

Death 1341

Death... and me

Chapter 1341: Out Of The First Level

Rean then touched his mark first before Light Element flashed, warping the light hitting the mark itself. Soon, light bent into a strange shape until that ice-blue Dragon Wing Mark suddenly changed back into the previous round ice-blue mark. In fact, the mark itself hadn't changed at all. However, Rean's manipulation of Light Element to bend light itself was already peerless. With that being said, it wasn't hard for him to make the ice-blue mark look a different shape in the eyes of others.

He also did the same thing with Roan and Kentucky, making the shape of their marks return to what it was before. Seeing what Rean did, Hurio also allowed him to work on his mark. After that, it became impossible to tell that the marks on their foreheads were any different than the marks they got as soon as they entered the first level.

That wasn't all. As mentioned before, the normal mark would start very faint. The longer one stayed in the First Level, the more substantial it became. With that, Rean used his Light Element control to make it take the appearance of a mark that had existed for ten days. They had been here for twenty-one days already, so that might serve as a clue for the Dragon Tail Group to put the fault of the robbed marks on them. However, if they saw how faint Rean's group mark is, it would look like it was impossible for Rean's group to have been the ones to receive four of the five marks.

Of course, Rean had to work on Lilia's mark as well. Hers didn't change shape. It showed that the dragon considered her not as worthy as Rean, Roan, Kentucky, Hurio, and Celso. With that said, even though her mark was the normal round one, it had the appearance of a mark that existed for twenty-one days.

Rean looked satisfied at everyone's marks once he was finished. "Alright, the Light Element applied on it will last five hours. Just make sure to stay close to me so that I can apply more Light Element to the marks while we're moving. I can do it in a hidden way as well. I just need to touch your bodies, and I can redirect Light Element to the fake mark's appearance. After we get out, I'll make the marks disappear little by little, making it look like we really stayed a short time in the first level."

Roan then proceeded with a new plan. "How far are we from the exit of the First Level, Hurio, Lilia?"

Hurio and Lilia looked at each other and reached the same conclusion after making some calculations. "Four days if slow and careful, two days if Kentucky flies at full speed. Although we moved a lot in this place, we still trekked part of the journey."

Roan nodded after hearing that. "That's good enough. I want to see if our Dragon Wing Mark will become more substantial as time passes. Perhaps the time limit of one month is still applicable even if the marks change shape. In that case, we'll have to move very quickly to the second level."

Everyone nodded in response before Kentucky charged in the direction Hurio and Lilia pointed. Rean also kept his Light and Divine Sense bending skill active, even though Divine Sense was somewhat useless in this place. He didn't want to risk having other groups find out that they had been in this place for much longer than the marks showed.

With that, Sister Orb could finally work on detecting the ancient formations once more, leading Kentucky to avoid the few ones they had ahead. Hurio already gave up thinking about how the twins could always find the ancient formations. In the end, the important thing was that they had their methods, and it would make their journey much safer.

Kentucky didn't go too fast but didn't move slowly either. He ended up completing the journey after three days before the twins sighted the exit. Thanks to Rean's life force detection, he could tell that no one was there. In this constant snowstorm and anti-Divine Sense place, life force detection was definitely one of the best detection methods out there.

"It's the exit."

Just like the entrance, the exit was also an enormous crack on a cliff. Hurio explained that this first level seemed to be in a shape that would keep the snowstorm inside, so it didn't affect the rest of the Lost Star Realm. It wasn't that the rest of the realm didn't have snowstorms, but they wouldn't be forever constant like the first level of the depths.

Kentucky then noticed something as soon as they came out of the crack that led them up again. "Look there!"

Rean's group immediately followed Kentucky's call and found a few marks on the ground. "It seems like we weren't the only ones to use this exit."

“That’s to be expected,” Roan mentioned. “Since we found the Dragon Tail Group at the entrance, it’s obvious that the big ten separated. Most likely, some of the big ten found their own marks already and left ahead of us.”

Lilia then asked Roan, “How about the Dragon Wing Marks on your foreheads? Did they become more substantial during these three days, as you hypothesized?”

Roan shook his head, saying, “No. After the marks took the dragon wing shape, they remained completely stable. I believe it’s fine to say that the thirty-day deadline is also some kind of test. If you didn’t find your beast mark until then, you would be forced to leave. In a certain way, it’s quite lenient since you can wait a few days for your round marks to become fainter and return to the first level.”

Rean shrugged his shoulders after that. “However, that would mean you fell behind others in finding beast marks. We don’t even know if there are enough marks for everyone. Think of it this way. There’s something very important going on, but the top ten powers’ disciples only sent around twenty members each inside. It’s probably because of the limitation of available marks.”

Roan and the others agreed with Rean.

Eventually, Hurio asked, “What are we going to do now?”

“What else?” Kentucky immediately answered.. “Let’s head to the second level.”

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Chapter 1342: Saving Lives

Since those with the Dragon Wing Mark saw no change as they continued to wait, Kentucky wasn’t in a hurry to arrive on the second floor. That being said, he would take the same three weeks Hurio mentioned at his current speed. This time, however, their group found ancient beasts along their way. From what they could see, that was probably because the ancient beasts they saw this time were even stronger than the ones outside. They might have stayed and resisted the Light Element and Divine Energy wave through sheer strength.

Naturally, they tried to swerve around the ancient beasts. The first and second ancient beasts showed no reaction, especially since the twins’ group was very far away. However, the third one did not fall

under that. To be more specific, the twins' group got close to it because they didn't notice it in the first place. It was one of those rare small ancient beast types, a flying one at that.

This one looked like a raven but was white and had a third eye on its forehead. Not only was it small, like a real raven, but it also came from above the pressure restriction. One must remember that the cultivators couldn't fly higher than twenty meters. The fact this raven could resist that pressure showed just how much stronger it was than anyone the twins had seen so far in this realm.

As soon as it appeared, its third eye shone with a red light before spatial power gathered around the twins. Kentucky didn't even have the chance to turn around before his body and the others on his back were locked in place. The twins had felt this kind of thing before, but it was usually through Divine Energy. Divine Energy would be pressed against them, making it impossible to move. This time, however, the laws of space itself prevented them from doing anything.

