

Destiny 641

Chapter 641 Empyrean Talons (Part 2)

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After a quick and simple introduction, Shin and the others quickly proceeded at sharing their respective quest with each other before discussing their next move. And just like what Shin had expected, clues started to appear when the three quests were combined with each other.

"I am starting to feel that this is somehow similar to what happened to the Saint Heaven Kingdom. Or to be more specific, that incident that took place in the Holy City," said Shin after putting all of the information that they had together.

"But the difference this time, we are dealing with a regional quest which concerns the whole Beast Glade Kingdom," he added as he leaned powerlessly on the tree behind him.

"So, what do you think we need to do?" asked Leonard almost instantly.

Hearing that, Shin slightly opened one of his eyes and looked at Akailu. "Didn't you say that there are a lot of strange quests being handed out by some foreign NPCs? And you are suspecting that those NPCs are members of the Corrupted Cult?"

"We will start with that. Let's investigate what kind of quest they are giving out and figure out their real plan through it," he added before closing his eyes once again.

Seeing Shin's nonchalant attitude, the corner of Akailu's mouth suddenly twitched before asked. "Is that all?"

Shin re-opened his eyes and looked at Akailu before saying sneeringly. "You are thinking that it is too easy, aren't you? But don't worry, I have a reason for that."

This time, Alucard also couldn't take it any longer and ask. "And you are not going to explain it to us?"

Hearing that, Shin 'seemed' to remember that they were not familiar with him and said. "Ah! Yeah, I forgot that this is your first time working with us. I apologize for that. Then let me explain what is on our mind."

Despite hearing that, Owen, who was aware of Shin's dual identities, couldn't help but smile bitterly before thinking to himself. 'Look at this guy. He sure knows how to keep that cover.'

On the other hand, Shin continued. "From what you have said earlier, the quests given by those suspicious NPCs are mainly a delivery type of quest and gathering ones. This information alone is clearly going to tell us the plans of our opponents."

"And the things that we need to know from those quests are-... What are they gathering, what kind of item are they delivering, and where are they going to take those items?"

"We need to figure out these three and we will naturally get the real answer that we are looking for," he added while maintaining his nonchalant attitude.

At this point in time, Alucard and Akailu couldn't help but turn their head towards the other members of the team who seemed to have no plan of saying anything, especially Cloe who was supposedly the Commander of this team.

Even Ithilien was unable to hold her curiosity and whispered to Owen. "The Gentle Goddess is the leader of this group, isn't it? Then how come she is not saying anything?"

Unfortunately, the others were able to overhear her words, especially the current members of the Empyrean Talons. And when she noticed that, Ithilien couldn't help but feel a little embarrassed.

Luckily, Arthur and the others didn't get offended by her words and just chuckled at her. Then Cloe smiled at her before saying. "Don't worry, this guy is still capable even though he is acting like that. And I may be the Commander of this troublesome bunch, but this guy is still our strategist," while pointing to Shin.

Hearing that, the others couldn't help but turn their heads at Shin and looked at him in a new light. But at the same time, they were also quite curious how he managed to convince these monsters to follow him.

After that, they decided to split their group into three for their investigation. And since Akailu and Alucard were both wanted within the Beast Glade Kingdom, they would be accompanied by Leonard to the palace to clear their names first.

In the meantime, Arthur formed a team with Archimedes, Daulla, and Charlotte. Then Shin would be teaming up with Cloe, Owen, and Ithilien. And when they separated from each other to go to the

respective place assigned to them, Cloe couldn't help but notice that Charlotte kept on looking on their way. Or more specifically to Shin.

Seeing that, Cloe was unable to help herself but squinted her eyes and looked at Shin with suspicion. And after a few moments of hesitation, she quickly whispered. "Hey! Are you sure that there is nothing going on between you two?"

Hearing her, Shin sighed helplessly before patting her head. "What's wrong with you today? You are too sensitive about everything."

"Tsk! Don't change the topic. And don't me that it is nothing because that girl keeps looking on our way," said Cloe as she further narrowed her eyes.

Shin laughed at her words. "I already told you, there is nothing going on. She didn't even know about my dual identity."

"Are you sure about that? Don't you know who she is?" asked Cloe, still suspicious.

Knitting his eyebrows, Shin suddenly asked. "What about her identity? Is there something special about it?"

When Cloe saw that Shin was genuinely unaware of Charlotte's real identity, she immediately became cheerful and clung her arm at him. "Really? You don't know anything about her? Then that is good! You don't have to know her. In fact, you don't even need to be close with each other."

Beast Glade Kingdom, Ferocious Beast City.

While Shin and the others were busy tracking the members of the Corrupted Cults, their movements were noticed by the opposing side.

"Elder Zaza, we found a small group of people that are trying to track us down?" said hooded Twilight NPC as he kneeled with one knee.

Standing in front of him was an old man that had a black cloak covering his body. He was not wearing the hood of his cloak which was why his face was currently revealed. And if Shin happened to see him, he would immediately recognize this old man since this person was the same guy who saved Thirio from him.

The elder slightly turned his head to the side and looked over his shoulder before saying. "Is that so? Then I suppose the Fourth Messenger is correct. Those people are indeed going to head over this kingdom as soon as they are done with the issues in the Elven Kingdom."

"Have you figured out how many there is this time?" he asked as he turned his head back to the window.

Hearing that, the Twilight NPC quickly nodded his head and reported. "We are still figuring out their total numbers but It is the same as you have expected, Elder Zaza."

"They indeed call out some reinforcements. And even if they only summoned a few allies, those people are still a formidable force. I'm afraid that we are going to have some trouble dealing with them," he added while lowering his head even more.

He was afraid that the Elder would sever his head because of the additional remarks that he added in the end. Fortunately, Elder Zaza overlooked it and just asked with a huge grin. "Heh! Is that so? I wonder who they are."

Then the Twilight NPC quickly reported. "From what our spies had said, one of them managed to easily clean the names of those two guys who fell on our trap last time. In fact, the Beast Council within the main palace seemed to be afraid of this guy, so we are suspecting that he is a Champion from the Temple of the War God."

"Hah! Those Brutes of the War God, they sure like to always mess with our plans," commented Elder Zaza before quickly asking. "Who else?"

Then the Twilight quickly continued. "We also spotted that Elven Sage that we fought earlier and she seemed to be with a 'Pride' of the Sanctuary of Dragons. And based on the reports, that guy is the same Dragon Knight who wipes our forces that are trying to invade the Dragon's Nest."

Then he paused for a moment due to some hesitation before continuing. "But they are not our main problem, Elder. It is because we also spotted a Maiden of the Church of Light among their group."

Hearing that, the elder's body suddenly trembled. He then slowly turned around and asked. "A Maiden you said? Which of them?"

The elder seemed to be calm on the outside but he was actually very anxious right now. It was because they were now facing someone from the Church of Light.

Out of all the churches belonging to the Righteous Faction, the Church of Light was not only the archenemies of the Corrupted Cults and Demonic Churches, but they were also the bane of all evil beings.

With the Holy Powers that the church's members possessed, the Church of Light alone could pose an immense threat for the entire Evil Function. And now that one of their highest-ranking believers was currently in this place, their entire plan could be put at full risk.

And to put a nail on the coffin, Elder Zaza heard that thing that really didn't want to hear.

"From her appearance, we are sure that she is the first in line to be the next Supreme Pontiff."

Chapter 642 Emphyrean Talons (Part 3)

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Beast Glade Kingdom, Wolfdom City.

Shin and the others picked a certain inn in this city so that they could stay there for the time being which also became their temporary meeting place.

Shin was sitting crossed leg on the bed while wearing a deep frown as he closely watched the 3D virtual map projected in front of him. There were also a lot of red dots blinking on that virtual map, indicating all of the locations that they had already marked after their investigation.

Shin thought for a few moments before deciding to separate the places where the quests that they were investigating were taken and where the package was delivered; yellow for the former and red for the latter.

Then he started connecting the dots with the same color before taking another look at them. But unlike what he had expected, he didn't find any kind of pattern or whatsoever even when he was done connecting them.

"What are you doing?" asked Cloe as she sat beside Shin.

"Trying to figure out our opponent's plan," answered Shin while re-arranging the lines connecting dots. But no matter how hard he tried, those locations seemed to really have no connection with each other.

"Tsk! This puzzle is really tricky," muttered Shin before giving it another try. And this time, he started grouping the glowing dots in 5 before connecting them once again.

Shin repeatedly did this for a whole hour but ended up with no better results, so all he could do was scrape everything up and start over again. "Maybe it is because they are not complete yet which is why we can't find any specific pattern yet."

Seeing that Shin was too immersed in thinking, Cloe got a little bored and just lied on the bed instead. She was quite mentally fatigued from the series of events in the Real World so she really needed to rest a little to recover her peak self.

After all, she was not like a monster like Shin and the others who were still full of energy to play the game despite the previous battles that they took part in.

Fortunately, the gaming cabin that she was using also had a stable sleep mode whenever she wanted to rest inside the game. Given all of that, Cloe took advantage of the fact they were currently resting right now to get a little bit of rest.

"Hey, sing me a lullaby," she whispered.

Hearing that, Shin couldn't help but knit his brow before saying. "Can't you see that I am busy? And if you really want to rest, just log out of the game and have a proper sleep outside."

"Come on~! I don't have any energy to argue with you this time," she replied with a quiet voice which made Shin sigh helplessly.

"Come closer, I'll help you sleep comfortably but I will not be singing any lullabies, understand?" said Shin as he adjusted his sitting position and moved closer to the head of the bed to lead his body on it.

Sensing his movements, Cloe suddenly smiled and quickly turned over to Shin and moved closer to him before quickly embracing his waist.

