

Earths GMagus 601

Chapter 601 - Recalled

A million light years away from Earth.

Right in the center of the human universe lies one of the most important places to mankind, the place where the human alliance placed their hopes of the future: the Magus Academy.

Today, thousands of acolytes were recalled to join their new class. For some of them, this was their first time setting foot in this majestic place, but for others, this was going to be their last year in this place.

Like before, a sharp ringing sound filled Emery's head as he opened his eyes. However, unlike last time, when he opened his eyes, he did not see the interior of the assembly courtyard nor did he see the inside of the small room. This time, he was in a much larger room.

He calmly looked around the room. While observing carefully, he found there were a few pieces of equipment inside the room. He could also see a long table in the center of the room. There was no window for the blue sky to peek from nor were there green fields on the other side. Instead, there was only a glass door with a large window. Through the transparent glass, he immediately noticed about half a dozen people wearing identical staff uniforms were watching over him from the other side.

It was certainly a different reception. However, before he could think about it any longer, he was distracted by the flash notification from the symbol on his hand.

[Restriction has been lifted.]

Right after the notification popped up, like last time, his whole body shone as white bits of stuff floated upward. He felt his body getting lighter and a strong rush of energy coursed in his body, re-energizing him both physically and mentally.

Afterward, before he wanted to access the symbol on his hand, a screen of light appeared in front of him to read.

[Emery Ambrose]

[19 years old]

[Battle Power: 100]

[Spirit Force: 904]

[Spirit Core of Darkness – Stage 5]

[Spirit Core of Nature - Stage 5]

[Acolyte Rank: 8]

[Bloodline Gene - Fey Wolf]

[Gene Classification - Legendary Bloodline]

[Bloodline Limit: Rank 6]

[Current Rank - Rank 4 - The Fey Shaman]

[Acolyte Status - Elite]

[Apothecary Apprentice - Rank 3]

[Contribution Points 93.120]

This was the most extensive information about himself he had ever seen, and with the half a dozen people in front of him watching his every move, he felt as if he was being closely analyzed.

A moment later, a voice came from among the people outside the window.

"Welcome back, Senior Acolyte. Please wait a moment."

This was definitely the Magus Academy, but it did not feel as familiar as it should. Seeing their actions made him wonder, why were they treating him differently? Was it because of the war with the elves?

Unused to the way they were treating him at the moment, he could not help but think about the warning his master Xion gave him again.

Shaking the thought off, Emery walked toward the long table in the center of the room. Although he could already see it from where he was, upon closer inspection, he confirmed the items on the table were indeed a set of the academy's uniform and a storage ring.

Among the two items, his attention was immediately pulled toward the storage ring. He took the ring and checked it, quickly realizing the ring was his, as he could access its storage.

Inside, he could see the apothecary tools and ingredients he had left in the academy, the sword given by Magus Xion, his bags of 18,515 spirit stones, and also his one last spirit foundation pill.

As Emery wore the academy uniform and storage ring, the door was opened. When he turned to look toward the door, one male and two females in uniforms politely approached him.

"We are here to help every Elite member returning to the academy."

Without wasting any time, the three staff members started to check his vitals and conditions gently and even asked if there was anything uncomfortable during the recall. It seemed this was the elite treatment Emery never had the chance to experience before.

"We also need to fully analyze your progress in the last three years. Please excuse us, as it is important to get as accurate data as possible."

He was then led toward one particular machine that looked like a long path. Before he could ask about it, one of the staff members explained he needed to run on it. As he stepped on the path, its surface began moving. After walking for a while, he found the speed of the path's movement followed the speed he was walking at.

After walking for a few more minutes, a mark came out on the screen in front of him.

[120]

[130]

Seeing Emery's eyes on the screen, another one of the staff members briefly explained, "Senior, those numbers signify that you are currently running at 130 meters per second. Please run as fast as you can."

The staff member's words made him realize something. He did not know if it was true or not, but he felt this had something to do with being in the elite class. With this in mind, he decided it was best to run at full speed.

[250]

[300]

[320]

320 meters per second was the maximum speed of his 100 points of battle power. He estimated he would be able to run at least twice as fast with his [Immortal Gate] and [Fey Transformation], but he would rather hide his real ability unless he really had to use it.

Next, he was brought to another machine. Although he was a bit curious, he knew the staff member would tell him what he needed to do without him asking, so he stayed silent. As expected, after attaching a few cables connected to the machine to his body, he was asked to punch a certain area of the machine.

BAM!!!

Another line of numbers came out from this particular machine.

[15,210]

Seeing the line of numbers on the screen, he decided to try one more time. This time, he punched the area as strongly as he could.

BAMM!!!

[19,275]

Without waiting for Emery to ask, the same staff member as last time explained, "Senior, those numbers signify that you did a 19,275-kilogram punch. It is 39 times the strength of a normal human."

Emery did not know about the standards of the elite class, so he was not sure if the score was high enough. He was tempted to use his skills to reach higher scores, but he decided it was probably better to ask if this number was considered high.

"Yes, this is about the average number for all elite-class acolytes," the third staff member answered.

The staff member's answer made him cancel his previous decision to use his skill. As long as it was enough for him to be considered belonging to the elite class, it was enough.

When all the required tests were finally done, Emery was told to sit on a chair. From the previous tests, it was clear they would tell him what to do and what it was for sooner or later, so he did not feel any need to ask and patiently complied. However, when he looked at the male staff member, Emery noticed he was holding some kind of injection item. Without a word, he pierced it at the back of his neck.

He felt a painful sting as soon as it pierced him, followed by the feeling of a small piece of metal stuck at the back of his neck. He quickly asked what it was for.

The staff member slightly hesitated when he saw Emery's questioning expression. In the end, he only vaguely explained, "This is the new protocol for all acolytes. It is for your safety, senior."

Although Emery had a lot he wanted to ask, he held himself back and chose to observe for the time being. After a while, he noticed the other three that were still behind the window began to discuss with slightly perplexed expressions as if something was out of place.

A few moments later, one of the two female staff members approached him.

"My apology, senior, but there seems to be some kind of confusion with the data, and because of that, we are required to further analyze your body."

The sentence quickly made Emery anxious. Was there something about him that could potentially be a problem to the academy? Was it the Khaos Energy, or was it something else?

Emery quickly asked, "Is it really necessary?"

The staff member opened her mouth to answer, but before she could say a word, another person walked into the room and from his uniform, the man was a Magus. He came directly toward him and said.

"Come with me! The headmaster would like to see you."

Chapter 602 - Suspicion

The third-year welcoming party quickly made him feel anxious, and being called to see the headmaster just an hour after being recalled. Things could not be any more concerning.

Emery walked following the magus through a long tunnel. At the end of the tunnel, the two entered some kind of box that lifted them up the stairs. He then went through another tunnel similar to the previous one, with the only big difference being this one had a big window showing the vast blue sky surrounding the flying island of the Magus Academy.

In the sky that seemed to have no limit, he could see seemingly countless flying objects that look like ships made of steel hovering around the academy.

The magus leading the way looked back in time to see Emery admiring the view. However, he couldn't care less, and called him up.

"Continue, acolyte. The headmaster is waiting."

Seeing the magus immediately turning back and continuing to walk, Emery quickly followed to catch up to the magus once again. As the two reached a huge door, Emery remembered that, before he left the academy three years ago, Headmaster Altus Deysden had been captured by the elves.

This memory made him wonder if the headmaster had already been saved and was back to the academy.

But as soon he walked into the room, he realized the headmaster the magus was referring to was someone else.

This grey-haired middle-aged man was the grand magus deputy headmaster Delbrand. It seemed he still took charge of the headmaster position these last three years.

Even though the grand magus did not have the same level of aura and charisma as the previous headmaster, he was still a grand magus. An individual with power a hundred times more than a magus.

While Emery was in thought, the new Headmaster Delbrand briefly examined him with a sharp cold gaze. Holding a small cube that was projecting information, the deputy headmaster began to speak.

"Emery Ambrose... Lower realm... Earth... You are one of the elites who won the third game by defeating a privileged acolyte, are you not?"

Despite clearly directing the question at Emery, the deputy headmaster did not look at him. Instead, his eyes were on the information projected by the cube in his hand.

