

## Affinity: Chaos #Chapter 71 - Danger In Capital City - Read Affinity: Chaos Chapter 71 - Danger In Capital City

### *Chapter 71 - Danger In Capital City*

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Red City, one month after Grey left for the Lunar Academy.

Martha looked at his room with a sad face, she was about to leave this place and head over to meet her husband, Lucas.

She reminisced about all the times they spent here and couldn't help but sigh in frustration.

"If that moron hadn't gone when they called him, I wouldn't need to leave my little boy behind"

Although she said this, she knew Lucas had to go since it was an important matter.

"I thought we would be able to leave everything behind and just live a peaceful life, seems like fate has something else planned for us. Hopefully Grey will be okay" magic

After saying this, Martha crushed a small red glowing bead that suddenly appeared out of nowhere in her hand.

Two minutes later, a figure appeared from the void without making any sound. It was like he had always been there.

Plop!

"Milady, do you have any orders for me?"

Martha looked at the man before her before asking

"I forgot to ask you when you first arrived, how are things over there with that bastard?"

The figure almost choked when he heard Martha calling Lucas a bastard, this was not the first time he had heard Martha calling her husband a bastard, but it had been long since he heard it. He could only smile wryly before replying.

"The bas..."

He froze subconsciously before saying

"Lord's appearance has acted as a deterrent, but we don't know how long this would last. Before I left last month, I heard they're already tired of waiting and are planning a full-on assault on our territory"

Martha snorted coldly before saying angrily

"Hmph, those lowlifes want to benefit from what they didn't work. That secret realm opened in our territory, and we also cleared it. Do they know how many of our people died during the process?"

The figure smiled wryly, he was very familiar with Martha's temper. Although she was a Water Elementalist, her temper was the polar opposite of her element.

"There has been increased contact between them and Yulan Region, there is a high chance they are planning to join hands on the assault"

Martha's anger increased on hearing this and the poor house suffered from it. Most of the furniture in the house started freezing rapidly. But she quickly calmed herself before she completely froze the entire house.

"I'll be going over, it seems like they have forgotten about the last time"

"You will stay here and protect Grey, don't interfere with his daily life only if his life is in danger, should you intervene, but try to do it secretly"

The figure nodded

"Yes Milady"

"What about Chris?"

Martha raised a brow before asking

"What about him?"

"There's something different about him"

When the figure first arrived here, Martha sent him out to obtain information about the higher-ups in the Lunar Academy.

Martha said in disdain when she heard this

"He's a mere Half step Sage Plane Elementalist, what is there to be worried about?"

"Besides, I showed him a little hint of my strength, if he is wise, he should get the message I was trying to convey"

"Although it's surprising to see someone of his caliber in this backwater place, it's not impossible. Besides, Lucas and I also came here to spend the rest of our lives peacefully. If not for Lucas asking for their help which they couldn't even offer, there was no way they would have been able to find us"

Martha said.

The figure knew she was right he didn't even know a place like this existed if not for Lucas giving him the coordinates when Martha asked for him.

Martha disappeared from sight after giving her final orders to the figure. He was someone they trusted, so she knew Grey's life was in safe hands. Just like Martha, the figure also disappeared.

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"Grey wins"

Grey looked at his opponent who was currently lying unconscious on the platform, he didn't feel bad about how badly he beat him up since he knew his opponent also had the same thoughts towards him.

During the first round, a student from the Lunar Academy was almost beaten to death by a student from the Starlight Academy, luckily, the man in charge stopped the battle quickly. But it didn't change the fact that the student was almost crippled by his opponent.

The students from the Lunar Academy were sent into an uproar because of this and a brawl nearly happened between them and the Starlight Academy.

They all wanted to get revenge, so when Grey was given the opportunity, he didn't miss it.

He was a student of the Lunar Academy, so even if he didn't want to get involved, he didn't have a choice in this since his opponent would not hold back.

The students and the instructors from the Lunar Academy all nodded their heads in approval of what Grey did. While the students and the instructors from the Starlight Academy all threw death stares at him.

Grey was completely oblivious to the death stares he was getting from the students and also the instructors of the Starlight Academy while he walked towards his seats. Since Grey was the first student from the Lunar Academy to dare to beat one of their students this badly, he was automatically placed at the top of their must-kill list. Well, this was not the only reason for that.

The crowd already knew the conflict between both Academies would continue in the competition, so they weren't surprised by what was going on, some were even enjoying it since the battles between the students are more brutal.

With this victory, Grey had secured a place in the special training the empire spoke about. Alice qualified after having an epic battle with a student from the Wellen Academy who was at the Ninth stage of the Arcane Plane just like herself.

The shocking part of it all was the fact that of the sixteen students who qualified from the Lunar Academy, eight of them were Dual Elementalist. It was a large number compared to the other Academies, from this the crowd already deduced the winner of the competition this year will most likely be the Lunar Academy.

The students were all given a three days break after the second round ended.

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Later that night in the Starlight Academy residence.

"We need to think of a plan, the number of Dual Elementalist present in their ranks is terrifying. If they are all allowed to grow, it will spell catastrophe for us"

"I also heard of a summoner appearing in their ranks also. You should all be clear about their strengths"

The upper echelon of the Starlight Academy was currently holding a meeting. The appearance of so many Dual Elementalist in the Lunar Academy was a threat to them. Added with the fact that a summoner was also among the students. If they had no qualms with the Lunar Academy, they wouldn't be worried, but they had always been at loggerheads with them.

"Enough!"

A deep voice said.

"You all know how we usually solve our problems"

The speaker spoke in a cold voice while looking at the people present in the room. A glint flashed past his eyes before saying.

"By making them disappear"

The others all nodded in compliance when they heard this.

"I've already sent someone to investigate the backgrounds of all the Dual Elementalist present at the competition and also the summoner"

"For now, our main target is a student called Grey. He's a Dual Elementalist who is at the Seventh stage of the Arcane Plane and I regard him as our greatest threat"

When the others all heard of Grey's cultivation stage, they were puzzled why their leader placed a student at the Seventh stage as the main target.

"I understand you're all puzzled by my decision, but after Clayton explains, you'll all understand"

A man stepped forward after the leader finished speaking.

"Grey is born in a little city called Red City, the mayor there is just at the Second stage of the Arcane Plane. When he turned twelve, he took the test but failed to awaken his element. He took the test again when he was already sixteen, that was when he was able to awaken his element, he was surprisingly a Dual Elementalist with the Lightning element as his base element"

"Grey is currently seventeen years old, and he has already advanced to the Seventh stage of the Arcane Plane. You should all remember that he only awakened his elements by the age of sixteen, this means he went from a normal person with no cultivation, to someone who is already stronger than his mayor within just over a year and six months"

"This is the fastest speed I have ever seen and even the fastest speed recorded in the history of the continent"

When the others all heard the explanation, they couldn't help but suck in a cold breath. Given the current speed Grey was advancing, it would take at most three to five years for him to catch up, added to the fact that he would go into the trial grounds, it might even be shorter as long as he didn't die in there.

Grey was like a ticking time bomb for them, from his performance at the competition, they could all see he was already a full part of the Lunar Academy, hence the grudge with them was also part of him.

A cold glint all passed through their eyes,

"We must get rid of him"

"And we will, the second reason I placed him first in the list is the fact that among all the Dual Elementalists, he is the only one who doesn't have a strong background, which means, he wouldn't have anyone protecting him as the others do"

They all approved of their leader's plan, this was not the first time they had done something like this in the Capital City. As long as they could corner Grey in a hidden place, it would be over. Of course, they wouldn't be going alone, they had people just for jobs like this.

"Inform the Black Hand, they will know what to do"

*Chapter 72 - Danger In Capital City II*

After the second round ended, later that night Klaus suggested they should go out and have some fun since they were given three days to rest. Grey agreed since he needed some time off on his training.

This was the third time Grey was coming to the Water Paradise, and he couldn't say he didn't like the place, for one, their food tastes delicious and their wines were also topnotch.

At the Jade Water Paradise

"What you did was f.u.c.k.i.n.g amazing, I didn't expect you would beat him that badly"

Klaus laughed out loud

"I only reciprocated to what he wanted to do to me"

Grey answered with a shrug. He's not some psychopath who derives p.l.e.a.s.u.r.e from the sufferings of others. During the battle, he had multiple chances to deal a killing blow, but he refrained from it. Although in the end he beat up his opponent badly, he didn't really expect he would continue fighting even after taking such beatings.

The reason Grey beat up his opponent that badly was only after he noticed the killing intent in his opponent's eyes, only then did he retaliate coldly. But even after getting the chances, he just couldn't deal a fatal strike.

He didn't even know what to call what held him back, was it weakness? Or was it just his mind playing tricks on him? Maybe it was his humanity? To be honest, he didn't know.

"That's what those sc.u.ms deserve. If I get to meet any of them, they'll be treated in the same fashion Grey did to his opponent".

