

SPELLCRAFT 1041

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 1041: The Resolution

When preparing for war, a general does not inform the troops or even the captains of the entirety of the plan.

This isn't done out of malice, or an underlying attempt to lose the war, but for the opposite reason.

In leadership, there was the concept of compartmentalization.

Keeping information in little bits and distributing them when necessary. That way, the troops were not overwhelmed by the complexity of the general's plans, but on the single task they had been assigned to.

Certainly, in war, some soldiers were going to be sent to their deaths.

However, if an all-powerful and benevolent strategist was the one who took command, wouldn't it be reasonably expected by the troops that victory was assured?

Using all of this as references to the current situation, I could see why Neron did not see a supposed error in his plan.

'I did the same thing in the just concluded war. There were a lot of aspects in my plan that I didn't reveal to everyone. I still keep things from my friends as well, and it's not out of malice. It's just...'

"You all wouldn't understand. I'm sorry, but it's true." Neron finally broke the silence and spoke.

"There's only so much I can tell you. I won't ask you to understand my rationale, and I have apologized for your hurt emotions. But, the decision I made remains valid."

That's right. I never really thought of this before, but after obtaining all the Arcanas and catching a glimpse of truly absolute power, I could somewhat sympathize with Neron.

No... even back when I was reincarnated, among people who were way younger than me and had a very rudimentary understanding of the things I knew.

'I can understand what's happening...'

The problem wasn't particularly with Neron. It was with us.

Or rather, a disconnect that existed between us.

'He knows too much, and he's too strong. It prevents him from being able to freely relate with us at that level.'

I was once quite envious of Neron, but now I could also sympathize with him.

In a way, he led a lonely life.

"I just have one question, Neron." Aloe Vida spoke, her tone serious.

She hadn't said anything since we started the conversation, even though it seemed like she had a lot to pour out back when we discussed what to do about Neron.

"Are you on our side? Can we trust you?"

"Um, you know that's actually two ques... never mind..." Edward kept shut the moment Aloe glared at him for trying to raise a very valid point.

"So what will it be, Neron? Why aren't you answering the question?" Aloe narrowed her gaze as her tone grew even sterner.

Silence radiated among us for a while. Tension spread throughout the expanse surrounding us, and I noticed gazes all focused on Neron.

"I'm just wondering why you think I'm untrustworthy. But, it's fine. I understand. In the end, you'll understand too."

"Just answer the question, Neron." I sighed.

"No. I won't." He glanced at me, and the moment our eyes met, I could see more of the hollow loneliness I suspected.

Truly, Neron was...

"Neron, if you don't confirm that we can trust you, then we can't bring you home with us." Kuzon added.

"Words are flimsy. Actions matter most. Also, I'm a bit tired of explaining things to you, so I'll just stop now."

With a shrug, Neron smiled at all of us.

"Besides... I never said I was returning with you all, did I?"

"What??" Even this came as a surprise to me. What in the world was Neron up to now?

"There's something I have to do. It's private as well, so I won't be going back with everyone."

My eyes slightly widened as I searched his face for any hint of what it could be.

And finally, something appeared in my head.

"Does it have to do with the deal you made with Crazy Neron?" I asked, narrowing my gaze on him.

"Precisely. I have my own reasons too, so it's not particularly detrimental to me."

"Will you tell us what it is?"

"Nope. I don't need to. Don't worry, it's really none of your business anyway."

I felt a little sting within me as soon as I heard those words. Because I finally understood what that meant.

The true question we all had to be asking wasn't whether we could trust Neron, after all

'It's whether Neron can trust us. And we've just received our answer.'

"Doesn't this work well for you? Your intentions must have been to abandon me if I didn't prove my trustworthiness, right? Well, there's no need to make that decision." Neron smiled at Kuzon, whose expression appeared slightly guilty.

He must have begun to reflect on all that he thought and said concerning Neron.

"You should all return to your home world as soon as possible. Do your best to stop Legris."

"Do you know what his plan is?" I swiftly asked. "It could help us in stopping him."

"You should already know, Jared. Piece it together." Neron smiled at me.

'What? Piece it together?!'

If I was to start, I'd begin with his origins.

Legris wasn't originally from the Aether tree, but from the Nether one. He somehow managed to leave the Nether tree, and proceed to the Aether one, where he joined the Nether Cult to retrieve all the Arcanas and obtain [The World], which he used to send us into various branches of the Aether tree.

'But the Nether was also able to send us to the Nether Tree using [The World] as well. Why didn't Legris send us there instead? Could it be... hold on... but that means!' My eyes widened as I looked at Neron, who nodded at me.

"Legris has all the Arcanas of the Nether Tree already. That's how he was able to arrive in this world. He got the Arcanas of this world too, which gives him both [The World] of both Trees..."

What could he possibly need both of them for? This was the plan he executed. He wanted to have them... no, he needed them!

'But why...?'

A theory slowly began to form in my head, but it was inconclusive at the moment.

"He needs a phenomenally huge amount of energy to achieve his goals, and since I injured him greatly, he'll need to restore his strength." Neron interrupted my thought.

In essence, we had to stop him before he finished harvesting all the energy he needed.

At the very least, that was the mission.

"Where would he find the amount of energy he needs?"

"There are a few options to consider. I can't see his future, since he's... different. So I can't say for sure. But I suppose the first thing to do is find him, and then stop him."

Upon hearing everything Neron said, I felt both grateful and amazed that he was on our side.

But, there was still one thing that troubled me.

"You'll... be coming back, right?"

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Chapter 1042: Neron's Departure

'He said he wouldn't be joining us to return home, but...' My thoughts echoed as I stared at Neron.

"You'll be coming back, right?"

In response to my question, Neron smiled softly and nodded gently.

"Of course. Why wouldn't I?" A bright glimmer shone in his eyes. "I have a wonderful wife waiting for me back home."

Once again, Neron reminded me that he was actually a married man.

"When you get back, tell Serah I'm looking for a place where we can spend our honeymoon." He added.

The way he said those words made me burst out in a chuckle.

"Roger that." I responded playfully.

"As for the rest of you, make sure you do your best. Constellations are watching you all now; Aloe, Serah... and you, Jared."

Crazy Neron did mention that his ultimate goal was for all of us to get accepted by Constellations.

"A time will come when they will depend on you. Make the best out of the experiences you've had thus far."

It really did feel like a final farewell.

"U-um... Neron, I..." Kuzon finally spoke up, stuttering as he hesitantly shifted his gaze.

'He's just sixteen in the end, isn't he? Sometimes I forget.' I smiled at Kuzon.

