

Undead 471

Chapter 471: The Penetrator Dominates! (3)

Indeed.

ALL THE MANA was held firmly in place.

The shrubs before Skullius illuminated his figure that still knelt on one knee while holding the abdomen of the Fire Breeder bound by chains with their orange-pink hue.

But this soon ended as the Penetrator stood, his sockets flaring madly.

"I was right. This is different..." Skullius said, his voice being very clear.

Everything around him was silent as with his 'grip' on the mana that was all around, every living creature was also firmly held down.

EVERY CREATURE!

The Fire Breeders and even his own allies.

The Nullmancer raised his head as the newly evolved skill he had attained was further amplified by [Epiphany], gaining a 90% increase in efficiency and power!

The four sockets of the Penetrator gazed at the Fire Breeders.

The dark scaled creatures gaped.

They couldn't move.

They couldn't breathe.

This... vengeful spirit that had suddenly appeared had got them in their clutches too!

But... it clearly had a core...

A white one.

So... how was it able to overpower them so easily?

What was going on?!

The tall Fire Breeder trembled as it looked at the figure of Skullius who was a finger's length taller.

At the same time, the Penetrator gazed at it, causing its heart to beat furiously.

"Ah... you're the one who decided to earn a kill for my noisy brat aren't you, bro...?" Skullius said as he walked up to the Fire Breeder which struggled but only felt all the mana around it pushed against its body with a deadly force that it caused it let out a scream!

It was as if a giant was squeezing it between its palms!

The Penetrator glanced at Yuyui who looked at him while also being unable to move and breathe, his finger swiping in her direction as this was enough for her to be freed!

The lime haired girl gasped in air and knelt down as she watched her master reach the Fire Breeder that had killed her and touch his abdomen.

"Let's start with you," Skullius said in a chilling voice that a hollow tone.

An Inhumane tone livid with brutality.

With this, the Nullmancer firmly held the Cluster beast's mana core with this new skill of his and...

Squeezed.

CRACK!

"AAAARRRRRRRGHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

The Fire Breeder screeched in horrendous pain, its mouth opening up so wide that it nearly tore apart!

The other Fire Breeders shuddered at this scream.

This wasn't pain that only torture to the body could spawn.

No scream they had ever heard was this guttural and meaningful.

No death throes they knew caused such a chill to run up their spines like this.

The Nullmancer's sockets flared once again, his four blue socket flames roaring as he felt a dull sense of ecstasy from hearing the Fire Breeder's scream.

Ahhhh....

A cackle escaped his teeth.

He squeezed again.

CRAACK!

"AAAAAAAEEEEEEEEEEEEAAAAAAA!!!"

Another screech echoed as some of the Fire Breeders started to lose their hold over themselves.

Yuyui was the same.

What was her master doing to this creature?

Skullius cackled once again as he removed his hand from the Fire Breeder's abdomen. He was done torturing this fool who had started to leak blood and saliva from every orifice on his body.

Now followed a harrowing death that came with a snap of the Penetrator's finger along with a single word that leaked from his mouth.

A word that carried over to every spot where his hold over mana was present.

Everywhere within the mile.

"BREAK."

PWAAAAAA!

Sounds akin to glass breaking apart could be heard only in the Nullmancer's ears.

The mana core of every Fire Breeder within Skullius' range... shattered!

With this came a cacophony of agonised howls of pain.

The Fire Breeders screeched with everything they had, their vocal cords rupturing as they sung the distorted melody of death together, the shattering of their mana cores causing a phenomenon that Skullius had grown to know with his own experience.

The cutting off of the anchor to the soul and body which was forged when one created a mana core!

The shock within the body and soul from losing their core like this caused a dreadfully pain death!

The orifices of all the dying Fire Breeders shone with a luminous light as with the shattering of their cores, their mana, condensed as it was from the blue or white cores, was not lost.

The Penetrator was greedy, and the small bits of the WILLS of Fulgardt that showed in this form would not allow any of it to go to waste.

ALL THIS MANA was collected.

It seeped from the corpses as they dropped while circling around the Nullmancer in a super bright ring!

"Hehe..." Skullius chuckled as he reached out towards this abundant mana, guidance field notifications raining in his vision of the successful culling of enemies stronger than he was.

[You have killed (IV) LV45 Fire Breeder. 3,560,120 Exp awarded]

[You have killed (III) LV20 Fire Breeder. 2,000,345 Exp awarded]

[You have killed....]

....

In addition to this, the notifications for Null Life Essence also rose, to which Skullius raised his other hand, his vast range for collecting the essence coming into play as it was ALL pulled towards him – 65 points for each Fire Breeder!

"Now," Skullius said as his other hand which stretched towards the abundant mana swirling around him cast [Mana Force], the skill evolved from [Mana Blast].

It was forged when he continuously compressed mana in his tiring training after the Eofel incident.

Now... the same concept applied, but with greater efficiency and power as all the mana around Skullius was suddenly sucked towards a point in his palm!

As this occurred, the atmosphere trembled this the action was done almost instantly, a small but shockingly bright spot of light being left.

ALL the mana just now, was compressed into this, an eyeball sized sphere that shone with extreme radiance.

Skullius chuckled once again.

"Let's save this for later and see if my other ideas will work for sure..." Skullius murmured to himself.

He pulled the orb of mana towards his core which was shining bright behind his rib cage, part of it showing below it, along his spine.

The orb of super compressed mana softly floated beside his core, waiting for its call to action which was going to be soon.

Yuyui gazed at Skullius, horrified.

She didn't know much about mana but this...

This was unnatural!

Ferex reappeared, rushing towards the two as he gazed at his master with reverent sockets.

The figure of Skullius never looked more domineering in his view.

He appreciated the Penetrator form more than he did the Hybrid Luman, so seeing the father of bone show utter dominance was quite the sight for him. The enemies he had been having trouble with had been dealt with by his master so easily.

One would ask the question of how though?

What was this skill that Skullius had unlocked and how had he done so?

Well, with [Elevated Mana Manipulation] only two levels behind its evolution, Skullius had decided to engage in one activity he was sure would cause the skill to level up.

Manipulating a mana core!

[Elevated Mana Manipulation] had levelled up from the thirties to the sixties just from the days he took recreating the Centre, Refinery and Shell for his mana core.

Now, if he did so to an external core... he was sure he could get two levels and he had turned out to be right!

The mana core was complex and its attachment to the body and soul was something he had learned from creating one himself.

With the evolution of [Elevated Mana Manipulation] came a new skill that gave a dignified title to Skullius for his achievement and not a verb for the action it allowed him to do.

[Greater Mana Crafter]!

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[Greater Mana Crafter | Lv.1]

The user gains a deeper connection with mana and all its forms inside and outside their body, the ability to wield it and shape it as they desire granted to them.

Mana Requirements: ---

Duration: ---

Cooldown: ---

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The ability to wield and shape mana and all its forms as one willed!

Mana in their air.

Mana in the user's body.

Mana in another person's body!

With [Elevated Mana Manipulation] and all its predecessors, Skullius had had greater control over his own mana than the mana in the atmosphere, as the limits of what he could do with it mainly revolved around drawing it to his core or using it to sense his surroundings.

The former had been able to invade the cores of others, but complete control had never been something it could give him even when the owner of the core had no means of resistance.

Now... things were different.

Skullius could even grasp a mana core as he wished.

Destroy it as he wished.

Manipulate it as he wished.

This had so many implications!

And as with all mana manipulation skills before this one, it had no specific requirements for mana, a duration or a cooldown which allowed the Penetrator to always have it for use even in dire times.

How it had the 'Greater' tag was a shock to him though but would find out soon.

As for this skill's capacity, how much power it gave to Skullius for his hold over the atmospheric mana...

How far did it go?

How much could he control?

To what degree was he proficient in this?

Well...

"Come on. There's a whole lot more left to kill," Skullius said as he extended his finger towards Yuyui and Ferex.

The mana within the atmosphere formed a blanket around the two, lifting them off into the air!

Skullius then gathered mana under his bony feet.

A massive amount of it!

At the same time, the skill he relied on in his Hybrid Luman form, [Koten Machi], which was enhanced by [Epiphany] showed him the nearest settlement within the Cluster, which was his next target!

It wasn't as useful as its purpose was to exploit the Hybrid Luman's abnormal senses but for now, it worked.

BOOOOOOOM!

The mana under Skullius' feet exploded in a shocking spectacle that eradicated everything within a ten meters radius, gouging out a deep pit that continuously caved in!

The Penetrator shot up at a controlled angle with Yuyui and Ferex following after him in the blanket of mana!

The speed they moved with was ridiculous, and Yuyui who felt a sense of deja vu, spawning from her experience with the horrendous agility of the Hybrid Luman form, yelled!

The trio descended after a long, angled flight, Skullius gathering mana below him to safely land on the ground... on the vast street, populated by thousands of Fire Breeders!

They had arrived within the first settlement in this Cluster!

The three's arrival caused shock, gasps and hostility.

But all of it... didn't matter.

All of it was inconsequential in Skullius' eyes.

The Penetrator felt the presence of the thousands of cores in his [Koten Machi] powered by [Greater Mana Crafter].

All this hatred.

All the high tiers.

They all weren't jack.

The Nullmancer, the Penetrator... raised his hand as he snapped his finger, a gesture he was carrying over from his fight with Bassbion.

A single word leaked from between his teeth.

A single word that ended it all.

"BREAK."

Chapter 472: Resisting Arrest!

"BREAK."

Skullius said with a gleeful yet commanding voice as his invasive hold over the mana around gripped the cores of every living thing in his range which covered the entire small settlement he had just landed in.

PWAAAPWAAPWAAPWAA!

The expected noise came as the mana cores of thousands of Fire Breeders exploded, those that were within the dome shaped houses, those that were outside walking about, those that were casually flying in the air and those that had begun to rush over to him as he appeared...

ALL OF THEM had their mana cores shattered!

Horrific noises sounded with a blood curdling tune of chaos, Skullius feeling his bones quiver from this in excitement as millions upon millions of Experience points were funnelled into him, level up notifications rushing in his view!

The Penetrator raised his hand at the same time as he absorbed the Null Life Essence which quickly filled his Essence bar!

