

The escalating battle between Darx and Kase, stretching on for what seemed like an eternity, had drawn the attention of countless onlookers, their curiosity piqued by the unfolding spectacle. While most maintained a safe distance, content to observe what they could from afar, a daring few, oblivious to the imminent danger, ventured too close in their eagerness for a better view. For normal people without any sensory abilities or a more refined instinct of what is dangerous, it was merely a clash between adventurers, a spectacle to be enjoyed without grasping the actual danger they were in. However, even these unsuspecting bystanders were jolted into awareness when Darx unleashed an overwhelming surge of demonic energy. Their sense of danger was materialized when some saw how one of the girls who was fighting was decapitated. Those who saw this screamed and ran, causing the rest of the other curious people to panic as well and run in different directions.

As Diva's lifeless body crumpled to the ground, her head rolling a few feet away, the air thickened with an eerie silence, broken only by the sound of blood dripping from the decapitated neck. Simultaneously, after killing Diva thanks to [Harmonic Drain], Darx's wounds start to get healed.

Arthur, Gin, and Celeste stood frozen in horror, their eyes wide with terror at the gruesome scene. Diva, their comrade, now lay dead without her head before them. Arthur's heart pounded in his chest, the horrific scene accompanied by the overwhelming and suffocating demonic presence beyond anything he could imagine being possible. That demonic energy that engulfed Darx had reached a level he could not comprehend, being just as strange as the demonic horn that emerged from Darx's head. Terror surged within Arthur, threatening to drown out his rational thoughts. Yet, despite the fear gripping him, Arthur's survival instincts kicked in, propelling him forward with a tightening grip on his greatsword. He bet everything on the belief that fighting back was his sole chance of escaping this dire situation alive. But as Arthur charged toward Darx, his opponent's demonic presence seemed to loom larger than life itself. Darx stood tall and imposing, his form shrouded in a miasma of darkness that seemed to pulsate with otherworldly evil might.

With a scream that came from the depths of his being, Arthur attacked with [Rampant Cleave], but as the sword descended against Darx, with a swift motion undetectable to no one but Agnes, Darx raised his arm, wrapped in swirling dark energy just like he did with Diva, and brought it down upon Arthur's greatsword, splitting the greatsword in two as if it were mere butter. Arthur stumbled backward, his eyes widening in shock at the sight of his broken sword. Almost simultaneously, an orb of dark energy formed in Darx's palm, from which a wide beam of demonic energy surged forth, aimed directly at Arthur.

"[Sentinel]!"

Arthur managed to use one of his rare skills [Sentinel] just in the nick of time. A skill that immobilizes him but, in exchange, makes him immune to any damage for five seconds. Arthur received the impact that would have been fatal if it had not been for his skill. However, this defense was a one-time saving, a precious resource to be expended wisely. Arthur can only use

Sentinel once a day, and if Darx attacks him again in a similar manner, he will have no way to protect himself.

Luckily for Arthur, before his skill expired, the air crackled with the sound of gunfire, and a barrage of bullets sliced through the air, aimed squarely at Darx, each one finding its mark with deadly precision. However, only two bullets managed to pass the dark energy barrier that surrounded Darx, hitting him with one in the chest and the other in one arm. The rest of the bullets seemed to have no effect on him; it was as if they were nothing more than a fly crashing into his body. Agnes understood that only the bullets used with [Witchbane Bullet] would be able to pierce the demonic energy surrounding Darx. However, the bullets she can use with that skill are limited.

With a steely resolve, Agnes raised her rifle, aiming at her adversary while Darx kept his expression unreadable. A second later, before the confrontation between Darx and Agnes began, a sudden interruption shattered the moment. Elan, who had arrived flying on his griffin, fell from the sky, already transformed into his human-lion hybrid. His skin looked white with a texture similar to that of a feline, his muscles were considerably big, and his head looked more like a lion's than a human's. Elan tried to surprise Darx by attacking with his claw, but Darx dodged the strike. Reacting swiftly, Elan leaped back, putting some distance between himself and Darx when he saw that his surprise attack had failed before Darx countered. Darx then looked around and saw that not only Elan had arrived but that more adventurers from Oblivion were already there with weapons in hand, ready to fight.

"We must take on this monster head-on!"

"Magicians and ranged don't stop shooting! Don't even give him time to breathe!"

"Attack from all sides!"

All around, the voices of those adventurers could be heard, ready to join the fight.