"Hey! I didn't tell you to hug me!" said Shin with a frown but didn't remove the arms wrapped around his waist. Then he gently patted the back of her shoulder with a slow rhythm and let her sleep.

He didn't even bother to turn his head at her when he was doing that and just focused on studying the virtual map in front of him. It acted so naturally as if he was already used to these kinds of scenarios.

At that very moment, the door of the room suddenly opened followed by Arthur and Charlotte entering the room.

Whistle~♪

"You two are acting like that even though we are supposedly working with other people? Are you not afraid that they misunderstand your relationship?" said Arthur smirkingly as he took a seat on the bed across the two.

"They can think whatever they want. It is not like they know anything anyway," said Shin nonchalantly without taking his eyes away from the virtual map in front of him.

Hearing that, Arthur just shrugged his shoulders and before looking at Charlotte who was currently looking at the scene, stunned and dumbfounded.

"Hesh~! Let's forget about it. This is not my problem anymore," muttered Arthur with a soft voice before opening a virtual screen in front of him to browse on the online forums, forgetting about everything else.

Charlotte stayed standing on her spot for quite some time before releasing a deep sigh and proceeded to look for a spot where she could sit.

A few moments later, Owen finally came back alongside Ithilien and was about to greet everyone inside with a loud voice. "H-...!"

Swoosh!

But before he could even complete a single word, a flying dagger suddenly flew past his cheeks and landed on the wooded wall behind him.

Then Owen gulped a mouthful of saliva before taking a good look inside the room. And that was when I noticed the strange atmosphere inside. Especially when he saw Shin and Cloe.

After that, he took a quick glance at Arthur who practically signaled him to stay quiet. The latter was even gesturing with his hands to say – "I will shut up my mouth if I were you." –

Then his eyes roamed around the room until his sight landed on the spot where the ominous energy was coming from. He saw Charlotte browsing on her virtual screen with her glaring eyes.

"Ahm... I am too scared to enter inside," whispered Owen to Ithilien as he stepped out of the room.

Seeing that, Ithilien shook her head and smiled bitterly before taking the lead to enter the room. And when Owen saw that, he had no choice but to follow her.

"Let's just hope that we don't suffocate inside then," muttered Owen with a bitter smile of his own.

Not long after, Archimedes and Daulla entered the room too. Fortunately, what happened to Owen didn't happen to them.

Well, that was to be expected since both of them were not fond of talking anyway. But the strange atmosphere within the room somehow affected them. Even Archimedes who didn't seem to bother about the world couldn't help but become bothered by it.

If they didn't encounter any mishaps from entering, it was a different case for the trio of Leonard, Alucard, and Akailu. The latter two both had big mouths, so they were quite loud when they entered the room.

Right after they entered the room, they were immediately greeted by immense Killing Intent which also made them immediately shut their mouths. And when they turned their heads towards the direction where that killing intent was coming from, they saw Shin looking at them with a sharp and deadly glare.

Naturally, the two Titled Rankers didn't like the look that they were getting from Shin, especially that they were not that 'familiar' with each other.

Fortunately, Leonard quickly hopped behind the two and put his arms around their necks. "Hey! Let it pass this time. That guy is just-..."

He was in the middle of talking when Cloe finally woke up and said. "Oh! Everyone is already here? Then let us start immediately."

She said it as if nothing was going on, so the strange atmosphere inside the room changed all of a sudden. She magically erased the tension that was built up earlier with just her clueless attitude.

After that, the group started reporting what they had discovered so far. Then also reported the coordinates that they got from their investigation.

With all of those coordinates, Shin was finally able to fill some blanks that he needed to figure out the next move of their opponent. He was also able to complete the real formation that the opposing side was trying to create.

But right after he completed the formation, the only word that came from his mouth was a loud curse. "F*ck!"

Hearing that, the others quickly turned their heads towards his direction and waited for him to explain what happened.

Shin took a few moments to organize his thoughts before enlarging the virtual map in front of him and placing it in the middle of everyone. And when the others looked at it, they immediately saw the huge formation circle that covered the entire Beast Glade Kingdom after all of the red dots were connected.

And to make it even worse, it was not a single formation circle but two. The yellow dots were also forming another formation circle which was slightly smaller than the previous one and was placed inside it.

"Hey, wait! These formations circles are already complete!" said Akailu as started the virtual map. "But how is it possible? It should be far from being complete just a few moments earlier, but how come it suddenly-...?"

The others were also quite confused since they also tried to find a pattern in their opponent's movements but they couldn't find anything up until now. So, they would naturally become completely surprised after knowing that the formation became completely all of a sudden.

Then Shin suddenly explained what happened. "Those guys, they mislead us by purposely giving out the locations that we need. But at the same time, they also left all of the most important locations to hide their real progress."

"And while we were too occupied at finding the exact location of those places, they simultaneously handed out the final set of quests to finally complete the formation without us knowing."

He then paused for a brief moment before muttering to himself with an interesting smile. 'So, this means that we are currently facing a really scheming strategist. This is starting to become more interesting.'

Chapter 643 Empyrean Talons (Part 4)

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The atmosphere inside the room suddenly became heavy as the mood of everyone significantly dropped. And when Shin saw that, he immediately chuckled a little before saying. "What's with that expression? It is not like we are already too late to solve this problem."

Hearing that, the others quickly turned their heads towards him all of a sudden as Cloe asked him curiously. "Care to elaborate, Mister?"

Shin crossed his arm in front of him and said smirkingly. "We may be late at stopping them from completing the formation, but it doesn't mean that we can no longer stop them from activating it."

"And how are we going to do that?" asked Owen with a deep frown.

Shin wore a smirking smile when he heard that before answering. "They may have completed this formation, but they still lacked the most important thing to activate it. They still need a 'sacrifice'."

He paused for a few moments before explaining further. "This kind of formation can only be used for a single purpose. And if I am not wrong, then they are most likely planning to turn the whole kingdom into a corrupted place or something similar."

"It is similar to what happened in the Holy City of the Saint Heaven Kingdom. During that time, the Corrupted Cult spread a large number of Corrupted Nest around the city before using the monster hordes created by those next to attack the Holy City."

Reaching this point, Akailu suddenly chimed in. "Yeah, we also heard about that. But what about it? Are you telling us, a monster horde is going to emerge from the ground and attack all of the cities within the Kingdom?"

Hearing that, Shin pointed at the virtual map once again, especially the three parts which had a star pattern on them. These parts of the formation circle were creating the triangular formation which made it pretty obvious that they were the critical parts of the entire formation itself.

"As you can see, these places should be where they need to do the sacrificial ritual. And if you pay close attention to them, you would notice that they were facing towards the Elven Kingdom and the Dwarf Kingdom," he said as he pointed at the two particular parts that he was talking about.

The other quickly understood what he was implying the moment they heard those words. Then Charlotte immediately said. "So, you are saying that they are supposedly going to declare a war against the Beast Glade Empire once they fully take over the Elven Palace?"

"That is supposedly their Plan A if you are not successful with your previous quest. And the bloodshed that will take place during the war between the two nations is going to be the so-called sacrifice for the ceremony or whatsoever it is," answered Shin noddingly.

"So, our involvement in the Elven Kingdom forced our opponents to proceed with Plan B?" asked Alucard as he nodded his head.

Then he took a brief pause to point out that the third part of the formation circle was not facing either of the two kingdoms. "But what about this place? It is neither facing the Elven Kingdom nor the Dwarf Kingdom, so how can they get the required sacrifice for this particular spot?"

Shin nodded his head and quickly answered. "I understand what you are thinking. This place is really quite odd since it is facing a map which can't be explored by the current players."

"The monsters beyond that place are too high-leveled even for peak experts, so there are no players willing to explore that map. But that is also the very reason why the Corrupted Cults choose this spot."

The latter part of his words practically confused the other members of the group, so Shin quickly continued before they could even ask. "Since there is no one exploring that map, it can be a perfect spot to transport an army without being noticed."

Bang!

"So, are you saying that they are planning to attack the Beast Glade Kingdom from three sides?" said Akailu as he slammed his hand at the wooded wall behind him.

"What's worse, winning and losing is not their main goal. All they want is bloodshed so that they could turn the whole kingdom into a corrupted place. And once it happens, conquering the two neighboring kingdoms is not going to be a problem since both of their forces are weakened because of the war," said Owen as he was also able to see the big picture.

"Whoa~! What a well-thought plan," commented Alucard as he didn't know whether to become impressed with what he learned or be scared of the opposing side's strategist.

"But as I said it is only their Plan A. After Ms. Charlotte become involved and Mr. Akailu discovered the strangeness of the quests running around the kingdom, those guys had no choice but to remove two of you out of the picture since you will become an obstacle for their plans," said Shin.

"But they still failed in the end and were forced to abandon the original plan and proceed to the next one," he emphasized once again before tapping a couple of times in the air before asking the others to pay attention to the virtual map once again.

This time, black dots were added on a virtual map and slowly spread around the Beast Glade Kingdom before forming three large groups gathered in three different places.

"We can forget about the Dwarf Kingdom since we don't have clear information about what is going on in that place. But since we are assuming that there is a large army of undeads hiding within this map, then we can say that they are going to divide their forces like this before attacking all of the cities around it."

"This way, they can at least gather enough blood to compensate for the amount that they need for the ceremony," he added before letting the others have a clear look at the virtual map.

After a few moments of overserving the virtual map, Charlotte suddenly raised her head and looked at Shin, asking. "How large is this army from your estimate?"

Hearing that, the others quickly turned their heads at Shin as they were also thinking about the same thing.

Seeing that, Shin thought for a couple of moments before slowly giving his answer. "Well, I can't give you the exact size of their army."

"But given all of the calculated moves that we have faced so far, I can say that those guys spent quite a lot of time plotting this grand scheme. And putting all of that in consideration, I can say that they have a very large army on their side."

