

Affinity 421

Chapter 421 - Grey's Fear

"You better be telling the truth, or else my death will be on your head," Ellis finally decided to trust Grey since he said he wouldn't let him die.

Although, he didn't really agree on his free will. If not for Grey saying the chances of him escaping was low, then he would've run away by now.

Grey nodded before moving a few meters away.

"Walk around, from what I've seen, it seems to only attack after sensing movements," He said to Ellis.

Ellis gulped in fright, shaking a little from the fear. He looked at the distance between himself and Grey and started moving in his direction.

Since the beast would be able to attack when he's moving, then it didn't matter what direction he faced. Besides, the closer he is to Grey, the safer he feels.

While walking in Grey's direction, he noticed how serious he was, this reassured him that Grey was throwing his life away.

"Now!"

Ellis suddenly heard Grey's voice, but Grey was nowhere to be seen. Without delaying any further, he hastily dived forward, moving away from where he was standing.

Boom! Bang!

Two attacks rang out in the same place, at almost the same time, but the second one was only a second slower than the first attack.

Ellis was sensible enough to create a water sphere to protect him from the aftereffects of the attacks.

Swoosh! Bam!

Another attack shot into the dust that was still in the process of rising completely. The sound of the attack hitting something rang out.

Crash! Bang!

A slightly large shadow flew out of the dust, crashing into the ground.

A smaller shadow shot out of the dust very quickly, heading in the direction that the first shadow crashed.

Boom! Bam! Bang!

Grey immediately released a barrage of attacks on the shadow that first came out. He hadn't gotten a proper view of it, but what was important was immobilizing it.

Squeak!

Rumble! Boom!

A large rumbling sound resonated after the creation squeaked loudly. But it was followed by another attack from Grey.

Squeal!

The beast squealed in pain.

On hearing the squeal, Grey suddenly froze, recalling a treacherous bunny he saw in the trial land.

"Crap! I hate these things!" He exclaimed, although he said hate, one could actually sense a little bit of fear in his voice.

The dust soon died down, and the beast appeared in Grey and Ellis' view.

"A mole," Ellis said while looking at the mole which was still squealing in pain.

Grey heaved a sigh of relief, although he had seen the tail of a rat-like creature previously, he still had a terrible fright when he heard it squealing.

For some reason, Grey actually has a built-in fear of bunnies since his last encounter with that particular bunny. It's surprising how he was afraid of all bunnies because of one.

"So, this is what has been trying to kill me? Hmph! I want to see how it can try that with senior around," Ellis walked closer to the mole and kicked it.

Squeak!

It squeaked loudly.

The squeaking sound terrified Ellis since he was very close to it and he quickly retreated to a location he deemed to be safe, which was behind Grey.

Grey didn't speak much, shaking his head as he walked towards the mole. From how the mole was acting, he could tell it was injured since it hadn't tried to dig back into the ground.

There was also a few injuries around its body as well.

'It's only in the Late stages of the Origin Plane. We were lucky, had it been in the Overlord Plane, then Ellis truly might die,' He thought inside.

This was what he found worrying about the issue previously, since he couldn't sense the mole, there was no way he knew what stage it was in. If it were to be in the Overlord Plane, then things would've been different.

'I have no use for the core,' He raised his head to look at Ellis.

"Do you want its core?" He pointed at the mole.

Ellis froze, not expecting Grey to ask him such a question.

Most people come to the Magical Beasts' forest to acquire beast's cores. Since they were quite valuable, no one would want to give them away.

"I can let it go if you don't want it," Grey when he saw the unresponding Ellis.

"No, no. I mean, yes, yes I want it," Ellis hurriedly rushed over.

He could tell the beast was at least in the Mid stages of the Origin Plane, if he is able to sell this in Lapis City, he would earn quite a sum. Even if it isn't as important as the core of an Overlord Plane beast, it was still important.

Grey nodded before moving in hand quickly. The mole squealed loudly before it finally stopped moving.

He opened the space in its head so Ellis could remove the core.

"It's a Late stage Origin Plane beast, so you should know how much it sells," Grey explained.

"Thank you, senior," Ellis said in excitement.

"It's nothing, you were the one who agreed to be the bait, so you deserve it," Grey waved it off.

Although he would need the cores of beasts for forgemastering, he didn't want to start with these ones. He planned to obtain some cores on his way out of here, then he would shut himself out and start practicing his forge mastering.

Presently, he only had theoretical knowledge of it, and not enough practical knowledge. Other than the time in the Academy, he hadn't tried doing anything that had to do with forging again.

"We should head in," Grey turned to the bamboo forest. This was the reason he came here, hopefully, he could find the pond here.

Only now did he realize he was naive when negotiating with the young man back at the Chimera forest.. He didn't ask him which part of the Magical Beasts' forest the pond was located, and neither did the young man bother to tell him.

Chapter 422 - Suspicion

Grey and Ellis entered the bamboo forest, as soon as they entered, Grey spread out his spiritual sense.

'*Sigh* I don't think it's here. But that thing is surprising, hopefully, it's not what this guy's searching for.' Grey thought while staring into the forest.

Albeit not finding the pond within his sensory range, he could sense something else close by. He didn't know what it was exactly, but he could tell it wasn't simple.

When he sensed it, he recalled Ellis telling him there was something here that he wanted.

"Do you know the location of what you're searching for?" Grey turned to look at Ellis.

"Yes, senior. Follow me," Ellis replied happily before taking the lead.

Grey didn't speak any further and followed behind him, he kept his spiritual senses out just in case he could find the pond. His senses couldn't cover the entire bamboo forest, so he didn't have any idea if it was here or not.

As they walked further into the bamboo forest, Grey got a clearer grasp of what he previously sensed. It was radiating the aura of the water element. Even though what he was searching for was a pond, this wasn't it.

'This is likely what he's searching for. *Sigh* Why do I always have to get into so much trouble for others' sake?' Grey thought when he also sensed the aura of people there as well.

The people there had also sensed them, so they were probably expecting them.

"Hey, stay vigilant," He warned Ellis.

There's a chance that those people would attack as soon as they got there, so he felt it was better to warn Ellis beforehand.