"Perfect," Skullius said as he then used [Greater Mana Crafter] to pull on the mana from exploding mana cores, rivers of bright mana flowing towards him only to be compressed into six small orbs that shone so much brighter than the first he had floating around his mana core!

Skullius pushed them to orbit around his mana core as well and looked around in satisfaction.

"Ferex. Make sure to absorb all the Null Life Essence you can to," Skullius gave the order and set to move on to scout around when...

BAAAM!!

The Penetrator was bashed by a speeding tall figure, his bones shattering as he blasted past the houses and into the forest at an insane speed!

...!

Ferex and Yuyui who had been by his side did not even see the hurtling figure before their attention was drawn to the flaming trees in the distance that had parted with a gouged track through the ground where Skullius had flown through!

"Master!" Yuyui called in horror.

Fragments of the Penetrator's body could be spotted on the ground and this to her, didn't spell anything good!

Before the two, the culprit behind their master's flight floated in mid-air as it turned to them.

It was flying with its large wings that had a span of roughly three meters, its frame that was almost nearly the same measurement looking swollen with tough scales that sparkled with a light red hue over bulged muscles!

Two curved horns that hissed with a searing heat could be spotted on its forehead along with a chestplate that carried the same characteristics while releasing billows of smoke!

Ferex and Yuyui could tell, this was a different kind of Fire Breeder!

It wasn't weak at all!

Unfortunately for them, there wasn't one of it but three and this one merely grunted with a vicious expression before it stormed at an astounding speed towards where it had sent Skullius flying, the others descending down to the Apostle and Pinnacle Occuluthon!

At the same time that this was happening, Skullius pushed his body to stand.

"Well... I was pretty careless that time..." he said with a self-mocking tone and a chuckle. "I got a little too lost in the moment that I didn't notice that guy coming."

The Penetrator's tall frame was fractured heavily.

His rib cage had six of the ribs torn away while the rest were cracked, his skull being chipped on the right side.

All this was after his natural 50% damage negation had kicked in to relieve him of the additional stress that would have probably killed him.

What a thrill!

Skullius immediately sent a mental message to Ferex before he prepared his next move.

Unlike last time, with his [Koten Machi] which was infused with [Greater Mana Crafter], he sensed the zigzagging presence that blasted towards him.

"Come on!" the Penetrator said with excitement.

He could have died.

He could die.

But so what?!

Escaping death was what made one stronger!

It was the thrill of life!

No!

The thrill of Null Life!

The Fire Breeder that had knocked him this distance zipped through the air and came to a halt a few meters above Skullius.

It wore a vengeful expression as it quickly stretched out its hand, a bright orange flare in the shape of a pole lightning up within its palm!

It wasn't light, but flaming magma that hardened into a black spear full of glowing red cracks, orange-pink sputters of flame flicking from its surface!

The Fire Breeder hurled the spear towards Skullius faster than he could manipulate the mana around him, the object whizzing through the air to accurately smash into Skullius' chest and explode as it released a mass of boiling lava and flame!

BOOOOOM!

An area of a hundred plus meters was instantly levelled by the explosion of flame and consumed by the magma!

The Penetrator's body buckled under the crippling pressure as wide volumes of the hot porridge smothered him, immediately beginning to melt his body along with fumes and flames!

A hissing shockwave that blew out gave the scene a more devastating image, spelling the approaching doom of the Pene—

"HAHAHAHAHAHAH! BRO, THAT WAS DANGEROUS!" Skullius' voice spawned from the searing goop along with four luminous lights that showed from its orange hue!

A melting arm jutted from the lava hurriedly made a claw gesture, the activation of [Greater Mana Crafter] ensuing!

OOOOOM!

Every tree and shrub in the vicinity arched down as if in a bow as the ferocious wave of atmospheric mana was borne down, creating an outrageous downward force that pulled on the Fire Breeder suspended in the air!

The creature gritted its teeth as mana pooled around it with a heavy grip, dragging it to the ground with astounding weight!

PUUUU!

The Fire Breeder created a shockwave with its harsh, involuntary landing and as it quickly struggled to stand....

In the dark sky, a thick cloud appeared directly over the creature while it frothed from the mouth, slowly getting a grip!

Then...

Silent.

Serenely.

Luminously.

A thick bolt of Silentburn Levin shot down rapidly, its mass that carried hundreds of smaller bolts wriggling around it smashing hard into the downed Fire Breeder!

A bright light shone over the body of the creature, with a burst of noise and dust rising up!

This was the Penetrator exclusive skill [Fulgurous Space Virulence]!

In the crater that remained, the Fire Breeder, grunted in pain, but... there was barely any damage to its body!

At first it rejoiced while looking at Skullius' melting body with a mocking grin!

None of Skullius' racial skills in this form had been levelled up to the point that they could do damage to a Tier 5 Cluster beast like this and none had evolved either.

But Skullius wasn't aiming for normal damage.

The Fire Breeder wrestled to break free from Skullius' grip, in its red eyes a fervent desire to escape this and kill him brutally if it was at possible!

However, a dreadful sense of weakness suddenly oozed within its flesh as slowly, its hostile and riled up emotion was overtaken by a calmness that made it take in deep breaths at lengthy intervals.

Huff.

Huff.

Its will to fight was being stripped away and death was creeping in the most unthreatening way possible!

This was Serenity damage!

"Heh!" Skullius who was in the midst of melting laughed as he activated another skill from his racial cache!

[Silent Revelation of the Bright King]!

Numerous sparks of Silentburn Levin, thirty two in number, along with a dark thundercloud, immediately appeared around the lump of lava that was devouring him and shot large bursts of the Silent lightning into it!

The Levin stormed through the lump and struck Skullius' body in a flashy display, recovering the bones of the Penetrator!

A second later Skullius blew through the lump of lava as he dashed towards his downed enemy and grasped his head!

"BREAK!"

The Fire Breeder's mana core burst and with a screech of pain, the creature died.

This bastard.

Skullius had learnt the hard way when manipulating the mana around that casually breaking its core from a distance wasn't that easy like with the fodder.

It made sense considering his skill was still new though.

The Penetrator turned his head as he felt another immense threat, but it was too late!

VWOOOBOOOM!

Like a dark, darting arrow, Skullius was once again nabbed from the scene, but this time, he wasn't smashed into!

He was carried!

One of the two Fire Breeder's that had remained behind streaked and tore through the vast distance to a far away destination with Skullius!

The Penetrator grunted and was about to invoke the wrath of [Greater Mana Crafter] when the Fire Breeder suddenly tossed him into the air!

Skullius spun through the air unsteadily as he bolted through the empty mass!

'Heh! This guy was able to sense that I was about to use my skill. That's clever, I guess. Just like the other one, it's hard for me to break his core from a distance too... This will be tricky,' Skullius thought.

The wind blew against the Nullmancer as he spun, but with his ability to sense the mana in a vast radius which was even larger than [Koten Machi]'s, he somewhat accurately sensed around him.

A massive settlement that was much larger than the last could be seen, like a vast town with these dome shaped houses!

Skullius sensed the mana cores of over fifty thousand Fire Breeders, and some of them were really strong!

Some of the stronger ones with larger bodies and big horns had already begun to fly in his direction, multiple bursts of powerful energy storming his way.

Tens of Tier 5s and 6s were coming for him!

Their rate of mobilising was atrociously fast!

FWWOOOP! BAMM!

The Fire Breeder that had dragged Skullius high up flew up to him and gave him a good whack, shattering some of his bones with blistering heat that glowed over its body as it sped past in the air!

Then again!

And again!

Skullius couldn't even react.

But he wasn't brought to despair!

The numerous points of blue Levin from [Silent Revelation of the Bright King] circled around him as they shot bolts of energy to recover his body!

"You brought me to a place with stronger allies and many more fodder to kill, huh? Good! You've just doomed every one of them!" Skullius said with his sockets flaring like fuelled lanterns!

The Elimparidis Stone Staff appeared in his hand and with but a thought...

WHUP!

WHUP!

WHUP!

Skullius used three charges of [Jump] in succession as he rose higher and higher into the air, the image of his enemies and the large settlement with large clusters of domes within becoming smaller!

The wind caused the Nullmancer's socket flames to dance.

The mana was thick, allowing him to feel omnipotent.

The odds were against him power and number-wise.

But the Penetrator couldn't be happier!

"Let's get creative then. It's time to use these," Skullius said while pulling on the seven orbs of mana rotating around his mana core...

Chapter 473: Wrath of the Penetrator!

Skullius had a question that bothered him ever since he had started to gather around all the mana.

Was it possible to use mana that wasn't from his core to cast HIS skills?

The closest thing he had to an answer to this question, was the time when he used mana that he had condensed outside of his body to spam [Basic Evil Production] and [Basic Evil Weaving].

But this was different.

As far as he knew, skills – techniques and all – were etched into one's body and when mana came from the core and into the mana channels, it would ignite the etching of the skill in the body to activate its effects inside or outside.

But what about mana that hadn't passed through his core?

How could he use it for skills without just pumping it into his mana core?

Was it that possible?

The Penetrator took a second to think as he was airborne, looking down on dangerous enemies coming for his life.

Then, an idea came.

A theory in fact.

First, the Penetrator drew upon a weapon he had never actually used, except for when his soul counterpart Sila had taken over.

The thorny spear, Hedoness Easper's Lord Slayer!

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[Hedoness Easper's Lord Slayer]

<Unique>

A grand spear forged for Hedoness Easper, the second Foregeneral under the Null Devil, a masochist who thrived on feeling pain and instilling it while in battle.

-Attack-

30,000-45,000

-Durability-

60,000/60,000

-Special Effects-

- 50% piercing damage

- 35% chance to ignore defences

- +20% to Strength

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[One Sight]

The spear accrues speed with each successive throw at the target. Subsequent increase ranges from 5-40% depending on the result of each throw. Usable five times a day.

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[Eversharp (Passive)]

The edges of the three blades constantly undergo refinement, such that they remain extremely sharp and capable of a constant flow of damage.

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It was a spear with a thick, maroon pole as large as a man's arm with sharp thorn-like protrusions all over its body. A blue blade that branched twice a both sides could be seen at the head, a veil of blue energy swirling over it.

