

## Death 1151

Death... and me

Chapter 1151: Taking Control

Rean's charge surprised his enemy. He didn't think Rean would make it through his Flying Sword Array like that. Without much choice, he could only open distance from Rean and his clones while attacking. He was a range-type cultivator, after all. However, he truly underestimated the speed Rean could achieve with his enhancement ability.

Rean kicked the water under his feet and advanced much faster than the enemy retreated. As for the flying swords, he and his clones disposed of them all with Three Claws of the Dragon. Rean could have used the Reversive Arcs to defend himself. However, it was easier to advance if he attacked back.

Eventually, Rean arrived at his enemy's range. 'You aren't the only one with ranged attacks.'

'Death Style, First Form, Stellar Piercer!'

"What?!"

The guy was taken aback as he saw that ray of Dark and Light Element coming in his direction. His only choice was to recall a few of his flying swords and use them to block the Stellar Piercer.

\*Clang, clang, clang...\*

However, because there wasn't anyone holding the flying swords, there wasn't a counterforce to fight against the Stellar Piercer. With that, he needed five flying swords to finally dispel the Stellar Piercer's strength. However, Rean didn't stop there.

Stellar Piercer, Stellar Piercer, Stellar Piercer, Stellar Piercer...

As Rean moved forward, more and more Stellar Piercers came out nonstop. That forced Rean's enemy to recall all his flying swords for the sake of defense alone. In the end, he could only send a Divine Sense Message to his companions. 'Help me here! This guy is crazy strong! I won't be able to hold back for long!'

However, when he noticed his companions' situation, his face went pale. Milina wasn't holding back at all on her Divine Energy expenditure, so she was overwhelming her opponent. From the looks of it, that guy needed a lot more help than him.

As for Samanta and Regio's opponent, he did have the advantage, but just slightly. After all, he was fighting two-on-one. There was no way he could detach himself from Regio and Samanta anytime soon, let alone help someone else. 'Fuck, where are Tinbik and Hemou? Why haven't they gotten the flag back yet?'

Well, they didn't bring it back because they didn't get it. Roan had used his Death Scythe against Tinbik, who dispelled his defensive skill. Because he thought that Hemou was fighting Roan, he didn't expect to be attacked at that moment.

Nevertheless, he was a member of the Holang Country and was able to turn around fast enough once Roan appeared in his Divine Sense's range. Unfortunately, he didn't have time to put up a good defense. No, to be more specific, Tinbik didn't even know how to defend against someone using a scythe. He had never seen anyone use that kind of weapon to start with.

\*Swish!\*

Tinbik tried to use his weapon to deflect Roan's Death Scythe, but it was all in vain. The scythe moved at an angle that he didn't know how to react, making him miss the right spot. The blade of the scythe began to penetrate his body when suddenly, his protective device activated, saving his life. Tinbik was the first person out of this battle.

Roan then turned around and charged at Hemou, who was fighting his clones. Normally, Hemou would have the advantage against clones with only 80% of the original body's power. Not to mention that the clones didn't have real scythes. However, he also didn't know how to fight against that kind of weapon, so he was having a hard time there.

Once Roan arrived, things became even worse for him to the point that he gave up on the flag and tried to leave Roan's Death World. After all, he was at least able to see his friend's defeat under Roan's hands. Too bad that it didn't work out for him. The Death World skill was something that had Roan as the center. The moment Hemou tried to flee, Roan followed him. Naturally, Death World did the same.

Sure, Hemou was a Water Element user. He could definitely move faster underwater than Roan. It's just that every time he tried to escape, one of Roan's clones would bar his way. The real one also kept harassing him from behind, making Hemou spend a lot of his strength to just dodge and defend attacks. Last but not least, Roan also used the Water Compression skill to make Hemou's life a living hell. 'Fuck! No one told me that this small fry country had such monsters helping them!'

Back at Rean's side, he finally got close enough to use his close-range skills. His clones, who also had the same black and white hair, joined the fray as well.

'Death Style, Three Claws of the Dragon!'

'Death Style, Fourth Form, Soaring Dragon!'

'Death Style...'

Rean and his clones used different skills, forcing the guy to defend in various ways from many sides. The lack of counterforce in his flying swords also worsened the situation. Eventually, Rean saw an opening in the guy's Flying Sword Array and didn't let the chance pass up!

'Stellar Piercer!'

\*Arrrgh!\*

Without being able to defend against it, the Stellar Piercer began to penetrate his right shoulder until it left through the other side. It wasn't an injury bad enough to force the activation of the Protective Device. Nevertheless, it definitely started a chain reaction.

Rean was using the Elemental Exchange with Roan, so his Stellar Piercer had Dark Element, which immediately began to destroy the guy's life force.

He couldn't focus on the defense as well as he did previously, so more and more injuries with Dark Element hit his body. The result was obvious, the threshold for the protective device to activate was achieved, and he was immediately enveloped by a barrier that Rean could break through.

"Well, that means he's out of combat." Rean, of course, had nothing against it.

He then looked at Milina and her opponent. However, he saw Milina go after the enemy's flag. As for her enemy, he was nowhere to be seen. Only after paying good attention to the surroundings did he see the guy fleeing. "Oh! Guess I'll just go help Samanta and Regio."

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Chapter 1152: 21 Points

Samanta and Regio were still holding their opponent back, although they were at a definite disadvantage. However, the guy also paid attention to the battlefield and saw how his companion fled from Milina. Let alone the fact that Rean defeated his. 'Fuck! Where the hell did those two come from? The ones fighting me aren't anything special, but the other two are too overpowered!'

Suddenly, he received a Divine Sense Message from his companion that fled from Milina. 'Stop wasting time there. The white-haired guy is coming for you. Don't get forced to use the protective barrier. Unfortunately, this field is just too terrible for us.' Well, this field was also terrible for Rean's team, so they didn't really have the right to complain. 'Save your Divine Energy for the next match. Parvin's main team definitely won't be an easy match either.'

He could see Rean kicking the water to approach him quickly. If he waited too long, he would be surrounded by three opponents at the same time. Let alone that Milina might come at him as well. 'Fine! Where the hell is Hemou and Tinbik? They're both Water Element users! Shouldn't they be back with the enemy's flag by now?'

