

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 261 - Observance

Their call ended abruptly as the messenger crystal began to crumble a little bit, and Jason was sure that it would only hold out at most one or two more calls.

However worse was the turmoil of emotions he created within his masters, which he didn't expect.

'Should I have waited until we meet in person?!' Thinking about this, Jason could only lament that he was sometimes extremely dense, in the worst possible situations at that.

It didn't matter how intelligent Jason thought he was if he acted so dense in front of others....

Sighing deeply, he decided to calm down by refining his body before he practiced the Heaven's Hell technique.

After washing up, Jason slept, expectant what would happen the next day, as the tournament would start.

He was still not sure what exactly his masters planned, but it was already enough for him to know that they were confident to rescue him from the Drake family patriarch's grasp.

That was if he were to appear, which Jason estimated to be unlikely because last time was already a waste of time according to the Drake family patriarch's words.

As such, Jason could just give his best without holding back, which caused him to smile foolishly.

Sleeping soundly, he woke up several hours later, when he heard that Scorpio and Artemis quarreled with each other.

When Artemis told him that his soul world was boring to stay in for a long duration, Jason decided to let them out as long as possible.

This meant that they could stay outside when he was at the Fler's or when he meets up with his masters once again, as walking with them through the city was not really what he or his soulbonds imagined to do.

Getting out of the bed, he stretched his body before caressing his two soulbonds.

Working out, and washing up, Jason felt extremely invigorated as he changed into a clean set of clothes before walking down to the Fler's that were already eating.

Greg and Malia looked like they were nervous, while they only noticed his excitement.

He wanted to have a few good fights and the Big-Three tournament would allow him to see how strong he was compared to his peers, which was something he wanted to figure out.

In the end, Jason would only fight against his strongest peers on Astrix, without considering any other islands, or even Canir.

Nevertheless, it was already enough for him to roughly estimate his strength, which was exactly what he wanted!

As such, he greeted the four sitting in front of their breakfast overjoyed, as he sat down with them.

Taking out a few high-nutrition dishes, he bought in bulk as he needed the nutrition for his Heaven's Hell practice, Jason ate them with a faint smile on his face.

However compared to the Fler's his hunger was still much higher and Jason noticed that his demand for nutrition increased after he practiced the Netherworld's fort body refining technique, which was however not out of his expectations.

Talking with each other, Jason noticed that even though Greg was nervous, whose confidence increased by a large margin after Taurus evolved into a Lesser Minotaur, which benefited both of them greatly.

Smiling lightly, the five of them decided to go to Cyro-City's main arena together, which was situated in the center of the city and used for the Big-Three tournament.

The Big-Three tournament had been split into three different segments in order to group the students, and that surprised Jason in the beginning.

The first few rounds of the tournament would be held at the same time because it would be difficult to cope with the sheer number of contestants and scheduled period, the government wanted the tournament to take place.

As such, each of the three tournaments, also called Basic-, Intermediate-, Advanced- tournament or to make it easy, first-year-, second-year- and third-year-tournament was split into different sections.

With the first rounds at the same time, they would only take a few days, while the rounds afterward would be scheduled over the course of the day.

While the Basic-tournament would be held in the morning, the Intermediate-tournament would start after lunch, with the Advanced tournament in the evening.

This was only, because the first few rounds were less entertaining, while the latter could be completely different and more thrilling.

However, even if the three Big-Three tournaments were divided in the morning, after lunch, and evening section, most citizens would only take a look at the Advanced tournament in the evening because the students' combat prowess was much higher, indicating a more spectacular fight.

Jason didn't really bother if anyone were to watch his fights in the beginning but that changed slightly when he remembered that the Drake family patriarch could see his fights.

It was unlikely but still possible and Jason decided to believe Shane, who told him that he would take care of everything, even if he would feel extremely useless, as a damsel in distress.

Once they finished their breakfast, everyone started their preparations before Mark took out their limousine, which Jason already got to know in Jiro city.

The limousine was extremely fast and luxurious, but compared to a few months ago, he couldn't help but chuckle lightly, as he remembered his naivety and non-existent knowledge he had at that time.

So many things changed over the course of several months and he was only about to start his journey!

Smiling, Jason entered the limousine followed by the others before they started their short trip to Cyro-City's arena.

Arriving in front of the arena, they got out of the hovering limousine as they looked up to the glamorous, yet seemingly profound and tall building which didn't was different from the surrounding building complexes, but Jason could immediately tell a big difference.

The materials used to build the arena radiated thick mana fluctuations and even a faint green-pinkish hue was released from the whole building.

Trying to figure out what this hue meant, Jason and the Fler's immediately felt a vigorous sensation enveloping and infiltrating them, as they entered the arena.

Forced to halt their steps for a second, his eyes widened, as he wondered if this vigorous and energizing sensation was caused by the green-pinkish hue his mana eyes perceived.

'Can I also see something like this?' He wondered, and it really seemed to be the case that he could even the unique effects some materials innately had.

Figuring this out, Jason felt slightly overwhelmed but it was nevertheless something extremely good.

As such, he shook his head and followed the Fler's who already walked ahead.

Splitting up, Malia went to the third floor, while he and Greg had to enter the first floor in order to compete against 3000 other youths.

Gabriella and Mark followed Malia at first, as they wanted to see how she would fare and to support her by cheering, while Greg had Jason to support him.

Entering the arena, both Greg and Jason noticed that more than 1000 youths were already present, split up in their own groups, glaring at each other as if they were arch-enemies.

'Are they gonna kill each other or what?' Jason asked himself, as a few youths suddenly glared at him when he noticed that his mana core was scanned.

While a minority began to laugh out, there were more youths who continued to look at him and Greg carefully.

The latter reaction was uncommon for Jason to receive, but it was exactly the same reaction he would have if he were to see a 6th Adept rank in the Big-Three tournament hall!

If two youths with a 6th and 7th Adept mana core rank were able to get a seat for the Big-Three tournament, they couldn't be taken lightly because they had to defeat other students that were at least at the 9th Adept rank, more likely even 1st Expert rank.

As such, their combat prowess, experience, martial art techniques, and most likely even soulbonds had to be extraordinary.

While they were carefully seized up by several hundred pairs of eyes, only a few dozen laughed out after figuring out their mana core rank, and Jason immediately knew that these few dozen would underestimate him, which was beneficial in his opinion.

In the end, they would figure out that he was not someone to laugh at after he beat them up, and somehow deep within, Jason hoped that he would be matched against one of the few dozen students who laughed.

It was still early and there was more than enough time left until the tournament would start which caused Jason and Greg to sit down in order to prepare their equipment when he noticed that Seron and Milo approached them.

Greeting each other, he introduced Greg to the two and vice versa, before the group of four began to talk lightly with each other without minding the others.

Jason was still relaxed because he doubted that anyone in the first few rounds would become a serious threat to him, which caused the others around him to release their tension subconsciously.

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Chapter 262 - First Round

Once the first arena floor was filled with all 3.000 first-year students, Till arrived at the podium with a few teachers next to him, which caused Jason to look up weirdly.

'Why is he everywhere?!'

With a light snap of his fingers which he enveloped with mana, the whole floor turned quiet within a single moment, as Till stepped forward.

"Hello dear students from the three big schools, my name is Till Greil and I'm the Vanguard school's representative for the Basic-tournament.

First, before anything else, I want to congratulate everyone to have come this far by defeating dozens of other students in order to claim a tournament seat.

However, this doesn't mean that any of you is something special and there are still 2999 other students that came so far, and only the Top 25 will receive any rewards."

Stopping for a moment to take a deep breath, he continued.

"Without wasting any time, I'll announce the rules for the first round! As everyone should know, the Big Three tournament is a combat-oriented tournament, without any additional rounds to seed out students by testing their mana mastery or martial art proficiency.

As such, the three schools decided to divide the 3000 participants into groups of 30 because the first floor has exactly 100 arenas, which perfectly fits our purpose.

After everyone is divided into groups, the AI will schedule the fights, with every student fighting against another.

To put it more simply, everyone will have 29 fights and in the end, the four students with the most wins will enter the second round which will follow a simple. K.O system.

After we reach the top 100, the schedule will change with the Basic Big Three tournament held in the morning, but until we enter this phase, a few days will pass!"

