

Destiny 991

Chapter 991 Hiding Each Other's Motive

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Crackle!

The electric currents swimming on the black clouds started releasing a series of crackling sounds before a flash of lightning fell toward the ground.

Immortal and his group, who were currently at the center, would not be able to dodge in time due to the 'encirclement' that Shin and the rest had created.

Since Shin, Faker, Lawless, Simba, and Zero were attacking from three different directions and Immortal and his group were persistently preventing them from getting away, the four basically created an encirclement without their opponents realizing it.

When they realized what was exactly going on, it was already too late to respond.

Boom!

But even if that was the case, the group that Immortal was leading was no ordinary fellows. They were still a group of experts in their own right. Some of them even stood at the peak of the virtual gaming industry, so they naturally have the means to save themselves from this particular predicament.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

They didn't dare to hold back now. They revealed their cards one after another, escaping this incoming forbidden spell. After that, they will slaughter these guys who dared to treat them like trapped mice.

While the opponents were too occupied with saving themselves, Shin and the others quickly took advantage of their distraction to take down a few more targets before disengaging from the fight.

Due to the chaos created by the powerful forbidden spell of Charlotte, the three thieves assaulting Faker were forced to stop harassing him and used their respective 'Gale Steps'. They were planning to use the 3 seconds invulnerability of the skill to protect themselves.

Faker, on the other hand, used that opportunity to get break free from their encirclement before heading towards Shin.

He was originally planning to continue targeting the priest of the group or Flouree, but after seeing that they were now protected by Jia and used their respective barriers, he chose to target one of the assaulters on Shin's side instead.

Shin saw his actions and started counterattacking. He first threw a powerful strike at Sabec, forcing the guy to stay rooted in place before throwing a 'Destructive Slash' in the process.

That skill was one of his most basic skills and didn't have much of a threat to his opponent, so Sabec let himself get hit by it, risking being stunned, to give Basion and GoodShoe a perfect opening.

Even if he was stunned for a couple of seconds, Shin would not be able to finish him off, due to the constant harassment of the two.

They also didn't care about the Forbidden Spell too. They just used a series of buffs and other strength- and defense-enhancing skills to withstand that powerful spell. They were confident that even if they got hit in the process, they would still survive the spell, especially when their team's priest was still alive.

Shin was able to read their minds. He understood their confidence, but they would pay dearly in exchange for it.

Shin used one of his powerful strikes to push Basion away from him while enduring the attack from GoodyShoe, avoiding getting hit on his vitals. And when the Guardian Knight was about to follow with another strike, he discovered that he couldn't move his body.

Faker suddenly arrived behind him and stunned him!

After that, Shin quickly turned around and followed with a series of slashes that dealt a massive amount of damage. He couldn't finish off GoodyShoe with those strikes alone since he was still able to guard his vitals with his current stance.

But with Faker and Shin working together to deplete his whole Health Bar, he could only watch himself get killed. He only lasted for a couple of seconds in front of the combined forces of the two.

That short amount of time was enough for the two to finish off such a tanky Guardian Knight. That was also the span of time when Sabec was stunned and Basion was trying to regain his footing. It was so fast that the two could only stare blankly at the scene, unable to do anything.

Right after killing GoodyShoe, Shin and Faker quickly escaped, not caring what the two were thinking.

It was already too late for the Sabec and Basion to chase after the two when they regained themselves. Moreover, they now had to deal with the descending pillar of lightning, preventing them from pursuing.

The same thing was happening on the other side, Leonard and Lawless did a similar thing. They first lured the opposing side by faking that they were disengaging from the battle.

Justin, Jugo, and Elise wanted to give chase, but they felt that there was something wrong, so they didn't try to chase after the two. Instead, they just focused on defending themselves from the powerful forbidden spell.

Unfortunately, Demian was not on the same page as them. He was originally working with Jugo at protecting their team's priest from aggressive advances of Leonard. And when he realized that the Annihilator God was not pursuing their opponent despite the series of buffs and protective barriers that they had, it was already too late.

The slight overextension that Demian had committed was more than enough to be a fatal mistake. Leonard quickly extended his hand and grabbed at this particular apostle of Immortal, preventing the guy from escaping.

Then Lawless quickly seized that opportunity to land a series of strikes, not giving Demian the time to retaliate. And before he could be saved, the pillar of lightning already fell from the sky and prevented the others from doing anything.

Boom!

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The corner of Immortal's mouth suddenly twitched when he saw three names on their team suddenly dimmed out, indicating that they lose more members. Two of them were even his apostles.

And when the bombardment of the lighting pillar finally subdued, one of the frozen houses near them suddenly exploded followed by a silhouette bolting out from it.

Bang!

Ta-ta!

Then that person landed at the center of Immortal's group. It was Lightning Fist who was currently in a terrible state. His appearance could clearly tell that he got beaten up pretty badly.

The two priests quickly cast heal on him, restoring his health back to full.

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Standing in the frozen house, Owen looked down at Lightning Fis from the broken room and clicked his tongue. "Tsk! He got away."

"It is fine, that guy is really skilled. The important thing is we already achieved our goal," said Ravier as he jumped down into the room.

In the meantime, Black Hand suddenly asked on the party chat channel. "Should we proceed with our arrangements?"

Shin thought for a moment before nodding his head and replying. "Okay, let's do it. Aside from Black Hand, S.Tigris, and Siegfried, the rest of the combat team can reveal themselves. But Alucard and Ara will have to continue to hide and wait for the opportunity to snipe their priests."

"Chaotic Luck also has to wait until Immortal is forced to summon his Undying Army. We are leaving those undead monsters in your hands."

Hearing that, the team quickly responded.

Shin, Faker, Simba, and Lawless gathered around Zero as they looked at Immortal and the opposing group. And behind them, Charlotte, and Arielle (Cloe) walked out from their hiding spots.

At the same time, Owen and Ravier who were already shown themselves hold on to their position as Ember and Seven stood on the roof of the frozen house across them, on the other side of Immortal's group.

Immortal, the remaining Silent Night members, and the rest of the Earners Mercenary Group wore dark expressions on their faces.

Justin even glared at Immortal and demanded. "What are you doing, Immortal?! Why do you still haven't summoned your undead army?! What are you waiting for?!"

But despite the angry tone that the Silent Night's commander, Immortal remained composed and replied casually. "Do you think that I can infinitely summon them? Do I look like I have an inexhaustible amount of mana?"

"I've already said you. I expend quite a large number of mana potions earlier when we first got ambushed, so I can't afford to senselessly expend more mana," he added, using a logical excuse to hide his real motive.

As the commander and captain of their respective groups, Justin and Flouree knew that Immortal was just making excuses. But they couldn't do anything about it since they were already bound by a contract.

Since they didn't completely trust Immortal, they asked him to sign a contract with them. And the especially clause was saying that he couldn't harm them as long as the mission was currently underway. In exchange, they couldn't just leave him behind if the situation went wrong.

Due to that, they couldn't question his decisions during the battle as long as it was within the reason. Unfortunately for them, it looks like that contract was now being used against them. Immortal seemed to be planning to borrow a knife from the opposing side to take care of them.

"Immortal, try doing anything foolish and you will pay it with your life dearly. Don't think that the system can stop me from getting back at you," said Flouree with a threatening tone.

Immortal sneered at her and refuted. "Do you think that I am that stupid? How can I fight these guys alone if I take advantage of you?"

"Just give me enough time to prepare my trump cards. I will turn this situation around and you will even thank me afterward," he added in a confident tone.

Flouree and Justin were not fully convinced but they couldn't do anything about it. All they could do was pray that this scheming fox would not backstab them when the fight was in critical stages.

Regardless of their thoughts, they now had to prepare themselves at engaging in a proper team battle. They had already scanned their surroundings and couldn't find any hidden threats, at least for now.

Moreover, they already saw every member of the opposing group and thought that these were the only people that they had. They believed that Arthur and the rest were currently dealing with whatever on the center of the city. The commotion on that side was pretty big, after all.

With all of that in consideration, they believe that they could still survive this current predicament. After all, they still have quite a lot of skilled members on their side.

In the meantime, Immortal suddenly revealed a devious smile as he thought about something else. 'No matter how much you prepared, the final victor of this battle will still be me.'

Chapter 992 Team Battle (Part 1)

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The two sides made a staring contest as they adjusted their respective formations.

Simba (Leonard) and Lawless acted to be the vanguards with Shin standing behind them to be their support. Then there was Zero who was guarding Charlotte and Arielle (Cloe).

Faker, on the other hand, already disappeared and continuously circled around the opposing group and carefully stalked the opposing mages and priests. He resembled a sneaky beast hunting for its prey.

Ember and Ravier remained in their respective positions with Seven and Owen guarding them respectively. They were fully ready to launch an attack the moment Shin and Black Hand gave them the signal.

On the other side, Immortal and his group also adjusted their formation.

Justin and Jugo quickly positioned themselves at the front of the group, acting to be the frontline with Lightning Fist, Sabec, and Basion right behind them.

Then there was Immortal standing in front of Jia. Flouree was right behind them and flanked by both of the priests, ready to give orders to the group.

Normally, the two priests should be right at the center to be protected. But since Flouree was currently the most vulnerable member of the group, she was the one who needed to be protected the most, especially since she was currently assigned to commanding everyone.

With that, the two priests were positioned on each of her sides since they were in better shape than her. They would be able to respond to unexpected situations much faster than her.

And this was also the time when Immortal chose to summon some of his undead monsters. After all, their current formation was clearly asking for it.

Though, he still chose to minimize the number of his undead to save more mana. At the very least, the efficiency that they could provide was pretty high.

He summoned a pair of skeleton knights, two bone archers, and four skeleton hounds. Each knight was paired with a bone archer as they stood at the very rear of the group. Then the skeleton hounds circled around Immortal and the rest of the backline, guarding them against every direction.

He already witnessed the terror of Faker's assassination technique. That ability to sneak in any kind of formation was terrifying, making it hard for the opposing party to deal with him.

These skeleton hounds might be a little weaker compared to most of his undead monsters, but they had the sharpest senses. With them around, Faker would find it hard to sneak past their formation and assassinate any of their backline members.

There were also the skeleton knights and bone archers which belonged to his elite summons. They might not be the strongest but they were still hard to deal with, especially when they were working with the skeleton hounds.

In the meantime, Elise and the three thieves from the Earners Mercenary Group also entered their stealth, hiding in the darkness and stalking the opposing side. With their advantage in numbers, the target that they chose would be very unfortunate.

After adjusting their respective battle formations and gauging the overall strength of their opponents, the two sides quite went into action.

