

Evolution 130

Chapter 130: The Silent Walk.

"Ooof, that sure took everything out of me."

Arthur might not show it, but his energy levels were dangerously low... The Jet Wings were his third innate ability.

Although it was used to transfer all the absorbed recoil into two hot steam jets, it devoured a great deal of energy depending on the recoil.

Arthur had gone all out with his punch, storing energy to the absolute limit of what his body was capable of.

As for how he unlocked two abilities in less than two weeks? He had used most of his sponsored growth totems to accelerate feeding his seed, having no interest in taking part in this mission without being at his current strongest.

It wasn't just him; Levi and Jojo had also hit their plateau...One was close to it, and the other was filthy rich.

As they were falling into the dark abyss, Nurah pulled three white totems shaped as a star. Then, she murmured an incantation under her breath and threw them to the ground.

The moment they touched the ground, the star exploded in a blinding flash of light and released tens of illuminating fragments everywhere at an insane speed.

They got stuck in the walls, on the ground, and even on the ceiling above them. Just like little lamps, the abyss was illuminated with a dim, gentle light.

Yet, there was nothing gentle in what appeared in everyone's sight.

Hundreds of terrifying ants rattled everywhere as they lifted their heads, awaiting their descent with their sharp, poisonous fangs ready.

While this sight freaked most of the viewers, Nurah, Levi, and Jojo didn't seem too bothered.

"The south side is mine."

Nurah smiled murderously as she cast Shadow Step, disappearing and reappearing behind the shadow of an ant at the southern side.

Before the dozens of ants around it could react, Nurah pierced her dagger into her own shadow while murmuring, "Blackthorn Shadow Arts: Shadow Dagger."

In an instant, every ant around the ten-meter zone had shadowy daggers manifest from their shadows and slice their heads off in one simultaneous motion.

The viewers were left shocked again, but this time, not so much, as it was an expected result from Nurah, considering her terrifying background.

However, when they switched to Jojo, their eyes showed a trace of awe at the sight of her standing midair on top of a single prayer bead while using ten more to pierce through the ants nonstop.

She didn't even need to cast an ability. She was controlling them with a mere finger, akin to a maestro.

Then, there was Levi, who chose to continue his fall to the ground. Nurah teleported, Jojo stopped midair, and he didn't seem to have anything to slow him down.

That's what everyone believed, but as Levi was a mere five meters from the dozens of clicking sharp fangs, Levi swung his vibrating staff towards the ground!

"Thunder Chant... X10. Release!"

As the order was given, the staff released all the stored vibrational energy from the strikes he had given Arthur!

RUUUMBLE!!

The thunder roared from the tip of Levi's staff, releasing a powerful, loud sound wave into the biggest gathering of ants, turning them into a bloodied mush in an instant!

The ones outside of the blast zone were also not spared, getting thrown away, clearing more than twenty square meters of space.

As for Levi? The released thunderous roar was powerful enough that it had offset his entire acceleration, canceling it mid-air.

In turn, Levi landed in the center of the empty space, his rumbling roar still echoing in the tunnels.

He lifted his head, ignoring the terrifying army of ants around him, and gazed in a single direction.

The massive Nyxformis Queen Ant, sitting unmoving more than twenty meters away from him.

She was a swollen, black-shelled monster, her body slick with mucus and covered in twitching egg sacs that bulged and squirmed with writhing grubs.

Her abdomen was so massive, it could barely move an inch... It was like her entire purpose was to lay eggs and hope that one of them would bring it the necessary material to kickstart its evolution to tier 3.

The fact that Levi could see its disgusting fleshly form meant one thing... It was hiding in the Shadow dimension behind a big, dark tunnel right in front of him.

"Your time has arrived..." Levi said calmly as he started walking in its direction, his staff placed on his shoulder.

Each step was steady and deliberate, as a sea of chittering nightcrawler ants parted before him. The swarm, hundreds strong, should have torn him apart in seconds, but not a single claw rose.

The ground trembled beneath their shifting mass, yet he moved untouched, as if the creatures themselves feared brushing against him. Eyes fixed ahead, he neared Queen's nest, his presence silent but suffocating.

For those watching, disbelief rooted them in place. It wasn't courage they saw... It was something colder, something unnatural.

-No way he is walking... What is he doing?!

-Why aren't they attacking him? Why are the ants just... moving aside?

-What the hell am I watching right now...-

Before they knew it, the ants started falling cold on the ground each time Levi passed through a row.

They died, and neither the Queen nor the viewers knew how...

All that was known was that Levi must be doing something to them... They simply failed to understand it.