The mana that Skullius had been gathering wrapped around the spear as it started to follow its shape, exceeding it in all proportions as it produced crackling noises of the compressed energy!

"I'll use the spear as a reference and then...shape the mana around it," Skullius said as around the Lord Slayer, a massive length of super bright mana was forged, its appearance caused a sound like thunder in the sky!

But this wasn't all.

Far from it!

Quickly, Skullius tested out his theory.

He ignited one of his racial abilities in his body, [Ful Discharge], a skill that allowed him to launch a concentrated streak of Levin that dealt 10% Serenity Damage, but with [Epiphany] acting on it, the value was much higher.

As the skill ignited within Skullius' body, the Penetrator stretched his hands around the pillar of mana around the Lord-Slayer as it caused a turbulence in the air!

"What if I..." he said as strands of his own mana that were sparkling with Levin from [Ful Discharge] connected to the massive pillar.

Then...

Like a lit match being flicked on oil, the humming mass of mana that formed a tall pillar was set alight!

Silentburn Levin spread along its mass and created a gigantic stretch of its own, a blinding pole-like thicket of arching energy in a light blue hue being formed!

It was huge!

It was bright!

It was atrociously domineering!

Every single creature within the Cluster saw it as with the success of this construct, Skullius' sockets blazed furiously, his hands going on to shape it as he wished with [Greater Mana Crafter].

Tendrils of this silent lightning as thick as a man body shot out as mere offshoots from this huge bolt that was crafted to have a pointy end, with its back spitting Levin endlessly like a massive root-like network of power that painted the skies!

The space contorted around this massive construct as Skullius fell down with it, his hold over it slipping bit by bit!

Some of the bolts blasted against his body, but luckily, he was immune to this element as his body passively produced it too.

Yet, Skullius wasn't done!

He wanted more!

He wanted to reach out to his very limits!

Skullius cackled as he added on another skill with mad glee.

[Ungodly Passion of Debauchery]!

Along the pillar of Levin, the bolt swelled as another blinding mass appeared with a golden flare, this skill being enhanced too as the overall weight of this atrocity grew, a thunderous pressure bearing down towards the enemies below!

What kind of madness was this?!

What kind of enemy was this?!

This kind of mana....!

The Fire Breeders that had been rushing to Skullius halted as they felt the tension rapidly increase.

The Penetrator looked down at them with nothing but malice and one would be surprised to know that all that Skullius had done – preparing this attack - had only lasted for 55 seconds.

No mercy could be seen in his eyes as he uttered.

"GET FLESHED, SOCKETHOLES!!!"

And he let the mass loose!

Contrary to what most of the Breeders believed, the mass blurred as it literally cut down the air in its way, storming towards the Fire Breeders settled in their tens of thousands!

Before it reached them though, it shot down ALL floating or flying Fire Breeders within a mile's radius with its hundreds of shoot offs that smacked the creatures down or erased them with brutal incineration!

Right before the massive bolt could touch the ground, a notification appeared in Skullius' vision as he looked down, expectant to the results of his work!

[You have acquired the skill 'Wrath of the False god']

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

It started with unnervingly thick web-like shots of Levin that brewed from the point of contact as they scattered all around in a great distance, in the air, on the ground and under it, setting everything alight!

Then came the first shockwave that disintegrated everything outside of the spot where the giant arrow had landed, stripping the land bare to leave an enormous bald patch!

Then.... a mix of golden red flame shot from the sky while exploding in a never ending show of light, extraordinary heat and a preposterous doses of pressure that caused the Cluster to rumble with a grand impact ensuing!

This was peak devastation, an atrocious show of power that not a single Fire Breeder was expecting and it was nothing short of...

"Beautiful," Skullius who saw all this occur with ash and dust flying around his falling figure said, only wishing he could grin at this spectacle.

He didn't wait for the chaos to settle, as with [Greater Mana Crafter] which was levelling up already, he shot down to the ground with a push from the atmospheric mana!

He landed tens of meters away from the damage which spanned six miles, his attack having taken down another small settlement as well, the burning and sparking scene lighting his image.

He sent a message to Ferex while relishing in the thousands of notifications for Experience he saw.

Skullius swiped them all away after a while before checking his level.

"Not too far now," he said with enthusiasm.

He was level 14!

Six more levels before he could evolve!

"Hmmm? Oh, right. I almost forgot," Skullius said to himself while turning to the mass of flame that was the destroyed area a distance away.

Several figures could be spotted rushing in his direction.

Some flew, some ran and one particular one among them didn't follow to reach Skullius. It seemed to be in the process of transition.

With the use of [Ungodly Flames of Debauchery], came the boon of having forty of the victims caught in the flame being pulled under the will of the user with a 50% boost to their powers.

Additionally, one of the victims could be baptised to the [Passion of Debauchery], their race being changed, and this was what Skullius was witnessing.

The forty Fire Breeders, most of which had been damaged quite a bit, had burnt visages, but they reached Skullius and looked at him reverently, wild expressions on their faces.

These thralls of his could last longer than before and Skullius' socket flames blazed as he thought to how he could use them to his advantage.

That was easy.

"Go. Kill every one of your kind in sight. Leave nothing alive. Go, my bros!" the Penetrator commanded to which the forty Fire Breeders burning in golden flame and with thick fumes scattered, rushing at full speed to execute Skullius' command.

All of them except the last one to remain.

Among the stream of notifications, Skullius saw one that alluded to this particular Fire Breeder.

[The 'Greater Fire Breeder' has successfully been baptised to the 'Passion of Debauchery'. Its racial features have temporarily been altered]

Chapter 474: Bold Thoughts

Skullius gazed at the Fire Breeder that was releasing a plume of smoke from its body which was starting to change, its form shifting as the once dark scales it had started to turn into tough, sky blue coloured skin.

Its body turned bulky in the torso, the sizzling horns it had vanishing while its eyes turned dark.

From its ankles and wrists to the toes and fingers, its skin was an unsettling shade of white that caused Skullius to narrow his eyes.

This creature definitely felt like the one he had 'created' from the massive toad that had been summoned by Lemorine.

What was it exactly?

The creature when it finished its transformation drooled from its mouth, the fumes filled with glowing gold sparks that gushed from its body billowing wildly to around the area!

Just like the multi-limbed creature Skullius had summoned back then as well, this one was not subservient to him. It was self serving.

Its dark eyes spun in its sockets and with sonic speed, it shot into the sky with a sound akin to a thunderclap, its destination being beyond the flames where multiple civilizations still stood, waiting to be culled... or converted.

"I need to see what it's going to do," Skullius said.

At that moment, the figure of Ferex appeared out of thin air, opening its mouth to allow Yuyui who was inside to heave in deep breaths.

"This...is... uncomfortable..." she said with a sharp draw of breath each time.

Back when Skullius had been battling the first of the stronger Fire Breeders, he had sent a message for Ferex and Yuyui to go incognito so that they wouldn't get killed.

At least here, none of the Cluster beasts seemed to be able to see Ferex, so the Apostle could finally feel good about himself again from his partially torn pride within the Temple of Unlusted Tears.

Skullius urged on Ferex to make room for him as well while dispelling [Silent Revelation of the Bright King].

The moment he entered, he gave the order, "Follow that thing."

With the plume of smoke the blue creature had made, a trail to follow led the trio over to where the creature had headed, using its limited time of existence to do whatever the heck it intended to.

Notifications of millions more Experience points started to flow once more as it seemed the heralds of pain and pleasure were executing Skullius' commands well, killing everything in sight.

Some were weaker, some were stronger, but they worked as fast as they could to net Skullius a huge bundle of kills.

.....

3 minutes later.

Ferex who had shut off his presence passed through what could be described as a city, a large city following the smoke.

"Jeez..." Skullius remarked while Yuyui covered her eyes. "What the hell did that thing do?"

Within this entire city of Fire Breeders, the dome shaped houses were obliterated, the wall that had been built around it demolished as even now, the chaos was yet to settle.

Certain things were happening.

Certain lewd, unsightly and unspeakable things.

The inhabitants of the large city ahead were all alive and somewhat well but... they moaned, they cackled and they gleefully cried out in pleasure.

EVERY single one of them without any exception.

The smoke was still thick within the city and it seemed to be the cause of this horrendously inappropriate scene that made Yuyui shake her head furiously.

Was this what it meant to be baptised to the Passion or Debauchery?

Being able to spread around this 'epidemic' simply by passing through?

That was ridiculous!

It seemed whatever creature he had summoned had already passed, satisfied with how it left its many victims with spinning eyes, drooling mouths and aching desires.

Skullius snapped his finger after exiting from Ferex's mouth.

The cores of roughly a bit more than forty thousand Fire Breeders exploded, killing them while pulling on the mana that made them to form four small orbs of condensed mana that he pushed to float around his mana core.

While the cores of stronger Fire Breeders were harder to manipulate, especially from a distance, that was mostly they were conscious and actively using them as their control over their cores wrestled against Skullius'.

After making sure that this city was completely wiped out, Skullius scaled up to the tallest dome he could find which was around four hundred meters tall and looked around.

From the aerial flight he had taken before, he had pretty much seen the whole layout of the Cluster.

There were eight settlements here, four small ones, three large ones and an enormous one that looked to be as big as Inhone City.

So far, Skullius had destroyed three, one large one and two smaller ones, with two of the smaller ones being taken care of by his lustful thralls.

Then there was this one, which had been destroyed by his insubordinate creation.

Skullius however, didn't plan on continuing to raid the populated areas as many, more powerful Fire Breeders were now scouring the land, searching for whoever was causing the chaos and the Penetrator was sure that it was only a matter of time before this weird summon was killed along with his thralls.

His plan now, was to attack the place where the Cluster General was located.

This was his chance.

The Penetrator hadn't know that the Cluster General lived quite a distance from all the settlements.

It lived nearly three miles away from one of the remaining cities, alone and unresponsive to the chaos going on for some reason.

This hadn't been what Skullius was aiming for in the beginning as he assumed there would be a specific area where the General would be, perhaps in one these settlements.

Now however, since he could waltz around unhindered with Ferex here, this was the perfect opportunity to spring up on the General and kill it.

