

## **Martial Unity 1021**

### Chapter 1021: Flow

While it was going to take some time for the research to end, what wasn't going to take too much time was their deployment.

Soon enough, both Rui and Kane received stand-by summons from the department of defense. The two of them quickly scurried over to the edge of the town and quickly followed through with their instructions.

Both of them were wearing masks, of course. Rui had no intention of letting hostilities take an image of his appearance.

If it spread around, then it could potentially land in Chairman Deacon's hands, and he would recognize Rui in a heartbeat, regardless of the color of his hair.

Rui was relying on the poor communication facilities across the continent to get away with such a simple disguise. The further away they got from the Shionel Dungeon, the more Rui would relax, but for now, his identity needed to be protected.

The two of them waited in a dispatch facility with a bunch of other Martial Squires that were loosely part of the same squad. The Martial Artists arranged themselves in the manner of their range, with the long-range Martial Squires taking a place at the back of the squad and the close-range Martial Squires serving as the vanguard of the squad.

Kane and Rui took a place in the vanguard, The former because he was a close-range Martial Artist, and the latter because he wanted to stick with Kane.

The squad was on immediate stand-by for whenever the alarm for an incoming attack was sounded.

And it wasn't long before it happened.

"Eighteen Martial Artists approaching Crexeet town from six O'clock!"

"Executing directive 8b!"

Soon enough, the handler of the squad nodded at all of them. "You're all up, you outnumber the incoming Martial Artists, follow the protocols, and you'll surely be able to overwhelm them."

The guidelines in such circumstances were specifically meant to ensure that the squad members did not get in each other's way and were able to complete their duties without any problems.

The squad was quickly deployed once they were informed about the specifics of the attackers. Apparently, the Derous Duchy had set off another attempt to try and compromise the defense of Crexeet town. If it succeeded, it could make invasions into Crexeet town a lot more feasible in the future.

Thus the surrounding kingdoms routinely made sneaky attempts to try and stretch the defenses of Crexeet Town just far enough for significant holes to emerge.

Soon enough, the attackers emerged into view. The enemy Martial Squires took to the air when they realized that they were going to be executed.

Yet the squad did not intend to let them pass without any problems.

THWOOM THWOOM THWOOM THWOOM

Rui launched multiple Mighty Flash Roaring Blasts at several Martial Squires in the battle, uncaring for which one succeeded in hitting and which one didn't. It was merely a stalling move to ensure that they never got to Crexeet town.

That was the goal of the deployment, to ensure that no harm came to Crexeet town, allowing this basic goal to occur would be quite disastrous.

Rui's attacks did slow some of them down, along with other long-range offense techniques.

However, he wasn't content with just this simple and mundane goal. He hadn't forgotten the deal that he had with the mayor.

As long as he killed a Martial Squire, he got a week off, It meant that he had more time to do what he wanted.

It was for this reason that Rui was very motivated to kill a Martial Squire in this battle. His eyes ran around the entire battle who looked to be the weakest. It wasn't easy making these evaluations when all of them were heavily clothed in attire and masks, but he could vaguely get a guess for all their power levels.

For one, there was no grade-nine or grade-ten Martial Squires. He was extremely certain about that, his Primordial Instinct was something that could easily detect them had they been there.

However, there were some high-grade Martial Squires. So much so that he felt quite an interest in fighting them. Fighting low-grade Martial Squires was easy, but it was also boring and highly lacking in stimulation. Rui liked exercising his Flowing Void Style, more than the actual conflict itself.

Low-grade martial Squires were simply far too weak to force him to use the VOID algorithm, he could dispatch them simply by applying just a few of the techniques of his Martial Art.

There was no way that he needed anything more than that.

His vision suddenly rested on one particular Martial Squire out of them, one that looked particularly strong.

Rui had already made up his mind.

"I'm splitting off here," Rui told Kane. "Be careful."

"You too," Kane nodded.

Rui rushed toward the man before swiftly launching a powerful blow.

The man did not react with surprise or panic, he simply faced Rui, slowly raising his hand up slightly.

POW!

He interception the attack gently, yet Rui'd attack did not break through.

Rui's eyes widened as the world twirled in his vision. It took him a moment to stop the rotation, yet he was already open.

BAM!

The man had exploited the opportunity to launch a blow against Rui's gut, causing the latter to grimace.

('That was counter-offensive redirection') Rui's eyes twinkled with interest. ('His Martial Path is similar to aikido in the defensive aspect.')

In just a moment, Rui recognized and identified the core of his Martial Art's defense.

The man watched Rui for a second, before moving. Yet instead of attacking Rui, he dodged a blow from behind, stepping aside as he caught the fist. With remarkable movements, he twisted the flow of the power of his attacker to face Rui!

The man flew forward towards Rui, much to his own shock.

Yet Rui simply ignored him as he evaded the flying body before rushing toward his opponent with an excited expression. The man was a remarkable master of manipulating the flow of power of his opponent, and Rui was excited to test himself against the man.

## Chapter 1022: Outcome

As far as Rui could tell, his opponent was the most powerful Martial Squire on the battlefield. At least, that was what his Primordial Instinct told him. The more time he spent in the Squire Realm, and the stronger he got, the better he became at gauging the power levels of Martial Squire with just a glance.

His opponent had already demonstrated some powerful redirection techniques and a remarkable mastery over manipulating the momentum and torque of his opponent.

('A close-range counter-offensive Martial Artist,') Rui immediately deduced. ('He manipulates his opponent's flow of power to cause them to completely destabilize their balance and defenses. He exploits the openings he causes to land clean attacks.')

Rui was not unfamiliar with redirection, he had even mastered a redirection technique in the Apprentice Realm.

