

Earths GMagus 291

Chapter 291: Information

In an instant, a flash of regret crossed Cedric's expression. Just like Emery, he was a poor artisan with a poor background, without the backing of a rich old family like many of the acolytes out there. There was no way he had 100,000 spirit stones laying around.

Emery himself knew this and laughed, showing Cedric he was just asking as a joke. While the mood had lightened, Emery decided to ask him about something else.

"That aside... Do you know where I can find items that are out of stock in the academy hub?"

"You're looking for a rare item then? Well, I'm sure Golden City has access to more items than even the academy. You know, being one of the biggest trading cities in the universe and all..."

For this matter, Cedric brought Emery to a place they had previously visited.

[Golden City -? Magus Guild]

Emery walked down the stairs along with Cedric to meet a familiar guy sitting behind his desk. He was currently busy with a big book and a quill on his side and occasionally, the horned, red-skinned man glanced at a stack of paper next to him, before writing its contents in the book.

"So, do you remember him? Believe me, he is the most knowledgeable person you can meet in Golden City!" Cedric pulled Emery closer to the man and pointed at him. In response, the horned man scrunched his eyebrows in annoyance.

"Seriously, Cedric, you again?! I know you have nothing better to do, but not everyone else has that privilege, you know?" Aeon put down his quill and glared at Cedric. At that moment, he saw Emery was standing next to Cedric.

"How are you, senior Aeon?" Emery smiled and asked.

"Ah, hello Emery! I'm good, thank you." Aeon smiled "Oh, I saw your fight in that Magus Games. Gotta say it was fantastic! You have no idea how much joy I felt when you knocked that smug golden noble to the dirt!"

"Do you see now, Emery? You have a lot of fans!" Cedric laughed.

"Indeed! Unfortunately, It appears I only have you as my fan! Stop bothering me!" Aeon smirked and pointed out.

They talked about things for a while, until Emery finally decided to tell them what he was looking for. He talked to Aeon about the void crystal, but as he was about to explain what it was for, they had already offered to help. It seemed they were sincerely on his side.

Emery was relieved that he didn't need the flimsy excuse he prepared beforehand.

Aeon looked to the left and right, ensuring no one was listening to them, and whispered close to Emery's ear.

"Hey, I know a place..."

"Yes, yes! I like the sound of this already!" Cedric exclaimed, loud enough for some people around them to look in their direction.

"What the fuck!? Cedric, shut up!" Aeon clicked his tongue and whispered.

Aeon talked about a place that was known for selling items that were not easily found. It was a semi-legal place, sort of similar to a universe-scale black market, which was the reason why Aeon tried to keep his knowledge of it under wraps.

Emery was about to shoot down the idea, citing that he had no spirit stones to offer, even if the item he needed ended up being there. However, Aeon insisted they should check the place first and find out more about the item. They could worry about the money later.

Everyone agreed to come, and Aeon told them to wait until his shift was over.

Emery and Cedric nodded before heading out to the front, where all the visitors gathered. Cedric ordered some cold drinks for the two of them, and they spent the time talking about various matters.

Emery talked to Cedric about the apothecary exams, along with his questions of what the next exam could entail.

Cedric told Emery the third exam would be more straightforward than the previous two.

"What do you mean?" Emery asked.

"Well, the exam could be very easy or very hard, it depends on your luck." Cedric answered.

The third rank exam would require the acolytes to create an original potion. In order to pass, they would usually need to create a Tier 2 potion with at least a level 3 originality score, or a Tier 3 potion with a level 2 originality score.

"This is why this could be really easy or hard depending on how lucky you are." Cedric explained. "They allow you to submit recipes beforehand, and if you have such a thing, you can come to the exam afterwards just to receive your reward."

Emery thought of his cleansing potion, the one he dedicated quite some time to master. Even with all his efforts, that potion was merely considered a rank 2 potion with the level 2 originality score.

Emery thought a little bit more about the exams and asked. "Senior, if they allow you to submit recipes you made before, can't people just cheat by submitting their family recipes or something similar?"

"That is also why I said the exam could either be very easy or very hard." Cedric said. "Yes, you are allowed to do that, and some acolytes have done that in the past. But, even though you have a recipe prepared, you still need to be able to concoct it... besides, not all families are willing to share their valuable recipes for something like this, right?"

Emery nodded, finally understanding what Cedric was talking about. He started to think about what he could prepare, when he remembered the acid potion he made that was still half-done. His acid potion

was a tier 3, and if he managed to score well in the originality aspect, he would have the advantage of early preparation.

Before Emery got the chance to talk about his idea, Aeon had already finished his shift.

"You both ready now?"

"Yes. Let's go."

Aeon, Emery, and Cedric walked together towards a portal gate swirling hidden from the crowded city. The portal gate was stationed in a dark corner, unnoticed by most passersby.

When they arrived at the place, it was pitch-black.

"Is it night here? Should we come back another time?"

"No Emery, this is the planet's condition, 360 days a year of total darkness, with no moons and no stars in its proximity."

Aeon quickly took out a light torch, lit it with a blast of a fire spell, and said. "Ah, don't stray too far from the light, there are creatures lurking in the shadows."

"What planet is this?" Emery looked around and asked. The inability to see anything made him a little bit anxious.

"Welcome to Furia, Emery." Aeon answered.

Chapter 292: Furia

Kkkwwwookkk!!

Emery could hear creatures shrieking all around, even from the sky. From the sound of something flapping across the air, he could guess they were probably the kind of creature that had wings.

Aeon, who was more knowledgeable on the matter, knew exactly what kind of creatures they were, "That's the bioraptors. They are very nasty creatures. Not only they can fly, they are also very hard to kill. Luckily, their weakness is light as they are very sensitive to it."

"Hence, we will be fine as long as we are inside this light."

"Aeon, how do you know this place?!"

"Being a Magus Guild attendant, I get to hear lots of weird stuff from people. So yeah... If you ask me how do I know... I guess, being a nice guy?" Replied Aeon with a smile.

Emery followed the two of them for a few minutes. From the ground he stepped on, he could tell the planet's terrain was similar to an arid desert. This guess was further enhanced by the dryness he could feel from the air in this place.

They continued to walk until Aeon finally led them to a door of a unique contrast. From a distance, it looked like a huge tube that was standing in the middle of nowhere.

When Aeon touched the door, it quickly opened and its inside were immediately lit by a light source, allowing the trio to see the interior. It was a spacious empty room that could easily fill a dozen people.

Emery revealed an interested expression as they walked past the door and the entirety of the room was bared open to him. The door, then, swiftly closed and he could feel the tube started shaking. From the sensation he felt, which was familiar to when he rode that rectangular machine at the Apothecary Institute, Emery guessed the tube was going down.

Before he could ask what was the thing they were in, Aeon beat him, "The surface of the Furia Planet is swarmed by monsters. Hence, everything going on in this planet happens underground. And this is one of the many entry points spread across the planet."

"Entry? Entry to what?" asked Emery.

Alas, before Aeon could explain more, just a few seconds after the tube began to go down, Emery's attention was suddenly caught by something. Through the glass, he could see a massive cave filled with rows of buildings. A city that was getting closer and closer.

Emery was so shocked to see a city built underground that his mouth went wide open.

"Welcome to the Underground City of Furia."

Emery was mesmerized by the sight of the city until he suddenly realized something odd. If the city was built beneath the ground, where did the light come from? He looked around and noticed something that could be the answer.

The massive cave was still somehow dark, which obstructed the visibility a little bit, however, Emery could see that there was some kind of glowing rock embedded in the walls and ceiling of the cave, making the place light up.

Before the tube they were in reached the ground, Aeon opened his storage ring and gave the other two a mask.

"Why a mask?" Emery asked subconsciously.

Without explaining, Aeon beckoned the doubtful Emery to wear it. Meanwhile, Cedric already wore his. "Yes. Just wear it and you will see."

When the tube hit the ground and the door once again opened, Emery was welcomed by the sight of hundreds of people, all wearing different masks. But then, he noticed there were some people who did not wear one.

Those people were the one wearing black armor, with no hair seen on their heads. Moreover, Emery realized all of those people were bald, no matter if they were male or female. From their gait, they seemed to be the guards of this place.

"Let's go. This way," Looking at how decisive Aeon was, it looked like he knew the way around this place.

They walked through the crowd of people, towards a dome-like building. The trio was blocked by the guard-like people Emery saw earlier. Aeon then showed some kind of identity certificate to the black-armored guard before he let the three of them inside.

Inside, Emery could see it was similar to the Hub, a large circular room with many counter tables. Currently, the place was filled with many people, all wearing masks.

Emery found the spectacle to be quite strange, but he did not comment further on this. When he casted his gaze over to the counter tables, he could see the attendants were women with colorful skin, such as purple, pink, green and so on. Exotic, that was the thought that appeared in his mind.

"My bronze tag can only allow me to get to this first level. But here should be enough for your business, Emery."

The trio then approached one of the available counters, with a blue-skinned attendant.

"Visitor, what can I do for you today?"

Aeon explained that everything in here was very similar to that of Magus Hub. It had its own taskmaster and shop, but the difference was located at its job range. This place gave some of the weirdest and shadiest jobs in the universe.

[Taskmaster - Bronze Job]

Recruiting guards for a delivery to Planet #19643 - 10.000 credits

Burglar was needed for Dragon Cave of Vinar - 20.000 credits

Exterminating Troll Camps seen in the area Entrance #367 - 15.000 credits

"Credits are the same as spirit stones, they are something that is used to be exchanged here."