The white raven then leisurely flew in the group's direction as it opened its mouth. As soon as it opened it, some kind of power began to suck everything inside, as if it was a black hole or something. No one could do anything, not even the system. In fact, the Dimensional Realm was tightly shut for the twins because of the danger. Escaping into it was impossible.

However, just as the twins' group seemed to be about to be eaten by the white raven, some kind of triangular-shaped object flew in between them and the ancient beast. That item also had three eyes on it, shining with the same red light as the raven's eyes.

The raven then showed a scared expression and immediately stopped using its spatial powers. As quick as it had appeared in front of the twins, the raven turned around and dashed into the zone above the restriction limit...or so it tried.

The triangular-shaped object shot forward as well, and it was even faster than the raven. The white raven saw it coming at it as terror appeared on its three eyes. Spatial powers quickly converged, trying to form a spatial barrier between the white raven and the triangular object.

Unfortunately for the raven, the object shone with even more red light and obstructed the raven's capability of controlling space. The barrier then shattered before it could even take form, opening the path for the triangular-shaped object to reach the white raven.

Craaaaaaa!

Seeing that, the white raven used all its Divine Energy to try to escape. Sadly, the object did the same thing the raven did to the twins' group. It took control over space and locked the white raven in place. Following that, the object seemed to break into three segments before they attached themselves to the white raven's body.

Bzzzzzzzzzzzz

Red lightning came out the moment the three pieces touched the raven. The raven's eyes contorted in pain while it tried to break free. It was all in vain, though. After a few seconds, the white raven lost all its power as the three pieces of the triangular-shaped object began to penetrate its body.

Eventually, the pieces disappeared inside the raven's body as the raven itself began to fall from the skies. However, it didn't fall to the ground. It opened its three eyes again and immediately spread its wings to fly once more. It's just that it didn't try to flee this time. Instead, it flew straight down.

The twins' group saw all of that happen and were obviously shocked by the power of that item. As they followed the white raven with their eyes, they finally noticed that there was someone on the ground. The white raven quickly arrived at that person and landed on her arm.

"A... kid?"

Indeed. That person looked like a little girl no more than five or six years of age. She wore a spotless white robe, seeming to blend with all the snow in the surroundings. The little girl then patted the white raven's head before she waved her hand. The white raven's body then completely disappeared, as if it had never been there before. "Lucky! I got a Star Raven today! Those guys will be dying from jealousy when they see what I found. Hahaha!"

The little girl then looked at Kentucky and couldn't help but be enticed by it, saying, "What a beautiful Minokawa. The feather crown on its head seems to be a mutation, but it only adds to its charm." Of course, she also noticed Rean's group on Kentucky's back. "Now then, are you the cultivators taking part in the Lost Star Selection this time? You should have quite a background to have a Divine Demon Beast to fly around."

They all understood that this little girl was not simple. Most likely, she wasn't a kid at all. She was the first one to even identify Kentucky after the guardian beast back in the Huring Sacred Land. Let alone what she did to that ancient beast. Just how much stronger was she compared to the ancient beasts of this place?

Roan then ordered Kentucky to come down as trying to escape from such a person would be nothing more than an idiotic action. Without wasting time, Rean's group immediately thanked that little girl.. "Thank you for saving our lives, senior."

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Chapter 1343: Come Home With Me

The little girl narrowed her eyes in response when Rean called her senior. However, she didn't comment on it. "You were just lucky. I've been looking for a Star Raven for a few days already. I didn't expect to find a Star Raven here, so I was truly surprised when it appeared to attack your group. In the end, I was just helping myself."

The little girl then looked at Kentucky once more before asking, "Do you wanna sell that bird to me? Because of the agreement, I can't force anything while I'm out, so I hope you'll be sensible enough to sell this Minokawa. Divine Stones are no problem. I'll give you a thousand Rank Three Divine Stones."

Hurio and Lilia couldn't help but gulp their saliva after hearing that. A thousand Rank Three Divine Stones was a truly huge fortune, even for a power like the Lanqueas Sect. However, this little girl was offering it in a way that seemed to be nothing more than pocket change in her eyes.

It would be a lie if the twins said they weren't interested in so many Rank Three Divine Stones. Their cultivation would progress much further if they had them. However, exchanging Kentucky for it was definitely out of the question. First of all, that wouldn't be their decision to start with, but Kentucky's instead.

Kentucky then looked at the twins and asked, 'What do I do?'

Rean and Roan shrugged their shoulders, saying, 'Your life, your decision. She seems to be a very powerful expert, so you might have an easier and safer life with her than us. If you wish to go with her, we definitely won't stop you.'

Kentucky shook his head, though. 'No can do. I don't want to just become a pet. At least with you, I can make my own choices... although Roan is quite annoying sometimes.'

Roan's mouth twitched after hearing that. 'If I'm being annoying, it's because you're acting stupid. What about fixing your behavior first, huh? I won't bother you anymore after that. For example, you can stop trying to hit on every single female cultivator you find.'

Kentucky looked away in response, saying, 'Today's weather is quite nice, no?'

Rean sighed after that. 'Alright, so do you want us to tell her, or do you want to do it yourself? It might be a risky thing to show her that you can talk and think by yourself, though.'

Kentucky pondered over it for a bit as he looked at the little girl. For some reason, he believed that she knew the truth already. "Ahem... little lady, I'm sorry, but I don't want to go with you."

The little girl's eyes lit up in response, saying, "I was right. You really have sentience. That makes things easier. My dear beautiful Minokawa, if you come with me, I'll give you all the resources you need to cultivate. No one will be able to inflict any harm to you either. As long as I'm here, you'll be pretty much free to do whatever you want."

Kentucky still shook his head. He didn't need to stay in a single continent forever if he went along with the twins, and he truly wanted to learn more about his race. At the moment, his best clue was in Jhiod Continent, so he wouldn't stay. "Thank you, but I still prefer to travel together with these two."

"Is that because they're your master?" the little girl asked. "I can sever the master-subordinate connection that you have with them if that's the issue."

"Master-subordinate connection?" Kentucky hadn't heard of it before.

Rean quickly explained after that. "Do you remember? We had this Master-subordinate connection with that Golden Rascol. She believes you're our tamed beast."

