

Martial Unity 681

Chapter 681: Catapult

That battle was intense and heated from the very start. The Longranger Martial Squires demonstrate their prowess and their worth as they rained all kinds of attacks on their opponents. Not only did they demonstrate techniques centered around the same principles that Rui had seen the long-range Martial Apprentices employ, but there were also many techniques that Rui hadn't seen ever before.

Techniques became a lot more absurd in the Squire realm since the Martial body allowed for the application of power in ways that the human body was simply unable to even attempt to replicate.

Still, he was more concerned with his opponent than anything else.

Their battle became independent of the others. Rui was forced to continuously move away from his opponent while she launched herself after him. Despite being much more powerful than him, she was quite heavy. The power canceled out with her mass, preventing her from drastically out-speeding Rui.

THWOOM THWOOM THWOOM

Rui fired Sonic Bullets one after the other relentlessly as he tried accumulating damage on her neck. Thanks to the extra-refined predictive model that he had built on her, he was able to accurately aim for her throat despite both of them chasing after him at top speed.

What he did discover was that even her throat was ridiculously tough! He had already landed numerous attacks on it, and the most he was able to do was bruise her.

('What the fuck? She has got to be grade seven at least, if not grade eight. That kind of defense is stupid.') He groaned inwardly as he relentlessly launched attacks, trying to slow down her momentum in vain.

She chased after him, barrelling through his attacks like a rhino. His attacks didn't do too much to slow her down. She gritted his teeth and bore all the attacks that he tried directing at her vitals, defending them or plainly tanking them head-on.

Unfortunately, she was extremely wary of any attacks to the eye. As tough as she was, not even she believed that she would be able to withstand an attack of that caliber to the eyes. If Rui succeeded in hitting her eyes like he did the previous two Martial Squires, then that would almost certainly kill her, or cripple her forever at the very least.

The K'ulnen Tribe was much more sensitive towards injuries than the Martial Squires of the Martial Union were. After all, the Martial Squires knew that healing potion technology was a deeply developed field. Although the cost of healing potions for Martial Artists was progressively more expensive and restrictive as one went up the Realms, they were still certain there was an extremely little chance that they would incur an injury that the Martial Union would be unable to heal, or that even their potions would be unable to heal.

"ARGH!" She snarled in frustration as Rui began maintaining the distance between them that much better.

The distance between them was a few hundred meters. Far enough that the chances of her reaching were not too high, and he didn't need to fight like he was treading on extremely thin ice. But close enough that he could aim for her vitals despite being highly consumed by maneuvering away from her. It was much harder to aim accurately when both the shooter and the target were moving at top speeds in a dance of high-effort maneuvering.

Unfortunately for Rui, he couldn't do much more than that at the moment. She put an immense amount of effort and care into ensuring that Rui would be unable to take her down the same way. Even if he so much opened his mouth, she would immediately tighten her guard around her vitals. Her eyes were perenially guarded. It was clear that she possessed some sensory technique that allowed her to sense his location from a good distance away, and that was enough.

Even if her sensory capabilities were much lower than that of Rui's it didn't matter all that much. Even if she couldn't sense the motions of his limbs, it didn't really affect her all that much. As long as she had clarity on his location at any given moment, it was good enough. Her goal was to get close to him and pummel him to death. Sensing his location was enough because once she reached his location, it did not matter what Rui did to defend against those attacks, they both knew that the fight would be over with a single clean attack.

THWOOM THWOOM THWOOM

Rui launched another barrage of attacks against her as his movements began growing increasingly effective and accurate. He smiled as he began using the data that he was obtaining in this battle to further refine his predictive model of her.

('If you cannot defeat me at the start of a battle, then you cannot defeat me,')

This was very true for Rui. The VOID algorithm ensured that he grew stronger with every passing second. His power growth against particular opponents in the middle of a battle meant that the best and only opportunity to take him down was at the start of the battle.

It was his one and only weakness.

('You have long crossed the threshold,')

That was why Rui was quite confident that she would not be able to take him down despite clearly being several grades higher than himself.

However, that only applied if this was a one-on-one battle.

('Hm?') Rui's noted another Martial Squire circling around their own opponent to reach Rui's opponent, meeting up with her.

The man twisted his upper body as he wound his balled fist back behind his body preparing for a punch despite being very far away from Rui.

Yet Rui's eyes widened as he saw his opponent bracing her body before her fellow tribal member.

('Shit!') Rui cursed as he realized what their plan was. He scrambled away at top speed as the man swung his wound fist, catapulting the woman forward at an extremely high speed, straight towards Rui.

"HAHAHA!" She cackled as she flashed through the sky at a tremendous speed, quickly catching up with the frantically retreating Rui. "YOU'RE DEAD!"

Chapter 682: Plan

This battle came to remind Rui of one of his other weaknesses. Perhaps it was more of a shortcoming, but regardless, Rui had come to remember how much larger scale conflicts and team battles could catch him off-guard.

The last time he had been part of a conflict this big was in the Serevian War, however, back then he was the most powerful and dangerous person on the battlefield, thus he never felt this shortcoming nearly as much. However, he realized that he was too accustomed to analyzing and making combat-centric decisions in a vacuum with his opponent and himself, and the environment. He did not have much experience in group battles.

The last time he truly fought together as a group was with his four friends against the newborn Martial Squire of the Commonwealth Duchy of Vinfrana. Even then, that was against one opponent.

Rui swore that he would rectify this problem when he got the chance. For now, however, he had to deal with the consequences of being caught off-guard due to not having factored in such an elementary solution.

His opponent shot across the sky at an extremely high speed towards him, laughing maniacally winding her leg back to slam him with a powerful attack no doubt. Rui scrambled away from the trajectory of her motion, but she carefully made sure to adjust her trajectory to keep up with Rui via sky-walking.

Rui felt Primordial Instinct screaming to him about the incoming danger as she got closer to him until it was too late for him to avoid her.