The reason why this place was the favorite for those who were trying to earn some items was its complete anonymity. The black market of Furia never asked and never required its customer's identity. However, the rate of the job would normally be 30 percent more expensive than the price at the Universal Market.

When Emery heard this, he finally realized why everyone wore a mask. They wanted to hide their identity.

Next, Emery quickly opened up the [Shop], which quickly showed a panel similar to the Hub.

"Can I help you with anything, sir? We have special items that you might be interested in." said the female attendant, pouring out recommendation after recommendation while Emery was browsing.

Upon hearing that, Emery was interested, as he asked the attendant to show him the list.

[Basilisk Egg - 25.000 credits]

[Intrepid-Class Spaceship - 150.000]

...

All those items were fascinating and alluring, but Emery only had one that he wanted in mind. He kept scrolling through the list until he found it.

[Void Crystal - 90.000 credits]

Below it, there was a brief introduction of the item.

[Crystal containing the primordial power of space]

"Dammit! It's so expensive!" Emery cursed inwardly. He could only cry in silence as he looked at the exaggerating amount of credits he would need to buy this crystal. If this crystal was included, Emery would need close to 200.000 spirit stones to bring everything he wanted back to Earth.

Emery, Cedric and Aeon continued to browse around for a while. However, as Emery had almost zero spirit stones in his pocket, seeing the rows of big numbers and comparing them to what he currently had, he just got depressed.

But Emery quickly picked himself up. Even though he currently did not have the capital to buy the Void Crystal, at least he now knew where to find it.

While Emery was going through his roller coaster of emotions, Cedric was excited to browse through the list of apothecary ingredients that were rare to find outside.

When they were all done, Aeon brought the two back to the surface and the group then returned to Golden City.

Emery first thought about continuing his practice in the stone origin room. But with such a low gain of spirit force and his dire need of spirit stones, he decided to return to the Apothecary Institute.

He recalled that Master Grom said there would be remuneration if he helped at the Institute as an assistant.

As he walked back together with Cedric, Emery asked the amount he would get.

"On average, working in the institute can get you 200 to 500 spirit stones per day. But what Master Grom said before is not wrong. If you can create a good, original product, you will definitely get a lot of money."

Listening to that, Emery was fired up. As a result, he spent his next two days assisting in the apothecary institutes.

It was a very good experience for him, it's the first time Emery ever learned the 'right' way to prepare and concoct potions. He also used this time to search for a good recipe that could help him for his third exam.

At the end of the second day, he still had no clue of what recipe to work on, but at least he got his two days' remuneration. He received 700 spirit stones and now he has a total of 1065 spirit stones in his pocket.

"Just 199.000 spirit stones to go.. how hard can it be? Haha," Emery smiled wryly trying to cheer himself up.

At the end of the second day, Emery received a message from his master Xion

[Emery come to see me first thing tomorrow, I need you to see someone]

Emery was supposed to meet Bob the frog tomorrow, but surely his master was his main priority

Chapter 293: Factions

Next morning, Emery immediately made his way to Magus Xion's residence. As the magus had been helping him a lot throughout his journey, he always felt gratitude and excitement when he met the esteemed man. Especially now that he had a lot of things on his plate.

When he arrived at his destination, Emery could see another figure sitting next to his master, talking about something. The blonde man was wearing all white clothes that caught his attention at first glance.

Noticing Emery's arrival, Magus Xion beckoned him to come closer, "You are here, Emery. Come, let me introduce you to this gentleman here. He is Urix, a magus instructor from the Institution of Light."

Emery placed one hand on his chest and did a slight bow to the magus as a sign of respect. After that, he straightened his body and looked at Magus Xion silently, waiting for the magus to speak.

"See, Urix? You can see yourself! The kid is really respectful toward the elders. You definitely will not regret this."

Annoyed by Magus Xion's constant bragging, Urix waved his hand and said, "Yes, yes! I already lost. So don't put more salt on my wound, alright?"

Satisfied with the reaction Urix gave him, Magus Xion stopped his teasing and gestured to Emery, "Hahaha, of course. Right. Emery, come here. Sit with us."

Emery was confused, he did not really get what the two magus were talking about. He could only deduce they were talking about something related to him. Shaking his head, he threw his doubts to the back of his mind and slowly walked forward taking a seat together with the two magus.

When Emery sat, Magus Xion opened his mouth, "Emery, unlike my poor self, this gentleman here, Magus Urix, comes from a prominent family, the Wellenstein family."

Seeing the curiosity on Emery's face, Magus Xion proceeded to give his disciple a quick background summary about the matter. Apparently, the Wellenstein family was also considered one of the most prominent factions in the universe.

Magus Xion paused in the middle of his run-down, turned his head towards Magus Urix and asked, "Your Wellenstein's is a Grade 3 faction, isn't it?"

Magus Urix coughed lightly, "Ehem..I soon to be Grade 4, actually..." the magus said, maintaining his cool expression.

Magus Xion put on a shocked expression as he said, "Wow! Amazing! Oh yeah, I remembered! Your father almost reached the Supreme Magus level, I heard."

"Yes... the third Supreme Magus in the faction, so..."

"Wow! So amazing!" exclaimed Magus Xion. Rubbing his chin like an old man, he continued, "Indeed, as expected from a Grade 4 faction."

At the moment, Emery noticed his master was acting a bit weird today. He seemed to dislike the magus sitting next to him, but still trying so hard to talk good things about the man.

After a few seconds more of buttering, Magus Xion finally turned to Emery, "Anyway Emery, Magus Urix has some good news for you," said the magus, pointing towards Magus Urix, who strangely wore a blank expression.

Emery was startled when he heard Magus Urix was the one who had the good news, not his master. While Emery was trying to process, and possibly guess what Magus Xion's words meant, Magus Urix already took out a parchment from his storage ring and laid it on the table for Emery to see.

"Emery Ambrose, we, the Wellenstein faction, are offering you the opportunity to become a member of our family. Here are the documents that you need to sign."

Emery was silent, processing the words he just heard.

"..."

"..."

"!!!"

"What?!" Emery said, subconsciously shouting it. The shock the words brought made him leap from his seat. He was startled, surprised and shocked by the offer that came out of nowhere and from a magus he never met before.

Amidst his utter confusion, Emery looked at Magus Xion, his master; his gaze was asking the magus what was going on.

"M-Master... W-What is this? Wh-What is this mean...?"

"This is good news, Emery! With you joining a faction as good as the Wellenstein, your future will undoubtedly be bright."

Emery was speechless, lost for words. Even though he trusted his master, there was no way he would sign something he did not understand about.

Realizing Emery was in doubt, Magus Xion added, "Emery, I have already checked the contract and found no problem in it. In fact, it's very favorable for an acolyte such as you."

Upon hearing that, Emery let his doubts slightly go and picked the parchment as he gave its writings a brief read. The content of the parchment was basically what Magus Urix said, an agreement to join the Wellenstein faction as an inner member.

Wait, an inner member?

"Inner member?" asked Emery, looking at the two magus. Seeing that Magus Urix wasn't paying attention, he turned to Magus Xion.

He then explained about the matter. Normally, there were different types of members in factions, such as outer members, inner members and core members. Each type received their own privileges and treatments, different from each other.

Emery then began reading the parchment carefully, as he read through he got shocked once again. The agreement involved an enormous amount of spirit stones and Spirit Foundation Pills.

If he agreed to join the faction, he would immediately receive 100.000 spirit stones and one Spirit Foundation Pill. Moreover, he would get the same amount every year, for the next 10 years. These benefits could also increase if he reached a higher realm in the future.

He also had an opportunity to receive Tier 4 Artifacts if he reached Rank 9, and Tier 5 Artifacts after breaking through to the Magus realm.

Emery's eyes were bulging with surprise as he read through the parchment.

"M-Master... Th-This... I don't know what to say..."

"This is a very good deal, Emery. It took me days to convince the faction to agree on these terms."

It then hit him. Emery finally realized the reason his master went out for days, losing contact with him. Apparently, he was doing something for him, again. Emery truly did not know how he should repay the kindness and care his master had given him.

Emery saw Magus Urix wryly smiling, when he heard Magus Xion's speech. This showed how hard it was for this agreement to be made.

"Thank you, master. Thank you, Magus Urix. But... I know that nothing in the world is really free. Please tell me, what should I do to deserve this?"

Hearing Emery's words, Magus Xion smiled and glanced at Magus Urix, "Haha... See? I told you he's smart, didn't I?"

Magus Urix wisely ignored Xion's remarks and pointed his finger at the bottom part of the agreement, "In here it is stated, when you reach Magus level, you will have to provide service to the Wellenstein faction for 100 years."

Emery could roughly guess what kind of service he would have to provide. He knew Lord Izta was serving the Nephilim faction for 2.000 years. Hence it appeared 100 years to exchange for such extensive support was very favorable for him.

Emery was sure this offer took into account his dark core and bloodline, his unfavorable situation, before it could be carried out. Therefore, he believed the faction was at least worth giving his service for.

Emery really considered accepting the deal when he realized that Magus Xion was still excited and had something else to say.

"That's not the best part, Emery!" The magus' eyes seemed to lit up as he said, "The Wellenstein is willing to pull favor and let you come to their planet when you finish your second year. This means that you could spend your three years in their facility, training under their special tutelage."

"..."

