

Reincarnated as an Energy with a System

Chapter 481: Perry Thatcher

Ning had already left Harnot city 2 weeks ago. He was starting to feel regretful about killing the mayor and the few other people.

He wasn't regretful because he killed, but rather because he was now considered a criminal, and this greatly diminished his influence as someone that was trying to do good.

"Tsk, I should remember this isn't Kumia. It's way more lawful," Ning thought to himself as he waited for people to him.

The empire had branded him a criminal, and he was finding it hard to do his Apostle work without people figuring out who he was.

He needed to think of ways to do that. One way was to give the technique to the publishing companies and have them do the work instead of him having to do it all.

That was likely the fastest way to go about it. After all, his primary focus for doing all of this was to bring the techniques to the normal folks that the Tower was trying to suppress.

The problem he faced now were the duds. He needed to give them something that wasn't simply Aether Ores so that he could keep hiding. He also needed something that could be mass-manufactured like the scrolls.

He would have to think about those later.

Ning took out a bunch of scrolls and laid them out in front of him on the bed in his hotel room.

'How many is this?' he thought and started counting. He had about 300 more scrolls.

"Alright, let's do this. System, teleport these 300 scrolls to every publishing company in all of this world," Ning said.

<There are more than 300 Publishing companies>

"Hmm, then just do it for the top 300 of those," Ning said. In his thoughts, even if just 3 of the 300 started publishing those scrolls, it would cause a big enough wave that the other 297 would soon join in on the action.

"Also, write 'Courtesy of the Apostle of Alexis' on the back of all of these scrolls before you do that, okay?"

<Confirmed>

The scrolls vanished at a moment's notice and were no more on the bed. Now, he would just have to wait and watch the Tower's ass be lit of fire.

'That makes me wonder. Aren't they supposed to be trying to stop me? It can't be that they gave up just because of what happened with Merilyn in Xandria, right?' he thought.

Just then, he felt the movement of air around him. His shirt flapped in the moving wind as his hair drifted to the side as well.

Not only the wind, but all the objects in the room were also slowly moving towards a certain point in his room.

Ning looked to his right and saw something black appear in front of him. It was a very tiny black spot in mid-air, but somehow the image of everything around it seemed warped.

The image warping with the pulling of objects around him gave Ning an idea of what that thing was.

It was a point in space that had a very strong gravitational pull.

Just as Ning was wondering what unnatural phenomenon was happening, the gravitational pull in front of him stopped, the winds and objects around him stopped moving, and in front of him, a man appeared.

It was an old man with long white hair, a white beard, and a very weak-looking build. He wore a dark purple robe and held a rather amicable smile on his face.

"Are you the Apostle of Alexis?" the man asked.

Ning looked at him in absolute shock. This man in front of him, he had just teleported there.

Aside from himself and Jha'Akim with his system, Ning had never seen another man teleport. However, he was sure that this man didn't use any system, instead, he used normal enchantment.

Ning knew about the possibility of teleportation using Enchantment. He didn't know how it could be done, only that it could be.

To think he would see someone teleport one day using only the energy of the planet... this was a dangerous man.

Ning could tell that this man was strong. Far stronger than he could hope to become in a short period of time.

The man looked at Ning for a while, and said, "based on your description of having a young face and quite a strong Aether rank, I can assume that you really are the Apostle of Alexis."

Ning looked at the man and used his Aether Analysis on him to check his rank. Suddenly, a sharp pain flared in his mind, making him stop.

He had only seen the person's rank and it had caused him mental pain. He had just now spent most of his mental energy trying to view this person's Aether rank.

This was dangerous. He was not a man Ning could fight.

"I am Perry Thatcher, the current Lord of the Aether Tower," he introduced himself. He then brought out a small glass bottle.

Ning didn't know what it was, but it looked dangerous. At the same time, he felt something in his stomach.

Ning looked at the bottle in the man's hand and for some reason felt his stomach where the bottle was.

'Shit! He's squeezing space again,' Ning thought and teleported out of the room.

The Lord of the Aether Tower remained in the room with a look of shock on his face. He looked around, but he couldn't see where Ning was at all.

'Did he teleport without using Aether?' the lord wondered. He wanted to learn how one could do that as well.

However, he sighed as he would likely never learn it now. He weighed the bottle in his hands, and as expected, the contents of it had already been moved over to a different location.

The location being the stomach of the Apostle.

Ning reappeared on top of the Ruins of Afterlife— that was the only place he could think of in the fraction of a second he had to leave.

He was about to take a deep breath of relief when suddenly, something started burning from deep within him.

Chapter 482: Attracted

Ning felt the burning in his stomach, and worse, it was slowly moving onto other parts of his body.

He did not feel any pain, so the burning was the only thing he could feel. If he had pain receptors, he was sure he would be on the ground, writhing with pain.

Suddenly he felt something happening. A rush of liquid came up his Esophagus, and he vomited it out.

Ning looked at it and saw a mixture of blood, food, and something that was destroying them both.

'Shit! Have I been poisoned?' he wondered.

Just as he thought that he felt his right knee buckled. He dropped to the ground and smacked his head on the ground.

"What the hell?" He thought and looked at his knees, only to find it fully rotten, with bones sticking out of it.

His skin and muscle writhed over his bones, trying to fix themselves, but the toxin kept his body had kept destroying them.

"System, what's going on?" he asked.

<You have a powerful toxin in your body that is destroying your body from the inside.>

"And my regeneration can't keep up?" Ning asked in surprise as he felt the other parts of his body start to tear themselves up as well.

<Yes. The toxin is destroying your cells and using them to produce more toxins that continue destroying your cells>

<at this rate, the toxin will overtake your body until nothing remains>

"What the hell? Will my body not regenerate?" Ning asked.

<it will, but the toxin will destroy it again>

"Dammit. What the hell did that guy do?" Ning thought back to the Lord of the tower's glass bottle. That was what likely held this toxin.

'To think such a powerful toxin existed,' he thought.

"System, can you remove it please," he asked.

<It will cost you 52 Trillion Energy. Are you sure?>

"Wait, what the hell?" Ning asked. "That's half of what I have right now. Why the hell is it so expensive to fix it?"

<The Toxin is really powerful, and removing it from your body not only requires the toxin to be removed, but also part of your body which has been eaten away by the toxin.>

<it is your body part that makes this task so expensive>

<if the Toxin alone were to be removed, it would only cost you 1.5 Trillion energy>

'Dammit!' Ning cried out. He couldn't do that. He wasn't going to spend half of his energy on his body.

"Is there any other way?" Ning asked.

<There is a cure you can prepare using the ingredients found in this world>

"Oh, that makes it easy. Give me the list of ingredients and where I can find them," Ning said.

The system did what it was told and gave him a bunch of information. Ning looked through all of that information, but there was something missing.

"Hey, why does this Scarlet Blood Lily have no location assigned to it?" Ning asked.

<there isn't one mature enough for use in this world yet.>

"Fuck! When is the soonest that one will mature?" Ning asked.

<5 years>

"Oh, that's not bad. I can wait for 5 years," Ning thought. Without wasting any more time, Ning brought out his spear from his storage and switched bodies with it before taking his body into his storage.

With the time stopped in the storage, the toxin couldn't keep eating away at it like it was just now.

"5 years huh? I guess I will have to go back to the same routine as I did for hundreds of years before this," Ning thought.

"Although, before that, let's go gather all the ingredients I will need," Ning said.

After that, Ning teleported around the world, which mostly just led him to the forest that separated the continent.

Within it, he found many of the ingredients he needed. All except for the Scarlet blood Lily.

He found multiple of them as well, but not a single one mature enough to be useful.

When he asked why there were none of such flowers available even though it wasn't the rarest flower in the forest, the system had told him that it had to do with the lifetime of the flower.

After the flower blossomed, which was it maturing, the flower would only stay matured for about 5 days worth of time.

If not picked within that time period, the flower would then disappear and in its place, it would form a fruit. Unfortunately, Ning didn't need the fruit.

"So I just have to pick it up when it matures huh? That's simple. Let me know when that happens, okay system?" Ning asked.

<Confirmed.>

Ning decided to stay in the forest. He was still in his spear, so he told the system.

"I will go sleep. Wake me up when my energy cap has reset or if I am moved from this place," Ning said.

<Understood>

Ning slowly felt his consciousness leave him. As soon as it was gone, he felt it coming back.

Ning heard some rattling sounds from around him as well as an up and down motion on his body. He also heard sounds of horses neighing.

'A carriage?' Ning thought confusedly. He looked around him and saw that he was in fact in the back of an ancient-looking carriage.

He was currently being held by a woman to her left who looked to the back of the carriage.

The woman, if described as anything, was beautiful. That was all Ning could think at the moment.

Long slender arms that were barely hidden by the see-through fabric of hers. An oval face of fair complexion with skin so smooth that Ning thought it was a statue for a moment.

The woman blinked, her long eyelashes moving, further accentuating the beautiful, dark Purple eyes of hers.

Her long flowing dark auburn hair fell down to her chest, not a single hair gone stray from it.

Along with the rest of her body, Ning really thought she was the most beautiful person he had ever seen in his life.

And that... was weird. Whatever he was feeling was definitely weird. He had never felt this much attraction towards a person in all of his life, even when his emotions were amplified.

It was as if, the woman sitting in front of him, was supposed to be the epitome of what human beauty could be.

'No, something is wrong. I can't stay here,' Ning thought. He wasn't sure how he was here in the first place, so he decided to leave back to the forest near the Scarlet Blood Lilies.

With a thought, he disappeared from the location.

His scenery changed, but not all that much. All he had somehow managed to do was go from being on the left side of the woman to being on the right side.

'What the hell is going—'

Just then, he looked at the woman. She was looking back at him and smiling towards him as well.

"You can stop trying to leave me," she said. "I have been watching you for a while now. I know all of your tricks."

Ning felt scared and weirdly attracted to her smile at the same time.

"Did you really think that I would let you go after you go around claiming to be my Apostle?" she asked.

Ning's eyes went wide as he realized who she was.

The Goddess of Aether.. Alexis.

Chapter 483: A New Body

The carriage rattled for a good few seconds, making that the only sound in the carriage for that period of time. Ning was too shocked to even think and finally decided to learn a little more.

"You... You are Alexis, the Goddess?" Ning asked using sound energy through the spear.

"I believe that is the name I have been given throughout the eons," the woman spoke with a voice so beautiful that just made him fall for her even more.

'Don't let your thoughts go astray, Ning,' he told himself.

"Don't worry. Your thoughts won't harm me," Alexis said from the side.

'She can read my mind?' Ning thought.

"Yes, I can read your little mind," Alexis said with a little chuckle.

"Ahem, sorry about that," Ning said.

"Don't be," Alexis said. "You don't have to apologize for me intruding your mind."

Her beautiful voice with her gorgeous face was making it hard for Ning to concentrate.

"How... can you read my mind, though? Does Aether give such skills as well?" Ning asked. He had read quite a bit about Aether, but he never knew this was possible.

"No, I cannot read the minds of anyone else in this world. Only yours," Alexis said. "That was one of the reasons why you caught my eyes the first time you came here 6000 years ago."

Ning felt quite a shock. "You knew about me back then too?" he asked.

"Yes," Alexis said. "After all, not many people can come through the Peak of Afterlife. Although, you destroyed it, and I'm quite angry with you for that."

"Did you know how difficult it was to create a seal around that mountain?" she asked.

Ning felt another shock. "You created that powerful seal?" he asked.

"I... think so? At least that's what I remember," Alexis said. "My consciousness didn't fully develop until dozens of thousands of years ago."

'So old,' Ning thought.

"I am," Alexis said.

"I read about you in the library of the tower. How... much of it is true?" Ning asked.

"What did it say?" She asked.