"Yes, I was." Although Emery did not know where this conversation was going, he still answered with confidence.

"Yes, yes, I remember you... It was a good fight... Quite entertaining".

Unsure of what to say, Emery stayed quiet while the new headmaster's attention was on the screen of information. The silence made him feel more anxious. Even after coming here, he still had no idea why he was called.

"You have an impressive history in your second year... A few achievements with the apothecary, and... an impressive Double Core! This is rare to see! Very good."

Hearing the deputy headmaster's positive words as well as his tone of speaking, Emery felt that it might not be bad news after all.

However, a second later the headmaster's expression changed. He stood up, walked toward the window, and took out a small tube shaped item. As he held it up near his mouth, he lit a small fire with magic to light up one end and inhaled from one end of the item before exhaling smoke outside the window.

He appeared to be in deep thought as his eyes were fixed on the sky.

"Do you have such a flying ship in your world, Emery?"

Emery thought for a while and shook his head.

"Ah... most lower worlds don't have one yet."

The deputy headmaster then began talking about the ships that were there as protection for the acolytes and how a lot of things have changed since the attack 3 years ago.

Out of nowhere he suddenly said, "I wonder how Altus would do at times like this..." .

There appear to be a lot of things keeping his mind.

Emery however still did not know why he was called here and why the deputy headmaster was talking about this to him.

"Tell me, headmaster, why am I here?" Emery directly asked.

Headmaster Delbrand threw the smoking item outside of the window and returned to his seat. He took a deep breath, looked him directly in the eye when he said.

"The truth is, after gathering your information, the academy's automated system flagged you as a threat toward the academy and recommended your direct expulsion from the academy."

"!!!"

Expulsion... This was definitely shocking for Emery but he did his best to maintain his calm. He asked the deputy headmaster about the reason and the Headmaster Delbrand was willing to explain.

"First is your bloodline. You must know the wolf bloodline is currently under investigation for allying with our enemy, the elves. Hence until these matters are proven, most wolf bloodline acolytes have already been sent out from the academy to return to their respective homes."

"Allying with the enemy...." Emery muttered in disbelief.

"Secondly, you have been sighted in two events that involved the attacks from the elves: the first being on your first year in elder respite and the second during the day Headmaster Altus was taken by the elves. For an acolyte to be in both events is undoubtedly suspicious."

Emery found this reason to be outrageous. It's like being in the wrong time and wrong place was not bad enough and he would be accused and suffer because of it.

The headmaster then once again looked toward the information that came out of the cube and said.

"Third was your extreme increase in strength, which was very questionable especially considering your low aptitude and the fact you came from a lower world. With these three reasons, you should be happy if expulsion is all you get."

Emery was about to strongly protest when the headmaster added.

"Out of the 10.000 acolytes of your year, only 65% still remained, we purged more than 2000 this year just because of suspicious background, hence taking out one more is nothing"

Hearing this made Emery realize something was unusual with the deputy headmaster's behavior. With this in mind, he calmed himself down before asking.

"Then why am I still standing here, headmaster?"

The headmaster showed a faint smile in response.

"It is also because of these three reasons that I plan to keep you here in the academy. Even more, I also plan to give back the reward that was unfairly taken from you."

"What do you mean?"

The headmaster looked at him with a serious gaze and said, "I shall give you what you earned from winning last year's game, the privileged-class status!"

Chapter 603 - An Opportunity

This was certainly a shocking development.

It took his mind a few moments before it could completely process what the latter had said. And when it did it, the shock on his face only became exponentially apparent.

In reality, Emery and his friends were already fortunate enough to be included within the elite class in spite of all the bias and discrimination they received as those of the lower class.

The elite class; ten classes where each consisted of fifty elite acolytes, totaling in five hundreds elites which made up the top 5% echelon of the acolytes in the Magus Academy. But these elite groups were nothing in comparison to the one offered by the headmaster.

The privileged class; one particular and significant class which only housed the most exceptional of these 'elites'. Those who were in this class were the top 1% echelon, with only one hundred or so members.

These privilege group acolytes were provided and given the best of the best the academy had - guidance, artifacts, consumables, items, facilities, and so on.

Most importantly, the privileged class would give out status, or rather, a standing that would definitely be very important for an acolyte of lower realm such as him. Hence being offered to enter the privileged class was certainly a one-of-a-kind fortune.

However, Emery was not as naive as he was before. He was sure there was nothing called a charity in this competitive academy, especially a matter as significant as this.

While he was trying to contemplate, the headmaster continued on speaking.

"There is one thing I need from you before I grant your privilege class."

As soon as the headmaster said those words, Emery took a deep breath, stared at the new headmaster with confidence and said, "Alright, headmaster. Tell me what you need."

"It's more like a requirement really.." said the headmaster when he saw how Emery looked. "I can't let you in the privileged class without you showing me how much you have improved since three years ago, after all."

The headmaster once again turned his gaze and looked at the cube. "You have the necessary battle power and spirit force. However you are only a rank 8 and all of the other one hundred acolytes in the privilege class have reached rank 9"

The headmaster tore his eyes from the screen and stared at Emery as he said, "Do you think you can break through to rank 9 in a week?"

Emery's face gradually turned strange after he heard the headmaster's question. That was definitely an absurd one. He couldn't even fulfill the 1000 spirit force requirement by then, let alone making a breakthrough. Therefore, he only quietly shook his head.

As if he had expected Emery's answer, the headmaster nodded his head.

"Yes.. I thought so. Your dual core certainly makes the matter tricky. In fact, it would be an achievement already if you manage to reach rank 9 before the end of the year."

The headmaster then put down the cube and said, "Then, in exchange, I will need you to show extraordinary results in the upcoming Magus Games that will be held next week."

Emery was about to ask what the other party meant by extraordinary results when his question was immediately answered.

"For starters, let's say reaching level 5. Yes, that should be enough.." said the headmaster followed with a nod. He then turned to Emery. "So that's the requirement."

As expected, there would be another Magus Game just like what Emery and his friends had participated in their second year.

Even though Emery had no idea what kind of game it would be this time and how hard reaching stage five was, it came without asking that he would try his best to get the best result he could achieve.

Hence the headmaster currently really was just offering him an extra gift if he accomplished well in the upcoming game.

Not willing to believe such a level of generosity was offered to a common boy from a lower realm, he proceeded to ask.

"W-why? ..Why are you offering me this, headmaster?"

Unexpectedly, the headmaster looked at him with what Emery assumed as amusement. The former had a pondering expression on his face for a moment before saying, "I am not Headmaster Altus. He has his own method while I have mine. For me, I am only here to find and nurture the best talent"

Seeing the look of disbelief on Emery's face, he continued. "You hailing from a lower realm not only further proof and reinforce my point, but also mean that you are untainted by all the politics of the magus world. Hence my belief that you have no involvement with whatever those old wolves are doing right now."

"In addition, the fact that you are able to reach rank 4 of your bloodline and having a dual core with the situation you are in, this is the kind of potential and talent that I wish to see."

To be honest, Emery found it hard to not like what he was hearing at this point. However, before he could show how grateful he was by the offer, the new headmaster once again stared at him with a sharp gaze that sent chills down his spine.

"Emery Ambrose, don't ever think of this offer of mine as a gift. With our current situation with the elves, I want to see only the most talented receive the best resources and expect the best results. Hence don't you dare waste this opportunity!"

"Now you may leave!"

At the same time, the door behind him was opened widely. Emery didn't even have the chance to deliver his gratitude as he was immediately told to leave the room.

Walking out of the room, Emery was still processing what just happened. He didn't know if the new headmaster had any hidden agenda or anything of that sort, but what he heard today was enough to give the other party his sincere bow and gratitude.

Turning around and looking at the already closed door, Emery muttered. "Thank you, headmaster."

He turned and walked away. His steps were calm, but one could see an excited look evident on his face. He was excited by the fact that he could finally access what the Magus Academy could offer to him once again.

But before that, he planned to find the others first.

Cool breezes blew upon his face as Emery walked down the pathway, and went towards where the other elite acolytes had gathered.