Emery was startled, this actually brought more hesitation to Emery than the 100 years service. After all, he still had many unfinished business on Earth.

"I am sorry, master... the last part will be difficult for me..."

"Aah, the boy is one of those..." said Urix. "He's the type that cares more about home than his growth."

Magus Xion was also shocked by Emery's unexpected words. He tried to convince him, saying that when he became a magus, he would not need to worry about anything else back home. After all, the status and prestige the Magus gave would take care of Earth by itself.

But halfway through his attempt of convincing, Magus Xion realized Emery was quite adamant about it.

"Thank you very much for your offer, Sir Urix. But this matter, I really need to think about it first. Please give me some time to consider." Emery firmly said, while giving his utmost respect to the magus.

Magus Urix appeared to be annoyed by Emery's rejection, but he still tried to keep his cool. Knowing the boy would not budge, he decided to give Emery time only until the last week in his second year.

As for Magus Xion, although visibly disappointed, he could understand Emery's decision.

Before Emery left, the magus mentioned about an invitation from the headmaster to watch a certain important meeting next month. It had something to do about Earth, part of the headmaster's promise to Lord Izta.

"I will definitely be there, master."

Chapter 294: Offers

An unassuming small shop stood in easy view of the passerby, its front doing business as usual with customers coming and going every so often. Meanwhile, in the dusty backroom, a white-haired girl paced back and forth, her beautiful face marred with irritation that grew as the seconds passed. It seemed she was waiting for something.

"Where did that moron even go? Why hasn't he come yet? Did he no longer need the gene serum?!" Her face was twisted in annoyance. "No! That can't be the case... My information was supposed to be accurate, he really needed this serum."

Another figure stood next to her. His green, slimy skin glimmered under the light of the room.

"Kkrrrr... Niece... What did this boy do to you? It seems you really hate him so much! Tell me I will KUT his body apart and use each organ for my next experiments."

The girl's eyes widened and she quickly shook her head. "No, no, Uncle Bob... It's not like that. Cutting him up seems a bit excessive."

"What is it then, dear? I've never seen you like this. He must have done something to you. If you have any problems, Kkrrrr... don't be shy and talk to unkle Bob."

"Uncle! Thank you, but don't do anything to him!. I will give him a lesson myself and you can just go with my plan... Please, uncle." Silva answered and looked away. It was clear that, even though she regretted her words, she was not about to risk her own self-image by taking them back.

"Ah, alright then, dear niece, donk worry. But, if I see that this boy really did something to hurt you... I will make sure your father and the entire Oroboros klan hears about this! That kid kan hide with the shadows and we'll khase him to the ends of the universe!"

The green man's passionate threat was interrupted when the bell attached to the top of the door rang.

"That's him... Go get him, uncle. Remember the plan," the girl whispered.

The frog-like man gave the girl a conspiratorial wink, before walking towards the front counter.

"Kkrrr... You are LATE, boy!" He said in a booming voice.

The boy was shocked and he covered his ears, not ready for the sudden shouting.

"Ah, I sincerely apologize. I was occupied, Mr. Frog... Ah, I mean, Mr. Bob..." Emery scratched the back of his head.

"Hah! Anyways, you already made my nie-, I mean, you already made me wait too long! You're not the only person I have to see, you know!"

"Again, Mr. Bob, I apologize... That aside, is the product ready?"

"Damnit! Of korse they are... I am Bob the frog! What kind of dealer do you take me for?! When I promise something, I keep it. Unlike someone who kame late and wasted everyone's time!"

The frog reached down the counter, pulled a few vials with orange liquid inside and gave the liquid to Emery.

"The first one is on the house, kortesy of your patriarch! I suggest you try it right now."

Emery eyed the orange liquid suspiciously. The liquid looked as if someone decided to take orange juice and added even more food coloring into it to make it more vivid, but the result ended up being more off-putting than anything else.

"Okay, so..." Emery looked at the frog man. "Should I just drink this just like that?"

"Yes!! Do you need me to shove it down your throat right now, boy!?" The frog man smirked.

"Sorry, Mr. Bob." Emery shuddered and apologized again. "Anyway, why are you so angry with me?"

"ANGRY?!" The frog-man shouted again. This time, Emery didn't get the chance to cover his ears and all he could do was wince in pain while the frog-man took a big gulp of air to calm himself down. "I... NOT angry. This is the way frog people talk. Are you making FUN of us frog-people now, BOY!?" He narrowed his eyes.

"No! No! Of course not, Mr... I mean, Mr. Bob." Emery shook his head and willed himself to calm down.

"Then drink up and stop wasting my time!"

Emery took the vial, eyed it one last time, and uncorked the bottle before pouring it all down his throat. Meanwhile, unbeknownst to him, a girl at the back was peeking outside and watching their exchange from the storage room. She tried to suppress her giggling to no avail. If it wasn't for the frog-man's booming voice, she would have been discovered much earlier.

"Emery, Emery... Still foolish as ever!" The girl giggled and shook her head. "You moron, you should have checked it before drinking! What if someone decided to swap it with poison?"

As the orange liquid went down his throat, Emery felt a warm sensation spreading through his body from the center of his heart down to the tips of his fingers. Though the heat felt odd, it certainly was more comfortable than anything. The feeling was similar to hugging a pile of soft, warm fur.

A few seconds later, the sensation dissipated and Emery saw a notification appear in his mind.

[Your bloodline just went through purifying process]

[Genes purified]

[Fey Wolf gene essence percentage increased to 21%]

"Mr. Bob, this is really effective! I can't believe I got one point increase in my gene essence percentage. This is really amazing!" Emery exclaimed, almost forgetting to contain himself. If no one was here, Emery would probably jump around in joy.

"Of course it is, I never let my clients down! Now, do you want more?"

"Yes, Mr. Bob." Emery nodded.

"As I've said before, each serum costs 10.000 spirit stones. As for the recipes, I am sorry to disappoint you, but it costs higher than I thought... All you need to know is that it's a very difficult thing to make, really!." The frog-man explained.

"I see..." Emery frowned, but decided to ask. "If it's not too much trouble, may I ask how much?"

"200.000 spirit stones!"

The girl hiding in the back room let out a snort and almost gave away her presence. It was worth it to see Emery turn pale and lifeless."

"How... Mr. Bob, I don't have that kind of money... Is there no way I can get it cheaper?"

"Ho ho..." The frog-man rubbed his hands and narrowed his eyes. "I have another solution... Boy, I have a great opportunity for you."

The frog-man seemed to have been waiting for this opportunity, as he pulled a rolled parchment sealed with a thin piece of string from below the counter.

Emery looked at the parchment for a second and read it carefully. With each word, he could feel his heart sink.

"A 3-years contract?" Emery looked at the frog-man.

"Yes! Isn't this a great opportunity for you? You will get the recipe and in return, you are under contract to work for the Bullfrog faction for three years."

The girl hiding behind the door to the backroom looked at their conversation with mirth dancing in her eyes. The bullfrog faction was a subsidiary of the Oroboros faction and if he signed the contract, the boy would work for her. She couldn't wait to finish her second year so she could bring him to her planet.

The plan was foolproof.

Or so she thought, until she heard the boy refuse.

"I am sorry, Mr. Bob, I really can't accept this... I will definitely find a way to pay you 200.000 spirit stones..."

"Are you stupid, kid?!" The frog-man shouted. "This recipe is your only way! You know that there is no better gene alchemist around than me and your gene bloodline is really difficult to make!"

The boy nodded and looked at him with a serious expression. Emery was grateful for the first serum he had received, but the terms for the recipe were just too difficult to fulfill. He decided to ask about the price of the second serum.

"Yes... For another serum, it would be... 10.000 spirit stones!"

"Hmm... Mr. Bob, I don't have that much with me, can you lower the price a little? You know... us being half-bloodline people and all..."

Mr. Bob glanced at the storage room, towards the girl hiding behind it. The girl nodded in response.

"Alright then, kid." The frog-man turned to look at Emery. "How much do you have?"

Emery slowly said... "Hmm... Ah, 1000 spirit stones."

"...@#%^ !! ARE YOU kidding me, kid?!"

Emery sputtered a quick apology and turned around to leave, but the girl behind the storage room door made a coughing sound and the frog-man instantly tensed up.

"Wait, kid!! wait... Come here... come."

"What is it, Mr. Bob?" Emery turned around and asked.

The frog-man seemed to be trying hard to calm himself down, then he said. "I decided, it's... Ah..." "Give me... give me the 1000 spirit stones, okay? I'll give you the second serum."

"Thank you, Mr. Bob. Thank you!" Emery came to the counter and paid the spirit stones as he requested. Emery sputtered his gratitude several times before exiting out from the door, accompanied with the sound of a ringing bell.

The girl walked out from the storage room right as Emery left.

"He didn't take the offer, dear niece... what now?"

Silva gritted her teeth, glanced at the door, and said.

"Hah! I'm sure he'll come back for more serum sooner or later! No one would dare reject my offer!"

The frog-man smiled at her. "Now, that is more like the niece I know. You're the famous Silva Oroboros after all!"

Chapter 295: Recreate

It has been one bad news after another for Emery.

The price for the fey wolf gene recipes increased from 100.000 to 200.00 spirit stones. Combined with the price of the void crystal, the total spirit stones he needed had increased to a whopping 300.000. Even if he decided to go all in and trade all the contribution points he had saved up, he still would not have enough.

Emery had considered giving up, but he had one last idea in mind.