“Oh, right!” Kentucky didn’t pay much attention to that before since he and the twins didn’t really have such a thing. Their only connection was due to the Soul Gem System, but Kentucky was free to do whatever he wanted. “Sorry, lady. I’ve never had such a thing. These two always let me do whatever I wanted, and we’re traveling together as companions, not as masters and subordinates.”

The little girl was taken aback and immediately spread her Divine Sense into Kentucky, Rean, and Roan. She thought that Kentucky only said that because the twins ordered so. However, the master-subordinate connection she was looking for was nowhere to be seen. “You’re seriously a free demon beast, uh? In that case, don’t mind if I force you into a master-subordinate contract with me.”

Immediately, Rean’s group felt the power of space locking them again, just like the Star Raven did. However, they could tell that she was much, much more proficient with it than the raven. However, Kentucky, Rean, and Roan didn’t seem very concerned. Due to Kentucky’s connection with the twins through the system, Kentucky was also immune to restrictions regarding the soul.

The little girl punctured her finger before a drop of blood came out of it. She then performed a few seals in the air that quickly entered that drop of blood. Soon after, she shot that drop of blood into Kentucky’s forehead. Kentucky’s forehead then seemed to absorb the drop of blood as its power headed to Kentucky’s soul. Eventually, it disappeared inside Kentucky’s soul without any resistance whatsoever.

The little girl smiled after seeing that with her Divine Sense. “Don’t blame me. The agreement said I couldn’t force anything. However, this demon beast isn’t bound under any contract, so it doesn’t count.” Right after, she ordered. “Come here. We’re going home.”

However, Kentucky looked at the little girl with a puzzled expression. “Why should I? Your home is your home, not mine. If you want to go home, then just go.”

The little girl was taken aback when she heard that. “Hmm... perhaps my words didn’t sound like an order. Alright, I’ll be direct then. Kentucky, right? I order you to follow me to my home.”

Kentucky shook his head immediately, saying, “Sorry, but I don’t remember to have accepted you as my master or anything.”

“Impossible!” After that, the little girl finally lost her composure. “The master-subordinate connection between your soul and mine is definitely there. How come you can defy it?”

Rean and Roan knew why, though. The Soul Gem System's Soul Dummy.. Kentucky also had the right to it as he was born in the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm, so he obviously didn't feel anything.

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Chapter 1344: Gone For Real

"Perhaps it's because I'm a mutated Minokawa that it didn't work on me," Kentucky hypothesized. "By the way, can we go now? We're thankful for the help you gave us, but we still have a lot to do in this Lost Star Realm."

The little girl obviously didn't like what just happened. However, she seemed to remember something before she gave up right after. "Very well. I shouldn't be stopping the rest of you from continuing your journey anyway. Since I can't tame you, then I have no interest. Your companions didn't try to stop me either, so that should count for something." The little girl turned around, preparing to leave.

However, Rean couldn't let that chance pass up, asking, "Sorry, senior. We're not very knowledgeable about this area. You said something about the Lost Star Selection, right? Would you mind explaining to us what it's about? As you can probably see, we aren't part of any of the top ten powers of the Lanqueas Continent."

The little girl looked back at Rean and narrowed her eyes in response. "Seems like I talked too much. Oh well, whatever. This could just be fate that brought us together." She then began to explain, "The Lost Star Selection is regarding a separate plane from where real immortals once lived... or so people believe."

"Real immortals?" Rean and Roan were confused to hear that. "We know that one's lifespan increases the higher one's cultivation realm becomes, but can one really become immortal?" Roan could be said to be immortal back when he was a Death Spirit. However, he wasn't considered a living being back then, so he knew that didn't count.

The girl shrugged her shoulders in response. "Who knows? At the very least, I've never seen one. People think it's related to real immortals because they don't know anyone capable of creating such a thing. But then again, this Lanqueas Continent is a very weak and far away place. What people can't do here, perhaps the people from the center of the Realm of Gods find it as easy as breathing. Just don't dwell on those words too much. Especially since no one found any remnants of real immortals or whatever lived in those ruins at the third level."

She continued, "Now then, about the Lost Star Selection. As I've mentioned before, it's a separate plane that can be found in this Lost Star Realm. Those who gain access to it will be able to stay there for one week. The place is known for having unlimited Divine Origin Energy, so everyone wants to enter that place."

Unlimited Divine Origin Energy! Naturally, Rean's group was astounded to hear that. Just a few hours inside the Divine Origin Energy was almost enough to jump an entire stage. With that in mind, how far could they cultivate if they had an unlimited supply of it for a whole week? Of course, Rean, Roan, Hurio, and Kentucky knew that once they entered the Elemental Transformation Realm, their cultivation speed would drop since it's a higher realm.

Nevertheless, they might be able to cultivate an entire realm with so much time. That alone was enough reason for those people from the top ten powers to monopolize it. At the very least, it was a much more efficient way to look for Divine Origin Energy than travel randomly everywhere in the Lost Star Realm. Finding those small patches of Divine Origin Energy was just too difficult.

"No wonder the top ten keep this secret hidden. They naturally don't want others to know."

The little girl nodded in response, saying, "However, there's a cultivation limit to enter that place. The Transition Realm is as far as that plane can hold. If anyone above that realm tries to enter, the plane won't be able to sustain their existences and will break apart in just a few minutes. That's why you won't see anyone with a very high realm contending for it. To make full use of that place, you need cultivation that could last seven days without surpassing the Transition Realm."

Roan immediately shook his head after that. "That's not entirely correct, right? If I'm not wrong, a lot of the top ten powers' disciples who came have the right cultivation to go all the way to the peak of the Transition Realm. After that, they would use the remaining time they have to break through into the Void Tempering Realm. As long as they voluntarily leave that plane in the next few minutes, it won't break apart. At the very least, I would do that."

"Smart," the little girl responded with a smile. "Indeed, you'll find quite a few cultivators in that threshold. After so many years, the top ten powers had already figured out that the best cultivation to have when you enter that plane is the Initial Stage of the Transition Realm. At most, they would be at the Middle Stage of the Transition Realm."

Lilia couldn't help but become nervous after that, asking, "Is it really okay to tell us that?"

The little girl shrugged her shoulders, replying, "I don't think you'll leave this place alive anyway, so who cares?" She also added, "But you don't need to worry. I won't say anything about you to the others, especially the hidden Dragon Wing Marks on your foreheads. I have to admit, that's a very good concealing ability. If not because my cultivation is so much higher than yours, I wouldn't notice it either."