The experience it would give him was insane he was sure, as from what he learned further about Clusters, the larger it was, the more mana the General had.

With his level now at 17, Skullius couldn't imagine that he couldn't find three levels from the Cluster General.

This was easier said than done though, killing the Cluster General that was.

Skullius' [Greater Mana Crafter] could vaguely tell extraordinary presences even if they were outside its range.

And he could tell that the Cluster General was nothing scoff at.

The simple fact of the creature's mana core, which was definitely beyond blue, was the main issue and one of the things that drew on [Greater Mana Crafter].

The other thing was the presence of three powerful artefacts around the location of the General.

Skullius was interested in this. At the very least, he had to see what these were.

"If I'm going to kill that sockethole, I'll have to be prepared," Skullius said as he sat himself down and settled his thoughts.

There was a skill that he had attained from the scroll he had been very happy to receive.

A scroll containing an array that released an already prepared spell for use on the fly.

One of the Prompt Spells, that had been mentioned by Alaris.

Skullius had used his innate ability to steal the within the Unique grade item, his level of mana manipulation back then being found sufficient for him to safely accomplish the task with little difficulty.

The spell within wasn't what Skullius had been hyped about.

No.

It was fairly strong but not quite something he would rely on in a Cluster like this.

Nevertheless, it was a tremendously good base for what he wanted to do.

~~~

[Slaughter Fence | Lv.1]

Release a wave of carefully woven mana with intricate and precise sharp edges capable of cutting apart objects and living things, even when they guard with other skills. It uses thin surface areas on impact for the improved attack power.

Mana Requirements: 8000 Mana Points

Duration: ---

Cooldown: 2 minute

~~~

The cost was definitely high for Skullius but it was worth it.

Yet, Skullius was more interested in that this was just a complex mana attack.

On some days he would be dedicated to exploring this skill, but he saw it fit to use [Unbound] over it to see how the mana aspect of it would be enhanced!

He had been interested in something like this for a while and now was his chance.

He couldn't risk upgrading [Greater Mana Crafter] for this experiment as it was too important but this... he could definitely give it a try!

"Let's use the entire 6000 points of Null Life Essence!" Skullius said with glee as he activated [Unbound].

[What would you like to Upgrade with 'Unbound'?]

"Slaughter Fence," Skullius said.

[6000 Null Life Essence points expended for 'Permanent Random Upgrade']

....

['Permanent Random Upgrade' decided]

Chapter 475: Cluster General | Deadly New Skill

A dark hill stood attached to the wall of the ginormous cavern that was the Cluster, holding a sense of sacredness that exhumed breath-like sounds of heat and steam.

A pool of boiling magma that was excessively hot, writhing and blazing in mini-swirling flames of orange-pink that leapt in and out of the mass like fish taking a dive out of the water circled this hill, with a radius of at least sixty meters.

The heat that circled around the hill was constantly sucked onto the hill with an unforgiving suction, a unique treasure bringing this about.

Perched on the side of the hill was a flat platform looking to be dug out cleanly as it was flat and big enough for several figures to settle on.

At the very end of this platform was another small pool of magma, its fiendish heat warping the air for distorted imagery that obscured the real proportions of what could be seen.

Within this smaller pool, a simplistic throne comfortably settled in.

It was pitch black with glistening patterns on the armrests and back that sizzled with diabolic heat. On this lengthy backrest that rose high were three items that looked like stones, two smaller ones and one that was triple the size of the others.

The throne as a whole was large, so large that the figure that sat on it could barely match it despite his body being huge, yet he could still reach the armrests.

This throne was a natural treasure at the Legendary level, one of the three Skullius had sensed.

The dark feet of this creature were in the pool of mana, comfortably enjoying a bath in the torridity.

Its scales were extremely thick, with curves that shone, steam seeping from under them every minute. A bulky, rocky armour, a chestplate that was set aflame adorned this creature's torso, its image being lit in an orange-pink hue that frizzled, giving it a frightful picture.

On its face were large yellow eyes and a wide mouth that released a raspy breath while shut, on its head four large, curved horns that were white hot while over the creature's head was a golden crown that pulsed with heat and untamed mana, sizzling pink patterns streaming around it and its eight peaks.

This was the another natural treasure at the Legendary level.

A massive sword that was dug into the pool of magma, its height being almost three meters and with a girth of at least a meter, pulsed with the same astounding presence as the other two items.

Naturally, it was the third natural treasure at the Legendary level in this beast's possession.

Three tall Fire Breeders with sizzling armour stood around this pool and throne, gazing upon this beast with worried eyes.

They were all Tier 7 beasts with radiant blue mana cores that drummed with power, the Cluster General's guards.

One of these beasts bowed to the Cluster General and posed a question respectfully.

"My lord. Shall we truly do nothing while our people die out there?"

There came no reply.

At least not immediately.

The beast upon the throne merely stared into the distance without an expression.

After thirty whole seconds, it finally spoke.

"Your duty is to serve me."

Succinct.

That was the reply that the guard got. One it couldn't argue with.

"That... is so, my lord but there truly seems to be a powerful enemy. If we can handle it quickly, we can save many," the guard stressed with worry. His fellow guards remained silent.

They felt the same way, but it was better for one to speak at a time.

Another bout of silence ensued with a reply coming after the same amount of time as the last instance.

"If the enemy is powerful, then you should guard ME."

The guard felt frustration welling in his chest.

Their lord as they had known was a selfish existence but they hadn't figured that he would neglect his subordinates at a time like this.

The guard to pose the question to his lord felt a rush of rebellion within him. He could just rush off to save the others and pay the price later.

His lord was currently at an important phase in his transformation after many decades, seven shy of the next merging.

There was no way he would compromise his growth just to stop him right?

"Take a step and I will kill you."

...!

The guard froze.

What?

Who was his lord talking to?

"Your duty is to me. Any ideas you have against that will be punished with death."

The flaming pupils within the Cluster beast yellow eyes flamed as it focused on the guard who was petrified.

The hell?

Was his master able to read thoughts now?

How?

Since when?

The Fire Breeders did not have reproductive organs. They reproduced by gathering the flame essence they were naturally able to produce, pitting the energy of two or more of their kind to create an egg that would eventually hatch into a Fire Breeder.

But...stronger Fire Breeders could accomplish this on their own, the flame essence they could produce alone being enough to form their own eggs.

The Cluster General was one such example.

The throne he sat on was capable of pulling all kinds of energies, condensing them and improving their quality.

As such, the heat which was prevalent in the Cluster would be drawn and used to nourish the eggs that the Cluster General gave birth to.

After every 100 years, the Cluster General would merge with the unborn Flame Breeder inside the egg – the young one inside was forbidden from coming out by the General as he didn't need it to hatch for the merging to be successful.

The Flame Breeder younglings were capable of absorbing the flame essence in its purest form, making it phenomenally convenient for the General.

Now though, for the past 100 years, the Cluster General had not risen from his throne or spoke much about anything.

So his ability to read minds was something the guards were just now discovering.

Did this ability work on every living creature, one would wonder?

The guard who had been about to rush to the rescue of his brethren cancelled out those thoughts.

His master had gotten stronger again after another merging.

He could probably kill him in an easier manner compared to before even if he was unwilling to move.

"Your service is needed against THAT."

The Cluster General said with a sharp tone that caused all the guards to involuntarily turn behind them where a plume of dark smoke with golden particles was blasting towards them.

['Permanent Random Upgrade' decided]

Skullius' socket flames ignited with a crazy flame. He was anxious.

It wouldn't turn out to be a trash skill right?

Things had turned out pretty good so far, shockingly.

Why would they take a turn now?

Skullius had funnelled 6000 Null Life Essence points into this to ensure that he got a decent skill after all.

6000 Null Life Essence points allowed him to get a Unique weapon with the Hedoness Easper's Lord Slayer which could be considered to be as powerful as a basic Legendary level weapon.

Sadly, the spear was gone, but it had served its purpose.

Now, Skullius hoped he could get something good too.

['Permanent Random Upgrade' Complete]

[Your skill 'Slaughter Fence' has been upgraded to 'Serration Zone: Baneful Edge']

~~~

[Serration Zone: Baneful Edge]

The user, as long as they are a Chosen Null Lifeform, can draw upon the malefic Null Life Essence that gathers in the contaminated, sodden and aphotic depths of the Dreg Valley, to <Rabbit> and <Slash> apart anything within its zone.

-A minimum of 1000 Null Life Essence points is required to cast the skill for tremendous damage.

-A maximum 40,000 Null Life Essence is required to cast the skill for apocalyptic damage.

Mana Requirements: ---

Duration: ---

Cooldown: 4 minutes

~~~

"Hooo!" Skullius exclaimed in surprise and joy.

This skill...

It didn't require mana for its casting!

As he was jovial quivering at the seemingly incredible quality of this skill, on his arms small circular rings began to appear with a white glow in various sizes before dimming down but leaving their grooves on them.

"What is this?" Skullius said as the process happened so fast before he could express his shock.

The key word he took note in the description of the skill was 'Chosen Null Lifeform'.

What did that mean?

A mental message interrupted his thought process as he was drawn to something in the sky.

Ferex was showing him something unexpected.

The Fire Breeder that had been baptised to the Passion of Debauchery left a trail of smoke as it headed towards the location of the Cluster General!

"Huh? Why is it headed there?" Skullius thought as he then hurriedly mobilised Ferex to take them there with his Hide's effect.

Chapter 476: Kin...

Yuyui had been feeling quite useless throughout the entire course of this trip so far. She had yet to fully recover from what she had had to experience through the risen memories of hers and now...

This memory made her feel even worse in this moment as the words of her father were similar to what Skullius had told her, the only difference being that one expressed concern and the other just expressed urgency.

She was constantly reminded that she lacked something.

The inability to commit to violence, in its different forms, for what she wanted.

Even freeing herself had taken the influence of another as if that individual, Skullius, hadn't come, she would still be dying of starvation every half a year for eternity perhaps.

What she lacked was something that even the owners of the power she now wielded demanded.

How angry they must be that she had received their power.

This was Yuyui's thoughts.

Seeing Skullius wreck through the Fire Breeders easily even though he was technically weaker than her in his Penetrator form was... also another demotivating fact.

