

Affinity 191

Chapter 191 - So Shiny

'Void, is that what I think it is?'

Although it was only the shadow of the creature, Grey had read a lot about it too often and also seen statues as well as drawings to be able to guess what it was, not just that, but he battled what looked like it about a month ago.

'If what you're thinking is what I'm thinking, then yes, it is what I think you think it is.' Void said in a strange drunkish voice.

'Huh!' Grey was lost for a moment due to how Void was speaking.

'In short, it's a dragon.' Void added in his normal voice this time.

Grey s.u.c.k.e.d in a deep breath on getting confirmation from Void. This wasn't like the quasi dragon he encountered the previous time, but a true breathing dragon.

"What's that?" Klaus asked before squinting his eyes to study the shape properly.

Even though there are only a few people who had seen a dragon in the present Qilin empire, it was something greatly revered by people because of its immense strength as well as its superior magical abilities. According to legends, it was said to be the leader amongst all the beasts.

"It...looks...like...a...dragon." Reynolds said after studying the shape.

"Yeah." Alice nodded.

Klaus had also figured it out as well.

The trio gasped in surprise and anxiety, they currently had the opportunity to see a dragon, of course they would be nervous, but there's one thing that was currently overshadowing their nervousness, excitement.

The excitement of seeing a dragon was unimaginable, they were still youngsters, so it was normal to be excited when one sees a legendary magical beast like a dragon.

Had Chris not been in the Lunar Academy, then they would just be as excited whenever they saw a Griffin as well, but because they've seen it too frequently, they've become numb to it, sometimes, they even forget it is a legendary beast.

'Since it's a dragon, doesn't that mean there will be a lot of shiny things?' Void's pitch-black eyes lit up at the thought of there being shiny things.

'Since it's a dragon, that means we're in danger if it wakes up.' Grey thought and he unconsciously took a step back.

The quasi dragon which was not a true dragon was already so overpowered that had it not been for the strange array in the lab, then they would have died under its attacks. Now, this was a real dragon, even if it might be restricted by an array, there would be no way it would be weaker than the quasi dragon, it would definitely be stronger.

'We need to leave.'

'We need to get in.'

Grey and Void came to a conclusion simultaneously in their heads, only, both were contradicting each other.

'Huh! What do you mean we need to leave?' Void asked disapprovingly.

'There's no way we're going in there, are you tired of living? Cause I'm not.' Grey said seriously.

While the duo was arguing about whose decision was right, Klaus slowly walked into the cave.

Grey who was still trying to reason with Void almost passed out when he saw this.

"Klaus, what the hell are you doing?" He asked in a hushed voice, fearing that if he speaks too loudly, the dragon might hear them.

"I'm going to see the dragon, also, why are you speaking that way? I can barely hear what you're saying." Klaus asked with a confused look.

"Get back here right now!" Grey said in the same hushed voice.

"What's wrong with you?" Reynolds couldn't help but ask when he saw Grey's behavior.

"Have any of you thought of the possibility of the dragon being far stronger than us?" Grey looked at the group as he asked.

The others shook their heads, they truly didn't think of it. Being too excited, they forgot the dragon was a magical beast who would most likely attack them if they intruded.

"I've fought against a beast that seemed to have evolved, it wasn't a dragon, but it wasn't far from it..." Grey told them about the dangers he faced when fighting against the quasi dragon, of course, he decreased the level of the quasi dragon so it wouldn't sound like he was overpowered being able to survive against it.

Gasp...

On hearing the story, the trio gasped in fear and shock. They didn't think that Grey would have such an experience in the trial land, not just that, but he survived, although it was with the help of an array he knew nothing about, it was still amazing to be able to escape.

"Do you all still think it's a wise choice to head in?" Grey asked after seeing their reactions.

"No, but to be honest, I'm very curious about it." Klaus replied.

The others nodded as well, although going in might be risky, this was a once in a lifetime opportunity. What if this was their only chance to see a dragon?

Grey sighed and looked at them, he was also curious, but his cautiousness was telling him not to go in. The group has managed to survive till now, it would be a shame if any of them, or all of them were to die here.

'Void can you sense the stage of... Shit! Void come back here!' Grey's facial expression changed when he couldn't find Void on Alice's shoulder.

He initially wanted to ask if Void could sense the stage of the dragon, if it wasn't too strong, then they might take the risk of going in, but who knew Void was long gone.

"What's it?" Alice asked when she noticed the change in Grey's expression.

"That crazy cat has gone in." Grey said through gritted teeth.

"What? Why?" Alice asked a little fearful of losing Void.

Although she couldn't communicate with him like Grey, she likes him, especially his soft black fur.

"Apparently, just like dragons, he too loves shiny things." Grey said while rubbing his temple to try and calm the headache he was feeling all of a sudden.

"Since there's a dragon here, then there would be shiny things as well." Alice said.

Grey nodded with a tired face, Void is once again about to put him in a perilous predicament, his only prayer is that the dragon shouldn't be too strong, so they might be able to escape.

Inside the cave.

'Sooo shiny...' Void said looking at the glittering shiny objects on the floor with drool dropping from the side of his widely opened mouth.

He didn't even put the over six meters creature in his eyes, all he was seeing were the shiny things.

Chapter 192 - Magnificent!

Outside the cave.

"What do we do?" Alice asked a little scared for the little cat's fate.

"He should be fine." Grey said waving his hands.

"What?!" Alice, Klaus, and Reynolds exclaimed simultaneously while looking at Grey with a little hint of disbelief.

'How could he be so cruel to his pet?'

This was the thought going through their heads.

"No, no, don't get me wrong, I don't have any plans of leaving him there, but you all should remember he's not an average cat. I can't even call him an average magical beast, he's too unique." Grey explained when he saw the expressions on the faces of the others.

The trio didn't buy his explanation and continued looking at him with the same expression.

"Fine, let's go get him before something untoward happen to him." Grey could only helplessly agree to their demands of retrieving Void.

"See, I told you making this expression would make him give in. Now, let's go see a dragon." Klaus whispered into Reynolds' ear.

Unlike Alice, they couldn't say they liked Void that much, after all, he was just a cat. If not for him having the space element, as well as his treasure sensing ability, they wouldn't even spare him a glance, much less trying to save him.

"How do you think a dragon would taste?" Reynolds asked Klaus as they walked past the door.

