

Destiny 561

Chapter 561 The Weight Of Being A God (Part 6)

.....

Swoosh!

Without further ado, Shin kicked the ground and launched himself forward, and charged towards Mammon.

Seeing that, the player entitled as the Sloth Devil of the 'Pandemonium Troupe' couldn't help but smirk at the sight in front of him as he found it ridiculous. "Delusional kid!"

Swoosh!

Just like what Shin did, Mammon also launched himself towards his opponent and with a much greater speed even. It only took him an instant to arrive right in front of Shin while also brandishing his weapons at the same time.

On the other hand, Shin still had a calm and confident look on his face despite witnessing the insane speed of his opponent. And right before Mammon's weapons chopped off his head, his figure turned into a blur for a moment before appearing behind Mammon all of a sudden.

'Phantom Swordsman Skill: Phantom Steps'

Immediately after that, Shin swung the [Dusk Blade] on his right hand downwards in a very powerful manner.

'Extra Skill: Destructive Slash'

Shing!

Mammon could hear the blade of Shin's saber cutting through the air as it was making its way to slice his back. And relying on that information, he was able to read how fast the attack was coming from his back which also gave him enough time to respond.

With that, Mammon leaned forward and let himself be pulled by gravity. And due to his actions, he was able to avoid getting hit by the incoming saber with a very small margin.

Right before he hit the ground, he suddenly pushed himself up before borrowing the momentum that he gained to spin in the air while swinging his butcher knife to Shin.

Due to his previous attack missing its target, Shin was currently in an awkward position to either counterattack or dodge the incoming attack.

'But it doesn't mean I can't block it!' thought Shin to himself as his head worked fast, thinking what to do next.

With a quick flick of his wrist, the [Duck Blade] was flipped instantly as he held it in a reverse fashion.

Clang!

Right after blocking the butcher knife, Shin suddenly swung the [Dawn Blade] on his other hand, returning the favor and taking advantage of his opponent's awkward position.

On the other hand, Mammon continued spinning while swinging his weapons right after the previous collision earlier.

Seeing that, Shin raised his eyebrows as he was quite surprised at his opponent's crazy control over his body movements. He was not expecting that Mammon was able to still move like that despite not having a proper footing to do such maneuvers.

Clang! Clang!

With that, Mammon was able to create enough space for himself to finally use a movement skill to escape his current predicament.

Ta-ta!

But right after he regained his footing in the distance, he immediately relaunched himself and lunged towards Shin once again.

"You really have a pretty good reflex, but let's see how much your body can keep up with that!" said Mammon before swinging his weapons at Shin, to which his arms transformed into multiple blurs.

"Heh! You may as well ask my masters about that!" sneered Shin as he responded in kind, also transforming his arms into multiple silhouettes as he swung his sabers to counter.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Metal sparks were flying in the air as Shin and Mammon exchanged blows with their weapons, making the scene quite stunning.

Shin should have a slight advantage in terms of speed and strength given the buffs that he got from Cloe. But he was having a hard time properly execute his attacks due to the strange moments of his opponent.

Just like how he was fighting Arthur earlier, Mammon was flipping his weapons in the air and shuffling in with the other set of daggers from his inventory spaces. And at the same time, the skills that were mixed with his attacks were also giving Shin some trouble during the exchange.

Due to that, Mammon was starting to get more and more confident as their fight progressed. And to make sure that his opponent was not going to regain footing, he picked up the pace and started attacking more aggressively.

But starting at that time, Mammon discovered something that he didn't expect. The more he exchanged blows with Shin the stronger his opponent became.

He already knew that Shin was a 'Battle Genius' based on the data that he got from their information network.

But from what he was seeing right now, the current Shin in front of him was more than a 'Battle Genius' who was continuously growing in battle. What he was seeing right now was a hungry beast who was not only absorbing the experience of their battle but also a freak who was also using what he gained as a weapon.

His 'Storm Dagger Dance' was a special technique that practically made him known in their organization. It was also the technique that made him quite feared by most of the top experts that he hunted down.

And aside from the very few people who could go against him toe-to-toe just like the top-ranking Godlike Players, no other low-ranking players could stand against this technique. But at this point in time, a rookie Ranker who just got his title recently was currently holding his ground pretty well.

The Storm Dagger Dance was a technique that Mammon used to confuse the senses of his opponents, especially their eyesight. The sharper one's eyesight the stronger the effect of this particular technique on them. Just like what happened to Arthur earlier.

But this technique seemed to be practically useless against Shin as time went by. Not only was he able to adapt to the unpredictable rhythm of shuffling daggers, but he was even able to use the purpose of that technique to his advantage.

Moreover, Shin seemed to be also trying to mimic the technique and used it for himself. And that realization made him feel insulted.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Enraged, Mammon started attacking more aggressively along with his more powerful skills and much stronger techniques.

But that was when he discovered how much of a monster his opponent could be.

Right after he picked up the pace for another time, Mammon saw Shin start flipping his sabers in the air before trying to engage in hand-to-hand combat which was supposedly unimaginable at the current stage of the game.

The game was able to give the players the ability to fight in hand-to-hand combat when their weapons suddenly broke in battle. But that thing only happened at the early stages of the game where weapons with very low durability existed.

Due to those sudden actions, Mammon was caught completely off-guard and broke his rhythm. And because Shin suddenly shifted to being barehanded, his opponent couldn't properly attack since he suddenly got too near to him.

Afraid of being grabbed by Shin in that very close distance, Mammon needed to create some space between them so that he could properly throw a counterattack.

Unfortunately, that was the time when Shin was going to take a quick step backward and catch his sabers before throwing a counter of his own.

His movements were quite sloppy at first since he was still trying to adjust. But every time he made a mistake and took a strike, Cloe would always heal him back to full, covering for him. And that practically made Mammon frustrated.

He tried to break free from Shin and takedown Cloe first so that he could focus on a one-on-one battle later.

But the problem was Shin being too persistent.

He was using the combined powers of his 'True Sight' and 'Sensing Circle' skills to find Mammon's location every time he tried to hide in sheath.

If ever Mammon tried to outspeed him, Shin would just teleport himself beside Cloe by either using the 'Phantom Steps' or 'Void Steps'. And in the distance, all he needed to do was to deny assassination attempts that Mammon was going to do.

"Tsk! So, I can't take her out with this guy's protection but I also can't kill this rookie in an instant as long as that girl is still around. This is becoming a little tricky," muttered Mammon with a solemn tone while looking at Shin and Cloe.

And after some hesitation, he finally shook his head and decided to use his berserk skill. "Tsk! This is going to hurt my pride as a member of the 'Troupe' but I guess I don't have any other choice since you are being protected by the 'Gentle Goddess'."

Boom!

Then a powerful pressure was suddenly released from his body, trying to crush Shin and Cloe who were standing in a distance.

Sensing the heavy pressure, Shin suddenly took a step forward and hide Cloe behind him before transforming himself into his werewolf form. And at the same time, he also summoned his Phantom Clone who also changed its form just like him.

He then took a couple of steps forward, leaving the Phantom Clone to protect Cloe as he activated the 'Phantom Dance' to release nine Phantoms of himself.

Hu~!

After taking a deep breath, he suddenly looked at Mammon with a murderous gaze before saying in a cold tone. "At this point in time, it is my turn to attack."

Chapter 562 Dragon Soul (Part 1)

.....

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Shadowy silhouettes were dancing around the battlefield where Shin and Mammon were fighting. One of them was obviously Mammon who kept on clashing against the other silhouettes that were attacking him from different directions.

Shin and his Phantoms surrounded Mammon in every direction and prevented him from going anywhere. Even if the latter was much faster now due to his Berserk Skill, he couldn't take advantage of it since he didn't have enough space to execute his techniques properly.

But what really made Mammon frustrated was the spells that Cloe cast to restrict his movements and limit his battle capabilities.

Dealing with Shin and his unkillable Phantoms were already troublesome enough but now that Cloe was also putting some pressure on him, Mammon couldn't do anything but defend himself passively.

"Tsk! This d*mn witch is really giving me a lot of trouble. I really should have killed her earlier," cursed Mammon while glaring at Cloe. "Gentle Goddess: Arielle, it looks like another target will be added to the hunting list."

After that, he cast his gaze towards another direction to look for Sildra. He then started cursing more when he saw that the guy was being beaten by Archimedes and Daulla. "Tsk! And this idiot is now almost on his deathbed."

"I guess this quest is no longer achievable," muttered Mammon to himself before taking a quick glance at the details of his quest. "Losing 5 levels? Tsk! Those arrogant guys will surely look down on me when they get the wind of this humiliation!"

Then he dodged a couple of attacks from Shin before preparing a counterattack. But before he could even make his move, something suddenly happened in the battle between Garuda and Serpent King.

Roar! Shriek!

They suddenly heard a pained roar and a cry of agony coming from the two celestial beasts!

Due to that, everyone suddenly stopped what they were doing and turned their heads at the two gigantic beasts and saw that both of them suffered a lethal blow from each other.

"It is time!"

Where the words that came inside the heads of the players who were involved in the Main Quest of the Sky Island.

Boom!

And that was when they made their respective moves.

Mammon crushed an Instantaneous Teleportation Scroll to appear behind Sildra who was standing quite far from him. It was quite a waste to use such a scroll to travel a short distance. But he didn't have any other choice since that was the fastest way that he could think of given his current situation.

