

Death 1531

Death... and me

Chapter 1531: Not Only That

The twins didn't really mind and returned to the Tranquio Sect with Ormo. Ormo wanted them to take part in the banquet. After all, they acquired an extra six kilometers of territory in this tube-like world. However, the twins refused and went back to their rooms instead. Of course, Celis followed them now that they were free.

"So, have you decided when we're heading out?" Celis asked. "Perhaps it would be a good idea to wait until you have recovered your Nascent Souls."

However, Rean shook his head in response. "I'm worried about what happened to Rafatia and Falangia."

"There's no need to be," Roan told him. "Falangia, although weak, was a seasoned cultivator. She saw the truth of the cultivation world and survived it. Don't take her for a greenhorn cultivator, Rean. We told her that we might not come back, and she's fully aware of that. After five years, it would be idiotic to think that she didn't get out of the city on her own with Rafatia."

Hearing that, Rean had to admit Roan was right. Falangia was indeed a lot more experienced than the majority at her age. "That's true. At the moment, our full strength would allow us to fight at the level of someone at the Initial Stage of Saint Realm, perhaps even Middle Stage. Maybe it's a good idea to wait for our Nascent Souls to recover."

However, Kentucky, who was watching from the Dimensional Realm, didn't think it was a good idea. 'After the show of power you guys showed in that competition, don't you think it would be risky for you to stay here? Anyone who chooses you to take part in the Core and Soul Fusion Realm would obtain an almost guaranteed victory. I'm pretty sure some people from other powers will come after the Tranquio Sect Master to talk about you two.'

However, Roan shook his head, dispelling his worries as he said, "There's no need to worry, Kentucky. After today, we won't be able to take part in any challenges anymore."

This time, Rean, Celis, Kentucky, and even Sister Orb was taken aback. "How come you know that?"

Roan faintly smiled in response, telling them, "Just wait for that old woman from the purging organization to come look for us. If I'm not wrong, you'll understand after that."

Rean and Celis looked at each other after that. "Well, if you say so. That'll be for the best."

As the twins waited in their room in the Tranquio Sect, Himatikia received a visit. She was still watching the contest between the Hura Clan and Crita Organization but spared a bit of attention to the subordinate that had just arrived. "You came faster than I thought. So, what did they say?"

The subordinate bowed and used a Divine Sense message to pass the purging organization's orders. After hearing it, Himatikia's expression slightly changed as she thought, 'What would someone like him want with those twins?' However, she quickly recovered and nodded at the messenger, saying, "Alright, I understand. Tell them I'll pass the message on."

Surprisingly, the Crita Organization didn't win three of the first four contests, even though they had the advantage in terms of disciples. In the end, the decision was carried out on the last test, which was selected by the judges instead of the two powers.

Not too long after, the Crita Organization left with the Hura Clan. Crita Organization was still the winner, though. With that, not only did the Hura Clan lose six kilometers of territory to the Tranquio Sect, they lost three more kilometers to the Crita Organization.

Then again, Himatikia couldn't care less about all of that. She just wanted to head to the Tranquio Sect to talk with the twins. Fortunately, it was very close, so she arrived there in just a minute.

Ormo noticed her presence and immediately called her over. "Elder Himatikia! So you came for our banquet! Come, come, join us at the table."

Himatikia shook her head after hearing that, saying, "Sorry, but I only passed by to talk with those twins of yours. Can you tell me where they are?"

Ormo was surprised to hear that. "Oh! So that's how it is. Sure, leave it to me then." Ormo then called Glasita as she was the one who treated them when they were statues. "Glasita, the twins are in their room, right? Please bring Elder Himatikia to see them."

Naturally, Glasita immediately accepted the order. "Yes, Sect Master."

Not too long after, they arrived at the twins' room. Well, the twins were already waiting for her anyway. "Come in. We were waiting for you."

Glasita then bowed and left Himatikia and the twins alone.

Himatikia obviously noticed Celis there, though. "Can we talk in private?"

Rean shook his head in response, saying, "Don't worry, Celis is with us."

Celis nodded at Himatikia, telling her, "There's nothing to worry about with me here."

Himatikia was surprised that Celis could talk, though. Celis was at the peak of Stage Eight. However, only those in the Transition Realm could talk. "How come you have sentience already?"