Chapter 604 - Familiar Faces

Because he was summoned by the new headmaster, Emery found himself coming in late for the welcoming ceremony. In fact, it was already finished by the time he arrived at the location where the returning acolytes were supposed to be gathering.

Oblivious of where they had gone, Emery proceeded to ask a nearby person wearing the Magus Academy's staff uniform. The staff told him he should head to his designated class.

Emery quickly walked out of the place and followed the track along the sky garden, heading toward the nearest transportation gate with the destination of Island 7, the exclusive training place for the elite group 7 he was in.

As he stepped out of the transportation gate, Emery was surprised to be welcomed by the Magus Academy's knights. These warriors clad in golden armor that reflected sunlight were the elites in charge of guarding the academy.

As he walked past them, he realized there were twice as many people around guarding the area compared to last year. While he was trying to ponder what could probably be the reason for this, Emery suddenly sensed that a figure just came out from the gate behind him and they were lunging for his back.

"Yo! Emery! My friend, how are you!"

Even though he hadn't turned around and seen who this person was, Emery immediately recognized the other party by their voice. Just before this familiar person touched his shoulder, Emery cast [Blink].

His figure disappeared and reappeared right behind the person who 'ambushed' him.

It seemed the person knew where Emery had gone as they immediately raised both his hands with a laugh.

"Wow! I give up! I surrender! Don't attack me!"

With a faint smile on his face, Emery said, "How do you do, Gerri?"

The other person turned his body around and still kept his hands in the air. His iconic red hair was still as messy as Emery remembered; coupled with the mischievous smile plastered on his face, the other party still looked the same as the last time they met each other. This person was none other than the one known as the Violet Flame, Gerri.

"I'm amazing!" He then proceeded to drag his gaze at Emery from top to bottom, as if he was scanning. His smile widened as he said, "You have grown up my friend! You don't look like a kid any longer!"

An imaginary vein popped at Emery's forehead when he heard that.

"What are you saying, Gerri..? We ARE the same age."

As if he didn't notice the tone Emery used, Gerri laughed boisterously. "Hahaha!! True, true!"

"Hah..."

Emery couldn't help but sigh and shake his head at him and his antics. Gerri was still the same, even though it had been three years. A small smile crept onto his face, as he saw how Gerri was still energetic as ever. He was glad to see his friend still had his easygoing attitude.

"I think we are late, let's go." Emery quickly said when he noticed Gerri wouldn't stop with his chattering.

He quickly went on the track, while Gerri quickly followed behind. They made their way toward the hall where the acolytes of elite group 7 usually gathered. When they reached the hall, the two were immediately greeted by the sight of many familiar faces.

With a quick glance from his part, Emery noticed there were around fifty people gathered on the scene. Of course, his friends were seen standing among them. He could clearly see Klea and Julian talking to someone, while Thrax walked towards him.

Seeing Thrax approaching, Emery quickly turned his gaze to look for his last friend, only to realize Chumo was already standing beside him. The guy really became more discreet every time they met.

Luckily, he didn't reflexively hit the latter out of surprise.

"Hi Emery... Hi Gerri.." Chumo said with his usual concise and polite style.

Emery nodded calmly with a smile as a reply to the greeting. The simple greeting, however, surprised the red hair acolytes

Emery was also a bit taken back by the latter's reaction, which he thought was too much. Though, the next words Gerri spoke explained it all.

"Seriously dude... I thought you were a mute!"

"..."

Both Emery and Chumo didn't seem to know how to react, as they turned and looked at each other.

The next moment, Thrax arrived in front of the trio. Emery noticed the disgruntled look on his friend's face.

"Can you believe it, Emery?" Thrax said with a grunt. "Look there. Those two are so friendly with the enemy."

Emery immediately turned his head to see what Thrax meant. He then looked at the people Klea and Julian were talking to. The latter was talking to Alara, one of Roran Harlight's bodyguards while the former was talking to Anas, the leader of the Kaleos acolytes who came together with him from class 77.

He wasn't sure if it was because of Thrax's words, but somehow he could see that Klea seemed friendlier than usual to Anas - a guy who last year couldn't have been more obvious in chasing after her.

Either way, Emery knew he shouldn't overthink the situation, lest it spiraled out of control. He then decided to look around, to greet more familiar faces.

He saw Aiko the Jade Flash give him a nod as a greeting, the big guy combat specialist Orycon waved his hand at him and Okoye, who beamed a smile at him. Then, he realized he couldn't find Igor and Ivar, the two goat half blood acolytes, among those here.

At one corner of the hall, Emery could still find Micah and his friends talking about him. Not far from him, his favorite and number one fan Lodos moniker 'Maniac' was still watching him with his hostility-filled gaze.

Gerri seemed to also notice Lodos' attitude toward him.

"Damn... it looks like that guy still hates you, Emery. How impressive! It's been three years, after all." Gerri commented, while looking at Lodos' direction. "It seems you really made one of his screws loose forever."

Emery could only show a wry smile at Gerri's straightforward comment. Still, although some people looked at him with not-so-good gazes, he still found the situation to be surprisingly heartwarming as if meeting old friends.

A while later, Klea and Julian came to join the four people.

The girl proceeded to do what she always did, sincerely smiling and greeting the group. Naturally, Gerri took the opportunity to once again flirt with her, which Klea responded with being friendly as usual.

The only unusual thing with her behaviour Emery noticed was the way she no longer was all over him, or even stood close to him for that matter. This was definitely how a normal friend should act, but Emery couldn't help but feel odd. Apparently, he needed time to get used to this treatment.

Julian, on the other hand, was being sneered at by the Thracian. The Roman, however, chose to ignore the latter and told the group the recent news about what had happened during their absence that he just got from Alara.

Julian told the group about the development of the war with the elves and the fact Grand Magus Altus still hasn't returned to the academy. There was also the updated information regarding the half blood clans.

He gave Emery the concerning news about the Wolf and Snake clans. Apparently, this was also the reason why Lymord and the other Harlight family's acolytes who were of Wolf Bloodline would not be joining the elite class this year.

Hearing that, Emery guessed a similar thing probably happened to Igor and Ivan as well as the other half blood acolytes of class 7 who were still nowhere to be seen.

The news also made him anxious about what he would be experiencing from this point on, as he was a half blood. He suddenly thought of a certain girl who he hadn't seen for three years. Knowing the Snake half blood had left the human alliance, he wondered if he would ever see her again.

...

Not long after, the big door in the hall opened and everyone saw the elite class magus instructors entered. Magus Nayla, the Spirit Reading instructor; Magus Clio, the Lore instructor; Magus Rommy, the combat instructor; and finally the always smiley Magus Minerva, the Ethic and Principle instructor.

Emery as well as the others, however, realized they didn't see Grand Magus Aimon among the instructors. Instead, they saw an unknown person among them.

Even though they didn't know who he was, the bald man standing in the center exerted a much stronger pressure than all the instructors combined, which immediately led them to believe that the other party must be a grand magus.

Fortunately, Emery and the others didn't have to wait long for their curiosity to be sated.

"I'm Grand Magus Silas.. I will be the one to replace Grand Magus Aimon. Now, let me see how good you all are, Class 7!"

Chapter 605 - Rank 9

The four familiar magus and the newly-acquainted Grand Magus Silas would be the mentors of elite class 7 for the next year. In the midst of the group of acolytes, Emery wore a pondering expression, wondering whether the character of Grand Magus Silas was the same as Grand Magus Aimon or not.

In the meantime, Magus Minerva gave Grand Magus Silas the chromatic cube the Magus Academy used. As soon as the man touched it, a panel of information appeared for him to read.

The moment his eyes swept through the contents, Emery and the others could clearly see the progression of Grand Magus Silas' facial expressions.

"42 acolytes!" said Grand Magus Silas loudly, almost to the point of roaring.

The sourest expression Emery could ever imagine appeared on the grand magus' face, as the latter continued to read.

"What's with this class?!!" roared Grand Magus Silas. "This is the worst elite class I've ever seen!"

The loud noise instantly caused the entire class to pay their full attention to the fuming grand magus.

Grand Magus Silas tore his eyes away from the information he was reading and stared at the acolytes below with a sharp gaze that made all of them nervous.

"43 acolytes! Thirty three rank 9, nine rank 8, and... one rank 7!!!"

