

Earths GMagus 241

Chapter 241: ReMatch

Both Gerri's palms burned in vivid purple. In the previous game, Emery had had a taste of the purple flames power and it was enough to break through the [Granite Skin] spell, leaving him with only one choice: to be cautious and keep dodging, so the flames would not hit him.

"I see, you're already rank 7, Emery? I'm not going to go easy on you."

Emery replied with a smirk "I don't ever remember you going easy on me... Didn't I manage to take you down to the point you had to lie flat on the ground last time?"

"Haha! Nah, it was all just my trick. If that Lodos didn't come, you would go down in one strike after being fooled by my incredible acting!"

"..."

Emery had a retort in mind, but he decided to swallow it and shake his head. It felt like, in this academy, he had enough of shameless acolyte encounters for the whole year.

"Okay, if our smart talk session is done, I'll start!"

Gerri raised his hand and cast [Fireball], causing the arena to become hotter with each sphere of flames he conjured. However, unlike before, this time each fireball was adorned with purple flames dancing in the air. It was enough of a warning for Emery to not drop his guard – Gerri was taking the fight seriously and the spell he was using was a far cry from the usual fireball spells.

In order to counter the attacks, Emery decided to cast the ever-reliable darkness spell.

[Enfeeble Blade]

Blades made of pure darkness appeared one by one in the air. Emery raised his hand and pointed forward, letting the flames and the blade-shaped shadows clash against each other. Whenever a ball of flame met a shadow blade, a small explosion shook the arena.

Bamm!

A blade bigger than the previous clashed with a larger fireball, sending a deafening shockwave mixed with dust everywhere. When the dust settled, Emery saw his shadow blade had completely disintegrated, while the purple fireball veered off-course.

It was to be expected that a tier 3 spell [Enfeeble Blade] would lose against such a powerful fire spell, but Emery's spell still managed to serve its purpose. The purple fireball exploded in the arena ground three meters away from Emery.

Gerri's spell won in strength, but witnessing Emery's tier 3 spell affect his attack shocked him.

"What the fuck! With just an increase of one rank, why would your silly shadow spell be able to do that!" Gerri shouted in disbelief, still unable to believe what he saw. But, he recovered quickly and continued casting his spells no-stop.

[Fireball]

[Fireball]

[Fireball]

Barrages of purple fireballs flew towards Emery. They looked like a swarm of purple meteors, making the air feel scorched and sticky with heat. Emery casted [Enfeeble Blade] several times, conjuring a swarm of shadow blades pointing upward to welcome the fireballs.

Once again, the two forces clashed. The resulting explosions were fiercer this time and parts of the arena blackened due to the relentless flames.

Emery finally saw his chance. He abandoned the passive approach of waiting for Gerri to attack and decided to start going on the offensive.

[Shadow Binding Root]

The ground cracked, spawning three shadow roots from the ground that proceeded to move towards Gerri's direction.

Gerri clenched his flaming fists and decided to dodge the shadow spell by dashing closer to Emery, ready to strike.

Realizing Gerri was aiming for a close combat, Emery touched his ring and took out the Reunite Blade given to him by Magus Xion.

It was time for a close range fight!

[Immortal Gate Stage 3]

[Battle power increased by 8]

[Current battle power: 53]

The increase in battle power brought an increase in both strength, speed and defense. The three physical stats would prove an invaluable asset during a close combat fight.

Emery was ready. He used [Heroic Slash] to intercept Gerri's fast movement.

It was clear that both of them possessed superb martial art skills. Without breaking a sweat, Gerri used his quick footwork and sidestepped out of the sword slash before countering with his own strike.

[Flaming Palm]

Emery had suffered a hit from that technique once, he knew first-hand the flame would burn his body from inside, if he got hit. He decided to cast [Blink], reappear behind Gerri, following the spell with another sword swing to the side.

Gerri raised his burning palm to block the sword and the force of the strike threw him a few steps away.

"Not bad, not bad at all, Emery! I see you can now cast your blink spell almost instantly... I have to admit, I am rather impressed."

"You're not so bad either, Gerri. Your movements are unpredictable and your palm could block a strike from my sword."

"Nah, I'm telling you... Your sword slash really hurts. Probably this is my cue to learn weapon-related skills next. Haha!"

Gerri kept on talking, while Emery did not waste time. He tried to use the lowered momentum of the battle to let the three shadow roots he cast to slowly approach Gerri from behind. With a flick of his wrist, the three shadow roots pounced towards Gerri from three sides.

Gerri was ill-prepared for the strike. While he ended up being able to dodge the attack, his footwork was a bit sloppier and he landed after stumbling a little bit.

"Damn, Emery, you are shameless! You purposefully made me talk so you could attack me from behind, didn't you?"

"..."

Emery stared at Gerri in disbelief. Wasn't he the one who initiated a conversation? Did this Gerri hit his head too hard in one of the battles or something?

Gerri kept on dodging the three shadow roots, while Emery used the chance to cast more of them.

[Shadow Root Binding]

Two more shadow roots appeared, merged with the three from before, The roots assaulted Gerri from all directions, leaving him no longer able to dodge. He resorted to flying to the air with his fire spells in order to escape the roots.

"!!!"

With all the five that slithering on the ground, He did not expect to see another pair of shadow roots already waiting on top of him.

In an instant, Gerri was entangled in mid air by seven shadow roots, each tying him up with an iron grip.

"Argh! Dammit, I hate fighting with your type the most, Emery! Stop fighting with your brain!"

"..."

"I caught you already, Gerri. It'd be best for you to give up."

"Hahaha! Now, that's quite the funny joke. Of course not."

Gerri's body started to emit an orange glow, before releasing a surge of power all around his body.

[Ignite – Tier 4 Fire Element]

All the shadow roots binding him instantly disintegrated, leaving Gerri free to fly around in the air. Not wanting to be caught unaware again, Gerri cast another spell [Fire Aura]

It was a tier 3 spell capable of buffing the caster's speed and strength. As his title implied, Gerri's version created a wreath of purple flame shrouding his body.

"No more playing around, Emery."

"..."

"Isn't that what you already said before?"

Chapter 242: Hot Battle

At the moment, not only Gerri's two palms were on fire, but his whole body was covered by purple blazing flames. Even though Emery had stood far from Gerri, who was currently the very definition of a fire hazard, Emery could clearly feel the searing heat emanating from the guy.

Without realizing Emery's facial expression, Gerri continued using his fire elemental spells to create a propelling force around his body, making him able to float in the air.

As he looked at Gerri's current state, Emery almost thought the man had turned into some kind of fire elemental creature. Heck, Emery would really think Gerri was indeed one, if he didn't know the figure in front of him was Gerri.

"Emery! I guarantee you will lose against me! The fight will not last more than 10 minutes!"

Upon hearing that, Emery quickly schooled his expression, as he prepared himself. Ignoring the scorching temperature, Emery said, "I'm ready!"

Right as Emery finished saying that, Gerri swiftly zoomed towards him just like a large-sized fireball. It was clear Gerri intended to fight Emery in close range combat.

[Darkness Infusion]

Emery's tier 3 sword quickly glowed, as it was covered by a black-colored substance. Meanwhile, his whole body turned grayish, as [Granite Skin] was ready to tank any attack Gerri threw at him.

