

## **EARTHS G MAGUS 121**

### **Chapter 121: Recalled**

"Morgana!" Emery shouted with his arm outstretched as his figure materialized into a bright decently-sized room that had two large windows, facing the blue sky outside.

She was just a few meters in front of them, and then all of sudden a light beam hit him then next thing he knew, he was in this room. For a couple of seconds, he stared blankly at his surroundings before it finally registered to him what had just happened. He was back in the Magus Academy.

Emery ignored the sharp buzzing sound in his ear and the hurtful thumping in his head. However, the heavy feeling in his heart was something he couldn't ignore. To be recalled here when he almost succeeded, he only needed another minute or two to end that one-eyed Silver Knight's life and release Morgana. If he had been a bit faster, this thought kept circling in his head, then the horrible words of the old knight came after... regret and indignancy was now filling his mind, rousing the rage inside him once more. His breath started becoming unstable, he gritted his teeth; clenched his fist as he stomped the ground and screamed in rage!

He didn't care if someone would hear him, he just wanted to let out all his bubbling emotions... A minute had passed, he sat in the corner. Taking a deep breath, he kept calming himself down for he was now here in this Magus Academy. He couldn't go back even though he very much wanted to do so.

He stayed still in the corner, breathing in and out deeply as he fought his mind, which kept on showing him all the possible terrible scenarios of what they would do to Morgana. A heavy burden fell on his shoulder and heart. Although he only knew the girl for less than a month, he had become attached and felt responsible for her. But then again, there was nothing he could do at the moment no matter how much he wished. Emery tried to calm himself down. This would be a very long three months.

Only after he had somewhat calmed, the symbol on Emery's hand flashed a notification.

[Restriction has been lifted]

After reading that, his whole body shone as white bits of stuff he didn't recognize floated upward. His body felt lighter as if a heavy shackle had been broken; a strong rush of energy coursed in his body, making him feel re-energized. Still, bothered by the thoughts of Morgana, he decided to distract himself by checking his status through the symbol on his hand.

[Emery Ambrose]

[16-year-old]

[Plant Spirit - Peak Stage]

[Water Spirit - High Stage]

[Earth Spirit - High Stage]

[Battle power: 27]

[Spirit force: 90]

[Spirit Core of Darkness - foundation]

[Fey Bloodline - stage 2]

[Acolyte Rank 5]

Unlike when he was on his planet, his status no longer had the double number that indicated his battle power and spirit force was being lowered forcefully. He clicked his tongue, why did they have to do this? If only he had this battle power and spirit force from the start, he would've easily wiped his enemies to the ground.

Breathing deeply again, he shook away the thoughts that only served as a catalyst to his anger. Emery placed his focus to the room he had appeared in, which also he hadn't given much attention to yet.

There was one door, heading to a hallway probably, a table and an attached chair to it on the side, and two large see-through windows, both near the bed.

First, he walked to the window beside the bed and saw a beautiful scenery of the blue sky. Staring at the far distance, he could see silhouettes of some mountains. And when he leaned in closer, gazed directly below the window, it looked like this place or house was also situated in a higher mountain of sorts.

Second, he approached the table. On it were two bags, one worn out and the other clean and mudless, as well as a ring neatly sitting across the table's smooth surface. Other than the ring, he knew what the two bags were.

The worn out bag was the one he was wearing before he got recalled to this Magus Academy. It appeared that he really could bring items from his planet but not the other way around. And also, he remembered the bag being on him, so to find it placed on the table peacefully, it struck him a bit. As for the clean bag that looked like nothing from his planet, this was the one he had received in Elder's Respite. He had it on him as well before he got transported back to his own world, but then here it was, also on the same table.

He inspected the small ordinary looking bronze ring with his eyes for a while until he finally remembered that this was the same ring that senior acolytes had been wearing. Cole had shown him the function of this ring once, as its name implied, it was a storage ring.

When he touched the ring, a small cube dropped from the ceiling without warning. Emery jumped back and readied a fighting stance, even though he was in a place he guessed could be considered safe, he had just come from a battle a few hours prior. Once he got a good look at the cube, hovering in front of him, he remembered this was the same type of cube he had once seen in their previous quarters.

[Acolyte Emery, I'll be assisting you during your stay in the academy.]

Emery lowered his guard and finally asked one of the things that had been bugging him because he had been expecting to appear in the assembly before the gigantic purplish stone. "Okay, can you start telling me where am I at the moment?"

[You are currently in your personal residence. It's a facility given by the Magus Academy for all senior acolytes.]

Indeed he could confirm this. When he had taken a look at the window, there were a few more houses on his left and right. He assumed all the other students received the same place of residence.

"Is this ring for me?" he asked, holding up the ring.

[Yes. It's the basic storage ring given to all senior acolytes. I suggest you activate the ring first and put all your belongings in it.]

Emery then followed the method of using this ring. He pricked the tip of his index finger using a small sharp metal the small cube had given him and allowed his droplet of blood to fall on the ring. The ring shone, confirming his ownership of the ring. He put it on and information about how this tier 1 storage ring had an area of three cubic meters entered his mind.

He opened his bags first to double check its content. The worn out bag had the empty containers he had used; unused cleansing potion; strength paste as well as several alchemical ingredients, particularly the blue powder and Granny's jet-black dagger. Meanwhile, in the other bag, were the six bottles of green essence potion he had received as a reward from Master Grom after the moon clover gathering.

Emery recalled that he had to give the green essences once he met Mags but then he wondered about the dagger made from obsidian. It was a tier 3 dagger, which properties he still didn't know. Then thoughts of him not being able to bring this back wandered his mind. If he couldn't bring this back after three months, he would be pissed.

Shaking his head, he asked the small cube, "What else can you do for me?"

[Whatever your need. Food, new bedding, new clothing, information...]

The word information piqued Emery's interests. He believed knowing more about his current situation would be important, but since he guessed since he was in a safe place after all, it'd be better to see the outside of this room for himself.

Before heading out, the cube reminded him to change his clothes back to the academy's uniform. He complied, changed the robe he had picked up in the camp, which was too large for him, and wore a long black suit that left no open skin visible up to his neck, except for his hands. The small cube summoned an object that allowed him to see himself. The badge on the collar of his suit appeared different, signifying his new status of being a second year acolyte.

Emery then stepped out of the door.

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In some other place that Emery had no knowledge about, there was a group of people with similar uniforms as him, only the badge was different, standing in front of several screens.

"This one is hilarious," said a person, laughing hard.

"What happened?" asked the person next to him with a frown.

"He screamed like a madman after he got recalled," said the guy, still laughing.

"Must be a bad day. Let me see his bio," said the serious guy. The other guy, who was laughing, pressed something below him and when Emery's information popped up on the screen, the serious guy said, "Ahh, he's from that group. There's no need to see further then."

"Four affinities and B aptitude. It's amazing he reached rank 5," said the carefree guy.

"Must be from a prominent family then. They wasted such resources for a person with B rank talent," said the other, looking at his own screen.

The carefree guy scrolled down and mentioned, "Well, here it says he has a special bloodline."

Looking back at the carefree guy's screen, he said, "Hmm it is quite special to have a bloodline. Let's see... Feywolf..." reading through the text information on his screen. After he finished, he said in a disappointed tone, "C grade bloodline..."

"But look at this, it says the people who have Feywolf bloodline are all females," said carefree guy, pointing at his screen.

"Don't think too much into it. All bloodlines that have the word wolf in it are ordinary," dismissed the serious one.

"Spirit core of darkness. Now that's unusual..." said carefree guy, no longer laughing.

The serious guy raised a brow before sighing exasperatedly. "The things your family willing to do to get ahead... Poor kid..."

"Should we put a special mark on him?"

"With a B aptitude? No need..."

## **Chapter 122: Residence**

Emery exited through the door and arrived at what seemed to be a living room. There wasn't much to see since it was empty, so he headed toward another door, which seemed to be the actual exit to this place. As he pushed open the door, The first thing that greeted him was a great set of stones that had overarching structure, heading toward a plaza where several people had already gathered.

He looked to his left and right and saw several his house situated on cliffs and on the curvature of the hills; similar to his, they also had mighty looking stone bridges, all converging to the central plaza and connecting to the other houses.

On the side of the bridges, there seemed to be countless waterfalls running through some of the hills themselves. Funnily enough however, it wasn't loud despite the thick current unlike some of the river falls he had been too.

He stepped on the stone bridge and made his way to the central plaza. Deciding to look back for a moment, he was mystified by the wondrous curved mountain that served as the background of his house. Again, the falling water on the hills, the humongous mountain filled with great greenery, the scene gave a mysterious and wondrous aura. Everything looked magical.

