

## **Few Wives 281**

### Chapter 281: Horrific

Even worse was how it wasn't even a full-power attack. If the beast were serious it could have destroyed at least twice as much of what it destroyed. Not just in length but width too.

Of course, such a thing would require a fully released DA. It was currently on partial release...

That's right, R4s could do some severe damage. One can look at it this way, New York which is considered the largest city by most is only 59KM across the widest point. And a not-too-serious attack from a PR4 can easily reach 100km. With weaker R4s reaching at least that.

Then the strongest attacks of PR4s can reach more than 200KM! One has to know that some countries were only that big. Which meant that R4s were country-level threats.

Then there were Pseudo R5s which Muku hadn't met. The strongest could reach around 400KM! This meant that with 22 or 23 attacks they could destroy the biggest country on Earth. And they could fire at least a few hundred equally strong attacks.

If they attacked with their strongest attacks then maybe half that would be enough. If they could sustain them.

Anyway, enough of that. The Earth Dragon's attack wasn't actually the most horrifying part of the ordeal. That title belonged to what happened soon after it released its attack.

A creature which looked like an ogre appeared in front of the Earth Dragon before it could even take a step forward after releasing its attack.

The beast which was tyrannical a moment before, began shaking from fear as it stood still. It didn't dare even breathe.

It seemed its attack had disturbed something it shouldn't have disturbed. This was a real problem in the Beast World where stronger beasts were anywhere and everywhere.

The Earth Dragon happened to unluckily mess around close to a resting R5! Honestly, it was Muku's fault. Everything probably would have been fine if he hadn't disturbed the Earth Dragon's rest for his experiment.

Unfortunately for the Earth Dragon, the R5 ogre didn't seem to be in an understanding mood. It just stared at by with angry yellow eyes...

"Good. You're scared. It seems you know your mistake. Honestly, if you had an opponent you were fighting I might have understood. Unfortunately, it seems you were just showing off your little strength for no reason at all. Now, we can't let that go unpunished can we?" The ogre spoke softly in Beast Tongue, the weird language all could understand as long as they had intelligence.

The Earth Dragon had sufficient intelligence, but it just didn't see the reason to shout at Muku who it was soon going to kill. Most beasts didn't like talking too much even if they could. Raya was a rare case...

Anyway, the Earth Dragon was about to explain itself and say that there was an opponent. Maybe that way it would be spared. Unfortunately...

BOOOOOOM!

Whoooo! Bang!

The Earth Dragon's humongous head was blown up with just a hand swipe from the R5 ogre. It seemed the ogre wasn't feeling diplomatic at the moment...

Muku who was observing from a distance was horrified!

How could he not when the beast which could dog walk him was dog walked? I'm fact, it was beyond dog walked! He had seen it fully deploy its DA as it shook in fear. Yet that did nothing to soften the blow.

Its head was still cleanly blown. Its headless body fell to the ground soon after. The ogre just looked on with cold eyes then disappeared.

That's right, it didn't even take a little bite or dig out the beast core. It didn't care. All it cared about was destroying the one who disturbed its rest, and it had done just that. There was no reason to linger. It wasn't hungry, after all.

Even if it was, R4 meat was just too trushy in its eyes...

Muku continued looking at the headless body for a moment before he turned away and left. His destination was the outskirts of the outskirts. Close to the ocean. It was only then that he would feel safe.

As for why he didn't go dig for the Earth Dragon's beast core. He didn't dare. What if the R5 was still lurking around? Wouldn't his head also get blown up then?!

Actually, his worry was unwarranted as the R5 had really left. It had a million better things to do than guard a random R4 beast copse...

Then again, Muku was the kind who believed in better safe than sorry, so his move was expected.

The experience had actually calmed his and Raya's racing hearts after reaching R4. The two had become slightly arrogant after reaching R4.

Which was understandable with the demigod-like power they now had. They were probably a lot stronger than "movie" superman by that point.

So yeah, being arrogant for a bit was kinda of unavoidable for most. Even if they knew that countless stronger creatures were moving around. It was only after seeing one in action that they really understood how weak they still were.

The Earth Dragon was strong, stupidly strong in fact. However, they still felt that they would catch up after a while.

But the R5 though, that thing, that thing scared them. That thing made them feel like they weren't even qualified to be ants in front of it. And that was when they were observing it from a distance.

Sure, they had faced the Monarch which had strength almost equal to an R6, but that experience felt like a dream with all the factors that were involved. It was only with the ogre that they felt the real terror of R5s let alone R6s.

They didn't even want to think about the possibility of R6s at that moment. It was then that Muku remembered the beasts which guided him. He was almost certain that all of them were R6. Cold sweat appeared on his body instantly just thinking about it.

If they had wanted to test him. He would have died before he even knew what was happening. Fortunately, luck had been on his side...

He also remembered his promise to fight Scar the Cynocephalus King one day. And that thing was also a R6, wasn't it? He was sure it wasn't just a random R6 either. It was probably one of the strongest ones out there.

A bitter smile appeared on his face as he thought about it. He regretted running his mouth that day. Instead of that he should have kowtowed and offered prayers to the CSK. After all, with their strength difference, it was pretty much a god to him.

He couldn't help but wonder what had gotten into him at that time. Had his testosterone betrayed him? Yes, that had to be it. After all, he wasn't usually a death seeker...

Fortunately, they were unlikely to meet unless he went to the Middle Zone. Which he would never do. Not to mention that they might still not meet then since the Beast Forest was huge...

Anyway, after R5 ogre-powered close shave with death. Muku rested in a hidden spot for a few days on the outskirts. After that, he went back out more cautious than ever...

He didn't randomly attack resting beasts like before. He actually only attacked LR4s already involved in battles.

That way he was sure of their strength. Not to mention that it was easier for him to kill them.

It wasn't a very honourable way of doing things but it was safe. And that's all he wanted after the traumatic experience from before.

However, something which happened pissed him off. He realised something after killing his first two R4s through ambush tactics... A single LR4 only gave a measly 0.02 KP! Which meant that one had to kill 50 LR4s just for 1% of KP!

Muku was angered to the max. One had to know that straightforwardly killing even a single LR4 wasn't easy. Beasts at that rank knew how to run away when things got tough. Most had a few escape methods each.

So yeah, getting significantly stronger was now even harder than before.

Mrs C intervened again at that point. She told Muku about the KP one gets from MR4s, PR4s and Pseudo R5s. The amounts were 0.05% for MR5s, 0.1% for PR4s. Then 1% for Pseudo R5s.

So one would have to kill 20 MR4s for 1% and 10 PR4s for 1%. To get to PR4. One could kill a hundred Pseudo R5s. But who was strong enough to do that at LR4? So yeah, the grind was real...

The colour drained from Muku's face as he listened to Mrs C. It was sinking in that it won't be easy to reach the peak anymore.

And he was certain that the situation would be worse once he reached R5. He asked Mrs C about the information, but she smiled without saying anything.

His stomach twisted from her silence. He realised that it might be even worse than he thought.

Anyway, he didn't linger on it too long. There was nothing he could do about it after all. It wasn't like he could give up on getting stronger. He wouldn't be able to protect the girls that way.

So he could only soldier on with a belly full of complaints.

Chapter 282: Mom's request...

"So, what happened after that?" Mrs C asked curiously after she finished telling Muku about the KP one gets from the different levels of R4 beasts.

"There wasn't anything interesting after that actually. We just carefully hunted a few more beasts. We took turns hunting them since Raya can't get any KP from the beasts I kill. Unfortunately, we only managed to kill two each. After that we thought that it was about time we came here, so we did just that. I guess, you know the rest after that" Muku replied.

"Oh, okay. It seems you really had a good time. I guess we can move on if that's all..." Mrs C spoke then trailed off into thought at the end.

"Yeah... What are we doing next then? I mean, you said there's still a month left before I can start the trials, right?" Muku asked Mrs C.

"That's what I was thinking about actually... Oh! So, son, you wouldn't humour your mother for a bit would you?" Mrs C replied. She seemed to think of something which made her smile brightly as she asked for Muku's co-operation.

"Hmm? Okay, sure. As long as it doesn't hurt me in any way" Muku replied.

He didn't mind doing whatever she wanted since she had done so much for him. And he was sure she just wanted to play some childish game or something...

"Great! Thanks for agreeing. And I promise that not even a single hair on your body will be injured" Mrs C spoke with even more excitement.

Without any further delay, she snapped her finger. Muku's eyes widened as her figure became bigger and bigger in front of his eyes. And it wasn't just her who got bigger, even the room and everything in it got bigger.

No, wait. That wasn't it. It wasn't that everything got bigger. It was he who had gotten smaller!

What the hell was happening?! What kind of game was this?! He never agreed to something like this! No! He couldn't let this continue. He had to tell her to turn him back to normal!

