

## Paragon 331

### Chapter 331 - 331: Shadows in the Forest

The red eyes lit up in the darkness, transforming the shadowy setting into an eerie blend of red pointed lights and darkness. It could terrify any of them before the apocalypse, but now, it looked even more beautiful to some.

"Tier 4 Gloom Rats," Klaus immediately recognized the type of monsters he was about to face. The Gloom Rats were large, shadowy rodents with glowing red eyes that moved and attacked in swarms.

Klaus understood the purpose of this level of the trial and what was expected of them. Precision and speed.

He formulated many solutions in his mind, but ultimately returned to his original plan: using the Needles.

"I count 50 Gloom Rats," he muttered, and without hesitation, the needles moved. What followed was a series of red lights going off as the needles dealt death blows to the 50 Gloom Rats.

The trial aimed to use swarm tactics to test their precision and agility. The Gloom Rats were incredibly fast and did not attack individually, so the trial required them to be quick and precise in their attacks.

Of course, for someone like Anna, a mage, she cast a wide area-of-effect attack that managed to slow down the monsters. Then, using ice shards, she quickly took care of them. It was the only way she could do it since she wasn't like the archers or swordsmen who could unleash quick attacks.

Hanna, like most of the archers, chose to switch to a crossbow, which allowed for even faster reloading and shooting. She could have used her bow, but that would have required much more energy.

The crossbow didn't require much energy, but just as it consumed less, its damage output was also lower. However, the Gloom Rats weren't known for their tough defenses, so using the crossbow was the best option for her in that regard.

The ones who struggled were the brute fighters. At first, Danny and his group of brute fighters wanted to take the Gloom Rats out one by one using brute strength; however, they soon noticed the monsters were faster than the axes and hammers they wielded.

Some struggled, but after realizing the monsters had weak defenses, they simply created powerful shockwaves to deal with them. It took just a couple of strikes to kill the Gloom Rats, and then they moved on to level 7.

At level 7, the Gloom Rats doubled in number, now totaling 100. But all the fighters needed to do was crank up a little from the 6th level to take care of them. This was also true for level 8. However, at level 9, they found themselves in a new place.

Klaus arrived at level 9 after spending about two minutes clearing levels 6 to 8. He found himself in a barren, rocky wasteland. Sharp rocks jutted out of the ground, casting ominous shadows in the dim light.

"Looks like these levels all have something to do with shadows," Klaus muttered, looking around the tricky yet shadowy setting.

Just as he was getting acquainted with the rocky environment, powerful steps began approaching him. He scanned with his senses and then smirked.

"Ash Golems." He muttered picking up his next targets

As if responding to their name, 2-meter-tall monsters made of hardened volcanic rock with molten lava veins that glowed fiercely charged at him—50 of them.

Klaus immediately sprang into action, sending the needles flying. However, when the fire needle connected, it bounced off the rocky skin. The monsters have a rather rocky skin that acts as their natural defense.

"Interesting," Klaus smirked, merging the needles to form 50 Void Piercing Needles. They moved, and this time, they managed to pierce the tough skin of the monsters.

The Ash Golems are creatures made of rock, specializing in strong defenses. They are also heavy hitters, so most warriors flee when they encounter higher-tier ones. They are hard to kill.

However, Tier 4 ones aren't that difficult to defeat. It only requires precise and powerful attacks, which of course favors the brute strength fighters. Danny and his group were on cloud nine through these levels.

Level 10 was also populated by Ash Golems. Klaus quickly made his way through them, killing only with his Void Piercing Needles.

He had, like everyone else, racked up the time that was meant for them to use to rest. But unlike many who began to slow down as the levels progressed, Klaus was moving through them with ease. His pace was as fast as it could be, so while many were still at Level 10, he was already at Level 15, speeding his way through.

After battling the Ash Golems up to level 14, he found himself facing some rather interesting and icky-looking, zombie-like slime monsters called Bog Crawlers at level 15.

He appeared in an endless marshland filled with the stench of decay. Shallow, murky water covered the ground. Klaus immediately realized that this place was poisonous. However, he knew that to become infected, one would have to breathe in a large quantity of the poisoned air or—

getting hit by the Bog Crawlers' acidic venom sprays. They lived in the mushy waters, so this time, Klaus devised a different attack plan.

He first used the ice element to freeze the water, instantly encasing the monsters in ice. Then, with a heavy shatter, all 50 Bog Crawlers were reduced to nothing. He could have used the needles, but they wouldn't have been ideal.

By employing a wide area-of-effect attack pattern, he was able to clear levels 15 through 18 with ease. He chose to use the ice element more.

Klaus knew that although his ice element was stronger than most—despite still being unawakened. But he knew it was only a matter of time before it awakened.

He had already witnessed the awakening of the seven Forbidden Ice elements in Fruity's memories, and he knew that the moment he awakened them, his control over ice would become very strong.

However, he first had to gather some resources which he had already made moves toward. The only downside was that after researching the resources he needed, he found that most of them could be found in the Ice or Glacial Union.

So first, he wanted to get into the academy, and since Lucy told him that by joining the academy, he could pick missions in those regions, he knew he had to hurry.

From level 19 to level 20, the monsters he battled were quite sneaky, Earth Lizards.

Earth Lizards were monsters with a strong affinity for the earth element, attacking from the ground. If one was not fast enough, they would be caught off guard and fall into a sinkhole.

However, with his enhanced senses, he was able to clear through it. After taking care of the 20th level, Klaus managed to clear the first stage in under 10 minutes.

He quickly made his way to the second stage, which spanned from level 21 to 40. This stage also meant they would be fighting Tier 5 monsters. However, instead of the base number of monsters starting at 50, this time it started at 70, and it would double after that.

Klaus wasted no time before entering the second stage of the trial. Some of the others chose to rest for a while before diving in, while others headed straight in. Klaus's friends, of course, chose to go straight in, saving their resting time for when they needed it.

However, the moment they entered the second stage, they could no longer slack off. The Tier 5 monsters posed a different kind of threat.

Chapter 332 - 332: The Bridge of Wraiths

"Really," Klaus muttered, standing on a narrow bridge suspended 200 meters above the ground which was made of lava burning rather hot—very hot, in fact.

However, while that was a shocking sight, what dumbfounded Klaus was the creatures circling overhead.

"Wraiths."

One hundred of them to be exact each Tier 5. Klaus had managed to weed through the trial from level 21 and was currently inside level 32. He had expected many things after going through so much already, but wraiths weren't one of them. Clearly, Lucil did not hold back on this one.

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When he arrived at the 21st level, it was a scorching hot dune of sand with large stones scattered everywhere. Tier 5 Sand Shades were waiting for him. These sand shades were phantom-like creatures that appeared only in the shadows cast by rocks and objects.

Klaus didn't linger.

He quickly disposed of them, making his way to the next level and then the one after that, all in similar environments. After pushing through that trial, he appeared in another one.

It was an ice cavern with a frigid, chilling air. The moment he arrived, he felt like it was made for him. Every ice elemental wielder felt that way in this place.

Just as in reality, where someone in an environment sharing an affinity with their element would experience a boost when fighting there, the same was true inside Oracle. In fact, the only artificial aspect of Oracle was the respawn after death.

So the moment Klaus arrived there, he felt right at home. Of course, he couldn't linger, so he immediately went into action.

From level 24 to 27, he battled hundreds of Frost Bats, a rather unique set of monsters. These large, icy bats attacked using two skills. First, they screeched—a form of ice sonic attack. Those with low mental strength and poor resistance to ice were doomed to fail at this level.

Second, they emitted a freezing mist that slowed down their targets' movements. From there, they would either freeze them in ice or use their pointed legs to scratch you until you couldn't take it anymore.