After finishing his business in Zodiac City, Emery took a portal and returned to the Golden City. He took one of the flying boats to the apothecary institute and found Cedric being busy with his research on the 15th floor.

Emery took out one of the extra serums he bought with one-tenth of the actual price and showed it to Cedric.

"Senior, would it be possible to copy and recreate this?"

Emery talked to Cedric about his gene bloodline, about the deal he was offered and the serum he had received. He hoped his senior apothecary acolyte would be able to give him some tips before he started using the [Fragmentation] skill on the serum.

Cedric took the serum from Emery's hand, walked to a nearby box-shaped machine filled with slots and placed the bottle into one of the slots.

"Alright. Before you dissect it, it's important we remember to scan it first."

After placing the bottle, Cedric pushed the slotted bottle down and pressed a combination of buttons. The machine whirred to life and started to make a quiet humming noise. Within a few minutes, the information about the potion appeared on a floating screen.

[Gene Booster]

[Classification – Unknown]

"Of course..." Cedric muttered and shook his head. "The guy who made it isn't stupid, he knew not to register the recipe."

"Show me the content of what you got from the scan?" Emery asked.

[Water 21%]

[Protein 15%]

[Carbon 11%]

[Natrium 5%]

[Glucoacid 2%]

There were almost three dozen other substances listed on the screen, each with decreasing percentages. They looked at the list for a while, trying to decode the ingredients used.

"Alright, we should save its data. We can use this as a base. This will be the base of its 100% potency, we can recreate this and come up with a recipe that is close to this data." Cedric explained.

"Whoa, you're impressive! You really are worth the title of 'senior'!" Emery clapped.

"Of course, Emery! After all, your senior here is a rank 5 artisan! haha."

"So senior... What should we do next?"

Cedric played with his glasses, glanced at the screen one last time and said. "Well, this is all we can do for now... We should dissect it. Alright, Emery, do it."

Emery took the bottle out from the machine before casting his spell.

[Fragmentation]

[3 essences found]

[Unknown], [Unknown], [Reagent]

"..."

Emery was stunned into silence, the fragmentation result was not helpful at all.

The serum floated out of the vial and separated into three distinctly different liquids. One part had a red color similar to oxygenated blood with a sticky texture, one had a lime-color that seemed to emanate a burning, acidic smell, while the last one was black like crude oil.

Those are the components of the three main ingredients. Cedric put the three parts into separate bottles and performed further analysis on it, while Emery could only watch.

"So, how is it, senior?"

Cedric did not answer and continued performing the analysis. However, it seemed Emery did not have to wait long for an answer, as Cedric's confidence instantly disappeared without a trace.

"Alright, Emery..." Cedric took a deep breath and explained. "The third essence is the reagent and it's the easiest one to identify. Basically, it's similar to a strengthener normally used for high-rank potions. There are a few combinations of plants that could be used to create this. As for the other two, I'm sure the first one is made from blood or might actually even be blood, while the lime-colored one is a lethal poison."

"Lethal poison?" Emery's eyes widened, realizing he had consumed the potion once. Was he being poisoned?

Seeing Emery's expression, Cedric smiled and shook his head. "No, it's lethal poison, yes, but there are ways to neutralize it. The most likely scenario is that this poison interacts with something in the blood or the straightener, causing its harmful effects to disappear... It's an amazing thing, really."

Cedric did a few more tests and concluded he needed some more time to do a complete study on the two liquids.

Tomorrow, Emery still had some mandatory elite classes to attend. So, he decided to give his thanks and greetings and return to his place for some much-needed sleep.

The next day, as planned, Emery met his friends in his elite class residence. The five gathered together and shared what they had learned.

Emery talked about the offer he got from the Wellenstain faction, along with the offer from the Bullfrog faction.

At first, the group laughed at the name, but when Emery told them the details of the contract, all of them suddenly went quiet. Julian was the only one who did not laugh and took Emery's story seriously.

"Oh right, speaking of factions, guys... Actually..." Julian started.

Julian talked about the deal he had with the Hartlight faction and what he had obtained so far. On one hand, Roran did keep his word and Julian really became an actual member of the faction. However, Julian was merely an outer member, meaning he was given access to tutelage and the Hartlights' library, but without artifacts or spirit stones support. The bright side of only being an outer member of the Hartlight faction was that there wasn't much commitment. He could just pay his membership by doing several jobs for the faction later on.

Julian talked to Emery about his own deals with the Hartlight family and urged him to accept either the Wellensteins' or the Bullfrogs' offer.

Emery definitely could see the benefits of accepting one offer and he could see how the offer would eventually benefit Earth's future. He also definitely needed the 100.000 spirit stones it offered. However, he couldn't accept not returning to Earth next month.

He spent the next five days with his friends and attending the elite classes. Other than attending the lectures and workshops, Emery also busied himself by continuing the duels with the third-year acolytes. By the end of the fifth day, Emery finally managed to rack up 50 wins and he became eligible to receive his second spirit foundation pill.

Day 66

Five days had passed by quickly. Emery took a portal to return to the apothecary institute and immediately looked for Cedric. He was dying to know the results of his research.

Unfortunately, "I am really sorry, Emery. The blood essence is really, really out of my current expertise. Don't worry, I've scheduled a workshop with Master Grom and I'll bring this up to him to see if he can help."

Emery was half-expecting this, but it would be a lie if he said he was not disappointed in encountering another block to his journey.

If the serum was that easy to copy, it would not be that expensive.

"Anyway, Emery..." Cedric started. "As for the poison, I was able to identify it, it's a rank 3 acid. If you could find me a few acid potions, I could use it to do more testing. Can you do that?"

Cedric's question made Emery instantly remember a certain planet with a certain plant suitable to make tier 3 acid.

"Yes, senior. If it helps, I will definitely get you some."

Chapter 296: Caracas Flower

[Planet #14722]

Emery returned to the savage planet. This time, he went past the portal by himself.

When he walked out of the swirling portal, he saw the recognizable small tavern and smiled a little, reminiscing of the time he and his friend went and had fun there.

After watching the tavern, which was completely filled with people, Emery quickly rushed towards one particular hill, the one where he went to mine titanium.

Several Skygazers can be seen swirling in the sky as soon as he came out of the forest. Emery also saw a few of those black rocks that had the familiar silvery glands. Unfortunately, he did not pick up any of them because today, none of them were his target.

Emery proceeded to run up the hill and started to search for the familiar hole that should be located between the cracks on the dry hill land. After scouring through dozens of meters, he finally found it. Without further due, Emery immediately slid into it.

While he was sliding through the narrow channel that headed downwards, Emery was further confirming the target of his destination in his mind. After a while, he finally touched the ground again and immediately looked around.

At the moment, he was in a place with several tunnels spreading around him.

Emery tried to remember if this was the same place he and his friends fell into the last time by comparing what he saw around him with his memories.

As he threw his gaze around, he noticed the familiar red light from one of the tunnels, which quickly confirmed this place was the one where they previously were.

Emery then carefully walked towards the tunnel where dozens of flowers had gathered. Unfortunately, just like the last time, there were almost a hundred Duma around the area.

The last time he was here, Emery was only a Rank 5 acolyte. Not only did he not have any good weapons, he also did not have any good spell in his repertoire. Hence, this time, his hands were itching to test all of his new spells and skills against the green gooey creatures.

However, he still needed to keep his eyes on the target first, the bright light plant that shone in the dark, the Caracas Plant. After all, the last thing he wanted was for the plant to be destroyed during his rounds of skills and spells experiments.

Before going at it, Emery suddenly realized no one knew he was here. His friends, his master or anyone else, they were all in the dark about his whereabouts.

Did this mean if anything happened to him here, no one would ever find him?

The thought sent shivers down to Emery's back. He probably should have left a note or something.

Anyway, before the dark thought could dive deeper into his mind, Emery tried to think more positively, as he analyzed the creature once again.

[Duma]

[Level 5 - Beast]

[Battle Power 50]

There were at least one hundred such monsters in this place. As for the flowers, there were a few dozen of them, but they were spreaded apart.

Emery knew these monsters were pretty slow, but their enormous number was the problem. It could be troublesome if he got pinned and trapped between them. If that happened, he could only accept his fate getting pummeled. Therefore, it was better to approach it carefully, without making rush decisions.

Emery quickly casted his [Shadow Mist] spell and blinked over to the nearest flower. While the mist slowly encompassed the area, he picked the flower carefully and stored it in his storage ring.

Smiling because of his successful harvest, Emery was about to go to the second flower when some of the Duma had already awakened. Therefore, he sped up his actions in order to pick up a few more.

While Emery was doing his best to harvest the flowers as fast as he could, all the hundreds of Dumas had noticed his presence. And the bad news was, they were not fooled by the [Shadow Mist] spell.

Looking at those Dumas who were beginning to approach him en masse, Emery could not help but curse, "Dammit. This is harder than I thought."

All it took would be one wrong step for Emery. Just a touch from one creature and it would be game over for him. Therefore, Emery kept casting [Blink], appearing and disappearing around the area for several minutes as he tried to dodge those gooey creatures.

He kept doing that until he realized that, sooner or later, there would be no more space for him to blink into. Hence, it was time for a new tactic.

Emery casted [Shadow Root] and [Mudwall] simultaneously to create an opening space for him. While the [Shadow Root] bounded those near him, earthen walls rose from the ground, dividing the area into several sectors, which would limit the Dumas' movement.

Now that the situation was somewhat stabilized, Emery just had to be really, really careful.