How bold! They didn't even know if the dragon would take pity on them and allow them to go unscathed, yet Reynolds was already thinking of eating it. What a bold thought!

"Given its superior quality, its taste should be exquisite." Klaus answered after a while.

Grey and Alice who were walking alongside them felt their scalps tingle. Klaus and Reynolds were seriously planning on how to eat the dragon, how the hell does their brain process work?!

"Grey, do you think we would be able to beat the dragon?" Alice asked.

They had only walked for a few seconds, but it felt like days had passed. They were like an army who knew death was coming, but can't flee.

"If we're truly able to beat it, then we'll be having dragon soup for dinner." Grey said jokingly.

Alice paused for a moment, 'The three of them are the same.' She shook her head wryly.

Before hearing Klaus and Reynolds speak of eating a dragon, Grey didn't think about it, but after the initial fright from the thought, he found out it wasn't a bad idea. I mean, not everyone could say they've eaten a dragon before, right?

'Void, are you okay?' Grey tried to speak to Void.

But his response was the same as before, 'So shiny.' Void currently doesn't say anything else, it was like he had been hypnotized by the shiny things.

'Damn! Stupid obsessions.' Grey said hatefully.

Going further into the cave, they had to climb up a rock so they could continue their journey. Just after they got to the top of the rock, they were left stunned by the sight ahead of them.

Yes, there was a six meters long creature lying by the side, but what grabbed the attention of the group was the different treasures lying on the ground.

Looking at the right side of the cave, the group saw different plants growing on the ground, and they were all thriving. They also noticed that after climbing the rock, the elemental essence in the cave seemed to have increased by threefold, that was a lot, considering how high it was outside.

On the left side of the cave, a pond could be seen, a blueish light could be seen floating on top of it like an aurora.

"So...beautiful." Alice said while gazing at the pond in a lost manner.

It was like the floating light above the pond was all she could see.

Amongst the treasures sprawled on the ground, different elemental weapons could be seen, there are even elemental defensive weapons.

These defensive weapons could make one almost immune to a specific element. Although, that mainly depends on the grade of the weapon, as well as the strength of the attacker. Unlike offensive elemental weapons, these were much harder to forge, and no one amongst Grey's group had ever seen one before.

It took the group almost a minute to fill their eyes with the things sprawled all over the place. The fire which they were previously using as a source of light had been put out since this place was quite bright. Although not to the extent of when they were outside, they could see properly.

"Guys, look." Reynolds said in a hushed voice while pointing to the six meters creature that was lying not too far from the pond.

Looking at the dragon closely, the group guessed if its tail was added, then it would measure at least ten meters in length. They couldn't get the proper height of it since it was lying on the ground with its eyes closed, but even in this position, it still measured over a meter high.

Its bat-like wings, as well as its hind and forelimbs, were tucked close to its body, but the razor-sharp claws were still visible for the group to see. The dragon's armor-like scales had a glistening look to it, like ice.

On the head of the dragon were two light blue horns which sparkled with a unique charm. The entire body of the dragon was blue, only, the color of its body was darker than the color of his horn.

The group had only one word to describe the dragon, 'magnificent!'

But they didn't have enough time to praise the amazing features of the dragon. The reason for this was because on the dragon's forehead, between its horn, a shiny crystal could be seen, and close to it, a pitch-black cat could be seen approaching it.

Grey's heart almost leaped out of his body through his mouth when he saw this, and his left eye couldn't help but twitch uncontrollably.

He wasn't the only one who freaked out, the others felt their scalps going numb.

"We're doomed!" Klaus almost fainted from fright.

Chapter 193 - We'll Beat Him Up

Alice was lost for words because of Void's current greedy look as he approached the crystal on the dragon's head.

What the group didn't understand was why didn't Void choose any of the shiny things on the ground, rather, he had to go for the one that seemed embedded in the dragon's head.

The dragon currently had its eyes shut, which means there was a chance they might be able to obtain some things and leave this place successfully.

Other than Klaus and Reynolds, Alice and Grey wanted to leave this place as soon as possible. They aren't able to sense the stage of the dragon, and there are only two possibilities, either the dragon was just a normal magical beast, or, its stage was far above theirs.

Given the fact that it is a magical beast, it was impossible that the former was the reason, so they were left with the last possibility, the dragon was far stronger than they were.

'Void, don't touch it.' Grey tried persuading Void.

'But...it's shiny.' Void managed to reply, although barely, it was better than his previous ones.

'There are other shiny things on the ground, why don't you pick from them?' Grey continued persuading.

He had a feeling that if Void removed the crystal from the head of the dragon, then it might wake up. If they want to survive, then the dragon should stay asleep, if it wakes up, then according to Klaus, they were doomed.

'This is shinier, also, it's a treasure.' Void said excitedly.

'Oh, what does it do?' Grey asked a little interested.

But Void's reply threw him off his feet.

'It keeps the dragon asleep.' Void said, without showing any signs of retreating.

'Damn it! We're dead.' Grey almost wanted to cry.

The crystal keeps the dragon asleep, so why would Void still want to remove it? Isn't that the same as signing their deaths?

"What's wrong?" Alice asked when she saw Grey's expression.

She guessed Grey was trying to persuade Void to leave the crystal alone, but she never expected him to wear such an expression.

"We're dead." Grey declared to the group.

"Huh!" The others exclaimed in unison.

"You see that crystal there?" Grey pointed at the crystal, which prompted the others to nod.

They all saw that Void was l.i.c.k.i.n.g his lips while staring at it.

"Well, that is what's keeping the dragon asleep, if that greedy cat removes it, then we're toast." Grey explained through gritted teeth.

"So what do we do now?" Alice asked.

"What else can we do other than escaping." Grey shook his head with a wry smile.

Even if he doesn't want to go without Void, he didn't have much of a choice here. He couldn't risk the lives of his friends because of Void's greed for shiny things. Had they been alone, then he would have tried to think of something, but since Klaus and the others were with them, he couldn't take the risk.

"Why don't we stay and fight?" Alice asked clenching her fist.

"Because we don't know just how strong the dragon is. Alright, everyone retreat immediately." Grey ordered and dragged the others.

Before they jumped down from the rock, Grey saw Void taking out a knife he wanted to use in extracting the crystal.