Well, little did they know that Roan had just finished the second guy underwater. It's just that they were so deep that even Roan's Death World couldn't be seen from the surface. Yes, Roan left his flag unprotected. Too bad that no one would be able to take it anyway. Holang Country only had two cultivators remaining that fled from Rean.

Even if they went after Rean's team flag, Rean's group already got their own. Without their own flag, it was impossible to finish the battle. Let alone when Roan joined them. It would be useless to go after Rean's team flag.

Samanta and Regio finally let out sighs of relief when their opponent fled. "Phew...thankfully, Milina and Rean won against their opponents. We wouldn't be able to hold that guy for much longer."

Regio agreed with Samanta. "As expected of a top country. Even two of us isn't enough to fight him on the same level. Let alone the fact that he is a Fire Element user. After all, this is an ocean field. His power definitely wasn't just that."

Rean then approached Samanta and Regio before asking, "How are your injuries?" He could see that they did receive quite some damage from their battle. Especially Samanta, who fought that guy head-on while Regio only offered support.

"We're fine. However, we could do with your healing skill." Samanta obviously wouldn't reject Rean's help in this matter.

Rean smiled and began to heal both of them. A moment later, Milina arrived with the enemy's flag on their side. "Alright, with their flag in our hands, we won't lose. Anyways, let's go back to our flag to finish it."

However, Regio and Rean were taken aback when they saw Milina. They didn't notice it at first because she was far away. However, now that she was close, they could finally see it. There was no more fat in her body. No, to be more precise, there was no more Divine Energy instead. She was as slim as a healthy girl could be. And...she truly looked beautiful!

Samanta was the only one who didn't look surprised. Samanta and Milina had known each other for quite some time, so Samanta had seen her in that form before. "Oh, it seems like you spent all the Divine Energy in your body, huh?"

Milina nodded in response. "I had to if I wanted to scare that guy away. Just a little bit more, and my power would fall to the Peak Stage of the Soul Transformation Realm. Well, he doesn't know that, so it's fine." Milina then warned them, "However, the way I am right now, I'm weaker than Regio and Samanta. Don't expect me to fight at the Saint Realm level anymore."

It was then that she noticed that Rean and Regio were still looking at her body, which made her feel a little embarrassed. "Ahem... aren't you two looking way too much?"

Rean snapped out of his daze and rubbed the back of his head, telling her, "Senior Fabio wasn't lying. You truly look great without the Divine Energy inflating your body."

Regio nodded vigorously. Even he, who usually didn't show much emotion, was dazzled by that.

Milina obviously felt happy to hear that. "Hehe! You better not fall in love with me, though."

Rean immediately shook his head. "That won't happen. I already have someone I like and have no intention of betraying her."

That was the first time Samanta, Milina, and Regio heard about that. "Really? How is she?"

Rean shook his head in response, telling them, "I'll talk about it another time. For now, let's go back to our flag."

By the time they arrived, Roan was already back as well. Not that it was necessary as the two remaining participants didn't dare to battle anymore. Eventually, a Divine Sense Message reached everyone when they put both flags together. 'Kamos Country has brought the enemy's flag back. The match is over. The victory goes to Kamos Country!'

Following that, everyone was teleported through the spatial door in the waiting room. Their battle seemed to have been the one that lasted the longest. The other team had already left the spatial doors and were resting.

Rean's group then looked at the scoring board. Tenke Country was still first, with Venali's Huring Country in second. Rean's group had won all matches up to this point, so they had the same 21 points as them. By now, less than 60 countries had a full score of 21 points, so they could be said to be in a good position. In Rean's group, only his team and Klacks Country had that. The next opponent, obviously, would be Klacks Country.

The battles continued, and the seventh round was over. In the eighth round, Tenke and Huring kept their positions. As for Rean's team, it was time to face the strongest team among their ten country group.

Hedoi obviously saw that Rean's team defeated Holang, just like his own team did. Because of that, he threw away any thoughts of underestimating them.

"Next matches! Number 91 and 93. Number Ninety..."

Without wasting time, Rean and Hedoi's team entered their spatial door. It was better to get over with it.

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Chapter 1153: Thanks for the Meal

The teleportation was over, and they soon appeared in the new field where everything was as dark as it could get. It was truly impossible to see anything with one's eyes at all! Rean's group then focused on the maps in their minds and finally found where they were.

"It seems like we're inside a range of caves. However, there's no life in this place as far as we can see. That's why everything is completely black," Rean explained.

"That's not all," Roan mentioned. "Divine Sense is also restricted here. Even I can't expand mine more than a meter away."

Regio, Samanta, and Milina nodded in agreement. They were also having the same problem with their Divine Senses.

Soon after, Regio gathered Fire Element and created a fireball above his hand. However, he quickly noticed that the light of the fireball barely illuminated anything. "It seems like the darkness in this place isn't simple."

Roan nodded and said, "It isn't. There is an abundance of Dark Element and Yin Energy in this place. It inhibits the propagation of light. As you can see, the light from your fireball doesn't go further than two or three meters before the light is completely consumed."

Samanta couldn't help but sigh after hearing that. "We're already up against a terrible team, the main team of Klacks Country. On top of that, Klacks Country is known for its Dark Element skills. Isn't this field just perfect for them? I can't see us winning this match at all. Perhaps we should just give up straight away and take the points of the next country."

Milina agreed with Samanta. "We're in the top 10 already. Even if we lose one battle, we'll still be inside the top 60 comfortably. When I looked at the scoring board outside, the country in 60th place only had 15 points. We're already 6 points ahead."

Of course, it was an environment that gave all members of Klacks Country an advantage. However, the same could be said for Rean and Roan. It's just that Milina, Regio, and Samanta couldn't make use of it as they could. Rean then talked with Roan through their Soul Connection. 'What do you think? I don't really see a point in battling in this place as we're pretty much guaranteed into entering the Sacred Land.'

Roan pondered in silence for a bit before saying, 'True. However, it's also a good opportunity for training. Since we can't be crippled or killed, we should take this chance.'

'What about Samanta and the others?' Rean asked after that. Sure enough, they were the main problem, especially Milina, who returned to her original size.

Roan looked at Samanta, Regio, and Milina before saying, "Let's do it like th-" Suddenly, Roan's expression changed as he brought his scythe out.

'Death Style, Third Form, Three Claws of the Dragon!'

\*Swish, swish, swish!\*

The three slashes went directly at Samanta. However, they didn't hit her. Instead, they seemed to cut something that was attached to her meridians' entrances.



