

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 151 - Challenge

The arena's doors opened slowly and the students outside walked towards the 150 combat class students that stood around nervously, ambitious, or full of fighting spirit.

However, all of them had something particular in common, they were expectant to the following challenges as the large mass of students that walked inside spread in order to look out for a suitable pray.

Jason estimated that there were at least 400 students as of now and probably even more that would follow soon.

Nevertheless even these 400 students were more than enough for everyone within the special combat class to fight two times with 100 students that had to fight three times if they were challenged.

The only thing that prevented a large number of students to challenge a single special combat seat, was the recuperation period of 30 minutes after each challenge.

With that and the knowledge that each special combat class lesson was scheduled for 4 hours, one could at most challenge a single student 7 times within a day.

If a student was heavily injured within the previous fight it was only fair for the student to be healed and to receive some recuperation time, as weakening someone and letting the next one occupy the special combat challenger would take place otherwise.

As such, the previously stated measure was taken to prevent students from paying others to plan out their own advancement into the special combat class in order to enter the Big-Three tournament two months later.

While most students from the other affiliated schools walked in, Jason and Seron were talking with each other, not minding the gaze of everyone in their surroundings as a few students walked straight towards them with angered expressions, as they voiced out.

"Aren't you two a little bit relaxed for your shallow mana core rank? A 5th and a 3RD Adept rank dare to take the special combat class seats...." He was obviously enraged causing Jason and Seron to look at each other visibly confused as they returned their gaze back to the vexed students.

It looked as if they didn't mind their anger and as Jason and Seron were about to continue their chat a few students shouted out

"I'll challenge you" and their voices rang out simultaneously.

Jason looked at the students in front of them, nonchalantly saying

"Just tell me who's going first...as for the others...you guys should wait patiently" as he turned to Seron once again, who only nodded in agreement.

The students were fuming in rage while their red heads were almost puffing in anger as a certain 1.8-meter tall youth walked out of the group.

"I'll challenge you, goldie" The youth said and he obviously meant Jason with `goldie`, causing Jason to lift his eyebrows.

He had never been called goldie by someone but from the tone of the youth's voice, it was definitely not a compliment.

Scanning his opponent's mana core size with his mana eyes in addition to the transmuted mana, something particular jumped into his view, causing him to smile lightly.

"What are you smiling at? Do you think it's funny to lose your seat on the first day? HAHAHA" The tall youth said and Jason could only shake his head in denial.

Somehow everything seemed like a cliché to Jason as he had read too many novels with his mother, causing him to cringe, every time he heard someone boasting about their strength.

What if the tall youth was an 8th Adept rank? Was it important for Jason? Nope!

"If you say so," Jason said, ignoring his provocation as he entered the combat ring, waiting for the tall youth to enter it.

"Ready?" Jason asked impatiently before he activated the AI's countdown when the youth nodded his head.

Summoning a great battle-axe, the tall youth was already ready to charge at him, only waiting for the countdown to go down when Jason unsheathed his two daggers.

Compared to before, Jason began to notice that he required new equipment to fight stronger beasts, as his current daggers were unable to penetrate through evolved ranked beast hide which was especially bad, as he was already at the 7th Adept rank from his mana core size and physique, while his mana core rank was only at the 3rd Adept rank.

Seeing the great battle-axe in his opponent's hands, Jason smiled as he also knew that his opponent didn't own transmuted mana, indicating him having a physical soul, that solely enhanced his physique.

As such, Jason calculated that his opponent had to have a low expert rank physique, which could bring him a huge problem if he was the same as a month ago.

Jason fought often with Greg over the last month and even though Greg's physique was at the 9th Adept rank, thanks to his high physical amplification from his soul, Jason figured out an essential weakness physical souls innately had.

As long as one's physique was much higher compared to the opponent's physique, it was extremely easy to overwhelm one, but once one was able to fight back with either their physique or drag the fight on by using an elemental affinity, it would become extremely difficult for someone with a physical soul world to win against his opponent.

Having an affinity was a huge advantage and so was a high physique, as long as one could overwhelm the opponent with it.

Greg's physique for example was weaker than Jason's affinities and it was possible for him to dominate the fight with it.

Additionally, Greg's amplification from Taurus the reinforced horned bull was mostly towards strength and endurance instead of agility and the same type of physical amplification seemed to be in front of Jason right now.

The youth in front of him was bulky and not even slightly athletic and it would wonder Jason if he could reach an astronomical speed.

And even if the tall youth was faster than him, he still had his affinities left which increased his confidence by a huge margin.

Smiling at his opponent, the tall youth could barely hold back himself, as the AI initiated the start of the spar, as he pushed himself from the ground with all the strength behind his low expert physique.

The difference between both of them couldn't be considered large and with a single push from the ground, the tall youth crossed the distance of a few meters.

Even if Jason predicted the tall bulky youth to be fast, his speed astonished him..

Nevertheless, Jason remained extremely calm and if one were to scan him carefully, one would be able to see a tiny black flame within his right eye spreading a hellish heat, covered by the distinct golden color, while his left eye released a terrifying cold.

Smiling at the charging youth with the battle-axe in his hands Jason's eyes turned cold as he released his mana.

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Chapter 152 - Burning Icicles

Releasing more than half of his mana at once, Jason's eyes radiated a terrifying heat and cold at the same time as a dozen tiny black flames manifested around him.

Shaping them into spikes, Jason enveloped them into mana icicles before his gazes turned to the tall youth who charged at him with his full speed.

Doing multiple things at the same time was extremely difficult, even for Jason who refined his brain and was more proficient in multitasking than others, but he still froze the floor five meters in front of him, turning it into a completely smooth surface.

This could be seen as a small obstacle but rather than doing it obviously, the focus of most students which included the tall bulky youth that charged at him, was mostly at the icicles with burning black flames within.

Ice and fire were opposite elements and more than a little bit hostile to each other as the hot flame would melt ice and in return, the produced water would extinguish the flames.

Seeing dozens of icicles enveloping a black flame, everyone was shocked as not a single drop of water fell to the ground, indicating a melting process as their eyes widened.

Jason only smiled lightly, as this was one of his most recent achievements.

As both of the affinities belonged to him, Jason could regulate them however he wanted with enough proficiency which included the heat of his black origin flame.

More importantly, however, was that Jason could even set a rough timer for his black origin flame to explode with a terrifying heat, he didn't know before.

He still had to supply both the tiny flames and the icicles with mana, but the consumption was not that big, thanks to the flames' low heat, with slowed down the melting process.

Because the black origin flame was his soulbond, he could control it much easier than any affinity, and transmitting orders felt as if his black fire affinity didn't have to be controlled by him but rather the origin flame within him.

Ordering it to have an extremely low temperature within the icicles, everything seemed magical but at the same time, it was entirely useless and only decoration, if nothing changed.

Smiling cunningly, Jason distracted the tall youth from the smooth ground in front of him, as he shot out two of his dozen black flame icicles at him.

Now Jason's timing had to be perfect, as he focused his attention on the two icicles he shoots towards the tall youth.