[Heroic Slash]

[Flaming Punch]

This time no tricks were involved, the familiar crescent slash was immediately released by Emery, while Gerri greeted the slash with the embodiment of a massive blazing fist. The two different, yet deadly attacks clashed against each other, causing a loud explosion at the point of impact.

Emery was being pushed half a dozen steps back by the howling winds resulting from the explosion. Emery expected Gerri to be the same as him, being pushed back by the aftereffect. Alas, it didn't turn out that way.

The moment Emery had only stabilized himself, he realized there was only a few meters separating the two of them. Hence, he hurriedly raised his sword and took a defensive stance.

As he arrived before Emery, Gerri began to launch his moves.

Gerri chose to combine the improved speed he got thanks to the [Fire Aura] spell with his martial art techniques. The result of the combination was a series of attacks that could be unleashed from the

front, left and right. The attacks were coming towards Emery like a wave of raging torrent, causing him to be overwhelmed for a moment.

Clank! Clank! Clank!

Emery was barely able to parry the first two attacks with his sword, as his body was being pushed back, sliding on the ground because of the momentum. From the clash earlier, Emery was now sure Gerri had a higher battle power than him.

When Emery realized this fact, he was extremely shocked. It seemed his 53 battle power still was not enough to be compared with the flaming figure before him.

While still moving around Emery and launching attacks wildly from all sides, Gerri, apparently, still had the time and leisure to strike a question to Emery.

"Why are you still not using your transformation ability, Emery?!"

As Emery was getting overwhelmed, he suddenly noticed something that made his expression turn grave. It was clear Gerri's speed was gradually increasing and Emery was sure he would not be able to withstand his assaults.

Noticing Emery still hadn't resorted to his transformation, Gerri shouted, "Let me see the real Savage Acolyte!!!"

BAM!!!

Gerry's flaming punch managed to hit Emery's stomach, causing him to lose his breath for a second and be thrown several meters away. The most irritating thing about Gerri's [Flaming Punch] was its after effect, where it would dwell inside the body for a substantial amount of seconds, causing great pain.

Emery spat out drops of blood, as the pain wrecked through his body. He surely needed a new tactic, or he wouldn't have the hope to win the fight. However, Emery would not resort to his transformation.

Emery obviously knew his stage one [Fey Transformation] would be more than enough to outspeed Gerri. But no, not yet. Emery wished to prove himself, using only all the training he had gone through the past 10 days. This was also a way to see his growth. Moreover, Emery's main goal was to impress the grand magus with his combat and spells' prowess.

Even so, Emery would not let himself be bullied by Gerri for a second longer. Hence, he decided to make his own move.

[Shadow Mist]

[Shadow Binding Root]

With [Shadow Mist], Gerri's vision was hindered and Emery managed to give himself some breathing space, as his mirror images started to move. While Gerri was busy with his mirror images, dark roots rapidly emerged from the ground and slithered towards Gerri, disrupting his movement.

Therefore, not only did Gerri need to guess which of the images in the mist was the real one, he also needed to take care of the slithering roots below him, that were trying to catch his legs.

Gerri's movements were greatly impeded when one of the roots managed to tie his leg and bound his body.

Even though Gerri was able to free himself by burning the roots with his flame, with several roots working together to bind him, Gerri was at least stopped for a second. That was when Emery launched his offensive.

[Blink]

Emery's favorite spell was casted, as he appeared right behind the struggling Gerri. A bright luster appeared on Emery's sword before he sent another [Heroic Slash] to Gerri.

Before the slash met Gerri's exposed back, he unexpectedly managed to free himself at the last second using the spell [Ignite], before proceeding to dodge the slash. Immediately after, Gerri sent his signature purple fireball towards Emery, while Emery swiftly teleported away the moment he saw the purple flame fusing into a ball.

The two of them were fighting as if it was a game of cat and mouse. As the faster one wasn't necessarily able to catch the prey. Even when Gerri was able to get close to the real Emery, Emery would just blinked away. And when Emery managed to land a strike, the result was miniscule.

The battle was going on like this for a while, until at one moment both of them stopped and looked at each other, as they took a breather from such a fast-paced battle.

As expected, Gerri opened his mouth first, "Amazing, Emery! You can cast multiple spells at the same time and with the right timing! You... have improved a lot!" Gerri said, as the [Fire Aura] spell was gone from his body.

"So, will you give up now?" Emery asked.

"Oh, hell no!" Gerri replied. He then proceeded to raise both his hands up in the air, "I prepared this spell for those privileged acolytes... But I guess you are worthy of it, Emery! After all, this spell is perfect for an acolyte such as you.."

Emery shook his head and said, "You talk too much, Gerri."

Large amounts of blazing flames began to materialize above Gerri's hands, before they coalesced into a wave. The sight reminded Emery of the tier 3 spell [Fire Wave]. However, this particular spell appeared a lot more grand and intense, as the wave moved in accordance with the movements made by Gerri's hands.

In an instant, the wave was surging forward, towards Emery's direction. But instead of heading directly at him, the wave was flowing and rotating around Emery, covering him from every direction.

Realizing all around him had been covered with scorching flames, Emery knew he was in deep trouble. It appeared Gerri was able to find out that Emery's [Blink] spell weakness: it was unable to teleport him to the place he could not see.

Hence, Emery currently felt like he was in the eye of a flame tornado, the temperature was so intense Emery could feel his [Granite Skin] began to weaken. As if the situation wasn't bad enough, the rotating flame wave began to inch closer to him.

At this moment, Emery knew he would definitely be screwed if he didn't do anything.

Chapter 243: Burned

Loud cheering filled the audience area, all coming from those paying attention to Arena 7. Blazing flames and overpowering darkness clashed in a battle of wills, roaring flames radiating heat all around the arena, while shrinking around an acolyte trapped in the middle. Meanwhile, another acolyte kept on creating complicated gestures in the air with his hands in order to direct the spell.

"Hey, Emery! I think you should just give up!" Gerri shouted from outside the flames.

"Nope, not happening!" Emery answered.

"If you stay any longer, you might become today's dinner... Roasted Emery, with charred skin and ashen bones... Urp, now that certainly is a disturbing image..." Gerri's face turned pale and he scrunched up his expression in disgust.

"Damn, Gerri! You really have quite the disturbing mind!" Emery shouted, trying to keep his expression straight.

"Come on, my friend! Just give up! I don't want you to die!" Gerri shouted.

"... Wait, since when are we friends?" Emery asked.

"Dammit, Emery, you hurt my feelings! Remember, I saved your sorry ass from the madman Lodos back in the virtual game! You don't think of me as a friend already?"

"Okay, my friend. Can you release me from this flame prison, then? It's so hot."

Gerri laughed. "How about you just give up? I'll treat you to some cold drinks afterwards, I promise."

"Haha!" Emery laughed at Gerri. "Honestly, that is a very tempting offer, but nope, I need to win this game no matter what!"

"Suit yourself then." Gerri shrugged and continued casting. "Don't come crying to me later on."

The flaming sphere kept on shrinking, encasing Emery in a tighter prison following the ticking of the clock. The increased defense he obtained from [Granite Skin] was losing its effect and Emery could feel the flames licking his skin directly now. He felt as if he was being slowly cooked.

He needed to think of a way out, very fast. Even though all the heat had started to make him dizzy, Emery was still able to think. He sensed that the flaming sphere was less dangerous, as he did not use Gerri's purple flames. There might be a reason why Gerri did not choose to burn his body to a crisp right away.