"RARGH!" She kicked hard, contorting her body to generate as much torque as she could. She employed power-boosting supplementary techniques not too dissimilar to Outer Convergence. However, it was exponentially more powerful than that of Rui when she used it. Hell, Rui was sure that she was proportionally more powerful than even Fae if their Realms and grades were hypothetically equalized.

Her leg blurred in his vision as it lashed out against him with tremendous power. Rui gritted his teeth as he intercepted the attack with his palm, immediately activating Flux Earther.

BAM!!!

CRACK!

WHOOSH!!!

Her eyes widened at an incredibly strange occurrence. The attack landed, and she even felt his wrist cracking, yet what surprised her was that the impact seemed to suddenly send him hurtling an incredible distance away at incredible speeds as though he had been launched by a catapult. It was a strange sensation unlike anything she had ever felt and a strange sight, unlike anything she had ever seen.

"Ugh..." Rui groaned as he finally managed to stop his momentum. "I almost died..."

He grimaced as he looked down at his swollen wrist. As bad as it looked, the situation wasn't all that bad. After all, he wasn't fighting with his arms in this battle.

('Unless, of course, I need to do what I just did again,') He sighed.

In the last second, he used Flux Earther to intercept the strike, however, instead of completing the full technique from start to finish, he only executed about half the technique. He elastically converted the power of her attack to kinetic energy to accelerate his body and send him flying as far away from her as possible.

Considering that he wasn't able to prevent his wrist from cracking, Rui considered it a partial success.

('This is still better than any other solution I had,') He sighed as he consumed his healing potion. He had brought multiple since he knew that it was entirely possible he would end up needing them given how restrained he was in this battle.

('Now then...') He turned back to face his opponent. She was still rushing down towards him, unwilling to give up on taking him down. She barreled down, passionately cursing him in increasingly creative ways to take him down. ('How do I handle this?')

He needed an actual solution here. Her tribe mate was already winding as he wrung his body to generate as much power as he could when he flung her the next time.

('I can't stop them from cooperating,') Rui braced himself as he prepared himself to take on yet another K'ulnen human cannon shot. ('They only need a moment to get their little combo off,')

WHOOSH

In the distance, she braced herself as her tribe mate launched her forward as he withstood the attacks of his actual opponent with raw durability to ensure that he could help her against Rui.

('Can't escape, can't defend,') Rui summarized even as she shot towards him. ('I guess the only possible way out of this situation is to retreat from the battle entirely or...')

His eyes narrowed. ('Win.')

A germ of an idea formed in his head as he came up with a strategy.

Even as she flew towards him, guarding her vitals, she was prepared to not ensure that he could not possibly escape this time. She took a partial grappling position as she decided to crush him in a midair grappling contest, rather than allow him to escape yet again with that strange technique.

Yet her eyes widened as Rui began sprinting towards her at top speed, closing the distance rapidly.

('Does he have a death wish?') She wondered in confusion as her senses picked him getting increasingly closer to her increasingly faster.

What kind of a long-range Martial Artist purposely drew closer to a close-quarters specialist barreling straight towards them with every desire to kill them? She didn't understand, this made no sense!

Hundred meters.

Fifty meters.

When they were only ten meters away from each other, Rui finally opened his mouth, launching two Sonic Bullets in rapid succession.

THWOOM THWOOM

He was staking a lot on this plan, his opponent didn't understand what his intentions were. He should have known that those attacks were almost entirely ineffective against her thanks to her ridiculously high passive durability. There was no way that any attack would be able to stop her from reaching Rui, and she certainly didn't think they were capable of preventing her from crushing him alive.

Chapter 683: She Comes

In human anatomy, the ulnar nerve was a nerve that ran near the ulna bone; one of the two bones that the forearm was comprised of. The nerve was one of the largest nerves in the body that was also unprotected by muscle or bone. It was covered by the skin and thus was quite prone to injury. When cleanly struck by an impact, it would send an electric jolt across the body, while also causing a knee-jerk or, rather, an elbow-jerk reaction in the arm.

Colloquially, most people knew the ulnar nerve as the funny bone at the elbow joint, a strange not-really-a-bone nerve that caused electric-like sensations and jerks in the arm.

That was why when Rui's first Sonic Bullet struck his opponent's ulnar nerve. Her body shuddered as the potent, precise, and accurate strike send electric-like shudders across her body her arm involuntary displaced itself in a jerk, consequently leaving her eyes exposed again.

Rui grinned, as a terrible sense of fear arose in his opponent.

He had aimed for this from the very start!

Her pupils dilated as time slowed down in her cognition, it was as though her brain went into overdrive, realizing how dire the situation was. She struggled to drag her aching arm back up, trying to protect her eyes.

Yet it was too late.

SPLAT!

The second Sonic Bullet that Rui had launched earlier flew unhampered, crashing into her left eye, crashing through it, and dove further into her skull even as her body accelerated forward inertially.

BANG!

She crashed into Rui violently, and the two tumbled out of the sky, free-falling out of the sky.

THUD!

A crater as wide and deep as a dozen meters formed, with the two Martial Artists at the center of it.

('One Martial Artist, and one corpse, more like,') He shoved her large body off him grimacing even as blood pissed out of her eyeball onto his face.

THUD

Her massive body shook the ground even as it fell, having weighed as much as a grizzly bear.

('Honestly, I'm a little surprised that actually worked,') Though Rui would never admit that out loud.

The first Sonic Bullet had been reduced in size. He needed precision far more than he needed raw power to strike her ulna nerve to achieve the desired effect. Ordinarily, this would have been extremely difficult, but considering how thin and small the ulna nerve was, it was very difficult to strike it in exactly the right way to achieve the desired effect, even when it came to one's own ulna nerve.

('If not for the extra-refined VOID algorithm, it probably would be nearly impossible to not only locate and aim accurately but also time and angle it accurately to cause the desired reaction,') Rui sighed.

Of course, he wasn't going to complain. He was happy that he survived.

('It's not like that strategy is something I can consistently employ in my battles,') He shrugged.

Just how many times would he be in a scenario where he would be facing off against a primitive group that made gathering intelligence on them easily due to their lack of technology, allowing him to make remarkably deep preparations against any possible enemy that could be deployed in him?

