

Last System 272

Chapter 272 End Of The Storm

I wouldn't lie by claiming that, at least for now, I controlled the battlefield.

Each of my launchers shot its payload so quickly that each of the bolts merged with the others, creating a stable ray of speeding mana.

Just like the monster would connect itself to other places with tendrils, I did the same. But instead of moving around my very mass, I moved around an insane volume of hostile energy!

But I wasn't really focused on damaging the monster. I was content with just locking it in place. I still needed more time to think over how to deal with it.

That's why rather than aiming for the monster in general or towards its tendrils to chip away at its lifeforce... I made my launchers aim their projectiles at the areas the monster actively sought to transport to.

Its tendrils extended towards a set of huge rocks?

My bolts nicely evened out the ground, ensuring there wasn't any natural obstacle that could obscure my field of view.

'Let's step up the game a bit,' I thought after taking my sweet time to confirm that the monster was now truly in a cage.

'I should be able to do it if I get a lot closer,' I thought, already long in the process of hatching a plan.

As the fight so far proved, defeating this monster just by shaving away at its energy would be an annoying task.

'No, not annoying, fucking dangerous,' I thought, fixing the naive attitude of mine.

Right now, I was putting my very life at stake. Just like I was doing my best to kill this monster, there was no doubt it would do its utmost to end my life instead!

'Remember Arthur, don't get cocky,' I reminded myself, keeping my focus at an all-time high. 'But this is going for too long already,' I decided before taking my first reluctant step towards the monster.

I changed the directives for my aiming stones once again, making the change happen the second I moved forward.

And for the first time since the very beginning of the fight, I allowed some of my bolts to rush right for the center of that monster's mass.

The violet ball of spikes suddenly contracted in itself as if attempting to condense into a single cell. And then, a single root of the monster shoots forward, right towards my heart!

Dun, dun, dum.

The singular arm of the monster broke through two of my guardians, barely stopping at the third one.

With just a little bit more power behind the strike, all three of my positional wardens would succumb to the attack.

Sure, I still had several defensive formations and six other wardens... But losing the initial three was no different than giving up on the first trench in the battle of attrition.

In contrast to my nearly bottomless mana, there was a strict limit to how many times could I renew my wardens. The formation stones in my pouch were ultimately limited!

'That was close,' I thought, staggering to the back.

I could feel the sharp pain of the wound that this attack would cause if it reached me, even though it never did.

This phantom pain was nothing more but a product of my imagination...

But it served well enough to refresh my mind!

"Okay, it's time to finish this," I muttered, raising my eyes with confidence.

There was only one mistake that this monster committed by attacking me like that.

Right now, a major chunk of its magical mass was locked within my Mage's Tower!

A single tug on several strings and the rest of the monster followed its main body. And the second the monster entered the area of my absolute power, the fight was basically over.

That is, assuming that my gamble would pay off.

'Disturb,' I thought, still unused to this particular ability. Especially because...

A sudden headache struck my mind, killing my vision and blocking all the other senses.

For but a second, I was the most vulnerable in the entire world.

I returned to my senses a mere second later. But it was already too late.

During this momentary lapse of my focus, the enemy managed to shoot out a golden ball from its side, freeing it from the influence of my mage's tower.

And a second later, the rest of the energy followed after the golden ball, as if there was yet another force pulling on the strings of the world's physics.

My desperate attempts to hold the monster within my Mage's Tower ended up futile. But I still learned something.

'Was it its core?' I thought, tracking the movements of the gulp within the body of the monster.

In this short period of time when its core was sent away, I managed to finally confirm that it was the source of this strange, oppressive yet familiar aura.

'Wait a second, isn't this aura the same as the air made me feel back at the borderlands?' I suddenly realized, so shocked that I almost allowed the monster to get a hit on me.

Yet again, a thick tendril invaded my space and broke through two more guardians to stop at the third one.

'At least now I know its ace card,' I thought, a wide smile appearing on my face.

I grabbed my spear and pulled it out from the ground, lowering its blade. Then, I simply stared at the monster while my bolt launchers continued to kill any and all directions the monster could attempt to escape.