Celis, obviously, already had an excuse for that. Well, not really an excuse since it was the truth. "That's because I was in the Transition Realm before. Because of a few issues, my cultivation dropped. As you can imagine, even though my cultivation was affected, my sentience was left intact."

"I see..." Himatikia had to admit it made sense. "Alright then, let's get into the main topic."

Roan then glanced at the old woman, saying, "You came to tell us we can't participate in any struggles for territories anymore, right?"

Himatikia was taken aback to hear that. "How did you know?"

"Because our strength would affect the balance if we suddenly decided to sell our services to other powers," Roan said in response.

Rean and Celis finally understood the reason as they thought, 'So that's why!' Of course, they didn't say that out loud.

Himatikia took a deep breath and nodded in response. "Yes, I came here to tell you that we can't allow you to take part in other power struggles. However, that isn't all. There's also someone who wants to see you two. It's our purging organization's Grand Elder, Levid."

Pin!

Suddenly, the twins heard a sound from the Soul Gem System go off in their heads.

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Chapter 1532: Evil Quest?

[Even the oldest humans and demon beasts of the Upside Down World have been in this place for as long as they could remember. Obviously, they're beings that were born and lived here all their lives. After so long, these beings have finally come up with a way of escaping the Upside Down World.]

[New Quest Available: Prevent the beings of the Upside Down World from escaping.]

[Point Reward: 150000 Destiny Points.]

[Title Reward: Dream Breakers.]

[Failure conditions: 1- The hosts leave the Upside Down World without completing the quest. 2- The hosts take more than six months to accomplish the objective.]

[Failure punishment: Time for full Nascent Soul revival multiplied by one hundred.]

The twins were taken aback after they read through everything. It had been a long time since the system released a new quest. In fact, the last one was back on the Zafins' planet. However, what truly caught their attention was the objective of the quest. 'Why would the system want to prevent the people of the Upside Down World from coming out?'

The system's quests couldn't be said to be righteous. Instead, they were more like challenges the twins had to pass through. However, none of the past quests had an objective that could be said to be evil. That's why the twins were surprised by such a request. Everyone here had been locked for so long. Not to mention that Rean truly thought about using his method of teleportation to let them come out once the twins' own safe passage was guaranteed.

As Himatikia talked to them, the twins used their Soul Connection to talk about it.

'Now, that's quite complicated,' Rean said. 'To be honest, if the people and demon beasts here have found a way out, I would be happy for them. After all, there are good ones here who deserve going out.'

Roan already expected that from Rean, saying, 'If there was no punishment, I wouldn't really mind giving up this quest. However, do you know what it means to multiply the time it takes for our Nascent Souls to revive by one hundred? It'll already take a year and three months for it to revive, you know?'

Rean shook his head, saying, 'The punishment said that it will multiply the remaining time. Our Nascent Souls will take one year and three months to revive. However, six months in the future, that'll just be nine months. With that said, it's a hundred times nine months, not one year and three months.'

Roan's mouth twitched in response. 'So what if the time is shorter? You can't possibly be considering accepting the punishment, right? A. Hundred. Times. Nine. Months! That's seventy-five years! Both you and I are seventy-three at the moment, idiot! We haven't even lived this long on this side of the universe. At that point, it would be much better to simply cultivate back to the Peak Stage of the Elemental Transformation Realm than wait for the revival.'

Of course, Rean knew that. 'Yes, but...' It's just that he couldn't think about stopping everyone from going out. Why should they crush these people and demon beasts' dreams?

With that, Roan decided to use the ultimate weapon. 'We have been apart from Qia and Calina for who knows how many years already, and now you want to increase that time even more? Which one is more important to you? Your woman or a bunch of unknown people? Remember, it's not like you're going to kill anyone. Their lives will simply continue as they've always known them to be. Put your priorities in the right place!'

Sure enough, those words hit Rean where it hurt. He struggled a bit inside but, in the end, couldn't deny Roan's words. 'Fine! We'll try to stop them. Happy now? Fuck this shit. I hope I can put my hand on Soul Gem in the future.'

Hearing that, Roan sighed in relief. 'It's good that you think like that. Don't worry. There's a good thing about it, and it isn't the extra Destiny Points or the title.'

'A good thing?' Rean's interest was piqued.

Roan then explained, 'The system had never put a quest that could be considered 'evil' for us to complete. At most, they could be considered neutral. That being said, do you think the system would really ask for such a thing if there wasn't a reason behind it?'