"That you are the goddess of Aether, and that you came down from the heavens and created Aether to help men," Ning said.

"Is that what they think of me?" she asked. "Hmm, did I create Aether? Or did Aether create me? I don't know which came first, but it is true that I helped men with Aether."

"Men weren't making use of Aether, despite knowing about it, thinking it was taboo, so I came to them and helped them understand more of it," She said.

"I see," Ning said. "So... why did you show yourself up to me now? Do you need something from me?"

"Yes," Alexis said. "I want you to continue to be my apostle."

"Well, you will have to wait 5 years for that, unfortunately. Unless you can cure my body right now," he said.

"I can," Alexis said, giving Ning a bit of hope. "But I won't do that."

"Why?" Ning asked. "Won't it be better if you help me get my body back so I can continue doing the work I was doing?"

"It would, but I need a weak you right now. Not the strong you," she said. "I've seen you create things. So, you can create a new body too, right? Create a new one that has never seen Aether before."

"A new body?" Ning asked. "Are you going to teach me how to use Aether or what?"

"Yes," Alexis said. "I have seen you use Aether, and while it's... not bad, you still have a lot to learn. You also skipped a lot of ranks before learning to use Aether, so you ended up not understanding just how strong you can get."

Ning got a little curious. "Why do you want me to learn how to properly use Aether? Is there something you want me to do?" he asked.

"Yes, I want you to take over the Aether tower that has so much influence over the continent and use it to help everyone so that they can use Aether again," she said.

"For that, you will have to defeat the person at the top of Tower. The same one that poisoned you 10 minutes ago," she said.

"I have to fight and defeat that Perry guy?" Ning asked. "Hmm... if you really can teach me to use Aether in the most efficient way, then yes I may be able to help you."

"Alright, I will make a body for me then," he said. "Do you have any specifications?"

"Your previous body was absorbing Aether even when you weren't doing anything. Can you stop that?" she asked.

"Yes," Ning said. He just had to stop his Automatic absorption after all.

"And do make it a Dual Awakener," Alexis said.

"Okay," Ning said and quickly gave the specifications for a new body to the system.

The total energy required to make such a body was only a few dozen billion, so Ning was pretty okay with making it.

Bright white light appeared in front of him and a body that looked a bit different from his usual body appeared opposite to Alexis.

The body had the same height and build as Ning, except the face was a bit different. The nose was much pointier, the eyes a bit further apart, and the pupils of a slightly lighter brown color.

It was just enough to make Ning still have the same body, yet look completely different.

Ning switched to the new body, and at the same time, Alexis moved her hand to create a bunch of clothes directly onto the new body. She then looked at the new body and nodded.

"Thank you for accepting my offer," Alexis said. "You are the only one that can help me. Although, I won't be asking you to help me for nothing. I will give you an incentive to help me as well."

"An incentive?" the new Ning asked. "What is it that you can offer me?"

Alexis smiled and said, "I can give you the location of the place you've been so desperately wanting to find."

Ning's eyes went wide as he asked, "You know where the Origin is?"

Chapter 484: Freelands

"Yes, I know where the Origin is. And if you help me, I will take you there myself," she said.

"You should have told me earlier," Ning said. "Alright, I will beat that guy without any problem."

Ning had found a reason to work for the goddess. With the location of the Origin as an incentive, something that even his system wouldn't tell him about, he was going to be able to gather a lot of energy in such little time.

He simply hoped that the Origin had the same sort of time dilation that Kumia had.

Alexis looked at him with a gentle smile on her face, and Ning blushed a little when he saw her.

She was too damn beautiful. Ning wondered if she had some sort of skill that was making her so attractive, and used his Aether analysis to check on her.

However, just as he did, he heard a notification coming from the system.

<Host is close to overexerting his Mental Capacity>

<Please take care>

'Damn, I nearly lost consciousness,' Ning thought. That just went to show how powerful Alexis was in the ways of Aether. Simply looking at her first layer of Aether information, which simply gave her rank gave him a head-splitting ache that far surpassed the likes of even the lord of the tower.

"Are you sure you need my help? You seem like you can do what you wanted to yourself," Ning asked while rubbing his head. He couldn't believe it would hurt him this much so that he nearly went into a comatose again.

"I have enough strength to defeat anyone I want on this planet, but I am not able to hurt anyone. For some reason, my moral instincts tell me to not interfere with humans. Me teaching the humans was already me going against my own instincts, but I could force myself because I thought that was helping the people," she said.

"However, hurting someone is something I can't even force myself to do anymore. This is why I decided to go with helping someone again. You," she said.

Ning looked a little confused. There were things happening here that gave him quite a lot of confusion.

Besides all that, there was one thing he desperately wanted to learn.

'System, does she have a system?' he asked. That was the only thing he could think of that would allow her to be as powerful as he was, and do things that weren't normally possible with Aether.

<No>

'No?' Ning felt surprised. He was plenty sure that he had come across another system user. However, that didn't seem to be the case.

"What's a system?" Alexis asked confusedly.

"Uh, you don't have to know," Ning said quickly. He decided to change the topic quickly and asked, "So, um... are you really a goddess or just a human that has lived a really long time?"

"I do not know," Alexis said. "The more I think of the past, the more clouded by memories get. I remember a time when there were normal animals roaming the forest. I remember when they weren't Aether beasts yet."

"I remember when humans were barely coming to be in evolution. I remember these all, yet when I try to think back to it, I can't. It's a very weird sensation," she said.

"So you don't even know if you are a god or not?" Ning asked.

Alexis shook her head. "I am just... a being, I think. I might even just look like a human because I like how they look," she said.

Ning felt like he could in some sense understand what she was. An archaic being, that never died, has a fascination with a human body, so you make yourself one.

Was she perhaps an Energy at some point that got sentience? He wished the system would stop hiding information about energy. What was it so scared of them finding out.

What could it be hiding even?

Ning looked to the front of the carriage, which by now he had come to understand was nothing more than a normal cart being pulled by the horses.

He then put his arms forward and tried to create fire in his hands. He couldn't.

"I currently have no Aether. What do you want me to do?" he asked.

"Become an Aether Starter," she said.

"Okay," Ning said. He let the automatic Aether absorption activate for a few seconds before closing it.

"Alright, done," he said.

Alexis looked at him and nodded. "Good, stay that way for now. I will start teaching you after we reach our destination," she said.

"Oh right," Ning said and he looked outside. "Where exactly are we going?"

The surrounding around him now looked like it was a small pathway in the middle of a canyon. He had seen a few carriages pass next to them and looked at them, wondering what such a old-looking cart was doing in such a place.

That reminded him.

"Wait, where exactly are we even at?" he asked. He had been so preoccupied with finding out that she was Alexis that he didn't even bother to learn where he was.

"We're in the Jesnal Canyon in the Kingdom of Shalor," she said.

"And where are we going?" he asked. The Kingdom of Shalor was an average place to stay at, but the Jesnal Canyon was not an ordinary place.

It landed right on the border of the Kingdom of Shalor, Principality of Losmana, and The Freeland. Since he was seeming to leave the Kingdom, he could only be going to one of the other two places. If he had to guess, it would be the Princi—

"The Freelands," Alexis said.

"The Freelands? Not Losmana? That is closer to the Aether headquarters," Ning said.

"We need to train you in a place where the Aether Tower has the most influence on the land. There you can show your skills and get pulled into the tower," she said.

"Since the Freelands has no monarch looking over them, the Tower gets the most authority in that place, and is thus the only place we can go to."

Chapter 485: Building A House

The Freelands lay in the mountain ranges of Yilal, so most of the cities and villages were either in the valleys or the mountains themselves.

After the originally massive Serian Empire came to its downfall, they could no longer regulate this mountainous area and had to thus give it up.

The other kingdoms didn't want to bother with land this treacherous to travel in and didn't take over it either.

So, the mountainous range that was free from any monarch's or government's rule came to be known as the Freelands.

The Freelands were a bunch of cities, that were ruled over by a city-lord, but that was the extent of the rule. Even then, the people were quite free to do whatever they wanted to.

That didn't mean there was no law, however. Since there were no monarch or government, the Tower had come to become the main law-keeping force of the place.

The cart rolled through a gravel road as it made its way to the bottom of one of the mountains.

"Let's go," Alexis said and got off from the cart that came to a stop. Ning got off as well behind her, and then the cart set off on its own, the horses dragging it to who knew where.

Alexis stood on the tall grass to the side of the gravel road, holding the spear in her hand as a makeshift staff.

Ning could see the familiar image of Alexis he had come to see in the statue and the book he had learned about her in.

"Come on, let's go get ourselves a house," she said and started walking into the trees that were at the foot of the mountain.

This area of land seemed to not have any humans living close by. The closest humans Ning could see was about halfway up the mountain, the path the gravel road led to.

Beyond that, the mountain was littered with houses. The city was up there and beyond in the valley behind the mountain.

Alexis walked until she came across a flat area without many trees around her. She closed her eyes and bowed her head in a sort of prayer.

Then, she opened her eyes and moved her hand. With that simple gesture, the massive trees all around her started getting pulled up from the roots.

Ning watched with wide eyes as controlling so many of the things at once was not that easy to do.

With another wave, the tree lost its branches, becoming a single, giant log. Those logs were then cut into 4 and planted around the area.

Alexis then moved her hands and the branches that were cut off started letting go of the leaves in them and they were put on the floor and to the sides of the giant logs.

Then, with no more items to use, Alexis started creating wood out of nowhere.

Ning watched with simple astounding as the house they were to live in came to fruition.

There was a small veranda at the front of the house, a 2 stairs staircase to lead up to the veranda, and a single door leading to a single-roomed house.

"This will be where we will be staying for a few weeks," Alexis said.

"Wow, you're amazing," Ning said. She really was. Ning wasn't sure he could make a house this quickly even if he were to ask the system.

Just telling the system the specifications alone would take him longer.

Ning walked up to the house, and up the veranda. He stomped on the wooden floor and realized that it really was quite strong.

He then walked through the doorless door and entered the house. The single room he was in was quite massive, almost 10 by 10 meters, but there was one problem.

Ning walked back out of the room and asked, "what are we going to do about the beds and furniture?"

"WE are going to do nothing. You are going to have to make the beds on your own," Alexis said.

"Oh, okay," Ning said and asked his system for a bed, who started asking him for specifics.

"And you are not allowed to use that little friend of yours that lives within you," Alexis said.

"Eh?" Ning was confused. "I can't use my system?"

"No, you will have to make the door, the bed, the chairs, and even the food, all by yourself," she said.

Ning understood what she meant. She was trying to get him to be self-sufficient, but...

"I'm only an Aether Starter right now. Creating even the most little things will cause me to go into paralysis," he said.

"Then you will just absorb a little Aether and go back to work," she said. She walked up to the house and waved her hand to create a small chair for herself to sit at.

"You better get to working now," she said. "The sun will set in a few hours, then you will have to work in the dark."

Ning didn't worry about the dark. After all, he had the night vision skill that could make it seem like a day if he wanted to.

However, the real problem would be the fatigue and hunger that came with this body. He couldn't work without any energy in him.

This body would likely die if he didn't do something quickly.

'I can sleep on the bunch of leaves if need be, so I don't have to worry about fatigue. I will need to think of food for now,' he thought.

He had a bunch of fruits in his storage at the moment, but he didn't want to use that.

Alexis was going out of her way to teach him Aether in a way that no other person in the world would be lucky enough to.

If he somehow ruined this chance, he would be the biggest idiot in the whole world.

"Right, I need to go find some food," he said to himself.

"One more thing," Alexis said from the veranda.. "You are only allowed to use your Aether for everything."

Chapter 486: Only Use Aether

"Only use my Aether?" Ning asked.