"I am actually quite reluctant to kill you since one of the higher-ups has his eyes on you. But since you are quite stubborn to hand over the Dragon Soul, then let me take it forcefully from you," said Mammon while swinging his butcher knife, targeting Sildra's exposed neck.

"Eh!?"

Archimedes and Daulla were caught completely off-guard at Mammon's sudden appearance, so they couldn't immediately respond in time when they saw him brandishing his weapon at Sidra.

On the other hand, Sildra couldn't do anything to save himself either since he was practically incapacitated from his previous battles.

"Sh*t!" He could only curse out a single word out in his current predicament as his head was severed from his shoulders.

Immediately after that, his body turned into specks of lights that were dissipating in the air. And in the middle of those lights, a couple of items were starting to fall towards the ground; both of them were spherical items that were glowing with different lights.

Seeing that, Mammon couldn't help but frown his brows as he didn't know which of them was the Dragon Soul that they needed to capture the souls of Garuda and the Serpent King.

He wanted to grab both of them but he couldn't do it right now since sheathing both of his weapons would make him exposed to any kind of attacks later without being able to retaliate.

"Tsk!" not having enough time to think, Mammon could only click his tongue as he grabbed one of the spherical items right after sheathing one of his weapons, hoping that it was the item that he needed.

He wanted to also grab the other item but Archimedes and Daulla already sent their respective skills and spells in his direction.

"Tch!" with another click of his tongue he reinforced himself with a protective skill before brandishing his butcher knife left and right, deflecting the enhanced arrows and lighting spears heading his way.

After that, he immediately extended his free hand, planning to grab the other spherical item lying on the ground. But he swiftly retracted his arm back when he heard something cutting through the air.

Swoosh!

Bang!

Mammon flipped a couple of times, distancing himself from his previous location. And when he was back on his feet, he saw Shin picking up the other spherical item on the ground.

"Tsk!" he clicked his tongue once again after seeing that sight before taking a look at the item that he got. "F*ck!"

After cursing out loud, he threw a sharp glare at Shin. "You may win this time, but are you sure that you can handle the consequences after today's event?"

Hearing that, Shin couldn't help but smirk at those words before saying. "That's our problem to deal with in the future."

"Heh! We will see each other again when that time comes then," sneered Mammon before quickly hopping backward and entering stealth while looking at Arthur and Leonard who were now charging at him. "The same goes for you two, Siegfried and Simba. Be aware that the Pandemonium will soon cast its eyes on you."

Boom!

And that was when the two landed on his location at the same time, creating a huge crater on the ground.

"Tsk! He escaped," cursed Arthur after discovering that Mammon was no longer in the place.

"Forget it. Just like what he said, he will mean him again soon," said Leonard while sweeping his gaze on the surroundings once again.

At the same time, Shin arrived beside them before handing over the spherical item that he picked earlier.

"What's this?" asked Arthur with a knitted brow as he received the item.

"That should be the thing that we are looking for," answered Shin before pointing his chin at the two injured gigantic beasts in the distance. "Go! We will handle the other guys who were trying to get their hands on the loots."

After that, he turned his head towards Leonard before asking. "By the way, what happened to your opponents?"

Hearing that, Leonard smirked before proudly answering. "Heh! We kicked their *ssess obviously."

Meanwhile, Arthur used his 'Dragon Eyes' to identify the spherical item on his hand.

Item Name: [Dragon Soul]

Item Type: Miscellaneous

Item Rank: Special

Description: A powerful item where an Elemental Dragon was sealed in the past. Feed it some undying souls to awaken the slumbering dragon inside that would grant you its powers in return.

Note 1: Careful! The sleeping Elemental Dragon inside might be stronger than what you have expected and could be able to break free from you.

Note 2: There was a high chance that the Elemental Dragon sleeping inside would go on rampage due to being sealed for a long time.

After reading the details, Arthur suddenly clenched his hand before wearing a grinning look on his face.
"Nice! I like this!"

He then turned his head towards Shin before asking. "So~... I can head over there now, right?"

Shin couldn't help but chuckle a little after seeing the excited look on Arthur's face. 'The original plan is to give the Elemental Spirit to Leo. But since it is a dragon, I guess it is better to give it to him.'

He was about to nod his head when Daulla suddenly appeared alongside Archimedes while trying to say something. "Wait! Then what about-..."

She was still in the middle of talking when Arthur suddenly cut in and said. "Don't worry! We will compensate you later after all of this is done."

"See yah~!" he said before slightly crouching on the ground while spearing his wings wide. And before Daulla could even give her reply, Arthur already flapped his wings and sent himself up in the air with the gust of wind that was created under his wings.

Swoosh!

Seeing Arthur acting like an excited little boy, Shin and Leonard couldn't contain their laughter any longer and burst out laughing. And while they were enjoying their time, Cloe suddenly appeared behind them before bumping their heads on each other.

Pak!

"If you two are done fooling around, then let me remind you that your little 'apprentice' is currently holding his ground against the surviving forces on the other side," she said while glaring at them.

"Ugh! Is it really necessary to do that?" asked Shin while rubbing his forehead.

"Yeah! That guy is an army of his own, so he is not going to be at a disadvantage when fighting against many," complained Leonard before adding. "And with that kind of 'luck', killing him is much harder than you think."

"Stop complaining now and come with me. You also said to Arthur that you are going to block them, right?" said Cloe while dragging the two.

On the sidelines, Archimedes and Daulla couldn't help but wear a weird look on their faces when they saw the strange scene in front of them.

"Ahm... wait!" called out Daulla after a slight hesitation.

"Eh!?"

Hearing her, the three suddenly turned quiet before looking at her simultaneously.

The expressions that they were currently wearing showed that they were quite clueless about what she wanted to say. But deep inside, they were actually grinning from ear to ear while expecting something to hear.

Chapter 563 Dragon Soul (Part 2)

...

Swoosh!

Arthur stood in the air above the place where Garuda and the Serpent King were fighting. He looked at them with squinted eyes, trying to assess their current state.

Both beasts were severely injured as they struggled to fight each other. Garuda had one of its wings broken as it could no longer fly anymore. There were also bite marks on different parts of its body where a lot of blood was coming out.

But at the same time, the Serpent King was not in better shape either since it also suffered a lot of injuries of its own. Its two heads were totally crashed, rendering them completely useless. The lacerated wounds running across its body were also no way better than the injuries that Garuda had.

Despite having those injuries, both beasts refused to concede and continued to fight. The Serpent King was trying to strangle Garuda to death by wrapping its massive body to the giant bird. But the latter would obviously not let itself be crushed by its opponent as it dug its claws on the body of the gigantic serpent while trying to free itself from being squeezed.

As the two beasts struggled to fight, their heads suddenly came face to face on each other as both of them opened their mouths while gathering a large amount of mana on them. And when the

accumulation of powers reached its peak, both beasts simultaneously released their attacks at point-blank range, creating a massive explosion.

Boom!

Roar! Shriek!

The two beasts cried in agony as they suffered yet another fatal injury from the collision of their powers. And due to the powerful recoil from the impact, both of them loosened their grips on each other and freed themselves from their opponent's death grasp.

And when Arthur saw that, he knew that it was the perfect time to land the final strike that would kill the two beasts.

Naturally, the other forces standing from the sideline were also waiting for this opportunity to come and immediately made their moves without having any hesitation.

Unfortunately, their forces were immediately greeted by a massive army of strange undeads that had golden flames protecting their bodies. And among them, there was a particular individual who ran across the battlefield who was assassinating the key figures of the opposing side one by one; it was Shin who was still in his werewolf form.

Meanwhile, standing behind the army of undeads was a small group of players who were giving range support. Chaotic Luck, Daulla, and Archimedes were sending their spells and skills across the battlefield, wreaking havoc in the enemy ranks.

On the other hand, Cloe was buffing the whole army all by herself with her prayers. Moreover, she was also recovering the health bars of the undeads with her large AOE healing skills, giving the opposing forces a massive headache on their side.

Seeing that his friends were practically overwhelming the opposing side, Arthur could now put all of his focus on the two beasts below him.

He first released his Elemental Spirit Possession before summoning his golden dragon pet. And standing behind his dragon, Arthur put his palms together while summoning his Elemental Dragons. "Oceana, Vulcan, Tempest!"

Responding to his call, the three specks of light circling around his body broke free from their cycle and flew towards three different locations.

Then they transformed into their original forms while forming a triangle formation with Arthur being the center.

After that, a magic circle was suddenly formed in the air while connecting the three points where the three Elemental Dragons positioned themselves.

Arthur waited for a few moments to complete the formation before almost emptying his mana pool to activate the skill.

'Elemental Dragon Formation: Wrath of the Heaven'

Boom!

Then a pillar of light suddenly fell from the sky and struck the two beasts struggling on the ground.

Roar! Shriek!

With another pained cry, both Garuda and the Serpent King tried to fight back the pillar of light by sending a powerful energy beam towards it. Unfortunately, they couldn't accumulate enough powers to charge their attack due to the severe injuries that they suffered from each other.

Boom!

With a massive explosion, the bodies of the two beasts were struck down by the falling light pillar, rendering them immobile as their health bars slowly ticked down to zero.

Garuda and the Serpent King struggled so hard as they tried to fight back with the little bit of strength that they still had. But like a verdict of a king, Arthur ended their lives by emptying his mana pool to strengthen the power of the descending pillar of light.

Boom!