"..."

"WHO THE HELL IS THIS?!!"

A loud roar that seemed comparable to nature's wrath itself reverberated throughout the hall, jolting everyone on the scene. Some of the acolytes even felt as if their eardrums had burst from it.

On the other hand, a person seemed to be trembling after the grand magus shouted.

Emery looked over and saw that the person was one of the Kaleos acolytes who always stood next to Anas.

Grand Magus Silas glared at the man and said sharply. "Get the hell out of my class!"

The momentum of those words had made the already shaking man turn completely white. He was then seen scampering out of the hall.

Meanwhile, Emery could see Anas seemed to be getting emotional by this unexpected development. Unfortunately, there was nothing he could do except watch as one of his men got kicked out of the class.

The grand magus seemed to notice what the acolytes were thinking as he said, "I don't care what you did last year, what you won last year: mere rank 7 for someone in the third-year elite class is a disgrace! This also included the nine people who only reached rank 8! In my eyes, you guys don't deserve to be here!"

The situation in the hall suddenly became tense, because of the grand magus' words.

Come to think about it, class 7 was definitely different from the other elite class as last year group 7 had managed to win the second Magus Game against the elites. Hence, there were previously 15 regular class acolytes, whose ability could only be considered subpar, but managed to make it into the elite class.

Grand Magus Silas then calmed his raging emotions for a bit. He then spoke again, "Do all of you not know we humans are at war?!! Do you know what happened to Grand Magus Aimon?!"

The grand magus' question immediately caught the attention of everyone. It was true they all wondered why the previous Grand Magus would no longer teach them.

Grand Magus Silas stopped his words for a second, his gaze turned sorrowful, while his tone became downcast. "My friend Aimon died bravely in the frontline last month!"

Emery and the others didn't even have a chance to process what they had just heard, when the grand magus' roaring sound once again rang out in the air.

"If you elites don't care to train seriously, then you don't belong in this class!!!"

The grand magus then approached the acolytes, while also started studying the data of each of the acolytes. A while later, he pointed at two acolytes Emery knew very well. One was the large and muscular Orycon, while the other was the blue-haired acolyte wielding the ice element Micah.

"You two have reached mid stage rank 9, show me see your capability."

The previous tension suddenly turned to excitement by the sudden sparing. Even so, Emery could still notice some of the acolytes wore a serious expression, evidently thinking about the fact Grand Magus Aimon died in the ongoing war.

Still, these people were the minority, as the others were soon getting overwhelmed by the passion of the upcoming fight between the two acolytes.

One was a very skillful, lighting element combat magus. While the other was someone who wielded unique ice element spells.

This was a fight where they could see where they currently stood, as the two acolytes chosen were said to be the strongest in class.

Everyone was excited to compare themselves with the two and found out their progress for the past three years. They all wanted to know how far their peers had become.

With enough focus from his part, Emery's [Spirit Reading] could tell the power of the two, but he couldn't tell how far. Fortunately, Chumo who stood next to him could do that part. He used his [Eye of the Raven] on the two acolytes and saw a much more detailed reading.

"Orycon has higher stats than Micah. He has reached his fifth pillar, while Micah has only reached his fourth."

This was information Emery and the others had learnt before. When an acolyte reached rank 9, they would have to establish the sea of consciousness within their core.

There, the acolyte then needed to create nine pillars before finally reaching the magus level.

The first to third pillar were considered the lower stage, fourth to sixth were the middle stage, while seventh to ninth were the high stage. This was the strata that generally determined a rank 9 acolyte's prowess.

"Chumo, can you tell me how many people have reached the middle stage in this class?" Emery asked in a low voice, not letting anyone else hear their conversation.

At his words, Chumo swiftly swept his gaze over everyone. His mind went into drive as he processed the information [Eye of the Raven] given him.

"Only those two people have reached the middle stage. Right behind them there are Lodos, Anas and your good friend Gerri, who have created the third pillar. As for the rest, most of them have their first pillar while some have their second."

With Chumo's help, Emery could know the approximate strength of everyone in the class. Next, he cast his eyes toward his friends and was a little hesitant to ask. However, it seemed the other four knew what he wanted to ask.

Julian was the one who spoke. "Don't look at us like that, Emery. We are all still rank 8 except our beautiful queen here."

Julian's flirting words to Klea immediately caught Thrax and Chumo's attention. The two realized something was amiss, but didn't know exactly what it was. On the other hand, Emery smiled at Klea and said, "Congratulations."

Klea was gleeful for a second, but she quickly lost the expression and said, "It's only the first pillar. Nothing amazing."

She then stared at Emery and said, "Hope this achievement please our genius acolyte."

Actually, Emery was included in the nine acolytes who were still in rank 8, but all of his friends knew his capability was more than that. In response, he could only show a wry smile, as he realized what Klea's words meant.

In the meantime, the sparring between Orycon and Micah seemed to have reached its climax, as the former used his powerful thunder spell to enhance his great sword, while Micah concentrated all of his spirit force to cast his strongest crystal into a crystal shield.

Evidently, this was a duel between the sharpest sword and the strongest shield. Tension rose to the maximum, as everyone watched the two people prepare their ultimate card. Some even didn't dare to blink their eyes for fear of missing the collision of the two attacks.

Lightning crackled furiously around Orycon's figure, with his sword completely enveloped by a small thunderstorm. His appearance right now looked as if the personification of thunder had descended upon him.

On the other hand, the temperature of the surrounding area, where Micah was, kept dropping exponentially following the creation and strengthening of the crystal shield that materialized in front of him.

Then, as if they could read each other's minds, the two launched their attack at the same time. Winds raged violently as the two attacks headed for each other.

CRACK!!

A loud crisp sound rang in the air as Orycon's attack managed to break Micah's famous crystal shield apart. The unstoppable sword broke the seemingly unbreakable shield. Moreover, Orycon's sword still carried enough momentum, as it continued towards the panting Micah.

Fortunately, Grand Magus Silas immediately took action and stopped the attack from reaching the latter. The grand magus' intervention ultimately marked the end of the fight.

It was a duel of two geniuses, however Micah, who was supposed to be one the best elite last year, was defeated by Orycon, who obviously has grown in strength a lot faster.

"Arrggh!! I have not lost!" Micah shouted, unable to accept such a result but he was quietly silent by the grand magus stare.

Grand Magus Silas turned to the other acolytes and said, "This is the standard that I want everyone to reach to be in this class. Do you all understand?!"

"Yes, Master!" Emery and the others said in unison.

He then called on a few more names who caught his eyes: Gerri showing his ferocious fire spells against Aiko whose mobility seemingly unparalleled thanks to her particular wind spells.

In the end, Grand Magus Silas warned those who were still in rank 8 to quickly reach rank 9. This was because the difference between rank 8 and rank 9 was much apparent, akin to a gulf.

"In a fair combat, no rank 8 could ever defeat a rank 9!"

When the grand magus spoke this sentence, Emery could see that Lodos was looking at him with such a condescending attitude. His hostility apparently sprouted from his disappointment toward him, by the fact he was still a rank 8 acolyte.

Even so, Emery decided to ignore the other party. He preferred not to show off and keep a low profile, after all.

However, as he said those words in his mind, Grand Magus Silas suddenly went silent and checked the data once again. He then called the next name that would show their abilities.

"Emery Ambrose!"

The grand magus called his name, which was odd. After all, he was still a rank 8 acolyte on paper. It seemed the former had found something interesting in Emery's information.

The grand magus was about to find an opponent when Lodos opened his mouth.

"Master, please... let me be the one who fights him!"

It was apparent Grand Magus Silas was displeased with the interruption. But then, Magus Rommy stepped closer and spoke a few words to him. Emery didn't know what the magus said, but it should be something about them since the grand magus agreed with Lodos' offer.

As expected, his guess was right.

"You two seem to have a history to settle. Alright, fight and let me see what both of you are capable of."

Clearly, his plan to keep a low profile was thwarted.

Chapter 606 - Madman

"You lower realm scum!" Lodos spat and clenched his fist as he said those words. "You shall finally taste defeat under my hand!"