Darx, at that moment, did something that he had not done until that moment. In a chilling display of power, Darx unleashed a frigid wave, plunging the surroundings into an icy abyss. The sudden drop in temperature sent shivers down the spines of those nearby, their breath crystallizing in the frosty air. Several adventurers tried to attack Darx simultaneously, but in that instant, the very ground beneath them transformed into towering spires of ice, hurtling upwards with lethal intentions of impaling the attackers. Despite Being all high-rank adventurers, the adventurers narrowly evaded the deadly thrusts. Still, to their surprise, summons of ice in the shape of a woman emerged from the frozen pillars, very similar to Darx's water summons. This summons, who should not be able to speak, laughed with a spectral female voice eerily with voices akin to whispers in the wind. A pitched fight between the adventurers and those ice summons began. Pillars of ice and skills of all kinds collided, causing more destruction to the guild building and its surroundings.

While all this was happening, Agnes did not stay still. Agnes quickly reloaded her rifle, focusing her thoughts on the objectives at hand. She knew that the battle was far from over, and it was crucial to keep Darx engaged while the others dealt with the icy summons. Taking a deep breath, she steadied her aim and let loose a barrage of [Witchbane Bullets], each one piercing the dark energy barrier that surrounded Darx and finding its mark with deadly precision. The bullets tore into Darx, causing him to flinch for the first time. Agnes was aiming for vital points; however, even though [Witchbane Bullets] pass Darx's barrier, they are not powerful enough to penetrate further and thus reach Darx's vital point.

Darx, with his arm wrapped in more concentrated demonic energy, tried to do the same thing he did with Diva and Kase, and in the blink of an eye, he arrived at where Agnes was with the intention of cutting her head off, but Agnes paid him in the same way, already expecting Darx to do it that.

"[Quick Draw]"

A skill that is useful both in guns as well as any other weapon. With a dagger, Agnes tried to slit Darx's throat. As the lethal dance unfolded, Agnes's hair cascaded to the ground, while Darx's throat bore a shallow scratch, both dodging deadly attacks. In less than a second, Agnes had her revolver loaded, and six shots came out at such speed that it sounded as if it were just one. Darx swiftly erected a pillar of ice between them to deflect Agnes's shots, countering with a torrent of dark energy directed at the pillar of ice or, more precisely, Agnes, who was behind. However, when the pillar was destroyed, Agnes was no longer where she was before, leaving Darx momentarily disoriented.

Darx turned to the sky and saw Agnes high above, pointing at him with her rifle that shone in a strange way. First, Agnes used [Swift Marksman's Stride]. A skill that infuses herself with strength, agility, and speed. Great to navigate the battlefield with ease, effortlessly reaching strategic vantage points. Using it, she managed to jump so high, but it was a skill that she did not want to use since, at her age and condition, it puts too much strain on her already worn-out body, but given the circumstances, she had no choice. The second skill she was using was [Predator]. It is one of her most lethal skills, but she can only use it twice a day. When active, this skill builds up power for as long as Agnes aims her weapon at a target.

"Take this, you son of a bitch!" Agnes screamed before pulling the trigger.

A beam of light erupted from Agnes's rifle, catching Darx off guard. Despite his attempt to evade, the shot found its mark, severing his left hand. Undeterred, Darx retaliated with a beam of darkness, but Agnes anticipated the attack, dodging by propelling herself forward with a shot aimed in front of her. As she landed on the roof of her guild building, Darx pursued, leaping onto the rooftop in pursuit. Agnes evaded the first attack, leaping away to put distance between them. Darx responded by conjuring water spheres and hurling them at her, but Agnes skillfully dispatched each one with precise shots from her rifle.

(It's no use if I can hit him with a bullet if he heals instantly,) Agnes thought as she dodged Darx's attacks, (From what I've been able to deduce, his healing has limitations. Darx can only heal if he deals damage with a physical attack. My only chance of winning will be if I manage to keep my distance from him without letting him physically harm me, causing as much damage as possible and at the same time buying time so that his body can no longer withstand the charge of demonic energy that he is expelling. I'm sure he'll have to reach his limit soon. As a last resort, I have one more shot of [Predator]. I can use it loaded with everything I have left, hoping it will be enough to cause a mortal wound.)

Agnes continued to move with incredible agility and precision, maintaining a wide distance from Darx as he followed her. Bullets and different skills from Darx collided, both trying to cause as much damage as possible. For Agnes, this was more than just another battle—it was a return to the life she had once known, a chance to prove herself on the field of combat once more. In her youth, Agnes had been a fearsome adventurer, her name known by friend and foe alike. But as the years passed, she was forced to trade her gun for a desk, her days of adventure a distant memory. Yet now, as she faced off against Darx, a spark of excitement ignited within her chest. This was what she had been born for.