Rui was relatively certain that this was the last time that he would ever be in this kind of situation again.

He grabbed her corpse by the head, lifting it up with him as he sky-walked into the air.

Despite being a good distance away from many of the other battles, he could sense that they all were eying him.

He could sense their emerging shock, rage, and hatred.

THUD

He dropped the corpse, after having achieved the result he wanted.

('The battles are stagnating, though we have a winning edge.') Rui noted.

At the moment, there were an equal number of Martial Squires on both sides. They had mostly sorted themselves out against opponents closest to their own grade. Resulting in balanced battles.

('The fight's gone on long enough for now, time to move on to the next stage,') Rui noted as he pulled out his comms device, hitting a few buttons.

Rui immediately rushed back to the battlefield.

Now that the Longranger Martial Artists had plenty of time to demonstrate the prowess of their techniques, Rui felt that it was time to move on to the next stage of the battle.

Drawing out the Martial Senior.

Senior Ceeran was probably on extremely high alert and on immediate standby at the moment. This was the moment that Rui and the others had to be very careful of. If not, they may very well just end up dying before Senior Ceeran could arrive.

Rui no longer attempted any spectacular assassinations. The goal of this battle was not to kill as many K'ulnen Martial Squires as possible. It was a sales pitch. And Rui had already done enough for his own techniques. The other Martial Squires needed their own time in the spotlight.

Rui half-heartedly launched a few attacks here and there for a brief amount of time to apply more pressure on the K'ulnen Martial Squires.

Until, of course, reinforcements came from the Martial Union as planned.

What followed was rather hard to watch.

The Martial Artists of the Martial Union already had an advantage that would have snowballed in the long term. However, with the arrival of even more Martial Squires. The odds of the battle tilted completely.

It was overwhelming.

The Martial Squires of the K'ulnen Tribe gritted their teeth, refusing to retreat. How could they? They were the final line of defense within the Squire Realm!

...Within the Squire Realm, that was.

Everybody froze.

It was abrupt.

Rui knew that it was coming, and yet, he never saw it coming.

Everybody froze as the atmosphere shifted, both metaphorically and literally.

The air chilled.

It was cold.

Chills crawled up their spine as an unprecedented amount of pressure crashed onto all of them.

"She comes..." One of them murmured with a maniacally wide smile. "You have courted death, outsiders!"

Chapter 684: Calamities

It was one thing to predict, on paper, after having analyzed historical data.

And it was entirely another to experience that prediction in the flesh.

For none of them were ready.

None of them were ready for the unhampered and unhindered bloodlust of a Martial Senior.

Even Rui shuddered as he gritted his teeth. His mental fortitude among them was probably the greatest, but even he was not mentally prepared for the avalanche of pressure that washed through them all.

It felt like a bomb had gone off on the island. The fauna in the forest broke into a frenzy as the creatures, regardless of their status in the food chain, ran away from that section of the forest as their lives depended on it.

Of course, they did.

"Don't retreat," Rui managed to squeeze out when he noticed the Longranger Martial Squire instinctively backing away, nearly making for a run. "Have faith in your senior!"

They barely heeded his words.

Rui was the only one who maintained a fierce expression.

He opened his mouth, aiming to launch a Sonic Bullet at one of the K'ulnen Martial Squires.

Yet he froze, once more.

His eyes widened as a tiny figure entered his vision in the distance behind the K'ulnen Squires.

It was merely a dot in the distance.

Yet, it was larger than all.

Not even the Sun drew as much attention to itself.

Not even the Sun shined brighter than the tiny figure emanating bloodlust so thick that one could nearly cut it with a knife.

Rui blinked, yet when he opened his eyes. His heart nearly jumped out of his mouth.

"You..."

She stood right before him.

In just a second, she crossed the many kilometers between him and the K'ulnen Village.

She, matriarch R'An'Alnen of the K'ulnen Tribe, stared at him with bloodshot wide eyes. The sheer amount of power that was contained within her feminine figure made Rui feel insignificant.

Staring him in the eyes. "You d-!"

Every hair on Rui's body stood on edge as an unprecedentedly powerful wind attack slammed into her, just barely missing Rui!

Rui was frozen in midair, unable to move. He felt like he just barely avoided being hit by a tactical nuke!

Before he could even process what happened, a tremendous explosion shook the entire island to its core!

Rui turned to the right, his eyes widening in shock.

Where a hill used to be, was a mighty crater!

"What... No, this can't b-" Rui subconsciously murmured.

Another mighty presence washed over the entire area, one less chaotic and more focused.

And one that was more familiar.

"Rui."

It was soft, yet it reverberated across the sky.

Rui turned his head in the direction it came from.

"Senior Ceeran!"

He heaved a sigh of relief.

"Good job distracting her," A brief smile cracked at the edge of his mouth. "You've all done great. Now leave. This is beyond you."

At that moment, Senior Ceeran appeared larger than life. Had Rui been an ordinary man, he may very well have gotten down to one knee and bowed in devotion to one that many may call a god.

He never even looked at Rui.

No.

His eyes were fixed in the direction of the second Senior-level aura.

Rui didn't even need to turn in that direction to know that she had already emerged out of the crater of that attack. Every sense in his body, even ones he didn't know existed, told him that he needed to get out of there immediately!

Whether it was out of consideration for their own Martial Squires, or whether they were sizing up each other, they did not engage in hostilities immediately.

It gave the fearful Martial Squires the time that they needed to get as far away from the battlefield as they could.

None of them had any thought of trying to circle around in order to try and continue their battle with the other side. At this very moment, both sides needed to return back to their respective homes.

The Longranger Martial Squires especially needed to be careful, they needed to protect their settlement from any side effects that may come in their direction. Even though the two Martial Seniors were situated far away from the Martial Union settlement, only an idiot would think that that mattered at all! Especially after witnessing what Rui just had.

In a single second, she crossed a little under half the distance between the K'ulnen Tribe and the Martial Union Settlement.