"Large enough to guarantee the success of their Plan B," he emphasized.

"Tsk! So, that means we are going to face a large army this time? How about we ask some help from the Head Chieftain of the Kingdom?" muttered Akailu, fully concerned.

Overhearing what he just said, Arthur couldn't help but laugh before saying proudly. "You don't have to be too scared about that. You have me on your side?"

He then paused for a moment to point at Leonard while saying. "What's more, we also have that guy? So, there is nothing to worry about."

Hearing that, Akailu's face suddenly turned stiff as he wanted to refute but he couldn't find the right words to answer back since he knew that these two monsters were really a pair walking disaster. Even the top powerhouses of the game would think twice before making a move against these two.

Meanwhile, Leonard immediately cut the conversation off and asked Shin. "What's your plan? I already told you that it is impossible to ask for some assistance from the main tribe of this place unless we provide solid evidence and not just our assumptions. So, don't get high hopes on them."

"How about asking some help from the Temple of the War God? This place is still under the jurisdiction of your Temple," asked Cloe while pursing her lips.

Unfortunately, Leonard shook his head before answering. "I'm sorry but I don't have the power to mobilize the Temple's Forces if it is not my territory."

"The Church of Light is in a similar case. They are not going to move unless there is definite proof that the Corrupted Cults are making their move," said Cloe while wearing a troubled expression.

At this point in time, Shin suddenly patted her head and said. "It is not like we are already out of options. So, do get discouraged yet."

"Really!? Then let's see your brilliant plan," said Cloe excitedly while looking at Shin with sparkling eyes.

Then Shin quickly pointed at the virtual map before saying. "A formation circle will only work if all of its most important parts are properly linked to each other."

"So, all we have to do is break that connection, and the whole system will either crumble completely or become crippled useless," he added smirkingly.

After that, he pointed at a certain part of the formation circle before continuing. "Let's forget the locations that are facing the Elven and Dwarf Kingdoms and focus on this isolated place instead."

"We will go to this location and block the opposing forces before they reach the cities within the area," he added to emphasize his intention. And when he saw the doubt on the faces of the others, he quickly pointed at Arthur and Leonard and continued. "We may be facing a large army this time but fighting this kind of battle is the specialty of these two, so they can just cripple their forces first before we join the prey."

Hearing that, Cloe suddenly chimed in and proudly said. "Yep! And you also have me! The holy power of my class is the bane of all undead, so you can re-..."

She was still in the middle of talking when Shin suddenly cut her words off. "Nope, you don't. You are not participating in this battle."

"Huh~!? Why not? I can provide strong firepower in this kind of battle. Don't tell me you are excluding me out again? Let me remind you, I am still the Commander of this group!" said Cloe in one breath while glaring at Shin.

"Again? What 'again' are you talking about? I am giving you a special mission this time," said Shin, trying to defend himself.

"Is that so? Then let's hear it out then," she said outside but still cursing inside because she couldn't work with Shin once again.

Shin cleared his throat for a moment before pointing at the smaller formation circle drawn on the virtual map. "I need you to guard this place. And of course, you are not alone. I already asked Chaotic Luck to make his preparations earlier, which is also why he can't attend our meeting."

"What is with that smaller formation? It doesn't seem important. It is also not connected to the main formation circle that was covering the entire Kingdom," asked Owen out of curiosity.

But the answer that he got was not something that he had expected. "I also don't know. But it is better to be prepared for the worst-case scenario than regret it later when some unexpected mishaps happened."

'And I also don't want to get played by 'my opponent' for the second time around,' he added inside his head while wearing a mysterious smile.

Chapter 644 Empyrean Talons (Part 5)

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On a secluded map within the Beast Glade Kingdom, Shin and the group were already in the perfect place to intercept the army of undead that they were expecting to invade the Kingdom.

But despite them waiting on their spot for quite a long time, they still couldn't see any kind of movement from the opposing side.

"Are you sure that they are going to take this path?" asked Owen with a slight doubt.

Hearing that, Akailu also couldn't take it anymore and quickly chimed in. "Given the size that we have estimated, it is impossible for them to hide their movements. So, how come we still can't see any movements despite that being the case?"

The others who were unfamiliar with Shin were also on the same page as those two. But despite receiving the doubtful looks from them, Shin was still acting rather calm.

Then he swept his gaze at them before answering their concern. "I understand where you guys are coming from since it is true that it is impossible to hide the tracks of such a large troupe. Unless-..."

He trailed his words a little before continuing with a smirking tone. "Unless they are moving underground."

"Ah!"

Hearing that, the others immediately realized what Shin was thinking and quickly turned their heads towards the towering Elemental Spirit standing among them. – "So, that is why this guy is summoned right after we arrive here." –

"If you already thought about it, then can you at least inform us beforehand," complained Owen while clicking his tongue.

This time, Shin refused to reply as Owen just closed his eyes to take a quick nap while waiting for Astaroth to inform him of the arrival of their opponents. But not long after, he suddenly remembered something and quickly stood up and walked over to Akailu.

"Brother Akailu, can I ask you a favor?" said Shin while putting up a smile.

On the other hand, the Beastmaster suddenly felt an intense shiver on his spine the moment he saw Shin's polite attitude. He then unconsciously asked in return. "What is it?"

"Can you appraise a pet egg for me?" said Shin directly, without bothering to beat around the bush.

Hearing the words 'appraise' and 'pet egg' immediately piqued Akailu's interest, so he quickly asked. "Pet Egg? What is its rarity? If it is high enough, then I may help you for free."

But soon, he immediately regretted what he just said. It was because the rarity of the pet egg that Shin had shown him was much higher than what he had expected. "T-this-...! Where did you get this pet?"

"Ahm... I just saw it somewhere and picked it up," said Shin while making it sound as natural as possible.

When Akialu heard those words, the expression on his face suddenly turned stiff as he didn't know whether to hit Shin with what he just said or let it slide. But his stress level immediately went up when he heard Shin urging.

"So, what kind of pet is it?"

Akailu gave Shin a sharp glare before activating his pet appraisal skill to identify the egg that Shin had handed to him. And right after he was done, his eyes almost fell from their sockets for what he had seen. "What kind of nonsense is this? Is this kind of creature allowed to be in the game?"

Then he quickly turned his head towards Shin and asked with full of expectation. "Are you planning to sell this little guy? I will buy it right away if you want!"

Unfortunately, Shin quickly snatched the egg back from Akailu's hands and said smilingly. "Too bad, this little guy already has an owner."

Akailu wanted to say something more but Shin quickly turned around and headed back to his spot right after giving his thanks.

Naturally, Shin was not that ungrateful to let the Beastmaster work for free. So, he took a special item from his inventory which was also perfect for Akailu's class. Then he tossed that item to the latter while saying another thanks.

Akailu stared at Shin blankly as he didn't know how to figure out Shin. 'Tsk! This guy really had a serious mood swing.'

On the other hand, Shin was pretty much satisfied with the details of the pet. "This one is really the same quality as Arthur's golden dragon."

Monster Name: Heaven Devouring Serpent

Nickname: (Not assigned yet)

Life Rating: Elemental Creature (Legendary)

Growth Rate: 120

Level: 0

Details: (Need to incubate to fully unlock the remaining details)

"What's that? Is it the so-called reward that you promised Sister Cloe?" whispered Leonard as he sat beside Shin.

Shin gave him a sidelong glance before replying. "Well, that girl will stubbornly insist on coming with us if I don't promise her anything."

"Hiss~! From what I can see, she is expecting something else in return," said Leonard while clicking his tongue. Then his face suddenly turned serious before asking. "Shin Bro-... why are you not-..."

But before Leonard could even complete his words, Shin immediately cut his words off by saying. "You already know my answer for that."

"But she said that she doesn't care!" refuted Leonard strongly.

Hearing that, Shin forced a laugh before patting Leonard's shoulder. "Her thoughts are one thing, but it is a different case for the people around her."

"But-...!"

Leonard wanted to say something more but Shin didn't let him finish his words once again. "We already talked about this before. And I also agree with Uncle's thoughts."

"I am still a man with an unknown origin-..." he added while wearing a lonely smile before standing up. "What's more, we are still young and we also don't know what will happen in the future. So, who knows whether-...?"

Swoosh!

Shin was still in the middle of talking when Leonard suddenly stood up and quickly grabbed the collar of Shin's armor. "Don't you dare mention that stupid bullsh*t ever again if you still consider me as your sworn brother!"

Shin was slightly taken aback by Leonard's actions. He then stared at the latter's angered face before wearing a bitter smile.

Leonard glared at Shin for a few moments before pushing the latter forward and turned around to walk away.

In the meantime, Shin was left leaning on the tree behind him while staring at Leonard's back. Then he suddenly muttered with a lonely tone. "It is not like I have any other choice. You guys should know my situation better than anyone."

...

The group continued to wait for a couple of hours before Astaroth finally felt some strong vibrations deep underground and quickly looked at Shin.

Being linked with each other, Shin was able to read what the Elemental Spirit wanted to tell and quickly informed the others. "They are here."

Hearing that, the others started standing up one by one before getting ready for the incoming battle.

Arthur and Leonard also jumped from their hiding positions and jumped in the middle of the road. Their roles were to attract their opponent's attention first before hitting the opposing side with their strongest punch.

On the other, Shin and the others would stay hidden for as long as they could. So, they could hide their real battle prowess until their opponents show all of their cards.

They waited for a couple of moments before quickly Shin gave his signal to Astaroth. And when the latter saw that, the Elemental Spirit quickly put his palms together before raising them in the air.

A moment later, Astaroth suddenly slammed both of its hands on the ground and sent a powerful ripple underneath.

Rumble!