While they weren't individually very powerful, when they swarmed—as they often did in large numbers—it was easy to get overwhelmed.

Of course, many struggled hard, but in the end, they all managed to pull through. Even Danny and the Brute Fighters. They somehow managed to wiggle their way through.

Throughout the trial, Klaus found out it wasn't only about having the strength to kill higher-tier monsters, it was more about having the intellect to know which approach to take when facing different situations.

In that regard, the Dark Tower was doing exactly that. Everyone was using their brain along with their strength. So despite the frosty situation that was rather terrible for the fire wielders, none of the 5000 washed out.

After which, from Level 29 to 31, it was a dense jungle with vines hanging everywhere. The air there was very hot and humid. The moment the disciples appeared there, they could hear something slithering through the thick foliage.

Of course, almost all of them knew what they were the moment they heard the notice. They fought Jungle Serpents through from level 29 to level 31.

The Jungle Serpents are massive, green-scaled snakes with venomous fangs and the ability to camouflage among the vines.

This trial of course was meant to test their reactions speed. The jungle serpents strike quickly from above, so this forces them to be quick on their feet to react to any situation.

In this place, too many struggled, but with the choice to rest a while after each level, some chose to use their minutes. However, not all of them stayed there. Klaus was the first to appear at the 32 level.

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He looked at the wraiths, and a smile began to play on his lips—a sight that left the instructors in the observation room dumbfounded as they watched over the trials.

"How I wish I could see how Danny and the other heavy hitters would handle this level," Klaus muttered, a wicked smile spreading across his face as he watched the 100 wraiths dash toward him.

The three 23-inch Void Piercing Needles appeared, and before the wraiths could even reach attacking range, they were all obliterated.

Klaus didn't move a single step. Below him was scorching hot lava; above, he was surrounded by wraiths. It was the kind of trial that many were bound to wash out from.

Not that they were weak—it was just that the setup was almost unfair. The bridge was narrow and fragile. Although Klaus didn't know if it could break, he didn't want to find out.

Aside from that, the wraiths were incredibly fast, which meant that if you weren't quick enough, you could be overwhelmed.

Danny and the other brute fighters, especially those using heavy weapons, were bound to have a hard time. If you fell into the lava, you were done for, and if you failed to kill the wraiths, that was just another problem.

"On the other hand, Daniel has the fire element in his favor, and Miguel has lightning. Danny, on the other hand—well, I guess we'll see how that goes after the trial... Hehe," Klaus chuckled before moving on to level 33.

The same pattern continued through to level 36. On Level 37 though, the scene changed.

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Inside the observation room, 5,000 screens with green outlines displayed the participants. Suddenly, one screen flashed red, indicating the first person had washed out. On closer inspection, he could be seen falling into the lava after failing to defend against a wraith attack.

Shortly after, more screens began turning red, as more participants started washing out. The first person was eliminated at Level 35, where they were attacked by hundreds of wraiths.

Before Level 37, over 500 participants had already been washed out. The narrow bridge and relentless assaults from the Tier 5 wraiths proved too much for many.

Most of those who failed were people with a slower killing speed. They were required to display quick reactions and adaptability but couldn't handle the pressure, leading to their rapid elimination.

Contrary to Klaus's expectations, Daniel and most of the brute fighters pushed through; even Danny managed to advance. It was a rather miraculous feat worth applauding.

Danny has an unusual elemental affinity for his class. While someone with his class would typically possess elements like fire, lightning, ice, or even earth, Danny awakened the light element, which many considered useless.

Even Klaus couldn't help but laugh when he found out. However, one person thought differently.

The senior within Klaus's Soul Sea said that Danny had a unique type of light element that, when awakened, would prove incredibly powerful.

Of course, the senior wanted Klaus to break through first and settle his Karma before adding any more karma to his resume. But he did say that if Danny ever managed to awaken his light element, his potential would skyrocket.

For now, Danny could only rely on his axe for heavy hits. However, his ability to push through from level 32 to 36 caught the instructors' attention. They recognized his potential with the axe and added his name to the list of candidates the academy intended to watch closely.

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Back inside Oracle, Klaus, who had entered Level 38, was immediately hit by the scent of decay.

"A graveyard," he muttered.

### Chapter 333 - 333: The Graveyard

"Welcome to the Graveyard. Due to the unique nature of this challenge, levels 38 to 40 have been merged. You must clear both levels together by killing all monsters within 15 minutes.

You can choose to relax now before entering the trial or rest afterward. Make your decision within the next 5 seconds."

Immediately, Klaus appeared on Level 38 as the system introduced the nature of the trial. He quickly took in his surroundings.

Looking around, he knew many would be taken aback by how the next levels of the trial would progress, but Klaus was more interested in the setting he had just found himself in.

He found himself in a graveyard filled with crumbling tombstones and mausoleums. The tombstones looked ancient as if they had been crafted by a game designer. Lucil had clearly invested a lot into the Dark Tower trial, aiming to impress Klaus.

A cold wind howled, carrying ghostly whispers.

"This place feels icky," Klaus muttered before opting to continue instead of resting. He wasn't really tired; it was just that something about the current trial made him think it would be a good one.

As expected, the moment he decided to continue, some of the tombstones started to move, and the area began to grow darker.

"Spooky," Klaus said, watching his surroundings with eagerness. Suddenly, from the shadows that seemed to have appeared within the area and beneath the tombstones, bony ghouls began to rise.

"Grave Ghouls," Klaus muttered.

It was a game character he had learned about from Lucil during his time at Stone Valley. Back then, he didn't understand why she was so keen on him learning the names of her game characters.

But now, as he watched hundreds of skeletal creatures with elongated claws emerging from the ground to ambush him, he couldn't help but smile. Lucil had made sure he wasn't overwhelmed when he laid eyes on the monsters.

Of course, he hadn't really paid much attention to her ramblings, but his brain was very good at picking things up, so he immediately knew he had to do just one thing.

'I have to look for the Death Mage,' Klaus said inwardly.

From what he could remember, Lucil mentioned that she implemented these characters in one of her video games. She wanted to create a mage necromancer class where the user could only summon Grave Ghouls.

However, after some brainstorming, she came up with a better idea. Instead of just Grave Ghouls, she decided to add another monster with similar traits. This meant even a rabid dog could have some abilities of a Grave Ghoul.

In essence, she aimed to create OP characters, ultimately putting their command in the hands of a sneaky character called the Death Mage. These Death Mages are darkness-type characters with great control over dark energies.

However, they are cowards and prefer to hide, summoning their minions to do their bidding. Like necromancers, the monsters they summon are undead, meaning as long as the Death Mages are alive, the tide of undead will never cease.

'I better find that sneaky bastard before the other icky and spooky monsters pour in,' Klaus thought.

He sprang into action. The Void Piercing Needles began their onslaught, and his senses activated, scanning the battlefield for the fiend.

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Far away in Stone Valley, Lucil, her friend, Olive, and the three nerds were seated, watching Klaus's trial with smiles on their faces.

"Looks like he was paying attention when I spoke about the Dark Mages and the Grave Ghouls," Lucil said, smiling.

"What did you expect?" Joon replied. "I remembered how you were bothering him with all your 'amazing' character designs," he added.

"Well, he didn't go to school like every other kid, and he also never had access to the internet until recently, so he never played the Ghoulish Ascendence game. If I hadn't said anything to him, he would have chosen to fight these monsters until time ran out," Lucil explained.

The three nerds nodded, knowing what she said was true. Unlike many who had access to these games, Klaus never did, so it was her way of educating him.

"Then what about his sister? I researched her and found out she wasn't really his sister by birth but rather an orphan he accepted into his family. How would she manage that?" Ryan asked.