Bang!

Swoosh! Swoosh!

Simba and Lawless quickly charged forward, planning to initiate the opening move. Both of them already used their respective means to absorb their weapons within their arms, enhancing their strengths.

They also entered their respective Reality Manifestation, not planning to hold back or hide their real strength.

Boom!

But at the same time, Justin and Jugo launched themselves forward to meet the two. They also underwent their special Demonification, using the power of their respective Demon Contractors to enhance their overall strength.

Normally, Jugo could only use his Demonic Transformation once within a day. After all, the burden that his body would receive was pretty heavy every time he used it. And if he used it more than that limit, the consequence that he would get would definitely harm his character foundation, he might lose some of his stats permanently.

Unfortunately, he didn't have the choice right now since he knew that he would only be beaten up by their opponents without the Demonification. He already experienced the current strength of Simba earlier, so he only very well the outcome if he didn't take the risk right now.

Justin also understood the gravity of their current situation. If he didn't reveal his cards now, then he might not even get the chance to use them anymore.

There was no drastic change in his appearance when he underwent his Demonic Transformation, unlike the others. Aside from the pair of curved horns that stuck out from his forehead and his demonic arm having some lava-like pattern on it, nothing much changed.

But contrary to it, the aura that he had suddenly increased drastically. There was even an illusion of a wicked demon manifesting behind him, indicating that his current strength was much higher compared to what it used to be.

Boom!

The two sides quickly collided and immediately engaged in an intense melee. Simba and Lawless, as usual, resembled a pair of ferocious beasts that had gotten loose on the battlefield. They didn't hold back on their attacks as they quickly went on a rampage, seemingly trying to destroy their opponents with their bare hands.

But despite that being the case, their opponents were monsters in their own right. They matched the momentum that Simba and Lawless had, not willing to lose.

Jugo was still wielding his mental spike club and swung it at Simba as if there was no tomorrow. The surrounding air even created strong ripples from each swing of his spiked club.

Boom! Boom!

But despite the difference between them, Simba using his bare fists and Jugo wielding his spiked club, the two of them remained in a deadlock.

On the other side, Justin put his weapon inside his inventory space before clashing against Lawless in an intense brawl. He was still not familiar with wielding his newly found powers, so it would be better if he took the straightforward approach instead.

Bang! Bang!

Every time their fists collided against each other, a strong shockwave would always be created.

Bang!

Their feet even sank to the ground as they planted them on it firmly. The pace at which they threw their fists forward was gradually building up a strong momentum. And not long after, their arms seemed to disappear as they continued throwing punch after punch.

In the midst of the chaotic field that the four had created, Elise silently got near Simba, planning to launch a sneak attack.

She was naturally on her Demonic Transformation, enhancing her cloaking abilities. She was in a similar case as Jugo, but just like the Annihilator God, she also didn't have the choice but to also use the power of her contractor in this battle.

A moment later, Jugo created an opening. And it was big enough for her to seize and try to assassinate Simba.

She quickly pounced forward and lunged with her poison-coated dagger, targeting the back of Simba's head.

Coordinating with her, Jugo skillfully repositioned himself on the other side of Simba, cutting off his possible escape route. Afterward, he swung his spiked club and angled it in a tricky trajectory to force the latter to make a choice.

If Simba chose to hold his ground and continue exchanging blows against Jugo, then he would be hit by the dagger targeting the back of his head. He might be able to survive that strike even if the dagger was coated with a potent poison. After all, he possessed a very strong constitution.

But that attack from Elise could stun Simba and make him immobile. It might only be for a second but that short amount of time was more than enough for the two Godlike Players to launch a coordinated attack and kill him, just like Shin and Faker did to GoodyShoe earlier.

On the other hand, if Simba chose to avoid the incoming dagger, he would be hit by the Jugo's spiked club. The damage might also not be enough to kill him, but it would still deal quite a lot of damage.

Moreover, it could also push him out of Jugo's way. It would break the formation of Shin's group, giving the Annihilator God access to their backline.

Either choice would be disastrous for their side, with the former case being the worst-case scenario.

But despite knowing the consequence, Simba still chose the first choice and decided to face the pincer attacks head-on. It was not because he was making a foolish choice, but because he was confident in the person who was watching his back.

Bang!

Simba swung his fist at the incoming iron club and sent it back with a strong rebounding force. Jugo was even forced to take several steps back to regain his footing. The Simba decisively stepped forward and quickly followed up with a series of punches, completely ignoring the threat of the poised dagger pointed at the back of his head.

Clang!

But before that dagger could even touch the hair of Simba, a flash of light suddenly came out of nowhere and accurately hit it at the very last moment, saving the War God by the narrowest of margins.

Shin suddenly appeared!

Shin then took advantage of the awkward posture of the opponent to follow up with another strike.

"Tsk!" Elise clicked her tongue as she felt that they missed the perfect opportunity to assassinate one of the key members of the opposing group.

At the same time, she also used one of her life-saving skills to escape her current predicament before entering stealth once again, looking for another opening.

Shin was about to use his 'True Sight' Skill to lock on Elise before giving chase when a fist enfolded with lightning suddenly struck from the side, heading straight to his face.

Due to the sudden attack, Shin was forced to halt his advance. He swiftly leaned backward to dodge the lightning punch by a hair's breadth. He could even feel the stinging feeling of the electric currents on his cheeks as he angled his head to the side.

Shin couldn't see Lighting Fist as he was looking at the other side. But that didn't prevent him from using his sharp senses and reading the next action of the latter.

Before Lighting Fist could even make his next move, Shin was already executing his counterattack.

Swoosh!

Lighting Fist was caught off-guard by Shin's move as it perfectly countered the attack that he was planning to execute. Left without a choice, he could only retreat and recollect himself. He already lost the initiative, so he could only reset and set up a tempo that was more favorable for him.

Shin wanted to ride the momentum and continue to be in control. But he only took a couple of steps when Sabec and Basion quickly intercepted him and forced him to halt in his tracks.

Fortunately, Charlotte gave him assistance and bombarded the path of the two with her spells, preventing them from moving forward.

The battle was already building up when Charlotte frowned deeply. And after a brief thought, she suddenly said on the party chat channel. – "There is still a member missing among them. That Demonic Human Archer. Look out for possible ambush!"

"Shadow Queen? Should I try looking for her or do I continue lurking around Immortal and others?" – asked Faker.

Shin didn't say anything as his hands were already full dealing with three people. Fortunately, the pressure on his side was not that heavy as Charlotte was focusing her spells on his direction while Arielle was giving him solid support with her constant buffs and healing.

Moreover, he left the commanding position to Black Hand, fully trusting the priest with the important role.

Black Hand understood it and gave his command. – "Continue targeting the backline of our opponents, especially the two priests on their sides."

"We can leave the Shadow Queen to Alucard and Ara, they could be the lookout for her possible ambush," – he added with a decisive tone.

"Understood!" – replied Faker before continuing with his job of threatening the back line of the opposing side.

Chapter 993 Team Battle (Part 2): Justin's Real Objective

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As Faker continued to harass Immortal and the rest of the opposing members on the back line, Ember and Ravier poured out everything they had at creating chaos on the battlefield.

They threw their spells at everyone, seemingly not caring about their target. Their main targets were still Immortal and the two priests, limiting the assistance that Justin and the rest of the frontline had.

From time to time, they were also providing support to Shin, Simba, and Lawless. Particularly Shin, since they were relieving the pressure that he was getting from fighting three people.

Though, he was still not their priority since he already had assistance from Charlotte already. It was better if they could break the formation of Immortal's undead monsters and give Faker enough space to break through it.

Unfortunately, Immortal constantly filled up the gaps that they were creating by re-summoning the skeleton hounds and bone archers that they managed to kill.

Jia, as the sole mage with strong firepower on their team, was the only one who could counter those two. But despite her giving everything she got, it was impossible for her to fight the combined forces of Ember and Ravier, especially when they had high grounds.

Immortal couldn't lend her hand either since he needed to constantly keep an eye for Faker on top of controlling and replenishing his undead monsters. He was even providing support for the frontline. In a sense, he was the one who was the busiest among the group despite the poor image they had of him.

If not for Flouree who was constantly giving out perfect instruction for the group, Jia in particular, then their formation collapsed already.

"Take care of Ember and Ravier," said Flouree, directing the command to Elise and Lighting Fist. And when the two heard those words, they quickly sprung into action.

Lighting Fist quickly disengage from the fight with Shin and let Sabec and Basion take over his place before heading over to where Ember and Seven were standing. He chose them to be his opponent since the combination of Ravier and Owen completely countered his class.

Ravier would only slow his movements down while chipping away his health bar slowly but surely. If it was only the problem, then he could at least still deal with it. But approaching Ravier would be impossible unless he broke through Owen's defense which would be impossible if his movements would be hindered by the ice elemental spells.

But such a problem would not be present if he dealt with Ember and Seven. He could at least fight those two with his full power.

On the other hand, Elise dropped her plan of trying to assassinate either Charlotte or Arielle and quickly headed to where Ravier and Owen were. With her class, the problem that Lighting Fist had didn't apply to her.

Moreover, her skills greatly exceeded Ravier and Owen, so dealing with them shouldn't be a problem. On top of that, her current stats were insanely high, matching the power of an Overlord Monster. She refused to believe that those two were enough to face her.

The moment she left, the three thieves of Earners, Zurra, Thayrin, and Asprey, took over her role and started harassing the back line of their opponents. That was the only thing that they could do currently since Zero was present in that place. Each of their advances was repeatedly stopped by him.

Aside from that, trying to assassinate Charlotte and Arielle was not that easy either. Even if Zero was not protecting them, these girls were skilled enough to take care of themselves.

As the best healer of the game, Gentle Goddess Arielle was not only good at supporting her teammates. Her awareness was also top-class, which made it hard for thieves and other related classes to assassinate her.

Adding the fact that she was the person who showed the world that priests were only good at supporting roles but capable of PvP-ing as well. Her previous reputation as the 'White Witch' was not unfounded.

Meanwhile, the Elemental Goddess Charlotte was not an easy target either. Her control over her spells and elemental affinity were ranked at the peak of the game. And after joining the Empyrean Talons and sparring with some of them occasionally, her combat skills were gradually returning to where it previously was.

With their combined forces, even if they didn't seem to get along well, assassinating either of them when they were together would not be an easy job. And when Zero was added to the equation, that job was basically impossible.

Even if the combined forces of Zurra, Thayrin, and Asprey were hard to deal with, Zero and the two girls would be able to handle them pretty well.