"Yes," Alexis said. "No using of hands or feet when it comes to the actual task you want to do. I will be able to tell it if you do."

"Sigh, okay," Ning said and walked off.

He went around the forest looking for some fruit. Very soon, he came across some growing on the top of the tree.

He wanted to teleport up there and grab it, but that wasn't allowed. He scratched his chin in confusion as using Aether didn't seem to be usable here either given how low his Aether amount was.

'That fruit is too far high. My little Aether won't be able to reach that location, let alone have enough force to pull the fruit off of the branch,' he thought.

He needed to think of some other ideas. He needed to think of some other ways.

"Hmm, if I weren't using my Aether, how would I get that fruit?" Ning thought to himself.

The first way he could think of was to climb up the side of the tree and go grab it. That was basically what he would do with Aether as well.

However, that wasn't possible right now. He was too weak. Then, the second way was to...

"Throw a rock at the fruit and hope it falls," Ning thought. Ning looked down at the ground and picked up a small pebble about a quarter the size of the pear-like fruit in the tree.

"I can only use Aether," he thought and the pebble started floating in his hand. He would then have to use his Aether to forcefu—

Ning lost all control of his body and fell to the ground. He had been paralyzed. 'Dammit!' he thought. 'Just that little use of Aether and I'm down?'

He had really underestimated just how low his Aether was right now. Having had so much Aether for so long, he had forgotten what having little Aether was like.

He used the Abyssal Absorption technique and got back his Aether a few seconds later. He didn't absorb a lot of Aether as that would have likely brought him to the next rank, Aether Student.

Alexis definitely had some plans with him as an Aether Starter.

Once Ning got back on his feet, he decided to do the same thing again. Only, this time, he didn't hastily use his Aether on the pebble.

He first decided to think about what he was going to do.

"Floating the pebble required gravitational energy and that emptied by Sea of Aether very quickly. I need to use something other than Gravitational energy. So... Kinetic energy?" Ning thought as he looked back up at the tree.

"Yeah, no other energy. Just a simple burst of Kinetic energy on the pebble that should propel it in the direction of the fruit.

"If I can get my aim correct, I should be able to get the fruit to drop," Ning thought. He was sure about it.

Ning got ready. With a single burst of use, he threw in all of his Aether onto the pebble to hurl it upwards.

He suddenly lost control of his body and fell to the ground again. Even as he was face down, he saw the pebble hit the branch next to the fruit and do nothing.

Ning's aim was off by just a few centimeters. "Again!" he thought and absorbed a bit of Aether to get back on his feet.

He knew what to do now, so he just needed to keep doing it until he succeeded.

It took him exactly 5 tries to get the fruit off of the tree. Ning gathered some Aether again to heal his paralyzed state and finally picked up the fruit.

He looked at the fruit with a little chuckle as he saw a part of it missing due to one of the time the stone hitting it directly.

'This likely won't be enough. Let's get some more,' Ning thought. He went to the other side of the tree to get some more of the fruit and in less than 30 minutes, he had about 4 of them now.

His aim improved a bit as well. Once he thought that he had enough for the night, he returned back to the small house.

"Oh, you returned quite fast," Alexis said. "It hasn't even been an hour yet."

"Yeah, I got the food," Ning said.

"Where is it?" Alexis asked.

"In my storage," Ning said as he brought out the 4 fruits.

"Remember what I said when you left here an hour ago?" Alexis asked.

"What?" Ning asked.

"That you are only allowed to use Aether," Alexis said.

Ning's eyes narrowed as he looked down at the fruits. "You don't mean to say that I can't store it in my storage either, do you?" he asked.

"That is exactly what I meant," Alexis replied.

"But... these will go bad if I don't store them," he said. "It's not even a cold climate. It's pretty hot out here."

"Then you will have to create something cold to keep it in then," She said.

"Damn, I should make ice to store it on my own as well?" he asked.

"Yes," Alexis said. "Although that can wait for later. Eat something if you're hungry and get ready. You have something else to do now."

Ning nodded and ate one of the fruit he had before asking Alexis what he was to do next.

"Go take one of the branches there and half bury it on the ground," she said.

Ning nodded and did as he was told to. He took one of the branches and half-buried it so that it stood like a stump on the ground.

"Alright, done. What now?" he asked.

"Now, step a little back and light the tip of the stump on fire," Alexis said.

Ning nodded and did just that. With a simple thought, a fire appeared on top of the stump, that burned brightly even in the day.

Ning nodded to himself and turned to Alexis. "Now what?"

Chapter 487: Training

"Put out the fire and try again," Alexis said from the veranda looking over Ning.

"Okay," Ning said and turned to put out the fire. As Alexis had made him understand by now, he was only to use Aether for everything.

He was about to use water to put it out, but he had to redo it again. If he used water, he would have to try extra hard.

'What was it? Oxygen?' he remembered the few books on science he had read for the last few weeks now. He hadn't gotten the chance to read much about it in the tower, so he had to try the books in the city.

Fortunately, they were enough to give him some ideas about it. To put out a fire, he just needed to starve it of oxygen.

For that, he didn't need water.

Some of the dirt on the ground moved up to the burning tip of the branch. Ning continuously absorbed Aether, so as to keep up his supply of it.

Once he brought up all of the dirt onto the fire and completely covered it, the fire went out.

"Phew! That was harder than I thought it would be," Ning thought. He really missed having more Aether, but having less of it right now was helping him understand how to properly use it.

He then used Aether to move away from the dirt as well as he could and started the fire on the branch again.

He looked at the fire before slowly turning back towards Alexis. "What do I do now? Put it out and burn it again?" he asked.

"Yes," Alexis said. "Only, you will take one step back each time you light it up and extinguish it."

Ning nodded and got back to his training. He took a step back and started putting out the fire again.

The dirt was easy to pick up this time now that he was sure what he had to do. Once he put out the fire, he burned it again.

It took Ning 2 whole cycles of burning and putting out the fire to see the purpose of the task. Now that he was about 3 steps away from the branch, the task of burning it started to get harder.

It was just too difficult to create fire at such a distance away from him.

Somehow, before the aether reached the branch to burn, it would dissipate along the way.

This meant that they couldn't properly use Aether at a distance.

Enchantment was easier to perform, and Invoking was harder. Ning had known for a while now, but due to his enormous Aether, it was hard to see the difference exactly.

Now he could. He had to focus very hard to make sure the Aether didn't disappear along the way.

'Maybe I should just create the fire in front of me and send it flying to the branch,' he thought.

He created the fire and was making it move towards the branch when suddenly it disappeared.

"What?" Ning felt confused. 'What just happened?'

"No mixing of Aether uses. Only use one of the two," Alexis said from the side. It had been her who destroyed the fire just then.

'How did she do it? I didn't feel the wind move or anything else appear there,' he thought.

"I created a vacuum," Alexis said. "A small point of reverse gravity that instead of pulling to it, pushes everything out. With nothing to feed on, your fire disappears. You will learn the skill soon, don't worry."

Ning got back to practicing. For nearly 3 hours, until the sun went down, he kept on doing the same thing.

By the end of it he was about 8 meters away from the branch, and completely exhausted.

It started getting dark, so Ning let the fire keep burning for light and left.

"I'm incredibly close to breaking through to the next rank," he said. It felt really weird.

His expensive body had no bottlenecks and he could consistently breakthrough without even knowing he did.

Now that he had bottlenecks, he was coming to understand just how hard it was for the common folks to grow as an Aether artists.

'I was really having it easy,' he thought as he walked back towards the house.

He walked inside to rest while Alexis still sat outside. Only after he entered the house did he realize that he had nothing in it to sleep on.

"Right, the leaves," he thought and went back out.

"Make sure to use Aether," Alexis said from her chair.

"What?" Ning got a little distressed when he heard that. "You can't be serious right? I'm already so tired."

"No, I'm serious," Alexis said. "Although, you may breakthrough to Aether Student before you do so."

Ning felt a little better hearing that. He quickly closed his eyes and started absorbing a bit more Aether.

Once he felt the bottleneck, he pushed past it and broke through. Suddenly, he felt a lot more invigorated.

With the newfound energy, he brought out a gust of air that helped him fly the bunch of leaves to the room.

He then went in and looked at it. Unfortunately, a bit of dust and small twigs followed the wind to come inside as well.

He spent nearly 10 minutes looking through it all.

"Do you want me to set you a bed as well?" Ning asked with a loud voice. However, he got no response in return.

"Alexis?" he asked as he walked outside.

The chair was there, but no one was sitting on it. "Where did she go?" he asked himself.

He went out to look for her, but he couldn't find her at all.

"There's no reason to worry about her," he thought and went back into the room.

She was a goddess, a rather powerful entity. Even if someone wanted to do something bad to her, they wouldn't be able to.

Unworried, he laid down on his pile of leaves and went to sleep.

Chapter 488: Changing Houses

"System, give me a skill," Ning said. It had been a long time since he had to ask for a skill from the system.

With how great his cultivation base was back in Kumia and how good his Aether rank had come to be in this world, he hadn't needed a new skill for himself.

But, now he did.

Alexis had just taught him a very weird but fun trick he could do with sound. Apparently, if you sent a certain strength of sound onto some object, you could destroy it, given you could supply enough Aether to create the sound.

However, the strength of the sound required was different for each object, and he wasn't sure which was which.

So, he decided to ask the system for a skill that would let him know.

Apparently, someone had already requested such skill as the system quickly gave him a skill.

The skill was called Resonance. Ning could use the skill to create sound at the same frequency as the object's natural frequency and destroy it.

While the skill used Energy, Ning only wanted to use the aspect of the skill that told him the natural frequency of the object and the frequency he was producing.

Once he got the skill, he went on to use it. He picked up a stone from the ground and checked its natural frequency.

Once he got the answer, he started creating sound energy directly from the stone.

He realized his frequency was really low, so he slowly changed it and started going higher and higher.

Finally, when he reached the same frequency as the stone's natural frequency, he lingered for a moment and started increasing the sound while keeping the frequency the same.

The stone started shaking so hard that in the next moment, it cracked into a dozen small pieces and fell to the ground.

"Phew! That works now," he thought. While it was quite unfortunate that he had to wait around for a while to reach the level of frequency to destroy the object.

'Surely things that are not stones will be easier to destroy,' he thought.

"Come on, let's go now," Alexis said as she left the house.

Ning looked back at the house. They were leaving this place today and he felt a little bad about it.

It wasn't that he had become attached to the house, but rather the things inside it. He had made a great bed for him to sleep at. A few tables, some chairs.

He had even made a place to keep foods cold that he was quite proud of.

Now, he had to leave it all because Alexis didn't want him to take anything with him so that he could start it all over again.

Ning felt a little salty about it all. Alexis didn't need to sleep, so she wouldn't know about the need for a good bed, but how was he to create the same bed all over again? It had taken him nearly a week to make it last time after all.

He begrudgingly followed her, complaining to himself how she would always leave at night time for some reason.

He had asked her where she went during the night, but she wouldn't answer it at all.

He had asked the system, but it would simply tell him that she hadn't gone anywhere. It would never explain beyond that.

The system really was weird when it came to talking about Alexis as it seemed hesitant to explain more about her for some reason.

The two of them walked up the mountain and finally went to the actual city in the mountains.

It had been weeks since Ning saw any human figure at all. That included him and Alexis as neither of them were human.

The humans around him noticed them walking top the mountain. 'Surely it isn't that uncommon for people to come to the mountains,' Ning thought for a while before realizing what was happening.

Alexis was walking in front of him and everyone was looking at her. As expected, he wasn't a unique case after all. Every single human on Vilmore was attracted to her.

However, Ning could see no lust in their eyes, only reverence. They looked like people who had just seen a god, which they had.