The icicles' speed wasn't excessively fast but that wasn't even their task, as such, it was entirely useless for them to reach a high velocity when they entered the range of one meter around the tall youth.

Cleaving down with his battle-axe, Jason found the perfect timing, as he ordered the origin flame to increase the flame's heat to the highest possible before he simultaneously changed to the ice affinity in order to force the icicles to explode in front of the tall youth.

Thousands of ice splitters flew through the whole arena, covering the view of the tall youth as his axe cleaved down without hitting anything.

Rather than that, the tall youth suddenly noticed, goosebumps covering his whole body as a terrifying heat spread from the position the exploded icicles previously exploded as a wall of fire could be seen only a few dozen centimeters away from him.

The tall youth could only decelerate his steps in order to cleave at the firewall in front of him to charge towards his opponent or change his direction with his current speed, as two icicles to the tall youths left and right side appeared, exploding at an even closer range to him.

The heat that spread through the combat arena approached him and burned the hair on his arm, as he cleaved down enraged.

He couldn't allow a 3rd Adept rank to play with him!!! Where was his pride?!

The tall youth wanted to win more than anything but the current situation didn't go as planned, causing him to frown deeply.

Jason meanwhile continued to shoot the remaining six icicles at the position the former icicles with the black origin flames exploded in order to cover the view of the tall bulky youth for some more, as he exerted his weightless step technique to his fullest potential.

Over the last month, his weightless step movement technique reached profound mastery and his speed increased by roughly 40% with it, as he charged at the black firewall that enveloped the tall bulky youth.

Due to his mana eyes, he could perfectly see what was going on behind the black firewall and what he saw caused him to smile oddly.

The tall youth cleaved at the firewall in front of him only to notice another batch of icicles exploding, exactly where he cleaved at, constructing another wall of fire.

Completely enraged, the tall bulky youth pondered if he should just charge through the firewall, before he immediately disregarded the suicidal move, as he pulled his battle-axe back in order to cleave at all firewalls at the same time with a spinning cleave.

Seeing this through the firewall, Jason smiled as he reached the tall youth's side.

Cleaving down, the tall youth severed the firewall, extinguishing them, as Jason canceled his mana supply completely at the same time before he enveloped his lower body with a mana membrane, while circulating it additionally in his lower body, exerting the weightless step once again.

To fight with a battle-axe, every attack had to hit the target as the combat style with heavy weapons was mostly focused on inflicting heavy injuries with a single strike and not clashing with someone hundreds of times within a minute.

As such, some time was required to pull back the heavy battle-axe and Jason used this period of time to charge at the unaware tall youth who looked straightforward, only to notice that Jason vanished from his previous position.

Sensing something amiss, he wanted to pull back his battle-axe faster, as he pondered if he should abandon his weapon when something cold grazed his neck.

[Victory, Jason Stella] could only be heard, when Jason's dagger laid upon the tall youth's neck, indicating his death sentence if this spar was a life and death fight.

For Seron and other students of the 6th affiliated special combat class, Jason's crafty tactics were already known to a certain extent, but they were still shocked to see the icicles enveloping his black fire affinity, which was something only someone with an extremely high fire affinity proficiency could do.

They knew Jason fought mostly with tactics that were mostly focused on deception and other facts, causing them to lose even though they knew about it, but now complete strangers fought against him and they were unaware of Jason's craftiness who overwhelmed his opponent with his strategy and high-affinity proficiency.

Even though these students didn't know how a 3rd Adept rank was able to enter the special combat class before, now they knew and they somehow pitied the 8th Adept rank that dared to fight Jason head-on.

Everyone could roughly estimate that both of Jason's affinities were most likely at the low-evolved rank, if not even higher, indicating him having formed a soulbond with two evolved beasts, which was shocking.

Nobody would do something like that as wasting two spots for evolved beasts was extremely wasteful and they wondered why this black-haired youth with golden eyes did something like that, as a shocking idea formed in their minds.

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Chapter 153 - This Is Boring

Many different terrifying ideas formed within the minds of the other affiliated students that observed Jason's battle against the tall youth, as one silently mumbled to himself.

"How large is his soul?" which everyone heard because the surrounding was dead-silent and the other youths all around wondered the same as they began to gossip amongst each other.

"Do you think his physique and mana core size already reached the 6th Adept rank with two evolved ranked beasts as soulbond?"

"What about his soul... why is he even at the 6th affiliated school with an extremely large soul world in addition to contract two evolved ranked beasts indicating a soul energy of more than 200... "

"Are we some kind of joke or why is someone like this not at the main Vanguard school?"

Jason took a few deep breaths in order to calm down his messy mind as it was extremely difficult to multitask so many things at the same time.

Not only did he have to supply everything with his mana, but he also had to regulate the perfect timing for the icicles to explode, while exerting his weightless step in order to rush to the tall youths' side, only for him to eliminate him at the perfect moment.

The tall youth stared at him with shock, as Jason sheathed his daggers once again, only to smile apologetically towards the tall youth.

"Sorry for the inconvenience. Next time don't be so arrogant without having accumulated enough information about your opponent."

Without trying to act arrogant, Jason added silently

"You could have picked someone easier in order to obtain a special combat class spot"

Ignoring the dumbfounded expression on the tall youth, he walked back to Seron, who congratulated him disgruntled.

Seron was confident in his own strength, as he reached the physique and mana core size of a 7th Adept while being innately at the 5th Adept rank, which could already be considered good.

In addition to that, he was also able to defeat someone with a physique and mana core size at the 9th Adept rank with enough mana injections, but Jason's feat looked extremely easy from the outside.

Even though Seron knew that it was an extremely difficult accomplishment, the elegance and fineness Jason showcased in addition to the astonishing feat of generating icicles with flames within was even more shocking and difficult at the same time.

Seron's fight mostly relied on his physique and the detailed usage of his mana to enhance his physique at certain body parts in order to ensure his victory against higher-ranked opponents, but his fights felt and looked rather shabby which wasn't the case with Jason's fights.

As an heir of the Gier family, he had to hold on to the reputation of the family and fight gloriously but instead of that, he was on Astrix island, a small punny island, fighting against higher-ranked students while feeling like a beggar.

It was extremely annoying and even more frustrating was Jason's combat prowess that was comparable to his own if not even higher, while he was two whole levels lower than he himself.

His desire to become stronger increased every time he saw Jason fight and Seron was even more motivated, as he received a challenge from a 7th Adept rank.

Accepting the challenge, Seron's fighting spirit soared and Jason felt the indestructible will to win from Seron, causing him to ignore the onlooking gazes that tried to see through him.

Looking at the combat arena, where Seron was inside, Jason's mana eyes scanned through the challenger as he noticed his mana core size at the 9th Adept rank, while he had a water affinity.

Seron's mana core size was at the 7th Adept rank but Jason doubted that Seron would lose as his mana sensitivity and minute details were extremely well defined in addition to his soulbonds affinity [mana injection] which were able to disregard the mana core size of his opponent.