Emery had a contemplating look as he stared at his opponent for the upcoming fight. He recalled how Lodos was the first, if not strongest, and most memorable opponent he had ever faced. After all, the only reason he was able to defeat the former at that time was thanks to Silva and Gerri's help in obstructing and restricting him.

The second match between the two of them however, Emery managed to defeat him fair and square. It was actually in the same setting as of today.

This marked the third time they fought with each other, and Emery could tell that the current Lodos, who they called and held the moniker of the Maniac, was really thrilled by the thought of fighting him again.

"I have been waiting for this!! Three years!! I have trained so hard for three years!! All in order to make you taste defeat!!" said Lodos emotionally.

To be honest, Emery actually became a bit worried as he watched the other party. It wasn't because of the incoming fight, but because of the possibility that the skinny man standing in front of him had really turned into a madman.

On the other hand, Magus Rommy the combat instructor had stood guard closely to where they were, making sure to prevent anything bad from happening. After all, he had seen the outcome of the last fight between them.

As soon as he gave out the sign, Lodos swiftly brought his right arm to the air and cast [Black Needle], a tier 3 shadow spell. Two dozen large, pitch-black needles seemingly made of shadow were rapidly materializing.

The empty air around his figure was quickly covered by their existences, announcing their advent from top to bottom. With a swipe of his hand, the needles immediately shot forward and headed toward Emery at great speed.

Whoosssshhh

Faint sounds of the air being pierced by numerous sharp objects could be heard in the air, telling that this attack was unordinary as it could get.

Emery raised his hand in response to the attack, making a small swing movement with it.

[Whiplash - Tier 1 Water Spell]

In an instant, a body of water materialized in the air and shaped into whip-like constructs. Pointing his hand forward, they immediately lashed toward the incoming needles.

CRACK! CRACK! CRACK!

The sounds of the needles being broken continuously reverberated loudly through the air, creating a harmony that seemed frenzied yet melodious. The simple, supposedly ordinary tier 1 spell [Whiplash] managed to destroy the tier 3 shadow spell [Black Needle] Lodos sent.

The madman was evidently startled by the sight. But he quickly regained his bearing and cast his spell again, sending more of those needles at Emery. Unfortunately, his efforts were doomed to be in vain.

CRACK! CRACK!..

Emery stood still in place confidently as his hands continued to make small movements, casting [Whiplash] in rapid succession to counteract the seemingly relentless attacks Lodos threw at him.

No matter what the latter tried to do, whether sending out the needles in batches like crashing waves, all at once like a volcanic eruption, or scattering and attacking from all directions like torrential rain, the former would neutralize the advance with a few gestures of his hand.

Realizing that his trademark method of attack with [Black Needle] wasn't working, the next thing Lodos did was use his other hand to cast his favorite move, [Pull Down]. This combination attack was his signature move that had won him the place as the top elite class.

Emery, who had encountered this move, already knew the gist behind it. [Pull Down] was a targeted area type of attack, and therefore as soon as he moved around he would be fine. However, he did not choose to cast [Shadow Mist] nor dodge with [Blink].

This was because ever since he had increased his spirit force exponentially throughout the last nine months, Emery found out that he was able to perceive the prowess a spell had even more accurately. Even though it wasn't easy at first, he had honed this unexpected ability of his throughout the months.

Using this intuition-like ability, Emery could determine how strong the spell his opponent used and decide how he should nullify it. Just like the [Black Needle]; he knew that the simple tier 1 [Whiplash] would be enough. And now, similar things would be happening.

When the gravity spell was about to take effect in his feet, Emery did nothing but stand there and watch Lodos launch his aggression.

Whisssss..

The ground beneath Emery caved in due to the pressure. His body instantly felt as if the weight of the entire world was weighing on him. He could tell through the power it showed that Lodos' [Pull Down] was at least twice stronger than the last time they fought, which was an impressive enough improvement.

Lodos was smiling wickedly when he saw Emery was trapped by his spell and quickly threw a dozen of the razor sharp needles.

However, when it got close, Emery simply dodged them by taking a few side steps. He did the motion so seamlessly, looking as if he wasn't affected by the pressure imposed upon him.

This immediately surprised Lodos as he himself understood how strong his spell had become after all the training he went through.

There were only two possible reasons why his opponent could do what he just did. One was he had some kind of spell that gave him resistance. The other was because he had such a strong battle power value that the pressure forced on him didn't affect him at all.

Even though Emery had such a spell with his shaman form, his [Spirit Reading] told him that he didn't need it. It was because he could tell that his 100 battle power was more than enough to withstand the pressure.

"URGGGHH!! What kind of trick are you playing right now?!" said Lodos loudly.

Emery, however, still kept his calm. He just stared at the raging madman and said, "Let's not waste both of our time and end this fast. Fight me with your real strength!"

Hearing that, the madman turned into a maniacal laugh. "Hahaha! That's right! You certainly not disappoint! This is more like it! Unfortunately a rank 8 like you will never win against a rank 9 like me! I will show you why!"

Emery just faintly smiled when he heard Lodos' mocking words. He watched as the latter put both of his hands together, a dark aura was seen emanating from his body and the surrounding area seemed to change.

This time, it wasn't clusters of needles he created, it was a single type of construct. A powerful-looking long pitch-black spear, half a dozen of them, floated around Lodos' figure. All of them emitted such a strong aura.

[Obsidian Lance]

Similar but definitely a few times stronger than Lodos previous needles.

After the several lances he created hovering over him, Lodos cast another powerful high tier spell as Emery can feel the ground around them has started to tremble.

Emery can feel it, it was the same gravity spell used by Hades on the battle of Camelot.? [Gravitational Pressure]

Both spells were tier 5 darkness element spells, the higher form of the [Black Needle] and [Pull Down] spell.

This was what Lodos was trying to tell Emery. The difference between rank 8 and rank 9, the reason why the former would generally never beat the latter was the capability of using Tier 5 spells.

"Die!! You Die!" The Maniac fell into madness even more

Chapter 607 - Tier 5 Spells

Lodos the Maniac cast his two tier 5 spells simultaneously while laughing wickedly.

As soon as [Gravitational Pressure] was about to take effect and pressurize Emery's body with the full might of his own weight, his spirit reading sense told him his current battle power wouldn't be enough to withstand such a level of gravity.

Hence he quickly did what any sane person in his place would do: move out of the way.

Emery immediately tried to escape from where he had been standing, but he was quickly warned by an attack from above. Multiple dark energy spears rapidly descended at him from the sky. He understood that he would not be able to dodge this round of attacks by simply running, as the power and speed of the spears being shot at him was twice that of those needles.

The moment he realized he would be injured if he didn't do anything else, Emery immediately cast [Blink]. His figure quickly disappeared and reappeared a few meters from where he had been, rendering Lodos' initial series of attacks ineffective.

Even so, the madman didn't seem to give up on attacking him. More spears came raining from the sky like a dark thunder bolt striking the land and Emery knew he had to use his stronger offensive magic.?

Emery spun his palm and crescent shape energy charging toward the spear and neutralized them.
[Enfeeble blades]

Craacckk!! Cracckk!!

The Maniac seemed to become even more frenzied, as he saw what was happening in front of him. He couldn't believe his combination of two powerful tier 5 spells could be evaded with such ease.

Alas, his suffering was fated to not halt, as he now witnessed firsthand how the spell he was so proud of was crushed by a mere tier 4 spell, cast by a rank 8 acolyte to boot.

"How is this possible?!!" shouted Lodos madly, casting more of the [Obsidian Lance] and sending them over to Emery. Unfortunately, his efforts were in no avail, as the latter easily nullified them again with his spells.

Carckkk!! Crackk!!

The madman in front of Emery was a rank 9 acolyte that had formed three of the nine pillars. Based on this fact, Emery assumed that Lodos would have around 600 to 650 points of value in his spirit force, which wasn't enough when compared to his.

Even though Emery was only a mere rank 8 as the other party had said, he had a spirit force of 900. This number was comparable to a rank 9 acolyte who had formed eight of the nine pillars.

Coupled with his dark core which gave him abnormal spirit power, even with his repertoire of tier 4 spells Emery was confident he could easily cast [Blink] continuously and evade the attacks thrown at him, while simultaneously cast another spell to destroy his opponent's spells.