They walked around the mountain and went down the other side. "Find an open area that doesn't have a house or is growing some crops," Alexis said.

Ning nodded. The Freelands was just such a place. Every piece of land was free for anyone to grab.

You could lay claim to the land as you wished and didn't have to pay any tax or anything for it.

The only rule to keep the land was that you have to grow some crops in it, or build your house in it.

If you claimed a piece of land and failed to do either of these things for a week, someone else could claim that land.

That was the only law-keeping people from hoarding land like in the other countries.

Ning quickly found a small piece of land that didn't seem like it was owned by anyone.

Even if it was, since they hadn't done anything in it, Ning could claim it and build something on it.

"We can use this area," Ning said. It was a small piece of land about 10 meters in length and 30 meters in breadth.

It only had some grasses growing on it, so he would need to find wood from someplace else to build a house.

He looked to the side and he could see the valley with the many houses down there and even a small tower.

'So the Aether tower is here too huh?' he thought. He had heard of them being in specific locations around the Freelands. He hadn't expected one to be this close by.

"Alright, you should make the house. I will go look for some food," Ning said.

"No," Alexis said. "You will be making the house."

Ning turned around. "Really?" he asked. "Dammit."

It was going to be a long and tiresome day.

Chapter 489: Announcemen

A few more weeks passed and Ning had safely gotten used to daily life.

He would start his morning when Alexis woke him up. He would then train for a while with Alexis on things he told him to try or do.

After nearly 5 hours of training, he would get something to eat, and rest for a bit before training for the next 5 hours.

After that, he would eat again and would use the next 5 hours as his free time, which he would use to go find food or check out the city.

After the 5 hour period was over, he trained for nearly 8 hours, and finally went to sleep.

The routine was exhaustive, but it was working. Ning was starting to get very good at using Aether in ways he didn't know were possible before.

It was early in the morning on a random day for Ning. The days had been monotonous so he didn't really know how many days he had been here exactly.

He was training with gravitational energy, to see what he could do.

He was training to crush a tree from the inside as he created what was practically a mini black hole.

He put gravitational energy onto the center of the tree and pushed in as much gravity on it as possible and soon, the tree started crumbling before being completely destroyed.

Ning stopped and the black hole disappeared, leaving behind a fallen tree that had half of its trunk missing.

Alexis nodded in approval. "Great, you can do that now too," she said. "There are a few more things I have still to teach you, but for now, you should go find a job for yourself."

"A job?" Ning was a little surprised. "We need money?"

"No, it's just a job that is suitable for you. Go to the valley today, to the City lord's manor. They are going to announce something today," Alexis said.

"Oh, what is it?" Ning asked curiously.

"It would be better to find it out yourself. Go, you should be able to reach the place right as they announce it," Alexis said.

"Alright then, I'll go," Ning said and left.

He walked out of his house to the road and took the road all the way down to the valley.

He had been there a few times, but each time he had only roamed it and did nothing else as that was Alexis' order.

The further Ning walked downwards, the more houses he started seeing.

The valley was about 5 kilometers in radius, so it was quite big for a place that was considered to be one of the weaker cities in the Freelands.

A decent-sized river went across the city right through the middle, separating it into two halves, that had now come to be known as either the Lord's side or the Tower's side, because of the City Lord and the Aether tower being located in either half.

Despite being on the other half of the city, the City Lord's manor was next to the river, so it was still at the center of the city.

The valley was full of nothing but houses, and rarely could Ning see a place or two with food growing in it.

From what Ning understood, people did originally farm in this place. However, as they slowly stopped for some years and those lands got taken over by others who wanted to live there, the farmlands in the city started to dwindle.

Now, the farmlands only existed on the mountainside where fewer people wished to live in compared to being safe near the tower and the city lord.

Ning saw people moving, gossiping about something. 'Did the news of the announcement already spread?' Ning wondered.

He crossed the bridge atop the river and finally reached the Lord's manor.

The area was already crowded, so Ning was forced to stay quite far away. He waited for a while, and finally, a short man with a cane walked out of the manor.

He had thick hair on the side, but barely any on top of his head. That look somehow seemed to suit his spherical head and body.

He was almost two heads shorter than the next man that walked behind him. This man looked younger, which still put him somewhere around 35 years old physically.

Ning could only guess his age physically, as his real age would be impossible to tell with analyzing him. After all, this man was an Aether expert from the Aether tower.

A few servants walked by the side and held out a metal speaker next to his face, waiting for the old man to speak.

"Ahem! So I assume you all have gotten the news about the announcement," the old man said. "I beg your pardon for trying to keep the announcement secret as even until this morning, we weren't sure if this was happening."

"Only a few hours ago did we finally get the confirmation and are now going to announce it," the old man said.

The crowd whispered amongst themselves, wondering what the announcement was about. Their city lord was certainly making it sound quite great.

"I will let brother Waxil announce the news as it pertains more to him than it does to me," The city lord moved backward.

The tall person from the Aether tower moved forward and took the speaker in his hands before speaking into it.

"As you all may know that some things have come to revelation in the last few weeks."

"Many of you may have even gotten your hands on it. Of course, I am speaking about the techniques that let people absorb Aether as they want to," Waxil said.

People started whispering again. They might have been a small city, but they had indeed come to learn about it all.

The city that lay beyond the mountains had printed tons and tons of scrolls that taught people how to gather Aether without being naturally gifted at it.

Many people from this city had gone to buy those scrolls for quite some price as well.

"Because of this, many talented individuals that were previously unable to increase their Aether ranks have now started popping up throughout the cities all over the world."

"This had become great news for many, but it has also become bad news because of some," Waxil said.

Ning listened to it all and nodded. He had indeed thought about this problem when he started spreading the scrolls.

But he couldn't stop improving the lives of the many because of a few people's bad thoughts. It wasn't like he could find out who would go on to becoming evil once they got stronger.

Humans were a fickle thing, and their emotions were more fickle. Some had a change of heart more often than they changed clothes.

"Because everyone is now strong, people are starting to disobey the law because they have the power to do so. And we, as the keepers of law are having a really hard time because of it."

"So, effective immediately, the Tower for this city will now hire 30 talented individuals to help us keep the law."

The crowd suddenly turned silent. Had they heard him correctly? Did they really just get the opportunity to join the tower?

Some people immediately started questioning if this was volunteer work or not.

"This is an actual job with great pay, and all you will need for it is a great understanding of Aether as well as having a high Aether rank," Waxil said.

Somebody shouted out loud and asked, "We have no knowledge of how to become a lawman. Do we still join?"

"Do not worry if you don't know much about law and such. You can learn plenty about it after you join the tower. You will go through an extensive course in the law and fighting tactics once you join."

People started getting excited. Earning money was quite hard in this place where people got their lands for free and could grow food by themselves easily as well.

Aside from that, the tower was the strongest organization in the world. Being a part of it meant that they would get status and protection like none out there.

"Since there will be quite a few people amongst you that will join, we will have to put you through some tests to see if you are capable. So, get ready for that," Waxil said.

The crowd got nervous and excited at the same time.

"There is one more thing," Waxil said to intervene into the crowd's joy, turning them silent. They intently listened to what he was about to say.

"This information comes directly from the headquarters of the Aether Tower over at the Serian Empire. If there are any of you that are exceptional in the ways of Aether, the tower is willing to take you over to the headquarters to rear you as one of their own."

"If you are able to do that, there won't be anything in the world for you to worry about."

Waxil put aside the microphone and left the stunned crowd.

Suddenly, the crowd got rowdy. They rushed forward to try and be the first to apply for it.

Ning stood where he was with a curious look on his face.

"I had thought the Tower would lose influence once the people learned about the existence of absorption technique. But somehow they are using this opportunity to strengthen themselves. Not bad," Ning thought.

Credit should be given where it was due. Ning chuckled a little to himself and walked forward to apply for it as well.

Chapter 490: Terran Forn

Ning applied for the job. He named himself Terran Forn, just a random name he asked his system to come up with.

Terran Forn was born in the Kingdom of Shalor and had moved to the Freelands about a dozen years ago. He was 48 years old at the moment and had reached Aether Magister in rank as an Enchanter.

Being in the Freelands, he didn't have any identity on himself to prove his identity, and for some reason, the Tower didn't seem to care if you put in the wrong information.

Once done, Ning left the valley and went back up the mountain. He had a week before he had to go to the tower to see if he was even chosen for the first test that would narrow the number of people even further.

'Surely Aether Magister isn't so easily come by amongst these people, right?' he thought. 48 years was beyond the range of someone that could enter the tower normally, but Aether Magister was strong enough so that he could make them feel they had missed someone.

Also, since Enchanters were so highly sought after in any battle-related job, Ning had decided to go with it, even though his skills as an Invoker wouldn't pale in comparison during an actual battle.

Ning could only hope that Terran got chosen by the next week.

There was more to this, however. He couldn't just be chosen. He needed to be the best amongst the people who joined.

After all, his primary target was to enter the headquarters of the tower and make his way up in ranks to fight the president.

However, he could do that by showing off the skills he had come to learn in the last half a year.

'I should tell Alexis that our plans will have to be moved forward by a couple of years,' he thought. However, he suspected she knew it already.

That only made him wonder more about who she was, or rather what she was.

God... was a weird concept he couldn't understand. Normally, he would expect it to be a normal person or beast that was so powerful and wise, that everyone else took them to be something better than themselves.

However, Alexis wasn't that. She wasn't human for sure given that she existed for such a long time when humans could only exist for about 500 years in this world.

Also, the fact that she seemed to be omniscient about almost everything made it impossible for her to be anything more than a system.

"But she doesn't have a system," he thought. This was starting to get confusing.

What was a system even?

There were way too many things that he didn't know about that the system wouldn't help him learn about.

He didn't mind. After all, he had eternity to learn about it all.

Ning went back home and found Alexis sitting on a small wooden chair in the front yard. He was surprised she stayed around, doing nothing during the day when she would disappear each night to go someplace else.

'Why doesn't she simply do what she needs to do at night right now? Surely she is just wasting her time here, right?' he thought.

Alexis smiled towards him. She had heard his thought and chose to not say anything.

Ning walked up to her and asked, "What do we do now?"

He somehow knew the answer that would come out of Alexis' mouth before she even spoke.

"You train."

* * * * *

A week passed in the blink of an eye. Ning was in the middle of his morning training, which included shooting a gun at something behind Alexis while she stood in front of it.

At first, Ning wasn't sure how he could do that. After all, a bullet moved way beyond the speed of a normal human's comprehension to change its direction mid-air.

Also, if he wanted to change the direction, it had to be mid-flight of the bullet. His Aether couldn't move fast enough to reach a bullet that was on its way to the target.

So, changing the direction of a bullet by directly changing the kinetic energy in the bullet was not a choice.

He started thinking about what other possible routes he could go through. That was when he thought of using gravity to direct the bullet away.

Ning aimed towards Alexis but obviously at an angle that was aiming just outside her shoulders.

He would have to shoot that area while simultaneously flaring the gravity on the wooden post behind her to pull the bullet towards it.

That was exactly what he did.

It all happened in an instant. Alexis stood still with no movement to her, while he heard the post behind her get destroyed.

'It worked,' he thought.

The moment he had shot, he created a massive gravitational pull at the center of the wooden post that had pulled at the bullet.

He happily moved to the wooden post to see the result. When Alexis moved aside to show the result, his happiness dwindled like to almost nothing.

It had indeed worked. But it had done more than just work. Using gravity, he had pulled the bullet towards the wooden post, but at the same time, he had pulled everything around the post, including the post itself.

That couldn't be counted as success at all. If this was a true situation with a woman as a hostage and a criminal behind her, he would have not only shot the criminal but destroyed him from the inside.

At the same time, he would have pulled the woman onto the criminal, killing her with the massive gravitational pull.