'This...' Rean had to admit Roan's words were right. 'If so, this mission has a lot more to it than the system described. Now that you say that, the system is giving 150000 Destiny Points as a reward. Whatever this quest is accomplishing, it has very great repercussions to the Upside Down World and probably the entire Pol Continent.'

Roan nodded in agreement. 'It was quite obvious before, but now even more so. There's a lot more to this Upside Down World than we can see. Anyways, we can continue this talk after Himatikia finishes her words. The system quest started as soon as she mentioned that guy called Levid. There's definitely a connection there.'

Himatikia, obviously, didn't know what the twins talked about. First of all, since it was a conversation between the two of them, just a split second passed in the real world. How could she notice anything? "Grand Elder seemed to have obtained some interest in you two after the report I submitted a few hours ago."

Although Himatikia couldn't share the twins' details with the other powers, she could still do it within her own purging organization. "However, I don't know why exactly he wants to see you."

The twins nodded, pretending to not mind it too much. "Sure, no problem. Should we be concerned about our own safety?"

Himatikia immediately shook her head, saying, "Absolutely not. You aren't the first geniuses to ever appear in this place, you know? If that was the case, this Upside Down World would've been in chaos. However, there's a good chance that you will be forced to join the purging organization to prevent other powers from asking for your help."

The twins were fine with that. "Well, this is one of the strongest powers even though they have no say in the Upside Down World's affairs. I guess it wouldn't be a bad thing to join your side."

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Chapter 1533: Foundation

Naturally, Himatikia was happy to hear that. "Great! In that case, I'll bring you two there. Of course, I heard about your Demon Bird and the young boy. I don't mind bringing them together as well."

Rean felt like laughing once he heard that. Those same guys she was talking about were in the Dimensional Realm at the moment, so there wasn't really any Demon Bird or young boy for Himatikia to carry. "It's fine, senior. We will deal with it ourselves. In fact, we prefer it that way. So, when do you intend to go?"

Himatikia didn't mind it either. Since they didn't want her to bring the others, she wouldn't insist. "To be honest, I have no reason to stay here. I didn't even want to come to start with. If it wasn't for the fact that I had to be a judge, I would have stayed in our headquarters until now. Are you ready to go now?"

Rean and Roan looked at Celis, who nodded at them in response. Seeing that they also had nothing else to do in this place, they decided to head out with Himatikia straight away. "We can go now."

Himatikia didn't waste time and used her Divine Energy to grab the twins and Celis. Following that, she left the room and went to see the Sect Master of the Tranquio Sect. Well, that was more because Rean wanted to bid farewell and let them know they wouldn't be joining the Tranquio Sect either.

Of course, Ormo couldn't help but feel sad about that. With the twins there, he most likely would have a guaranteed win for every Core and Soul Fusion Realm challenge. "I see... so you won't be able to fight for any other power anymore. I would be lying if I said I didn't mind, but I guess the purging organization has its reasons. In any case, thank you for the help this time around. We definitely won because of you two."

Rean and Roan nodded once they heard that. Ormo then asked if they wanted to stay for the banquet, but the twins refused, saying they didn't have an interest in it. Only after that did Himatikia take flight again and leave the Tranquio Sect with the twins' group and a few other elders.

"You will like it there. Because of our role in the Upside Down World, we have access to a lot of resources. It's also because we're prohibited from intervening directly and must remain neutral at all times that we have the most freedom. Divine Stones aren't plenty, but there are a few every now and then," Himatikia said.

Rean couldn't help but ask, "Will we need to take part in that so-called purging every one hundred years? I'll be honest with you. I can't force myself to kill others like what's expected of your organization."

Himatikia narrowed her eyes in response, saying, "You do know that it's the purging that prevents this place from going nuts, right? If we don't control the population, this Upside Down World will eventually collapse."

Rean nodded, replying, "I know that. However, I still can't go around killing innocent people, even if they were chosen randomly."

Himatikia didn't insist, though. "Well, it's a rare thing that we're the ones asking you to join our side, so perhaps there can be an exception for you. However, you better not try to get in the way of others. Even if you're part of our organization, you will be immediately executed if you stop anyone from doing their jobs. Even I wouldn't be an exception in this case."