'Given the size of the crystal, it should take him at least eight minutes before he completely extracts it, by then, the others should have gone far.' Grey thought.

He didn't have any plans of leaving Void behind, he wasn't that heartless. Although if they were to fall into danger, it would be Void's fault, he knew the crystal would have other uses than just keeping the dragon asleep.

'Try not to die before I come back.' He transmitted his voice over to Void as they ran towards the spot where they entered the tunnel.

Given the stages of everyone, it didn't take up to four minutes before they got to the spot they used in entering this place, had it not been for Klaus who was slower, they would've arrived a little sooner.

Grey made the rock beneath them rise, taking them closer to the surface, before long, the group could be seen coming out of the hole in the big tree.

"Take this, follow it and you'll get to the array soon, wait for me there. Also, run as fast as you can, I'll try to delay the dragon." Grey said hurriedly while throwing the map to Alice.

Before any of the others could comprehend what was happening, an earthen wall appeared, blocking the hole that led inside the tree.

This was not a normal earth wall, rather it was the advanced form of it which was not only sturdier but thicker. But this naturally wasn't enough to stop the others.

While they were coming, he also made a small defensive array beforehand, while also enforcing the wall with a thick ice wall as well.

It would take the trio outside at least six minutes before they can break all three defenses.

Boom!

Klaus and Reynolds were the first to attack the wall. Even though Grey told them to leave quickly, they didn't plan to.

"Guys, don't worry about me. Do you think I'm tired of living? Go to the array, I've already memorized the map, I'll meet you there. Also, run quickly, because I think the dragon would be behind me when I'm coming over." Grey knew his friends wouldn't leave instantly, so he assured them once again before running back to the cave.

"We should leave, we'll beat him up when we leave this place." Klaus said angrily.

They knew Grey did this for their good, but they didn't like it. If they wanted to fight, then they should fight together, at least dying together would be better than dying alone.

"Don't worry, he won't die, not yet." Alice said to Klaus and Reynolds before they ran following the route Grey told them.

But she agreed with what Klaus said, they'll definitely beat Grey up once they leave this place.

The trio soon disappeared.

Underground.

Grey could be seen sprinting in the direction of the cave.

'Stupid cat! Greedy cat! Just wait and see what I'll do to you after we leave this place.' He thought angrily.

He wasn't confident in being able to fight against the dragon at all, but he was a little confident in escaping from here. While he was running here, he was already brainstorming on the possible things he might use to bar the way of the dragon while they escape.

And he had thought of a few, but that would all depend on the strength of the dragon.

'*Sigh* I really need to keep his obsession in check, or else it will be the end of me one day.' He shook his head once again.

The time he spent coming back was shorter than the time he spent when the group was leaving this place, he was naturally faster than them, added to his wind and lightning element, his speed was unbelievable.

He got back within two minutes, when he got there, Void hadn't been able to remove the crystal completely.

'Void, leave it alone.' He tried persuading once again.

When they were here previously, he thought of stopping Void, but when he recalled the space element, he knew even if he tried, it would be useless since he can't catch him.

'I'll need to think of a way to keep him at bay.' Void's obsession with shiny things was causing him a massive headache.

Chapter 194 - Take It!

Grey could only helplessly watch on as Void continued trying to remove the crystal.

'Well, I still have some time, better not waste it.' He thought as he dashed in the direction of the herbs on the ground.

Since he couldn't stop Void, why not take some things as well?

'This herb looks good, I'll take it!' He picked up an unknown herb.

This ball looks mysterious, I'll take it!

Oh, what is this? I'll Take it!

A red rock? I'll Take it!

Grey could be seen busying around the cave, picking items left and right. He didn't care what they were or what they did, the only thing in his head was to keep as much as he could before the dragon wakes up.

While he was running around, he didn't forget to start creating an inscription since the dragon would be waking up soon.

Within one minute, Grey had managed to pick fifty herbs, as well as over thirty treasures that he had no idea what they were. The only treasure he had an inkling of knowledge to was the defensive elemental weapon, and it seemed to be of the water element.

The defensive weapon was surprisingly a blue vest, but Grey didn't have time to test it out as he immediately kept it.

Elemental weapons? Take it!

Seeing that he hadn't acquired any elemental weapons, he decided to take some as well. The reason he was taking them was simple, to use them as gifts when apologizing to his friends for leaving them outside.

He knew they would be upset by his somewhat selfish decision, so he hoped after apologizing, as well as giving them gifts, they would forgive him.

If only he knew the plans they had for him, then he'd try to kill the dragon so he could cook with it, at least Klaus and Reynolds would forgive him if he offered them dragon meat.

Growl...

To be honest, Grey felt a little scared inside. This was a legendary beast, something he had only read in books, and according to those books, dragons were terrifying creatures. Not just that, but this one was not only stronger than he was, but they've currently stolen some of its properties.

The crystal Void was currently trying to pull out was more than triple his size, yet he didn't even think twice about it, since it's shiny, he had to have it!

Grey hurriedly kept the bow, before turning around to prepare himself for what he had been doing most of the time since he came to the trial land, running.

'*Sigh* To think even at the end, I'll leave this place while running for my life. It's amazing how life treats some people.' He shook his head lightly.

But then, a little golden hairpin by the side of the dragon caught his eye, unlike the rest treasures here, the hairpin was closer to the dragon. Maybe it was because of the golden glow it radiated from time to time. No matter what the reason was, it was none of Grey's business, because, since he'd seen it, then he'll definitely take it!

Boom!

Just as Grey picked up the hairpin, the dragon's tail slammed forcefully into the ground. He looked up only to see Void had removed the crystal completely, he had not only removed it, but he had stored it in his spatial storage.

'Run, it will take some time before it gets to full power.' Void appeared some distance away with a satisfied smile on his face.

'What's its full power?' Grey asked as he ran in Void's direction hoping to leave this place quickly.

'It's definitely above Rank Five.' Void said.

'Rank Five? Isn't that like an Overlord Plane Elementalist?' Grey stopped and asked in shock.

'Yeah.' Void nodded before adding, 'Why did you stop running? Come on, before it catches up.'

'Wait, and it's above it?' Grey asked again feeling like this gamble was too dangerous.

'Yes, but don't worry, it can't use strength above Peak Rank Four. Although since it's one of the higher class magical beasts, its strength at that level is way above others.' Void explained.