"... I'm sorry for doubting you!" He finally declared.

"It's fine. I completely understand."

I didn't think it was simply out of courtesy. Neron must have actually understood everything.

"I'm sorry for doubting you too." Aloe spoke gently, finally reverting to her old, loveable self.

'Whew!'

"I always believed you would never betray us!" Edward grinned innocently.

He truly was the best of us.

"Safe journey. And bring back a souvenir for me." Ciara grinned excitedly, almost as if she forgot all the things she said about Neron.

Or the horrible suggestion she made.

"Of course. Anything for my prized pupil." Neron smiled warmly at Ciara.

"Hehe! Stop it!" She could only blush and grin even more.

'Hold on, didn't she say she wasn't really close to Neron? What's happening right now?'

"How do you think I developed my Original Magic and Mage Mode? I figured out what I wanted and made the rudimentary steps on my own, but Neron taught me how to bring it to life." Ciara beamed.

"Hold on, you did?"

Neron shrugged slightly.

"Ciara is extremely skilled and talented. I guess it makes sense since she's from the lineage of the Apostles of Aether. I didn't even need to do too much."

"But why did she make it sound like you two aren't really close?"

"We aren't. She just comes to me when she need something." Neron smiled tiredly.

"Aww! Don't be like that. Let the souvenir be a couple's item. For me and Jerry."

"Fine. I hear you." He sighed, though maintaining his smile.

"What about you, Jared? Want a souvenir?"

"Sure. I'll trust you to give me something good." I smiled at him.

"The last gift I gave you ended up being a foundation for your development of Anti-Magic. It should be fun, seeing what else you'll be able to accomplish."

"I can't wait then."

We spoke for a little while longer, but considering the fact that time was of the essence—literally—Neron bid us a final farewell.

"When you see Legris, give him a big whacking for me, will you?" He finally said, standing in front of a swirling portal that looked like coagulating stardust.

"I'll try my best." I responded.

We both nodded at each other knowingly, smiles on our faces.

And then...

>VWUUUUUUUUSSSH HHHH<

... He vanished into the portal.

For a while, no one said anything. We only just watched in silence.

But the silence didn't last very long.

"Alright, Kuzon, let's go home." Ciara raised her voice, her tone trembling in excitement.

"Ah, yeah... let's go."

Our golden-haired Midas prepared the Blu-Blu, and was about to hit it before pausing at the last second.

"Hold on! I'm forgetting something!" He burst out, swiftly retracting his Aether.

"What is it? Can't it wait? Let's go homeeee!!!" Ciara whined, showing her pent-up frustration.

Nothing mattered more to her than returning to see Jerry, it seemed.

'Now that we all know what her deal is, it's sort of cute.'

"Ah! I remember now. Jared, Crazy Neron told me to give you something."

Ah, yes. Kuzon did mention something like that in his story. It was rushed over, so I didn't remember until he raised the issue.

"Since we've reached the end of this odyssey, I suppose it's time to check out what Crazy Neron wanted me to see."

Kuzon brought out a small paper slip, no larger than a finger.

It was glowing with various colors, and I couldn't properly detect just how much Aether was locked inside it.

"Hmm...?" The moment I took it away from Kuzon, touching it with both of my hands, I felt a sudden surge of energy wash through me.

>VWUUUUUUUOSSSHHHHH<

'A-ah... ahhhh!'

Suddenly, I began to hear words in my head, and strange letters started swirling across my thoughts.

Meanings slowly started to form, and I began to comprehend what the words were all about.

This was a message!

I deciphered the message—no, more like it unfolded before my very mind.

It seemed like a very long process encapsulated within a second, but it finally drew to a close, leaving me breathless as I finally returned to my senses.

The paper slip slowly dissipated, and I was left suspended in motion with my friend stared at me strangely.

"Are you okay, Jared?"

"What's the matter?"

"What did the message say?"

"Can we go home now?"

The words of my friends, each with varying levels of concern, echoed in my ears, but I couldn't stop ruminating on the meaning of what I just learned.

"K-Karlia..." I whispered, grabbing my face with my palm.

"... She needs my help!"

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Chapter 1043: The Crossroads

Darkness.

Sheer, undeniable darkness.

Filled with such immense pain and suffering that would instantly kill anyone that experienced it.

That was the kind of horror Karlia was currently experiencing.

Unfortunately, due to her immortality, she would die. She was merely trapped in that hell, cursing and suffering.

'All this time... she's been suffering.'

My body trembled as my bulging eyes twitched. What I saw was too horrifying for someone to experience.

... Not to talk of someone I still cared so strongly about.

"Jared, we need to return. Legris should have started implementing his plan. We need to stop him quickly."

Hearing Kuzon's rational and completely reasonable words moved my heart.

I could sense impatience in his tone, and usually, I wouldn't hesitate to leave for home.

"B-but... what about Karlia..?!" I whispered, my body unable to move.

"Karlia? What are you talking about?"

"She's in immense pain right now. She needs my help."

"Jared, you don't even know where she is. Besides, we don't have the time. You can rescue her after this is all over."

"I... I know where she is now." My tone was somber, and my gaze quiet.

The slip that Crazy Neron gave me had the coordinates of her location.

"She's in the Root of the Nether Realm." I muttered.

That was the equivalent of the Root of Aether—a place where concepts were subjective to the will of the occupant.

"With the Nether now absent, the Root is in a fixed state, and the place where Karlia is trapped in is a torture realm."

That meant she would keep experiencing unimaginable pain forever!

"I... I have all the Arcanas, and Crazy Neron's message came with a huge supply of Aether. It's enough for me to create [The World] and open a way into the Nether Realm..."

I could go and save her. I could rescue Karlia from her suffering!

"Jared..." I heard Kuzon's voice, but my thoughts were too occupied with the possibilities.

"I don't think I'll have enough energy to reach The Root of Nether, but if I get transported to a branch, I should be able to navigate my way to the Root."

"Jared..."

"If I can find her and save her, then she won't have to suffer anymore. She won't... she won't have to experience all of tha—"

"Jared!" Kuzon's words finally snapped me out of my thoughts.

"Listen to me. I understand your sentiment, but... we don't have the time. Once we stop Legris, I promise we will go and save Karlia."

Even though he said all that, it wasn't enough to stop my line of thought.

"Kuzon... I... I can't abandon her again." The last time I did something like this, I regretted it for my whole life.

I couldn't be happy with Emilia afterwards, and I knew if I allowed the same thing to happen, there would be no future with Maria.

'I can deny it all I want, but I still love Karlia.'

And while it was extremely cruel for fate to put me in a situation where I had to choose once again, I couldn't bring myself to make the obviously rational choice.