Rean could only nod for a moment. Though, he decided that he would definitely try to bring the people of the Upside-Down World out to end this purging thing.

Roan didn't care about any of that, though. Once Rean finished his questions about the organization, he decided to go back to the main topic while they flew. 'Now then, there's a good chance that the reason we need to stop everyone from leaving is that it might break this place.'

Rean knew where Roan was coming from. 'The Upside Down World is connected to 33 places in the Pol Continent. All of them had the Salt Sweep phenomenon, while the statues were brought to this place by

the natural formations. It pretty much meant that this place was very important to the entire Pol Continent in some way.'

Roan nodded, saying, 'Correct. Since we're at it, we might as well try to discover what's so important about this place that we must prevent it from being destroyed. Of course, we still don't know if the method used for escaping is really going to break this place. For example, perhaps this place needs its cultivators and demon beasts so that it can work properly.'

'Do you mean fuel?' Celis, who was also participating in the conversation, asked.

'Yes,' Roan replied in agreement. 'The Divine Energy of the cultivators themselves might be partially used by this Upside Down World. If they escape, this world might collapse or simply stop working on whatever its existence is meant to be doing. We still don't know if it's a Dimensional Realm, after all.'

Rean pondered over it for a bit before asking Sister Orb, 'Sister Orb, do continents have foundations? Like the foundation of the universe which we have a fragment of?'

Roan and Celis looked at Rean in surprise as they became very curious about Sister Orb's answer.

[Where did you get this idea from?]

Rean then explained, 'Well, this is a tube-like world, right? It moves in a straight line on both sides. Don't you think it looks like a pillar?'

[That's quite perceptive of you. Unfortunately for you, I have no idea.]

Rean quite expected that answer already. 'Is it because this is restricted information from the system?'

[Not really. The system is not preventing me from talking about it at all. It's just that I don't know. Of course, I can't guarantee that the system, or Soul Gem for that matter, doesn't know about it. Perhaps the system will give you more information in the future.]

Rean nodded after hearing that. 'Alright, I'll keep this idea in mind.'

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Chapter 1534: Not the only reason

As mentioned before, the entire Upside Down World was only 1341 kilometers long. Considering that Himatikia was above the Transition Realm and could fly, it obviously didn't take long for them to arrive at the purging organization's headquarters.

Celis and the twins looked far ahead and noticed that the area around them was increasing in size. So far, this tube-like world was only twenty kilometers in diameter if one moved sideways until one reached the same point again. However, the twins could tell by looking around that it had already increased to at least twenty-five, not to mention that it was getting bigger the farther they went.

Suddenly, Celis and the twins noticed something that looked like a giant tower in the distance. By far, that was the biggest building they saw in this Upside Down World. However, it wasn't its size that really caught their attention. Instead, it was the fact that it looked to be completely white. "Isn't that the white powder?"

Everyone who was caught by the white powder and became a statue would recognize it, so Himatikia wasn't surprised the twins recognized it as well. "It does look like it, doesn't it? However, even though it seems to be made of white powder, the tower doesn't have the power to transform anyone into a statue. Also, it's very solid, unlike the white powder from outside."

Rean and Roan nodded in response. "That makes sense. If it was made only of the white powder, that tower would have fallen a long time ago. However, it goes straight from the ground on one side to the ground on the other side."

Rean was right. By now, the tube-like path stretched a total of 42 kilometers to the sides for a full round, and it seemed to be the biggest area. Past the tower, the tube's diameter started to decrease once again. Most likely, it would return to the same 20 kilometers from before.

As for the tower itself, it was 21 kilometers tall... or perhaps it wasn't correct to call it 'tall.' After all, it had two bases connected to the ground on both sides. One must not forget that the gravity in this tube-like world was the same on all sides. That meant one could stay standing upside down on the other side,

or so it looked like for those seeing it from the other side. The tower simply stretched from one ground to the other.

Celis couldn't help but say after a while, "Doesn't it look like this tower is a bone stuck in a throat?"

The twins had to admit Celis was right. The tube world was the throat, and the tower was the bone stuck on both sides. It was definitely a very good description of the view ahead.

Himatikia couldn't help but laugh when she heard that. "Hahaha! A bone stuck in the throat? That's definitely the first time I've heard that comparison. Indeed, it truly looks like that. Hahaha!"