Rean bitterly smiled after hearing that. Sure enough, his abilities had a limit at his cultivation level. "Senior is being too courteous. It's just some simple skill I learned in passing."

The little girl didn't mind Rean's words, waving her hands as she replied, "Well, I'm not here to pry into your secrets anyway. Although I can't intervene and believe you will die, I'll definitely pray that you pass the selection. That way, the Minokawa won't die. I truly wish to see it again. Hehe!"

Roan ignored that last part and asked, "How do we join this selection? Is it as we thought? Do we need all the marks from the three levels?"

The little girl nodded. "That's correct. You need to find the other dragon pools in the next two levels since any other beast pools won't work for you anymore. Once you gather all three marks... Well, let's keep that part a secret. I hope you enjoy it."

Rean's group didn't have the time to ask about her last words, though. "Alright, that's all I'll tell you. It isn't much, but it's better than being completely oblivious. Oh, right! One last piece of information. The Divine Origin Energy isn't the only thing you can get in that plane. Whether you can make use of this information or not is up to you." Right after saying those words, a breeze passed by, and the little girl soon disappeared.

Rean didn't give up, though. He immediately filled his throat with Divine Soul Power and shouted, "Senior, you haven't told us your name!"

Surprisingly, he got an answer through a Divine Sense message. 'How unpolite of me. You can call me Aelrie Holamenor. Perhaps we will meet again in the Realm of Gods.'

Rean then tried to ask a few more things, but he didn't receive an answer this time.. In other words, Aelrie Holamenor was gone for real.

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Chapter 1345: Aelrie

After some time, Rean and Roan concluded that she wasn't coming back as Roan said, "She's most likely not someone from Lanqueas Continent."

Naturally, Kentucky, Hurio, Rean, and Lilia were surprised to hear that. "How come?"

"First, do you remember what she said that Kentucky would have nothing to fear if she left with her?" Roan asked. Everyone nodded and waited for him to continue. "That's the point. She had never said that Kentucky would be safe in Lanqueas Continent. If she was someone from the top ten powers, she would have mentioned the Lanqueas Continent. However, she made it seem like Kentucky would be safe simply anywhere."

Rean's group had to admit Roan was right. However, Roan didn't finish it there. "Second, everyone from the top ten powers always wore some sort of identification that showed who they were. Even those Void Tempering Realm cultivators had them. Aelrie had absolutely nothing like that on her. It even makes me wonder whether the agreement she talked about was something about the Lanqueas Continent or something else entirely."

"Last but not least, she said that we might meet someday in the Realm of Gods. Not the Lanqueas Continent, but the Realm of Gods as a whole. It obviously meant that she wasn't someone who stayed in a single continent for long."

Hurio couldn't help but comment, "However, she knew a lot about the Lost Star Realm. Doesn't that prove that she's part of the top ten powers?"

Roan shook his head in response, telling him, "She can subjugate something like that white raven... well, she called it a Star Raven, very easily. Do you think she would have any issues finding the truth about this place with her strength? She can basically travel all around this Lost Star Realm without a care in the world since nothing here can threaten her."

Rean then looked in the direction the little girl disappeared, muttering, "Aelrie Holamenor... it really might not be the last time we meet her." Rean then turned his attention to the surroundings before saying, "Kentucky, can you see above the twenty-meter limit as well as you see the ground?"

Kentucky looked to the skies after that. Although there was a huge pressure that made it impossible to fly beyond twenty meters, that pressure was invisible, so Kentucky could indeed see very far. "Do you want me to check the skies instead of the ground from now on?"

Rean nodded in response. "I really don't want to bump into another ancient beast again. It was already crazy enough that we were saved by that little girl. I refuse to believe that we'll be that lucky again, so we need to be careful against what might come from above. That Star Raven found us even with my Light bending skill active, so I can't guarantee that the others won't be able to do the same thing. After all, the first ancient beast we came across didn't seem to have noticed our presence, so I'm in doubt whether it was really possible to hide from them or not with my technique."

Kentucky nodded after that, saying, "Alright. I'll keep an eye on the sky as well from now on."

Nevertheless, Roan felt that something wasn't right about that little girl. "Just what was that girl? She resembled a human, but the feeling was completely different."

Rean didn't seem to care that much. "Who knows? It's not like we haven't seen other races that looked like humans but were different. Look at Hurio and Lilia. They look like humans, but they obviously aren't."

Hurio scratched the back of his head in response. "Well, I won't deny that, but I can't talk much about it either."

Rean and Roan nodded after that. "It's fine. Let's go back to what matters. Kentucky, let's go."

"Sure." Kentucky then turned in the right direction once again and shot into the distance.

Meanwhile, at the entrance of the Lost Star Realm, a small spatial gate appeared before a small little girl dressed in white came out. Sure enough, that was Aelrie Holamenor, the person the twins' group had

just met a few minutes ago. What the twins took over a year to travel through, she was able to travel in a moment.

As soon as she came out, a voice appeared on her side, its tone quite angry. "Aelrie! I told you not to wander around on your own, didn't I? Members of our race are too rare, so we can't risk losing anyone." Soon after, a young man with an angry face appeared beside her.

The little girl's expression saddened in response, saying, "But father, I found this realm a few days ago. Look, I even found a Star Raven inside. Once I show it to the others, they'll definitely feel super jealous."

Pah!

Ouch!

The young man slapped Aelrie's backhead after that. Even with her control over space, she was completely powerless to resist or stop the young man's action. "Do you think these small creatures are worth more than your safety? Sigh... that's why I told your mother to stop being so lenient to you. You're not even ten years old yet, but look at how many problems you and those friends of yours are causing already."

Aelrie complained after the slap on her backhead, "I'm gonna tell on mom what you did."

The young man couldn't care less. "Is that so? Then, how about I go tell your friends until what age you kept wetting your bed. Let's see if they would like this piece of information."

"No!" Aelrie immediately turned as docile as a puppy after that. "Sorry, father. I won't do that again. Please!"

The young man didn't believe Aelrie's words even for a second. However, it was enough to scare her for the moment. He guessed that she would behave for a few weeks after that. "Hmph! We'll see. Now, let's go back home before someone notices you left."