"Gugu gaga"... "Ge?!" Muku tried speaking but it was only cute baby sounds which came out.

His eyes immediately snapped in Mrs C's direction. He asked her what was going on with just a look. He ignored Raya who was laughing her lungs out in the corner.

Snap!

Mrs C snapped her finger and a small mirror appeared before Muku. His worst fear was confirmed... He had been turned into a baby!

"Mwaaaah!... Gugu gaga gu ga..." Muku screamed in surprise then tried his best to tell Mrs C to turn him back.

Unfortunately, no real words came out of his mouth. Only cute baby sounds came out of his mouth.

And the almighty Mrs C seemed to be unable to hear him. At the very least she appeared not to be able to hear him. Whether it was true or an act, only she knew.

However, her eyes hadn't left his body since he became a baby. She was looking at him like he was the most precious thing in the world.

She picked him up the moment he relaxed a bit from the change. It seems she had been holding herself back until he became aware of his situation and accepted it...

"Hehe. Who is Momma's cute baby? Thank you for agreeing to this son. I promise to give you a reward after this okay? Now let's go, we have so much stuff to do!" Mrs C spoke while cradling Muku.

The duo disappeared the next moment leaving Raya alone in the room...

"..." Raya was speechless at the development. She was still laughing when they disappeared. However, her laugh stopped the moment they disappeared.

"Hey! What about me?! There isn't even a door here!" Raya screamed in a complaining tone as she looked at the doorless and portal-less room. It was almost like it had been set up that way to keep her inside.

"I can't believe they left me alone like that. And I really wanted to see what she was going to do with Muku. I'd then use the information as blackmail material when we get back to the team. I'll have him be my butler if he doesn't want me to spill the beans... Sigh, such a great chance wasted" Raya lamented to herself.

"What a terrible friend you are... And who said you were alone?" A familiar voice sounded from behind Raya.

Hearing the voice made Raya's stomach twist. She hated it a lot. Which was odd since the voice sounded like her own. Hell, it was literally her voice. The only difference was the much higher level of arrogance in the voice.

She turned around slowly and her eyes fell on a floating figure...

"..." She looked at the figure without saying anything.

"What? You aren't going to say anything to one you killed?" Fake Raya's ghost which was obviously the owner of the voice replied as arrogantly as ever.

"Ahhhhhhhhh!" Raya screamed hysterically.

She didn't mind being left alone. She didn't mind being locked in a doorless room. Hell, she didn't even mind dying. But she minded one thing. And that was being locked in a doorless room alone with the ghost in front of her.

She would literally choose to die rather than have that... Unfortunately other than suicide, there was no other way she could die in the situation. And there was no way she could do something so cowardly.

In other words... She was screwed...

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A few days later...

Mrs C had taken Muku to a large mansion even more luxurious than his group's back on the Blue Planet after Freya's upgrade.

After that she made him go through the most embarrassing things he has ever experienced. She didn't just make him look like a baby, she made him a real baby! And his R4 strength he was so proud of was completely gone!

Anyway, other than breastfeeding, they did everything. From lullabies, baby feeding, burping, story telling and even diaper changing. That's right, the body he was given wasn't under his control at all.

So, he got to see himself get changed like a baby and everything else. She would take him for walks outside the mansion through the most beautiful back garden he had ever seen. That part he didn't mind.

Then there was the house help. It was especially embarrassing when they talked to him like a baby and pinched his cheeks. Some pinched him so hard he promised himself to pinch them back when he got the chance.

As for where they were or who the people around them were, he didn't know. However, his life as a baby felt rather nostalgic and quite nice despite everything... He was probably going crazy.

Anyway, after a few days, he had grown a bit bigger and could say a few words and walk for a bit...

While he could ask Mrs C to turn him back at that point. He didn't do it. He felt that it would break her heart. Which was something he didn't want to do. So, he chose to go all in instead.

He began acting like a real toddler for her sake. At the very least he did what he thought toddlers did. Of course, he refused to poop himself anymore at that stage. Though it was still embarrassing. Fortunately, Raya wasn't there so he could take it.

After half a month he looked to be about five years... At that point, he could go around the mansion and explore. He would spend most of his time in the library reading books full of ancient knowledge. He even learned a few useful things about Monarchs among other things.

He would also play different outdoor games with Mrs C in the garden. She didn't keep him too busy though. Which gave him his library time...

At that point, he was completely committed to the role of acting according to how he looked... Other than reading "grown-up" books of course.

He had at some point realised that Mrs C wanted to experience how it felt to raise a child from a baby until they are of age. Maybe it was an unfulfilled wish of her's from that "tragic" event he assumed happened in the past.

The thought melted his heart even more. And so, he became the best child he could be. Always obedient and helped out around the mansion when he could.

At the same time, he couldn't help but be impressed by Mrs C's power. It was probably the envy of all parents who wanted to relive the younger days of their children. Unlike those parents, she could literally turn her child back into a baby instead of just wishing she could while looking back in nostalgia...

Around twenty days later Muku had reached his early teen years. His body started going through puberty. This led to Mrs C giving him "the talk". The experience was quite awkward considering that he was actually a twenty-one-year-old dude who had already had sex. But he tried his best not to let the awkwardness show.

Again he played the best child. Listening intently and asking stupid questions...

Then twenty-nine days he had pretty much returned to his usual self. Though his strength hadn't returned yet.

It was then Mrs C who had been in oblivious mother mode broke character and returned to her usual...

"Truly son, thank you for playing along with me. I'm sure it was really embarrassing. However, thanks to you, I won't have any longer regrets now..." Mrs C spoke with a gentle smile on her face...

"Sure mother. If there's anything else don't hesitate to ask" Muku replied naturally.

He had been calling her that every day for so long so it had gotten more natural to him. He had also completely accepted her as his mother. After all, he had seen nothing but motherly love from her in the past 29 days.

"Such a great son I have. I'm so proud of you. But don't worry. There's nothing else. In fact, I wanted to ask you that. Is there anything you want as a reward? I'll give you anything within my power" Mrs C replied with a gratified smile on her face.

"Oh, okay. Umm, I only want one thing. Can you tell me why you had regrets about not raising a child from the baby stage? That is if you don't mind my asking" Muku asked the one thing he was curious about.

Immediately the air shifted. Mrs C looked at him seriously.

Muku gulped down some saliva uneasily as he wondered if he had overstepped his boundaries...

Chapter 283: New trial?

"What do you mean? You're the only child I've ever had. And I couldn't raise you from childhood and so I wanted to experience that" Mrs C replied seriously.

She seemed a little confused as to why Muku was asking such a question in the first place...

"Wait, what!? That's it?! You don't have any trauma from a child you lost or something?" Muku exclaimed in surprise.

He couldn't accept it. After all, if there was no deep reason why she wanted to raise him from a baby, didn't that mean he embarrassed himself for no reason?!

Even if he wanted to show his gratitude, such a price was too steep if there were no deep emotions involved!

"Wait, what?... Pfft. Hahahahahaha. So you thought I had trauma and that's why you played along? It really caught me off guard when you began behaving like a baby actually. I almost threw you away thinking you had lost your mind for doing something so embarrassing with a straight face. Hahaha. What a sweet son you are. Hahahaha if I had known I would have extended the period for a few more months" Mrs C laughed her guts out in between her sentences.

She laughed so hard that tears came out of her eyes. Seeing her pure reaction made Muku feel embarrassed even more. If his powers had been restored he would have flown away.

"Tsk. Why are you laughing so hard when you already knew everything? You read my mind every chance you get after all" Muku spoke grumpily after Mrs C stopped laughing.

He wished he could go back in time and not come a month too early. That way he wouldn't have to be in the situation he was in...

"Believe it or not. I haven't read your mind once since we came here. I haven't even used my abilities after that mirror I created for you. I thought doing that would take the fun out of it. Plus it would be unfair to lock away yours but still use mine. Anyway, I really didn't know what you were thinking" Mrs C replied while wiping away the tears from her eyes.

"Oh... Well... That's good. You shouldn't have been reading my mind in the first place anyway... When are we going back anyway?" Muku replied awkwardly then tried to switch the topic.

"We'll go tomorrow morning. Tonight we're holding your farewell party. That is if you want to say goodbye to everyone we've been living with for the last month. We can leave now if you want. But it will make them all really sad if you go just like that" Mrs C replied to Muku's question.

She pretended not to notice how he quietly switched topics. She didn't feel like embarrassing him anymore. After all, she felt quite touched by how thoughtful he was despite the misunderstanding.

It made her feel very gratified. She really has the greatest son in the world!

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Later that day in the evening Muku's farewell party was held.

Everyone he had met during his time at the mansion showed up. They comprised more than fifty people and were all dressed in fancy clothes.