However, it looked like that because they were still far away. The closer they got, the bigger the tower looked. By the time Himatikia landed on one of the tower's ends, the twins and Celis could tell that the tower's circumference was at least two kilometers wide. "This is kind of a wasteful construction for a world like this, no? Just how long did it take for your purging organization to build it?"

Himatikia shook her head, saying, "I have no idea. As far as I can remember, this tower was already here. That's already considering I'm over a thousand years old."

The twins and Celis nodded after hearing that. Since she didn't know, it made no sense to insist on the question.

"Welcome back, Elder Himatikia." As soon as she approached the gates, the guards in front paid their respects. "Grand Elder Levid left a message saying that you should bring the new guests straight to him once you arrived."

Himatikia nodded in response. "Very well."

The guards then opened the gates and let her pass with the twins and Celis. Inside, the elders that had accompanied Himatikia bade their farewells, leaving for their own rooms.

Himatikia didn't mind it and simply brought the twins over. They passed by several floors with their own facilities. The tower had everything the twins could think of. Side occupations, cultivation formations, even resting places for those who wanted to do nothing more than relax.

Eventually, on the 113th floor, Himatikia made a turn into one of the corridors and headed towards a room in the end. She then knocked on the door and waited, saying, "This is Grand Elder Levid's room."

The twins and Celis nodded in response as they waited.

"Come in." It didn't take long for Levid to call them inside, though.

Just like the rest of the tower, the room inside was enormous. Let alone that the doors would probably lead to similar size places. Nevertheless, the twins were more interested in the old man in front of them.

"So those are the twins you talked about, huh?" Levid asked with a smile.

The twins tried to sense his cultivation but couldn't feel it with their Divine Senses. Fortunately, Levid also used his Divine Sense to feel the twins. That allowed Rean's Divine Sense bending skill to catch its power and make them understand where Levid stood. 'Space Bending Realm. That's a lot lower than we expected.'

Then again, they were in a closed world, so it was normal for the strongest experts to not be as strong as the ones outside. The fact that Levid reached the Space Bending Realm was already remarkable if one considered the place they were in.

Rean then smiled back at Levid, saying, "Nice to meet you, Grand Elder Levid. I'm Rean, and this evil-looking guy by my side is my brother Roan. We heard that you wanted to talk to us. Could it be something related to joining your purging organization?"

Levid wasn't surprised that Rean asked that, replying, "Well, seems like Himatikia already told you a few things. Indeed, as part of the purging organization, you won't be able to help any of the powers in the Upside Down World. However, that isn't the only reason why I called you over."

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Chapter 1535: No More Masks

Celis and the twins also expected as much. "Is that so? What could two cultivators at the Core and Soul Fusion Realm like us do for someone like you? Someone at the Space Bending Realm like you should have no lack of subordinates who can do things for you, no?"

Hearing that, a hint of surprise finally appeared on Levid's face. 'So you really are part of the Sacred Undersea Kingdom, huh? Otherwise, how could you tell my cultivation with your own? Even this demon tree by your side shouldn't be able to do it,' he thought.

However, Levid wasn't disappointed with that, saying, "Well, you two are quite resourceful. Indeed, if it was for some simple thing, I could just ask anyone else to do it for me. However, there's something I want you two to do that others probably can't. Do any of the two of you have knowledge about the formations of the Undersea Kingdom? We're in desperate need of help with a certain formation of ours. However, we have very limited knowledge about formations since this world is closed. We can't go out and ask the Formation Guild or anything like that."

Rean couldn't help but say in response, "After so long, there's bound to be quite a few Formation Masters who became statues and ended up here, right? Can't they help with it?"

Levid shook his head, saying, "Everyone who becomes statues are usually low-level cultivators and demon beasts. If you were at a high level, do you think you would have been caught by the white powder phenomenon?"

The twins had to admit Levid was right. "So, because of that, the Formation Masters you have here are mostly at a low-level, is that it?"

Levid nodded in response. "That's pretty much it. We did create our own Formation Guild in the Upside Down World, gathering as much knowledge about formations as possible. The same goes for the other side occupations. But in the end, we can't even compare to a small city's guild because of our circumstances. We also improved as much as possible on our own, but there's a limit to our achievements."