\*Gasp...\*

Samanta then fell on the ground, gasping for air as fear appeared in her face. Just a second ago, she had lost control over her body completely, and she didn't even know why!

Roan then looked in a certain direction before asking, "Is there really a need to hide? Since you're here, why don't you show your face?"

Regio was taken aback and immediately increased the size of his fireball, allowing the light to expand two or three more meters.

"Hahaha!" A cold laugh came from a few meters away as Hedoi's entire group came out of the shadows. "Impressive, impressive! You were the first person in this recruitment to destroy my marionette manipulation ability. Let alone the fact that you did it in such an environment."

Samanta quickly got up and stayed beside Roan. Regio and Milina were also ready to battle. However, it was obvious in their faces how shocked they were. 'How did they get here so fast?'

'They must have moved out right after the teleport was over. They completely ignored everything else and came here. In any case, that was a hell of a quick move.'

'They knew they had the advantage in this fight. Look, all five are here. Klacks Country isn't even bothering defending their flag.'

All of that was said through Divine Sense Messages, so just a moment was taken for all those words.

Roan then snorted at Hedoi as he rotated his scythe. "You call that impressive? Those threads of yours were made of Yin Energy and Dark Element. I have Dark Element Affinity, you know? For me, they're as bright as the sun itself."

Hedoi smiled in response. "Is that so? Then, let's see if you can stay away from my control."

Roan smirked and lowered his scythe while looking at Hedoi with an expression of disdain. "Sure thing. I won't even defend myself, nor will I dodge. Go ahead and try using it."

"What?!"

Let alone Rean's team, even Hedoi and his companions were taken aback. Roan just let his guard down! Was he crazy? Of course, there were two who didn't find it surprising, Rean and Sister Orb. 'He's definitely planning something.'

[Yes. I know that disdain expression way too much.]

Hedoi's smile then disappeared completely. He felt like Roan was making fun of his ability. "Very well. I shall use these 15 minutes of the match to make you torture yourself plenty. I'll also make you do the same with your friends. I might not be able to kill or cripple all of you, but I can definitely make you suffer like the others."

Right after that, Hedoi's hands moved. However, other than Rean and Roan, no one else could see what was happening. That's because Hedoi's threads blended with the darkness. It was hard to see those threads even with Divine Sense!

Even with that, Roan kept up a cold smile as the threads entered his meridians' entrances. They were so thin that one couldn't even feel pain. That's why Samanta didn't notice it until it was too late. Fortunately, Roan saved her.

Hedoi's group members knew what was going to happen, so they didn't even move either. The rule was to not bother Hedoi unless he said so.

However, Hedoi's expression turned into utter disbelief as Roan licked his lips. "Thanks for the meal."

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Chapter 1154: I need him at all costs

"A-Attack him! Kill him immediately!"

Gala and the other three were taken aback by Hedoi's sudden shriek. However, they knew something bad happened when Hedoi connected his marionette threads with Roan.

They all took their weapons and immediately charged at Roan.

Rean smiled in response, knowing what Roan was doing before he took his Black Star out. "Stop them! We can win this fight now that Roan is holding their leader back!"

Samanta, Regio, and Milina didn't know what was happening, but they could only grit their teeth and attack as well. However, they couldn't help but think, 'So what if their leader is caught? The other four are definitely stronger than us. Rean is the only one who can possibly fight one of them on equal grounds.'

Indeed, Gala and the others felt enraged to hear Rean telling his teammates to stop them. "Hmph! I want to see how you four will stop us. Die already!"

However, what Gala and his companions didn't expect was that at that moment, Hedoi took out his weapon and attacked his own team from behind instead!

\*Swish, swish, swish!\*

Hedoi's sword moved too quickly and was way too sudden! Besides, even if they noticed Hedoi charging to attack, they simply thought that he would attack Rean's team anyway. The possibility of Hedoi attacking them didn't even pass through their heads!

That wasn't all. Rean knew that Roan had control over Hedoi. To make sure that Hedoi's companions didn't notice, he immediately shouted those words. It was all so that no one would see the moment Roan acted while controlling Hedoi instead. Obviously, Rean wanted to keep the rest of the enemies' attention on his group.

In the end, Hedoi forced two of his member's protective devices to activate so that they wouldn't die! The battle started just a few seconds ago, but two of Klacks Country's people were already out!

Samanta, Regio, and Milina were as dumbfounded as Gala and his other remaining companion. However, they noticed the incredible chance that appeared before them and charged with even more vigor at their enemies!

With Hedoi, Rean, Regio, Milina, and Samanta attacking together, those two guys had no chance of victory, so they immediately tried to escape. Unfortunately for them, only Gala succeeded in leaving the encirclement. The other one died from the focused assault, without having a chance to break out at all!

Eventually, Gala disappeared in the darkness while Roan gave his order. "Leave him be. This battle is already over."

Milina, Regio, and Samanta immediately nodded and looked at Roan. No, to be more specific, they were looking at Hedoi, who had a terrible expression on his face. It was obvious that he did all of that against his own will.

Roan then snorted at him, saying, "You truly are an idiot. No, I guess it's wrong to say that. After all, if it wasn't me, this technique of yours would indeed be very effective. Today I learned a lot."

Samanta couldn't help but ask, "What did you do? How come he was the one to be controlled and not you?"

Roan didn't mind explaining as he knew Hedoi had already figured out what he did. "His Marionette Control used threads of Yin and Dark Energy to control the opponent. These threads are extremely thin, so they're hard to see. Anyways, they will pierce through your meridians' entrances and take control of the nerves that control your body. The threads do that by using Dark Element to cut your own connection to those body parts."

"However, to do that, Hedoi has to do the same with himself. Although it looks like he was using his hands, in fact, the threads that assaulted me are coming from all the meridians' entrances over his body. They are connected to the same nerves that he tried to cut my connection with."

Roan then looked at Hedoi before continuing, "Unfortunately for him, the one who controls the other depends on who's better at controlling both Yin Energy and Dark Element. He probably thought that no one else in this recruitment would be better than him. At most, he would find someone with a similar

level of control. If that was the case, the technique would be canceled, and he would need to fight with other skills, so it was a safe bet if you'd ask me."

"Obviously, I'm better than him. Isn't that right, Hedoi?" Roan asked while patting Hedoi's shoulder. Hearing Roan's words, saying that he was better made Hedoi almost vomit blood. However, he couldn't do so as he was still being controlled.