Alexis had only survived because... she was Alexis.

'Given the wooden post magnetic energy wouldn't work either, would it?' he thought. While Magnetism worked on far fewer objects than gravity, it would still be strong enough to destroy the wooden post, while pulling at the iron in a human body around them.

"You seem to understand that simply using Aether arts won't help you," Alexis said.

"Now, you need to start focusing your Aether onto a single direction, rather than all."

Chapter 491: Test at the Tower

After a few hours of training, Ning was surprised how easily he could curve a bullet through mid-air now.

All he needed to do was focus his Aether to create Gravity or magnetic pull in a certain direction, and shoot his gun in that direction.

The moment the bullet entered that small area where everything was pulling, he could easily curve the bullet.

Ning could think of many different things he could do with such a newfound understanding of the usage of Aether.

Alexis had also said that if he were to keep learning this part more and more, he could also teleport one day like the Lord of the Aether tower did.

'Focus gravity onto a single point in space with such strength that it squeezes space until you need a single step to cross it,' that was what Ning came to learn.

Of course, just learning the theory didn't mean he could immediately teleport. To produce enough gravity to create such an amazing effect required at the very least for the user to be an Aether Saint.

Ning still had a long way to go.

He walked out of his home now that the training was over and made his way to the tower.

Alexis had already spoiled to him that he had been chosen, not that he would've expected otherwise.

This time, he would have to go to the Tower instead of the city lord's manor.

The tower was located quite a bit further away from the river, unlike the City lord's manor.

It was way to the right of the city, for Ning. Even though it was on his half of the city, it still took him almost the same amount of time as last time.

He reached the location of the tower, with a crowd formed in front of it, albeit just a fraction of what was in the City lord's manor last time.

Ning looked at the tower, with a hint of surprise to his eyes. He had seen it from his home all the way up in the mountains, but he never expected it to be so... small.

The tower was barely 3 floors tall and about 30 meters wide in diameter, granted that each floor was almost 7 meters tall.

This tower was nothing when he compared to the other towers he had seen through the many cities he had visited, which each held a tower.

As always, the tower shined with a dark purple glow as it reflected the morning light.

There was no wall stopping people from entering the tower on their own, but there were guards in each of the 4 entrances to the tower on all sides.

Since this tower was more of a law-keeping force than an educational place, not many people would dare to sneak in here anyway.

Ning waited, along with the crowd, for the members of the tower to come out, which they did very soon.

A girl walked out with a bunch of paper in hand and started speaking out names of the ones who were chosen to go through the testing.

Ning heard his name and waited for the calling to speak.

"Please, those of you whose name was called, stay in a line. We will bring you in to test you if you are eligible to join us or not," the girl said and left.

A table appeared out of nowhere and a person stayed on it with a bunch of applications on it that the people had previously filled.

"Jeriah Suld?" he called out. A person walked in front and the man at the table asked him to recite the information written on the application form as a way of identification.

Once he confirmed it was indeed the person, the man let Jeriah go inside.

"Hmm," Ning thought. "They are not using the Aether sphere thing to check him."

It made sense. Now that people could grow on their own using the technique, they would no longer need to check for one's potential.

Or so they would think, but Ning knew regardless of the techniques, there was still a matter of potential amongst people.

It seemed that since the tower had only accepted people with potential, who could easily breakthrough at any level of bottleneck, they didn't realize that normal people who lacked potential had a hard time breaking through those same bottlenecks.

That was what going to come back to bite them, which they absolutely deserved for denying the normal person what Ning considered their human rights.

Once Ning's name was called —Terran Forn— he stepped forward upto the man at the table and answered the simple questions to assure them of his identity.

Once that was done, he walked in.

A couple of people stood along the way, showing the people who were entering the way tower.

Ning saw a couple of people walk out. These were the ones that had walked in earlier.

Judging by the nervous look on their faces, Ning assumed that they weren't given an answer on whether they were chosen or not.

'So I will have to wait for later, huh?' he thought.

He made his way to a training ground where a girl was trying her best to move a long piece of rope on the ground to wrap it around a wooden post in the distance.

She struggled for a few seconds to untangle the rope and then moved it towards the post to wrap it with it.

Once she was done, she nodded towards the examiner and moved on to the next test which was taking place to her right.

Ning walked up and took the spot she had left behind.

The examiner unwrapped the rope and put it where it had been in the start.
"Incapacitate your enemy with this rope," the examiner said, pointing towards the post.

Ning nodded and put his hands forward. In a single instant, the rope came undone. Then, he used what he learned today with a single space gravity that started at the post and pointed at the midsection of the rope.

In the blink of an eye, the rope flew to the post and using the same momentum, wrapped around the post.

The examiner nearly dropped his jaw watching the test be complete in just a second.

Chapter 492: Lawmen

Next up after incapacitating the 'enemy', Ning had target practice with an actual gun.

The person giving the test was an invoker, who would create a single bullet for each gun and hand it over to the examinees.

Ning took the gun and aimed at the wooden post with a bullseye drawn on it.

Ning wasn't confident in his aim at all. While he was sure he could hit without a certain area, he couldn't hit a single spot multiple times.

That was to say, his accuracy was good, but he lacked precision.

However, he could easily correct his aim if he could use Aether, after all.

He did the same thing he had learned today and shot the gun. The bullet curved through the air, pulled by the bullseye directly onto itself.

The examiner couldn't see the bullet curve, so he was surprised to see Ning's shot hit right at the center.

He noted it down, and let Ning move on to the next one.

For the next one, Ning was supposed to get hit. He was surprised as to why that was but realized what they were doing with each test.

They wanted to see how he would catch someone, kill someone, and now take hits.

Ning nodded and strengthened his body, waiting for the man to hit him. The examiner held a wooden bat and started whacking at Ning.

He started off weak and slowly increased his strength while constantly asking Ning if he was fine.

Ning could feel pain now with his new body, so he waited until he started feeling it.

Once he did, he let the examiner know, who quickly noted it down.

Once that was done, Ning moved on to the next few exams. The exams were meant to test one's Aether amount and ability to use it under the familiar scenarios that a law keeper may have to face.

The next few exams had to do with speed, endurance, locating a criminal, and such. Ning finished each exam with flying colors.

After he was done, he left with a badge that was his number.

As he walked out, he saw another person walk out from another direction.

Ning looked at the man and then at the direction he had come from and realized that the Invokers were being tested on a different location.

'No wonder the test was only applicable to the Enchanters,' he thought.

He made his way out of the tower and back to his home. He didn't bother waiting around the front like the other people, hoping to learn when the results would be out.

After all, Alexis, his all-knowing God would let him know when he would have to visit the tower.

He didn't even believe for a single moment that he would fail the tests.

* * * * *

Ning sat down on a chair. On the desk in front of him were a bunch of papers and files tucked away to the side as well as an electric lamp for when he would have to work during the nighttime.

In front of the desk sat an old lady wearing a woman's tunic while her half gray hair was in a braid, loosely set along the side of her shoulders.

She wore no jewelry and looked quite poor.

Ning looked at the piece of paper in front of him and read it quietly to himself.

"So, to confirm once more, your neighbor has been stealing your vegetables and grains from your farm without your permission, right?" Ning asked.

"Yes, yes," the old woman nodded.

Ning looked at the form once again and asked, "Are you sure that your neighbor is stealing your food, or is this just an assumption?"

"No, I saw him steal. That I can swear to god. I have seen him steal every few days, so there is no doubt in my mind," the woman said, looking very certain so Ning didn't doubt that she was correct.

He would have to go and check her information and come up with a result on his own.

Ning nodded. "Alright, then miss. You have nothing to worry about. If there is in fact some stealing as you claim, we will surely bring the thief to justice," Ning said.

"Thank you, young man. You make me feel very safe with your words. I hope to see that stinky man get imprisoned by the end of the sunset," the old woman said and walked away.

'That's a little extreme,' Ning thought. 'Although she has had her food be stolen, so I guess its fair.'

Just because it was the Freelands, didn't mean everything was up for grabs. Only the land was free. What the new owner of the land did on that land wasn't.

Ning looked at the form one last time and stood up. He took the purple jacket from the chair he was sitting on and wore it while taking out a purple badge from the drawer that proved that he was in fact a lawman of the place now.

It had been over a month since he took the exam for this position. In Vilmore terms, it had been about 7 weeks.

The results had surprisingly come in just a week, that being simply 5 days.

As expected, he had passed without a shadow of a doubt. In fact, the folks from this tower had been so surprised that they asked him many questions like where he learned what he did, and why he hadn't joined the tower before.

Ning made a believable lie about being from the outer edge of the Kingdom of Shalor, so he had never gotten the opportunity to even visit a tower until he came to the Freelands.

The people accepted the answer pretty handily. Once the 30 new people were selected, 13 women and 17 men, 6 Invokers and 22 Enchanters, they were then given training regarding the law for the next quarter of a year, meaning 5 weeks.

Only after that was Ning and the others allowed to work as lawmen.

Chapter 493: Cruel Punishmen

Ning had been a lawman for the last week or so. While he had quickly learned how much he hated working as a lawman, he couldn't deny that this was the best way for him to work his way up the tower.

He just had to show how great his skills were, and he would soon be transferred to the Aether Tower headquarters.

Well, it wasn't that Ning hated working as a lawman exactly. He actually quite liked it. Going around town, solving his own mystery. He quite liked that and found it rather refreshing.

What he really hated was the paperwork that came after. He would have to fill out multiple forms explaining all the events that had happened during his investigation. That was so very tiresome for him.

What was worse was that he couldn't even use his system to fill out the paperwork. Every time he was done with an investigation and had captured someone or got them to pay a fine, the original lawmen here would stand over Ning, watching him do the paperwork so as to make sure he made no mistake.

Sometimes, Ning simply wanted to show his system and do it all automatically, but he reigned in his stupid thought.

"Hey Terran, where are you going?" a middle-aged man asked, who was walking in with a person tied behind him. This was one of the men that helped Ning with the paperwork.

"Brother Hans," Ning called out. "I'm just going to an old woman's house to look for a stealing neighbor. Just got the job."

"Oh, old women huh? Those can be tricky to deal with if they don't get what they want. Make sure the neighbor is actually guilty okay?" Hans said.

Ning nodded. "What's up with him?" Ning asked.

"Just the same old. The guy was drunk on his newfound Aether power and went to fight his old boss in the mill who he hated. Fortunately, I was close by and caught him," he said.

The man behind him was wearing just shorts and a white vest, nothing else.

He seemed to be vacant and was too sedated to do anything for now.

Sedation was what the lawmen did to folks who had Aether powers so that they could stop them from fighting against the lawmen.

"What's going to happen to him?" Ning asked.

"Same old," Hans said. "A few days in the cell. If he reforms, he is let out. If he goes back to the old habit, then... I'm afraid we will have to give him the death penalty."

Ning sighed. That was something he had come to learn during the time he was taught the law.

Most criminals that were Aether Master and above, if their crimes were heinous enough, and they were particularly troublesome, were given the death penalty without hesitation.

This was one of the reasons why police stations could even work despite everyone being superpowered being in this world. Just the threat of death made people not do anything impulsive.

However, Ning still felt that this was a bit inhumane. He could understand giving the death penalty to the people that did do the bad crimes and tried to fight back, but what about the normal person that maybe got into a fight and was arrested.

What if they thought they weren't deserving of jail time and tried to get out.

What if a white-collar criminal tried to escape using Aether, would they be killed too?

They probably would, but they didn't deserve to die.

Ning tried to think of ways around this, but he wasn't able to.

He thought of crippling one's body by destroying the sea of Aether, but that wasn't any different from killing them either.

The police certainly didn't hold that right.

Ning wondered what he would do if this was a cultivation world, instead of an Aether world.