They all seemed to enjoy calling him "Young Master" which he didn't really like... Unless it was Audrey saying it with those sexy lips of hers. But he did get used to it. It will all end after that night anyway.

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The next morning...

Muku had taken a bath and prepared for departure. Mrs C had given him the reward she promised. And it was one of the things his current self needed the most. And that was a storage ring!

He finally didn't have to eat the fruits he found in the beast forest on the spot. Or bury his beast cores as well as ditch beast meat... Well, he still has to ditch most of the meat since R4s were really just too big. Even dinos would have to pay their respects to the biggest of R4s.

Anyway, Muku was ready to meet that traitorous partner of his again. He hasn't seen her for a month after all. But he wasn't worried since Mrs C told him that she was being well taken care of before he even asked. And he had no reason not to believe her...

The reason he called her traitorous was because of how much she enjoyed seeing him in unfavourable situations and was always trying to take advantage of him. Like the time he was turned into a baby, he could sense her malice through their soul link. And the damn dragon brat didn't even try to hide it!

So, yeah, he didn't mind being away from her for a while. Hell, he even hoped she was having a horrible time wherever she was... And it seemed his wishes were answered as he saw the listless Raya lying on the ground when they appeared in Room Zero.

He didn't even ask what had happened, he just gave her a gloating and schadenfreude-filled gaze.

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A while later...

Raya had finally pulled herself together after seeing Mrs C's presence and the ghost's absence. She had been tormented by it for a month! Like what ghost was so chatty? The worst part was that plugging her ears with her mana didn't prevent her from hearing what the ghost was saying.

Anyway, that was all in the past. She and Muku were receiving their briefing from Mrs C before their next trial. It was finally time for the fun part!

Or so you would think. But the situation didn't feel that fun after hearing what Mrs C said.

"So yeah. That's what you'll be doing next. What's with the blank looks? Do you want me to repeat what I said? Okay, I will. I said that for the next trial, you will be glass canons! That means your physical capabilities will be lowered to the minimum and you will only have your mana. But since I... cough... the trial feels merciful. You will keep your current power level minus the physical capabilities of course. And you will only face one beast for the trial. On the other hand, since the trial is shorter. It will have two parts. The mana aspect of it and the mental aspect which will come after you're done with the first part. Now, are there any questions?" Mrs C spoke.

"Umm, yeah. Aren't we supposed to be going to the second floor? I mean, shouldn't we pass through ten floors of physical trials before doing something else?" Muku asked confusedly.

"Oh yeah, you still remember that. You're right. You're still going to have to do those in the future. However, you couldn't even pass through the first floor. So going to the next is out of the question. You can probably do it now with Force. But I don't want to watch you breeze through a test right now. Maybe next time. So we're doing this instead. Oh, and Raya passed her test so she should actually go to the second level. However, you, her partner are holding her back since you two have to do the same level tests" Mrs C replied with logic full of holes.

It was clear to see that the rules didn't matter to her. She just did whatever she liked when she liked. And she wanted to see them suffer together in a new environment. After all, they had some experience in physical trials, so sending them there wouldn't be as fun as the first time. At the very least, the first floor they were familiar with wouldn't be too hard the second time around...

"Sigh. Fine... Send us in and let's get it over with" Muku who had learned more about his mother during their month together replied tiredly as he agreed to whatever she wanted.

In the past, he had suspected that it was hard to change her mind once she made it up. But he had actually managed to confirm it in their month together from how she interacted with the other people at the mansion. No matter what the situation was, it was either her way or no way.

So, he was too lazy to bother with something he knew the ending of already.

"Great! Now if you look behind you. You will see a door with the number "1.0". You can step through it whenever you're ready. Feel free to take as much time as you need to mentally prepare" Mrs C directed the duo's attention to the door which had appeared behind them.

"You really like making doors appear behind people, huh? Anyway, why's there only one door?" Muku asked after a little jab at Mrs C for how she always places her doors behind people.

The jab surprised Raya greatly since it wasn't something Muku would have said before. While he was mostly free with Mrs C back then. There was still an element of holding back involved. But now, it was

completely gone. It made Raya wish to know what had happened when she wasn't there. But she didn't ask.

She knew Muku wouldn't tell her anything and there was no way she would ask Mrs C such a thing.

"Hey! I'm your mother! How dare you make fun of me?! Anyway, don't worry about the door. It will take you to different locations" Mrs C replied.

"Okay... Is there anything else we need to know?" Muku asked one more thing.

"Hmm, I'll tell you if I think of anything. And you're taking too long! Bye!" Mrs C replied then snapped her finger at the end.

Muku and Raya were sucked into the door before they could react...

It seemed she was too eager to wait anymore...

Chapter 284: Unexpected trial opponent

"Ahhhh!"

Bang!

Muku found himself falling from the sky after Mrs C sent him away. So, of course, he screamed as he fell. The situation was too sudden and he was on the ground before he could properly think.

Fortunately, it seemed Mrs C had thought of everything as he didn't feel pain or get hurt despite the height he fell from... Though it was still messed up what she did.

Anyway, he didn't linger on it. He immediately got on his feet and began looking around cautiously.

Mrs C said that he only had to face one opponent. So, the opponent was probably something special. For that reason, he didn't want to be caught off guard by them.

Fortunately for him, it didn't take long for him to find the opponent. In fact, the opponent had found him first. Two fiery red eyes had been looking at him from the moment he fell into the trial ground.

Of course, he soon sensed the intense gaze. Then his eyes snapped in the direction it came from. He felt goosebumps appear on his skin the moment he saw the other party.

It was a crimson red beast which looked like a huge Komodo Dragon with large spikes on its back. A violent flame faintly burned around its body...

Muku immediately thought of a creature from his recent past...

"That's right son! That's the same beast you told me about before. The one you got unjustly killed. I brought it back for you! And don't worry, its power has been reduced to match your own. Though it still has both its physical and magical capabilities intact unlike you. Think of it as a way for you to make peace with it for what you did!" Mrs C's voice sounded from above.

For whatever reason, Muku found her really annoying in that moment... Who was he kidding, he knew very well why he found her annoying. The damn old lady had brought back a monster from the dead so that she could see him get beaten up! If he knew what she would do with the information, he wouldn't have told her anything!

"What do you mean it's the same one?! I watched that thing get killed! I thought you said you couldn't create life?!" Muku screamed hysterically while running away from the towering creature which made him look like a little rodent.

It was more than fifty metres tall and he was just six-foot-seven!. That's less than two metres! Even worse was how he realised that he couldn't use his Telekinesis!

It seemed it was locked too since it required mental energy to work which wasn't mana. So, he felt fortunate that the creature didn't chase or attack him. It just looked at him. If it had chased, then he would have been screwed!

"Correct, I can't create life. However, after being alive for so long. I can mess with ready-made life a bit. It actually just takes a little effort. Anyone can do it... Though I haven't actually come across anyone else who can do it... But my point still stands. Oh, and it's not a zombie or anything, it's really alive. Isn't that great?" Mrs C replied excitedly.

She seemed to really like showing off her abilities to mess with life. Maybe it really was as tough as she said. After all, for someone as unfathomable as her to talk about it so highly, it had to be something out of the ordinary. The fact that she hadn't met anyone else who could do it also showed how impressive it was. In Muku's eyes, she was an immortal monster who had been alive forever, so for her not to meet even one other being who could do it in that time...

"OMG! I knew I should have skipped your crazy trials after the first time. Why was I so greedy? Muku complained as he ran further away from the unmoving Earth Dragon.

"Oh come on now. It's not that bad. I never give you anything you can't win... Probably. Anyway, the battle will begin in one minute. So, be prepared because I can assure you, that the lizard can't wait to tear you apart..." Mrs C replied dismissively.

She was clearly unbothered by Muku's complaints. So what if he had regrets? Everything was already done. And he couldn't escape from the trial ground.

She knew him well enough to know that if she rewarded him well enough after the completion of the trial... He'll come back. Like he said. He can be quite greedy when he knows his life is guaranteed...

"One minute?!... Wait? One minute? That's actually better than the usual ten seconds. I think I can work with that... And it doesn't matter that you took away my Telekinesis. I found out a while back that I can fly with my DA. So, you won't get to see me run around pathetically like you expected. Even if the flight method is quite wasteful compared to my Telekinesis" Muku who was running away paused after hearing that he had a minute to prepare.

He was fat enough anyway. He felt so well prepared that he began backtalking to his mother like a brat. It seemed he had developed some weird habits from his experiences from the previous month...

"Ten seconds left..." Mrs C didn't argue and just reminded him of the time.

"Hey! I didn't even talk for that long! You're stealing my time!" Muku protested but still got ready to fight.

"My trial, my time... Three... Two... One... Zero... Fight!" Mrs C indirectly admitted to cutting down Muku's time. She immediately started the battle before he could complain further...

