

Chapter 211: Against All Odds

*Congratulations, you are dead! Your Talent **[He Who Eludes Death]** brings you back to life once a day.*

Number of deaths: 21

*Synergy detected with your talent **[Homo Elysian Obsession]** and your Titles **[Three-Headed Hydra]** and **[Weathered]**. Your body and spirit are rebuilt and will be more resistant to what killed them:*

VIT +6

***[Pyro - Concept]** - Natural Affinity +5% (73%).*

***[Supremacy - Domain]** - Sphere of authority radius: +0.5 meters (3.0 meters).*

*Lvl Up: **[Revelation Resilience]** lvl 7, 8*

MEM +6

META (Affinity) +6

META (Authority) +6

*Lvl Up: **[Aura Resistance]** lvl 4*

CONST +3

META (Endurance) +3

META (Authority) +3

*Lvl Up: **[Fire Champion Physique]** lvl 2, 3*

VIT +6

CONST +6

META (Endurance) +6

[Tribulation]: Three Tribulations pending.

Future Tribulations delayed until:

Time: 162 days 6 hours 2 minutes 52 seconds.

Next thresholds: 6 attributes > 600 / 3 attributes > 900

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[He Who Eludes Death] allowed Priam to wait up to half an hour before resurrecting. A time during which his soul was disconnected from reality. This period of invincibility was sometimes helpful to him.

Today, he chose to resurrect a second after his death.

A few flames flickered as Priam regained consciousness. Reunited with his Concept, he used the perception of fire to perceive the world.

The combination of his Breath and Pyro had created a pyrotechnic tower that assaulted the sky. At the center of the blast, a sphere of authority pushed back the flames, creating a blind spot for his fire sense. Priam materialized one of his eyes to obtain a visual signal.

With her body greatly burned, breathing difficulty and tortured by the infernal heat, Eleha did not look proud. Her feline form seemed to suffer from multiple fractures, and her right front paw had been torn off at the shoulder. She must have managed to turn at the last moment, absorbing the majority of the explosion with her former limb.

Focusing, Priam perceived some bone fragments, fur tufts, and blood drops carried by the firestorm. He had seriously injured his opponent, but she was far from dead. *Too bad.*

Growling, Eleha began to rise, using her Domain to protect herself from Pyro. She looked around before transforming back into humanoid form. Nude and bloody, she began to hobble away from the inferno.

A few meters away, Priam spotted Kazuki. He had activated his temporary invincibility to escape the explosion but was not out of danger. Obviously, Eleha intended to finish the job. *Over my dead body.*

In a fraction of a second, Priam became aware of everything around him. Kazuki, the Forum, the ambient aether that belonged to him, the immense pillar of fire at his disposal and Eleha, alone and wounded. He saw a possibility. Perhaps it was time to seek out a new Achievement.

Flexing his Fire Concept, Priam drew the flames to him. The cloud of fire stopped its expansion before compressing rapidly. A colossal amount of thermal energy rushed toward him as he connected to his Potential. It was not the time to conserve resources.

POT -50

Reforming his body at the edge of Eleha's Domain, Priam summoned Promesse in his right hand and two wings of fire on his back. As the burning gases finished condensing around him, forming a miniature nova, he activated **[Kinetic Control]**.

In an instant, all the thermal energy created by his suicide attack was absorbed as kinetic energy. The amount of energy passing through his meridians caused their destruction, and his second set—the blood network activated by **[Bloodless]**—took over. All combustion ceased, and the incandescent air disappeared to reveal Priam, naked and angry.

If he had not been a Fire Champion, if the flames had not originated from him, and if he had not used Potential, it would have been unimaginable. However, these improbable conditions were met, and Priam achieved the impossible. Feeling the kinetic ocean churning within him, he understood it was worth it.

Deploying **[Aether Manipulation]** and aided by his Potential, Priam took control of the aether he had condensed with his Breath. He did not intend to waste any resources. Using his formidable will, he gathered the primordial fluid into a sphere that he placed at the tip of Promesse.