Rui stepped away as he launched multiple Mighty Roar Flash Blasts at his opponent. Much to his surprise, the man did not attempt to dodge the attacks, instead, he raised his palms, breathing in a strange manner, before spinning extremely fast!

The spinning instantly caused a powerful spiraling pillar of wind, Rui's sound projectiles were seamlessly dragged into the tornado that he had caused, failing to hit him.

Rui's eyes widened in amazement. ('He redirected sound by manipulating the air, the medium that sound travels through.')

Rui had simply lightly attacked him with a few long-range techniques to see how he would react, and whether he was able to effectively combat long-range attacks. Much to his surprise, the man was fully prepared to redirect long-range techniques that relied on the atmosphere.

Rui rushed forward as he launched a heavy Flowing Canon at the tornado, fully expecting to be able to break past it.

The reason that his sound projectiles had been ineffective was that the man had entirely bypassed it altogether. It was similar to trying to move away waves on the surface of the water in a bucket, you could try to combat the waves of water themselves, or you could move the entire bucket itself, the waves of water would not be able to do anything about that.

That was effectively what the man had done with Rui's sound projectiles, a rather clever counter to such forms of attacks.

That was why Rui immediately abandoned the technique as he adapted and returned to close-range combat, throwing in a powerful Flowing Canon aimed at the spinning man. Much to Rui's surprise, he immediately ceased the tornado technique before gently intercepting Rui's punch, applying just enough force in the right direction causing Rui to fall off balance.

STEP

Rui ceased his attack as he regained his balance, yet the man had no intentions of just watching.

BAM!

A powerful weighted blow struck Rui, yet it was his opponent's turn to feel surprised. The man visibly reacted as he felt the power of his strike seemingly disappearing into thin air as he impacted Rui's body!

Rui grinned as he seamlessly dispersed the man's attack into the ground, before launching a flurry of short and swift blows.

He had already begun adapting to his opponent. Attacks that took longer to land were easier to redirect, thus Rui had changed his approach entirely. He adopted a boxing stance as he threw short and swift jabs. By sacrificing power, he could make it much harder for the man to redirect them.

He held off on kicking against such an opponent. Kicks were more powerful than punches, but in this case, they were not suited against such an opponent. Kicks took longer to land, furthermore, they compromised balance more than blows did, in exchange for a much more powerful impact and greater range.

Rui knew that carelessly throwing kicks against such an opponent would only allow his opponent to completely toy with Rui effortlessly.

Rui wasn't even surprised when the man managed to deal with his strikes quite well. Yet, Rui's eyes were starting to 'see'.

Everything had patterns, and this man was no exception.

('You need to intercept attacks at a ninety-degree angle for your technique to work,') Rui noticed. ('Furthermore, the redirection process must begin before the attack reaches you, you cannot redirect attacks point-blank.')

He quickly adapted further altering his attacks even more. For one, he employed blows with a curving trajectory, which made it difficult for his opponent to redirect them, it also made it more difficult for him to be able to intercept them as cleanly as before.

POW!

Rui smirked as he landed the first clean attack on the man. Unfortunately, the blow wasn't all that heavy. Everything came at a price, and curving his strikes in such a fashion sacrificed a bit of power to achieve.

Still, it was a good start.

BAM!

Rui surprised him as he switched it up with a well-timed low kick to the shin, while simultaneously winding up a punch, allowing him to seamlessly follow through.

POW POW POW!

The man leaped back as he tried to put some distance between him and Rui, but Rui was not having any of it. He leaped forward with Outer Convergence and Gale Force Breathing, refusing to allow him any respite, all while spotting even more patterns in the man's movements now that Rui had pushed him out of his comfort zone.

BAM!!

Rui managed to land an incredibly heavy Flowing Canon lower right hook.

('You leave a blind spot at the other end of your field of vision every time you redirect attacks.') Rui mused as his attacks became more seamless and precise.

The more he fought, the more patterns he caught, and the more he was able to predict. His reaction speed effectively went down to zero as he began making incredibly well-timed movements and counters, completely devastating the man's defense and offense.

BAM!!!

A powerful flying knee kick struck his solar plexus, leaving him entirely incapacitated for a few moments.

POW!

A swift straight kick to the jaw was enough. He had accumulated enough blunt-force trauma that his consciousness shut down.

SPLAT!

A simple stab to the brain through the eye socket, and he was dead.

Chapter 1023: Considerations



It was a good fight, Rui took a moment to appreciate the power that his opponent demonstrated.

('He had a mature Martial Art,') Rui mused.

He could feel that his opponent had spent quite some time refining his Martial Art. He had a strong foundation and expanded the effectiveness of his redirection against all kinds of attacks across multiple ranges.

That alone probably took the man about a decade of creating or modifying techniques to possess the necessary individuality needed. That was the estimate that Rui had in mind when he considered how slow the rate of growth of the average Martial Artist was.

Regardless, Rui got the impression that this man was closer to reaching the Senior Realm despite being weaker than Rui.

Rui had not forgotten that the path to the higher Realms was not simply one of power, although power had a correlation.

He had failed to get an opportunity to learn of the exact conditions of the path to the Senior Realm, but as he grew stronger, it was almost as though he could intuitively sense what it could be.

The Senior Realm was a natural phenomenon. This he knew because Senior Ceeran had carelessly let slip in a conversation long ago that he had broken through to the Senior Realm in the middle of combat.

It was rather strange, the breakthrough to the Apprentice Realm was natural, however, the breakthrough to the Squire Realm was artificial and man-made. Then the breakthrough to the Senior Realm was natural once again.

('Does that mean the breakthrough to the Master Realm is also artificial?') Rui wondered, before shaking his head. He didn't feel like that was the case, although he certainly couldn't know at this point in time.

He glanced back at the corpse before him grabbing by the arm before he headed back in the direction of Crexeet Town.