The young man then touched the little girl's shoulder and disappeared without a trace. He didn't simply leave the periphery of the Lost Star Realm. In fact, he couldn't be found anywhere near the continents surrounding Lanqueas Continent at all.. As to where he and the little girl went, only they knew.

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Chapter 1346: Checking

The twins' group was able to stay out of trouble on their way to the second level's entrance. They also traveled faster so that they would make it there in a week or so. Although there was no time limit for the Dragon Wing Marks, it was better to guarantee it. However, unlike the first level, the second level only had a single entrance. It was exactly at the second level's entrance where they ended up finding a lot of cultivators again.

Hurio looked at the crowd ahead and immediately recognized them. "Look, it's the cultivators from the top ten powers and a lot of those who followed them."

However, Rean also noticed something different, saying, "You're right to say that. However, look at their numbers. There are a lot less this time."

"It can't be helped," Roan said in response. "That first floor was very dangerous with those weird icicles and the ancient formations around. If you pay attention, you'll see that although the top ten powers' disciples decreased in number, they lost way fewer members than the cultivators that first followed them."

Rean nodded after hearing that. "Most likely, the top ten powers' disciples separated after they got close to the first floor, just as we predicted. The rest of the cultivators obviously don't have as many tools to avoid dangers compared to them. Well, it might be that the rest of them haven't arrived yet. For example, I can't see the Dragon Tail Group we stole the Dragon Wing Marks from."

Hearing that, Kentucky could not help but say with a Divine Sense message, 'Speaking of that group, look who's coming from behind.'

Rean's group immediately looked in the direction Kentucky pointed at. At first, they couldn't see anything since their eyes weren't as good as Kentucky's. However, it didn't take long for them to notice a shadow in the distance, taking on the form of a Demon Bird. Naturally, that was the Demon Bird the twins' group saw that Dragon Tail Brotherhood group used to move around. 'So they're here. That's

convenient. There's a good chance they'll think we stole their Dragon Wing Marks. Once they see the marks on our foreheads, they'll quickly think that we're not the culprits.'

Lilia then gave a warning. 'That would be good. Nevertheless, let's keep our guards up in case they have some other way to detect your Dragon Wing Marks.'

Everyone nodded in response before they landed in the midst of the crowd. Since there were many cultivators who weren't part of the top ten powers here, they deemed it okay to stay for now. In any case, it was a good spot for the Dragon Tail Brotherhood people to see them.

Naturally, the cultivators around noticed the arrival of Rean's group, but they didn't seem to care. As for Hurio and Lilia, they tried to find their own people there, but it was useless. Mira's group couldn't be found at all.

Eventually, Rean's group heard Celso's voice once again. "Found you!" Celso's group headed to where the twins' group were, ready to attack at any time. However, Rean's group, who had their backs at Celso and company, finally turned around to see them.

Celso's group suddenly froze on the spot. That's because they could see nothing more than the normal round marks on their foreheads. Not only that, but it seemed that their marks wouldn't take more than a few days to disappear, showing that they left the first level way before Celso's group did. The timings simply didn't match if that was the case. "You..."

"Oh! Good to see you again, brother. We met at the entrance of the first level, didn't we?" Rean then came forward and extended his hand, wishing to compliment Celso.

"I..." Seeing Rean's unconcerned look and friendly behavior, Celso didn't know how to react for a moment. However, he quickly calmed down and paid close attention to the round ice-blue mark on Rean's forehead. He then looked at Roan and the others and could tell that they all looked the same. That meant Rean's group left the first level at the same time.

Celso then looked at his team members and asked, 'Can you see anything wrong with their marks?'

Wrigal was the first one to shake his head. 'No. It truly looks like the normal freezing mark.'

Barcelona then added, 'Wait, it might be some concealment ability. Let me check it out.' She then took out a piece of equipment that looked like a mirror before she pointed it at Rean.

Rean showed a puzzled expression in response, asking, "Is there something wrong?"

"We lost something important to us, and this mirror can help us find it again. Just stay still," Barcelona replied.

Rean pretended to not understand what was happening and nodded. "No problem. However... we haven't seen you after we entered the first level, though."

Barcelona smiled after hearing Rean's words. "If so, you should have nothing to fear." She then poured her Divine Energy into the mirror, which shone with an ethereal energy that covered Rean's body for a moment. Eventually, it went back to normal, and the reflection in the mirror looked the same as before. She also did the same thing with Roan and the others, but the result was the same. "This... the mirror didn't find anything wrong with them."

Celso couldn't help but sigh in resignation. Obviously, it was just a coincidence that Rean's group met them at the entrance of the first floor. He knew the power of that mirror Barcelona used. He didn't believe Rean would be able to conceal the Dragon Wing Mark if there was some concealment skill being used. "Sorry, it seems like we were mistaken." Celso then shook hands with Rean as Rean previously intended.

Rean smiled in response, saying, "It's fine. However, would cultivators who aren't part of the top ten powers try to steal something from you? I truly find it very hard to believe."

Indeed, Celso's group had considered that option before.. Now that they saw Rean's group had nothing, they truly thought that some other group from the top ten powers had done it.

Death... and me

Chapter 1347: Going To Ask

There was a reason for the mirror not to see through Rean's concealment ability. It was the fact that what hid the Dragon Wing Marks was not the Light bending skill itself but the light it had bent. There

was absolutely nothing wrong with the light reflecting the blue color of the marks other than the fact that it was forced to follow a pre-determined path. Rean's concealment ability against naked eyes was near impeccable because of it. Unlike other skills that concealed things themselves, Rean's skills forced something else to do the job. In this case, it was the light.

Since Celso thought Rean's group didn't have the Dragon Wing Marks, they preferred not to attack. After all, they believed Rean's group would die to the next Light Element and Divine Energy wave. It would be unwise to attack them in front of everyone and alert the rest of the cultivators who had nothing to do with the Lost Star Selection.

Rean's group had just arrived, so Rean took the chance to push further, asking, "Brother, we have just arrived here, so we don't know what's happening. Do you know why everyone's waiting in front of the Second Level? Is there something wrong?"