With another explosion, the bodies of the two beasts finally transformed into specks of light, indicating their deaths.

"Tsk! What a pity, I really want to take a few parts of their bodies. Those are supposedly good crafting materials for godlike equipment," muttered Arthur when he saw what happened.

"I guess the game is still not willing to give us such game-changing materials for broken items," he commented with a dejected sigh.

He then ignored the items that were dropping towards the ground and took out the Dragon Soul from his inventory bag before whispering a few words to it.

A few moments later, the spherical item on his hand suddenly glowed with brilliant light and illuminated the whole area around him. After that, Arthur threw the item in the middle of the specks of light left behind by Garuda and the Serpent King.

On the very next instant, a powerful suction force was released from the Dragon Soul, sucking all of the specks of light around it before they could even dissipate in the air. Little by little, the suction force started to become stronger until it became a massive hurricane that was sucking all of the mana in the surrounding area.

Strange enough, the vortex created by the Dragon Soul was not pulling any physical things aside from the mana and specks of light lingering in the air.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

While all of these were happening, multiple silhouettes suddenly appeared in the air as they tried to grab the items that were falling towards the ground.

But before they could lay their hands on those items, flashes of light suddenly struck them down. While two more silhouettes appeared in the air and obstructed their path.

"No, you ain't!" shouted Leonard as he threw his battle-axes in two different directions, creating a cyclone that warded off the attacks thrown at them.

Meanwhile, Shin used the charges of his 'Mondi's Jump' consecutively to travel in the air while catching the falling items one by one and quickly putting them in his inventory.

Ta-ta!

When Shin landed on a tree branch, he quickly surveyed his surroundings, trying to see if he missed any loot. And after confirming that he got everything, he immediately ran towards a certain location while whispering a few words in the party voice channel. "I've got everything! You can retreat now, Leo!"

Nodding his head, Leonard suddenly smirked and complied with the orders. "Later, guys!"

Swoosh!

...

Meanwhile, Arthur, who was still standing on his golden dragon's back in the air, was currently looking at the dark vortex with squinting eyes.

"What now?" muttered Arthur while wearing a frown as his Elemental Dragons flew back to his side with their speck of light forms.

"Are you sure about this, kid? I can tell that whoever is the dragon sealed in that Dragon Soul is much stronger than what we can currently handle," said Vulcan, the Infernal Dragon.

"I second, child. We should forget about this time," agreed Oceana, the Ocean Dragon.

Meanwhile, Tempest, the Storm Dragon suddenly laughed mockingly at them when he heard their words before sneering. "Heh! You weaklings can just stand on the side if you are scared! I can handle this myself!"

"I am asking what do I need to do next?" asked Arthur, ignoring their warnings and remarks.

Hearing his words, Oceana could only sigh helplessly before answering. "When the dark vortex reaches its peak, jump towards it and enter the sub-dimension where it was leading."

"That's all? If it is that easy, then the other people present here can enter it too," said Arthur with an even deeper frown while looking at the other players hiding in the vicinity.

Tempest started laughing when he heard that before saying. "If they want to die early, then they are more than welcome to follow us inside!"

"A Dragon Soul is called Dragon Soul for a reason. Now one can enter its sub-space unless they are from the Dragon Race or a Dragonkin," added Vulcan before joining Tempest to laugh.

"And you also don't have to worry about the other Dragons and Dragonkins entering it after us since the vortex will only accept the challenger that opened it alongside their servants," explained Oceana, answering the question that Arthur was about to say.

"The challenger? Then it means we really need to fight the dragon sealed inside? What will happen if we lose?" asked Arthur while waiting for the dark vortex to reach its peak.

"Child, you seem to have a lot of questions," said Oceana with a sigh before answering. "If we win you can accept the sealed dragon as your partner like us and have their blessings. But if we lose, then that sealed dragon will regain its original powers alongside its freedom to roam free around the world."

"But let me warn you, child. Since that dragon is sealed within a Dragon Soul, it can only mean that it is imprisoned by our kin for committing a grave sin. So, you must never let such beings become free since it will cause chaos in the Atlas World."

Tempest suddenly smirked after listening to her words before adding. "Moreover, it will also affect your position in the 'Sanctuary' if they discover that you are the one who breaks its seal."

Hearing their words, Arthur nodded his head heavily before casting his gaze back at the dark vortex.

A few moments later, the violent energy surrounding the vortex calmed down a little, indicating that it finally reached its peak state.

"Then let's see who is this criminal dragon that you guys are talking about," muttered Arthur before ordering his golden dragon to dive into the dark vortex.

Chapter 564 Dragon Soul (Part 3): The Chaos Dragon, Archon

...

Swoosh!

Right after entering the dark vortex, Arthur and his golden dragon arrive in an abyssal world. There was nothing around aside from total darkness.

"Are the insides of all Dragon Souls always like this?" muttered Arthur with a low voice as he surveyed his surroundings. And after a few moments of hesitation, he waved his hand to unsummon the golden dragon before standing in the middle of darkness all by himself.

He waited in silence for some time as he knew that whoever this dragon was, it was clearly testing him. Arthur was quite impressed with himself as he stood there alone, doing nothing but stare at the darkness.

"Now that I think about it, I really become calm when it comes to these kinds of situations. I guess that training inside that prison camp is paying off," he muttered to himself while stroking his chin.

A few moments later, Arthur finally heard the voice that he was waiting for. "You really look calm for someone who is about to die."

The voice was coming from every direction so Arthur didn't bother to look for its source. He just smirked after hearing those words before replying. "Thanks for the compliment. Though, I'm not planning to die here."

"And you really believe that you are going to survive after entering this cursed place?" sneered the voice, mocking Arthur's reply.

Boom!

Then a powerful pressure suddenly fell down from above, trying to crush Arthur.

But despite how powerful that pressure was, its target seemed to be unaffected by it as he stood calmly on his spot. And after basking himself with that crushing pressure, Arthur suddenly smirked at the owner of that voice before saying. "Is that it? It seems like you are massaging my sore muscles with this much pressure."

"How about you increase it a little since we are already in this? Maybe it will relax my muscles a little more," he added with a smirking tone.

The dragon hiding in the dark became silent for a moment as it couldn't hide its surprise after seeing Arthur withstood its pressure.

A few moments later, the dragon started laughing maniacally and shook the whole place with it. At the same time, Arthur felt an unbearable headache assaulting his head due to his eardrums being shaken by the loud laughter that was coming from every direction. He almost fell on his knees but his willpower managed to hold out and withstood it in the end.

"Good! Good!" said the dragon repeatedly after seeing Arthur manage to endure all the pressure.

"Here I am wondering who is dilutional enough to challenge me – it turns out that it is a little hatchling of the 'Sanctuary'," said the dragon in a sneering tone.

This time, Arthur was able to locate the direction where the voice was coming from. So, he slowly raised his head and looked up in front of him to see what kind of dragon he was facing right now.

The first thing that greeted him was the pair of huge eyes staring back at him with their crimson red pupils. Arthur felt an urge to kneel on the ground after looking at them for a second. Fortunately, he managed to immediately regain his composure after activating the 'Dragon King's Will' skill from his arsenal.

After that, Arthur's eyes seemed to adjust with the darkness surrounding him as he started to see the outline of the dragon's body in front of him.

It was an incredibly massive dragon with a size that was much larger than any beings that Arthur saw so far. It was even larger than his Elemental Dragons as well as Garuda and the Serpent King.

It was a lizard dragon with what seemed to be obsidian scales that were acting like armor protecting its entire body. A pair of bull-like horns were sticking out from each side of its head while a sharp horn was curving upwards at the center of its forehead.

On the other hand, there were lines of razor-sharp teeth filling its jaws while purple flames were coming out from its mouth, matching its breathing.

There was a pair of massive wings on its back that had sharp bones sticking out on their edges. And at the same time, there seemed to be a long-sharpened fin on its back and running all the way its long tail.

Arthur immediately wore a solemn expression on his face when he saw the complete appearance of the dragon. 'D*mn! Its size alone is already concerning. This dragon seemed to be as large as the Leader of the Sanctuary.'

Meanwhile, the Elemental Dragons revolving around Arthur's body started moving restlessly as they were able to recognize the massive dragon in front of them.

"Kid, it looks like you finally ran out of luck. This dragon is not someone you can take on," whispered Vulcan with a slightly trembling voice.

Hearing that, Arthur suddenly frowned his brows before asking. "How can you be sure about that without putting up a fight?"

Oceana seemed to sigh powerlessly when she heard that before answering for Vulcan. "Child, we may be Ancient Dragons just like him, but he is already in a completely different realm than us."

Meanwhile, the haughty Storm Dragon was completely silent at this point in time as he also knew that they were no match against the dragon in front of them.

Noticing his silence, Arthur couldn't help but frown his brows even further before asking. "Is he as strong as the Sanctuary Leader for you to turn mute, Tempest?"

"As strong, my *ss! That dragon over here is the great Catastrophe-Class Dragon! His strength is at least on par with an Elder Dragon!" refuted Tempest when he heard Arthur trying to ridicule him.

"Moreover, he is one of the fearless rivals of the Dragon King himself," added Vulcan noddingly.

Hearing that, Arthur used his 'Dragon Eyes' one more time, trying to see if he could finally read the details of the massive dragon now that he knew a few things about it.

Monster Name: Archon

Life Rating: Ancient Dragon (Catastrophe Class)

Elemental Affinity: Chaos

Level: ???