Fortunately for the three thieves, harassing the opposing side was more than enough for their current situation. As long as they could mess up with the rhythm that their opponents had, their purpose was already been achieved.

The battle continued to be chaotic, especially in the frontline where both sides were constantly trying to snatch the upper hand from each other.

They even had a couple of times when they were swapping opponents. Lawless and Simba were sometimes switching positions, making them swap opponents. Shin was also trying to get in the mix, targeting Jugo and Justin from time to time right after he shook off Sabec and Basion.

Justin was currently in his most enraged state. Not only his archenemy was currently near him, but he was constantly being harassed by the latter. What was worse, he couldn't do anything about it due to Lawless and Simba repeatedly stopping him.

Frustrated, he could only think of using his final trump card at this point in time. And when he swept his gaze at the battlefield and saw that the current state of the battle was not completely in their favor, he felt that his thought was right.

Moreover, he would no longer have the chance of extracting his revenge once everything was over. He needed to do it right now, especially when he could only use his Demonic Transformation for a limited amount of time.

He created a significant distance between himself and his current opponent before saying in the party chat channel. – "Elise, come down here and take over my position. I will use that item that we prepare for this operation."

Hearing those words, Elise could not help but crease her brow. She nimbly dodged the spells from Ravier while hopping away from Owen before replying. – "What about these two? We can't leave them alone, right? What's more, I almost catch Ravier – give me a little more time and I will be able to eliminate him."

"We can't wait that long. We are already losing control on the frontline. Leave those two to these guys from the Earners, instead. Come down here, quick!" – replied Justin in a commanding tone.

Not only Elise was the one who was frowning now but even Flouree was now frowning deeply. She was upset that Justin was bypassing her and giving out commands without asking her permission.

Regardless, she didn't immediately voice out her thoughts as she also came up with the same assessment. If they let the battle continue to be in this state, then they would gradually lose control of the flow which would lead to their defeat.

She was not aware of the so-called item that Justin was planning to use, but given the confident tone that he had, it seemed to be a pretty useful item and could help them in their current situation.

Unfortunately, the real usage of that item was way off from what she was thinking. It was just an item to fulfill his selfish desire for revenge.

Elise and Jugo were about of it, but they couldn't blame him either since they could understand where he was coming from. And even though they did not completely agree with his decision, they knew that there was no way of stopping him now.

Elise hesitated for a few moments before clicking her gritting her teeth and using her 'Gale Steps' to instantly disengage from the battle. A few seconds later, she was back at the front line and pounced at Simba almost upon her arrival.

Basion and Sabec hesitated for a moment. But they quickly followed the arrangement from Justin after hearing Flouree's approval.

"Jugo, come over here. Let's swap opponents." – said Justin with a tone that would not tolerate any kind of refusal.

Jugo was currently wearing an ugly look on his face when he heard those words. But regardless of his unwillingness, he still complied and ditched Shin, who was facing him.

Shin was slightly taken aback at Jugo's actions but quickly gave chase later. He was not sure what the opposing side was planning, but he could at least tell that it was something not good.

At first, he thought that they were targeting Lawless since that was the place where Jugo was heading. He tried to warn Lawless but the words that he wanted to say suddenly get stuck in his throat the moment when he saw Justin turn around and ran straight to him.

'Oh! I am the actual target, huh?' that was the thought that Shin had after seeing those actions from Justin.

'Come! Let me educate you more since you still haven't learned your lessons,' thought Shin while staring straight into Justin's furious eyes.

Then he saw Justin take out something from his inventory before crushing it. He then muttered a series of words that couldn't be understood before pointing at Shin.

Shin suddenly got an ominous feeling after seeing those actions and got ready to defend himself and counterattack at any given moment.

But contrary to what Shin was expecting, Justin was not planning to launch an attack this time.

A pillar made of black light suddenly descended from the sky and landed on Shin and Justin. Everything happened so fast that no one was able to react in time. And before Shin could even do anything, his vision suddenly spun as the familiar feeling of being thrown into a spinner drown him.

He was being transported to another place!

Aside from Jugo and Elise, everyone on the battlefield became stunned. Both Shin and Justin suddenly disappeared alongside the pillar of black light.

Chapter 994 Will Not Have A Second Chance

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The two sides stood stunned for a moment when they saw Shin and Justin disappeared alongside the black pillar of light. But not long after, they quickly recovered themselves and resumed fighting.

Lawless and Simba resumed assaulting the front line of the opposing side, trying to break through it.

Jugo and Elise were already expecting that to happen, so they were not the same as the others. But before they could even use that opportunity to launch a surprise attack, the two beasts in front of them quickly reorganized themselves and resumed their assaults.

Since their composition was not suitable for the front line, they chose to fight a little passively. Jugo became the sole vanguard, trying to stop both Lawless and Simba alone, while Elise gave him enough support to ward off most of the attacks of the two. She was also launching sneak attacks from time to time which was enough to mess up the tempo of their opponents.

The rest of the battlefield also resumed what it was, creating chaos once again.

None of the members from Shin's side were worried about him as they were fully confident in his abilities.

At the same time, it was also the time when Alucard and Ara found it appropriate to make their moves. They got ready to snipe down the back line of the opposing side, especially the two priests that they had – or Flouree, if possible.

But at the same time, they still hadn't forgotten the hiding opponent, the 'Shadow Queen' of the Silent Night. If it was just individual strength alone, then they would be no match for that particular player. She was a Maverick Player who was comparable to Godlike Players, after all.

Given that, they still had to prioritize looking out for her since it would be disastrous for their group of the 'Shadow Queen' to spot them before they could even do anything.

In the meantime, Shin found himself in an unfamiliar place right after he regained himself.

The first thing that assaulted him upon his arrival was the foul smell of the place. It was the smell that the decaying bodies had from being left alone for a long time.

It didn't take long for Shin's eyes to adjust to the darkness of the place. And right after that, he swept his gaze at the surroundings and found what kind of place he was in.

It was a place full of corpses from different creatures. They varied from land monsters, sea creatures, flying beasts, and humanoid beings. The sky was grey and gloomy indicating that it was supposed to be a world unsuitable for living beings.

Whoosh!

Then purple flame was suddenly lit from the distance before spreading around, moving rapidly to surround the whole place. It didn't take long for it to enclose the place, creating a circular field.

The light produced by that purple flame gave Shin a clear view of the surrounding. It seemed to be a graveyard – or a dumping place of corpses.

It was at that moment when Shin received the notification from the system.

Ding!

System: You entered an Ancient Battlefield – The Purgatory Graveyard!

System: Condition for getting out: Defeat the initiator of the challenge.

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Taking a quick glance at it, Shin instantly understood what Justin was trying to do. "Heh! What a foolish decision."

Then Justin suddenly appeared in the distance and spoke. "This is going to be different from the last time. You are now in my personal field. You will die here and fail your quest entirely."

Justin knew that Shin's in-game avatar would be deleted the moment he died even once during their quest. He heard it from Immortal and could feel that it could not be more perfect. With the transport item that he had prepared earlier, he was confident that Shin would not be able to escape his demise.

As if responding to Justin's words, Shin suddenly received another set of system notifications. And this time, it was informing him about some unpleasant news.

Ding!

System: Due to the dense corrupted mana present in the surroundings, your overall stats will decrease by 30%

System: You have been affected by the Curse of the Purgatory Graveyard! Your stats will further reduce by an additional 20%.

System: A powerful Demon King is currently suppressing you. The blessings of your Combat Physique, the 'Heavenly Fighting Physique', are greatly being affected. Physique overall performance is reduced to 50%.

System: Due to the special condition of the Ancient Battlefield – The Purgatory Graveyard, your connection with your Elemental Companions is temporally severed.

...

Fortunately, not everything was bad news for him.

Ding!

System: Your 'Solar Reaper', Hellfire Goddess Solus breaks free from the restriction of the Ancient Battlefield!

System: Your 'Void Reaper', Ancient Void Spirit Hanzo is unaffected by the rules of the Ancient Battlefield!

...

At the very least, he could still rely on the Elemental Possession of the two when the situation called for it.

Though, he couldn't help but become a little troubled by the huge decrease in his stats. It was not just a significant decrease but a massive decline that could almost make him a cripple.

'I have to admit, this guy really came prepared this time,' thought Shin for a moment before sneering at Justin. "If you think you can defeat me just by relying on these things, then I must say that it will be futile."

Hearing those words, Justin looked at Shin mockingly before replying. "Heh! You can stop with the false bravado. Your sudden rise in the gaming world will end here. This place will be your graveyard."

Justin was confident that he would win this time. This Ancient Battlefield greatly favored those who wield demonic and corrupted powers. For someone like him, who was a believer of the Demonic Church and a contractee of a powerful Demon King, this place was his playground. He refused to believe that Shin had the means to win against him here.

Shin clearly understood the train of thoughts that was currently running inside the head of his opponent. It might be troublesome, but he was confident that he would be able to get out of this place alive.

Having that in mind, Shin swapped his current equipment with the [Apocalypse Equipment Set] but retained the [Nightwalker's Cloak]. At the same time, the [Dusk and Dawn Blades] were also unequipped as they were switched with the [Yamato].

Given the current circumstances, Shin could not use the Elemental Possessions of Blackie and Whitie which were perfect for his Yin-Yang Swordsmanship, so it would be better if he used his other style which didn't rely on them.

Together with the insights that he gained from his previous enlightenment from earlier, he believed that the respective Elemental Possession of the two would complement his sword-drawing style, especially Hanzo's 'Dimension Cutter'.

After that Shin slowly walked toward Justin while saying. "Since you can't appreciate the mercy that I've given you last time, then you can forget about getting another chance."

Justin immediately became furious after hearing those words. For him, that time when Shin let him retain his level after losing their previous battle was his sore spot.

It was very humiliating!

Moreover, it happened in front of Cloe!

Shin ignored Justin's current expression and added. "Since you are so confident that you are going to win, then how about signing another Death Match? But if you are too afraid to take another risk, then you can forget about it."

"Who is afraid of you?! This time, I am going to crush you – enough for you to suffer mental trauma!" refuted Justin while summoning the system to form a contract.

Seeing that, Shin gave Justin a mocking smile before signing the Death Match Contract. Whoever lost this match will get their in-game avatar permanently deleted.

"I will not let you off the hook this time," said Shin as he quickly used his two-berserk without hesitation. And on top of that, he also activated his Domain Skills to weaken the stats of Justin, equalizing their strengths.

'Equipment Set Skill: Ruler's Authority'

Boom!

The aura surrounding Shin increased drastically, suppressing his opponent in the process. It was a special aura that was meant to weaken his opponent and force them to submit to him and treat him as the King of the World.