"Just several more..."

A few minutes later, Emery finally managed to clean out all the flowers in this place. He was celebrating in his heart and was about to return back when he realized his way out was covered by dozens of those gooey creatures.

Not wanting to waste any time, since he had already accomplished his goal here, Emery took a no-nonsense approach, as he casted his strongest spell [Dark Matter]. Channeling the spirit energy into swirling black energy on his hand, he immediately fired the spell towards the clump of creatures blocking the way.

KABOOM!!!

Emery was blown away by strong gusts that resulted from the spell. Because of this, he accidentally came into contact with one of the Dumas. The parts of his body touched by the Duma were instantly scorched by its acid.

The moment his brain registered the stinging pain on his shoulder, Emery immediately casted [Blink], escaping from the Duma.

He then turned his eyes towards the entrance hoping that the path was clear, only to find the Dumas that were hit by his most powerful spell had almost returned to their previous state.

"I am in trouble, am I?" asked Emery to himself, smiling wryly.

Emery once again casted [Blink] to dodge the incoming group of Dumas. He decided to run to the furthest corner and heal himself first by using the [Nature Blessing] spell.

While the burns on his shoulder slowly healed, Emery began looking for a bright idea that could get him out of his current predicament. He sifted through and checked all the items inside his storage ring, and finally found something that might work.

[Freezing Potion - Tier 1]

Emery decided to try it by throwing it to one of the closest Duma.

shatter

As the potion bottle broke, the cyan liquid inside immediately splashed over the monster, causing it to freeze.

Seeing the satisfying results, Emery was excited. He directly took out his Tier 3 sword and used [Heroic Slash]. The target, the frozen Duma.

PRANG!!

Loud piercing sound resounded through the air as the frozen monster was destroyed into pieces. More importantly, Emery could see that even though the ice began to melt, the monster was unable to reform to its original state. That meant he could finally kill them!

"This is it!"

Emery was about to kill those blocking the way using the same method, when he noticed a shiny crystal laying among the destroyed pieces of the Duma. It was a spirit stone... A yellow one. That was 100 spirit stones!

Curious about the matter, he decided to use the dozen or so Freezing Potions that he had and killed a dozen Duma with it. From them, Emery found 10 yellow stones, which meant the chances of Duma dropping them was a whopping 90 percent!

In an instant, Emery's brain began to calculate the numbers.

This could be the solution to his spirit stone drought.

Chapter 297: Rich

After Emery was done harvesting all the Caracas Flowers, he quickly returned to the apothecary institute with the aid of the portal.

As tired as he was, there was no time to rest. He ran with all his strength towards the room housing Master Grom's potion crafting equipment and prepared his apothecary tools. His body felt tired, but his mind felt as alert as ever.

This lab did not just allow him to use the equipment. As one of master Grom's disciples, Emery had the right to access free ingredients. Although most of those provided were common tier 1 ingredients that were relatively easy to find, the cost certainly added up and for a poor student like Emery, such access was already quite the privilege.

Emery concocted the potion carefully, his brows furrowed in concentration as he did each of the steps in a meticulous concentration. After the process was done, Emery held a small test tube containing a bubbling, greenish liquid in his hand with a proud smile.

His hard work, combined with access to new ingredients and better lab equipment, all culminated in the creation of an acid potion with higher potency.

[Acid Potion – Tier 2]

[Originality Level: 2]

With a spring in his steps, Emery showed the result of his hard work to Cedric. However, all the hopes he had were dashed as Cedric shook his head. Though the acid potion was good, it was not a suitable ingredient for the gene serum as it was not strong enough. For the replication process, he needed a tier 3 potion.

Cedric decided to lend Emery a hand and they worked together to grind a massive, red-colored plant with a texture similar to rubber. After boiling the plant and extracting its juices, they ended up with a small tube's worth of deep red, sticky liquid similar to blood. They added a small drop of the liquid to the potion, turning the bubbling green acid potion into a shade of deep vermillion.

The plant was a higher-tier one and could be used to increase the potency of Emery's acid potion.

[Red Acid Potion – Tier 3]

[Originality Level: 1]

"Actually, Emery..." Cedric started while playing with the tube of red acid in his hand. "I think you should make this acid potion for your project in the third exam. If you can somehow increase the originality by another level, passing would be easy."

Emery nodded, agreeing with the suggestion. He had spent many hours experimenting and finding the best ingredients for that potion. If his hard work could be useful for something else aside from the gene serum, he would be ecstatic.

"Ah, by the way, Emery, it costs 50 spirit stones in ingredients to create a tier-3 acid potion. How many spirit stones do you have? I would need to make 30 to 40 of these potions to continue the experiments."

Ah, yet again, spirit stone costs came to Emery and blocked his progress. Advanced as this world may be, some aspects of it were still the same as Earth – namely, the price tag required to do anything at all. Cedric's question reminded Emery of the Wellenstein Faction's offer of 100.000 spirit stones just for joining.

However, Emery knew, now was not the time. His last visit to Dumas's planet gave him some ideas on how to get more spirit stones. But first, he needed to make sure the senior who gave his time for free for his sake had enough materials for his experiment.

Emery decided to get more spirit stones by selling his potions. The tier 2 potions he made could be sold for 150 spirit stones, while the tier 3 ones could be sold for 200 spirit stones.

At this moment, his storage had around 90 Caracas Flowers. He used half to make tier-2 potions; and was enough for 22 potions and, as a result, Emery earned 3300 spirit stones by selling all 22 of them.

Emery gave the remaining 45 flowers to Cedric along with 2250 spirit stones so he could continue his research.

Emery busied himself by using the rest of the spirit stones he earned to create as many Freezing Potions as he could. The potion was only tier-1 and almost all the ingredients were available in Master Grom's facility. Thanks to that, he was able to create one Freezing Potion for as low as 10 spirit stones each.

He spent the next three days hunched over in the lab, creating one potion, storing it, and repeating the process all over again. He merely rested to sleep a little or to get a bite to eat.

With 100 extra freezing potions in his storage ring, Emery was excited to return to fight those ugly creatures.

Emery spent his next day on Planet 14722 hunting more Dumas lurking beneath the tunnels under the hill. Thanks to all the Freezing Potions he made, Emery could explore the tunnels without fear.

Crack!

One bottle flew from his hand and several Dumas were frozen in one shot. He smashed the frozen creatures with his blade and he obtained some more yellow spirit stones.

However, Emery did not come here just for the purpose of hunting the creatures. He continued searching while killing Dumas along the way and gathering stones. Right before he used up his last Freezing Potion, Emery came across another cavern filled with reddish flowers glowing in the darkness.

The light reflected on Emery's eyes, glimmering with satisfaction. This was definitely a great solution to his spirit stones problem. From what he had seen so far, in one day he would be able to kill 100 Dumas and that amount was enough for him to clear one cave.

If he sold what he obtained from the Dumas, along with the flowers after he concocted them into acid potions, he would get a total of 9000 spirit stones and 7000 spirit stones, respectively. Though he would probably have to spend quite some time making the potions, he would consider that time well-spent.

As they said, time flies quickly when you are having fun or when you are busy. Emery didn't realize that his 5 days of personal studies were over.? Emery had to return back to the elite class area to attend his mandatory class lectures.

As usual, they sat at Emery's dining room table to discuss their current plants. After some thinking, Emery decided to tell his friends about his current endeavor and asking them if they would like to join for some spirit stones.

Julian was currently occupied with matters involving the Hartlight Family, while Klea still had to finish her training under Grand Magus Ororo. But the other two Thrax and Chumo decided to join after they finished the 5 days lectures.

During the next 5 days of mandatory study, after the half day lectures, while everyone else spent half the day doing duels, Emery spent his time in the apothecary institutes making more potions. He concocted all the 100 Caracas flowers into Tier 2 acid potions and sold all of them. He then used all the profit to create as many tier 1 freezing potions as he could.

Day 76.

Emery, Chumo and Thrax went together into Planet 14722, each with their own weapons ready, while Emery also carried the 1500 bottles of Freezing Potions he finished. Within the next two days, what happened could be described as a Dumas massacre, with corpses littering the ground and the three of them collecting everything.

Chumo and Thrax arranged with Emery to receive 2 spirit stones for every 1 they received – in other words, Emery was entitled to receive 50% of the spirit stones they earned as he provided them with the potions, while the two of them split the remaining 50%.

At the end of the second day, right as they ran out of potions, Emery was 75.000 spirit stones richer and he was able to bring home around 300 more Caracas Flowers for concocting his acid potion.

His acid potion was not only a source of income, it was also a chance for him to improve his recipe in hopes it would reach tier 3 originality.

Thanks to the massive amount of loot they obtained, Emery decided to spend his days in the apothecary institute in order to continue his research and make more potions. Every morning, Chumo and Thrax would come for more freezing potions and they brought back Emery's share of spirit stones later in the day.

This arrangement became a good business model for them. Chumo and Thrax would receive around 30.000 spirit stones total every day by killing 300 Dumas and half of that amount would go to Emery's pocket.

If he had more time, this arrangement would have made him rich and gave him a promising future. Unfortunately, their time in Magus Academy would end soon and they would have to settle their own problems back on Earth.

Chapter 298: Last Preparation

Day 81.

Emery and his friends once again met up at his estate as they did their routine of sharing information among each other.

Klea and Julian could see that Thrax and Chumo, although looking tired, they smiled brighter than usual.