"I know, senior, I can sense them as well," Ellis nodded.

Grey didn't speak any further and continued walking behind him nonchalantly, he would occasionally run his hands across the bamboo leaves.

After walking for almost three minutes, they got to where the treasure was located. Unfortunately, Grey didn't find anything related to the pond he was searching for.

In front of them was a cave abode, Grey guessed it was man-made given how it looked. It even had what looked like a door in front of it.

"What you're searching for should be inside this place," Grey said.

He had heard of how some experts would live in the Magical Beasts' forest, and this is the first of such abodes he had seen. According to rumors, such abodes hide lots of treasures.

'The person who stayed here must've been a Water Elementalist.' He looked around.

He couldn't deny it, staying in this bamboo forest would be very peaceful. Other than the occasional beasts which would intrude, it wasn't bad. As long as the expert sets up some arrays, they could stay here peacefully.

After getting involved with arrays and forge mastering, Grey knew how important it was for one to stay in a peaceful environment. The better the environment, the clearer he could think.

....

Rumble...

The stone door in front of the cave abode rolled to the left side.

As soon as it opened up.

Swoosh! Boom! Bang!

Multiple attacks flew out of the cave abode, heading straight for Grey and Ellis.

Since the duo was already expecting this, they didn't have any problems with moving out of the way.

"Hehehe, if it isn't Miss Ellis," A mocking laughter rang out from the cave.

What Grey found surprising was what they called Ellis. Although he thought he was a lady the first time he saw him, he didn't think of calling him Miss at any time.

'Looks like he is familiar with these people.' Grey thought inside.

Since they were people Ellis was acquainted with, then there's a chance that he might resolve this without having to fight. But from the way they addressed him, he didn't think the chances of that happening would be high.

A middle-aged man was the first to walk out of the cave abode, followed by four other men and two women. All seven of them were either in the Eighth or Ninth stage of the Origin Plane.

"I didn't think he would make it here," One of the women said, her voice slightly rueful.

It was almost like they didn't wish to see him.

"It's you guys!" Ellis exclaimed in surprise.

"Of course it's us. Now, tell us, how did you escape from the bear?" The middle-aged man asked curiously.

"I was helped by this senior," Ellis pointed at Grey, not even offended by the way the group was addressing and speaking to him.

"Uh, wait, how did you people find out about the bear?" He suddenly thought of something and asked.

When he was first attacked by the bear, the group was nowhere to be found. They got separated when they just got to the bamboo forest, on his way to find them, he was unfortunate and attracted the bear.

"How can you be this dumb?" Grey, who was by the side, couldn't help but ask.

Even without interacting with these people, he could tell they didn't like Ellis. There's a chance that they were even the ones who caused his attack.

'Wait, how did he survive escaping from the bear for such a long distance?' He thought, confused.

Given the distance from here to where he helped Ellis, it was almost impossible for Ellis to stay alive under the pursuit of the bear unless he had the lightning or wind element which would've given him a boost in terms of speed.

It was just like the time he was almost hit by the attack of the mole, Grey was certain that given Ellis' speed, there was no way he could escape it. But for some reason, he managed to escape it by a hair's breadth.

"What do you mean, senior?" Ellis asked, his face showing pure innocence.

He didn't understand why Grey asked him such a question.

"These people obviously set you up, yet here you are, smiling in their faces," Grey decided to point it out to him.

"No, senior. They would never do such a thing. If not for them, I'd have been dead," Ellis explained.

Grey shook his head with a sigh, how in the world is Ellis still alive given his reasoning? To be honest, he had no idea.

"And who are you?" The middle-aged man asked, turning his attention to Grey.

"A passerby," Grey shrugged and moved to the side.

Since Ellis was being stupid, then there was no use helping him, not just that, but he was suspicious of him. If this group were to kill him, it would be to his advantage since he would get the chance to obtain whatever was here.

"Good, make sure to act like one, hmph!" The middle-aged man snorted before walking in Ellis' direction.

"Since you're here, why don't you help us in collecting the item?" He put his hand across Ellis' shoulder.

"What item?" Ellis asked, confused.

"Don't worry, you'll find out when we get there," The middle-aged man snickered as he shoved Ellis in the direction of the cave.

"Okay, looks like there's also something there you guys needed. Why didn't you say so earlier?" Ellis asked as they headed into the cave.

Grey was the only one left outside.

'Hmm, is he truly naive, or could this be an act?' He looked at the cave, suspiciously.

Chapter 423 - It's Not Worth It

Grey stood outside the cave, after pondering for a while, he decided to walk inside as well.

The cave was that big, but there was another passageway that led deeper into the cave.

As soon as Grey walked in, he could sense a murderous aura, but it surprisingly wasn't from the group who came in with Ellis, rather, it's from the cave itself.

'An array? Most likely a trap array. But, if it is, how did they escape from it?' He thought while looking at the group.

He got his answer after staring around the cave, there were two dead bodies lying on the ground with blood all over them. It's clear to see that those two were sacrificed so that the group could escape.

Now Grey understood why these guys were pushing Ellis forward, since he's always lucky and is able to dodge all those deadly attacks by a hair's breadth, then there's a chance that he might be able to do the same here.

The traps in the array will only go off when one steps on it, without a quick reaction, there's no way these people could dodge it. And since they don't know where to step on, they can't advance.

This array wasn't like Grey initially thought it was. An array like this gives one the chance of retreating, but advancing is extremely difficult.

'Looks like whoever stayed here is a kindhearted person. Whoever it is gives the people who would come in here a way out, making sure their cave is not a death ground for many. Only those who are greedy would want to advance no matter what.' thought Grey.

"What are you doing here?" The middle-aged man looked at Grey viciously.

"Do you own this place?" Grey asked, apathetically.

"Yes," The middle-aged man nodded since he knew what Grey wanted to do.

"Oh, is that so? Why don't you lead the way then?" Grey asked with a smirk.

"Captain, should we deal with this guy before advancing?" One of the men in the group asked the middle-aged man while staring at Grey with a vicious gaze.

"Let him be," The captain of the group said before turning around.