Furthermore, Senior Ceeran launched an attack from so far away that Rui could even sense it despite his incredibly large sensory range.

Furthermore, that attack sent the matriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe a dozen kilometers away, crashing into a sizeable hill, and leaving nothing but a crater behind. The flying debris alone crashed a small part of the forest!

That was what shocked Rui the most.

Of course, he always knew that Martial Seniors were incomparably more powerful than Martial Squires. Perhaps to an even greater degree than Martial Squires were stronger than Martial Apprentices.

Still, it was hard to visualize what that looked like.

Now, he didn't need to.

Now, he knew.

They were forces of nature. Calamities bound to human form. There was no other way to describe them.

Yet, as shocked as Rui was, he was even more excited.

And as excited as he was, he was even greedier.

He yearned to elevate his Martial Art to that level of power!

When would the day come when he could alter the topography of a small region all by himself?

('Not anytime soon, that's for sure,')

He knew that he was a truly long way from becoming a Martial Senior. He did not know what the conditions for breaking through to the Senior Realm were, and whatever they were, he needed to go through much before he was qualified to undergo the breakthrough process to the Senior Realm.

RUMBLE!

The land shook, startling Rui.

"They've begun," He murmured. "This battle will decide the fate of many people."

Chapter 685: Unprecedented

Senior R'An'Alnen rose from the giant crater spanning hundreds of meters in diameter with a hateful expression on her bruised face.

She glared at him.

Senior Ceeran smiled helplessly as waves of pressure washed over him in vain.

Her expression crumpled into one of venomous hatred, rage, and plenty of shock.

The two had completely lost any interest in the Martial Squires that were still scrambling away. The matriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe stayed her hand briefly to ensure that she did not inadvertently hurt her own Martial Squires. She no longer cared about Rui who had already put a good distance between himself and them.

After all, as impressive as Rui was, he was but an infant in her eyes. The adult that had stepped in to protect him was a far worthier and more meaningful target of her ire and hatred.

"Rank three outsider Martial Artist, you have returned," She spat those words with venomous contempt, from many kilometers. Not even Rui would have heard her despite his remarkable senses, yet Senior Ceeran shrugged mildly at her words.

"Have work here," He replied in the Vilun dialect.

Four months ago, when Martial Commissioner Derun had requested him to return to Vilun Island to aid Rui in a mission that he was previously assigned, he took the liberty to begin learning the language. Of course, his Vilun was broken and he couldn't understand complex sentences yet and he definitely couldn't read or write its script. But he had reached a point where he was able to understand her words and reciprocate basic replies.

"You outsiders... You dare infringe on our domain. You dare to challenge us. You dare to kill our warriors!" She snarled. "You will pay for your transgressions!"

The atmosphere grew taut.

The two of them narrowed their eyes as their expressions grew more severe.

A maelstrom of pressure radiated from their powerful frames wrung the air between them. It was as though their very presence weighed down on the world.

Chaos began to consume the island.

Humans, animals, and even the flora.

Nothing was the same.

The Martial tribes sensed the brewing pressure that was churning the atmosphere.

Children cried as their mothers comforted them while fathers guarded them. The many animals and beasts of the island ran amuck as their instincts warned them of the terrifying conflict that was to come.

Only the Martial Squires across the island retained their composure, and only the Martial Seniors were unfazed.

"Enough..." Senior matriarch R'An'Alnen spoke softly. "It is time for you to die."

The air grew tumultuous as their expressions grew more severe.

What followed beggared the minds of those who witnessed it.

Their eyes began glowing.

Thin glowing red lines began trickling across their entire body.

An increasingly devastating sense of power and peril radiated from their bodies. Their muscles brimmed with power as their skin grew taut with restraint.

It was as though they were volcanoes, on the cusp of erupting in a mighty explosion of power.

For a moment, it seemed as though nothing happened.

Yet in the very next, all hell broke loose.

"RARGH!" She snarled with an inhumanly intense expression.

The atmosphere behind her ignited into a small inferno!

The sheer force with which she launched herself forward generated a sonic boom the size of a small town as the pressure was enough to ignite the flammable constituents of the air!

The sheer friction generated by the velocity of her launch ignited all her clothes on fire.

Yet she flashed forward at a blindingly high speed unperturbed.

Her eyes were fixed on Senior Ceeran, and nothing could stop her.

Senior Ceeran inhaled deeply, and powerfully, causing a vacuum so large that animals in the surrounding area had trouble breathing for several seconds! He extended one arm in front of him, spreading his fingers far apart.

His other arm went behind him with his palm facing forward.

When he exhaled, he did not exhale an ordinary transparent gaseous breath like normal humans did all the time.

No.

What he exhaled was opaque, heavy, and powerful.

His lungs had compressed a gigantic volume of air into a temporarily solid state with sheer pressure!

His highly dense breath dispersed at a speed far surpassing that of sound. Yet his finger began moving rapidly as though he were manipulating a puppet, he began inhaling and exhaling in patterns. The combination of movements created wind currents and areas of higher and lower-pressure air.

The result?

A culmination of highly dense and powerful wind gusts formed as the many winds and currents superimposed over each other, congregating into a single attack.

The attack was so dense that not even light could pass through. It flashed across the sky, heading straight toward his ignited opponent.

Matriarch R'An'Alnen's glare grew more severe, yet unfazed. She kicked downward, and a burst of flames lashed downward as the recoil of the sheer force and energy allowed her to avoid Senior Ceeran's attack at the last second thanks to an extremely high acceleration that the gesture had generated by recoil.

She burst forward, leaving the attack behind her. Yet her sense of danger spiked when she saw a grin erupting on her opponent's red line-laden face. Her eyes widened as she sensed his earlier attack changing trajectories!

It turned a whole one-hundred and eighty degrees as it quickly caught up with her

"Tsk," She tutted as she kicked the air again, releasing a blast of flames as she somersaulted out of the returning attack that sought to strike her in the back.

The attack rushed towards Senior Ceeran, seemingly about to strike him, yet he was unperturbed. He brought a balled fist before him, suddenly opening his hand and spreading his fingers as he inhaled and exhaled in a pattern.