Then Shin turned his attention towards Arthur and Leonard before telling them that it was their turn.
"Slam it down!"

Seeing that, Arthur and Leonard quickly made their respective moves. He formerly channeled a large amount of mana on his spear before pointing it towards the sky before stabbing it on the ground.

On the other hand, Leonard jumped high up in the air while also channeling his mana on one of his battle-axes before throwing it powerfully towards the ground.

Boom! Boom!

Then there was a pair of simultaneous explosions right after their weapons hit the ground. And not long after, the ground was suddenly split open before huge debris towards the sky alongside a large group of undeads.

"Oh~! Look at these guys. Are they a mole or something?" said Arthur smirkingly before thrusting his spear forward and releasing a large amount of golden mana from its tip.

Roar!

Then the streak of mana transformed into a golden dragon that flew straight to the undeads in the air and devoured all of them in the process.

Swoosh!

And when the golden dragon started to dissipate, Leonard suddenly shot down from the sky and descended with unstoppable force.

He flew straight in the middle of the undead army that was still at the bottom of the collapsing ground.

Boom!

Then there was another explosion when he came in contact with the ground. And the impact was strong enough to send a powerful shockwave that sent all of the undeads around him to fly in the air.

And because of that, there was another batch of undeads for Arthur to be targeted.

"Alright, let me vent out my frustrations to these guys," said Leonard while wearing a grim look on his face.

Chapter 645 Empyrean Talons (Part 6)

...

Boom!

Loud explosions could be heard everywhere as Arthur and Leonard took on the whole undead army on their own. Both of them were also under their respective Elemental Possession which was why their firepower was much stronger than an average expert could do.

Arthur was fused with his Infernal Elemental Dragon while Leonard was fused with his Crimson Lion. The two focused on firepower alone since it was the best for these kinds of situations, it was the best for fighting against a large group of enemies.

Every time Arthur swung his spear around, a powerful blast of energy was going to be released from it, sending all of the undead monsters that were trying to approach him from different directions.

On the other hand, Leonard was blasting away all of the undead monsters around him. Each swing of his battle-axes was strong enough to create a strong shockwave that was sending all of the swarming undeads every time they tried to get near him.

As time went by, the undead monsters were getting stronger and stronger to the point that they could even put some pressure on both Arthur and Leonard. Moreover, some of the elite Necromancers were also starting to make their presence known as they added more pressure to the two.

"Tsk! Looks like these guys already learned their lessons since the last incident in the Blind Abyss Empire," said Arthur as he sent another batch of undeads flying.

"Should I take care of them?" asked Leonard as he glanced at those Necromancers.

Hearing that, Arthur slightly shook his head before saying. "Nah~! Let's just leave them to our pets for the time being. It is not like those guys are the Undead Legion of the Undying Guild anyway."

After that, he made a loud snap with his fingers and summoned a huge golden magic circle right above those Necromancers before activating it all of a sudden.

Roar!

Then Arthur's golden dragon pet suddenly came out from that magic circle and fell right in the middle of the Necromancers and immediately created havoc within their ranks to break their solid formation.

At the same time, Leonard also called out his monster pet and summoned it within the ranks of their opponents just like what Arthur did.

Roar!

The crimson lion with a blazing mane immediately bitten all of the undeads around it and blasted the Necromancers within the vicinity with its blazing breath.

...

Shin and the others were observing the battle from their hiding spot while waiting for the perfect opportunity to make their move. But given how well Arthur and Leonard were handling the situation with just the two of them, the others felt that they would never get a chance to join the prey.

"Tsk! Are we even needed here? It seems like the two of them are already enough to handle the whole army," commented Akailu while watching the two slaughter their army of undead.

Hearing those words, the others couldn't help but nod their heads as they could see that Arthur and Leonard were not even having any trouble when facing the army even with just the two of them.

But contrary to what they were thinking, Shin stood up from his spot and started getting ready for battle.

"What are you doing? Are you planning to join the fight now? I thought we will wait until the other side shows all of their cards?" asked Owen confusedly.

Hearing that, Shin looked at Owen and said. "Yeah, I indeed said that earlier. That is why we are making our move now."

"Huh!?"

Hearing those words, the group became even more confused as what he was saying seemed to be quite ironic to what they were trying to say.

Understanding the confusion that they had, Shin pointed at the battlefield before saying. "Those two are about to get busy with something else, so we need to get ready now to take over on battling that undead army on our own."

"Wait a minute!"

The others still wanted to say something as they couldn't keep up with what Shin was trying to say. But before they could even voice out their thoughts, Charlotte suddenly received a message from his Earth Elemental Spirit and quickly relayed the others. "I think we really need to start preparing now. There is something big hiding deep under the ground."

This time, the others redirected their attention towards her and waited for her to continue. And when Charlotte saw that, she took a quick glance at Shin before explaining to the others. "I am not sure about the details either, but there is really a gigantic creature hiding deep underground. And it is already showing some signs of large movements."

"So, are you telling us that it is about to emerge from the ground and join the battle?" asked Alucard to clarify what she was saying. And when they saw her nodding her head, they quickly made their respective preparations.

"Tsk! If you already know about it, then why do you keep on beating around the bush and not tell us about it straightforwardly?" asked Owen as he nudged Shin with his elbow.

Hearing that, Shin rolled his eyes at Owen before answering. "It is because you guys are always too doubtful with everything I say."

He then paused for a moment and pointed his chin at Alucard and Akailu before continuing. "Do you think that I haven't noticed that those two keep on giving me their sarcastic looks whenever I give out my orders?"

"It doesn't matter if they are strong or not, soldiers that are not following the orders of who is in charge are useless pieces anyway. So, it is useless to explain anything to them."

Overhearing what Shin had said, Akailu suddenly smirked before saying. "Well, sorry about that. We are still not sure if you are truly worthy of our real respect. How about we test each other's strengths before heading out?"

Shin ignored those remarks from Akailu and quickly said to Owen. "I'll be heading ahead. You can catch up later."

Then he started walking towards the battlefield. And when he was walking past Charlotte, he suddenly whispered to her. "I'm pretty sure that you are already aware of my identity. But can I trouble you to keep it a secret for the time being? I can't afford to have another problem added to my plate."

After that, he suddenly entered Stealth before sprinting towards the battlefield.

Charlotte was taken aback by Shin's words at first but she quickly recovered herself after a few moments. Then she looked in the direction where Shin disappeared before turning her head to the others.

After seeing that everyone was done with their final preparations, Charlotte slightly nodded her head at them before they went to the respective positions that they had agreed on earlier.

"Tsk! He is talking as if I am going to join the prey. Did he already forget that I am assigned to guard our 'main cannons'?" comment Owen with mixed emotions.

...

Boom!

A powerful explosion suddenly occurred in the middle of the battlefield where Arthur and Leonard were fighting. A tall cloud of dust appeared due to that explosion alongside a lot of rock debris.

A moment later, a strong gale of wind swept away the cloud of dust and revealed a gigantic worm with a lot of razor-sharp teeth filling its mouth.

"Yikes! This is kinda disgusting," said Arthur as he hovered in the sky above the giant worm.

In the meantime, Leonard was sitting on his feet at the edge of the monster's mouth while staring at the sharp teeth right below him. "Can we harvest these teeth once we kill this thing? Their quality seems good."

A moment later, Leonard sensed that the whole body of the monster worm suddenly trembled, seemingly planning to vomit something.

Hup!

Given that, he quickly jumped away from the worm's mouth to dodge.

Swoosh!

Boom!

Then we saw black miasma come out from the mouth of the monster and shot up in the air. It lingered in the air for a couple of seconds before turning into a black liquid that suddenly poured down towards the group.

When the black liquid came in contact with the scales of Arthur's golden dragon, it immediately turned into a black vapor just like when water touched a very hot surface.

On the other hand, the heat of the flames surrounding Leonard's crimson lion immediately vaporized all of the black liquids before it could even get near it.

In the meantime, the undead monsters that came in contact with that black rain suddenly get a huge boost on their strength.

Swoosh!

Bang!

Leonard strongly descended on the ground right after all of the black liquid landed. And the moment the surrounding undead saw that they quickly swarmed at him in a more aggressive manner than before.

Boom!

Leonard stomped his foot on the ground and sent a powerful shockwave in all directions, sweeping away all of the incoming undead monsters.

"Poison and acid for enemies but a drug for its allies, huh? This is going to be a little troublesome," muttered Leonard to himself after seeing the undeads slowly getting berserk.

"That is why you two need to deal with that overgrown worm and leave these guys to us," said Shin as he arrived behind Leonard.

"Are you going to be fine? There are still a lot of them around," said Leonard with a knitted brow before adding. "Moreover, I can also sense some experts hiding somewhere, so this situation can be a little dangerous."

"Heh! As if you need to tell me that. And didn't you already thin out their forces by half? We can at least handle this much," smirked Shin before pulling out his sabers. "Moreover, we are not that weak either."

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

When those words left his mouth, a valley of silver arrows suddenly fell down from the sky alongside a barrage of spells and magic bullets.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Roar!

Then a small group of magical beasts suddenly appeared in the distance and slaughtered all of the undead monsters that were blocking their path. Akailu was standing in the middle of his pets and commanded them to assume a battle formation.

"Then I will leave this place to you," said Leonard as he quickly summoned in the air and flew straight to the giant worm.

On the other hand, Shin looked ahead of him where the undead monsters were charging at him. Then he summoned his Phantom Clone before walking forward alongside it. "Alright, it is time to show our worth to those paparazzi spying on us!"

Chapter 646 Empyrean Talons (Part 7): Mastermind

...

While the battle between Shin's group and the undead army was taking place, the news of the battle immediately spread throughout the Beast Glaze Kingdom before being a huge hit online once again.

But this time, the players were no longer surprised about the news since they seemed to be already used to Shin and his gang appearing online.