None of the others knew why he didn't order them to attack, but since he had decided, they didn't question him.

Grey scoffed with speaking any further, while Ellis wiped off his sweat. He thought the duo was about to start fighting.

He had been traveling with Grey for a few hours, so he wasn't really too bothered about him. He was more concerned about the well-being of the group since the chances of Grey killing them were quite high, according to his hypothesis.

"Move," The captain shoved Ellis in the back, making him move forward due to the momentum.

The passageway was around five meters wide, and from what Grey could tell, there was at least a trap every two feet. This would make advancing extremely difficult.

After being shoved forward, Ellis entered the passageway, and the ground he stepped on lit up.

'Crap!' Grey cursed out cause he knew that Ellis just triggered the array.

Boom!

"Ah!"

An explosion, followed by Ellis' scared scream rang out almost simultaneously.

'Impossible, he shouldn't be able to dodge it,' Grey looked at Ellis with doubt starting to grow in his mind.

Given his speed, even he would have a difficult time dodging that. Yet, Ellis dodged it so effortlessly. Although he made it seem like he was only barely able to, Grey was no fool.

'He's definitely hiding something.'

This was the only conclusion Grey could come to, and what Ellis is hiding is most likely his true strength. Grey wasn't a hundred percent sure, but he was at least forty percent sure about it.

If he were the one who was told to pass through this place, then he would have to rely on his knowledge of arrays to pass through it, either that or he would use his space element to move past it entirely.

"Haha, I don't know how you managed to dodge it, but you'll be our guide forward. Keep moving, before the array restores its powers," The captain of the group laughed happily before ordering Ellis to continue moving.

Grey studied the array, and it was just like the captain said, it was already slowly restoring its strength. If the group didn't move quickly, then they might be caught up by it.

"But... but..."

"But what? You better start moving or those attacks would be the last of your worries," The captain cut Ellis off while giving him a threatening look.

Ellis gulped in fear, before taking a step forward. On dropping his foot, he hastily retreated, but to his surprise, an attack didn't go off.

"Move," The captain took a step forward, making Ellis run into him when he retreated.

"Sir, this... I'll die," Ellis tried explaining.

"No, you won't. I don't know how you keep doing it, but I'm at least more confident in you passing through this place compared to any of us here," The captain said.

"Now, move," He later added while tapping Ellis on the shoulder as if encouraging him.

Ellis staggered forward, after clenching his fists with gritted teeth, he advanced forward.

Whoosh! Boom! Bam! Bang!

The array kept lighting up and sending out attacks, but just like the first time, Ellis managed to dodge them, all by a tiny margin.

Grey, who still hadn't taken a step forward, was staring at Ellis with sharp eyes.

'There's no denying it, he's definitely more powerful than what he shows.' He thought inside.

After thinking up to this point, he thought of retreating since he didn't like being involved with people like this. Since Ellis was hiding his strength, then he naturally had an ulterior motive.

Grey wasn't one hundred percent sure about his conjectures, but he felt it was better safe than sorry. Since he had the space element, then escaping from here wouldn't be a problem.

His curiously urged him to follow them, but thinking about it properly, he felt taking such risks wasn't worth it.

Chapter 424 - People Will Be People

"Huh, it's shut?" Grey stared at the door.

After the array lit up the first time, the door closed shut. Grey didn't take note of it since he was more focused on how Ellis was going to escape, and how the array worked.

'I guess I have no choice.' He thought.

With that thought, he sat down crossed leg. For now, he didn't plan on following them, once the group gets past the array, he might decide to go then, but for now, he didn't want to involve himself with them.

While Grey was sitting down, the group continued advancing.

"Captain, look, he isn't coming along," One of the ladies in the group informed the captain of Grey's strange behavior.

The captain looked at him but quickly focused on the path ahead of them.

"Forget about it, we should focus on what's more important," He said.

"What if he's only waiting for us to bring the item out before he attacks us?" One of the men asked.

"Then, he will have to lose his life," The captain said with confidence.

"Hehe, if you say so captain," Another man said while licking his lips.

"Sir... can... can I rest?" Ellis' weak voice came from ahead of them.

"Keep moving, the arrays are restoring," The captain said, not even bothering about how haggard Ellis currently looked from the multiple near-death encounters from the array's attacks.

From Grey's estimate, they were currently almost halfway through the trap array. If not for his suspicion, he would be certain that Ellis would definitely die from the shock of all the residual attacks that were hitting him, but his suspicion is saying otherwise.

"If we continue at this rate, I'll die before we even get to the other side," Ellis begged with tears in his eyes.

"Don't worry, you won't die, you've been surviving till now, haven't you?" The captain said before taking a step towards Ellis, his murderous gaze sweeping his entire body.

Ellis felt chills from the gaze and took a step back.

With no choice, he was forced to continue moving forward.

Boom! Bang! Bam!

The attacks kept ringing out, sometimes they would be followed by Ellis' pained cries.

Grey, who was sitting by the side, opened his eyes to look at the pitiful-looking Ellis.

'Could it be that he only has a knack for escaping at the last moment?' He asked himself when he saw blood on the body of Ellis.

He watched them for a little further, contemplating if he should step in to help Ellis or not. From how Ellis looked, he didn't think he could endure any further.

On the passageway.

"Sir, please, any more and I'll truly die," Ellis burst out crying while holding onto the leg of the captain.

His eyes were already starting to close, there are signs of blood in them, he was bleeding from his nose, mouth, and ears. He could still hear the ringing sound of the attacks exploding from the ground.

"We're already close to the end of the passageway, six meters more. You wouldn't die now when your goal is right in front of you, would you?" The captain asked.

"I don't want to die, but I can't go any further, or else I might die," Ellis continued begging.

"Hmm, I really want you to rest, but you see, the array is already starting to recover, if you don't move in the next two minutes, then the person standing at the back would die from the attack. You don't want that right?" The captain asked with a smile.

"Damn it, since you say so, then why don't we all die together?" Ellis let go of his leg, a crazed look appearing on his face.

Since the captain wanted to kill him, he wasn't going to take a step forward. He was certain that at least five or even six of the eight people in the group would die if they want to pass through. Then there's still the return journey.

