

## Death 1331

Death... and me

### Chapter 1331: Lack Of Information

Pondering over it, Rean decided to give Hurio one last help, touching his shoulder and healing him in just a few seconds. All of Hurio's injuries disappeared in a flash, much to the others' surprise. It was so astonishing that Lamanto couldn't help but ask, "Is Light Element this efficient with healing?"

Rean nodded in response. "It has always been like this. Unfortunately, it seems like only someone with an affinity for this element can use it to heal. Using Yang Energy to manipulate Light Element doesn't work in this regard."

Lamanto didn't find it strange, saying, "It's the same as someone who doesn't have Water Element Affinity trying to use it for healing. It doesn't work either. A Water Element Affinity cultivator can naturally do it, though. However, I'm quite surprised that the difference between Water Element Affinity and Light Element Affinity in terms of healing is actually pretty huge."

Mira agreed with Lamanto. "But then again, how many Light Element Affinity cultivators are out there? Perhaps he's as rare as Hurio and his Energy Element Affinity."

Rean immediately asked after hearing that. "Do you mean you have never seen anyone else with Energy Affinity before?"

Mira and the others nodded in response. "We do know that they exist, but we haven't seen another person at least. It's not like other odd affinities that are somewhat more common, like Metal and Wood."

Roan could more or less guess why Hurio was so important. With his previous display of power and his fast cultivation due to his affinity, he was an ideal candidate to become a leader in the future. They probably don't want him to take unnecessary risks. In any case, that wasn't his nor Rean's problem. "Forget it. Rean, let's go to some corner and wait. We can't go any further, but we can't head back either. Something tells me it won't take long before those guys decide to enter."

Rean nodded in response and bid farewell to Hurio's group once again. Seeing that, Mira couldn't help but ask Lamanto, "Is it fine to let them be? They're also after the Fallen Light Star Fragments."

Lamanto then looked at Hurio, who was having a conversation with Lilia and sighed. "Hurio is probably alive because he followed those two. We do have a debt to owe them. Not to mention that he told me about the Divine Origin Energy area he enjoyed because of those twins. It saved him at least one or two years of cultivation. Of course, if it turns out that we find the same fragment, then we won't let them have their way."

Mira nodded after that and didn't say anything else.

Back on the twins' side, Rean couldn't help but ask Roan, "How come you know they will move soon?"

Roan then pointed at the top ten powers' groups. "Look at their expressions. They're trying to hide it. However, it's pretty obvious to me that they're becoming tense as if waiting for something to happen. They had been in this place for several months, according to Hurio's group. It wouldn't make sense to look that tense all the way until now. Besides, I believe that rule of not letting anyone go ahead of them was something they decided to do only recently."

Rean then looked at them and closed his eye before focusing on their life forces. After a few moments, Rean nodded, saying, "Indeed, their life forces are a little out of shape, a clear signal that they seem to be expecting something very important to happen. Perhaps a dangerous one at that."

Then again, there wasn't much they could do at the moment, so they sat down, took a few Divine Stones out of their spatial rings, and began to cultivate. In that fashion, four days went by when suddenly, a tremor assaulted the region around the two mountains.

Rean, Roan, and Kentucky opened their eyes and looked in the barrier's direction. Suddenly, something that looked like a giant wave of white light appeared on the horizon behind the barrier. The cultivators on the other side showed frightened expressions and tried to leave the barrier at all costs. However, it didn't matter how much they attacked it. The barrier didn't even tremble.

Among them, Rean was incredibly shocked by that giant wave. That's because he could feel the ridiculous amount of Light Element inside it even though it was so far away. "No wonder the guy stopped us from entering and told us we would soon find out why. So that's what he was talking about."

It turned out that the middle-aged man was helping the twins instead. It's just that he was part of one of the top ten powers, so he couldn't act too gentle in front of the others. The reason the other members of the top ten powers looked with dark expressions in their direction back then was that they thought the middle-aged man shouldn't have intervened.

Well, Rean and Roan wouldn't just simply believe the middle-aged man was trying to save their lives either.

That wave didn't have only Light Element, though. Exactly because it was Light Element, Rean could feel what was inside as well. "Light Element and an extremely chaotic yet enormous amount of Divine Energy. If it was only Light Element, I would find no issues surviving it. But that Divine Energy is way too berserk. I doubt we would survive that for more than a few seconds."

Roan narrowed his eyes after hearing that. "Why would such a phenomenon be unknown by most people? It's obvious these guys from the top ten powers know about it. With how huge it is, if it happens from time to time, we should have found something about it."

Rean understood what Roan meant. "The ones who saw it kept their mouths shut, huh. Is that what you think?"

Roan nodded in response. "It doesn't seem like they would attack us right now, and I'm not sure if they will or not. Perhaps they just bought the silence of those who know it. Perhaps there's some other reason behind it. Who knows, although they know about it, it truly might be the first time it has happened, and they found out about it somehow. In that case, it would make sense if no one else knew. However, keep your guard up. Once we enter, we won't move like everyone else. We won't tail the top ten powers and instead head on our own path."

Rean didn't have anything against it, nodding as he replied, "Alright."

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Chapter 1332: Here's Your Sweetheart

Not long after, the twins saw the people from the top ten powers start to take a few steps back. From the looks of it, they weren't sure if the barrier would hold that wave back. Seeing this, Rean and Roan were ready to jump on Kentucky to leave this place as fast as possible.

The moment the wave reached the cultivators inside, they immediately used all their methods to defend against it. However, even the best ones there weren't able to hold for more than a few seconds before shattering. Following that, their bodies were destroyed by the berserk energy within the huge wave of Light Element, with no chance of survival at all.

The eyes of the people who saw it showed the fear contained inside them. None of them wanted to be in their place. In fact, it was hard to say if they would still follow the top ten powers now that they saw this thing. After all, they knew it wasn't possible to come back from beyond the barrier, and they would need to rely on the top ten powers for that. Then again, they weren't sure if they could either.

\*Rumble!\*

As the wave crashed onto the barrier, it trembled nonstop, seemingly on the verge of breaking at any time. Several nervous eyes looked at it, completely forgetting the rest of the world. However, that was it. It didn't matter how much the barrier trembled. It stayed put, holding the wave with all its power.