But at the same time, these players also became excited about the news since they were thinking that Arthur and Leonard were really planning to create their own team. And now that they were creating yet another commotion on another kingdom, they seemed to confirm the rumors running around the community.

Moreover, there were also new faces among the group. And even if it was not confirmed yet, the players who saw them were thinking that they were the other members of the team that the Dragon God and War God were planning to create.

What's more, the new faces were also players who had a solid reputation of their own. Some of them might be new players who recently became famous in their respective kingdoms but they were still talented enough to attract the attention of the powerful guilds.

Then there was Charlotte who had the godlike title of Elemental Goddess. And the fact that she was among the group shocked quite a lot of players. It was not new for her to work with other experts, but since there was currently a rumor surrounding Siegfried and Simba, it was not strange for the players to misunderstand her joining their team.

To present some evidence, there was even a video attached to the post which showed the current state of the battle. And when the players saw that, they became even more sure about the rumors.

– "Dragon God Siegfried and War God Simba are really building an elite team" – was the thought that was running inside everyone's head at this point in time.

Meanwhile, the news about Shin and the group fighting the undead army also reached the ears of their enemies.

"Elder Zaza, our forces have indeed been intercepted by our enemies. What are we going to do next? Are we going to entrap them with everything now?" said a Twilight as he kneeled behind the Elder.

Hearing that, Elder Zaza suddenly raised one of his eyebrows before wearing a huge grin. "Is that so? Then everything that that kid has said came true."

"But it is not the right time yet. We can't reveal our real intention yet until we figure out where the Maiden of the Church of Light is hiding," he instructed while waving his hand.

Twilight suddenly clenched his hands when he heard that before asking. "But this is the perfect opportunity to strike now. We can even capture those guys and present them to the Great Leader. I'm sure-..."

He was still in the middle of talking when he suddenly felt a heavy pressure that was trying to suffocate him. Then he heard the cold voice of the Elder, seemingly threatening him.

"Are you questioning my decision?"

And when the Twilight heard those words, he immediately panicked and started pleading. "No! I will never dare to question your decision, Elder! Please, forgive me. I will make sure that this is not going to happen ever again."

"Heh! I will spare you for now since you still have a job here. But I can't guarantee that you will still be safe once we get back in our base," said Elder Zaza smirkingly.

Then another voice suddenly interrupted the two. "I think that should be enough, Elder. We still have to proceed on the next part of our plan."

"You are already back? How is the preparation going? Did you already finish everything?" asked the elder as he turned his attention towards the newcomer.

It was a player who was wearing the same type of cloak as the elder. And based on the special features that he had, it was pretty clear that his race was closely related to Demon Race instead of the Undead Race, especially with those long black horns sticking out on his forehead.

But due to the pale complexion of his skin and the dead-like eyes that he had, other people might think that he was an undead instead of a demon.

He was also holding a metal fan with steel blades on its tip, indicating that it was a special weapon. And hiding underneath his cloak was a full-body light armor that was meant for combat assassins and swordsmen

p On top of these, his black hair and crimson pupils were also complementing his overall appearance which was making him look like an evil and scheming person.

"Sir Beelzebub, it-..." the Twilight was about to greet the new guy but he immediately interrupted before he could even complete his words.

"There is no need for the greeting. Just do what you are told to do and don't make any mistakes," said the guy named Beelzebub while gesturing to Twilight to leave.

"Yes, Sir!"

And when the Twilight disappeared, Beelzebub turned his head towards the elder once again before saying. "Let me remind you again, Elder Zaza. We are only doing this for cooperation, so don't go running around and telling people that I am a messenger of your Cult."

"If not for our leader commissioning me for this matter, then I will not associate myself with the likes of you," he added while squinting his eyes.

On the other hand, Elder Zaza suddenly laughed before sneering. "That is rich coming from you. Aren't you just a hybrid of an Undead and a Demon? You are not even pureblood, unlike the others."

'Tsk! This d*mn NPC,' cursed Beelzebub internally before saying. "You should order your people now and tell them to get ready. This part of the plan is the most important one, so you better make it clear to them not to mess up just like the last time."

"Or else, I might personally discipline them later," he added smirkingly.

Hearing that, the elder suddenly frowned his brows before saying. "I will handle my people, so don't you dare touch any of them."

Then a heavy pressure suddenly came out of nowhere before trying to crush Beelzebub. But regardless of the strong pressure pressing on him, the latter seemed to be unaffected by it and just stood on his spot calmly.

Then he took off the cloak that he was wearing and threw it to the side before saying. "Anyways, this is where our contract ends. Whether you are going to succeed or not is our problem anymore."

After that, he turned around and started walking towards the darker parts of the room while adding. "But let me remind you, the Beast Glade Kingdom is yours while we are taking the treasure within the Chief's Palace."

A moment later, Beelzebub finally disappeared within the shadows and left Elder Zaza behind. The elder stared at the spot where the former disappeared before smirking. "Heh! What a cocky little demon. He better watches his back the next time we meet."

...

On the other hand, Beelzebub suddenly appeared in an alley within the capital city of the Beast Glade Kingdom.

He looked left and right to make sure that no one saw him before walking in a certain direction. And when he arrived at his destination, a group of hooded players was already waiting for him in that place.

When the group saw him, they quickly kneeled in front of him and greeted him. "Welcome back, Sir!"

"Tsk! What are we? Do you think that we are some sort of gangster or something? Stop greeting me like that," said Beelzebub while wearing a deep frown.

Then he swept his gaze at everyone before asking. "Is everyone already here?"

"Yes, Sir! We are only waiting for you to give your orders," said the player who was in the forefront of the group.

"Then let's get moving already. This place is about to get lively," said Beelzebub as he pulled out a scroll from his inventory.

But while he was in the middle activating it, the guy in front of him immediately asked. "Are you sure about this, Sir? Those guys from the Corrupted Cult are-..."

Unfortunately, Beelzebub didn't let him finish what he wanted to say and immediately smirked. "Why would I care about those guys? I already laid a perfect plan for them. So, if they still fail after all of that, then it is their incompetence and not ours."

"Fortunately, they are not going to affect us even if they indeed failed. At the very least, they can be a distraction that will keep everybody else busy while we are doing our own job. Isn't it a good thing?" he added sneeringly.

After that, he swept his gaze on his subordinates once again before saying. "Don't treat me like the other 'Troupe Members'. I will do everything I can just to finish my task. Even if it means using 'Sweepers' like you."

Then he crushed the scroll that he was holding while continuing. "I am not called the 'Greed Devil' for nothing. So, anything that I want should be mine! Everything should be going according to how I desire it to be!"

Chapter 647 Empyrean Talons (Part 8): Witch Of The Eternal Light

...

Inside a secret passage within the Head Chief's Palace, Cloe and Chaotic Luck were currently waiting for their opponents to arrive just like Shin had instructed them.

After waiting for quite some time without any sign of their enemies appearing, Chaotic Luck became a little bored and controlled some of his undead summonses to fight each other. He learned this trick from Shin during one of his training sessions with Arthur and Leonard.

During that time, he was taken aback by what he saw and asked Shin why he was doing such a strange thing out of curiosity. And the answer that he got back then was pretty simple. – "Training" –

But when he heard the details behind that training method from Arthur and Leonard, he immediately became more interested and asked Shin to teach him how to do it properly. And after training under Shin a little, Chaotic Luck discovered how beneficial this kind of training was for someone like him.

Not only did his control over his undeads improve, but he was also able to become familiar with the movements and abilities of his own undead summonses.

He also managed to hone his own skills by training this way. Moreover, his magic control also improved drastically due to this which made his overall battle prowess become stronger. And because of that, he started training like this whenever he was not training with Arthur and Leonard or if ever he had some free time.

With all of these, he was able to manually control a couple of his undead monsters while also casting some spells simultaneously. And due to this, he was now capable enough to stand against top Rankers with official titles of their own; he now became worthy to become a Maverick Titled Ranker.

He trained for a couple of minutes before getting tired of it. Then he turned his head towards Cloe who was currently staring at the air with a blank expression on her face.

Seeing that, Chaotic Luck knitted his brow before asking. "Is there something wrong, Big Sis?"

Cloe immediately snapped back to reality when she heard that and turned to him before smiling. "Don't mind me. It is nothing really."

"Is that so?" replied Chaotic Luck unconsciously. Then he was about to open his mouth to say something else but he was immediately interrupted by Cloe's next words.

"But do you think that I am useless too?"

"Ah!" Chaotic Luck opened and closed his mouth, trying to force a couple of words from his mouth but failed to do so.

Then Cloe suddenly continued. "Look, that guy is always leaving me behind and excluding me in the most important parts of everything. Am I that weak? Do I really look like someone who always needs protection? Do I-...?"

Reaching Chaotic Luck finally found the time to cut in and immediately said. "I think you are misunderstanding Big Bro Shin's intention, Big Sis."

"Then why did he-..." Cloe wanted to refute but she was immediately interrupted before she could even complete her words.

"You said that you are being left behind from the most important part of the missions but we are currently here because of that very reason," said Chaotic Luck with knitted brows.

Hearing that, Cloe became confused at what he was saying before asking in return. "Huh? What are you talking about?"

Then Chaotic Luck suddenly became serious before explaining. "Big Bro told me that we are here to stop our enemies from getting that thing that they want."

"He said that whatever is happening outside, all of it is just distractions. Even the battle on the surface above us is also another misdirection that will attract our attention," he added to further explain.

"Huh?" Cloe was still confused and just stared at Chaotic Luck blankly.

Seeing that, Chaotic Luck pursed his lips a little before continuing. "He said that whoever we are currently facing, their real purpose should be something inside the Chief's Palace."