He had already completed his end of the deal and had killed a Martial Squire, thus he had quite some time free of defense duties, as per their agreement. Martial Squires were special in Squire-level nations, after all, as well as in general.

One of the things that he had come to learn during his travels thus far was that the Kandrian Empire was truly an outlier. Based on his experience, half of all nations were only at the Apprentice level as far as Martial prowess went. The remaining half were nations that possessed Martial Squires, and even above, of course.

It put things into perspective for Rui, and showed him that in most places, Martial Squires like himself were quite precious. He could straight up negotiate with smaller and weaker Apprentice-level nations all by himself as a Martial Squire. It was unfortunate that these nations were simply too weak to provide him with anything that he wanted.

However, even when it came to Squire-level nations, he was quite precious and valued. He was experiencing that with Crexeet town at the moment.

Just by virtue of Kane and him being Martial Squires, the mayor had been quite motivated to retain their services no matter what.

He glanced around the battlefield as he spotted Kane. The man was evading attacks from what seemed like a piercing specialist. It wasn't a bad match-up to Kane as the greatest capability of his opponent's Martial Art could only be shown if an attack landed. If it didn't then his opponent would not be able to show his true power.

Rui nodded approvingly as he continued back to Crexeet Town.

He had no intention of helping Kane out, it wasn't good to stifle his combat with overprotectiveness. It was best if Kane overcame this by himself.

Besides, in the worst-case scenario, Rui was confident that he would be able to use Void Step to momentarily get away. Although they had agreed not to use it in combat, that didn't apply when he didn't have any chance and was on the verge of death or something like that.

THUD

Rui dropped the corpse before the defense personnel who let him back into the town. "Inform the mayor of this, will you?"

He nonchalantly made his way straight back to the scientific libraries of the Crexeet research institute.

His deal unfortunately did not include Kane in it, meaning Kane would need to kill a Martial Squire for himself if he wanted a good chunk of time himself. This wasn't entirely a bad thing as it would keep Kane busy and allow him to hone his skills in actual combat.

After all, at least as far as the pure research part went, he would need to rely on Rui a lot, there was nothing that he could do beyond that at the moment.

Rui immediately dug back into his research as he skimmed through several more esoteric substances, studying their properties. The search for appropriate substances showed him just how vast the field of esoteric material science was. It was also an excellent reason why conventional physics and theoretical physics were woefully underdeveloped. He couldn't even blame them.

After witnessing what esoteric substances were capable of, he too would have been more inclined to spend all his research capital on esoteric material science. There were simply far too many things that one could do with them.

In comparison, conventional physics centered around more normal and better-understood phenomena were rather boring. Furthermore, he could see that there was a good argument that esoteric material science and technology were superior to the conventional technology of Earth. The things that were possible in a variety of fields such as medicine and warcraft were greater than what conventional technology was capable of.

The only field that the latter exceed the former was in communication, information transmission, and processing sector. The internet far surpassed anything that the Panama Continent had ever accomplished as far as communication and information transmission went.

Still, for what he had in mind at hand, conventional technology wasn't really able to help him, he needed to find a solution buried in the myriad of esoteric phenomena of this world.

#### Chapter 1024: Discovery

Time passed a stable routine fell into place. Rui would research, and get deployed.

And then he would kill his opponent, and gain even more free time.

Every time.

Every time that he was deployed, an enemy Martial Squire died, and their corpse was brought back to Crexeet Town.

Every time.

Rui's dominance was shocking to both allies and enemies alike.

Word of his deeds spread like wildfire within Crexeet Town, albeit unspecific. The town was still unaware of the extent of the conflict that occurred outside the borders, however, they had come to learn that Rui always killed a Martial Squire every time he fought.

He was already quite famous because of his accomplishment in the scholarly fields, but he had also proven his worth as Martial Squire to the entire town. He was nothing short of a celebrity within the town, he had become the object of admiration and even lust.

The mayor was thoroughly overjoyed by Rui's dominating performance. He knew that the Martial Squires of this region were by no means of the highest grade, but there were plenty of competent Martial Squires, and even high-grade Martial Squires.

Yet, Rui was never stopped.

His success was so impactful that the enemy nations had long taken notice of him. He was known as the 'one soul reaper' in certain circles, for he only killed once every time he stepped onto the battlefield and no more.

However, something had to give.

These nations did not possess an endless supply of Martial Squires to merely be reduced as fodder for this new Martial Squire to consume. The loss of each Martial Squire was a tangible wound to these nations.

That was why after the fourth domineering defeat, the various nations finally threw their hands up and decided to deploy multiple Martial Squires to at least neutralize him as a threat, even if they could not eliminate him as a threat.

The fifth time Rui stepped onto the battlefield he was confronted with a defense-oriented Martial Artist and a long-range Martial Squire.

This was the first time in a while that Rui had been subject to a longer and more intense battle. It appeared that his enemies had chosen well. The long-range Martial Squire was a competent Martial Artist with immense flexibility and maneuvering as well as power. She could rapidly alter the angle from where she attacked him in a manner that was similar to Senior Ceeran, albeit much inferior.

The defensive Martial Squire, on the other hand, was a good tank with enough speed and wingspan, giving him the ability to barricade Rui from reaching the long-range Martial Squire who continuously bombarded him with powerful attacks.

Thus, Rui was confronted with an unfair battle where he was blasted with power offensive attacks that were quite difficult to evade, but unable to inflict any damage on either of them. The long-range Martial Squire was too far, he'd need to use his own long-range techniques, but also more importantly, the defensive Martial Squire kept tanking everything that Rui had to offer.

Yet, Rui eventually prevailed yet again.

He waited for the moment when the long-range Squire came closer to him than she ever had as he put on a facade of losing. Just when she got close enough, he used his Reverberating Catapult to launch the defensive Martial Squire straight at him.