Seeing Lodos becoming even more irritated as time went on and how he kept up with whatever he threw at him, Emery felt that warm-up time was finally over. Now it was time to launch a counterattack.

Emery took out the sword given by Magus Xion from his storage ring. Now, instead of just dodging the spears that were constantly being thrown at him, he started to dodge closer and slowly approached Lodos with each dodge.

The reason Emery took this slow and steady was because the difficulty of dodging attacks exponentially increased as the distance between them drew closer. Still, it was within the realm of his ability.

Swisshhh! Swisshh!!

Emery perfectly dodged the powerful dark spears that pierced from the sky and once he felt he had gotten close enough to Lodos, Emery immediately cast [Shadow Mist]. Dozens of identical-looking himself were created, all of them proceeded to [Blink] around making the Maniac turn even more crazy.

"AARGGHH!!!" Lodos shouted. Emery could clearly hear the frustration within it. "Fight me, you coward!!"

However, as soon as his scream echoed through the mist, a voice was heard coming from behind him.

"Who are you looking for? I am here!"

The moment he heard Emery's voice, Lodos knew he was in a great predicament. Unfortunately, he was not given the chance to react. Without missing a beat, Emery immediately swung the sword in his hand and utilized [Heroic Slash] at the same time.

A bright flash of light seemed to shroud the sword as it hit Lodos' unprotected back.

BOOM!

Loud noise rang out in the air, but Emery's face remained serious. Just as he thought, Lodos was protected by his [Shadow Barrier] and his strike was only able to create a small crack in it. Unfortunately, he didn't have the opportunity to do more.

Through his spirit Reading, Emery quickly knew Lodos' combination attacks of [Gravitational Pressure] and [Obsidian Lance] already came knocking.

The gravity spell covered a great area around Lodos' surroundings, hence he once again cast [Blink] and appeared in the distance to dodge the attack. Not only that, he also started to shoot his long-range spell [Enfeeble Blade] at Lodos.

Emery continued to do this sequence of moves, rinse and repeat. As a result, everyone could see how Lodos, a rank 9 acolyte, was being put backstage by a rank 8 acolyte.

The other acolytes start shouting, some hoping for Lodos to successfully hit his target, while some rooting for Emery.

BOOM!

After the second [Heroic Slash] which landed squarely on Lodos' waist, Emery could see the latter's [Shadow Barrier] was cracked and didn't seem to be able to take another hit. Hence he bode his time, and when the moment came, he immediately cast [Blink] and swung for the supposedly final attack.

[Heroic Slash]

Clank!!

However, to Emery and the others' surprise, at the last second, Lodos took out a sabre and parried Emery's perfect slash. Emery realized the situation wasn't good and he tried to quickly blink away.

Unfortunately, Lodos was faster as he charged forward with a saber battle art, forcing Emery to stop his spell and block the attack.

Clankk!!

Lodos could be seen smiling, as when Emery chose to block his attack, he also missed the timing to dodge his [Gravitational Pressure]. The ground Emery stepped on immediately became crater as he was stuck on the ground and being robbed of his ability to move due to the sheer pressure exerted on him.

"Hahahahaha" Lodos was laughing so hard as he watched Emery's predicament.

"The mouse is finally caught! Hahahahaha".

He didn't immediately attack Emery although the latter was already powerless to resist. Instead he decided to strengthen his spell and such gravity pressure forced Emery to kneel and drop his sword. A clunk sound was heard as the sword hit the floor.

The madman Lodos once again laughing maniacally seeing Emery situation, he then brought his saber high to the air and said,

"After my last defeat, I knew that close combat was my weakness. Hence, I have been practicing hard for the last three years, all for this one particular moment! To defeat you!!"

"Hahahaha, you can never escape this tier 5 gravity spell! NEVER!".

The madman stopped his maniacal laugh, took a step back with a smile and said,

"Just like the first time we fought Emery, I will give you a chance. Ten seconds to resist my spell... Or my blade will cut through your neck!"

"Ten... nine..."

It seemed Lodos had really gone mad, as evidenced by what he just said. With Magus Rommy close by, of course, he won't let the Maniac kill Emery. As the academy wouldn't let him kill another student this way.

Everyone could see that Emery might not be able to escape this time, thus became anxious, especially Klea and the others. Even the grand magus seemed to be no longer amused.

"Eight... seven.."

The person concerned, however, remained calm. Unfortunately for Lodos, Emery had faced this spell before and knew very well that he could easily break free with the combined power of [Immortal Gate] and [Shaman Form], which would provide the necessary battle power and magic resistance. But Emery somehow felt he wanted to keep his true power a secret for a while longer with finding a different way to break out the spell

"Six... five.."

The pressure Lodos' [Gravitational Pressure] imposed was not as strong as Hades, that was for sure. Emery could probably regain his movement with just his [Immortal Gate - stage 5]. But the truth was ever since he felt Lodos' gravity spell with his spirit reading, Emery had perceived a strange feeling.

It was as if he could sense the source of gravity within the space manipulated by Lodos. Thanks to the fact he had used [Spatial Gate] countless times since he had mastered it, Emery had gained some degree of understanding of space and could sense the layers of anomaly in the space around him.

'Four... three..."

Emery closed his eyes and pushed away his dark core, as he started to reach out and force open the layer by his spatial spells.

However, in the eyes of outsiders, especially Lodos, it seemed as though Emery had decided to finally give up and accept his fate.

"Two... Hahaha you're giving up already?! Such a shame! Then die!"

Just before Magus Rommy was about to stop the madman who was already bringing his saber high into the air, there was a sudden distortion in the space where Emery and Lodos were standing followed by a slight tremor on the ground.

Everyone was startled by the unexpected event. Immediately after, a loud sound of breaking glass resounded through the air as the tier 5 [Gravitational Pressure] shattered apart.

Lodos' face instantly turned pale. He didn't even dare to imagine in his wildest dreams that his opponent did not just escape instead he break his spell to smithereens. This was just something he couldn't understand.

Thanks to the shock, Lodos didn't even notice that a fist was flying into his face and sent him flying through the air.

BAMMMM!!!!

Lodos the Maniac once again tasted defeat, as his body fell heavily to the ground.

Chapter 608 - Challenge

"The fight has ended. The winner is Emery Ambrose!" said Magus Rommy quickly, when he saw Lodos lay flat on the ground.

As Emery turned his head to where his friends were, he could see they were cheering for him. On the other hand, most of the acolytes seemed to be in a stupor and had just woken up with shocked expressions on their faces. Some of them even looked at each other stiffly, their gazes showing they were not expecting the outcome of the fight.

None of the other rank 9 acolytes in the class could confidently say they could escape from Lodos' tier 5 [Gravitational Pressure] spell, much less shatter it apart like what Emery had just done. Hence, the fact the latter was able to do just that despite his rank 8 cultivation was a huge surprise to all of them.

Emery approached the lying Lodos and stretched his hand over to help the man. Unfortunately, the latter's pride simply won't allow him to accept the gesture.

Lodos struggled to get up and everyone could see how he was silently enduring the throbbing pain on his face. With an expression as if a heavy burden was weighing him down, he looked at Emery with a complicated gaze.

"I admit defeat."

Then, he turned around and walked back to where he had been standing before quietly.

Even though it was apparent the man was devastated by the result of the fight, Emery could faintly feel his spirit was burning even more ferociously than before. Realizing this, he couldn't help but let out another wry smile. Emery was sure this was not going to be the last time he fought the man.

At the same time, Emery felt several sharp gazes directed at him. Sweeping his gaze around to find out their origin, he saw Orycon, Aiko, Micah and other famous acolytes, who were considered to be the top elites, staring at him. They all looked at him as if they wanted to ravage him into nothingness.

Grand Magus Silas, who watched all of this happening, inwardly found the situation amusing. Coughing lightly to attract everyone's attention, he then spoke with a mocking gaze. "It seems I spoke too soon. Was this rank 8 acolyte too good or all of you rank 9 were just simply inadequate?!"

It was apparent to whom those words were aimed at and this made Emery bewildered by the grand magus' action.

The man literally added more fuel to the burning forest! And just as expected, reactions were born quickly .