The only difference between Seron and his opponent was, that his opponent's physique was most likely higher in addition to the water affinity.

Among the most basic affinities, the water affinity was seen as the weakest followed by earth, wind, and fire, but Jason didn't agree with such statements.

Every affinity had its strengths and flaws and the wielder was the most problematic fact one had to consider when judging over the might of a certain affinity.

For example, if Jason with a high comprehension would have a water affinity, he would practice it multiple hours a day to figure out all of its characteristics before he would try to find ways to attack his opponent with lethal attacks.

Water affinities were seen as rather weak because of their lacking attack and defensive abilities compared to the fire and earth affinity, while a wind affinity could increase one's speed by a large margin.

Nevertheless, Jason liked the water affinity due to multiple reasons more than the earth affinity for example and he was expectant to see how Seron's opponent would use his affinity in order to fight against Seron's aggressive strategic advancement, causing a high amount of pressure, Jason already witnessed hundreds of times.

When the AI initiated the start of the fight, Jason's mana eyes noticed that Seron immediately injected himself with three mana injections as the mana fluctuations around Seron heightened to a devastating degree, as Seron's sword began to glow white.

'Huh?' Jason questioned in his mind as he noticed Seron's special sword ray Seron used against him a month ago.

This attack was at least at the evolved rank and Jason's eyes widened in expectations to see how Seron's opponent would defend against the blade ray, as he continued watching.

While Seron gathered his mana within the sword, his opponent wasn't standing idle as he manifested a five-meter-long spear out of thin air, with compressed mana, as he compressed it, even more, forcing it into shape.

'So a head-on clash, huh?' he wondered.

From Jason's estimation, both attacks would disintegrate upon clashing with each other which meant the following sequences were equally important.

However, one rather disappointing fact was, that Seron's opponent had used more than half of his mana in order to form the compressed evolved ranked water spear, which was a waste of precious mana during a fight, while Seron only used his three mana injections, without a single drop of his own mana.

Releasing his blade ray with a horizontal slash, Seron already noticed that the water spear of his opponent would most likely shatter his own sword ray causing him to frown lightly as the water spear shoot out with a terrifying velocity.

Upon clashing with each other in the center of the combat arena, a loud *BOOM* resounded in the surrounding, as a fog wall spread through the combat ring, covering everything within for the spectating students.

Only Jason with his mana eyes could see what was happening within as he suddenly turned away from the arena in order to caress Artemis who nagged him all the time, demanding more pats.

"This is boring" Jason mumbled, causing the surrounding students to look at him as if he was stupid.

How could such a battle be boring, their attacks were magnificent and everyone was expecting what happened within.

There was no way for them to know that Seron exerted his floating sky movement technique immediately after the fog spread through the small arena in order to finish off his opponent, who was already extremely exhausted.

With his spear, the water affinity user tried to fight Seron with his physique, but due to Seron's advantage with his whole mana pool and additional mana injections left, he could finish off his opponent rather easily.

In the end, the water affinity user disappointed Jason, causing him to voice out his opinion.

The AI issued the obvious outcome [Victory, Seron Gier] and Jason focused more on Artemis than the astonished youths around him that once again gossiped around.

'Are these students here to challenge us or play around and gossip? Do they believe this is some kind of vacation?' Jason thought in his mind, not being able to comprehend the thoughts of his 14 to 15-year-old peers.

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 154 - Jump Into The Lake

The first day with all Vanguard schools challenging each other went smoother than Jason thought and the `first wave` as their teacher called it, was extremely boring for him and Seron.

At the end of the school day, both he and Seron were only challenged one time before the rest of the challengers separated themselves in order to find someone else to challenge.

Jason's combat prowess was unknown for them but his two elemental affinities had to be at the evolved rank from two soulbonds in addition to his high proficiency with both of them.

As such Jason was a bad pick for anyone without a perfect elemental advantage or a great physique in order to overwhelm Jason with that.

Seron's combat prowess was also odd but more easily to estimate than Jason's as his physique seemed to be roughly at the 7th Adept rank.

What made Seron's combat prowess estimation extremely difficult was the mysterious mana fluctuations within his body which increased his presence in the combat arena.

With that Seron seemed to have been able to produce an expert-ranked sword ray with enough mana reserves left in his mana pool to finish off his opponent within the thick fog that covered their sight.

In the end, it was a better choice from the surrounding affiliated Vanguard schools to pick other students as their prey in order to obtain a special combat class spot.

Without further ado, Jason and Seron were once again alone.

Both of them were disappointed that nobody else challenged them but it was only logical to pick the easier targets before the stronger ones would venture to them and challenge them and it would most likely only take some time before that would happen.

Jason predicted that the `first wave` was something like the beginning of the storm that allowed the first batch of students to challenge them because he hadn't seen any student from the main school.

It was rather boring, but Jason and Seron decided to observe the battles all around them in order to figure out if there was someone strong enough to threaten them but even that was somewhat disappointing after some time.

As such, they decided to spar against each other without using their affinities and abilities, as their physique and mana core size were roughly at the same rank.

Sparring against each other generated much more pressure as they knew each other's combat style which forced both of them to adjust their own unique combat style once in a while in order to win the sparring.

With that, both Jason and Seron adjusted their fighting style multiple times and increased their combat prowess slowly but steadily.

It was 5 pm when their teacher sent all of them home and Artemis jumped back on his shoulder before they left the school grounds once again.

Even though the first day of their all associated vanguard school challenges was rather disappointing, Jason was expectant towards the future and he knew that the true opponents would only come out in the later game if they couldn't enter a special combat class seat within the main school.

Obtaining a special combat class seat from the main vanguard school was only a matter of pride and not one seat within the affiliated school in addition to the main vanguard school had a single difference, neither advantage nor disadvantage.

But even if Jason was expectant of the future challenges, what was really important for him right now, was meeting his teachers once again after more than a month passed.

There were so many things he wanted to learn and his mind was filled with questions he asked himself when he read the masses of books.

Furthermore, when he forged, brewed, and inscribed for the first time, Jason was extremely dissatisfied with his result, even though the examiners saw that completely different.

Somehow, he thought of himself as a perfectionist with flaws.

Sometimes he wanted to do everything perfectly without anything going wrong, while other times he was perfectly fine with doing the bare minimum.

But the latter didn't apply for the lifestyle occupations, blacksmithing, alchemy, and rune inscribing, which Jason found extremely interesting.

From his first experience, he found out that it was extremely difficult to produce graded equipment as he could barely make something feasible but this difficulty fueled him with the desire for more.

As such the day passed silently with Jason arriving at the Fler's house where Greg sat on the couch with a frustrated and dejected expression, only to jump up enraged.

Greg seemed injured and Jason figured out that his friend seemed to have been defeated during the first day of the special combat class lesson.

Jason already predicted such an outcome and it was already a wonder, that he was able to take a hold on his seat for so long, when he figured out what the 'first wave' his teacher called it, really meant.