Emery stared wide-eyed for a moment and when he turned his gaze to his surroundings, there were already several other acolytes walking past him, enjoying the scenery too, sitting on benches, gathering in groups and talking to each other. Arriving at the central plaza, he scanned the surrounding until he found a young man with dark hair, tied to a bun. With just one glance, Emery knew who this tall young man was without even seeing his face.

"Chumo!" Emery called out.

The young man turned his head toward Emery and walked over. He greeted Emery by doing his half-fist salute and bow before saying, "Emery, good to see you."

"How are you? I hardly recognized you," remarked Emery, surprised a bit now that Chumo was before him. The boyish charm and aura Chumo had before had been replaced with a more mature aura based on his rougher appearance. It looked like Chumo had gone through a lot of challenges too in the year they hadn't seen each other. But Emery guessed he could say the same about himself. He asked, "By the way, any idea where we and the others are?"

Chumo gave a slight nod and said, "I haven't seen the others yet. But I did recognize some faces. With the number of houses, I'm guessing this is a place of residence dedicated for the acolytes in class 77."

"I see... Do you know what we should do now? I don't see any information," asked Emery.

"I think—"

Chumo closed his mouth all of a sudden. His eyes appeared to be in a bit of panic as he stared frozen behind Emery. There was only one person Emery believed who could make Chumo this way. Emery then heard running footsteps behind him and when he was about to face toward the direction. The footsteps changed into a jump as two arms wrapped around Emery's neck and he felt something soft pressing against his back.

His presumption was right as the sweet, melodic voice said, "There's my two favorite people. How are you two handsomes doing?"

"Klea!" Emery exclaimed, Chumo still unable to say anything.

"Emery! You're a man now! I can feel your muscle now is growing nicely," excitedly said Klea while touching all over him. Emery honestly thought her touch to be relaxing, but he felt it was inappropriate.

Emery took Klea's hand from his shoulder, breaking free, and turned around to face her. She had become more beautiful than before as well. Her hair reached her shoulder now and her unparalleled exotic beauty couldn't be compared to any woman he knew. He said, "How are you, Klea? I'm glad to see you too."

Klea, after seeing Emery's matured face, blushed for a moment before quickly turning back her usual self. "Hmpf, you're no fun to tease anymore. Tell me did something good happen to your girlfriend back home? What was her name again? Gwen, was it?"

"No, nothing happened..." Emery said. His mood dipped again at the mention of a girl. Not Gwen, but Morgana in fact. Her image of being in that cage and his desperate attempt to save her. It was coming back at him again.

Klea looked at Chumo for help, understanding she had asked she shouldn't have. However, Chumo shrugged, so she coughed and tried to change the subject. "Well, well, well, Emery! You know, I can tell when you're not telling me the whole truth. However, remember you can always tell me anything, okay?"

Emery gave half a smile but then a commotion happened. All three twisted their necks at the gathering of senior acolytes. They made their way over and overheard a fight was about to happen.

As they neared, the clashing of metals entered their ears. Pushing their way through, they found two young men fighting. One was using a spear while the other was using a sword.

The rough voice sounded familiar as it said, "Taste this! You roman dog!"

"So now I'm a dog? Hah! I guess better than being called a pig by a crazy barbarian!" retorted the other person with brownish hair.

Clank! The young man holding a short sword made the spear heading toward him slid to the side. He then stepped in and countered with a stab, however, the burly man used his huge round shield to block the attack and then bashed the attacker back with his shield.

Seeing the young men battling it out, Klea placed a hand on the face and said with a sigh, "At least those two haven't changed."

Thrax charged, following up on his shield bash, and to everyone's surprise, instead of attacking, he threw away his spear and reached out with his hand. He said, "That is a well-timed counter, Roman!"

Julian smiled and grabbed his hand. "You're getting much stronger, barbarian! But of course, not enough!"

"Wanna go at it again?" challenged Thrax, holding out his spear again, pointed at Julian.

Julian waved his hand as he answered with a smile, "Hahaha, no, no, our beautiful lady has arrived with our friends." Gesturing with his head toward Klea, Emery and Chumo.

Klea charmingly put her hands on her waist and said, "What happened to you guys?"

"Heh, apparently, we're in an alliance with the Thracians," answered Julian, placing the sword into his storage ring.

Thrax did the same and nodded at Emery and Chumo with a stern expression. "The Romans aren't as bad as I thought. I've spent months fighting together with them."

"Yeah, they're our recruits," said Julian, giving a smirk.

"Who're you calling a recruit huh, dog! We're Roman auxiliaries!" snapped Thrax, giving a fierce look at Julian.

"Well, like I said, recruit," repeated Julian with a grin, making Thrax's face even more angry.

Klea gave a great big sigh with a smile as she stood between them. She told both of them to stop arguing and quickly shot at them by saying, "So, I can see both of you are now good friend, aren't you?"

Thrax immediately said, "With this pig? No!" Julian followed up, "Something we both agree then."

Despite the tense argument and opposing words, it was clear that these two had indeed become closer than before. Because of this, Emery's mood had somewhat recuperated. His four friends from the same world who were given a chance to be in this Magus Academy to become a magus had met again after a year.

Julian proposed to celebrate this reunion of people; the others quickly agreed, Emery didn't answer for he wasn't in a celebratory mood at the moment, but luckily no one had noticed. Still, even though he had half the heart to join them, he went anyway with thoughts of appreciation inside him, being with them somehow alleviated his once again increasing worries regarding Morgana's condition.

His friends' voices seemed to drown that away, especially Thrax's. He was proudly bragged about the battles he had fought in, how many people he had defeated and how he had missed death by a narrow margin multiple times. The others chimed in from time to time, the returnees of the magus world. Surely a lot of interesting things had happened to the others too.

But before they had the time to walk away and sit on one of the benches, a woman dressed in green landed from the sky right in the middle of the courtyard. The acolytes then all gathered to see and they all recognize the woman who had just arrived as their class guide.

"Welcome back, Class 77. Now, let's talk about exciting things waiting for you lot for the next three months," said Minerva.

When they had gathered, it was only then that Emery realized the number of acolytes seemed to be less than what he had thought. Some were missing. For example, that white haired girl with the snake-like eyes named Silva was nowhere to be found.

### **Chapter 123: Second Year**

From what Emery remembered, there should be a hundred acolytes in class 77, however, after counting, he found there were only eighty acolytes gathered in this courtyard, including himself and his four friends.

The woman magus called everyone's attention and led the newly arrived senior acolytes toward the edge of a cliff, which had a stone platform that stretched toward an open edge, facing another similar-looking magical mountain with more waterfalls and flying flocks of birds in the distance. The open air stone platform had a stone roof, providing shade to the acolytes who sat cross-legged while Minerva stayed on her feet.

Minerva had her hands in the back, she was silent for a while, most likely enjoying the view as well before turning around to address the sitting senior acolytes. She said, "It seems there are still eighty of you under my care, 'where are the others?' you may be wondering. The answer is simple. The seven days we gave was to make everyone at least understand the basics of the spirit elements. The year after in your homeworlds was a way to see how you'd deal with the power given to you. Some have become lazy, while others may be in some event, which prevented the recall. However, don't mind them and focus on what's in front of you. Agreed?"

Minerva, who was also their previous guide last time they were here, explained in such a straightforward manner as if she didn't care even a little about the acolytes who hadn't shown up. She masked the explanation with a charming smile, slightly hinting not to ask any unnecessary questions. Almost everyone nodded.

Emery was one of those who didn't nod. The magus' summarization of 'some had become lazy' was something he couldn't accept regarding Silva. However, the other explanation of something must have happened to her, was the reasoning he could swallow. Nevertheless, he stretched his neck again to look for her among the remaining acolytes.

After failing to find the long-haired, snake-girl, for the second time, a soft hand patted him on the shoulder, startling him. He turned around to see Klea who said, "Ehem. You're looking for your snake girl, aren't you, Emery?"

"I — no — yes..." confusedly said Emery, not sure how to answer at first.

"Hmm... My spirit sense is telling me you'll have a lot of trouble regarding women in the future, Emery," said Klea, trying to look mysterious.

A shiver ran on Emery's spine. "You can't really do that, can you?" he asked.

Now that he had thought about it... in fact, he had been having some trouble regarding women. Gwen, Granny, Morgana, and at a certain point the other four Feywolf sisters... Emery looked at her with disbelieving eyes as she said with a haughty look, "You'll see... My prediction is always right! Hehe..."

He couldn't tell if she actually knew something or not behind her mysterious exotic beautiful face, which seemed to be doing a smile and a frown at the same time. Sometimes, he really couldn't understand this woman, Emery thought.

Placing his attention back to the magus dressed in green in front, he heard her say, "Being accepted in this prestigious academy is a huge fortune in which some would give even years of their lives for just one day here. It's truly a shame if some people aren't taking it seriously. Now, let's put our minds back to the matter at hand and let me see your progress the last one year."