Stats: ???

Historical Note: One of the most Ancient Dragons of the Dragon Race who survived three Eras of the Atlas World.

He was categorized as one of the most powerful beings of his race due to this reason. He was also able to slaughter a lot of Demons with different ranks during the Repelling Era.

But he was imprisoned by his on Race due to committing an unforgivable sin.

(???)

Note: Increase your affinity with Archon to have a chance to know more about him.

"Hiss~! I guess we are really f*cked this time," muttered Arthur after reading the details that he got.

Meanwhile, Archon, the Chaos Dragon smirked at him after sensing the change of mood from Arthur.

After that, the Chaos Dragon lowered its head to look closely at Arthur before sneering. "Where is that smug look that you have earlier, a hatchling of the Sanctuary."

"How about you swear your loyalty to me instead and I may spare your lives," he said in a mocking tone.

Arthur was silent for a couple of moments as stared straight into Archon's eyes before smirking after a few moments. "Heh! Do you think I'm some sort of a pushover? Why not try me instead?"

Seeing that Arthur regained his guts within an instant, Archon started laughing out loud once again before looking back to the Dragon Knight. "I really started to like you, little one. It is just a pity that you are one with those egotistical dragons claiming that they are righteous beings."

"So, how do you want to die, little one?" asked the Chaos Dragon.

Arthur raised his brows for a moment when he noticed that Archon slightly chanced how to address him. Sensing that there was something wrong, he raised his head and looked at the Chaos Dragon with squinting eyes. "It seems like you really hate the Sanctuary of Dragons. I wonder why."

Hearing that, Archon smirked a little before sneering. "Don't try to buy some time. We both know that you and your little partners can't stand against me."

Arthur nodded his head after hearing that but still refused to bend in front of the Chaos Dragon. "Well, that is a given. After all, you are one of the legendary dragons based on what my Partners are telling me- ..."

He then trailed his words a little before taking a special token from his inventory while saying. "But you are not the only one alive."

Archon immediately noticed that there was something off when he heard those words. And when he noticed the small actions that Arthur did, he immediately squinted his eyes and looked at the item on Arthur's hand.

'This will cost me almost all of my accumulated contribution points in Sanctuary, but I guess I don't have any choice either,' thought Arthur to himself while wearing a bitter look on his face.

"This item is mine to begin with, so the one that I am going to summon will be considered as my servant, right?" muttered Arthur with a quiet voice before crushing the token in an instant.

Boom!

Then a blinding light came out from the broken seal before a column of light suddenly appeared before breaking through the dark abyss.

"I summon thy, the ruler of order!"

Chapter 565 Ripples

...

Bang!

Arthur crushed the special token on his hand which created a huge magic circle appearing underneath his feet before a blinding column of light suddenly flew upwards, breaking through the dark abyss.

Roar!

Seeing that, Archon, the Chaos Dragon immediately raised his claws and slammed it towards the column of light.

Bang!

But before his claw could come in contact with it, he was immediately repelled by a powerful force that made him take a couple of steps backwards.

"This Divine Energy! It is that b*st*rd!" shouted Archon as he looked at the column of light with great resentment.

Meanwhile, Arthur currently had his eyes closed as he was trying to communicate with someone. "I summon thy, the mighty ruler who oversees the order of this world."

Responding to his call, a majestic voice replied to him on the very next instant. "Are you sure that you are going to use this opportunity now, little one? You should know that you can only summon me once with our contract."

"Well, I can't do anything about our current situation anyway," replied Arthur while wearing a bitter look on his face

"This will cost you a lot, chosen successor of the Dragon King," said the majestic voice.

After that, the column of light suddenly expanded and created a gigantic golden door that was opening slowly.

"It's not like I have another choice aside from this," muttered Arthur to himself while laughing with a bitter tone.

Bang!

When the golden door opened, a huge dragon slowly walked out from it. And based on the powerful pressure coming from the teleportation gate, this particular dragon was at least as strong as Archon.

"Tsk! Tsk! Of all the places that you can pick, you choose to summon me to a filthy prison?" said the dragon that was walking out of the golden gate.

It was a golden dragon which seemed to be a better and more powerful version of the golden dragon pet that Arthur had. Its size alone was already on par with Archon. What's more, the pressure that it was releasing.

"Hoh~! I didn't expect this. To think that I will meet an old acquaintance here," said the golden dragon after seeing the other dragon in front of him who was also wearing a wary look. "It has been a while, Archon."

"Agios..." muttered Archon with a heavy tone while looking at the golden dragon aggressively.

"What's with the unfriendly look, Archon? You are making it look like we are mortal enemies," said Agios with a sneering tone.

Grr!

Seeing that Archon was starting to gather a massive amount of mana in its mouth, Agios give Arthur a sidelong glance before saying. "Stay behind me if you don't want to get blasted, little one."

After that, he quickly gathered his own mana in his mouth before releasing a Dragon Breath of his own.

Roar! Roar!

'Chaos Dragon's Breath: Calamity Blast'

'Holy Dragon's Breath: Sacred Howl'

BOOM!

A devastating explosion was immediately created when the two opposing breaths came in contact with each other. And due to how powerful their attacks were, the whole abyssal world seemed to shake violently despite the infinite darkness surrounding the whole place.

Whistle~ ♪

Meanwhile, Arthur couldn't help himself but whistle with an amused look on his face despite seeing such devastating powers closely. "So, this is what the fight of Ancient Dragons looks like. I guess this is how Shin and Immortal felt when they saw their dragons fight each other."

"Agios! You will pay for your actions during that time!" roared Archon before charging towards the Holy Dragon.

"I see that you are still blaming us for what happened back then," sneered Agios after seeing Archon charging at him aggressively.

Boom!

"Hmm... I want to watch them fight up close, but I guess I can do it right now unless I want to die from the crossfire," muttered Arthur before distancing himself away from the fight while summoning his Elemental Dragons to protect him from the residual powers of the two Ancient Dragons.

"I wonder how strong I can be after fusing my powers with that Chaos Dragon," thought Arthur to himself, looking confident that he was going to win this battle.

Meanwhile, outside that abyssal world, the whole gaming community was shaken by a particular announcement that was broadcasted to the entire Atlas World.

Global System Announcement: The Sky Island is now available to the public! All players from different races can now enter the said Region at the Primal Kingdom.

Global System Announcement: After completing the specific requirements, two more sub-races are going to be added to the game.

The 'Wingmen' of Beastman Race, and 'Dire Nagas' of the Naga Races.

Meanwhile, the current Nagas known in the game will be addressed as 'Ocean Nagas'.

For more information, please visit the game's official website!

Global System Announcement: Congratulations to the following players for their efforts in achieving such an amazing feat!

Party leader:

Gentle Goddess: Arielle

Members:

Dragon God: Siegfried

War God: Simba

Bird of Hermes: Archimedes

(Emperor of the Night) Sickarius

(Calamity Sorceress) Daulla

(Herald of Chaos) Chaotic Luck

These players will receive the following as extra rewards: 1000 additional Fame, 25 Basic Stat Points, 15 extra Legacy Points, and a special item related to their respective class.

Uproar!

The whole virtual communities all over the world immediately become crazy after receiving such a piece of world-shaking news.

Different online platforms were immediately bombarded by this news while the official forums of the game were filled with different topics regarding the new subraces and their racial abilities.

But at the same time, the Powerhouses of the game were concerned about something else. The new addition of the 'Wingmen' and 'Dire Nagas' was just a trivial thing for them. At most, their existence would only open a few new team compositions and battle strategies for everyone to employ.

But it was a completely different matter when it comes to the freaks of the game. Especially when it comes to the ones who were standing at the peak.

They already knew that Siegfried had some connections with Simba from the previous games that they played together. But since both of them were playing like solo gamers, the Powerhouse Guilds and other Organizations were not putting much attention to them.

But due to the recent incidents, these guilds were not suspecting that these two top Godlike Players were planning something big. Almost all of the big incidents that happened recently, these two were always together alongside the new rising star of the Saint Heaven Kingdom.

And at this point in time, these very players were involved with another world-shaking event. Moreover, they were even in a full team this time, unlike the previous events.

This matter made the powerful organizations to be wary of the current situation, so they started making preparations for a suspected Powerhouse Group that was about to emerge.

"Start investigating about those members that we never had heard of!"

"Send some scouts to the Saint Heaven Kingdom, we need to gather as much information as we can."

"Are these crazy muscleheads are finally teaming up together? Keep an eye on them, are going to be one of our rivals in the future when it happens."

"Looks like they finally get tired of playing alone. This is going to be interesting."

And unknowingly, these movements were going to start a ripple that would affect the current balance of the gaming world.

"With them taking the first step, I'm sure that those stubborn guys will immediately follow suit."

While all of this was happening, Shiella who was about to take her beauty rest in the real world, started getting reports from her personal assistant inside the game.

After skimming through the entire report, Shiella could only release a helpless sigh before massaging her temples. "These idiots! Can they at least try to play a little lowkey? Now, I need to also keep an eye on what is going to happen next!"

She then turned her eyes back to her virtual screen, focusing on a certain topic written on the report. "Sigh~! And can they at least make it a little obvious too? They are going to make a power shift inside the game with this."

After that, she thought a couple of moments before giving out her orders and immediately lied on her bed to finally get her to sleep.

.....

In the meantime, David was currently staring at the ceiling of his room, thinking about what happened earlier.

