

Abyssal 72

Chapter 72 - Expedition

Zatiel was in his laboratory working. These past few days, he has spent all of his time making Rank 1 runes, only leaving this place every few days to sleep. Besides him, there was a pyramid made from cubes of food that, from time to time, floated to his mouth for him to eat them, but even when he did that, he didn't stop working.

The thing that will raise interest in anyone who sees this is that even as he eats, all of his concentration remains on the runes.

It was like if two people were controlling a body, the first had domain over his eyes and hands, focusing all of his attention in runecrafting and the second controlling his mouth and digestive system, monitoring the energy inside Zatiel.

This feat was thanks to the glowing rune in the upper section of Zatiel spine, replacing 'Secondary Consciousness' that was there previously. This was the rune that he only was able to create thanks to the help of the Eye of life and creation, and it was called 'Mind Mirror'.

'Mind Mirror' is a Middle-Rank 2 rune. It works by enhancing your cognitive abilities by a factor of two and letting you split your mind and focus on two different tasks simultaneously.

What Zatiel was doing was using one mind to concentrate completely on runecrafting. The other was manipulating his digestive system, directing the energy that was generated to his hearts.

Neo-Demon use abyss aura as a source of energy, and their bodies have great vitality. But the power necessary to use a Rank 2 rune constantly was huge. Zatiel was not even close to the peak of Rank 1, so he had to focus almost all the energy coming from his Bloodline Heart.

A significant part of the energy from the original heart was to use it, keeping the rest for inscribing runes. This was only because his reservoir was higher than any other Rank 1, even those of the Neo-Demon race.

By doing this, Zatiel would not have to decide how much of his time to inscribe and will be able to enhance his power and improve his skill as a runemaster simultaneously.

When he was about to finish a rune, he received a message from Heinz though the crystal from the Tower. After completing his work, he took the crystal and checked the message.

It appears that Heinz had some good news for him, and was calling him to his room. Since he had had nothing urgent to do, Zatiel eats a cube and calls the sword cultivator.

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In the room with a wall full of swords and another full of lacerations, Heinz was resting. On his body were some open wounds. Although they were shallow, there was a dark glow surrounding them. It was stopping the regeneration abilities of the cultivator from healing his body.

This wound was caused by attacks that had the laws of death on them, and Heinz was using his own energy to purge it from his body. Although purely in offensive terms, the Law of Killing is more potent than the Law of Death, the Law of Death had a connection with decaying, rot and the withering of life. So it was very persistent once it latched on a living being, but thanks to Heinz's power, in a couple of hours, he will be able to erase it.

When the last of the dark glow vanished from his body, Heinz received a message and stood up to create a portal, from which Zatiel came out.

"Brother, I have some good news. An expedition party will be sent to the inner area of the Endless Forest, the task is to extract metal from a cave found in that place. Due to the special condition of the mineral, only those at Rank 1 and above can touch it safely, so I wondered if you would want to form part of it. As a show of gratitude for the help you have provided me with my sword training, you will retain everything you earn in that place, unlike all the others that will only get a percentage."

It was thanks to the help from Zatiel that he was able to dominate his opponent in the battle for the cave, so Heinz wanted to repay him with this.

Although Heinz had enough wealth and it would be simple for him to give something to Zatiel, he thought that doing something like that will harm their relationship. So giving him a spot for a task in which he will be able to get his own wealth, will be perfect.

"Thank you. But I need more information about this expedition like the power of the people who would be going and the possible enemies that we will face before making a decision. After all, the inner area of the Endless Forest is a dangerous place."

Despite Zatiel needing enormous wealth to create his Magic Tower, he would not take an expedition to anywhere lightly, especially to a place where Rank 3 Magic creatures could be found.

Heinz was not in surprise that Zatiel asked for more information. On the contrary, if he had said yes immediately, letting greed cloud his judgment, he would have found it weird and stupid. After all, even he would need to be cautious in some places of the Endless Forest, much less a Rank 1.