It wasn't before twenty minutes or so that the wave began to dissipate while the chaotic Divine Energy behind it started to disperse. The barrier also stopped trembling not long after.

Following that, the top ten powers' disciples started to get close to the barrier once again, seemingly giving off the feeling that they were preparing to enter. Naturally, those who pretended to follow them started to prepare as well. It's just that there weren't as many people as before.

Rean and Roan also prepared, and they purposely got closer to the group where the man who stopped them was situated. Rean then took the opportunity to thank that man. "Senior, thank you for stopping us back then. We owe you a lot."

"Hmph!" The middle-aged man didn't seem to care that much. "I didn't do it for you. I'll give you a piece of advice, though. That's not the last Star Wave. If you know what's good for you, you shouldn't enter this place."

Rean shook his head after hearing that. "We need to enter. Nonetheless, we're thankful for the help you gave us, even if it wasn't your intention. By the way, how can we address you, senior?"

“Wian.” The middle-aged man answered straight away, but he didn’t seem to want to know the twins’ name, though. “Now, don’t bother me anymore.”

Rean nodded. “Alright, thank you once again.” He then turned around and went back to Kentucky and Roan.

At some point, the wave filled with berserk energy and Light Element finally dispersed, which made the top ten powers move through the barrier straight away. Following that, many cultivators’ groups, including Hurio’s group, followed suit. One must remember that the barrier allowed one to enter. It only stopped one from coming out.

Kentucky then let out a sharp cry before taking flight and heading towards the barrier, behind the top ten powers’ groups. Everyone was able to pass through the barrier without issues. However, the groups of the big powers didn’t dawdle around. Immediately, they all looked in the same direction before looking at each other. It was obvious that they were after the same thing, regardless of what it could be. With that being said, they all sped up and soon disappeared in the distance.

Rean and Roan couldn’t care less, though. Most of the cultivators’ groups followed the top ten powers, but they immediately selected another direction. Surprisingly, Hurio’s group was the same. They also turned in a different direction, which just so happened to be where the twins were heading. “Errr... do you guys need something from us?” Rean could not help but ask.

Lamanto shook his head in response. “We’re just trying to get away from the other groups as well. Once we’re far enough, we will go our separate ways.”

Rean and Roan looked at each other and simply nodded. It didn’t seem like Lamanto wanted to try anything against them. After all, Lamanto himself was more than strong enough to get rid of the twins, so there was no need to do something like this. No one would care if they acted either.

Sure enough, a few hours later, Lamanto’s group decided to head separate ways from the twins. However, much to the twins’ surprise, they threw Hurio in their direction as if he was some plaything. “Here’s the guy you initially made the Soul Binding Contract with.”

“Eeeeeiiii!” Hurio was taken aback as his body was thrown in the air, quickly falling in Kentucky’s direction. “What the hell are you doing?!”

Kentucky then changed his position, stopping right below where Hurio was going to fall, catching him. Nevertheless, Kentucky and the twins were puzzled by that sudden change of events. "Care to explain?"

Lamanto shook his head as he said, "He told us about the Divine Origin Energy area you found together. As much as we don't want him to be here, it's a fact that it helped him a lot. Perhaps the three of you will have the same luck again."

However, Hurio understood what Lamanto was trying to do. "You just don't want me to head to that same place! Just what the hell is there? Aren't the Fallen Light Star Fragments enough?"

Mira shook her head when she heard that. "You will know in time. For now, we can't risk having you die there."

"Doesn't that mean you're the ones who might die then?" Hurio replied with a dark expression.

Mira pondered in silence for a bit before she threw another person in the air. "If it makes you feel any better, have your sweetheart, so stop complaining."

Lilia also screamed as she flew in Kentucky's direction. Rean and Roan didn't know what to say anymore. However, Rean wouldn't let the girl simply fall, so he told Kentucky to grab her as well.. Then again, with her cultivation, she wouldn't suffer anything if she fell from such an altitude anyway.

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Chapter 1333: Thank... You?

Lilia immediately looked back with a bright red expression, telling Mira, "M-Mira, what are you doing?! I want to go too!"

Hurio, obviously, agreed with Lilia, saying, "The same goes for me. Sorry, Rean, Roan. We're getting down."

Rean and Roan didn't want to get involved with all of that, so they simply nodded in response. "Sure, go ahead."

However, it was then that Mira sent Lilia a Divine Sense message. Soon after, Lilia gave up jumping down from Kentucky's back. "I... don't want to go anymore."

Hurio was taken aback to hear that. "What?!"

Mira then took the chance to tell them, "You can come with us if you want, Hurio, but that means you'll leave Lilia in the twins' care. Unlike you, she doesn't have a Soul Binding Contract with them. Will you be fine in leaving her behind just so you can follow us? Well, if the answer is yes, then by all means, come."

Lamanto's group immediately headed in a different direction from Rean, Roan, and Kentucky. Of course, how could Hurio not understand what they did? He wasn't an idiot. "Shameless! Sister, that's not fair!"

Then again, that's what Rean and Roan also wanted to say. Why were they being used as a babysitter of sorts? Well, they didn't really mind bringing Hurio with them since that was the plan from the very start. However, they didn't hear anything about having to also carry that girl around. One could tell that they convinced Lilia to stay with the twins so that Hurio wouldn't leave her behind.

Unfortunately, Mira, Lamanto, and the other members of his group completely ignored his complaints. Not too long after, they disappeared in the distance while Hurio gritted his teeth, preparing to jump down from Kentucky. However...

"Hurio, are you really going to leave me alone with these strangers?" Lilia immediately acted as she asked him.

Hurio's expression turned dark as he looked back at Lilia, asking in response, "Why are you doing this?"

Lilia then replied, "You are too important to us. From what I heard from Elder Lamanto, the place they're going to is too dangerous, so it would be better if you didn't come. I finally understand why I was brought on this journey since I'm not that strong. They wanted to use me to stop you, and I shall make that happen."

At this point, Rean couldn't help but intervene. "Ahem... that's good and all. However, just what do Roan and I have to do with any of this? Couldn't you simply have gone somewhere else instead of being

thrown at us?" Rean then pointed at Hurio and continued, "This idiot here obviously loves you. He would have followed your footsteps either way."