It appeared they managed to earn around 80,000 spirit stones, which split among the two of them, from hunting Dumas for the past five days.

As for Emery, he himself now had 110,000 spirit stones lying comfortably in his storage ring as well as hundreds of Caracas Flower.

Hearing this caused Julian and Klea to be a little bit jealous. They became a bit regretful they did not join when Emery invited them. But there was nothing they could do about it, as they had other things and commitments to do in the past 5 days.

Thrax and Chumo then proceeded to tell the two jealous friends that it was becoming harder and harder to find the Dumas' nest lately. So, this activity probably would not be a long term thing for them.

Other than the trouble of hunting the Dumas, Emery also had trouble in the potion making side.

It appeared his excessive and blatant use of the free ingredients privilege Master Grom granted him finally being discovered. Thanks to his incessant potion concocting, the required ingredients to make a Freezing Potion were quickly depleted from the warehouse.

Emery now had to spend 40 spirit stones to acquire the ingredients for one potion. Due to the additional expense needed, the project profit became much less lucrative.

Starting from today, the five of them only had ten more days to spend at the Academy before they returned to Earth. Because of this, they all were reminded to prepare themselves.

Before they went to the classes, Emery told them that on Day 87, three days before their second year ended, they were invited by the headmaster to attend a meeting that would be held at the headquarters of the Alliance of Men.

Like previously, when all other elite classes used their half day for more duel practice or getting pointers from the magus instructor, Emery spent all his time attending the lectures during the day, while using the night at the Apothecary Institute, acting as an assistant.

The next day Emery made a new breakthrough.

[Acid Potion - Tier 2]

[Originality - Level 3]

Apparently, the solution to his bottleneck was closer to home.

Emery used [Fragmentation] on his Cleansing Potion, took out some of the ingredients from his home, and combined them mainly with the blue powder itself. In the end, a new recipe for a Acid Potion with higher potency was created.

Unfortunately, with the limited amount of blue powder he had, Emery could not mass produce the potion. But still, his 2 weeks of constant meddling with the Caracas Flower and Acid Potions had rewarded him with a recipe that he could use for his fourth rank exam, which would be held on Day 88.

Besides the new Acid Potion recipe, Emery also had another amazing finding. He discovered there was actually a different kind of flower among the dozens of Caracas Flowers. Said flower still had a distinct disparity that defined it from the rest.

In this special flower, Emery found out that a certain spore was produced that could be turned into a seed, a Caracas Flower Seed. He analyzed this seed and discovered it could grow easily in any place, as long as it was not exposed to heat or light.

Emery was extremely excited with the thought of growing his own Tier 3 plant. If he managed to do so, it would personally be a huge achievement for him.

From the three main ingredients for the blood genes, it appeared the reagents and the acid ingredients were ready.

Unfortunately, the same could not be said for the third ingredient, the one that looked like blood which his senior had been experimenting with.

"I'm sorry, Emery. I have tried my best. I even forced Master Grom on this matter, but he said that Gene Sequencing is completely out of his expertise."

Emery knew his senior had tried his best to help him. Of course, he would not blame him.

Day 85

Five days more had passed, At the end of the last mandatory elite class, Emery concluded it with having the least duels won.

Well, it was to be expected, as many of his classmates like Micah, Gerri, Aiko, Lodos and even Anas managed to reach the 100 duels benchmarks. That was Emery's result in the combat department.

As for the theoretical exam, Emery only managed to reach 71% for his grade, which once again landed him in somewhat middle to bottom tier of the class, as the average score for the class was 78%.

Despite his 'average' result, Emery was not dejected. After all, what mattered was he learned something from the lectures and benefited greatly from them.

Still, it pained his heart to see he didn't receive the last spirit foundation pill reward. Among the five friends, Klea received the extra reward from winning the 100 duels.

Surprisingly Julian also received one of the extra spirit foundation pills, but not from the duel but for getting a 90% score in the theoretical exam. Apparently, the Harlight faction had helped him prepare for the exam.

On the last day of the mandatory elite class, strangely Grand Magus Aimon was nowhere to be seen. It appeared that there was something more important he had to do than giving his final lecture for the elite class.

The second year elite class was finally closed up by magus Minerva with her cheerful and strange speeches about the future.

Right after Emery finished his last day of mandatory training, With his time in the Academy almost coming to an end. It was time for Emery to finalize his preparations before he departed for Earth.

[Contribution points 118.650]

[Spirit stones 141.515]

In the end, Emery decided to spend 50,000 contribution points for the special box. As for the [Universal Formation Pattern - Rank 1], he did not use his contribution points to acquire it. Instead, he bought it at Golden City with 2,000 spirit stones.

Now that two things in his checklist were crossed off, the next important thing on the list was the Void Crystal, which he bought through the Furia market, converting 90.000 worth of spirit stones to Furia credits.

After all these things were bought, Emery finally decided to do one thing that he had been keeping off for quite some time. The unbinding of the Tier 3 Moon Dagger.

The procedure cost him a total of 16,000 spirit stones. 1,000 used to buy the Absolve Potion from the Apothecary Shop, while 15,000 was spent to pay for the unbinding service, which was done by a formation expert.

The formation experts were masters of runes. They dealt with the engraving of magic items, artifacts and so on. Hence, for this particular unbinding service, the formation expert would first decode the artifact runes, before using the Absolve Potion to erase the previous owner's blood markings on the item.

Only after all the traces of the previous owner were gone could the artifact be tied by the new owner. It wasn't a simple job, hence the reason for the high cost of service.

At first, Emery thought that with the same amount of spirit stones, he could easily buy another Tier 3 weapon, maybe even two. The thought really tempted him to forget about the dagger.

However, Emery quickly swatted the thought away as he really wanted to know the secret behind the dagger that had been used to kill Lanzo and sap him out of his power.

When the unbinding process was done, Emery only had to bind the magic artifact with his own blood, marking it with his signature. Next, time for the revelation.

[Moon Dagger - Tier 3 Artifact]

[Weight 0.9 kilogram, Length 35 centimeters]

[Spell - Blessing of the Moon]

[Enhances the user spell strength by harnessing the Moon's power]

The secret was not what Emery expected. Initially, he had thought the dagger was the one who was responsible for absorbing the life energy from its victims. Apparently, its effect was enhancing spells.

Emery then remembered that during the Night of Mistshire Massacre, a special moon exuded its luster through the night. It was what they called the Blood Moon.

Either way, he could not wait to try the effects of this dagger. It must have its uses.

After his round of shopping, Emery checked his remaining balance.

[Contribution points 88.650]

[Spirit stones 18.515]

Now, the only thing that Emery had not acquired was the Bloodline recipe. Alas, he still did not have enough stones, even if he traded all of his remaining contribution points.

Realizing the situation he was in and knowing he only needed one last item but unable to buy it, Emery sighed deeply.

Chapter 299: Farewell

Day 86

In the past few days, thanks to his hard work killing Dumas, concocting, and selling the acid potions he made, Emery had earned enough spirit stones to obtain everything he needed to take back to Earth.

There was just one thing that was still attainable; The recipes for his gene bloodline, which according to what Bob the frog said to him before, the potion recipe he would help him increase the purity of his fey wolf genes.

[Bloodline Gene – Fey Wolf]

[Gene Classification – Legendary Bloodline]

[Bloodline Limit : Rank 6]

[Current Rank]

[Rank 3 -The Fey Warden]

[21% fey wolf essence found]

From what he knew so far, Emery believed that, if he was able to purify his gene essence to 30%, he would be able to upgrade his fey wolf rank. This was the path that even the headmaster himself thought would be the best for him.

If he managed to obtain the recipe, he could try to create the serum himself. Emery remembered the patriarch's words – when he managed to reach rank 4, he could become an alpha wolf and help the other fey wolves. This path of progression would be nothing but beneficial to him.

Unfortunately, even with all his efforts, the matter of spirit stones still troubled him. He didn't have enough spirit stones to purchase the recipe and, even if he traded all his contribution points into spirit stones, he would only have 107.165.

The day of his return to earth ticked even closer, and Emery was left with three choices.

One, he could forget about the research for recipes, save up his money and contribution points for later, then he could resume the research 3 years later, when he would probably have more spirit stones to comfortably do so.

Two, he could join the Wellenstein faction and get 100.000 spirit stones right away. However, joining would render his objective moot, as he would not be able to come back to Earth to experiment with the serum to his brethren.

Three, he had the choice to beg for some kind of deal with Bob the Frog and get parts of the recipes or more spirit stones out of the deal.

The more Emery thought about it, the more he realized his only choice would be the latter one.

"Maybe this can work." Emery muttered, trying to be optimistic about his own half-baked plan.

He woke up early in the morning, got dressed and went to Zodiac City without wasting as much as a second. Upon reaching the city, Emery went directly to the alley with the familiar building he had visited before.

Right as he was about to open the door, Emery heard a massive ruckus going on inside. The sounds of something being thrown around were clear, even from there.

"Kkrrr... Why is this happening! This is a disaster!"

Bob's enraged cursing could be heard even from outside, probably even across the street.

Emery's expression turned full of concern and he quickly walked into the shop. A lot of potion bottles were scattered on the ground and the previously well-stocked shelves were much more empty than usual. Colorful stains from various potions covered the floor, some even hissing and smoking against the ground.

Clink! Clink!

The bell resounded as soon as Emery came in and not long after, Bob cursed again.

"GET OUT!! You are not welkom! The shop is klosed now!"