Noticing the disappearance of the infernal column, Eleha froze before starting to turn in his direction.

Before she could establish a defense, Priam overloaded his wings and dashed forward. The phoenix skill almost teleported him, preventing the Tier 3's Domain from stopping him before he was in close combat.

Lvl Up: [Phoenix Wings] lvl 12, 13, 14
META(Focus) +6
META(Endurance) +3

Guided by Spear Mastery and his Potential, Priam channeled the first skill the phoenix had taught him. **[Tribulation: Piercing Spear]**.

Mobilizing all his vivacity and the help of his System, Priam began to weave a drill around Promesse's tip with the aether from his Breath. In a fraction of a second, aided by his Potential, skill, and new aether proficiency, he finished preparing the skill. Conquest Aura and Spear Mastery resonated, adding a piercing quality to the drill.

Lvl Up: [Tribulation Piercing Spear] lvl 13, 14, 15
STR +3
AGI +3
DEXT +3

POT -50

Priam looked up at Eleha. Rage distorted the Tier 3's face. A wave ran through her body, which suddenly accelerated to put itself on guard. With her last arm, Eleha slashed, cutting through the air. A white halo covered the dagger, promising death. If he were hit, Priam would die. He had to flee, he had to plead, he had to...

"FUCK YOU!" he yelled as **[True Will]** and **[Aura Resistance]** broke the mental constraint.

Guided by Spear Mastery and his spear skills, Priam thrust. The shining drill surrounding Promesse like a sheath collided with Eleha's dagger. The rare skill should have exploded upon contact with the opponent's Mastery, but the colossal amount of aether it possessed allowed it to hold its ground.

Lvl Up: [Tribulation Piercing Spear] lvl 16
STR +1
AGI +1
DEXT +1
Lvl Up : [Unrelenting Thrust] lvl 20, 21, 22
STR +9

In a moment of hesitation, the two attacks balanced each other out, neither able to gain the upper hand. Drawing from his kinetic reserves, Priam opened the valves. Eleha's eyes widened as an impossible force invaded Promesse.

Just as the spear was about to crush the Tier 3, an authority descended, freezing reality. Eleha's Domain pressurized Priam, hindering the activation of **[Kinetic Control]** and weakening his attack.

Another Tier 0 would have lost consciousness under the insurmountable oppression, but Priam had pissed on a divine statue without passing out. Refusing to bow, he activated his trump card.

His mind split in two, and one part called the Tribulation affinity hiding in his draconic heart. The organ pulsed, sending an imperative order to his eyes.

An invisible shadow eclipsed Priam's pupils. As Hecate New Moon awakened, the world was stripped of its colors. Plunged into a monochrome nightmare, Eleha lost control of her aether, and her Supremacy faltered.

Charged with a tremendous amount of energy, Promesse moved forward, unstoppable. Priam's entire blood network exploded, and only the simultaneous activation of **[Three-Headed Hydra]** allowed him to survive.

*Ideal upgrade available for **[Erosion Resistance - Rare]**...*

Title upgraded!...

The spear shattered the dagger, broke the sound barrier, and annihilated Eleha's arm in a gory explosion. Guided by Priam's rage, Promesse continued toward the Tier 3's heart.

Seeing death approach, Eleha snarled. Her eyes split, and she disappeared.

Charged with phenomenal energy, Promesse left Priam's hands and continued its trajectory, passing through Oasis and its border. Less than a second later, the weapon struck a cliff two kilometers away. Part of the mountain exploded.

Event: Necromoon.

Banishment of a corrupted (Tier 1 - Baron) - Sun point +100

Banishment of... - Sun point +2 694

Priam turned around. Behind him, hate burning in her eyes and without her arms, Eleha gritted her teeth. *I wonder if **[Armless]** exists...*

As if she had heard his thought, Eleha screamed.

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Vysharratjekto watched the battle unfold with fervor. He had come close to bursting into laughter several times, but he valued his reputation too much for that. *Even if it'll never sink as low as Eleha's*, he smirked.