Reynolds said coldly. After his experience, he hated the students from the Starlight Academy to the core.

"So, what do you all think this special training is all about?"

Klaus took a sip of his wine before asking.

"I have no idea, I have never heard of the empire ever conducting any special training after the competitions"

Reynolds replied.

"Grey, got any ideas about it?" magic

Klaus asked looking in Grey's direction.

Grey continued with his drink before replying

"I have no idea, we'll all find out about it after the competition comes to an end"

Klaus nodded before switching topics to something more exciting.

After staying for some time, just like the previous two times Grey had followed his friends here. They retired with their partners leaving Grey alone once more. Grey didn't stay long in the room, after finishing his drink, he walked out of the place.

He looked at the busy night street in front of him before turning his gaze towards the center of the city.

'I want to see it again'

Grey started walking towards the center of Capital City. His destination wasn't too far from the Jade Water Paradise, and he soon got to the place.

Outside the castle of the emperor of the Qilin empire stood an enormous statue of a man who looked to be in his mid-thirties. The man had a serious-looking face with sharp eyes and a heroic air strongly radiating from him. It was surprising a statue felt so life-like.

Grey was awed the first time he saw it, this was why he decided to see it again. This was the statue of the first emperor of the Qilin empire, Constantine Gale.

This was the man who spearheaded the rebellion against the Azure empire long ago. Since the Qilin empire was created, only the Gale family had occupied the ruling seat. Although there are other top families in the empire who might have an eye on the ruling position, none have made a move yet, maybe they're biding their time.

In the history of the Qilin empire, just after it was formed, only one of the families who followed the Gale family in the rebellion tried to usurp power, but they were defeated and nearly completely annihilated. Although the family still stands, they keep to themselves without getting too involved with matters of the empire.

Grey stared at the statue and couldn't help but ask himself

'What does it feel like to be at the top?'

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While Grey and his friends were at the Jade Water Paradise.

A middle-aged lady could be seen entering into a luxurious compound in the southern part of the city. Flowers were planted on the side of the walkway which gave the place a serene look, added with the peace and quiet, it gave one a certain sense of comfort.

In a secret room in the building.

"This is the information gathered of the target"

The lady passed a file over the beautiful lady seating across her who looked to be in her late twenties, with golden hair and black eyes. She was dressed in all black.

The black-dressed lady collected the file and went through it before asking,

"Did you come with the payment?"

The middle-aged lady brought out a pouch and passed it to the lady.

When the lady in black opened the pouch, three colored stones could be seen glowing inside the pouch. She smiled after confirming their originality before saying,

"This is only half the payment"

The middle-aged lady nodded before replying,

"You'll get the balance after accomplishing the mission"

The lady in black nodded,

"Fair enough, is there a time limit?"

"Yes, the target should be dead before the competition ends. From what we gathered, he's currently in the Jade Water Paradise with his friends"

The lady in black frowned when she heard this,

"The owner of the place has a good relationship with me, and killing someone there will be bad for his business"

"I know, we gathered some added information about the target before coming here. He never sleeps in the place. He stays till just after midnight before he leaves the place, he takes a stroll around the City before heading back to his residence. Although we're not certain if he would also do it today, this has been his usual routine whenever he visited that place"

"Okay, I'll send one of the girls over"

"Okay, we'll be waiting to hear from you"

After getting assurance from the lady in black, the middle-aged lady left the building. A girl came into the room minutes later. After getting the details about her mission, she left swiftly.

'What does it feel like to be at the top?'

Grey stared at the statue a while longer before heading towards his residence. As a kid, he has always had the dream of standing at the top one day, this was one of the reasons he was devastated when he couldn't awaken his element.

Now with this inheritance and his hard work, he believed it wouldn't be long before he realized his dream.

While Grey was staring at the statue, a shadow was staring at him intently. This shadow has been following him since he left the Jade Water Paradise, but he had no idea of it.

The cool night breeze was always a refreshing experience. On his way back, he saw Claude and Nina walking with arms locked around each other, and Nina's head was placed on Claude's shoulder as they were walking.

'Seems like they're a couple, no wonder he thanked me so much for saving her'

Since the couple didn't see him, he didn't want to spoil their romantic moment, so he just walked silently on the other side of the road.

The shadow was following closely behind Grey, seemingly searching for an opportunity to strike.

Grey discovered an alley that cut across two streets and took him quickly to the place designated for the Lunar Academy the last time he went to the Jade Water Paradise.

The moment she wanted to strike out, she quickly held back and hid back at her hiding spot.

Grey also stopped in his tracks and looked ahead of him.

*Chapter 73 - Danger In Capital City III*

Grey looked ahead of him and his eyes instantly turned cold. Two boys were walking in his direction from the alley. He recognized one of them from the competition, and from that, he already guessed their identities.

'Students from the Starlight Academy'

"Do you know how long we had to follow you before finally getting this chance?"

One of the boys said as they walked closer towards Grey. They saw Grey heading out of the Jade Water Paradise and decided to follow him and teach him a lesson he would never forget.

"No, and I don't really care"

Grey answered before preparing to leave the alley the same path he used in walking in. The student he recognized was a Water Elementalist in the Eighth stage of the Arcane Plane and was strong. Although he could battle with him, that was if they were alone. The addition of the other student will make things very difficult for him.

"You think you can leave"

The boy said with a sneer

Grey turned around only to see two figures coming from the direction he planned on using, now he was trapped in the middle of both sets of boys. At least if he was left with the previous two, he had a good chance of escaping,

he wasn't even thinking about fighting since it was a lost battle. But now, with the addition of the other two boys, his chances were almost zero.

"What are you trying to do?"

Grey asked in a cold voice.

"What does it seem like?"

The boys laughed as they got closer, they knew the city too well. They couldn't believe their luck when Grey took this path which had almost no guards in the vicinity.

The place around the alley was a lonely environment, to begin with, so it would be hard for people to come here since it was already so late in the night.

The girl who wanted to assassinate Grey stuck to the shadows without making any moves. She looked on with interest and if an opportunity presented itself to her, she'll take it without a shadow of a doubt. None of the people present knew of her presence.

Grey looked at the boys with angry eyes, he knew the students from the Starlight Academy were sc.u.ms, but he didn't expect them to follow him from the Jade Water Paradise. He had already figured they followed him when he left the Jade Water Paradise.

Two minutes later

Bang!

Grey's body slammed into the wall by the side.

'F.u.c.k! There's no way I can fight with them, I need to think of a plan to escape'.

This was a battle he knew he wasn't going to win, he was not a God, he can't battle with this number of opponents who were on the same stage as him or higher. If they were two, although his chances wouldn't be too good, at least he was confident he could escape safely.

Now he was blocked on both sides and his opponents clearly have no plans of letting him off.

"Damn, doesn't the city guard patrol this area? How come none of them have been attracted here by the noise?"

Grey was already starting to feel helpless. This was a situation he had never been in before, all his battles have either been one on one or one on two, even when he battled with the mercenaries it was one on three, but those were people who are weaker compared to these students in the same stage.

Although he was stronger than the students personally, the difference wasn't too large and with numbers on their side, the result was clear for all to see. The Water Elementalist he recognized seems to be the leader of the group, and he was also the strongest among them.

Now Grey understood why Reynolds hated them so much, this was not a situation anyone wanted to be caught in.

'Why are they even doing this? It was their student who refused to give up'.

Grey complained as the battle went on

Grey managed to send one flying, but before he could capitalize on the space created by the missing man, he was sent flying again.

'Shit! They're not even giving me a breather. I need to deal a fatal strike'.

He couldn't help but curse in his mind

The chances of his escape were getting smaller and smaller with the increased injuries he was sustaining.

'Lightning rain'

Grey called in his heart and a sea of lightning struck at his unsuspecting opponents. He had not used this technique during the competition, so they knew nothing about it.

The group scurried to block the lightning bolts, but they were still struck, the guy Grey sent flying in particular had it worse and was hit with momentary paralysis. This was the special trait of the lightning element, paralyzing one's opponent. Although it doesn't always happen, it has a twenty percent chance of occurring.

Grey went for the kill by sending a rock the size of a fist towards the paralyzed youth's head. The leader of the group saw this and quickly made a water shield that helped reduce the impact of the attack, but the youth was still sent flying and hit the walls which immediately knocked him out cold. magic

'One down, three to go'

His surprise attack had helped him reduce the number of attackers, but it didn't change the overall situation of the battle, he was being beaten badly.

The battle had already gone on for over fifteen minutes with Grey getting the short end of the stick.

He had already coughed up multiple mouths full of blood that he even started wondering if he had any blood left in his body. There were different injuries on his body which were bleeding although not strongly, the loss of blood is already starting to take its toll on him.

His opponents weren't without any injuries with some getting multiple burns from his lightning attacks.