Swoosh!

At the same time, an invisible field was suddenly released.

It started from Shin's body before spreading in every direction and expanding until it reached a 50-meter radius. Everything inside that field turned black and white aside from Shin. It was as if the world itself was dyed with a dull color.

'Grim Reaper Skill (Tier 2): Monochrome Field'

It was an overpowered domain skill that could weaken all of the opponents inside by at least 60% of their peak strength. It could also slow down his opponents by 100% of their maximum movement speeds.

No matter how much Justin benefitted from this Ancient Battle, he was about to be weakened greatly by these two Domain Skills. And with such a massive decrease in stats, Shin was able to bridge the current gap in their stats.

Even if he was not currently in his peak form, these Domain Skills balanced everything.

Right now, they were standing on an equal footing once again.

After summoning the two Domain skills and activating his two-fold berserks, Shin stared at Justin coldly before saying in a chilly tone. "Fifteen minutes. If you managed to survive within that span of time, then it is your win."

Pausing for a moment, he took a sword-drawing stance and entered the state of Reality Manifestation. "That is if you can last that long."

Chapter 995 Will Not Have A Second Chance (Part 2)

...

As Shin took his sword-drawing stance, an invisible pressure was released from his body, different from what he usually had. He didn't have the Aura Manifestation for this current style, but the pressure that he was emitting was as strong as the one when he was using his Yin-Yang Swordsmanship.

On the other hand, Justin was slightly furrowing his brows due to the series of changes that Shin had undergone. The massive decrease in his overall stats due to the two Domain Skills surprised him a little but what made his face darker was the current pressure that he was getting.

From their previous battle, Justin believed that the reason that he lost was because of the multiple fighting styles that Shin was using at that time. It was his first time dealing with a person who possessed more than one fighting style and even used it in battle.

Shin was shifting from one style after another during that battle, messing up the tempo that Justin had at that time.

From the sword-drawing style alongside the magic swordsman style to the dual-wielding style before turning into the multiple swords style. Dealing with multiple styles was really a headache for Justin.

On top of that, there was also the multiple Elemental Spirit Possession that Shin had, which was also pretty insane. Most of the players with Transcendent Race and Class only had a handful of Elemental Spirits but Shin had plenty of them and even mastered each of their Possession States to a very high degree.

Moreover, Shin was even using those Elemental Spirit Possession to complement his multiple styles, especially his dual-wielding style, and multiple sword style.

That was the main reason why Justin chose to rely on this Ancient Battlefield to suppress the Elemental Spirits of Shin. With that, he would at least lessen the cards that the latter had during the battle.

The strength of the two Domain Skills might be out of his expectations but the two-fold berserk was at least within his plans.

What bothered Justin right now was the current state that Shin was in. From what he could see, it was the same as the one that Simba, Faker, and the rest had used during their earlier collision.

Regardless, Justin was still confident. The power of his contracted Demon King couldn't be underestimated. At the very least, he was not afraid of the current strength of his opponent.

What's more, he could use his full power and real technique without worrying about getting out of control within this place due to the density of the corrupted mana. With it, he would not have to worry about controlling his Demonic Powers, he could recklessly use it due to the endless supply of corrupted mana in the surroundings.

Having that in mind, Justin collected his thoughts and focused on the fight. He took out his halberd and unleashed his overwhelming Demonic Powers.

That power was so potent that it could even affect the surrounding space. The visible dark aura surrounding his body even created an illusionary image of a demon's face behind him as he looked at Shin with his savage eyes.

The pressure that was coming out from Justin was even much stronger than what Shin had. And when the latter noticed that, he quickly summoned Hanzo without any hesitation.

"Void Reaper!"

Right after he said those words, the Ancient Void Spirit materialized behind him for a brief moment before turning back into a speck of light fused with the [Yamato]. The katana quickly took a massive chance on appearance while the pressure that was coming from Shin grew drastically.

'Elemental Spirit Possession: Dimension Cutter'

Boom!

The opposing auras quickly clashed against each other, creating a powerful explosion when they came in contact with each other.

Crackle! Crackle!

There was even a black and silver electric current being produced at the center of the collision as well as some cracks in the space. This indicated the current level of powers of the two. They greatly surpassed the current milestone of power of most players in the game.

Though, the two of them represent different sources of power.

One of them relied on an external power provided by the game to reach this current level while the other summoned his real powers and enhanced them with the help of the system to get a glimpse of his potential future.

After gauging the strength of each other, the two quickly stomped on the ground and simultaneously launched themselves forward.

Bang! Bang!

Swoosh! Swoosh!

They disappeared from sight for a brief moment before reappearing away from each other, throwing their respective attacks.

Justin stomped strongly on the ground to forcefully halt his advance before controlling all of the momenta of his charge and directing it towards his halberd as he brandished it down.

A dense Demonic Power gathered on the blade of his halberd, surrounding it with a dark flame that drew an arc in the air. The Ancient Battlefield seemed to resonate with his strike as terrifying wails suddenly resounded in the whole place, filling the air with an eerie feeling.

'Demonic Palace: Abysmal Strike'

Swoosh!

In the meantime, Shin controlled his breathing according to the 'Jade Kirin Scripture' and circulated the energy within based on the circulation technique of it.

And when he reached the ideal range to strike, he quickly pulled out the sword from its sheath before swinging it horizontally.

Shing!

The space seemed to be cut by his blade due to the spatial powers that the [Yamato] had due to the Elemental Possession. And the moment when he swung it, a thin line was suddenly drawn in the air, signifying the trail that it left behind.

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Quick Draw – Flash Horizon'

Swoosh!

Boom!

The halberd and the sword didn't even touch each other when the collision of powers exploded. The respective auras covering the two weapons prevented them from advancing forward as the space in between them showed some signs of collapsing.

Shin and Justin stubbornly maintained their current postures, refusing to give the opposing side to show any sign of weakness. They persevered until the space at the center of the collision could no longer endure their powers and exploded.

Bang!

The two skidded on the ground as they tried to nullify the force that pushed them away. They left a long trail on the ground as they forced themselves from moving further away.

They were at least fifty meters away from each other when they managed to stabilize themselves.

Shin quickly sprung back into action right after that. He charged ahead and used his 'Mystic Movements' foot technique, sprinting forward. And when he accumulated enough momentum, he discharged everything and exploded with a powerful outburst of speed.

Swoosh!

He also sheathed the [Yamato] at that time. And when he reached Justin in almost an instant, he quickly unsheathed the sword and thrust forward.

Shing!

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Quick Draw – Flash Strike'

Justin just stabilized his footing at that time and was vulnerable to the incoming attack. But he was already expecting that attack to come, so he was prepared to face it.

He enfolded his demonic arm with a purple false by gathering the surrounding corrupted mana in the air. He then twisted his hips and pushed from there to throw a powerful punch, greeting the incoming tip of the thrusting sword.

'Demonic Palace: Annihilation Fist'

Boom!

Yet another explosion was produced by their collision, sending the two of them away from each other once again.

Shin was thrown high up in the air while Justin was pushed skidding once again. But it only took an instant for those two to quickly stabilized themselves before preparing for their next attack.

Shin skillfully flipped in the air as he sheathed the sword with a quick and smooth motion before curling his body while keeping an eye on the position of his opponent. And when his gaze finally locked down on Justin, his body suddenly stopped as his foot seemed to step on something in the empty air.

'Legacy Skill: Mondi's Jump'

Slightly inclining his body, Shin suddenly kicked behind him and launched himself straight at his opponent while unsheathing his sword for another time.

Shing!

Due to the gravity combined with the force of his kick, the momentum of his descent reached an unbelievable degree.

Swoosh!

With his insane speed, his sword drew a thin line in the air as it released a blinding glow right after being pulled out from its sheath.

He modified the sword-drawing techniques that he had with his current actions and produced yet another form.

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Quick Draw – Flash Descent'

On the other hand, Justin stomped strongly on the ground, producing a resounding 'bang' sound alongside a series of cracks on the ground's surface.

He then held his halberd with both of his hands and channeled his demonic powers into it which solidified after an instant, creating an extra layer of sharp aura on the blade.

He waited for a couple of moments for Shin to arrive before dragging the halberd and swinging it at the latter with every ounce of strength that he had, releasing a resounding wry cry. "Haaa!"

'Demonic Palace: Hell Execution'

Boom!

The explosion this time exceed the previous ones as it even created a strong ripple in the air. Then it was quickly followed by an unstoppable shockwave that extended in every direction and swept all of the corpses lying on the ground.

Shin was sent flying in the air once again, reaching a much higher height than earlier. He flipped multiple times in the air as he tried to nullify the force from the collision. It took him quite some time before he fully stabilized himself.

He then used the remaining steps of the 'Mondi's Jump' to buy himself enough time to switch the [Nightwalker's Cloak] with the [Dawn's Mantle] and used the 'Flight Skill' that it had to suspend in the air.

On the other hand, Justin rebounded back as he forcefully nullified the burden that his body received from the impact. He even sent some of the force toward the ground which led to his feet sinking into it followed by the creation of a massive crater.

Both sides suffered some injuries from those exchanges, making their respective Health Bars drop a little. If it was in the real world, then the two of them should have suffered some internal injuries, serious enough to hinder their movements.

Fortunately, they were currently inside the game, freeing themselves from those burdens. But at the same time, the look on their faces took changed.

Shin was slightly furrowing his brows as he was slightly surprised at the additional strength that Justin had found. But it was not strong enough to put a serious threat to him given his current strength.

And now that he warmed up a little, the next attacks that he would be launching would be serious ones.

Meanwhile, Justin was currently wearing an ugly look on his face. He knew that Shin should also be strong after entering the mysterious state that he saw from Faker, Simba, Zero, and Lawless earlier, but he was not expecting that he would be this strong.

Even with the suppression of the Ancient Battlefield, the Purgatory Graveyard, Shin still possessed a strength that could contend against him. This was supposedly the playground where he could be the strongest.

He was also surprised that Shin was able to use his Elemental Spirit Possession when his Elemental Spirit was supposedly suppressed by this specialized battlefield.

Justin was afraid that he was no longer Shin's match under normal circumstances. Fortunately, he prepared the transport item before challenging Shin.

Though, there was still a bitter feeling within him after learning that Shin had become this strong.

He was supposedly suppressing Shin in this place, yet their strengths remained to be in equal footing. It felt like all of the sacrifices and preparations that he made were all meaningless.

He gritted his teeth and tightly clenched his weapon while glaring at Shin. "I refuse to believe it! I refuse to believe that I can't defeat you after everything that I've done!"