"Jared. You heard Neron. An entire existence is at stake here. You want to risk all of that for one person?"

I... I didn't know how to respond.

Rationally speaking, Karlia had already been suffering there for a while, hadn't she? Of she could only wait for a while longer... at least until the world was safe, then I could save everyone and return for her.

"She's immortal, right? That means she won't die. For now, we should focus on what's more important."

Kuzon was making sense. It was the rational call to make.

"Don't try to be selfish, Jared. I know it's hard, but we need your help to stop Legris, and you know it."

Everything he said was accurate. What good would it be if I saved Karlia and everyone I cared about got destroyed?

What was the optimal decision to make? What would Neron do?

No... all of those things didn't matter at this point.

"Kuzon, what would you do if it was Ana who suffered unimaginable horrors for what seemed like an eternity."

"Jared, I—"

"Her body feels like it's constantly on fire, with her eyes constantly getting gouged out. Every part of her gets violated, and as she constantly screams your name, every sound she makes grates her throat. She is denied rest, and experiences every living moment feeling in such vivid agony."

"I..."

"Would you abandon her, despite knowing you could save her from even just another second of that suffering?"

I could see Kuzon's gaze fall. His expression darkened, and his fists clenched. He bit his lip, and I could see a tortured expression on his face.

He too must have realized it by now.

"I would... if it's for the greater good. I would abandon her." He finally spoke.

Silence radiated across us as I stared at him.

"You're lying."

"I'm not. I would abandon anyone to achieve my goals. And the current goal is to protect all of existence."

"You wouldn't abandon her, Kuzon. You know tha—"

"What do you want me to say, Jared? That I'll let an innumerable amount of people to perish just so I can save one person?"

"Yes. You would."

"I wouldn't."

"If it is Ana... you would."

"I... I... I can't be selfish, Jared. Neither can you."

Kuzon's words, and his dilemma hit me hard. I could understand everything he was saying, but I just couldn't let Karlia suffer, knowing I could stop it.

I also couldn't waste any more time, knowing it added to her pain.

But... how could I make the choice to risk all of existence just for her?

Could I really do that?

"Don't listen to him, Jared. Follow your heart! Save the one you love!" Ciara's words suddenly echoed in my ears.

'H-huh?!'

"You'll regret it forever if you don't. There's no need to overthink it. If she needs you, then go save her!"

"Ciara, you—!" Kuzon growled as he glared at her.

"I agree with Ciara. In the end, Jared... it's your call." Aloe's soothing voice flowed into me as well.

"Not you too!" Kuzon's voice sounded more frustrated with every passing second.

"You just have to do what you think is right. We'll hold the fort in the meantime."

"Edward!" Kuzon roared in annoyance.

I couldn't believe this.

Everyone was on my side.

"You guys..."

I knew it wasn't rational, and it was flawed, but... I agreed with them.

"... Thank you."

"Jared, you can't do this. You should know better than this."

Kuzon was right. Everyone else was right as well.

Even now, I had a dissonance that left me unable to make a true decision—at least, without some form of regret or the other.

But that was when I finally arrived at my conclusion.

"Don't try to stop me, Kuzon. I've made up my mind."

A soft smile formed on my face, and at that moment I knew exactly what I had to do.

It wasn't going to be easy, and it required a lot more than just willpower to pull off, but... I wasn't going to turn back now.

'This time... I won't abandon you, Karlia.'

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Chapter 1044: The Ultimate Choice

The past still haunted me.

The hard choice I had to make between my happy life with Emilia, and the life I could have had with Karlia.

I thought I had settled it all, but I was dead wrong.

Once again, Karlia fought for my sake, finding herself in unbelievable torture as a result.

She did it all for me.

And now I had a choice to make.

One person... or the entirety of existence.

It wasn't even meant to be a decision. It wasn't meant to take deliberation.

But... but...

"I can't abandon Karlia!"

"I can't abandon everyone!"

The cognitive dissonance only kept getting more severe the more I dwelled on it.

These two clashing ideologies made it impossible to make a decision and choose.

I had someone I loved other than Karlia, but I also loved Karlia dearly.

How could I make the right choice in this instance?

The answer appeared to me like an epiphany.

"I... I can do both."

The true reason behind that lie in the power of an Arcana I had used carelessly in the past.

[The Moon].

Of course, I wasn't planning on making a spontaneous decision and possibly threatening the mission on both ends thanks to my incompetence, but... what if I could achieve a perfect replication?

That would work, wouldn't it?

No... it wouldn't. Not really.

'In order to save Karlia, and only Karlia, I need to take a different approach.'

Karlia was someone I cared about, but ultimately lacked enough will to choose.

'Which is why I have to use an imperfect replication.'

I knew the consequences, but this was for the best.

'I want to make a version of me... a version that CAN choose Karlia!'

I could finally correct my past mistakes all those years ago, and fix the regret that now plagued me.

If I could love Karlia enough to save her, damning everything else... that would be the only version of me worthy of even a fraction of the love and devotion she showed me.

Which was why I did exactly that.

Within the Great Sage's Archives stood two versions of the one called the Great Sage.

They were identical in every respect—in power, in memories, in intellect, but that was where the similarity ended.

In appearance and emotions, they were completely different.

On one side of the room was Jared Leonard: blond hair, a teenage appearance, his usual demeanor, and the quality of power he possessed.

On the other side was... Lewis Griffith?

He had dark hair, and a focused hairstyle. He was taller than Jared Leonard, and he wore a dark cloak instead of the usual white that Jared donned.

These two looked at each other and smiled.

"Looks like the version of me that loves Karlia the most is still you, huh?" Jared smiled at the person who stood in front of him.

"And how do you feel? About her?" Lewis returned the smile.

"I feel... nothing. Well, I have a faint recollection, but it's not enough to form actual emotions. I suppose I bled everything out to form you."

That response was the satisfactory one.

"This way, none of us have to choose." Jared smiled at his opposite half.

"We can just follow our preferred path." Lewis grinned as well.

"It looks like I'm inept in this form, though."

The replication has succeeded, but that only meant the 'Jared' that was reproduced was the Jared before his reincarnation.

Lewis Griffith's Inept form.

"Aether won't be able to properly function where you're headed. Plus, utilizing Aether in that place will only put a target on your back."

The Nether's realm was bound to be rife with chaos and evil. Having the opposite energy in such a place was bound to be suicide.

"Without Aether, how will I survive, though? I'd be instantly vaporized by the Nether around."

There was that aspect to consider. Without the power of Aether to fight off Nether, his body would be easily corrupted, and he would die.