Agnes, her reflexes as sharp as ever, dodged and weaved through Darx's ice pillars, her movements a blur of speed and agility. However, with each passing moment, she could feel the weight of her years and her disease bearing down upon her, having a hard time breathing and her muscles straining against the relentless assault of Darx's attacks.

The rest of the adventurers there tried to watch Agnes fight against Darx while simultaneously dealing with their own fight against the summons. It is rarely possible to see a true S-Rank fight at all his abilities, and at that moment, even the A-Rank present understood that Agnes, despite her age and illness, was fighting Darx at a pace that they could not keep up with.

Simultaneously, close to Diva's body, Kase was writhing in agony after the loss of his arm, severed cleanly at the elbow, while the blood that didn't seem to stop coming out covered his body in red. Kase looked at his arm on the ground and at Diva's lifeless body and couldn't comprehend what had happened. Seconds ago, he was about to finally end Darx's life, and now he was in agony, bleeding to death, not knowing what happened.

"FUCK!!!! FUCK!!!" Kase screamed, looking for Celeste to heal him since the pain he was feeling was overwhelming, "AGGG!!! CELESTE!!!"

Celeste, who was lying on the ground still in shock, finally realized Kase's screams and, seeing him covered in blood, with trembling legs she got up and ran to Kase.

"I HAVE BEEN YELLING, WHY DIDN'T YOU COME!!!?? HEAL ME!!!" Kase screamed as he saw Celeste approach him.

"D-Diva is dead..." Was the only thing Celeste could say.

"I DON'T CARE!! JUST HEAL ME, OR I'M GOING TO BLEED TO DEATH!!!"

Celeste immediately sprang into action, her healing magic enveloping Kase's wounded body. As her healing magic washed over him, the bleeding gradually ceased, and some of his injuries began to mend. Kase was counting on Celeste to use one of her rare healing skills, which is capable of even regenerating lost limbs. Yet, despite Celeste's best efforts, the wound on Kase's arm and the scorching burn on his face stubbornly resisted her magic, refusing to heal.

Kase felt more relieved without so much pain, so Celeste's priest asked, "What are you doing? Hurry up and regenerate my arm!"

"I-I'm trying!" Celeste responded with a confused expression, "I'm using my rare skill, but it's not working. I-I can't heal your arm or the wound on your face." Celeste then used more mana in desperation, trying to power up her healing, "I don't understand! ...Why? I managed to stop the bleeding and close the wound, but your arm is not regenerating, nor is the wound on your face healing."

"What are you talking about? Hurry up and regenerate my arm!" Kase said with concern reflected on his face.

Kase and Celeste were so focused that neither of them detected the stealthy approach of a figure creeping up behind them. This mysterious individual dressed in a hooded cloak that covered the face walked slowly with deliberate stealth, trying to make as little noise as possible. When this person was already a short distance from Kase and Celeste's backs, in a swift and silent motion, they withdrew a knife from the clothes and lunged towards Kase's, thrusting it towards his vulnerable back, catching him off guard with a vicious attack.

"DIE!!!!" A woman's hateful scream was heard.

Celeste turned her head and saw Amelia glaring at Kase with deep hatred. Then she turned to look at Kase and saw the knife buried deep in his back, held by Amelia. Before Celeste could understand what was happening, Amelia pulled out the knife and stabbed Kase once again, but this time, Kase moved, and the knife didn't go as deep.

Kase crawled on the ground, then looked back, "AME...LIA..."

Amelia had taken advantage of the chaos and Kase's moment of vulnerability to carry out her murder attempt. How long Amelia had been on the prowl waiting for this opportunity was impossible to know.

"YOU ARE A SON OF A BITCH! YOU RUINED MY LIFE!! YOU TOOK EVERYTHING FROM ME!"

Kase tried to stand up but fell to the ground. A lot of blood was coming out of the wounds on his back, added to the blood he had already lost from the wound on his arm. Kase was weak and exhausted.

"A-Amelia, why?" Kase said, looking at Amelia, feeling afraid for his life.

"NOW YOU'RE GOING TO PAY!"

With that heartbreaking scream, Amelia launched herself at Kase once more, knife in hand. However, this time, Celeste stepped in to intervene. Weakened from the ongoing battle and nearly depleted of mana after tirelessly healing everyone, Celeste's efforts were futile as Amelia easily overpowered her, pushing her aside.