After Till finished explaining the first round and what followed afterward, another teacher that looked somewhat annoyed, came forward, replacing Till on the podium, as he said, quietly seemingly without emotions.

"Mr. Greil already explained everything important for the tournament, but there is something else everyone should be aware of. Every arena will be monitored by the AI, which means that it will also record all fights. This is only to figure out if anyone used unfair means, like guns, grenades, poison that doesn't come from an affinity, or other similar means!

Killing is obviously forbidden and intentionally crippling your opponent too. If someone breaks these simple rules the punishment will be severe but fair, from being exiled to imprisonment or even forced to enter a soul contract with the victim, forcing the perpetrator to become the victims' slave, which allows him or her to do everything with you whatever he or she wants!."

Hearing what the teacher, who found it apparently useless to introduce himself, said, Jason nodded his head, as he already imagined such rules, while hearing what he said about the soul contract was something new to him.

However, thinking about it, this didn't seem to be bad! If someone were to permanently injure his mana core, the perpetrator might even be forced to serve him for his whole lifetime.

With this, the possibility for someone to intentionally heavily or even permanently injuring someone decreased drastically!

It was not a bad plan to prevent such cases, even if they might still happen if someone were to provoke his or her opponent too much.

In the end, the rules were extremely simple, while the whole tournament schematics felt like they were thought of a few minutes before.

Shrugging his shoulder, Jason ignored the last teacher who said something about healing the injured students and so on, as the notification about his scheduled fights arrived at his inbox.

Opening the message, a small holographic screen manifested in front of him, with all fights of his group listed down while his own name was underlined and easy to find,

Looking through the schedule, Jason figured out that the whole first round would take around three days, which included the weekend.

The only issue he had with this, was that he couldn't refine his body with others looking at him because exposing the body refining technique was not something humanity or even he could handle right now, as foreign races might as well annihilate him and everyone who saw him refining his body.

As such, Jason thought of things he could do, during the times he had to wait an hour or so for his next fight to start.

The schedule spanned from 8 am to 8 pm which meant that he would have to be in the arena for 12 hours, every day, for the next three days!

He could refine his body in the evening at the Fler's, which was not problematic, and thinking that he might as well absorb mana, hone his skills or improve his proficiency with his affinities while waiting, Jason disregarded the issues he thought of.

Looking at the schedule, Jason also noticed, that he was the first to fight, which caused him to smile lightly, as he sheathed his pseudo mana grade-1 daggers he made himself in the scabbards instead of the Viridi-Starstream daggers, as they would attract too much attention.

The same applied to his leather armor, as he simply wore his normal grade-2 leather armor instead of the mana grade-2 leather armor.

In the end, it was not a problem to fight with his mana grade-1 Viridi-Starstream daggers, but the other things might attract others too much for the first few days.

Jason also decided against wearing his spatial ring, mana sphere bracelet, and conservatory necklace, even if they didn't release any mana fluctuations and looked like normal accessories.

As long as nobody with an extremely high mana core rank and distinct senses scanned through these items, nobody would detect them, but he decided to be more careful, as he had a bad feeling that the Drake family patriarch might appear suddenly.

If he were to find that he owned three extremely valuable items which he shouldn't have under normal circumstances, Jason would either die or be forced to immediately sign a soul contract in the worst-case scenario.

Jason liked to be alive and not restricted, which caused him to act more carefully at this point.

He also told himself that he had to store these items at home, with the exception of his daggers in order to be safe.

With his current combat prowess, he could already attract too much attention which was neither beneficial nor an extreme disadvantage currently, as long as Old Drake didn't bother him.

Finally being able to fight against his first opponent, Jason excitedly entered the 100th arena, which was the number of the group he was scheduled in.

Looking around he searched for his opponent, as a 1.8-meter tall youth entered with an athletic body entered the arena, and perceiving his mana core and transmutation, Jason could not help but act carefully

His first opponent was a 1st Expert rank, whose mana core size increase only marginally, reaching a state infinitely close to the 2nd Expert rank.

However, he didn't have transmuted mana, which told Jason, that his opponent had a physical soulbond without a transmutation in his mana.

As such, he couldn't really estimate how strong his opponent's physique would be.

Nevertheless, if his mana core size increased by almost one rank, his physique should definitely enter the 2nd Expert rank, more likely his 3rd Expert rank and Jason only smiled lightly, which his opponent perceived.

"Why are you smiling? Shouldn't you despair right now? You're barely a 6th Adept rank and with my strength, I can crush you, before you can even unsheath your daggers!" The athletic-looking youth said, causing Jason to lift his right eyebrow, as he eyed his opponent as if he was extremely stupid.

Right as he was about to open his mouth to retort something, he decided against it.

Sighing, Jason could only lament about his mana core rank, because he was underestimated too often.

But, rather than feeling down, it seemed as if the youth in front of him was one of the few dozens who laughed at him, and an evil smile emerged on his face.

"Please guide me, idiot!"

Somehow, he couldn't help but say that, right before the AI started the countdown.

Seeing his opponent's face turning red, Jason chuckled lightly before he went into his fighting stance, as the AI ended the countdown, initiating their fight.

Unsheathing his daggers, Jason rushed towards his opponent, without wasting a single thought of utilizing his affinity as he exerted his weightless step technique to the limits, increasing his speed by roughly 40% only to accelerate further by circulating his mana into the lower body, he almost crossed half the arena in a second.

His opponent didn't remain idle, as he also unsheathed two daggers before charging towards Jason with his own movement technique fully exerted.

However, the youth's eyes suddenly widened, when he noticed that Jason already emerged in front of him with a much higher velocity than he ever reached until now.

'F*ck!!'

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Chapter 263 - Interesting Fellow

Even without an affinity, Jason's physique alone was already stronger than his opponent's, who only realized this, as they clashed upon each other.

Being able to overwhelm his opponent with his physique alone while only having a 6th Adept mana core rank was extremely terrifying and clearly indicates that the soul world amplifications Jason received were horrifyingly high, or that he might even have multiple strong soulbonds.

However, neither Jason nor the athletic youth in front of him bothered about this at the moment, as Jason slashed out with his daggers multiple times in succession, as his velocity increased, only for the youth in front to barely deflect him while retreating.

He was not even able to continue his charge, while Jason was forced to slow down in order to accurately slash at his opponent's vital spots.

'He is slower than I expected?!' Jason suddenly figured out before he decided to end the charade, as he exerted his weightless steps technique once again while leaning forward to evade his opponent's slash, as he emerged behind him.

Piercing his daggers into the athletic youth's calves and other vital spots, Jason twisted his body in order to kick him firmly, which pushed the youth two meters away, as he slumped on the ground.

Trying to stand up, the youth cried out in pain thanks to the several cuts Jason inflicted, as he felt cold metal on his neck, and his eyes trembled involuntarily.

[Victory, Jason Stella!] the AI announced, and only then did Jason retrace his dagger.

Cleaning them from his opponent's blood, he sheathed them before walking out of the arena, without bothering to care about the youth on the ground who stared at him in fear.

'How can a 6th Adept rank be so terrifying?!' He asked himself in shock, without being able to understand what was going on, as he was enveloped with a healing sensation from the medic team that was hired to take care of the injured students.

Sitting down on the bench, Jason decided to ignore the strange gazes locked on him, as he used his mana eyes in order to figure out everyone's mana core rank and their amplification.

With this, nobody could hide his or her affinity from Jason as well as their mana core amplification, which helped him to figure out what student in his group he could see as a pushover and who he should be careful about.

However, in the end, the 100th group he was placed in, couldn't be described as extraordinarily powerful, with only two stronger students in it, who Jason was already expectant to fight

Their mana core rank was at the 2nd Expert rank and one of them received an amplification, which allowed him to reach a 3rd Expert rank mana core size, close to the 4th Expert rank, while the other student had a slightly lower amplification, who similarly reached a mana core size at the 3rd Expert rank

Meanwhile, Jason's physique and mana core size were barely at the 3rd Expert rank, which was already shocking enough, yet still slightly lower than the two youths'.

As such, he couldn't help but feel overjoyed with his opponents, which he expressed with a bright smile.

The other students around him were astonished about his combat prowess and some of them started to think that he had a physical soul because his physical amplification was extremely high.

Some other students, however, added an affinity into their calculations when they saw Jason because they already started their research about some students before the tournament even started, as they heard many rumors.