Since Klaus had been indirectly given a heads-up, what about his sister Hanna? Among the 5,000 taking the trial, they were the only two without any flashy backgrounds. While other academies and families were guiding their youngsters through game trials and training, they weren't as fortunate.

"Who said she doesn't know?" Lucil asked with a smirk. "Have you heard of the Female X Archers before? Specifically, Female Archer XX and Female Archer XI?" she asked again.

"Of course, everybody knows those two gamers. However, nobody knows their true identities," Joon surprisingly answered. The question was rather unusual, something a nerd like him shouldn't have known, but he did.

Lucil smiled inwardly, understanding why he was aware of that. However, she chose to stay on topic.

"Well, Female Archer XX is Klaus's sister. She and her friend formed that group when Ghoul Ascendence launched four years ago and have been topping the charts ever since. So, I think among all 5,000 candidates that entered the trial, she was perhaps the most well-informed."

"No way!" Joon exclaimed, his smile widening in shock.

"You look like you've uncovered the identity of your idol," Lucil remarked, observing Joon's expression.

"That's because he did. Joon is a huge fan of those two. He even has their posters in his room," Ryan rattled him out before he could deny anything.

"He even offered to pay a million gold coins just to meet them at one point when their fame was skyrocketing."

Lucil and the others burst into resounding laughter at what Ryan said. Joon could only hide his face as he observed Klaus moving toward something.

Klaus moved through the graveyard, killing monsters left and right. His senses were on high alert, searching for the root cause of the horde.

Five minutes passed, but he hadn't found it. Then suddenly, he noticed a shift in one of the destroyed mausoleums. He quickly made his way there, killing the monsters along the way as if they were chickens.

"Got ya!" Klaus exclaimed the moment his senses picked up on the shadowy figure. Without wasting time, he summoned a sword and coated it in fire. He lashed forward, sending a clean, lethal fire arc that cut through the mausoleum.

The attack destroyed it, creating a wide-open area for him to see the Death Mage. He quickly unleashed another fire arc that landed in empty space. However, Klaus just smiled as he watched the shadowy figure moving through the darkness, trying to escape.

The Ice Lotus appeared, and before the shadowy figure could jump into its next hiding spot, an ice beam landed on it, freezing it in place instantly. One thing about the Dark Mage: despite its ability to summon hundreds of Death Ghouls, they themselves weren't that strong.

So the ice beam was all it took to kill it. Its body froze for a few seconds before dissipating. Immediately it did, Klaus was teleported to a place where the system immediately asked if he wanted to rest or continue.

Of course, he opted to continue.

Thus, Klaus entered the third stage of the Trial leading everyone.

#### Chapter 334 - 334: Stage Three Calamities

The third stage spanned from Level 41 to Level 56. This stage involved Tier 6 monsters, so it was bound to be tough. Of course, by the time everyone passed through stage three, only 2,212 participants remained, though the academy was looking to select just 2,000.

These levels were grueling for many, as not only did the monster Tier rise from Tier 5 to Tier 6 but the environments they appeared in were also unique and challenging for most to handle. There were three distinct environments this time, each very difficult for most considering they were now battling Tier 6 monsters.

From Level 41 to Level 44, participants found themselves in a vast labyrinth of mirrors. Everyone immediately knew what needed to be done upon arrival. Typically, when a labyrinth appears in a trial, the objective is to navigate through it within a specific time frame.

Since most of the mirrors serve to distract, those with low perception often struggle. In most trials, that would be the extent of the challenge.

However, this time was different. Even Klaus nearly washed out when he first arrived. Initially, he, like everyone else, assumed it was a typical trial, but he quickly realized this one was unique.

Instead of simply walking through the mirrors to find the next exit and ignoring all the reflections, this time, as they moved through the labyrinth, creatures emerged from the mirrors to attack them.

These monsters were known as Mirror Phantoms, recognizable to many from a popular game made by the Lucil company. This familiarity caused several participants to give up before even taking a single step.

From the trial's beginning, the goal was to test various aspects a warrior should possess: reaction time, adaptability, reasoning, and many other skills they had already demonstrated. However, they soon realized the previous ones were merely lessons.

The Mirror Labyrinth was perhaps the true test of reflex and quick decision-making. Enhanced senses did not matter here, as Mirror Phantoms had no detectable presence until they lunged.

Klaus, initially unaware of what the trial entailed, was almost caught off guard. It took him a few minutes to understand how to proceed, but not everyone managed to overcome this obstacle.

Some participants were even eliminated at the graveyard before reaching the 41st level. After moving through Levels 41 to 44, the number of those who managed to make it through was 4,002, meaning 998 couldn't reach Level 45.

However, the nightmare didn't end there. After the labyrinth, they found themselves in yet another mind-bending setting that left many questioning what exactly the academy wanted from them—or, more importantly, whose twisted idea it was to design such a trial.

This next stage was an open field, bordered by towering cliffs on either side with no place to hide. Atop each cliff, what looked like a volcano on the verge of eruption loomed ominously. The ground was covered in fire residue, a major disadvantage for ice users.

After the Oracle system gave some information about the trial, two things became clear: first, they would be fighting Tier 6 Hellhounds—a fact that pleased Klaus, as his former self, Fruity, had once had a grudge against them.

Hellhounds are known as some of the most vicious monsters in the wild, infamous for their haunting nature. Their aggression made this a terrifying trial for many.

But if that wasn't daunting enough, the cliffs weren't just for show—the volcanoes would erupt two minutes before the time limit expired. This required participants to complete the trial before time ran out, or they would be consumed by lava.

This stage also claimed quite a few participants, with even Anna nearly washing out. Unlike Klaus, who was exceptional—even managing to use ice in a fire-dominated area—Anna wasn't as fortunate.

The fire in the area acted as a debuff for her and other ice-wielders. Although she wasn't exactly struggling, she was holding back to conserve energy, which almost backfired.

The Hellhounds were relentless, and if she hadn't quickly recognized the need to switch tactics, she might have failed at Level 45. However, she managed to push through to Level 50 before the scene changed once again.

From Level 51 to 56, they appeared on a vast battlefield littered with abandoned weapons and armor. Although the scene wasn't real, it felt genuine from the moment they arrived, with intense pressure settling over the battlefield.

If it had been real, they would have begun to see visions of the terrible battle that had scarred the battlefield. But rather than experiencing the battles of legends, they faced something worse—fighting those legends themselves.

Hundreds of knights rose once again for battle. Although it was a toned-down version of the real thing, many still felt the overwhelming pressure. At this point, everyone abandoned all caution and began a true massacre.

This stage was where everyone started using their trump cards. Anna summoned a massive 4-meter Ice Rhino onto the battlefield, which brought utter devastation, leaving a trail of ice that froze everything in its path.

Lily also became a force to be reckoned with as she tapped into the wind, moving across the battlefield like a storm. Whenever she slashed her sword, multiple arcs of wind shot out, each hitting with precision and dealing damage.

However, it became clear that only a few of these wind arcs were inflicting true damage. Even so, it was enough to handle most of the awakened knights.

Kilian unleashed his clones—a sight that made the instructors add his name to the list of genius for this year's union trial in the Northern Union.

Whenever he activated his clones, his movements became unpredictable, allowing him to inflict heavy damage on the knights, who were distracted by the multiple clones around them.

Daniel also earned his place on the list of geniuses. When his hammer struck the ground, it brought utter destruction, leaving the instructors wondering just what kind of technique he was using. And he wasn't the only one.

Hanna, who many had overlooked during the City Trial, accomplished something remarkable. Throughout the trial, she hadn't expended much Qi; in fact, she still had 94% of her Qi left by the time she arrived at level 51.

When she unleashed the lightning technique she and Klaus's mother had helped her develop, the battlefield was cleared in an instant. However, she didn't move on immediately.