It was the blue-haired and proud Micah who stood up first and shouted, "Grand Magus! Let me give this trash a proper lesson!"

Alas, Orycon immediately shouted at him.

"Huh?! You? You have lost against me, you have no right!" He then looked toward Emery and said, "You will fight me instead!"

"No! Let me!" Interrupted Aiko, who had already brought out her daggers.

The situation suddenly turned chaotic, where three esteemed acolytes as well as several others were fighting each other to be allowed to fight Emery. It also didn't help as Gerri's mischievous nature acted up and he started teasing the strong elites with his remarks.

Emery, who saw all of these people, couldn't help but remember that all these people had already been defeated by him in the past. They probably had the same intentions as Lodos. That's why they were so passionate about challenging him.

Grand Magus Silas glanced at Emery with a small smile perched on his face and said, "What do you think, acolyte? Do you dare to fight again?"

Emery laughed dryly in his heart. He could only be amused by the antics of this grand magus. It looked like the other party found enjoyment in creating conflict and watching it unfold.

Still, the truth was Emery had been itching to find a proper fight to see what he had achieved for the last nine months. Hence he wore his confident look and said, "Yes, Grand Magus. I am willing."

The grand magus' smile widened at Emery's bold words and quickly chose another opponent for him.

First, Emery fought with the Jade Flash, Aiko. She had reached the same level as Lodos, successfully forming three of the nine pillars. However, instead of learning new skills like what Lodos did, she apparently chose to grind her superiority in speed even further.

She cast [Greater Windwalk] on herself, a tier 5 speed enhancer spell. Combined with her tier 4 water spell [Slipstream], which also improved her speed considerably, her speed wasn't only fast, but had also become hard to predict.

Unfortunately, it wasn't just her who improved. Thanks to Emery's improved [Spirit Reading], he could sense it. It took a bit of time for him to get used to his newfound 900 spirit force to feel the fabric of space that shook because of Aiko speed.

After a few undodgeable attacks, finally Emery was able to predict her movement and with his powerful restraint spell [Shadow Binding Root], the Jade Flash quickly discovered her mobility was greatly impeded.

It took her only one misstep for Emery to land a decisive blow and defeat her.

The second opponent Emery fought was Micah, the young master of a prominent family who was a middle stage rank 9 acolyte with four pillars formed. But unexpectedly, Emery was surprised to sense that the other party was anxious when fighting him.

It seemed the blue-haired acolyte couldn't accept the possibility of more defeats, hence he only went with defense through the entire fight. He probably hoped Emery would waste his spirit force on attacking, only to no avail and be defeated.

Emery had to admit that Micah's famous spell [Frozen Crystal] was certainly much stronger, especially when faced against magic attacks. He could sense that even his strongest offensive spell [Dark Matter] would not be enough to break through his opponent's defense.

However, that did not mean Emery had no other way. He knew that in order to defeat Micah, he needed to use his advantage in battle power. Therefore, he used the [Immortal Gate - stage 5] and thanks to the existence of the [Beast Pendant], Emery wasn't hesitant to use his second stage [Fey Transformation].

The battle power he received from them was enough to blast the shield apart. However, it wasn't because of him that he won. Rather, it was Micah himself. Apparently, his fear of the wolf that beat him savagely at last year's game made him lose his calm and therefore he lost the battle.

"Emery Ambrose won!" said Magus Rommy for the third time today.

The others can't help but feel that Emery has won easily. In reality,? both fights were actually very tricky and Emery had quite a bit of difficulty fighting them.

Grand Magus Silas looked even more amused because of the two fights. He then said, "One more!"

Emery took a deep breath, calming his mind and his gasping breath, as this time he needed to fight against the strongest one in the class, Orycon.

Chapter 609 - Combat Specialist

Orycon was one of the opponents Emery had defeated at the academy's second game. When they fought, he was merely one of the many elite acolytes, however this time, after three years, he returned as an acolyte that was one level above all the others in the class.

Right now, Orycon was a rank 9 acolyte with five pillars already formed. It meant he was already halfway across rank 9 with around 750 to 800 spirit force.

Although Emery may have higher spirit force points, he knew full well these numbers could not define the outcome in a duel, especially considering his opponent was a combat specialist.

The huge acolyte swung his massive two meters long blade, creating the sound of whizzing in the air, and said.

"I would rather fight you in your prime condition. If you need time to prepare, I will wait."

Emery had to admit, the last three fights had consumed much of his stamina. Hence, he decided to take the offer. He sat in a lotus position, closed his eyes and cast [Nature's Grasp].

Little dots of light appeared all around him, but he was a little surprised to find out he was unable to absorb the surrounding energy as much and as efficiently as he could on Earth. The only explanation he could come up with at the moment was the speed has something to do with Gaia's existence.

As Emery started healing himself, however, the grand magus spectating the fight huffed, seemingly unhappy. "We don't have that much time, ten minutes is all you get!"

10 minutes was barely enough for Emery to heal himself to full condition. He could not waste even one second.

When the ten minutes were up, Orycon opened his storage ring, took out two more blades, and swung each of them around before finally choosing one. As he chose a broadsword emblazoned with runes, he turned to look at Emery and asked.

"I will be using my tier 4 broadsword, do you have a tier 4 sword?"

Orycon knew as a combat specialist, a huge part of the battle would be decided by the quality of weapons, hence he asked. Emery only had his tier 3 sword given by Magus Xion, but it was made with materials that could match a tier 4 weapon. Other than that, he also had his tier 3 moon dagger. He decided to accept the fight's condition as it was.

Emery and Orycon took their fighting stance and the crowds cheered in excitement. Everyone was excited to see the upcoming battle, especially Thrax, as he himself really wished he could taste the large acolyte's sword.

Just like before, Magus Rommy signaled the start of the fight and Orycon quickly cast his tier 4 lightning spell buff: [Energize].

Sparks of lightning filled his body with electrical energy, as his speed and strength multiplied.

There was no way Emery could afford to underestimate this acolyte. Despite some difference in their battle stats, one full powered smash from Orycon could destroy Micah's crystal form and match his speed, meaning Orycon's current strength was equal to the combined might of his [Immortal Gate] and Second Stage Fey Formation, possibly even more.

When he saw Orycon's buffing spell, he quickly used his own buff spell as well.

[Immortal Gate: Stage 5]

[Battle power increased by 36 points]

[Fey transformation stage one]

[Battle power increased by 10 points]

[Battle power 146]

Emery focused his partial transformation onto his arms and feet. They transformed into massive, clawed limbs covered in gray fur. The partial transformation increased his speed and the strength of each swing he made.

Now, Emery was ready to fight the huge man.

CLANK!

Both dashed forward and swung their weapons with all their might, the clash of their swords loud enough to pierce the crowds' ears and threw sparks of fire all around. Right as they collided, both were thrown back around three steps. However, Emery could feel his left hand was trembling so hard he almost lost his grip on his own weapon.

In the first clash in a battle of pure strength, Emery knew he lost. If he wanted to win, he would need an extra boost. Hence, he decided to use his [Battle Howl].

[Battle power has increased by 10]

[Battle power 156]

Now, he was more confident, so he charged forward one more time, as he grasp the balck sword tightly

Clank!! Clank!! Clankk!!

Each of Orycon's swings was loaded with enough power to stagger him. The fourth swing was too fast and strong for Emery to parry. He tried to use [Blink] and dodge, but when he reappeared, a wound had opened on his shoulder, dripping with a bit of blood.

That was their second clash and Emery still lost in power and speed. The acolyte in front of him was an expert swordsman, his skills shone through how none of his movements were wasted, how his swings were loaded with just enough power to push Emery back.

Orycon seemed to enjoy their battle, the huge man charged forward one more time. It forced Emery to cast [Granite Skin] to block some of the attacks that his swordplay or [Blink] could not dodge.

This time it was clear Emery was cornered, as he could not break Orycon's sword defense.

As moments passed by, it became increasingly clear Emery would not last with his current tactic. He started using his other hand to cast spells to help him.

The moment he decided to do so, his dual core started to thrum and brim with power. He concentrated while dodging Orycon's attacks, aiming to cast his most dependable spell.

[Shadow Root Binding]

A dozen black roots broke from the ground and moved fiercely like nature snakes, helping him attack the huge acolyte together.