Probably all top students challenged the seats of the special combat class from the main Vanguard school and Greg's only advantage was the 9th Adept physique he received thanks to the high soul amplification from his mid-evolved soulbond.

In the end, his physique and above-average combat prowess was the only thing he had and Jason predicted that a similar scenario he himself created while fighting against the tall bulky youth was produced.

He couldn't really help out Greg and he had to find his flaws himself, in order to fix them.

In the end one could even say that Greg was extremely lucky because he had two soul worlds, giving him the opportunity to wield elements while reaching a terrifying amplification to his physique from non-elemental beasts.

Deciding to ignore Greg's chaotic emotions that changed between being angry and sulky, Jason went into his room in order to read the advanced bestarium, before he practiced the Heaven's Hell technique.

After finishing his practice, Jason worked out, washed up, and continued reading for some time before he felt tired.

Sleeping in, with Artemis next to him, Jason felt free, without any worries.

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Waking up early in the morning like everyday, Jason practiced the Heaven's Hell technique, before he worked out once again.

Washing up, Jason met Gabriella and Mark eating breakfast and he sat down with them after greeting them.

Gabriella and Mark were talking about the special combat class challenges, about Malia still being one of the seats after getting challenged a few times, while Greg lost his seat to an elemental affinity user with a mana core size of an Expert rank.

They involved Jason in their discussion by asking him multiple questions about the challenges within the 6th affiliated special combat class, but he couldn't really tell much as he wasn't actually observing many battles with great interest.

Greg and Malia were still absorbing mana, while Jason decided to go to school earlier than normal.

It was only 7 am, when he entered the school grounds and he immediately rushed towards the forest which only third-year students were allowed to venture in.

Jason couldn't really understand why this was the case, but he just decided to ignore this rule, as he saw a large stone arch above a blue shimmering lake.

Without hesitating for a second, Jason covered his whole body in a mana membrane, before he jumped into the lake full of expectations, as his mana eyes detect something.

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 155 - What Happened To...

Jason's mana eyes detected the underground water dome with ease as he dived deeper into the small lake within the forest.

Without him knowing, Shane and Dalia waited for him more since the early morning, equally expectant like Jason, to figure out how far they could go with Jason's talent.

Since Jason accepted their proposal to be their disciple to a certain degree, they were worried and expectant at the same time.

If something happened to Jason, it would be devastating, while his future achievements could change everything, as long as they had enough time to groom him into a strong individual.

It wasn't that they were Saints, but this did not change their opinion about the unfairness within mankind's territory and the dangerous threat coming from the other continents due to the foreign intelligent races.

With Jason's extremely vast soul world, he wouldn't have any limits as long as his soul energy increased which was impossible not to happen as Jason injected the soul energy into the soul world core in order to strengthen its production rate.

Some humans called this "soul energy training", while others simply said "muscles training", because they saw the soul world core as a muscle that had to be trained and strengthened.

Jason almost reached the dome that was enveloped in hundreds or maybe even a thousand runes, as space next to him twisted with an old hand reaching out from within.

Taken aback, Jason took a moment to notice the familiar mana fluctuations as he reached out for the hand, only to be transported a few meters further into the dome.

Due to him being covered in mana, Jason's clothes were still dry and he looked around the extremely large dome once again, before he saw two familiar faces standing behind him.

Standing up, Jason greeted his masters with a radiant smile that was filled with joy, who also greeted him with a smile on their faces.

Shane and Dalia wanted to go inside the small wooden house they built within the dome, as Jason stopped them in their tracks.

"Master! Can we do something else first?" he asked causing Shane and Dalia to turn around with a slightly confused expression

"Artemis, my first soulbond is still above...She didn't want to dive into the water...Shane..Master, can you please take her down with your spatial ability?" Jason asked slightly hesitating, as his master could feel like an errand boy like that, but what wondered him was Dalia suddenly laughing out, while Shane looked at his wife betrayed.

Tearing apart space, Artemis flew suddenly through the small portal that was created before she circled around within the dome's borders, only to squeeze herself on Jason's shoulder once again.

Eyeing the two unfamiliar old humans in front of her, Artemis was extremely shocked to notice that she couldn't feel a single mana particle, radiating from them, which had never happened to her over the last month.

Transmitting her confusion to Jason, he could only smile weirdly, agreeing to her bewilderment.

Not even he himself, with his mana eyes, could really detect much from his masters, except their mana core rank, without being able to identify what mana core size or how much liquefied or solid mana was within their mana core.

The only thing Jason could tell for sure was that Shane was at the rank above the Lord-rank, as he already constructed a prismatic-crystal within his mana core, while Dalia was most likely at the lord stage, even though Jason couldn't exactly tell.

Jason knew that Shane was born more than 250 years ago while Dalia was most likely also 200 years old and with their vast knowledge and high mana core rank, they were most likely humanity's cream of the crop.

Nevertheless, they still had to flee from the rest of humans' peak cultivators as they were similarly strong.

Now, these two powerhouses wanted him to overrun old monsters that were 250 years old with his tender age of 14 years, which Jason found quite ridiculous.

But even so, he was more astonished about Shane and Dalia's reaction, when they saw Artemis.

Coming closer without warning both stood suddenly in front of Jason and he could only stand silently, while Artemis felt her whole body being scanned.

"Is that the snowflake owl???" Shane asked, not believing what he saw right now.

Both of them knew that Jason's soulbond was evolving, but what they saw right now was baffling to put it simply.

Looking at Dalia, Shane could only ask "Do you know what race she is?", only to see Dalia shaking her head with gleaming eyes.

Even though Shane's knowledge was vast, Dalia was much more proficient in beast-logia, the knowledge about beasts.

If Dalia didn't know what kind of beast Artemis was, there was no point in asking anyone else on Astrix or any other Island.

There were most likely only a dozen humans with a wider variety of knowledge about beasts than Dalia and seeing her shaking her head, Shane was shocked but at the same time proud.

'I made the right choice by picking Jason as our disciple!!' Shane told himself as a big smile appeared on his face.

Dalia turned to Jason with curiosity asking.

"What ingredients and materials did you feed her to cause such an evolution? Wasn't she a three-star wild beast before? To evolve from a three-star wild beast to a low-evolved ranked beast is not that easy, as low ranked beasts don't own a high innate endurance towards foreign resources..."

Jason noticed that Dalia's eyes gleaned in curiosity and her desire to know more about Artemis' evolution wonders him, but unfortunately he couldn't really help out much, as he himself didn't know how Artemis evolved like that.

"She gulped down a magical ranked ice affinity magic core and began evolving without previous warning.. I'm also not sure why pitch-black horns grow out of her forehead or what exactly happened"

Sensing the frustration in Jason's eyes, Dalia's curiosity died down as she nodded her head.

"Well, it doesn't matter, as long as everyone is healthy, right?" She said, trying to end the topic with that statement, while her heart hurt deeply because she wanted to figure out more about Artemis.

Without further ado, they went inside in order to sit down at a wooden table that released a high amount of mana.