After he told Shiella about the in-game name that he used to use, he somehow noticed that she seemed to be hesitating to tell him something. But when he tried to ask her what was on her mind, she immediately refused to tell him anything and said that she was leaving.

"Tsk! What was that? I thought everything is going smoothly," muttered David with an annoyed tone before adjusting his position on the bed sideways.

"Should I go back to playing games? I no longer have any urgent tasks to do now anyway," he added before closing his eyes.

Chapter 566 Arthur's Scheme

...

While the whole virtual world was in an uproar, the group who was the main topic of this commotion was currently resting outside the black vortex while waiting for Arthur to come out from it.

The group couldn't help but browse at the online forums after seeing their names in the global system announcement. It was even more true for Chaotic Luck who was always dreaming to have his name being broadcasted globally like this since he was still an ordinary player in the Blind Abyss Empire.

Meanwhile, Shin, who didn't care about all of this, was currently reviewing his previous battle against Mammon inside his head. They might win that bout but he was aware that all of the odds of that battle were leaning towards their favor, so he couldn't help but feel a little unsatisfied with his own performance.

Seeing what Shin was doing, Leonard clicked his tongue before saying with an unsatisfied tone. "Look at this guy being lost in his own world once again. Can he at least enjoy this moment of being the main topic of everyone's discussion? This is the thing that Arthur hates a lot from him."

Hearing that, Cloe couldn't help but giggle before saying. "Let him be. That's how he is; he doesn't care about fame or in-game reputation. What he wanted is to be as strong as you two."

"Tsk! At least we have some 'normal' dude in our theme now," he said before turning his attention to Chaotic Luck who also had his mind floating in the air. "Though, he seems to also have the habit of creating his own world."

Looking at the Lich, Leonard suddenly remembered something before asking. "Now that I think about it, Luck just got his unofficial Ranker's Title, right? I don't remember him having one when we first met him."

Despite saying those words in a quiet voice, Chaotic Luck seemed to be able to hear them and quickly turned his head at Leonard. "Oh~! The 'Herald of Chaos'? Yeah, I just got it recently after our consecutive battles. After I defeated some of the official Rankers of this Kingdom to be exact."

The corner of Leonard's mouth suddenly twitched when he heard that, especially when he saw Chaotic Luck losing his focus once again after answering.

Meanwhile, Cloe was currently giggling on the sideline after witnessing what happened. After that, she turned her head towards Daulla and Archimedes who were currently discussing something.

...

"Are you sure about this, Dad? If we are really going to join a group why not choose those Powerhouse Guilds and famous Adventurer Teams with more solid foundations? We also got a lot of invitations from them," said Daulla, trying to reason out Archimedes.

Hearing those words, Archimedes chuckled a little before saying. "Why are you so against them? Didn't you see that they are also famous individuals and very strong ones at that?"

"I know that! But what's with the sudden change of heart? I thought you hate being in a group? What's more, working under someone else!" asked Daulla.

Seeing her reaction, Archimedes patted her head a little before replying. "It's fine if you don't understand it now since you will in the future. But if you are going to ask me what moves me to accept their invitation, it is the way they invited us."

Confused, Daulla knitted her brow quite deeply before turning quiet and waiting for Archimedes to continue.

"Heh! Did you notice the difference in how we are invited by the other powerful organizations and them?" asked Archimedes chucklingly.

Daulla fell into deep thought when she heard that before shaking her head, indicating that she still couldn't get it.

Patting her head for another time, Archimedes answered with a huge smile. "They didn't take our freedom while inviting us. The other organizations asked us to be a member of their group but these guys directly asked us to be their Archer and Mage."

"Don't you see the difference now? Those self-centered groups are asking us to work under their superiors and follow their orders. But these guys are basically telling us to be a part of their group with equal rights as everyone else by mentioning our roles and position," he added before sitting under the shade of a tree and closing his eyes.

"Eh!?" Daulla still couldn't fully get his words but she couldn't bring herself to refute those words from Archimedes since it was rare for her to see him smile like that. "I guess this is still better than him distancing himself from other people."

She then turned her head towards Shin and the others who were currently doing their own thing before finally deciding to drop the topic.

Bang!

On the other hand, the situation inside the dark vortex was already turning in Arthur's favor. Well, that was already a given the moment Arthur summoned the Holy Dragon Agios earlier.

It was natural for Agios to be at an advantage of this battle since his Elemental Powers were somewhat the bane of Chaos Element. But the main factor that made Archon be at a disadvantage was the fact that he was sealed in this Dragon Soul for a long time.

Obviously, he was going to be a little weaker compared to his previous rivals since his battle powers were going to decline after staying in this place without having the means to progress his strength.

"Heh! Look how weak you've become, Archon. If only you didn't act so stubborn back then, you should be the same as us right now," sneered Agios while stepping on Archon.

"Heh! Are you talking about being a slave of the Sanctuary? I will never bow down in front of those self-centered dragons who are claiming that they are the strongest in this world," sneered Archon back while pushing himself up from the ground.

Bang!

But Agios put more strength in its arms to push the Chaos Dragon back. "There is no point resisting now Archon. Just choose between being a puppet dragon without your own will and become an honorable servant of the Sanctuary."

"Heh! Just kill me instead," snarled Archon while glaring fiercely at Agios.

Seeing that his old friend and rival were still stubborn as ever, the Holy Dragon could only sigh helplessly before opening his jaws while accumulating a large amount of mana between them.

On the other hand, Arthur could already see where this event was heading after seeing what was happening. "I knew it! It is impossible for the game to let me have an overpowered Elemental Companion like this."

"Why didn't I think about this given that Shin also has the same situation," he added while shaking his head bitterly.

But immediately after that, his mood immediately changed as he clenched his teeth and fist while saying. "But that lucky b*st*rd is still way ahead of me when it comes to them! He even has a Deity-Level one for f*ck sake!"

After that, he immediately headed over to where the two dragons were before stopping Agios "Wait!"

Hearing Arthur's voice, the Holy Dragon canceled his skill and before turning his head to the side. And when Arthur saw that, he immediately signed a release before asking. "Can you seal a part of his powers?"

Agios knitted for a moment before immediately realizing what Arthur was planning to do. "Little one, aren't you biting more than you can chew? Even if you are one of the chosen successors, you are still not sure that you will inherit the throne."

'I don't care about the throne or anything. What I want is to get all of the badass dragons of this game,' thought Arthur inside his mind before replying with a question of his own. "Don't tell me you can't?"

Agios immediately deepened his frown when he heard that but immediately regained his composure as he understood that Arthur was trying to provoke him. "Nice try, little one. But you can no longer get me with that trick of yours."

But at the same time, he still said. "You know that even if I seal a part of his strength, he will still break it once he recovers his original power, right?"

Hearing that, Arthur waved his hand casually while saying. "That is my problem to deal with, so you don't have to worry about that."

Bang!

Then a powerful pressure was released from Agios, making the whole abyssal world shook once again. Fortunately, Arthur was not being targeted by it, or else he was going to die instantly.

"What are you talking about? It is going to be my problem if ever he breaks free from the seal since I'm the one dealing with him now!" snarled Agios while glaring at Arthur.

"Oh~! So, are we in this together? Then how about helping me get the strength to keep this guy in check?" replied Arthur with an evil grin while pointing at Archon who was under Agios.

"And helping me is the same as helping yourself. After all, we are in the same function in the Sanctuary. Don't tell me you want the other side to win the throne?" he added with a sneering tone.

Realizing that he already fell on a scheme since the time that he was summoned, Agios couldn't help but glare even fiercer at Arthur.

In response, the grin that Arthur was currently wearing curved even higher before muttering to himself. 'If there is a single thing that I admire from Shin and Big Sis, then it should be when they are scheming like a boss.'

Chapter 567 Being Summoned

...

Bang!

After a long time of waiting, Shin and the others finally saw Arthur emerge from the dark vortex.

"Finally!" muttered Leonard with a sigh after seeing Arthur. But at the same time, he also couldn't help himself but do a double-take at the latter when he sensed that the air surrounding him suddenly changed. "Tsk! This guy eats something good once again."

Despite Leonard's quiet voice, Arthur seemed to hear his words and immediately refuted them. "What are you talking about!? You are saying that I'm a gluttonous pet that becomes healthier after eating something nutritious. I'm not a pig! Dammit!"

The group started laughing out loud the moment they heard the exchange. And after hearing them bicker each other for a few more moments, Shin finally shook his head and said. "Alright! That's enough for now. How about we head back now and have some rest?"

Hearing that, the group immediately nodded their heads and prepared to leave. But before Shin and the others could activate their Teleportation Scrolls, Daulla suddenly walked forward and said. "Ahm... Wait."

Shin and the others stopped themselves from crushing their teleportation scrolls before turning their heads towards Daulla.

"Why? Don't tell us you already change your mind at joining us?" asked Leonard in a joking manner after seeing Daulla's tensed face.

Hearing that, Daulla suddenly panicked for misunderstanding those words. "Eh!? No, we are not thinking of backing out from our words! We're just-... Ahm..."

Pfft!

Seeing her flustered look, the group started laughing once again before having an urge to tease him.

"It is rare to see Leonard tease someone not close to him. And a fine lady at that," said Cloe while giggling.

"Tsk! You should limit being together with Arthur, Leo. I think you are starting to get corrupted," comment Shin from the side which made the others laugh even more.