'Why's that?' Grey asked a little confused.

'This place isn't as simple as it seems...' Void explained.

According to him, there's a seal or something, that restricts the magical beasts in here not to go above Rank Four in regards to their strength, so even if they were Rank Five or higher, they can only unleash the strength of when they were at the Peak of Rank Four, just like the quasi dragon Grey encountered previously.

'It's like the people who previously stayed in this place knew those who would come in here wouldn't be able to fight against a single beast in the Overlord Plane, such foresight, it's unbelievable.' Grey thought to himself.

Grey hadn't gone far from the cave when a loud roar shook the area.

'Shit! It's awake, we need to leave.' Grey said while creating earth walls behind him to at least impede the movement of the dragon as it chases after them.

'No need to be scared, it's just an oversized lizard.' Void said nonchalantly.

Since the dragon couldn't use its full strength, then he wasn't really scared of it. He was naturally aware of this, that was why he removed the crystal even though he knew it would wake it up.

'Oversized lizard! Damn, maybe only Void would dare to call a dragon an oversized lizard.' Grey was left speechless but Void's remark.

Boom! Boom!

The sound of the earth walls being destroyed behind Grey pushed him to increase his speed, but he was unfortunately at his highest speed.

'To think you'd be running once again.' Void said a little mockingly.

'You're the cause of it you greedy cat, you know what? Now that I think of it, you put me in this situation a lot.' Grey retorted while running and setting up walls behind him.

'No I do not.' Void instantly denied.

'Oh really, then what about the time you stole the treasure of the Lightning Apes just because it was shiny?' Grey asked while preparing himself to rise up.

He had managed to successfully get to the spot they used in entering the tunnel, and from how loud the sounds of each of his earth walls made when being destroyed, he knew the dragon wasn't far from him.

'I'll definitely have a dragon as a mount someday.' He vowed to himself.

If he had a dragon, just the mention of it alone would evoke fear in the heart of his opponents, unfortunately, he wouldn't be able to catch the one.

Boom! Bang!

Grey soon came out from the hole in the tree and dashed in the opposite direction his friends took.

At this current speed, the dragon would be able to catch up to him in about five minutes or so, if that happens, then he had to rely on using the Fusion State so they could survive.

Chapter 195 - Void Getting Beat Up

Boom!

The tree Grey and his friends used in going underground was exploded into smithereens as the huge body of the dragon came through it.

Roar!

An earth-shattering roar came out of its mouth spreading in all directions as the hole that it came out from was sealed in ice.

The dragon was an Ice Dragon. Unlike humans, there's a distinct difference between an Ice Dragon and a Water Dragon. An Ice Dragon can only use the ice element, likewise, a Water Dragon can only use the water element. Humans are more fortunate in this aspect since a Water Elementalist is entitled to using both.

But there are naturally some dragons that are blessed with both ice and water elements, they're referred to as Dual Elemental dragons amongst the dragons' community.

The blue dragon spread its over four meters long bat-like wings and started flapping, before long, it took to the sky.

Six kilometers away from where Grey and the dragon were.

"Did you hear that?" Reynolds asked and looked behind them.

"Yes, it should be from the dragon." Alice nodded.

"Hmm, should we head back?" Reynolds asked a little worried for their friend.

"No, going back might do us more harm than good, also, Grey probably has a plan, and if we were to come into the picture, it will most likely disrupt it, not only putting us in danger but him as well." Klaus said after contemplating for a while.

"Don't worry, he'll be fine." Alice assured Reynolds, a little uncertain though.

They've always been confident in their friend's ability to survive, but not a hundred percent confident in this case. After all, what he was going against was a legendary dragon, even their Head Instructors wouldn't say they were confident in going against it.

"Hmm." Reynolds nodded with a sad face, "But we're still going to beat him up, right?"

"Of course." Klaus smiled evily.

Of everyone in the group, except for Alice, Grey was the one who rarely gets beaten, since an opportunity has presented itself, he would definitely take it.

'Hehe, with Alice's help, I'll finally beat him up!' Klaus laughed internally.

"We should continue running, since Grey's going to take a detour, it would be a shame not to see his scared expression when he's running." Alice said with a light smile.

Klaus and Reynolds nodded before they once again started running quickly. Given their current speed, they shouldn't have a problem with getting to where the array was located within four hours. If they were walking, it would take no less than two days before they would get to their destination, but it's a totally different matter once they decided to run there.

On Grey's side.

'Crap! It's already so close.' Grey felt dismayed when he sensed the fast-approaching dragon.

He had estimated it would take at least four or five minutes before the dragon caught up, yet, it hadn't even been up to two minutes, and the dragon was already at his heels.

'It's flying, it would naturally be faster than when running.' Void said as he gazed at the silhouette that was getting larger by the second.

'Get ready to fight, you're the cause of all this, so you'll be the one who has to use up most of your energy.' Grey said hastily while also preparing himself.

He didn't want to carelessly use the Fusion State this quickly since he would have to exit it mid-battle, so, Void would have to do most of the work before, and after he uses the Fusion State.

'Relax, I got this.' Void said confidently.

One minute later.

'I don't got this, I repeat, I don't got this.' Void yelled as the dragon sent him flying towards the ground.

Unlike the quasi dragon, a real dragon didn't have any problems with matching up to his speed, also, given the real strength of the dragon, it had more experience than Void who wasn't even six months old.

Hearing Void's words, Grey almost wanted to snicker, but their current situation didn't allow him to.

'Done!' Grey said excitedly as he completed the third inscription.

Compared to the time he fought against Quinn and his group, now, he could use three inscriptions without suffering much of a side effect, he could even use it for a prolonged time without tiring out.

Boom!

He attacked with all three inscriptions instantly, but the dragon casually formed an ice sphere around itself that was able to easily block the attacks.

The only way the attacks from the inscriptions could affect it slightly is if Grey were to use the Fusion State, since his attack power would increase then. But it was still too early for him to use it, it hadn't even been up to a minute yet they were already forced into such a perilous situation.

'Stop playing dead and attack, you're the cause of all this in the first place.' Grey said while stomping his feet on the ground.

The moment his feet touched the ground, the spot where Void landed on shot up quickly, sending Void flying straight at the dragon.

Roar!

The dragon roared before spitting out a stream of ice at Grey who was running.