He would have most likely made some pills or drawn a formation around the jail where the prisoner wouldn't be able to use Qi at all.

But Aether wasn't like that. There was no pill or formations that worked with Aether. It was simply energy that flowed through the air, that no one could keep out.

Ning shook his head and forgot about it for the moment. He left the tower and made his way to the eastern side of the city where the old woman's house was.

The place lay on the city lord's side of the city and was right around the base of the eastern mountains.

Ning entered the farm and went to check up on the vegetables that were stolen.

Coincidentally, he saw a man picking up a vegetable from the farm as he entered.

He nearly burst out loud laughing when he saw the man. This was perhaps his easiest investigation as of yet.

"Sir, please stop right there," Ning said, stopping the man.

The man tried to run when he saw Ning, but his foot seemed to have hit something and he fell onto the ground.

Ning walked up to the man and caught him.

"Sir, I am arresting you for stealing from someone else's farm," Ning said.

"Wait, wait, wait," the man said. He looked to be a little older than a middle-aged person, but not enough to be a senior citizen.

"I'm not a thief. I'm only borrowing the fruit," he said.

"Borrowing?" Ning asked.

"Yes," the man said. "I... I can't farm at the moment due to my broken leg, so they took away my farm. Thus, I have to resort to using someone else's food to survive. But I promise, as soon as my foot is healed, I will pay all the food back with my next harvest."

Ning looked at the man's foot. It was indeed broken. 'So he didn't trip on something,' Ning realized.

"Do you have children?" Ning asked.

"No, I have no family," the man said.

He felt a little sympathetic for the man's situation. However, he was still a lawman.

"Let's go to the tower, sir. We will decide there how much fine you will have to pay," Ning said and took the man back towards the tower.

Chapter 494: Inciden

Along the way, Ning asked the man for some more information.

It had turned out that the man always lived alone and never made any money aside from what little things he sold from his farm.

He was okay with that for a while, but once he fell down a ditch on the side of the mountain, he had broken his legs and was since then not able to work.

He spent many days in his home, waiting for his leg to heal, but during that time, someone else took away his farm since he hadn't worked on it.

There was still some time before he could get a farm of his own, but his resources were running low.

So, he first asked his neighbors to help him a little, which they did. But after a while, they stopped helping him. They would ignore him if he asked for anything.

With no other choice, he had resorted to thievery.

"Sir, please let me go. I have no money to pay the fees at all. If I did, I wouldn't have to steal to live, would I?" the man asked.

He limped as he walked behind Ning. Ning felt a bit bad for this man. Making someone poor pay for trying to survive was not something he would want to punish.

But crime was crime. All he could do was make sure the punishment wasn't too harsh on the man.

He thought of something that seemed to work for the man and said, "If you can't pay the fee, then you will be imprisoned."

"What?" the man sounded frustrated. "Officer, please. I— I swear I won't steal again. Please don't send me to jail. I- I can get the money somehow. I promise."

"Sir, listen to me," Ning said. "Your leg will need some time to heal and you don't have the money to pay the fines. If you do borrow some money, you will only be in further debt."

"There is also the fact that you will have to still survive on your own, which in your case is very hard. So, I suggest that you don't pay and instead accept the jail time."

"In jail, we will take care of your meals and health. You can rest there while you get your body ready to go back to the fields."

"Since your crime is small, you will only spend a few weeks in there. I promise you will want this more than anything," Ning said.

The man limped slowly, lost to his own thoughts for a while before asking, "I really won't have to worry about my food?"

"No," Ning said. He looked at the man as he finally came to the realization that Ning's idea was actually beneficial for him.

"Thank you, officer," he said.

"Don't worry about it. It's my job," Ning said and turned around. A frustrated look appeared on his face as soon as he turned around.

He was getting closer to the tower, and the dreadful task was about to come.

The Paperworks.

Ning would rather get tossed into the most blistering sands or the most freezing ocean than go through that paperwork.

As he was sighing, he heard some sounds coming from far away. It sounded like a bunch of people talking at once... or were they screaming?

He looked up and had his vision magnify directly towards the source of the sound.

He saw smoke and dust rising into the sky around the tower, while many people were running away from it.

'What?' he thought and decided to go see.

"Stay here, something is happening up ahead," He said to the man behind him and ran towards the tower.

He ran through the crowd that was running in the opposite direction but had a hard time as people pushed him while they ran past him.

His speed severely dropped while trying to navigate through the many people that seemed to be running away from the situation.

'What's going on over there?' he thought. He didn't have any more time to waste.

Suddenly, his body lifted as he started flying.

Sounds of gasps of awe rang out from the people underneath as they had rarely seen anyone fly before. Most didn't even know it was possible.

Ning flew, but his speed was slow. After all, he was only an Aether Magister, on the verge of becoming Aether King. Unlike the other times when he flew when he was nearly above Aether Saint.

Still, it was fast enough to reach the tower in a matter of minutes. When he reached there, and looked past the dust and smokes, he saw multiple of the officers, fighting with the people, who by their clothes, looked like escaped convicts.

There were dozens of them.

'Did they somehow manage to leave their cells?' Ning wondered and looked towards the tower, that was destroyed in places.

Ning dropped from the sky and landed to the side of a woman who was fighting a man that had managed to find himself a knife that was entirely made up of metal.

'He probably made it using Aether,' Ning thought when he checked the man and realized he was an Invoker.

The woman to his side knew that he was an Enchanter, so he didn't dare create anything in front of her.

"Terran, can you help?" she asked when she realized he had come.

"Yes," Ning said. Ning put his hands forwards and suddenly made a single point on the ground extremely gravitational towards only the tip of the knife.

In a single instance, the knife dragged itself out of the convict's hands, striking tip first onto the ground.

The convict looked surprised at the red mark on his hand that was left behind by the friction.

While he was distracted, Ning threw out a rope from his storage space and constricted the convict with it.

The convict saw it and was about to create fire to burn it, but the woman to his side suddenly leaped towards him and stabbed him in the shoulders with a sharp object.

It was a syringe that contained the sedating liquid.

Chapter 495: Battles

"Where were you?" the girl asked. She was sure that Ning had a shift during the day today, but had been surprised when she didn't see him leave the tower during the sudden attack earlier.

"I was out to the east, doing my job," Ning said.

"Well, then you are one of the lucky few that managed to not get injured during the attack," she said.

"What happened here?" Ning asked.

"Some convict must have decided to fight back instead of accepting their punishment," she said. "Go on and help the others. Many of the other prisoners decided to leave

during the attack. The other officers are trying to keep them in, and they are fighting back."

"Alright, take care of him," Ning said, referring to the guy on the ground.

He left the place and went just a few meters ahead, before seeing another fight that he hadn't before because of the dirt and smoke.

A man with a bleeding left hand had a gun pointed towards a man on the other side that was getting ready to fight.

Surprisingly, the one with the gun was actually the convict and not the lawman.

'Was his gun stolen?' Ning thought.

The officer had his hands in the air, his eyes slightly moist, likely from the fear. He was only an invoker and wouldn't be able to fight against someone with a gun.

Ning tried to do the same thing as before to point the gun downwards towards the ground.

But he was too late. The man was already pulling the trigger. So, instead of creating gravitational well below the man, he used Aether to push the gun upwards.

The gun fired, but the aim was vastly off as the gun was pointed upwards. The convict himself was surprised how that happened before he saw Ning to the side.

His eyes went wide and pointed towards Ning. This time, Ning had ample time to snatch away his gun.

As the gun pulled down, it got shot again due to the convict's finger still being on the trigger.

Ning felt a trace of fear in his heart when that happened. He had strengthened his body, but it was still not as strong as it would have been before as an Aether saint.

He looked down to check if he had been shot, but fortunately, he wasn't.

'That would've hurt a lot,' he thought.

When the bullet left the barrel of the gun, just like the gun itself, the bullet too was pulled by the ground.

Along with the gun and the bullet, the man was also dragged to the ground and was currently trying to pull away from his fingers from the gun that was stuck to the ground.

"Sedate him," Ning told the stunned lawman next to him. The man woke up from his stupor and ran up to the convict before sticking a syringe onto his arm.

The convict slowly lost the ability to think and simply laid on the ground with his eyes open, not sure what was happening around him.

"You can take care of him?" Ning asked.

"Ye-Yes," the man said and started wiping tears that were flowing down his eyes.

"Why are you crying? Were you hurt?" he asked.

"N-no," the man said and pointed towards the front. Ning looked upfront and behind a column of smoke, he could see a female silhouette lying on the ground.

He walked to the front to see if she was injured, but when he went past the smoke, he realized the truth.

The woman was dead.

Ning recognized her. She was the only of his classmates that learned about the law with him just a few weeks ago.

Now, she was lying on the floor, with a bullet in her head. She had died not long ago as her blood still slowly seeped out of the wound.

Ning felt horrible looking at her.

He had seen dead people before and even lost people close to him, but that never made it easier.

Fury blazed in his eyes like a raging fire as he turned around to kill the person responsible for it.

However, just as he did, he saw the officer, diligently tying up the convict, even though he had nearly been shot before by the same person.

He shook his head. He sometimes forgot that justice in this world was different from the other planet he had been to.

Either way, this man was likely going to be killed later anyway. His crime was too severe to not be hanged for it.

Ning decided to leave the place and go help the others.

He stopped dilly-dallying and directly pushed people onto the ground as he saw them.

The convicts didn't usually expect someone to use Aether to Enchant their bodies themselves and that was usually very hard.

As he made his way through the outer ring of the tower, he finally met a convict that he couldn't easily push down.

This convict seemed to be an Aether Magister like Ning himself and was an Enchanter as well. He seemed to have his body constantly strengthened to the point that normal attacks did nothing to him.

Ning started thinking of ways to find him. Normally, he would get rid of his weapon, but this was holding nothing.

He was using his superior physical ability to fight the 3 officers that surrounded him.

2 of the officers were Enchanters, and the third one an Invoker.

None a single one of them were at Aether Magister rank, so they had a hard time fighting against this one convict.

The convict was like a juggernaut. He smashed through the places, not caring for his body, and tried to attack the officers.

The officers had guns in their hands, but they weren't able to fire it with how much the convict was moving around, and destroying stuff.

One of the officers was Hans, the man he saw before leaving the tower just an hour ago.

That was when Ning recognized the convict as well. It was the same person that Hans had brought back.

Chapter 496: Contained

Hans wasn't muscular, but he had enough muscles to make him look quite fit.

His skin wasn't dark, but it was tanned, at least his hands and face were.

The man was heaving with heavy breaths, with scratches all over his body that his Magister rank Aether Enchantments couldn't stop.

Ning saw not only anger and frustration in his face, but also some hints of sadness.

The man suddenly moved. He rushed towards the three officers like a bull that saw red.

Hans and the other officer started shooting him. The man was slowed down by the gunshots, but not stopped. The bullets barely managed to put the scratches on him.

He ran into the 3 officers, but just then, Ning appeared in front of him and blocked him with his own Enchanted body.

However, he felt himself losing in strength to the man in front of him. Ning's leg skidded below him and only came to a stop about a meter or two back.

'Shit! He's stronger than me,' Ning thought. That was truly surprising.

"Another one," the man said as he gritted his teeth. "Just how many of your corrupted bastards are there?"

He pushed Ning backward, but the other officers caught him.

The man, with fury in his eyes, looked around for things to throw at the officers.

"Bastards who only know how to prey on the weak, but cannot do shit against those that really deserve it," the man shouted. "I will get rid of you all today."

Ning had thought he was angry before, but that was nothing to what the man in front of him was feeling.

He stood in front of the three to protect them as he asked, "Brother Hans, what's going on? Why is he so angry?"