Roan continued, "Of course, even if you aren't better than Hedoi in these two requisites, you can still avoid being controlled. For example, cutting the threads as I did would be enough as long as you can see where to hit them. Or perhaps generate a small Divine Energy barrier, impeding the threads from passing through. As I said, the threads are very thin and hard to detect, which means they are also very weak. Any run-of-the-mill protection that can cover your entire body is enough to stop it."

Roan understood after that. "No wonder they came at us as quickly as they did. It had nothing to do with the environment, although the environment really helped them. It was all so that Hedoi could take us with our guards down and control our bodies."

Samanta, Regio, and Milina were really impressed by that.

Well, they weren't the only ones. Gille, back in the guest hall, also watched this match, and so did most of the people there. Seeing Roan reveal the secrets of Hedoi's abilities made him feel horrible. That was one of the secret techniques of the Blood Path. Not many people were supposed to know about its flaws. Well, the first flaw where one had to have better control over Dark Element and Yin Energy didn't matter much. After all, their top disciples would always be in that position of best control. The problem was the information about any barrier being enough to stop it.

However, he quickly calmed down before looking at Roan with greed in his eyes, thinking to himself, 'I need him at all costs.'

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Chapter 1155: Ancestor Paulo

Milina couldn't help but ask, "How did you find out about the flaw in his abilities?"

Sure enough, even Hedoi's expression changed as he also wanted to know that.

Roan shrugged his shoulders as he replied, "I didn't really know. All I knew was that his ability used Yin Energy and Dark Element. That being said, I decided to let him use his skill on me so that I could test whether it worked on a Dark Affinity cultivator or not. Since we were already heading in the direction where we were going to give up on this battle, I might as well test his abilities out."

Roan continued, "I just didn't expect that by copying what he was trying to do with his marionette threads, I would take control over his body instead. That was totally out of my expectations. My idea was to see if I could recover my body's control once he had that skill working on me. Well, it worked, so that's what matters."

Hedoi felt like crying after hearing that. In the end, the guy didn't even aim for something like this. However, the problem now was that he was locked down. Well, he wouldn't die, nor would he be crippled. The protection device would prevent that from happening.

After replying to Milina's question, Roan looked at him and said, "Now then, what should I do with you?"

Rean then got an idea. "Hey, isn't everyone probably watching this match? How about we make him do some funny tricks? It's always good to entertain the public."

Hedoi was taken aback. He obviously preferred to be tortured than having people watch him humiliating himself.

Roan didn't care about such things, though. "Enough with the bullshit. It's quite unfortunate that I can't make him speak his own secrets. This technique isn't controlling the mind, only the body."

Rean found that strange, though. He couldn't help but ask through their Soul Connection. 'Can't you force him with your Dark Element?'

Roan shook his head. 'I can, but I don't want to show that it's possible now that everyone is looking.'

Rean understood and didn't ask again.

In the end, Roan simply held Hedoi there until time was up. Eventually, due to the match having ended with Rean's group having more members, they won. They were teleported through the spatial door once again and arrived at the waiting room.

Hedoi, obviously, was released from his own marionette skill. Roan took his spatial ring to see if he could find the skill book that explained how to use that marionette skill, perhaps a jade slip. Unfortunately, Hedoi didn't have it on his person.

Hedoi saw as the Sacred Land people brought his sealed companions away and then looked at Roan. "This isn't over. The marionette control is just a skill I use for fun as it's not effective against people with higher cultivation. Next time, don't expect me to make the same mistake."

Roan nodded, not caring too much. "Yeah, yeah. So be it."

The two teams separated, and Gala came to talk with Hedoi through Divine Sense. 'What will we do? The sect master definitely saw this defeat of ours. Do you think he's gonna kill all of us?'

Hedoi shook his head as he told Gala, 'No, he won't. Didn't you see? Their group already had 21 points when they fought us. Even if we won, they're pretty much guaranteed into the top 60. Besides, their next opponents are those pieces of trash from Tacon Country. There's no way they would lose to that. In the end, the chance to make them fail the recruitment had never shown itself. Sect master can't blame us for that.'

However, Hedoi looked at the three guys who were released from the protective device. 'However, he's probably gonna kill those three if he's too angry. Don't meddle with them too much as I can't guarantee your safety.'

Gala nodded after hearing that. 'Alright. Our next battle is basically decided, so we have also joined the Sacred Land with it. Let's focus on the next test.'

Back in the guest hall, Fabio simply couldn't wipe the smile on his face even if someone beat him. With the victories against both Holang and Klacks Country, his proteges would definitely join the Sacred Land. "When was the last time someone from our Kamos Kingdom joined the Sacred Land? Hahaha! I can't even remember as I wasn't born."

Haera knew that it was over. Her brother had truly found the perfect duo to bring him all the merit from the Sacred Land Recruitment. "The last person from our Kamos Kingdom to join was Ancestor Paulo. I wasn't born at that time either, as it was over 3000 years ago. However, as far as I know, our father has some contact with him. It seems like Ancestor Paulo is still a minor elder in the Sacred Land."

Suddenly, a voice echoed behind Haera's back in response to that. "Sorry for being a minor elder."

Haera almost jumped in fright. The man behind her appeared like a ghost, so she didn't notice at all. "An-Ancestor Paulo!" Haera had never seen the man up close, but her father did have his picture, so she recognized him immediately.

Paulo ignored Haera and looked at Fabio, asking, "Are those five your proteges, especially the twins?"

Fabio's expression immediately changed into one of respect as he bowed to Paulo. "Yes, Ancestor. This Fabio was lucky to find them in a small city of our Kamos Kingdom."

Paulo nodded before saying, "I shall pass that brat Varold a message, telling about your good eye for talents."

Fabio couldn't be happier to hear that. Not only was he going to receive a lot of attention, but even the Ancestor that they had in the Sacred Land was also recommending him. That didn't mean he would become king one day, but it was definitely an enormous step ahead. "Thank you, Ancestor Paulo."

The other princes and princesses were obviously dying of jealousy, but they didn't dare raise their voices.

Paulo looked at the scoring board and then back at Fabio. "Tell those five that I'll make the arrangements in the Sacred Land for them. I'm also looking forward to their performance in the next test." After that, he turned around and left before anyone could ask anything.