'Shit! Too strong.' Grey complained before he turned around and threw both hands in front of him.

At first, before the ice got close to the fire wall, it would melt due to the intensity of the heat, but after the dragon noticed this, the stream of ice it released suddenly turned bigger and colder.

Grey soon saw his fire dwindling by the second.

'What the hell are you doing Void? Distract it!' He yelled at Void.

'It's not as easy as you think.' Void said feeling a little wronged.

He was trying hard, but the dragon was just too strong. It's amazing how it had been able to keep its head in the same position while defending against attacks that were coming from behind it.

Void almost regretted his decision to take the crystal, well, almost. Since it's shiny, for him, it was worth it.

The dragon spat out the stream of ice for almost one minute before it stopped, the second it stopped, it immediately focused its attention on Void.

'Shit! I'm f.u.c.k.e.d!' Void complained when he noticed this.

Swoosh! Bam! Boom!

He managed to escape some of the crystals, blocked some, but he was unfortunately struck one time, and since the crystals were bigger than he was, it sent him crashing towards the ground, along with it of course.

'Damn it, if I let this smash him as well, he might get seriously injured. I still want him to be beaten up.' Grey immediately shot to the spot where Void would crash into.

He made sure to attack the dragon with his inscriptions to distract it for some time.

Boom!

The ice crystal was quickly destroyed by Grey, and he instantly got hold of Void, stopping him from slamming into the ground.

This was the first time Grey was seeing Void being beaten, and he couldn't lie, he was enjoying it. If not for the fact that he might be in danger as well, he would have been cheering on the dragon from the sidelines.

Chapter 196 - You Made It Angrier

'Are you okay?' Grey asked while trying his best to put up a concerned expression.

'No, no I'm not. This guy is too strong.' Void shook his head.

'Oh come on, it's just an oversized lizard, there's nothing to worry about.' Grey said sarcastically, using Void's previous words against him.

'How can...' Void wanted to ask Grey why he would call such a mighty dragon an oversized lizard, but he quickly shut his mouth when he recalled the scene of him telling Grey it was an oversized lizard not too long ago.

'I get it, I messed up, no need to rub it in my face.' He said.

'Apologize after fixing this.' Grey said while giving him a boost so he could continue fighting against the dragon.

This time though, he decided to help out as much as he could, although, he still planned to allow the dragon to beat Void up on some occasions, but he would distract it whenever he notices it might seriously hurt him.

'Thank you, Teacher.' Grey couldn't help but thank Chris when he saw how important inscribing was in this battle.

Had he not been an inscriber, then things would have been a little too difficult for them, given how powerful the dragon was. Even with the inscriptions frequently distracting the dragon, it didn't stop it from beating them. It was completely dominating the duo, and if things continued like this, they would most likely die under its attacks.

'Isn't it time to use that technique yet?' Void asked after he was once again pushed back by the dragon.

He was the main attacker in the battle, although he couldn't fly, his space element gave him an advantage which allowed him to stay in the sky for long periods, all he has to do was disappear and appear in different positions.

But he couldn't do this forever since it's quite steadily dwindling his space essence reserve in his body.

'No, it's still too early, and we've barely even gone a kilometer from the spot where we came out.' Grey said while attacking as well.

Unlike Void, he was actually having an easier time, even though the dragon attacks him sometimes, its main focus was on Void.

'Crap! Then when's the right time?' Void asked worriedly.

'When you've been beaten to stupor.' Grey said to himself with a chuckle.

'We still have a long way to go.' He answered.

After responding to Void, Grey created a large four meters earthen staff and sent it slamming down at the dragon.

The staff slammed into the ice sphere that appeared around the dragon when it got close.

"Void!" Grey yelled out.

'I know.' Void replied and disappeared from his previous spot.

Grey made three long fire spears and sent them in the direction of the dragon that was mid-air defending against the assault from the inscriptions.

On seeing the incoming spears, the dragon kept its ice sphere active, to block against both the attacks from the inscriptions, as well as Grey's spears.

Just as the fire spears were about to make contact with the ice sphere, Void who disappeared previously, appeared once again. As soon as he appeared, the spears vanished into thin air.

The dragon's large pupils dilated when it saw this scene, it knew what the duo wanted to do, but dodging it was easier said than done.

The three spears materialized inside the sphere and continued their speedy charge towards the dragon, slamming into it before it could retreat.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

After the spears exploded, it caused smoke to rise up in the ice sphere the dragon created, and cracks could be seen forming around the sphere.

Grey didn't know if the was more effective because it was a fire attack, or if any other attack could harm it as well, after all, this was the first time they were able to strike it since the battle started, and it's been over five minutes now!

Roar!

A roar of pain came out from the dragon's mouth.

'Yeah! We got it!' Void said excitedly.

Roar!

Another roar was heard, but this time, it was louder.

'Is it just me or does it sound angry?' Void asked, but to his surprise, he didn't get a response.

When he turned around, all he could see was the dust Grey kicked up as he was running away.

'F.u.c.k! Wait for me!' Void immediately turned tails and ran after Grey, not waiting to see the dragon appear from the smoke.

'You've made it angrier.' Void said as he tried to catch up, but this time, Grey seemed a little faster than he was.

With no other option, he used his space element to shorten the gap between the two, before long, he had caught up with Grey.

'I need to rest a little, I've used up a lot of my space essence.' He thought.

'Try to recover before it catches up to us.' Grey said to Void.

He on the other hand seemed okay, even after the battle he had gone through, although he didn't do much, he shouldn't be this energized.

'It's the tonic.' He thought.

This was the only thing he could think of that managed to keep him energetic even till now. If only tasting it as well as taking in its scent was this wondrous, how would it feel if one truly consumes it?

Well, he didn't plan to find out soon, unless he's cooking with it.

Back at the battlefield.

But it didn't take long before it managed to sense them though.

Roar!

It roared before flying in pursuit of the duo, a cold glint evident in its eyes, this time, its intent to kill was stronger .

Chapter 197 - I Miss Food!

Deep in the trail land.

On a mountain peak.

Chris could be seen speaking to Brown in a somewhat animated manner while raising his hands up from time to time, he would also occasionally point at the old-looking man who was sitting on top of a rock.

"Brown, can you believe this guy? He has kept me here for so long, I haven't even gotten a chance to eat something good."

"Sometimes when I look at you, I get a feeling that you would taste good."