"I have a Nether repelling device. It should protect you from the surrounding Nether. It should also defend you from powerful attacks, but its durability isn't infinite."

"I understand. And what of the means of getting to Karlia? She's in the Root of the Nether Realm, isn't she?"

This was the major problem. Reaching the Root of the Nether Realm...

"T-that is... the wall I can't overcome." Jared muttered, clenching his teeth as he gritted his fist.

It was impossible to invade the Root of the Nether from any branch of the Aether Tree. Even from the Root of Aether, it was highly problematic.

If it was that simple, then the Nether would have just done that instead.

"I understand what we have to do." Lewis Griffith sighed, both hands in his pockets as he smiled at his partner.

"Really? And what's that?"

"Obtain all the Arcanas in the other world. That way, I'll be able to achieve enough power to reach the Root."

"But how are we certain that world has Arcanas?"

"I'm sure that Crazy Neron must have been well aware of the feasibility of the plan when he sent you Karlia's coordinates and the world you should send me to. Besides, since you have all the Arcanas, you can try a resonance with the Arcanas. You'll most likely get an opposite effect of repulsion, which will prove the Law of Opposite Interactive Relativity that I postulated back then. Ah, it seems I'm getting sidetracked."

Jared simply stood, almost dumbfounded as he listened to himself speak. How could he have forgotten something he had postulated himself?

No, he hadn't lost his intelligence or memories. Perhaps it was his new memories that somewhat clouded his older ones.

But with this version of himself, things were different.

Lewis Griffith remained the Great Sage through and through.

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Chapter 1045: Separation

"You're right. Using that Counter Resonance, we can even detect the locations of each Arcana!" Jared exclaimed, his eyes widened with excitement.

"Indeed. My mission will be to recover all the Arcanas and use [The World] to transport myself to the Nether Root." Lewis responded

"With the Nether gone, it shouldn't be a problem to infiltrate it."

"Once I get in, I'll find Karlia and get her out. She'll finally be free of her pain."

"Yes. That." Jared muttered, rubbing his chin as he calculated their plans.

"It's going to be an extremely difficult journey. Dangerous too. It's uncharted territory, and I can't even see any future in such a world. You'll have no Magic, and you'll have to navigate that plane on your own, with no assistance and multitudes of incomprehensible dangers sprawling from all directions. You might not last a second in there. You might even—"

"I am well aware of the risks, Jared. I realize that plans usually don't work smoothly, and the chances of failure are much higher than those of success."

"And you still want to go? Maybe it's not too late to reconsider. Help us defeat Legris Damien. Once we're done fighting him, all of us can assist you with Karlia."

Jared instantly recognized his line of reasoning... and how similar it was to Kuzon's words.

"You would do the same for Emilia, or for Maria. It's no use trying to convince me, Jared."

The blonde knew his other self was speaking the truth. He had felt the same only a moment earlier.

"I love Karlia. And I'll do anything to save her!" Lewis clenched his fist and narrowed his eyes in determination.

This level of devotion moved Jared as he watched in both disbelief and relief.

"I suppose this is what I wanted. Someone who would fight for Karlia no matter what. Someone she deserves."

It was very strange how love could make people do crazy things.

"I can't guarantee we'll come to your aid anytime soon, or even at all. No, in fact... there's something else we need to discuss."

"I know what you're thinking. I suppose that's another reason why I have to succeed in my mission."

"Yes. Please... we're counting on you."

"I understand. But to succeed, I'll need some tools. Time doesn't pass here, right? I'll be building a couple of things for my journey."

"Sure. Everyone is waiting for me outside this space anyway. Once I send you on your way, I'll return to my friends and we'll return to stop Legris."

"Fine, then. In the meantime, you'll be helping me make my tools. With your assistance, it shouldn't take too long."

"How long are we talking exactly?" Jared asked, his brows raised as he stared at Lewis.

The older, black haired man only gave a smile and whispered. "Not long."

And so, both began building.

[Two Years Later; The Great Sage's Archives]

"I'm finally ready for the journey."

Lewis Griffith, the Great Sage, was currently clad in a long dark hooded cloak donning a long coat of the same color underneath, with dark trousers, and an obsidian necklace.

He had what resembled a watch on his right hand, as well as five rings on the fingers in his left hand.

He carried a satchel bag, obviously having a couple more items stored within it.

His bright blue eyes shone with anticipation, and he readied himself for the adventure of his life.

"Do it, Jared."

"To think we spent two years... and you said it wouldn't take too long..."

Lewis could only smile at the boy who stared at him with disbelief.

"Every second was worth it, Jared."

"Sure it was." Jared could only roll his eyes. "Only for you."

"Just send me on my way already."

"Of course. I've had enough of your face for two years."

"Pfft. Is that so? Well, whatever. I'll be out of your hairs soon enough."

"Damn straight!"

Both men stared at each other in silence after that.

Despite their heated exchange, they couldn't help but appreciate each other. It was only by either of them that the other could exist.

For that alone, they were grateful to each other.

"I wish you success. At the very least, for the worst case scenario..."

"Same here. I wish you good fortune as well." Lewis interrupted Jared's words with a knowing smile.

Upon seeing this, the younger—or technically, older—Jared nodded.

"Thanks."

And then, a swirl of pure energy began to form around him.

"Thanks to Crazy Neron's letter, I have more than enough Aether to send you to the coordinates he specified."

The swirl of energy rippled with multiple colors, glowing ever so brightly.

All the Arcanas formed around Jared, each displaying their respective sigils and glowing in their respective hues.

And then, at the very center of them all, where Jared floated, the final Arcana formed.

"[The World]"

The lone card glowed powerfully, overshadowing the rest in its beauty and glory.

"Farewell... Lewis." Jared smiled in a complicated manner, unsure of what expression to make.

And then, the bright, multicolored blast of the card shot through the space of the Archives, reaching Lewis in no time at all.

"Farewell... Jared."

And then, in one final surge of power... the space around Lewis imploded, sending him, and all he possessed into the void that was the Nether Realm.

Whether or not he would survive... was left to the decree of fate.

"And now, to alter my memory of this occurrence..." Jared whispered.

It was better this way.

I returned to my comrades who were patiently waiting for me after I told them to give me some time to make a final call.

Once I returned to them, I had a smile formed on my face, and my eyes were more focused than ever.

"So, what will it be, Jared?" Kuzon asked, his arms folded as he stared at me seriously.

"After giving it a lot of consideration, I've decided to make the truly rational choice."

I could see Kuzon's expression light up the moment I said this, and the expressions of my other friends morphed into disbelief.