The captain looked at the crazed Ellis, and he was sure he would not move anymore. Presently, he was caught between two minds, either he sacrifices one of his members at the back so they could wait for Ellis to recover, or he forced Ellis to move forward.

Both choices come with a huge disadvantage, especially Ellis dying. If Ellis dies, then there's no hope for them to return. But if he sacrifices any of his members, then he would lose the trust of his comrades.

He turned to look at his group, they all heard the conversation between Ellis and their captain, and the one who was more scared was the guy standing at the back of the group.

"Does any of you have any healing tonic?" The captain asked.

"No, we used them when we first entered this place, and that time we helped this moron," One of the ladies said, pointing at Ellis at the end of her speech.

"*Sigh* Fine, I'll go to the back, you better recover quickly," The captain decided to be the one to stand at the back.

He managed to get to the back without stepping outside the place they used in coming here. Since two people couldn't stand in the same position, he had to maneuver there at the risk of dying.

His comrades all felt warm on seeing the gesture of their captain, especially the guy at the back.

A minute later.

"Tell the boy to move," The captain said.

"I still need to rest," Ellis said.

He was not only hurt but he was also exhausted, moving any further is currently impossible for him.

"If he doesn't move, I'm not going to be the only one to die, but everyone else," The captain said.

When the group heard this, they felt he was correct since Ellis could decide not to move until all of them dies.

"Move!" The man at the front shoved Ellis forward, not bothering about his condition.

"No, please!" Ellis screamed, but he couldn't stop himself from moving forward after being pushed forward.

Boom!

"Ah!"

The explosion was followed by Ellis' scream, but for some reason, the scream sounded longer than the group thought.

When the explosion died down, a look of extreme shock appeared on their faces.

"People will?be people,"

Chapter 425 - A Trick

"You can stop screaming now, or I might just toss you back in there," Grey said emotionlessly.

Ellis was stunned on hearing his voice, looking around, he noticed he wasn't on the passageway anymore, instead, he was on the safe side of it.

"Senior, you... you saved me again," Ellis fell on his knees, tears and snot all over his face as he hugged Grey's leg.

"Don't make me regret it," Grey said as he dodged Ellis' attempted hug.

Ellis fell on the ground, screaming from the pain that was wracking his body.

"Here," Grey passed a bottle to him.

Without even looking at the contents, Ellis gulped it down.

"Reckless, that was meant for... *Sigh* Forget it, it doesn't change anything," Grey looked at Ellis, hopelessly.

How could he drink the contents of the bottle without even asking what it was or even inspecting it? Isn't he by any chance scared of being poisoned?

The group who were still in the passageway looked at Grey and Ellis in shock, the only question running through their minds was how did Grey get to the other side of the passageway so quickly. He not only got there quickly, but they didn't even realize when he left his spot.

"How did you get there?" The captain of the group was the first to regain himself and ask.

"Simple, I walked," Grey replied before turning around, heading deeper into the cave.

Grey's reply stunned the group.

"What do you mean you walked? There's no other way to get there other than this passageway," The captain asked, hoping that Grey might tell them the secret he used.

Unfortunately, Grey didn't give them a glance, neither did he answer them. He headed into the cave and soon disappeared.

"Sir, I'll be going now," Ellis stood up, bowed to the group, and ran after Grey.

"Ellis, come back, you're fine now, why don't you help us get through the rest part of the passageway?" The captain tried to persuade Ellis with the gentlest voice he could muster.

Ellis whistled loudly as he ran after Grey, and the group couldn't deny it, for someone who had a very feminine voice, his whistling was pretty loud.

"Damn it! Captain, what should we do?" The man standing at the front of the group couldn't help but ask.

"What else can we do? We'll advance of course," The captain said nonchalantly.

'Hehe, why did you think I willingly agreed to come back? I knew the kid was done, there's no way I'm going to take the risk of being the one who would attempt this piece of shit, I'm not even twenty percent confident in dodging it.' He thought inside, but his face didn't betray his true feelings, so no one knew what was on his mind.

The man standing at the front of the group shivered in fear, from what he could feel, he wasn't confident in being able to escape. Now, he regretted not being the one who went to the back of the line.

'The captain had already predicted this, no wonder he went back so freely. I've been wondering why such a selfish man would make such a selfless decision.'

It didn't take long for some of the group to know the captain's goal of going to the back of the group, but the few people at the back didn't care, given the way things stand, only the first four people would die.

The man standing at the front refused to take a step forward, he was shaking from the fear, now he knew just what Ellis was going through when he was standing in front of them.

"Can... can we switch places?" He turned to the man behind him and asked.

"I'm good," The man behind him shook his head.

"Move! We don't have all day," The captain ordered.

After fidgeting for a few more seconds, the man prepared himself to dodge the attack.

As soon as his foot touched the ground, it instantly lit up.

Boom! Bang!

The sound of a human body hitting the roof of the passageway rang out, the body crashed into the ground, landing in the spot where it stepped on.

Deep in the cave.

Boom!

"Senior, looks like they've tried moving forward," Ellis said after hearing the explosion.

"No need to think of them, they're all going to die here anyway," Grey said nonchalantly.

The duo continued heading forward before seeing what looked like an exit. Compared to the dark cave, there was light coming from the road ahead of them.

Grey didn't think much about it, because he could sense what they were searching for emanating from this place.

He was the first to take a step in, all of a sudden, he disappeared.

Bang!

An attack rang out from where he was previously standing.

Ellis looked ahead of him in surprise before mumbling under his breath, "Impossible."

Grey soon appeared behind Ellis, looking at where he was previously standing, multiple ice shards could be seen on the ground. If he didn't escape in time, then he would've been pierced by the ice shards.

"This person really doesn't want anyone obtaining their treasure," Grey said before moving forward once again.

Ellis didn't immediately move forward, instead, he kept staring at Grey in surprise.

"Senior, how were you able to dodge that?" He couldn't help but ask.

"A trick," Grey replied offhandedly.

He soon disappeared into the light coming out of the other side of the cave.

Ellis finally walked forward.