From the way the flames shrank and how they moved far too slowly, Emery concluded the main strength of the spell did not lie in its trapping purpose, but in the damage over time resulting from the slow, but sure increase of the heat. Those who were able to realize this fact would know the only way to escape was to walk out.

It might seem counterintuitive to walk out of the spell, since he would get burned the moment he walked through the flaming wall. However, the damage he would sustain over time if he kept on staying here would be much worse. It would be better to run out straight away than to waste his time thinking.

There was no other way and no other reason to delay other than a futile attempt of keeping himself safe. Emery decided to pull all the energy from his spirit core into another [Granite Skin] spell, before jumping out of the shrinking sphere.

Upon seeing the trapped Emery jump out from the flame prison, the audience cheered. However, Emery was not out of the woods yet. The audience could see that, even though he managed to escape, some of the flames from the sphere were stuck on his body and started to wreath his clammy skin in uncomfortable flames.

"Wrong choice, Emery! I told you, you can't get away from my spell that easily!"

Gerri kept on casting the spell, and the flames scattered to follow Emery from different directions, always sticking close to him like shadows, even though he moved quickly in order to avoid them.

No matter where he went, the flames would persistently follow and stick close to him.

Emery was able to tell that his [Granite Skin] was reaching its limit. In addition, when Gerri decided to unleash all his strength, the orange flames following him started to glow purple. Gerri had just increased the strength of his spell to the limit.

Within moments, Emery's defensive spell crumbled down. The feeling of the purple flames' full might made Emery tumble and kneel down.

"Give up, Emery! You have no chance to win!"

"No!"

Emery briefly entertained the thought of using his fey transformation. If anything, perhaps the increase of physical would give a good solution for his current problems.

Emery pushed through the flame, even though wounds had started appearing on his skin. He channeled all his energy towards his dark core, trying to maintain his [Granite Skin] spell even if, deep down, he knew his attempts would be futile. As if answering his plea, all of a sudden Emery could feel an unusual reaction from his darkness core. The stage four darkness core seemed to expand and reach out, brimming with power to defend against the relentless assault of the flames. In an instant, he felt a new connection form between darkness, earth and another element.

The element he had been practicing the last 10 days. The green spirit, plant element.

Emery was able to let the elements successfully converge together. Their convergence carried a burst of energy coursing through his flesh and bones, reinforcing it with a layer of magical energy and a dark green, shining cover similar to that of a beautiful crystal.

[Skin hardness increased!]

[Elemental resistance increased!]

[You have learned a new spell!]

[Jade Skin]

[Spell categorized as tier 4]

Even though his body was still ablaze with violet flames, the dark green crystal that formed all around his body somehow made the fire less painful than before. Emery gathered his strength and stood up.

"What?! No fucking way! What did you do?!" Gerri shouted in disbelief.

Emery gritted his teeth and decided to ignore the violet fire still burning atop his body and picked up his fallen sword.

He was about to dash forward and attempt to attack Gerri once more. But right as he took his stance, the flames all over his body started to fade before dying off in a puff of smoke.

Emery looked at Gerri and saw the acolyte raising both his hands.

"Okay, okay! I give up!" Gerri said playfully, grinning while still raising his hands.

"..."

"Don't be too surprised ok.. I told you before, my limit is ten minutes. Now, I'm out of gas already, so... I give up. This is your win, friend."

Right as the words of surrender left Gerri's mouth, a notification appeared in Emery's mind.

[Congratulations! You won the second match!]

Emery stared at the notification, still a bit startled his opponent would just give up like that. He was unable to dwell on it too much. Right as the notification disappeared, Gerri threw something at him, hitting his face.

It was a piece of robe.

"Hey, Emery, I know you're happy, but seriously, it's inappropriate to go around naked in a public place like this."

Chapter 244: Optimistic

Emery tried his best to keep his expression straight as he wore the robe Gerri threw at him. Emery also did not forget to glare at Gerri, as he was the reason his clothes disappeared. After all, the purple flame temperature was frighteningly high. It was no wonder that nothing was left behind after Emery 'bathed' in it.

After making sure every inch of his body that shouldn't be seen was covered, Emery released a relaxed breath, as he had finally won the difficult battle.

Emery snatched the wins in his fights, making it two for two and increasing his chance to enter the privileged class. Even though the second fight was kind of arduous, it was still a pretty smooth first day for Emery.

Moreover, not only did Emery win both matches, he even managed to learn a new spell in the middle of a precarious situation earlier. A strong tier 4 defensive spell, a combined spell between darkness, earth and plant element: [Jade Skin].

Even though the intense fight ultimately ended with an anticlimactic closure, with one of the acolytes giving up, Emery's unexpected spell caused strong whispers amidst the audience. The deep-green skin that gave off a bright luster brought a wave of discussion among the spectators.

[Jade Skin] was a rare spell that would require three elements as its base requirement, let alone the difficulty to cast it. The prowess it gave was such that the spell could be considered as a unique spell, giving considerable impression to the audience.

If only they knew Emery just managed to learn the spell in the middle of the fight, in the midst of a dangerous situation, where it was do or die, the audience would definitely be more amazed and excited.

Within the VIP box, where countless distinguished and esteemed figures were, more people began to inquire about Emery, as they were curious about what Emery had shown in the battle earlier.

"Ooh, wasn't he one of the first places in the second game?"

"Impressive."

"That's the lower world's one. Yes."

At the moment, one of the figures in the VIP box, who at first didn't have any interest in the fights, began to pay attention to Emery. The figure was a thin-looking grand magus from Institute of Plant, Grand Magus Yvere.

The grand magus was seated near his old friend, the headmaster of Magus Academy, Altus Drayden.

"Altus... That kid is from a lower world. It looks like your effort with the academy policies against those factions have finally paid off."

Instead of smiling when he heard his unimaginable effort had finally bore fruit, the headmaster sighed deeply before saying, "I am afraid the kid will have to face more challenges from now on..."

"Of course, he will. But with the right guidance from the academy, such a kid will shine brighter."

Altus Dreyden let out another sigh, "We have seen the same result for thousands of years Yvere, none of the lower realm talents ever really make it. He needs more than talent, he needs guidance and support from other people, a strong resolve and a lot of luck. If not, it will be like a beggar given a treasure. It might only give trouble to him and to the people around him"

This time Grand Magus Yvere was the one who let out a sigh. "I kinda miss my old optimistic friend."

"We are not young anymore Yvere. There are things we can't control"

With him finishing his second and last match for today, Emery was free to leave, as the next two fights would be held tomorrow. Because he was basically allowed to roam around, Emery decided to walk towards the other arenas. The one he went to was where Klea was fighting.

Unfortunately, by the time he reached the arena, Klea had finished her fight and the result was a loss for her. It quickly ruined the happiness Emery felt for his victory. Even so, Emery tried his best to cheer Klea, who definitely wasn't happy.

"You still have another chance tomorrow, Klea. What's important is that you are fine."

Klea turned her head and saw Emery beside her. She then hung her shoulder low, "I am sure everyone is disappointed."

"I believe they won't... I am not." Emery said with a smile.

Klea looked at Emery and saw his reassuring smile, "Thank you, Emery. You always say the nicest things."

Before Emery could reply anything, both of them were attracted by the sudden and loud cheers that came from the audience. Something big must have happened to incite such a reaction.