News about a student with an extremely low mana core rank yet high combat prowess spread far and the diligent researching students already figured out about his two affinities!

In the end, they found his combat prowess shocking and asked themselves if they were able to fight him head-on after estimating his physique to be on par with an average 3rd Expert rank.

The next rounds passed quickly and Jason who initially wanted to observe a few fights, decided against it, as he actively used his passive mana replenishing technique in addition to his two known affinities at the same time.

He already expected that some students would know about his fire and ice affinities, which caused him to reveal this fact if someone were to seize his mana fluctuations right now.

Circulating both his fire and ice affinity at the same time through his body, Jason tried to find a state where he could utilize them because they innately repulse each other, which was not something he wanted for his affinities, as it might be disadvantageous for his future fights.

As such, he practiced with his two repulsing affinities within his body and after several weeks of hard work, it seemed to work much better and more efficiently than before.

With this, his combat prowess increased by a small margin, which overjoyed him.

Since Scorpio finished his evolution, Jason also experimented with the advanced poison affinity, but it was harder to cope with it than expected because he had to understand the composition of the poison

he wanted to use, as Scorpio knew multiple different types of poison which he integrated with his poison affinity when establishing an affinity seed and enhancing it.

This was extremely advantageous because he could utilize different poison's with all kinds of perks and usages, even though it was not easy to understand everything at once, due to the complex composition of the different types of poison Scorpio integrated.

In the end, Jason decided to turn his poison affinity into his hidden trump card simply because he had no other affinity to hide, while he wouldn't use his fortified soul conjunction if it was not necessary.

If he were to win against the two strongest opponents in his group, Jason was sure, that there were no other opponents he couldn't face before entering the top 100 because these two were already the cream of the crop.

A 14-year-old 2nd Expert rank was extremely terrifying and not something everyone was capable to reach at such a young age.

The two youths in his group that were so powerful probably received lots of cultivation resources from their family, which indicated a certain degree of wealth.

However, Jason didn't really care about this, and he was just excited to fight them.

More than 6 hours passed until Jason barely finished his 6th battle, as he noticed that he had a two-hour break, which allowed him to barely practice his Heaven's Hell technique, which he choose to do after reassuring that he didn't see anything wrong in his schedule.

Taking out a huge bulk of dishes after the practice, which took barely less than two hours, he forcefully stuffed the high-nutrition dishes into his mouth in order to replenish his used-up nutrition to fight decently.

But even if he were to fight with an empty stomach, his next opponent was none of the two strong youths in his group.

Jason wasn't even forced to utilize any of his affinities, as his physical strength, combat experience, and martial art techniques were more than enough to cope with everyone until now.

The two youths, which Jason labeled as the strongest in his group were both from the Miral academy and apparently friends.

Without caring about anyone else, they just wanted to compete against each other, which was however disrupted by Jason's appearance because they figured out that he was as strong as them, if not even stronger, which shocked them as they already knew that their strength was comparable to the Top-students from all three Big-schools.

Above them, there were only a handful of students from the Miral academy, who were stronger than them, and if they had to estimate their combat prowess with the other 3000 tournament participants, they were sure to enter the Top 50 if not Top 25.

Nevertheless, the youth that stuffed food into his mouth as if they were small candies had a powerful aura around him, which caused the two friends to feel threatened.

Looking at each other, they smiled drily, as one of them said lightly

"I think we have to add an irregular in our calculations...It looks like he practiced the Heaven's Hell technique for two hours if the golden hue around his head is his soul world's signature sign.

Considering that he is eating a bulk of high-nutritious dishes right now, immediately after his practice means that he is most likely already at the 3rd Level of the Heaven's Hell technique... His soul energy should be higher than we imagined if he took two hours to practice the third level, yet he doesn't sweat which means he is already proficient in it!"

Nodding his head, the tall youth next to him could not help but praise his friend's perceptions, as he smiled foolishly, without caring about his friend's detailed analysis.

"I hope so! With such an interesting guy in our group, we won't be bored!"

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 264 - Tactics

Jason was in a hurry to stuff his mouth with food, as he was notified to enter the combat ground.

Sighing, he stored the dishes away, not without finishing the chicken drumstick he was already begun to eat as he stood up in order to enter the combat arena, where a 1st Expert rank was already waiting for him.

His opponent's soul world amplification was not even large and prevented him from attaining a mana core size of a 2nd Expert rank, which caused Jason to smile lightly, while he also perceived an ice transmutation within his mana.

Comparing his mana affinity to his opponent's Jason estimated that his affinity's rank was either on par or a little bit stronger, and the desire to test it out was ignited within him.

As such, Jason didn't even bother to unsheath his dagger for the moment because he wanted to fully focus on attacking with ice attacks.

Seeing this, his opponent was confused for a quarter of a second before he unsheathed his longsword when the AI initiated the start of their fight.

Utilizing his ice affinity, he immediately attacked Jason with several ice icicles, as he charged towards him with his movement technique fully exerted.

Meanwhile, Jason who was fully focused on his ice affinity manifested several dozen fist-sized icicles around him, which he shot in bunches towards his opponent.

Aiming accurately, the icicles his opponent shot towards him were targeted by his own, and the icicles that clashed upon each other shattered while the remaining icicles flew towards the longsword-wielding youth.

'What?! He also has an ice affinity?!' The youth thought shocked, as he adjusted his broad longsword so that his vital points were protected before he continued his charge after noticing that the onslaught of icicles ended abruptly.

However, instead of being able to rush forward, the youth who couldn't see Jason for only two seconds was now looking straight into a firm ice wall that suddenly erected in front of him.

Not being able to figure out where Jason was, he could only release his mana to find out his rough position as he perceived several dozen icicles shooting towards him.

Trying to deflect them, the youth couldn't help but feel taken aback about Jason's proficiency with the ice affinity, as he couldn't maintain and shoot several dozen icicles at once, after erecting a thick ice wall as if it was nothing special.

Several seconds passed and the storm of icicles didn't seem to cease, while his body already began to hurt due to the several dozen shards that pierced strafed his hands and arms.

Gritting his teeth, he erected a large wall in front of him which would deflect the icicles, giving him a short moment to take a deep breath, as his whole body began to tremble involuntarily, as he felt something behind him.

Before he could even turn around or do anything, he felt something sharp faintly piercing into his back, as the AI announced.

[Victory, Jason Stella!]

Firmly grasping the ice dagger Jason manifested in his hand, it shattered as he turned around to return to his seat.

Because he was always weaker than his former opponents several months ago, he had to figure out other ways to win his fights and one of them was tricking his opponent with illusions or misplaced information.

As he became stronger, Jason didn't bother about these tricks, others labeled as petty, but if he were to be honest, it was much better to use petty tricks than using too much of his precious mana.

For instance, if he were to fight a huge pack of beasts at the low evolved rank, Jason would either have to use his complete mana and exhaust himself beyond measure to survive or use tricks, which might allow him to regain some of his energy in order to advance or retreat if more opponents were to appear.

In the end, fighting with his head was not something petty but more like well-thought fights, where he used his mind to overwhelm his opponent.

Thanks to his passive mana gathering, he could easily replenish his mana consumption when he manifested several dozens of small icicles in a short interval, while the only large mana consumption was the ice wall he erected in order to confuse his opponent and led him to think, that Jason wanted to prevent him from fighting head-on because he didn't even unsheath his daggers as he did the fights before.

After that, shooting another large badge of icicles at the longsword wielder was the reason for him to be completely focused on defending, while Jason's existence had been forgotten for a short moment.

Once Jason noticed that his opponent also erected an ice wall, he could only smile, because Jason already stood behind him, barely a dozen meters away.

Exerting his weightless step technique to his limit, he manifested a sharp ice shard in his hand, that was enough to finish his opponent who took a deep breath.

In the end, his tactic was not even complex, yet his opponent couldn't handle it, which disappointed Jason a little bit because he had much more to experiment with.

However, if not more was required to finish off the first-year students, he could also just stop wasting his breath and wait until stronger opponents were to appear with which he might test the dozens of ideas in his mind.

Seated, Jason continued to think of multiple possible tactics in order to win fights where he might not have an innate advantage thanks to his large mana core size and physique.