Hurio's dark expression quickly changed into that of embarrassment, and so did Lilia's. However, Lilia quickly recovered before explaining, "They can't spare anyone strong enough to bring Hurio back home safely. However, they know Hurio would definitely follow them to where they are going if they left him be. As far as I know, that place is one of the most dangerous ones in the depths of the Lost Star Realm. That's why I'm staying so that it will force Hurio to stay. As for why they sent me to you, that's because the other parts of the depths of the Lost Star Realm are still dangerous places. They think we would have a higher chance of survival if we stay with you."

Roan narrowed his eyes after hearing that. "I don't remember us accepting the task of protecting you." He then pointed at Hurio and said, "Our Soul Binding Contract has no clause that states that we must help each other. When we signed it, we made it very clear that if any of us got in trouble, the others didn't have to do anything to save them. Even though we wouldn't mind helping Hurio if it wasn't a complicated situation, we definitely wouldn't think twice about leaving him behind if the danger was serious."

Rean agreed with Roan, saying, "Besides, we knew Hurio was strong on his own. He had plenty to add to our group while we looked for Fallen Light Star Fragments. But how about you? You're still in the Initial Stage of the Saint Realm. If things spiral out of control, can you protect yourself? Wouldn't you simply drag us down along with you?"

"I..." Lilia didn't know what to say when she heard that.

However, Hurio decided to talk on her behalf at that moment. "Even though I'm not sure as to what my sister and elder Lamanto are looking for, I'm certain that the Fallen Light Star Fragments are necessary. With that being said, we can still keep our contract and look for it together. Don't worry, I won't ask you to do anything for Lilia. If push comes to shove, then you can leave the two of us behind regardless of the outcome."

Rean and Roan pondered over it for a bit when suddenly, Kentucky decided to open his mouth. "Can't you just stop bullying the beautiful girl? I've been coping with all your testosterone so far, so it's good to have such a cute lady follow us. I'm tired of having to keep staring at your faces already."

Rean and Roan's mouths twitched after that, anger evident on their faces. "What part of keeping your mouth shut didn't you understand?"



Of course, Lilia and Hurio looked at Kentucky with astonished expressions. They were at the same level as Kentucky, so they could obviously tell his cultivation. "He can talk?!"

Kentucky didn't care about the twins, though. "It's easy for you to say that when you don't need to hold yourself back from talking for several months in a row. I'm tired, you hear me? Tired! I'm gonna talk, I'm gonna talk a lot!"

Kentucky then ignored the twins and turned its head while flying to look at Lilia. "Hey lady, I'm Kentucky. Don't worry. If the idiot duo doesn't protect you, I will. I'm very strong and resistant, you know? You can count on the great Kentucky."

Rean and Roan felt like giving the Minokawa a beating already. Hurio also felt that it was quite peculiar to see a demon bird hit on his girl. As for Lilia, her mind went blank as she answered, "Thank.... you?"

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Chapter 1334: Escaping Plan

\*Smack!\*

\*Ouch!\*

Kentucky looked at Roan with an angry expression, complaining, "Why did you hit me?"

"Don't you know the answer to that already?" Roan asked back. "If you don't stop the bullshit right now, you better be prepared for a lot more pain."

Hurio couldn't help but ask Rean after that, "Is your demon beast hiding its real cultivation? After all, there are also a few Transition Realm demon beasts that enter the Lost Star Realm. They obviously have their human forms and intelligence."

Hurio was right. Along their way to the depths of the Lost Star Realm and especially in the middle of the crowd outside, Rean and Roan identified a few Transition Realm demon beasts. They were mostly in their human forms, but their demonic aura was very easy to make out among the group.

Rean understood why Hurio asked that, saying, "You think it would be a lot safer if Kentucky was a Transition Realm demon beast, right?"

Hurio scratched the back of his head, showing that Rean hit the bullseye. "Well, I won't deny that it would make me feel better."

However, Rean immediately shook his head. "Unfortunately, that's not the case. You've already probably guessed that we came from outside Lanqueas Continent. It just so happens that demon beasts in our home continent gain sentience a lot earlier than they do here. Don't ask me why. I was as surprised as you when I found out that demon beasts actually needed to reach the Transition Realm to be able to speak." Since he had already used this excuse so many times, he might as well use it again.

"Is there really such a place?" Hurio didn't know whether it was true or not. But then again, he knew very little about what was outside of Lanqueas Continent.

Rean then continued, "With that said, Kentucky really is a Peak Stage Seven Demon Beast. Nothing more, nothing less."

Hurio sighed in disappointment after that. "It's fine. When I signed the contract with the two of you, I didn't expect us to have a Transition Realm helper anyway." He then went back to the previous topic as he asked the two, "So, is it okay if I bring her with me? At the very least, I know that she won't go after my sister and the others, so I need to stay with her."

Roan glanced at Hurio after hearing that, telling him, "First of all, your sister already said that only she and Lamanto know where they're going. Even if you convince Lilia to follow you after your sister, you wouldn't even know where to start."

"Does that mean you don't mind if I keep her close by?" Hurio asked in response.

Rean shrugged his shoulders, saying, "We will take your word for it. If something wrong happens, we'll keep the same rules as before. We won't help you if this puts us in danger. You will have to take care of her yourself."

Kentucky couldn't help but comment, "I'll protect her, though."

Rean and Roan couldn't care less. "We aren't your masters or anything. You're free to do whatever you want as long as you don't drag us into this mess."

Kentucky nodded in response before he looked at Hurio. "That's how it will work, then."

Hurio obviously had nothing against it. "Great! Did you hear that, Li-" It was then that a strange scene entered his eyes as he turned to look at Lilia. "Er... what are you doing?"

At some point, Lilia laid with her chest on Kentucky's back and hugged his fluffy feathers. It looked like she was having the time of her life! "He's so fluffy and cute. I just can't resist."

Kentucky, the womanizer, had struck again. "Hehe! Your grandfather here is the dream of every single female in this Realm of Gods. It's only natural that she succumbed to my charms."

Hurio's mouth twitched after hearing that. If not for the fact that Kentucky was a demon beast, he would have felt betrayed for real. Then again, he was feeling a little bit betrayed already. "Ahem... control yourself, woman."

Only then did Lilia sit up again, feeling a little embarrassed. "So-sorry..." Still, the eagerness in her eyes for Kentucky was obvious for everyone to see.