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Chapter 1156: What is It?



The ninth and last round passed by without major changes in the top of the scoring board. Tenke held its first position until the very end, helped both by Liana's strength and the fact that they didn't have any real enemies in their group. Venali's Huring Country finished in second with the same amount of points, twenty-seven.

Other than them, there were a total of 15 countries that succeeded in getting full points, including Rean's group. They also scored twenty-seven points by defeating Tacon Country in the last match. However, due to their victory's speed, their position was only seventh. Not that anyone would complain about it, of course. Anyone who got a full twenty-seven points couldn't be underestimated.

Klacks Country and even Rean's group's Holang Country also passed the test in the end. Holang won seven of its nine matches, so it was still twenty-one points, finishing in 55th position. Of course, this group wasn't the main one. The main group of Holang got nine victories and twenty-seven points, just like Rean's.

Cassia then called everyone's attention after the matches were over. "The three hundred people who will join the Sacred Land have been decided. Follow me back to the guests' hall."

Rean's group obviously returned to Fabio, who was all smiles. "Welcome back! You guys did great!"

Rean nodded and replied, "It was thanks to Senior Fabio's chance that we were able to try. We are in your debt here."

Fabio shook his head in response. "No, I gave those slots to you, thinking that none would enter the Sacred Land in the end. Never in my wildest dreams did I think five of you would pass it. It's quite unfortunate that Gulia died in the second test. Otherwise, she might have made it through as well."

Rean and the others sighed after hearing that, but they knew what they were signing up for when they accepted the recruitment token. None of them regretted their decisions.

Fabio then used his Divine Sense to tell everyone about their Ancestor Paulo. 'And that's what happened. In the future, you can count on Ancestor Paulo if you need help. He's just a minor elder in the Sacred Land, but it's better than not having any background.'

That came as a surprise for everyone. Nevertheless, it was good news, so they thanked Fabio once again.

Cassia saw that everyone was already back and decided to continue. "Alright, the three hundred cultivators who passed the test are already accepted into the Sacred Land. However, the Sacred Land isn't much different from a sect. We also have Outer, Inner, Core, and Legacy Disciples. The next test will determine whether you will become an Outer or Inner Land Disciple. As for the position of Core and Legacy Disciple, you will have to fight your way inside the Sacred Land to get there."

"Each of the categorizations will give you access to a different amount of resources, facilities, skill manuals, and cultivation techniques. That will also determine what kind of missions from the Sacred Land you can get. That being said, you better put your all as being an Inner Disciple is definitely the best choice!"

"Of the three hundred people, only ten will get into the Inner Sect. That's how hard it is. As for the test, it will be a comprehension examination. Everyone will be given the same set of skills, which are neutral in elemental nature. These skills were prepared by myself, so I'm sure none of you had seen them before. The ten disciples who succeed in executing those skills first will get the Inner Sect slot. It's that simple."

Cassia continued, "To prevent people from sharing information with each other, I'll put you all into an isolated chamber where Divine Sense and Soul Power can't penetrate. Only then will you be given the manuals."

If you asked the top countries, they would say they preferred it to be a one-on-one battle. After all, their disciples were all in the high-level Saint Realm or even the Elemental Transformation Realm. But then again, they were that high because they had high talent and superb comprehension ability. With that, they couldn't really complain either. The only problem was the small and medium countries. Their participants might also have much higher comprehension levels. However, their cultivation palled against the top ones because of their background. That meant their chances of getting one of the ten slots became a lot smaller.

Seeing that everyone heard her words, Cassia decided to finish. "Now then, the test will be carried tomorrow. You can all stay here in the guest hall or head to a private room prepared by our Sacred Land. It's up to you. I can guarantee everyone's safety until the recruitment is over regardless." Following that, Cassia turned around and left the guest hall.

Fabio then looked at the twins before asking, "What do you want to do? I don't mind going after a private room or staying here."

Samanta and Milina immediately raised their hands. "We want a room!" Those two girls haven't had a bath in a long time. As women, they simply couldn't resist anymore."

Regio, Rean, and Roan didn't really care, though. "We will stay here and cultivate. At least it saves us the problem of heading to the room."

Fabio nodded and then brought the two girls away. The twins and Regio sat down and began to cultivate as well. However, there was one person that couldn't stay still, Gille!

'Even if Hedoi's group had won, that black-haired boy would still have passed the test. Fuck! Why wasn't there any test where my disciples could have forced him to fail?'

Roan was truly too important for him, so he gritted his teeth and decided to talk to Roan directly. He spread his Divine Sense and began. 'Roan Larks, is it? I'm Gille, Sect Master of the Blood Path Sect from Klacks Country.'

Roan's eyes moved a bit when he heard Gille before looking in his direction. 'I've heard of you. What is it?'

Death... and me

Chapter 1157: Join Both

It was obvious for Gille that Roan didn't seem to care whether he was the sect master or not. However, that didn't bother him. 'I have an offer for you. Would you give up entering the Sacred Land and come join my Blood Path Sect instead?'

This time, Roan's attention was piqued. Well, the same thing could be said for Rean and Sister Orb as they could hear Gille because of the Soul Connection. However, Rean and Sister Orb didn't say anything and left it for Roan to decide.

Roan narrowed his eyes in response before asking, 'Why should I? I'm already accepted into the Sacred Land. Besides, your country is anything but safe. You all use evil skills and cultivation techniques that have terrible backlashes if their requirements aren't met constantly. Last but not least, can you even match the Sacred Land's resources? If you could, I don't see why you would bring your top disciples here to try the recruitment.'

Gille shook his head in response. 'Top disciples? You're wrong there. None of the top countries participating in this recruitment brought their real top disciples. Hedoi can only be considered the sixth or seventh strongest back in Klacks. Nevertheless, he's the strongest member in this recruitment. As for the other five or six above him, they're back in the Blood Path Sect, training.'

Gille continued, 'The Sacred Land is indeed the strongest power, but none of the top countries would dare to give all their future talents to them. Regarding the resources, yes, we can match the Sacred Land as long as you're using our methods. In fact, we might be even better as I plan to make you a legacy disciple straight away. You definitely can become the strongest of the strongest.'

Roan found it weird. 'Why are you going that far? There's no guarantee I'm as good as you say.'