Minerva summoned a cube from her storage ring and let it sit on her hand. She pulled it closer to her and read the shining text, which reflected on her eyes, and muttered, "Impressive... a few of you have reached rank 6 while most of you are still rank 5. Some interesting data here and there...." she stored the cube once more and addressed them, "being chosen in our Magus Academy means you all are special, I'm sure all of you have your own secrets but this time it is wise not to show it like last time."

A bunch of people slumped their shoulders, after Minerva gave her statement. Some even made their feelings known to the others by grumbling to their seatmates how they had wished to showcase their incomparable progress, the ones who grumbled by the way were those entitled young men and women from Kalios.

Emery felt a sense of resentment after hearing there were people who had reached rank 6 and most already on rank 5, including him. In his heart, he was hoping he could be in the lead this time, but apparently, even after being helped by Killgragah, cultivating straight for half a year inside the spatial space with the black dragon, going through a grueling experience of turning his normal spirit core into a



spirit core of darkness, as well as a bunch of other stuff, it felt unfair for him. He sighed, pushing down the rising tension of indignation inside him. There was just a huge gap in talent between those who had spirit aptitude S, A, and B.

When Minerva opened her mouth, everyone fell silent immediately. She said in a serious tone, "The requirement to pass the academy this time is easy. You only need to reach rank 6 acolyte. However, I am telling you all now the truth. The second year is the most important year of all. Why? Because this is the time where you'll have to exhibit your talent and progress. The magus games will be held and if you can show your worth, you'll receive fame and most importantly sponsorship, which will soar up your advancement."

The senior acolytes became rowdy in hearing all this. Thrax again puffed up his chest, showing a wide-grin while looking at Julian, while those from Kalios also beamed.

Minerva continued, "The first magus game will be held in ten days. It'll be a team game. You'll be required to form a team with a maximum of eight people. So, don't waste your time and prepare to the best you can.

"Of course, you're all free to seek any of the institutes for ways of advancement. I firstly suggest that you get yourselves good equipment and spells. Lastly, other information will be available in your personal room attendant. So although I'll be staying here with you for the next three months please don't bother me with unnecessary questions. Agree?"

Once again, almost all acolytes nodded in glee. Emery could already see some people leaning to each other and whispering.

"Any questions?" Minerva asked.

"Magus Minerva, what about the reward for the game?" asked a bald male senior acolyte after raising his hand.

Minerva seemed to frown for a moment, this was probably one of the unnecessary questions she had just told them not to ask. Regardless though, the crevice on her brow slightly loosened as she answered, "All rules and rewards can be answered by your personal room attendant. But I guess you'd want to hear this from me anyway to make you feel excited..." she raised her voice and added, "The reward will, of course, be a huge amount of contribution points. But the main reward will be to be accepted to be a personal disciple of a grand magus!"

Emery's fellow senior acolytes issued a great chorus of 'woah' after Magus Minerva revealed the reward.

"Being accepted as a personal disciple of a grand magus is a fortune for anyone, even a magus would compete to the death for a chance to be guided by a higher ranked magus. Anything else aside from this question?" she asked but didn't wait for a second longer as quickly she said, "That is all then. If you have any follow-up questions or need anything else, state your questions again to your personal cube attendant in your residences. Dismissed."

Contribution points, guidance of a grand magus, and sponsorship regarding things he would need to help him to become stronger and advance faster, Emery couldn't help but feel one with the excited atmosphere. If he had those things, Gran—Meave, the Lady of the Lake's sister would be someone he

would be able to contend to, there were also those golden knights who appeared to have mysterious powers that could increase their strength.

For all he knew, there could be hundreds of golden knights within the seven kingdoms and Emery had a feeling he would face more of them once he returned in search of Morgana.

Emery's brain began to draw plans how he could advance himself in these ten days. He had the four elements institutes and the apothecary institute, which he would definitely be visiting some time later. But he paused those thoughts for now since there was something more urgent. He needed a team first.

All senior acolytes stood from their seats and began to form groups. Julian, Thrax, Klea and Chumo all walked up to Emery and Julian took the lead by saying, "It looks like everyone already agrees that we're to be in one team?"

The three young men and woman nodded in unison. What they needed to do now was to recruit three people to fill the remaining space.

#### **Chapter 124: Join the Team**

An hour had passed but the five young people still had yet to find additional senior acolytes who accepted their invitation to join their team. Some reasoned that they had already joined the people from their own world, but some were even worse for they had walked away even before they got closer to them, of course Klea was a different case, she managed to speak to some people but the moment she introduced the four young men from her team, the acolytes she had been talking to all suddenly made up excuses and disappeared from their sights.

Among the remaining senior acolytes in the stone platform, there was a group of seven people still looking for one more member. That was one of the largest groups so far. Another large group were those young men and women from the planet Kalios, which had eighteen people selected to enter the Magus Academy last year and again all eighteen had returned. They could have easily formed two to three groups if they wanted, but they seemed to be talking to themselves and have not left yet.

The five people from Emery's group still didn't give up and talked to the acolytes they hadn't met with yet.

A couple more minutes had passed and the crowd was thinning. It looked like the teams had mostly been set, for there were groups of people about three to six, leaving the area. As for the rare individual acolytes, none were present for they seemed to have already joined groups.

The same situation was still happening to Emery's group, none wanted to join theirs. In fact, the opposite was happening whenever someone walked to speak with them, in particular Klea, the people who had spoken to her were actually trying to poach her in joining their team, which of course, once the boys had taken notice of, quickly chased the poachers away.

Emery understood why people were asking Klea specifically to join their teams. She was once of the top acolytes in class 77, they all knew about her triple affinity and S aptitude talent. Even though she hadn't confirmed her current status yet to anyone, it was most likely she was one of them whom Magus Minerva had mentioned to have reached rank 6.

He took a moment to self-reflect, stepping back, Emery observed the remaining crowds until he finally noticed one particular oddity. Whenever he met someone else's gaze, they seemed to glance and step away immediately. This caused Emery's brows to furrow, could it be the reason why his four friends were having a hard time recruiting the last three members was because of his infamous B rank spirit aptitude? He curled his lips downwards, if that was really the reason, he actually considered showing his power to them.

As he was thinking, his four friends walked up to him and sat by the bench, exhausted. It was at that moment when one of the largest groups of acolytes walked up to them.

"You guys are still recruiting for a full team, aren't you? Heh, classic lower world problems," said a pretty boy who fought with them in the cafeteria a year ago. After doing some questioning from the other acolytes, they found his name was Rowe. He seemed to be the leader of this group of young men and women from Kalios.

Thrax, who had been in a foul mood since no one seemed to be recruited by him, stood on his feet and walked up. He snarled, "Go away!"

"Woah, woah, woah! Easy there. I think we got off on the wrong foot last year. I'm here to propose something. I want us to be friends! What do you think? Friends?" said Rowe, showing off his charming smile.

However, that seemed to tick off Thrax even more as he roared, "What sort of nonsense is this? Piss off!"

Julian stepped in between Thrax and Rowe before the tension rose further and said, "What my barbaric friend is trying to say here is thanks, but no thanks."

"Is that so? You lower world people should know the benefits of having friends in this place. Especially since the world you came from knows nothing but shit," said Rowe, antagonizing Thrax even further, who was being held at bay by Julian.

Klea was the next to stand from her seat. She paced around the pretty boy, Rowe, and asked, "Well if you have anything to share, then we'll listen."

"Now, now, pretty lady..." said Rowe with a smile, "first, I'd like for everyone here to know you're the only reason why I speak to these other lowlives. Well, let me tell you why nobody wants to join your team."

Rowe then began to explain how not only the five of them came from a lower world, they were actually from the lowest of the lower worlds. He mentioned the reason how they could tell was just from the weapons Julian and Thrax had shown earlier.

"...your world, your civilization are just too primitive. Maybe in another milenia or two, only then will you all start to begin and grasp our understanding," concluded Rowe, finishing his explanation.

Emery didn't like the way this man had looked at him. It was him who stood up next and said, "If we're the lowest of the low as you've said, then what do you want from us?"

"Weren't you not listening? I said we want to make friends with some of you," snapped Rowe at Emery before adding, "we, the best youth from Kalios, has eighteen senior acolytes in this class alone. We're planning to create just one team and have the rest of us separate to help underprivileged groups such as yours. With that said, we would like for two or three from my group to join your team. I'm sure all of you will benefit from us."

At first glance, it seemed to be a good idea on the surface. Having two, three or even just one from these people from a higher world would probably indeed make Emery's group of five become stronger by a large margin. However, something felt off. What benefits would the people from Kalios have in having them join Emery's team. Something was amiss.