Of course, there was a reason for Rean and Roan to accept this weird arrangement, Hurio's tablet that allowed him to detect Fallen Light Star Fragments. With that, Rean took the opportunity to ask him. "Alright, Hurio. We'll do it like this. I will travel with Kentucky around ten kilometers apart from you. Roan will follow you on the ground while you two check the tablet. That way, we can use your tablet and my Elemental Affinity to cover a bigger area while we move."

Roan didn't mind that. In fact, he wanted to keep an eye on that tablet from Hurio to make sure Hurio was staying true to his words. After all, nothing in the contract stated that one couldn't pretend to have found nothing even though one actually did.

Hurio didn't mind that either. "Sure. However, we literally just entered the depths of the Lost Star Realm. We should head a bit deeper for a few extra months before we start looking for the fragments."

Rean had no problem with that. "That's good for me."

Lilia then mentioned another point. "What will we do if another one of those waves appear? We're locked here, you know?"

Rean replied, "All we can tell at the moment is that the wave doesn't move that quickly. From what we saw, it's as fast as an average Stage Six Flying Demon Beast. We can simply jump on Kentucky and flee from that since Kentucky's normal speed is much faster."

"But doesn't it cover the entire extent of the depths of the Lost Star Realm?" Lilia could not help but ask in response. "We would flee until we arrive at the barrier or at the end of the Lost Star Realm and die regardless."

"Do you have a better option?" Roan asked her straight back. Well, in fact, the twins wanted to open a very, very big distance from it. They wanted to go far enough from it so that the system wouldn't detect it. After that, they would enter the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm and just wait for it to pass.. Simple as that.

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#### Chapter 1335: On To Something

Lilia shut her mouth after that, not saying anything else. In theory, the people who followed the top ten powers were expecting them to find a way out. They just had to follow and fight for the scraps left behind by the top ten powers' disciples. They believed the top ten powers wouldn't enter the barrier if they didn't know a way out. The fact they knew about the wave increased that notion. Rean's group, however, was nowhere near where the top ten powers' disciples were.

Roan then looked ahead before saying, "Alright, let's move forward. We all know that it would take months to make our way into the area that matters in the Lost Star Realm's depths. Since the Lanqueas Sect's disciples and the others still risked entering the barrier to head there, it means the next wave will take a very long time to appear. It should take at least a year."

“How do you know that?” Hurio could not help but ask.

Rean answered the question in place of Roan. “Didn’t you say it yourself? The top ten powers had been waiting outside the barrier ever since you arrived. How long was that?”

Lilia’s eyes lit up when she heard the question. “Eleven months! We arrived eleven months ago at the barrier, and they were already waiting for the Light Element wave at that time.”

“I see now.” Fortunately, Hurio understood after that. “Unless the top ten powers were sure that the next wave wouldn’t come so soon, they wouldn’t head inside. They waited more than eleven months for sure, which means the next one is bound to take longer than that.”

Roan nodded in response. “That’s why I don’t think the next wave will appear in the next year at the very least. Of course, we might all be wrong. They might know a way to protect themselves when the next one comes and will leave everyone else to die.”

Hurio and Lilia felt a chill on their backs after that. However, there was no way to find out about it.

Kentucky didn’t seem to mind that much, though. “What’s the point in guessing what they’re thinking? We should focus on our own journey. Who knows? We might find a way out once we get there. Since we’re already here, let’s just go.”

Rean and Roan agreed with Kentucky. “He’s right. Kentucky, bring us there.”

“On it!” Kentucky immediately increased his speed.

At the same time, Roan looked at Hurio and Lilia and asked them, “Since you two are more aware of what we can expect inside the depths of the Lost Star Realm, you should know the best routes, right?”

Lilia and Hurio nodded in response. “Indeed. The depths have three different levels for those who wish to reach the ancient ruins located at the end. Each level only has a few passages that can be taken. The others are inside that twenty-meter height restriction, so we can’t use them.”

“Three levels?”

Hurio nodded and continued, “They aren’t much different from the rest of the Lost Star Realm. Of course, that’s only in terms of their appearance. As a whole, they’re still a lot more dangerous due to the ancient beasts and ancient formations.”

Rean nodded after hearing that. “The ancient beasts seem to not be a problem this time. We now know why there were so many in the outskirts. They were also fleeing from that Light Element wave. Of course, there might still be some out there that could resist the wave. After all, those beasts are ridiculously powerful.”

Hurio agreed with Rean. “True. In any case, the ancient formations are guaranteed to be working. Now, these are the common dangers. I’ll now explain the first level, which should be around five months away from us, considering our actual speed.”

“The first level is covered by a snowstorm that never dies down. The snowstorm itself is the problem. It has some kind of freezing energy, which you must constantly keep outside. The time we can stay inside depends on how long we can hold the freezing energy outside. It consumes a lot of Divine Energy, so I would say that we won’t last more than a day or two at our current level. Of course, if we use Divine Stones to replenish our Divine Energy, we should last a lot longer.”

Lilia then continued where Hurio left off, saying, “However, we absolutely must pass through it within a month.”

“Why?” Rean and Roan asked in response. After all, they didn’t lack in Divine Stones, and they doubt Hurio and Lilia lacked them either.

“Because of the freezing mark,” Hurio replied. “No one knows how it happens, but as soon as you enter the first level, an ice blue mark will appear on your forehead. It can’t be blocked by neither Divine Energy nor Soul Power. Yang Energy and Elements seem useless as well.”

Rean and Roan had to admit it was quite strange. “So, what’s the problem with the mark?”

Hurio nodded and continued, "This mark will start out very faint, barely visible at all. Obviously, the longer you stay there, the more visible it becomes. After many years, people understood that it takes around a month for the mark to appear completely. Cultivation, race, gender, nothing matters. The time is the same for everyone. As soon as it finishes taking form, your body will instantly freeze up. There is no way to fight it back, as far as we know."

Rean then asked another thing to the couple. "Will it disappear once we traverse the first level?"

"Not quite," Lilia replied. "It will disappear eventually. However, the time for it to disappear is the same as the time you spent in the first level. If you take ten days to traverse the first level, the mark will take ten days to disappear after that. Naturally, if you head back to the first level, it will restart to take form."

Rean couldn't help but comment after hearing that. "Such a weird thing..."