She had committed to Skullius now but she couldn't do anything but not die (permanently), which did precious little to help Skullius.

Despite the mixed emotions that scratched at her throat and chest, she still tried to... do something.

She tried to open the eye on her forehead, the Eye of Dispersal but it did not budge. It didn't react to any of her efforts and nomatter what she did, nothing changed.

After Skullius had been bashed into the forest, attaining considerable damage, Yuyui had been flustered.

The Penetrator was clearly not very considerate towards her but he was still her master and even cutting that part aside, if Skullius died, there was probably no way of getting out of here so either way, she had to help in some way.

Yuyui was yet to develop a true sense of loyalty towards Skullius but the facts remained.

Ferex also felt the same, in terms of feeling insufficient that was.

However, his main stress was with trying to protect Skullius from the immediate dangers that he could also sense from this Cluster.

Beyond that, he was almost there.

His second and more combat oriented form that he had been working on was close to completion. If he could just get that finished, he would no longer be a simple means of transport.

He would be much, much more.

He could fight with Skullius side by side.

For now though, both Yuyui and Ferex would focus on what they could do now to help Skullius.

The trio travelled hidden from the surveillance as they headed towards the end of the line of smoke within the Limitless Body Null Demon Hound's mouth.

Less than two minutes remained before [Ungodly Passion of Debauchery]'s duration ended and Skullius wanted to see if this bastard could do anything to help his case or otherwise.

Worst case scenario he would have his kill stolen but he wasn't counting on it. From what he had tasted of the Cluster General of this place, he was in for a bitter fight.

The trio crossed the vast distance to the location where the Cluster General was located and...

BOOOM! BOOOM! BOOOM!

"The battle has already begun?" Skullius questioned himself as he urged Ferex to run faster.

Soon, the high ground on top of which a large hill rested on became visible and Ferex carefully approached while opening his mouth enough for Skullius to see.

"I knew it," Skullius said. "Get closer, Ferex. Climb up that slope."

"Master, are you sure?" Yuyui asked with a concerned look.

Her blue core allowed her sense the power of whatever was ahead and it was facing suppression.

"I won't be able to act unless I'm that close at least."

....

One of the guards of the Cluster General who continued to sit without moving on the throne flew into the sky and halted when he was ten meters away from the sky blue creature that flapped its wings in place, its dark eyes that spun focusing on the Cluster General.

At least that's what it looked like.

The guard analysed this unique looking creature.

Some of its features resembled those of a Fire Breeder while some, like the white on its hands and feet did not, definitely did not.

'This thing... its not even looking at me. It's only keeping its focus on lord,' the guard analysed. 'It's underestimating the rest of us.'

The guard wasn't at pleased to be dismissed.

He was one of three ordained from birth to protect the Cluster General!

He wouldn't stand for this!

Candle flames lit up behind the guard, six inches away from its back, twelve of them, dotted up to form a circle like a birthday circle with scattered candles!

These flames, with their orange hues suddenly flared as if fuelled up, their ferocity shooting out like jets as they propelled the guard forward with blinding speed that caused his image to vanish from view, zipping towards the smoking enemy!

BOOOM!

A sphere of storming heat with a visible effect on the air bubbled with a fierce force that caused Ferex's Hide to start to smoke, burnt up even as the Apostle was a distance away!

The figure of the guard only reappeared when it had gone past the blue creature, the sound of impact coming later!

The guard Fire Breeder, upon reappearing from his acceleration, shook his head a little.

Just now, he had punched the living hell out of the enemy, but...

He felt like he had barely done any damage as his enemy didn't show any reaction at all!

The hell!

He packed a lot of power in that attack!

On the other hand, things were so fluff for him.

The guard shook his head lightly.

'What is that smoke? I barely touched it but already feel... strange,' he thought.

On the ground, Skullius who was watching marvelled.

His sight honed in on how the Fire Breeder guard was utilising the flames on his back to accelerate his movement. He didn't even use his wings anymore.

'That's an interesting technique...' Skullius thought. This applications of fire could be really useful to him.

Beyond that though, he was more impressed by how the blue creature he had created had tanked an attack from this guard who had a super bright mana core!

When it came to Skullius' influence over mana cores with [Greater Mana Crafter], it lessened the more conscious one was of their core as when an expert grew stronger, they were naturally able to control elements of it.

These guards were such experts and yet, the blue creature he had summoned had survived an attack from it?

He couldn't quite feel anything even close to reinforcement around this creature.

No mana.

No...

'Wait a minute...' Skullius thought as he came to a rapid conclusion.

He was going about this wrong!

His excitement for [Greater Mana Crafter] was blinding him towards the very real obvious reality that this creature.... didn't use mana!

It was using Null Life Essence to guard its body!

This wasn't something Skullius could sense very well with mana manipulation skills. It relied on his innate ability as a Null Lifeform which was garbage as he hadn't exercised it much!

He still couldn't even control his Null Life Essence at a basic level as the only way he could use it was through already established skills like [Unbound].

But this thing...

Now that he thought about it, outside of [Unbound] and perhaps [Bringer of All], only [Null Life Aura] could be said to be a simpler application of Null Life Essence than some of his other skills.

Could he use it to try to understand the energy form?

Preferably right now?

He wouldn't risk acting now as the Cluster General wasn't even focusing on the fight in the air. He was definitely on guard.

'Alright then. Before this thing disappears, I might as well try to learn how it's using Null Life Essence with [Null Life Aura] active,' Skullius thought.

No one but him, Ferex and that blue creature could sense Null Life Essence after all and that thing didn't give two flying sockets about him so it would be fine.

Back to the fight in the air...

The guard with the flames behind his back saw the blue creature still only gaze towards the Cluster General who didn't even spare it a glance.

The General knew, after all.

This wasn't the real enemy.

The real enemy was probably hiding somewhere.

The guard accelerated once again and landed six punches on what he thought were the vitals of the creature, each punch causing a heated rumble in the air!

Yet, his enemy's body still didn't react at all!

Another one of the guards stormed into the sky as well as he growled, "What's taking so long?! You can't kill this one enemy?!"

"Why don't you give it a try?" the guard who had been fighting before hissed back as he floated aside giving room for his peer.

The other guard scoffed as on his skin, glowing orange markings formed along his arms and chest which hissed with heat!

The guard's body was set aflame after as it set to attack the blue creature with its wings unfurling for a rapid flight towards the target.

BOOOM!

...!!!

Unfortunately, the same scene of an unprogressive battle didn't happen.

The enemy that the guards were fighting suddenly vanished from sight with a crackling of the air, its wings having beat against it so hard that it shot ahead to catch the guard who had set himself alight off guard!

The creature grinned as it sank its clawed, white hands into the guard's face, its finger piercing cleanly through its eyes!

The guard screeched from both the pain of being violated like this and from the fumes that instantly began to affect it!

However...

Its pain slowly turned dull, a weird sensation building up in its brain and heart that caused it to feel... 'happy'.

The other guards grew wary when they heard their mate start to laugh maniacally, its sockets that remained with the blue creature's fingers in them, bleeding profusely.

What manner of horrific shit was this?!

Were they so weak that each of them could be done in with one attack?!

The guard with the flames behind its back drew back as it retreated to the platform on the hill to liaise with the remaining guard who also looked ahead warily.

This wasn't something they could handle casually.

This was in the realm of the unknown!

To their surprise though, the creature finally showed a strong reaction suddenly, its head swinging to the left as it was...drawn to something.

A field of something familiar opened up a distance away and of everyone around, only it could see.

Something with a serene presence.

Something that felt more like home.

The creature stopped drooling as it turned to this direction, its wings beating against the air with crisp clap again as...

...!

"What the... why is it coming here?!" Skullius who had just activated [Null Life Aura] exclaimed.

The blue skinned creature landed within the Aura and...emitted a sigh of satisfaction.

It felt at home, its instincts of a new born kicking in.

It couldn't see Skullius but it kept gazing around, looking for his traces.

"SHIT!"

Skullius' sockets flared.

They were too close to the Cluster General for such surprises to happen willy nilly!

Why did this damn thing have to act so damn unpredictably?!

This unpredictability could cost him his Null life!

He didn't want to go out like that!

Right then, as if to prove a point, the fiery pupils of the Cluster General finally moved from the horizon as they followed the blue skinned creature.

"There," the huge creature said in a chilling voice that drew its guards' attention towards what they were already looking at.

...!!!!!!

As the piercing gaze of the Cluster General turned to this spot, Skullius felt it!

This was bad!

Thrillingly so but very bad!

He hypothesised and thought but within a limited span!

The Cluster General still probably couldn't see him and Ferex but...

TCHT!

The large hand of the Cluster General wrapped around the hilt of the massive sword dug into the pool of magma around it, a surge of unbearable torridity blazing as if to melt the air itself!

A skill was being used!

A terribly powerful one from the sword!

....!!!!

Everyone felt it.

The immense level of threat.

"FLESH IT!" Skullius called as he leapt from Ferex's mouth and used cast a skill at the same time.

At this very same time, the blue skinned creature twisted its head to focus on him who was now visible to it...

It had found the user of this, finally!

Its dark eyes that spun calmed and it opened its mouth fractions of a second after this 'same time' where multiple things occurred.

"Kin...Your enemy is strong," it said comprehensibly to the Penetrator.

And then the deleterious devastation ensued....

Chapter 477: Not So Simple (1)

The Cluster General on the throne didn't stand.

He did not swing.

He only gazed at his target and clenched the hilt of his great sword with his powerful hand.

When he did...

Skullius...

Ferex...

Yuyui...

The blue skinned creature...

All four existence were blasted apart.

No.

It was more like melted apart.

The blue skinned Null Lifeform was deformed into sludge that flew everywhere.

Skullius was melted from the middle, his bones being slogged off like porridge in different directions as only hints of it remained, barely identifiable as bone.

The same happened to Ferex behind and Yuyui who was in the Apostle's mouth!

None of these four had seen what had happened at all and neither could they comprehend when they were being broken down.

The sword had throbbed with scalding passion at being held by its owner, releasing a velocious heat that traced through the ground from where he sat, opening up the ground as it travelled to its enemies!