Previously Jason thought that he would most likely get thrown into practice without wasting much time, but before they began, Dalia prepared tea for Jason, calming down the tension which had accumulated over the last few weeks, before they began to question Jason about various theoretical themes.

This was solely done in order to figure out how much theoretical knowledge Jason memorized over the last month and if he could understand everything he read or if he just learned it without knowing what the words implied.

To their surprise, Jason's memory was excellent and he could name almost everything they wanted while his comprehension lacked behind, which was only obvious.

It was already a wonder, that he could read more than a dozen books with multiple thousand sites of knowledge within a month and memorize the most important points just like that.

Comprehension could follow with practical experiments and now, Shane and Dalia roughly understood how to start their teaching.

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 156 - Verbal Skirmish

Jason figured out that his knowledge was on par with the questions but his understanding lacked behind and he wasn't able to comprehend every situation stated by his masters, which was only reasonable.

If he were able to answer everything after memorizing the content of the dozen books he read over the last month, why would he even need Shane and Dalia as his Artisan masters?

It would be entirely useless and a waste of time.

Nevertheless, his comprehension was good but there was just too much to reconsider with every lifestyle occupation.

Jason understood the main points but concluding some facts was still extremely difficult due to his lack of practice.

Dalia and Shane also figured that out and they decided to focus on these facts on his schedule.

"Jason, you've been reading books about theoretical knowledge over the last few weeks. It would be best if you can come to us every day to teach you more about practical knowledge from all basic-lifestyle occupations.

We know that you don't have to attend the early classes in school, as such it would be even better if you use your free time in the morning to come here." Shane said knowingly.

Jason's free time in the morning was mostly used to increase his proficiency with his affinities but it wouldn't be a problem to reschedule his schedule in order to free his morning.

As such, Jason nodded his head before a thought appeared in his mind.

`Can I practice my black origin flame's proficiency while brewing and refining materials?` He asked himself as he looked at Shane and Dalia, asking the same question.

Dalia chuckled for a moment before she seriously answered

"You can obviously practice the proficiency of your black origin flame while brewing inscription reagents and potions as the control and accuracy of your flame determines the cleansing effect of origin flames.

A single degree difference can change the purity of your herbs and materials by a huge margin.

Maintaining the perfect temperature is taxing and will consume a lot of your focus but with enough practice, you will be proficient with all of it."

Saying so, Jason sighed in relief and he could use most of his remaining time to increase the proficiency of his ice affinity, as long as his fire affinity proficiency increased while learning more about the lifestyle occupations.

Now it was Shane's turn to say something, causing Jason to be slightly disgruntled

"As you already know, I've observed your performance at the school's basic artisan exam and I have to say that you really found a good way to waste materials. Even a newborn would be able to forge a better dagger and inscribing it with runes in order for it to be barely able to reach an acceptable sharpness was the only thing you did almost well.

I wonder if your black origin flame is a normal flame you dyed while trying to only make it look like a special origin flame or the real deal because the impurities you extracted were laughable.

I could do better with normal flames and a decent purifying method and you want me to believe that you have a rare origin flame.

If I didn't know better, I would have believed that you tried to con us with your black origin flame!" Shane finished his speech and looked at Jason disappointed on the outside while he felt slightly sorry on the inside.

He wanted Jason to feel provoked in order to awaken his motivation to work harder.

It would also backfire but it seemed to work as he observed Jason's change in his expression.

Jason felt wronged and couldn't understand Shane, as he only tried to pass the practical artisan exam and nothing more.

Turning slightly red, Jason's anger was apparent and he stood up saying

"I can do better! Just give me another try and you'll see!!

Furthermore, why are you even pulling me down without having me taught anything? The only things you provided were the books only a few days before the exam started.

For me to be able to pass all three lifestyle occupation exams with a single try is already better than almost all of my classmates! I'll do better!"

Jason said slightly louder. He wasn't dumb or naive to believe that Shane would praise him in order for him to grow lazy, but what he said right now was too much for him to endure because he gave his best over the last few weeks without slacking off for a single moment.

It was tiring and hearing Shane's speech provoked him, even though he knew that Shane solely said so in order to provoke him.

Shane was astonished to see Jason's outburst and he wanted to rebuke when Dalia sent him a voice transmission.

`That was too much... Jason is still young and he always gives his best!!`

Hearing this from his wife, Shane remembered that Jason was barely 14 years old, causing him to slap his own forehead.

Shane didn't see Jason as a teenager as he behaved differently most of the time and due to his height and well-developed body in addition to his mature face, he treated him like a young man subconsciously.

This wasn't particularly wrong but Shane forgot that it was important for children to receive praise once in a while, in order for them to understand that their hard work pays off.

Sighing, Shane decided to step back as he cleared his throat.

"I don't want to undermine your achievement, but I know your capabilities and talent are much better than the products you delivered at the school artisan exam.

As such I might have overreacted a little bit... It's only for your good and I want you to strive for the highest possible instead of playing lowkey in order to not attract the attention of stronger individuals.

It might be true that you shouldn't oppose the big clans for the time being but nobody on Astrix will be able to handle me.

I want you to give your best each and every time you do something without having to hold back even a tiny bit."

Listening to Shane, Jason calmed down as he figured out that his master only wanted the best for him.

Having someone to rely on was not something Jason had for the last few years while his mother was not strong enough to protect him from being bullied or anything like that due to her duty at the Cerus family.

As such, Shane's words warmed his heart and Jason smiled at him.

This made Shane uncomfortable while Dalia smiled at Jason brightly.

Not being able to take this situation any longer, Shane changed the subject.

"You don't really have to show me your current capabilities as I could roughly estimate how far you can go at the moment.

To show you how to handle forging, brewing, and inscribing, we want to demonstrate to you a perfect grade-1 weapon, potion, and inscription.

Our confidence in your talent is high and due to your mana eyes, you'll be able to understand everything much easier than most students.

Just imprint our knowledge in your mind and learn it.

Maybe you can even improve it in the future...who knows?"

Shane said with a slight tinge of pride in his voice, as he turned around towards the spiral staircase that led them downwards.

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 157 - Demonstration

Jason was expecting to see how a perfect grade-1 product would look like and how much of a difference it would make, compared to normal grade-1 products.

From his knowledge, Jason knew that perfect products would only be produced with a purity of less than 0.02 left within the cleansed ingredients one used.

To accomplish that, origin flames were the easiest way and Jason wondered, if he would be able to forge or concoct such products in the near future or how long it would take for him to control his black origin flame perfectly, in order to make it possible.

Following Shane with fast steps towards the basement, Jason noticed that there was a hallway with multiple rooms.

Activating his mana eyes everything shone in bright colors, radiating a vast amount of mana, shocking Jason quite a bit.

Comparing the basements radiating mana to the Artisan tower and Beast Pagoda, Jason didn't doubt that the basement mana was a few times higher.

Absorbing mana here would increase his cultivation speed by a few times but it would also most likely destroy the supply, the radiating mana distributed on the plants Jason perceived with his mana eyes within the rooms.