And due to being too overwhelmed by them, Daulla panicked a little more as she didn't know whether to cry or continue what she was trying to say earlier.

Seeing that, Archimedes couldn't take it any longer and butted in. "I thought we already had enough of fooling around? So, how about hearing us for now?"

The group immediately shut their mouths after hearing the serious tone of Archimedes' words.

"Sorry about that. I think I'm the one that is being influenced by these three idiots," said Cloe with an embarrassed smile before asking. "So, what is it that you want to discuss?"

In response, Archimedes turned his head towards Daulla, waiting for her to recover herself. And it didn't take long for her to regain her composure before continuing what she was saying earlier. "Ahm... we know that we are going to stay in your main Kingdom since it is going to be the base of our operation-..."

She trailed her words due to some hesitation but she immediately continued after seeing Archimedes nodded his head. "But we can't follow you there immediately as we got a follow-up quest after we killed both Garuda and the Serpent King."

"So, we want to ask for your permission for the two of us to stay here until we are done with our quest," she added with a voice that was becoming quieter with each word that came out from her mouth.

Hearing that, Cloe exchanged glances with the other members of the group before laughing alongside them once again. But at the same time, they immediately stopped before Daulla could even misunderstand their laughter.

"What's with that look? And you also don't have to ask our permission about this kind of matter since we clearly tell you that we are not going to restrict your freedom even after you join our team," said Cloe with a smile.

"Just being present during special events such as Boss and Dungeon raids alongside some expeditions are more than enough for us. We are also busy guys just like you, so we understand your situation," said Shin chucklingly.

"But giving us the head-ups is not a bad thing either," he added before resuming to activate his teleportation scroll.

Seeing that, the others immediately followed suit with Cloe being the last.

"Ah! And be sure to wrap everything up since we are planning to have a brief meet and greet when all of the members of the team gather together," she said while waving at the two.

Meanwhile, Daulla and Archimedes stared blankly at the spot where the group disappeared after being left behind. Then they exchanged looks with each other before wearing a bitter smile on their faces.

"They still have some members?" muttered Daulla before recalling how strong each member of the group was. "With that kind of lineup, it's still not their full strength?"

On the other hand, Archimedes patted Daulla's shoulder to wake her up from her imagination. "Let's go, we still have a lot of things to do."

Meanwhile, Shin and the gang went to do their own thing after arriving back in the Saint Heaven Kingdom.

Cloe went to the Church of Light, saying that she was summoned by the archbishop who was overseeing the branch in the Saint Heaven Kingdom. And since she also had some things that she needed to report, it was a good chance for her to visit the church now.

Arthur and Leonard dragged Chaotic Luck to the Battle Arena of Calderock Town, where Shin built his special training room. Those two said that they were planning to train the 'Solaris Lich' to improve his battle prowess.

Hearing that, Shin could only nod his head since he still had to prepare some things for the promotion of the Town. This matter was being dragged longer and longer due to the recent events that happened.

Alongside it, there were also some side quests that kept on being delayed since he was too busy at the moment.

Given that, he split up with the others while praying for Chaotic Luck's soul. "I hope those two don't torture this poor soul too much. I'm now starting to feel worried that he will leave after being bullied a lot by them."

After that, he immediately went to the Mayor's Residence to listen to Ribbit's reports. And the session made Shin grief once again due to the long list of expenses that the NPC showed him.

Moreover, he also had to listen to the reports regarding the future progress of the town, which was also about to be promoted into a city.

Hu~!

"So, what's only left on the table is our negotiation with Big Sis. Tsk!" muttered Shin as he walked back to his room after his meeting with Ribbit.

He then lied on the bed and stared at the ceiling for a few moments before taking a look at the digital clock to check the time in the real world. "Eh!? Is it still too early? Should I log out now and have a few hours of sleep?"

He thought for a few moments before deciding to log out of the time in the end.

.....

A few moments after Shin woke up from his short sleep, he immediately did his usual daily routine before heading down from his room to prepare their breakfast.

After walking down the stairs, he was immediately greeted by the rowdy living room as the entire gang in the real world was gathered in their house once again. Well, aside from David, Jerimiah, and Vincent who seemed to be nowhere to be found.

Understanding what he was thinking, Leonard immediately walked over to his side before whispering. "The cousin duo already left early in the morning since they still have a lot of things to do for their application for the academy. I'm not sure about your senior brother, but he also left alongside those two earlier."

"Moreover, they also said that they are going to feel out of place if they join us in breakfast along with the girls. So, they said they will look for a good place to eat outside instead," he added before running back to Arthur who was already preparing a chess board. "Wait! I'll take white this time!"

Seeing that, the corner of Shin's mouth couldn't help but twitch before muttering to himself. "These muscleheads playing an intellectual game? I don't know if it is a good matchup or just plain idiocy."

Meanwhile, the girls finally noticed Shin after seeing Leonard running from his side.

Cloe smiled and waved after him before turning her attention back to the chessboard where Arthur and Leonard started moving a couple of moves successively. And after seeing their moves, she could no longer suppress her laughter before making fun of the two who were acting like professional players for moving their pieces so fast.

"Oh, Shin! We are here to freeload some breakfast again! I hope you don't mind!" said Lorraine right after seeing Shin.

"Nah~! It's fine," replied Shin in a nonchalant manner before turning his head to the other girls.

As usual, Shiella was already burying herself with the reports on her virtual screen early in the morning while Alice was also keeping herself busy with a couple of online magazines on her own virtual screen.

Looking at the lively scene made him remember some long-forgotten events of his past. But quickly after that, he shook his head to shake off that thought before heading towards the kitchen to prepare something good for their breakfast.

But before he could even step into the kitchen, everyone present in the room suddenly received a message on their respective Advance Watch.

After reading the contents of the message, Shin's lips suddenly curved into a grin before muttering with a quiet yet excited voice. "So, it's finally time."

Chapter 568 Entrance Exam (Part 1)

...

The next day, Shin and the others were summoned by the Magic Ace Academy to finally take the special examination that would determine whether they were going to be accepted to the special program classes or not.

"Whoa! So, there are still a lot of people that are trying to test themselves?" exclaimed Arthur after seeing the huge crowd of young men and women in the school gymnasium.

"And almost all of them are quite strong," commented Leonard after sweeping his gaze at the whole place and assessing the strengths of everyone.

Hearing that, Shin nodded his head repeatedly before adding to their words. "Well, that is to be expected. After all, these people are some of the brightest stars of our generation. And if they are not at least on par with us, then they shouldn't be in this place in the first place."

Meanwhile, the girls were currently distancing themselves away from them, acting as if they were afraid to catch a contagious disease from them. They were very embarrassed to admit that they were with these three who were acting like little kids that were visiting an amusement park for the first time.

But at the same time, they also didn't dare to be too far from them since they didn't want to be bothered by the other boys in their surroundings. Given their looks and figures, it was impossible for the three of them not to be noticed by these young bloods.

"I hope Big Sis Shiella is here. A glare from her is more than enough to scare these annoying flies," said Cloe dejectedly while trying her best to ignore the eyes of the young men around them.

"Agreed, the looks on their eyes make me really want to puke. Idiots who always use their lower head first on all occasions," said Lorraine in a helpless manner.

On the other hand, Alice seemed to be indifferent to her surroundings as she was able to maintain the cold look that she was wearing.

"I guess being a celebrity is really a good thing for this kind of situation," commented Lorraine, feeling impressed by Alice's indifference.

The gymnasium started to be filled with more and more candidates as time went by. And not long after, everyone seemed to finally arrive as the doors of the place simultaneously closed themselves, turning the whole place dark.

But despite the sudden darkness, everyone that was present in the place remained quiet as they simultaneously turned their heads at the stage where a spotlight was directed.

Or rather aside from a sole individual.

Right after the darkness enveloped the whole place, Shin felt that his whole body suddenly shook for some unknown reason. His arms were trembling violently as the event triggered some of his long-forgotten memories.

Even though it only lasted for a brief moment before Shin was able to recover himself, Arthur and Leonard were still able to notice the flash of changes from Shin since they were right next to him.

Shin frowned his eyebrows due to that and quickly thought to himself. 'What was that? It is not like this is the first time that I experience something like this. But how come this particular one agitated me so much?'

He then swept his gaze at the surroundings with his sharp eyes as if he was trying to find something.

"Is this a coincidence or someone is purposely doing this?" he muttered with a quiet voice before directing his attention to the stage ahead of them.

At the same time, his two brothers also dropped the matter after seeing that Shin immediately went back to his usual self.

"Hmm-... Not bad," said an impressed voice from the stage, attracting the attention of everyone even more.

The young men and women below the stages were quite confused with his words as they were not sure what exactly he was impressed about. But they didn't have enough time to dwell on that thought since they saw someone walk out from the shadows on the stage before standing at the center of the spotlight.

It was a lean old man with a hunched back and seemed to have a very fragile body. But despite him looking like that, the air surrounding him was more than enough to inform everyone that he was not someone to be trifled with.

He was not doing anything aside from standing at the center of the stage with his hands crossed behind his waist. But from the perspective of everyone standing below the stage, there seemed to be a huge pair of sharp eyes staring at them from the darkness behind this particular old man.

Shin and the others were sweating bullets after sensing how dangerous this old man was. But aside from that, they were holding pretty well compared to the other contenders around them who were breathing heavily after enduring the pressure from the old man.