"ROOOOOOOOOAR!!!" The Earth Dragon let out a monstrous roar as if celebrating being released from invisible shackles. The earth around it shook from the roar alone. Muku had to protect his ears with mana or they might have exploded.

The beast was confused as to what was going on since it was certain it had been killed by the R5 ogre. It remembers everything going black... And yet there it was, alive and well. Despite its power decreasing, everything was okay.

The situation was really weird. But it didn't care about that. After all, the weird creature who had gotten it into that situation was standing in front of it. It couldn't sense Muku's aura before, but it recognised his grey eyes. There was no way it would forget those eyes which looked at it with pity when it got wrongfully killed...

Anyway, it was glad that it could sense Muku's aura now. This way, he could escape even if he made himself invisible like last time... This time it was going to end him! Revenge was just one fire breath away.

It didn't care that they were the same in strength now. It was a beast which had tasted the peak of the rank. So, it knew things this rookie didn't. It knew he was still a rookie from his yet to completely solidify Advanced Mana...

"Well, this is definitely not a fight I'm looking forward to... Not even Ares has so much hate for me in his eyes..." Muku spoke a little uneasily.

His body was already close to being tired despite the little distance he ran. It was a new experience indeed. His physical capabilities hadn't been slightly reduced. They had been completely removed. He was no different from a normal person, physically.

The very definition of a glass canon. The very thing one shouldn't be when fighting an obviously steady creature which could go the distance.

Fortunately, he still had his Domain Armour. That should give him a fighting chance at least... Right?

With that thought in mind, a grey armour appeared around his body. The thing about the mana was that it seemed a bit faint and ethereal... This was because it wasn't actually metal, but metal advanced mana densely gathered together to form a Metal-Element Domain Armour.

Fortunately, domains still worked despite requiring mental energy to work. Maybe it was because, unlike Telekinesis which used mana to weaponise mental energy, domains used mental energy to weaponise mana. So, as long as it was advanced mana which was the weapon, everything could be discussed...

"ROOOOAR!"

The Earth Dragon didn't delay anymore, it started with a breath attack off the bat!

BOOOOM!

Fortunately, Muku was expecting something like that so he quickly jumped out of the way. It wasn't easy though. After all, the beam travelled at super-fast speeds and had a diameter of around twenty meters.

So, Muku had to move at least ten meters away from where he was in less than a second with his physical capabilities removed.

That was quite problematic. So much so, just doing that took away a sizeable amount of his mana... The thing with DA is that it works together with one's physical capabilities for the best results. So, the lower your physical capabilities, the more mana you burn when using it... One can understand how screwed Muku was with his normal human-level physical capabilities while facing such a monster.

He was so tense he was repeating the embarrassing "safe words" in his mind over and over ready to shout them at any moment.

Mrs C really knew how to make his life hell despite her obvious love for him. Was she one of those weirdos who were hardest on the ones they loved the most?

If so, he really should have a talk with her after the trial... That is, if he makes it out. After all, the Earth Dragon hadn't gotten serious yet.

The move it had used was one of its relatively normal attacks. So, yeah, Muku was in for one heck of a ride...

Chapter 285: Execution Ground...

A few minutes later...

"Huff. Huff..." Muku who has been dodging attacks for the last few minutes breathed heavily while hiding behind a big tree.

It wasn't that he didn't try to fight back. He had tried the same spike from before which threw the beast into the sky. Unfortunately for him, this time it was prepared.

The beast's DA literally burned his metal into a liquid state. It didn't even move a bit. The spike liquefied before reaching its body every time.

The sight of which horrified Muku. The result was even worse than last time! This made him wonder what would have happened if it had been aware from the start back then...

He might not have even gotten the chance to escape. The Earth Dragon was way too monstrous!

The worst part was that it had moved from the start. It was practically making him dance for him within a certain range.

He had tried running behind it. But it increased the firepower to the point that he could only dejectedly turn back lest he get burned to a crisp...

At that point, it was clear to him that the beast wanted to make him suffer first before ending him. Which was something he had gotten used to after it happened so many times in the past.

It gave him the chance to turn things around. Which he has always been able to do given enough time... Though Mrs C had to get involved in the CSK's case. That thing was just too much, after all.

Hopefully, she won't have to get involved this time otherwise he would practically turn into a mother's boy who can't do anything without his mother. That would be way too embarrassing.

Anyway, just because being played around with gives him the chance to turn things around, it doesn't mean he likes it. He was one of those people who liked bullying their opponents, after all.

Unfortunately, it seemed fate was playing a cruel joke on him since recently he was always the one getting bullied in all significant encounters...

How he wished to turn things around. Unfortunately, the current battle didn't seem to be the one. After all, even if he ends up winning, he had already been bullied, right?

"Roooooar!..." The Earth Dragon roared again as Muku was hiding behind one of the few remaining trees in the area...

But the roar seemed a bit different. On top of that, the accompanying fire breath was missing. Muku didn't feel happy but felt extremely uneasy instead. After all, there was no way the ED had run out of mana from those few attacks.

That meant one thing... It was switching up its attacks. Muku immediately went into defensive mode. He was ready to receive an attack from any direction...

**BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!...**

Suddenly, a pillar of fire rose from the ground into the sky. But for whatever reason, it wasn't located anywhere close to Muku's position. Though, he could still feel its burning heat from a distance.

Before he could make sense of the situation, another pillar sprouted in the distance. Then another and another until ten pillars surrounded him in every direction...

Then thin horizontal lines of fire spouted into existence and joined the pillars together. The space left in between wasn't big enough for a person to go through... Though Muku wouldn't dare attempt such a thing anyway. Not unless he was okay with literally getting cooked.

The structure almost looked like a ring designed to keep him from running away. And it burned like hell despite being some distance away from all sides.

However, he wasn't too worried yet. After all, the top was still open. He could get out at any moment... Or maybe not. Just when Muku wanted to fly out. Something appeared in the sky.

Something which made him dare not fly even an inch into the sky. That something was a huge fire spear which was pointing down. And the very tip was locked on him who stood at the centre...

"Oh... Fu..." Muku cursed. But the latter part of his curse was covered out by a domineering voice...

"EXECUTION GROUND" A deep voice sounded from the Earth Dragon's mouth.

The words sent a chill down Muku's spine despite all the heat.

He immediately understood that the beast was done playing around...

But it was too soon! He hadn't thought of anything yet! Sure, there was something on his mind. But that required too much time to do. He wanted something faster. But it seemed he was out of time.

He could either do what he could or die before he could...

The huge spear began descending after the ED's words fell. And the descent wasn't slow like Layla's Shadow Charged spears. It was rather quick. Within two seconds it had reached the ground from over

seventy metres in the sky. The pillars were also of the same height, so Muku couldn't get out. And then...

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

An explosion worthy of Advanced Mana went off when the attack reached the ground. The explosion resulted from both the attack's power and momentum from the height. So the explosion was extra strong. It was an attack worthy of the name...

Even more devastating was how the pillars contained the attack. This concentrated it in that spot making it more potent and deadly to the target...

Quite frankly, if Muku doesn't pull out something special then he's dead for sure. Wouldn't it be interesting if he really died?...

Anyway, it took a few minutes for everything to clear up before the ED could see again.

It didn't use its power to clear up the dust since it was certain Muku was dead. So, there was no need to waste power to see a corpse...or nothing at all. It would see everything eventually anyway.

It chose to take that time to enjoy the show of destruction it caused. Its mood would get better and better the more dust which cleared as it looked at the hole which kept getting deeper and deeper as it was revealed.

The hole was around fifty metres wide. A little too much for the tiny Muku but that's the smallest the ED could make the attack...

As for the depth, around seventy metres had been revealed and it kept on getting deeper and deeper... This went on until three freaking kilometres were revealed! That's right. The attack which wasn't even a beam attack caused such devastation. And Muku was nowhere to be seen. Nor was his aura.

The Earth Dragon low-roared to itself in satisfaction. The ant which had brought it so much misfortune was dead. Preparing that attack while pretending to focus solely on breath attacks was worth it.

It made Muku think that it was playing around with him when it was setting up a sure kill attack instead. If the execution ground could be prepared instantly. Tye ED would have used it at the very start. It had no interest in playing around with Muku despite the hatred it had for him.

To it, all enemies should be promptly killed off no matter what. There was no need to delay... If Muku found out about its thoughts he would have vomited blood. To think he thought it was a fool when he was the real fool. He had been playing in its palm from start to finish...

Was that the difference between Advanced Beasts(R4s and beyond) and Common Beasts (R3s and lower)?

Now it could think about how to get out of the weird space it found itself in. The only reason it didn't bother with it before was that it couldn't move at first and its enemy appeared in front of it after.