Entering the room at the end of the hallway, a large smithy came into Jason's view and the radiating mana and colors enveloping everything told him that the tools, anvil, and forge were of high quality and extremely valuable.

Shane looked at the forge with pride and Jason figured out that everything within this room was his treasures, causing him to smile lightly.

'In the future, I'll also have my own high-quality equipment!' He told himself with a trace of ambition gleaming in his heart.

Turning around, Shane looked into Jason's eyes before he explained.

"I'll show you a way to remove the impurities from ores with a certain slagging method that is mostly used for grade-1 materials because you are unable to solely use the Origin flame for the impurity extraction for the moment.

Nevertheless, I believe your origin flame will still be helpful to decrease the difficulty of exhaling impurities within all materials which normal flames don't provide.

You will probably have a much easier time to learn how to perfectly purify materials than I had, but that is definitely an advantage!"

Jason nodded his head and he concluded the same thing. If he used an impurity extraction method in addition to his black origin flame, he might be able to have an easier time perfectly purifying each type of ingredient.

As such, Jason listened carefully, as Shane pulled a hammer and a large green shining ore out of his spatial ring.

"We will work with normal Jade-iron ore for now... And the slagging method I mentioned earlier isn't even that difficult for grade-1 materials, even though you have to be slightly careful to maintain the mana conductivity during the whole process."

While heating up the forge, Shane explained and he continued working while explaining

"As you already figured out within your first forging process, you extracted the jade-iron from your ore with a reduction.

To put it simply, Jade-iron ore is extracted from its oxide, by heating it up with charcoal, limestones, and so on.

They react with each other and you will receive Jade-iron.

This Jade-iron will then react with the impurities of the ore in order to form slag, this slag mostly floats over the top of molten ingots, but that's not the case every time, like it more than 300 years ago, before the mana outbreak happened.

Due to the mana injected within everything, the slug can be suppressed within the molten ore, making it difficult to force it outside.

In order to do that, you'll have to inject your own mana within the molten ingot and lead the impurities out of the molten Jade-iron.

This process is extremely difficult for someone with bad mana sensitivity and control, but you shouldn't have a problem with that.

It will drain a lot of your mana to expel all impurities, which is the reason, everyone searches for origin flames because they can force the suppressed purities more easily out of reduced Jade-Iron for example

The heat should increase consistently but never cross a certain temperature where the mana veins within the materials will be damaged.

Your theoretical knowledge is large enough to figure out what temperatures you can go at the highest without damaging the mana veins, as such it shouldn't be much of a problem, as long as your control is precise enough."

The red shining green jade iron mold shone brightly in Jason's eyes as his mana eyes were activated during the whole process and he could perfectly see the impurities or rather slag within the molten Jade-iron.

It blocked the mana veins and forced them to change their path slightly, turning into a small detour, which decreased the efficiency.

In the end, a forged weapon with fewer impurities would have a smoother mana conductivity, which increased not only the mana circulation efficiency of the weapon but also the mana consumption and required time to fully empower the weapon, which could determine over life and death.

Extracting them slowly, Shane wanted to show Jason how it worked, even though he could do it much faster due to his vast amount of mana and proficiency with perfectly purifying low-graded materials.

Imprinting Shane's words and the pictures he saw into his mind, Jason nodded his head, as he noticed something odd, the moment the molten jade iron expelled his last impurity.

Not only was the molten jade iron shining which could be seen by one's bare eyes, but Jason's special mana eyes could also detect a faint black color radiating from the jade iron in front of him, shocking him extremely.

But he couldn't ask a question as Shane once again began his teaching, while he worked on the Jade-iron.

"Now, we have perfectly purified jade-iron, the best of the best quality and you could immediately hammer it into a nice shape in order to forge a weapon.

However, for now, I want you to learn how to perfectly purify ores in order to build a firm foundation."

With that, Shane stopped talking, as he shaped the molten jade iron into a bar, which could be used in the future.

Jason was more than confused by what he saw.

He still listened to Shane, but the color radiating from the jade iron bar in front of him was tormenting his mind.

'Why is it radiating a color now? Because of the cleansed impurities? It has to be so, right?' Jason knew he was right, but there was a nagging feeling within him, telling him that it could also be something different but also the same.

His gut feeling told him that his eyes didn't directly implement the purity of things but rather something above that which included the purity as a sub-category.

But even then, Jason had not a single idea, what it could be and he only shook his head in denial, which was noticed by Shane.

Thinking Jason thought it was impossible for him to do the same, he encouraged him with a few words.

"Maybe your first few tries will end up as failure but that is normal."

"Failure is the mother of success, remember that Jason! Just keep working hard and you'll be able to do it"

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 158 - Failure Is The Mother Of Success

Jason's mind was somewhere else because he still thought about the color radiating from the Jade Iron bar in front of him, but Shane's words made sense, and he doubted there would be someone who could do everything perfectly without failing a single time.

Coming back to his sense, Jason considered it obvious that he would have to learn out of his mistakes, which he would definitely make in the future.

Learning how to make a perfect jade iron bar was the first step Jason had to go in order to become a renowned Blacksmith.

He wasn't sure if he wanted to become a high-ranked blacksmith, alchemist, and runemaster, but it was definitely a huge advantage to know about all lifestyle occupations to a certain degree.

The biggest advantage would be that being a high-ranked lifestyle Artisan could generate a lot of credits and star notes, as long as one was diligent, while his mana control would increase inevitably with his practice.

Furthermore, Jason's trust in weapons and protective garments made by someone else, he didn't even know couldn't be considered extraordinary high.

If a weapon broke during a fight, death was the only outcome and this was not something Jason wanted to happen.

Thanks to his mana eyes, he could see that his tempered jade iron daggers durability worsened with each day passing and it was only fortunately, that he didn't have to go out and hunt beasts right now, otherwise he would purchase a few daggers in order to be rather safe than dead.

But even so, the mid-grade-1 tempered daggers Jason was using at the moment, were not strong enough to pierce through the hide of peak awakened beasts even less evolved ranked beasts.

As such, Jason would have to make himself a weapon as soon as possible, the higher its grade, the better.

It was even possible to make a grade-2 weapon with grade-1 materials as long as it was purified enough, releasing 100% of the material's potential.

Furthermore, with runes inscribed on it, Jason would be able to improve the sharpness and endurance of his weapon, adding another layer towards the weapons he made by himself.

In the end, Jason was confident in producing a pseudo mana weapon with jade iron ore, as long as he had enough time.

With Jade Iron as sole ingredients, it was impossible to forge a mana weapon, while adding certain ores and other ingredients would allow him to forge a mana weapon, which was one of Jason's dreams.

Who wouldn't want to forge a powerful weapon allowing him to increase his combat prowess by a large margin, turning the tides in a battle even though he would normally be considered weaker?

Learning the path of a Blacksmith and runemaster were intertwined with each other as long as Jason wanted to manufacture a mana weapon by himself.