When they looked around the eight arenas, excluding the one who was already empty, as the fight there had already ended, Emery and Klea noticed something that made their faces change.

Both Emery and Klea were shocked to see an acolyte being brutally beaten by his opponent. Despite the apparent helplessness the acolyte had shown, his opponent seemed to not understand mercy, as he kept continuously beating the poor acolyte. And to make matters worse, the opponent only attacked the acolyte in non-vital parts.

It was not a fight anymore, it was torture.

The opponent, a certain acolyte with a spiky hair was cutting the limbs apart while laughing maniacally. From the expression the spiky-haired acolyte had shown, it was clear that he thought that the fight was some kind of a game.

A group of medical acolytes quickly went towards the arena and brought the poor acolyte to the medical center. Meanwhile, the spiky-haired acolyte was still laughing madly at the arena, admiring his work.

Seeing the acolyte, made Emery frown. It was actually not possible to expect all the people in the academy to have the right moral compass. After all, it was impossible not to have a single bad seed among thousands of seeds. In fact, being able to cast magic and standing on the top of others tended to change people. Emery clenched his fist as he stared at the acolyte. Deep inside, he wished he would get the chance to meet the guy later in the game.

After the last round of fights was finished, it marked the end of the first day of the third game. The first day of the final game of Magus Games was concluded with another spectacular display of fireworks in the sky.

After the two rounds of matches, out of the 550 acolytes participating in the third game, 178 acolytes had already been removed for losing all of their matches. Hence, there were only 382 acolytes left and they would once again compete against each other the next day.

At evening on the same day, Emery and his friends gathered at Lord Izta's palace.

Although it was unfortunate Klea lost one time, the group was still optimists for the second day match. Especially looking at Emery's performance today.

"Emery, you were actually very fortunate you didn't match against an acolyte from the privileged class. However, you will eventually have to face one. Ideally you will meet them in the last match, but if that is not the case... You just have to do your best." Magus Xion said.

Magus Xion also gave Emery his opinion regarding today's fights, where he could do better and what he shouldn't do again. He specifically also guided Emery with his newfound spell. After a little bit of practice, Emery decided to take a good rest. After all, there were still fights awaiting him the next day.

The next morning, Emery came to the arena again and realized the place had become more rowdy than the first day. When he looked towards the seats area, he was greeted by a sea of ??people that filled the entire place as far as his eyes could see.

Moreover, the arena had been changed. Instead of the previous eight small arenas, this time, the matches would only be divided in 4 larger arenas.

Emery entered one of the platforms at the corner, as he waited for the third round of the matches to begin. He thought about what Magus Xion said yesterday, where he hoped he wouldn't meet any privileged class' acolytes. It somehow didn't feel right for him. Emery unconsciously hoped to fight the strong acolytes, after all.

Moments later, the names of the 4 pairs that would fight were displayed on the screens. Much to Emery's surprise, his name appeared on the screen.

Seeing the information of his opponent made Emery feel a little down as he saw the word 'Elite Class' instead of 'Privileged Class' as his opponent. But when he saw the name and picture of the acolyte, his heart stopped for a moment.

His third match will be against Zack, the illustrious dragon boy.

Chapter 245: Jackpot

As Emery saw the name of his opponent, he could not help but feel he had finally pulled the Jackpot. He would be facing what others said was the strongest acolytes. The boy who was bestowed with Dragon Bloodline, Zach Talon.

From the information Emery got from Silva, he found out there had not been that many half-bloods, who had Dragon Bloodline for a while. Silva believed Zach's abilities were not at the same level with all the other acolytes, even when compared to those privileged class acolytes.

In short, he was ultimately the strongest acolyte of his year and the only reason the boy was not in the privileged class was mainly because of his bloodline and the bias brought by it.

Since Emery was going to fight against the famous dragon boy, he could tell that hundreds of thousands of spectators' eyes did not look to another arena. The situation was as if there was only one arena that existed at the moment. For this round, everyone was focused on their match, without exception.

The crowd cheered loudly, because they were going to have a good match at the start of the second day. It was like the moment when someone knew they would be served with the most exceptional appetizer.

Emery immediately walked towards the arena, where a young man with brown hair and muscular body was standing. As he walked up to the arena, Emery didn't forget to observe the young man standing across him.

Looking at the gait and demeanor the young man exuded, Emery was truly impressed. There was only one word to describe the figure in front of him.

Confident.

On the other hand, Emery's opponent, Zach, was staring at him without any kind of emotion. Unexpectedly, the dragon boy opened his mouth and said something to Emery.

"You wish to fight?"

A sentence which would be laughed upon when uttered by anyone else, but when Zach was the one who said that, it strangely appeared appropriate.

Emery felt a kind of pressure when he heard those words, as if there was a formless mountain weighing down on his back. However, there was no way for Emery to choose defeat without a fight.

"Yes. Let's fight!"

Still without any emotions, Zach replied, "Good." He then took out a large sword twice the size of a normal sword before stabbing it in the ground in front of him. "Let me see what you got."

Zach didn't move, he just stood still with his hands on the sword stuck in the ground in front of him. Even so, he was still exuding such a powerful aura, Emery felt as if he was currently standing in front of a massive sierra.

He obviously decided to give the first move to Emery. Therefore, Emery would not miss his opportunity and immediately made his move.

Emery was sure his tier 3 spell [Enfeeble Blade] would not bring any effect to him. Hence, he would try to fight against Zach using his swords. Emery immediately took out his tier 3 Reunite Sword and casted [Dark Infusion] on the sword, as the familiar black-colored substances swiftly encompassed the blade of the sword.

The combination of tier 3 sword and the spell would result in at least twofold the power that a single [Enfeeble Blade] exhibited.

Next, Emery activated his battle art technique [Immortal Gate - Stage 3]. Faint layer of energy rapidly engulfed Emery's entire body, as his battle power was increasing.

The reason Emery was so confident to fight in close combat, his source of certainty, was because of the new spell. Emery concentrated upon the three elements within him as he casted his spell [Jade Skin].

In an instant, Emery's whole body was gleaming with deep-green crystals.

With all his self enhancement preparations completed, Emery casted [Shadow Mist] as the last touch in the plan. Right away, the arena swiftly shrouded with darkish mist, as mirror images of Emery began to appear in it.

Immediately after, Emery dashed towards Zach together with his five illusionary figures. Unexpectedly, Zach still didn't budge, as he watched Emery do all of this.

Six identical figures from different directions began to swing their swords, as they struck the still standing Zach.

If it was any normal acolyte, Emery was sure they would not be able to differentiate which one was the real him and could only take his slash. Unfortunately, this was not the case right now.

swish

CLANK!

Zach raised his hand and managed to block the slash delivered by the real Emery. However, the thing that shocked Emery to his core was that Zach took the deadly swing, that could easily decapitate someone, with his bare hand calmly.

Even though surprised, Emery didn't let the shock last long, as he swiftly launched another attack. However, before Emery could move on his second attack, Zach used his other free hand to grab the huge sword stuck on the ground with speed before swinging it towards Emery.

The sequence of actions was so fast Emery didn't even have the chance to cast his [Blink] spell.

BAMMMM!!!

An explosive sound resounded through the Grand Hall, as Zach used the flat side of the sword to smash at Emery. As a result, Emery was thrown dozens of meters away and coughed a little blood upon landing.