Celso stopped thinking about the twins and was now focusing on the top ten powers' disciples. He wanted to know who it was that robbed his group of their marks. Because of that, he didn't want to waste time with Rean anymore. "Sorry, I don't have time to talk with you anymore. Good luck." Immediately after, Celso moved to the place where his Dragon Tail Brotherhood companions and elders were located.

Seeing Celso leave without answering his question didn't bother Rean, though. He simply returned to his group and raised a doubt he had through a Divine Sense message. 'I can understand all the Elemental Transformation and Transition Realm cultivators among the top ten powers' disciples. However, what are the elders doing here? They're obviously above the Transition Realm, so they won't be able to enter that plane Aelrie talked about.'

Hurio shrugged his shoulders in response, saying, 'What else could it be? They're obviously here to protect the disciples. Since that separate plane is so good, all the top ten powers sent their best disciples who could enjoy that place's Divine Origin Energy. It would be idiotic if they died to someone because of their cultivations.'

Rean still found it weird. 'That much I know. What makes me curious is the Light Element wave that will eventually come. Wouldn't they die to that?'

Roan understood where Rean was coming from, asking in response, 'You mean that only those who can enter that so-called plane will be able to survive while the rest will die. Is it?'

Rean nodded in response. 'Yes. Of course, I have no proof. Perhaps the fact that these Void Tempering Realm elders came together is because they know a way to escape the barrier back at the depths' entrance.'

Hurio then looked at Lilia, who bitterly smiled in response. If Rean was right about the deaths, didn't that mean Lilia would stay out and die as well? 'We need to find a beast pool for Lilia at all costs.'

Roan snorted after hearing that. 'Yeah? And how exactly do you intend to find them? Also, don't forget. You need to have all three marks to enter the other plane. If she really wants to enter it, she'll need to go back to the first floor, find a beast pool that none of the ten powers did, and then come back. First of all, is there still any pool remaining even with all ten powers scouring the depths? The big ten obviously have gone through this process many times. Don't they perhaps know where each and every pool is located, so they already got everything?'

'This...' Hurio had to admit Roan was right.

Roan also added, 'One more thing. We have nothing to do with you and Lilia. We're here for the Fallen Light Star Fragments that are easier to find in the third level. If you want to go back to help her, by all means, be my guest. However, we definitely won't follow you.'

Hurio's expression immediately turned dark after that. Even though what Roan said was true, he didn't need to put it that way.

Rean couldn't help but laugh after that. 'Hahaha! Cold as always, huh? Why can't you be a little more honest?' Rean then looked at Hurio and Lilia and said, 'What the ice block really meant was that this selection most likely won't take everyone in. After all, it's called a selection. It will become a race against time to see who are the first people to gather the marks and get selected. Even if you go back now, it would be simply impossible to come back in time to fight for the slots. Obviously, Lilia has a much better chance of surviving if she finds a way to avoid the Light Element wave by continuing to move forward.'

'Hmph! You're the one who said that, not me.' Roan refused to admit those were his intentions at all.

Hurio's expression finally eased up after that. 'I see...' He then looked at Lilia, who just smiled at him. 'But she's still at risk nonetheless.'

Kentucky then mentioned, 'Well, I also want to help her. However, you're forgetting something. Before you think about saving your sweetheart, you must save yourself... unless you're planning to die together, that is.'

Lilia and Hurio became somewhat embarrassed after that but didn't deny Kentucky's words. 'Ahem... I won't leave her alone outside unless she has a chance, so yeah, we might die together.'

'Don't be ridiculous,' Lilia immediately complained. 'You're the hope of our people. I absolutely won't allow you to do such a thing. Stop being selfish.'

Hurio and Lilia then began to argue about the issue while the twins and Kentucky simply ignored them. In the end, that wasn't their problem. 'Roan, I'm gonna ask the other cultivators who aren't part of the top ten to see if they know why everyone is waiting outside.'

Roan nodded in agreement to Rean's move.. 'Alright.'

Death... and me

Chapter 1348: Which One?

It didn't take long for Rean's group to find out why. The second level was different from the rest of the Lost Star Realm. Instead of a snow-covered area, it was a place filled with volcanoes. Of course, Hurio and Lilia knew this much already, and it shouldn't be enough of a reason for them to stop at the entrance. The problem was that the Light Element wave stirred up the Fire Element and Divine Energy in the area. Because of that, all the volcanoes started to erupt nonstop. It had become ridiculously complicated to resist the environment at the moment.

However, the top ten powers' didn't give up, and they didn't seem too concerned either. Obviously, they already expected such a thing, so everyone thought the area would reach a state where they could enter again sooner or later.

Boom!

Sometime later, an explosion could be heard coming from far ahead, beyond the entrance of the second level. It was so big that even the ground where everyone was staying trembled and started to crack. It

wasn't hard to guess that another volcano had erupted. Unsurprisingly, this one was much stronger than any of the previous ones.

Theoretically, that should be a signal that it was still not the right time to enter the second level. However, as soon as the top ten powers' disciples and elders heard that, they hushed their companions, much to the rest of the cultivators' surprise.

Of course, Rean's group didn't just watch and stand still as those people disappeared into the entrance. Whatever might have happened, they had to go as well. The same could be said for the cultivators of other groups.

The entrance of the second level was different from the first one. Instead of going down through a crack, everyone went up on a mountain that had two peaks. The entrance, obviously, was in between those two peaks and was the only entrance to the second level. It was useless to try to go around the mountain, as an extremely concentrated cloud of ash and smoke made it impossible to pass through. According to Hurio, that thing was too dangerous. They should avoid clouds as concentrated as that when they got inside.

Soon, they all arrived at the gap between the two peaks as ash began to fall from the sky. When they finally passed through, they were able to see the second level from that advantaged point. It wasn't just a few volcanoes, though. As far as the twins and Kentucky could see, there were volcanoes spewing out lava nonstop. In fact, there should be even more. However, because of the constant ash falling from the skies, their vision was hampered after a certain distance.

That wasn't the most concerning part, though. The moment everyone passed through the two peaks, they were assaulted by a huge searing sensation because of the area's chaotic Fire Element and Divine Energy. They all had to create a Divine Energy Barrier to try to keep it all out from reaching their bodies.