'Why does it take so long?'

Grey asked in frustration. Currently, his only bet was inscription, but with him not being able to create the symbol immediately, and the constant distraction from the battle, it wasn't easy to concentrate on it.

He planned to make three symbols and hopefully use them to strike at his opponent simultaneously. With his increased training, the attack power had gone to the level of his normal attack power, so he was certain that even if his opponents don't die from the attack, they would be fatally injured, and he might get a chance to escape, or even go for the kill.

Grey sent out a ball of lightning which exploded as it got close to his opponents and also raised a wall to block the attack of one of the students. He was currently trying to buy as much time as he could, so he could complete the inscription.

Just after he had completed the third symbol and was prepared to use them to attack, he was hit by a wind blade which not only sent him flying again, but it also cut open a new wound on his back.

Being surrounded by walls on his left and right, he hit a wall again. After landing, he coughed up another mouth full of blood.

'Seems like I still have some more'

Grey thought jokingly, even in a desperate time like this, he still had the energy to make fun of himself.

Unknown to Grey, he landed within a few meters from where the shadow hid.

There was no better opportunity to strike other than now. The girl who already had her dagger in hand sprang out of her hiding place behind Grey and immediately aimed for his heart.

The distance was too close and Grey didn't expect someone to sneak attack him even when he was already in such a tough battle.

Before he realized what was happening, it was already too late as the dagger was about to plunge straight at his chest. He could almost see death staring at him, despair almost washed his entire being.

His adrenaline shot through the roof, and he was able to shift to the side, the dagger missed its target and plunged straight into his shoulder. Blood splattered from his back, but Grey didn't have time to think, he sent out attacks from the three symbols in the air, with two targeting the two strongest members of the group and the last one attacking the shadow who almost killed him.

Everything happened so fast that before the girl or the students from the Starlight Academy could react, they were already struck by the inscription and one of the students lost an arm that completely detached from his body. The girl also wasn't lucky as a huge injury appeared on her back.

Although all this took some time to explain, it only happened within the space of five seconds.

Grey didn't think of any other thing and immediately used both his lightning and wind element to escape from the place before the last student who wasn't attacked could recover from the shock of what just took place. He was already on his last legs and there was no way he could battle with anyone currently.

Even keeping his consciousness was already starting to get difficult.

He managed to get to the residence albeit barely, only after the instructor who was keeping guard of the place appeared did he finally lose consciousness.

*Chapter 74 - Teacher Is So Overbearing!*

"What happened to him?"

"I don't know, he lost consciousness the moment he entered the place"

"Hmmm"

Blake looked at the unconscious Grey the man held in his arms.

Seeing Grey's identification, the instructor took Grey to Blake the moment he lost consciousness.

"Okay, you can leave now"

Blake said before taking Grey in another direction.

Some moments later...

Chris looked at the unconscious Grey and couldn't help but furrow his brow.

"Leave"

Blake dropped Grey on the bed before heading out of the room.

"Although his injuries are bad, it's not a challenge since he's still alive"

Chris said as he placed his hand on the body of the unconscious Grey.

Blake stood outside the room and saw a white light flash in the room. He squinted his eyes and looked on with interest.

'So the rumors are true, he truly is a Light Elementalist'

Although the rumor has been on for a long time, it still hasn't been confirmed.

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Back at the alley

The girl managed to stand up and picked up her dagger which Grey managed to remove from his shoulder before leaving. The injury in her back was painful, but that was the least of her issues right now. She was still replaying what happened in her mind.

'How did he dodge it?'

Given her experience, she knew her target couldn't evade from that distance. After careful thinking, she recalled something.

'I froze'

Now she knew the cause, she froze when the dagger was about to pierce through Grey's c.h.e.s.t. Even though it wasn't up to a second, it was enough for Grey to move so his vitals wouldn't be hit.

It was something that some people might not even notice since it felt like she was paused just before the dagger hit.

The only student who wasn't struck by the attack first stared in the direction Grey fled towards, before staring in the direction of the figure who appeared out of nowhere and almost killed Grey who has also left the alley.

The student whose arm was detached screamed in pain on seeing his arm a couple of meters away from where he was sitting. Only the Water Elementalist who was the strongest of the group wasn't badly hurt, but he was still bleeding from his hands nonetheless.

He looked at his comrades and couldn't help but feel a little twinge of regret, but since he wasn't the one whose arm was detached, he quickly got over it.

"Get him up, we should head back and report this to the instructors. Those bastards from the Lunar Academy sneaked attacked us"

He said gritting his teeth.

They all thought it was a sneak attack since they didn't see Grey attacking. But they were all still surprised they didn't see or even sense the presence of the students who attacked them.

The student whose arm was detached picked up his arm with his other hand and the more he was looking at the arm, the more rage, hatred, regret, and

tears were flowing from his eyes. This was not how it was supposed to end, they would have beaten Grey badly or even killed him. But now, Grey escaped, although injured, he escaped. They on the other hand got multiple injuries, and he got it worse with one of his arm cut off his body.

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On getting to the residence designated for the Starlight Academy, the students rushed over to their instructors and told them about the attack they faced, with the injuries they sustained, it wasn't hard for the instructors believed it completely. Of course, they said they were sneaked attacked by the students from the Lunar Academy when they were on their way home.

The instructors knew they were lying, but they didn't really care. This was an opportunity for them to get rid of Grey. According to the students, Grey was the one who blocked their path, when they tried reasoning with him, the other students attacked from behind, they didn't see the others and Grey was the only one they saw.

The instructors dismissed them before starting a meeting.

"They'll have to hand over that brat to us if they don't want to start a war"

"Such audacity, to think they had the guts to attack our students in the city. This is breaking the rules of the city, we should report this to the emperor if they refuse to hand over the boy and his accomplices to us"

The instructors of the Starlight Academy starting planning on which actions to take.

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Back to the Lunar Academy

Chris walked out of the room and glanced at Blake who was seemingly lost in thoughts.

"What are you thinking about?"

Blake was startled and looked at Chris. He couldn't help himself anymore and asked,

"Are you also a Light Elementalist?"

Chris's facial expression didn't change before he asked,

"Why are you asking if you already know?"

This statement was the confirmation Blake needed to affirm his eyes didn't play any tricks on him. He couldn't help but look at Chris again, he had always felt great respect towards this man who had an eccentric character, now he found out he was not just a Dual Elementalist, but a Multi Elementalist. The shocking fact of it all was that his last element was one of the two extremely rare elements, the Light element.

Although Lightning Elementalists were rare, compared to Light and Darkness Elementalists, they could be said to be very plentiful.

Light Elementalist are known for their extreme speed, but that isn't their most special attribute, they had the unique skill of healing. The Light element had a special trait, Life Force energy.

With this, they can be said to be the best healers given their special ability. But don't be deceived by the fact that they are good healers, the Light element is known to also have terrifying attack power.

Just like the Light Element, the Darkness Element also had the special attribute of corrosion, it can corrode almost everything, and it is regarded as one of the most, if not the most terrifying attacking element there is.

Blake finally came back to himself after being lost in thoughts once again,

"How's Grey?"

"He should be fine, a little sleep and he will be back to new"

Blake saw Grey's state when he brought him here, so when he heard this, he couldn't help but be shocked. He expected Grey to take at least two weeks or so to heal, but now, Chris said a little sleep and he would be as good as new, who wouldn't be shocked when they heard something like that?

"You should keep your mouth shut about what you saw today"

Blake nodded, he didn't have any plans of telling anyone, okay, maybe he might tell her, but he wouldn't tell any other person.

"By the way, what happened to him?"

Chris asked, because Grey was badly injured when Blake brought him in, he didn't ask what happened and just started healing him outright. But now that Grey was alright, he wanted to know what happened.

"I don't know, the instructor guarding the place brought...."

Blake told Chris what the instructor told him.

"Hmm, guess we'll have to wait for Grey to wake up before we can know what happened"

"Yes, that's the only solution"

Grey opened his eyes and looked around, he didn't recognize the place so he panicked a little, but on remembering he saw an instructor, he guessed he should at least be within the residence.

He subconsciously touched his shoulder where he was stabbed but was shocked when he couldn't feel anything.

'Was I dreaming?'

He asked himself, he clearly remembered being stabbed by someone in black yesterday, or was it the day before, he didn't really know since he didn't know how long he was unconscious.

But the injury miraculously disappeared, not just that one, even the other ones were nowhere to be found also.

'What's happening?'

He got to his feet and walked out of the room, on getting to the courtyard outside the room, he surprisingly saw Chris sitting.

"Teacher"

Chris turned and looked at his coo... ahem, student.

"How are you feeling?"

Grey checked his body again just to be sure before replying

"Fine, I feel great in fact"

Chris nodded

"Good, good. Now tell me, what happened to you yesterday?"

'So it wasn't a dream. But, how did my injuries disappear within the space of a single night?'