Gille shook his head as he said, 'Wrong! Even if your talent isn't high, which obviously isn't the case, you have Dark Element Affinity. You are the very first person I've ever seen or heard of to have this kind of natural affinity. Most of our best techniques rely on Yin Energy to control Dark Element and then be used. However, you don't need to pass through any of those steps. You can gather Dark Element and instead use your Yin Energy to fortify it! This is a dream constitution that our Blood Path Sect is willing to pay anything to have.'

Gille also mentioned, 'Because of this constitution of yours, I can guarantee that your cultivation will be swift. We will give you the best secret cultivation techniques of our sect. With all of that, not only would you become the strongest in our sect, you can also be one of the strongest figures of the entire Huring Continent in the future.'

It was then that Sister Orb's voice echoed in Roan's mind. [Hmph! Best secret techniques, my ass! Oh wait, I don't have an ass. Anyway, his cultivation technique is definitely based on sacrifices. Besides, it can't possibly be better than the Soul Gem System's Dark and Light cultivation technique.]

Roan obviously knew that. He had seen many cultivation techniques already and could tell that none could get even close to the system's technique. Nevertheless, even though he didn't need their

cultivation techniques, the Blood Path Sect's skills incredibly interested him. For example, the technique to control others with Dark Element and Yin Energy threads.

Roan then went silent for a moment, pretending to give it some thought. Eventually, he answered Gille. 'That very much interests me. However, there's no such thing as a free lunch in this Realm of Gods. What is it that you want from me?'

Gille smiled as the hardest part was to at least catch Roan's interest. If he decided that the Sacred Land was better, then there wasn't much that he could do. 'It's good that you understand. I'll be giving you all of that. In exchange, you will sign a Soul Binding Contract, specifying that you will never betray the Blood Path Sect in your life.'

Roan narrowed his eyes in response. 'That's a very broad way of putting it. If you make a contract like that, I might simply die in any corner without knowing just because I did something against the interests of the sect. You'll need to be a lot more specific there.'

Gille didn't mind that at all. It was obvious that Roan seriously considered taking his offer. 'Sure, I can make a few alterations to the contract to fit your needs as long as it means we can keep your loyalty. Well, it might sound weird to hear loyalty come from someone like me. In any case, that's the only way we've continued being a top country in this Huring Continent.'

Of course, for Roan, it mattered little what changes Gille made to the contract. After all, Sister Orb would just use the dummy soul to receive the binding, keeping Roan completely free to do whatever he wanted. He only insisted on it so that Gille wouldn't find it suspicious.

Roan then mentioned, 'That's good and all. But does that mean I also have to follow all your orders? I like my freedom very much, and the Sacred Land seems very good in this aspect.'

Gille immediately nodded. 'You are obviously free to come and go as you see fit. In fact, we encourage our best disciples to do so. They often go out to do missions, even in other countries, before returning. Of course, there will be times where we will need you to work for us in some other fields. In those cases, you might be bound to something for some time until you finish. Naturally, the Sacred Land is definitely no different in that regard.'

Roan agreed with Gille on that point. 'Let's do it like this, then. I will join the Sacred Land and your Blood Path Sect. I can get the best of both worlds like that.'

Death... and me

Chapter 1158: Separation

'No can do,' Gille replied. 'The Sacred Land also has its own Soul Binding Contract clauses. Just like us, it will prevent you from betraying the Sacred Land. Both contracts will enter in conflict with each other.'

'Then forget it,' Roan said in response. 'The Sacred Land just seems like a better option for me at the moment.'

Gille was taken aback to hear that. 'But you'll have a better cultivation environment if you choose us. The cultivation path is full of dangers, you know? Are you going to run away from every obstacle when you see them? You will never get far like that.'

On that point, Roan agreed with Gille. 'Sure, I know that much. But I don't consider the Sacred Land an easy place to live either. After Cassia told us about the different categorizations for disciples, it's obvious that going up is very hard. That should prove to be more than a good enough obstacle for me.'

Gille found it difficult to continue. He truly needed Roan, but it was hard to come up with an argument to convince him. Simply put, this was the worst place he could have found Roan. Here, he couldn't do anything. He would have brought Roan back by force otherwise.

Gille gritted his teeth before saying, 'Fine! Tell me what you want.'

Roan faintly smiled before saying, 'I want a Dark Element catalyst for the time I breakthrough into the Elemental Transformation Realm.'

'This...' Gille was prepared to negotiate anything with Roan. However, he truly asked for a phoenix feather there. 'That would be quite complicated. Dark Element materials are extremely rare, even for us.'

Roan knew that. Otherwise, Rean's catalyst wouldn't be that hard to get either. They went after information of Light Element materials, but the information given by Langara Talan was the only clue so far. Of course, once he joined the Sacred Land, he would try to look for information about it there as well. It's just that the Blood Path Sect, as a place filled with Dark Element users, might know something.

'Well, I guess I can only rely on the Sacred Land then,' Roan told him.

However, Gille immediately called his attention back. 'Wait, wait, wait! I think I know where to get it.'

'Where to get it?' Roan asked. 'Does that mean you don't have it with you?'

Gille nodded in response. 'Exactly. However, I will only tell you about it once you sign a Soul Binding Contract with me. I'll add to the clauses that I must tell you where to get Dark Element materials that can be used as a catalyst for your breakthrough. It just so happens that you're near the perfect cultivation to head into that place.'

Roan pondered in silence for a bit before using his Soul Connection to talk with Rean and Sister Orb.

Rean shrugged his shoulders as he said in response, 'Why not? You can get the skills you want, no? You can also find your Dark Element materials for your breakthrough.'

[Indeed. With Celis and Kentucky's help, your path to the Elemental Transformation Realm is very smooth. The earlier you can get your hands in that material, the better. After all, you really won't be bound by any contract with the system here.]

Still, there was a problem. 'What about the Sacred Land Recruitment? Will you just give up?' Rean asked him.

Roan pondered in silence for a bit and shook his head. 'We still need the information on how to pass through the Continental Barrier. For that, the Sacred Land is our best choice.'

[You can divide your forces. Rean will join the Sacred Land and use your sister's glittering coin to find Tulipa. Meanwhile, Roan will go back with Gille and 'join' the Blood Path Sect. Once both sides get what they need, we can simply leave.]

Rean and Roan nodded in agreement. 'That seems the most optimal choice.'

However, Sister Orb warned Roan. [Just be careful out there. Something tells me this Gille guy doesn't just want you to be part of his Blood Path Sect.]