"DIE!!!"

With his remaining hand, Kase managed to hold Amelia's hand, stopping the stabbing, but Amelia did not give up and climbed on top of him, using her weight to push the knife against Kase's chest while he desperately tried to hold on.

"A-AMELIA STOP! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?" Kase shouted.

Amelia's face was distorted by the force she was exerting and the hatred she felt for Kase.

"I HATE YOU...!" Amelia said, starting to beat Kase, and the knife was about to touch Kase's chest.

But at that moment, Celeste got up and grabbed a stone from the ground and hit Amelia on the head, causing her to fall to Kase's side, dropping the knife.

Kase, breathing hard because of how exhausted he was, grabbed the knife, "You damn bitch! You tried to kill me!"

With difficulty, Kase managed to stand up and, for a moment, considered stabbing Amelia as she wanted to do to him but ultimately threw the knife into the distance.

"Why Amelia? Where have you been?" Kase said as he saw Amelia starting to stand up.

At that moment, a loud bang was heard in the distance, and Kase turned to see what it was. Opportunity that Amelia took advantage of to escape.

Kase saw Amelia running away and then fell to the ground, bleeding again, but now from his back. Celeste rushed to heal him again, but her mana was almost gone when she tried to heal him.

"SHIT! SHIT!" Celeste shouted, trying to use the last of her mana to close the wounds.

Elsewhere, a long time had passed, and the intense fight continued. Agnes was still fighting using everything in her power, but with each passing moment, Darx's demonic power seemed to grow stronger, his attacks more ferocious and relentless than ever before. As Agnes struggled to keep pace, she could feel that she couldn't hold this pace for much longer, and soon, it would be impossible for her to evade Darx's relentless assault.

Agnes' breath came in ragged gasps, her muscles screaming in protest as she pushed herself to the brink of exhaustion, and suddenly, she started coughing blood, not because of an attack from Darx but because of her illness.

"It seems that in the end, I won't be able to retire and spend my last years in peace," Agnes muttered, smiling with blood dripping from her mouth.

While Agnes coughed blood and dodged one of the ice pillars, with her body battered and broken, she couldn't help but reflect on the journey that had led her to this fateful moment. Memories flashed before her mind's eye, each one a testament to the trials and triumphs that had shaped her into the person she had become.

Agnes remembered the thrill when she became an adventurer, receiving the highest possible rank. She recalled all her adventures and the friends she had made throughout her life and had lost along the way. Agnes also remembered the face of the man she loved but whom she left to marry, the man her family imposed on her. All in order to become the guild master of Oblivion, the guild to which she had dedicated much of her life.

And now, as she faced her greatest challenge yet, she couldn't help but feel a shiver down her spine. A feeling she had forgotten after spending so many years in front of a desk. Agnes, who, after becoming an adventurer, never lost a fight, began to feel the forgotten adrenaline of facing a dangerous opponent with her life on the line, knowing that at the end of the battle, one of the two would not be alive.

Throughout the fight, Agnes achieved her goal of hurting Darx using all the [Witchbane Bullet] bullets she had left, as well as avoiding being physically hurt to prevent Darx from healing. Agnes also knew that Darx must be reaching his limit since there was no way a human could withstand that amount of demonic energy for such a long time. But she was in the same condition, and her body had reached the limit.

Even in the face of death, Agnes refused to yield, her spirit unbroken despite the odds stacked against her, "It seems that in the end, I will have to bet everything on one shot." Agnes said, preparing her last attack.

From a building, Agnes jumped as high as possible, being followed by Darx. After dodging a first attack while she fell with a final, desperate effort, Agnes raised her rifle, the barrel aimed squarely at Darx's heart, charging [Predator] with everything she had left, knowing that this would be his last shot.

Seeing Agnes' intention, Darx also charged her dark beam of demonic energy. Simultaneously, Agnes pulled the trigger, and Darx unleashed a devastating blast of dark energy. Unfortunately for Agnes, her eyesight failed at the last moment, and her vision became blurred and the bullet didn't hit Darx's heart but his shoulder. In return, Agnes, in the air in free fall, had no way to dodge, and with a scream from Syvis in the background, Agnes received Darx's beam of darkness in full. While she was being dragged and her body destroyed in her mind, Agnes couldn't help but wonder what would have happened if this fight had taken place in her youth when she was in her prime. Her self-confidence or perhaps her pride made her think that, in that case, maybe she would have had a chance to win. But none of that mattered as her body fell hard to the ground.