However, Roan narrowed his eyes, asking soon after, "Three levels, one mark... could it be that the two other levels also have marks?"

Hurio and Lilia nodded in response. "Indeed, all three levels have this system. Although there are differences between them."

Roan couldn't help but feel like he was on to something here.

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Chapter 1336: We Should Go Too

Then again, as he didn't know much, he decided that he might as well see it by himself. "Alright, show us the path to one of those entrances. The further away from the top ten powers' disciples, the better."

Hurio and Lilia nodded in response before they told Kentucky where to go first. After that, the five months Hurio said it would take passed in a flash. Why? First, there were no ancient beasts all the way to the first level. Second, Sister Orb was able to detect the ancient formations that shifted from far back, with Kentucky having no problems avoiding them.

There were a few dangerous areas. However, Hurio and Lilia seemed to know the routes in the depths of the Lost Star Realm quite well. It was obvious that the records available for them back at their home were very complete.

Obviously, all four of them took this time to cultivate on Kentucky's back, only stopping when Kentucky needed to land to rest. Even though he was already at Stage Seven, Kentucky couldn't travel forever. Of course, the majority of the time was still spent on air.

Eventually, Kentucky called everyone's attention as his vision was the best in their group. "Hey, there seems to be a cliff in the distance."

Hurio's eyes lit up before he asked, "There should be some mist beyond the cliff. Can you see it?"

"Yes." Kentucky immediately nodded.

"Good! If the location is correct, there should be an opening, like a giant crack, in the cliff head somewhere," Hurio said soon after.

It was still far away, but Kentucky had a good view of the area. He scanned it with his eyes slowly until finally, he found the crack Hurio mentioned several kilometers to the left of their location. "Oh, I believe it's that one." Immediately, he changed direction and flew towards the crack.

However, Rean's group found out that they weren't the only ones there. Another flying demon beast appeared, coming from another direction before it stopped in front of the crack. Soon after, a group of five people came down from it.

Kentucky, obviously, arrived a moment later while Roan and the others looked at the people there. After some time, Roan looked at Hurio before asking, 'Didn't I tell you to bring us to an entrance away from the top ten powers?'

It turned out that the clothes and badges used by those people were the same ones as the ones from the Dragon Tail Brotherhood. It was an organization that looked quite similar to mercenaries. The only difference was that mercenaries usually only cared for themselves. In the Dragon Tail Brotherhood, they



were very united and even had Soul Binding Contracts imposed on new members to guarantee that feature.

However, one must not mistake them for some good guys. Other than their brotherhood's people, they wouldn't show any mercy to others if the situation called for it. This kind of management system made them quite a difficult organization to deal with.

Hurio then answered Roan's question, telling him, 'I did. I selected this entrance exactly because it was far away from the top ten powers we saw before. If they're here, then that's because they decided to use a different path from the others and wanted it to be as far as possible.'

However, Rean also noticed another thing. 'It's not their entire group here. The elders that we saw with them back at the barrier are nowhere to be found. Not to mention that they all jumped down from their Demon Bird, so I doubt any of them are at the Transition Realm, let alone Void Tempering.'

In fact, Rean was right. This was a small group that detached from the main one. It's just that Rean and the others didn't know why they did that. Staying together was obviously a lot safer, after all.

All that conversation happened in a flash through Divine Sense, and the people from the brotherhood also did the same between themselves. "Since you're here, why don't you come down?" a man asked, seemingly the leader of that small group.

Rean's group then looked at each other after that and decided to do as the guy asked. It wasn't like they had some vendetta with them anyway. Kentucky quickly landed at the crack's entrance before Rean jumped down and complimented the Dragon Tail Brotherhood's people. "Hello. My name is Rean, a vagrant cultivator. It's quite a surprise to see one of the top ten powers' disciples coming to this entrance. After all, we definitely saw all of you moving together after we passed through the barrier."

The man smiled after hearing that. "I'm also surprised to see someone coming here, especially since the majority of the cultivators from smaller powers followed the big ten. By the way, I'm Celso, a brother of the Dragon Claws."

'Dragon Claws?' Rean and Roan were confused by that. After all, wasn't it supposed to be Dragon Tail Brotherhood?

Hurio then quickly explained through a Divine Sense Message, 'The Dragon Tail Brotherhood has several divisions. The new members and weak ones are part of the Dragon Skin Division. You can think of it as an Outer Sect. Then you have the Scales Division, which would be kind of an Inner Sect. And then, you have the Dragon Claws. They're equivalent to a sect's Core Sector.'

Rean and Roan nodded after that. That made things easier to understand. "So you're brothers and sisters of the Dragon Claws. Nice to meet you, friends. My name is Rean, and these are Roan, Lilia, and Hurio. If you don't mind, we're going to enter the First Level."

Celso looked at his brothers and sisters before they all nodded. "Sure, go ahead. Just be careful because the Light Element wave stirred things up in there quite badly." Celso then began to enter the crack after that. "Now then, I wish you good luck."

Rean's group watched as Celso's group moved into the first level before letting out sighs of relief. Fortunately, the worst-case scenario where they attacked for no reason did not happen.. "Alright, we should go too."

Death... and me

#### Chapter 1337: The Marks

Surprisingly, the crack led the group several hundred meters down. As they moved in deeper, the mist slowly transformed into the snowstorm that Hurio mentioned before. How could they not understand? It wasn't a mist that they were seeing inside the cliff, but the clouds that formed the snowstorm.

Eventually, they reached the end of the crack, reaching the first level of the depths. At some point, Rean's group lost sight of the Dragon Tail Brotherhood people. It wasn't that they descended faster, but because the snowstorm made it really hard to see.

However, Rean and Roan didn't care too much about that part. Instead, they were paying attention to each other's faces, as the blue mark that Hurio and Lilia mentioned slowly took form on their foreheads. Of course, the same thing happened with Lilia and Hurio. As for Kentucky, it was there as well, but because of his feathers, they couldn't see it that well.

'Sister Orb, can you identify what this thing is?' Rean asked.

[I'm already doing that. Fortunately, it's happening in your body, so it's a lot easier to check. From what I can see, this isn't just a mark made to freeze you once it finishes forming. Instead, it's a kind of semi-sentient mark.]

'Semi-sentient?' Rean and Roan did not expect to hear something like that. 'Does that mean we can talk to it?'