Chapter 996 Will Not Have A Second Chance (Part 3)

...

Shin stared at Justin for a couple of moments before smirking with a mocking look on his face when he saw the ugly look on the latter's face.

He then adjusted his position in the air once again before diving down toward Justin once again, descending with an even stronger momentum than before. He transformed into a streak of light that flew straight to his opponent like a falling meteor.

Swoosh!

Justin quickly recollected himself before assuming an offensive posture while waiting for Shin to reach him.

Bang!

Another explosive collision occurred when they clashed for another time, though the impact that they made was a little weaker than earlier.

Then they quickly engaged in an intense melee, sending shockwaves for every collision of their weapons that swept the surrounding corpses.

Despite Justin having the absolute advantage within this Ancient Battlefield, Shin was still able to bridge the gap between the two of them with his domain skills and sword techniques alone. He didn't even get the upper hand during their exchanges since the beginning of the fight.

On the contrary, he was currently the one who was gradually being suppressed as the battle progressed despite having the home-ground advantage. This frustrated him even more, making him launch a series of attacks more aggressively without considering his defense.

But if he knew that Shin was actually treating him as a training dummy right now, then he would become even more enraged than he already was.

Shin was honing the basic sword techniques that he gained from the 'Jade Kirin Scripture'. He was still not sure if the sword techniques from the said Mentalism Scripture were originally part of it or if it was something he already knew given the 'familiarity' that he had with it.

But at the very least, it complemented his Mentalism pretty well, so he really couldn't complain about anything.

It at least had to wait until he talked to David later, when all of this was over.

The Sword Technique was composed of thirteen movements in total and all of them could be linked together and even mixed them out in order.

Shin couldn't master them all in the short span of time that he had, especially when he just 'learned' them earlier. He also had to wait until he got out of the game to continue exploring their mysteries in the real world.

Unlike the sword-drawing techniques that he was already familiar with due to the set of Class Fighting Style Skills that he had in his arsenal, he only managed to familiarize himself with four sword movements in total during their battle against Caelum.

This opportunity was actually a blessing in disguise for Shin since he had gotten the perfect time and place to deepen his understanding of these four basic sword movements.

Swoosh!

Justin swung his halberd downward, drawing a blazing vertical line in the air. The blade of the halberd fell toward Shin with an unstoppable force, making look impossible to be blocked.

Seeing the powerful force accompanying that incoming strike, Shin skillfully adjusted his position with a quick shift on his ankles. He then held the [Yamato] with both of his hands and raised them up, positioning the sword over his shoulder and angling it in a sharp tilt.

With his great timing, he let the halberd of his opponent slide on the surface of his sword, guiding it to hit the ground beside him.

Bang!

Quickly after that, Shin moved the sword around him before swinging it diagonally from the opposing angle.

He took advantage of the awkward position of his opponent to throw a counterattack!

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Second Movement – Returning Wave'

Shing!

The counter was perfectly timed, making it impossible for Justin to block or dodge by normal means. And given the spatial mana surrounding the sword, he knew that it could deal fatal damage to him if he faced it head-on, even though it seemed to be a simple sword movement.

Left without a choice, Justin was forced to use one of his life-saving skills to escape his current predicament.

Swoosh!

A pair of giant demonic hands suddenly appeared behind him and shielded him from the incoming strike with their tough scales.

Clang!

And quickly after blocking, they opened their palms wide and shot forward, trying to grab Shin and crush him in the process.

'Demonic Palace: Death Grasp'

Shin took a series of quick steps backward to create some distance between himself and the pair of demonic hands before swinging his sword at them quickly after.

Crackle! Crackle!

Electric currents covered the [Yamato] and left an electric trail in the air as he swung it three times.

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Third Movement – Trinity Storm'

Clang! Clang! Clang!

With him fending off the demonic hands, a gap was created between them which gave Shin enough space to advance forward.

Bang!

Holding the sword with both of his hands and raising it above him, Shin stomped on the ground and sent him striding ahead, passing through the gap that he created.

Borrowing the momentum from his charge, he transferred his strength to his arms before swinging the [Yamato] down to Justin, who was now vulnerable once again.

'Jade Kirin Scripture: First Movement – Collapsing Wind'

Swoosh!

That attack came too suddenly and arrived within an instant. Fortunately, Justin already recovered his footing at that time, letting him respond to Shin's attack.

He raised his halberd and positioned it in front of him while supporting it with his demonic arm. He used it to block the incoming strike while channeling some of his demonic powers into it to reinforce its defensive capabilities.

Bang!

Unfortunately, the force behind Shin's attack was much stronger than he had expected. Despite the preparations that he had, he was still pushed quite far from the point of impact, skidding back and drawing a deep trail on the ground.

Click!

When Justin managed to stabilize his footing, he heard a subtle sound that sent an intense chill to his spine. And when he raised his head, he saw a flash of light that blinded his vision followed by a sharp sound of something cutting through the air.

Shin already sheathed the [Yamato] right after he sent Justin away. Then he quickly assumed a sword-drawing stance while circulating the energies within him according to the method of the mentalism scripture.

Using the 'Moonlight Splitter' as the base, he quickly charged ahead and unsheathed the sword in the process.

Right after the flash of light during the unsheathing, a thin glowing line was drawn in the air as he headed toward his opponent while thrusting his sword forward.

Shing!

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Quick Draw – Flash Final'

Swoosh!

Puchi!

But despite the flawless series of movements that he had, he still failed to end the life of his opponent as something blocked his sword right before it reached its target.

Looking ahead, Shin saw a living monster corpse standing between him and Justin, blocking the finishing move that he just executed earlier.

He blasted a huge hole through the chest of that monster with his previous attack. The residual energy from his attack clearly pierced through the tough body of this zombie-like monster, but at the same time, it managed to redirect the course of the energy at the last moment, saving Justin, who was currently standing behind it.

"Tsk!" Shin could not help but click his tongue when he saw that before quickly retreating. And right after he distanced himself away from the zombie-like monster, its body suddenly exploded and blasted off everything around it.

Strangely but expected enough, Justin was unaffected by the explosion. He even walked through the raging flame produced by it as his glaring eyes fixed on Shin's retreating figure.

'Demonic Palace: Living Hell'

Right after the activation of the skill, the surrounding corpses within the fifty-meter radius suddenly became alive and stood up one after another.

The expression on Shin's face immediately turned serious when he saw those standing corpses. He clearly understood the indication of their actions – this whole place was filled with 'opponents'.

The corpses of different creatures suddenly became alive and started pouncing at Shin, not giving him the time to think how he was going to escape.

Seeing the hordes of zombie monsters swarming at him from every direction, Shin quickly halted his steps and took his stance.

Huu~!

Taking a deep breath, he controlled the energy within him according to the 'Jade Kirin Scripture' once again before transforming them into Spatial Elemental Mana. "This is going to consume a lot of mental strength and energy from me, but I don't have the choice."

"Lend me your powers, Hanzo!" he muttered before closing his eyes.

As if responding to him, the [Yamato] released a series of humming sounds after he said those words. It also produced a dense Spatial Elemental Mana that assisted Shin with the technique that he was planning to use.

Shin, on the other hand, pictured the final form of the technique that he wanted to use inside his head while focusing his senses on the surrounding.

Whoosh!

A silent and invisible aura was suddenly released from his body and swept through his surroundings, scanning everything and informing him of the clear number and position of the incoming zombie monsters.

He patiently waited for all of the zombie monsters to enter his attacking range before unsheathing his sword.

Click!

It released a blinding glow upon the unsheathing that lasted for a brief moment. Then it was quickly followed by light flashes that left a series of crisscrossing lines in the air.

Shing!

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Quick Draw – Dimension Quelling'

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Time seemed to stop at that moment as the horde of zombie monsters swarming at Shin suddenly stopped moving all at the same.

Click!

Thud!

And when the sound of Shin putting his sword back into its sheath resounded, all of the zombie monsters started falling on the ground one after another, turning them back into lifeless corpses once again.

But this time, their bodies were severed into multiple pieces.

Chapter 997 Will Not Have A Second Chance (Part 4): The End Of Demon God Justin

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Shin stood at the center of the severed corpses piled around him, maintaining the last posture that he had after the previous move. He breathed out heavily, releasing a visible vapor produced by his breathing and the energy residual from the earlier skill.

He had a mysterious air around him that made it hard for the others to divert their attention away from his location. It was the air of an expert, the strong, and a person who was bound to pave their path to greatness. It was an atmosphere that could only be seen by those people who were born to stand at the peak of the world.

Justin, who saw this sight, clenched his fist tight and grasped his halberd. Even though he was strong and one of the Godlike Players who stood at the peak of the virtual world, he still couldn't achieve the greatness that those exceptional individuals had.

He had the fame that all of the players wanted and even the commander of one of the top adventurer teams that everyone looked up to, but it still paled in comparison to what 'those' individuals had.

He had beaten a lot of strong gods of the game and snatched their positions and solidified his position in the Godlike Ranking List.

But that was all into it.

He was still not as great as Sword God Zero, didn't have the prestige that Dragon God Siegfried had, nor could be compared to the reputation of War God Simba.

His adventurer team was one of the best but their achievements were not on the same level as what the Dark Hero Adventurer Team had. Led by the God Slayer 'Tora' and Death God 'Yami', of that time, they swept through everything during their activeness.

Their small team filled with elite members stood toe to toe with the great guilds and powerful organizations, the hegemons of the virtual world.

Justin might be feared by most of the players but the 'fear' that he could inflict on them was nothing in front of the 'terror' that Haowin, the Great Villain, possessed.

There was also Immortal, who was synonymous with the words 'wicked' and 'evil'. Mentioning the name of the Lich God was more than enough to make the players shiver in fear and terror.

Justin lacked in many areas compared to those individuals. He might be the same status as them in the eyes of everyone, but he knew deep inside that his prestige was not even a quarter of those shining 'stars'.

But right now, right in front of him, stood a person who had the same air as those people. Someone who was bound to be on the same summit as them and stood haughty at the peak, overlooking everyone.

But despite the truth laid in front of him, Justin still refused to accept it. He would never accept that Shin was better than him, not in this life and even not when he was reborn. Especially when he remembered the look that Cloe had when she was looking at Shin.

"I will never accept it!" shouted Justin like a madman while activating the additional conditions that the contract with the Demon King had.

"I don't care what price I am going to pay as long as I get rid of you!" he roared as the purple flames shrouding his demonic arm turned denser before spreading to his entire body.

The corruption that his demonic had spread through different parts of his body, turning him into a hideous demon from the depths of hell.