Swishhh!! Slasshhh!!

Orycon was able to cut Emery's dark roots into pieces easily with each swing of his sword, but Emery did not stay idle. He kept on slashing, while the roots moved on their own accord. With the combined power of the spell and his sword techniques, Emery was able to continuously stop him.

Every single student in the class watched with eyes full of amazement in the fight. Emery was slowly gaining ground against the huge man; eventually, the roots started to cover the massive acolyte.

Orycon raised his broadsword up and suddenly thunder from above struck him creating a large blast that blew up all the roots around him, including Emery who was thrown away. As sparks ran through his body, Emery groaned in pain.

The man slowly walked out of the smoke, absolutely unscathed. He raised his sword toward Emery and said "Again!"

Chapter 610 - Sword Techniques

Swisshh!! Swisshh!!

The sound of air being sliced could be heard, as the huge blade danced relentlessly in the air. Orycon swung that heavy-looking sword with ease, as if it was as light as a feather.

Emery didn't have the time to appreciate the extraordinary prowess of the other party, as he could see another swing was already heading towards him.

He immediately shifted his body to the side to dodge the sword, as he didn't have enough time to cast [Blink]. A droplet of sweat unknowingly rolled down his forehead when he saw the sword sweep past him.

Immediately after, he cast [Blink] and appeared a distance away. However, Orycon seemed to have expected this as he immediately gave chase to him and swung his sword once again.

Emery gritted his teeth and spun his body to dodge the diagonal slash aimed at his shoulder, using the maximum acceleration his body could exert. Afterward, he used [Blink] behind Orycon and tried to retaliate, only to be nullified by the other party.

This sequence of actions went on for some time, where Emery dodged Orycon's attacks with his speed and [Blink], while also continuously trying to attack the latter.

In fact, the huge acolyte was not only stronger or faster than he looked. If one were to pay close attention to him, they would realize there was no waste in his every move and action: everything he did was concise and to the point, making his approach efficient beyond belief.

When Emery managed to move five steps away, the man would proceed to catch on within three steps.

Emery cast another [Blink] after turning his body to the side to avoid Orycon's thrust. This time, he chose to appear a lot further away to give him some leeway to catch his breath.

This kind of continuous, fast-paced fight where he was overwhelmed was a little too much for Emery to take. He badly needed a moment of respite.

Currently, Orycon was fifty meters away from Emery and should be unable to attack the latter. But it was clear the distance between them didn't affect him, as he smashed his broadsword to the ground and Emery could see a bolt of lightning charging toward him while tearing the ground deep in the process.

It was fast, but still manageable for Emery, as he quickly moved out of the way. But even though he managed to dodge it, the residual sparks managed to make their way to him. He could feel the numbness sensation as the attack hit him.

[Nature Blessing]

Emery quickly cast the spell. It took him a few seconds to push the lightning out of his body, which proved how fearsome it was. On the other hand, Orycon stood motionless where he was, seemingly having no intention to chase after Emery again.

He then suddenly opened his mouth.

"I have shown you some examples of my [Nine Thunder Sword Skill]. If you're still planning to keep running, you'd better give up right now!"

Emery was silent. He took a deep breath after he finally expelled all the lightning energy coursing the energy and began to think.

The man was faster and stronger than him. In addition, his swordsmanship was superb. Emery reckoned the only way for him to be able to overpower the other party was to use his third stage of [Fey Transformation]: the shaman form.

The boost the shaman form provided should give him enough battle power to match Orycon's heavy swing as well as increase his [Blink] spell casting speed. The additional magic resistance would certainly be very helpful in resisting the other party's lightning.

However, Emery decided to take out his [Moon Dagger] instead.

What Emery did quickly made Orycon laugh. "Alright... If that's what you wish!"

Orycon tightened his grip on his sword and dashed towards Emery brandishing it. On the other hand, Emery unexpectedly chose to do the same.

Everyone watched with bated breath as the two battling figures swiftly approached each other and finally clashed.

Clankkk!!! Clank!!!

Quickly, it became the same story all over again with Emery being pushed to and fro, forced into defense by Orycon's storm-like attacks. The other acolytes who saw this started to sneer at Emery, mocking him for being so arrogant and thinking that he could beat Orycon in his preferred game.

If Emery could hear what these people were thinking, he would definitely just shake his head in response. Sure, he could definitely give Orycon a run for his money if he utilized his trump cards. But is it worth it?

For him, there was no need to do so - exposing his real strength that is. There was no real benefit for himself to win the fight using shaman form. This was just practice, after all.

Even so, Emery planned to use this opportunity to improve himself even further. It was an opportunity to use Orycon as a grindstone for his own swordsmanship, polishing his still imperfect Dao divine sword techniques.

Clank!! Clankk!!!

By now, he understood that using continuous [Blink] to escape Orycon's attack wouldn't be enough. He had to control the flow of the battle.

Orycon was stronger and faster, hence he bravely attempted to carry out his very bold and near-insane idea. With the Dao focused on the balance, Emery tried to neutralize the former's heavy attacks with soft parry, while negating his speed with slower pace.

Swwiishhh!! Swiisshh!! Splaattt!!!

Blood splattered from Emery's chest as he miscalculated Orycon's moves, causing the latter to successfully land a hit.

Seeing that, Orycon shouted in disbelief. "What are you doing?! Do you wish to die?!"

He couldn't imagine what Emery was trying to do and he didn't want to accidentally kill him for a stupid reason like this. However, the sparr still continues with Emery's weird techniques.

Clank!! Clank!!

The other acolytes, even Thrax, started to panic. "Since when did he become so suicidal?"

Clankk!! Clankk!!!

Emery ignored the growing noises around him as he focused his entire concentration on what he was trying to do. He knew there were no shortcuts to perfect his skill, so he gave his best to test his understanding of the Dao Divine and further improve it.

Clank!!? Clankk!!

Slowly but surely, what Emery was trying to do unwittingly changed the pace of the battle.

"What sword technique is this!"

Orycon also seemed to be aware of what his opponent was trying to do. His face gradually turned serious when he realized whatever Emery did was extraordinary.

Gradually the huge acolyte felt his heavy swing were absorbed by Emery's sword as if hitting mud instead of a sword and Emery gradually discovered he could predict the amount of strength Orycon used for each swing of his sword.

In trance, he proceeded to parry one of them with just enough strength to tilt the blade.

Then, he immediately released the control he had and utilized his as well as Orycon's force in a seemingly inexplicable way, sending the sword back to its user.

Spallttt!!!

Orycon's sword was flung away by Emery's action and caused the former to receive a wound. This time, it was Orycon who got to bleed.

Unexpectedly, the huge acolyte laughed. "Hahaha!! Amazing!"

The two, or rather, Orycon immediately resumed the clash. They drew close to each other and traded dozens of attacks against each other. The exchange between the two individuals was fierce and intense.

As time passed on, Emery couldn't help but be amazed by his opponent. Orycon really deserved to be called a genius in the art of sword. It didn't take long for the man to start changing and modifying his moves to counter his attacks.

Emery couldn't lie: although tiring, he really enjoyed this fight. He received a few cuts here and there as a consequence of his choice, but he did manage to repeat what he had done earlier.

There was only one thing Emery had yet to achieve. He still couldn't understand how exactly Orycon moved, how he could easily dodge and close in on him with a few simple-looking steps.

Unfortunately, he wasn't given the chance to dig further as Grand Magus Silas suddenly shouted.

"That's enough! We don't have all day!"

The two people who were fighting immediately stopped their steps. They were both gasping for air, but everyone could see the satisfied smiles on both of their faces.

Orycon approached Emery and extended his hand. "You won this round, but this is not yet over! I expect a rematch!"

Emery took the hand and shook it with a smile. "Of course."

All of the class 7 elites realized Emery, a lower realm acolyte, had taken the title of the strongest in the class again. Unknown to Emery, everyone in the class was burned with the motivation to grow stronger as they stared at him.

Grand Magus Silas who saw the situation inwardly smiled and nodded in satisfaction. Outwardly, he maintained his serious expression and opened his mouth.

"Now, I will brief you all on what is to be expected this year at the academy."