When Grey entered the place, he couldn't help but reminisce about his Teacher. This place was a valley, just like the one his Teacher stayed in, the only difference was that this one was very small compared to his Teacher's valley.

In the center of the valley was a pond that was emanating a high concentration of water essence.

"How did you know this was here since you didn't come in?" Grey asked curiously.

"I sensed it, I'm very sensitive towards any treasures that have to do with the water element" Ellis replied proudly.

Chapter 426 - Offer

'Could it be that I was wrong about him?' Grey thought while staring at Ellis.

He had some suspicions about Ellis, especially after seeing how he kept dodging fatal strikes at the last minute. But when he was pushed into the array by the group, he watched him, and knew he was too exhausted to move any more.

If he were truly hiding his strength, then he would've dodged it at the last moment, but he didn't. Luckily for Ellis, he had already prepared to teleport to the other side of the passageway, all he had to do was to come out of the space tunnel when he got to where Ellis was and dragged him along.

He decided maybe Ellis had a skill or a treasure that might be helping him with those last minute escapes, but his suspicion didn't die though. He had always been a cautious person, so there was no way his suspicion would die just like that.

"I guess this is what brought you here, you can have it then." Grey said before walking in another direction.

He wanted to explore the place, how these places were made has always intrigued him.

'Is there a way that they create these places or are they natural?' He thought while studying the small hill in the valley.

Unlike his Teacher's valley, there was no house here.

Ellis watched Grey observing the place in shock, he couldn't believe Grey just let him take the treasure without even taking as much as a glance at it.

"People like senior are very rare," He muttered before walking towards the pond.

On getting there, he dived inside, traveling over thirty meters in a second, it was almost like he was one with the water. If Grey were to see him, he would be stunned. Even though Ellis was a Water Elementalist, it would be impossible to move with such speed and ease unless he had gotten to the Overlord Plane.

After almost twenty seconds, Ellis got to his destination. He was currently standing upright, looking at the glowing blue orb at the bottom of the pond. He stretched his left hand out, grabbing onto the orb.

Ellis looked around the pond, as if searching for something, after seeing nothing, he sat down crossed leg, while still at the bottom of the pond.

Grey who was in the valley was still studying the valley, hoping to find something that would at least give him a clue about these places. He looked around for about five minutes, but didn't find anything.

'Huh? How come he's not out yet?' He suddenly recalled Ellis had gone into the pond for a while now.

He remembered seeing him jumping into the pond, but he hadn't felt any disturbance from the pond yet which made the situation strange.

'Is there a chance that there might be a beast in the pond?'

After the thought flashed through his head, he quickly disapproved of it since he would have sensed it if a beast were to attack. Besides, he could clearly sense that Ellis was still in the pond, his aura is very close to whatever was emanating the water essence aura.

He walked towards the pond, but stopped around five meters from it. The reason for this was that he could sense some people coming towards the valley, radiating intense killing intent.

"Oh, four of them survived, how unexpected!" He turned around, looking at the entrance of the valley.

He thought at most only two of them would survive, but for four of them to survive meant that they were strong.

"Where's that little brat? I'll kill him!"

The captain's enraged voice could be heard from outside the valley.

Grey prepared an attack while waiting for them, since they were going to fight anyway, why not take one of them out as soon as they stepped into the valley?

The array that attacked him when he stepped into the valley hadn't recovered yet so he had no choice but to do it's work.

"Captain, don't worry, none of the..."

Boom! Bang!

Grey exploded out with a terrifying attack as soon as the person at the front of the group took a step inside the valley.

The figure was sent flying, but Grey frowned when he saw what happened.

His attack was blocked.

"Such a shameless act, I thought you were bigger than this," The captain's voice, which was filled with mockery, rang out.

The group of four walked into the valley with confident strides, all four of them were the strongest amongst the group of seven. They survivors of the group were two men and two ladies.

All four of them were in the Ninth stage of the Origin Plane, and given how the person at the front managed to block Grey's attack, it showed they were no pushovers.

"I was only doing this place a favor, I was also attacked when I walked in here. Since I'm an upright person, I feel we should all be treated equally," Grey replied with a sneer.

"That's... such a great explanation. I like you, why don't you join us?" The captain laughed before suddenly proposing.

"Captain?"

The three survivors of the group looked at the captain simultaneously.

"What do you say? With your strength and whatever trick you used in passing the passageway, you would be very useful to us. I don't even mind making you the vice captain of the group," The captain continued.

It was like he didn't hear what the others in his group said.

"I'll have to pass, I'm not interested in traveling with others," Grey replied nonchalantly.

"A shame, I truly don't want somebody like you to die such a worthless death. I know you're only recently acquainted with that moron, but fighting for him is a bit too much, don't you think so? Why don't you give my offer a second thought?" The captain asked.

"Like I said the first time, I don't like traveling with people." Grey said with both hands behind him.

"*Sigh* A shame, truly a shame.. I guess you'll have to die then," The captain shook his head with a rueful expression on his face.

Chapter 427 - Warm Up Battle

"Kill him," The captain said to the group before walking towards the pond.

He could sense the treasure was inside the pond, and close to the pond was Ellis' aura

'That brat, he's trying to get his hands on something I've set my sights on. Hmph! If not for the fact that we need him to get out of here, I'd have killed him immediately,' He snorted coldly.

Boom!

He suddenly retreated two steps back, an attack landing on where he was previously standing.

"Are you that tired of living?" He glared at Grey with an angry face.

"Do you think the likes of you can kill me?" Grey smirked.

"You shouldn't be so full of yourself, I don't know who you are, but whoever gets in our way dies," The captain turned around, no longer interested in going into the pond.

He wanted to join hands with the others and kill Grey quickly.

"Heh! I can say the same for you four," Grey chuckled.

"Make sure he suffers before he dies," The captain changed his order.

Previously, he just wanted Grey to die, now, he wanted him to die in the slowest possible way.

The two ladies were the first to attack, one of them was a Fire Elementalist, while the other was a Wind Elementalist.

With the first attack, Grey knew the battle wouldn't be easy, the coordination between the ladies was insane, what was more terrifying was their ability to amplify each other's attacks.