Julian seemed to have figured this too for he asked to discuss it with the others for a moment. After a round of discussion, in fact all five of them had the same thought. None of them bought the word of such a man from Kalios. However, the four were still hesitant in rejecting this young man.

Seeing this, Emery felt it was up to him to give the rejection set in stone. He was basing it through his accumulated experience of being with people who had a hidden, or more accurately, malevolent agenda when dealing with him.

Emery turned to Rowe and said, "Again, thank you for the offer but no!"

Rowe's expression turned into great anger as he shouted, "No one is asking your opinion! You B rank moron!"

Julian, Thrax, Chumo and Klea all faced the young man from Kalios with evident displeasure on their faces. Emery was their friend, a youth who came from the same world as them. The harsh treatment of this man named Rowe toward Emery and his constant reminder to them coming from the 'lowest of the low worlds' word seemed to give rise to their increasing urge to rebel against this entitled youth.

Thrax was the first to walk beside Emery and said, "You heard our friend! Our decision is still no! So piss off, now!"

"Hmpf, you lowlifes don't really know what's good for you." Rowe snorted again, walking away.

Emery turned to face the other four with his head a bit lowered. "I'm sorry, my friends, but I don't trust these people. And that is the most important thing. I'd rather we fight with only the five of us than work with them."

Klea jumped at Emery, wrapping her arms around his arm, and exclaimed, "Of course you're right! There's nothing you should apologize for!"

Julian and the others also nodded. Emery felt grateful to have such great friends.

While they were talking about what they should do next, a group of three young men walked closer.

"Hello! We would like to join," said the first.

"Yes, would like to join, we do," followed up the second.

"Please, let us join, we would like too," and followed up the third.

The group of five friends all looked at the three young men simultaneously and saw they the three all had the same facial features.

They were all struck into confusion for a moment when Julian coughed, bringing back the other four to normal, and asked, "The three of you, are you all brothers? Triplets?"

"No, we are not. We all are from the same world," said the first one.

"Indeed, from the same planet, we are," answered the second.

"Agree to that," mentioned the third.

Klea exclaimed, "But you all look so similar..."

"Well, we can say the same for you five," said the first. The other two answered with the same meaning, only phrased differently.

The five youth from Earth were speechless. "..."

### **Chapter 125: Progress**

"Let me introduce myself. My name is Zuna, a rank 6 acolyte and two of my companions here are Zaku and Zidi, they're both rank 5. Our homeworld is called Zaiueo."

Emery and his friends were still at a loss on how they'd be able to distinguish these three people from Zaiueo apart. Of course, saying their name was one thing, but what if they called Zuna, Zaku or Zidi, would that be considered rude? Not only their faces were similar, the trio's personalities, name, habits, as well as almost everything were identical. So, the five youths couldn't help but wonder.

Julian again was the first to recover his composure; he stepped up to talk to them. He was somewhat their unproclaimed leader. Julian said, "Welcome, my name Julian, this is Thrax, Emery, Chumo and the beauty here is our pride, Klea." Julian waved his arm at the four youths and added, "As for our ranks, all of us are rank 5, except for our beauty here, she's rank 6."

Truth be told, Julian had guessed their ranks. It wasn't a stretch to guess anyway since Magus Minerva mentioned most of them were rank 5, a few were rank 6, but didn't mention anything about rank 4. And with everyone nodding to confirm his statement, Julian smiled in satisfaction for figuring it correctly.

"Great," said Zuna, the one in the middle. "With this, we have two rank 6 acolytes but... wow, your names are weird."

Everyone didn't know how to react to such remarks. Their names were weird? What about them and their faces? They all looked the same from their footwear, height, body frame, to the blemishes on their faces, eyes, nose, ears... there was definitely something wrong with this group...

Julian coughed, breaking the ice. He said, "Umm... yes... okay, I think I heard you said you want to join our group?"

"Yes, although we didn't have the chance to talk with you guys last year, we hope we can help each other this time," said Zuna, the others nodding in approval.

Klea decided to join in the conversation, moved forward, and said, "So, why don't you guys honestly tell us, the reason for your interest?"

The three looked at each other, nodded, and then answered Klea, "Well it seems you guys are close, we like that. Also, we are a team of three and you, five. It is like the universe is telling us to join together. What do you think?"

The five youths went back to discussing amongst themselves while the three youths stared at them with confused eyes. Occasionally, Emery's group glanced at them and although they were indeed a bit weird in everything they did and said, they seemed to be trustworthy somehow, the five youths concluded.

Just when Emery's were about to say something, Zuna said, "How about this, let's get to know each other better first."

Julian let out a chuckle before answering, "And how do you propose we do that? By learning the meaning behind our names?"

Emery first thought Julian's joke was a bit offensive and feared that their collaboration would break apart before it even started since the three humans from Zaiueo were silent. A second later, however, they tilted their head, expressed their confusion by staring with straight faces. Clearly they didn't understand what Julian had meant for the next words that came out of Zuna's mouth, who seemed to be the leader, were "Easy, we will do one task that we can do together. Nothing big, of course, but just enough to test and synergize between ourselves, what do you think?"

"Can you tell us more?" asked Julian, a bit more serious this time.

Zuna proceeded to explain about finding a task, which would reward them with some contribution points or spirit stones after finishing it. This way, Zuna reiterated, they would be able to learn more about each person's likes, dislikes, abilities, etc. Of course, by having those rewards, they'd be able to purchase better equipment for the upcoming magus game in ten days.

Klea made her excitement known by exclaiming, "That sounds like a good idea! Reward and shopping!"

The group then decided to retire for the day due to the darkening sky and meet up here again tomorrow morning for the task finding.

"Until tomorrow morning then," said Julian.

"Yes, see you tomorrow," replied Zuna.

"Tomorrow, we will, yes," followed up Zaku.

"You will see us tomorrow," said Zidi last.

Hearing their weird sentences, the group fell into conclusion that it probably was the universal translator the symbols on their hands provided were just having a hard time to comprehend or fully translate their language.

Emery then looked at the orange glow on the sky and fell into contemplation. There were only ten days until the magus games, he needed to prepare a lot so he could catch up, compete with the others and get that reward, which would be extremely beneficial once he returned. He was about to leave to plan

out his to-do list regarding the elemental institutes or many other things, when Klea suddenly grabbed his arm, seemingly unwilling to let him go after reuniting with them.

"You are not going anywhere, my Emery," exclaimed Klea. She turned to the others and said, "Let's catch up! We haven't seen each other for a year, so there must be a lot of things that must've happened. Also, let's show each other how their progress has been, that'll be important for the upcoming event."

Julian and Thrax said, "Agreed."

Chumo, who had returned to be quiet again whenever Klea was near, nodded in agreement.

As much as he wanted to rush go back and train to reach acolyte rank 6 in his personal residence, there was some sense in what Klea had proposed. In fact, he could only go so far if he went on alone, so he needed people and friends to be with him. Forging and strengthening friendships were also crucial in getting by in whatever world he would be. Hence, Emery let Klea do whatever she wanted, leaving his fate to her.

Klea led everyone, passing another stone bridge, and went to one of the more secluded houses on a cliff, which had its own waterfall on the side and a personal courtyard on the side! She invited them inside, and in contrast to Emery's empty living room, hers actually had a lot of furniture.

The floor was made of shiny wood, Emery suspected that if it was polished a bit more, he might be able to see his reflection. The large living room had a hanging lighting on the ceiling, the soft chairs were a mix of blue, yellow and black, some purple. And there was more than enough space to host at least a dozen guests.

Klea called for her personal cube attendant and the group tried to access the cube to order food and drink. The group still amazed at how the cube is able to create things out of thin air.

She smiled in satisfaction and mentioned to the others to make themselves feel at home while they waited in the living room.

Thrax, Chumo and Julian had eyed the lit courtyard outside earlier, they asked Klea if they could use it to do a bit of sparring. The first to spar were obviously Thrax and Julian, after Thrax won the spar again, he challenged Chumo next.

Chumo gave more of a resistance against Thrax by using his some darkness spell, but after a while, Chumo gave up, making Thrax to be the undefeated winner. Thrax raised his hands, seemingly enjoying himself to be crowned as the best in physical combat. It looked like his battlefield experience improved his raw strength and skill against the rest.

Thrax then asked Emery if they could spar, but Klea, shouting from the inside of the residence

"Can you boys stop with all the sparring already and come in"

Emery actually feel an itch to spar with Thrax, but now probably not the right time. Everyone obliged and went inside sat together in the living room.

"Ok lets share our progress shall we?" Asked Julian

Thrax presented his status first to the group.