There were even some guys who collapsed on the ground after failing to endure the pressure that was pressing at them.

"Not bad! Not really bad!" said the old man repeatedly after seeing that there were still quite a lot of candidates still standing on their feet despite pressuring them with a hint of his aura.

He then waited for the surviving candidates to recover before nodding his head while saying. "I will not waste my saliva talking about useless things that may bore all of you, young buds and unpolished gems."

"But I may as well introduce myself since I feel that you need to know me to put your minds at ease. I'm Klaine Abeloth, the current principal of this Academy."

After that, he paused for a moment to sweep his gaze at the still conscious candidates, spotting a few noticeable individuals among the crowd before nodding his head with satisfaction. "That is all I want to say. As for the unconscious guy on the ground, all of them failed the first test while the rest are going to proceed."

Snap!

Then the old man made a snap with his fingers, turning on all of the lights in the gymnasium and illuminating the whole place. And at the same time, the old man suddenly disappeared without a trace as if he was never in that place in the first place.

"The heck, undergoing a test from the get-go?" cursed Arthur after stabilizing up his breath.

Agreeing with him, Leonard wiped off the sweats on his forehead while nodding. "That old man is scary. He minds me of the time when I first met my Master."

Meanwhile, Shin was still wearing his deep frown as he looked at the spot where the old man disappeared before saying to the others. "Let's go."

"Eh!?" The group was confused with his sudden words which made them frown their brows. They simultaneously turned their heads at Shin, demanding some explanations from him.

Feeling their gazes, Shin couldn't help but sweep his gaze at them while wearing an expression lingering between mockery and contempt.

He then made a quick snap with his fingers, creating a barrier made of Mental Energy around them. "Don't tell me that you guys are still unaware that our tests already started when we entered this place?"

After that, he pointed at the doors of the gymnasium that were still closed before continuing. "I'm not sure what they want us to do, but I'm sure that we need to get out of this place as soon as possible."

And the moment those words left his mouth, the group immediately noticed that the other candidates around them started grouping together before staring warily at their surroundings.

"Tsk! Don't tell the Academy wants us to fight each other this early?" said Arthur with a smirking tone after seeing what was happening.

"That's fine by me! It is much simple and easier this way," nodded Leonard while cracking his knuckles.

Pak! Pak!

But before they could even do something reckless, Cloe immediately hit their heads while saying. "Do you think it is really that easy? Of course, there is something they wanted us to do."

"Tsk! Complex stuff! Then I'll be leaving it to you. Just call me when it is time for action," said Arthur with pursed lips before crossing his arms in front of him.

Seeing that, Shin swept his gaze at their surroundings once again to observe the other groups around them. While trying to look for some people. "I can't see Big Sis – Brother Jerimiah and Vincent are not here either, I guess they really have a separate test from us."

He may not find who he was looking for but he still spotted a couple of familiar faces and was currently walking towards them. And with a quick snap of fingers, the Mental Energy surrounding them was instantly deactivated.

Arthur was currently sulking on the side as he couldn't fight the other candidates around them. But while he was still disappointed, he suddenly heard a familiar voice inside his head.

"Senior Brother!"

"Eh!? Telepathy? And this voice!" Arthur was confused at first when he heard the voice but he immediately identified who was talking to him after recognizing the voice.

He then spun around and looked for the owner of the voices before spotting Molton and Jillian making their way towards them. "Oh!"

Seeing those two, Arthur immediately walked towards them before warmly greeting two. "My Junior Brother and my Princess."

Arthur first hugged Molton as a form of greeting, to which the latter returned in kind. "It is good to see you again."

Their bodies barely touched each other when Arthur quickly let go of his so-called junior brother before proceeding towards Jillian, attempting to do the same form of 'greeting'.

Unfortunately, what greeted him was a swift punch straight to his abdomen.

"Oops! Isn't this a little too unfeminine way of greeting someone given that it is from a fine lady such as yourself?" said Arthur with a huge smile after catching the incoming fist with ease.

He then held it with both of his hands before quickly saying. "But I will not refuse a handshake if that is what you are offering."

Chapter 569 Entrance Exam (Part 2)

.....

Jillian frowned her brows and glared at Arthur quite sharply. But at the same time, she was also surprised at the latter as she couldn't take her hands back from Arthur's gentle grip no matter how hard she pulled.

Meanwhile, Arthur was maintaining his smile, refusing to let go of the soft hand that he was holding. And due to that, Jillian glared even more sharply at Arthur before using her Mental Energy to free her hand from Arthur's grip.

"Oops! Relax, relax! You will attract the attention of the people around us if you act too recklessly," said Arthur while finally letting go of Jillian's hand.

Pak!

And that was only when Shin and the others arrived behind Arthur and hit him at the back of his head.

After that, Shin looked at Jillian before apologizing. "Sorry about that. This guy really loves to fool around."

"Hmph!" Jillian wanted to say something but she immediately restrained herself from talking since she sensed that the other candidates around them were starting to take notice of their group.

Meanwhile, the girls walked towards her. Cloe was quite curious about her since she heard about her from Lorraine. She wanted to know what kind of girl the troublemaker young master of Springfield Family took fancy of.

On the other hand, Alice was curious about Jillian because she was also from a Mentalist Family just like her. The Stuart Clan and Potter Clan were the top Mentalist Families of the Soaring Continent, she wanted to know which techniques were stronger. Unfortunately, this was not the right time to know the answer.

Noticing her gaze, Jillian couldn't help but also think the same after recognizing Alice. But since she was also aware of their current situation, she also didn't have a choice but immediately drop the idea.

Due to all of that, the atmosphere surrounding the group immediately turned weird, making Shin got a headache for such a strange team composition. And adding the deadly glare from the other groups around them, he couldn't help but sigh helplessly before muttering dejectedly. "Beauty always attracts trouble."

"You guys can 'greet' each other later. How about we focus on the exam first?" said Shin, breaking the awkward atmosphere surrounding the group.

He didn't wait for them to respond as he quickly walked towards a corner of the gymnasium, planning to distance himself away from the groups.

Seeing that, Cloe immediately followed after him alongside Lorraine and Leonard before the others quickly followed suit.

"So, what's the plan?" asked Leonard as he wore a deep frown due to the ill gazes directed at their group.

"Just ignore them. No matter what happens, don't start a fight," said Shin, understanding what Leonard was currently feeling.

And just like earlier, he cast a barrier around them to prevent the other groups from overhearing what they were going to discuss.

"What do you think are our main jobs now? Does the Academy want us to break those doors and get out of this place?" asked Lorraine while casting her gaze at the tightly shut doors of the gymnasium.

Hearing her words, Jillian immediately shook her head and said. "That is impossible. The whole place is under the protection of a powerful reverse Defensive Array, so it is impossible to get out of this place unless you are strong enough to break it."

"Eh!? Then it really means that we are trapped in here," said Arthur with a deep frown before quickly adding. "What do you think about my first impression in this second test? Do you think they really want us to fight each other from the get-go?"

Hearing that, Jillian couldn't help but laugh mockingly before saying. "If you want to fail, then you are free to go and start a fight."

"Huh?" Arthur frowned his eyebrows even deeper when he heard those words as he couldn't understand why starting a fight with the other groups would immediately fail him.

Seeing that look on his face, Shin immediately explained what Jillian meant. "From what I can see, the nature of this quest is to test our patience."

"And with what grounds?" asked Alice with a knitted brow.

Shin was silent for a moment before explaining further. "From what I can remember, there is a famous phrase within the Magic Ace Academy-... Battles are not all about strength as willpower, composure, and intellect are also part of it."

"So, I am thinking that they are trying to test us if we have those three factors before proceeding to the real deal," he added after a quick moment of pause.

"Tsk! Boring~! Battles are meant to determine who is stronger. Those three factors are not important as long as you emerge victorious in the end," said Arthur while clicking his tongue.

Ignoring his comment, Cloe nodded her head before saying. "Given that the principal already tests our willpower earlier, then they are now trying to see if we can remain calm in this situation."

"Heh! That's easy! So, all we need to do is stay here and remain quiet?" said Arthur smirkingly before quickly adding. "If that is the case, then all I have to do is take a nap and hope for all of this to end early."

Hearing that, the group simultaneously slapped their foreheads due to his simplemindedness.

"Idiot! Of course, it is not that easy!" said Cloe in a helpless manner.

"Do you think that those guys are thinking the same as you?" said Shin while pointing at the other candidates at the center of the gymnasium before quickly adding. "Did you already forget where we are? We're in the place where completion is everywhere."

"The younger generation present in this place are from different countries. Some of them are rivals – Heck! There are even some mortal enemies. And since all of us are equally talented, it is quite hard to suppress the urge to test each other's strengths."

He then paused for a moment to sweep his gaze at the other candidates before continuing. "And since we are all gathered together, conflicts are bound to happen."

Just like what Shin had said, the silence didn't last long as some of the rivaling groups started to get on each other's nerves.

Conflicts always started from eye contact before the most impatient ones took it as a form of provocation. Then the dispute started to spread like a wildfire rampaging in a peaceful forest.

"It already started," muttered Jillian as they watched the other candidates get in an argument with each other.

Not long after, some of the rival groups started fighting with one another, inviting the others to follow suit. And with all of that, the whole place immediately fell into chaos, turning the whole place into a battlefield.

Thanks to Shin's barrier, their group seemed to be forgotten by the other candidates as they were being ignored.