Yet she hadn't realized that that was merely meant to be a momentary distraction.

POW!!!

A simple well-timed Flowing Canon from her blindspot took her down. She had been the kill for the fifth battle.

The enemy nations had come to realize that they couldn't simply keep him bogged down with just two mid-grade Martial Squires, thus they kept stepping up their efforts. It wasn't long before they had increased the quality and quantity of martial Squires enough so much so that they were able to pressure him very hard.

Yet, all it took was for Rui to exhale deeply in a strange manner. In the middle of the battle, he became vastly faster than he was before, he slipped through the Martial Artist nets that his opponents had made to suppress and kill him.

The Forestep technique was not to be underestimated. Although the predictive model that he had created in this battle was far too unrefined for it to bring out the full power of the Forestep technique that he had demonstrated in his battle against the Root, it was still enough for him to win the battle against the Martial Squires.

Time passed as this became the norm. A single Martial Squire seemingly turned the tide of war all by himself.

Rui seemed to be the only one who wasn't impressed. This wasn't the first time that he had had wide impacts just purely based on his Martial Art performance. Compared to what he had achieved in the Shionel Confederation, this little conflict was nothing more than a quarrel between children.

Not that he minded this in any way, in fact, he was rather relieved that this was the case. It meant that the enemies that he made were much more proportional in their threat level relative to him.

In the Shionel Confederation, the threat level of his enemies was off the charts. There were simply too many of them who were too powerful for him to possibly face head-on.

The same was not true for the smaller and weaker local sovereign states that he had picked a fight with by doing such a good job protecting Crexeet town. The Squire-level nations did not scare him. Although they certainly were stronger than him, they were unable to simply crush him, or even defeat him without any exertion like Chairman Deacon was capable of.

That was desirable. He had no intentions of making disproportionately powerful enemies yet again when he was already on the run from extremely powerful enemies in the first place.

Regardless, he continued his research until he finally stumbled across success.

"I've got it," He grinned. "This is it!"

## Chapter 1025: Family

Lashara sighed as she got up in the morning. Dawn had just cracked the veil of darkness, ushering in a new day. Mornings used to cheer her up, but these days, it only depressed her.

She wasn't the only one.

A melancholic gloom had swept up the entire Quarrier Orphanage. An undertone of grief had occupied everybody's day-to-day life, much to her dismay. It didn't help that winter was on its way, either. It meant cold and dark days for an entire season.

Of course, the orphanage was doing much better these days financially. Rui and Julian had supported the orphanage a lot financially, nourishing the orphanage, and allowing it to expand and take in more children.

It was far larger than it was just a decade ago due to this reason.

This was a great blessing and one that she hadn't even dreamed of before. She should have been happy, and she had been.

That was until recently.

It had been nearly two years since the last time she saw Rui. She recalled the day he left like it was yesterday. He had bid them goodbye with a smile as he went away.

He hadn't returned ever since.

About a year ago, an official letter from the Martial Union had personally informed them that Rui had passed on all his wealth to them out of the blue.

Apparently, he had even sent them a message.

'I'm sorry.'

Lashara felt as though the blissful life that they had had at the Orphanage had come to a grinding halt.

She didn't understand.

What did this mean?

They had been unable to get more information from the Martial Union. Not even Julian with his contacts had been able to find out what was happening with Rui.

Every day, she prayed that he would come home, and every day, she would be disappointed. It wasn't until a year later after that that it became evidently clear that Rui wasn't coming home.



She didn't even know what to think.

She didn't even know if he was alive.

She could only hope, but she felt as though the uncertainty was driving her mad. She couldn't help but fear the worst.

On one hand, she knew for all her worries, Rui was very competent and strong. However, that didn't mean he wasn't capable of befalling some danger that could take his life.

On the other hand, if he had the chance to contact the Martial Union and tell them to convey a message, he couldn't possibly be under any acute threat.

Julian had thus concluded that Rui was most likely alive, and had made a decision to not come back home for some reason. He suspected that Rui must have found himself in truly exceptionally dire circumstances that caused him to leave without saying more than a few words.

He had had some suspicions as to what had gone on, but he couldn't be sure. Although Lashara appreciated his intelligent insights on the matter, it only made her feel worse

She got up earlier than the rest, preparing herself for a long day. She also quickly whipped up some food for Julian along with Myra. He headed to work at the Kandrian Institute of Technology quite early in the morning.

"Thank you for the food," Julian smiled as he hugged Lashara goodbye.

She was happy to see that he had recovered in the past year.

He had taken quite a hit from Rui's disappearance, but it appeared that he was finally making his way back to how he used to be.

He was closer to Rui than most of them. They knew that the two of them had always enjoyed spending time with each other, partly because they were quite similar to each other in several ways. For one, the two of them were incredibly gifted mentally far beyond the norm. Lashara recalled how the two of them began speaking, reading, and writing at ages far earlier than normal children.

They began being able to use complex language at the age of four.

The two had gotten swimmingly well despite the age gap between them, something that she had always found odd, having conversations that none of the others could follow.

Soon enough, the rest of the adult caretakers woke up as well, starting their duties and work early in the morning before the kids got up and swarmed them.

The size of the orphanage had grown remarkably, thus there was a lot of work to be done. A year had passed since they learned of Rui's message, most of the adults were in the same mind as her, they were simply unsure of what to make of the matter in the first place.

Nonetheless, they too had been quite depressed about it. However, their responsibilities with the young ones caused them to push it out of their minds for the most part, they couldn't afford to be affected by it.

This matter hadn't been disclosed to the children, naturally. They were only children, after all. They did not need to be burdened with such matters.

Lashara knew that it was only a matter of time before they realized something was wrong.

Rui often did spend quite some time away from home, but never this long.

The older ones had already begun to realize that something was off.