The horns on his sticking out from his forehead grew longer as his mouth became wider and filled with razor-sharp teeth. The spreading dark scales from his demonic arm devoured his armor and other equipment while his body grew larger.

His metal boots were destroyed as his feet turned into a pair similar to reptilian creatures. It had long toes with sharp nails.

His other arm, the one holding the halberd, also became the same as the demonic arm while the halberd itself melted and turned into a wicked flame that maintain its previous shape. Then a long reptilian tail grew from his back, swaying threatening from side to side.

Whoosh!

Then a purple flame suddenly appeared on his head, forming a crown shape, before running through his spine and tracing through the surface of his long tail until it reached its tip.

Roar!

He then opened his hideous mouth wide and released a defeating roar that resounded throughout the whole place.

That roar sent a powerful ripple in the air that extended in every direction followed by the strong tremors of the ground. What followed after it was the revival of all corpses present on the Ancient Battlefield.

A smirk seemed to appear on the corner of Justin's mouth as he pointed at Shin, ordering every zombified monster to attack.

Shin, on the other hand, ignored the seemingly endless horde of monsters swarming at him from every direction as he locked his at the Demonized Justin. He only had a single target in mind, and once he defeated that person, all of these zombified monsters would also disappear in the process.

After regulating his breathing, Shin quickly kicked the ground and propelled forward without any hit of fear on his face.

The monsters naturally tried to block his path but not of them stood a chance. He repeatedly executed the 'Ghost Evanescence' foot technique during his charge to leave a series of afterimages behind as he constantly cut down all of the zombified monsters blocking his path.

He advanced steadily as he switched between the quick draw attacks and the basic sword movements of the 'Jade Kirin Scripture'.

Justin would naturally not wait passively for Shin to arrive and cut him. He constantly moves backward while ordering the zombified corpses of different creatures to continue swarming at Shin.

He was unaware of it, but he actually feared Shin right now. His subconscious retreat was proof of it. He was afraid of the current Shin, who now had the bearing of greatness, even though his current form greatly enhanced his overall strength.

Shin already forgot how many times he swung his sword or how many monsters he had cut while advancing forward. But there was an undisputed fact right now, his familiarity with the 'Jade Kirin Scripture' grew significantly, and even reached the level of proficiency that he had with the 'Four Symbol Scripture'.

At this point, he already forgot about everything and continued to advance alongside his sword. And within this trace, his movements became more refined and polished.

He left a pile of lifeless bodies of those zombified monsters behind as he continued to move ahead, completely unstoppable.

It continued to be this way until he finally broke through the last blockade of zombified monsters and reached where Justin was.

The two stared straight into each other's eyes and paused for a brief moment alongside their surroundings.

During that short span of time, Justin saw that despite Shin staring at him, the latter was actually looking for another place.

Shin actually looked past him and stared at the place that was completely unknown to him. A territory that only a selected number of individuals could set foot on. A place that he would never be able to reach.

Roar!

Justin wanted to say something but only a crazy roar came out from his mount as he started swinging his weapon made of fire like a madman.

Whir!

Bang!

Swoosh! Swoosh!

Bang! Bang!

A series of explosions were immediately produced as Shin and Justin exchanged blows. Due to the powerful shockwaves from each collision of their weapons, the remaining zombified monsters were

unable to approach them. Those who tried were either got obliterated or sent flying away by the impact.

Justin swung his blazing weapon like crazy, trying to suppress Shin with his overwhelming strength. But despite all of his efforts, the latter refused to budge even with the seemingly insurmountable difference.

Shin relied on multiple things to bridge the gap between the two of them. He used his sharp awareness to read the trajectory of his opponent's strikes, then relied on insane reflexes to respond to each of them before adding them to the various skills and techniques from his arsenal.

Justin might have absolute strength as his weapon, but Shin calmly countered it with his deep understanding of techniques and applied them in battle.

"What an idiot! You are too blinded by rage and can no longer see what is ahead of you. You may have a slight chance if you stick to your original fighting style," said Shin as exchanged blows with Justin.

He already broke out of his trance as he already achieved his goal. He originally don't want to say anything to Justin since it would be no point in talking to him. But he felt that it would be a waste if he didn't reap everything from this final battle.

He at least wanted Justin to use his original trump card before he stumbled upon the demonic powers.

Shin saw a couple of videos of Justin when he was studying how to defeat him during their first battle. And there was one signature technique that he really wanted to experience. It was the technique that shaped him into what he was now and solidified his reputation.

Unfortunately, Justin was too blinded by his rage and could no longer think properly.

"Relying on external forces will never be able to help you to reach the summit," added Shin, provoking Justin even more.

It was at that time that Justin finally responded. "Shut up! Don't you dare to lecture me!"

Bang!

Then started another flurry of crazy strikes that made Shin shook his head while deflecting each of them skillfully. 'He completely lost it.'

Shin found it a pity that he would never be able to experience that particular technique. The look in his eyes then turned sharp as he knew that it was finally time to end this.

Boom!

The two were separated from each other after a strong exchange. They skidded on the ground, being pushed at least a hundred meters away from each other.

Shin took that chance and sheathed his sword and took his signature sword-drawing stance. At the same time and inspiration suddenly stuck in his mind as he was reminded of the scene when Hanzo was executing one of his Ultimate Skills.

Controlling his breathing according to the method of the 'Jade Kirin Scripture', Shin converted all of the energies within him into spatial elemental powers and channeled them in every part of his body and sheathed sword.

Boom!

When the accumulation of powers reached its peak, the pressure coming from Shin instantly reached another height and made the space around him distorted a little.

Seeing the transformation of the surrounding air from his opponent, Justin felt the pressure that could almost suffocate him.

He then remembered the words that Shin had said earlier and gritted his teeth. He clenched his hands and held his blazing with both of his hands and raised it in the air.

Swoosh!

The surrounding corrupted mana was suddenly sucked toward his blazing weapon as if they were being devoured by a hungry monster. It didn't take until the accumulation reached its peak and exploded with an outburst of pressure.

Boom!

A violent vortex seemed to appear above Justin, revolving around his blazing weapon. It then turned into a gigantic halberd that extended hundreds of meters in the sky.

He did not wait for Shin to finish his preparations and quickly swing the halberd down, cleaving everything on its path.

'Class Fighting Style: (Modified) Apocalyptic Extinction'

Seeing the sudden change in Justin, Shin could not help but raise his eyebrow a little before breaking into a smile. It might be a little different but he was sure that it was the same technique that he wanted to see from the latter.

He stared at the descending halberd with its gigantic size before muttering to himself. "It might be a little but it perfectly fits to pull the final curtain."

Bang!

He then stomped on the ground and launched himself forward.

Swoosh!

The gigantic halberd was almost upon him at that time but he was still wearing a calm look in his eyes

He was in the middle of unsheathing his sword when he suddenly disappeared from his sight and quickly reappeared a distance behind Justin, ending a horizontal slash motion.

Boom!

It was at that moment that the gigantic fell in front of Justin, creating a deep gully that extended hundreds of meters away. Unfortunately, his target was no longer there.

Shin shook his wrist a little alongside the [Yamato] before sheathing it back in an unhurried manner.

Click!

Crack! Crack!

When the subtle sound finally resounded, a series of shattering sounds, similar to broken glass, suddenly followed it alongside the formation of a spatial rift behind him.

'Jade Kirin Scripture: Quick Draw – Spatial Rending'

Bang!

A huge tear in the space suddenly appeared on the path that Shin had taken earlier. It then eliminated everything that was on it. They were being devoured by the void within that chaotic spatial tear. Justin, who was standing right in the middle of it, was naturally included.

He stared blankly in front of him, watching the space repair itself after the tear on it was created. He tried to open his mouth and say something but he couldn't force out the words that he wanted to say.

The shock and unwillingness in his eyes still remained as his vision turned black alongside his dissipating body.

And when the space was finally restored, Justin could no longer be seen. Not only he lost this battle and got ejected from the Ancient Battlefield, but his in-game avatar would also forever disappear.

Chapter 998 Immortal's Plot

...

Outside the Ancient Battlefield, Frozen City.

A few moments before Shin defeated Justin.

The battle between the two groups continued to escalate to a higher degree, clashing in multiple cases that caused further chaos within the city. The deadlock continued to be in that way until Black Hand finally decided to reveal their cards.

S.Tigris and Black Hand joined the battle, quickly shifting the tides of the battle towards their favor. And when they two revealed themselves, the expression of the opposing side quickly became solemn.

They even began looking for their final member, Rust, the Shadow Queen of the Silent Night Adventurer Team.

She was tasked to snipe down and assassinate the most important member of the opposing group which was why she was separated from the rest of them. She was to look for a good position to hide and find a good opportunity to strike.

They were expecting her to reveal herself when Justin took Shin with him toward the Ancient Battlefield. It was supposedly a perfect opportunity to assassinate someone since the other side was slightly stunned at that time.

But contrary to what they were expecting, she did not make her move up until now. Not even when they were in a dire state. There was no sign of her even when Alucard and Ara took down their two priests, throwing their formation into chaos.

Immortal also 'failed' to stop Faker at that time when the latter slipped through the defensive formation of his undead monsters.

Faker sprinted straight to Flouree at that time, trying to eliminate her as soon as possible. Unfortunately, Jia put herself in between them, sacrificing herself in order to save her captain.

Faker quickly retreated at that time since Immortal quickly made his move and tried to trap him within the formation.

In the meantime, Basion and Sabec were taken down by the combined forces of Ravier, Owen, and S.Tigris. They managed to put up a good fight before their fall, but that was all into it.

On the other side, Lighting Fist was suppressed by Ember and Seven while Alucard and Ara sniped him down from their positions. He could hold himself against the former two but he couldn't do anything when the two marksmen joined the fray.

It was at that moment when Jugo and Elise realized that there was something wrong. It might be a pill that was hard to swallow but they had to accept it – Rust had betrayed them for some unknown reason.

They could not believe it since she was one of the founding members of the Silent Night and went through thick and thin with them. They had been with them through life-and-death situations countless times, so they were not expecting her to betray them.

They could only ground their teeth when they thought about it, given their current predicament. And now that their allies were starting to die one after another, the only choice that they had right now was to retreat.

But given that Justin was still within the Ancient Battlefield, battling Shin, they could not just run away with just the two of them. There was also the contract that they had with Immortal.

While they were caught in a difficult dilemma, a particular notification from the system suddenly informed them of the unfortunate news – Justin was defeated. And given their understanding with their commander, they knew he had signed another death match with Shin, especially with the deep enmity that he had.