Matriarch R'An'Alnen's eyes widened as the attack split up into dozens of smaller attacks that each turned curved around before flying in her direction. Some chased after her directly while others pirouetted to intercept her from other directions from various angles!

Chapter 686: Spectation

"What is happening?" Rui murmured subconsciously with a bewildered expression. His sharp senses strained themselves to the limit as he did his best to get a good view of what was happening.

So many of the things that he had witnessed from the very start of the battle had flummoxed him, he wouldn't even know where to begin had someone asked him what was wrong.

Normally, he shouldn't have been able to even perceive what was happening. Martial Seniors were exponentially faster than Martial Squires, or at least, the two Martial Seniors who were currently fighting most definitely were.

The Matriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe was moving so fast that both her clothes and the air caught on fire due to the friction caused by drag. However, Rui knew that only rockets moving at dozens of times the speed of sound generated such a degree of friction due to their speed!

It was a level of speed that he could only dream of achieving. Not even Kane with the Squire-level version of the Godspeed technique could hold a candle to it, Rui suspected.

The reason he, and other Martial Squires, were able to perceive the battle at all was because of the size of the attacks and techniques that each Martial Senior was using, and also due to the distance away from which they were spectating the battle.

The further away an observer, and the larger the size of the event one was perceiving, the easier it was to perceive extremely rapid events.

This was due to the fact that at great distances away, the field of vision covered a massive area, which meant that despite the fact that the Martial Seniors were engaging in attacks and maneuvers that crossed massive distances in seconds, they still did not exceed the boundary of the field of vision of the spectating Martial Squires, allowing them to barely keep up with the battle, even if incompletely.

It was the same reason that ordinary humans could perceive a rocket take-off despite the fact that they moved at Mach twenty-three, or the same reason that humans had no trouble perceiving the moon despite the fact that the moon was moving at supersonic speeds.

Size and distance mattered. Many of the techniques that the Martial Seniors were using definitely had the latter.

He was shocked when Senior Ceeran breathed what looked to be a dark-colored opaque gas, but once he realized that it was an enormous volume of gas that was highly condensed, his mind was boggled.

He gritted his teeth as he pushed back against the force of the air currents that the mere presence of the temporarily-solidified dense gas had created. Wind currents naturally emerged flowing from high-pressure areas of air to low-pressure areas. The side-effect wind currents that were created from Senior Ceeran's opaque breath were so powerful that Rui had to exert himself to a little degree to prevent himself from being blown away despite the gigantic distance he was from them.

When Senior Ceeran harnessed those wind currents and directed them at his opponent along with his breath, the scale and power of the attack were greater than Rui had ever seen before in his entire life. That attack alone would easily destroy both the Martial Union settlement and the K'ulnen village many times over.

That was why Rui had grown even more shocked when, in the face of such a shockingly fast and powerful attack, the matriarch of the K'ulnen village casually ignited and blasted away a huge volume of the atmosphere, generating an immense amount of accelerating via Newton's third law of motion, evading the attack at the last moment.

She was literally a rocket in human form!

Senior Ceeran was like a tactical homing nuke launcher in human form!

"I see... so Martial Seniors are no different from superweapons disguised in human flesh!" Rui laughed weakly. "I wonder if that has something to do with the glowing thin red tattoos that they both have on their bodies.

Rui would have to be as blind as a bat if he missed that incredibly peculiar feature that the bodies of both Martial Seniors had come to bear. He hadn't even the faintest idea what they were, and how they were related to the Senior Realm, if at all. But he noted that both Martial Seniors had grown much more powerful since they appeared on their body. They resembled volcanoes in Rui's eyes.

('They're not much weaker than volcanoes, if at all!')

Rui watched the ensuing battle like a hawk as the two mighty Martial Artists clashed against each other violently. The battle between them had stabilized into a pattern, reaching an equilibrium.

The Matriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe, despite her magical techniques, was clearly a Martial Artist whose Martial Path was centered around speed and agility, as opposed to power and toughness.

She had yet to land a strike on Senior Ceeran, who expertly foiled all of her attempts to get close to him so she could pummel him into bits.

('The fact that she's content evading all of Senior Ceeran's attacks instead of clashing against them with her own indicates that she most likely is not a power-oriented striker,') Rui analyzed the battle as he calmed his beating heart.

The battle began morphing into the most common model and template for battles between long-range and close-quarters Martial Artists. Though, there were clear differences. Rui recalled that Senior Ceeran's Martial Path was post-launch trajectory manipulation, allowing him to alter the trajectories of his attacks even after they had long been launched. Rui got to witness exactly what this looked like. In the distance, dozens of infernos rapidly extended across the sky for a dozen kilometers in every direction, all before Rui could even react to a single one of them.

The matriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe danced across the clouds as she was pursued by dozens of homing projectiles. While Senior Ceeran continued launching an increasing number of attacks at a pace that was invisibly fast even to Rui's eyes.

The battle only continued to get more serious.

Chapter 687: Unfair

WHOOSH!

Matriarch R'An'Alnen narrowly evaded a wave of homing breath projectiles leaving behind an inferno. Her clothes had long burned off, revealing her naked feminine red line-laden body. Yet it did not inspire lust, merely fear as one could nearly see power itself condensing within her body, the same power that allowed her to leave infernos in her step that could burn down an entire village!

WHOOSH

Matriarch R'An'Alnen dodged yet another attack, yet her eyes widened as she surveyed the area to a shocking discovery.

She was trapped!

No matter where she looked, she was beset by attacks that weaved a closing net together, preventing her from escaping in any direction.

The smirk on Senior Ceeran's face angered her as she realized that he had been carefully planning for this. He had launched the right number of attacks in the right manner, manipulating their trajectories such that he could eventually cut off all paths of escape!

She gritted her teeth, whipping her leg in a rotating kick as she created a small inferno around her, attempting to intercept the attack.

BOOM!!!

A tremendous explosion of wind and fire emerged with her at the epicenter. The explosion was so large, that it rapidly expanded to the ground, despite the fact that it originated in the sky!