The warrior's arrogance had cost her dearly. After being spewed with titan blood in the eye, she had her hand burned by a surprise attack. The rest of the fight had been even more brutal, and Eleha struggled to finish it without her skills.

Honestly, both Tier 0s were exceptional. While the first fighter was a prodigy with the spear, Vysharratjekto found the second more intriguing. Versatile and possessing a draconic bloodline, he had limitless potential. Even his description, Death Obsession, was fascinating.

The rest of the fight proved him right. Despite her injuries, Eleha had made it a point not to use her skills. As a result, when the hoplite reached the half-step of Spear Mastery II, he injured her. The wound wasn't severe—some minutes of focused regeneration with Micro III would make it disappear—but it wasn't superficial either.

At that moment, Eleha must have realized she had underestimated the Tier 0s. It came a bit too late, and she didn't have time to protect herself from Priam's fiery embrace. Was it a simple mistake? Vysharratjekto's draconic intuition told him that Priam had manipulated Eleha's instincts—as impossible as it seemed.

Seeing the pseudo-suicide, Vysharratjekto jumped up in fear. The Champion possessed a different draconic bloodline than the Snaherts. If it could be cultivated, it would strengthen the entire clan. He had to live!

The Tier 3 had vainly searched for a trace of his soul within the explosion. When he found it a second later, his joy turned to astonishment. It was *impossible!* Had he been dreaming? But no, the soul had vanished, destroyed by the explosion.

And yet, there Priam was, in full form and even more powerful than before. Vysharratjekto's breathing quickened. There was only one explanation: Priam Azura had sacrificed his soul and had resurrected with a Phoenix Nirvana.

Was it luck? Or perhaps...

"He—" Viktol began upon seeing the Tier 3 standing.

"Silence!" Vysharratjekto commanded, focusing on the fight.

Instead of ending the fight, the Champion capitalized on his previous attack to create an even more terrifying new assault. Vysharratjekto would have dodged the thrust, but Eleha chose to tank it. The Tier 3 had been humiliated by two Tier 0s, and her misplaced honor prevented her from fleeing. She employed an acceleration skill and Dagger Mastery III. Wasting her mental energy like this against an opponent was stupid, but Vysharratjekto didn't expect any better from Eleha.

Against all expectations, Priam matched the power of the attack by stacking different skills and Supremacies. *Well tried, but useless.*

Vysharratjekto was not surprised when Eleha triggered Domain II to neutralize all resistance. Powered by a Tier 3 soul, Supremacies and Concepts became absolutely terrifying.

As Vysharratjekto prepared to save Priam, the world lost its colors.

A wave of primal terror briefly engulfed the Tier 3. Was it a skill based on the Necromoon?
No, it's different...

Pushing aside the sensation, he cursed upon seeing Eleha's Supremacies collapse. The attack severed Eleha's second arm, and the Tier 3 used her Concept to avoid a stupid death. Even a stupid cat counted her lives.

Laepa leaped forward, and Vysharratjekto followed suit. It was time to make a good impression.

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As Priam prepared for another assault, two strangers appeared by Eleha's side. Ignoring the pain caused by the Moon shining in his eyes, he eyed the newcomers.

"A Tier 3 against two Tier 0s isn't enough? You need the numbers advantage too?" he growled, conjuring up a mantle of mist. **[He Who Eludes Death]** was on cooldown, and he had no safety net left, but Priam refused to be intimidated. He wasn't too proud to back down, but the promise of violence in Eleha's eyes confirmed it wouldn't help him here.

Before anyone could respond, the catwoman dashed toward Priam, screaming. Despite her lack of arms, burned torso, and the monochrome domain, her speed remained impressive. As he prepared for the impact, the human-looking young woman snatched Eleha out of the air and slammed her to the ground with disconcerting ease. In a fluid motion, she kneeled on Eleha's throat. Struggling to breathe, the dominated woman stopped screaming.