Emery felt his head spun a little the moment the powerful smash with unimaginable strength struck his body. If it wasn't because of the [Jade Skin] spell, which covered his entire body, he may have been knocked unconscious.

As he lay there on the ground, Emery's thought ran quickly, as he could not believe the guy could that easily catch his real body amidst the mirror images. Moreover, the strength and speed Zach showed were causing Emery an extreme headache.

Not giving up, Emery decided to add the [Shadow Root Binding] spell to the action.

5 shadow roots and 5 shadow figures were swirling all around Zach, attacking the dragon acolyte altogether. Zach clearly was not willing to let the roots have any chance to catch him, as he held his sword and began slashing any root coming towards him.

Meanwhile, Emery was hiding himself behind all the things happening in the arena, as he waited for the opportunity to send a decisive strike. He concentrated his mind on the [Dark Infusion] spell on the sword, as he prepared to teleport over and launched a deadly sneak attack.

Alas, when Emery was about to blink over, Zack suddenly defied all expectation and decided to ignore all the shadow figures, dashing towards his direction at breakneck speed.

"!!!"

The moment Emery blinked his eyes, a huge sword already descending right at him.

swish

BAM!

A loud explosion occurred, as the sword hit the ground, creating a small crater in the arena. Fortunately, Emery managed to cast [Blink] at the last moment. Hence, he was pretty much unharmed.

However, even though he had already teleported away and dodged the attack, Emery continued to retreat several meters away from Zack, while an incredulous expression appeared on his face. Emery couldn't believe how fast Zack moved, if he was just one second slower, he would have probably been split in half.

Zack slowly turned his body around as he faced Emery, while bringing his sword up to his shoulder. From the look on his face, Emery believed Zack was only warming up and was still not serious yet.

"I will tell you this... your illusion won't work on me."

The moment he heard that, Emery realized there was a golden glow on Zack's eyes. It probably some sort of skill that made him see through illusions or track his whereabouts.

Extraordinary speed, exceptional strength and a mighty body that could block Emery's strongest sword attack using just one hand. This guy was definitely a monster.

With his two most reliable spells: [Shadow Mist] and [Shadow Root Binding] practically useless against Zack, Emery had no other option other than using his transformation.

This was not the time to worry about what was ideal to show to the audiences and the grand magus. If he didn't transform right now, there won't be anything to show at all.

Emery made his decision and immediately carried it out.

[Fey Transformation - First Stage]

Chapter 246: Give Up

Emery looked up to the sky and roared, signaling his transformation had begun. Like a caterpillar breaking free of its cocoon, the green crystal-like layer from [Jade Skin] started to crack before crumbling and falling off only to be replaced with greyish fur. For this battle, Emery decided to use his first stage Fey Transformation.

Out of all the changes, the most obvious ones could be seen on his four limbs, where muscles have formed and increased his strength, together with grey fur and sharp claws.

[Battle Power increased by 10 points!]

[Current Battle Power: 63]

When he saw Emery's transformation, the emotionless Zach's gaze lit up slightly in interest. He glanced at Emery from top to bottom and asked.

"Ah, wolf bloodline, aren't you?"

Emery did not answer, but he nodded and reached for his storage ring to pull out another sword. The tier 2 sword he had received as reward from the dwarf in Golden City.

Emery remembered how he fought against Orycon, the powerful combat-oriented acolyte who wielded a massive broadsword. Emery decided to adopt a similar tactic with his two swords, hoping he would be able to match Zach's strength.

Realizing both [Shadow Mist] and [Shadow Root Binding] would be futile against his opponent, He decided to focus on conserving his strength to cast [Dark Infusion] instead, cloaking his blade in a shroud of dark energy before he disappeared in the blink of an eye.

Similar to a lightning bolt, Emery was able to dash forward too fast for the eye to follow, appearing and disappearing from view as he increased his speed. His two swords started to glow, marking the use of the battle art skill [Heroic Slash].

He swung both of his swords simultaneously, and both were met with a downward slash from the claymore.

BAMMMMM!

The collision between the three weapons sent dust flying around and created a sharp noise, piercing everyone's ears. For an instant, Emery felt his hands becoming numb and he almost released his swords. But he decided to harden his grip and his resolve, before gritting his teeth and turning around with a side step. Once again, he swung both his swords to the left.

The increase of speed from his transformation, along with the increased battle power, made Emery far more deadly in physical combat.

BAMMMMM!

However, it was still not enough. Even with all the power Emery placed into each swing, Zach still managed to block the attacks. Emery had learned to not let that stop him from his first attempt, so he used his increased speed to swing his sword again and attack from a different side as a feint, before swinging down and using [Heroic Slash] with both his swords.

BAMMMMM!

Once again, it was blocked. Even with his Fey Transformation, Zach's reaction speed was just too fast and Emery was almost unable to see his movements. Was the speed bestowed by the first stage of his wolf form not enough for him to surpass Zach?

That half a second moment of doubt was enough for the sword master to attempt a counterattack from above.

Even though Emery's transformation bestowed him with higher speed and battle power, he felt that his spellcasting became a little bit slower. He attempted to cast [Blink] to dodge the attack, but he realized

the attack was far too fast for him to finish casting, so he decided to raise both his swords in the air to block the swing of the broadsword.

BAMMMMM!

Emery succeeded in blocking it with the strength of both of his arms. However, he could still feel the force of the swing rattle down his bones, a sure sign the swing was made with intent to kill.

The fast-paced sword battle was able to attract as much attention as the flashy spell battles before it. Unlike before, this time most of the cheers were directed at Zach, the famous dragon boy.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the coin, Emery was standing in a very delicate situation. He held both his swords above his head with all his strength in an attempt to resist the downward force from Zach's heavy broadsword. Even without the help of numbers, Emery could tell his current battle power was not enough to overpower his opponent.

AAAAARGH!

Emery shouted with all his might, releasing all the willpower he had. But, the result was not in his favor. The tier two swords he was holding started to crack, before it finally broke apart.

Crack!

In the end, the sword finally broke and Zach's massive blade was able to cut him deep on his shoulder. Blood dripped from his wound and splattered onto the surface of the blade. With a trembling right arm, Emery held up the sharp end of the blade as much as he could, preventing the blade from cutting him any deeper.

Emery released the handle of the sword he was still holding and decided to push up the huge broadsword with both of his hands. If he let the blade cut his shoulders any deeper, he would be in even worse trouble.

In contrast to Emery's struggle, Zach simply looked at him with a disinterested gaze, while still keeping the force behind his sword swings.

"Just give up.! You know you can't win."

Emery bit his bottom lip, realizing Zach was right in many ways. Both of his palms were bleeding and his bleeding shoulders started trembling the more power Zach put into the strike. However, if he did nothing, he would be cut into half.

Unfortunately, his current condition did not allow him to cast any spells. He was only able to delay the inevitable. His energy continued to dwindle and his real choice was either forestall his loss or admit it right in this moment.

"Should I really give up?"

Chapter 247: Roar of Pain

Delay the inevitable or admit his loss.

This was such a critical choice for Emery.

This 'battle' had really shown him the strength of the prodigy, Zach. Even though Emery poured all his efforts and tried his best in the situation, Zach was able to overpower everything he did without breaking a sweat.

What made Emery seethe with concern was the fact Emery was sure Zach still kept the power of his bloodline transformation hidden.

For a moment there, Emery seriously considered giving up on the match. After all he only needed to win 4 out of the 5 fights. Even if he threw this match, he would still have a chance to continue.