One of Jason's small dreams was to manufacture an extremely strong weapon, allowing him to shatter mountains like he had heard from fairy tales when he was young.

What he was extremely curious about, were soul weapons and how exactly they were crafted and so on, but unfortunately, the theoretical books he received from Shane and Dalia weren't much of a help for this theme.

Jason thought Shane and Dalia wanted to wait with this information for later until he reached a certain threshold, which wasn't that problematic.

Even if he knew how to craft a soul weapon, he would still have to learn the basics.

As such, Jason summoned a small mountain of Jade Iron ores which fell to the ground next to him.

Lifting up a large piece, he went to the extinguished forge, while Shane stepped back without saying anything at all.

Shane would just observe everything carefully and he decided to explain Jason's mistakes after every failure.

He calmed himself down before the black origin flame appeared within his hand.

Leading the flame slowly towards the forge, Jason activated his mana eyes directly in order to follow every step he imprinted into his mind perfectly.

At least that's what Jason wanted to do, as he heated up the flame to the temperature that was required to mold the Jade Iron ore.

Noticing the oxide reacting with the limestone within the forge, Jason took the reduced jade iron out of the forge, before he led his mana within the sizzling hot jade iron mold.

Only a few seconds passed and he was already sweating buckets when he noticed that moving the impurities around was much more difficult than he previously imagined.

Forcefully injecting his mana into the jade iron mold, Jason noticed that the difficulty increased further, the more time passed, while the mold cooled down.

Jason was confused and only noticed that the jade iron was cooled down when he was unable to move the impurities by a single millimeter.

Feeling extremely stupid, Jason cursed to himself 'The impurities can only be moved out of the ore, as long as it's hot enough.'

Heating up the Jade-iron once again, Jason increased his origin flames temperature by a few degrees, as he injected his mana once again into the Jade-iron.

This time it was much easier to lead the impurities out of the jade iron, as he once again increased the heat of his flame with ambition gleaming in his eyes.

Unfortunately, Jason forgot to control his black origin flame and increased the temperature to high, immediately destroying the mana veins within the jade iron, turning it into scrap.

Gazing at the scrap in front of him Jason frowned deeply, as he took out the next jade iron ore, giving it another try because he couldn't accept his failure.

Shane didn't even correct Jason's mistakes as he seemed to have noticed them by himself.

Working with a lower temperature was possible but it would waste a high amount of mana due to the increased difficulty and even more so was it a waste of time.

Meanwhile using a high temperature was much faster but the temperature wasn't allowed to cross a certain range, otherwise, the ore would slowly die due to the damaged mana veins.

In the recent era, everything had mana, and forging a weapon with burned mana veins was even worse than forging a gradeless weapon, as the enhancement of mana within weapons kept them alive.

Injecting mana into one's weapons would not only enhance the weapon's sharpness, endurance, toughness but even more important was the fact that a weapon with high mana conductivity could feel like an extension of the wielder's body.

Having a low mana conductivity meant in return, that one wouldn't feel connected to the weapon, and the smoothness of all kinds of moves was restricted.

Mana veins were everything and the purer they were, the higher was the enhancement from the injected mana which included the feeling of moving one's body instead of a cold weapon used to kill.

Jason was extremely fascinated by all the theoretical knowledge implanted into his mind and he wanted to get to know the feeling of a perfectly purified ingot while comparing it to a rough product in order to figure out more about the significance of purification, as it included everything Jason got to know over the last few months.

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 159 - Small Steps

Hours passed and Jason's clothes were completely drenched in sweat, as he gazed lovingly and with pride at the jade iron bar in front of him.

He forgot how many times he failed to expel the impurities within the jade iron ore and only the small mountain of scrap to his left could tell Jason the answer.

But he didn't care about that as the jade iron bar in front of him shimmered lightly, revealing a faint black color, even if it was only barely visible.

Shane looked at Jason oddly, as he questioned himself if Jason's eyes were made for forging or if the Origin flame he possessed was the cause of his superiority in exhaling the impurities out of the jade iron bar.

Inspecting the Jade iron bar in front of Jason, Shane was baffled to figure out that it was an almost perfectly purified jade iron bar, shocking him extremely.

He was jealous of Jason's mana eyes and origin flame but on the other side, it was a huge advantage for both of them, as Shane reduced the set time to teach Jason how to forge perfectly purified bars from all kinds of ores by a few months in an instant.

Previously he was already sure that Jason would be much faster than him in learning how to perfectly purify bars, due to Jason's mana eyes and origin flame, but he underestimated his disciple's capabilities by a lot.

If he knew that Jason could see every single particle of impurities within the ores, Shane would definitely be enraged and overly jealous, but fortunately, that wasn't the case.

Even Jason was astonished that he could control his flame relatively well after a few hours, as the temperature was relatively stable after experimenting some time.

He decided to use a moderate temperature between the highest possible temperature to purify jade iron and the lowest possible temperature in order to have a small range for "accidents".

More problematic than his control over the black origin flame was rather injecting his mana into the jade iron mold, expelling the impurities forcefully by leading them around without bumping into the mana veins, damaging them.

The detour Jason had to take sometimes was through the whole bar and would take dozens of minutes which he had to concentrate on maintaining the perfect heat of his flame, in addition, to accurately leading around the impurities towards the surface.

Even if the perfectly purified jade iron bar in front of him was his first success, Jason was lucky as the impurities were on the outside and not deep within the jade iron mold, like it was often the case with the other molds he tested.

A single mistake would damage the mana veins, and decrease the efficiency of a perfect purification if it wouldn't even destroy the mana veins within.

In the beginning, Jason was extremely frustrated, but as time passed, he was becoming more relaxed, focused on the task in front of him, without caring about anyone's existence.

It was already lunchtime when Jason finished his first try and he initially wanted to continue practicing even more when he noticed Shane and Dalia behind him with Artemis further away standing on a table.

He hadn't even noticed that Artemis and Dalia followed them and Jason wondered why they were gazing at him so oddly, which was noticed by them.

While Shane shook his head in denial, Dalia laughed, before she told Jason to change his clothes to make himself ready to go to school.

Previously she wanted to teach him about alchemy and how to make perfect inscription solutions, but once she saw Jason's determination while exhaling the impurities within the ores, Dalia was sure that Jason would do fine, even if she teaches him later.

Socializing and being among peers was important in her opinion and She wanted Jason to live his youth as well as possible without any worries, even though they forced a huge responsibility on him.

Jason could follow this responsibility later if he wanted to and it was no use to isolate him from his peers.

Rather than that, it would most likely harm his growth and turn him less humane which was the last thing they wanted to do.

The thing they wanted Jason to do was to lead humanity into a more prosperous time and in order to make that possible, he would need to have superior socializing skills and not social distancing.

Jason himself didn't even know what he wanted, but he just nodded his head.

Artemis was extremely bored throughout the last few hours and spectating what Jason did wasn't really helpful as he repeated the same thing over and over again.

She couldn't even enter Jason's soul world because the soul energy she required was too high for Jason to handle and standing too close to him while he worked was also not helpful, even more than that, it was uncomfortable for her due to the heat she didn't really like.