"I assume you will ask. As you may know, the Endless Forest works as a natural barrier between the lands under the jurisdiction of the Aetereum Empire and the Eye Dynasty. The individual who found the cave with the mineral vein is an Eye Tyrant from Dynasty. Normally those who found a place with great wealth in the Endless Forest could reclaim them for the power they are part of. Still, since he entered our land without informing us before, I was able to get that place in dispute. The two powers have decided to send groups of equal power to the place and extract the mineral together, making it a competition, letting the more powerful and faster group to get the most of the mineral."

Zatiel was not surprised at this type of arrangement to be done. After all, great powers rarely go to war for resources. Instead, they chose to engage in this type of competition instead of starting a conflict. After all, when a dispute begins, it is almost impossible to know for sure to what extent it will grow and who the winner will be, especially with those waiting in the darkness to take advantage from the weakened parties.

"How many members will this expedition have, and which Rank of power will they own? And when will it start?"

"The group sent by the Empire will have one Rank 3, five Rank 2 and twenty Rank 1. The Rank 3 Magus will be the one in charge of protecting the rest from the powerful magic creatures that round the area. Those at Rank 2 and 1 will be the main force in extracting the mineral and battling against the members from the Dynasty. I must warn you, although it will be mostly those of the same Rank

fighting against each other, it could happen that a Rank 2 going against those weaker than him. Still, our Rank 3 and their Eye King are forbidden to enter the fight, so you will not have to worry about them."

When he reached this part, Heinz made a pause and looked at Zatiel. Most of the Rank 1 who hear they may have to fight a Rank 2 will show hesitation, but in Zatiel face, he didn't see any change.

'As expected from someone who makes me feel respect.'

Nodding at the attitude of Zatiel, Heinz continues, "The expedition will leave in four years for the cave. This time will be used to select the ones who will go and make some arrangements in the area. Since it was thanks to me that the Empire got this opportunity, I will select one rank 2 and eight rank 1 for the expedition."

Heinz gives a general idea of how this competition will go and its dangers.

'When I reach the peak of Rank 1, I should have enough power to kill a Novice Rank 2 Magus, but in four years, just reaching 50% of the transformation of my hearts will be the most I can do. I may be able to enhance my power with some potent runes, and in the worst case, I will just escape with the mirage crystal.'

Zatiel was assessing his options and the danger of the mission.

"I will go, can you get another two spots for me?"

"I guess you want to give them to your companions, I can put them in the group for the expedition, but unlike you, they will be like the rest and will have to give me a part of what they get. Those who go, retain 25% of whatever they get, but since they are with you, they only need to return half to me."

Heinz did not have any type of relation with Sophia or Ezequiel. The spots were in high demand, so only the act of giving them one was already a big favor.

"Then I thank you in their name," Zatiel was grateful for the cultivator's attitude, and he was gaining his trust little by little.

"Four years can be a lot of time or little, so I must make most of it, goodbye," Zatiel stretched his hand at Heinz

This may be just a small detail, but besides his race, this was the closest show of friendship that Zatiel has displayed. With the interactions they have had, Heinz knows how significant this was.

"I am sure my brother will truly surprise me," After saying goodbye, Heinz made a portal that led to Zatiel's house.

Zatiel nodded and was going to enter the portal when his entire body stiffened, and his face filled with surprise.

"Brother, are you fine?" This is the first time that Heinz saw Zatiel doing something like losing control, so he was worried, but it didn't last long as he saw the smile on his face and the excitement in his eyes.

"Don't worry, I am more than fine. And you are right, I will definitely surprise you."

Saying those words, Zatiel vanished from the room, leaving a confused Heinz.

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When Zatiel reaches his room, he closes his eyes and concentrates, making his smile even greater and the happiness vivid in his expression

"Finally, my True Name has awakened!"