Roan nodded after hearing that. If even Sister Orb noticed it, then let alone him. 'Yes, I know that. But it's also based on the Soul Binding Contract, so I believe it's worth the risk.'

Rean smiled after that. 'Worst case scenario, if they try to imprison you, I can get close enough so that we have access to the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm. You can use it to leave by then.'

Being imprisoned couldn't be considered a dangerous situation to the system. Roan would just be locked without the risk of being attacked. That being said, it would allow Roan to enter it. Of course, if people wanted to kill Roan there and had the means to, it would block it. In any case, it was a risk worth taking just for the Dark Element skills of the Blood Path Sect alone.

'Alright, then that's decided. Once the next test is over, I will refuse to join the Sacred Land and leave with Gille,' Roan decided.

'I'll stay and try to look into other options for Dark Element materials in case Gille's information isn't of any use.' Rean also had his part cut for him.

With that, Roan looked at Gille and nodded. 'Fine! But first, let me tell you that I'm already in a Soul Binding Contract.' Roan then explained the terms of the contract that he had with Fabio.

At first, Gille thought it would be something hard to deal with in that contract. However, he relaxed when he heard that it was just about giving help in times of need. 'Oh, is that all? No problem, no problem. This Kamos Country is very far from us anyway, so we won't be meddling with them for no reason. If this Fabio guy gets in trouble, you can go help him and even use our sect's name to resolve the issue.'



'Good!' Roan nodded, satisfied. 'Fabio should come back anytime now. Come closer so that we can talk to him. I want to make everything clear since I owe him for this opportunity.'

'Understood.' Gille then made his way to the twins and waited for Fabio to come back.

Death... and me

Chapter 1159: Reason

Obviously, Haera and the other princes and princesses noticed when Gille approached them. Not only them, but quite a few other countries as well. After all, the Blood Path Sect of the Klacks Country was a famous evil path power.

Fabio returned shortly after and was taken aback when he saw Gille waiting beside Roan. "This..." He quickly bowed to the man as he also knew who he was. "Can I help you, sir?"

Gille pointed at Roan and said, "I want this boy. We've already discussed it, and he will join my Blood Path Sect once the recruitment is over."

Fabio was even more shocked after hearing that, and so were the rest of the people hearing it. "But sir...what about the Sacred Land? Roan already got accepted. It's just that it isn't decided which type of disciple he is."

"Don't worry." Gille didn't seem worried about that. "Roan isn't a disciple of the Sacred Land just yet. He only has the requirements to join fulfilled. If he refuses to enter, the Sacred Land has no reasons to force him."

Fabio didn't know whether it was true or not. However, he doubted Gille would tell such a lie inside the Sacred Land's territory. Roan then got up and told Fabio, "Fabio, he's right. However, our contract is still valid. Also, I believe the Blood Path Sect's name isn't much worse than the Sacred Land. Besides, my brother and your other proteges will still be part of the Sacred Land after the recruitment is over. Just one less person won't make a difference to your status."

Fabio pondered in silence for a bit and had to admit Roan was right. In fact, Roan being part of a top country would make it easier for him to move in case Fabio needed assistance far in the future. Not to

mention that it didn't go against his contract with Roan. "Very well. It seems like you've already made your choice, right, Roan?"

Roan nodded in response. "He has something I need, and I already discussed the terms of the Soul Binding Contract with him. As a cultivator with natural Dark Element Affinity, the Blood Path Sect suits me better."

However, it was at that moment that a giant man approached the group and bellowed, "That won't do, Blood Path Sect Master. That won't do at all. I want both the twins, not only one of them."

His loud voice immediately caught everyone's attention. However, no one seemed to recall who this man was. They could only tell that he was part of the Sacred Land due to his clothes, and that was all.

Rean and Roan also didn't seem to remember him as it was a completely new face. However, the giant body and well-built muscles reminded them of a certain person. After some time, Rean and Roan couldn't help but ask the man, "Are you perhaps...Rivaldo?"

"What?!" Everyone was taken aback. Sure enough, although the face was different, his body was just as big as that illusion in the Dream City. How could the people there forget who the person stopping them from joining the City Guards was? The ultimate barrier! Rivaldo himself!

The giant man then laughed out loud as he replied, "Hahaha! So you guessed it, huh? Yes, that was me there. However, my name isn't Rivaldo. Instead, you should call me Erithean Mondac. I'm one of the Core Elders of the Sacred Land."

"Erithean?!" As soon as that name was mentioned, shock appeared on everyone's faces.

"Wasn't he dead already?"

"Last time I heard about him was over 2000 years ago."

"It was during the continental war that he disappeared...so he was still alive!"

"One of the Ten Greats!"

Even Gille's expression wasn't good when he heard that. 'Why would such a monster appear out of nowhere? Only the ancestor back in my Blood Path Sect could hope to contend against him. However, he would prefer not to do so for sure.'

After a while, Gille finally calmed himself down a bit before asking, "It's nice to meet you, Senior Erithean. The ancestor of our Blood Path Sect told me a lot about you."

Erithean seemed surprised to hear that. "Oh! So, Galman is still alive? That's good to know. Perhaps I'll pay a visit to the grumpy guy some other day."

Gille bitterly smiled when he heard that. It was obvious that they knew each other from what he heard. "Sir, is there a problem with what I said earlier? I was just trying to recruit a new disciple for my sect. As you probably know, a natural Dark Element Affinity cultivator is of unprecedented value to us. It shouldn't be against the rules of the Sacred Land either."

Etherian nodded as he replied, "Indeed, it's not against the rules. If Roan decides that he wants to go with you, I won't stop him. However..." Etherian looked at Roan and told him, "You should really think twice about it. I would prefer to have you join the Sacred Land instead. Whatever Gille offered you, I can do the same and better on top of that. The same goes for your white-haired brother."

Rean and Roan looked at each other after that. Since when was their value that high? However, if Etherian could offer more, Roan naturally didn't have a reason to refuse. "Could you elaborate more about it? Sect Master Gille really gave me an amazing offer that's kind of hard to refuse." Roan didn't care why Etherian wanted him to join the Sacred Land instead, but he didn't care. The one who paid more would get it.

Etherian then looked at Roan's cultivation and nodded, replying, "Considering your talent, I can only think about one thing that could attract your attention so much. You need a Dark Element catalyst for the time you try a breakthrough into the Elemental Transformation Realm. Am I right?"