"I... I don't know. He randomly got angry while I was trying to get his statement on what happened," Hans said. "Before he could even talk, he started attacking everything, and we couldn't stop it."

"Then, he broke through the floor and the other convicts in the cells below got out."

"It's been chaos since then. Dammit, we need to sedate him quite," Hans said.

"Okay," Ning said. "You two, go help the others. Brother Hans and I can take care of these two."

The other two hesitated for a bit but nodded when they remembered how well Ning did in the exams and his other performances.

Ning blocked the stones that the man threw towards them while talking to Hans behind him.

"I will go stop him, you get ready with the syringe," Ning told Hans. Hans nodded and took out the syringe from his storage trinket.

Ning turned around and smashed the stone that was thrown at him. He then rushed towards the man as quickly as he could.

The man got ready to stop Ning, but Ning had different ideas. He knew that he couldn't stop the man with his Enchantments unless it meant harming him, so he used something else.

His Energy.

Suddenly, a telekinetic force slammed onto the man, pushing him down towards the ground. At the same time, Ning ran behind him to grab his arms into locked positions between his own arms and legs.

The man tried, but he couldn't fight against Ning's combined strength of his Telekinesis and enchanted body.

Hans saw the opportunity and came rushing towards the man. He slammed the needle onto the open arm of the man and was about to push the plunger when he noticed... the needle of the syringe was bent.

It couldn't go past the tough skin of the man. 'Shit!' he thought.

Ning noticed it too and started worrying a little about what he should do. The only choice he could see was fighting the man until his Aether ran out.

At Aether Magister rank... that would have taken him about an hour or two of constant usage.

However, given that the man was using it so heavily, it might take him even less of a time.

"You bastards. You claim to work for justice while you only fight for those that break the law itself. How dare you call yourself lawmen? You are nothing but boot lickers of the rich," the man said while straining to get out of Ning's chokehold.

"What are you talking about?" Ning asked. "Explain carefully."

Hans was there too, thinking of ways to get the man sedated.

"Why did you stop me? I could've killed him and got my revenge!" the man shouted.

Ning got confused.

"What are you—"

Suddenly, something dropped from high in the air and directly stabbed onto the skull of the man.

Even as Ning held him, he died.

Ning looked in shock. He hadn't expected someone to kill him like that.

"Are you guys okay?" a man flew down from the sky.

Ning looked at the man and recognized that it was Waxil, the head of this city's tower.

He was an Aether King and a strong one at that. He looked worried as he glanced towards Ning and Hans.

"Are you guys— oh thank god. You are fine," Waxil said with a sigh of relief. "I thought you were in trouble."

"Why... why did you kill him?" Ning asked. He clearly had him contained. There was no reason to kill him.

"Were you guys not in trouble?" Waxil asked with a confused look.

Hans and Ning shook their head.

Waxil realized what he had done. "I— I thought you were in trouble. I just saw a few of our people dead along the way, so i—"

Waxil just moved his hands around, hoping the two of them would understand what he was thinking.

They did, but they still felt bad seeing someone who was clearly not a threat anymore, die like that.

Ning got out of the stupor before the other two and said, "We still have to go help others let's leave."

Waxil had a guilty look in his eyes, but he nodded and moved away from the place.

While what had happened was bad, there were still others that needed their help.

Chapter 497: Unfortunate Story

An hour later, the fighting finally came to a stop.

The area surrounding the tower became a ruin like any other battleground.

There had been about 20 people in the tower when the fighting broke, and maybe 15 more arrived to help after they learned of the situation.

Of them, 7 had died, and 12 were heavily injured. Ning got to helping the heavily injured folks first before going for the ones that were mildly injured.

The people were surprised to see his medical skills, but they weren't in a mood to show it.

Once Ning was done with the lawmen, he moved onto the convicts. There had been about 120 criminals in the cells below the tower, but most weren't strong enough to fight their way out.

So, about 70 or so were either immediately caught, or never even bothered to leave at all.

Of the remaining 70, they had managed to capture about 40 of them through sedating them. About 8 of them were killed without other actions being possible, and finally, 2 had managed to escape away.

Fortunately, none of the civilians were injured... except maybe one.

Ning watched the corpses get taken away, both the lawmen and the criminals... as well as the lone civilian. The man who had died while under his hold.

He hadn't gone through with the process to become a criminal, so he could still be counted as a civilian.

His words still floated in Ning's mind. Words like injustice, cowards, helping the rich, boot lickers.

And then the words about revenge. Revenge against who? For what? Ning felt curious.

So, he decided to look into it. He pulled up the man's information from the system and read it.

The man's name was Rejiro. He lived with his sister with no parents. From a young age, he had started working in the steel mill to make what little money he could.

He wasn't really good at farming, so he never bothered with getting land for himself.

Working in the mill, the boss saw his ability to lift steel bars better than any of his other men. So, he started making the boy do more work.

As he did, he also started a farm once his sister was old enough.

They were happy. The boy worked on the farm during the morning and evening, while working in the steel mill during the day.

They weren't earning a lot, but it was sufficient.

As the boy grew older, he got stronger. He was passively enchanting his body, but he didn't know.

The boss, however, knew and made the boy work a lot more than usual while keeping the pay the same.

Then, tragedy struck. His sister came down with an illness that could not be cured easily.

He needed thousands of Gols worth of medicine, something he could never hope to have within his lifetime.

He tried asking his neighbors for help, but they didn't have the money. He asked his boss, but he refused to give him any.

In fact, the boss even cut his pay during the days when he stayed at home, looking after his sister.

Still, the boy couldn't do anything but watch his sister die. Once she was dead, he cremated her body and took her ashes to the place where he had heard legends of people being taken after death.

The peak of Afterlife.

It was a few weeks-long journeys, but he took it and gave a proper farewell to his sister.

Finally, he returned back home. The first thing he did after coming back was going to the boss to tell him where he had been for the past few weeks.

However, when he got there, the boss told him that because of his disappearance, the mill had lost money and that money was docked from his pay that he had yet to receive. In fact, if he wanted to work again, he would have to work a couple of more weeks without any payment to pay back for the loss.

The boy left the place angrily and went back home. He didn't need to work in such a place. He now knew how to farm, so he would be fine.

However, when he returned to his farm, he realized that it was not there anymore. The farm he had owned since childhood with his sister was now owned by someone else.

When he went to find out who it was, he was stunned. It was the boss.

The boss seemed to have been eying the land for quite a while, so when he saw the chance after the boy and his sister stopped working on it for a while, he took it.

Anger flared in the boy's eyes. Not only did the boss take away his pay, but he also took away the only other thing that his sister cared about.

So, in his anger, he went to kill the boss.

If Hans wasn't accidentally there, he would've likely succeeded in killing the boss.

However, life wasn't so fair towards the young boy.

Ning sighed once he read through the information. 'No wonder he thought of us like that. To his eyes, we were just like the boss, using our powers to hurt him,' he thought.

However, whatever the young man thought, he didn't deserve to die.

Ning went to the boss and captured him. He made the boss confess everything to the tower, and before long sent him to the prison where the boy was supposed to go.

"So that's what happened huh?" Hans said as he learned everything as well. "That's quite unfortunate."

Ning nodded.

"Well, his is not the only unfortunate story," Hans said, looking around at the empty desks where the others used to sit.

"They died too, they got hurt too," Hans said. "If the prisoners weren't strong, if the bad guys didn't get stronger, this would've never happened."

Ning was about to nod when he realized where Hans was going with his train of thought.

"If only that bastard that called himself the Apostle of Alexis never publicly revealed how to get stronger with Aether, we would've never gone through this trouble."

Chapter 498: Plans

Ning fell silent. He didn't know what to say.

At some level, he realized that this was all partly his fault. He had known that revealing the absorption technique to the world would have some level of negative effect, not he society with people being drunk off of power.

However, that was just a distant thought for him at the time. It was like learning about a car accident on the news.

You would feel a little bad for the ones that got into the accident, but not think for a second more.

However, if the accident were to happen right in front of you, that was when you felt the horror of what an accident was like.

To Ning, the problems his scrolls would cause were simply part of daily life. Something that was bound to happen.

However, when he saw it first hand, he truly realized that his actions had consequences.

He had been so focused on taking down the Tower, that he didn't stop to think for more than a moment if he really should have.

"He's dead now. There's no point in cursing a dead man," Waxil said as he walked by Hans and Ning.

Ning looked up and he could see the slight trauma the man felt from killing an innocent person.

"It's dark outside. Your shifts have ended. Go back home and rest," Waxil told them and moved away.

Ning finally looked out, and realize that the day had already turned to evening. He didn't realize where the hours had gone by.

He slowly walked back home, his mood a little better, but the guilt was still there.

He knew that it wasn't him that caused most of what had happened. But... the small part that was his fault made him feel bad.

He returned to the empty home, Alexis already gone somewhere.

Ning didn't have the heart to train for the day, so he went to his room to sleep. It had been a long day.

He lay on his bed for nearly 3 hours unable to sleep. The events of the day still played in his head.

"I brought this to the world," he thought, his face somber. But then, his face changed with resolve appearing on it. "Then I will fix it."

He stood back up from his bed and started thinking of how he could fix it.

Plan 1. Remove all knowledge of the Aether absorption technique from everyone's head.

"No, that won't work. I don't have nearly enough energy for that," he thought. He remembered erasing just a little bit of memory of the Emperor back in Xandria for not a lot of energy.

But multiplying that amount by nearly 4 billion of this world's population. That would give him a heart attack.

Plan 1 was all he could come up with for the moment. He needed to think some more.

The system wasn't helpful either. It wouldn't tell him much about Aether itself, but he could learn more about using Aether.

So, he bought higher-tiered knowledge of the Aether knowledge he already had and used Aether in other ways.

One of the things he learned from this new set of knowledge was how to create a storage item to keep things.

Surprisingly, the way to make them was something he had never would've expected it to be.

'You can do that?' he thought. However, while the knowledge was interesting, he skipped it for now since that wasn't very helpful to his current situation.

Plan 2. Teach good people how to fight so that they can protect themselves against the bad ones.

There were flaws in this plan as well. Not only was it very hard to teach a lot of people, but it also had the same problem that teaching everyone the scrolls had.

That being Ning could not tell who was good and who was bad. More importantly, he couldn't tell who would turn bad after learning it.

Besides, it would take years to teach people all over the world.

Plan 2 was a no-go.

Plan 3 was gone before it was even formed. He wanted to do something like make formations, but that was impossible with Aether.

Only Qi could make formations... as far as he knew. There were dozens of different extra energy in the world that could also make formations, but Aether wasn't it.

As for Plan 4... Ning had no idea. With midnight falling over the world like a veil of darkness, Ning returned inside to sleep.

He woke up in the morning and saw Alexis outside the house on her chair. He could never tell when she came and go.

He walked up to her and decided to ask the goddess the question.

"Don't be sad," she said before he could even say anything. The goddess always somehow knew what he was thinking.

"I know you feel like you've done the world a terrible disservice by introducing the scrolls, and while the crime rate had indeed increased by over 300% in the last 10 weeks, there is also the fact that you have empowered a lot of good people too."

"As evil rises, there will always be good that rises along with it too to vanquish it," she said.

Ning nodded. He needed to hear it.

"Is there a way to repel Aether from an area?" Ning asked. That was the Plan 3 he wanted to do with formations before he remembered formations didn't work here.

"Repel?" Alexis asked. She knew everything he would ask and think before he did, but she still liked to act like she only just heard what he wanted to ask.

"Yes, repelling Aether," Ning asked. If anyone knew anything about it, it would surely be the Goddess of Aether.

"Unfortunately, there is no way to repels aether," she said.

Ning felt saddened when he heard this. Was there really no way?

"But... repelling Aether is not your objective, is it?" she asked.