"I'm going to stop Legris Damien. That's what the right choice really is."

"J-Jared are you serious? You'd abandon Karlia?"

"Jared, just trust us. You can go and save her!"

"Don't you believe in true love?"

Aloe, Edward, and Ciara respectively tried to protest, but their words didn't make any sense to me at this point.

"What the hell are you guys talking about?" I smiled at them, my eyes genuinely reflecting confusion.

"Who is Karlia?"

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[End Of The Sixth Arc]

This Arc has been my least enjoyable, and it's probably because I fell sick a lot, had my Law exams, and a bunch of other personal stuffs that really ruined a lot of the journey for me.

I certainly hope you enjoyed some parts, if not all of the story.

Maybe when I'm all recovered and I return to check out this Arc, I'd have better thoughts.

For now, though... I'm more excited about the final two Arcs that will put a close to Jared's story.

And so, for the next Arc, we have...

[The Nether Realm Arc]

I hope you enjoy this one.

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 1046: The Realm Of Darkness

"ARRRGHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!"

In the depths of a forsaken realm, cloaked in absolute darkness, a woman with crimson skin, a wickedly coiled tail, and bat-like wings writhed in unspeakable torment.

Her once lustrous dark hair hung in disheveled tangles around her ashen face. This tortured soul, bearing the appearance of a succubus, existed in a hell crafted specifically to magnify her suffering.

A maddening silence enveloped the desolate chamber, broken only by the anguished screams and pitiful cries that erupted from her lips.

Her voice, laden with desperation, echoed through the oppressive void, reverberating back upon her with malicious glee.

Yet, there was no one to hear her agonized pleas, no one to witness her torment.

Her scarlet skin, radiant in its demonic allure, now seemed ashen and lifeless, marked by the invisible scars of relentless pain. Her tail, once a symbol of her unearthly beauty, twitched involuntarily, a mockery of its former grace.

The bat-like wings that had once borne her aloft in flight were now tattered and frayed, a testament to the perpetual torment she endured.

Tears streamed relentlessly down her contorted face, mingling with the grime and soot that clung to her tortured form.

They carved paths through the ash-colored veneer of her cheeks, tracing the paths of unspoken sorrows.

Each tear, an embodiment of her anguish, seemed to carry the weight of countless tormented souls.

As the darkness pressed upon her, suffocating and inescapable, she gasped for breath.

Her cries turned into desperate sobs, the sound echoing into the void, only to be swallowed by the oppressive atmosphere.

She curled into herself, her body wracked with sobs, seeking refuge from the ceaseless pain that wracked her being.

Amidst the chaos of her suffering, her lips trembled, and her voice became a mere whisper.

The name of someone dear to her, a lifeline in this abyss of agony, escaped her quivering lips.

"Lewis," she muttered, her voice barely audible above the wails of her torment. "Please... save me..."

With each utterance of his name, her voice grew weaker, her plea more desperate. She clung to the hope that he would hear her, that he would answer her cry for salvation.

Tears fell unabated from her eyes, cascading down her face like a river of sorrow, mingling with her soul's searing torment.

But the darkness remained unyielding, the silence unbroken. In this desolate realm, her pleas went unanswered, her torment unabated.

And so, the Succubus, whoever she was, continued to endure her personal hell, trapped in a cycle of suffering and longing, her voice fading into the abyss.

"Lewis..."

~VWUUUUMMM~

Emerging from the depths of a swirling vortex of vibrant colors, I found myself transported to an unfamiliar and foreboding realm.

The disorienting journey deposited me into the heart of a dark, cave-like region.

The air felt heavy with a palpable sense of unease, and an eerie silence pervaded the surroundings.

"At least I made it..." Murmuring to myself, I recognized that the protective layer that repelled Nether from me was currently active.

If it wasn't, I wouldn't be alive to think for even a few seconds.

As I glanced around, my eyes strained to pierce through the gloom, but all I could discern was an impenetrable darkness.

A sense of isolation gnawed at my core, and I felt an overwhelming urge to shed light upon my surroundings.

Reaching into the depths of my satchel, my trembling hand found solace in the touch of a familiar object—a luminous gemstone.

'This should do it.'

It pulsed with an ethereal glow as I held it aloft, casting its soft radiance upon the shadowed expanse.

The illumination revealed the desolation that encompassed me. No signs of life, no familiar landmarks to anchor my presence.

It was as if the cave itself held its breath, waiting in anticipation for my next move. I cautiously stepped forward, my footsteps reverberating through the stillness, the echoes a haunting reminder of my solitude.

After what felt like an eternity of wandering through the dim labyrinth, my eyes caught sight of a faint, glowing region in the distance.

It beckoned to me like a distant oasis, promising an escape from the claustrophobic confines.

'The exit? Finally!'

A flicker of hope ignited within me, urging me onward.

My steps quickened as I approached the luminous gateway, anticipation mingling with trepidation.

But as I breached the threshold, I found myself confronted with a sight that froze the blood in my veins.

'E-eh...?!'

Before me sprawled a vast expanse teeming with grotesque and fearsome creatures.

They lurked amidst the shadows, their forms twisted and monstrous, their every movement hinting at unimaginable power.

Wings beat against the air, creating gusts that carried the stench of decay.

Some feasted on carcasses, their eyes glinting with ravenous hunger.

Others engaged in savage battles, their roars of aggression rending the air.

It was a macabre symphony of chaos and violence, and as my presence disrupted their realm, their attention snapped toward me as one.

'Crap...'

Time seemed to slow as I stood rooted to the spot, stark realization washing over me like an icy wave.

In that instant, I comprehended the magnitude of the danger that engulfed me.

The creatures, sensing a vulnerable intruder in their midst, bared their teeth, claws, and fangs, prepared to unleash their fury upon me.

Fear surged through my veins, coursing with an intensity that matched the pulsations of the gemstone clutched tightly in my trembling hand.

I was a stranger in this hostile land, an interloper who had unknowingly trespassed upon their territory.

Survival became my sole purpose as I braced myself for the impending onslaught, desperately seeking a way to navigate this perilous confrontation with the monsters that now regarded me as their prey.

'Wait for me, Karlia! I'll save you!'

For now, though, only one thing became my occupation.

'RUN!'

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[Welcome To The Nether Realm Arc]

Now, you might think this will be a rehash of everything we've seen in the Lost Worlds Arc, but then you'd be sore mistaken.

This will be a different adventure for sure. Hopefully you all enjoy it.

And I'm grateful for everyone who's made it this far.

Thanks for reading.

Cheers!

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 1047: Evading The Monsters

"GROOAAAHHHHH!!!"