Celis found it strange. "Can't you see that they're only Peak Stage Core and Soul Fusion Realm cultivators? Do you think they would know too much about the formations of the Sacred Undersea

Kingdom? First of all, don't forget that they're more like disposable tools for the Undersea Kingdom since they aren't aquatic demon beasts. There is a limit on how many things the kingdom would be willing to share with these two."

However, Levid laughed out loud when he heard that. "Hahaha! You're kidding, aren't you? Do you think I can't tell they lost their cultivation? The Peak Stage of the Core and Soul Fusion Realm? Ha! That's the cultivation you get when you burn your own Nascent Soul in exchange for power."

This time, it was the twins that got surprised by Levid's words. In fact, even Himatikia, who was in the room, looked at the twins with surprise at Levid's words. "Grand Elder Levid, is that true?"

Levid could guess what Himatikia was thinking, saying, "Are you afraid that they broke the rules when they took part in the challenge between the Tranquio Sect and Hura Clan?"

Himatikia nodded, replying, "Yes. If that's the case, then we must give the victory to the Hura Clan instead."

However, Levid immediately shook his head, telling her, "There's no need. There's nothing in the rules saying that one can't destroy their own Nascent Soul to bring their cultivation down. What matters is whether you're in that cultivation realm or not. Of course, these twins ended up having much more advantages that came with their previous higher cultivation. It's just that no one would be idiotic enough to throw away most of their cultivation just because of some challenge. That's why you don't see it happen often. However, I guarantee you that they aren't the first ones and are definitely not the last."

"This..." Himatikia then thought about the rules for a moment. Sure enough, there wasn't anything preventing one from using cultivators who lost their cultivation realms. "So that's how it is..." For Himatikia, that's more than enough. The only thing that mattered was if the rules were broken or not, and it was obvious that they hadn't been broken.

Roan, who had been quiet so far, finally decided to ask, "How do you know our cultivations were much higher before? We're still in our seventies, so there's nothing wrong with our cultivation for the age we have."

Levid shook his head in response, replying, "There wouldn't be anything wrong if you were just some random cultivator. However, do you want me to believe that two cultivators in their seventies who are also part of the Undersea Kingdom are only at the Peak Stage of the Core and Soul Fusion Realm?"

Roan had to admit Levid was right. "That would indeed be weird. However, that's not the only reason, right? After all, you didn't even know our ages until a moment ago."

"Smart," Levid complimented Roan. "The reasons I mentioned were good ones. However, the main reason I can tell you lost your cultivations was your fighting power. People at the Core and Soul Fusion Realm would never be able to fight at the Saint Realm level, regardless of how much talent they have. After seeing the report from Himatikia, I was absolutely certain that your cultivations were much, much higher before."

Levid was curious, though. "And that's what begs the question. Since you were much stronger before, how did you get turned into statues?"

Roan shrugged his shoulder in response, saying, "I would rather not talk about the situation that forced us to burn our Nascent Souls."

"Hahaha!" Levid laughed after hearing that. "Indeed, no one would like to talk about such things. Well, that doesn't matter as it won't change my request to you. Now then, how about the answer to my question? Do any of you three have any advanced knowledge about formations?"

Rean, Roan, and Celis looked at each other and nodded in response. After that, Rean raised his hand, telling Levid, "I believe you need me, then. I'm a Golden Peak-Level Formation Master."

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Chapter 1536: Separation

The reason the twins' group decided to tell Levid about that was very simple. 'This is most likely related to the system's quest. Perhaps whatever formation Levid needs Rean to look into is what will let them escape the Upside Down World. If that's the case, we can take this opportunity to investigate or maybe even sabotage that formation,' Roan concluded.

Levid's eyes lit up when he heard Rean's words, saying, "A Golden Peak-level Formation Master! Even you're just a pawn of the Sacred Undersea Kingdom, your connection to them has definitely helped you a lot in your development with formations. Perhaps you're exactly what we need!"

Rean didn't mind it, replying, "Whether I'm what you need or not will depend on what you need me for. What kind of formation do you want me to help with? Would it be risky? What about the payment? We have a lot to discuss before we jump to conclusions."

Hearing that, Levid calmed down and agreed with Rean. "You're correct." Soon after, he looked at Himatikia and said, "You can bring this Demon Tree away with you. I will need to talk with the twins in private."

Celis narrowed his eyes, asking in response, "Why should I leave? What if you do something to them?"