[Thrax]

[Fire Spirit - High Stage]

[Battle power: 29]

[Spirit force: 74]

[Acolyte Rank 5]

[Julian]

[Earth spirit - High Stage]

[Battle power: 23]

[Spirit force: 78]

[Acolyte Rank 5]

[Chumo]

[Darkness Spirit - High Stage]

[Battle power: 20]

[Spirit force: 84]

[Acolyte Rank 5]

"Damn you, Chumo. You're so quiet but you've almost reached rank 6! Klea show me yours!" said Julian, and Klea happily complied.

[Klea]

[Lightning- early foundation]

[Wind - early foundation]

[Water - early foundation]

[Battle power: 17]

[Spirit force: 105]

[Acolyte Rank 6]

"Oh wow, early foundation, you really are the pride of our world Klea. Julian then turned to Emery and said, "What about you Emery?"

## **Chapter 126: Stories**

Everyone noticed how Emery had been looking over the symbol on his hand. He was debating in his mind whether he should show them or not because his current battle power had reached 27, which was just two points beneath Thrax and his spirit force was a bit less than 90, which was the threshold to



reach before becoming rank 7. Would they be shocked, envious, happy, or something else once he had shown them?

After a couple seconds of hesitation, he opened his mouth but Klea spoke first and said, "There's no need to show it if you don't want to, Emery. Just know that we will help you push to rank 6 no matter what, right everyone?"

She gave a knowing look to the other four, which Emery noticed, and the rest nodded immediately.

Emery stared at Klea. She had probably thought he was a bit ashamed to present his status thinking he was still in the early stages or had barely reached rank 5 in terms of spirit force due to his B rank talent in spirit aptitude. This was most likely her conclusion as to why he had been hesitant after Julian had asked him.

Emery had spent the first four months in the real world doing a lot of alchemical work and gardening with Granny and Lanzo. Although he had not neglected practicing his cultivation during the early mornings and the late evenings, his progress had indeed been at a snail's pace compared to when he had been transported by Killgragah in the spatial space of Khaos.

Inside the Khaos spatial space with the black dragon, it only took him two weeks to reach rank 3 and a month to reach rank 4. He also mastered other spells as well as increased most of his elements to a high stage in terms of understanding. And after his core had become a darkness spirit core with Killgragah's advice, he managed to reach rank 5 also in just a month's time. However, since then, the gap between rank 5 and rank 6 was more than the previous ranks. Rank 6 required him to push the spirit force by 40 more, and there was also a need to have a breakthrough in the elements like the early foundation Klea had.

Therefore, even though most of the returnee acolytes were in rank 5, their spirit forces differed in strength and quality, and since his friends, who themselves had a spirit aptitude of mostly A's and one S, were mostly in the 75s and above a year later, it wasn't only Klea who believed Emery to be in the early stages, which was about 60s. It had never occurred to them the fact that Emery was in the late stage.

Emery considered clearing the misunderstanding for his friends and upcoming teammates because he believed it to be important for the magus game, not to mention, he somehow would like to show off his progress. However, if Emery indeed showed them, the next thing he would have to consider telling them would be Killgragah. He wasn't sure if it would be good to tell about the existence of the dragon.

As he was thinking though, the old knight, Sir Bagdemagus' last advice rang in his head. It would appear he really needed to start being more careful and not let everything about him known.

Klea then starts to try asking for some drink from the cube. Emery stayed silent and drank whatever the cube had served them while keeping to himself the thoughts he just had. He guessed it'd be better for the meantime to not say anything about his progress, so everyone would still work hard in training and not bother him with too many questions he didn't want to answer yet.

Everyone then moved to the living room where there was a crackling fire on the side, giving a wonderful relaxing atmosphere. In front of the fire while the outside had darkened was the best time to tell stories of what they had been through during the year they had been apart from each other.

The first person to share their story was Julian. He started with how his family had met misfortune but quickly transitioned to how he never felt more alive. Julian mentioned the preceding events indeed was terrible, however, because of that, he finally started his training and already rose through the ranks of the Roman's Legion army by becoming a centurion because of his family's old connections. He boasted how he was the youngest person to have ever reached the title, even though there were a lot of grievances and people underestimating him for being young, he soon shut them down by showing the results of his knowledge in literacy and in the battlefield, which gave the much needed respect for him to keep his position.

He also mentioned how fortunate he had been to receive approval from his commanding officer in the army for his leave request just a day before his recall, else he shuddered to think what would happen to him if he got branded as a deserter.

Thrax snorted. "Hmpf! Spoken like a true roman, right! Talking about glory and discipline but corrupted to the core, you just had to use connections to get to a position. Unlike us Thracians, we talk with strength and we are always true with our word."

Julian ignored Thrax's hateful remarks. He just sighed, not bothering to explain to Thrax how the actual world and politics in the Roman culture worked.

The next person to tell their story was Thrax. He mentioned how he had been in constant battle, and how he loved being in the battlefield.

And when he mentioned he had a beautiful wife waiting for him Julian suddenly exclaimed, "A wife! You are just 16!"

"Stupid Roman, it's normal for us to have a wife at that age," retorted Thrax.

"I'm not saying whether you can or can't, what I'm saying is that it's stupid for you to be tied already when you've just started your glory! Imagine, how many swarms of women will be keeping you preoccupied later," said Julian in disbelief.

"Like I've said, you and your traditions are stupid, roman. For us Thracians, it's normal for a great warrior to have at least nine wives, and if I garnered more glory, I might just break the record of having twelve wives. That'd be an achievement," said Thrax with a great laugh, seemingly proud of himself.

Julian had a look of exasperation. He gave up trying to understand the young man opposite to him and said in resignation, "Right... I've forgotten for a second how barbaric you Thracians can be."

"Ehem!" Klea grabbed their attention. "Are you boys forgetting that you're in the presence of a lady here?"

Thrax didn't seem to mind but Julian withdrew. And since it looked like Thrax was done with his story, and Klea had spoken, it was only natural for her to speak next, surprisingly, continuing a similar topic.

"Actually, I am also married, and have become the Queen of Egypt," said Klea. She then told news, which was actually more intriguing than theirs had been. She mentioned that after her father had returned from his long voyage, her father actually had her oldest sister be killed before anointing her to be a dual ruler with her younger brother, Ptolemy. "Don't worry about my sister though, i never really like her anyway"

The boys then gave her weird looks, wondering how Klea had the right mind to try and consummate her marriage with an 8-year-old.

"Of course, it's for the title only! Damn you, boys! I am still a virgin!" exclaimed Klea with great embarrassment on her face.

Klea's story only seems to make Chumo more nervous to talk about his. Chumo then told a story about a young prince of a kingdom who gets thrown away and lives with the common folk. Such a surprising story but told in a very short and simple manner, make the other wonder if he's talking about him or someone else's.

Lastly, it was Emery's turn. He told the group about how he had gotten closer into finding his father's murderer. He also told them about how he had found out he still had some remaining family, the people of the forest but didn't give them much detail about it.

Emery mentioned a lot, but also removed a lot of details in his story. Believing to only let them know what they needed to know. After he finished his retelling, the night had become late; everyone agreed to rest and prepare for tomorrow's task.

Klea bid them goodbye, Emery, Thrax and Julian, separated their ways. And once Emery was alone, heading toward his personal residence, he started planning in his mind the ways to quickly improve his spirit force, battle power and rush into becoming a rank 6 acolyte.

## **Chapter 127: Task Master**

This world's rays of sun passed through the window beside Emery's bed, warming him to a good morning. As he opened his eyes, the soft material the bed was made of, its pleasant smell, and the wonderful scenery outside his window, was telling him he had a nice day ahead of him. It felt like a dream though, to wake up in this place, because as he stared at the ceiling, his mind was already preoccupied with the nightmare of yesterday. What happened to Morgana? What kind of fate awaited her?

He checked the circle-split-in-half-symbol in his hand and saw there was still [89 days] before he returned to his world. Sighing, he thought this would become the longest 89 days of his life. The ancestral gods had been cruel with him. Just one or two minutes was all he needed.

Emery sat upright on his bed, trying to shake the thoughts of her. He was here now, there was nothing he could do although he still wished to go back with all his heart. Getting off his bed, he went to the living room and ordered the personal cube attendant to ready his meal.

As he waited, his mind wandered to the things he should do to improve himself. He needed to get better at making decisions and not just stronger, so people wouldn't be dictating his actions; rather, he himself or them to his. Like what the old man had said, his parting advice of 'observe first, listen, and think before speaking your mind', was something he should start doing. In fact, this wasn't just that old knight's advice, Killgragah had a similar statement to him while he had been training inside the Khaos spatial space.