Grey went on to tell Chris about what happened with the students from the Starlight Academy. Chris squinted his eyes and a cold light flashed past it.

"Hmph, those people are just like pests, they need to be exterminated"

Chris said icily, he was already fed up with what was going on with the Starlight Academy, they were lucky he was not the principal, or he would have already destroyed them already. He definitely didn't give a shit about what the emperor was going to say.

Chris took Grey over to the instructors so he would explain what happened the previous night.

While Grey was still in the process of explaining what happened, the instructors were already all turning red from rage when a loud voice traveled to the meeting room.

"Where is the student called Grey?"

The speaker made sure to enhance his voice to ensure everyone in the residence heard it. Even the people who were walking heard this and all curiously stopped on their tracks and looked at what was going on.

"Aren't those people from the Starlight Academy?"

"Yeah, but why are they yelling in front of the residence of the Lunar Academy"

"I don't know, but it would be interesting"

Different conversations broke out, the instructor who yelled smirked inside. This was the result he wanted.

The principal, instructors, and the students who resided in the place all came out and looked at the group who were floating in the air outside the gate.

Grey was behind Chris when they walked out, he stared at the group with cold eyes.

Klaus and Reynolds were already back from the Jade Water Paradise so on hearing Grey's name being mentioned, they rushed outside their rooms.

"What are you doing here?" magic

The head instructor from the Fire Hall asked coldly.

"A student from your Academy attacked our students yesterday, and one of the students is almost dead and even lost an arm. We want you to hand the student over to us so we can punish him appropriately"

The man said confidently

The instructors from the Lunar Academy all looked at him like he was a fool, did he really think they would hand over their student to him?. They didn't even have the strength to bother with him, arguing with people whose brains weren't functioning properly was too tiring.

The crowd was finally able to get the gist of the whole issue, it seems a student from the Lunar Academy attacked the students from the Starlight Academy and even successfully injured them badly.

"You should leave, people from the Starlight Academy are not welcomed here"

Oliver said calmly, he was already holding himself back from unleashing an attack towards the group.

"We came here for the student and also an explanation, we are not leaving until we have both. Also..."

The man suddenly stopped talking and a scene that stunned everyone present played out. The man who was still in the middle of his speech was sent flying by a slap from someone who suddenly appeared beside him.

The rest of the group from the Starlight Academy looked in the direction the man flew to, and couldn't help but feel a chill run down their spines.

"I don't like him, he should've just left when he was told to"

Chris said with a shrug before he returned to his previous position like nothing happened.

'Teacher is so overbearing'

Grey looked at the man in front of him and his respect for him increased to a new level.

*Chapter 75 - Augustus Gale*

The crowd gathered outside looked in the direction the man landed, his life and death is unknown since there have been no movements from him since he crashed into the ground.

Oliver looked at Chris and couldn't help but sigh, he knew now the issue wouldn't be settled easily, and he didn't really care. Now unlike the previous time, the higher-ups from the Starlight Academy will try to make a big issue out of this. But to hell with them, did they think the Lunar Academy was scared, if they thought that, then they were dead wrong.

"Are you still here?"

Oliver asked while releasing a cold aura from his body, since things have already gotten to this stage, there was no use in trying to talk calmly to them. If they still decide not to leave, then they will face the same fate as their comrade. He was over a hundred percent sure Chris killed the man with that slap.

The instructors from the Lunar Academy all released intense killing intent from their bodies, the group from the Starlight Academy quickly scurried away like a pack of scared dogs with their tails behind their legs. They came here with heads held high, thinking they might use this opportunity to not only get rid of Grey but to also show everyone who was the number one, but now they left in disgrace and mostly fear. From how the instructors from the Lunar Academy were acting, they knew they weren't joking and might attack if they stayed any further.

Among the group, the man who was smacked to death was the most pitiful. If he could talk he would have surely complained about the nature of his death, if he was killed with some flashy move, it wouldn't be as bad as being smacked to death. He only came here to show dominance, why did it end like

this? Even in the underworld, he would be a laughingstock because of the way he died.

The group quickly went over to get the man who was smacked away, but on seeing his condition, they were stupefied, and the fear they felt increased once again. The side of the man's head caved in, and he couldn't be any deader. They picked up the corpse and disappeared from the area.

News of the event quickly rocked the entire city. The fact that a group from the Starlight Academy went over to the Lunar Academy to demand for a student was shocking on its own, the fact that one of the group was smacked to death was even more astonishing.

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The instructors all looked at the corpse with rage, this was an instructor who was most likely to be the next head instructor in the Wind Hall, but now he was dead, even the manner of his death was annoying, he was smacked to death, like an annoying fly.

"Good, very good. The people from the Lunar Academy are getting more daring, do they think we're pushovers?"

"Call everyone here, we're heading over to confront them"

The principal of the Starlight Academy said in anger.

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The Castle of the emperor

"Your highness, the conflict between the Lunar and the Starlight Academy seems to have escalated again. An instructor from the Starlight Academy was killed today when they went over to the residence of the Lunar Academy to demand for a student who they said attacked some of their students"

Seated on the throne was a man who looked to be in his early forties. With refined features and a calm look, he was the emperor of the Qilin empire, Augustus Gale.

He stared at the man who was reporting what happened to him.

"To dare break the rules of the city, the Lunar Academy doesn't seem to put his highness in their eyes"

An elder by the side spoke in a spiteful manner.

The others looked at him but didn't say anything, they shifted their gazes back to the emperor. They all knew that the elder had close ties with the Starlight Academy, and he's not the only one, more than half of the elders present here had close ties with them. This was one of the reasons the Starlight Academy had not only grown in power but also why they always acted overbearingly.

The man who was giving the report suddenly spoke up again.

"Your highness, it seems the people from the Starlight Academy are currently on their way to confront the Lunar Academy"

Augustus felt tired?from the entire issue, he didn't know what to do about the two academies.

"Head over to the residence of the Lunar Academy and summon both Academies over"

"Yes, your highness"

The man bowed before leaving the castle

"Your highness, if I may?"

The emperor nodded.

The elder continued after getting the go-ahead from the emperor,

"This is a very delicate matter, and if not handled properly it might cause internal strife in the empire"

"So what do you have in mind?"

The emperor looked at him with interest

"We still don't know if what the group of the Starlight Academy said is the truth. For all we know, they might just be looking for a way to get back at the Lunar Academy for the matter that occurred previously"

The elder said.

The elder who spoke up previously quickly jumped into the fray,

"What do you mean by that? Do you think the people from the Starlight Academy will just decide to bully someone of the younger generation unreasonably?"

"Yes, yes I do"

The man didn't hide his thoughts and said it out loud, he was tired of the tyrannical way the Starlight Academy were acting in the empire for a while now.

They soon got into a heated argument before the emperor decided to step in,

"Enough, we'll hear from both sides when they get here"

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When the crowd saw another group from the Starlight Academy approaching the residence, they weren't surprised since they expected this. The principal and the instructors from the Lunar Academy all came out also when they sensed the aura the group from the Starlight Academy was doing nothing to hide.

"He's the one"

One of the people in the group who came the first time pointed at Chris hatefully.

On seeing that the one who was pointed at was Chris, the principal couldn't help but be taken aback. If it was the principal or any other instructor from the Lunar Academy, he would have been a hundred percent confident in doing what he came here for, but in front of Chris, he wasn't too confident.

Chris is known for his unreasonable conducts, and given his strength, offending him was not a wise choice.

Just as he was about to speak, he noticed someone coming from the direction of the castle. He heaved a sigh of relief since he knew the emperor has already gotten involved in the matter.

"His highness summons both parties to the castle"

Both sides nodded before heading towards the castle. They landed when they were five hundred meters away from the castle since it was forbidden to fly within this range of the castle.

After entering the castle, both sides told the emperor their sides of the story. The students weren't called over and only the higher-ups of both Academies were present.

Augustus was caught in a dilemma as he didn't know which side to believe.

"How are you sure what that brat said was the truth?"

The elder who spoke up the first time said.

"How are you so sure what those twerps said was the truth"

Oliver retorted calmly.

"You people from the Lunar Academy all feel like you're on top of the world, to even have the guts to protect such a lowly student who would sneak attack his peers"

"If you continue speaking, make sure to never leave this castle again"

Chris said calmly as he looked at the elder. Since they came to the castle, this elder has been the one opposing them. Even the people from the Starlight Academy weren't as dedicated as he was.

"Is that a threat"

Chris looked at him without replying, but his gaze gave him the answer he wanted, his eyes were simply saying, try me.

The elder sensibly shut his mouth, he knew some things about Chris and knew he would really kill him regardless of what the emperor said.

Augustus was beginning to feel a headache, especially with the sudden involvement of Chris. He was still confused why Chris was involved in the issue, why was he even here? He had never attended the previous competitions.

"Chris"

Augustus called out.