"Sorry, she's an embarrassment," the lithe woman apologized in flawless French. At Priam's surprised look, she gestured to the Menhir of Secrets. "I bought your language."

"... I suppose you're not here to continue the fight?"

"Indeed. We're from three different tribes, and our alliance is temporary. I have no fondness for Eleha, but this fight is a trap," informed the man with drawn features and scaly skin. "Her cat totem has multiple lives, and even if you manage to kill her, her great uncle is a Tier 4."

"... I guess that's it for today then," grumbled Priam. He eyed Eleha, swearing to get revenge. "Who are you?"

"I am Vysharratjekto, from the Snaherts tribe."

"Laepa, from the Gaeserts."

"...Priam, Oasis's Lord and Champion of humanity. What do you want from me?"

The tone was rough, but Priam was annoyed. Leaving his retreat, he had seen his friend get beaten up by an unknown Tier 3. He had died helping him, and his mythical mutation was splitting his skull.

The man coughed. "Perhaps you could deactivate your suppression skill? On the Dragon laws, I give you my word that I won't take advantage of that to harm you or your loved ones."

Deep inside him, Priam knew that Vysharratjekto shared his bloodline. Swearing on draconic laws certainly had dramatic consequences.

Priam deactivated Hecate New Moon with a grimace. He couldn't keep it for long, and its activation had a terrifying price. The backlash was immediate: dizziness and blindness. Simultaneously, the wound was transferred to his soul, which trembled.

His perception of the aether blurred, and Priam focused on the perception offered by his Concepts and his Domain to orient himself.

"Thank you. We wished to get to know our new neighbors and—"

"I'd like access to the Auctions," Laepa cut in. "Some of my brothers and sisters are in a coma, fighting necro corruption, and we're looking for elixirs to help them."

A growl drew Priam's attention. Kazuki was leaving his invincibility unsteadily. "I can sympathize, but we'll talk about that when my friend feels better," Priam replied, rushing over. "How are you feeling?" he asked, offering his hand.

"Like a Tier 3 beat me up," the hoplite replied, accepting Priam's help. Two streams of blood flowed from his pierced thighs. "I see you gave her a beating."

"I would've finished the job if they hadn't intervened," Priam growled, supporting Kazuki.

"I would've killed you, you little shit!" Eleha exclaimed in French. With her head squashed on the ground, it was hard to take her seriously.

Laepa pressed further, causing a crack to appear in the Forum's pavement. "I'll keep an eye on her. I brought along an apprentice Shaman; she can speed up his healing," she added.

"Thanks," Priam replied before addressing Eleha. "If you want to try something stupid, remember that you represent your tribe. Even if you can survive an H-bomb, I'm not sure your whole family could pull off the same feat. Think about the safety of the weaker ones," he said, pointing to the Tier 0 Aelbe. Priam felt dirty saying these words, but the safety of his loved ones was his top priority.

The five warriors looked toward Log-a-rhythm. There, the apprentice shaman Aelbe was yelling at the other two Tier 0s, unaware that one of her locks had just fallen to the ground.

Eleha paled upon seeing a shadow dagger pressed against her pupil's throat.

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Status:

PHYSICAL:

Strength 582 (+19)

Constitution 983 (+90)

Agility 561 (+6)

Vitality 860 (+20)

Perception 719

MENTAL:

Vivacity (D) 516

Dexterity 594 (+4)

Memory 471 (+9)

Willpower 1 036

Charisma 631

META:

Meta-affinity 563 (+8)

Meta-focus 366 (+6)

Meta-endurance 377 (+16)

Meta-perception 260

Meta-chance 230

Meta-authority 66 (+9)

Potential: 9 787 (-65)

Tier 0

Sun points: 138 716 (+2 794)

[He Who Eludes Death] charge: OFF. Reloaded in 5 hours 23 minutes 59 seconds.

[Tribulation]: Three Tribulations pending.

Future Tribulations delayed until:

Time: 162 days 5 hours 57 minutes 12 seconds.

Next thresholds: 6 attributes > 600 / 3 attributes > 900