"Urghhh!"

Emery spat out a glob of blood near his feet, his body showing he could not take the battle of strength much longer.

He was pinned down with such power to the point he had to kneel while holding the blade with both his arms. The position really bothered him, as it reminded him of how helpless he was as a scared little boy way back before he joined the Magus Academy. With the blood coming from his hands, his shoulders and as his energy dwindled, it was clear all of his choices would lead to him losing.

No...

Not yet!

'I will not let it end here!'

Emery realized the only way to have a chance at winning was by using the second stage of his transformation.

With time against him, Emery decided to take the chance and search deep within himself, looking for his dormant knowledge that would let him trigger the second transformation.

[Fey Transformation – Second Stage]

Emery let out a roar of pain, as greyish fur slowly covered his body. The transformation made the grip of his mind over his body slip little by little, making him only barely conscious enough to stand, yet gave him a burst of power enough to push Zach back a few steps.

However, right before Emery really lost his mind, he saw how Zach still seemed unfazed.

The last thing he remembered was Zach's scathing remark right before everything went dark.

"Amateur... that's a mistake..."

Zach's eyes suddenly emitted a golden glow and brilliant red scales started to appear from both his hands, crawling up to his shoulders.

The sight of Zach still looking as unperturbed as ever in front of a three meters grey wolf made the audience cheer in admiration.

Emery was no longer conscious and the wolf was only driven by the instinct to attack everything in front of him without stopping. The wolf extended its claws and pounced so fast, even the dust around its feet

started flying the moment it dashed forward, but Zach merely took one step aside and dodged the attack perfectly.

Right as the wolf stopped and looked around in slight confusion, Zach grabbed his broadsword with both hands and muttered a spell. A slight glow covered the blade before disappearing.

Again, Zach took his battle stance and swung his sword, fire started to spread from the tip of the blade down to the handle. With such speed Zach took another swing and instantly chopped off Emery's damaged right shoulder and caused the wolf arm to fly several meters away.

Blood splattered around the arena and with each disoriented step the wolf took, blood started to gush from the open wound. Driven by rage and no higher thought, the wolf roared and pounced, trying to attack Zach with its remaining arm, but all of the creature attack was simply dodge easily.

When Zach saw an opening, he did not waste any time at all. He dashed at the creature, swung his sword and stabbed the wolf right in its chest.

Splatttt!!

The tip of the blade pierced out from the other side of the wolf's body, marking Emery's loss.

The pierced grey creature slowly returned from his wolf form to his previous human self. Bathed in blood missing one arm, Emery laid down defeated on the arena grounds.

Zach gave a sigh, put his sword back into the storage ring and walked out of the arena without a care in the world.

[The third match is over]

Right as the winner was announced, the crowds cheered again even louder than before. Some whistled and some pointed at Zach, while talking about him in a mixture of awe and fear.

While the crowds drown in their fun, Emery was quickly brought away from the arena by the medical acolytes and into the treatment room. Even though Emery has yet to regain consciousness, he was hauled into a pod to allow the medical acolytes to treat him better.

Just outside the treatment room, a group of people asked the medical acolytes for permission to enter, but they were ignored and told to leave. They were Emery's three friends.

"Let us in!"

"Please, at least tell us how he is doing right now! Will he be okay?"

It was obvious the medical acolytes made a pointed attempt at ignoring them and telling them their presence was not welcomed without actually saying anything. Seemingly attracted by the commotion, a man wearing magus robes walked towards them causing everyone to stop what they were doing.

"How is he doing right now?"

"We are still in the process of treating him, Magus Xion." The medical acolyte answered politely.

"Then, tell me, how bad is his current condition?"

"Loss of blood, piercing wound to the chest and a missing hand. I do not know if he was fortunate or his opponent purposefully did this, but the stab missed the heart and all vital organs. He will be fine, the loss of blood can be treated easily and the hand can be regrown in time. Don't worry too much, Magus."

"I see. Good to know, then." Magus Xion nodded. Before he left, he realized he forgot to ask the most important question.

"How long will the treatment take, then? Would he be able to join the next match?"

Chapter 248: Treatment

Emery awakened in darkness and found his body movement seemed limited. He could vaguely tell he was in some sort of treatment.

While letting the mysterious thing treat him, he reflected on what just happened.

It was the third time Emery had used the second stage transformation of his Fey Bloodline. Even though this time he was still not in control, Emery managed to get bits and pieces of what happened, unlike the previous occurrences where he didn't remember anything.

At first, Emery thought remembering what he did during his transformation would be a relieving matter for him, as he would at least be aware of what had happened.

Apparently, it was not the case.

Remembering doing something he had no control on was disturbing, extremely so. Especially this time, where Emery went in a frenzy and still lost the fight.

Zack Talon, the Dragon Bloodline prodigy, was too strong for him.

Moreover, what bothered him the most at the moment was the last sentence uttered by Zack, where he said that he was an amateur.

As Emery tried to analyze and understand what he meant by amateur, he landed to a conclusion it might have meant there were some secrets about the transformation ability he didn't know.

Hence, it should be Emery's utmost priority to learn more about this matter. All for the sake of further growth.

While his vision was still covered by the pitch-black darkness, a radiant light suddenly appeared out of nowhere, catching his wandering attention.

It looked like a door in front of him was opened and Emery could see several figures rushing through the door towards his direction. When they came close enough to let Emery see them clearly, he realized they were his three friends and his master, Magus Xion.

"You are finally awake, Emery! How do you feel? Is there any discomfort?" Julian asked, as he took a closer look at the lying Emery.

Emery tried to move his body, but apparently, the bed he was on now was kind of holding him back.

Noticing Emery wanted to get up, Magus Xion quickly said, "Don't move too much lest the machine do its job, Emery. You are still in treatment."

Looking at his body, coupled with the resurging memory, Emery quickly realized he had lost his right hand... again.

First, it was by granny and this time by the dragon boy.

Magus Xion saw Emery exhaling a heavy sigh, when he looked at his lost hand. Patting softly to make sure not to hurt Emery, Magus Xion said, "Don't worry too much about your hand, Emery. This facility can cure it within hours. You only need to stay put and let the facility do the job."

Emery immediately jolted awake when he heard the time, "Master, How long did I pass out? What about my fourth match?"

Upon hearing Emery's inquiry, Magus Xion and the others immediately fell silent. Emery turned anxious as he saw the expression on their faces and the eerie silence.

"Guys... Tell me, what about my fourth match?"

When Emery was about to force himself to rise, Thrax finally could not hold it any longer. With an annoyed face, he spoke, "Fuck! Just let Emery decide! This is his matter, not ours!"

Realizing the others didn't say anything, Thrax looked at Emery and said, "Emery, your fourth match has just been called up and they will only give you 10 minutes or you will be disqualified."

Emery was stunned when he heard this, "Then, what are you waiting for, guys?! Let me out of this thing!" Emery said, as he began struggling.

This time, Julian approached Emery and said, "You are in no condition to fight, Emery. Moreover, the opponent chosen for you is... troublesome"

"What?! What do you mean with troublesome? Is he a privileged class acolyte?"

Julian quickly shook his head. "No, he is an elite acolyte."

"Then why? Why aren't you guys letting me?"

"Look at yourself emery... your opponent this time... we are worried about you..."