The ball of wind and fire could not only be seen across the entire island but could also be seen nearly a hundred kilometers away at sea!

"Cough... Cough..." The Matriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe coughed. Every inch of her skin was bruised, and she was bleeding from multiple areas. Her body possessed a mild healing factor, however, it would not do much in the short term.

And the short term was her biggest obstacle to overcome.

She immediately tried lashing out from that area, refusing to fall victim to the same trap again.

Yet, she discovered, it was too late.

Senior Ceeran had already prepared yet another powerful wave of attacks even as she had been bombarded by the previous set of attacks.

"It's over," Senior Ceeran smirked as a giant wave of wind enveloped her location preventing her from escaping.

BOOM!

A humungous blast of wind arose. The attack would have undoubtedly ravaged her already battered body. After all, she was not a defensive Martial Artist at all. Her lean and petite body was extremely able to maneuver around the atmosphere aerodynamically, yet it was not conducive to withstanding barrages of potent projectiles blasting her across her entire body.

Yet something was off.

Senior Ceeran froze, pausing his next attack as his eyebrows furrowed.

"Tsk," He tutted in irritation as he saw a second figure standing beside the battered matriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe. "Two on one... this not fair."

"Everything is fair in love and war." The patriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe replied to Senior Ceeran's broken Vilun, turning toward his mate.

Senior Ceeran inspected the newcomer. He had a gargantuan body, unlike his partner. It was rather clear that his Martial Path was most certainly not centered around speed and agility.

"YOU'RE GOING TO REGRET EVER COMING TO THIS ISLAND!" The wounded matriarch roared as her aura soared.

Yet the two of them suddenly froze as their senses were rocked by an incredibly potent burst of pressure.

Senior Ceeran's smile was gone. His expression grew graver and increasingly severe as the glowing red lines that wound about his body began glowing even brighter as his. His eyes become increasingly bloodshot, growing redder by the second.

"You're right, nothing is fair. Just like this battle," He told them. "You two are no match for me."

He exhaled deeply, launching breath projectiles that were more than twice as large as before!

The eyes of the K'ulnen Martial Seniors widened as they realized that despite their numeric advantage, they needed to go all-out with the risk of death if they wanted to win!

The glowing lines cracking across the skin of the patriarch instantly emerged as his expression grew severe. He had emerged, thinking that the battle was as good as done, with his partner and him double-teaming Senior Ceeran.

He rushed forward, accumulating momentum as he prepared an attack. Senior Ceeran narrowed his eyes at the sight. He knew that he couldn't deal with the man the same way he dealt with the matriarch.

He moved his fingers as he launched a powerful breath attack at the man. He didn't even bother broadening it to prevent him from trying to dodge it, he knew the man wouldn't dodge it.

He was right.

The patriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe confidently rushed forward at the attack, shaking the atmosphere with each step as he threw a powerful kick.

BOOM!!!

A gigantic wind explosion expanded outwards as the patriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe was flung away.

A shocked expression emerged on his face when he realized that Senior Ceeran possessed the power to push him back!

The patriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe was a power-oriented striking Martial Artist, his Martial Path was core-driven striking. he had developed the core of his body to an extreme degree and empowered each strike and even every movement with it in a manner similar to Outer Convergence.

Yet Senior Ceeran had not only neutralized his attack but also the moment that the patriarch had gathered.

All while simultaneously fighting his partner with volleys of attacks in the exact opposite direction.

('How is he so strong?') The man tried to conceal his shock as he rushed in for another attack. He could not let up his offense for even a second, otherwise, his already injured partner might die!

The patriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe was more than a hundred years old, and yet he had never come across a Martial Artist this strong. None of the other Martial Seniors on the island could possibly fight both the matriarch and patriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe simultaneously, and not only not get suppressed, but also push back and even gain an upper hand in battle!

Chapter 688: Analysis

Rui's emotions fluctuated immensely throughout the entire battle. When Senior Ceeran and the matriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe began showing their true strength at the start fight, he had been shocked by the true capabilities of both Martial Artists. Not only was their raw prowess incredible, but their techniques were very interesting as well.

The matriarch employed the same principles that rockets did to achieve extreme acceleration. Except unlike rockets, she could apply that speed in all avenues in combat while rockets accelerated in linear motion exclusively.

This allowed her to dart across the battlefield at blinding speeds. Frankly, if not for the giant infernos she left behind with every step, Rui would have had absolutely no chance of tracing her movements and trajectories.

However, while her technique was a novel and extreme application of Newton's third law of motion, it was elementary at heart. Senior Ceeran's techniques thus far held far more of his interest than hers. Senior Ceeran employed the tendency of the gaseous particles to move from high-pressure areas to low-pressure areas.

('It's an advanced application of the Pauli Exclusion Principle,') Rui noted.

The Pauli Exclusion was a principle of quantum electrodynamics that stated no two electrons of an atom or molecule could have the same quantum numbers and states. In a general context, the principle stated that two particles could not have the same positions and velocities, and the closer one of the two parameters was, the greater the difference in the other parameter.

This principle of quantum mechanics was the reason that densely packed particles experienced a strong repulsion from each other. It was the reason that the atmosphere functioned the way it did, and it was the driving force behind Senior Ceeran's techniques.

('He densely packs particles together in his lungs, and when he exhales them, he uses breathing techniques to manipulate his high-pressure breath which alters the directions of the wind currents that they produce from his high-pressure breath to low-pressure areas.') Rui analyzed. ('Means he doesn't directly control the wind currents themselves, he controls their starting point; his high-pressure breath, and the ending point; the low-pressure areas and vacuums. This allows him to manipulate the trajectories of the attack even after he has launched them!')

Rui couldn't help but marvel at the ingenuity of the technique. It was quite remarkable and gave a genuinely high amount of flexibility and efficiency with his attacks. Unlike Rui's, his attacks were not dealt with when successfully evaded once. He could keep reusing them even after they failed to hit their target. Of course, their potency greatly decreased with time until they fizzled out, but it made his offense extremely efficient compared to more generic Martial Paths and Martial Art.