Now it had the time to look into it. It couldn't wait to get back to the Beast Forest despite all the danger there was there. After all, the place it was in was way too eerie.

Not to mention that it was small and had no other living creatures... Well, there were two living creatures but it had just ended the life of the other one. So, yeah, it was the only living creature in there.

While it could go a long time without food. It could go beyond a year actually. But still, it would have to eat after that year...

Now where should it start looking...

BOOOOOOM!

An explosion suddenly rang out from behind the ED. It immediately turned around with its guard up. In its head, it felt confused. After all, there shouldn't be any living creatures left in the pocket dimension apart from itself. So what the hell was happening?!

As it thought that its eyes widened in surprise as it laid its gaze on the cause of the explosion.

{Impossible!} It thought as it looked at the grey-armoured human floating some distance away from it. How was he completely fine?! Sure, he smelled like burnt hair and there was some smoke coming from him. But that was nothing considering the attack it used. There shouldn't be anything of him left!

"What? Still not going to speak to me? The last guy spoke after I shocked him around as much as I shocked you now" Muku who had somehow survived the devastating attack taunted the Earth Dragon.

His body was fully encased in a glowing grey armour. It looked somewhat different from the one he had before. Yet the Earth Dragon could only sense a faint aura from it...

What the hell was going on?

....

Find out how he survived in the next episode of Dragon Ball Apocalypse! Hehe. Again. I couldn't help it.

Chapter 286: Ruined plan...

Muku and the ED stared at each other intensely. The former was thinking of the ruined plan while the latter was wondering how the former survived.

....

A few moments before...

Just before the ED's attack smashed down on him. Muku was suddenly pulled to the ground by a grey hand just before he was struck down.

In the group, he was completely encased in the grey metal. After that, it took on a bullet shape and dug deep into the ground then went to the side avoiding the devastating attack.

Since the pillars went deep into the ground, despite his quick reaction, Muku was still slightly burned while making his getaway.

What happened was that he was just dodging the ED's attacks before. He was preparing his counterattack. And that counterattack was in the form of Mithril, the same devastating metal that even Monarchs feared.

However, Mithril had a major drawback. And that was obviously the long period needed to create it. And that was just normal Mithril, not that weird sword with unknown characters on it.

Anyway, while reaching R4 didn't reduce the time needed to create it in any significant way, it did however give him the ability to create it some distance away from him. And he could also clock its energy after extensive training.

That was a very crucial component in his plan otherwise he would have been discovered instantly if he tried to use it without it(clocking). After all, Mithril caused quite the scene when being created before.

And so, he was able to quietly create it in the ground. Interestingly enough, the two were doing the same thing in the sense that they were using the ground to prepare strong attacks away from the sight of the other.

If either of them had moved a bit from the area where they were preparing their attack, they might have discovered the other. That would have been quite the scene...

Unfortunately for Muku, the more experienced ED finished preparing its attack first. And so, he could only use his Mithril to escape.

After all, if he had used his normal metal. He might have died. That stuff had long proved useless against the beast when it melted before even touching it...

Anyway, while he successfully managed to get away by using Mithril. It ruined his initial plan of ending the battle with one insanely strong sneak attack.

After all, there was no way the ED would still remain relaxed after seeing him survive such an attack. The fact that he had metal which could resist its attacks was enough to raise its guard. His previous attacks couldn't even reach it. But now, that would clearly not be the case.

While it felt that he was more of a threat than it expected, it still didn't panic or feel too threatened. His secret had been exposed so there was no element of surprise anymore. And it was sure it could handle any frontal attacks.

For that reason, it didn't acknowledge him by speaking despite the shock...

....

Present time...

"To think you bastard was actually so sneaky. I really would have died there if I didn't have anything prepared!... Tsk. It doesn't matter. A secret attack wouldn't have been fun anyway. Let's do this the right way" Muku spoke resolutely.

He decided to attack the beast head-on. He no longer had the mana to keep on playing around anyway. He had to finish the battle in the next few minutes or he would be the one who would be finished.

Just using his Domain Armour was quite taxing. And he created Mithril on top of that, which was like a black hole for mana. If it wasn't for his larger-than-most mana core dude to his high class. He might have long died from mana exhaustion alone...

As he spoke, the metal which was thin in some areas due to the fire, recovered. In fact, it had been worse than that initially. It was the reason why he delayed getting out. He wanted to recover as much as he could before going out. In fact, he would have preferred to stay there until he fully recovered.

Unfortunately, the problem with using Domain Armour is that you don't recover while it's still active. You will keep on losing power until everything is gone and it deactivates on its own.

So, while he was using his mana to recover his Mithril armour. He was losing more mana with every moment which passed by.

In fact, at that point, his Domain Armour and Mithril Armour were one thing since he switched the DA energy from normal metal element energy to Mithril mana.

His normal mana was clearly getting outclassed by the ED. It made him realise that one shouldn't stop improving their mana quality after meeting the qualification point for ranking up to R2. It was something that should continuously be done. Otherwise one would find their mana getting dominated by those who are technically the same as them in terms of strength. This was the very situation Muku was in.

The ED's mana quality was much better than his own. For that reason, it was dominating him despite its strength having been reduced to match his own.

Just being talented or having a higher-level class didn't cut it in the apocalypse. One also has to put in the work. No aspect of improving strength should be ignored. Which was something Muku was learning the hard way.

Anyway, because he was losing mana. Muku couldn't stay underground any longer. After all, his current body was fragile as hell. If he loses the protection of his Domain Armour, then he is screwed.

He would have pretty much dug his own grave and buried himself since there would be no way he would be able to make it out without mana...

Boom!

With time not on his side, Muku forward targeting the ED's head. The scene was quite interesting. Like a little rat or even smaller than that flying toward a grown human's head with conviction on its face.

Of course, since humans are wimps, chances are they would scream and run away. But the ED wasn't human now was it? No, it wasn't.

It was a creature from the Beast World. A creature which managed to reach PR4 in the Beast World. Which was a lot harder than one might think. After all, not many survive the period in-between R3 and R4.

The numbers only seemed high due to the unreasonably large population in the Beast World. If one looked at the statistics, they'd realise that only about 5% successfully reach R4.

Which was reasonable with the weakened period they go through when they reach Pseudo-R4.

Anyway, the point is that the ED wasn't scared. It would never back down from a fight. Especially from such a little creature.

"Roooooar!"

The ED let out a fire breath as Muku got closer. It was predictable. But it was effective. This was proven by how Muku dodged to the side. He couldn't take the heat...

Bang!

BOOM!

Muku was caught by surprise as the ED swiped at him which knocked him out of the sky.

"Roooooar!" The beast didn't pause as it roared more attacks into existence.

This time it didn't throw a fire breath. It created multiple giant fireballs in the sky and...

BOOOM BOOOM! BOOOM!...

One explosion after the other went off as it tried to hit Muku who had recovered quickly and flew back into the sky. Its fireballs followed him wherever he went barely missing him due to his great dodging skills.

BOOOOM!

His just when Muku dodged the last attack. A fire pillar exploded out from the ground in front of him. He barely managed to evade it.

Despite evading all the attacks Muku wasn't happy. After all, his time was running out and he hadn't even scratched the ED yet!...

"Damn! Why did I not improve my mana's quality? This sucks" Muku complained about his element as he dodged another attack.

If his mana's quality was as good as the ED. They would be duking it out. Exchanging an attack for an attack. Instead of him running around like a rat a he searched for an opening which just wasn't appearing.

Sure, he could do that with Mithril... But where tf would he have gotten so much Mithril from??

"Wait... I guess I can try that..." Muku spoke to himself as he flew closer to ED.

This time he chose to take some attacks head-on. Then...

Whoosh!

A two-metre-long blade flew towards the ED. There was something about the blade which seemed weird. It seemed a bit different from his usual metal attacks. It also seemed different from his Mithril even.

The blade seemed to be a phantom as it looked somewhat ethereal. It was white in colour and released a gentle aura.

If the girls were present they would recognise it. But they weren't...

Anyway, the ED looked at it with ridicule in its mind. It let the little blade get close while looking on in disdain. After all, it sensed no danger from the blade.

It was when the blade reached three meters away from it did it made a move. It created some flame in front of it and encased the sword.

It wanted to show Muku just how useless his efforts were. Unfortunately, something unexpected happened...

The blade wasn't burned away as it expected. Hell, it didn't seem to have even been touched by the flame.

It passed through the flame. Entered its body and then...

"ROOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOAR!"

A monstrous cry of pain rang out...

Chapter 287: Soul Metal...

More than a year ago...

Muku was still on the blue planet with his girls enjoying life. One random day, he was messing around with his class and its abilities.

This included his only mental attack. It was a move he rarely used since his opponents would usually be too strong or too weak for it to be applied. For that reason, he mostly doesn't bother himself with it.