Instead, Hanna rested for 20 minutes to recover before repeating the same tactic in the next stage, and the next, until she reached Level 56, where she had only ten minutes of rest time left.

She was also one of the last few to clear the third stage. However, her dominance left a mark on all who watched her. In fact, after she finished the third stage, her screen was enlarged to the size of Klaus's, revealing that alongside Klaus, there was another hidden dragon from the Northern Union.

Of course, she was nowhere near Klaus's level of dominance. From the start of the trial, the only time he used a different weapon was during his run at the Graveyard.

Aside from that, he relied solely on the Needles. In fact, he had developed significantly in the Labyrinth of Mirrors. While it was true he nearly died there, he learned from the experience, and throughout those levels, he focused on training his mind and mastering the Void Piercing Needle.

Unlike many who were unleashing powerful skills, Klaus was saving his for stages 4 and 5, where he would be battling Tier 7 monsters and possibly a Tier 8 monster.

Chapter 335 - 335: Battle of The True Geniuses

"It seems they weren't just friends with him; they are also quite impressive," the Announcement Lady said, watching Mark move across the battlefield with his upgraded spear, unleashing devastation in his wake.

He also began using skills Klaus had given him from the moment he appeared in the third stage of the trial.

Now in the first level of the fourth stage, level 57, Mark and the others started to see where their limits could take them.

Mark managed to get his name on the genius list too.

"It would just be laughable if his friends weren't also impressive," a lady said, watching another screen that showed Kay, whose every fire arrow unleashed from his bow turned into a flaming lion head with a rather long, pointy flaming horn. He managed to earn his name on the genius list.

Wherever the arrows landed, devastation was bound to happen. The monsters he was facing at the 57th level were Tier 7 Spike Tail Wolves. There were only five of them, but no Tier 3 human should have any business facing them; however, these kids were doing it.

That is especially true for some of them who managed to clear Level 57 and head to Level 58. Although they are weaker than the monsters, the advantage they have lies in the skills and techniques they possess.

However, not all of them were able to brave the danger. The reason almost all of them, except Klaus, were able to face the monsters was that they knew this wasn't the real world. Death here wasn't permanent.

At their current level, dominating a hundred Tier 4 monsters should be possible. Maybe defeating a dozen Tier 5 monsters would be plausible; however, anything higher than that was just too much for them.

Still, they took solace in knowing that by stepping into the fourth stage of the trial, their chances of being in the Top 2000 were high.

And it was a bullseye. The moment the 2,212 participants entered the fourth stage, the number began to fall at a rapid pace. It took just a few seconds for the number to drop to 2,010. Then, before long, the number finally hit the 2,000 they were aiming for.

However, that doesn't mean the trial was over. The remaining part was what they all called the battle of the geniuses.

Klaus was at the very top, obviously.

He wasn't moving at their pace at all; his speed was several times faster. He cleared the 57th and 58th levels with just his needles, but when he reached level 59, he took out his sword.

Thirty Tier 7 Spiked Wolves surrounded him, each one comparable to some of the Tier 7 monsters he had killed. However, he couldn't afford to slack off.

Klaus moved with the Void Piercing Needle, choosing to multitask instead of just going for one-way slaughter. The Needle was his killing tool, while his sword was the damage dealer.

Although the monsters were faster and stronger than him, they didn't seem to have any chance of attacking. Some came close, but Klaus was always a step ahead.

His combat strength had improved.

Obviously, his past memories weren't for show. Fruity started out as an Ice mage, but thanks to Yuying intervening in time, he learned to use a variety of weapons.

The sword was one of them.

The time he spent at the Witch Temple helped him train even more. Although he wasn't the most skilled with the sword—Yuying was even better—he still managed to elevate his Sword Aura to quite a level and even developed his own swordplay called Tormented Sword Sage.

Basically, Klaus, who was now using it, had only one objective: torture. Yes, while the Tormented Sword Sage allowed him to fight evenly with the most powerful sword masters, whenever he gained the advantage in combat, based on his swordplay, the damage dealt wouldn't immediately kill.

Instead, it would inflict pain so agonizing that one might ask for death instead.

Klaus hasn't really mastered it yet, but he was using it, and the results were instant. The wolves were not having it easy. However, he didn't prolong the fight; instead, he always went for the kill.

Not that he needed the time for anything—he had hours of resting time, but he never used any. Klaus wasn't tired at all. In fact, as the levels became more harrowing, his energy seemed to rise.

But his friends weren't having it easy, especially true for Danny and Daniel, the brute fighters. Although they had the strongest bodies, their mental strength wasn't as robust, so they began to feel sluggish.

Still, they were pushing through—more like bulldozing ahead. They were using the skills Klaus had given them. Danny, whose light element only provided some minor healing effects, was using it alongside the Axe skill.

Daniel, on the other hand, held a large, heavy-looking hammer bathed in flames. He was using his element too, but the difference in strength was just too vast.

But they were moving on, barely.

Only 400 managed to make it to level 59.

Miguel was one of those 400. So were the Zhou twins, Lin and Zing, who, despite their class being that of defense, somehow managed to pass through the many disadvantageous levels and are now among the top 400.

By level 60, it became the top 200. By level 61, it was in the top 100. Then, it was in the top 50 by the end of level 62. However, when they all entered level 63, it dropped drastically to the top 20.

Klaus was at the top, already at level 65, while the others were at level 63, facing fifty Tier 7 Spiked Wolves that had somehow become even stronger than when they appeared at level 57.

However, contrary to what anyone would expect to be leading right after Klaus, nobody anticipated a no-name who had only gained some fame recently.

Yes, Hanna was sitting in the second position, telling everyone she was indeed Klaus's sister. Truth be told, she deserved that position more than anyone. She had been training harder than everyone, so being there was well-earned.

But her position was very shaky because Anna was right below her, and from the look of their performance on the battlefield, she was closing in on the kill. They were both fighting at level 63.

Hanna had already taken down 30 monsters, while Anna had done 28. They were both exhausted, but they weren't giving up just yet.

Miguel and Lily were switching between the 4th and 5th positions, but the 6th place was still undetermined, though Ethan Duncan held that spot. Kilian was in 7th, Mark in 8th, Ella Duncan in 9th,

Kay in 10th, and Daniel in the 11th position. Surprisingly, Danny was sitting in 12th place, with Max Duncan following closely in 13th.

Omari was in 14th place, while Lin and Zing occupied the 15th and 16th positions, respectively. Alavaro, one of Ella's lieutenants, was seated in 17th, and another contender named Rolin was in 18th.

Surprisingly, Scarlet was in 19th, with the 20th position taken by Lucian, the other archer who remained in Klaus's team during the trial at Sinji Valley.

In short, Klaus's friends proved they weren't following him for nothing. Well, what would anyone expect? They all wanted to avoid looking dull. While everyone aimed for the top 2000, they were after the top 20, top 10, and even top 5. They all had their ambitions.

In the end, they weren't able to get past level 63. Well, Hanna and Anna got close, but alas, Anna ended with 46 kills out of 50 monsters, while Hanna ended with 48 out of 50.

Ultimately, Miguel took 4th place, giving Lily the 5th position—something nobody had expected. Everyone expected the three legacies to dominate the top 5, but it seemed that anyone Klaus was close to if they weren't spoiled brats, seemed to improve significantly.

Klaus on the other hand has finally cleared Level 65 and managed to climb to the 66th stage where a dear friend was waiting for him.

#### Chapter 336 - 336: Mecha Zombie, the Final Boss Fight

Immediately, everyone was ejected from Oracle because they couldn't hold on anymore. They quickly made their way to the large hall where a big screen was supposed to show the rankings.