This trail that dug deep was the one that carried fearful heat that melted all the Cluster General's enemies within divided fractions upon divided fractions of a second, its effect being so potent that it travelled through the land up to the cliff Skullius had come in from within a few short breaths, the leaking red from this narrow, lengthy depth hissing with nasty fog!

The guards of the Cluster General were awestruck.

Not because of the power on display but because their master had made a move, and had even caught hidden figures that they hadn't!

"Do not relax. It is not over."

The Cluster General then turned to the horny idiot, one of his guards who had been converted by the blue skinned creature and in a fiery show, the Fire Breeder's head exploded into chunks, much to the other guards' shock.

"Keep your eyes peeled ahead."

The two guards heeded as they looked at the continuous cleave on the ground that travelled into the distance. If this land wasn't already so hot and with creatures and plants that were besties with the heat, a hellish forest fire would be billowing everywhere right now!

But then, this just served to show their master's might!

The molten goo that was their enemies with barely any parts of them remaining; part of a head with a molten furry side and sizzling threads of what looked like a four legged beast, roasted flesh, charred bone and oozing fat for a peculiar humanoid like them and lastly, parts of a dark blue arm and chunks of a skull with a torn socket that blinked with a dull blue light for the skeleton that had just appeared.

What was there to look at, the guards wondered.

Waa.

Waa.

WA!

The Cluster General turned to be right.

Thirty two lights started to silently blink with power around the molten walking skeleton, growing brighter as they then shot massive bolts of lightning at the body!

The process was rapid.

[Silent Revelation of the Bright King] which had been cast right before the slaughter fest just now by Skullius on instinct, quickly recovered the Penetrator's body, the Null Lifeform appearing on his feet with his sockets flickering to eventually produce a flame.

At first, Skullius was confused on where he was but then it all came rushing to him.

"Right. That was close. I thought I heard Somanda calling just now..." the Penetrator said with a soft voice as he checked his ribs. Only his white core remained. His saved orbs of mana were gone.

Typical.

'At least we're petty durable,' Skullius thought while gazing down.

On the ground, on the maw of what remained of Ferex, a green light shone as the maw softly clenched on it, the molten body that tried to fight back bubbling and contorting as it rapidly started to rebuild itself!

At the same time, as if a fade in transition was in play, Yuyui appeared sitting down on the ground, her figure jittery as she looked down at her molten corpse and shivered.

The simmering guts were a bit much.

One of the guards of the Cluster General rapidly flew up as he got ready to finish off this trio.

"Stop. Let them get up."

The voice of the Cluster General reached the guard, making him stop.

Ferex and Yuyui carefully stood and rushed to Skullius' sides, the Penetrator looking up at the Cluster General with a steady flame.

His thoughts were unknown as his face didn't give it away, but his followers knew nowhere was safer but with him right now.

The Penetrator himself was trying to settle a lot of thought.

One particular subject being what he had just heard.

'Kin... Your enemy is strong.'

The last words of the blue skinned creature.

"Fascinating," a powerful voice spoke.

The crown atop the Cluster General's head shone, its golden hue with patterns of orange-pink causing a mirage.

Then Skullius heard it.

A voice in his head that he could comprehend.

The Cluster General wanted to talk.

'You fascinate me. Three different creatures. Three different ways to escape death.'

Skullius' socket flames flickered ever so slightly.

'What about it bro?' he asked nonchalantly as if unfazed.

'Hmmm? You have no fear?'

'Why should I be afraid, bro?'

'Because... I can dictate whether you live or die.'

'...'

'Hmmm?'

'Hahaha. That's fleshing hilarious bro. Even if you kill me, I'm afraid it won't be your win. Someone else already...called dibs. Oh, nice phrase.' Skullius said with a relaxed voice, his mind coughing up another phrase he wasn't familiar with...until now.

'Hmmm?'

'Do I look like a normal creature to you?'

'...'

The Cluster General was little confused.

This enemy seemed a little... too relaxed.

And what was with his statement?

Even if he killed this creature, it wouldn't be his win? What the heck was that supposed to mean?

'Do you perhaps mean a binding?'

'A binding?' Skullius asked, it being his turn now to be confused.

The Cluster General leaned back on its throne as the crown atop its head shone bright once again.

A pulse of barely seen energy bloomed, streaming outwards in all directions.

Skullius could feel it.

It was weird.

This item, the crown.

It seemed to be amplifying something!

Shortly after this pulse went out, a shocking scene occurred!

Even the guards were shocked beyond belief as well!

From the direction of the settlements, thousands upon thousands of Fire Breeders appeared, all of them either flying or running over the ground.

Their red eyes seemed blank, their faces showing no expression.

Within no time at all, the masses of Fire Breeders gathered at the base of the hill, away from the pool of magma and gazed sternly at the Cluster General.

'This is binding. Every one of them is bound to me now. Their lives and all. I have used a special method over the years to grow my strength. To mutate myself and gain different abilities while making those I already have stronger,' the Cluster General explained. 'Unfortunately, I can only amount to this.

I cannot last another hundred years and I will not be able to reach the next Tier.'

'This prison... is bland. I know there is another world beyond this one. My aging bones yearn for it. But even if I see it, I might not live long enough to enjoy its entirety. My strength also leaves much to be desired when there are strong enemies.'

Skullius' socket flames danced.

'This guy knows that he lives in a Cluster?' he thought.

The subject wasn't something they Nullmancer's had explored.

Whether Cluster beasts knew from the beginning that they lived in a different world, only finding out about Aigas when the Cluster crack ruptured was a mystery to him.

Was this normal for Cluster Generals or was this guy an exception?

The Cluster General's guards couldn't believe their eyes.

Their lord had the ability to forcefully control their entire race, probably related with how he could read minds as evidenced earlier.

Their lord...

'Oh. If you're asking if what I'm talking about is the same, well then, sorry to say, it's different,' Skullius said while grinning hiddenly. He thought this would boil down to just a brutal fight but...

This was better.

'I have a master who owns my soul. If I die, he can resurrect me as he wishes and give me power as he wishes through a special technique.'

'Hmmm,' the Cluster General hummed with intrigue. 'Amusing. I am not so foolish as to believe such a silly lie. If your 'master' has such strength, why give you the means to escape death and not the means to give it freely to any calibre of an enemy?'

Skullius scoffed.

This bastard dared to call him weak when he wiped out so many Fire Breeders without breaking much of a sweat?

'I am but a messenger. I have been tasked with finding relics. Powerful relics. My duty is to bring back information when I die and bring my master treasures when I find them,' Skullius said as he then played a card he had just churned up while following the trajectory of this conversation.

'For instance, a throne that draws on unique energies, a crown that amplifies skills and abilities and a sword that can both attack and nullify techniques. These would interest my master greatly.'

...!

The Cluster General's eyes shot open, its pupils flaming wildly.

'How do you know that?' it asked with a threatening tone, the sword it held by the hilt vibrating while shining with a bright orange-pink hue.

'My bro. My body doesn't react to torture and I'm definitely more scared of my master than I am of you. So those two won't work on me. As for how I know all about your weapons... well, like a said. I'm a messenger.

Fighting is just a pastime. My main duty is collect information and relics and bring one or both back, either by foot or by death.'

Skullius' body took a few steps towards the hill where the Cluster General was.

He reached just before the pool magma and his socket flames flared.

'You still have a bit of time here. Maybe a little more than two days. I can afford to wait. I can afford to die. Either way, my master will be coming for these treasures. So, flame bro.

What will you do with me?'

Chapter 478: Not So Simple (2)

"Master, is this really a good idea. Don't you need to participate in the Premium Age Royale in two days? How.. how are we going to get out of this before then?" Yuyui said with a constipated face, her eyes darting to and fro.

"It's fine. If everything happens as I think, this should all end a few minutes after the Cluster opens up."

" "

"Hahahaha! I'm just kidding. We're probably going to die. At least me and Ferex will. You'll probably become a slave to that Cluster General and never get to eat a single piece of food again. That is, of course, unless you manage to outlive the bastard and his bros."

"...."

Yuyui's stomach growled.

Skullius' words caused a dreadful chill to run down Yuyui's spine.

She trembled.

Skullius was joking right?

He couldn't possibly mean what he said right?

The lime haired girl turned to Ferex and found the Hound sitting down silently, bound as it was.

Hey hey hey!

Was everyone just giving up?!

The girl then turned to look up at the hill beyond the magma pool. The Cluster General sat down without a word but the increased discomfort from the worsening temperatures in the atmosphere told of how frustrated he still was.

Earlier when he was conversing with Skullius, he had been left with a dilemma. He had shared a summary of his life with Skullius because he didn't believe the invader could escape him, intent on linking his method of growing stronger with how Skullius and his crew got their interesting skills.

If he could attain them somehow, he could become even stronger.

Unfortunately, what should have been petrified prey before him turned out to be a nightmare that dropped a few bombs on his head.

Killing him. Not killing him.

These choices seemed to be much of the same!

One would be inclined to think this was a bluff but the Cluster General was well aware of the mystery behind the other side of the world he lived in.

A bigger world full of its own dangers.

How could he not believe it?

At the very least, he couldn't dismiss it.

In the end, he had Skullius, Yuyui and Ferex stationed right before his throne. If he couldn't kill them, then he'd just keep them with him to delay whatever demise was going to come eventually.

He had thought that perhaps Skullius would try to kill himself but the confidence this skeleton and his companions displayed made him realise that he was probably enjoying his conflict.

Still, he had Skullius and company bound.

Something akin to thick ropes with cracks that glowed red could be seen wrapping around Skullius and his crew individually as they sat down, the ends of these ropes nailed down to the ground.

These ropes were extremely powerful and wouldn't even allow Skullius, Yuyui and Ferex to budge. Yet that was all they could do.

Several hundred Fire Breeders patrolled in the skies, all their eyes gazing on the enemies at all times.

"Master..." Yuyui said as she found her emotions going awol once again.

She understood that the Cluster General had some kind of mind related powers that it had used to communicate with Skullius, but it didn't seem like he could brainwash or harm Skullius with them.

Was her master just being cautious with his words?

"Make sure to keep my ring safe for the next thousand years," Skullius said before his socket flames flared and then died down.