However, on that day he was quite bored and thought that he might as well give it a look. It was then that he was surprised by what it actually was.

Instead of being somehow derived from his Telekinesis like he thought. It was actually derived from his soul! It seems he was just too weak to notice it then. Unlike that day when he was a R3 Evolver.

Anyway, after the discovery, his interest was piqued. And so, from that day he would try to probe it any way he could as he wanted to make it stronger. At the very least, he felt that there was something to it that he was missing.

As someone who believed in his intuition, he kept at it for weeks. One day he finally made a breakthrough!

It was by mistake like many other great things. It was during battle when he sent a thought in the wrong direction. He wanted to create a sword with his metal but accidentally sent the order to the soul ability. Of course, if the order couldn't be carried out, nothing would happen.

However, something did happen. There was a steer in the ability. It wasn't too apparent but he felt it. He put it aside for the time being and dealt with his opponent.

Later on after the battle, he retreated to his room and began messing with the ability again.

This time he has a direction. So it didn't take long for him to figure out what was happening. It seemed he had been using the ability wrong all this time. At the very least, he had been using it inefficiently.

He was attacking with soul energy instead of attacks made out of soul energy. It was like attacking with metal-element mana instead of spells made out of it. As mentioned before, such a thing might work on those weaker than the attacker. But to those of equal strength and above, it was almost ignorable to the former and completely ignorable to the latter.

That might be part of the reason why he couldn't use the ability effectively in battle. Especially as he got stronger and his opponents got more experience and resistance under their belt.

Anyway, the way the ability was supposed to be used was to make a soul-targeting weapon with it.

Muku excitedly got to work after the discovery. But then he found out that the process was a lot slower than he expected.

And so, he, who had better things to do partially gave up on it. Though he would make more whenever he could. He also found out that he could keep the metal within his soul if he linked the two together. Which he did. That result led him to find out that whenever he was injured, the metal would become unstable. The heavier the injury, the worse the instability.

So, he put two and two together and realised that the metal was linked to his soul and life. It seemed quite useless although. So, he didn't do anything with the metal or tell the girls about it. Jade would probably make fun of him for bragging about a useless thing.

With that said, Muku made a significant amount of the metal. Which he then gifted to the girls right before their separation... That's right, it was the very metal used to make the necklaces the girls have...

It felt like a good way to assure them of his safety. And he was right, it was only due to the necklaces that most of them were still sane despite his long absence.

Anyway, after that Muku arrived in the beast world. A lot of things happened and his strength improved. He didn't stop creating soul metal throughout all these things. He felt that it had real potential.

Then he had a fateful encounter a few months after leaving the trial ground after the first round. At that time he was backed in a corner which forced him to use the soul metal dagger he had created and kept...

He would have liked to create something bigger and better but the process was super slow and exhausting. He also found out that it got slower and slower the more he comprehended it. Which was messed up since it should have become easier as he got more familiar right?

Well, whatever. There was no use complaining... Back to the encounter, he threw the blade at the enemy in hopes of a miracle... And a miracle did happen. The blade faded through everything the energy threw at it and made its way into their body. Much like what happened with the ED.

Soul metal was quite unique in how it could change states between solid and ethereal. He could use it in its solid state ineffectively or effectively in its ethereal state.

This was because it was a soul attack so obviously it worked better when used on its intended target. And that was the soul.

The blade entered the body of the enemy and immediately aimed for the soul. Apparently, it would aim for the soul no matter where it entered from...

A roar much like the one the ED let out rang out. Which was understandable since the soul was very delicate and unguarded for those who weren't specialised in the soul field. This was a very small group of individuals since souls weren't easily accessible even to their owners. Muku had just been lucky.

All he could do was use that attack and perceive his soul. He couldn't affect it any other way apart from that.

Anyway, the beast soon turned silent after the attack... Or more of it had forgotten how to roar. Just as it has forgotten how to do anything. This was because Muku's attack had ruined its soul beyond repair.

It entered a state no different from brain death. It quickly fell to the ground and Muku finished it off and moved on in shock.

From that day the study of that attack became one of his main activities every day. This went on until eventually he made a breakthrough in it and the soul metal turned white. Which was a much more potent version of the metal he had been using before.

He was ecstatic and immediately went into overdrive in creating the metal. Unfortunately with everything else which had to be done, he could only create that two metre sword despite all the months which had passed.

However, it seemed to be very useful since the ED let out such an intense roar of pain.

Now all Muku had to do was wait and watch it fall to the ground like the one before it. After all, the attack was stronger than before and they were the same rank level while the beast from before was a level above him. He was LR3 and it was MR3.

With that logic, the Earth Dragon was done for right?...

....

Present day...

Muku looked on with wide eyes. The damn thing didn't fall and die(in the brain) like he thought it would.

It roared for a bit then shut up and glared at him with intense hatred in its eyes. Its aura was even rising and the flames around it were getting more intense and darker. Its eyes were also turning redder and redder with each moment that passed by.

And yet it didn't do anything. It just looked at Muku like that making him extremely nervous...

{Umm, son. I feel that I should tell you that bringing this thing back from the dead might have strengthened its strength by quite a bit. Not to mention that I had only reduced its rank strength not soul strength. So, its soul would have still been as strong as it was at its peak even without my involvement. But since I involved myself... It's probably as strong as a Pseudo R5 now. Sorry. However, it was a really good surprise attack. I did not see that coming! You're really good at surprising me, son. You should keep it up. Momma is proud of you!... Oh, and I almost forgot. You should probably attack it as soon as possible. While it wasn't too injured by your attack which would end any beast equal in strength to you in the soul department, it was still stunned by it and won't be able to move for a few seconds. It also can't make its mana leave its body during that time. That's why it's just staring at you when it wants to kill you more than any... It is a really good actor, huh? I'm impressed!} Mrs C's voice intruded in Muku's head again.

Hearing her words he first showed a look of enlightenment then understanding which later morphed into extreme anger after hearing the last part.

"Shouldn't you have begun with that part you unreliable old lady?! You wasted useful time!!!" Muku roared in anger while making his mood in the immobile beast.

The Mithril around his body separated from the DA for a bit and turned into a small energy-charged blade... The blade was only small in the ED. To Muku it was quite huge, being slightly bigger than him even.

The blade flew toward the beast's head as Muku intended to end it in one attack!

Whoosh!

BOOOOOOOOM!

Chapter 288: Acknowledged

Flames and grey energy flew everywhere after the impact.

The top part of the ED was covered by the debris. It took a few seconds for everything to clear up.

Muku had already called back the Mithril. After all, if the beast had been hit effectively on the head, it would have died already, just like how it was killed last time by the ogre.

"Well... That's something at least" Muku spoke softly while looking at a certain part of the ED's body...

It seemed that the beast had blocked his attack at the very last moment. It had covered its head with one of its large front legs.

While the defence saved its head from destruction, it wasn't without a price. This was because its leg was blown up in the head's place.

You'd think it would roar in pain but it didn't. It just gave Muku a deathly glare and stood in place. Smoke came out of the wound as it burned it shut with its fire energy.

"Why is your gaze getting fiercer and fiercer? We're already mortal enemies seeking each other's death. So you shouldn't get angry with me making a move when you're incapacitated right? Besides, you successfully blocked it... Sure, it was because that unreliable mother of mine got involved and saved you by talking to me. She probably thought I was fooled by how she pretended to help me at the end when

she was delaying time and preventing me from discovering that something was wrong. But whatever, it doesn't matter. And I guess she's really my mother because... Die!" Muku spoke just when the ED was about to make its move, whatever it was...

He was actually delaying the beast like Mrs C delayed him. Then...

Whoosh! Stab! Boom!

Out of nowhere a large metal spear emerged from the ground aiming for the ED's leg stump.

The move was so unexpected that it successfully stabbed the closed-off wound and re-injured it. The thing was that it had weakened the DA defence in that area as it wouldn't be good to expose the wound to too much heat.

It was something Muku who was always searching for openings instantly noticed and made his move. He attacked with his normal metal which was completely unexpected by the ED which thought it had successfully taken his normal attacks out of the picture.

Unfortunately, the heat around the wound had been lowered enough to the point that the metal could break through without being melted down.

It was a big mistake, which cost it greatly. But then again, it had just taken a soul attack and had its leg blown off. So, its brain, being a bit slow was understandable...

Fortunately for the ED, it reacted quickly enough before the metal got in too deep. Flames exploded out of its body and burned away the metal. They were so strong that it was thrown into the sky by the force.

Muku was forced to fly a distance back by the heat. He knew just how hot the fire was from the "execution ground" and he didn't want to taste any more of it. He was full from that encounter.

The beast looked at him from above as it fell. Then...