In Rean's group, Rean was pretty much fine since elements attuned to Yang Energy like this had little effect on him if they weren't being used to attack. Hurio was fine, too, since he was good with all mainstream elements. Then again, he got Lilia to come closer to him, as she was a Wind Element Affinity cultivator. He used his power to help protect her against the searing sensation.

Kentucky, well, had a heaven-defying defense, and it wasn't just physical, so that didn't bother him at all. As for Roan, he didn't have an easy time as Rean, who could simply ignore the environment. Nevertheless, he was more than good enough with Yin Energy to use it to create a barrier capable of protecting him.

Then again, it was quite unfortunate that not everyone had their own methods, especially the low-level cultivators. Some of them were forced to retreat after just a few minutes as they couldn't resist it. They would have to think about some other method to do that. Well, the only ones who cared about them were the people from their groups. The rest simply ignored their issue as they had nothing to do with it, Rean's group included.

As the rest came down from the mountain with two peaks, they got to watch the ground area as well. Rivers of lava could be seen everywhere. Every now and then, a molten rock would fall from the skies, forcing the nearby cultivators to dodge. Everyone was ready for that anyway. After all, they could now hear the eruptions that happened much easier.

There was a problem for the majority, though. Even though they could somehow drive the chaotic Fire Element and Divine Energy of the environment away, the cultivators were quickly spending their Divine Energy reserves to do that. It was even worse than when a few of them tested it earlier, as that big eruption they heard from outside made things even worse.

Rean's group had an idea, though. 'The next beast pools would probably only appear in this kind of environment. It's supposed to be a selection, after all. It's definitely not supposed to be easy.' They were right. The top ten powers' disciples could not get the second marks any other time. It had to be while the second level was in its most hazardous state.

After a few minutes, the cultivators following the top ten powers' disciples finally gave up. Most of them didn't have the capability of sustaining their presence in this place for too long, so they separated themselves and headed to the exit of the second level. The only ones who remained were people with high-level cultivation, such as those at the Elemental Transformation Realm and above. Or, of course, those who had effective methods to defend against the environmental conditions, like Rean's group.

After seeing that most of the cultivators following them left, the top ten powers' disciples also decided to separate. After all, they had to find their own marks.

That was what Rean's group was waiting for, actually. 'Should we follow the same group as before, or should we tail the other Dragon Tail Brotherhood groups?'

Death... and me

Chapter 1349: A Shadow

Rean believed that Celso's group would definitely pay very close attention to their surroundings this time. Perhaps they would be able to find their group, which would definitely cause trouble in the future. Unless, of course, they fought Celso's group and got rid of them. It's just that everyone in their five-person group was at the Elemental Transformation Realm, so it would be a complicated thing to do so with no victory guaranteed. Even if they could win, killing the other party would be another story altogether.

However, Roan didn't seem to care about it. 'Let's follow Celso again. That's our best choice.'

'Why?' Hurio Rean, Kentucky, and Lilia asked in response.

Roan then explained, 'Simple. First of all, the marks are only given to the people the dragon finds to be the most worthy. If we follow another group, we might not receive any marks at all, depending on their talents. Also, Celso had definitely warned the other Dragon Tail Brotherhood members about what happened, so the other guys will still keep an eye out. Last but not least, we need to follow them to see if they really know where the pools are located or if it's just a coincidence that they found the first one.'

Rean and the others had to admit Roan was right. 'Alright, then. Let's pretend that we're leaving before Celso's group does.'

Everyone jumped on Kentucky's back before flashing into the distance. Celso, obviously, noticed that, as did most of the other groups still remaining. They all thought that Rean's group was the same as the others who left. They couldn't resist staying in this place for too long, so they wanted to reach the exit.

However, after the twins made sure no one was looking anymore, Rean activated his Light bending skill and asked Kentucky to go back. By the time they arrived, the rest of the groups had already separated, heading somewhere else by themselves.

It wasn't a problem for Kentucky, though. He could see further than most, so he still managed to find the direction Celso's group was heading in. 'Fortunately, they didn't change the composition of Celso's group. They're still the same five members.'

‘That’s to be expected,’ Rean replied. ‘Even though they’re from the same organization, everyone there wants to gather the marks. If there’s even a small chance that joining Celso would lead to losing the second mark, the rest of the members from other groups definitely won’t join him.’

With Kentucky’s vision and Rean’s Light bending skill, they were able to stay hidden from Celso’s group as they followed Celso and the others. Sure enough, Celso’s group seemed to be a lot more aware of their surroundings, afraid that they were being followed again. However, Divine Sense in the Lost Star Realm was still blurry, so they had to rely on other detection abilities.

Then again, even though everything was chaotic in the range of the volcanoes, there was still wind and other things. With that said, Rean and Roan guided Kentucky so that their smell wouldn’t be carried over to Celso’s group.

The sound made by Kentucky as he flapped his wings didn’t escape at all as their group also kept a Divine Energy barrier up. All in all, they left no clues left on the ground since they were flying, no Divine Sense, no sound, no sight visible from the naked eye, and no smell. If Celso’s group was full of Transition Realm cultivators, they would still most likely not find Rean and the others with such preparations.

However, a few hours after Kentucky began to follow Celso’s group, Kentucky noticed a shadow flashing somewhere nearby. It was very fast, making it really hard to detect. If not because of his improved sight, Kentucky would have missed that shadow entirely. ‘Rean, Roan, there’s someone else following Celso’s group.’

‘What?! Who is it?’ Rean asked.

‘I don’t know,’ Kentucky replied. ‘It moved way too quickly, trying to stay out of sight. All I can say is that the one following Celso’s group is much stronger than we are. That wasn’t the kind of speed we can achieve with our cultivation levels.’

Hurio couldn’t help but ask, ‘Could it be that someone else is also trying to steal Celso’s group mark?’

Roan immediately shook his head, saying, ‘I don’t think that’s the case. Most likely, that’s someone from the Dragon Tail Brotherhood. In fact, it should be one of their Void Tempering Realm elders.’

How could Rean and the others not know what that meant? The guy was keeping out of sight so that he could watch over Celso and the others. Celso's group got robbed once, so they might get robbed again during the time they get their second mark.