But thinking for some time, he could only shake his head, because it was unlikely to see many students with a mana core size or physique at the 4th Expert rank, even if there might be a handful of them.

Looking up, he averted his gaze towards the two strongest youths who also stared at him curiously, as he smiled lightly.

'Maybe they'll be more satisfying to fight?' Jason began to wonder, slightly excited, as he smiled at the two youths whose expression stiffed for a second before they forced a light smile on their lips.

Turning away, he started to absorb mana while continuing to practice his affinities, until the first day of the tournament was finally over.

Jason won all 10 fights without any serious issue and walking towards Greg, he noticed that his friend seemed to be overjoyed, yet he seemed to have sustained multiple bruises all over his body, which caused him to lift his eyebrows.

"How did it go?" He asked, to which Greg only answered.

"Good, but I need much more practice!"

Saying so, Jason noticed that Greg's eyes glimmered brightly, and he could only smile when he heard his friend's answer.

'If he continues like this, Greg might even turn into a freak, huh?'

However, rather than feeling any pressure, Jason was glad to hear this, because he wanted to fight against Greg by using his whole strength as it might as well be their last spar, which was not unlikely.

Shane would bring him away from Astrix and it was unknown when they would meet each other again.

Thinking about this, Jason's mood plummeted slightly, as the two of them met up with Malia, who looked like she won most of her fights without any serious injury, while Gabriella and Mark showed a proud expression.

As such, everyone seemed to have made it quite far until now, without losing too many fights, which was definitely a good sign.

If the second and third day continued like this, Greg and Malia might as well enter the top 400, without any issue, while Jason was confident enough in his strength to reach the next round.

The only thing that caused him to hesitate lightly, was that the AI recorded every flight, and Jason felt somewhat unwell because of that, even if Shane told him that he would definitely bring him out of Astrix.

Arriving with the Fler's at home, they ate dinner, before Jason went into his room in order to refine his body.

He wanted to further improve his physique, even though he felt his body refining progress began to slow down, the stronger it became.

Furthermore, from what he noticed, humans seemed to be only capable of refining their physique according to their mana core rank, which means that Jason would only be able to refine his physique to the 6th Adept rank, which was the exact same rank his mana core was currently at.

He was not exactly sure why this was the case, but he thought that it might be because the foreign races didn't have soulbonds and couldn't bind them, which led them to ignore adjusting any body refining technique to humans.

Another reason might be that the soul world amplification every human received for their mana core size and physique were impossible to refine further because it was their soulbonds shared strength and not innately their own.

Thinking about these possibilities, Jason dived down into the warm basin to refine his body, fully focused on the process.

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 265 - Recalculation

The second day of the Big-Three tournament was nothing special for Jason, who was rather dissatisfied about the tournament's difficulty.

Only a few were strong enough to fight him head-on and even some that seemed to be stronger than him according to their mana core size, which he found exciting, while the rewards one could obtain from the Big-Three tournament was another factor that motivated Jason to give his best.

As such, he also wanted to receive a reward which led him to defeat all his 10 opponents on the second day without too much effort.

At the same time, he tried to improve his combat style with his daggers and affinities in accordance.

Other than practicing the Heaven's Hell technique in the morning before he and the Fler's entered Cyro-City's arena, Jason began to actively absorb mana more often than before, as his soul energy was high enough at the moment.

During his short break between each fight, he continued to practice multitasking his affinities and circulating mana within his body, which was seen by the two youths from the Miral academy who eyed him the day before.

Meanwhile, Jason also figured out their names, which were York and Lore.

Apparently, both were from the Miral main school and within the Top-10 in the first year which caused him to become even more expectant than he already was.

Their fight would only start the next day and it felt like the second tournament day didn't end at all.

When it was finally the third day, Jason also noticed that Greg and Malia were also much stronger than their peers than he initially expected because they won all matches on the second day, which he could only praise.

However the most difficult would be the last day, because everyone who fought was desperate to win, which would inevitably lead to injuries, due to student's greed and determination to enter the next round in order to obtain rewards as long as they're able to enter the Top-25.

This was easier said than done, as Jason knew that the average students' combat prowess was between the 1st and 2nd Expert rank, which could already be labeled as powerful if one considered that the first-year students were around 14 years old.

But what astonished him more was that Seron stepped back from the tournament on the third day, which caused a small commotion in his group, as his opponents won their matches without doing anything.

If that was everything, Jason wouldn't give Seron's decision too much attention, but even Till decided to let someone else replace him as the first-year tournament representative, which told him that something happened.

'Is the Earth Dragon finally laying its egg?' Jason began to wonder, as he asked himself how long a Dragon would need to lay and the time for it to hatch under normal circumstances.

In the end, there was no other solution for their sudden disappearance, if one were to disregard the worst-case scenarios that something might have happened with their family or something similar.

However, this caused Jason to feel somehow disappointed because he thought that the two wanted to take him with them in order to choose a better soulbond for Seron if there were multiple eggs at once.

Other than that, he also began to ask himself how many Earth-Dragon lived on Astrix and where the hell they were, because he never heard from any dragons on the island at all.

Instead of complaining, Jason could only accept Till and Seron's decision to not take him with them, and maybe they would still ask him for their help, but there was nothing he could do about it.

After defeating his first five opponents on the third day of the first round, Jason entered the arena for the sixth time, when he saw York, who was the first-year student from the Miral academy, he was expecting to fight, entering the arena.

He was smaller than his friend Lore, while his amplification was also slightly lower in comparison, which only allowed him to reach the 3rd Expert rank in his mana core size.

With a wind affinity, that was either at the peak evolved or low unblemished rank, York was probably the strongest opponent he fought until now when both gazed at each other seriously.

His opponent used two shortwords that were barely longer than his daggers and instead of using the pseudo mana grade-1 daggers he forged by himself, Jason decided to replace them with his Viridi-Starstream dagger, with which he was more proficient in, as they laid perfectly in his hand.

The Virid-Starstream daggers felt like extensions of his arm and this feature was extremely beneficial to use with his martial art techniques in accordance.

Smiling at his opponent, York could sense the faint mana fluctuations from Jason shining daggers, as he gulped down his saliva, thinking

'He is going all out huh?'

Yet, rather than becoming nervous, York smiled brightly, as his erupting mana intensified with his mana circulation accelerating, as the AI initiated the start of their battle.

Enveloping himself in a thick wind mana membrane, he pushed himself from the ground, while exerting his movement technique, as a strong draft from behind accelerated his speed further.

York's eyes turned green and Jason was taken aback for a short second, as he involuntarily thought 'Is that an ability or already a fortified soul conjunction?!'

However, not being able to think further about his opponent's weird appearance, which was comparable to that of a human tempest, Jason exerted the weightless steps technique to his highest capabilities, as he retreated while testing the waters with several dozen small icicles which he threw towards York.

Using different icicles of size and velocity, they crashed into the thick green mana membrane that was additionally enveloped in a gust, only to shatter into smitherness, with a bare minimum of impact remaining.

Seeing this, Jason was immediately reminded of the water affinity user that used his affinity to construct unstable armor, which was a joke against what he saw in front of him because he couldn't see a single flaw in the wind armor's mana.

The only apparent thing he noticed was that the armor was not thick enough to take on an onslaught of several hundred icicles, which was hardly required as York stood already in front of him, radiating with fighting spirit as he smiled brightly.

'Not bad!' Jason thought and he had to acknowledge that he underestimated his opponent because he didn't expect such a weird ability or soul conjunction which allowed his opponent to reach a higher velocity than he had, while his armor nullified his high-quantity low mana consumption tactic completely.

Jason had to recalculate everything as his whole mindset was wrong from the beginning because he underestimated his opponents too much, while arrogantly thinking that he could easily destroy everyone.

Looking straight into his opponent's emerald-colored eyes that had not a tiny trace of white left, Jason couldn't help but feel excited, as he erupted with his mana, without holding back anymore.

Utilizing his black origin flame, Jason turned into a black burning torch without wasting a single moment on creating a complex armor like his opponent, as his Viridi-Starstream daggers began to shine in its lush green-silvery color, that was enveloped in thick black glowing flames.

Seeing the sudden change in Jason's appearance and even demeanor that happened in a single moment, York was taken aback for a moment, as he felt as if he was attacked by a foreign race, due to the overbearing mana fluctuations coming from the black origin flame which seemingly wanted to devour his whole existence.