"Domain: Crimson Purgatory"

The beast spoke for the second time. And again, the words weren't ones Muku liked hearing. After all, it meant that he was in for more suffering. Even worse was how he couldn't even run away. After all the pocket dimension they were in was only ten kilometres big. And a rank four domain can cover that easily.

Mrs C had really gone out in making the fight as fun for her and horrible for him as possible. That didn't matter at the moment, he'll first deal with the ED and then make her pay!

The world around him turned red and the temperature rose to levels normal humans or even R3s can't handle. So yeah, he could only survive inside it due to his DA.

It was one of the reasons, R4s usually didn't bother with their domains when fighting those of the same Rank. This was because, unlike when they were R3s where a domain can completely suppress the enemy, it can't do the same with R4s. This was because Domain Armour was a level higher than a normal domain. For that reason, it couldn't be suppressed by a normal domain.

Only if the level difference is significant can one suppress domain armour with a normal domain. The difference would have to be at least, a LR4 against a PR4.

A MR4 can't suppress a LR4 and a PR4 can't suppress a MR4. So yeah, in most cases, domains are useless after R3 due to Domain Armour.

However, it would make it slightly harder for the lower rank to maintain their Domain Armour. And the domain can still pose a significant threat if the one it's being used on is low on energy. Which was the very situation Muku was in.

Despite the anger which made it want to explode. The Earth Dragon was still very rational in its decisions.

This was shown by its first big move which almost ended the fight.

Anyway, it didn't take long for the domain to cover the pocket dimension completely. All the plants got burnt and turned to ash as it expanded past them.

In less than ten seconds. The significantly vegetated area was completely turned into a desolate wasteland.

Muku gulped down as he saw this. He no longer had anywhere to hide even if the trees were useless as a defence anyway.

BOOM!

The beast finally landed back on the ground with authority. Despite missing a leg, it still looked quite cool actually. Hell, it looked even cooler without it.

"Well done human. Despite everything, including your hateful nature. You have earned a little of my respect. For that reason, I am letting you hear my voice before I end your worthless existence. So, rejoice, not only have you heard my voice, but you have also managed to wound me significantly. Which none have been able to do at the same level before..." The Earth Dragon finally spoke while addressing Muku.

For whatever reason he felt slightly happy that it acknowledged him. Even if it was mostly just expressing its disdain for him.

"I... (BOOM!)... You bastard!" Muku screamed in anger as he avoided a large fireball which had appeared above him.

He cursed at the beast for using much using his move of talking then sneak attacking when the opponent's guard goes down. He finally understood why it was so pissed off at him before. Such an honourless move was really angering.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!...

The ED didn't reply, it just sent one attack after the other at him from every direction. But he could swear he saw a gloating look appear in its eyes before going away... The bastard was really enjoying it!

Anyway, he didn't have time to worry about that. After all, all kinds of attacks were coming at him from every direction. This was the advantage of a domain over a Domain Armour. The attacks were instantaneous. Just think it and it would appear as long as you have the mana.

Of course, at the moment Muku really hated that quality. He was burning because of it. He even wondered if he was getting a free tutorial before he burns in hell.

But that shouldn't be, right? Tye Earth Dragon was definitely not a saint. So who gave it the right to try and purify others?!

Fortunately, the flames in the domain were only half as hot as the flames created under a domain armour. So, his Mithril which could resist even that fire could easily resist normal domain flames.

Unfortunately, that didn't mean he wasn't suffering. After all, he was in a metal armour in a place hotter than a furnace. So yeah, his life wasn't too good at the moment.

His skin was blistered all over under the armour. He might have shrugged it off easily if he had his built-up physic Mrs C had stripped away. Unfortunately, that was off the table until after the battle.

What was even worse was how he was practically stripped of all resistance. While he attacks he created with his metal could survive for a bit now. They could only go a few metres in front of him before melting away.

And he could get closer to the Earth Dragon which would intensely bombard him whenever he tried to get too close. It would get so strong that he had to retreat.

It made him wonder why it wasn't completely bombarding him from start to finish but he couldn't possibly ask it now could he?

The internal question did make him feel a bit uneasy but there was nothing he could do. He could only keep his guard up as he tried to figure something out.

And it wasn't like he didn't have a plan. Just like the last time, he was cooking something up. Fortunately, it doesn't get ruined like that time or he would really have to give up. The Earth Dragon would be too much for him to handle.

Anyway, the bombardments suddenly stopped. Muku looked at the creature in the distance in confusion. That's when he saw something in its eyes.

His eyes widened in surprise and fear. A familiar pillar has appeared behind him! The moment he saw the reflection. The flames around him cleared up. Then he saw everything.

The damned beast had recreated the Execution Ground!...

Chapter 289: Next step?

"F\*ck! This thing just won't give me a damn break!". Muku cursed while looking at the familiar flame structure surrounding him.

And unlike last time he couldn't escape into the ground, the damned creature was somehow using the elements of a domain armour in its domain.

While it wasn't able to make the whole domain as intense as a domain armour charged spell. It was able to do so to the Execution Ground.

This time there was no loophole in the structure. Muku was pushed to the edge of his capabilities in less than a minute. He could barely breathe. His vision was getting blurry. His skin had long dried up.

Despite that, his mind was still steady. He couldn't help but wonder if combining a domain and domain armour was the next step.

It actually was one of the things needed to do before stepping into R5. It was actually the first time the Earth Dragon had been able to do it.

Interestingly enough, it only managed to do it after getting killed, resurrected, its strength reduced and losing a leg.

It was actually a lucky moment for it. It was only able to do it due to the shot to the soul by Muku.

Maybe the close encounter with death again when Muku almost killed it was the push it needed. Well, whatever the reason. It has come out of the experience stronger...

As for the leg, there must be a way to fix it somewhere. Maybe kidnap a good healer after getting out of the current situation.

"Goodbye human... EXECUTION"....

BOOOO... Whoooo....

The familiar spear appeared in the sky and fell on top of Muku. This time it was a lot quicker probably because of the domain's presence.

Within a second an explosion went off when the spear made contact. The Earth Dragon was looking at Muku intently from start to finish unlike last time when it stopped paying attention when the explosion rang out thinking that it was over.

This time it had to make sure that he was hit. And he was hit, he didn't, or couldn't escape into the ground like last time.

Safe to say, he was done for. The Earth Dragon had won. Now it just had to look on as Muku resisted for maybe a second before he was ended.

He had served the purpose it had for him. It was the reason it hadn't been bombarding him nonstop from the get-go since he entered the domain. Which would have slowly but surely killed him off.

It wanted a live target to express its newly enlightened super spell on. Not to mention that Muku had wounded its pride a lot from the moment he escaped the Execution Ground to the two deadly shots he took at it. It wanted to end him with the very move which started everything.

And from the look of things, it had succeeded! That's when something weird happened. It was something which made its eyes open wide in surprise.

Before the explosion could reach its peak. It was sucked in by something. Instead of exploding out, it was getting smaller and smaller until it was completely gone.

In its place, a soccer-sized red orb appeared. Rather, it was created.

This was because it was spinning around on top of Muku's open palm. And as the Earth Dragon looked closer, there seemed to be a weird, tyrannical and transparent energy swirling around the orb.

It could barely sense the energy but it got a very intense sense of danger from it.

"..."

Its mind went black for a moment then...

Whoosh! Whoosh!...

It spammed attacks on Muku again. From all directions. This time it wasn't holding back. It used everything it had left. The domain turned redder and hotter due to all the attacks. No matter where Muku looked, whether up, down, left right, flame attacks came from everywhere.

However, he didn't panic. He even smiled. After all, he had finally gathered enough.... That's right. Your boy had been gathering force.

It was a lot harder to do with his weakened body which he pretty much had to retrain. But he made it work. He had to otherwise he would have had to give up.

Anyway, the first wave of attacks reached him.... Well, they reached the area five metres away from him and they... Vanished?!

But shouldn't that be impossible in a domain completely under the ED's control?!

The beast didn't lose hope yet. It had one more move to try out. It was going to show Muku its special domain ability it had been keeping hidden thinking it was unnecessary...

With that thought...

BOOOM!

The beast's body suddenly exploded in intense flames. Muku was surprised thinking that it had killed itself. That's when something surprising happened.

A Flame Elemental Dragon rose from the flames! Not an Earth Dragon. No! But a legit Western Dragon! Only that it was made out of fire.

"To think it could turn into a dragon...". Muku spoke softly.

BOOOM!

The dragon's flame wings opened wide and it took off into the sky as Muku's words fell.

Crazily enough, the missing leg was present in its Elemental Dragon form.

BOOM! Bang!

The dragon in the distance sped in front of Muku with a boom. The next thing he saw was a giant fire hand swiping at him. It scared the hell out of him!