'I see...' Rean noticed something else. 'They hope that the people who stole the first marks will appear again. After all, four members of Celso's group are still without the first mark. Since the marks can be stolen once their owner is killed, that's their best option. Don't forget that we believe we have no time to return to the first level anymore. That's their only choice unless they decide to attack the other top ten powers. However, if they decide to do that, they will definitely wait until everyone arrives at the third level so that they can avoid meaningless conflict.'

Roan and the others agreed with Rean on that. 'Of course, this is all speculation. That shadow might be some ancient beast from the second level. Or maybe it's someone from the other top ten powers. Let's not forget we also have cultivators who are not part of any of the top ten powers. As far as we know, any of these options are possible, or maybe none of them at all.'

Lilia then remembered something. 'We still don't know if Void Tempering Realm experts can find low-level cultivators with their natural spatial detection ability. However, the shadow that's following Celso's group doesn't seem to have noticed us yet. If Void Tempering Realm cultivators can really find enemies with lower cultivation levels through that ability, then its range isn't that big.'

Rean's group looked at each other after that. There was only one way to find out, and that was to get closer. It's just that they definitely wouldn't do such an idiotic move. 'Let's stay away as far as possible. Kentucky, you should be able to detect that shadow easier now that you have noticed its presence. Make sure you don't get too close. We'll eventually find out its identity.'

Kentucky nodded after hearing that.. 'Understood.'

Death... and me

Chapter 1350: Easier To Catch

However, things didn't go as planned for either side. Celso was holding a small object that looked like a white dragon scale that had a tinge of red over it. Then again, Kentucky couldn't see it since he was too far away. He could only make out the silhouette of Celso's people as he followed their group.

Rean and the others didn't know, but Celso used a similar scale to find the previous pool. It's just that the previous one had a blue hue instead of red. Everything was going well for Celso and his companions when, out of nowhere, one of the nearby volcanoes erupted.

That wouldn't be anything out of the norm. On their way to this area, Celso and Rean's group had seen five more volcanoes erupting. Since they kept some distance from the volcanoes, they were able to leave their dangerous areas without any issues. Only the falling lava and molten rocks caused them some small trouble.

However, when this volcano exploded, something enormous, brimming with yellow-red light, came out of it. It looked more like a giant rock covered in lava. However, the aura it spread immediately caught the attention of both the twins and Celso's group. 'Ancient beast!'

That ball of lava then opened, landing nearby.

Bang!

Scales colored white and red spread on its back as it stood on four legs. Immediately, Hurio identified the beast, quickly sending a Divine Sense message to everyone. 'It's a Star Armored Salamander! Quick, Kentucky! Fall back! It's definitely no weaker than any of the other ancient beasts we found so far.'

Kentucky didn't need to hear that twice before he made a turn and dashed into the distance. Celso's group was no different as they immediately started to run away as fast as they could. Unfortunately for them, neither Kentucky nor Celso's groups could go further than a few dozen meters.

Roarrrrrr!

Spatial power soon spread from the salamander. Not only that, its spatial power seemed to be mixed with Fire Element as well. It immediately created an area of twenty kilometers where no one weaker than it could move as they wished.

'Fuck!' Kentucky tried to fight the spatial power while he felt the Fire Element imbued in it enter his body. Even Kentucky's heaven-defying defense couldn't stop the Armored Salamander's power from

affecting his body. Rean was also more or less like Kentucky since he was the best at manipulating Yang Energy and Elements.

However, Roan, Hurio, and especially Lilia were faring not so well. They were using all their Divine Energy to try and drive out the power of the salamander, who hadn't even left its landing position yet.

Celso's group wasn't any better. The only difference was that they seemed to have some protection treasures that they all used to try to fend off the Fire-attribute spatial power of the Armored Salamander. Sure enough, the top ten powers only sent their best disciples to try and enter the other plane in the Lost Star Realm. Naturally, they gave these disciples plenty of treasures for self-protection. It's just that these treasures took in mind the battle against other humanoid races, not ancient beasts.

Thanks to Rean's Yang Energy resistance, Rean was still able to keep his Light bending skill activated. In other words, no one saw that they were there yet except the salamander. But in the Armored Salamander's case, it wasn't trying to catch Rean's group at first, so it landed much closer to Celso's group instead. Simply put, its natural spatial detection ability caught sight of Celso's group first. In a certain way, that confirmed that those at the Void Tempering Realm and above could sense lower-level cultivators.

However, as soon as the salamander spread its Fire-attribute spatial ability to lock Celso's group down, it noticed the extra person there. The same shadow that Kentucky saw moving and trying to stay hidden several times.

There was a reason why the salamander took this long to notice the owner of that shadow. That's because the guy was following Celso's group from further away, so it entered the salamander's range after the salamander jumped out of the volcano. Immediately, both the guy and the salamander noticed each other's 'black hole' inside their natural spatial detection range. As mentioned before, those above the Transition Realm couldn't really hide from each other. At the very least, Rean's group didn't know of a way to do that.

The man then looked at the salamander and had a dark expression on his face. Kentucky was able to identify the man as well. 'To think it's actually an elder of the Dragon Tail Brotherhood following them.' It was easy to tell due to the man's clothes. As far as Kentucky might be, the color was easy to make out.

The salamander then began to make its way to the man, not the least bit afraid. The same couldn't be said about the man, though. He was indeed in the Void Tempering Realm and had some capabilities to control spatial powers. However, he wasn't even close to being able to activate such a huge spatial

ability, let alone fuse an element into it. With that being said, the Armored Salamander was definitely at a realm much higher than Void Tempering.

In any case, the only thing he could do was keep himself free from the salamander's Fire-attribute spatial locking ability. Not to mention that he could only do that because the salamander spread out its ability way too much. If it had focused its ability on the area he was staying in, he wouldn't be able to move as he wished either.

With that, the elder of the Dragon Tail Brotherhood threw away any thoughts of battling the Armored Salamander. Instead, he immediately used his spatial powers to move to where Celso's group was and used it to hold their body. Following that, he blinked away, carrying Celso's group with him. Yes, fleeing was the only option!

The salamander was enraged when it saw that, so it immediately gave chase, completely ignoring Rean's group... or so Rean and the others wished for it to happen. However, it seemed way too lazy to move with its enormous body. It probably felt that it wasn't worth the effort to capture Celso's group. Instead, it turned in the direction of Rean's group.. To it, their group seemed a lot easier to catch.