Chris turned his gaze to the emperor.

"Why are you interested in this matter?"

"Because the boy in question is my student, I brought him personally to the Academy and I know what he can or can't do. There is no way he would sneak attack their students. But if he really did, given his talent, they'd be dead"

"Your student?"

"Yes, my student. Do you have a problem with me having a student?" magic

Augustus thought for some time before saying,

"Since there is no way to confirm who is right in this matter, we'll have to end the matter here. Chris, you'll have to compensate them for their dead instructor. I do not want to hear of this matter anymore. If the younger generation wants to compete against each other, they're free to. But none of you in the older generations should interfere with it anymore"

The elder suddenly objected

"Your highness, do you mean you're going to just dismiss the matter like this?"

Augustus looked at him coldly,

"Are you saying I don't know what I'm doing?"

The elder suddenly realized his mistake,

"No your highness, please forgive this old one's incompetence"

Augustus snorted before adding,

"Good, you're all dismissed"

The group from both Academies left the place with the Lunar Academy coming out the better of the two.

Later that day, inside the depths of the castle

"Father, why are you still tolerating Chris? He didn't even put you in his eyes"

"The plan is still ongoing, and he is an unknown factor in the overall shape of things. He still hasn't accepted my offer yet, but he promised not to interfere with the plan. He is also a huge asset to us in case a war breaks out with the other empires. For now, we'll leave him be, besides, he's not someone we can easily get rid of"

"Why don't we use the Starlight Academy to deal with him?"

"The chances of them succeeding is below twenty percent"

"He's that strong?"

"Yes, but I have a plan"

*Chapter 76 - Upgrade*

At the residence of the Lunar Academy...

Grey told Klaus and the others what happened after he left the Jade Water Paradise. He gave them a detailed description of the entire event, and they all felt like they were there when it happened.

"Those sc.u.mbags"

Reynolds said through gritted teeth.

Grey looked at him and was almost a hundred percent sure Reynolds was the one who hated the Starlight Academy the most.

While the others were speaking, Klaus stayed unusually quiet. He suddenly spoke up,

"There's still something puzzling about the story"

The rest looked at him with interest.

"You said one of them suddenly appeared and tried to stab you with a dagger?"

He asked

"Yes, I didn't really get a good look at the figure. But I think the person is also one of them. He just hid and waited for the right time to strike, luckily, I was fast enough to make sure he didn't hit my vitals"

Grey answered, he was totally taken off guard when that figure suddenly appeared.

"I don't think so"

Klaus said calmly.

"Huh"

Not just Grey, but Reynolds and Alice were also taken aback when Klaus said this.

"From the way the person appeared, I think it was an assassin"

Klaus told them his conjecture. From the way the figure stayed until that moment to strike, it was evident the person was quite experienced in it.

"Assassin!"

The others all exclaimed in surprise.

"But what I don't know is who would want to send an assassin to kill you, and why?"

The group looked at Klaus with surprise. Grey thought about it and couldn't help but feel what Klaus said was right.

"I don't think I've offended anyone since we got to the city"

Grey said after some time. He rarely had contact with people, how will he offend people and didn't even remember it?

"What about the Starlight Academy?"

Klaus asked

"Why would the Starlight Academy send someone to assassinate me just because I beat up one of their students?"

Grey said. He didn't think the people from the Starlight Academy did it, he knew they were upset he beat up their student, but sending an assassin to kill him is just being unreasonable.

"Beats me, but they are the ones I think are likely behind it, or, the family of the boy you beat up"

"We all have to be careful from now on. I'll inform my father about this"

Klaus said to the others. They stayed for a while before they all left. Grey decided to tell Chris about Klaus's deduction.

"It's definitely them"

Chris said without a second thought. After hearing the full details of the fight, he couldn't help but applaud Klaus's perception. For him to be able to know there was something different about the figure was brilliant.

"By chance, did you see any symbol in the shape of a hand on the dagger?"

Chris asked to confirm if it was the group he suspected.

"I don't know since it happened too fast, but from what I could remember when I touched the dagger, it was made from what seems to be steel. Oh!, and the dagger is black, even the blades of the dagger were black"

Grey said

"It's definitely them"

Chris mumbled

"You know them?"

"Why are you asking? Now get to training, if you were able to make the inscription faster, you wouldn't have been beaten so badly"

Chris reprimanded him

"Teacher, how come all my injuries were healed when I woke up?"

Grey couldn't help but ask, he was puzzled by this, but he had not been able to ask Chris because of what happened earlier.

"A miracle"

Chris answered nonchalantly.

Grey left frustrated after not getting any answers from Chris, he was sure Chris definitely had a hand in it.

After Grey left, Chris squinted his eyes.

'Hmph!, To dare try to assassinate my cook'

Chris appeared in a luxurious compound on the southern side of the city. It was like he was a ghost as he appeared and disappeared in random places. Some minutes later, Chris came out with a confused look on his face. He searched the entire place and he didn't find a single soul in the entire compound.

This was unexpected since the place was always occupied. Since the black hand established themselves, they had never left this place. They had powerhouses who could protect the place and given their strong network of friends, they rarely made enemies who are strong enough to threaten them.

'Could it be that they have fled the city? I don't think so, seems like something else is going on'.

Chris left the place since he didn't find who he was looking for. He was not the only one who had come searching for the people here, even the middle-aged woman in black had come earlier today but couldn't find them. She came the previous night, so it was surprising they just disappeared the next day.

It was like they were never there.

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The previous night, while Grey was battling with the group from the Starlight Academy, there was another person present who none of them took notice of. Even the girl didn't notice there was someone else there.

A man was watching the battle from the sky, but it was impossible for the others to know of his presence, even the strongest expert in the city will not be able to detect him.

'Hmm, little lord seems to have improved compared to the last time he battled against a group. Although he's still getting beaten, the result of the battle is not that bad'.

He had been following Grey since he arrived here a month after Grey joined the Lunar Academy. He had watched all of Grey's battle and could tell Grey had improved compared to before. One of the things that shocked him the most was when Grey battles with the mercenaries.

After Grey was covered in rocks, he knew he wasn't dead and was just about to step in and eliminate the mercenaries, when Grey suddenly rose from the rubble. It was a shocking sight as the power Grey showed was something someone of Grey's stage wasn't supposed to have.

But the thing that shocked him was when he noticed Grey suddenly had an extra element, the wind element. He was sure from the time he started following Grey, he could only sense lightning and earth elemental essence around him, but the wind element suddenly joined the fray after that night.

During the current battle when Grey is being badly beaten, he sensed when Grey was making the inscription.

'What a great plan, if this is successful, he wouldn't have a problem with defeating them. But that lass is still a problem though, let's see how it goes'.

He nodded in approval when he noticed what Grey was trying to do, and also kept a close watch on the girl hidden in the shadow.

Just as Grey landed close to the girl, the girl sprang out and dashed towards Grey aiming the dagger towards his heart.

'What a smart girl, an assassin truly is an assassin no matter where they are. Such sublime timing and impeccable spot targeted. With the speed of the strike, her target can't escape this. Sigh, if only she wasn't trying to kill little lord, I would have taken her as a disciple'

He waved his hand and the girl froze for a slight moment, this was all Grey needed to dodge the attack and use the symbol to attack the others. On

seeing Grey was able to shift his body, he nodded in approval. If Grey hadn't been able to move, he would have been disappointed since he thought Grey's reaction speed was fast.

Given an opportunity, he firmly believed Grey would be able to make sure his vitals weren't hit, and Grey didn't disappoint.

'This battle should teach him to never lower your guard when battling'

He could have easily made sure the girl never appeared, but he wanted to see Grey's reaction and also his vigilance. And the outcome showed him Grey still had a lot to learn.

After he confirmed Grey had entered the residence of the Lunar Academy, he followed the girl back to her hideout. He saw the girl speaking with a lady,

'Guess you will all have to disappear now, you can only blame your bad luck for trying to assassinate the little lord'

The man spoke with a sigh, he still felt bad about killing the girl, but he knew he had no other choice.

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Back to the present day...

"Ahh, finally"

Grey said in a satisfied manner. After so long, he had finally increased the grade of his earth element. Now, his lightning element was blue grade, the earth element was purple grade, and his wind element was still in the pink grade. But he was sure it wouldn't take long before it improved to the orange grade.

The three days break soon came to an end and the third round was about to begin. Of course what happened previously at the residence of the Lunar Academy was still the major topic.

Soon, the man in charge of the competition took to the platform and announced the rules, just like the previous times, they will all be given a plaque with numbers, but since there was an extra person, one person would get to skip this round of battles.

The moment Grey and his group heard this, they all turned to look at Klaus. They still remembered how he was able to get both lucky numbers during the tournament at the Academy.

Grey shook his head,

'There's no way he would also get it this time' magic

He was not the only one who had such thoughts, Alice and Reynolds also thought the same thing.