Emery finished his meal and sat in the living room and began processing what had happened yesterday since there were still a few more hours before his meeting with the others. His first thought, he wouldn't

believe that Silva had become lazy or something of the sort. In fact, he was neither satisfied with Magus Minvera's explanation as well... there must be something behind Silva not returning. Second, the overly interested actions of his classmates from Kalios were odd. Emery had his doubts because they didn't seem to be the sort of bunch who simply offered hands for the sake of relationships. Thirdly, about the Magus Games, there was something that felt amiss for him, but he couldn't point a finger too as to what it was.

His eyes then fell on the personal attendant who was hovering and picking up the meal he had finished. That was it, information about the Magus Academy. There should be a recorded history of the past classes before somewhere and hopefully, this cube had information about it.

Calling for the small cube personal attendant, he asked it to give him information about the Magus Academy, however, it rejected his inquiry and answered that it could only give general information about the Magus Games, the Magus Academy, as well as a map of the whole place. There wasn't much he could access since he didn't have any authority. Emery fell back on the couch, thinking of more ways how to get more information. Magus Minerva wasn't an option, in lieu of his new mindset, he couldn't just reveal his intentions by asking her, also there was that statement from her yesterday to not bother her with unnecessary questions.

As he racked his brain, the face of a certain person came into his mind. Cedric, his senior in the apothecary institute. He should know more about this place and the situation. He should be able to help Emery. With the right motivation and compensation of course, Emery believed he could get something out of the opportunistic person. Settling on that idea, Emery decided to find Cedric the first thing as soon as he had a chance.

He glanced at the symbol on his hand and decided it was time. Getting up and exiting the house, he went back to the stone platform to meet with his four friends and the three possible new teammates.

"Are you all ready?"

"Ready, are you all now?"

"All ready, are you?"

A headache was threatening to split Emery's mind. They were weird! Couldn't they just pick a single person who would speak for them instead of hearing all three sentences with the same meaning?

As Emery looked at his four friends, it appeared like he wasn't alone in this sentiment. In fact, Julian seemed to be having it the worst, so he decided to speak out his thoughts, "Please guys, for the sake of healthy cooperation, I am sorry but could you all not speak at the same time or better yet, decide a representative who would speak for all three of you."

"Okay, we understand."

"Understand, we do."

"I, Zana, will speak for them," said the one in the middle.

"Okay, that's much better," said Julian. The rest all looked at Julian with grateful eyes.

With that settled, the rest of the group made their way toward the plaza where a crowd of entering and exiting the portals. Zana led them toward a portal and after they entered it, they were transported to a place to a tunnel-like location with no windows. They traveled on the tunnel, which had a lot of colorful drawings on the ceiling and once they reached the end, the view of a multiple window counter revealed itself and once they got out of the tunnel, it shifted into a circle hall with a lot of people walking around on the spiral stairs.

Zana introduced the place and said, "This is the Magus Hub, run by the Magus Academy. This is the place where you get items or information that cannot be given by the cube in our room. This is also the place we could get a task." Pointing to one of the window counters, which was not occupied by another acolyte, he said, "There's an open spot, let's go."

After they stepped before the window, a beautiful lady in a white uniform behind the counter that didn't have a badge on her collar greeted them with a bow and a wonderful smile, making them feel welcome. She said, "Welcome to the hub, dear acolytes. What can I do for you today?"

Zana turned to them first and explained, "Here you can ask for any open task given by other institutes or magi. There are many kinds of tasks, varying from item finding, hunting, information gathering, protecting people, and a lot more others. The difficulty is set by the Magus Academy, and as for the information about the task or quest, it is provided by the person or institute who created the task. The lady behind the window was one of the many task masters of Magus Academy."

"How do you know all these?" asked Klea.

"Well, isn't researching and asking for information the most basic things one should do before acting on something? Actually, I went down here last year but tasks for first year acolytes are very rare."

Emery was fascinated with the way this person from Zaiueo thought. Maybe this was what Rowe from Kaleos meant that a more advanced world would have a broader mind in doing their tasks.

Zana asked the girl behind the counter to show them the list of available tasks. She complied and then from the edge of the window counter, it opened a small hole wherein a flying cube went out. A light came out from the cube and foreign letters showed up, but despite it being unknown to them at first, the symbol on their hands reacted and made them able to understand the written words. They were now able to see the list as well with their minds.

[Choose Acolyte task]

[Difficulty level]

[Reward]

[Types]

Each of the choices was like a way to sort and categorize the hundreds of tasks.

"This one!" shouted Thrax, looking all excited and such. He showed them the information which said:

[Giant hunting]

[5,000 contribution points]

[Difficulty A]

"I want to fight a giant! That sounds really amazing. Can we get this one?" asked Thrax to the cube hovering above them.

[Minimum rank 8 acolyte needed]

"Damn!"

"Guys as we are doing this just to measure our teamwork, I suggest we choose the one with the lowest difficulty and the safest to clear," reminded Emery. He recalled the task Master Grom had issued in Elder's Respite, which was about gathering for the moon clovers, although it looked harmless at first glance, the place he went to was full of dangerous beasts. Three of his companions at the time ended up dead. Hence, he wanted to make sure his friends not to underestimate even the simplest looking task. It was safer to measure the difficulty one at a time.

"We agree," said Zana, "I think this task is the most beneficial for our current condition."

[Gather Mineral]

[200 contribution points]

[Difficulty D]

"That sounds really boring! I want action," complained Thrax.

"You will not be bored with this, we think. The description says this will be in a low level savage world, so we will see some action. Also this job was given by the blacksmith institute, so it'll give us favor with them so we can upgrade our equipment. What do you think?" said Zana.

## **Chapter 128: Planet 14722**

It didn't take long for the group of eight to decide in accepting the task. When Zana went back to the lady behind the counter, Emery noticed that on the side of the lady, there was some kind of projection that gave numbers. After Zana had registered the number became less by one.

The rest of the other seven followed suit and received the mission. Their task was to gather one ton of tier two material called titanium. They would have to retrieve a ton of titanium each, that was about eight tons of titanium overall.

Once everyone gave confirmation that the gathering mission was in the symbol on their hands, Emery looked at the lady behind once more and the number on her side had become less by eight. Emery inferred that the mission they just took was a limited mission, and the number beside it was the total number of requests of titanium needed the blacksmith institute needed. He then wondered if he could bring more titanium then register for this task for the second time or third time. Would there be a bonus or something?

The beautiful girl behind the counter then slid over eight small circular objects that had the image of a pickaxe on it. She proceeded to explain that once they pressed on it hard, it would summon a pickaxe, which they would use for the gathering. They stored it on their storage ring and lastly, the mission

information on the symbol of their hands updated. It showed them a list of locations where they could dig the so-called titanium.

"What does savage planet mean?" Emery asked the lady behind the counter, looking over the list of destinations.

"It's a planet that is mainly filled with savage creatures," she replied.

It sounded straightforward, however, Emery felt there were more to it. He tried asking for more information, but it looked like that was all they were going to get. Either he needed to ask other people, an acolyte or a magus perhaps, or maybe once his rank had upgraded, he would have access to more information.

The group looked over the list of level one planets. Thrax was again suggesting to pick the location that had the most dangerous description but they ignored him, and chose the planet that seemed the least dangerous place based on its descriptions.

The beautiful girl behind the counter then said, "If you don't return in 48 hours to submit the material, it means you'll have failed the mission and the task will be given to other acolytes."

They all nodded. It looked like everything had been settled, so the group proceeded to one of the many portals in this location. They stood before the portal and on the side was some kind of cube that was blinking. Zana once more took the lead, entered the data of the location they would be going to.

[Planet 14722]

[Class M planet - savage level 1]

The portal lit with the image of a yellowish planet before them. Zana turned, so did the other two, to Emery's group, gestured at the portal and said, "Let us go."

The three Zaieuo walked on the portal. The other five followed suit. And when Emery placed one foot inside the portal, it felt like it sucked him in, throwing him a bit forward as he landed on an unfamiliar place. Once he regained his senses, he saw that they were in the middle of a wilderness. There were large rocks in the distance; when the wind blew, it carried bits of dust that hit gently their faces, and made them shiver for a moment.

The place they arrived seemed to be in the middle of the night, however, the shadow on the distance quickly lit up like the day was arriving. Emery looked and saw a large spherical shaped planet, getting out of its way for this world's sun to shine on the land. He was stunned to see that planet-like thing, which reminded him of the Earth when Gaia had shown him the vision of its birth.

Turning his head around, he noticed that this place felt heavier to move around and it looked like he wasn't the only one that had the same sentiment. Still, it wasn't that much of a hindrance since they could still move properly, Klea, on the other hand though, looked a little bit struggling. Maybe it was due to her battle power being the lowest among them.

Now that they had gotten their bearings back, Emery moved around and first noticed the portal they had exited from. The portal looked like nothing from the Magus Academy, it was a large structure that

had two spikes pointing upward at the stars beyond. The second thing he noticed were the several small buildings not far from them.