Ning looked confused. "What do you mean?" he asked.

Alexis smiled a brilliant smile.

"There are ways to achieve what you want without Repelling aether. In fact, you just have to do the opposite."

Chapter 499: Attraction

Ning frowned for a moment. 'Opposite?' he thought. 'Not repel? How am I supposed to keep Aether away by not rep—'

He understood what she was trying to say. 'I need something to attract Aether away from a location,' he thought.

"Hurray! You got it!" Alexis said from the side.

"How?" Ning asked.

She smiled again. "That's for you to figure out. Now go on, or you will be late for work."

Ning had the urge to skip work for today to make the goddess answer his questions, but they needed him at work today.

Ning sighed and left the place. He wouldn't see Alexis until tomorrow morning now, so unless he could come up with answers today, he would have to ask her again tomorrow after 36 hours.

Ning made his way to the tower with million thoughts in his mind.

'If repelling is not the way, but attracting is, what attacks Aether?' Ning wondered.

'Should I use Gravity at one point to pull every— No, that pulls everything, not just Aether. That won't work,' he thought.

'Attract... Magnetic energy? Magnets don't attract Aether at all,' he thought.

What other ways were there?

He asked the system for ways, but the system said that the information had something to do with the Origin of this planet, so it didn't help him.

'The origin of this planet?' Ning thought with surprise. He didn't think the answer would be common, but he didn't think it was so uncommon.

'What could it be?' he thought.

He soon got busy with work and couldn't think about it for much longer.

He had to go through the funerals of the dead and then return to the tower to help with construction.

The civilians came to help them as well, which was quite surprising to Ning. However, they needed every help they could get.

After about 5 hours, the tower was back to looking as good as new.

Ning went back to his table to stay and got back to work. Just then, a man walked into the tower.

He stood at the entrance and looked around until he saw Ning. Then, he limped his way towards Ning.

"Officer," he called out to Ning when he got close.

Ning was busy thinking about the thing to help with his Aether problem, so he didn't notice the man get close.

Only after he was called the second time did he realize someone had appeared in front of him. When he looked up at the man, he realized that it was the same man from yesterday who he had caught stealing vegetables from a neighbor's farm.

"Oh, you came on your own?" Ning asked with surprise.

"Officer, you said this could help me... right?" he asked. He was still not sure if this was the right thing to do, but if what Ning had said was true, he needed this.

"Yes, yes," Ning said and took out a form to fill.

He asked the man some basic questions about himself and took a statement of the crime he committed.

Once he was all done, Ning gave him a punishment of 30 days in prison.

He took the form to get the approval of 5 different officers in the tower.

There was no judge in this city, so instead, they just needed the approval of 5 other officers to give out punishment.

Once Ning got it, he took the man to the cell and put him there. He looked at the other people there that were either sad or injured from yesterday's event.

Some of them had killed people, and would likely get the death penalty for it. There was nothing Ning could do about them.

However, he could stop it all from happening again to someone else.

Once his work was over, he returned home. As expected, Alexis was missing again.

He sat down on his bed, not sleeping. He felt the bottleneck he was stuck on and knew that he needed to break through now as it was the perfect opportunity.

Ning started breathing in and out slowly as he felt the aether in his Sea of Aether slosh around while being nearly full to the brim.

He absorbed the Aether just a little realized that there wasn't much Aether in the surroundings to help him breakthrough.

So, he teleported to the Aether forest where there would be a lot of it.

Once he absorbed enough, the Aether went into his Sea, and he used that sea to push through his channels to breakthrough.

He was now an Aether King.

Ning looked at himself in surprise, his eyes so wide that they were almost circular.

Ning didn't need to be shocked for reaching the Aether King realm. That was easy. With how much Aether his automatic and manual absorption technique collected, it was simply a matter of time.

However, what did shock him was the fact that he had learned of the thing that attracted Aether.

Yes, humans could collect aether with a good absorption method and that would work in some cases, but not all.

What he was shocked about was the thing he has collected in his Sea of Aether just now.

Not the Aether, but rather the liquid that contained Aether.

He either needed to make something that collected Aether, or... he needed to make that liquid itself to collect Aether.

Ning returned home and waited for Alexis to arrive. He waited for hours on end when suddenly, he heard, "it seems you figured it out. And it didn't even take you a full day. I can't lie, I'm a little proud of you."

Alexis had once more returned without his knowledge.

Ning quickly walked outside to see Alexis on the chair. "So that is it? The liquid?" he asked.

"Yes," she said. "Just get the liquid and the Aether will always more towards it."

Ning excitedly asked. "How do I make one?"

"You can't," she said. "But I can show you how to get some."

With that, the world around Ning shifted, and he found that both he and Alexis had teleported.

Chapter 500: Origin of Vilmore

When Ning reappeared, he was in the middle of what looked like a really foggy region. however, it was way too hot to be foggy. There was a massive sun in the sky, but that was likely not the reason for this fog. which lead him to believe that he was actually in the middle of a bunch of steam.

Suddenly, he lost all feelings of gravity in his body as he started free falling.

He immediately caught himself and started flying normally. He looked around to catch the sight of Alexis flawlessly floating through the air, the water vapor parting around her, not daring to taint a single spot on her body with their moisture.

"Let's go down," she said. The two of them floated down until they were atop a small piece of land.

Ning looked around in shock. The land looked like nothing but an island with a single volcano on top of it.

The brown, rocky piece of land was really warm. Ning really believed a volcano would erupt at any moment here.

Most of the area was covered in dense fog and was hard to see.

Alexis took him and walked towards the mouth of the volcano. Ning walked along with her and slowly ascended the mountain.

"Is... this the Origin?" he asked. He had wanted to come here for so long, and finally, he was here. To top it all off, it was the goddess who had brought him here.

Ning took a mental image of the location and tried to find it on the map he had, but he couldn't find it.

'It must be in a folded space as well,' he thought.

"Yes, it is," Alexis said. "Not only is it in a folded space, but there is also a seal around the place as well."

"You might think you will come back here when I take you back, but you won't," she said.

"Eh? A seal?" Ning asked with a bit of surprise. "And you can open this seal?"

Alexis smiled at him. "Of course. I put the seal here after all."

Ning's eyes threatened to bulge out of its sockets. "You put a seal around this place?" he asked.

"Yes," she said. "I don't really like it when people come in here, so I made it impossible to get in using any method."

Ning looked around. He wondered if this was the source of her godhood and that was why she didn't want anyone to come here.

"I learned my lesson pretty well last time," she said, almost absentmindedly.

"Your lesson?" he asked.

"Yes," Alexis said. "I had another seal prepared where I didn't want anyone to go to. However, preparing a seal where no one could enter cost me a lot of power. So, I had decided to skimp out a little and let some flaws there."

"I ended up making a seal where no living being could enter," she said.

"And the flaw?" Ning asked, and even as he did, An answer came to his mind.

"Yes," she said, reading the answer in his mind. "Since no living being could enter, people entered using dead people. I was quite distraught when I realized that."

"But the seal was already made, and I couldn't really change it," she said.

"You made the seal around the Peak of Afterlife?" he asked in surprise.

"Yes, and you destroyed it," Alexis said with a hollow voice

Alexis said nothing and continued walking. Ning started thinking about what he had just learned when he realized he had reached the top of the mountain and was now looking into the mouth of the vol—

It wasn't a volcano. Ning was wrong.

"The hell?" he asked in surprise as he tried to peer through the upcoming waves of steam to see what he was really looking at.

Alexis waved her hand and a gust of air took away the steam at the bottom of the crater.

When it went away, Ning could finally see a large pool of shimmering white liquid at the bottom of the crater.

The pool reminded him of the liquid Qi pool in the Origin of Kumia. However, while that was a pool of Qi, this one... wasn't a pool of Aether at all.

There was no energy in that pool aside from a bit of heat to turn it into vapor and...

Ning finally saw it. At the bottom of the lake, there was a large hole that looked like a portal, the same as the one at the bottom of the lake in Kumia.

That was the portal to the world of Energy where even he as an immortal had a very high likelihood of dying.

Ning subconsciously took a step back in fear, but still stuck his head out to look at the slightly purple color of just a small section of the lake.

"Aether is coming from there," Alexis pointed and said. "But... you knew that already, didn't you?"

Ning nodded.

"You keep surprising me with your knowledge," she said. She looked back towards the pool and continued explaining.

"That liquid right there is nothing but water, mixed with a special mineral that can only be found on this mountain."

"The mineral dissolves into the hot spring down there, which then becomes the liquid that absorbs Aether. From what I know, there are many other minerals out there that can make the Aether Liquid, but only this mineral is available on this planet," Alexis said.

Ning nodded as he came to an understanding. "So it the mixture of water and that mineral that makes the liquid that absorbs Aether, huh?" he said.

He would need this liquid to make the things that would stop people from collecting Aether.

"I don't necessarily need the liquid, do I?" he asked as he looked at the side of the mountain. "I just need the minerals."

"Yes," Alexis said.

"Depending on the amount of mineral in the liquid, it may or may not have a really high capacity of carrying Aether. If you want a liquid that gathers a massive amount of Aether, including the one from other Aether liquid already in the air, you will have to make a really concentrated liquid."

Ning nodded while listening to her. He looked at the bottom of the pool once more and realized that the Aether liquid that was supposed to be purple wasn't really purple at all.

"Go and get as many as you can from anywhere on this island," Alexis told him.

Ning nodded and left the place to get the minerals.

It took him no more than a few minutes to realize that the entire land was made up of the same mineral as the one in the crater.

Someplace had a higher amount and someplace had a lower amount, so he went on to find locations that had a lot of it.

He started digging in the rocky ground that was soft as a cake under his Aether King enchanted body. The shovel dug into the rock like a knife entering a bread and easily pulled out the contents inside of it.

Then, he stored the minerals in his storage.

In just a matter of minutes, he had enough mineral to make that pond's worth of Aether liquid of the highest concentration.

He walked back up to the top of the mountain with Alexis still waiting there.

She looked solemn, with not a single smile on her face.

"What's wrong?" Alex asked.

"So beautiful," she said as she looked into the shimmering lights beneath the pool of Aether liquid.

"Don't go in there. That is very dangerous," Ning cautioned her.

"I know," She said. "I've touched it and felt it try to devour me. I won't make that mistake again."

Ning tried to ask her what it was like, but then he saw a teardrop from her face. He stopped.

"What's wrong?" he asked.

As if that were the key to the sea, the floodgates opened and tears streamed down both of her eyes.

"I'm dying," she said. "I have been dying for a while now, and I can't stop at all."

Ning froze. At first, he thought he heard her wrong. How could a god die? Weren't they gods because they couldn't die?

He wasn't a god, and even he couldn't die, without special circumstances.

However, he knew he could trust his hearing and thus the words he heard coming out of Alexis' mouth.

She was dying.

"Are you sure?" Ning asked.

Alexis nodded. She nodded while the tears streamed down her face constantly.

"I don't know what to do," she said. "I have been losing my mind a lot of the time recently. I can't even stay awake a whole day anymore and have to disappear to gather my consciousness before returning back."

"I don't want to regress back to the time when I couldn't think at all," Alexis said.

Ning tried to comfort her. "I'm sure we can find a way around this," he said.

"No, there is no way. I know everything, and therefore, I know that there is no way," she said.

Ning didn't want to believe that. He had never been in a situation where there was no solution to a problem.

Most of the time the solutions were horrible, and the worst choice, but they were still solutions.

"Do you know what is causing you to regress back to this unconscious state then? If we know how it is happening, then maybe we can fix it," Ning said.

Alexis nodded. "I know the reason," she said.

Ning smiled and asked, "What is it?"

She turned towards him, with red eyes full of anger, and said, "YOU!"