Emery was a little bit afraid of disturbing him, but there was no time left and with each second, he grew more desperate. Only 4 days were left before he would need to return to Earth and he needed to get all his affairs in this world in order before then.

"I am sorry, Mr. Bob. It's me, Emery Ambrose... I came to ask about the wolf gene recipes."

Bob the Frog stopped throwing the things around in anger and actually looked up, to see Emery's concerned face staring at him. "This time you came at the right time!" Bob looked at the back room and shouted. "The boy is here, niece!"

After shouting, he turned back to look at Emery and whispered. "My niece has been waiting for you for quite a while... you..." Bob shook his head. "Argh, forget it, just be quick. We are in a hurry, okay?"

Emery stared at Bob in confusion. What does he mean by waiting? However, he had no time to ask Bob that, as he was quickly shoved to the back room by the frog-man. Inside the back room, he saw a white-haired girl standing right in the middle, her gaze drilling into his soul.

"Ah, it's you, Silva! You... Niece... Uncle... Frog?" Emery was so surprised, he was not even able to form a coherent question and had to resort to mumbling under his breath.

"Emery, come closer!" Silva said, her tone serious.

One question answered, two thousand more new questions popped up. Silva outstretched her hand and pulled Emery closer while confusion was still evident on his face. Though he had always known Silva was a serious, no-nonsense smart acolyte, Emery could feel from her gaze she had something important weighing on her mind.

Emery decided to walk a few steps closer to her. "What is it, Silva?"

Silva kept staring at him and it took minutes for her to answer the question.

"Emery, this place is run by the Oroboros clan. My clan. And Bob is... My distant uncle."

"Ah, I see..." Emery was relieved, delighted to hear that, even. He knew Silva to some extent and, by knowing her, perhaps the negotiation he needed to do today would be easier. They could be referred to as friends or sorts, their complicated relationship making categorizations confusing.

Emery did not expect her expression to become more grave, but Silva did just that and took out a parchment from her ring before showing the parchment to him.

"Emery, you came here for this gene recipe, right?"

Even from a glance, Emery was able to discern the paper contained the recipe he was looking for.

"Then, tell me, do you have the 200.000 spirit stones I asked for?" Silva asked directly, cutting into the heart of the matter. Unused to such a direct confrontation when it comes to trading, Emery stuttered.

"No... No, I can only provide half of it... By tomorrow, I will... Wait, I thought-"

"No deal, then." Silva cut him off before he was able to say anything.

Emery stared at the girl. From back when they first met to now, Emery was always confused about her behavior. Why did she act so mean towards him only to treat him better later?

Before Emery could ask, Silva handed a piece of parchment to him.

"Here, you can keep it, free of charge!" Silva looked away, making sure Emery did not see her reddened cheeks.

"Why are you-" Emery asked, but Silva cut in before he managed to finish.

"I don't have much time to explain, just... Just keep it, it's yours!"

On one hand, Emery was glad for the gift, but on the other hand he remembered the three-year contract that was offered to him before in order to let him pay for the recipe indirectly.

"No, Silva... Tell me, what should I do in return for this gift?"

"Emery, you truly are... The biggest moron, ever." Silva breathed out on him. "You know, if someone offers you something for free, you should just take it as asked!"

Yet again, Silva handed the parchment to Emery, however, Emery kept on refusing, not wanting to accept such a valuable gift without giving her something in return. Emery was about to offer something again, but Silva screamed in irritation.

"Arrrggghhh!"

The sudden outburst shocked Emery. The scream was followed with the voice of panting breath. Instantly, Emery's expression turned worried.

"Silva... are you okay? What is it? You can tell me."

"Urghh why are you such a guy Emery! Why did you worry about me? You know nothing about me! Just take the recipe and go!"

"No Silva, tell me... "

Before Silva could answer, a voice could be heard from outside the room.

"Niece... Niece!! kkr... All is ready, let's go!"

Silva snapped out from her previously emotional expression. With the straightest face she could manage, she said to Emery.

"Emery, trust me, you will really need this. No one else is as good as uncle Bob, let alone better than him when it comes to gene sequencing... Actually, this recipe was only half-complete, but it should be enough for you... If you end up being able to master this, you can find the frog people later on."

Silva placed the parchment on the table and said.

"You can take it, you can throw it away, the decision is in your hands. Think of it as a farewell gift from me..."

"Farewell? ...What do you mean?"

Silva looked down, an awkward silence settled between them. From her expression, it was clear she was feeling emotional. The force swirling behind her gaze was much more powerful than her usual playful anger at Emery, a gaze of worry and sadness. Silva took one deep breath and slowly said.

"I... I really can't say anything... Good bye, Emery."

Silva turned around and started walking away, only for Emery to grab her hand.

"Calm down, Silva. Tell-"

To his surprise, Silva turned around, but she threw a handful of powder to his face, causing Emery to cough and slowly lose his consciousness.

Emery could roughly tell Silva didn't leave right away. She helped him to take a seat on the chair, stared at him and moved her face closer. She whispered in a careful manner. "Emery, please... I hope you won't believe what they said about us."

The last thing Emery could remember was a soft, loving touch on his lips right before everything turned dark.

Emery had no idea for how long he was unconscious, but when he managed to regain clarity of mind, he saw that the room had already been emptied. He could feel a pit forming in his stomach.

He had nothing but a bad feeling about this.

He walked towards the table and saw that the parchment containing the recipe part was still there.

Right as Emery tried to read it, a notification came into his mind.

[Fey wolf gene enhancer recipes acquired.]

[You have learned a new recipe!]

Emery felt a rush of new information and with them came knowledge he previously lacked. Most of what he received was too advanced and Emery was unable to make heads or tails of it beyond the fact that they were some sort of apothecary related technique.

Though Emery had received such a good boon on this unusual day, he was still worried about Silva. But there was no way to find any more information about her. All he could do was hope nothing bad ever came to her.

Emery went back to his residence and woke up the next day to see Magus Xion at the appointed time. The magus did not recommend everyone to come to the meetings and thus only Emery and Julian came to join the Magus

The two walked past the portal and into the headquarters for the alliance of men.

Chapter 300: Decision

Headquarters of the Magus Alliance

Emery went through the swirling portal together with Magus Xion and they arrived in front of a colossal palace. White pillars made of polished marble stood tall and proud, supporting the much taller buildings scattered around the place.

Julian looked around with obvious interest, as he thought the building somehow reminded him of home.

But their main surprise actually came from the humongous, triangle-shaped structure hovering high in the air.

"Master, is that...?" Emery stated.

Magus Xion looked up and said. "that's a battlestar-class ship. I guess the Imperium came for a visit today."

"That's a flying ship!?... It is as big as a city..."

The marvelous sight of the ship was an eye-opener for them.

Magus Xion led them across the street, while Emery and Julian both admired the place. All over the street, guards clad in shiny armor stood and walked around, each carrying high-quality weapons of various kinds. Even with a glance, Emery could tell that all the guards he saw were at least on par with him.

Noticing Emery's interest, Magus Xion smiled and said. "You can sense it, can you? None of those alliance guards are weaker than a rank 9 acolyte."

Emery and Julian stared at them again, this time with their mouths agape. Other than the armored alliance guards, Emery also noticed most of the residents wore the same kind of grey robes. Though the robes lacked color, they still looked luxurious.

Magus Xion explained that, although this place looked like a city, almost all the people passing through this place worked for what he simply referred to as 'The Council'.

These thousands of grey robes people were working as administrators to decide the fates of no less than ten thousand human planets in the whole quadrants.

Occasionally they would have meetings where decisions involving billions of lives on a planet were being discussed and decided. Meetings such as the one they are attending today.

"Remember, you two." Magus Xion warned. "We came only to observe. Always be respectful."

"Yes, Master." The two answered solemnly.

The building in the center of the area stood tall, dwarfing the others around it as if to show off its importance. Close to its entrance, many moving boxes constantly went back and forth in several different directions. The boxes were made of strong but light glass, allowing those inside to see the city from up above as they ascended.

The three of them picked one box and went inside. Slowly, the box rose up and, within a few minutes, they arrived at one of the topmost areas. The place looked like a massive balcony that was suspended inside an open-air dome. At glance, Emery thought the place reminded him of the arena he battled in during the Magus Games, except it was more tall than wide.

From the top, Emery noticed the place was separated into three parts. The top layer was where he stopped at, precisely the topmost part, where observers wearing various unique clothing seated.

The second layer, the mid part of the place was populated with those from The Council, the people in grey robes.? Meanwhile, the bottom and centermost were part of the first layer. Each of those residing there had their own private seating space that could hover to the center.

"Emery, look on that side!" Magus Xion said, pointing at one of the private spaces. Julian and Emery threw their gaze in that direction and saw the headmaster Altus Dreyden standing inside.

At last, the centermost of the place, hovering in the air, was reserved for the chairman of the council.

From what Emery saw, there were thousands of people gathered in this building at this very moment. However, even though the place was packed, it was quiet and only the chairman's words echoed through the building.

Emery observed the council meeting and saw the way it worked. The chairman would call upon the agenda to be discussed, with each petition detail available to be accessed through the system panel all around the buildings

Those who had concerns regarding the petition would be called to the center of the room to explain their stance.

Afterwards, the councilmen would vote their decision in accordance with the information, and the result of the vote would decide if they agreed or disagreed.

From the looks of it, the meeting had already gone on for several hours, leaving Emery scrambling for bits and pieces whispered by the audience to know what was actually going on..