"Okay, that came out wrong. I'm not talking about you, but other Griffins."

"See the point is, I miss food, especially that little rascal's cooking."

"He's a great cook, don't you think so too?"

Brown would occasionally nod at Chris' words, the only time that he put on a strange expression was when he said it would taste good. But on hearing the part about Grey's cooking, it couldn't help but nod vigorously. It too wanted a taste of Grey's amazing cooking.

Chris has been here for over five months now, and the old man rarely speaks to him, although he likes peace and quiet, at least at the Lunar Academy, he would occasionally go out to speak with Oliver, or maybe Blake would come visiting.

After Grey became his student, his days weren't as boring as before. He rarely spoke with others because of his personality, and most of the instructors in the Academy were afraid of him since the day he nearly killed an instructor who spoke rashly to him.

All in all, he's a great guy as long as people don't get on his bad side, only, his bad sides are quite a lot.

"Hey, old man! When can I leave this place?" Chris called on the old man who had his eyes shut.

The old man slightly opened his eyes and took a peek at Chris, he smiled before replying, "When I want."

After his reply, he shut his eyes once again, not bothering to listen to Chris' rants. He couldn't help but click his tongue at the similarities between Chris' father and Chris. They even have the same foul mouth when things aren't going their way.

Chris went on for some more minutes, but when he didn't get a response, he could only turn to Brown for comfort.

Boredom can push one to extremities, if anyone told Chris he would have to speak to Brown as much as he has done lately, he would have beaten the person up, but now, the reality of things is quite unexpected.

Chris soon got tired of speaking to Brown and sat down feeling a little exhausted. The truth was, the five months he has spent here had been very beneficial to him, it's just that, since he had already cursed at the old man from the start, he didn't want to apologize.

"Huh!" The old man who had been silent all this while suddenly opened his eyes and looked at the part of the trail land that Grey and the other geniuses entered.

He followed the aura he sensed, and it took him to the scene of the Ice Dragon battling against Grey and Void for the first time.

'Hmm, interesting, he's grown this much. Oh! He even got old Vaughn's blue flames, he's quite lucky. Two more elements have been awakened in his body...'

Just by sensing Grey from his position, he was able to tell how many elements Grey had in his body. He kept tabs on Grey during the first month or so, but since then, he didn't really check on him much.

He also wasn't bothered about him since he could clearly sense his aura, the only reason he checked on him just now was not because of him, but the dragon. He naturally knew the dragon, and given what's inside Grey, he couldn't allow him to die.

'Why don't I just bring him here like this guy, at least he'll grow stronger here.' The old man thought.

Taking Chris away from the world would actually do the world more good, given his personality.

'There's something strange about that cat, I can't seem to sense its elements unless it uses them.' The old man thought after he focused his attention on Void.

The old man continued watching the battle and felt a little amazed since Grey and Void could fight against the dragon. Although because of what they did to that part of the land, the dragon couldn't use strength above Rank Four, it was still a dragon after all, and it wouldn't have any issues with fighting against Elementals who are in the early stages of the Overlord Plane.

'Those two are quite special.' He thought.

If two other people at the same stages as Grey and Void teamed up against this dragon, then they would've been dead. But Grey and Void being able to last this long was a testament of their strength. Though the dragon was the one who was mostly beating them up, their performance has been praiseworthy since they've managed to stay alive.

It soon got to the time when Grey and Void teamed up in attacking the dragon with the fire spears.

"Ingenious, they seem to have built a chemistry between them." The old man blurted out.

Chris who was by the side looked at the old man strangely.

'And here I thought I was the only one going crazy.' He thought to himself with a snicker.

'*Sigh* I'll have to speak to him before he kills them.' The old man shook his head before waving his hands to set an array around the mountain peak.

"Stay here, I'll be back soon." He said to Chris before vanishing.

Chapter 198 - Where Is It?

Chris watched on as the man disappeared before chuckling to himself.

"Brown, it's time to escape." He said as he walked closer to the array.

'Hopefully that old man stays out long enough for me to break this array.' He thought as he started looking for a way to break the array.

This array was more advanced than the ones he's familiar with, having more nodes that connect, making it difficult to break. But there's one thing few people knew about him, when it came to learning, he was a genius.

With the knowledge he had in arrays, although it was shallow when compared to this one, he was confident that if he was given enough time, then he would be able to break it.

He soon focused fully on breaking the array while the old man was gone.

At the battlefield.

The Ice Dragon roared angrily before pursuing the duo who were currently out of sight.

But before it got far, it sensed a familiar aura getting close to it and stopped.

"Why have you come?" The dragon spoke in an ice-cold, detached voice.

"You're just as cold as ever, Aetonth." The old man appeared mid-air, standing before the dragon.

"Hmph! That puny human and annoying cat stole my crystal, I must get it back." Aetonth said angrily.

"Oh! No wonder you're awake. Don't kill the boy, I'll retrieve the crystal from the cat." The old man said.

"What about the cat?" Aetonth asked icily.

Even if it wanted to spare Grey, it didn't want to spare Void. To it, Void is more annoying.

"Don't kill any of them." The old man said.

"Hmph! Fine! I'm going back to my cave then." Aetonth said turning around.

Since it wasn't allowed to kill any of them, then what's the point in chasing after them?

"Actually, I have a job for you. Keep on chasing them like you were previously doing, beat them up, I want to see the boy's limit." The old man said.

"Fine, besides, I've been sleeping for so long, I need to stretch my legs a little before going back."
Aetonth replied before once again giving chase.

The old man smiled and followed behind them, it took Aetonth over ten minutes before it caught up with the duo.

'His speed is terrifying!' The old man was left dumbstruck by Grey's speed.

Given Aetonth's speed, he should've been able to catch up to them within five minutes even after the delay, yet it took over ten minutes. When he was at Grey's stage, he paled in comparison when it came to speed.

'I should go back, Aetonth knows what to do.' The old man thought before disappearing.

He made sure to secretly retrieve the crystal from Void's spatial storage, and to his greatest surprise, accessing Void's spatial storage without him knowing was quite difficult. Even given his strength, he still had to be careful.

Other than the difficulty in accessing it, he was once again shocked by what was inside of the spatial storage.

'Now I get it, it likes shiny things.' The old man thought when he saw the items.