...!

Yuyui at first was alarmed but then she realised that this was probably the equivalent of Skullius closing his eyes.

But...

"Keep the ring safe?"

The girl wasn't used to this kind of stress.

Was this a coded message or something?

Was there something she was supposed to derive from this?

Yuyui gritted her teeth.

Skullius had given her the spatial storage ring after his grand attack earlier. Apparently the ring was hard to keep safe when he was fighting and he had had to use large quantities of mana to keep it from melting when he first fought that powerful Fire Breeder that could manifest exploding spears.

Now, his choice turned out to be right as he would definitely lost everything within it if he had been wearing it when he was molten away by the sudden attack from the Cluster General's great sword.

Since Yuyui and whatever she wore would come back to life along with her, the ring would always be safe in her possession.

Skullius had even told her to eat it if she could avoid suspicion by doing so, but she declined, opting for another, more mundane way of hiding it from the Fire Breeders.

Now, with Skullius having shut his vision and with Ferex resting under the binds as if without a care, Yuyui was left to her own.

All she could do was replay the memory that she had awakened.

She recalled how her parents wanted her to be safe by being able to protect herself. She even boldly made an excuse for herself, that she couldn't fight. That it wasn't a part of her.

She justified her weakness by turning to music.

The Deities said so, so it was probably alright, right?

She didn't need to fight, right?

Then, was she really able to just let herself live a lengthy life of slavery then?

'Arrgh!' Yuyui frustratedly screamed in her mind.

Alone, she just couldn't see a path ahead.

All she could see was her own uselessness.

Even if she couldn't die, it seemed less and less of a superpower than it was a mere trait about her.

The girl felt herself devolving, her mind-set going towards being sheltered like back in that lonely place. Perhaps that was all she meant to amount to.

Perhaps... that was all there was.

If she just relaxed and let everything divulge in the way it was supposed to...

It would be fine.

CRACK!

A resounding echo travelled through the entire Cluster.

It was time.

Approximately two mostly uneventful days had passed.

On the high ground from where Skullius and friends had come from, a light could be seen.

Space tore on itself as it invited the Cluster beasts held within to exit, entering the world of Aigas, finally.

"The time is finally ripe," the Cluster General said.

The opening to the Cluster was grand, like a massive white circular gate that didn't show what was on the other side, just like how the mercenaries saw the Clusters from the outside.

Yet now, it was welcoming to the Cluster beasts for a change and even those who would have entered would be free to leave now, despite not being able to clear the Cluster.

The Cluster General rose, his large body rising for the first time in decades. He gripped the hilt to his great sword and pulled on the nigh three meter long weapon from the pool of magma around his throne, his feet that had also been in the liquid hell pushing through as he set them on hard ground.

"Let us go. I wouldn't dream of leaving you behind as I venture into your world."

The face of the General was a little tense.

There were too many mysteries with this bone creature.

While he hadn't done anything but wait patiently for the Cluster to open, as his inborn instincts foretold, he had witnessed this creature change shape twice in the past days!

Its presence changed dramatically when it transformed into the shorter, more... 'normal' looking form that he assumed was how the creatures on the other side would look like, a calm yet deadly air revolving around it that put the other to shame.

Yet...

Contrary to what the General had assumed, even in this new form, this creature still did nothing, remaining in the binds that adjusted later to his size.

It was suspicious.

Only this kept him on edge.

Fortunately, Skullius wouldn't take the easy way out.

The Penetrator's sockets lit aflame as he exhaled a burst of mana.

Indeed, it was time.

Chapter 479: Don't Disappoint

The Cluster General along with thousands of Fire Breeders stood tens of meters before the massive shattered white space that was supposed to lead them into Aigas.

On both the General's sides stood two of his remaining guards and roughly fifty Fire Breeders from the largest city Skullius could be seen forming an encirclement around the three.

The presence of these fifty was almost the same as the guards but it was evident that the difference lied in the quality of their abilities.

The fire essence that Fire Breeders brewed from within them was not the same as fire flavoured mana or general flame formed through non-magical means. It was a natural sort of flame. Biological even.

Pure fire that could be considered to be the natural ability of these Cluster beasts. To put it more elaborately, water wouldn't be able to counter it.

The fact that the guards could produce purer forms of this fire essence was what lead them to have a higher status than the rest.

Other lower level Fire Breeders flew above as they gazed forward. The Cluster General no longer controlled their minds so with the bits of freedom they had, they appreciated the fact that they would get to see something new.

Within the ring of protective guards and high level Fire Breeders, Skullius, Yuyui and Ferex could be seen still tied up, at least up to the arms.

The lime haired girl could be spotted taking heavy breaths as she looked around while Skullius and Ferex didn't show any fluctuation in their emotions at all.

After two whole days, Skullius still hadn't talked to her, leaving her to wallow in her self pity and fear.

There really didn't seem to be some kind of plan.

The Cluster General wanted them close as he left room for this same thought – that there could be an escape attempt.

"Ten of you. Go and scout ahead," the General commanded, ten of the Fire Breeders flying out into the white opening.

They sank in and disappeared, the Fire Breeders behind waiting for the feedback.

One minute.

Two minutes.

Ten minutes.

The Cluster General's eyes showed an ounce of trepidation.

He turned to Skullius who didn't say a word.

The Cluster General had made sure to keep a link on Skullius' mind in order to detect anything funny, he did or said.

He had acquired a unique natural ability to infiltrate and control the minds of all Fire Breeders as he had evolved past that name himself with his merging technique, taking a different path even though he was a Tier 7 like his guards.

The crown of his head amplified his natural abilities and skills but even with that, doing the same thing he did with the Fire Breeders to every other race wasn't something he could do.

At best he could detect external interferences from the outside, which is what he had been doing for the past two days with Skullius. So far, he hadn't discovered anything strange, except for how Yuyui was trembling.

Unlike Skullius, she was the one he was convinced least about, but he had seen her revive, regardless of the points he could make against this.

Of course, he didn't get careless.

Now though, he was tempted to ask.

"Are there beings from your world already waiting for our arrival outside?" the Cluster General asked.

"Who knows?" Skullius replied hollowly.

The Cluster General hurled the great sword he had over his shoulder and scoffed, refocusing ahead.

The crown atop his head pulsed once again, two hundred of the Fire Breeders in the sky getting manually controlled to sour towards the sky as they headed towards the Cluster exit.

Unlike before, he linked what the Fire Breeders saw to his own sight, an advanced application of his natural ability and his crown.

FWOOSH.

Four steady flames flared.

This was it.

The socket flames of the Penetrator flared.

There it was.

He sensed it.

The Penetrator casually opened his mouth and spoke.

"Yuyui. Are you afraid of dying?"

The lime haired girl was jolted out her cluster of emotion as she turned to see Skullius gazing at her.

Afraid of dying?

Why was she being asked this?

"I... I don't know. Not really, I suppose. Maybe it depends on the type of death."

Pat!

A large hand gripped Skullius' shoulder.

"You dare converse in my lord's presence?" a particularly angry Fire Breeder growled but Skullius didn't care.

"Good," Skullius said while in the background, the Fire Breeders controlled by the Cluster General sank into the exit.

There wouldn't be too long of a time before the Cluster General figured out the convenient setting that had swallowed the ten scouts from before.

He had to act fast.

"Then if I gave you death itself, would you still be afraid to fight for what you want?" Skullius asked.

"...."

"Hey!" the Fire Breeder butted in again, but he was ignored.

Yuyui couldn't wrap her mind around what Skullius had said, but...

Death.

She tasted it every other day of the week.

Her ambitions were to die in different, more comfortable styles.

One could say he knew death quite a bit.

If she could wield death as a weapon, would she be afraid to fight?

What was her greatest fear anyway?

Dying continuously without meaning? Yes.

Starving to death? Absolutely.

Losing pieces of her self with each death? Right.

Dying for naught a cause? Aha.

It even seemed like her history contained much of this.

Yuyui felt something creep under the ropes that bound her and funnel into the ring she held tight in her hand, Skullius' spatial ring!

"You said you'd become whatever I needed, when I needed it. I'm giving you death itself, so don't disappoint me. When you hold it, just SWING with all your might, then we'll see if you really aren't a FIGHTER."

These words would have been a load of bull to anyone who heard, but the rapid series of events that followed made Yuyui understand what Skullius meant before his words faded from her ear.

...!

The Cluster General who had sent out his Fire Breeders expressed a light burst of fury.

"I see. So that's why," he said as he saw what was on the other side of the exit. The threat to his kind. A natural one.

Did that waking bunch of bones know this all along?!

At the same time, however, the Penetrator made his move with the General still occupied.

[Null Life Aura] was cast!

The serene field spread around Skullius unnoticed by any of the Fire Breeders then, with a burst of golden light, a shot flame ignited on the ropes that bound him while another streaked towards Yuyui and crashed into her, tearing the ropes that bound her as she was sent flying a few meters away!

As she landed on the ground, the chill she had been feeling on Skullius' spatial ring magnified.

It was Skullius' mana activating the ring to release...

Demion's Dance!

The sword fell to the ground and Yuyui's eyes met it.

At the same time that this was happening, a powerful fist bashed into Skullius' face sending him flying to crash into the wall of the cavern a distance from the exit!

"I knew he would try something!" the same Fire Breeder who had been interrupting Skullius and Yuyui's conversation growled.

He had punched Skullius just now but held back as their lord wanted the walking corpse alive.

The Penetrator's jaw was shattered and so was half of his skull but he hurriedly stood as the thousands of Fire Breeders turned to him menacingly, some of them hurrying to bind him and Yuyui again!

The Cluster General narrowed his eyes, returning to himself. He focused on Skullius but the Penetrator wasn't dismayed.

"Hehehehehe..." he cackled as he saw the enemies before him.

The odds were stacked against him.

He didn't make a move yet however, as he turned to the distance where Yuyui was slowly rising, in her hand, Demion's Dance.

Unlike most people who saw the weapon, she felt it.

Death.

She had tangled with it too many times to not recognise its scent, its feel, its power.

The beauty that lied in losing life.

It then clicked in her mind.

What Skullius had just said.

'When you hold it, just SWING with all your might...'