Jason's bright, golden eyes were the only things York could see right now, as he perceived his opponent's fighting spirit overshadowing his.

'F*ck!'

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 266 - Fighting Spirit

Looking into York's eyes, Jason was full of excitement as he was finally able to go all out, while he could also test his new physique with its perks which not only decreased his mana consumption by a small degree but also enhanced his circulation speed and output with his fire affinity.

Until now, there was no chance for him to test his fire affinity with the Netherworld's forte body refining results, which he wanted to test now because his opponent seemed to be perfectly fit for this.

While he was like a black burning torch with his golden eyes charging towards his opponent, York was enveloped in a thick wind membrane, with a gust surrounding him, while his eyes were emerald in color without any white remaining.

Without the need to hold back, Jason couldn't help but feel fortunate, as he increased the temperature around him by a few degrees when he slashed out with his burning Viridi-Stardream daggers.

Forced out of his advance, York was only able to barely twist his body and deflect the daggers with his own as he noticed that the black flame burned his thick membrane, where it strafed him.

Frowning deeply, York jumped back a few meters, only to notice that Jason's mana fluctuation didn't seem to lessen to the slightest, which caused him to frown as he thought.

'Does his soulbond also have an ability to decrease his fire affinity's mana consumption...and why is his flame black?!

However, there was nobody to answer his question, and it was useless to bother thinking about the questions in his mind as York decided to fully focus on the fight in front of him instead of possible answers to his questions when he led his mana towards the armor's damaged areas in order to repair them.

His mana consumption by manifesting the windbreaker armor was not much, but repairing it was, due to its complexity, and he could only lament about Jason's black flame, which he underestimated.

However, not only was York astonished but also Jason because he was obviously slower than his opponent.

Yet, seeing his opponents insanely fast mana circulation thanks to his eyes, Jason couldn't help but praise his opponent inwardly.

Exerting the weightless steps technique, Jason's speed increased by 40%, which was still lower than his opponent's, as he noticed that York continued to retreat in order to repair his damaged armor.

'He relies on his armor and is careful....how about I do this?' Jason thought as a vibrant smile emerged on his face, which looked devilish and cruel behind the black flames that enveloped him.

Using his fire affinity, he created a sudden, yet compressed flame behind his back and lower body in order to push himself further ahead, allowing him to appear in front of York, who was astonished about Jason's sudden increased velocity, as he lashed out at him to stall more time.

Deflecting the dagger with his own, they clashed several dozen times, when Jason suddenly shot a fireball from his chest towards his opponent, who didn't expect the sudden interception of their close combat fight.

Even if he tried to create a wind blade or something similar in order to defend against the fireball, their distance was less than half a meter which didn't even give him enough time to breathe freely, as the black fireball, smashed into his chest, burning the wind armor without any hindrance.

York was knocked away several meters, where he crashed into the ground.

With his mana eyes activated, Jason concluded that the fight was already over, as he extinguished the flames around him.

Taking a deep breath, he was about to retreat and wait for the AI to determine his victory, as he sensed dozen unstable mana fluctuations coming from York's position.

With several dozen wind blades manifesting above his opponent, Jason could only sigh deeply because the wind blades were not even something he should be afraid of without any affinity.

After his black origin flame pierced into his opponent's chest, without being disrupted by any resistance, it also shook York's mana core heavily, which required at least a few minutes to recuperate even slightly for him to be able to use mana under normal circumstances.

However, the several dozen wind blades above his opponent who still laid on the ground indicated that something was either wrong or that he ignored his mana core's pain, which was not something one should do if it was not a life-threatening situation.

Without further ado, all several dozen wind blades shot towards Jason, who could only shake his head, as he used his remaining mana in order to construct a half-circle-shaped wall in front of him.

This was solely because Jason was unsure how high his opponent's wind ability proficiency was as it was possible to control wind blades freely in a certain range around the wielder.

But other than building a half-circle-shaped wall, he didn't bother to build a complete dome or something similar around him because it was impossible for York to control his affinity to this extent, at least currently with his mana core shaking violently.

His mana eyes only perceived the situation through the mana wall and it astonished Jason that York tried to stand up, while the wind blades pierced inside the ice wall, as he finally collapsed on the ground.

York's mana core seemed to groan and even change its shape which was bad and the medic team had to act fast to prevent permanent damages as Jason shouted towards them before the AI even announced his win.

However, the medic team who witnessed the whole fight also noticed that something was off after Jason extinguished his flames before his victory was even official.

As such, they appeared in front of York only a moment later as they carefully picked him up to lay him on a hovering stretcher with healing currents enveloping him.

Jason looked at York for a moment, as he walked out of the arena, saying

"Good fight, I like your fighting spirit, but your health should be more important than a single win in the Big-Three tournament, right? It's not like we entered the K.O rounds..."

Hearing this, York couldn't help but frown as he gnashed his teeth, while Lore rushed towards his friend, only to hear Jason's words, as he retorted angrily.

"You may not see this as important, but everyone has their own dignity, right?!" Seeing the tall youth retorting him foolishly, Jason looked at him for a short moment, as he pondered for a second only to shrug his shoulder.

"Maybe, but staying alive is still more important than one's dignity.." Once he said this, Jason ignored the tall brown-haired youth who still glared at him, before he averted his gaze in order to check his friend and how he was doing.

In the end, Jason didn't care about dignity or something like this, because he simply wanted to survive to become stronger, but he could somehow understand the two youths' train of thought.

If he could prevent it in any way, Jason would give his all in order to win because losing was not something anyone really liked.

However, there was a big difference in fighting a life and death battle against beasts, foreign races, or whatever than a simple tournament fight in its first round at that, which wouldn't even give York a disadvantage after he lost.

He was still the third strongest in their group which made him eligible to enter the K.O rounds.

Instead of forcing himself too much which could lead to permanently damaging his mana core, evidently throwing him out of the tournament, York could learn out of his mistakes and search for a way to counter his fire affinity.

Unfortunately enough, it seemed like he was the only one who looked at it long-term as the two youths didn't care about that at all.

Shaking his head, Jason went back to his seat, where he replenished his mana, before visualizing his fight against York in his head in order to figure out his flaws and what he could fix.

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 267 - Useless Pride

There weren't any threatening opponents except Lore left and Jason hoped that the last fight he had to attend would turn out as an adrenaline rush.

His fight against York was already slightly intense and beneficial, but there was no need for him to use all affinities, whether it was one after another, at once or even overlapping, like the blazing icicles he started to experiment with months ago.

After defeating York, his other opponents were scared of him, which led them to fight halfheartedly, allowing Jason to save much trouble, even though it caused him to feel disappointed in his opponent's willpower.

He already entered the top 400 and it was not even necessary for Jason or Lore to fight against each other, but Lore's fighting spirit was almost impossible to overlook as he glared dagger at him every once in a while.

It was annoying and there was not even a good reason to do so, and in the end, Jason just decided to ignore it because there was no better way to handle this, except to beat the crap out of him.

Knowing what elemental affinity Lore had was already advantageous for him because he could prepare a few plans against him, if necessary.

Unfortunately or maybe even fortunately enough, Jason was sure that he would need a few plans against Lore because he had an earth affinity that was most likely at the unblemished rank.

Lore's defenses would be much sturdier than his, while his fire affinity would hardly be efficient against an earth affinity, while the same applied to his ice affinity.

There were only a few things he could try out with these two affinities and Jason couldn't help but feel gratitude towards his superior eyes' ability to tell him almost everything about his opponents, which allowed him to enter the arena with ease.

Standing opposite Lore, he felt his anger, and he could only sigh deeply, lamenting about every student's useless pride, once someone said anything bad against them.

In the end, Jason didn't think that he said anything wrong, because York almost permanently damaged his mana core which would turn him into a cripple.

Nobody wanted to end up as a cripple in the current era, where one would be thrown away like garbage or even worse.

As such, he only wanted to help out, but if the other side didn't accept his sincerity, it was also fine with Jason.

Nevertheless, Jason somehow wanted to demonstrate to Lore what despair was and how valuable their pride, dignity, or whatever was.

Staring into each other's eyes, Jason wanted to beat his opponent up but also fight a magnificent fight, but after pondering what was more important to him, he could only chuckle lightly.