Particularly Max and Mana, who were also Martial Apprentices in the Martial Academy. They had wondered why they hadn't seen their big brother and teacher in so much time. However, they spent

most of their time in the Martial Academy either training or completing missions now that they had received their learner's license.

All in all, Rui's disappearance had hurt the entire orphanage, but those who knew had no choice but to move on, and those who were too young to do so, didn't know.

Lashara didn't know where Rui was, or whether he was even alive, but she prayed that he was safe, and she prayed that he would one day return.

#### Chapter 1026: Lundenfire

Rui grinned as he finally found what he was looking for. Months had gone into scouring the database for the right kinds of esoteric substances, and suitable esoteric phenomena. It was unfortunate that he couldn't do non-combat-related tasks at super speed, such as research, which was why he needed a lot of time to finish all these tasks.

However, his effort had finally paid off.

[Lundenfire marble]

This was a substance that was known to be able to cause a shocking sensation to those who touched it when it came into contact with another piece of Lundenfire marble. It had been empirically verified to be the same kind of phenomenon as lightning when experiments confirmed that substances behaved similarly to this phenomenon as they did with lightning.

This could give Rui what he was looking for, it was the solution to Kane's issue.

Furthermore, that was not the only discovery that he made.

He had come across a technique that he had never known before, a technique that was foundational in the field of poison.

This technique allowed the user to permanently integrate a substance into their body without ever needing to replenish said substance. This was a highly advanced form of conditioning that made use of the special traits of the Martial Body.

The Martial Body was an evolved species relative to the human body, it was superior in almost all ways. One of them most certainly included the human body's mild tendency to be able to adapt to grow more resistant to things that hurt it through gradually increasing prolonged exposure to it.

There were humans on Earth who had become increasingly resistant and even immune to poison and venom after years of exposure to those substances. The body went through anatomical, and physiological adaptations that allowed it to resist them better, and perhaps even be able to integrate small portion of it into the body.

The Martial Body had elevated this to another level, because of the enhanced healing factor of the body, the body's ability to adapt to certain things became a lot better due to healed cells and tissue being able to deal with it better than before. The reason for this was because the cells that survived and healed would recover and heal, passing on their ability to survive and heal to the next generation of cells and tissue.

Thus, dangerous substances could be introduced into certain parts of the body, and the body was capable of adapting to it.

Furthermore, there existed ways to teach the body to ingest said substance to replenish it elsewhere into the body, or even produce the foreign substance in the body from scratch. The potential for this came from the appendix of the digestive system.

The appendix used to be an organ for breaking down structures and compounds that were particularly hard to break down.

The organ was now redundant in the human body due to major diet changes, causing the organ to have grown redundant.

However, during the evolution of the body into the Martial Body, the organ also evolved. It became possible to do things that weren't possible prior, such as teaching the body to produce or at least ingest and replenish certain substances into the body, things that it couldn't do before.

It involved a painful and long conditioning training technique that would eventually force the body to develop that capability in a manner similar to how it gained capabilities during the Squire evolution breakthrough process.

It was essentially a smaller and downscaled version of the Squire evolution breakthrough phase without the radiation and the hyper-accelerated healing process.

Rui realized that this was a technique that was not only relevant to Kane for when he introduced the Lundenfire Marble into his body but also to Rui as well as due to the substances that he had introduced into his body when creating the Riemannian Echo technique.

However, that was not all, after seeing how promising the results of his research were, he couldn't help but feel the desire to use them not just for Kane, but also to benefit himself.

In other words, he wanted to create his own technique incorporating these concepts in mind.

Furthermore, he already had the perfect kind of technique in mind.

('I did recall lamenting my lacking grappling and wrestling combat,') Rui recalled. ('This is a good opportunity to handle that issue.')

In fact, a simple image popped into his head when he began considering the concept of the technique. It was an exceedingly simple and straightforward application of the research that he had done and the kind of techniques that he wanted to create.

('The individuality is great. I did all of this research myself, so there is no question of originality, and I'm willing to bet that it is very unique too,') Rui mused. ('As for affinity... Well, it's not bad, though it's nothing special in that regard.')

That was fine. Not every technique could have a perfect affinity with his Martial Art as the ODA System and the Forestep technique. Regardless, it was a fine addition to his Martial Art and deepened his Martial Path nonetheless.

He still needed to iron out some details to make sure what he had in mind, it wasn't safe for him to just throttle forward at top speed.

For one, it was possible that the Lunden Marble was too toxic to be able to integrate into their Martial bodies, in which case, there was simply no question. The worst part was ascertaining this, it would require a bit more time as Rui would need to conduct some more research on the substance and its viability as the foundation for some Martial Art techniques.

He would need to borrow the research facilities of the institute to learn what he needed. Thankfully, he didn't require much time, a handful simple and straightforward experiments would tell him everything that he needed to in this regard.

('Once that's out of the way, we can finally get through what we came here for in the first place,')

#### Chapter 1027: Integrate

Much to Rui's ecstasy, Lunden Marble was not too toxic and poisonous to the Martial Body. A week passed as Rui quickly all the experiments that would verify this.

He subjected the substance to tissue from his body and other origins to test harmful the substance was to the Martial Body.

It turns out, that the substance was instantly lethal to the human body, but only mildly to the Martial Body. That was quite the desirable outcome.

It meant that it could be integrated into the body with some degree of conditioning to acclimatize the body to the substance.

"Lunden Marble..." Kane murmured. "You sure that this is it?"

"Positive," Rui replied, nodding.

"How does it work?" Kane asked.

"You'll have to integrate the substance into two parts of your body, bringing them into contact will charge your body in a similar fashion to the lightning bolts of Thundering Valley," Rui told him. "You'll also have to undergo a conditioning training technique that will allow your body to naturally integrate Lundenfire Marble into your body if and when you ingest it, or its building blocks."