My heart pounding in my chest, I sprinted through the treacherous expanse, desperately evading the monstrous creatures that pursued me.

'Damnit! How was I supposed to know that I'd stumble onto their nest?!'

Their guttural snarls and thunderous footsteps echoed behind me, spurring me onward.

I knew I had to find a way to escape their clutches, to find sanctuary amidst the shadows that concealed me.

'Thankfully, I'm quite fit, so I can navigate my way through this area!'

The tiny regions proved difficult for most of the monsters who chased me.

As for the smaller ones, I was able to dodge them—though barely.

I felt my life on the edge countless times, but I pushed through and endured many times.

As I ran, my mind raced, seeking solace in the plan I had devised before my arrival in this nightmarish realm.

'The Arcanas... yes, that's right!'

There was a reason I had been teleported to this cave-like place by Jared.

Somewhere within these depths lay an Arcana.

'It's signature was detected by Jared, so to begin my journey, I was going to start here, but...'

I had no idea where it was!

With each stride, my focus sharpened, and I retrieved the holographic map from my satchel.

It flickered to life, illuminating my path with a soft azure glow. The map was very imprecise and only provided a rough approximation of the Arcana's location.

'It's in my location, but where exactly? Above? Beneath? To my left? To my right?'

I suppose I'll have to perform some tweaks to my equipment. But first, I had to escape the chasing monsters behind me. a proper

I knew that engaging in battles with the monstrous denizens would only hinder my progress, diverting me from my ultimate goal.

'Their numbers have reduced quite a lot.'

In the eerie stillness, broken only by my hurried footsteps, I plotted my course.

Adrenaline coursed through my veins as I pressed forward, my senses heightened, attuned to every subtle shift in the environment.

'Ah, there! Perfect!'

The creatures here most likely had night vision, so even if I turned off my precious luminous gemstone, that would do me very little good.

They could also probably sense heat signatures, so turning invisible wouldn't work if I had already been detected.

'To lose them, it's probably best to get rid of them.'

"GRROOOAAHHHH!!!" I heard screeching roars from behind me, as if the creatures were trying to remind me of their presences.

'I hear you. I hear you!!!' My thoughts echoed as a wide grin formed on my face.

'Might as well try this...'

I had already observed a very deep chasm right ahead of me, and I was running straight for it.

Removing two devices from my satchel, each with one hand, I braced myself for what would happen next.

"Hup!" I leaped down into the gulf beneath, and so did the creatures who lunged after me.

'Unintelligent. Very good.'

I used one of my devices—a grappling hook—to target the mouth of the cave I jumped out of, swiftly swinging away from the free fall that would ultimately lead to my demise.

Unfortunately for most of the Demons that chased me, they were going to plunge to their doom.

Mist covered the bottom of the huge lacuna, so even i didn't know how deep it was.

"KRRRIRIIIIII" I heard a couple of screeches, along with wings flapping.

'Shit...'

Some could fly, so they were able to avoid their free-fall dive.

Of course, I already prepared for that too.

As soon as I swung to the mouth of the cave, finding a solid foothold for myself, I threw the second device—something akin to an orb—to the approaching creatures.

"Die... I guess."

~BOOOOOOMMMM!!!~

The explosion, caused by purely natural combustive processes, and not Magic, echoed across the hollow of the cave, sending shockwaves flying in multiple directions.

'I better run before something worse happens.'

A wave of such intensity could make natural rock formations like these to cave in. If that happened, I would find it extremely difficult to move around.

Plus, the sound was also bound to attract monsters. If I remained in the same position, there was a high likelihood I could become nutrients for these savage beasts.

'We can't have that, can we?'

As such, once I was done with my task, I returned to my path, determined to be more careful in the future.

'First off, I should find a place where I can tweak as much equipments as possible.'

The map wouldn't be very useful in this instance, since I was already at the estimated location of my prize.

What I needed now, more than anything, were detection tools.

'Heat signatures and Energy Density' Those two were the most important.

'I brought some equipment with me for that purpose, but since I haven't been here before, I couldn't do it while I was with Jared.'

But now, things were different.

I was going to sync my devices and their energy receptive capabilities to the Nether around me, and account for higher density of such energy.

'That would mean monsters are close by.'

If I added the synchronizing effect and made a detection radius device, I could generate a mini-map around me, allowing me to detect the creatures that lurked around.

In essence, I would be able to evade them.

Most importantly, I would be able to find a more specific position of the Arcana I was after.

'Just follow the trail of the strongest energy signature.'

But this was a double edged sword.

'What if it leads me to a very powerful monster?'

Well, it was a risk I was willing to take. Inasmuch as I was trying to be careful, I couldn't be too wary. This entire mission was already too dangerous, to begin with.

"I should also be more proactive." Time was of the essence, after all.

Karlia was waiting for me, and every second counted.

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[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 1048: Labyrinth Of Chaos

[Nether Realm: Eastern Continent]

[The Khaos Labyrinth]

"Great Sage, over here. I think I found something." A very gruff voice sounded in the deep dark silent expanse that was the Entrance Region of the Khaos Labyrinth.

The man who spoke was a very buff individual. He had dark skin, with a bald head and a somewhat stern face.

His tone also sounded rough, and based on the complementary nature of his features, it was easy to mistake him for a thug.

... But he really wasn't.

"Ah, Doctor Drake. What did you find?" The man called the Great Sage approached the ebony man.

He had a somewhat thin and lanky frame. He also seemed like a man past his prime—middle aged, at best.

He had a very youthful smile, however, and the glasses he wore complemented his looks.

Unlike the dark-skinned man, who had a tank top and somewhat baggy trousers, the older man had a long dark cloak, with a satchel firmly placed beside him.

He had a curious glint in his eyes as he approach Dr. Drake.

"Aren't these... ah, I see." He murmured, looking at the items that the good doctor had called his attention to.

"Nether Ores, huh? I guess we really are at the right place. The Labyrinth Of Khaos..."

According to legend, there were 21 Great Labyrinths scattered across the world where the treasures of the Prime Ancient Ones were kept.

Obtaining all of these items would allow one infinite power and the ability to completely change the world.

Unfortunately, finding these Labyrinths was the most difficult task imaginable.

"I devoted decades of hardcore research, and finally compiled the list. If this is truly a Labyrinth, then the others I have pinpointed have to be accurate as well."

Unfortunately, he only had the precise location of about ten Dungeons, but it still filled his heart with joy that he found one.

"The Khaos Labyrinth. Finally, we're one step closer to our goals..." The Great Sage smiled to himself, his aged eyes gleaming with hope.