The participants were all called into the platform and the plaques started floating midair air.

"A plaque will come to each of you. You are only allowed to grab the one which comes to you"

The man said before the plaques shot towards the participants. After each participant got a plaque, the man said,

"Now the student with plaque number seventy-five should step forward"

They all looked at the plaques in their hands...

*Chapter 77 - It's A Date*

"The participant with plaque number seventy-five should step forward"

The man said after all the plaques were distributed.

Grey looked at the plaque in his hand, and twenty-nine was boldly written on it. He was not the only one who check his plaque, the rest of the participants also did the same. The few weaker ones prayed they were the ones who got the lucky number.

Grey had no problem with not skipping this round since he mainly came here to test his limits against others. With the upgrade in his earth element, he's stronger compared to the last time he battled, but it didn't mean he could defeat a student in the Ninth stage yet. But he was sure he might be able to fight Alan to a draw now.

Alice also didn't have a problem with this, after all, she was a battle maniac. She might even feel sad if she had to skip this round. Reynolds and Klaus

didn't really care also, if they had it, they'll just relax and watch the battles, if they didn't, they'll fight.

Grey looked around to see who was going to step forward but didn't see any movements from the crowd, he subconsciously turned his head towards Klaus and his expression changed when he saw Klaus smiling stupidly.

Klaus stepped forward and showed his plaque to the man in charge.

Reynolds mouth twitched a little when he also saw this, since Klaus stepped forward, it only meant he got the lucky number again.

"Crap! How come he always gets it?"

He wasn't the only one who had this thought though, everyone who came from the Lunar Academy who witnessed the tournament was also dumbfounded. They had witnessed Klaus's terrifying luck during the tournament which allowed him to skip two rounds. But witnessing it once again was just shocking.

They could only smile bitterly and curse their poor lucks.

The second round soon began, Grey's battle was among the last set for the day. Although he hoped to battle with a student in the Ninth stage, he didn't get it. His opponent wasn't weak though since she was in the Eighth stage of the Arcane Plane. After a long battle, he was able to obtain victory.

When the group who attacked Grey saw him, they were stunned, especially the one who lost an arm. Grey was perfectly normal, they knew too well how many injuries Grey sustained during the battle, he wasn't even supposed to be able to fight, talk less of beating someone in the Eight stage. Regret suddenly washed him up once again, he regretted following them to attack Grey. If he had just stayed where he was, he would have been perfectly fine. Unfortunately, there's no medicine for regret.

Of the seventy-five participants left, more than half of them were in the Ninth stage, the number in the Sixth stage was only four, with Klaus and Jonas being two of them.

After getting through this stage, Grey knew his chances of advancing once again was very low since the participants left were mostly in the Ninth stage.

Even though he really wanted to fight with them, he knew he wasn't their match yet.

The battle soon got to Reynolds turn, his opponent was surprisingly Jonas. Given the way he hated the Starlight Academy, Grey was sure he would try to beat Jonas up badly. Well, so they thought.

When the battle started, Reynolds didn't even try to hold back, he unleashed a strong attack towards his opponent. With his strength, coupled with the stage advantage, he should normally be able to completely overpower Jonas.

But...

Boom!

Both fighters were pushed back by the impact of the first clash Reynolds retreated three steps backward from the impact of the attack, Jonas on the other hand retreated five steps before he was able to get his footing right.

The result of the first clash stunned Reynolds, although he got the upper hand, it was just merely. Grey was also surprised by it, he didn't think Jonas would be able to almost fight Reynolds to a draw given the grade of his element. But it didn't surprise him too much since Klaus's grade was also purple, but he could battle with those who had blue grade and a higher stage too.

"He's pretty strong"

Klaus stared at the battle before commenting.

"Yeah"

Grey replied calmly.

The battle went on with Reynolds holding the advantage most of the time, but there were a few times he nearly lost due to his hotheadedness, but luckily, he was able to calm himself and slowly grind down his opponent. The advantage of having a higher stage soon started to play out, and just as expected, Jonas lost.

Reynolds came back to his seat after the long battle, he was feeling exhausted, luckily, he won the battle.

"To think you almost lost against a student from the Starlight Academy, who is even a stage lower"

Klaus said in a mocking tone.

Reynolds looked at Klaus and felt speechless, sometimes he felt like just beating him up. He knew Klaus was just playing around, but it didn't mean he couldn't beat him up still.

"You want to try?"

"Please, like I haven't defeated you before"

Klaus said with a scoff, particularly stressing the first word he said.

Grey looked at Klaus and didn't know what to say. He still didn't remember when Klaus defeated Reynolds.

"What are you looking at? Do you want me to beat you up again?"

Klaus looked at Grey arrogantly.

Grey looked at Reynolds and they both nodded, they seem to have come to a conclusion about how to deal with Klaus.

On seeing this, Klaus couldn't help but freeze,

"G...guys, you know I'm only playing around right?"

He stuttered while trying to butter up his friends, which ended in a failure.

Grey didn't even bother to look at him and drew closer to Reynolds, seemingly planning out what methods will hurt Klaus the most.

Klaus almost wanted to cry but no tears came out, he was already cursing his big mouth inside. He totally forgot about their sparring sessions, given his strength, he might be able to struggle longer than Jonas against Reynolds, but it didn't change the fact that he would get his a.s.s whooped. Against Grey, he didn't even have the chance to struggle for more than three minutes.

"Damn you! Do you think I'm afraid?"

He suddenly shifted his gaze over to the laughing Alice, and an idea struck him.

"Hey, want to spar with me today?"

Alice stifled a laugh when she heard Klaus's offer. Klaus has always been scared of sparring with her, she didn't expect he would take this route to escape from punishment from Grey and Reynolds.

"How about next time? I can see you already have plans with Grey and Reynolds"

She said trying to hold back her laugh.

"No...no, today is good"

Klaus said with a shaky voice. Only after continuous persuasion did Alice finally agree.

"Okay fine"

Alice agreed helplessly. She didn't think Klaus was such a persistent person.

"Great, it's a date then" magic

Klaus said without thinking. His arrogant look once again returned as he looked at Grey and Reynolds,

'Hmph! They think they can bully me, but I'm one step ahead of them'.

There was no way Grey and Reynolds would object to him sparring with Alice, all he had to do now was spar with her for some days. By then, Grey and Reynolds would have already forgotten about their evil scheme.

Alice however lowered her head shyly when she heard Klaus say the word 'date', she blushed unknowingly with her heart beating like crazy.

"Hey, are you okay?"

Klaus asked when he suddenly noticed Alice's strange behavior.

Alice nodded, she didn't dare to raise her head though, she covered her face with her hands and her imagination started running wild. It was only after some time had passed was she able to calm her racing heart.

"I have a sparring session with Alice today"

He said as he walked past them with a smirk,

'Let's see how you will beat me up'

Klaus gladly went over to Alice's place for their training session. Although he was still beaten by Alice, it wasn't to the extent Grey and Reynolds had planned for him. They soon ended their sparring session and he volunteered to show Alice around. Although Alice was from a big family, she didn't travel frequently, this was only the second time she had been to Capital City...

*Chapter 78 - Magical Beast Forest*

The next day...

The group all went over to the arena, Alice was in a good mood, and she laughed more often compared to the previous days. Grey noticed the change but didn't think too much about it since he knew Alice was a cheerful person.

Alice was still reminiscing about the previous night which she enjoyed, she hadn't had this much fun in a long time. Klaus being a great company only made things better, he took her to all the fun places he could think of, and they only returned when it was past midnight. They would have stayed longer if not for the battle she had today.

Her opponent was in the Eighth stage of the Arcane Plane, who she easily defeated and came back hopping to her seat.

Just like the previous day, Klaus ditched Grey and Reynolds and opted to train with Alice. He still didn't know if they still wanted to beat him up, and didn't want to take the risk. Although he was also beaten up like the previous day by Alice, she seemed to have held back compared to yesterday.

After training, they continued their touring of the city. Reynolds could only find comfort in Grey since they were the ones who were left out. But unfortunately, Grey also left Reynolds and headed over to meet up with Chris for his training.

Although Grey wanted to be with his friend, he couldn't reject it when Chris called him since he had been training on his own since they came here. He noticed since the incident, Chris had tried to make sure he improved in his speed in creating the symbol. It felt like he wasn't going to see him for some time.

"Teacher, do you know what this special training is about?"

Grey suddenly asked after finishing his practice.

Chris gazed at the sky before replying,

"You'll know about it anyway, so there's no use in hiding it from you. You will all be going..."

Chris told him some details about the land of trial which was about to open up. He also made sure to tell him not to tell others about it, well, he could tell his friends, but they should keep it to themselves since the empire would execute them if they found out they knew. Well, Grey would be safe, so also would Klaus and Alice. Reynolds however didn't have a more prominent background like the other two, so he might be executed.