"That sounds rough," Kane grimaced. "But if it will allow me to use my Fulminata technique, then I'm willing to go through with it."

His Fulminata technique was something that he was deeply attached to and unwilling to let go of, the technique was the first technique that he had created from scratch. It not only turned out to have an incredible affinity with him and his Martial Art and Path, but it also turned out to be a grade-ten technique that allowed Kane to keep up with Rui going all out, something he never thought that he would be able to do.

He was determined to get his hands on any way that would allow him to retain the technique.

"I want to get started immediately," Kane told him.

"Sure, I've already confirmed that the institute has enough of the substance that we can purchase with our services so that we can employ them in our techniques," Rui replied.

"Oh," Kane raised an eyebrow. "You're telling me you have use for this technique as well?"

Rui nodded. "Not as much as you do, however, I do believe I can make good use of this technique.

He had mostly come up with two technique projects.

The first technique project was centered around a grappling and wrestling technique. His plan was to employ lightning in a manner that allowed him to be able to impart a current and charge to his opponent to cause a certain degree of paralysis, weakening them in the process of grappling with him.

Thus, even coming into contact with him in a fight was unsafe in the first place, he could paralyze weaker and lighter victims without any doubt. Only the stronger or heavier ones would be able to resist or negate the technique's influence.

Grappling in particular was a field of combat that required constant struggle from the entire body exerting force every moment. Any lapse in effort could cause one to instantly lose the battle as their opponent would be able to gain a dominating position and the fight was as good as done.

This was Rui's attempt at closing the shortcomings that existed in his grappling. Although it was not perfect, this technique made Rui confident of being able to engage in grappling in general.

His next technique project was a close-range striking technique centered around the same principle as the previous technique. This technique employed lightning to paralyze his opponent by passing electricity through their autonomous nervous system through their nerves and pressure points.

Unlike in the grappling technique, he did not have full-body contact with his opponent, which meant that he had a reduced surface area to work with. That was why he had to specifically aim for the nerves and the pressure points, otherwise, the technique would be meaningless.

He considered trying to master the Fulminata technique through the same way Kane would be doing so with Lundenfire, but he ultimately decided against it, his body was evidently not able to sustain the same amount of current and charge as Kane was, for some reason. This was why Kane was able to reach a stage where lightning bolts did not hurt, but actually helped him.

Rui, instead, decided to employ lightning in different ways. He decided to employ it not to empower himself, but actually to depower his opponents and weaken them mid-fight. This would create holes that he could exploit and win the fight.

Of course, he was aware that there was a limited scope with this ability, he would not be able to one-shot any powerful Martial Squire magically, most certainly not. However, it would become a powerful tool when employed at the right time and place.



More than anything, it increased the versatility of his Martial Art. The solutions that he could not employ prior were not possible now that he had a depowering technique that could hamper and incapacitate his technique in such a fashion.

Rui was quite excited to train and realize both these techniques, yet not nearly as much as Kane was to regain the Fulminata technique.

"It probably won't be as strong as it was in the Thundering Valley," Rui warned him. "It's hard to replace something that powerful this easily."

Kane nodded. "I understand. I'm not naive enough to believe that everything will turn out perfectly, if I can gain a good chunk of the prowess that I had in the Thundering Valley, I'll be happy."

Even with a portion of that technique, Rui suspected that he would still become a lot more formidable than without it. It was a powerful enough technique that, along with Godspeed allowed him to fight Rui as an equal. As long as he lowered Godspeed's output to match the resultant Fulminata technique, he would still be extremely powerful.

"Heh," Kane grinned. "I can't wait to fight those Martial Squires deployed by the surrounding nations after I remaster this technique."

## Chapter 1028: Tattoos

"You still have some planning to do," Rui told Kane. "As I told you, Lundenfire requires contact or extremely close proximity with itself in order to generate charge. This means simply integrating them into your body isn't enough, you need to brush the two portions of Lundenfire in your body in order to charge your body with lightning."

"In the middle of combat?" Kane frowned.

"It's not going to last as long as the charge you got from the lightning bolts of Thundering Valley," Rui nodded. "You're going to have to charge and recharge in the middle of combat."

"Hmm..." Kane considered his words. "Then it'll be best to make the charging as easy and accessible as possible."

"That's right," Rui nodded. "The charging will require gesture with you brushing the two portions of Lundenfire in your body together, so make sure to choose a rubbing motion or action that's easy to do in combat."

"Well," Kane glanced at his arms. "Then I'll go for my arms. My legs are far too important to be preoccupied with such matters. I need them unimpeded at all times."

As an evasive maneuver, his legs were extremely important to his evasive maneuvering capabilities. He could not constantly detract from that by constantly having to perform some gesture that will allow them to perform more than what they could already do so far.

"I plan to do that for one of my techniques as well," Rui nodded. "What we can do is figure out which parts of our arms to graft the Lundenfire marble into based on the rubbing gesture."

Rui and Kane spent some time figuring out what they wanted the gesture to be. It didn't have that many restrictions, for starters. It only required both arms to make contact with each other.

Thus, they could find the simplest and easiest gesture to make in the middle of combat, and then simply graft the Lundenfire Marble into those parts of the arms that would make contact with each other.

Thus, performing the rubbing gesture would bring the Lundenfire Marble in contact with each other, producing a charge and current that would travel to the entire body. Now, all they needed to do was get Lundenfire tattoos on their arms in the places that they had already decided ahead of time.

It was a good way of disguising the esoteric substance as art.

"Why are your tattoos thinner?" Kane frowned.

"It will generate less charge," Rui replied. "I can't handle lightning with the ease that you seem to be able to. That's why I'm using less Lundenfire Marble. I also can't get the boost to my reflexes the way you do because my body does not conduct electricity like yours does."

