“Alright, soldiers!” Dana shouted, standing before the ten creations of the Keeper. She wasn’t in one of the Olympus training rooms, but rather stood with them in a large field. “You all were given life by the boss, created to master a particular style of combat! You were given intelligence to train on your own and develop your own techniques in these styles. You were given the freedom to move around and act independently. Many aeons aren’t given such beneficial treatment!”

“Are we aeons?” The blue-haired woman among the group asked, tilting her head at the unfamiliar word. Dana turned, pointing sharply at her and causing her to flinch back.

“Yes! At your core, you are fundamentally aeons! Creatures that were summoned by another being for one purpose or another with the combination of mana and spiritual energy. However, you are also more than that. You are the creations of a special technique known as the Beasts of the End. Originally, there were meant to be twelve of you. However, aside from you ten, the Keeper only has one other, and the final one is still being planned.”

“Now, today I am going to go over basic combat styles that can apply to all aeons! These are techniques that I have learned over a very, *very* long life. I was reborn in an ancient elven city to an ailing father. When he was taken from me, I fought to get him back. I marched into the depths of hell, and I conquered it in order to find him again.”

Dana paused, closing her eyes and letting out a deep breath. “I never found him. By the time I knew that I was in the wrong place, he surely would have been reborn as a new soul. However, someone else found me. Tsuba, she took me in and gave me a home.”

Dana opened her eyes, a fierce light shining from within them. “This is my home now. If it’s your job to defend it, then you had better believe that I am not going to let you slack off. Unlike all of you, I wasn’t created with special powers. I was pieced together from the soul of a young girl who died of illness. Everything I have, I fought for, I earned.”

“I’ll be paying *special* attention to the two of you.” Dana said, pointing at the jester and the woman in an asian dress. “You were created with the express intention of mastering your arts, and I myself am an expert of the techniques you focus on.”

“But first… general combat skills. Every aeon with enough intelligence to act independently has the potential to borrow spiritual energy from the underworld. I have already gotten permission from the Keeper to take you all to hell. If you can’t handle it, you don’t deserve the powers you’ve been given.”

Dana lifted a hand, purposely slowing the process as a familiar spell diagram appeared above her, forming a black abyss in the sky, filled with rolling silver fog. “All of you, enter. It’s time to begin basic training. Unless I give you permission, you are not to use the styles you have been training until now.”

The ten aeons had serious expressions, at least those who had a visible face. One by one they flew up to enter the portal that Dana had created, Dana herself passing through moments later before closing the portal behind herself.

Aeons were not the same as avatars created by the Keeper, or copies made for the Virtual world. Even if he went to the Admin Room, so long as the aeons were given the ability to act independently, they would function thanks to his World Host. This was something that Dana had confirmed when she found out that Dale had hastily returned to the Admin Room previously, and found that they were still training, unaware that their creator had left. Now, she was going to take advantage of that fact.

“Let’s see… this spot should be good, right?” Aurivy asked, glancing back at Julia as they arrived at a rocky plateau, having moved to an uninhabited world.

Julia gave a wry smile, shrugging her shoulders. “It’s certainly not your usual choice of location for a date. If you’d tell me what we’re here for, I might have more confidence in answering you.”

Aurivy simply grinned, snapping her fingers as an orb of darkness rose from her shadow, hovering in the air. “It’s one of my research projects! I’ve been thinking about it for a long time, but never really came up with an answer!”

Julia arched a brow, glancing at the orb. She could sense Aurivy using natural energy to control her shadow. A rather advanced technique for a druid, but not unheard of. “This is just a representation. This shadow orb represents the void. The void, as you know, is the source of everything, whether it is energy or creation.”

Aurivy lifted her other hand, and four streams of energy flew out of her body, forming spheres. One green, one silver, one blue, and one red. “These are the four basic energy types; natural, spiritual, mana, and ki.”

Julia simply nodded, following along so far. Aurivy, meanwhile, looked at the energies. “We know that you can directly turn the void into mana, because that is the source of the void generators. However, you can also do the same with the other primary energies. This led me to a question… which energies have a higher priority.”

The four spheres went to orbit around the black orb, and Aurivy smiled. “The first theory is that they are all equal when pulled from the void. After all, it makes everything, so why would it differentiate?”

“The second theory…” The ‘void’ sphere rose up, with the green and white spheres resting just under it, and the red and blue ones just under those. “Is that the void first gives birth to either ‘nature’ and ‘spirit’, or ‘form’ and ‘thought’, and the other two are then derived from the first.”

“Okay? Where is this going?” Julia arched a brow, not sure what this had to do with anything.