Gille couldn't help but sweat a little after that. That's what he offered Roan.

Roan, obviously, confirmed that. "That's correct. But there's also the Dark Element skills they have there."

Etherian waved his hand as he told him, "Our repository is definitely not smaller than theirs, even if it's Dark Element skills. After all, how many evil path sects exist or have existed in the past in our continent? Not to mention that many of their disciples joined our Sacred Land during the millenniums we have been here and brought more techniques in. They even created new ones as well. If you can think of a technique, we probably have it."

Rean then contacted Roan through their Soul Connection, telling him, 'Well, I guess the choice is obvious here.'

Roan agreed with Rean. 'Pretty much. I can tell he isn't lying either.'

With that, Roan accepted Etherian's offer. "Very well, the Sacred Land it is."

Gille felt terrible! He wanted nothing more than to grab Roan and leave this place straight away. Unfortunately, Gille wouldn't even reach the hall's door before being killed. He wasn't a match for someone like Etherian at all! Let alone the other elders and the Sacred Land's protection formations themselves.

Following that, Roan asked the question that was in everyone's minds. "But before that, why would the Sacred Land show such an interest in me and my brother? Depending on the answer, I might have to reject the offer."

Death... and me

Chapter 1160: Transfer Bodies

No one there could remember the Sacred Land coming out to fight for the recruitment of a disciple. The disciples came naturally to them, so it was definitely a sight to behold. Could it be that the Dark and Light Elements were really that good for one of the Ten Greats to come out? Everyone wanted to hear Etherian's reason.

"A reason, huh?" Etherian pondered over it for a bit before saying, "To be honest, I'm just curious. You two can obviously exchange elements with one another. I want to see how far you can go with this weird ability of yours."

Everyone found that reason a little strange. In the Realm of Gods, two cultivators exchanging elements with rare techniques wasn't unheard of. The Sacred Land itself, although rare, had a few cultivation techniques that did the same thing. These kinds of techniques would usually be cultivated by couples or two cultivators who trusted each other a lot. That shouldn't be a reason for Etherian to come out to fight for Roan, though.

Roan narrowed his eyes after hearing that. From what he could see, Etherian wasn't lying. However, Roan was sure that Etherian's words were only a small part of the real motives Etherian had to intervene in Roan's business. It's just that he couldn't figure out what the rest was. Well, he wouldn't dig deeper into it for now. It was better to wait until a better moment showed up as there were too many eyes at them at this moment.

Etherian then finished by pointing his finger at Gille, adding, "Besides, this brat here wants your body. I wouldn't go there if I were you."

Gille's face went pale for a moment when he heard those words. "Wh-What?! What is senior talking about? I want him to be part of our sect, that's all."

Gille couldn't help but let out a bit of cold sweat. After all, a body transfer wasn't anything easy. In fact, everyone in the surroundings knew that as well.

"Wait! Is it possible to take someone's body?"

"It is... with the right techniques."

"Indeed. However, no one would do such an idiotic thing. Such techniques come with a huge backlash. Unless you're about to die for some reason, you definitely don't want to leave your body behind."

"Gille is the Sect Master of the Blood Path Sect, isn't he? Why would he throw away his enormous cultivation? After all, such techniques don't transfer one's cultivation over."

"Could it be that he's dying?"

Hearing everyone's words gave Gille the chance he needed. "Everyone is correct. That's why Senior Etherian is wrong. I would never risk losing my cultivation and status to take this youngster's body. It's just ridiculous to think that I would make such a commitment. And before anyone asks, no, I'm not dying. I'm very healthy, thank you."

Everyone around nodded in response. Even if those words came from a Sect Master of the evil path, his words were reasonable. None of them could detect any problems with Gille's body that indicated he was dying either.

However, Rean and Roan were different.

'It seems like Rival- ahem, I mean, Etherian hit the bullseye,' Rean said.

Roan agreed with him. 'Yes, I can tell that. However, there's a problem with the backlash, so why would he want my body?'

[Could it be that he's part of one of the races that can change bodies, like Langara?] Sister Orb wondered.

That was the only thing Rean and Roan could think of as well. But then again, they also knew how rare such races were. Wasn't it too much of a coincidence to find two members of those races in such a short time? They could only look at Etherian and wait for his answer.

Etherian didn't deny everyone's doubts, though. "You're all right. There are high prices to be paid when taking someone's body. However, you have to calculate the pros and cons when trying to do such a thing. For him, the pros definitely overcome the cons. A body with a natural Dark Element Affinity...hell, if I was part of the evil path, even I would feel tempted. The majority wouldn't do such a thing exactly because of the price. However, some think it's worth it. Besides...if he waits too long, Roan's cultivation will reach greater heights, and transferring bodies would be even riskier. If there's a moment for him to do it, it is now."

"I don't want to transfer to another body!" Gille shouted in anger. That sudden burst caught everyone by surprise. Even Roan had to admit it was a very convincing response.

Suddenly, an idea popped into Roan's head as he said, "You don't want to transfer bodies since you would lose too much...but what about someone else's soul? Someone that even a person from the evil path like you can trust. Perhaps...a son?"

Gille gritted his teeth. "So what?" With that, Roan finally got to the root of the matter. Gille wanted to give a family member the perfect evil path body!

Gille then looked at everyone around and said, "Are you all going to condemn me? I can see at least three cultivators here who are using someone else's body at this very moment."

"Of course not!" Etherian laughed heartily. "The evil path always had these kinds of things. In fact, even our side of the cultivation path has a few techniques like that. You said you can see at least three people using someone else's body? I can see seven. Hahaha!"

"No one will condemn you. At least I won't. The evil path is necessary for our continent, so you can take as many bodies as you need. As long as it doesn't affect the Huring Continent or the Sacred Land, who cares? If the evil path was really something bad, why would the heavens let it exist? That's how I think of it, at least."

Etherian then patted Rean and Roan's shoulders as he continued, "However, I told you already. I want these twins. With that being said, I can't allow you to take one of them away."

Roan couldn't help but think after hearing that, 'This guy is good. He completely avoided the question, and no one bothered to ask back. Elemental Exchange isn't anything that impressive, so what's the reason behind his interest? When he pointed out the body change, everyone simply forgot the rest. Forget it. I don't believe he will tell us right now.'