Levid could tell that Celis was probably some kind of guardian that the twins' got to protect themselves now that they were weak. "Do you think you can help if I decide to do something? Have you seen where you are and the difference in cultivation between you and me?"

Rean then patted Celis's shoulders, telling him, "It's fine, Celis. Just go take a look at the tower since you'll most likely be included in the purging organization as well. I don't think Grand Elder Levid called us here to create enemies."

Celis only sighed after hearing that. "Fine..."

Well, Himatikia was also very curious about the reason Levid needed Rean's knowledge of formations. However, she could only follow his orders. "Understood, Grand Elder Levid. I'll take him to the building where most of the demon beasts with intelligence stay."

Levid nodded in response, satisfied. "You can also start the procedures to include Rean, Roan, and Celis in the purging organization. Oh, right! I heard that you didn't want to take part in the purging that happens every one hundred years. Although this is a very important mission of our purging organization and most of the reason for our existence, I can make an exception. After all, your knowledge of formations will be of great help to us. However, I believe Himatikia told you already. Anyone who intervenes with it will be killed straight away. Understood?"

Rean nodded once he heard that. "Yes." Well, if it really came to it, he probably wouldn't stop. But for now, it was better to pretend to agree.

Levid then looked at Roan, saying, "What about you? Since it's your brother who knows about formations, it would be better for you to leave with your Demon Tree."

Roan didn't seem to care about it, shrugging his shoulders as he replied, "Fine. It's all about secrecy, right? Since I know almost nothing about formations, it's better for me to not get involved in this." He then turned around and followed Celis and Himatikia. Well, it didn't really matter since he could see everything Rean did as long as Rean allowed it.

After Celis, Roan, and Himatikia left, Levid brought Rean to another room, where he found a teleport formation. Rean could tell that it wasn't anything powerful. It couldn't teleport anyone more than a few tens of kilometers. "The formation you need help with is not here?"

Levid nodded in response. "Correct. This place is too small and too far away from the formations' objective." Levid then stepped on the formation, saying, "Step on so we can go."

Rean did as he was asked and stepped on the formation. Since it was a low-level formation, the Divine Energy in the environment was more than enough for it. Soon, the formation activated as Rean disappeared in a flash of silver light with Levid.

Rean was right about the formation. It really didn't teleport them very far. However, there was no other way into the place they were brought in other than a few secret teleport formations. The only way out was through the teleport formations as well.

Levid and Rean then appeared in a room with only one opening. There were no windows whatsoever around them. Other than Levid and Rean, there was also an aquatic demon beast in human form taking care of the formations in that room. "Welcome back, Senior Levid. Who is the brat?"

Levid then patted Rean's shoulder as he replied, "He is a new Formation Master that will take part in the plan, Lin. I'd suggest you don't look down on his cultivation. He just lost his Nascent Soul. Also, he's a Golden Peak-level Formation Master that has just arrived in the Upside Down World."

Lin was obviously the demon beast's name. "Golden Peak-level? Holy shit! I can count on one hand the number of Formation Masters at the Golden level we've received from outside. And to think he's even at the Peak level. This is great!" Following that, Lin took a Soul Binding Contract out of his spatial ring. "However, rules are rules. He will have to sign a Soul Binding Contract to keep the secret."

Levid then looked at Rean and said, "Sorry, but we can't allow you to talk with others about this. At least not until we're done with it. I hope you're fine with that."

Rean pretended to not be happy as he grumbled, "You could at least have told me in advance." Of course, Soul Binding Contracts were useless against him.

In any case, he read the terms. Basically, the contract prohibited him from talking about the project to anyone not related to it. However, it wasn't permanent. Part of the contract stated that he would be free to do as he wished if the project succeeded or if it was abandoned in the end. Seeing that there wasn't anything wrong with it, Rean finally signed it before the Soul Binding Contract attached itself to one of the Soul Gem System's dummy souls. "Alright, can you now tell me what's happening here?"

Death... and me

Chapter 1537: The Hole

Surprisingly, it turns out that the place they were in was right below the white tower. It's just that Rean couldn't tell which side of the tower it was. Levid then nodded in response and guided Rean outside the building. With that, Rean was finally able to see the area where the formation was. "That's quite a big formation."

The area below was at least a kilometer wide. However, it didn't go very deep. After all, the Upside Down World had a barrier that prevented anyone from escaping. 'Speaking of the barrier, I guess that hole in the center of the formation is connected to it.'