Emery understood his friends meant well for him, but he couldn't just give up here. If he gave up, he would lose the chance to enter the privileged class. After all, he would be eliminated from the game. So, with the limited time he had, Emery quickly opted for another option as he looked at his master.

"What do you think, master? Will it be a guaranteed loss to participate in the match?"

Magus Xion looked back at Emery with a serious expression on his face, "Your condition is pretty bad, Emery. You will be in a very disadvantageous position and this is not any virtual game"

"Master, you know that was not my question. Please, do you think I won't stand a chance at all?"

Magus Xion was silent for a moment.

"Please master, let me do it."

The magus didn't answer Emery's question and slowly moved to operate the panel beside Emery. A few seconds later, the thing Emery was on released him as he could see several needles detaching from his body.

Emery took a step and almost fell to the ground, but he quickly balanced himself and stood on his two feet.

"You're freaking crazy, Emery!" Thrax shouted, showing both of his thumbs up, "Awesome crazy!"

"You go and kick that acolyte ass, Emery." Chumo cheered, as he knew there was no stopping Emery. Julian could only shake his head, unable to convince Emery otherwise, but supporting him as well.

The well wishes coming from his three friends reminded Emery he was not fighting for himself but also for them.

Magus Xion grabbed something on the table and handed it over to Emery.

"Here, Emery. You left this in the arena."

In Magus Xion's hand was the sword Emery dropped in the previous fight, the one which his master gave to him.

"Thank you, master. I will not disappoint you." Emery said. He then turned to look at his friends, "And you guys too. I will definitely win!"

Magus Xion let out a smile as he saw Emery, "Just make sure you won't return in an even worse condition."

"Yes. master. Even if I did, I will make sure my opponent will be in even worse condition"

Emery then swiftly went out of the treatment room and walked to the Grand Hall, as he slowly walked up to the arena. Emery's unexpected arrival caused a series of discussions among the spectators.

When he reached the arena, Emery was startled as he faced his opponent. He recognized the acolyte. It was the spiky-haired acolyte he saw yesterday,

However, instead of being afraid, Emery's spirit actually burned even more fiercely as he eyed the acolyte.

Before the fight began, Emery checked his status through the symbol on his palm. His attention was attracted to new information stated right at his bloodline.

[Fey Bloodline - Weakened State]

The next information below shocked him. He truly could not wait to curse his fate.

[Weakened Status]

[Bloodline Transformation unavailable]

[Battle power was decreased by 10 points]

'Damn... What the f... apparently one arm still isn't bad enough... I am screwed.'

Chapter 249: Little Creatures

Seeing the information stated in the notification, Emery was getting even more confused. The fact there was a weakened state added even more questions to his already clueless state. At the moment, Emery finally understood he didn't know anything substantial about his bloodline. Not even one bit.

Even though Emery had so many answerless questions inside his mind, he quickly threw them all to the back of his mind, as he had to win the fight with whatever he got right now. To at least have a chance to do so, Emery needed to throw anything unrelated to the fight away and focus on what he could actually do to win.

Emery walked up to the arena where the spiky-haired acolyte was already waiting for him. The moment the audience saw the sight of Emery without one of his limbs, they instantly became wild, as suppressed and unsuppressed chatters ensued through the arena seatings.

This time, Emery could clearly tell the cheers from the audience were much different than before. Countless shouts with mocking and ridiculing tones were launched towards the arena where Emery was.

"Hahaha, this one is so funny!"

"Heii!! What are you doing participating in the fight like that!"

"Get out!! You are ruining the game!"

"Just give up already!"

Just like what Silva had just said to him before, those spectators only cared about good entertainment and he should not be concerned with them at all.

One moment, they would vigorously cheer for your win, like a manic fan; one second later, they would immediately shove you down to the gutter, while you were disadvantaged. Emery's current situation was exactly like that because he had suffered a loss.

Emery knew not the whole audience was like that. Nevertheless, Emery was glad he never really cared about what these people thought about him. After all, they were just fleeting passersby in his life.

Unfortunately though, most of them were probably right. An injured person like him probably had no place in the competition. But it still didn't stop Emery from giving his best.

Moments later, the match finally started. From the information Emery read. His opponent was called Molt. Truly a befitting name for a nasty figure like him.

The spiky-haired acolyte's clothing looked a little bit different than the one others wore. Because Emery had seen his fight yesterday, he knew the reason why.

Molt was an acolyte of the Crafting Path just like him. However, while Emery had been accepted in the Apothecary Path, his opponent was part of another path, the Beast Taming Path.

Currently, the spiky-haired acolyte was smirking at Emery before he let out an unrestrained laugh, "HAHAHAHA, I'm so lucky! I got a free win. Hehehehe..."

Molt swiftly raised both of his hands and a few dozens of black ant-like creatures the size of a palm came out from the young acolyte's sleeves. The ant-like creatures immediately swarmed towards the standing Emery.

"Go get him, my Durantz!"

Seeing the incoming swarm, Emery quickly pulled out his sword and casted [Dark Infusion] on it. He also did not forget to use his [Immortal Gate] technique. Emery planned to give the creatures a spar with his swordplay.

Dozens of ants crawling were coming at him and Emery quickly sent a slash toward the nearest one.

Clank!!

Emery could see he landed the strike straight on the target, but he only managed to scratch its carapace and slightly hurt the creature. In short, his strength was not enough to kill it in one attack.

Looking at the dozens of similar creatures coming at him, Emery's expression turned grave.

Emery swiftly checked to find out the reason. Because of his weakened state, his current battle power was only 43, and that was after it had been enhanced by [Immortal Gate] technique. Moreover, the ants were stronger than Emery previously thought.

As he was being cornered and saw the ants almost reaching him, Emery quickly teleported away to the distance. Before he could let out a sigh of release, Emery was dumbstruck, as he looked at the place he was before.

The ants, who lost their target, appeared to have a great sense of reaction, as they were able to quickly change their course and headed towards Emery's new location. They were rushing towards him like a raging tidal wave.

On the other hand, Molt appeared to release more of his pets. At first glance, the creatures he released looked similar to the ants crawling on the arena. However, they could fly. It was bad news for Emery.

At the moment, there were around 30 or so palm-sized creatures chasing after Emery.

When Emery was cornered one more time, he proceeded to do his usual action, casting [Blink]. But instead of teleporting away, this time Emery teleported closer to Molt as his figure reappeared on the arena that the ants had passed.

Emery's intention was to defeat the tamer, as he knew he didn't have the necessary strength to decimate those creatures. After all, he only needed to defeat his opponent to win the match.

Unfortunately, right after Emery appeared close to the spiky-haired acolyte, Molt released more flying creatures that quickly sped towards him. The swarm immediately moved to the trajectory of the slash Emery launched at Molt and blocked it.

Hence, Emery was left in an extremely dire situation, as there were even more creatures chasing after him. He had tried to make use of [Shadow Mist], but apparently, those creatures could not be fooled by the mirror images. Emery assumed they must have another way to seek their prey besides their vision.

Emery then opted to his next option, [Shadow Root Binding]. Fortunately, it managed to do its job as the roots hindered the ants. Hence, Emery could only depend on the roots to help him. He also occasionally casted [Mudwall] to create a blockade, stopping the crawling ants closing over him.

Emery once again casted [Blink], chasing after the retreating Molt. Even though a dozen of those flying ants were coming at him, Emery still dashed towards the spiky-haired acolyte.