"What?"

"Basically, I can't do what you do, so I have to make the best use of what I can," Rui replied.

The two of them quickly made up their minds about where they wanted to graft the Lundenfire Marble in the skin of their arm. The result was strange tattoos across their arm in different elementary designs since neither of them were capable of art to any meaningful degree.

By the end of it, they had ended up with marks on their arms that highlighted the areas where they would inject the Lundenfire Marble, before recording it.

After that, it was just a matter of the procedure, for Kane at least.

"Wait, you're not getting the injection done right away?" Kane frowned.

"Yes," Rui confirmed. "I want to build up my tolerance for electricity with conditioning, otherwise there's no point."

For example, if he generated enough power to stun and paralyze his opponent, he needed to be able to resist it in the first place himself. Otherwise, he would get paralyzed the second he charged his body up.

He was envious of Kane, who was able to harness lightning without any side effects.

Soon enough, Kane's arranged procedure began with the trained professionals of the Crexeet Institute.

Rui had chosen to overlook the entire procedure, as he did not trust anybody in that place. This was not the Martial Union that he could at least trust not to be malicious or incompetent.

The integration procedure looked exactly like what Rui expected it to. The machine looked like a giant tattoo device.

It systematically dug into the flesh of Kane's arms, spreading the Lundenfire Marble into his outer flesh.

The procedure was surprisingly quick.

Within an hour, all of the Lundenfire Marble had been grafted into his skin. Furthermore, he didn't even need any caution time thanks to his healing factor healing the tissue that had been damaged, integrating the esoteric substance into his flesh.

Within some time, he was as good as new.

"You're sure I can try it out now right?" Kane asked with an excited expression.

"Go ahead," Rui told him.

Kane nodded, before bringing his arms together and letting the tattoos on both arms touch.

BZZT!

His expression lit up as he felt a nostalgic sensation. His long lost technique had finally come back.

"Hahaha!" He laughed. "This is great! It's not nearly as strong as the lightning bolts from the Thundering Valley, but it's still pretty good!"

"FUUUU...!" He exhaled hard, activating his Godspeed technique partially, before immediately testing out his new technique like an excited child.

WHOOSH!

Rui's eyes widened as Kane manifested a large portion of the formidability that he had displayed in the Thundering Valley. Rui would not be able to handle him without Forestep, that was true without a doubt.

"Let's spend the rest of the day sparring!" Kane grinned.

Rui chuckled but shook his head. "I still have a lot of preparations to do for my training, so I can't keep you company, unfortunately. Still, you don't need me if you want a fight."

Kane's head tilted quizzically.

"Have you forgotten?" Rui smirked. "You're participating in a war against actual enemies. Go fight them and prove yourself on the battlefield."

"You know, that's actually a brilliant idea,"

## Chapter 1029: Menaces

In the days that followed, Kane stormed the battlefield, eager to test the limits of his capabilities against someone who wasn't Rui.

The reason for that was that Rui was arguably the worst person for him to test his strength against. The reason for that was because Rui possessed grade-ten combat power, if not more when he was facing off against opponents that he was very familiar with.

Thus even though he had fought hard against Rui in the Thundering Valley, he still did not have a good intuitive feel for how well he would perform against normal Martial Squires.

That was the issue with Rui, one that he hadn't overcome yet.

In the next few days, Kane eagerly took part in the Squire-level conflicts against the surrounding nations.

And it went exactly as he hoped it would.

He became a force to reckon with. Much to his delight, none of his opponents could lay so much as a finger on him!

At one point he was fighting the entirety of all enemy Martial Squires as he ran around the battlefield, attacking all of them one by one.

Rather than fighting one Martial Artist at a time, he decided to turn into a bit of a team battle as he simply ran around helping allies and friendlies win in battle.

These speedy and sneaky attacks gave his allies an advantage allowing them to capitalize on it and win the battle as a large, driving away the enemy Martial Squires.

Soon enough, Kane gained his own notoriety among the surrounding nations as the chaotic flash that dashed around the entire battlefield caused havoc, one that they hadn't managed to even land a scratch on.

On days that both he and Rui participated, they were menaces on the battlefield. There were times when the enemy Martial Squires retreated from the battlefield just when they recognized the duo, for they were not equipped enough to handle the two of them at once.

Rui and Kane had reached a stage where they could effectively keep up with the enemy squad with just the two of them alone, even if their allies failed to keep up.

The one thing that Kane regretted was that it was impossible for him to use the Void Step technique simultaneously with his Fulminata technique.

The Void Step technique was a very conscious technique, it was a technique that required the user to very consciously gauge and then misdirect the attention of the targets of the technique.

The issue was that when he was using Fulminata, he was operating purely on enhanced reflexes. The current and charge only amplified his reflexes and thoughtless movements, not all cognitive processes. That meant that he was moving too fast for him to apply the technique when he was using Godspeed with Fulminata.

Rui hadn't expected him to be able to use the two techniques together either. It was simply too overpowered, it would give him a level of power so high, that Rui would probably be the one and only Martial Squire in the entire world who could take him down.

Regardless, Rui was happy for his friend's success. He had managed to retain a good chunk of the original Fulminata technique. In a sense, it was probably good for Kane's growth that he didn't manage to retain it at its original power and capabilities. That would have been far too rapid for growth, it would have hindered him in the long run. It would have eliminated any need for Kane to develop techniques with individuality and probably would have stagnated his growth to the higher Realms consequently.

Seeing Kane be and do fine put his mind at ease as he returned back to his own matters.

He had been subjecting himself to electrical conditioning. Passing current through his body and fighting to retain control over his muscles was something he had found more challenging than he had expected.