'Half of the launchers, focus on the body,' I thought, changing the paradigm of the aiming stones yet again.

Then, my body was taken over by a shudder of terror.

That last attack... It got a bit closer than the previous one.

Sure, it still ended up repelled by the third of the new wardens, but it was only a matter of one or two attacks like that before my defenses would crumble... Or rather, the first line of it.

'I guess I was overreacting a bit,' I thought, watching how my bolts started to hammer at the monster's body.

And then, once again, I took a step forward. This time, however, the dust kicked up by my attack covered my steps, allowing me to push the center of my mage's tower a lot closer to the space-born entity.

'Since I lack a heavy-hitting ability, let's turn quantity into quality!' I thought, raising a new set of aiming stones.

And then, I dedicated all my focus to controlling the attacks that went the monster's way.

I wasn't stopping or even slowing them down. I simply made sure that a bolt, instead of hitting the ground behind its target's back, would join a massive flow of bolts, all of which would squeeze the life out of the monster.

'If I can confine its movements, I should be able to amass enough firepower to end it quickly,' I thought before unleashing hell on the monster once again.

And then, the paradigm of my battle-stance changed once again.

All my bolt launchers turned their angle, unloading their shots directly at the monster instead of cutting its paths of escape.

This job was taken care of already. Ever since the monster stepped into the area under my control, no matter where it would want to escape, a shatter-stone mine would await it.

All the while, more and more magic bolts joined in a whirlpool of magic that surrounded the enemy.

I raised my hand up, spreading my fingers as far as I could.

And then, I closed my first down.

My formations locked the monster in place. Other arrays covered it with pure, unadulterated mana. Another formation ignited that mana, covering the entirety of this violet monster with magic explosions.

And then, the dome of magic bullets that I kept roaming around the monster's head all fell down.

I coordinated all of my tools and skills to strike once and true in a single instant.

And then, just to be sure, I lunged forward, calling forth the skill that I nearly forgot I had.

The phantom blade associated with my spear.

Pushing through to the monster was a pretty weird experience.

With all the mana that fluctuated around me, I was unable to sense the monster at all. The dust that hid my approach earlier was now obstructing my line of sight.

But I continued to run.

Using every trick and technique that Lucius taught me back at the camp, I rushed ahead, inching towards the monster with every step I made.

And then I lunged forward, pushing my spear right in the middle of the monster.

Now that I got close, I realized that nearly a third of its mass was already gone, dispersed by my attacks. But with all honesty, it didn't matter right now.

I pushed my spear forward, forcing it into the surprisingly soft tissues of the monster.

And then, instead of using the phantom blade as a perfected cutting surface, I allowed the mana creating it to disperse deep within the monster's body. At the same time, I infused the spear with all the mana that I had to spare, accelerating the decay of my opponent.

The monster's magical mass layers started to disappear, proving that the fight was now over. With the loss of the will that guided it, the mana that a being possessed would return to the global pool.

And then, all the violet mass disappeared, leaving me holding a spear deeply embedded into the heart of a stranger.

'What?!' I shrugged, shocked beyond my ability to comprehend.

And then I realized what this situation meant.

'Did I just kill a man?' I thought, freezing on the spot.

Sure, it wasn't my first kill, but a first kill that I committed intentionally while fully in control over my own mental state.

"Khe..." The man spewed a mouthful of blood.

No wonder, given his heart was spilled into two by my attack.

"Please," the man muttered, his eyes hazy to the point there was no doubt the man was already on the edge of passing. "Save the others," the man muttered, raising his hand to grab the wood of the spear...

Only for his hand to slide down and fall to the ground when the life vanished from the man's eyes.

'What the fuck?!' I fixed my posture, looking around in search of hostile targets.

I simply attempted to make sense of this situation for a moment.

And then, I raised my eyes to the sky, tracking the direction this strange thing or man came crashing into my new world.

And there it was. The same violet dot, far out in the space yet close enough for people to notice.

'Rather than being the last, he was just a first of them,' I thought grimly before sending one last look at the deceased man's face. I then released a deep sigh before kneeling down before the body and lowering its eyelids.

It was the most I could do for this man right now.

I looked up once again.

The sun was rising.