"Twenty-five spots have already been taken by the Royal Academy, while the remaining seventy-five are taken by the top seventy-five participants in the competition"

Grey was stunned, this was the first time he was hearing about something like this. Seems like the previous people who went in all kept it under wraps. But why were they keeping it a secret anyway? It's not like someone else would take the spot from them, given there were only four empires, and they jointly keep guard of the place to ensure none of the others cheated and placed in more people.

"So that's the reason they increased the number of students, but why didn't the Royal Academy fight for a spot like the others?"

He couldn't help but ask.

"Because they are 'royals'. The twenty-five spot which they took will be given to the youths from the royal family. The empire is actually quite good in this aspect, I heard the Azure empire only gave ten spots to the Academies there, and they took ninety spots"

Chris said with a light smile. Although the current emperor isn't as good as the previous one, it was good he didn't change this rule. But Chris knew some things were going on behind the scenes which he didn't know, but as long as it didn't clash with his interest, he didn't care.

The day ended without much happening, the third round soon ended and the fourth round began. Just like Grey expected, his opponent was someone in the Ninth stage. He battled with all he had, but still couldn't change the expected result, he lost. magic

The defeat didn't dampen his mood though since it was within his expectations, he was not the only one who was knocked out in this round, both Klaus and Reynolds were also eliminated. Klaus in particular almost had it worse, with his opponent being a student from the Starlight Academy in the Ninth stage of the Arcane Plane.

He made sure to curse him as much as he could before the battle started. The student almost went on a rampage when Klaus told him something in particular, luckily, as soon as the man in charge said 'begin', Klaus immediately jumped off the platform and admitted defeat. Well, he didn't forget to unleash more curses on the guy, which in turn, provoked the guy even more. The guy's eyes literally turned bloodshot from rage, but Klaus didn't care.

Klaus knew since they were no longer on the platform, the guy wouldn't dare to attack him since it will attract a huge punishment on the guy and he on the other hand will most likely come out unscathed.

Grey and Reynolds joined in the fun when Klaus returned, and they all had a good laugh while watching the rest of the competition.

Soon it got to the final twenty in the competition, and Damian was surprisingly still in it. He was lucky not to have met anyone in the Ninth stage, so he was able to advance, only after bringing out his summon that is. When the crowd saw it, they were all stunned as they never expected to see a summoner in the competition.

Of the final twenty, the Lunar Academy had seven left, while the Starlight Academy had only four left. Alice's next battle was against the guy who Klaus met the previous time, she was unexpectedly more violent compared to the previous times she battled and completely whooped him. She even broke one of his arms before he was able to admit defeat.

Klaus got excited when he saw this,

'Hmph! Trying to show your petty strength in front of me, now that you met my sparring partner, you couldn't even do shit'.

Reynolds on the other hand, was always excited whenever he sees the people from the Starlight Academy being beaten.

When it got to the final ten, the Starlight Academy only had one student left. This was a total setback compared to their previous year's triumph. The Lunar Academy had five students in the top ten, this was an amazing record. They completely dominated this year's competition, from now, they would definitely be regarded as the number one Academy among the others.

The competition ended with the Lunar Academy winning it comfortably, with two of their students taking first and second place. This was the first time in the history of the competition that one Academy took first and second place. Alice was ranked fifth overall, the student from the Starlight Academy was able to grab the third spot, just barely.

The result of the competition was announced in the empire and the rewards were given to those in the top ten.

Five days later...

Grey looked at the man who stood before him giving a speech, and was quite moved by the majestic aura radiating from him.

"You all, are the future of the empire"

The man ended the speech with this.

The participants all cheered after the man finished his speech, this was the emperor of the Qilin empire. They never thought they would get the chance to meet the emperor, so seeing him was a pleasant surprise to the seventy-five participants. Well, there are some new faces among the seventy-five participants, but the others didn't really care. It was not like they were the ones changed, right?

When the majority of the crowd heard about the mysterious land of trial, they couldn't help but feel excited. They all knew this was a once-in-a-lifetime

opportunity, and they were glad they would be able to participate in it. Now they understood why the quotas were improved previously.

The youths formed different groups and chatted about the new place they were about to head to. They were informed beforehand to come with their weapons if they used any, and some clothes since they would be out for a while.

Grey had finally reunited with his short blades, he was about to step into a dangerous land, going without his blades was impossible for him. He had spent the last five days training mostly with Chris since he would be gone for a while, and he needed to improve the speed at which he created the symbols. Inscription will be very useful for him in a place like that.

A group of men came out and directed the youths towards an open field in the castle. The youths were stupefied by the sight, a bunch of aerial magical beasts gathered in the place, this was going to be their ride.

They all got on the different birds and the birds took off, their destination, the Magical Beast Forest...

*Chapter 79 - Magical Beasts Forest II*

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Somewhere in the Azure empire...

In a mountain range, a large compound was situated in the depth of it.

Inside a study room in the compound...

"Lord, they are ready"

A man stood in front of a refined-looking man who sat on the chair behind the desk, reading a book. There was a desk at the side of the study room and books could be seen arranged in an orderly fashion on a book rack.

The man who was reading shifted his attention to the man standing. This was the butler of the compound, he hadn't stayed with the family for too long though.

"Hmm, okay. Have you given them the map?"

The butler nodded,

"Yes lord, they should have no problem with locating it this time"

The man replied,

"Good. Make sure to remind them there is no room for failure, you should know how long it took us to create that map, and how many lives were lost because of it"

The butler was aware of this since he had stayed with the family for some time now.

"Yes my lord, they know acquiring it is their main objective. They have promised to return with it, but we still don't know if there might be any unforeseen events yet"

The man replied before shifting his gaze back to the book he was reading.

"As long as they are careful, they should be able to acquire it"

The butler was about to leave when he suddenly paused, after gathering the courage, he said,

"My lord"

The man continued reading his book when he answered,

"Speak"

The butler asked with a shaky voice,

"What is this thing they're going to acquire anyway"

The man looked at the butler while squinting his eyes. The butler immediately regretted his decision and quickly knelt on the ground,

Thud!

"Forgive me for intruding my lord"

The man seemed satisfied with the butler's reaction, after some thoughts, he said,

"Don't worry it's okay, you've been with me for over ten years, and I'm very pleased with your work so far. I don't think there's any use hiding it from you, and besides, I trust you"

"The truth is, I don't know what they will acquire, but according to my ancestor, it's a great treasure in the land of trial that can increase our strength drastically. He found a record in a room which said a great treasure is located in a specific region. He searched for it throughout the time he was in the place but couldn't find it due to how vast the place was"

"He made a map of the place he had explored, and every time the place opens, he would send someone inside to continue the search from where he ended. The map is modified after every opening since the people who go in, explores new places"

"Even I have entered, but we've still not been able to find it. But from the map, we have been able to search most of the region said in the records. The place left is all they have to explore, and they will most likely find it. With it, we will be able to get back what my family lost for so long, the throne. I will not only rule the Azure empire, but I will unite the entire continent as well and be the only ruler"

The man said with eyes sparkling. He truly was a man with big dreams. His gaze then went cold,

"If those bastards didn't betray us and claimed the throne, our family would have been the one ruling the Qilin empire. There would have been only two empires and not four, because of the Gale's family betrayal, those other old folks who refused to die took the opportunity to create their empires as well. The Gale family will pay for what they did"

The butler looked at the man in shock, although he had been in the family for a while now, he didn't know much about the history. He couldn't help but ask,

"My lord, I thought it was Constantine Gale who led the rebellion?"

The man scoffed, before saying through gritted teeth,

"That fool, what could he do, it was my ancestor who made the plan for everything. He was even the one who started the fight at the castle, but who would have thought Constantine would backstab him at the end. And those stupid families also joined hands with him"

The butler was startled by this discovery, this was the first time he heard the story of the great rebellion differently. Usually, it was Constantine Gale who would get all the praise, but now, there seems to be some hidden information about the entire issue. If it was as his lord said, then Constantine Gale was not the hero.

"My lord, what if there is a chance others have already acquired the treasure?"

"It's impossible, only we have the method of getting it. Others might have gone to the place, but they will not be able to open it"

The man said confidently.

The butler left after clearing this up.

The man stood up from his seat and walked towards the book rack, he pushed a book, and a secret door opened up in the study room, he quickly disappeared into the stairway before the secret door closed shut.

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The border of the Magical Beasts Forest

Two days later...

The group from the Qilin empire just got to the borders of the Magical Beasts Forest where they met up with some experts from the empire who were already there waiting for them. This was Grey's first time coming to this place, and he was awed by it, the view while they were still in the sky was simply breathtaking. All he saw was a never-ending view of trees, and when he got to the ground, the trees towered into the sky like they wanted to peek into the heavens.

"Hmph! You people are always late"

A cold voice rang out from the camp nearby.