"Next is the list of planets that are at war and asking for the alliance intervention!" The chairman shouted.

The audience's panel started to glow and a list of planets, along with a short summary of their information and problems, were shown in front of their eyes.

"Emery, the way it works is, although the councils are the one who do the votes,? only the people on the first layer were able to speak. As for the current petitions for example, the default is that the alliance would not involve itself in any war... except if there are any people from the first layer who speak on behalf of the particular planet. You see Emery? That's why having authority to be in the first layer is very important."

Next, Magus Xion pointed at some of the people in the first layer and talked about them.

One particular room in the first layer was filled with a group of people wearing massive yet well-polished, oversized golden armor. The armor covered their whole body, including their head, causing them to look like machine lifeforms when seen from afar.

"Those are from the Imperium. They rule a huge part of the quadrant and they favor technology much more than the power of the spirits."

Magus Xion then pointed at another group, one that consisted of people wearing brown, hooded cloaks.

"They are the Ancient Magus, one of the most respected groups here. They are the ones who created the teleportation gates"

Magus Xion continued to explain, pointing at the groups as the meeting went on. Most of the groups in the first layer were there to represent huge factions.

The factions allowed to be on the first layer were those who reached at least grade 4 or 5, meaning that not even the Wellenstein groups were allowed a seat on the first layer. If there were members of lower factions in the first layer, they were only there thanks to an invitation from a higher faction.

"You see, Emery. If you join the Wellenstein faction, your future as a Magus would be bright. Especially when their faction upgrade to grade 4"

"How about the Nephilim? Which grade do they belong to?" Emery asked.

"Do you really need to ask?" Magus Xion answered by holding up five fingers.

A few hours passed and a voting session marked the end of the discussion about warring planets. After a short break, the chairman announced a change of discussion.

"Next agenda is a list of planets who ask for a change in management, included in the information are details about potential new caretakers to be assigned to that planet."

"Emery, this is what we came here for," Magus Xion said.

Emery concentrated on the system panel and pulled one of the many lists as indicated. Among the worlds on the list, Emery saw the Earth was also petitioning for their freedom.

[Current caretaker: Nephilim Faction]

[New caretaker: Lord Izta]

[Petitioned by: Altus Dresden]

Below the data, there was a summary containing reasons for the change along with other necessary information. A detailed background summary about Lord Izta could also be seen.

"Now, we will wait and see if the Nephilims or any other people in the first layer dare to go against our headmaster's petition." Magus Xion smiled.

The meeting started and most of the planets' petitions were agreed upon without a hitch. The seamless agreements made Emery and Julian feel more confident that their headmaster would succeed.

But, when it was almost time for the Earth's petition to be reviewed, a ruckus started on the first floor.

They saw the people on the first and second layers had turned chaotic.

"What happened, Master?" Emery asked.

"I am not sure, but... something big must have happened"

From their place on top, Emery could see the chairman's expression also turn to panic, but he tried to calm himself before announcing..

"We have received very disturbing news, and thus, the meeting has to be adjourned. I repeat, the meeting-"

Before the chairman could finish, Emery could feel his heart skip a beat. The air suddenly felt heavy followed by his spirit core feeling conflicted as if his soul was weighed down by a gigantic rock.

He looked to Magus Xion for guidance, only to see his master was equally terrified.

Suddenly there was a bright light followed by a loud sound in the sky above that pierced his ears.

KABOOOMMMMM!!.

Debris rain down from above. Julian, Emery and Magus Xion unconsciously crouched down to protect themselves.

When the light and smoke subsided, Emery saw the large battleship-class ship was on fire and tilted about to crash down from the air.

"What just happened, Master?" Emery asked, panic evident in his voice.

"We are under attack!"

The explosion was the first of many that followed right after. From where he stood, Emery saw the magus of the first layer started flying into the air, with the headmaster among them.

When they passed the layer Emery stood on, he could feel that most of them were Grand Magus and Supreme Magus level fighters. The pressure each of them radiated was comparable in power from the explosion earlier.

The skies that were full of smoke started to shine with various colors of powerful spells. Emery realized that a chaotic battle was happening at this instance. A battle that even his magus master unable to join.

"You two, we need to get out! NOW!" Xion shouted and Emery was back to his senses.

KABOOOMMM! KABOOOMMM!

When they were about to leave the area, Emery saw a huge, pitch-black cloud forming into a huge, shadowy face. It's terrifying form start to speak thunderous words in an ancient tongue he could not understand at all.

"A spirit attack!" Xion shouted in warning. "Quickly, protect your-"

Before Emery could hear what his master said, he felt something attack his mind. Emery try hard to perform the spirit defense into his mind as from the lessons he learnt in the elite class

But this particular spirit attack was beyond his capabilities at all.

Emery saw Julian passed out to the ground and before he could do anything about it. He also felt his consciousness start to slip and everything instantly turned dark.

Emery opened his eyes in panic. He quickly sat up and looked around, seemingly searching for an invisible threat.

Instead of opponents, Emery saw Klea and two of his friends waiting by his bed. Klea's eyes were wet with tears.

"What happened...? Julian...? Emery mumbled. He found speaking a little more difficult than usual.

"The Roman's fine, resting in the other room," Thrax said.

Emery took a deep breath and started to calm himself knowing he had returned back to the academy.

His friend started to explain the situation. It seemed the alliance meeting was interrupted by an attack from the elves. Many lost their lives in the battle. Fortunately, Magus Xion grabbed both of them and was barely able to get back to the portal.

"How.. How long have I been unconscious?"

"Three days Emery"

Three days would mean today is probably the last day of his second year academy.

"What about Magus Xion is he alright?"

"He is fine Emery don't worry."

Emery stared at his friends. It seemed there was something unspoken. "Then, what happened? Why are you all being weird...?"

"It's just... The headmaster, he... he was taken by the enemy."

"!!!"

"We actually also just recently learned of it from the academy announcement. We were all shocked."

His three friends told him everything he missed during the time he was unconscious. Some of what they said were official announcements and some were just bits and pieces of gossip spreading between the acolytes. But the gist was that the war between humans and elves had escalated.

"What does that mean for us? What do we do now?" Emery asked.

Unfortunately, none of them could give an answer.

A knock could be heard from the door and Magus Xion came into Emery's room, together with the pale-looking Julian.

After saying his gratitude for helping him and Julian, Emery ask about what happened

"You acolytes shouldn't worry too much. I believe the alliance has a solution ready for this." Magus Xion smiled.

"Master... What's happening to the academy now?"

"I can't answer that, as I'm not too sure myself. What I know is that Deputy Head Delbrand will fill in for the headmaster role for now"

Magus Xion turns silent for a moment before saying.

"Unfortunately, with what just happened, the Earth petition is currently on hold"

The five of them turned silent. Magus Xion sighed and spoke.

"I am not supposed to say this being an academy instructor, but.. there has never been an attack this magnitude for a thousand of years... and as for your question earlier, I believe the academy will also change"

"What are you trying to say, Master?" Emery asked.

Magus Xion stared at the five kids in front of him one by one, before speaking in a serious tone. "I'll make it simple. If you kids don't improve in the next 3 years, I would suggest against accepting the third year recall."

Emery and the others looked at each other, stunned and unable to reply.

"Alright, that will be all. Now, can you give me some time to talk with Emery?"

Still confused about the announcement, they all left without much protest, leaving Emery alone with Magus Xion. His master's serious face made him even more concerned.

"Emery, for you... it will be even harder"

Magus Xion explained he would have a difficult time due to his status as a half-blood. From the information he had, it seemed the attack was possible due to the betrayal of one of the bloodline races. This attack had caused the relationship between half-bloods and humans to become much more complicated.

Because of this, the Wellensteins also took away their offer.

"Without their support and with your dark core problem, it will be very difficult for you... I hope you think thoroughly about what I said, if you are not improving don't bother coming back for the next academy recall... you understand?"

Emery nodded.

"Emery, if it were up to me, I'd really hope this is not a goodbye... Maybe I'll visit you on Earth sometime." Magus Xion gave a forced smile and said. "Good luck, Emery"

The magus turned away to leave, but Emery stopped him.

"Master... Tell me, which race? Which bloodline?"

Magus Xion turned around and answered. "It's the Snake bloodline... All members suddenly left and cut off communications with us. The council had confirmed they already defected to the elves."

Emery startled, he felt as if freezing cold water was poured on his back. Now, he understood what Silva meant by her farewell.

Within hours, Emery would have to return to Earth and made sure all his preparation had been completed. He used his last few thousand spirit stones to buy a few spells and ensure the safety of the three items in the special box.

Void Crystal, Blood Moon Ritual Scroll, and the Caracas Seed. As for the seed Emery has a whole bag of them. However, at the last minute, he was told that he was only allowed to bring one seed.

He found such a rule stupid and for a moment he considered bringing home his Spirit Foundation Pill instead. But in the end, he decided to bring back just the one seed.

Emery picked up the box, along with his bag that he brought from Earth. Inside the bag, there was his Earth-made potions and the Moon Dagger.

Just like last time, there was a small ceremony to commemorate the acolytes' leave back to their own worlds, but this time it was led by the deputy head.

Emery and his five friends made a small circle, put their hands together and promised each other to be safe and improve themselves. The future seems much harder now and they need to get stronger.

"For us, for we are the Earth's greatest magus! Fight!"

A bright light engulfed them and they were gone from the Magus Academy.