[Heroic Slash]

Plack!!

Loud crisp sound resounded as Emery saw his skill didn't manage to injure Molt. It appeared that Molt casted the tier 3 plant element spell [Oak Body] at the last second. Thus, Emery only managed to chip some bit of the sturdy wood covering Molt's body.

"No, no, no. You are not going to defeat me." Molt scoffed as he quickly retreated.

Emery was about to give chase again. Alas, he was late to do so as dozens of flying ants were already hovering upon and biting him. The strength behind their bite was stronger than Emery estimated.

[Protective Vest - Tier 2]

[Protective Barrier 72/100]

Just one round of bite was able to deplete a quarter of the barrier energy. Emery quickly casted [Jade Skin] to make sure the barrier was not destroyed right away. With the addition of [Jade Skin], Emery was able to reduce the damage he received into a third of its initial.

However, it still didn't change the fact there were too many of them and with Emery forced to fight with only one hand, he was quickly getting overwhelmed.

A few minutes later, after Emery played a cat and mouse game with Molt, or to be more precise, Molt's creatures, Emery was in a bad situation. Real bad.

[Protective Barrier 0/100]

Emery's extra defense was already gone and more of those little creatures were crawling at him.

To make matters worse, Emery felt his body nearly reaching its limit as well, he was not fully recovered from the last fight after all.

'I'm screwed.'

Chapter 250: Ants

After the protective barrier provided by the vest was completely destroyed, Emery could only depend on his [Jade Skin] spell to withstand the attacks of those crawling and flying creatures.

Fortunately, the crystal green layer of rocks that covered most of his body was strong enough to hold the creatures' jaws, preventing them from biting a piece of Emery's flesh off.

At first, Emery's strategy, or should he say 'thought', was to close up on the beast tamer and incapacitate him, before the creatures could break through his defenses. In short, Emery planned to subdue the commander.

Emery of course expected the process would have some alterations, as the things happening during the fight could change to anything. But he never expected that the matter would be so difficult.

Knowing Emery's signature spell was [Blink], Molt had held and prepared most of his flying ants to protect his close surroundings. Therefore, whenever Emery got close to him, instead of landing on an advantageous position, Emery was actually in a more dangerous situation.

"Let's see how long you can hold under my creatures!!" Molt shouted, flashing a nasty smirk. "My precious boys, attack! Don't give him any mercy!!"

As if the creatures understood their master, they rapidly increased their speed, as they went at Emery like a crashing wave. Dozens of crawlers and flyers rushed towards Emery at great speed.

Clank! Clank!

Emery kept getting cornered, as his attacks were not strong enough to cut through the creatures' rock hard carapaces.

Even though the ant-like creatures were not fast enough to completely obliterate him, Emery was currently fighting inside an arena with limited space. Moreover, there were just too many of them, they could have filled a third of the arena if they spreaded apart.

With every passing minute, Emery became more and more disadvantaged. He knew that if the situation didn't change, he would be defeated eventually.

Alas, Emery's fighting choices were limited, as he only had one arm that could be used to fight. It was fortunate Emery had some prior experience fighting with his left hand using the sword. However, with his only arm holding a sword, Emery was unable to cast any spell that needed the use of one free hand.

At the moment, Emery was truly in a pickle. Most of the spells in his repertoire were useless and he didn't have enough strength to kill those annoying creatures. And, as if the situation wasn't worse enough, Emery began to feel the wound on his chest, the one caused by Zach, started acting up again.

Emery had to find a way out, a solution, and he needed to find it fast!

'Use your brain, Emery...! There must be a way...!' Emery thought inwardly, as he avoided another wave of attacks with [Blink].

Suddenly, Emery remembered something buried deep within his mind, some facts about animals he acquired during his childhood life in the woods. Even though the creatures before him were different from the ones in his memory, Emery bet they should have the same case.

He observed carefully and finally believed he had found the way to beat Molt. If his plan succeeded, Emery would leave the arena with a win in his pocket.

Now that the plan was formed, Emery just needed to make sure he had the capability to pull it off.

Making up his mind, Emery immediately proceeded with his plan.

This time, Emery teleported further away from Molt and the creatures, to be more precise, to the area located almost at the corner of the arena.

Seeing the place where Emery teleported over, Molt shouted, "Where do you think you can run?!! Hahaha!"

Emery swiftly stored the sword into his ring and knelt down to the ground, causing confused reaction from the audience. Ignoring them, Emery proceeded to take out a bottle. Inside it, a bluish paste could be seen; [Strength Paste - Tier 2] Emery quickly spread it all over his legs. As for his arms, he could only pour it altogether.

Noticing Emery's actions, Molt frowned, "What are you doing? Huh?! My Durantz, quickly kill him now!!"

Emery continued dodging the creatures around, as he waited for the paste to take effect. Moments later, he finally felt his two legs and arm starting to warm up due to the paste's effect.

[Battle power increased by 4 points]

[Current battle power : 47]

Previously, Emery felt his body was at his limit, as his speed had decreased quite a bit. Luckily, it was apparent the bit of boost given by the paste earned Emery the extra speed he needed to dodge the incoming creatures.

With his sword stored in the ring and his hand free, Emery began to proceed towards the next step of the plan. He casted his long-range attack spell, [Enfeeble Blade].

Clank! Clank!

Familiar sounds resounded in the air. The spells were able to knock the creatures they hit, but they were still not strong enough to end the creatures' lives. Realizing he would not be getting nowhere if this kept up, Emery finally decided to take out the most potent weapon from his arsenal, a spell he recently learnt.

[Dark Matter]

As the spirit energy inside his body churned and materialized darkish energy on top of his left hand, Emery could feel his already painful chest became even more painful. However, Emery gritted his teeth, as he focused his attention on the spell, ignoring the excruciating pain wrecking over his body. Emery understood that, if he failed this attempt, he would most probably lose the fight.

While his only arm held onto the pitch-black sphere, Emery proceeded to cast [Blink]. But instead of heading directly at Molt, Emery randomly teleported over the arena, doing this continuously. The ants who saw where Emery was gone swiftly followed him, causing them to be misdirected and split apart.

When Molt realized what Emery wanted to do, it was already too late, as his creatures already spreaded out apart over the arena.

The moment the opportunity presented before Emery's eyes, he swiftly took action. Emery casted [Blink], appearing right outside the swarm of flying ants surrounding Molt and threw the baleful sphere towards them.

Molt could only stare, as he saw the sphere landing on the swarm.

BOOM!!!

The explosion caused by the sphere knocked the creatures and broke their tight formation, leaving Molt right in the open. Finally, the opportunity to finish Molt arose.

Emery knew he had no time to cast another [Dark Matter]. So, he decided to use another method he had thought of.

A bottle with green-colored fluid inside it rapidly flew through the air and landed on Molt in that very second.

[Acid Potion - Tier 2]

Splash!

The bottle broke and the green liquid splashed over Molt, quickly burning the acolyte's clothes. Molt started screaming in pain, as his skin was corroded by the acid.

Emery knew his acid potion was not enough to defeat Molt. His main purpose was to burn Molt's clothes and force the appearance of another ant-like creature he was sure was hiding beneath it.

In the end, Emery's plan paid off, as his vision was greeted by the emergence of a new ant-like creature. At first glance, this particular one only looked like the larger version of the flying ant, but it had golden stripes on its back.

It was the ant queen.