"And with what basis?" asked Cloe unconsciously, seemingly forgetting that she was upset that she was currently in this place.

Hearing that, Chaotic Luck shrugged his shoulders. "I also don't know. It is all because of his gut feeling- ... That is what he said."

Cloe knitted her eyebrows when she heard that before falling into deep thought. Then she looked at Chaotic Luck once again and asked. "But why are we the ones to be assigned for this task? Isn't it better if either Siegfried and Simba take on this job?"

"Ahm... What did he say again?" muttered Chaotic as he thought to himself. And after a few moments of thinking, he quickly explained. "Big Bro says that us being missing in the main battlefield will make our opponents confused."

"They will think that we are either hiding in the dark until the situation turns worse or we are present in another battlefield."

"Given that we are practically the bane of Undead Monsters, the two of us are more than enough to take on a whole army of undead. So, I will be not surprised that they are expecting us to appear in a different place," he added while shrugging his shoulders once again.

Listening to his words, Cloe pursed her lips before saying. "Purposely hiding us to mislead our enemies. That is pretty much how Shin deals with things. But why do I feel that there is still something more to it?"

"He said that he trusts your abilities, so he chose you to take on this task. There is no need to overthink about it, Big Sis," he emphasized.

Despite hearing those words, Cloe still felt a little doubtful and tried to think about it for quite some time. But when she couldn't figure out what it was, she immediately stopped thinking about it and forgot it altogether.

But right after she threw that thought at the back of her head, her eyes suddenly turned sharp and quickly waved her staff to summon a huge magic circle, standing in the corridor.

Swoosh!

Boom!

Then a powerful wind gale collided on that magic circle before creating a storm-like ripple in the air.

"Looks like our visitors finally arrive," said Cloe with a serious tone as she looked at the darker side of the corridor.

Then she saw a group of players walking towards them while emitting a very strong threatening aura. And since she was somewhat familiar with that aura, she immediately figured out their identities. "Pandemonium Troupe."

In the meantime, Beelzebub who was at the forefront of the group suddenly opened his mouth. "Now, this is something unexpected. To think that you will be here instead of helping your teammates outside, even I am not expecting this?"

"But are you sure that you two will be enough to stop us?" he asked sneeringly as the 'Sweepers' behind him immediately made their moves.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

They lunged forward with an imaginable speed. But before they could even travel half of the distance between the two opposing groups, they were suddenly intercepted by a group of strange undead that shot up from the ground.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Repelled, the Sweepers were forced to retreat back before taking a good look at the undead monsters blocking their path. It was a group of humanoid monsters with a blazing aura surrounding their body.

"Oh! So, this is the famous 'Legion of the Chaotic Sun' that I am hearing about," commented Beelzebub after taking a good look at the special undeads in front of them.

In the meantime, Chaotic Luck was rather confused with what he just heard. "What? Legion of the Chaotic Sun? What is that? It is my first time hearing it."

"Hah! You don't even know what the players are calling your own army of undead? That's funny," said Beelzebub smirkingly.

Then he swept his gaze at the corridor. And after seeing how narrow the place was, he couldn't help but shake his head a little. "Looks like our plan to use this place to sneak inside becomes a hindrance to us instead."

Given how close the place was, alongside the fact that it only had a single path ahead, Beelzebub and the others had no choice but to break through the blockade of blazing undeads if they wanted to advance.

But they were going to waste quite a lot of time if they just charged ahead, especially when the corridor was slowly being filled by Chaotic Luck's undead monsters. Moreover, they also need to be wary of Cloe who wields a powerful Holy Powers which was their bane.

Beelzebub thought for a few moments before sighing helplessly while saying. "I guess, there is no other choice."

Then he took out a magic scroll from his inventory space before crushing it all of the sudden.

A brilliant light suddenly illuminated the whole place and blinded everyone, excluding Beelzebub himself. And when Cloe saw that, she quickly took out a magic scroll of her own before crushing it without any hesitation.

Swoosh!

Then a spherical barrier suddenly appeared around her and Chaotic Luck as a powerful gale swept through the entire corridor while ripping all of the specialized undeads on its path.

Fortunately, Cloe was fast enough to react and saved themselves from being ripped into pieces by that powerful gale.

But at the same time, the Sweepers were quite fast to react and quickly surrounded the two from all sides before they could even prepare their respective spells. And now that Cloe and Chaotic Luck had nowhere to run, Beelzebub quickly teleported himself in front of the spherical barrier before stabbing his closed fan into it.

Bang!

The barrier protecting Cloe and Chaotic Luck was immediately shattered but that attack. And when the Sweepers saw that, they quickly pounced at the two with their respective weapons, planning to eliminate their target as soon as possible.

But right before their weapons reached their targets, Beelzebub suddenly heard a smirk coming from Cloe which also sent a shiver down his spine.

Sensing the danger, Beelzebub instinctively waved his fan and activated a group teleporting skill within an instant. And when they appeared a few distances away from the two, they saw a huge magic circle on the ground below Cloe and Chaotic Luck, which also shot a pillar of light straight to the ceiling.

"I guess a Godlike Player is still a Godlike Player regardless of their class," commented Beelzebub full of amusement.

On the other hand, Cloe walked out of the pillar of light before saying. "You know what? I am already getting tired of people who are looking down on the combat prowess of someone with a support class."

Then she slowly raised her head and looked straight at Beelzebub. "I guess you guys haven't heard, the 'old-timers' are not calling me the Gentle Goddess in the previous games' Ranking List."

She trailed her words for a couple of seconds as her hair danced alongside the wind together with the brilliant glow that was surrounding her body. "Back then-... they used to call me the 'Witch of Eternal Light'."

Chapter 648 Emphyrean Talons (Part 9): The Other Side Of The Gentle Goddess

...

Beelzebub stared blankly at Cloe the moment he heard her words. "Witch of the Eternal Light? Then you are-...?"

Seeing the look on his face, Cloe slightly raised her eyebrow before saying. "Looks like you at least heard about the old me. If that is the case, then you better brace yourselves to experience some pain."

Then she snapped with her fingers and summoned a pair of magic circles floating behind her before activating all of the sudden.

When he saw the insanely fast spell casting that Cloe had displayed, Beelzebub immediately understood that they were misinformed about this girl who bore the title of Gentle Goddess.

Swoosh!

After that, a beam of light came out from each of the magic circles behind her and flew straight on her opponents.

In response, Beelzebub quickly opened his fan and immediately waved in a circular motion, sending a powerful wind vortex towards the incoming beam of lights.

Boom!

A thick cloud of dust was immediately created right after the two forces came in contact with each other. But it was immediately swept away by the strong gust of wind that scattered from the collision.

Since the line of sight of each group was being blocked by the cloud of dust earlier, they were not sure what the opposing sides were doing before it was cleared by the gusting wind. And the moment their view was cleared, each side was immediately greeted by the attacks of each side.

The Sweepers immediately charged forward, taking advantage of the cloud of dust earlier and using it as their cover. But when all of the dust was blown away, they were immediately greeted by a barrage of lights which also hit each of them accurately.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Fortunately, they were fast enough to activate a defensive skill in time and managed to block those beams of lights. But despite successfully blocking those attacks, they still failed to defend themselves from the blazing undeads who suddenly pounced at them out of nowhere.

Then a battle broke out between the two opposing sides.

Chaotic Luck managed to hold down the Sweepers all on his own thanks to his summoned undeads. And since they were currently in a small and narrow place, all he needed to do was focus on defending while having a small unit of undeads to harass his opponents.

Moreover, his undead monsters were also quite strong and high in numbers so dealing with them was quite troublesome even for this group of top-class assassins.

After training under the supervision of peak Gods like Arthur and Leonard, Chaotic Luck rarely got intimidated when facing players who were much stronger than him. And his little training with Shin taught him how to take advantage of his surroundings.

With all of this, the current setting of their battle was working to his advantage.

In the meantime, Cloe was keeping Beelzebub busy, trying to buy as much time as they could for Shin and the others to settle the situation outside.

During the battle, Beelzebub started to recognize the playstyle that Cloe was currently showing. "Now, I remember. There was a rumor running around during the reign of «True Era» online."

"There was a monster-class player who had a battle prowess that was comparable to most of the top combat experts despite only being a priest. They said that she was a Witch clad in white clothes."

"That so-called witch is so strong that her sole existence became a class of her own. At first, the players addressed her as the first Holy Mage. And later on, she was granted the title of the 'Witch of the Eternal Light'."

Hearing all of that, Cloe slightly pursed her lips before saying. "It looks like you guys are quite informed after all. No wonder the 'Mystery Pavilion' is keeping an eye on your organization."

Beelzebub dodged another barrage of spells sent by Cloe before replying. "We looked everywhere just to find that 'Witch' to invite her to join us."

"But who would have thought that the Witch who is known for being a merciless Holy Mage is also the same Goddess who is also the best priest of the game? This is quite unexpected," he added after a brief moment of pause.

"Heh! Join you? And why do you think that I will join you?" said Cloe with a sarcastic tone.

After that, she cast another set of holy spells which immediately summoned a group of golden light spears floating in the air before forming a fan-shaped formation right behind her.

Then she pointed her staff to Beelzebub and sent all of the light spears towards the same direction on the very next instant.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

The light spears drew a long trail in the air as they traveled through it. And the beautiful arc that they drew in the air attracted Beelzebub's eyes and made him unconsciously look at them. Due to that, he was slightly late to cast a spell of his own for a counterattack.

Left with no other choice, Beelzebub could only cast a defensive spell instead of an offensive one. He closed his fan to channel his mana on it before reopening it once again and waved it upwards, summoning a blowing wind from the ground that redirected the course of the incoming light spears towards the ceiling of the corridor.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Due to the power of the light spears, the concrete ceiling suddenly collapsed. Broken bricks and rock debris fell on the ground, creating yet another cloud of dust that blocked the line of sight of the two opposing sides once again.