“I’m getting there, okay?” Aurivy stuck her tongue out. “No matter which way I thought about it, whether they were equal or there was a hierarchy, there was always something bothering me.”

“When the Martial Will appeared in the world, this only became worse and worse. Now, let’s go over the basic energy combinations. First, you have mana and ki, which is the most simple, and makes chakra. Because this is the easiest combination, let’s put these two adjacent to one another.” She nodded her head, rearranging the order of the orbiting spheres.

“Now… given the complexity and power of Martial Will, let’s put spiritual energy opposite of ki. This also shows that aeons are rather easy to create, due to mana and spirit being next to one another, as well as elemental ki, due to ki and elemental energy. World spirits are a bit tricky, but nowhere near the degree of a complete martial spirit.”

As she spoke, she drew lines between each of the orbs, with the line connecting ki and spiritual energy overlapping the void orb. “This diagram can be made with the hierarchy as well, and the ‘simple’ combinations are still adjacent.”

“You didn’t mention elemental magic.” Julia pointed out, crossing her arms in front of her chest. “I’m guessing that’s intentional, right?”

“Yup! See… if the combination of ki and spirit can lead to something as powerful as Martial Will… you’d think that the other two energies would combine to form something just as powerful, right? But, elemental magic can’t be considered as powerful as that. So, I kept thinking that we hadn’t really uncovered the potential of elemental magic. Like how ki and spirit originally just made martial spirits.”

Julia blinked at that, looking around. “So you brought us to this desolate world, wanting to try and ‘perfect’ elemental magic?”

“Got it in one!” Aurivy grinned, planting her hands on her hips. “I figure there has to be some secret to elemental magic that we hadn’t discovered yet. Maybe it can be used to create a powerful saint energy. Maybe elemental magic itself can be used at that level. That’s the purpose of today’s experiment. And if everything goes critical… oops? At least it’s just an uninhabited rock?”

“Uh huh…” Julia’s shoulders sagged slightly. “If you want to test the full scale of elemental magic like that, wouldn’t Ryone be a better helper? Like how Scarlet used her domain for ki, Ryone could do the same for mana.”

Aurivy glanced off to the side, chuckling slightly. “I uh… I wanted to surprise Ryone. She’s always busy trying to crack fifth tier magic, so I wanted to show her this as a surprise if it worked. If it didn’t, I’d just tell her later.”

Julia simply rolled her eyes. “Alright, what do you need my help with?” She asked, a small grin on her lips.

Aurivy’s own grin grew wider and wider. “An audience! Also, someone to bounce ideas off of. My first thought is to construct an elemental magic spell diagram completely out of natural energy.”

“Won’t work.” Julia said simply, holding up a hand to stop her. “Tons of people have tried that before. Hell, *I’ve* tried that before. If anything, the effect is a bit worse than normal elemental magic.”

Aurivy’s brow twitched, clearing her throat. “T-Then, the next idea. Scarlet used a lot of ki, so… why not try using a lot of mana?”

“And this is why I said we needed Ryone.” Julia said with an amused smile.

“Well, I’ve got this!” Aurivy waved her hand, depositing several large crates from her inventory. “I’ve been stocking up on Mage Heart crystals for about ten years, so it should be enough!”

Julia’s eyes widened, immediately retreating a few steps. “You’re not worried about causing a mana siphon?”

“Well… that’s part of why we needed an uninhabited world.” Aurivy said, somewhat sheepishly. “If a mana siphon is created here, it will only be based on the thoughts of the two of us. I even got a spell diagram that should be able to support all of the energy!”

“Wait.” Julia extended a hand to stop Aurivy again. “If you want to test it in this direction, you need a directionless spell, and then use natural energy to focus it. Otherwise, you’re just adding an elemental effect to a powerful spell.”

“Uh… well… that’s not wrong.” Aurivy chuckled sheepishly. “That was going to be my fifth test.”

“...How many tests do you have planned?”

Aurivy glanced from side to side, speaking slowly. “...Eighty-two?”

“Eighty…” Julia’s eyes went wide, almost stumbling back at that. “You have been saving this up for so long that you have eighty-two tests prepared, and the materials for all of them? Is your inventory *filled* with Mage Heart?”

“Only like ninety-five percent of it. I needed some room for other materials, too. Like I said, I’ve been saving up the crystals for about ten years.” Aurivy snickered, looking back at the crates.

“Okay… well, let’s just start off with this ‘fifth’ test, then.” Julia shook her head with a long sigh, massaging her forehead. “If that doesn’t work, we’ll just go from there, or find the next planet to test on. How many *planets* do you have prepared?”

“Ten!” Aurivy shouted in a confident tone. “I figure it can’t take less than eight or nine failed attempts to destroy a planet, right?”