'I'll crush him for good!' Grasping his final decision firmly, he would give his everything.

Seeing Jason chuckling to himself, ignited Lore's unfounded rage as his words stung deep in his heart as he knew the truth deep within him.

However, in the end, he didn't want to accept the truth simply because his pride was the only thing Lore could maintain in the Miral academy by avoiding fighting the students that were stronger than him.

With the Big-Three tournament, he wanted to change the tides and show everyone that he was also strong which, however, didn't bother Jason at all as he defeated his opponents one after another in a simple manner without any elegant techniques.

He just fought straightforwardly and somehow, in Lore's perspective, in an overbearing manner which was unbearable for him.

When the AI finally initiated the start of their fight Lore immediately summoned a broadsword and was about to charge at Jason while shooting earth spikes towards him, as he suddenly noticed an extremely large ice mountain emerging in front of him.

Jason who stood on top of the mountain of ice smiled faintly towards the ground, as he released his mana while utilizing his affinities.

Thick mist enveloped Jason's whole body, slowly descending towards the ground where Lore stood.

Jumping towards Jason, Lore pushed himself from the ground, while constructing an earth pillar below him, throwing him into the air to accelerate his speed.

In the air, he immediately sensed several strong mana fluctuations in front of him with dozens of fireballs shooting towards him.

Within a moment, Lore manifested a thick earth shield in front of him before he noticed something heavy falling on the shield, as he was flung into the arena grounds, where he had to take a deep breath in order to realize what happened.

'Did he just jump in my earth shield?' He wondered, but seeing Jason standing at the exact same position for the whole fight that began merely ten seconds ago, this couldn't be the answer, as he noticed a large block of ice next to him.

"Did you like my present?" Jason teased from above, as he accelerated the pace with which he released the mist, only to see Lore fuming in anger, as he rushed towards the mountain of ice, where he used his longsword to slash at it while releasing his earth affinity to protect himself.

'He can't fight in the air?' Jason asked himself, and considering that an unblemished ranked affinity would evidently require more mana to be utilized, he could think that his opponent used his affinity too careless, without considering his expenses.

In the end, Lore's tactic was not stupid, because the mountain of ice was rather shallow constructed and not strong enough to hold out his several dozen slashes.

There was only one thing he didn't seem to care about, which caused Jason to smile, as he said apologetically.

"I'm sorry to interrupt you, but this fight is over" Snapping with his finger, one could only see Lore staggering as he looked at Jason with widened eyes.

"WHAT DID YOU DO TO ME?!?"

However, instead of an answer, Jason just shrugged his shoulders, before his golden eyes gleamed in a faint green light.

Barely being able to see through the mist, that continued to thicken, Lore was unable to find Jason's outlines, while his golden shining eyes were the only thing he perceived.

Seeing his golden eyes gleaming in a green light for a quarter of a second, his heart seemed to stop beating, as his sight blurred.

Gritting his teeth, Lore circulated mana through his body only to notice that his blurred sight became even worse, while his mind turned fuzzy.

'What?!?' He asked himself in shock, and with every earth spike and spear he forcefully manifested and shot towards Jason's presumed location, breathing became more difficult and it was hardly possible for him to even stand on the ground.

Without the ice mountain next to him, he used to support himself, Lore would have already collapsed and Jason couldn't help but praise his opponent inwardly.

'He endures it much longer than I estimated...not bad, even if it's completely useless.'

Smiling brightly, his experiment worked out perfectly fine and this was only thanks to Scorpio, who digested the poison elemental crystals he mined inside the four-star rift.

These crystals were the reason for his near-death experience inside the elemental crystal cave due to the maneless poison in the air that became even stronger, once he circulated mana through his body.

Thanks to Scorpio absorbing, digesting, and comprehending everything about the poison elemental crystals which were extremely rare, it was able to allow Jason to reproduce almost the same poison for his affinity, which was extremely beneficial.

By intertwining his poison affinity inside the mist he released, Lore couldn't detect anything at all, while his snap was just for show as if he activated something, which was however not the case.

In the end, his finger snap was just a trick and nothing more than that.

Time passed slowly, and when Lore seemed to be close to collapsing on the ground, barely hanging on his consciousness, Jason stopped releasing his poisonous mist, before he jumped down to the ground.

Approaching his opponent who kneeled on the ground barely being able to sense anything around him, Jason couldn't help but shake his head, as he called for the medic team.

Leaning down towards Lore, he only whispered "If that's how much your pride is worth, I don't need it!"

It would be a lie if Jason said that he didn't feel slightly bad to have crushed his opponent but he was sure that if someone else were to do the same to him, he would rethink a lot and try to learn out of his mistakes to become stronger.

Giving up was not something in his own vocabulary and he would overcome everything if necessary!

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 268 - Last Week

He may have sounded like a rude as*hole but that was nothing he could bother about, as he left the arena once the AI announced his victory.

Instead of being prideful, he could have noticed that something was wrong from the beginning of their fight because Jason was unable to release traceless poison like he got to was forced to overcome in the elemental crystal cave.

However, instead of acting carefully or even slightly observant, Lore just charged ahead in anger which caused his defeat.

Sighing, Jason hoped that his other opponents would be more level-headed because otherwise, the whole tournament for the first years could only be considered as a bad joke.

Once his last fight was over, he was finally allowed to leave the arena, where he met up with Greg, who seemed to have gained a few new bruises, while his mana fluctuations were still stable.

Giving him a thumbs-up, the two youths laughed with each other before they met up with the other Fler's who smiled proudly.

Driving home and eating together, Jason pondered how exactly he should bid farewell to the Fler's because he had the bad premonition that his departure wouldn't be smooth.

As such, he just took the opportunity at the dinner table.

Clearing his throat, he said

"My master contacted me and told me that our departure might be sudden... In case we can't bid farewell, I just wanted to thank all of you for taking me in for the last few months...Without this, I wouldn't have been able to enter Cyro-City and the Vanguard academy which brought me many benefits. But even more so, I gained new friends and something as close as a real family... In the end, I would have never imagined that I will leave Astrix so soon and miss someone here..."

Saying this, Jason was unsure what else he could add as he looked up, only to see that everyone's mood soured to the degree, that they stared at him with wet eyes.

Malia had tears in her eyes and Greg suddenly asked

"So you don't know when you have to depart? It could be tomorrow or maybe even after the tournament?"

Shaking his head, Jason added "It's probably next week but definitely before the tournament ends... At least It feels like it will be like this"

The previous joyous mood plummeted completely and everyone felt suddenly heavy, without being able to say anything to Jason, as Mark jumped up from his chair to say

"Being depressed won't help! Just enjoy the next few days and leave good memories behind!" With these words, he eased up the tension to a certain extent before Malia began to sob, as she forced herself to say "Let's h-have some fun!"

Even if it didn't sound genuine with her sobbing, everyone knew what Malia meant.

With this thought in their mind, Jason told himself to practice less during the next few days, in order to use his free time to spend it with the Fler's.

Other than that, he already entered the basic Big-Three tournaments Top 400, which was a simple K.O round.

This meant once he was defeated the whole tournament was over.

As simple as it was, everyone would give their best in order to win the next few rounds, while Jason was already asking himself, when exactly the Drake family patriarch would appear, even if he hoped that it would be never.

It was not that he was completely sure that this might happen but he just felt it in his gut and until now, his gut feeling was relatively good.

Waking up early in the morning, he went out of the bed as he saw Artemis laying next to him on the bed, while Scorpio laid on the bottom next to his bed.

Smiling lightly, he woke them up gently as he took Scorpio into his soul world to leave the room without destroying everything.

Releasing him once again, Scorpio just laid down behind Jason's chair at the dining table, with Artemis on top of it.

The Fler's eyed this weirdly but didn't say anything about it because everyone had their own weird connection to their soulbonds with their unique demands.

Once they finished breakfast, Jason and the Fler's drove towards the arena like the last three days, however, today would be different because the tournament would be separated into three sections.

Because the K.O rounds were rather short, without the need for every single student to fight against everyone, one after another, only 200 fights were required to decide the Top 200.

With the first-year Big-Three tournament held in the morning, the whole arena would be free to use, which meant that one could immediately finish the whole tournament in a single day if one were to use multiple combat arenas at once.