There weren't a lot of people moving about. They walked into a small building that had an image of a mug on its hanging sign. Heading inside, they found out that this was a tavern-like building with about two dozen people inside, drinking and chatting. The patrons were mostly humans, but some looked to be not human. Half-blood humans, similar to Silva, the patrons had their own distinct features. Some looked like fish, some looked like stuff from a nightmare with their disfigured faces, large bodies, more than four limbs, etc. The patrons became silent as they watched the eight people walk on the hall up to the bartender, who seemed to look like a normal human with a large beard.

When they got before the counter though, they were wrong. The bartender was a half-giant, half-human, making them stretch their necks just to speak properly.

The half-giant spoke in a booming voice, "Universe magus acolytes! It's been a while since we've last seen your bunch. Come for a drink!"

Zuna was the first to speak. "No, thank you. We would like some information, instead."

"Information we need," followed up Zaku.

"Need some information we do"

The bearded man behind the counter exclaimed, "Arghh, dumb shit! Stop your nonsense! If you don't want a drink or speak properly, then piss off!"

The bartender turned away from them, as it turned out, it wasn't only them who thought these three from Zaiueo acolytes were weird. Julian actually chuckled seeing the group get shouted at. But that seemed to garner greater reaction from the bartender for Klea stepped forward immediately and said, "I apologize for my rude associate sir of course we will buy a drink. Give us eight of your best in house drinks."

The bartender grunted as he served eight glasses of brownish drink that didn't at all appear appealing. Klea casually threw four white stones and quickly said in a sweet voice, "I believe that good man should be more than enough for the drinks and a spare of your precious time."

"Okay, what do you want to hear?" asked the half-giant. Klea took the lead and proceeded to ask questions, which the man blabbered away, giving away all the information they needed. The best place to find the titanium and what creatures they had to look out for.

"Thank you very much," Klea said, giving a wink to the person. They left the establishment without touching the drink while being stared at by the dozens of remaining patrons.

Emery has known about the spirit stones before, but this is the first time he sees it. Looking at Thrax's blank face, she again explains that the small whitish colour is called the spirit stone. They were widely exchanged in a lot of places, not only the Magus Academy, because of its multitude of usage.

When Julian asked if she had gotten it, however, she smiled mischievously and didn't bother explaining.



Emery then started to wonder where the group would be without Klea. She was smart, beautiful, able to blend in with people naturally, and she was the most powerful among them. Emery figured if they couldn't keep up with her, they would most likely look like Klea's little soldier and fan group.

On this savage planet, there was no mode of transportation such as carriages or even horses. Hence, they ran with caution toward the location given by the half-giant, half-man. They had to be on-guard at all times because even though this was tagged as a level one savage planet by the mission description, they were advised not to explore too deep for this planet wasn't fully explored yet and might have some dangerous creatures, which could end them nevertheless.

After running for more than two hours, not a single one of them was out of breath due to their enhanced battle power. They found the hill exactly where the bartender had mentioned it to be.

On this rock and dust-filled hill, devoid of trees, the titanium stones should be inside the large rocks. As to know which rock had it, they'd have to strike it with the pickaxe.

Before climbing up the hill, they had to decide who would be on guard duty as well as the people striking the rocks. Because according to the bartender, they had to beware of the six-winged creature who liked to prey upon anything that moved on the high ground.

It was finally time to show what they could do.

### **Chapter 129: Skyglazer**

There was a treaded path going up to the hill. And indeed, after a few minutes of trekking, they found dozens of the red six-winged creatures. The group could hear the bald birds' ear-splitting shrieks from a distance as it flew in circles. It was confirmed that they were now in dangerous territories. Luckily, they hadn't been seen by that flock yet.

All eight went to hide behind one of the rocks that gave them cover of the sky. Julian said, "We should probably focus on finding the rocks that have the titanium first, shouldn't we? Once we have enough, we'll do some practice fights with these beasts. What do you all think?"

"Sounds like a good plan," answered Klea.

They start going up the hill further, using the large yellowish rocks to avoid detection. Eventually, they found a huge clump of rocks that were black in most parts but had silvery white substance on it.

"Okay, that should be it," said Julian, double checking the titanium description through the symbol on his hand "That white part should be the titanium, I guess."

The rest nodded as they spread out and stood on the corners of the other rocks, keeping a lookout. Julian summoned the copper-colored token from his storage ring, he pressed on it and poofed out pickaxe on his hand. He started hitting the rock, but his first hit didn't even do anything. It was harder than he thought. Pulling back the pickaxe for more power and holding it with two hands, he struck the big black rock and caused a large clank!

One of the flying creatures seemed to have heard it as Emery saw it turn its head on their location. "One of them is coming!"

The symbol on Emery's hand issued a notification and he read the following:

[Skyglazer]

[Level 3 beast]

[Battle power 30]

Emery remembered that the incoming creature had the same battle power as the angler vine he had fought with Cole and the others in Elder's Respite. Although he could say he was now much stronger than he was before, he decided not to be reckless in dealing with this creature, since there were more nearby.

It was nearing them and finally, Emery could see the reddish six-winged creature better than earlier. It had a worm-like ugly face that was filled with sharp teeth inside its rounded head and mouth. Its claw seemed to shine with extreme sharpness as well as its wings, which was splitting the air as it flapped toward them.

They were getting ready to fight it but before it could even get near, a sharp woosh erupted from behind them and they saw an elongated object thrusting straight into it and pierced the skyglazer right in its ugly rounded face. It fell down with a hard thud and they knew it was dead then and there.

"Nice throw!" praised Klea to Thrax who had thrown the spear. Thrax opened his arm as if he was saying 'give me more praise'.

Julian shook his head, he said, "I hope that was a pila and you have more. It'd be quite stupid if you threw your only weapon, idiotic barbarian."

"Hah, did you think I only have one, pig?" said Thrax, summoning another pila from his storage ring.

"Boys, stop bantering and get to work. We better finish this as soon as we can. I don't like this place," said Klea with a slight disgust looking at the flying worm-head red winged creature in the distance.

"Okay, you guys do that. I'll take care of these creatures. They're nothing to worry about. So, let's get our free contribution point quickly," said Thrax, watching the sky.

Emery and Chumo nodded to each other and also started taking out their little pickaxe. The three Zaiueo decided to stand guard, which they were fine with, since there were still dozens of the skyglazer hanging around.

More and loud clanking resounded in the area.

Klea, Thrax and the three weirdos saw three more skyglazer heading toward them. This time, Klea shouted as a sharp crackling emerged from her fingertips, "My turn!"

[Lightning bolt - Tier 3 spell]

She waved her hand and crackling shot out a bluish and purplish bolt of lighting, searing two of the skyglazers into crisp. With just one spell, two creatures fell from the sky. The remaining ugly beast however managed to dodge by swaying sideways, before it turned around heading toward its flock.

Thrax ran, trying to throw another pila, but the creature had already flown out of his range.

That was when one of the Zaiueons took out a strange weapon from his storage ring. It looked like a spear but it was as big as a club. Emery, Julian and Chumo stopped mining as they stared at the weapons used by the three identical young men.

"Aim! Shoot!" shouted the one in the middle, which was Zuna.

A loud bang shocked the five youths from planet Earth as the tip of the Zaiueons weapons lit up and spewed forth a ball and traveled in the air like Klea's lightning bolt hitting the flying skyglazer down.

"Wow! What kind of weapon is that?" Julian asked as he watched the skygazer crash into one of the large yellowish rocks.

Zidi, the one on the right, answered, "Our world calls it a firearm. It can hit a target with maximum range of maybe twice that we just showed."

"How does it work?" followed up Julian, making his way while with amazed eyes at the weapons.

"Energy stored in a container, makes it shoot. Ion, we call it, is stored in the magazine here," said Zaku, the one on the left, showing them a piece of metal that can be attached and detached on the lower part of the weapon. Knowing we will be sent here again, we have prepared, we did, quite a bit of the battery. Hopefully, enough for the whole three months," Zaku explained.

Because of the loud noise the weapon had made, however, the circling skygazers noticed it and flew headed toward them. The beasts were making nasty shrieking for it was only now they had noticed several members of their species dead on the ground.

There were two worm-headed creatures leading the flight and once they were in range, Thrax had once more thrown another pila that killed one of the creatures, and the three Zaiueons aimed and shot, sending another burst of light killing the second one.

The rest of the six-winged creatures became more enraged as they seemed to flap their wings harder, shrieked louder, and drew nearer to them faster.

The three Zaiueons once more fired their firearms and that was when they noticed they needed to hit a single target two or three times before they could kill the creature. Nevertheless, the three people continued firing their firearms with great speed and power, occasionally stopping to replace the ion container that popped out with steam. With just those three, they had managed to eliminate the flock of skyglazer that had come near them. The weapon's range and simplicity of use really amazed the group of five for they watched them fire that weapon by pulling something with just one finger and then the light bursting out of it.