Although there were good items in the spatial storage, most of the items inside were shiny, some weren't even useful, yet Void kept them.

Some seconds later, he appeared back at the mountain peak, but there were no signs of Chris or Brown.

"*Sigh* To think he broke it this quickly." The old man sighed before sitting down on top of the rock and shutting his eyes.

The array he set up was actually a test for Chris, he knew Chris was knowledgeable about arrays, but due to his personality, teaching him was difficult. He was already having a hard time teaching him about cultivation, if he were to teach him about arrays as well, then he might probably die from headache.

He spread out his spiritual sense outside his body, and within ten seconds, he was able to sense Chris' aura, although Chris hid it, it wasn't a challenge for him.

But what surprised him was the fact that after he sensed it the first time, it was suddenly cut off. It was like Chris was never there.

"Oh, smart. He managed to sense me." The old man chuckled before disappearing.

Three minutes later, he could be seen with Chris in tow.

Chris had an angry expression but since he couldn't fight back, he could only helplessly follow the old man back.

But storms were currently brewing in his mind, with multiple questions running through it. Although he didn't get far, he was able to recognize this place, after all, it was just like the other side where the geniuses all explore, only, it was more intact.

'This place is definitely that place, but how come there are people this strong here? I thought it was abandoned?'

"You're quite good, to be able to actually break this array within such a short time." The old man praised before fixing the array once again, but this time, it was more complex.

"Where are we? I recognize this place, I've been here before." Chris asked seriously.

"Oh, try breaking this one and you'll get an answer." The old man said before shutting his eyes again.

At least with this, Chris would be too busy to complain to Brown about how bored he was here.

'Void, it's here again!' Grey said when he saw Aetonth getting closer to them once again.

As Aetonth flew through the sky, snow fell from behind it, making the area colder.

'I haven't even been able to get a proper rest.' Void complained.

'Well, it's not my problem.' Grey said while preparing to attack.

'Do you think it will let us go if I return the crystal?' Void asked.

Grey was shocked when he heard this, he didn't believe Void would actually think of returning the crystal since it was shiny. He knew just how obsessed he was with shiny things.

Boom!

Aetonth attacked the moment it got there.

The duo managed to block the attack, and Void instantly decided to return the crystal since they might die from Aetonth's attacks.

But his expression changed when he couldn't find the crystal in his spatial storage.

'Where is it?' Void asked.

'Where's what?' Grey had a baffled expression on his face.

'The crystal.' Void said.

'I knew you'd never return it.'

Chapter 199 - Going Through Two Seasons

'I knew you'd never return it.' Grey shook his head, not at all surprised by the fact that Void said he couldn't find the crystal.

Given how much Void loved shiny things, he was sure Void is just looking for an excuse not to return it.

'Seriously, it's not in my spatial storage. Had my storage been like yours, I'd have shown you so you'll see I'm not lying.' Void said feeling wronged.

The crystal truly wasn't there, but since there's no way for Grey to assess his spatial storage, there was no way for him to prove his innocence.

'Yeah right, less talking, more fighting.' Grey didn't believe a single word Void was saying.

Boom!

Grey's fireball was destroyed by the jet of ice Aetonth sprayed out.

'Damn it!' Void said in frustration before joining Grey in attacking Aetonth.

Unlike the first time, this time, Aetonth didn't fight the duo mid-air, but after dealing with Grey's fireball, he flew down, landing not too far from them.

The ground where it landed, was slowly covered by snow.

Roar!

It roared before its horns lit up, ice energy slowly started converging in the middle of the horns.

'Shit! Don't let that thing release that.' Void warned when he sensed the energy converging in between Aetonth's horns.

'No need to tell me that.' Grey shot a fireball at Aetonth, before sending out a lightning bolt as well.

Void on the other hand quickly shot out three arrows made of black mass at Aetonth's body, hoping to stop it from completing whatever it wanted to do.

Seeing the black arrows, Grey was slightly taken aback, before recalling that Void also had the darkness element. Sometimes, he tends to forget about this due to Void's heavy reliance on his space element.

When Aetonth saw the black arrows, it created an ice wall, as well as the previous ice sphere it used in protecting itself. It was familiar with the darkness element and knew of its corrosive properties, one defense wouldn't be able to stop the arrows from coming, two, on the other hand, might just be able to do the job.

Grey's attacks were the first to strike, the lightning bolt first struck the ice wall, but it was unable to leave any marks on it, before the fireball crashed into the ice wall, with intense heat.

Bang!

The fireball exploded, but the result wasn't what Grey was hoping for, although there were some slight signs of damage, it wasn't enough.

Void's arrows were the last to get there, the darkness element is regarded as one of the slowest elements, but its high damage made up for it.

The first arrow struck the same spot Grey's fireball hit, making it easier for it to corrode through it. With two seconds, it had managed to appear on the other side of the ice wall with the other two arrows going a little slower since they hit a more resilient part of the wall.

Aetonth sneered on seeing this and enforced the ice sphere which was its second means of defense, if this didn't stop the arrows as well, then it would think of something else to do.

Grey didn't stay idle, the moment his first two attacks died down, he had already prepared another attack, this one was a mixture of the lightning and fire element.

It wasn't fusion since the elements weren't fused, he only used the lightning element to bolster the speed of the spear he sent through the hole Void's attack had created.

Swoosh!

The fire-lightning spear made its way straight for the hole on the wall, as the arrows ahead of it were trying to open up another hole on the ice sphere as well.

Everything happened within a matter of seconds, from Grey's first attacks to Void's darkness arrows, then to Grey's fire-lightning spear again.

The duo's understanding had grown a lot over the time they've spent together, so they were very good when it came to working together.

Boom!

The fire-lightning spear struck the ice sphere, and a crack appeared from that spot, all the way to the other side of the ice sphere, running all around it.

Crack! Crack! Bang!

A second later, the ice sphere exploded, giving room for Grey's fire-lightning spear, as well as Void's three darkness arrows to head straight for the dragon that wasn't even up to two meters away from the attacks.

Unfortunately, Grey and Void didn't see what they expected.

'Duck!' Grey yelled and dived to the ground, covering his head with both hands.

Void was more relaxed since he just vanished and appeared ten meters away from his previous spot.

When he looked up, he saw what looked like an Ice beam shooting off the energy mass Aetonth gathered between its horns.