[Not exactly. It's better to say that this mark has received its own orders and will follow it to the letter. It isn't wrong to call it a puppet if you wish to. It's just that it's made with the freezing energy of this place instead of materials.]

Roan understood after that. 'The mark is the puppet's body.'

[Exactly. Of course, this is just an analogy. Well, as long as you understand.]

Rean couldn't help but ask after that. 'Does that mean it has another objective than simply turning anyone who lasts here for a month into ice?'

[I would say it's quite possible. Sadly, I can't tell what kind of orders it received. All I can say is that the freezing outcome is just one way of fulfilling its objectives.]

'The question is what other objectives it has. The fact that it starts to disappear as soon as we leave this place means that we have to do something here, right? Something which has a time limit of one month,' Rean could not help but say.

However, Roan shook his head, telling Rean, 'No. Anyone would have thought about it in the past. Always a month to freeze, so the cultivators definitely have something secret to uncover in this place. However, I think the objective isn't here.'

Roan then looked at Hurio and Lilia and asked, "Hey, after we pass through this first level, how long would it take to reach the second and third level after it?"

Hurio pondered over the question for a bit before saying, “With our current speed, around three weeks to arrive at the second level. Then at least a week to pass through it. The third level would be another three weeks away. Why?”

Roan immediately closed his eyes and began to ponder in silence. ‘Those times are based on a careful journey. However, if we use Kentucky’s full speed and replenish his Divine Energy with Divine Stones, we can definitely make it to the second floor in a week after leaving this place. With that, we would have four weeks to make it through the second level and reach the third one. Once again, it’ll be several times faster if we use Kentucky’s full speed.’

Roan then looked at Rean for a bit before saying, ‘We need all three marks. Our time limit is one month.’

Rean was taken aback to hear that. ‘Doesn’t that mean we’ll have to stay in this snowstorm for almost a month before leaving?’

Roan nodded after hearing that. ‘Yes. First, let’s head to the exit of the first level. However, I won’t go out. Instead, I’ll stay here for twenty-nine days until my mark is almost fully formed. Then I’ll have those days to get the other marks.’

Rean could tell that Roan was up to something, asking, ‘You’re thinking the top ten powers are most likely doing the same thing, right?’

‘Exactly.’ Roan didn’t deny. ‘Well, it also explains why the Dragon Tail Brotherhood split their forces. No, to be more specific, I’m almost 100% sure that all the top ten powers’ disciples did the same thing. They want to guarantee that at least one or maybe a few of their members will arrive at the third floor with their marks.’

Rean then had an idea. ‘It’s easy to confirm whether it’s true or not. All we need to do is stay close to the group we saw earlier and see if they’ll also delay their stay in this place or not. After all, although there are many entrances, the first level is the same for everyone.’

Hurio didn’t know what the twins were discussing, nor did he care. He was trying to gather the clues so that he could guide their group through the first level as fast as possible. “Alright, I think I know where we should go now.”

Lilia immediately said the same. "Me too. Did your analysis point towards the north-northeast?"

Hurio nodded and turned to the twins. "Let's go. Be careful. This snowstorm hides a lot more than you can think."

'Death Style, First Form, Stellar Piercer!'

Suddenly, a ray of black and white light zipped beside Hurio's ear.

\*Clang!\*

The sound of metal hitting a hard surface immediately rang out before an object pierced the ground next to Hurio's leg. Hurio couldn't help but feel a chill on his back as he looked at the huge icicle on the ground. Neither his Divine Sense nor his Soul Power Scan detected the thing at all. It was as if the icicle was part of the snow flying around. He couldn't tell the difference at all. "That... was close."

Rean then patted Hurio's shoulder and told him, "You said it yourself, be careful."

Hurio, obviously, had to ask. "How did you notice this icicle?"

"How else? I just so happened to be looking in the right direction," Rean answered with a smile.

"Anyone, make sure you keep an eye on your surroundings.. Don't just rely on your Divine Sense since it's kind of useless here."

Death... and me

Chapter 1338: Wait To See

Hurio quickly calmed himself down before using his Divine Energy to spread a web of lightning all around him. It spread three meters around him, covering all his sides. In any case, the lightning was very weak to the point that anyone could defend against it with the most basic Divine Energy barrier. After that, Hurio called Lilia close, making her stand inside that lightning array that used his body as the center.

The use of that array was very simple. Since the hundreds of small bolts of lightning were connected to Hurio, he would notice the moment anything touched them. That would give him enough time to react and protect himself or Lilia if another one of those icicles appeared. "Alright, I'm ready to go."

Rean nodded after seeing what Hurio did. "That's a good way of doing it. By the way, there's no need for you to show me where to go because we're going to follow those guys from the Dragon Tail Brotherhood."

Hurio and Lilia were taken aback to hear that. "Follow them? But they already disappeared."

Rean didn't explain. Instead, he just jumped on Kentucky before calling everyone aboard. "Let's go, Kentucky." At the same time, Rean activated his Light and Divine Sense bending skill. The Dragon Tail Brotherhood group didn't have anyone at the Transition Realm or above, so Rean was confident in keeping their presence hidden.

Nevertheless, Hurio couldn't help but ask, "Is it okay to try to fly in this weather, Kentucky? What if one of those icicles hit your body?"

Kentucky didn't seem to care, though. "It's fine, it's fine. I'll just keep my feathers in blade mode. Did you forget I have an amazing defense? If the icicles can penetrate my armor, then I'll think about something else."

\*Bang!\*

\*Shatter!\*

"Ouch, that hurts." Sure enough, it didn't take long for Kentucky's big body to receive one of those flying icicles. "Well, at least now I know they can't pierce through my armor. In any case, Rean, if I get injured somehow, just heal me."

Rean obviously didn't mind it. "Sure. Now, fly to the west. The Dragon Tail Brotherhood group will leave my senses if we take too long." Rean was using a very simple method to detect those people, their life force. There was no life in the middle of this snowstorm, so it was quite easy for Rean to make out the

life force in those guys even though they were quite ahead. Of course, it wasn't as good as Divine Sense, but it was obvious that Divine Sense was useless here.