And sure enough, the notification that followed after it was Justin's account being permanently deleted.

With the rules of the game, he might be able to create a new account and start over again from the very beginning. But he also had to wait for an entire month before he could do it. It was the price of having their account deleted.

At that time, he already lagged further behind and was left in the dust by all of the leading players, especially the other Godlike Players.

Enrage, both Jugo and Elise could only blame all of this on Rust, who had betrayed them at the most important time, venting their anger. Unfortunately, they didn't know where she was right now.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

"What!?"

While their thoughts were currently distracted, a pair of blackened arrows suddenly struck them from behind, making them pause for a moment.

Lawless and Simba, who were currently fighting them at that time, quickly took that opportunity and stuck them down, and ended their lives. They didn't know where those arrows came from, but they would never miss such an opportunity slip away.

On the other hand, both Jugo and Elise knew whose arrows were those. They were very familiar with it since those arrows saved and assisted them in countless battles before.

They lowered their heads in extreme difficulty to get a clear look at the arrowheads and saw the spiraling metal with a pointed end. It was the signature arrow of Rust. They now became sure that she had betrayed them.

The two fell to the ground, signifying that their health bars were now emptied. But before their bodies turned into particles of light, the shadow underneath them suddenly expanded and shot up, turning into mantles that wrapped around them.

Immortal grinned even wider. It was the time that he was waiting for!

The two corpses were swallowed by shadow mantles and dragged to the ground. Everyone knew what it indicate, Immortal was planning to turn them into his special undead monsters.

It might not delete their characters, but it would consume some of their stats, damaging their foundation. And since it was Immortal who was executing the 'devouring' skill, the number of stats that they would lose was significantly higher. It was no different from making their accounts cripple.

It was a sinister skill that was only available for the class that Immortal had, which was also the reason why most of the people, especially the Titled Rankers and Godlike Players, were wary of him.

This would not be considered as Immortal breaking the terms set out in their contract since those two were basically dead.

Flouree, who was the sole survivor of this battle aside from Immortal, quickly cast 'Blink' to get away. She distanced herself away from the latter, afraid that she would suffer the same fate as the others.

Unfortunately, she couldn't run away since she was still bound to the contract. All she could do right now was to take shelter under one of the ruined houses, hiding from the sight of Rust. She had seen what happened, so she knew that they had been betrayed.

As long as she was not shot to death by Rust, then she would be fine since Immortal could not harm her directly. The problem was whether she would be left alone by Simba and the others.

Fortunately, no one was paying attention to her right now since all of their eyes were now locked on Immortal.

They wanted to quickly eliminate him but before they could even make their moves, they noticed that there was something wrong with Immortal's body.

A hazy fog shrouded Immortal while his body continuously flickered like a broken image from a virtual projection.

Immortal swept his gaze at the surroundings before giving them a devious grin. "I must thank you for assisting me in acquiring such good samples. You can expect that I will remember this 'favor'."

It was at this moment when Zero and the rest realized that the Immortal standing in front of them was his real body.

"Crap! It is just a clone!" said Owen, voicing out the thoughts of everyone.

Swoosh!

It was at that time that Shin suddenly appeared, being transported by the same pillar of black light that took him earlier. Sweeping his gaze at the surrounding, he knew that the battle on this side was also over.

Then he looked at the flickering figure of Immortal and frowned deeply. He also figured out that this 'Immortal' was just a clone. 'It must be the same skill that he used during that time. Maybe an improved version since we didn't notice it up until now.'

Immortal was also attracted to Shin when he appeared. "It is a pity that I can get my hands on Justin's body. He will be a powerful undead."

"Let's see each other again at the final stage!" said Immortal with a laugh before his body exploded into a black mist.

Bang!

Left alone, Flouree did not know what she was going to do aside from escaping. The eyes of the others were also directed at her at this time, making her wear a solemn expression.

She quickly activated one of her life-saving skills, summoning an ice pyramid that confided her inside. It might have trapped her, but it could also protect her from any harm. She could not attack anyone from inside the ice pyramid but no one could also attack her.

"It's been a while."

It was at that moment that she heard a familiar voice behind her. It quickly made her head whip toward that direction. Then she saw the person who was the reason why she accepted the commission from Immortal.

"Siegfried," she muttered with a cold and heavy tone.

"Oh! What's this? An affair or something?" said Shin as he walked over before turning to Arthur. "An ex-girlfriend, perhaps?"

Hearing those words, both Arthur and Flouree turned their heads at him almost at the same time and refuted simultaneously.

"No!"

"Disgusting!"

Shin shrugged his shoulders, not saying anything but giving them a knowing look.

Flouree ignored Shin and turned her attention back to Arthur. "This is not the exact situation that I am expecting to meet you."

She then paused for a moment to take a deep breath before continuing. "You better be ready as I will make sure that you will pay for what you have done!"

She didn't wait for Arthur to reply as she quickly crushed a return scroll to teleport herself away from this place. She wanted to teach the latter a lesson right now, but given the current situation, it was clear that it was not the right time yet.

Immortal was no longer around and he was the first one to leave, so it would be fine for her to escape now without being punished for not abiding by the contract.

Arthur could only watch her turn into particles of light with a helpless look on his face. He then shook his head with a bitter smile.

Shin gave him a meaningful look before saying. "I like to hear about that girl and the excuses that you are going to make, but we are clearly not in the position to talk about it."

"Let's go! Immortal must be at the center of the city by now," he added as he turned around.

The others also cleared the battlefield, picking up the high-quality equipment that was dropped on the ground, and starting to move.

They were also curious about Arthur and Flouree's relationship, especially Cloe who could smell some gossip, but it could wait until later. They were aware of the plot that Immortal had, so they had to move as fast as they could.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

Arthur took one final look at the empty cage of ice before shaking his head once again and following after the others.

Chapter 999 Immortal's Plot (Part 2)

.....

Earlier, before Immortal and his supposedly 'team' headed out toward the Frozen City, he separated from the group for a moment in order to prepare the plot that he was scheming.

When he had enough distance away from the rest and could not be spied on, he secretly summoned a clone that he could remotely control before turning himself into an insignificant skeleton warrior that looked like the one that he usually used when scouting the surrounding.

After that, he controlled the special clone of himself while his main body headed in another direction.

When the clone regrouped with the group. The others did not find anything strange in him since he was completely the same as the main body. But it was a little different for Rust, especially when the clone exchanged looked at her, seemingly giving her a secret signal.

She slightly nodded her head, indicating that she understood before making her preparations secretly.

Rust was one of the founding members of Silent Night and everyone knew about it. Even though she was overshadowed by the star members of their adventurer team, a lot of players still acknowledged her strength and abilities. This was why she was called the Shadow Queen.

At least that was what was on the surface. But it was actually far from the truth. Her real identity was 'Jinxes,' one of the notorious assassin archers of the gaming world. And she was one of the original apostles of Immortal widely known as the 'Catastrophe Assassin' from multiple virtual games, mainly «True Era» Online.

She was one of the most notorious Monster Class Players in the virtual world. She was feared alongside the other apostles of Immortal.

She was about to create her new account on «Destiny's Fate» when an interesting piece of information managed to reach her and the rest of the apostles. And when they learned about it, they started making a series of plans that would lead to conquering the game.

Immortal instructed his real group of apostles to change their identities and scatter in every corner of the Atlas world to spy on different organizations, especially the powerful guilds and adventurer teams. And if everything went according to their plan, they would be able to make a much bigger event than the tragedy of «True Era» Online.

They would rewrite the history of virtual games and create a much phenomenal legend of their own.

He was planning to use this card when the game was already reaching its latter stages, but given the current situation, it looked like he had to pull out one of his cards. Especially when the Silent Night was pretty much over.

If Silent Night managed to pull off something from this mission, then he might consider sparing them so that he could use them in the future. But after seeing the foolish choice that Justin had chosen, Immortal knew that the adventurer team was no longer useful, thus he needed to throw them now before they could implicate him.

The Catastrophe Assassin, Jinxes, now known as Shadow Queen Rust, finally made her move when the group finally fell into a predicament that they could not escape.

Immortal finally gave her the signal, so she had to execute it properly. And when she struck, it was already too late for Jugo, Elise, and the rest to react.

...

Going back to the present, Immortal, who was in his skeleton undead form, managed to sneak into the Frozen City from a different entrance.

He had already been traveling within the city in a sneaky manner, making sure that the scouting skeletons of the opposing side would not spot him. It might be slow, but it was more efficient and safer.

He headed straight to the center of the city since he knew that the vessel that he was looking for was currently there. He still didn't know Shin and the rest managed to hold both fronts, but he was sure that they had a trump card on their side, given the confidence that they had.

And when he finally reached the city plaza and saw what was currently happening there, he could not help but feel amazed. What he saw was three powerful beings engaged in an intense battle.

Two of them seemed to be a pair of NPCs, an armored wolf with a huge size while the other was a vampire who wielded a sword skillfully. They were working together to fight a humanoid creature that was overflowing with dense corrupted mana and curses.

Seeing the strange creature, Immortal instantly knew that it was his target.

He didn't care what method Shin and the others used to employ such a pair of powerful NPCs to help them, but he could not thank them enough for they made his job much easier.

He checked his surroundings to make sure that no one was around before gauging the distance between him and the three powerful beings. He had to make sure that he was not in the rage of their detection to avoid unnecessary trouble.

Given those beings' power, he knew he had to be far from them not to get discovered. He even used all of the special items that he prepared alongside the disk arrays that he bought from the Corrupted Cult, making sure that he would not be discovered by the vampire and the wolf.

He exhausted all of the reputations points that he collected from all of the missions that he got from the cult just to buy these items. It might cause him a limb or two but it would be worth it as long as he completed his special quest and got the second combat class.

When he was done with everything, he licked his lips before taking out a black stone tablet emitting dense corrupted mana. He placed it in front of him and closed his eyes before chanting a series of incomprehensible words while channeling his mana on the table.

There were also the mana stones and crystals piled beside him, making sure that he would be able to replenish the energy that he needed to activate the black stone tablet.

...

In the meantime, Lycan Steel noticed the strange chance in the air while fighting the Demon of Slaughter. His bestial instincts were telling him that something was happening.

It was the same for Duke Bellion. He was residing in this city for as long as he could remember, so he was familiar with it more than anyone else. He instantly noticed the sudden change of air – he could feel immense danger from it.

The two quickly swept their gazes in the surrounding, trying to find the cause of the change. They even used different means to scan the whole place with their senses but they couldn't find its source of their unease no matter what they did.