Emery became interested with the weapon as well and began to wonder if they really were from a lower world like them. If not, then it was probably really like what Rowe from Kalios had said. Emery and his friends' world were truly the lowest of the low worlds. And they needed to catch up as soon as possible.

From one of the carcasses out of dozens that had laid on the ground, Emery noticed a shiny stone glimmering, wicked seemed to burn away a part of the creature's back head.

He went closer to it, checked one more time if the creature was still alive by throwing a rock, and once he confirmed it was dead, he scooped out the shiny stone and said, "Is this... is this a spirit stone?"

"I believe so it is. For a level three creature, sometimes it would drop a spirit stone," said, Zuna, "or so we've heard."

Zaku and Zidi nodded.

Emery inspected it closer, it indeed appeared similar to what Klea had given the half-giant, half-man from earlier.

"The spirit stone is the core energy of the universe. Its usage ranges from powering up artifacts, items, machineries to powering up humans as well as many other things. It's very useful that it is the most used currency for trading, similar to what she had done," said Zuna, no longer holding the firearm weapon.

"Powering humans? What do you mean by that?" asked Emery, still holding up the shining white stone.

Zuna nodded. "One can consume a spirit stone in its raw form. After consumption, it'll increase your spirit force and in some cases battle power. However, doing so people will view you as some kind of barbarian, since it is indeed barbaric. What we have observed so far, we have seen it processed before consumed."

The task was starting to become more interesting with every minute passing. Not only Emery was confident they would be able to finish this gathering mineral task and receive contribution points afterward, but they would be also training and receiving spirit stone as well by eliminating these skyglazers in the process.

### **Chapter 130: Ugly Creature**

The five acolytes took turns in mining while the three acolytes from Zaiueo mostly fought the incoming level 3 ugly creatures. Once they had finished one deposit, which didn't offer a lot of titanium to be extracted, they moved on trying to find more of the large black rock that had spots of silver-colored substance on the hill.

Whenever it wasn't Emery's turn to mine, he watched the three Zaiueons and became even more impressed as time passed by. He was extremely fascinated by their usage of the unique weapon called firearm, which was very useful on its own, but the way they also communicated using hand signals as they took the lead in scouting and eliminating the skyglazers that came their way, making their movements efficient in setting up ambushes. The hand signals appeared to be a universal knowledge in their world.

In addition, another interesting fact was that during one of their searches for more deposits, the three Zaiueons had mentioned they had only met each other in the Magus Academy like how Emery and his friends had met each other. Hence, Emery and his friends thought all of the people in their world looked the same. But if so, then how could they even distinguish a person they knew from someone they didn't? Julian had tried to get an answer from Zuna. Zuna pointed to a specific part of Zidi and Zaku's faces, saying it was their distinguishing feature. However, when the rest of the group looked at the pointed part, they couldn't see anything different even after squinting their eyes to the hardest they could! It was virtually impossible for Emery and the others to identify who was which.

After spending more than three hours on the hill, they had managed to take out more than 300 skyglazers. However, the total collection of titanium from them had only reached 1 ton.

"Only a ton of titanium and a hundred plus spirit stones, the task is actually harder than I thought," said Thrax, stretching out his sore limbs from hitting the hard lump of rock with the pickaxe.

"Well it's not really hard, but it's quite a chore," said Klea on the other side of the crumpled black rock who was sweating all over, making her exotic bronze face glisten.

They wanted to switch places again since everything here had been depleted of the black rocks that had titanium but as they got ready to leave the area, a high pitched wailing resounded from the previous deposit they had finished before this one.

Hiding themselves on the corner of the rock valley, they peeked on the edge and saw that the wail came from the dozen of odd looking creatures that looked like a blob of greenish water with two eyes on the front. It had a gooey texture and moved by spreading out its boneless body on the ground and pulling it back together.

Klea seemed to have shuddered as she said, "I'm starting to hate this place even more. What's that disgusting creature!"

"It looks like that's the other creature we should look out for according to the bartender," said Emery calmly. He checked the symbol on his hand, scanned the new creature and a piece of information appeared.

[Duma]

[Level 5 beast]

[Battle power 50]

"Yes, that's the one," confirmed Emery with a nod. He put away the information and turned to others asking, "Should we go back then?"

From the information, these creatures were scavengers. They had an excellent sense of smell dedicated to sniffing out carcasses and fresh blood, which was their main diet. The group watched as one of the blobs rolled over one of the skyglazers carcass into its semi-transparent body and melted the flesh of the skyglazer within seconds, turning it into bones before spitting it out and moving to the next carcass.

"We should test its power first. See if we can manage to defeat one. Shouldn't trust a stranger that easily, I guess," suggested Zuna, placing a fresh ion battery on the firearm. Zaku and Zidi did the same.

Repositioning themselves behind another large yellowish rock, Zuna, Zaku and Zidi aimed their firearms at a lone duma and then fired simultaneously! Three bursts of light punctured holes at the greenish body of the duma, that however, didn't seem enough to kill it, as expected of a level 5 beast. The three once more fired simultaneously but after dozens of shots, riddling it with holes, the monster was still alive and started to crawl toward them. As it neared, they could see the holes the bursts of lights had made seemed to be filled up with the rest of its greenish texture after a few seconds.

Zuna placed the firearm back in his storage ring. He raised his hand and the wind surrounding them converged onto a ball on the top of his palm, he then threw it at the monster and the wind transformed into a sickle-like shape. The tier 3 spell [Wind blade] went right in the middle of the duma and the lone

duma became two pieces, slicing the monster in half! They had thought it was dead, however, its two pieces suddenly twitched and it crawled toward each other and became whole again!

Seeing that the duma was still alive, Klea issued her strongest spell and shot out the [Lightning bolt] with loud crackling. The duma stopped and issued a high pitched wailing, it seemed to have been hurt but after it finished shivering and the lighting dissipated, the blob continued crawling over the next skyglazer carcass as if it hadn't suffered any sort of damage.

They watched as it once again swallowed another carcass and turned it into another pile of bones. It moved slowly as the information had mentioned and indeed could be dangerous if they were caught into its body. It being a level 5 beast was not for show as the two spells it had just taken were tier 3 spells from rank 6 acolytes.

This, however, seemed to rile up Thrax who had been wanting to do some more fighting on top of the three hundred skyglazers they had eliminated. He summoned this time a long spear and raised it above his head. Thrax then used for the first time a tier 2 fire spell [Fire infusion], which enhanced the weapon's attack, burning the whole spear.

He ran with a loud battlecry toward the blob, ignoring Julian's warning to stop what he was doing. As he neared, the blob seemed to have finally noticed Thrax's presence and it wailed with its high pitched sound. Thrax almost stumbled but continued moving forward and thrust the burning spear into the insides of the lone duma.

The creature wiggled like how it had reacted when Klea had struck it with her lightning bolt. However, after a second, the creature again gave out another high pitch wailed, making Thrax drop to his knee.

It turned its attention to the stunned Thrax and spread out its gooey body, seemingly wanting to swallow Thrax. Everyone had seen how it could melt any flesh into bones in an instant. Thrax was in a dangerous situation. But then, without anyone realizing it. Chumo appeared behind Thrax and snatched him just before the duma landed on where Thrax had been kneeling stunned. Chumo ran back to the group with Thrax in tow.

The duma seemed to have lost interest since it didn't chase and proceeded to make its way slowly toward the nearest carcass. From this exchange, they concluded that attacks with elemental damage such as fire or lightning were able to hurt it. Wind, however, was an exception.

Not far from the lone duma were still more blobs of the gooey creature and even further than that, a dozen more seemed to have been attracted to the carcasses of the skyglazers. It looked like they would have to find another spot with lesser carcasses or wait it up until the creatures had finished feeding off the carcasses.

For now, the group decided to go down the hill to discuss and regroup. After having spent at least three hours alternating between mining and fighting, with the rate at which they were going, they needed to come up with a more efficient strategy in battling and gathering the material to finish it within 48 hours.

The group found a hidden spot at the foot of the hill wherein it provided cover against the burning sun above. Staying on an open location of a savage planet where beasts could be lurking around the corner wasn't a good idea after all. Once they had made sure the place was secure, they checked how many spirit stones and titanium they had managed to gather so far.

There were one-hundred-twenty spirit stones in total, dividing it into eight people, it was fifteen stones each person. As for the titanium, it was also shared equally among them. They put down their numbers and it looked like some had managed to mine more than others.

From the total 1.5 ton they stored collectively on their rings, apparently one-third of them was gathered by Emery. And just like, with a unanimous vote, Emery had been assigned as the dedicated miner.