To their surprise, when they arrived, the screen was displaying Klaus taking down the last of seventy Tier 7 Spiked Wolves. They looked at the level, and when they saw Level 65, everyone's jaws dropped.

"This Klaus—what is he made of?" a young lady asked, watching Klaus take out the monsters as if he were some kind of god.

"What? Are you shocked?" another lady replied. "Even my dad said they should have just offered him an inner disciple position and be done with it."

"That would have been better. He is just too domineering. Just look at how he fights—like the monsters pose no threat to him."

"I'm more excited about what's on the 66th floor," someone beside the two girls chimed in.

"Well, I envy him, though I know I will never reach his level of talent in this lifetime," another person added.

Soon, everyone started commenting on their feelings. Some were in awe, while others were just frustrated. Klaus was simply too domineering. Those who hated him were struggling as they watched him accomplish things they couldn't.

"Just wait. When we get to the academy, Big Brother and Big Sister will make your life a living hell," Ella said under her breath, gritting her teeth.

Ethan and Max Duncan both wore the same look in their eyes, the kind that showed just how much they hated the white-haired bastard.

But contrary to their feelings, Klaus finally managed to bring down the last of the monsters, and without rest, he opted to continue.

He appeared on the 66th level, expecting another ominous-looking space. However, to his shock, he found himself in a rather familiar setting. He was in the same arena where he had battled the Mecha Zombie many times while working with the Nerds and Lucil to make Oracle better.

Klaus smiled, but then his eyes fell on the 2.5-meter-tall metallic figure standing 50 meters away from him and his eyes narrowed. The figure had jagged metal skin that seemed to consist of some kind of alloy that absorbed the darkness around it.

It wore a metallic helmet that revealed only its deep red eyes. In its hand was a long spear, and hovering behind it was a metallic ring—the same razor-sharp ring it had used during their training and testing.

"Are you ready?" Before Klaus could meticulously appraise the tall figure, it spoke in a robotic voice.

"Born ready," Klaus replied with a smile.

His sword transformed into a spear, and the entire 64-inch length of the Void Piercing Needle appeared.

His eyes also changed from gold to red, something that caught many off guard.

Even from the screens, everyone who saw it broke into a cold sweat, instructors included. The announcement lady seemed unfazed, but she raised an eyebrow—perhaps surprised by Klaus's red eyes or maybe because she hadn't expected the final boss to be something this powerful.

'Can he kill this thing? Even I don't think I could,' she sighed.

She was a Sage, but staring at the Tier 8 Mecha Zombie, she resigned herself to the fact that she wouldn't be able to defeat it. In contrast, Klaus seemed eager to fight. He was thrilled to finally lay his eyes on something that could give him a real challenge.

**BOOM**

The Mecha moved, cracking the ground as it appeared before Klaus instantly.

"Fast," Klaus thought, swinging his spear to meet the attack aimed at him. Boom! The two spears collided, sending shockwaves through the air. Klaus was pushed back a few meters, but he didn't falter.

He lunged forward again, this time using a movement technique he had learned from Yuying called Phantom Steps.

When used, it made each step appear ghostly, making him hard to track. Klaus appeared before the Mecha, but instead of attacking directly, he turned around and slashed his spear backward. His spear met the razor-sharp ring as the Mecha launched a sneak attack with its spirit weapon.

Klaus's back was exposed, but instead of taking advantage, the Mecha also turned and slashed its spear backward, intercepting the advance of the Void Piercing Needle. Klaus had launched his own sneak attack.

"Not bad, not bad at all," Klaus laughed wholeheartedly as he jumped into another exchange with the Mecha. He could feel it—this Mecha was different from before. It was more powerful than the one he trained with and, more importantly, stronger than Klaus himself.

He was fighting a losing battle, or at least that was how it should have been. But Klaus didn't see it that way. No, he saw it as a chance to test just how much he had developed.

Right now, it was purely a battle of strength. No skills—just a good old-fashioned spear fight.

Klaus lunged forward, his spear slicing through the air with fierce precision. The Mecha met him head-on, its spear flashing like silver lightning.

Their weapons clashed, sending sparks flying. The ground beneath them trembled with every impact.

The Mecha was far stronger than Klaus, so whenever they clashed, Klaus felt the force coursing through his body. But all of it only added to the thrill, the rush, the adrenaline. Klaus was having fun, and without even realizing it, twenty minutes had passed.

Klaus twisted his body, dodging a fierce jab from the Mecha. He retaliated, thrusting his spear toward its core, but the Mecha blocked, twisting its own spear in a brutal counter. Metal scraped against metal, the sound echoing through the arena.

Sweat ran down Klaus's face, but his eyes stayed sharp and focused.

He shifted his stance, charging low, then springing up to aim a strike at the Mecha's neck. The Mecha leaned back, its movements smooth, almost human.

It swung its spear in a swift arc, nearly catching Klaus off guard. He barely managed to parry, staggering under the force.

The Void Piercing Needle was also intercepting the Razor Disc. Right now, the focus was more on hand-to-hand combat, with only a strand of Klaus's consciousness controlling the disc.

However, thanks to Klaus's enhanced mental strength, it was mere child's play for him. His senses covered the arena, ensuring nothing escaped his gaze.

It was a rather difficult feat, yet Klaus was pulling it off with a surprisingly calm expression. But the battle—more like a duel between old friends—was far from over.

They circled each other, both unyielding, eyes locked. Klaus grinned, tightening his grip. He spun his spear in a rapid flourish, launching into a series of relentless attacks. Each strike was faster, sharper, and heavier than the last. The Mecha deflected them all, each block precise, unshaken.

Klaus saw an opening. He lunged, his spear striking toward the Mecha's core—but the Mecha anticipated it, twisting aside and bringing its spear down in a deadly arc. Klaus dodged, feeling the rush of air as the strike missed him by inches.

They clashed again, both refusing to relent. Each impact thundered through the arena. Neither side showed weakness. It was strength against strength, raw power in every move.

Klaus's adrenaline was pumping so much that even after 40 minutes of pure, strength-based clashes with an opponent five realms above him, he wanted more.

He craved more.

Suddenly, the Mecha swung its spear, and a flame circle with a diameter of 400 meters appeared around them. The moment it appeared, Klaus felt his strength drop by 20 percent.

"We can't have that now, can we?" Klaus muttered before switching to his sword.

"Demon Killing Circle," he muttered as he swung his sword. In an instant, the effect of the fire ring was canceled, making Klaus's grin widen.

"To the trial of skills and techniques, then." His smile broadened as he activated his first skill—or rather, one of the skills he'd been holding back.

"Chaotic Nirvana Flame: Dragon Arm Guard."

Chapter 337 - 337: Two Domineering Dragon Skills

As soon as Klaus activated the skill, his right arm—holding his sword—lit up in flames that burned fiercely for a second before calming. Once they settled, an armed guard made of orange-red fire with patterns of dragon scale appeared around his arm.

"Much better," Klaus muttered before slashing his sword forward. This time, a fierce arc of fire cut through the air with intense energy.

Boom!

The Mecha, intending to use the Flame Circle to trap Klaus, now found itself locked in place by the powerful attack. Forced to defend with its spear, the Mecha lost its grip, and the weapon was blown away, pushing it back three meters.

Klaus grinned, then began bombarding the Mecha with more attacks.

The skill he used was one of the two abilities the dragon had imparted to him when he used the golden energy to upgrade it.

After awakening the slaughter aura, Klaus used the technique Number Three gave him to help the dragon absorb the golden energy and finally level up. It has undergone an upgrade.

The golden energy was meant solely for Klaus to absorb. However, after a near-fatal attempt to awaken the Slaughter Aura, Klaus received a glimpse of his past, which enabled him to discover a method not only to awaken the aura but also to upgrade his fire element.