'Get out of there!' Void yelled when he saw ice shards coming out of the ground as well, following the path of the ice beam, which had Grey lying directly under it.

The cold radiating from the ice beam which was just only a meter and a half above Grey was intense, luckily, he was able to fight against the cold after he circulated his fire essence around his body. He thought he could dodge the attack by just lying down, but he felt a chill when Void told him what was coming.

He couldn't stand up since he was sure he'd be frozen to death if he makes contact with the ice beam, with no other option, he could only roll on the ground.

Since they were in a forest, he also had to maneuver past the trees on the side.

All the trees that the ice beam came in contact with were currently frozen solid, with no sign of returning to their previous state any time soon, and ice shards could also be seen around them.

This part of the forest currently looked like it was going through two seasons at the same time, with one part being covered in ice and snow like it was winter, and the other part still having fresh green leaves like it was summer.

Chapter 200 - I Swear It On All Things Shiny!

Grey managed to escape the range of the attack on time, but as soon as he stood up, all he saw was a white flash coming straight at him, before he could react, it struck him on the c.h.e.s.t.

Bam!

Grey's figure was sent flying, and Void couldn't help but shake his head at Grey's misfortune.

While he was previously rolling to try to escape the ice shards that were coming out of the ground, because of the trees he had to maneuver past without standing up, he unfortunately rolled within a few meters from his attacker.

Aetonth who was about to stop its ice beam instantly swung its currently snow-covered tail at Grey.

In such a short distance, Grey didn't have any chances of reacting before he was hit. Luckily, Grey not only has a strong body, but Aetonth went easy on him since it was told not to kill him, or else, it wouldn't have had any issues with breaking most of his ribs with just that attack even though his body was stronger than most people.

Bang!

Grey crashed into a tree hard on his side, before falling to the ground.

Void instantly attacked, in hopes of distracting Aetonth to buy Grey as much time as he could, but because of the huge gap in strength, he was quickly overwhelmed and sent flying by an ice pillar in Grey's direction.

Grey who was just standing was forced to catch Void, because of the suddenness, he could only put his body on the way before holding Void with his hands after Void hit him. The force not only sent him staggering back, but also increased the pain he was feeling on his chest from Aetonth's previous attack.

"Ah..." He groaned lightly in pain while his face winced because of it.

'Void, how about you return the crystal to it, I'll even allow you steal the shiny crown of the emperor.'
After regaining his footing, he tried to convince Void to return the crystal since that was the current best course of action.

Initially, he thought this was going to be like the quasi dragon when even though they were overpowered, it wasn't by much. But now, he really wished he had tried everything he could to stop Void, although it might be futile since he couldn't keep up with Void's speed when he's using the space element, at least he would have known he tried.

Who knows, maybe he might have been able to stop him.

"Shiny crown?" Void asked a little excited by the possibility of stealing a shiny crown.

'Shit! I shouldn't have said that.' Grey thought to himself.

Now he had to make sure not to go close to the emperor or else Void might get him in trouble. But the funny thing was, he had only seen the emperor once, and at that time, he wasn't wearing his crown, so he didn't even know if the crown was shiny or not.

'Yeah, why don't you return this so we can leave this place in one piece. You know you can't get another shiny thing if you're dead, right?' Grey tried convincing Void to return.

'I know, but the truth is, I really don't have the crystal, it just vanished!' Void said feeling wronged.

He didn't recall taking the crystal out, so how did he lose it if it was in the same place?

'Come on Void, we're being serious here, return it before this dragon kills us.' Grey said a little annoyed.

He couldn't just let Void do as he pleases, especially when it'll put their lives in danger. Luckily, he told Klaus and the others to leave, else even though if they all fought against the dragon they might fare better than his current situation, the dragon would still be able to easily overwhelm them in the end.

But since he's currently alone with Void, he could easily run once he uses the Fusion State, without the fear of leaving anyone behind.

'I'm serious as well, it just disappeared! I swear it on all things shiny!' Void said while sending out an attack at Aetonth.

Since they're speaking via the mind link, they could communicate faster than when people speak openly, so although their small conversation seemed a little long, it all happened in a short time.

Grey created a large boulder that he sent at Aetonth.

'Wait, you're being serious?' He asked to clarify.

He wasn't really too sure if Void was lying, but since Void could swear on all things shiny, which is probably the most precious thing to him, there might be a chance that he's right. But he didn't believe him completely though.

'Yes, I still want more shiny things, I don't want to die now. Although I know we have a small chance of escaping, I really can't find the crystal in my spatial storage.' Void explained.

'That's strange, if it's not with you, and given how the dragon is still chasing, it shouldn't be with it as well, then who has it? Or is there a chance you brought it out while we were running previously and misplaced it?' Grey asked, he found Void's words baffling.

'We were together, did you see me taking out any crystal?' Void looked at Grey weirdly before disappearing from his position and appearing not too far from Aetonth, sending out a black mass that covered a three meters radius towards it.

Aetonth opened its mouth and sprayed out a stream of ice that gradually ate away the black mass.

The black mass started shrinking at a fast pace, and within three seconds, it vanished. But Aetonth's attack continued heading in Void's direction.

Grey who was by the side stepped in by using three elements simultaneously.

He first formed the strongest earth wall he could, before sending a lightning bolt, as well as a stream of fire in Aetonth's direction. Both attacks struck from the left and right side respectively, that wasn't all, two blue symbols also lit up in the air, they were inscriptions he made with his fire essence.

The symbols also sent out two huge fireballs at Aetonth, one headed towards its tail region, while the other targeted its back.

It was a four-way pincer attack, Grey was hopeful it might be able to do some damage, even if it's a little.

'Void, again.' Grey called on Void to repeat the same trick they did the first time.

Aetonth's attack struck the earth wall the same time Grey's four attacks got to it. Seeing them, it quickly formed its protective sphere once again.

Void who previously disappeared, appeared outside the sphere, and it sneered. It wouldn't fall for the same thing twice.

It quickly came out of the sphere, taking the path where his ice stream was going, heading towards Grey.

It all happened so fast that just after Void moved all of Grey's attacks into the sphere did it leave it.

Grey smiled on seeing this, as well as Void.

Unknown to Aetonth, Grey also released a fifth attack, with a third inscription, but it never appeared since Void kept it the moment it sent out the attack.

Boom!