The wind element increases the intensity of the fire element attacks, making it far superior when compared to a normal Fire Elementalist's attack in the same stage. Even Grey's blue fire paled in comparison.

Boom! Bam! Bang!

Grey managed to block the attack, but the force of the attack pushed him almost ten meters backward.

Grey squinted his eyes, and for the first time in a while, he reevaluated his opponents.

He took a step forward and exploded out with blue flames. His attacks shot towards the two ladies, but before they got there, an ice wall formed in front of them, blocking the attacks.

Just as his attack was blocked by the ice wall, multiple lightning spears shot in his direction.

Boom! Bam!

He dodged the attacks, but for some reason, the attacks didn't die down, instead, they kept getting fiercer.

Splash!

'Huh? When did water get here?' Grey, who was focused on dodging the lightning spears didn't know when the ground he was standing on got covered with water.

His pupils dilated when he suddenly recalled something.

'Oh crap!'

Buzz!

The lightning current was transferred by the water, and for the first time, he was electrocuted by lightning.

The blue vest he was wearing managed to block most of the lightning attacks, but he still felt the last part of the attacks.

Immediately after he was electrocuted, he was picked into the air uncontrollably by a rising tornado. The tornado was then fueled by the fire and lightning element, giving off a beautiful red tornado with silvery lines flashing across it.

Ice shards appeared mid-air, shooting into the tornado repeatedly.

GWhoosh! Bang!

A large blue ball of fire exploded out from the middle of the tornado, forcefully blowing the tornado apart.

Bam! Boom!

The fireball spread out further in all directions, but the group easily dealt with the ones coming in his direction.

Grey soon appeared in front of the group, his hair was a mess and his clothes has some burn marks which indicated that he sustained some damages from the fiery tornado.

"You look alright, lets see how many more you can take," The captain of the group said with a snicker.

Although he was impressed by how Grey was able to forcefully break their attacks, he knew that attack wouldn't be able to deal with him since he was able to cross the passageway and even save someone in the process.

"I was just getting warmed up," Grey replied while looking at his tattered clothes.

'Luckily, I always bring multiple sets of clothes, else, I might've started robbing pants again.' He shook his head when he recalled his experience in the trial land.

With the storage ring, he has space for keeping multiple sets of clothes. Presently, he usually keeps most of his clothes in his storage ring.

"Oh, we haven't even started to warm up." The captain said, before turning to the others, "Let's show this fool how we take care of passersby who poke their noses in other people's business,"

"Gladly, captain,"

The trio said simultaneously.

They moved to four different positions, putting Grey in the middle of the formation they made.

With opponents in four different locations, Grey didn't panic. When he sensed the group coming, he made two inscriptions since he knew he would be fighting against a group of four.

Swoosh! Boom!

He was the first to attack, targeting the Wind Elementalist amongst the group.

The lady was able to dodge his attack, before sending out an attack. The others followed suit, attacking Grey from behind, forcing him to block their attacks.

Bam! Bang!

They kept exchanging moves, but Grey was at a disadvantage from the get-go. Although this wasn't the first time he was fighting against a group, this was the first time he was fighting against one this well organized and strong.

He suddenly thought of what would've happened if the others were still alive, he would've most likely escaped, or even started using his space element from the start.

Bang!

Grey was forced back by a lightning attack, and the direction he retreated was where the Fire Elementalist was standing. With Grey's back turned to the lady, and given that he lost his bearing from the lightning attack, she didn't hold back when she unleashed a terrifying fire snake towards him.

Boom!

The fire snake was stopped halfway by a lightning attack.

"Huh? Who did that?" The Fire Elementalist looked at the Lightning Elementalist suspiciously, but she knew he wouldn't block her attack.

"There's no need to think too much about it, look up," The captain of the group said while looking up.

The others did the same, and they saw the lightning inscription hanging in the air.

"An Inscriber, this will be fun," The captain said.

Chapter 428 - Shall We?

Boom!

All five of them attacked at the same time, Grey using two inscriptions to attack as well.

He deflected the attacks of the Fire, Lightning, and Wind Elementalist, while using his superior speed to dodge the attack of the Water Elementalist.

Bang! Bam!

Although Grey was fighting against four people, he was still able to fight them to a stalemate. There are times where he was affected by their attacks, but he had been able to keep himself fairly safe.

Seeing how Grey is able to keep up with them, the group couldn't help but feel apprehensive. Other than the first time they were able to get a good strike at him, they haven't been able to replicate it.

"Captain." One of the ladies looked at the Water Elementalist a little worriedly.

"Don't worry, just stay calm. We'll break through his defense eventually," The captain reassured the others.

He found Grey's performance impressive, nothing more. If he were to focus on only defending, then he wouldn't have a problem with holding out against a group of four.

'What really matters is how long he can hold on for,' He thought to himself.

After getting reassured by the captain, the group calmed down and continued their routine attacks, making sure to always attack with precision.

Grey focused fully on defending, with the help of the two inscriptions he made, as well as his insane speed, he was dodging and blocking most of their attacks with his.

"Up!"

The Wind Elementalist yelled while raising both hands.

A strong wind current suddenly sprang up from the ground where Grey was standing.

Having experienced this thing before, Grey used the earth element to merge his feet with the ground, making it impossible for the rising tornado to pick him off the ground.

"A Multi-Elementalist!" The captain exclaimed when he saw this, surprise evident in his voice.

The others also noticed it the same time the captain noticed it, and shock was written all over their faces. This was the first time any of them was seeing a Multi-Elementalist, so their reaction was expected. But like the seasoned veterans they were, they quickly resumed their offense, this time, with more ferocity.

Boom! Bang! Bam!

The battle started intensifying, the pressure Grey was facing naturally increased with the intensity of the battle. Although he had multiple elements, he couldn't attack with all of them at the same, at most, four elements.

He would train on it on some occasions, this was why he had been able to increase the number of elements to four.

While defending, he focused on the captain and turned the ground where he was standing into mud.

Being taken unaware, the captain lost his balance, almost falling face first forward.