"Great Sage, I'm done scouting the area. It looks safe for now." A feminine voice suddenly echoed from beyond the location of the two who observed the rock.

Standing a distance from them was a damsel of unquestionable beauty.

She had striking silver hair, and her crystal blue eyes could entrap anyone within them. She was currently putting on a gleaming armor, with a sword by her hip, and her helmet hanging on her back.

"Thank you Aria. I appreciate the trouble." The Great Sage smiled at the young lady, causing her to slowly turn away.

"I-it's nothing. More importantly, what are you both looking at?" She muttered, hiding her face for most of what she said.

"Well, we found Nether Ores. That's enough proof that this place is rich in Nether, and it has been for a long time, such that it has crystalized here after several weathering processes." The Great Sage explained, turning to his companion.

"Right, Dr. Drake?"

"Precisely." He smiled. "Based on mere observation alone, the purity also seems to be of the highest quality. I reckon we'll find more in higher quantities if we venture inside."

Dr. Drake was an expert on biological and geographic studies. He was even more of an expert on these things than the Great Sage... though he would never admit it.

"How about it, Aria? You said the area looks safe, right? We can proceed, then." Dr. Drake smiled excitedly

"No monsters are nearby. There are weaker presences I sensed beyond, but they'll pose no problem for me." She answered sternly, donning a composite befitting a knight.

Aria was the most powerful Magic Swordsman in the world.

She was also an Half-Elf, evident by her pristine beauty, slightly pointy ears, and immense Magic Prowess.

Not only was she skilled at Martial Arts, but she was also very formidable with the blade, thus making her the strongest Magic Swordsman in the current generation.

"That's a relief. Sorry to keep relying on you like this, but you're the only one skilled enough to do—"

"I've told you already, it's fine!" Aria lost her composure for a second, raising her voice a little.

It seemed she realized this, and thus turned away from the Great Sage, holding her face in a somewhat self-chastising manner.

"A-ahem... anyway, it's fine. All three of us decided to journey together to find the Arcanas, didn't we? We all need each other, so it's fine."

The Great Sage and Dr. Drake couldn't help but nod in silence at their comrade's words.

Aria was right, after all.

All of them had their respective roles to play in the discovery of the most powerful items that could possibly exist.

Dr. Drake was a medical professional, though he was even more skilled in Archeology due to his expertise in rocks and minerals, as well as biology.

He was an expert in structural geology, paleontology, and petrology.

His help was indispensable in the search for Arcanas which were buried in Labyrinths—which were essentially rock formations, and we're obscured from all civilization.

As for Aria, she was the muscle of the team. Without her, neither the Great Sage nor Dr. Drake could hope to fight the monsters or other horrors that faced them in the Labyrinths they were challenging.

As for the Great Sage himself, he was the greatest Magic Scholar in the world, and an expert in the very thing they were after.

He had devoted most of his life developing Magic Theories and changing the way the world perceived the concept of Magic.

Not only that, but he spent decades studying the Arcanas, and since he was already nearing old age, he decided to explore the world to find the Arcanas.

This would be his final mission as the Great Sage. His last contribution to the world of Magic.

At least, that was what he openly declared to his comrades.

"Well then... let's venture in, shall we?" He smiled, leading the way for his team.

[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 1049: Denizens Of The Nether Realm [Pt 1]

It took me a couple of hours to manufacture the devices I wanted.

Making everything should have taken less time, but in my defense, I had to be careful about creeping monsters around while I proceeded with it.

If I was in a safe, comfortable environment, it would have been different.

But for me, this place was the most unsavory place to work in.

'The whole thing shouldn't have taken that long, considering I have all the materials and the theory at hand.'

Combining and appropriately syncing the tools with the existing elements around was all that I had to do.

"And I spent so long on it... have I gotten rusty?"

After going through it to make sure there was no error, I decided to test it out—my new goggles and Navigation Compass.

Putting on my goggles, I could sense the flow of Nether around me. It looked like dark purple mist just flowing around, and the particles also floated around me.

It seemed like Nether truly existed everywhere in this world.

'I'd die the moment my barrier is compromised.'

The other function of the goggles was to show me the density of Aether a target possessed.

It would help me determine how strong an opponent was.

'It also allows me to detect the strongest signature around me.'

And that was where my navigation compass came into play.

'Using it I can detect clusters of energy, which indicate a monster—or at least, a creature with enough dense Nether or something.'

The colors, based on the intensity of energy, ranged from white, yellow, blue, green, orange, red, purple, and black.

Black was the highest my device could measure.

'So I'll have to be very careful not to go near any black marker.'

Fortunately, no creature here had displayed the black marker, even after performing a long-scale scan.

'Or should I call it counter-scan, since I determine their positions and qualities based on anti-resonance? Well, terms aren't really important right now.'

The important thing now was that I could finally navigate my way through this cave.

'Let's take a closer look and see where I'm supposed to go now.'

I looked at my navigation compass hoping for guidance, but found something strange instead.

"Hmm? What's going on?" I murmured, staring closely at the holographic screen in front of me.

All the markers around were moving in the direction of three markers.

'Hm? That's strange...'

Of the three markers, one was white, one was yellow, and the final one was red.

'Are they monsters? Two of them seem extremely weak, though. The red one is most definitely very strong, but if it's a monster, why is it close to the other two weak ones?'

Were they the monster's kids? That would make sense.

Then, did that mean the other monsters were drawing closer to ambush the parent and her kids?

Based on experience, the creatures in this cave were savages who were capable of anything with their primal brains.

I wouldn't put it past them to try to kill a mother and her children.

'That's an awful amount of monsters heading their way, though...'

I observed the map a little more, noticing the markers that managed to get close to the three markers blinked and vanished—which meant they were dead.

'I see. So the red marker is protecting the other weak markers and is killing them.'

So far it seemed to be doing well, but I couldn't help but wonder how long that would last.

After all...

"There are three red markers drawing close to their position?"

Would they be able to win? Would they not? I was immensely curious.

'Get a grip, Lewis. You don't have time for this!'

That's right! I was meant to be searching for the Arcana here, not watching some sort of battle royale.

'Let's focus on the task ahead of us.'

I decided to ignore the monsters in trouble and instead use the opportunity to freely move through the labyrinthine cave.

'Since the monsters are drawing closer to that position, they won't mind me. This is a perfect opportunity!'

Plus, if I took a certain path that was a little adjacent to the spot where all the monsters were gathering, I was home free.

'The strongest signature is definitely coming from that position!'

It was perfect.

Jumping to my feet, I began to make my way towards my next destination.