Grey looked in the direction of the voice and noticed the speaker was a man whose hair had started turning gray with deep eyes and an obese build.

"You people are always too eager"

The man who was in charge of the group from the Qilin empire retorted in contempt. The man who just spoke was a member of the Azure empire.

The man snorted coldly before turning his gaze to the other camps.

"Since everyone is here, we shouldn't waste any more time" magic

The members of the other camps all agreed, the quicker the youths get into the place, the better it was for them. The leaders of each group all walked out.

"Are we going to enter the place now?"

"Seems like it"

Grey nodded.

"But, we just got here. Shouldn't they at least give us some time to rest?"

Klaus complained.

"Seems not"

Grey replied. Although the journey was tiring, since they wanted them to head in now, he had no problem with it.

He curiously stared in the direction the leaders all gathered, and he could see them placing some stones on the floor in a specific pattern. Looking closely, one could see the lines which formed up a huge array on the floor.

'Essence stones'

Grey searched his memory for the information about them. These stones are formed in places where there are high concentrations of elemental essence. It usually takes a long time before they are formed, and they are divided into three grades; low, mid, and high grade.

After the stones were placed in their required spots, the array lit up. The stones were what was used in activating the array, Grey hasn't gotten to this level yet, but he already knows of it.

"Step into the array, you will all be transported into..."

The leaders all told each group entering the land of trial about some of the dangers they knew about. They also reminded them to keep track of time, and they should always be wary of those from the other empires.

The youths all nodded enthusiastically before slowly stepping into the light shining off the array and disappearing. It soon got to Grey and his friends' turn, he stilled his mind and stepped into the array. The light shone on them, and just like the others, they too disappeared.

After all the youths entered the place, the leaders all went back to their camp. They will spend the next six months here, waiting for those who would be lucky enough to come back out of the place. Sometimes, the number of people who make it out is higher, while on other times, not even up to thirty percent will make it back. The only thing which has never changed was the fact that over ninety percent of the people who came out would have already broken through to the Origin Plane.

At the camp of the Qilin empire

"How many do you think will make it?"

"I have no idea, but if more than half of the youths from our empire make it out, I'll be content"

They weren't the only ones wishing for this, the other empires also hoped at least half of the youths they sent into the place makes it out.

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Grey felt like his body was being dragged by an unknown force after the light covered his entire body, he was unable to keep his eyes open and shut them tight. The feeling didn't last long before he felt a cool breeze on his face, he slowly opened his eyes...

*Chapter 80 - Horned Snake*

Grey looked around and found himself on a hillside halfway up the mountain. The ground was carpeted in green, and a purple bamboo tree patch dotted the hillside. A faint mist wreathed around the purple bamboo forest, giving it the ethereal feeling of a unique realm. Grey's senses penetrated into the somewhat loose dirt beneath his feet as he breathed in the incomparably

fresh air. The first thing he noticed was the high density and concentration of elemental essence that exceeded that of the Qilin empire in the place.

"A single day of cultivation here is almost equal to fifteen days outside, it's amazing"

Klaus said. Given the high density of the place, it wasn't hard for everyone to realize this fact.

"We should head forward, staying here won't be any good given the enmity between us and the Starlight Academy, added with the Azure empire, we could be attacked at anytime"

Alice said while the boys were still in a state of reverie due to the feeling of the high elemental essence in the air.

Her words quickly snapped them off their somewhat almost intoxicated state.

"You're right"

Grey and the others nodded.

They actually failed to realize that there wasn't anyone here when they arrived, it seems like the other groups all headed inside in fear of being attacked by their enemies.

The group walked forward with extreme caution. Looking at the sky, one could see it was covered with grayish lights, it was somewhat dark and gloomy, but they could clearly see their surroundings. The flora here was different from the outside, they were long and tall, ancient trees at the height of several hundred meters but everything felt like it was covered in dust.

Looking afar, one could see mountains, rivers, and jungles.

One hour later...

Boom!

"What the hell! That's the sixth one already"

Klaus said in frustration. They had only headed around one kilometer, yet they had been attacked by six different beasts. The only upside was the fact that the beasts were alone and not moving in groups.

"They did say it was going to be dangerous. And besides, they are only in the Mid-stages of the Arcane Plane"

Reynolds said with a laugh.

"That's why I'm complaining, we haven't even gone deep into this place and the beasts we are encountering are already in the Mid-stages, this last was one step away from breaking through into the Late stages. What would happen when we head further?"

"Stop complaining, it's not like you couldn't defeat them even if you were alone"

Grey reproached Klaus.

The group continued their journey, and they soon started seeing some buildings, the buildings all had an ancient feel to them, like they had existed for a long time now. It was just like they were told, this place used to be inhabited by people. But it seems like it was a long time ago.

"What happened here anyway?"

Reynolds looked at the shape the buildings were and asked.

Most of the buildings had holes in them, and they didn't seem to be made due to the passage of time, rather, they were made from some kind of attack.

"A war maybe? Well, from what they said, this place has been existing for so long, and there weren't even any records of it"

Alice said while also surveying the place.

They entered into one of the buildings but found nothing relevant inside. The group continued on their way when they suddenly heard a scream, on looking ahead of them, they saw a boy being eaten by a giant snake, well, swallowed is the right word. More than half of the body was already inside the mouth of the snake.

"A Horned Snake"

Grey said as he looked at the snake that was moving in their direction. This snake seemed to already be at the Late stages of the Arcane Plane, and the

chances of it being in the Eighth stage is very high, it could most likely be in the Ninth stage even.

The snake immediately opened its mouth and spat out a greenish gooey liquid which shot at a very fast speed towards the group.

Grey acted fast and quickly set up an earth wall. But as soon as the liquid came in contact with the wall, it immediately started corroding it at a fast pace.

"Venom!"

Klaus yelled.

"We can see that!"

Reynolds retorted

"Why would we meet such a troublesome beast this early?"

The snake swung its tail agilely and was able to easily destroy the spear. Alice and Reynolds also sent out attacks that landed on the body of the snake, but the snake seemed to be oblivious to the attacks.

"Its scales are too hard, there's no way our attacks can penetrate through"

Alice said while dodging the venom the snake spat out towards them again.

Grey brought out his short blades, given the current circumstance, there's a chance he might be able to inflict damage to the snake due to its sharpness. But that was not going to be an easy task since it will be incredibly difficult to get close to the snake.

He infused both the lightning and wind element in his body to maximize his speed. As he dashed towards the snake, Alice, Klaus, and Reynolds immediately sent out attacks towards the head of the snake to distract it so Grey could get the chance to get close to it.

Just like they expected, the snake immediately protected its head with the other parts of its body thereby leaving a large target for Grey. Although Grey initially planned to go for the head, but the current defensive stance the snake took made sure he didn't get the chance. Held in a reverse grip, lightning started dancing around his blade as he slashed it at the body of the snake with terrifying force.

Slash!

Shriek!

The snake shrieked in pain as a deep gash opened up at the side of its body. It looked at Grey with hatred before swinging its tail quickly towards him, wanting to smash him to minced meat. He already knew the snake would counter-attack, so he immediately retreated after leaving behind a wound.

Slash!

Grey who had been on the sidelines waiting for an opportunity immediately struck again. This time, leaving a bigger wound. The snake shrieked again and wanted to attack Grey, who had already wisely escaped from its attack range. They had already left the area the previous snake was during the battle. The group continued with the same tactic, and they slowly started tearing down the scales of the snake. Grey was literally just descaling the snake so it could be dealt strong attacks from the rest of the group.

Alice was very effective since she was now able to inflict damage on the snake. The wounds increased and the snake was barely able to counterattack. It suddenly let out a strange sound. And they once again heard the sound of something rubbing against the ground.

"It's calling for backup"

Grey yelled as he once again delivered another slash close to the head of the snake. The snake had managed to protect its head almost all through the battle, but Klaus had been able to get a good strike which almost hit its eye if not for it closing it quickly. The attack struck the eyelids of the snake, but the strong scale ensured it didn't leave any wounds. magic

The first snake crawled out of the building where it swallowed the boy. On seeing the wretched state of its partner, it charged towards the group.

"The same tactic?"

Alice asked in excitement.

"Yes"

The others all nodded and once again started slowly wearing out both snakes. The new one was much easier since it wasn't as strong as the one they were fighting previously.

The snake seemed to have realized it made the wrong decision in rushing into the group and wanted to escape, but the realization was a little too late.

Ten minutes later...

The two huge corpses of the snakes laid on the floor with the group breathing heavily, especially Grey since he had to get close and attack, before retreating as quickly as he came.

"Did anyone notice the beasts here are much stronger compared to their stages?"

Grey couldn't help but ask.

Given the stages of the snakes, it shouldn't have taken them this long to deal with both of them. Grey even felt the chances of him defeating the first one they battled personally were very low.

"Yeah"

The others all nodded.

"This truly is a mysterious place"