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Two Weeks Before...

After the mission was confirmed, Levi returned to his room with Arthur next to him. The moment they went inside, Arthur asked about his reasons for picking this mission.

Was it for money? To prove himself? Or, he simply didn't see it as much of a threat like the others.

Levi's answer surprised him.

"We need a challenge, and the normal Burrows can be cleared by anyone with decent skill." Levi said calmly, "What are you afraid of? We have everything to gain if we succeed, and if we fail? Instructor Seraphis will save us."

"It's a win-win situation."

"Bro... What about the bet?"

Arthur would have agreed with him in a heartbeat if they hadn't just placed their entire fortune on their success.

"Well, isn't winning more than twenty thousand coins enough of a motivation to give it your best?" Levi chuckled.

"..."

Arthur was left speechless, realizing that his brother bet on their success not just as a way to show their confidence, but also to push them to their limit.

After all, knowing that Instructor Seraphis was ready to rescue them removed the edge of death, which would do more harm than good. But now? If they didn't want their bank accounts drained, they had to go all out!

"I suggest you push to the third stage using growth totems; you will need all the strength available," Levi advised while sitting down on the floor.

He pulled out some growth totems that he had saved for emergencies. Then, he started absorbing them one by one, desiring to push for the third stage.

He still needed 2%, and Levi didn't want to waste an entire day waiting for the divine light to descend. Also, his sessions were affected a bit due to the midnight spars. But he wasn't complaining since he was taking their lunch money.

Seeing this, Arthur decided to follow his brother's lead.

He remained seated on the bed and pulled out all the sponsored growth totems he had saved... Then, he went all in.

A few minutes and four growth totems later, Levi finally reached the third stage and had his inked tattoo flicker in red.

He pressed it and swiftly found himself inside the Ancestral Rooted Plane. The gigantic nanogam flower was already summoned. Levi went straight to the auditory section and stood before the wall of mastered abilities.

Usually, he went for the dimmest abilities at the far bottom. But this time, his eyes were attracted to the row above it... It was also dim, but not as much.

"Ash'Kral... You think I am strong enough to unlock an ability of this row?" Levi asked with a hopeful tone.

"Hmmm, I usually recommend this row of abilities after undergoing the first evolution... Your energy pool will be devoured in a single use if you unlock it now." Ash'Kral shared calmly.

"I see..." Levi held his chin thoughtfully.

He understood that if he were to unlock such an ability, it would be more useless than useful in most scenarios.

After all, he didn't know what he would be unlocking. If he ended up with a niche sound-based ability that devoured his entire energy with each activation, it would be the same as owning a brick.

"I was meaning to ask, you told me that I need to reach the plateau on all three evolutionary paths before attempting to evolve." Levi wondered, "Is it a must? Or recommended?"

"It's recommended," Ash'Kral said.

"Why?"

"It's the only way to ensure no pain from the evolution." Ash'Kral shared, "If you attempted to evolve one seed and leave the others behind, they won't make the evolution process pleasant in the slightest."

"..." Levi went silent.

Chills coursed down his spine after recalling the hellish agony he was put through during his awakening... If the evolution was going to give him a similar taste, he wasn't too eager to choose this approach.

'Don't shoot it down so fast... Think of the benefits.'

Levi thought about the positives and realized that, besides the hellish agony, there was no other downside.

He would be able to put a much stronger ability in his limited slots. In addition, he would be awakening the Nine Senses' ultimate ability sooner.

Just to mention, his strength, energy reservoir, spiritual prowess, and more attributes would be improved from the evolution.

"But, if I went with this path, the Nine Senses Seed will be stealing energy from the Sun and Void Origin seeds." Levi frowned.

He suddenly remembered another issue, a much bigger one at that.

The Nine Senses Seed was a gluttonous monster that sucked all energy in the seeds' orbit. The only way to stop it was to hit the plateau.

However, if he were to evolve it, the seed would sprout... Then, it would keep stealing the energy, leaving the other two seeds still stuck behind.

"Is there any solution to this?" Levi murmured, deep in his thoughts.

He hadn't given up yet on this approach, understanding that it would help him immensely in the early levels.

"Should I stop at the first stages of the Sun and Void seeds? Then, commence the evolution of the Nine Senses seed." Levi asked for Ash'Kral's opinion.

"It's a one-way to tackle the Three-Body-Problem." Ash'Kral said, "After the first evolution, the seed sprouts and its roots spread out slowly across the soul. By leaving the other two seeds behind, you will be subjected to random coldness and heat flares as a punishment."

"Which way? The masochist way?" Levi's lips twitched.