When the Dragon underwent its first upgrade, Klaus received two new skills. The dragon, meanwhile, not only had its existing skills upgraded but also gained two additional skills. Klaus couldn't wait to finish the trial so he could go on another hunt and explore them.

The first skill he received, according to the system interface, read:

[Chaotic Nirvana Flame: Dragon Arm Guard: When activated, dragon scales made of the Chaotic Nirvana Flame will materialize around your arm, granting a 120% increase in all fire-type attacks unleashed with that arm.]

[Consumption Rate: 10,000 Qi per second of activation.]

[Note: This skill has no cooldown and can be used as long as you have sufficient Stamina and Qi.]

As soon as Klaus read the skill description, he instantly knew how to use it. His Moon Slash skill allowed him to imbue his elemental Qi into any weapon he held, enabling him to unleash a crescent-shaped arc made from the chosen element.

This was like instead of forming the element in his hands, he could just use his weapons for more direct and precise attacks.

The first attack he unleashed was only a fraction of his current potential. But with a 120% power boost, the impact alone sent the Mecha staggering back. Still, it wasn't enough to destroy the killing machine Lucil had devised.

Thus, Klaus began bombarding the Mecha with increasingly powerful fire attacks, using only 50% of his strength, which was amplified by the 120% power boost. By the time the timer hit 55 minutes, the Mecha had utilized about 90% of all the skills Lucil had given it.

However, Klaus never switched his attacks. The Mecha countered many times, but Klaus was just too unreasonable—his attacks were simply too powerful.

Yet Klaus noticed something: although they had fixed Oracle, it still didn't meet the standards of real-world combat. The thrill of knowing that a single mistake could cost him his life—permanently—wasn't the same in Oracle.

In his eyes, this made it 10% less effective, and somehow it led him to believe that to truly enjoy the thrill, he would need to venture into the wild. Of course, he knew that in the real world, a Tier 8 monster would be a different story.

After all, in the real world, a Tier 8 monster is a Pseudo Beast. Battling one would be many times more dangerous than fighting in Oracle. Still, he didn't see the need to pass up the chance to test his two skills.

He knew people were watching, but he hadn't even used a fraction of his skills yet. So no matter how much they wanted to learn about him, they were far from understanding his capabilities. Plus, watching him now would reveal one thing: just how many skills and techniques he had under his belt.

'Time for the second skill,' he thought inwardly before raising his sword.

"Chaotic Nirvana Flame: Fiery Dragon Claw!"

A couple of meters above in the air, a fire circle resembling a spell circle appeared, about two meters in diameter. It looked elegant; however, what was contained within it was far too dangerous to admire when it was coming your way.

Klaus pointed his sword at the Mecha charging toward him.

From the circle, a large, fierce claw with menacing talons emerged. The moment it appeared, a great pressure descended on the arena, halting the Mecha in its tracks.

The claw moved, and before the Mecha could make any defensive maneuvers, a fire arc appeared, forcing it to split its defense between the claw and the fire arc. It tried using the Razor Disc, but the Void Piercing Needle was in the way.

Boom!

The two attacks connected with the body of the Mecha, sending it flying. The claw landed squarely on its body, propelling it backward. The fire arc struck the ice defense it had raised, cutting through before landing on its body too.

"You can die now," Klaus declared, swinging his sword several times.

Wide arcs of flame erupted, each landing on the Mecha's defenseless body, instantly vaporizing it under the sheer force of the attacks.

Well, it was more like the Mecha had lost too much stamina to contend with Klaus, who wasn't even tired. Although there were some aches here and there, he felt fine.

"Ha, in the end, the real world is still better than the virtual," Klaus sighed, and then his vision darkened. The next second, he found himself back in the real world.

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At the same time, the rankings were immediately displayed, snapping the attention of the 1,999 viewers who had witnessed Klaus's sudden dominance over the Tier 8 Mecha Zombie back to reality. The rankings took precedence.

Those who saw their names at the bottom fell silent. Those in the top 500 felt pleased, the top 200 began celebrating, and the top 100 were over the moon. As for the top 50, they became celebrities.

Not to mention the real contenders—the top 20. However, not everyone ranked at the top was happy. This was especially true for those from the Central Region and the other regions.

In the top twenty, 15 spots were occupied by the Eastern Region. In fact, the top 50 had 35 individuals from the Eastern Region.

Everyone was shocked.

The reason was simple: the Eastern Region was the smallest among the five regions and lacked resources compared to the others. So While the other regions had always dominated the trials, this time it was different.

The reason, of course, was Klaus.

His presence compelled them all to aim higher and perhaps hope to surpass him. This was particularly true for Miguel, who wanted nothing more than to grow stronger so he could get back at Klaus for the humiliation he had put him through during the Felin Youth Ball.

So instead of acting like the strongest simply because they were above-average Awakens, they all started pushing harder, and the results were outstanding.

The Eastern Region entered with 1,000 disciples, and 575 made it into the academy.

The look on the faces of the three Legacies said it all. Normally, the Legacies were among the top five, but this time, none of them made it into the top five. It was a huge blow to their egos, and what was even worse was that if Klaus was the monster they all knew him to be—

Then who the hell was Hanna Kendrick, who took the second spot?

Chapter 338 - 338: Instructor Constance

Hate is a better teacher. Many might argue differently, but in this context, hate has proven advantageous.

In the Eastern region, 90% of the awakened taking the Academy trial hated Klaus—and they still do. Some were angry because of the humiliation he had put them through. This was especially true for people like Omari, Miguel, and Lawrence.

Some, however, hated him because of the possibility their girlfriends might leave them for him. Although the women around Klaus were considered some of the best in the region, they were still wary.

Just an image of Klaus was enough to win the heart of Lucy, a top beauty, so their worries were justified. They indeed had reason to be concerned.

However, this concern turned into hate, and many thrived on it. They all wanted to bridge the gap between them and Klaus somehow. So they began training like animals.

The men hated Klaus because of his charm, and the women hated his companions for having him all to themselves.

And it paid off. Now, looking at the rankings, the Easterners couldn't believe their eyes. However, no matter how one looks at it, the Eastern region has indeed come out on top this time—and the trend won't stop there. It's bound to continue.

Klaus woke up from the game chair, and with the next few steps, he was back inside the large hall, joining the 1,999 others already present.

The moment he appeared, everyone noticed him. They all turned to look at him with varying expressions—some conveyed hate, anger, and even a desire to kill.

However, many showed awe. But Klaus wasn't paying attention to them; his focus was on the rankings. When he saw his friends' names in the top 20, he smiled and began moving toward them. Nobody dared to stand in his way.

The guy had just killed a Tier 8 creature they'd never seen before, so it would be foolish to block his path.

"Congratulations, guys," Klaus said as he approached his friends.

They all smiled, knowing that although some of them hadn't made it into the top ten as they'd planned, their rankings were still impressive.

Yes, his friends had met to strategize about breaking into the top ranks. However, they could only do much considering they are not monsters like Klaus. Still, they hadn't fallen far behind.

"Big sister, looks like you wanted my spot," Klaus said to Hanna, who smiled slightly. Truth be told, she was very shocked by the result herself.

Of course, she had also aimed for a high ranking, maybe within the top ten, but never expected to land in the top two. That was beyond her expectations.

"Nobody can take your place, brother; you are undisputed," Hanna replied with a small smile.

"Ladies," Klaus said, reaching for the waists of Anna and Lily, whose faces began turning pink. Even Klaus wasn't holding back his affection in such a crowded place.

Well, he was Klaus; when had he ever bothered with that? He pulled them closer, resting their heads on his shoulders.

"Looks like I've got myself a pair of prodigies," he added, making their blush deepen.