However, this was not what the government wanted and they decided to stretch the K.O rounds over the whole week, in order to distract the citizens from the recent happenings in Cyro-city.

Thus, the first K.O round would use five arenas take the morning with every single battle live broadcasted in Astrix.

With this, not only would the citizens from Cyro-city be distracted, but students all over the island would figure out the youngest generation's strength, which was also exciting.

Other students would be able to compare their strength to Astrix's strongest youths which might motivate them to strive for more and become stronger.

Jason however, found this simply annoying, because he didn't want that the tournament would be spread over the whole week, but on the other side, it was probably not dumb to allow students to recuperate from possible injuries and analyze their opponents' weaknesses in the meantime.

Looking at the schedule, Greg was one of the first to fight, while he was somewhere in the middle. As for Malia, her turn was in the evening because she was a student in her third year which had their tournament in the evening.

Broadcasting all fights from the three tournaments would also help to show Astrix's citizens how superior the Big-Three schools' teachings were compared to other schools because one would see apparent improvements.

This was also used in order to promote their own school, which Jason noticed, and he could only acknowledge this type of promotion inwardly.

There was still no news from his masters, but he didn't worry about this right now because he watched Greg's fight against a 1st Expert rank with an earth affinity.

Both students' physical strength were roughly the same, but Greg was at an apparent disadvantage because he was incapable to wield an affinity without a suitable soulbond.

As such, he was forced to use his Berserk ability, even if he wanted to hide it for longer, which allowed him to surprise attack his opponent, who could only manifest a thick earth wall in front of him, that was however shattered into smithereens through Greg's brute force.

However, what Jason saw caused him to smile, because even if it looked like Greg couldn't control himself, his eyes were still clear without his wild instincts disturbing him.

With this in mind, it was clear that Greg was much more proficient in controlling himself and after overwhelming his opponent thanks to his berserk ability which allowed him to increase his physical strength for several minutes by multiple levels.

Afterward, they watched the other matches that were in-between Greg's and his simply because it would be a waste of time to just leave right now, as it was already his turn after a few more rounds.

Entering the combat arena, he heard Malia, Mark, and Gabriella cheering for him, while Greg could only shake his head because of his family's behavior as he was the only one who was aware of Jason's strength.

Greg wasn't even sure if Jason showed him his full combat strength but instead of asking himself too many times, he would try to force Jason to use everything he had up to his sleeves when it was their turn to fight against each other.

From the tournament' schedule, they knew that their turn to fight against each other would be in the Top-25, which would be four days later.

Not knowing if Jason would be there at this time, Greg felt restless, because he wanted to have one last final fight against his best friend, not knowing when they would ever meet again.

Looking at Jason's opponent, Greg's eyes suddenly widened, as he blurted out

"Ugh...this will be ugly..."

Opposite Jason, there stood a busty girl in revealing clothes, smiling seductively at Jason, who only frowned deeply, as he asked

"Aren't you a little bit too young to be clothed like a h*e?"

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 269 - Seduction

Stiffening, the girl in front of him wanted to throw a fit, but she calmed herself down in a matter of seconds as she said

"I can wear whatever I want!"

Nodding his head, Jason had to acknowledge that this was certainly true, yet, upon inspecting her mana, he immediately figured out why she wore such clothes.

Her transmuted mana looked exactly like the hue he perceived around Antalia Sharon, the Rank-4 alchemist when he first met her at the basic artisan exam.

'An affinity that has something to do with seduction or lust?' He asked himself and it was certainly interesting how many affinities existed, and it would have been a lie if he were to say that he was not interested in figuring out more about her affinity or rather all rare affinities because he wanted to know which affinity he should try to obtain next.

Thinking about the voluptuous girl's affinity, he continued to stare at her, which was noticed by almost everyone who looked at his fight which included the broadcast throughout Astrix island.

In only a few seconds, he turned to Astrix's pervert, without him knowing.

'Is this affinity based on the scent, hormones, or a simple kind of mind control?' Jason started to wonder as he finally heard the AI, that initiated the start of their fight.

However, rather than doing anything special, he just unsheathed his daggers slowly while looking at his opponent in order to figure out what she would do with her affinity as it could hardly be used to attack him directly.

With this in mind, Jason was sure to be capable of inquiring more about her affinity, as her strength should be lower than his own because his physical strength was comparable to an average 3rd Expert rank while her mana core size was infinitely close to the 2nd Expert rank.

It was obvious that she contracted a beast with an affinity due to her transmuted mana which also indicated a physical amplification from her soul world that was lower compared to non-elemental beasts that were contracted by pure physical soul worlds.

Estimating her physical strength to be at most on par with a peak 2nd Expert which was already a generous assumption, Jason would still be stronger.

However, what he had to pay attention to was her affinity and that he shouldn't neglect it as it could become the reason for his defeat.

Carefully inspecting what the girl in front of him did, Jason remained motionless as he continued to stare at her intently.

From the surrounding he was called all kinds of naughty names and portrayed as something evil, while even Malia frowned, killing him inside her mind when she noticed that his eyes were fully focused and not filled with lust.

Sighing in relief, she took back the bad words she called him in her mind, as she focused on the fight once again.

The voluptuous girl in front of Jason smiled at his reaction or rather that his eyes followed her every move intently as she released her seduction affinity in a wide radius around him while trying to maintain her mana consumption.

If she were to extend her seduction affinity too far, her mana consumption would skyrocket and a good radius was between five to ten meters around her, which she did, and it was only when she approached Jason, he figured out what exactly her seduction affinity could do.

'Soo my hormones are in disarray while my thoughts will be constantly drawn to her?' He comprehended, and if he were to be honest, this ability was extremely powerful if used correctly with a slightly stronger effect.

However, someone with a strong will or an affinity to work counter hers would immediately leave his opponent unguarded and unaware of how to defend against her attackers, which Jason noticed by her crude movement.

Yet, rather than doing anything against her approach, Jason awaited her as he wanted to figure out if his hormones and wild thoughts would intensify the closer she came, which happened exactly as he predicted.

Inwardly nodding his head, he couldn't really estimate how powerful this affinity might become in the future if correctly used, and maybe it would even improve further.

Unfortunately for the voluptuous girl was, however not someone extremely proficient with her affinity yet, and Jason could easily disregard his desire and wild thoughts as his golden eyes shone lightly, dispelling everything.

Even without this ability, he was sure to be able to cope with the voluptuous girls' mind-controlling affinity that was intertwined with hormones, as she was not proficient in using it perfectly.

Waiting for the girl to arrive two meters in front of him, Jason only saw that she unsheathed a small dagger, which she wanted to use to pierce at him to win as he suddenly exerted his weightless steps technique, accelerating towards her, only to pierce out with his Viridi-Starstream daggers, overwhelming the shocked girl, he unintentionally threw to the ground.

[Victory, Jason Stella] the AI announced, with the surrounding youths and parents looking at him dumbfounded, while a few citizens who watched his fight over the live broadcast were astonished about his sudden movement after acting as if he was bewitched by his opponent.

Looking at the girl, he held out his hand in order to help her up, as he said

"Don't rely too much on your affinity, there are still many flaws in it, and it's easy to leave the bewitched state..."

After he helped the girl up, he turned around to walk towards the Fler's who greeted him cheerfully, while Greg could only shake his head because Jason defeated one of the main Vanguard school's most powerful affinity users just like that.

It was extremely difficult to leave her seduction once enveloped and infiltrated by it, but Jason looked like he was completely unaffected, defeating her as if she was a middle-schooler, which was annoying.

Sighing deeply, Greg couldn't help but feel more excited and restless to fight Jason with his whole strength.

Once Jason was done, the Fler's drove home and spend their time together because Malia's fight would be at the end of the day and after a few hours, they ate lunch together before Jason practiced his Heaven's Hell technique.

With his high increase in soul energy after each practice, he couldn't help but feel satisfied with the Heaven's Hell technique as he walked back to the Fler's who similarly practiced the Heaven's Hell technique.

Playing games, Jason used this time to improve his multitasking ability as he utilized his three affinities at once, played the game, and tried to circulate mana through his body at once, which caused him to sweat heavily.

Seeing Jason's efforts to become stronger even while playing games, Gabriella and Mark couldn't help but sigh deeply, as the youth in front of them seemed to be unable to relax even a tiny bit.