Beelzebub was about to take advantage of that situation to cast a large-scale spell that could enfold the whole place. That way, he could bypass Cloe and Chaotic Luck and continue with his task.

But before he could even chant the first word of the spell, a thick pair of light whips suddenly emerged from the ground and grabbed his legs before pulling him downwards.

Ugh!

Fortunately, Beelzebub had a fast reflex which was why he was able to react instantly to the sudden ambush. He quickly used a teleportation skill to disappear from his spot and reappeared a few meters from it.

But not long after his feet landed on the ground, a hexagonal prison suddenly locked him in place while silencing all of his skills. "Since when-...?"

He was in the middle of cursing when the corner of his eyes caught a glimpse of a hole in the middle of the cloud of dust as a brilliant spear of light flew past it.

Seeing that, Beelzebub panicked a little before taking another scroll from his inventory and crushing it without any hint of hesitation.

Bang!

Then a monster with the body of molten lava suddenly shot up from the ground and blocked the incoming spear of light.

Boom!

Beelzebub survived yet another dangerous situation due to his magic scrolls. But unfortunately, he didn't have the time to take a breather yet since it was just the start of the storm that was about to come.

Right after blocking the spear of light, Beelzebub saw a large group of light spears hovering in the air around him and surrounding him from all sides. "What a crazy casting of spells. She is almost on par with that other witch who was giving our leader a huge headache."

"Looks like I can't hold back anymore," he muttered with a solemn expression on his face before taking out a magic scroll after another from his inventory bag while channeling his mana on them.

He didn't activate it yet and let them float in the air while waiting for the next move of his opponent. He knew that this was going to be a huge waste but he had no other choice since they didn't expect that the so-called Gentle Goddess was hiding such a ruthless side of her behind her usual innocent looks.

Snap!

Then he heard a snapping sound from a distance which also signaled the start of his real ordeal. The light spears flew straight to him with a precise succession which also blocked all of his possible path of retreat.

Due to how crafty those light spears were arranged, Beelzebub also knew that it was impossible to dodge each of those spears with the limited space he had inside the hexagonal prison.

Gritting his teeth, Beelzebub crushed one of his precious collections once again and activated another defensive spell that guarded him against the incoming spears of light.

The chaotic barrage of spells lasted for a couple of moments before the area around Beelzebub calmed down. But despite the silence surrounding him, the so-called Greed Devil didn't dare to let his guard down since this might be one of the traps set up by Cloe.

But after a few moments of nothing, Beelzebub couldn't help but become a little suspicious, especially that the hexagonal prison that was trapping him finally dissipated.

He waved his fan to create a gale that swept away all of the dust hovering in the air, clearing his light of sight.

But it didn't take long for him to regret that decision because he was immediately greeted by the sight of a huge magic circle hovering in the air between him and Cloe.

Then an angel clad with shining armor slowly emerged from the magic circle. The angel stood straight with its snow-white wings folded on its back while its hands were supporting a longsword that was pointing on the ground.

"So, everything else is just a distraction," muttered Beelzebub with a heavy tone while tightly gripping a black scroll on his hands. "A Valkyrie, huh."

Chapter 649 Empyrean Talons (Part 10)

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Beelzebub stared at the Valkyrie that Cloe had summoned with a solemn expression on his face while gripping the black scroll on his hand tightly.

He was having an internal struggle whether he was going to use that scroll or not. But the problem was that Cloe did not only summon a high-leveled Valkyrie but it also seemed to be a high-ranking one on top of that.

"Fine! I am saving this summoning scroll for the battle with the Chief Beast later, but it looks like I will never have the chance to use it anyway since you are keeping us busy," said Beelzebub as he immediately crushed the black scroll after some hesitation.

Bang!

Then a magic circle with a similar size as the one in front of Cloe suddenly appeared in the space in front of Beelzebub. And unlike the magic circle that had holy powers on it and also summoned the Valkyrie, this particular circle was radiating with a dense demonic aura which was even visible to the naked eye due to the dark smoke coming out from it.

Not long after, a fully armored knight emerged from the demonic circle while riding an armored undead horse that also had dark flames enfolding its body.

When the Angel Valkyrie and the Demonic Knight stood face to face with each other while releasing their respective auras, trying to crush one another.

The faceoff between Cloe and Beelzebub alongside their summons lasted for a few moments before the two gave their orders to attack.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

Boom!

Then an intense battle broke out between the Valkyrie and the knight and slowly turned the secret passage into a ruin.

In the meantime, while Cloe and Chaotic Luck were battling the people for the Pandemonium Troupe underground, the players on the surface right above them were currently in utter chaos.

A huge army of undead suddenly appeared outside the city, throwing the whole place in a state of panic where both the NPCs and the Players were not sure what was currently happening.

Not long after, a system announcement was immediately issued to all of the players within the city, asking for their assistance to defend the city against the incoming army of undead.

Seeing the announcement, all of the players immediately became thrilled as they stumbled upon such a rare city-protection event.

The guilds and adventurer teams residing within the city immediately made preparations since they all knew that this event was going to be quite rewarding. There were some top experts who were planning to take part in this event.

But not long after they started making their respective preparations, a series of explosions suddenly occurred in different parts of the city which further intensified the panic within the city.

But that was not the end.

A few moments after those explosions occurred, the Corrupted Cult Players who were hiding inside the city, immediately made their moves and further spread the chaos.

The capital city of the Beast Glade Kingdom was immediately thrown into a state of calamity within just a few minutes. And because of that, the Chief's Palace had no choice but to deploy some of their guards to quickly put everything under control.

But despite all of their efforts, chaos already enveloped the whole city which was why they didn't manage to properly repel the undead army that was besieging the city from all sides.

Fortunately, the famous adventurer teams and powerful guilds finally made their appearance before the city was completely overturned. They even set aside their grudges and competition to join forces together to defend against the army of undeads.

After all, all of the investments that they poured on staying in this city would all be in waste if they let these undeads successfully conquered the capital city. And once that happened, the Beast Glade Kingdom would slowly get corrupted until they were kicked out of their respective territories.

With their combined efforts, the situation outside the city walls became a little better as the battle was put in a complete deadlock.

But despite that being the case, the allied force of the Beast Glade Kingdom still didn't let their guards down since the situation inside the city was not optimistic. All they could do was maintain the deadlock outside the city walls while hoping that the NPCs inside would take back the order as soon as possible.

...

Meanwhile, Elder Zaza was watching the battle from a distance with squinting eyes. "Why is the Palace still standing? Are those people not done with their task yet?"

Thirio who was kneeling behind the elder hesitated for a couple of moments before voicing out his thoughts. "Elder Zaza, is it possible that they left us behind after getting what they want?"

Bang!

Hearing that, Elder Zaza suddenly released a suffocating pressure before saying. "Are you telling me that they just used our strengths and took advantage of us? That is quite bold of them if that is the case."

"Are they not afraid to get hunted down by the Corrupted Cults and Demonic Churches?" he added as the look on his face turned grim and heavy. "They may be deviants, but it doesn't mean that they can do whatever they want."

After that, he turned around and commanded. "Recall the Shadow Demon Army from the other battlefield, we are going to end this annoying job as soon as possible."

Thirio couldn't help but suddenly raise his head when he heard those orders and quickly asked. "Are you sure about this, Elder? The situation on that side is not favorable to our people, so if we recall them now-..."

Bang!

He was in the middle of talking when his head was suddenly slammed on the ground by the invisible pressure that was pressing him.

Then Elder Zaza suddenly said. "Since when did I give you the permission to raise your head? And who gives you the right to question my decision?"

"They only have a small group of people on the opposing side yet you are telling us that our army still can't take those people down? Do you know how much disgrace you are giving me now? The other elders will surely laugh at me if we fail in this task, so you better watch your mouth."

He paused for a moment before continuing. "And if our army of undead is so useless anyway, it is better for us to use them to stall those people while we are securing our main target."

"So, ignore all of those meatshields and recall the Shadow Demon Army right here as soon as possible before my patience runs out!" added the elder as the temperature within the vicinity dropped drastically.

Despite being crushed by the heavy pressure, Thirio greeted his teeth and tried to persuade the elder once again. "But we still haven't found the Maiden from the Church of Light. What are we going to do if we are suddenly caught with one of their traps?"

Unfortunately, Elder Zaza was currently not in a condition to listen to any reason due to his rage. He further squinted his eyes before saying. "Don't let me repeat my words."

'Tsk! Let's forget about it then. It is not like I will be the one to get blamed once all of these fail anyway,' left with no other choice, Thirio immediately abandoned the idea of persuading the elder and quickly complied with the order given to him.

He waited for the crushing pressure to disappear first before running away from that place as soon as possible.

"D*mn it! These NPCs are getting more and more annoying as the game progresses. What are those developers thinking? They keep improving the A.I. of the game which is why manipulating them is getting much harder."

"Do they really think that this game is a second world? A game is just a game in the end. The only thing that really benefits the players is the in-game currency that can be traded for real money."

Thirio was ranting out quite loudly as he traveled towards the battlefield where Shin and the others were fighting. That place was a secluded one which was why he couldn't instantly teleport to that place.

Moreover, they also locked the whole place with a special formation to block all kinds of communications, it was the same whether coming in or going out of that place.

Given that, Thirio had no choice but to ride his mount to run towards that place as fast as he could. But when he arrived at that place, he was suddenly greeted by an unbelievable sight that he could not even imagine.

What he saw was their entire army that got slaughtered without any survivors. Even the 10 Death Worms that they specially prepared for this mission were all killed brutally.

Thirio swept his gaze at the scene and saw their Shadow Demon Army were also killed on the spot and their bodies started to become specks of light that were dissipating in the air.