All around, both boys and girls were gritting their teeth in annoyance as they watched Klaus's actions. Everyone wanted to be in his place. The boys wanted Klaus's spot—some of the ladies, too. Without a doubt, Anna and Lily were heavenly beauties.

They could charm both guys and girls without much effort. So, with Klaus's arm around their waists, it was as if he was daring others to take action. Some were very close to that point. Fortunately, before anyone could act on their feelings, a door opened, and seven people walked in.

The one leading them was a mature woman, someone in her late thirties. She had short blue hair and blue eyes. Although she wasn't the most beautiful, she could hold her own in a ballroom full of ladies.

"Congratulations, everyone. You have finally made it to the Academy." The moment she said that everyone went wild. They had all been training diligently for this moment, so they were thrilled to have finally achieved something significant.

"Now, before I continue, let me introduce myself. You can call me Instructor Constance. I will be your go-to instructor for the next three months before you finally head to the Academy. As your instructor, I'll tell you a few things you should do and know before these three months are up.

"First, all of you are required to break through to the Grandmaster stage within these three months. The reason is that, before leaving here today, the sect will give you a valuable elixir to help expand your qi sea after the breakthrough.

"Let me explain. When you break through, your soul sea will expand, just as it did during your previous breakthroughs. However, this expansion will be different. This time, you will have the chance to determine how large it expands.

"This, of course, means that as you absorb Exp Points, cores, and other treasures, your qi sea will continue to expand. The reason we aim for a larger soul sea is that it allows you to use more qi during combat without worry.

"However, this expansion ends 72 hours after your breakthrough, so it would be in your best interest to work quickly. As temporary disciples of the Academy, you will be given a treasure that extends this time by an additional 42 hours.

"This is, of course, an advantage many would kill for, so be grateful. Use the time wisely, and right after expanding your soul sea, consume the Mountain Dew you won from the trial to stabilize and strengthen your foundations."

Everyone nodded, even Klaus, who already had a rather large soul sea. He couldn't wait to watch it expand even more. The moment he broke through, he would also start cultivating the second paragon star diagram.

"Before I continue, allow me to share a little something. Consider it my first official advice as your instructor.

"I know most of you are pretty impressive. You're strong—very strong, in fact—so you might think that because of this, you can afford to be arrogant and avoid pushing yourselves harder. Well, I'm here to burst that bubble, children.

"None of you here has what it takes to take on any disciple currently in the Academy," Instructor Constance said.

Everyone exchanged glances, some even looking toward Klaus. The announcer lady glanced at Klaus with a pondering expression, but Instructor Constance's expression remained firm. She meant every word.

'How exciting.' While everyone seemed skeptical about what she said, Klaus stood there with a neutral expression, but inwardly, he was laughing.

If only they knew he hadn't truly shown his true power. Perhaps he should invite them to his next tribulation, where he would be going toe to toe with the heavens. Maybe then, they would have a different opinion.

"And I'm not saying this to break your spirit; I just want you all to be prepared. When you arrive at the Academy, those there will try to oppress you. While I'd love to tell you to fight back, it would be in your best interest to lie low for a while and build your strength.

"The Academy will help with that since within these three months, you'll start to sense your spiritual qi more closely. When this happens, it means you can begin forming your star core. However, it would be wise to hold off until you reach the Academy, so you can begin properly.

"Once your star core starts forming, you will gain the strength to fight back." She didn't waste much time. She immediately continued.

"Now, let's discuss what you need to know before coming to the Academy."

Chapter 339 - 339: Unexpected Message [Bonus]

Instructor Constance went on about the various things they should know before ending with the two most important.

"The academy has eight factions. These factions are like different families vying for resources. While the academy will give you cultivation resources monthly, these factions also have their own resources they can spend on their members.

"It's the best way to grow together with those who have similar talents and classes as you. Now, I won't advertise here, so all I can say is that you should all do your research on these factions when you get to the academy before joining.

"Joining the wrong one would be to your loss, so take your time and figure out which suits you best before joining.

"Lastly, the academy doesn't use the same currency as the outside world. In the academy, we use something called Celestial Points, of which most of you have already received a few. But essentially, no matter how rich you are, your gold coins won't do you any good there.

"So when you join the academy, anything you need to spend on will require Celestial Points. That being said, there will be many ways for you to gain more points, so don't worry much about it.

"Now, you all have three months to prepare. When the time comes, you will all gather here, and then we will leave for the academy.

"But before I end, if any of you have any questions, now would be the time to ask."

A young disciple raised his hand. "Instructor, can we join more than one faction at the same time?"

Instructor Constance shook her head.

"No. You can only join one faction. Each faction has its own rules and goals, and being loyal to one helps you grow faster. Plus, most people even struggle to get into their preferred factions, so be grateful if you manage to join one"

Another disciple asked, "What if we don't like the faction we choose? Can we switch later?"

"You can," Instructor Constance replied, "but it's not easy. Switching factions means starting over with new rules and losing the points you've earned in your previous faction. So choose carefully."

One more disciple spoke up, "How can we earn Celestial Points besides what the academy gives us?"

"Good question," Constance nodded. "There are missions you can take on, competitions, and jobs within the academy. Each activity has a different point reward based on difficulty."

A final question came from the back. "What about safety? Are there any dangers in the academy?"

"There are strict rules about safety within the academy grounds. Most challenges are controlled to prevent serious harm. But remember, this is a place to grow strong. Risks will be part of your journey."

"While we strive for everyone to come out alive, there are some situations that can't be controlled by us. That's why we work to make sure you receive the best training so that when these situations arise, you can face them without fear."

Nobody else asked any more questions.

"Now, since there are no more questions, I will see you all here three months from now. And don't forget to claim your rewards before leaving."

With that, Instructor Constance and the other six instructors turned and left. The students started moving to claim their rewards. Klaus and his friends were about to do the same when the Three Legacies blocked their path.

"Klaus, I hope you heard what the instructor said," Ella sneered. "Just because you're some local hero doesn't mean you're the strongest. Just wait—when we get to the academy, Big Sister and Big Brother will make your life a living hell," she said through gritted teeth.

Klaus looked at her, smirking.

"The joke's on you," he replied. "My girlfriend's an inner disciple there, and from what I've heard, she's been putting your Big Brother and Big Sister in their place since day one. So, I think I'll be just fine.

"Oh, and you might want to stop making that face. No guy's gonna want you looking like that."

"You—!" Ella's face turned green, and she moved like a cat, about to attack Klaus, but Ethan and Max held her back. With angry expressions, they dragged her away.

"Shameless much?" Lily asked, looking at Klaus's proud smile as he bragged about Lucy.

"What? I'm proud of my girlfriend," Klaus said, walking away with his friends. A while later, they finished collecting their rewards. The Celestial Points were given to them on small cards, which they could redeem once they arrived at the academy.

On their way to their transport, they ran into Miguel's team, who looked noticeably more relaxed—a stark contrast to their mood in the morning.

After some conversation, they decided to join Miguel's team for celebratory drinks, which lasted a couple of hours before they headed back to their hotels. Scarlet tagged along, and surprisingly, the Zhou Twins joined them as well—though mostly for Mark's sake.

The group parted ways after a few hours. Later, after dinner, Klaus and his two lovers, Lily and Anna, retired to his room, where they helped him unwind and release some stress.

"So, what are your plans next?" Anna asked, licking her lips. She and Lily had grown quite fond of Klaus's star juice after just a day of tasting it, so as Anna asked, Lily continued to caress and playfully tease him down there.

"I still have a few levels to go before I can break through, so I'll spend the next few weeks raising my cultivation base. I'll break through when I'm ready," Klaus replied.

"Oh, so you won't be joining us to hunt after we break through?" Anna asked, a hint of disappointment in her voice.