'He can already cast some lesser formations? This guy's progress sure is insane given that he is also a Martial-Artist on top of being a Mentalist,' thought Alice and Jillian as they observed the barrier surrounding them.

In the meantime, Shin was intensely staring at chaos filling the whole place while taking note of the most noticeable individuals.

Naturally, their group was not the only one watching from the sidelines. There were also some groups that were observing what was happening calmly. They were also using their respective means to lessen their respective presences to avoid unnecessary aggressions.

And just like Shin, they were also taking notes of the individuals that were most likely going to be their main rivals for the upcoming tests.

Meanwhile, the teachers of the academy were currently gathered in a certain conference room where they watched what was happening in the gymnasium.

"Tsk! Kids these days, they are always hotheaded and impatient," said one of the teachers with a bulky body.

"Then they are not going to be kids anymore if they don't act like that. Being a youth is all about being free and hot-blooded," said another teacher smirkingly as he combed his long hair with his fingers.

"Well, at least we have some kids who are worthy of our attention," commented a teacher in a formal suit without removing his eyes from the huge virtual screen in front of them.

They were discussing with each other in high spirits as they spotted the most noticeable individuals in the gymnasium. Some of them were even arguing with each other as they spotted some candidates that they wanted to take as their students.

Clack!

While they were arguing with one another, the door of the conference room suddenly opened as the Academy Principal entered. "Hoho! I see that all of you are quite excited about this. Did you already find who you want to take under your wings?"

With his entrance, the room immediately turned silent as they quickly stood up and greeted him. And not long after, they immediately noticed the other old man following closely behind the principal.

If Shin was here, then he would be able to realize who it was since this was the same old man that paid him a visit when he first arrived in their new house.

"Oh~! It is rare to see Old Henry join us on selection. What makes you get out of your hole?" said the bulky man with a sneering tone after seeing the old man behind the academy principal.

Hearing that, Henry Cortez wore a mysterious smile before casting his gaze at a certain young man at the corner of the virtual screen. "Let's say that someone finally piques my interest."

Chapter 570 Entrance Exam (Part 3)

.....

While Shin and the others were trapped inside the Academy Gymnasium, Shiella and her fellow prodigies of the same generation were currently gathered in an open field somewhere inside the academy.

Each of the seven continents had their respective term to call their brightest stars; 'Junior Monsters' of the Soaring Continent, 'Young Ghost' of the Lost Soul Continent, 'Supernovas' of the Sun-Moon Continent, 'Bright Feathers' of the Silver Wing Continent, 'Decastars' of the Clear Sky Continent, 'Marines' of the Deep Blue Continent, and 'Umbras' of the Dark Continent.

These young geniuses were regarded as equals since they never met each other before neither fought one another to test their strengths. But at this point in time, some of them were gathered together which made the atmosphere surrounding the place quite heavy.

Aside from the Soaring Continent, the other continents sent their respective stars to other countries to train under the most prestigious schools of the world.

In this regard, the Soaring Continent was at a disadvantage since they had the least number of prodigies compared to the other continents. And since Shiella killed the traitor of the Leon Tribe not long ago, they became even more shorthanded.

Right now, they only had two geniuses to contend against the other prodigies from the other continents, putting them in an awkward position and a great disadvantage compared to the other countries.

"Hehe! To think that these Junior Monsters are going to fight with each other and kill one of them on top of that, if it is not completely idiocy then I don't know what it is," said by one of the Supernovas in a mocking tone.

"Don't be rude, Jake. We are currently in their territory," said another Supernova beside him. His words were meant to rebuke his colleague, but given the skeptical tone that he had, it was pretty clear that he was also mocking Shiella and Mariel.

Meanwhile, there was another pair of individuals standing not far from them and were currently looking at the two girls with lustful eyes.

"Well, at least both of them are complete beauties. I guess my time here is not going to be a waste," said an Umbra while licking his lips and not caring whether Shiella and Mariel could hear him or not.

On the other hand, his partner was currently rubbing his palms with each other while also wearing a huge grin at the same time. "I guess choosing this continent is the right pick after all."

Despite having those disgusting eyes being directed at them, Shiella and Mariel were completely ignoring those two as if they never existed in the first place. These two beautiful ladies were already

used to these kinds of looks that they were getting, so they already gained some immunity to ignore them.

As usual, Shiella was browsing the reports that were sent to her and currently reviewing them one by one. Meanwhile, Mariel was meditating, ignoring everything around her.

"Tsk! Idiots!" muttered Vincent, one of the Young Ghost of the Lost Soul Continent, when he saw the two Umbras sending lustful looks at the two ladies.

At the same time, his partner and cousin, Jerimiah was currently looking at the two Umbras with a deadly glare. "These lowlives! How about I teach them a lesson?"

In the meantime, the two Decastars of the Clear Sky Continent were minding their own business and currently reading the information about their rivals.

Meanwhile, the respective representatives of the Deep Blue and Silver Wing Continents were already at edge with each other since they were already mortal enemies before they even arrived in this place; their countries already hated each other after all.

Not long after, David suddenly arrived at the meeting place and immediately said to the two Umbras threateningly. "Hey, you two trash from the Dark Continent! Pay attention to your eyes before I gauge them out."

Hearing his words, everyone immediately turned their heads towards him, especially the two Umbras who were wearing a sharp glare.

"Who dares to-...?"

But they immediately swallowed back the words that they wanted to say when they saw who the guy was talking to them.

"David Solomon," muttered heavily by one of the Umbra's while gritting his teeth and clenching his fists.

Seeing that look on the Umbra's face, David raised his chin a little to look down at the Umbra with squinted eyes before asking. "What? You want to give it a go, Liebert?"

Being provoked, the Umbra named Liebert immediately took a step forward, planning to attack David. But before he could even make a move, the other Umbra immediately blocked his path before saying. "Calm down Liebert, you should know why we are here."

"Get out of the way, Gendo! Let me teach this arrogant b*st*rd a lesson!" said Liebert with a hoarse voice while pushing the arm blocking his way.

Seeing that, David suddenly smirked before talking out his hands from his pocket. "Teach me a lesson? Let's see who is going to teach whom."

Unfortunately, someone suddenly appeared between the two opposing sides while laughing. "Hahaha! I see that you guys are quite eager to test each other's strengths. So, how about we already start your own entrance exam?"

This person was a middle-aged man in his early fifties with a lean yet muscular physique. He was grinning from ear to ear while sweeping his gaze at the young prodigies around him. And after assessing their respective strengths, he immediately added. "Well, I can't call it an entrance exam since all of you are already qualified to enter the academy."

He then trailed his words for a moment to shift his gaze between David and the two Umbras before continuing. "In a sense, it is just a way for us to see how we are going to categorize you for the special study program."

In the meantime, Shiella and the others were trying to hold their breaths as they were enduring the powerful pressure pressing at them. Especially for David and the two Umbras who had a greater pressure that was crushing on their bodies.

A moment later, the middle-aged man suddenly snapped with his fingers and increased the pressure that he was releasing.

"Ugh!"

The group immediately felt the increase of the pressure crushing at them and almost made them fall on their knees. Fortunately, they were fast enough to protect themselves by summoning their respective Internal Qi and Mental Energy.

"Oh~! As expected from the brightest stars of their generation. So, how about we step up a bit?" said the middle-aged man before increasing the pressure even more.

Bang!

"Ugh!"

Seeing that, Shiella immediately released her 'Natural Force' to protect herself and fought back the crushing pressure. And as the multicolored flame surrounded her body, she was able to stand straight on her feet.

At the same time, the others also did the same as they simultaneously summoned their respective 'Natural Force' and 'Spiritual Force' to ward off the pressure that was trying to crush them.

(Natural Force = Personal and higher form of Internal Qi. Spiritual Force = Personal and higher form of Mental Energy)

The middle-aged man maintained the pressure that he was releasing before waving his hand to remove it. "Alright! Since all of you are already warmed up, how about we proceed to the main event?"

Meanwhile, the group around him still refused to retrieve their respective 'Natural Force' and 'Spiritual Force', afraid that they might get ambushed by the crushing pressure once again.

And seeing that they remained quiet, the middle-aged man clapped his hand and continued. "Then I'll take your silence as you agreeing with me."

He then trailed his words for a moment to clear his throat before continuing. "First of all, I need you to create some space from each other since I don't want you to fight each other before I even give you the signal."

"Of course, it is better if you guys pair with your partners from the same country," he added after a moment before turning his gaze at David before saying. "And since our friend over here is a lone traveler with no partner, we invited one of our brightest students to join this little activity."

Right after he said those words, a young man suddenly appeared beside David which made the others raise their eyebrows due to his sudden appearance.

'This guy is quite strong,' thought David to himself after observing the young man beside him. Especially when he saw the long sword hanging on the latter's back. 'A Sword Practitioner? Interesting!'

In the meantime, Shiella and Mariel seemed to be quite familiar with the young man standing beside David given the deep frown that they had.

"I thought this guy is training overseas under the vice principal's supervision? He is already back?" whispered Mariel while pursing her lips a little.

Hearing that, Shiella could only shrug her shoulders before replying nonchalantly. "Well, he is already here, so it can only mean that he already completed the training."

"I wonder how strong he is now," muttered Mariel without removing her eyes from the young man.

On the other hand, Shiella suddenly giggled when she heard Mariel's mumbles. "Don't worry too much. Since he is sent over here by the academy, then that means he has the qualification to join us."