"How can this be? We abandoned the idea of splitting our forces and decided to focus all of our main power in this place, so how can they end the battle so fast?" muttered Thirio unconsciously as he stared blankly at the scene in front of him.

Not long after, he suddenly heard a pair of voices coming from behind, saying.

"Someone is still alive?"

"Looks like we still overlook someone."

Hearing their words, Thirio quickly jumped forward and turned around midair to have a clear look at the owner of those voices. But right after his feet fell back on the ground, his entire body was suddenly frozen in place as he saw Arthur and Leonard looking at him sneeringly.

Then Shin suddenly appeared from a different direction and walked over. "Can you guys leave this one to me? I am itching to try a few techniques that I just learned earlier."

Chapter 650 Emptyrean Talons (Part 11): A Different Breed Of Monster

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Thirio didn't have the time to go back to their main headquarters to lift the curse that was reversed cast to him by Shin earlier because of the ongoing mission that they had. Due to that, he was still under the curse of the Blood Monarch.

It was also the reason why he was looking at the three a little nervously. He couldn't afford to die in this place.

Shin as Sickarius was one thing, but the real problem was the pair of Arthur and Leonard. Thirio would not get intimidated when facing either one of them if he met them on a normal occasion. But since he was currently under pressure from the curse, he was currently not in a position to fight with everything he got.

But the problem was running away was also not an option for him to consider. After all, it was an impossible task to run away when he was facing both the Dragon God Siegfried and the War God Simba.

While Thirio was currently in a dilemma, he suddenly heard that Shin wanted to take him on by himself. Such words provoked the former and looked at the latter with a solemn look on his face.

'Are all of these rising stars looking down on me? First, it is that 'Nameless Swordsman', and now there is another one that is trying to challenge me? He is not even an Official Ranker!' thought Thirio to himself as he glared at Shin.

Seeing the look that Thirio was making, Arthur and Leonard couldn't help but smirk as they were able to read what was running inside his mind. Then they shrugged their shoulders and let Shin take over.

The two find a spot where they could sit comfortably and enjoy the show. And when Thirio saw that, he became even more enraged for being provoked.

Given that, he quickly took out his war axe and immediately activated his berserk skill at the same time. And without further ado, he took the initiative to attack, not having any intention to give Shin the time to prepare.

But to his surprise, his supposedly surprise attack was completely read by Shin which also made his sudden move a step too late.

Before Thirio could even reach Shin, the latter suddenly strode forward to cut his advance while also thrusting his right-hand saber forward.

Due to his sudden charge, it was impossible for Thirio to stop his flight midair which was also why the saber pierced through his body. Moreover, Shin did not only throw an ordinary stab, but it also had a stunning effect as he accurately hit his opponent's heart.

'Extra Skill: (Modified) Heart Seeker'

And since Thirio was stunned midair, there was no way for him to escape the next attacks that Shin was going to throw at him. Naturally, this Messenger of the Corrupted Cult would try to remove the stun effect by activating his CC-removing skills.

Unfortunately, Shin was already familiar with his skills after fighting each other a couple of times.

Right after Thirio cast his CC-removing skills, Shin quickly pulled out the [Dusk Blade] from his opponent's chest while using the momentum of his movements to swing the [Dawn Blade] on his left hand at the same time.

'Extra Skill: (Modified) Destructive Slash'

Then Thirio was stunned once again after getting hit by such a heavy strike. And what came after that was a series of attacks that almost emptied his Health Bar.

'Self-Created Skill: (Modified) Triple Slash'

'Extra Skill: (Modified) Multiple Stab'

'Grim Reaper Skill: Purgatory Slash – Penta Slash'

Thirio was able to activate one of the special effects of his race and managed to defy death for a brief moment. And while he was sent flying by the fifth strike of Shin's 'Purgatory Slash', he saw that his HP was already close to hitting zero, so he tried to recover some of his health by drinking some potion midair.

But before he could even take out the Health Potions from his inventory, he saw Shin swinging one of his sabers in the air and releasing a crescent energy wave that flew straight in his direction.

'Grim Reaper Skill: Purgatory Slash – Energy Wave'

Swoosh!

Thirio was still under the effect of his undying skill, he would surely survive that attack even if he got hit by the incoming energy wave.

Boom!

But due to the powerful impact, Thirio failed to take out any Health Positions to recover his HP. And what was even worse in it was the fact that Shin was not done yet.

After immobilizing Thirio in the air, Shin unexpectedly threw both of his sabers up in the air before using the 'Phantom Steps' to appear right above his opponent.

Then he flipped his cloak in the air, revealing the combat belt wrapped around his waist before taking out the paralyzing needles from it.

After that, his arms suddenly turned into blurs as he accurately stabbed all of the needles on his opponent's vitals. And because of that, Thirio suddenly lost control over his body and became paralyzed.

At this point in time, Thirio already lost the effects of his undying skills. So, Shin took advantage of this opportunity to activate the special effects of his 'Shadow Mark' Elemental Skill to teleport himself high up in the air, where his sabers were located.

Right after he caught both of them, Shin suddenly shot down towards the ground with an unimaginable speed.

Shing!

'Extra Skill: (Modified) Falling Lightblade'

Shin left a trail of light in the air as he descended towards his opponent while also swinging down both of his sabers at the same time.

In the meantime, Thirio could only stare at Shin as he waited for his death. He didn't know why he couldn't react to each of Shin's attacks even though he could see each one of them pretty clearly. It looked like he was always a step too late whenever he tried to do anything.

At first, he thought that it was his imagination. But now that Shin could clearly counter each of his moves before he could even do it, he was now sure that this guy was able to predict whatever he was thinking before he could even put them in action. It was as if he was an open book right in front of Shin.

Having those thoughts, Thirio was now able to see what kind of monster he was up against. He even started to feel scared after knowing that such a monster existed – a monster with a completely different breed from the freak that he encountered back in the Elven Kingdom.

'It looks like there is a massive ripple that will shake the entire Gaming World,' thought Thirio to himself as he watched the coming blades severed his head.

Ta-ta!

Then Shin landed on the ground alongside the items that dropped from Thirio's body. And after stabilizing himself, he quickly stood up and sheathed his sabers with one smooth motion before turning around and looking at Arthur and Leonard in a cool manner.

"That is easier than what I have expected," said Shin as he looked smugly at the two.

Hearing that, Arthur couldn't help but chuckle a little before commenting. "Heh! Are you that proud that you bully someone who doesn't have a personal trait?"

"Huh? He didn't have one?" asked Shin with a frown before quickly adding. "How did you know?"

Arthur sneered at him and calmly answered. "Isn't it obvious? He didn't notice that you have one until the end, so it can only explain that he doesn't have a Personal Trait of his own."

"Is that so?" said Shin before pursing his lip. "Tsk! This 'Personal Trait' feature sure is too overpowered. That guy is really giving me a lot of trouble when I am fighting him earlier as a Nameless Swordsman. But now that I fully unlocked its next stage, dealing with him is as easy as pie."

When Leonard heard that, he couldn't help but become a little curious and asked. "How many stages did you unlock?"

Shin thought for a couple of moments before answering. "Hmmm... I managed to evolve it twice, so does that mean I unlocked two stages?"

"Heh! Just two? You are still way too far before you catch up to us," commented Arthur as he looked at Shin with a smug look on his face.

"Why? How many stages are you on?" snarled Shin.

Hearing that, Arthur raised three of his fingers and answered proudly. "This much! And I am almost reaching stage four with my 'Pinnacle Omniscience' Personal Trait."

Then Shin turned his head towards Leonard and asked. "What about you? You also have one, don't you? What is it and which level are you on?"

"Primordial Aptitude, also level three," answered Leonard in a nonchalant manner before asking in return. "But what did you do earlier? Why do I feel that you are not using the common method for the 'Personal Traits'? Is there a trick that you added?"

Shin suddenly clicked his tongue when he heard those words. "Tch! You really are unexpectedly much sharper than before. Did you eat something strange this time?"

Leonard shrugged his shoulders and gave his remarks. "It may be unnoticeable to others but I can clearly see small details when I am focused. For example, the fact that you are always taking a brief pause every time you finish your moves."

"It is not your usual style, you used to be attacking in a rapid manner until your opponents can't keep up anymore. It was the same for your counters, you are always reacting to your opponent's attacks on the spot before counterattacking."

"But this time, it seems like you are reading your opponent's movements first before making our own move. It is very brief, but each of those pauses is precise and perfectly timed."

Hearing that, Shin couldn't help but smile before patting Leonard's shoulders. "Oh~... It looks like you really picked up quite a lot of things when training with your master. To think that you can even spot all of that?"

This time, Arthur suddenly butted in and asked. "So, what is that trick? Tell us before the others finish cleaning the battlefield."

Then Shin crossed his arms before answering. "It is not that special actually. You know that my Personal Trait is 'Ultra Instincts' and it mostly affects my reflexes and reaction speed. And because of that, I can move my body pretty well inside the game."

He took a brief pause and asked the two. "Do you remember my personalized technique in the real world? The 'Zone'."

He waited for the two to nod their heads before continuing. "I managed to incorporate it in the game with one of my skills. So, by combining those two, I can easily predict my opponent's movements and react to them before they can even execute it."

"I haven't mastered it yet, so I did some practice during our previous battle earlier. Thankfully, I managed to get myself completely familiar with it because of that."

After that, Shin turned around and looted the items that Thirio had dropped before leaving the two.

Leonard stared at Shin's back for a couple of moments before saying. "Looks like we can no longer slack off. That guy is really close to catching up with us."

Arthur nodded his head unconsciously when he heard those words before asking. "Want to have a little spar later, after we are down with here?"

"Sounds like a good idea to me," replied Leonard while also nodding his head.