Adding the fact that the overwhelming amount of corrupted mana coming from the Demon of Slaughter was messing up with their senses, they could not properly scan the whole area.

The two exchanged glances with each other and see that both of them were thinking the same thing. They had to finish this as soon as possible before the ominous premonition they had come true.

Unfortunately, it would be much harder than they could imagine since the Demon of Slaughter was constantly growing stronger the more they fought. And right now, it reached the level that even the two of them combined would not be enough to finish it off.

Fully understanding the gravity of their current situation, the two quickly used everything they had, hoping to defeat the Demon.

The Demon of Slaughter could feel their anxiousness, so it became much bolder in its attacks to make the two wary when trying to advance.

Lycan and Duke Bellion remained vigilant about their surroundings as the eerie feeling that they were getting from the air was getting more and more dangerous as time passed. But there was still something that confused the two. They felt that they were not the target of whatever hiding from their sense. Instead, it was the Demon of Slaughter they were fighting.

Thinking deeply into it, the two thought that it might be an ally. But that thought didn't last long as they quickly rejected the idea. The most logical thing that they could think of right now was someone wanted to capture the Demon of Slaughter, and it was something that they would not like to happen.

They could not let whatever or whoever was plotting with the Demon of Slaughter. If such a dangerous creature became loose, then the disaster that it could cause would be very hard to imagine.

The two wanted to actively look for the source of the chance of mana in the air, especially when it became even more obvious the more time passed. But what bothered them, even more, was the fact that the chance was starting to resonate with the corrupted mana that the Demon of Slaughter was emitting, masking their surroundings with it.

And before they could even do anything, the whole place was suddenly enclosed by a huge dome made of corrupted mana.

Sensing the dangers coming from it, Lycan and Duke Bellion quickly escaped with the help of their respective skills.

Within an instant, they appeared tens of meters away from their previous locations and stared solemnly at the black dome in the distance.

Before they could even have a closer look and inspect that mysterious dome, it suddenly started spinning rapidly before shrinking at an imaginable rate. The two didn't even have the chance before the originally large dome turned into a small marble floating in the air.

Pop!

Then, like a bubble that suddenly popped, the black marble suddenly disappeared as if it was never been there in the first place. And alongside its disappearance, the Demon of Slaughter was nowhere to be found.

...

In the distance, Immortal crushed a 'Linked Teleportation Scroll' to escape. He didn't dare to linger even for a moment in that place, afraid that the two powerful existences would discover him.

He already achieved his initial goal, so there was no longer a point to take a risk of staying there. He immediately ran away and appeared where Rust was. She already arrived here before Immortal could even finish his goal.

She quickly kneeled on a knee when she saw Immortal appearing on top of the formation circle and greeted him. "Master!"

His appearance clearly indicated that he was thoroughly exhausted. His eyes were bloodshot while his already pale skin before even paler. The Mana in his body was also continuously leaking out, indicating that it was currently in a chaotic state.

But despite that being the case, he was very satisfied with their harvest. Everything was now going back on the right track. Gripping the black tablet in his hands, he grinned widely before standing up.

He then gave Rust a slight nod before instructing. "Prepare the materials that I asked you for. We are proceeding to the next part of the plan."

Chapter 1000 The Calm Before The Final Battle

...

While Shin and the rest of the group were running toward the center of the city at full speed, they suddenly heard the sound of the battle coming to a halt. This gave them the idea that Immortal might had succeed at securing the Demon of Slaughter.

"Tsk! It seems like we are already too late," said Lawless right after they arrived at their destination.

The city plaza was already beyond recognition. Everything was pretty much devastated, there were fallen buildings that turned into a pile of rubble, and huge craters caused by powerful impacts which made the group very uneven.

Standing at the center of all of that were Lycan and Duke Bellion. They were currently discussing something. It seemed to be pretty a serious topic given the heavy expression that they were wearing.

When Shin and the others walked over, the two quickly noticed them and then walked over. Lycan didn't even wait for Shin to ask them what happened and quickly explained what had happened.

Since Shin and the rest of the group were already expecting it, they didn't look surprised at all. But the others still showed some signs of concern as they knew the consequence of Immortal possessing such a powerful creature.

Even though they knew that the strength of the Demon of Slaughter would be restricted by the system and set its stats proportional to its master's strength, it would still be a powerful monster that break the balance of the game.

Though, Shin and the others, who could enter the state of Reality Manifestation, were also kind of cheat themselves.

Shin, on the other hand, was currently in deep thought. He was already expecting this to happen. Even though the process was a little different, it was still within his expectation. The result would still be the same.

'Given Immortal's character, I am sure that he is now making preparations to awaken the Guardian Dragon of Grand Marshal Draco and corrupt its mind in the process,' thought Shin silently before turning his gaze at Arthur.

Arthur quickly noticed his gaze and quickly nodded. And when Shin saw that, he knew that Arthur had successfully convinced one of his dragons to work with them.

With that, Shin asked Lycan and Duke Bellion to talk to him in private for a moment, distancing themselves from the rest of the group.

The others were slightly confused when they saw that, but given that the two NPCs were constantly throwing them some gazes during the discussion, they knew that it was definitely related to their current situation.

A few moments later, Lycan and Duke Bellion slightly nodded their heads to Shin before disappearing from everyone's sight. The others didn't know where those two were going, but they were sure that it was another arrangement of Shin to deal with the next part of the quest.

Then Shin walked toward them and quickly said. "Let's find a safe place to rest. We are going to recuperate until we recover our peak forms. The next battle is going to be much more intense than what we have faced so far."

He paused for a moment before trying to cheer them up. "We are almost at the final part of the quest, so I hope that we can hold up until it."

Shin didn't explain much about his plans to the group since he knew that most of them already figured it out.

He was planning to wait patiently and conserve their energies instead of chasing after Immortal. Since the Demon of Slaughter was already in the other party's hands, it would be useless to waste their time and look for the latter.

In a sense, this current situation would be working in their favor. The moment when Immortal succeeded at waking up the Guardian Dragon, he would have exhausted most of his resources already. Even though he somehow managed to corrupt the dragon, the losses that he would suffer were pretty massive.

It was the perfect time to land a powerful blow on Immortal. Shin and Arthur already prepared everything, so all they needed to do was patiently wait for the pieces to land in their rightful place.

As the situation in the city calmed down a little, a heated battle was currently taking place in the other part of the Frozen Kingdom.

In the place where the teleportation portal was being constructed, the trio of Chiefs from the Hand of Midas Trading Firm was currently facing a large group of places.

Earlier, some of the scouts of the Pandemonium Descendants accidentally set foot on Illusion Boundary that there had set up. And after learning that something was hidden within that place, they started sending more and more scouting parties to investigate.

It did not long until they learned that the people on the other side were from the Hand of Midas Trading Firm. And when the people leading the Pandemonium Descendants heard about it, they became even more interested in what was beyond the Illusion Boundary and quickly launched a restless assault.

...

"These guys are pretty persistent," muttered Adept Hands before continuing. "I heard from the young miss that they will be restricted from entering the Kingdom again after dying here."

"They will also be suffering quite a huge loss if they died. They will not only lose a level or two after dying but whole 10 levels!" she added. He didn't know if she would praise them for their persistence or idiocy.

Hearing her words, Tinker shrugged his shoulders. "Well, given that they manage to spot us here, I am sure that they must have figured out a couple of things."

"After all, we never appear anywhere unless the firm is reaping a huge benefit," he added before pausing and glancing at the two beside him. "What's more, they learn that there are at least three chiefs of the present here, so I can relate to what they are thinking."

"Heh! This is also a good opportunity for us. We can weaken the forces of the Pandemonium Descendants by killing more elite sweepers from their side," said Black Hammer with a smirk.

They had already received some reports from the outside that this mysterious organization was already making huge movements and started conquering a couple of key regions of the game. Three even heard that the Pandemonium Descendants took control of the two largest neutral regions.

"Since they choose to relieve themselves now and announce their presence in the world, we can tell that they are plotting something big," said Adept Hands.

Nodding his head, Tinker added. "Moreover, the regions that they have chosen are pretty interesting."

While the three of them were discussing one of the members busying themselves with building the Teleportation Formation suddenly walked toward them. "Chief Tinker, everything is already been built. We can now proceed at opening the portal."

"Hoh! Already?" he commented before slightly nodding his head. "Then that is good. But we can delay opening the portal. We still have to wait for the Guild Leader's permission."

"For now, fortify the formations and strengthen the altar. We still have extra materials with us, we should use them to the fullest," he added before dismissing the subordinate.

On the side, Black Hammer could not contain his grin before asking. "Now that we don't have to oversee this place, should we play with those guys from the Pandemonium Descendants? I am itching to test some of the special equipment that I've recently forged."

Tinker gave the chief blacksmith of the firm a skeptical look before replying. "I know what you are thinking but our task still remains. We can't afford any mishaps now, can we?"

Ignoring Black Hammer, Tinker turned to Adept Hands. "You should start preparing now. Once the young miss gives the order, we are proceeding with the next plan."

Adept Hands sighed in boredom before nodding her head. But before she managed to move her feet, she suddenly remembered something and turned back to Tinker. "Wait! What about the suggestion Young Master Shin said? I think it is a good plan."

This time, Black Hammer quickly chimed in. "About building a temporary settlement here? I think that is also a good idea. And when they are done with the quest and unlock this region, then we can turn it into a village, then into a town â€" or may even be a city, if possible."

"I also think that is a good idea. But we don't have enough resources for it," refuted Tinker. "An advance settlement is possible, but you can forget about turning it into a village."

Pausing for a moment, he frowned deeply before continuing. "I am not sure about this, but I feel like the young miss and Young Master Shin are making their own arrangements for this place."

"Anyway, you can forget about those useless thoughts for now. Just do your job and be ready anytime."

He was about to turn around when he remembered something and quickly gave Black Hammer a warning. "You! Don't ever do something foolish. We only bring a limited number of people for this operation, so we can't afford to lose any of them."

"We have the advantage over the Pandemonium Descendants because the young master set up the Illusion Boundary ahead of time, but once we lose control because of your recklessness, then the consequences are going to be dire."

After that, he quickly left with Adept Hands to proceed with the preparations that they needed for opening the teleportation portal.

Black Hammer had an unsatisfied look on his face but given that he would be personally punished by their guild leader once he messed everything up, he disregarded the thoughts of creating trouble.

He could wait until they make sure that everything was perfectly under control before he got the chance to test his new creations. A huge cut on his salary was on the line, so he would not dare to act recklessly.

He just hoped that Shiella passed down the orders as soon as possible. He was itching to use his new babies right now.