The current most certainly hurt, not only did it render his muscles obsolete, but it also burned due to how much it heated up his body. Unlike Kane, his body offered a lot of resistance to current, it meant that his body would heat up as a result. That was one of the reasons that he had minimized the amount of Lundenfire Marble that he would be inserting into his body to make sure that he wasn't overdoing it.

He couldn't afford to overheat in the middle of a battle.

During this time, both Kane and he had already begun training on the integration technique of the poison field. Subjecting his digestive system to the substance had slowly begun to cause it to be able to integrate the substance into the body over time.

The reason the two of them had been subjecting themselves to this technique was so that they would be able to regenerate their tattoos if they were got damaged in battle, just by ingesting some Lundenfire Marble.

Rui had also opted to have the same technique performed for the substances that he had used for the Riemannian Echo technique. Thus he would be able to naturally fix his Riemannian Echo technique just by ingesting the relevant substances.

It took weeks for him to finally reach the level of comfort when subject to current before he was finally ready to get the procedure done himself.

BZZT!

"Woah..." Rui murmured as he felt the strange numbing sensation spread across his body. Previously, this would have been very painful, but he had managed to develop a degree of

His procedure took even less time, and he bounced back out of recuperation very quickly. However, the job was not done immediately. Unlike Kane, he didn't have pre-existing techniques that allowed him to know what to do with the current.

He was finally at a stage where he could proceed with the two projects that he had had in mind. It was only now that he had gotten his own little lightning technique that he could fully realize the two techniques.

#### Chapter 1030: Team

The grappling technique that he had decided to call Thundercoil was very simple and did not require much complex theoretical sophistication.

The whole concept of the technique was to add an electric buzz to basic grappling combat. Meaning he didn't need to do too much.

The few things that did require adjustment and practice were maximizing surface area contact with his opponent to maximize the current.

What he needed to do was to reinvent some of the basic maneuvers keeping that condition in mind.



This part took him back to his days when he trained in jiu-jitsu and judo with his siblings, and then later on in the Martial foundation. It was just relentless practice of basic moves until it got hammered into his soul.

It was simple and straightforward unlike most of his techniques. Most of his techniques had complex mechanisms and systems of function. Especially techniques like the ODA system were among the most complex techniques that he had ever created and seen anywhere.

In comparison, techniques like the Thundercoil were closer to the norm.

His striking technique was not nearly as simple. He had already long begun to deeply familiarize himself with the nervous system of the human body so that he could target them accurately.

It required truly burning the image into your bones such that you always knew where to strike in order to strike a nerve.

Unfortunately, he couldn't use the Mind Palace as a substitute this time, the Mind Palace was a very conscious form of memory, what he needed was a subconscious form of memory, to know all the places that he ought to aim for without any conscious thought.

The reason that he could only aim for nerves was that the amount of current that he could pass with every strike was very little due to the limited contact time and area.

However, if he passed that limited current through a nerve it could have a limited paralysis effect, limited in both degree and timeframe of paralysis.

Thus his training continued week by week as he slowly began gaining mastery of both techniques.

He first came to master the Thundercoil technique first, due to how simple and straightforward the training for this technique was. It was so easy, that it really didn't even feel like training.

However, the technique was not necessarily weak due to this, The reason for that was the fact that the technique was actually more effective than Rui had expected. He discovered that the technique

massively increased the chances of landing a rear chokehold on his opponent. There was no way that they could possibly do anything other than the tap.

Or in this case, die.

Rui discovered that this technique was in and of itself not very potent, but it allowed him to employ certain solutions that would give him the win.

He took a bit of a break from training as he began testing the technique out against the enemy Martial Squires of the surrounding states.

His success rate at being able to take down opponents via grappling increased many folds as many of his opponents found themselves unable to muster up enough resistance to be able to handle what was coming next.

Of course, every now and then he ran into a particularly defensive Martial Artist who simply possessed the ability to resist grappling.

Much of his adapted grappling was a little useless in such circumstances and he got thrown off. That was an unexpected weakness surrounding he simply did not expect to encounter. It made the move a little risky.

The striking technique took longer to master. He needed to be able to strike nerves properly with the Lundenfire Marble that he had grafted into his nails and the skin under his nails. It allowed him to convey current into the target's nerves easier than if he just randomly struck them.

He was particularly ecstatic to try the technique that he had named Thundering Tap. It was a name that conveyed the gentleness of the strike. The reason that it was a gentle technique was that it relied more on accuracy and precision than it did on speed and power.

In fact, power was just irrelevant in this technique, it just made landing the correct strike harder since a powerful strike would be unable to correct course to adjust for the moving target.

The good news was that it meant more variety and versatility for Rui, but he also couldn't just combine this technique with his other technique to get an even more powerful striking technique as a result. They were simply antithetical to each other.

That was fine by Rui, he would rather have more options rather than a single technique that was overpowered.

The time had come to try both techniques in combat against the enemy Martial Squires from the foreign entities.

Rui and Kane stepped onto the battlefield as the two of them were singlehandedly deployed against a small squad of enemy Martial Squires.

Normally, such an uneven matchup was not something that the Department of defense would ordinarily create, however, it appeared that they were not in for an easy ride. The Department of defense had long since noticed the two of them exceptionally strong Martial Squires that also possessed an extreme amount of synergy and teamwork with each other.

Particularly, Rui was extremely good at matching Kane perfectly. This was an unexpected application of the predictive model in combat. Using the predictive models as a way to predict allies and friendlies, it would allow for an unheard-of level of coordination and teamwork.

And that was exactly what Rui and Kane achieved each time that they entered the battlefield together and fought together. Rui would pull out one powerful technique after another to launch against his enemies while Kane stormed around the battle with his chaotic energy, disrupting their defenses while casually evading their offense effortlessly with his Fulminata Godspeed.

Now it was time to see how much of a numerical gap they could handle.