Hurio and Lilia found it strange, though. It's not Rean's detection ability that was strange to them. Hurio already said that the twins weren't normal, neither were they for the matter. What confused them was why the brotherhood was moving west. From what they knew about the first floor, there should be no exit on that side. Of course, there was one more thing they wanted to know. "By the way, why exactly are we following them? Lilia and I can guide us through this snowstorm. There's no need to tail the brotherhood."

Roan shook his head in response, saying, "We're not following them because we want to leave. We're following them because we think they won't leave. Well, at least not that soon."

Lilia and Hurio looked at each other with confused eyes. Seeing that, Roan also gave them the same explanation as he gave Rean. "That's about it. However, make sure you keep track of our whereabouts. If it turns out they're going to miss the one-month mark, we need to leave far earlier."

Hurio and Lilia didn't know if Roan was right or not about the marks. Then again, perhaps this was what the top ten powers had been after ever since. They definitely didn't want to lose on whatever the brotherhood members were looking for since they couldn't help Mira's group anymore.

Sure enough, Rean's ability to feel life force far outstripped the Dragon Tail Brotherhood group to detect others. Not to mention that it looked like Rean's group didn't even exist in this snowstorm.

Every now and then, Kentucky was forced to bear the hit of the icicles. If those icicles hit some of the more vulnerable spots, he would get injured. However, with Rean there, the injury was healed very quickly. Not to mention that Kentucky's healing abilities were very good as well.

As for ancient beasts, they felt as if they didn't exist anymore. In normal times, there were supposed to be a lot of them concentrated in the levels. But after they fled the Light Element wave, Rean's group didn't find a single one except for the ancient beasts outside the barrier. Also, those ancient beasts could control space to move, so they should have come back by now. Since they didn't, it reinforced Roan's theory that another wave was coming at some point.

Last but not least, the ancient formations proved useless for their group. Not because of Sister Orb this time, though. The Dragon Tail Brotherhood seemed to have their own way to detect those ancient formations ahead of time and dodged them.

Those disciples from the brotherhood continued to stroll in the snowstorm for many days, and it didn't look like they had a destination in mind. They would change directions every now and then, and Rean's group even passed by the same location quite a few times. That made Roan even more certain that those disciples from the brotherhood were biding for time.

However, on the 21st day after entering the first level, something different happened. Roan felt like all the Yin Energy in the area began to congregate into a single point, and that point was exactly where the brotherhood disciples had stopped. 'What's happening there?'

He then looked at Rean, who understood the message. 'Kentucky, get closer to them. Be careful of the wind so that they won't notice your presence.'

'Alright.'

Hurio and Lilia also shut up and concentrated on what was happening ahead.

The visibility was very poor. However, Kentucky's eyes were very good, so when he got close enough, he began to explain to the twins what he was seeing. 'There seems to be a lake in the middle of the snow. I'm not sure if I'm seeing it right, but there seems to be a shadow moving inside.'

The twins then looked at Hurio and Lilia, who shook their heads. Obviously, they didn't know what it was.. All they could do was wait and see what the disciples from the brotherhood would do.

Death... and me

Chapter 1339: The Dragon Mark

Well, the only one that actually saw what was happening was Kentucky, but he continued explaining, 'The shadow isn't that big. At the very least, it isn't even close to being as big as the ancient beasts we've found so far. It's more or less half of my size.'



Hurio then mentioned, 'Not all ancient beasts are the size of mountains. There are some who are small, although those are more difficult to find. However, they're just as dangerous, or perhaps even more dangerous than the big ones since it's harder to spot them, especially in a snowstorm like this.'

Kentucky nodded in response and continued to observe. The Dragon Tail Group was gathered around the pond, and they seemed to be channeling their Divine Energy into the pool. The shadow in the pond moved faster and faster the more energy they poured into it. Suddenly...

**\*Bang!\***

An explosion of water and energy blasted out of the pool before a creature that looked like a small dragon came out. Just like the ancient beasts that Rean's group saw so far, this one was also completely white. Kentucky thought the Dragon Tail Group would immediately run away at the sight of the ancient beast. However, they remained composed... no, to be more specific, they seemed to be a bit excited to see the dragon.

The small white dragon then looked at Celso's group with a completely emotionless expression. In fact, it really didn't have any emotions at all. It was the same as the marks Sister Orb mentioned, a being that simply existed to fulfill its orders, a puppet of some kind. It was then that a voice echoed in everyone's minds, asking, 'Are you the Dragon Mark holders from this time?' Surprisingly, Rean's group also heard that. However, the Dragon Tail Group thought they were the only ones hearing that. The small dragon didn't tell them anything about the presence of Rean's group, although it had obviously noticed them.

Their leader, Celso, immediately nodded, saying, "Yes, sir. We require the recognition of the Initial Dragon Mark so that we can aim for the second mark. As always, it's our Dragon Tail Brotherhood that will hold the Dragon Marks, so sir should have no issues with that."

The small dragon nodded after hearing that. 'Indeed. The Dragon's Mark is only one of the ten beast marks available for taking in this Lost Star Realm. I'm not the only one who distributes the Dragon Marks, but it's hard to locate us in the first level. Nevertheless, the marks can only be given to the five most worthy cultivators or demon beasts in the vicinity. Those are the rules. Should I start?'

Celso and his members got even more excited after that. It turned out that the five of them were sent into another entrance so that they could look for one of the Dragon Mark Ponds. The same thing happened with the rest of the Dragon Tail Brotherhood disciples, who also separated into groups of five.

The rest of the top ten powers did the same thing as them. It's just that the marks they were looking for were not the Dragon Marks. Instead, they had an agreement that each of them would look for a specific beast mark to prevent meaningless competition before they reached the third level.

Of course, Rean's group had no idea regarding that. They just followed the Dragon Tail Group to see what they were up to. Nevertheless, they could figure a few things out since the small white dragon's Divine Sense message also reached their group.

Celso then looked at his companions, and they nodded at each other before Celso gave the small dragon the order. "No problem, sir. Please start." They already received the instructions from their elders that the small white dragon would always say the same thing. After some time, they understood that as long as only five people were close by, only those five would receive the marks. The same was the case for the other marks.

The small white dragon nodded after that, and its body began to shine with white light. Rean could feel intense Light Element while Roan was able to feel a huge concentration of Yin Energy. Light was Yang, but it seemed like the beasts in this realm were similar to Kentucky. Kentucky could use both Yin and Yang Energy as well as Dark and Light Element, all at the same time, and that small dragon was doing exactly that.

