Ding!

System: Conditions are all met, a hidden quest is initiated!

System: Please pass the Gatekeeper's test to see the details of the quest!

Chapter 530 Sky Island (Part 2): Top-Priority Targets

...

Sky Island, the flames of war could be seen everywhere as the Wingmen Tribes residing in his place kept on contesting to become the strongest tribe that would rule everyone. And since the players of the Primal Kingdom had gotten involved, the battles became even more chaotic.

Boom!

Explosions could be heard from every direction as players and the Wingmen Tribes that they chose to side on were always battling and seemed not to have any intention of ceasing their attacks.

And since there were a lot of tribes involved in this war, the battles occurring in different parts of this particular map would always look like a royal rumble since the players in those battles were from different sides.

In these kinds of chaotic battles, it was natural for the players to be confused about which among the other players on the battlefields were their friends and foes. And since the game had the friendly fire active, the players would always have a certain difficulty attacking.

But these players didn't have any room for hesitation since they were going to be dead if they tried to stop even for a brief moment.

But unlike these players who had certain tribes to lean on, there were still some capable individuals who didn't choose any tribe to team up with and decided to venture on Sky Island on their own. And since they didn't have to worry about any players being on the same side, they would always have a much easier job when a battle broke out.

All they needed to do was to protect themselves and always stay alive until the very end.

But no matter how free these independent players were, there were still some restrictions on the things that they could do.

Even if the players on the side of the Wingmen Tribes were having a hard time whenever a chaotic battle broke out, they still got some benefits every time they went back to the bases of those tribes or whenever they revived in those places.

And one of those benefits was the 'Hunting System' of each tribe.

Every time a player killed someone who belonged to the other side, they could always receive a corresponding point that was equivalent to the value of that certain individual.

These points that they were getting were exchangeable for some special items, high-class equipment, and strong weapons, in the specialized shops of each tribe.

And if the opposing players or Wingmen had a bounty on their heads, they would receive additional rewards that could assist them in their battles in Sky Island; such as a limited edition of Equipment Sets that were only available until the event was over.

Obviously, if a player or a Wingman had a high bounty on their heads, that particular individual was not an easy target since they were top experts for their own good.

They were even some independent players who had a very high bounty in them. But only an idiot would target those individuals since they were way too strong for ordinary players to handle.

Moreover, some of these independent players belong to some powerful organizations. They were either from Powerhouse Guilds, or famous Adventurer Teams, or some unknown Organizations.

But all of those groups paled in comparison when they came across a certain pair of players who arrived in the Sky Island just recently. And the moment they set their feet in this place, they immediately challenged all of the players in the Sky Island through a Regional System Announcement.

And obviously, it was Arthur and Leonard who just finished the special test given to them by the so-called head gatekeeper.

The test was quite simple and straightforward; there were no puzzles, nor riddles to be solved, all they had to do was to defeat a series of opponents provided by the head keeper of the Sky Island.

Moreover, the opponents that they needed to face were some strong Wingmen who came from different tribes of Sky Island.

Both Arthur and Leonard benefited from those trials since they had gotten a chance to become familiar with the special abilities unique to each tribe. And due to that, they had a pretty much easier time when they arrived at the Sky Island and battled with the Wingmen residing in that place.

The two took quite some time to finish up the series of trials since they needed to figure out how to defeat the Wingmen and find their respective weaknesses. Fortunately, they were skilled and strong enough to study everything they needed during those trials.

And since it was a special trial under the hidden quest that they got, the system asked them whether they wanted to announce the result to the public or not.

Obviously, Arthur would hit the yes button without any hint of hesitation since it was a Regional Announcement that we were talking about.

Seeing that, Leonard could only follow his lead since it happened to help them with the job that Shin had tasked them to do.

With all of that, the Dragon God and War God announced their arrival at the Sky Island while also challenging everyone through the message that Arthur inserted in the system announcement.

Regional System Announcement:

-Congratulation to Player Siegfried and Player Simba for passing the hardest trial to enter Sky Island!

The Leaders of the Wingmen Tribes heard of your feats and extended their hands to invite you to ally with their respective tribes.

Regional System Announcement:

- Player Siegfried and Player Simba refused to join any tribes, they now belonged to the independent group of players.

Regional System Announcement:

-The Tribe Leaders felt insulted by their actions, they were now placing the highest bounty in exchange for the heads of these two.

Regional System Announcement – a special message from Player Siegfried:

-Wassup Mo'herf*ckers! This God is finally here! Kindly get in line to have your *ssess kicked!

The series of announcements shocked all of the players on Sky Island. Most of them even stopped what they were doing just to focus on re-reading its contents – even the players who were in the middle of intense battles retreated for a brief moment after hearing it.

The first three announcements took everyone by surprise since none of them knew that there was actually some sort of difficulty levels in the trials given to them when they were trying to enter Sky Island.

But the very last system announcement really made everyone speechless the moment they heard it. They even re-read the message repeatedly just to make sure that they didn't hear it wrong.

– "What a crazy dude!" – this was the thought that was running through everyone's heads the moment they read it.

Everyone in the game was aware that the so-called 'Dragon God: Siegfried' was a showoff who always wanted to become the center of attention. But they were thinking that what he just did right now was a little overboard.

It was true that he was strong, but there were still a lot of strong players who were currently in Sky Island, especially the Guild Leaders of Powerhouse Guilds; and some of those guys were also Peak-Class Godlike Players just like him. So, provoking them was pretty much an insane idea.

Due to all of these, Arthur and Leonard immediately became the top-priority targets of every player who was currently in Sky Island.

Even if they all knew that trying to kill these monsters was quite impossible, they were still willing to gamble their lives just to give it a try.

After all, the bounties on their heads were very tempting that anyone would lose their minds for greed.

Some of the independent players even join a certain tribe just to have the 'right' to participate in this hunt. And if they were lucky enough to kill either of those two, then they would surely get one of the special rewards such as converting to Wingmen Race.

Unfortunately for them, their imaginations were too far from the reality since the strengths that Arthur and Leonard possessed were beyond the limits of what they could comprehend.

Whenever a group of 'hunters' came across them, they would always get slaughtered instantly. And such a devastating sight made most of the players come back to their senses, facing the reality.

But there were still some exemptions.

Arthur and Leonard would sometimes bump into some skilled players who could survive the attacks of the two and flee with their lives.

There were also some strong groups of players who could at least post a decent fight against these two monsters. Though, most of them were still forced to retreat when the two became a little serious.

The two also encountered some of the old rivals of Leonard who could stand against him toe-to-toe. And even if he was able to emerge victoriously, the opposing side was still able to flee while leaving him a little exhausted.

Sometimes, the pair would also meet some of the strong group of experts that they never had heard of before. They were either from the neighboring Kingdoms and Empires who came here to join the fun or some of the hidden cards from the Powerhouse Guilds and similar organizations.

But the trickiest situation that Arthur and Leonard had was when they encountered some of the most elite Wingmen that came from the leading tribes.

Those guys were quite strong on top of having an elite unit of Wingmen accompanying them. So, sometimes, the two were being forced to retreat since they couldn't fight all of them head-on; especially when there were some groups of cunning opponents hiding in the dark and waiting for the best opportunity to strike.

Regardless, both Arthur and Leonard were still enjoying their battles since it had been a while since they got to experience such thrilling battles and difficult situations.

Due to that, the almost forgotten competitiveness sleeping within them was starting to awake little by little; and it won't be long until it roused from its long slumber.