Grey followed up with another attack, but the trio attacked him simultaneously, not just them, even the captain who was falling attacked since he knew Grey would attack him when he lost his balance. His attack was off though since he didn't know the exact location Grey was standing since his eyes were currently facing the ground.

On seeing all three attacks, Grey was stuck between forcibly taking an attack then using the opportunity to kill the captain. It didn't take him up to a second before he came up with a decision.

He suddenly blinked twice, before disappearing to the shock of the trio who attacked him.

Boom!

An explosion rang out the moment he disappeared, when the trio turned to look, they saw a big dust cloud rising in the position where the captain was previously located.

"What?" Grey's surprised voice could be heard from the dust.

Swoosh! Bang!

Grey flew out of the dust cloud, crashing into the ground.

"Everyone, spread out your spiritual senses. There's a technique he uses that gives him unparalleled speed," The captain's voice came out from the dust as it was starting to settle down.

When the group looked, they saw the captain covered in ice armor that had cracks all over, and blood could be seen coming out from the side of his mouth. They heaved a sigh of relief when they saw that he was fine, although slightly injured.

Grey stood up from the rubble he was in, after dusting his body, he looked straight at the captain of the group. He couldn't believe his space element was detected.

'He didn't detect it, he only sensed the ripples in space when I was coming out from the tunnel. I'm still not as good with the space element as I thought,' he thought while staring in the direction of the captain.

From what the captain said, he was able to ascertain that he didn't know of the space element. Grey could only attribute the captain sensing it to luck.

"How unfortunate, but I have to ask, how did you sense me?" Grey asked before walking forward.

His robe has long since exposed his face after this attack. Even when he was lifted into the air by the tornado previously, and some parts of his clothes burning, the part covering his face was okay.

"Easy, I kept my spiritual senses out while we were fighting. I've been wondering how you managed to get past the passageway without touching the array, you not only passed through it, but you also managed to save someone while you were at it," The captain said with a smile, before adding, "I sensed something when the kid disappeared so I wanted to confirm my suspicion,"

Grey looked at the captain who had a proud expression on his face, he couldn't deny it, he was surprised that this man was able to sense the space ripples.

'Looks like some people are generally more sensitive to the space element.' He was a little surprised by this discovery.

"I never thought you'd be so young," The captain said.

Grey shrugged, not replying. After walking a little closer to the group, he smiled before spreading out his hand, "Shall we?"

The captain nodded to his group and they spread out once again, attacking as soon as they spread out.

Boom! Bam! Bang!

After all four of them attacked, they were surprised to see Grey's inscriptions attacking him as well.

What happened next stunned the group.

Chapter 429 - Overwhelming Space Element

Grey vanished from where the attacks were about to land, in his place was the unprepared Lightning Elementalist.

Boom!

"Ah!"

An explosion rang out, followed by a scream which didn't last up to two seconds before dying down.

"Ronald!"

The Wind Elementalist amongst the two ladies screamed in horror.

The captain of the group and the Fire Elementalist had their mouths and eyes wide open after witnessing what just happened. He could at least come up with an explanation when Grey attacked him, but in this scenario, he didn't know what to think.

He turned around, and Grey was leisurely standing in the position the Lightning Elementalist was standing with a smug smile on his face.

"How... is that possible? How can you switch places with a person without the person actually moving on his own free will?" The captain asked Grey.

Now, he was scared of even trying to attack Grey. After what Grey just displayed, anyone in their right minds would think twice before daring to attack him.

"Just a simple trick. Don't tell me you're scared of fighting now, I was just getting started," Grey said while playing with a small fireball he summoned in his palm.

The captain looked at Grey's smiling face and couldn't help but unconsciously take a step back. People always tend to be afraid of the unknown, and this is exactly what is happening to the captain right now.

With this trick of Grey, they can't attack him as a group anymore since if he were to switch places with any of them, it would be an utter nightmare, just like what happened with the Lightning Elementalist.

The explosion soon died down, and the lifeless body of the Lightning Elementalist was laid bare for all to see. What was worth mentioning was how the body was stuck on an earth spike that sprang out from the group, holding the body mid-air.

The two ladies looked at the body in horror, before turning to look at Grey. Now, they all regretted the decision of coming in here, had they known, they would've left after two from their group died when they first entered this place. Provoking someone like Grey made their decision even worse.

Swoosh! Boom!

The Fire and Wind Elementalist attacked simultaneously, but Grey dodged the attack easily with the space element. Since he had already started using it, why go through the stress of blocking attacks anymore?

Although using the space element was a bit stressful, he wouldn't have a problem with dealing with these guys until he runs out of the space element essence in his reserve.

"Don't attack him carelessly!" The captain said to the duo.

Since it has already gotten to this stage, he knew Grey wouldn't let them go, so he had to think of a way that they would be able to defeat him. The problem was, with Grey's supposedly insane speed that makes him literally disappear, how will they be able to attack him?

Then, there's also the problem with that switching thing he did not too long ago.

Multiple thoughts were flying through the captain's head as he watched Grey preparing to attack them.

Just as Grey sent out his attack, the attack disappeared, then suddenly appearing within one meter of the Wind Elementalist.

Boom!

She managed to set up a windscreen just as the attack was about to get to her, but the impact of the blast still sent her flying.

The Fire Elementalist looked at the captain in terror, she couldn't believe what she was seeing.

When Grey sent out the attack previously, he was standing in their front, but after the attack disappeared, it suddenly appeared on the left side of the Wind Elementalist. If not for her years of battle awareness, then she would've died from that single attack. Even though she managed to block it, it was evident that she wasn't unscathed from that attack.

"Group up!" The captain charged in the direction the Wind Elementalist was going to land, using his water element to cushion her crashing.

The Fire Elementalist ran after him. On getting there, she saw the Wind Elementalist was bleeding from the mouth, and given how she was clutching her stomach, there might be a chance that she had some broken ribs.

What she found appalling was that Grey's attack didn't even hit her, she was only affected by the impact.

'What would've been the outcome if his attack had hit her?' She asked, dumbstruck.

"Can you still fight?" The captain asked while supporting the Wind Elementalist.

The Wind Elementalist nodded, albeit with some difficulty.

"Good, backs against each other," The captain said to the ladies.