However, now even Malia changed her attitude and used both her affinities while circulating mana at the same time and additionally she even manifested a fire and water ball which she shaped into all kinds of forms, which Jason couldn't do.

Even if his mana sensitivity and control were high enough, multitasking was still something relatively new to him and he would need some time to manifest his three affinities, shape them while circulating mana through his body and do something else at the same time.

In the end, he was not far from Malia's standard in multitasking which bothered her, because she practiced extremely hard in order to achieve this after multiple years.

Furthermore, she focused on this field of expertise during her combat.

Jason however, looked like a natural, who could do everything without much problem, even if seemed to walk one of the most difficult paths for his combat expertise.

From the Fler's perspective, Jason wanted to become someone who was capable of wielding multiple weapons and at the same time all affinities, which was definitely over the top and it was questionable if it was even useful to learn multiple weapons, as his dagger mastery was already extremely high.

Comparing Greg and Malia with Jason, it was obvious who worked the hardest in order to improve, as Jason turned from a nobody in Artes city to someone who was able to defeat the most powerful first-years in the best schools on Astrix within half a year.

His talent was also superior to anyone the Fler's ever saw and it was only a matter of time for great personalities like a Beast-Creator to set his eyes on him.

Even if it was sad to know that Jason would leave them soon, Gabriella and Mark were happy also for him.

In the evening, when it was time for Malia's fight, the five of them drove towards the arena, and cheering Malia up, she won her fight against a wind ability user, that at the 1st Master rank.

Using her wand in order to defend herself with her water affinity and attack with fireballs, spears, and waterjets, she overwhelmed her opponent without much problems, who could only lament inwardly.

After what happened to Jason in the four-star rift, she focused more on her own strength as she noticed that her combat experience and prowess were too shallow which led her to improve by leaps and bounds over the last few weeks.

Jason meanwhile couldn't help but praise Malia when she returned which caused her to smile brightly before they returned back to the house where they talked about their fights and who they should be careful of.

GOD'S EYES

Chapter 270 - Top 100

The next day, Greg and Jason quickly finished their match in the Top 200, which was scheduled at the same time, only to go back home afterward.

The two youths were astonished that their opponents couldn't even fight against them head-on after Greg used his berserk ability, while Jason overwhelmed his opponent who had a water affinity with his ice and fire affinities.

In the end, he didn't want to expose too much of his poison affinity because it was one of the only trump cards he had left, except the fortified soul conjunctions with his soulbonds.

Some students that watched his fight against Lore understood that something was wrong during their fight, yet, they couldn't comprehend what exactly it was because they weren't close enough to inspect the mist, while none of them possessed a special trait similar to his mana eyes.

As such, Jason felt partially assured that nobody knew about his peak evolved ranked poison affinity, which was definitely an advantage.

It was better to have a trump up to his sleeves than nothing, exposing everything he had.

After the two friends won their fights, only Malia had to win against her opponent in the Top 200, however, unfortunately, she was placed against a youth who contracted his first soulbond only recently.

Before their fight, the youth was laughed at because of his small soul energy, only to shock everyone at the Big-Three tournament because he contracted his first soulbond after two years, which was a rare mid-magical ranked Titanium Elephant that required more than 5.000 soul energy units.

It had a rare and powerful metal affinity, which was also the youth's sole affinity he could contract, while his soul energy was small.

Without being able to find a beast at the lower ranks with a metal affinity, he was forced to be patient.

However, in the end, he found a suitable soulbond while his soul energy barely reached the demands.

From one of the worst students in his school, he returned as the strongest, thanks to the high soul world core's amplification he received from the Titanium Elephant

Malia's fire affinity was not strong enough to burn through the thick metals her opponent manifested, even if her Nightmare horse was about to reach the magical rank soon it was still not enough.

Feeling disappointed in herself, she couldn't help but be sulky during the whole evening, only to see Greg and Jason chatting with each other happily, when it was dinner time.

Staring dagger at the two dense youths, she couldn't help but feel helpless.

While Malia sulked, Greg and Jason were somewhat expectant about the Top 100 because it was extremely unlikely that anyone who entered the Top 100 would be a pushover.

The Top 100 fights would also be held one after another without using five arenas at once in order to broadcast every single fight one after another live, demonstrating to Astrix island's citizens how powerful the three big schools and their most powerful youths were.

Jason was one of the only students who entered the top 100 while being in one of the affiliated schools which was looked at with curiosity.

However, he didn't really think much about it because it was not important from which school he came from but rather how strong he was.

In the end, the most powerful youths ended up within the big three main schools but only because their mana core rank and soul-awakening were superior to others.

There were obviously also youths who were weak even though their starting point was higher due to a better soul-awakening or better background with more resources, yet Jason was a perfect example which clearly indicated that having a good soul-awakening or background was not everything.

At least it looked like this from the outside because nobody could have known that Jason had the best soul-awakening out of all students within the Big-Three tournament as well as a backing which however didn't bring him a lot of resources he could use to absorb mana.

His masters' teachings were different and maybe not seen as the best way to improve his strength in a short period, yet they were extremely beneficial for his long-term progress, which was exactly what he wanted.

As such, he couldn't lament about this at all, and Jason was also expectant to see his masters again, which would only take several more days.

It was only Wednesday when the Top 100 started, and both Greg and Jason were happy to enter the arena, while Jason estimated how many more days the tournament would take.

With the Top 50 and 25 being held the day after, Jason thought that the remaining fights which included the final would take place on Friday.

In the end, the whole tournament would be over only one week after it began, which was neither short nor long.

Somehow, it seemed to be the perfect time to calm down Astrix- or even more Cryo-City's citizens from the recent happenings that still lingered in their minds.

However, instead of being happy that the tournament would be over in two days, Jason felt that the next day would be extremely important for him and maybe even dangerous, even if there was no indicator about something like this.

Inside the arena, Jason suddenly noticed that there were many more students seated around the arena, divided into their classes, with a teacher standing in front of them, which caused him to smile lightly.

'Are they using the Top 100 battles to show good and bad examples of combat techniques, combat experience, battle awareness, usage of affinities, and so on?' He asked himself and it was most likely the case as he noticed hundreds of classes seated around the arena, staring at their teachers and the youths in the spotlight, which were the 100 remaining first-year tournament participants.

Seeing the other students staring intently at the Top 100 in awe, Jason couldn't help but feel weird, because they were classmates or at least peers, yet there was already such a large gap in order to be seen as a role model from some students.

Without wasting more time, Jason prepared himself for his fight, which was scheduled somewhere in the middle of the 50 Top-100 fights, as he washed his weapons once again, before sharpening them neatly, not looking at the fights in front of him.

Some time passed until a few students and even teachers noticed him minding his own business, which was badly received from the students, only to hear their teachers lecturing their students.

"This student with the lowest mana core rank and black hair who prepares his weapons is extremely clever! My dear students, remember to not only perceive the obvious! This youth is extremely calm and carefully prepares his weapons... but why exactly is he so calm?! The answer is relatively easy after a closer inspection! Even though his mana core rank is extremely low, he is able to fight against his much stronger peers. Thus, his combat strength has to be high too and he calms himself down by being perfectly prepared for the fight without looking at the fights in front of him, which might even disrupt his calmness and tense him up.

This would evidently decrease his combat prowess because a calm body and mind are extremely important in order to release one's fullest combat prowess! As such don't complain or curse this youth and try to see the bigger picture he follows!"

Hearing this, the teacher showed a proud expression, while his youths exclaimed in shock

"So it was like this?"

"I never expected that this is also possible!!"

"He is almost like a veteran...wow!"

"This is the gap between us average students and a real prodigy?!"

Upon hearing what the teacher said and his students' answers, Jason almost choked on his saliva because he didn't really think about anything as he started preparing his equipment and it was only because he neglected it that he had to do it now...

But in the end, he didn't want to destroy the teacher's illusion as he continued to prepare himself as if nothing happened.

Once he was done, he sheathed his daggers, before he put on his normal grade-2 leather armor.

Afterward, he watched the remaining battles, with slight interest, while talking with Greg about their combat prowess and tactics before it was his turn to fight.

Entering the combat arena, he immediately saw youth in front of him with a lean physique.

From his outer appearance, he didn't look like anything special and Jason seized up his opponent with his mana eyes, as he exclaimed inwardly

'What is that?!