When Jason glanced at the clock, he stored away his perfectly purified jade iron bar, before he left the forging room and entered a secluded room to change into a new set of clothes.

Shane transported him out of the underwater bubble back to the surface and Artemis flew through the treetop to greet the fresh air and sun that shone on her white plumage.

The sun's heat wasn't uncomfortable for Artemis, only the black flame Jason had, was, even though Artemis didn't know why that was the case.

There was an odd feeling that Jason's black origin flame was the most dangerous existence she had ever felt.

As such, Artemis told herself to either overpower the flame's heat or flee as far as possible in order to never meet this flame ever again.

Unfortunately, as both Artemis and the black origin flame were Jason's soulbond, the latter option wasn't possible and Artemis could only strengthen herself in order to ease her worry against the black origin flame

Outside the small lake, Jason looked around if someone saw him jumping out of twisted space, but Shane had most likely done the same by releasing his mana, easing up his tension.

Running towards the combat arena, Jason figured out that there were more students challenging them than a day before, while their strength increased only slightly.

Unfortunately, there was still not a single student from the main school and most likely not many high-ranked students from the remaining affiliated schools, turning Jason's mood slightly down.

He wanted to have some exciting spars that would cause his adrenaline to soar, but it looked like he would only again be disappointed as not many high-ranked students would challenge him.

There was still some time left before the special combat lesson would start and Jason decided to practice the Heaven's Hell technique to increase his soul energy.

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 160 - High Proficiency

It was already Friday when Jason once again entered the combat arena with hundreds of familiar students standing in front of it and he could only sigh disappointedly as something particular jumped into the corner of his eyes.

A single individual among the more than one hundred students seemed to behave differently than everyone else and Jason's mana eyes immediately detected that he was the real deal.

This caused Jason's sour mood to brighten up and he smiled lightly as he sat down next to Seron who gazed at him weirdly, wondering what was going on in his mind.

Artemis sat on his shoulder like everyday which was already accepted by everyone around them but Jason's composure changed during the last four days, causing the special combat class students to question what he was doing to have such a sudden change in his composure and temperament.

Unbeknownst to Jason, his mana control heightened by a large margin while practicing to perfectly purify all kinds of ores for the last few mornings over multiple hours.

It was not, that Jason's temperament changed or something similar like that but the passive mana gathering from his sub-area he created from the unique splitting mind technique more than a month ago was the most apparent thing he changed.

His passive mana gathering was solely following Jason's orders and throughout the last few days, he changed the characteristics of his mana gathering slightly with his consistently improving mana control as foundation.

With that, not only his mana gathering increased by a lot but also his ability to absorb mana into his mana core.

Considering that his passive mana absorption was already relative fast, Jason was confident in breaking through the next mana core level within the next three weeks, without the need to absorb a single mana particle actively.

Smiling brightly, Jason was proud of his sub-area within the mind he established when he was at the Novice rank, as he entered his soul world to take a look at everything.

Unfortunately, Scorpio was still at the awakened rank with a soul energy of 15 units, as the opportunity to ask Dalia for a purity cleansing didn't come due to Shane's demand for Jason to solely focus on blacksmithing for the time being.

Nevertheless, Scorpio didn't leave the soul world because of its frustration and depression, shocking Jason, as he remembered his second soulbond as an active and a beast full of vigor.

Due to this, it was only obvious what Jason would focus on in the following days, as he couldn't accept Scorpio's depression, even though he had to fight against Shane's stubbornness.

Scorpio was more important to him than Shane and it was the only right thing for Jason to ask Dalia if she could enhance his second soulbond's purity, as long as he provided enough resources, which he possessed thanks to the pseudo-mana grade-3 anvil he sold some time ago.

Other than Scorpio, the black origin flame was still flickering around without having gained a single soul energy unit, which displeased it by a lot, but Jason couldn't afford to supply his third soulbond with soul energy, as long as Artemis couldn't enter his soul world.

Entering the soul world was extremely important for Artemis, even though Jason wasn't sure why that was the case.

Asking her couldn't answer his questions and Jason could only obey disapproving about her behavior.

As of now, his soul energy reached 129.6 units thanks to his five-braided soul energy helix, Jason inserted into his soul world core three times a day without missing a single opportunity.

It would probably take some time for him to fulfill the requirements of all his three soulbonds at once which required around 145 soul energy units at the moment.

However, in the end, he was getting closer with each day passing.

Having reached the requirements to practice the third level of the Heaven's Hell technique, Jason was still hesitant to practice it due to multiple reasons.

First, his time was scarce and he couldn't afford to give his Heaven's Hell practice more of it and second, the focus he would have to provide was said to be multiple times more than before, even if Jason was not sure if this was even possible.

In the end, he had to once again switch to the lower difficulty from the Heaven's Hell technique and he wondered if that was even useful, as his current soul energy increasement could already be considered top-notch.

This caused Jason to ponder for the last few days, but even so, he was still in a good mood with his current achievements.

Shane was satisfied with his results he provided in the morning blacksmithing class and Jason even forgot to join the school's artisan lectures he applied to in the beginning.

In the end, the artisan lectures focused on the most basic methods to forge, brew, and inscribe runes which Jason already figured out thanks to the vast knowledge Shane, Dalia, and the large number of books provided him.

As such it would be a waste of time for him to attend the artisan lectures and Jason wanted to focus on his perfect purified ores he hammered into bars for the time being.

With three days passing since he purified his first jade iron bar, Jason was already much more proficient in it, as he was already aware of the most apparent facts he had to take care of.

His control over mana, the mana sensitivity, accuracy, and even more so his control over the black origin flame were the most important aspects, immediately after the incredible capabilities of his mana eyes, Jason himself was astonished.

In the end, his mana eyes helped him out to hasten up the whole process of perfectly purifying the jade iron ore with time passing and only three days later, Jason could already be considered proficient enough in purifying Jade iron bars from all of their impurities.

Even though Jade iron ore was one of the most basic grade-1 ores and materials, it was still an astonishing feat Jason delivered, causing Shane and Dalia to feel extremely proud of Jason.

Sitting next to Seron, both waited for the students to enter the combat arena, while Jason was still thinking about this one student that stood out according to his mana eyes.

The other special combat class seats arrived only a few minutes after Jason but something seemed off to the two of them, as they heard some gossip.

"Have you guys heard about the Vanguard-main-school dispatching their first students to figure out the strength of the affiliated schools?" a certain 7th Adept rank said.

"Really? Why should they do something like that? It's not like we are at war with them? Can't they just openly challenge us, as we did it?" Another student said and he was apparently one of the other five affiliated vanguard schools that replaced one of their students.

Nobody answered him and most students that were about to talk with him turned away from the later student, causing an awkward atmosphere to spread around the combat arena.

Jason knew that the competitiveness among the students was high but seeing the later student being ignored was still somewhat weird.

Wasn't it normal to replace the weaker students? If someone didn't like it, just fight back?!