This was the only thing he could think of doing for now. If they were to spread out, then Grey would be able to kill them all one-by-one, but putting their backs together would give them a better chance at defending those strange attacks of his.

When thinking up Grey's strange attacks, his pupils suddenly dilated when he recalled something.

"Move!"

The captain said, but before he finished his statement, he realized his view had changed. Instead of seeing only Grey, he was seeing him standing alongside the two ladies. His heart fell when he saw this scene.

Boom!

Grey exploded out with his blue fire against the unsuspecting ladies, sending both of them flying with severe injuries.

The duo could be said to be lucky since they didn't die on the spot, but the Wind Elementalist shouldn't be too far from death given her previous injury.

'How? How can this be countered?' The captain asked in dismay.

"Time to quit playing," Grey said while moving towards the ladies who were already unable to move after they crashed to the ground.

The captain couldn't do anything other than to watch as Grey snuffed the life out of his companions.

A few minutes later, Grey was the only one left standing in the valley.

"Space Elementals have always been a thorn to deal with. I never expected to see one as well versed in the space element as you are in such a place,"

A voice said, drawing the attention of Grey who was still standing in front of the corpse of the captain.

Chapter 430 - Shocking Information

Grey looked around but couldn't find the source of the voice, raising his head, he saw a familiar figure floating mid-air.

"Guess my suspicion was right," He said while looking at Ellis who was mid-air, there was no sign of surprise on his face.

It's generally known that only Overlord Plane Elementalists and above could fly or float mid-air, so when he felt Ellis was hiding his power previously, he was accurate. The only thing that he found strange was the fact that Ellis was aware of the space element, and given how he spoke about it, he must have seen others.

'So, there are others.' Grey thought to himself. He had always thought there were other Space Elementalists, but not hearing or seeing any other one, he felt a little skeptical about it.

"You're very sharp, had I not stayed in that array a little longer, then you would've already found out by now," Ellis said casually while slowly coming down.

"What was the use of hiding your strength?" Grey asked, not understanding why someone would go through all this stress.

"Fun, it was just for fun," Ellis shrugged after landing opposite Grey.

Grey looked at him for a while but refrained from speaking since he knew someone who wouldn't have any qualms about doing something like this for fun. Not just one, but two.

"So, what now?" He asked.

"Nothing, I've taken what I wanted, thanks to you," Ellis replied with a smile.

"You could've easily taken it by yourself, so no need to give me any credit," said Grey.

"You're right, but let's just take it as it is, alright?" Ellis walked closer to Grey, stretching out his right hand.

"Sure," Grey replied, not wanting to continue the conversation.

"I never thought you were this young though," Ellis took his hand after seeing Grey not reciprocating his attempted shake.

"I did tell you I wasn't a senior," Grey said while walking out of the valley.

All he wanted to do now was to exit this place, if not for the fact that he wasn't sensing any malice from Ellis, he would've escaped already. But he still didn't feel safe around him since he couldn't sense his accurate strength, this meant that even if he were to use his Fusion State, he probably won't be a match for Ellis.

"Yeah, but in this place, people who are as strong as you tend to be old, and you had that robe that was covering your face. You can't blame me for misjudging you," Ellis explained.

After walking for a while, Grey paused at the front of the passageway where the array had already completely been restored.

"Who are you?" He turned to look at Ellis.

"I'm Ellis," Ellis replied.

"Hmm, I've not heard of anyone being an Overlord Plane Elementalist while still being this young," Grey said.

He wasn't too sure if Ellis was young or an old man who refused to grow old, but he felt given how he was acting, he might be young.

"Given how little the essence is here, it's not surprising that there's no one my age in the Overlord Plane," Ellis replied.

"But, you shouldn't be far from it, right?" He asked.

Grey shrugged, blinked twice before disappearing.

Ellis chuckled before taking a step into the passageway, but unlike the first time, the arrays didn't light up. He casually walked to the other side of the passageway within two seconds.

Grey, who watched how he walked past the passageway from the other side was stunned by how he nonchalantly did it, he could swear he saw Ellis taking only three steps, yet he appeared on the other side of the passageway.

"Where are you from?" He asked curiously.

From the little conversation he just had with Ellis, it was safe to say that he's probably not from the Qilin empire.

"Far away," Ellis replied.

"The trial land?" Grey asked curiously.

That was the only place he knew that had more essence compared to the Qilin empire.

"Trial land? What's that?" asked a confused Ellis.

"It's a strange place. If you're not from there, then where?" Grey asked.

"I'm from the uh... how am I going to put it, let's just say the main continent. You wouldn't know about it since you people are stuck in this small place," Ellis replied.

"Small place? Main continent?" Grey asked, his expression is clearly one filled with confusion.

"Yeah, something like that. I was accidentally transported here during an exploration two years back, finding such a place where the main powerhouses were in the Overlord Plane surprised me. To be honest, the only thing of interest in this place is this Magical Beasts' forest." Ellis explained.

"Just to be clear, don't try to go deep into this place, there's a terrifying presence in here that gives me the chills. I feel it can easily wipe out this continent of yours with as little as a sneeze," Ellis added, his voice shaking slightly when speaking about what he sensed in the Magical Beasts' forest.

"Wait, what?" Grey, who was still having a hard time processing what Ellis was saying couldn't believe what he said about there being a terrifying presence that could wipe out the Azure continent with a sneeze.

How strong would the creature or person be to wipe out the entire Azure continent with a sneeze?

"This place holds a lot of secrets, I don't think most of the people in my continent know about it, else, it would've already been investigated by those supreme powerhouses," Ellis said.

Grey paused for a few minutes, trying to digest the information he just received. He had never read about there being another continent, other than the Azure continent, he knew nothing about there being a main continent. What was more shocking was how weak Ellis actually thought they were, he didn't even seem to be putting those experts in the Overlord Plane in his eyes.

Then, there's the issue of the inferior elemental essence in their continent.

Grey had thought of the possibility of there being another place after visiting the trial land, but after not really finding out about anything, he threw the thought to the back of his head.

"Wow!"

This was the only word that came out of Grey's mouth after a few minutes of contemplating.