"Probably not, but don't worry. I'll have Miriam take you all to a Tier 5 Forbidden Zone and help you hunt stronger monsters," Klaus assured her.

"Really?" Anna's eyes lit up at his reply.

"Of course," Klaus nodded. "It'll also give you all a chance to bond with her. She's actually quite sweet once you get to know her."

"Great, thank you, Klaus," Anna said with a smile, her assets partially visible to Klaus to see.

"You do realize I can see almost everything, right? That dress is way too thin for someone trying to keep me from devouring them," Klaus said, eyeing the pointed outline of her nipples through the thin nightwear Anna was wearing.

Although her assets weren't as developed as her sister's, she was getting there.

"Don't worry, Klaus. The day we allow you to claim us will be the day you get to touch everything. For now, you can just look—no touching."

"Tsk, what wicked torture," Klaus said with a playful smile.

"At least give me a reward for winning the Union trial," he joked.

"Don't worry, Klaus. By the time we're done, you won't even be able to stand up," Anna teased. With that, she and Lily got to work, milking Klaus dry. They went at it the whole night, stopping only when the sun was about to rise.

They all fell into a deep sleep that lasted a few more hours. When Klaus woke up, the two girls were nowhere to be found. He quickly freshened up, getting ready to meet his friends.

Just as he was about to head out, his phone beeped with a message. He quickly retrieved it and read the text, only to be hit with a huge surprise.

"Ohema is back..." he muttered with a smile.

Soon, all their plans were canceled, and before long, they were on their way back to Ross City, where Klaus was eager to see his dear sugar mommy, whom he had missed greatly.

Chapter 340 - 340: Ohema is Back

Ohema has been gone for months now. When Klaus nearly died during the Arcadian Mine Invasion, she stayed with everyone, crying their eyes out for 72 days straight.

However, after Klaus woke up and she saw he was okay, she left abruptly, as if she were running late for something incredibly important.

Klaus wanted her to stay a few more days so he could officially make her his woman. However, for some reason, Ohema wasn't ready to take that step just yet. At first, Klaus was a little concerned, but she told him she needed it more than he did.

But the time wasn't right at the moment.

Klaus accepted her explanation, but after she left, all contact went dark. Klaus, who doesn't really know much about her, was puzzled when communication ceased.

Thankfully, his mom was there to comfort him, helping him worry less and simply wait for her to come back. Now, seeing her message congratulating him for topping the union trial and telling him to come home soon, Klaus wished the pilot could fly even faster.

His friends were a little taken aback by the change of plans. Some had hot dates, but they had to bring them to Ross City because Klaus wanted to leave, which was a very selfish move. Thankfully, none of the ladies his friends picked were bad, so they agreed to continue in Ross City.

Kofi was there to pick them up the moment they landed at Ross Mansion. Soon, they were back at Klaus's home, where, as soon as he got out of the car, a familiar face immediately jumped into his arms, planting a kiss in front of everyone.

"I miss you, Klaus," Ohema said, hugging Klaus's neck.

"I miss you too, Ohema," Klaus replied with a smile, wrapping his arms around her waist.

Soon, they moved inside, where Klaus quickly entered his bedroom with Ohema. His friends, who had been wondering why they left so early, now understood why.

They could only smile and then left to go meet their dates, who would soon be landing in the city.

They all missed Ohema. Every last one of them; even Miriam missed her. She was just so sweet and caring. Had it not been for her, Miriam would probably still be "figuring things out."

Inside the room, Klaus and Ohema engaged in an intimate kiss that lasted for several minutes. By the time they were done, Klaus was in his shorts, and Ohema was only in her bra and panties.

But while they all knew where things were headed, Ohema stopped before they could continue further. She sighed and decided to talk first

"Klaus, I have to tell you something first before we continue," Ohema suddenly said, making Klaus frown slightly.

"Is everything alright?" he asked, concerned written on his face.

"Everything is fine; it's just that I have something difficult to say," Ohema replied. Klaus nodded and sat up, facing her.

"Go ahead; I am all ears."

"Before I start, tell me, do you hate me?" she asked with a sad expression. "I left and promised to return a few weeks later, but it has already been a few months. Clearly, you must hate me."

"Stupid head, who said anything about hating you? I don't hate you, Ohema. Although I don't know much about you, I can tell you are someone very important. Going away for a long time means you were either busy or doing something significant. So, in my eyes, now that you are here, that is all that matters. No need to assume the worst."

Klaus already knew from the beginning that Ohema was no easy person. When he saved her, he was still a rookie who didn't know much about combat. But as he grew, Klaus could now see things more clearly.

Her fight with the Demon Face Spider was not as it appeared. He could tell she had intentionally made most of the mistakes that nearly led to her death, which triggered him to save her. He realized he had been played, though he wasn't about to complain.

The person who played him was the most beautiful woman aside from his mother he had ever met. His mother is always the most beautiful. No need to cry about it. Lol.

As he grew, he started putting all the clues together. From the situation with his bank to Nadia's fashion company suddenly having an anonymous investor, it all clicked.

Klaus soon realized that Ohema had been orchestrating things from the beginning, and now she seemed to want to pass some of the responsibility to him or more like let him in on some of her secrets.

"I have a unique Heavenly body constitution that would make it unsafe for us to have sex," Ohema suddenly said, tears streaming down her face.

"Say what now?" Klaus asked, thinking he had heard wrong.

"I have a unique constitution called Virgin Poison Body. It's dormant now, which means I haven't awakened it yet. However, from what I know, if I were to engage in sexual activity with a man, that person would die the moment he claims my virginity" she repeated, her tears still flowing.

"Hehe, so that was why you ran away," Klaus suddenly laughed upon hearing her reason. Ohema looked up at him with a frown, though her tears never stopped falling.

"You... why are you laughing? This is bad. I am your woman, yet I can't give you what my other sisters can give you. Don't you hate me?" she asked, slightly frustrated.

"Hey, hey, you don't have to keep crying. Although I have to say, you're missing out on a lot, but your not being able to have sex with me changes nothing. I still love you and will never stop loving you.

"I mean, I would be stupid to stop loving such a rich sugar mommy," Klaus said with a teasing smile, making Ohema unsure of how to react.

She had spent a whole month wondering how to tackle this conversation, yet when she finally made up her mind and gathered the courage to talk about it, her partner was now laughing and joking.

"You don't realize how serious this is. I can't have sex with you, Klaus, and as your woman, I should be able to do that with you." She repeated her words, but Klaus just continued to smile at her.

"Say something," Ohema said, frustration evident on her face.

"What is there to say? You have a Virgin Poison Body that is preventing you from having sex with me. So all we have to do is break your poison virginity and awaken the True Poison Body, and then we can start having all the sex we want," Klaus said, and Ohema gazed at him with wide eyes.

"What? Are you surprised I knew about your situation?" Klaus asked. Ohema continued to look at him with a shocked expression.

"Well, don't be. I once spent decades with a fox lady who seemed obsessed with Unique heavenly Constitutions and Physiques, so your situation is just something minor to me." Klaus smiled, remembering all the torturous hours he endured from Yuying's constant rambling about anything her mind could think of.

'I probably shouldn't let her rest inside my soul sea the next time we meet,' Klaus thought inwardly, smiling.

Still, Ohema couldn't say anything, which only made Klaus's smile widen. He reached in and lifted her onto his lap.

"Since you said if a man tried to have sex with you, they would die before they knew it, I suppose women would be fine then," Klaus asked. This time, Ohema reacted, puzzled.

Why would Klaus ask such a question? However, her mind quickly connected the dots, making her instinctively nod.

"Then we have no problem. Why don't we blow off some steam before dealing with the Poison Body thing?"