This was the Death he meant!

Yuyui saw the enemies rush to apprehend her from the sky in their thousands.

They were going to take away the new life she has started where she could eat anything she wanted, even if there were several stipulations.

These monsters were going to make her a slave and keep her under their feet, taking away the fortune she had won a few days ago.

This is what her father was trying to say.

'These are dangerous times. Evil lurks everywhere...'

Yes.

Right now, evil WAS everywhere.

And...

Huff, huff.

Yuyui took in deep breaths as emotion welled in her.

If she wanted to live a comfortable life, she had to SWING!

If she didn't want to disappoint her master, she had SWING!

Her grip on the sword tightened tremendously and she grit her teeth.

"I won't disappoint!" she called out, putting all her strength into the sword.

It was a clumsy diagonal swing.

It had no form or class.

But it was packed with the emotion of someone who didn't want to remain the same anymore!

And thus...

SHIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIING!!!

Chapter 480: It Ends Outside! (1)

A familiar sound rang in the air, a dark line swiping through the it as Yuyui slashed from top to bottom diagonally at the hundreds of flying Fire Breeders!

This whistle of Demion's Dance's edge as it cut the air spelled the carving up of all the Cluster beasts that were touched by the dark line which sped forward eagerly!

Blood flew and the dozens of enemies fell, some spinning wildly in the air as their rhythm was compromised, the dark coloured slash going for the kill in a radius of over forty meters!

The lime haired girl who still remained in her stance had bulged eyes.

Her hands trembled and she swallowed a lump of saliva!

This...

The dead bodies that lay before her along with the carved earth from her swinging Demion's Dance with all her might...

This was her?

"I... I actually... did it?" she questioned herself in disbelief at the carnage that brought a temporary pause to the rest of her enemies.

Did she just FIGHT?

The cumulative mana experience she felt rushing into her as it awaited for her complete her Task...

The rush in her blood, a reaction from taking the lives of her enemies...

It was evidence that she had just fought!

"Wooaa..." the girl expressed as she breathed out, shockingly, her forehead twitching multiple times.

The way a dark streak emerged with her using the blade was just like how Sila used this green sword back then, opening a way for Skullius to see how to effectively wield this weapon that one half of a deathly whole!

But there was clear difference with how it appeared when Skullius used it and the Penetrator, who was watching this unfold was also surprised!

This wasn't how he had thought this would devolve at all!

It was even better, but suspiciously so.

'She doesn't have the [Swindling Death's Dance] though. How did she... Wait. Is it because she...'
Skullius thought with his four socket flames blazing madly but he decided to not waste time on thinking anymore.

This was a time for action!

The Nullmancer raised his bony hand and called for the mana and Null Life Essence from the corpses!

This had been his aim, and with this unexpected show by Yuyui, he got more than bargained for!

The Cluster General in this moment turned to give a glance over to where Yuyui was with curiosity.

What was that power?

Was it from that sword?

Where did that sword even come from?

'There are too many unknowns,' the large creature thought. Still it didn't seem like there was much of a threat with these captives. They couldn't run around as they did before with him here.

Unless it was that form that the skeleton creature took at the same time of day twice before, he didn't need to take these three seriously.

All this was a desperate attempt at nothing but failure.

One of these three was still bound and—

....!

The General's attention was nabbed once again.

What was it now?

Streams of white burst from the corpses that were spread all over, rushing over to Skullius who immediately condensed them into two floating orbs that started to float around his core.

Then...

The Penetrator's flames cruelly blazed as on his hand, the circular groves that were etched there since he received a certain upgraded skill, shone luminously!

Pfssss!

The Nullmancer emitted mana from between his teeth!

Skullius swung his glowing hand down while uttering with malice the name of his new skill!

"Serration Zone: Baneful Edge."

6000 Null Life Essence points were immediately prepared for the foretold carnage!

....!

Null Life generally went unnoticed most of the time, but right now...this version of it, caused every creature in the vicinity to gnash their teeth as their bodies instinctively stiffened!

This was an unnatural skill with an effect that appealed to instinct!

No.

Rather than a skill, it was a whole phenomenon that was not of this world!

And Skullius aimed it right in the direction of the Cluster General whose face grew vicious, finally showing aggressive emotion for the first time!

'You can move now bro,' Skullius told Ferex who remained in place, bound by the ropes as he had been instructed not to miniaturise by Skullius right after he had had the conversation with the Cluster General back then.

They had needed to remain as captives back then but now...

Ferex grew tiny, the ropes remaining to bind nothing. He shot off as he went to accomplish his own mission. His part of the fight that Skullius wasn't privy to.

No one cared about him at this moment though, as in the split second that had passed, all the high level Fire Breeders and the guards rushed to protect the Cluster General, congregating in one place!

Unfortunately, the Cluster General, his body brimming with power from the dull purple core in his body, blurred, eclipsing all the guards in speed shot towards Skullius to stop him from casting the skill!

Before the effects of his dreadful ability could activate, the greatsword of the large creature blurred, its speed being so fast that it became an orange streak in the air!

The sword hammered through Skullius' torso and planted itself into the ground with a resounding boom that reverberated throughout this flat plane, causing it explode as if ignited a miniature sun!

Everyone who had been standing here fell to the lands before, some propping in the pool of magma here, like Yuyui... who screamed the whole way as she met a flaming demise only to resurrect multiple times as she crept closer to the ground with each revival.

Skullius had been spit in half, his arms also torn away, the greatsword that the Cluster General having now gone through his spine.

Unfortunately, this spread away the two floating orbs of compressed mana Skullius had saved up.

The two were on the pile of debris that floated over this pool of magma that Skullius recognised.

The Cluster General didn't look as relaxed anymore, his body emitting a vicious presence that began to melt everything around, including Skullius.

A weird halo with beautiful pink patterns swirled around the two, coming from the sword and the Penetrator knew exactly what it was.

This was an effect of the greatsword that nullified the casting of skills and abilities!

"That didn't go well..." Skullius said self mockingly.

'I see you're still enjoying yourself," the Cluster beast said as he established a connection with Skullius' mind. 'You knew there was a natural enemy of my race outside didn't you?'

The Cluster beast had seen it. The harsh cold outside that formed the popular tourists' site, the Creeping Chill. A cold so powerful, Skullius, Yuyui and Ferex had started to freeze the second they got into contact with it.

The two hundred and ten scouts that exited the Cluster had all been frozen, despite the fire essence within them.

'Of course I did. I hoped you'd jump out immediately but I guess I was wrong.'

'Hmmm. You think I will fold just like these weaklings?' the Cluster General asked. 'Your provocative words spurn me to believe that there is falsehoods to many of your claims. And even if they are true...'

The Cluster General paused his line as from behind his back, fire blazed in two streams that eventually formed two red hot webbed wings!

The General grabbed Skullius and his greatsword, his crown pulsing with power as two of the high level Fire Breeders' eyes turned blank, and followed after their lord.

"Capture the other two," the Cluster General said before blasting through the large open space into Aigas that was up above!

"Master!" Yuyui called with a look of concern as she reappeared from another death, Demion's Dance in hand.

Her forehead twitched again, a small opening beginning to show as if reacting to her emotion.

Her bangs that covered the Inhuman Eye on her face moved out of the way as for the first time, Yuyui actually showed aggression.

Her breathing accelerated again as she felt frustrated.

Skullius had helped her find a part of herself she didn't know even know she had.

Her impression of the skeleton had shifted greatly as a result of this and to lose him right now would be devastating.

One of the guards of the Cluster General wore an annoyed face as he turned to his fellow guard who had the same look on his face.

They were upset that even though their lord stressed that they were there to protect him, he up and left them behind every time they tried to do their job.

One of them, with flames lighting from his back burst with incredible speed towards Yuyui and gripped her by the hair, making her kneel.

He kicked away Demion's Dance which was picked up by one of the Fire Breeders and scoffed at Yuyui who puckered her lips as her chest rose up and down rapidly.

He then turned to the other Fire Breeders with a fierce expression and gave an order.

"Find the other one. He must be here somewhere!"

Yuyui's forehead twitched once more.

The sword her master had entrusted with to her earlier had been nabbed.

Her glorious shift...or what should have been, was trampled by... evil.

Yuyui couldn't help but gnash her teeth.

This was a dangerous time but now she knew to fight. She knew she could.

She just needed something to fight with.

Her forehead twitched again.

'Come on! I was just starting to like my new self. I won't let it end here!' she thought as her face contorted.

The Fire Breeder that held her hair pulled on it quite hard as he dragged her to the others without mercy, garnering a death stare from Yuyui who struggled.

The girl ground her teeth, her good nature slowly being clouded by dark thoughts.

But what could she do now?

Well...

"Huh?" the lime haired girl felt something slide into her hand. Her eyes couldn't see it but she felt it. It was heavy.

The moment she welded it, it started to suck up a whole lot of her mana, which caused some alarm but this changed for the girl pretty soon.

Within the blink of an eye, a message that streamed into her mind from this sword calmed her down and made her tremble in excitement at the same time.

Her wish had just been granted and it would start with the bastard pulling on her hair.

The moment the Cluster General and Skullius exited the Cluster, the monstrous Cluster beast shot high up, avoiding the foggy cold.

They soared a good few hundred meters into the air as the tall creature and the Fire Breeders behind it took in the view - on his behalf as well.

Hmmm.

It was nothing special.

It was merely an opposition of what he and his kind saw everyday.

But perhaps there was more, further out there.

"So this is your world..." the Cluster General said to Skullius whom he held by the torn spine, a scoff that followed from his mouth releasing a puff of steam.

As the Cluster beast attempted to move forward, he felt a shiver from his body. A shiver of instinct.

He turned to the exit from the Cluster.

"If I go any further away, my world will be destroyed," he said to himself. It was a choice he could make. A choice each Cluster General could make.

"In that case, I might as well make myself at home right here..."

The Cluster General reduced his altitude of flight and opened his mouth wide, the heat that was spread out from his volcano-like mouth causing a loud hiss in the cold, snowy air.

Within the extraordinary gap that opened from this creature's face, flashes of red lightning and flame flickered, a natural ability on the level of a high tier Special skill being used.

Flame Storm Gullet!