('It's definitely one of the reasons that he's able to keep up with two clearly experienced and veteran Martial Seniors of the K'ulnen Tribe simultaneously,') Rui noted.

Because he was able to save a lot of power due to this technique against the matriarch who was forced to waste energy evading the same reused attacks over and over, Senior Ceeran still had enough power left to also overwhelm the patriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe simultaneously.

This was a feat that was extremely impressive to Rui. The patriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe was a mountain in human form. The man made the Martial Squire that Rui fought look like a little girl, in comparison.

His abdominal and back muscles, the muscle sets that comprised his core, were especially quite formidable. Each of his charges was as heavy as meteorite impacts, and yet Senior Ceeran managed to push him back.

The battle's dynamics had changed once the third Martial Senior had joined the battle, yet they once more fell into a pattern and a paradigm.

Senior Ceeran was much more concerned with the patriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe than he was with the matriarch. There were several reasons for this.

Firstly, the matriarch was already wounded. And while she did possess a resilient body by virtue of being a Martial Senior, her affinities did not lie towards endurance, thus it was inevitable that her combat prowess had taken a solid hit. Even when she was healthy, Senior Ceeran was capable of taking her down swiftly even when holding back, but in her current state, it was safe to say that the patriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe forcing Senior Ceeran to dedicate a significant chunk of his power to handle his offense was the only reason that she was able to fight against Senior Ceeran without dying.

Senior Ceeran had to divide his attention between both his opponents, and Rui could sense that balancing them was not easy.

Handling the matriarch was more complicated since he needed to make sure that he never left a chink in his waves of attacks that could allow her to hurt him. But she was less of a threat due to her injuries, and hence he could afford to use less energy in her direction.

The patriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe was extremely simple in comparison. His attack consisted of charging at Senior Ceeran as hard as he could hoping to land a powerful strike on the man. Although he had much greater raw power than his partner, Senior Ceeran didn't need to think m

He only needed to ensure that he was using a marginally greater amount of power than his opponent to ensure that there was no way that he could possibly get through.

The one that was more dangerous and powerful, at the moment, requires more raw power but less thought to handle. The one that was less dangerous to her injuries required more thought and less raw power to handle.

Senior Ceeran needed to balance both in order to ensure that he was not overwhelmed by either one of them.

('However, I don't know if he can win this way...') Rui frowned.

At the end of the day, Rui was not sure whether he possessed greater stamina than the two Martial Seniors combined. While he was able to stalemate the battle for now, it was quite questionable whether he would be able to do the same for an extended period of time.

Chapter 689: Course

"Tsk," Seniro Ceeran tutted in irritation as he once again failed in taking down the matriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe. He, unfortunately, had too little work with the remaining power that he could afford to spare after overwhelming the K'ulnen patriarch's attacks.

('This can't go on forever,') He sighed.

He needed to find a way to ensure that this stalemate did not go on for too long, otherwise, he would lose the power needed to change the battle from a stalemate to a checkmate. He needed a change in plans.

('I can't take either of them down individually,') He established, he had already tried doing pretty much that for half an hour, and it was clear that he was not quite at the level where he could accomplish that just yet unfortunately. Even if he had better techniques and a better Martial body, the two Martial Seniors were clearly extremely experienced and elderly within the Senior Realm. They were remarkably strong and together stood at the upper echelons of all the Martial Seniors on Vilun island.

Senior Ceeran was much stronger than either individually, he was sure, but together they were capable of not only withstanding his full power but refusing him to give much of an advantage, if any.

Of course, technically, still possessed an advantage. He was the only unharmed Martial Senior in this battle. The matriarch had been hurt significantly, and the patriarch had also incurred a certain degree of damage; with many bruises and wounds across his entire body. The problem was that it was not enough in the long run, most likely.

Senior Ceeran was consuming his stamina at a pace far higher than he was, both physical and mental. He had to chase after and barricade the matriarch with sophisticated and complex manipulations of the trajectories of his attacks, spending at least as much energy as her, and even more energy than her partner each time Senior Ceeran slapped his attack and him back. He definitely was consuming more mental energy than them having to divide his attention across both targets when both of them needed only focus on him.

Even if his physical reserves could somehow keep up, he would most certainly end up feeling mentally exhausted before them and would likely make a mistake that would allow one of them to close the distance and get a good hit on him.

('That's an unacceptable outcome,') He resolutely decided. He refused to allow that to happen, and that naturally included going down the path that would allow that to happen. He needed to find a new course of action to allow him to win the battle and avoid a slow defeat.

('I need to focus my attention on just one of them for long enough to overwhelm them without incurring too much damage from the other,') He decided.

The question was which one he ought to focus on, and how he ought to go about it.

('Of the two of them, I can take down the matriarch the fastest,') Senior Ceeran noted. ('But conversely, turning my back to the patriarch will be quite painful when he slams me with his powerful physique,') Senior Ceeran hesitated. He was not a particularly tough Martial Artist, he would not be able to survive many attacks from a striking-oriented Martial Artist of that caliber. This was especially the case if those attacks struck his vitals. He would easily get knocked out from a single strike most likely.

('I need to ensure that there is enough of a distance between us if and when I choose to go for the matriarch,') Senior Ceeran thought to himself.

Had Rui been in his position he would have come up with a more sophisticated plan with many layers and steps while also using predictive models that he would have undoubtedly created by now, while also relying on the outputs of the VOID algorithm to deal with them.

Senior Ceeran was certainly not as intelligent as shrewd as Rui, but he was far more experienced.

He exhaled the largest breath of solidified breath he could, getting ready to immediately manipulate both it and, in turn, the wind currents that it would create. Normally, he would divide them into two batches for both the Martial Seniors. Yet this time, turned all off toward the patriarch, shocking both his opponents.

WHOOM!!!

A titanicly powerful wind current slammed into his opponent, completely crushing his momentum and sending him flying dozens of kilometers away.