Suddenly, Rean, Roan, Hurio, and Kentucky felt an acute pain in their foreheads. That small ice blue mark then began to change shape, changing into the form of ice blue wings.

As for those among the Dragon Tail Group, Celso felt the same pain as the mark on his forehead changed into the same shape. Not too long after, the pain subsided, and the ice-blue wings soon took a very lifelike appearance.

However, Celso's companions looked at him with confused expressions. "Celso, are you alright?"

Celso rubbed his forehead before he looked at his companions. Naturally, he noticed the problem. "Why haven't your marks changed?"

His companions looked at each other and shook their heads. Obviously, they had no idea why they still had the same round ice-blue mark as everyone who entered the first level.

Immediately, Celso looked at the small white dragon and asked, "Shouldn't the mark be given to the five most worthy people in the vicinity?"

The small white dragon nodded with a bleak expression. 'The five Dragon Marks that can be given through this dragon pool have now been distributed. I shall seal myself until the next Lost Star Selection happens.' Unfortunately for them, before Celso's group could say anything, the small white dragon dove into the pool. Following that, the pool froze entirely, and the snowstorm quickly covered the pool a moment later. It soon transformed to look like the rest of the scenery, and no one would be able to tell that this place had a pool before.

Celso and his companions were not idiots. When the dragon mentioned that the Dragon Marks had been distributed, they immediately understood that they weren't the only ones close by.. "Find them! We can still take their marks by killing whoever stole the other four marks."

Death... and me

#### Chapter 1340: Lost Star Selection

Unfortunately for them, Rean's group also heard the dragon's Divine Sense messages. Naturally, they knew that Celso's group would figure out that they weren't alone. With that being said, Kentucky had already turned around and shot into the distance. With Rean's Light and Divine Sense bending skill, Celso's group ended up not finding even a single clue to where the other marks were. Of course, they still remembered when they found Rean's group at the same entrance, so they guessed that they might be the culprits. "But why would they stay in the First Level all this time? No one else is supposed to have the need to stay here more than necessary. Could they be involved with the other top ten powers?"

One of Celso's companions, a guy called Wrigal, shook his head, saying, "Everyone had to sign the Soul Binding Contracts regarding the truth of the Lost Star Selection. There's no way the information leaked out."

Another one, a female cultivator called Baraloe, also added, "Besides, would that group we found at the entrance of the first level be able to hide from us? They're all Saint Realm cultivators and obviously not members of the big ten. We have been wandering in the first level for 21 days, so I think it's more probable that another group of the big ten would get close to us instead. Those guys from the entrance most likely left this first level a long time ago."

After that, a guy called Lipa mentioned an important point, telling them, "The dragon that gave out the mark only accepts the five cultivators or demon beasts who it considers to be the best ones. Do you think all four people we met at the entrance were better than the rest of us? Due to the contract, we

know that they definitely aren't part of the top ten, so I refuse to believe that they're all more talented than the four of us. That just sounds ridiculous."

Celso narrowed his eyes but had to admit Wrigal, Lipa, and Baraloe were correct. He also found it hard to believe that some Saint Realm cultivators would be able to hide from them. Even the other group from the big ten would find it difficult due to the reconnaissance abilities of Celso's group. "Whatever. We'll know if they're the ones who took the other four marks as long as we see them again. If it were some other group of the big ten, we would naturally see the Dragon Wings on their foreheads."

In the meantime, Kentucky shot through the air, heading straight for the exit of the first level. Rean's group didn't know if Celso's group could track them down with those new marks, so they wanted to get out of this place first before doing anything else. It's not that Rean, Roan, and Kentucky were afraid, but they lacked too much information at the moment.

Along the way, Rean looked at Roan and Hurio, who obtained the same Dragon Wing Mark as himself. "It's obvious that the Dragon Tail Group was after these marks. In the end, Roan was half right about his conjecture."

Roan didn't deny that. "Indeed. I guessed that we would need to gather the three marks before the first one completely disappeared. Then again, when you think about it carefully, it would be weird to think that no one else thought about it before. It actually turns out that we had to receive the recognition of one of the Mark Beasts."

Hurio touched his forehead and could feel the wing shape there. "I had no idea such a thing existed. It seems like the top ten powers have been keeping this secret among them all this time." Hurio then looked at Roan after that, saying, "Roan was right about the other half of his conjecture, though. We need to gather all marks. I just don't know if the next ones would also have guardian beasts like this one."

Lilia couldn't help but mention after that, "The Divine Sense message from the white dragon said that there are ten beast marks. Don't you think it's way too much of a coincidence that our continent has ten big powers, including the Lanqueas Sect? Of course, this might be just a coincidence. Then again, we all know that the Lost Star Realm was already here when the Lanqueas Sect took this continent."

Rean and the others agreed with Lilia on that point. "There was also what the dragon said. He shall seal himself until the next Lost Star Selection happens. Lilia, Hurio, have you heard anything regarding something like that?"

Lilia and Hurio immediately shook their heads in response. "We're just as surprised as you guys. We definitely know a lot more than the average cultivator of the Lanqueas Continent when it comes to the Lost Star Realm. However, this is the first time we saw and heard anything about what just happened."

Roan pondered over it for a bit before asking, "Do you think that perhaps Lamanto and Mira know something about it?"

"This..." Lamanto and Mira made it obvious that they knew a lot more than what the rest of their group was told. For example, only they knew where they were going. The rest of the people following them were oblivious to the matter. "We don't know..." However, they would definitely keep it in mind now.

"Lost Star Selection... whatever it is, we should work to get into it. I don't think the big ten would go to such lengths if it wasn't something worth such a large mobilization. Not to mention that they're breaking their own agreement of only having a single power in the Lost Star Realm each time."

Now that Rean and Roan were thinking about it, they also connected a few other points through their Soul Connection. 'We know that Langara was very powerful before she got hurt in the Lost Star Realm, remember?'

Roan nodded in response. 'Yes. Perhaps she got involved in this Lost Star Selection and paid the price. It's quite unfortunate that she never told us how she ended up like that. In any case, she's dead now, so we couldn't ask even if we went back.'

Rean sighed and looked at Hurio, Kentucky, and Roan, telling them, "Alright, I first need to do something about our marks."