"I don't know who you are, mother monster, but thank you for your sacrifice!".

"Huff... huff..." Heavy breaths leaked from Aria's lips as she stared at the creatures that stood imposingly before her.

Her narrowed eyes focused on the targets in front of her, and she gripped her heavy blade with firm resolve, unable to loosen her grip even if she tried.

The glowing energy on her body was dying out, and that was only a testament to her exhaustion.

The dead bodies of several fallen creatures littered the landscape, yet it seemed the number of adversaries wasn't dwindling.

"You two... just stay behind me..." Aria huffed, her tired eyes glaring at the monsters that took yet another step closer to her and her comrades.

Using Magic and Martial Arts took a great amount of concentration and stamina, and while the results made it all worth it, using it for long periods drained her immensely.

And the worst part about this battle remained very bothersome for Aria.

'Three of these monsters are very strong. As strong as me even.'

And then the rest served as distractions—enemies who would attack her comrades if she lost her guard for even a second.

As a result, she was stuck.

'I'm not giving up, though!' She gritted her teeth and rooted her stances.

As long as there remained breath in her chest, she would never falter.

Never again!

"Bring it on, you beasts!"

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[SPELLCRAFT: Reincarnation Of A Magic Scholar](#)

Chapter 1050: Denizens Of The Nether Realm [Pt 2]

Aria, her silver hair shimmering like moonlight, stood at the forefront of a chaotic battleground.

The deafening screeches and growls of the encroaching swarm of monsters reverberated through the air, their grotesque forms casting ominous shadows upon the grim landscape.

Behind her, two companions who lacked the means to defend themselves trembled with what could only be called fear, their eyes wide with terror.

Undeterred by the overwhelming odds, Aria gripped her gleaming sword with unwavering determination.

She knew that their lives depended on her skill and resolve.

Gritting her teeth, she took a deep breath, channeling her magic into the blade, causing it to glow with a radiant light.

~WHOOOOSHHH!!~

As the first wave of monsters lunged toward them, Aria met their onslaught with a deft flurry of slashes and parries.

~SWISH!~

Her sword sliced through the air, a blur of silver, as she maneuvered with uncanny agility, her movements a seamless fusion of grace and lethal precision.

~VWUUUM!~

Sparks of Lightning Magic erupted from her blade, each strike a testament to her mastery of both magic and swordsmanship.

~FWISH!~

With each swing, she dispatched the grotesque creatures one by one, their lifeless forms crashing to the ground.

~BOOOOMM!!!~

But the relentless swarm seemed endless, their numbers closing in from all sides.

Aria's heart pounded in her chest as she fought with unyielding resolve, desperate to shield her vulnerable companions from the horrors that threatened to engulf them.

The monsters lunged and clawed at her, their fangs gnashing and claws slashing.

Aria's focus remained unbroken, her senses honed to the razor's edge as she anticipated their every move.

Her body danced with agility, narrowly evading their strikes while launching counterattacks with lethal precision.

Yet, the tide of battle began to shift.

Fatigue clawed at Aria's muscles, her movements losing a fraction of their former speed.

The monsters seemed to sense her weariness and capitalized on it, redoubling their efforts to overwhelm her.

"HAAAAA!!!" She fought back, her sword an extension of her will, but the sheer numbers became overwhelming, threatening to swallow her whole.

With a thunderous crash, Aria stumbled backward, her blade slipping from her grasp and clattering onto the blood-stained ground.

~BOOOOOOM!!!~

"Aria!" Her companions cried out in despair, their voices filled with helplessness and anguish.

She locked eyes with them, her own filled with a mixture of regret and determination.

As the swarm of monsters closed in, their feral eyes gleaming with hunger, Aria and her companions watched as their lives flashed before their eyes.

Moments of joy, sorrow, and triumph danced through their memories, a bittersweet symphony of a life well-lived.

... But one of regret nonetheless.

'I-if only... I could have at least...' In their final moments, Aria reached out to her companions, particular the older fellow.

Unfortunately, just like always, it never seemed to reach.

They stood together, defiant in the face of impending doom, their unspoken farewell filling the air with a quiet, unyielding strength.

And as the monsters descended upon them, their triumphant roars drowning out the echoes of their valiant fight, Aria, her companions, and their shared memories were forever consumed by the merciless jaws of fate.

... Or so one would think.

~BOOOOOOOOMMMMM!!!~

A massive eruption roared from behind the horrifying creatures, causing all of them to halt in their pace and turn back to see what the commotion was all about.

~BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMM!!!~

Another round of explosion, this time greater than the first, roared through the cave, causing massive cracks to sear through the ceiling and walls.

"W-what's going on?!" Aria weakly shouted, suddenly experiencing the explosions that rendered the entire labyrinth structure unstable.

"I'm not sure. But if this continues, everything around us will collapse."

Unfortunately, none of them could fly. They could activate the defensive barrier they had as a last ditch effort, but even that wouldn't be strong enough to survive the collapse of an entire portion of the cave, and all of that descending to the depths of the Labyrinth's abyss.

It was the reason why Aria avoided using any flashy Spells, and the rest didn't bring any explosive to their expedition.

They even tried to avoid fights, but when the monsters lunged from below and above, they had suddenly found themselves surrounded.

And now, they were doomed to be buried by the rocks of the Labyrinth...

"Hey, you guys, grab on!" The voice of a man suddenly echoed across the vast cave.

Aria and her comrades saw no one, and they could not understand what words were just spoken, but they realized the ground beneath them was trembling, and the constant explosions were only making things worse.

"Grab the rope!" The voice echoed again, but they still could not comprehend the meaning behind it.

However, the moment they saw a dangling rope mysteriously appear in front of them, their instincts told them to grab hold of it.

"Hurry, you idiots! You want to fall?" The stranger's voice roared imposingly, causing them to tremble at the sound of his words.

They swiftly held onto the rope, each of them desperate to live.

~BOOOOOOOOMMMMMM!!!~

The final eruption sent the already fragile earthy platform to break apart, sending everything falling downwards.

The monsters were forced to descend with the shattered earth, roaring as they plunged into the abyss.

"ROOOAAARRRRrrrrrrrrhhhhh..."

Before long, they were no longer visible, and the only survivors of the skirmish were the ones who held onto the rope that kept them from falling.

"W-what just happened?" Aria murmured to herself, her grip strong on the rope that extended so far up that she didn't know it's origin.

"I have no idea. But it seems we've been saved." Dr. Drake murmured, his breath heavy with relief.

In response to this, the Great Sage couldn't help but nod emphatically.

"Indeed. Whoever our benefactor is... we owe him our lives."

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