The matriarch's expression grew grave as she dove towards Senior Ceeran at top speed even as her partner was being blown away, looking to exploit this rare opportunity to close the distance between her and her opponent.

Several infernos blasted off behind her as she propelled herself forward with the recoil force, reaching her top speed nigh-instantaneously. She shot across the sky at an unprecedented speed, flying straight toward Senior Ceeran.

"RARGH!" She snarled with excitement as she finally reached within striking range of him, launching a powerful flaming straight at him!

The temperature of the flame spiked as she poured in every ounce of her power, turning blue instead of orange as it reached another level of potency and power.

BOOM!!!

An explosion of flames and wind blasted outwards with Senior Ceeran at the epicenter of the attack.

"URGH!" She grimaced as she was pushed back, incurring even more damage. Yet a savage grin emerged on her face until she realized something was wrong.

WHOOM!

Suddenly, thousands of projectiles seized an opportunity, emerging from the smoke as they weaved a net around her. Her eyes widened as Senior Ceeran emerged from the smoke with first-degree burns all over his body.

"Watch out, R'An'Alnen!" The patriarch's voice frantic voice echoed from afar as he rushed in to try and intercept the attacks like he originally did.

"Too late," Senior Ceeran softly murmured even as the wind current net that he had created collapsed on her, crushing her at the epicenter.

BOOM!!!

"NO!" The patriarch's bellow echoed across the entirety of the island and beyond.

Chapter 690: Perspective

The battle unfolded in a manner that shocked all of the spectators, especially the Martial Seniors of the island who were most certainly paying rapt attention to the conflict between two of the most powerful Martial Seniors on the island and the single outsider Martial Senior who had come to the island as a diplomat last time.

They had been quite surprised when they saw him intervening to protect his Martial Squires from the matriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe. After all, none of them knew that he was even present on the island. Still, they cared much less about why he was here than they did about his battle with the leaders of the K'ulnen Tribe and his Martial prowess.

And, without a doubt, every last one of them was shocked at his techniques. Yet, none of them were more shocked than the Martial Seniors of the G'ak'arkan Tribe.

"HOW IS HE DOING THAT?!" Senior K'ahru's jaw dropped as he momentarily lost all of his dignity and bearing as a Martial Senior as he witnessed Senior Ceeran elegantly manipulating his attacks like a magician.

"To think that the outsiders possess techniques that allow you to manipulate your attacks to such an extreme degree!" Senior K'Mala was unable to maintain her composure either. "Truly enlightening! It's a good thing we did not rashly attack them with just the two of us, isn't it little brother?"

She said with a measured tone as she threw a bit of a smug expression at Senior K'ahru. "If that man can fight the leaders of the K'ulnen Tribe and even injure them while remaining in pristine shape himself, the two of us would definitely have died a quick yet glorious death had we tried attacking their village."

Senior K'ahru gritted his teeth at her words. He was indeed the one who held the opinion that they ought to attack, dominate and extract the powerful long-range techniques of the outsiders because they clearly seemed to not possess a rank three Martial Artist like themselves, only rank two Martial Artists like the dark-haired diplomat who came to the tribe earlier.

Now he realized that had they tried to implement his suggestion, both he and his elder sister would have undoubtedly died. The two of them had fought the vaunted matriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe together years ago and had almost died. They certainly would have died if not for their tribe leader intervening to protect them from the powerful woman at the last second. They had spent many weeks healing before they finally recovered from the burns that the matriarch had inflicted on them.

They both knew that she was a fierce and powerful warrior that had dominated them from the very start. She was worthy of her position as the leader of the K'ulnen Tribe.

So what were they supposed to make of the Martial Artist who bullied her with a fraction of his full power?

Just how exponentially more powerful was this Martial Artist relative to them?

They would die on the spot, and not even their chieftain would be able to save them in time, most likely. Maybe if the three of them took him on at once, they might be able to make it a fair fight, still, after witnessing his ridiculous Martial prowess, the three of them did not want to provoke a battle against him unless there was a real need to. Besides, unlike their hatred born of their many enemies and rivals on the island, they had no ill will toward the outsiders.

At the same time, they felt a great deal of quivering excitement at the prospect of fighting such a powerful being as dangerous as it was, they were warriors, after all. Not even the chieftain was able to quash such a temptation entirely.

Part of this was definitely also because of the fact that he was a long-range Martial Artist like themselves. This roused their interest and curiosity tremendously.

In the duration of their audience of the fight, they had already forgotten about the outsider's offense when he tried engaging in negotiations with them. He had already apologized, which had become much heavier after witnessing just how much power the man wielded.

He had the capital to look down on their techniques to a certain degree, they painfully realized, yet he apologized to them nonetheless all to prevent hostilities from breaking out and facilitate cooperation between both groups, all to obtain their techniques. Was this not a sign of respect?

The three of them found their reluctance in engaging in trade with the outsiders melting away. The events that had occurred over the past few months had shown them all of the merits of choosing to cooperate with the outsiders.

They had demonstrated the value of their techniques in both explicit and implicit manners, holistically in many avenues that were highly relevant to the G'ak'arkan Tribe. After watching the settlement flourish in every way possible, in many ways, thanks to their long-range prowess, not even K'ahru, in good faith, could deny the merits of cooperating with the outsiders.

In fact, Senior K'ahru was one of the most eager to master many of the techniques that were highly relevant to the Martial Art techniques that were highly relevant to his Martial Path. The prospect of making jumps into power overcome any xenophobia he had. Martial Artists hungered for Martial power, after all.

"Hm?" The chieftain N'Kulu had been the first to notice something strange in the battle between the outsider and the K'ulnen leaders. Their eyes widened as they saw Senior Ceeran launch a powerful surprise attack at the patriarch, breaking his existing pattern of alternating between them. The attack had been so powerful that it crumpled all of the momenta that the patriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe had gathered, it flung him so far away that he ended up outside of the island!

The three Martial Seniors of the G'ak'arkan Tribe had realized that the battle had reached a new stage as the Senior Ceeran targeted the matriarch of the K'ulnen Tribe momentarily unhampered.