But the hand didn't reach him as it bounced off after reaching a certain point. It was then he remembered that he had a Force forcefield. Which was quite an interesting thing to have.

"Huh, it seems that form gives you bullshit speed which you don't have in your normal force. Fortunately for everyone, you can only use it in your domain... Well, whatever, I've let you show off enough. It's my turn now. This farce has gone on long enough. And you might have just made this whole thing even easier for me" Muku spoke calmly in a low voice. But he was certain that the Beast which had retreated a bit could hear him.

As for why it has retreated, it was because it felt its claw getting shredded a bit when it hit the force barrier around Muku.

And as an intelligent beast, it didn't randomly start hitting the barrier over and over again hoping that it would work out. It chose to step back and think of a way to get through. That's how it has been living up to that point. And that's how it was going to win that battle... At the very least, it was sure that it was going to be the eventual winner despite all the twists and turns.

After all, there was nothing Muku had done which had made it feel too threatened. Even the new energy he was using didn't seem overly threatening.

It actually looked down on him for having so much energy and attack methods. After all, as they say, a jack of all trades is a king of none.

While it only had the fire element, it still felt that it was so strong with it due to focusing solely on it. Not that it was strong from the start.

Anyway, Muku finally made his move.

BOOOM!



That's right, all the ten kilometres had been cleared of the top layer of soil. And quite a few other layers too it seemed.

Muku's moving away hadn't changed much in the small area. While the intensity of the attack was a little less on him as he was ten kilometres away from ground zero.

He was still beaten up badly by it as it hadn't lost much energy in such a short distance.

His Mithril armour was completely stripped off. He was only left with his force barrier. His domain armour was also long gone.

Without Force, he would have fallen into the hole below. The situation looked pretty dire for him.

Then there was the Earth Dragon...

Chapter 290: Last Wish...

It surprisingly survived the blast! Sure, it was forced out of its elemental form and had lost a large chunk of its body. But it was still breathing.

Ironically enough, it was the part Muku had injured before which had been completely rooted off this time.

A stomp was left after the last attack. However, this time, there was nothing left. It was cleanly destroyed. And the injury extended upwards. The scales and a layer of meat had been destroyed. Some parts even exposed the creature's bones.

Then there was its tail which was also gone. Muku figured that it had tried to protect itself with its tail which resulted in the tail's destruction. It was a real wonder how the beast was alive with eyes still as intense as they had always been.

Muku couldn't help but develop some respect for it for how it could shrug off so much pain. If it were him he would have been screaming in pain left and right. He would make sure that anyone and everyone around would know that he was in pain.

Hell, even the current him who wasn't missing any limbs was wincing in pain and could barely focus on what was happening around him. Sure, he might have gone through even more intense pain before, but that didn't mean that he was used to it. He was no masochist after all.

This time he had managed to escape with skin as dry as a corpse which had been burnt so much it faintly smelled cooked. Jade might have been tempted to take a bite if she were present, well, maybe not, but she would at least think about it.

While it wasn't as bad as the Earth Dragon, it still hurt like hell to be cooked alive.

At the very least the heat was gone as the Earth Dragon couldn't keep its domain up anymore. It had splurged on mana in its last attacks so it was just as spent as Muku. It only had a little mana which it used to create the platform it was standing on, which wasn't enough to do anything to Muku if it attacked with it.

This wouldn't have been so if it hadn't been enlightened so suddenly. It probably would have whittled Muku's mana away until it won. Unfortunately, there were no redos in life...

"Human... That's what you are right? It seems you have bested me. Now are you going to end me or are you going to let me die on my own honourlessly?" The Earth Dragon addressed Muku.

It has finally remembered what he was after everything. The beast was the solitary kind which didn't interact with others much, for that reason, it didn't keep up with current affairs or care.

For that reason, the day the Monarchs addressed the Beast World about the humans had long been forgotten in its mind since it had been broadcast. Those who were sent to invade were sent to the portals at random.

And it had managed to avoid the draft so far, and so, it completely forgot about it. Which would anger any arrogant Monarch if they found out that a random R4 didn't respect them enough to even remember such important things.

Anyway, it was only through the intense battle with Muku that it finally remembered that past event.

Anyway, it understood why the Monarchs had said that humans shouldn't be underestimated despite their tiny build and weak appearance. Now it knew why, it had been looking down on Muku from the start despite everything.

Sure, the first escape from the Execution Ground wasn't on it, but after that, it didn't show due diligence. It should have hit him with everything it had from then until he was dead.

Unfortunately, it continued looking down on him until the end. Maybe it wasn't that it wanted to look down on him, but just looking at him, his tiny size... Then there was his trash mana. It all made it look down on him subconsciously. He just looked so weak and unimpressive. Like an ant to humans.

It really was no different from how humans look down on ants due to their tiny size. Even if the ant is supposedly poisonous and can possibly kill, it would still be hard to take it seriously. At best one would mind it a bit whilst still thinking that, "it's just an ant, I can squash it whenever I want...".

Anyway, there was a lesson to be learned in the event...

If you're going to crush an ant, crush it immediately. Do not give it a chance to fight back even if you think it can't fight back.

"Oh? Honour? I didn't know you cared about that. You didn't strike me as the type" Muku replied genuinely shocked.

That wasn't something he was expecting from the beast's mouth. It really didn't seem like the type to care about such things.

"Hmm. It seemed you were paying a lot of attention to me. More than I was paying you. Maybe that's why you're the winner and I'm the loser... Anyway, you're right, I didn't care about honour before. But you would be surprised by how many things start making sense when you're about to die" The Earth Dragon which seemed to have gotten a lot more chatty after the serious injury replied.

"Hahaha. You're wrong there. I have danced with death quite a few times actually. So trust me, I know. Anyway, do you have any last wishes before I send you on your way?" Muku replied to the beast confidently. After all, he was speaking the truth.

From that time Ares ambushed him, to the time his bloodline went out of control when Emily "died" and more. He really has had a few close encounters with death.

"It seems you do know. I can see it in those freakishly tiny eyes of yours... As for my last wish, I just hope you can help out a beast which looks exactly like me if you encounter it in the future. That's my one biggest regret... Of course, if you don't meet them or they aren't in any danger when you do, there's no need to do anything. If they are unreasonable, beat them up for me" The Earth Dragon spoke with regret in its voice.

"Understood. I promise to do just that. Though I was expecting you to ask me to save your life or something..." Muku replied.

He didn't dig deeper into the last wish even though he could tell that there was a great story behind it. He and the beast weren't even close anyway. He would take what it gave without desiring more. Besides, it would suck to know more about a beast he was about to kill.

"Haha. My life. What life? I have the feeling that I'm only here because of you in some way. Which means that I'm already a dead beast walking. So there's no need to be greedy. I even got a great battle for my send-off. Which is more than what I can say for the first time I died. We can say that you made up for what you did. Oh and, I no longer hold a grudge against you, life in the Beast World is just that. One moment you're dead and the next you're not. We all know that. I was only angry before because I was embarrassed by the death. Now I can finally rest in peace... We've spoken enough. So please, do it. My current state hurts more than you can imagine" The ED replied one last time.

It closed its eyes ready to receive Muku's attack after finishing speaking...

"... Understood, Sir" Muku replied seriously then raised his hand and pointed it forward.

All the force in his body which could be spared was focused in front of the pointed hand. And it was a lot. After all, the last explosion fed him quite a lot despite everything.

Which was fortunate since he was sure he could end the ED's suffering with just one attack...

It only took a few seconds to gather it all. A huge invisible vortex of force which had a diameter of around ten metres was formed. Then...

Whoosh!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

The huge orb flew toward the Earth Dragon at a super high speed. It was in front of the beast in less than a second. Then it exploded upon coming into contact with the beast's large head.

This obviously blew the unprotected head up killing the Earth Dragon instantly. Putting it out of its misery. Finally, it could rest..

Though at the very last moment, it cursed Muku, the bastard, for killing it the same way it was killed before. Couldn't he target its heart instead of something?? Did he think it was a certain purple super villain who shaves with a rake? There was no need to go for the head damn it!

Anyway, the moment the Earth Dragon's head was blown off. Muku was transported out of the pocket dimension. Maybe Mrs C didn't want him to see the gory sight?

He was used to seeing such things but not when some level of emotion was involved. So, maybe it was for the best that he didn't stick around...

....

Back in room zero...

Mrs C stood in front of the completely healed Muku nervously. She looked like a child who had been caught doing something bad.

Then again, she didn't get in the way of Muku killing off the Earth Dragon at one point.

So, yeah, she did do something wrong.

Muku didn't continue the stare down for long. He slowly walked towards her and before she could react, he hugged her tightly...

"Thank you..." Muku spoke softly while still in her embrace...

(AN: Well, she could have easily avoided him if she wanted to, but you know... Well, whatever)