Surprisingly, Rean was right. At the center of the formation, there was a hole which one could see the barrier from. Then again, Rean couldn't tell what was being done there as he was too far away.

Other than that, Rean could see a total of twenty-one cultivators. They were all working on the formation, although they all had complicated expressions on their faces. One didn't need to be a genius to tell that things weren't going very well for them.

Once they got closer to the formation, another Formation Master, someone who seemed to be in charge of everyone in this place, came to see Levid, saying, "Levid, who is this brat? Did you forget how important this place is? You can't just bring fucking anyone here! Even if you're a Grand Elder, I won't tolerate it!"

Levid didn't seem to mind the man's words as he introduced the man to Rean. "This lovely person who has a way with flowery words is Grand Elder Vaz. He's one of the three Golden-level Formation Masters of our purging organization."

Vaz's expression turned worse when he heard that. "Are you making fun of me?"

Levid smiled back at Vaz as he replied, "How could I? It's thanks to your leadership that we got this far in our plan. I'm just talking about your inner self, which is definitely a very good person." Before Vaz could complain more, Levid introduced Rean, saying, "This young boy's name is Rean. He was a pawn from the Sacred Undersea Kingdom until he and his brother were caught by the phenomenon. Don't look down on his appearance. His cultivation was much higher than it is right now. It's just that he had to burn his Nascent Soul."

Vaz was surprised to hear that. He didn't care about Rean's previous cultivation, but the Sacred Undersea Kingdom's name definitely carried some weight. "Sacred Undersea Kingdom's pawn? Someone like that wouldn't have access to as many resources and knowledge as the aquatic demon beasts, though."

Rean nodded, saying, "That's true. However, what I had was enough for me to become a Formation Master. That's why Senior Levid brought me here. Well, I still don't know what you're trying to do."

Vaz pondered a bit in silence before asking, "Formation Master, huh? In that case, what's your level? I'm sorry, but we have no use for anyone below the Silver High-level. If you can't perform as well as this, you might as well go back."

Levid smiled even more as he replied, "There's no need to worry. Our little friend here is a Golden Peak-level Formation Master."

Immediately, Vaz's expression changed. He looked at Rean with incredulity but couldn't believe Levid's words. "Is that true? Are you really, really a Golden Peak-level Formation Master?"

Rean nodded in response, saying, "That I am. If you wish, I don't mind making some simple formations at the Golden level for you to see. By the way, Senior Vaz, what's your level as a Formation Master?"

Vaz didn't mind answering, saying, "If you're telling the truth, then I'm one stage below you. I'm a Golden High-level Formation Master. You better don't look down on me, though. I reached my level in this shitty-ass world. To get here, I had to create my own Golden High-level formations from scratch."

Rean was the one to be surprised now. "That's an amazing feat, Senior Vaz. I respect you very much for that."

Vaz's expression improved a little after that. At the very least, Rean seemed to be sincere in his compliment. "Alright, you can stay. However, you will have to share your knowledge with everyone else so that we can continue the project." Vaz then looked at Levid and asked, "Did he sign the contract? Since he's in the Core and Soul Fusion Realm, the contract definitely works."

Levid nodded, answering, "Of course! No one can come here without signing the contract. Well, at least no one below the Void Tempering Realm, that is."

Vaz nodded, satisfied. Right after, he looked back at Rean, saying, "Don't think it's a bad thing to share what you know. Let me tell you in advance. We spent the last thirty years here building a new formation that might bring us out of the Upside Down World."

Rean nodded without the least bit of surprise, saying, "As I expected."

"You expected?" Levid and Vaz looked at Rean with confused expressions.

Rean then explained, "First, we're underground. Second, there's a huge formation and a hole at the very center that is most likely deep enough to reach the barrier. Look at the arrangements and the secrecy of this place. If you weren't trying to do something as important as escaping the Upside Down World, what else could it be?"

Vaz and Levid had to admit Rean was right. "Perhaps we spent so much time on this project that we've become too used to it."

Levid then turned around and prepared to leave. "Alright, I have finished my part. I know nothing about formations, so I'll leave the rest to you guys."

Vaz agreed with Levid. "Yeah, just go already. Rean, come with me. I'll gather everyone, and we'll explain what we've been doing so far and what we intend to do with this formation. If you're really at the level you say you are, you shouldn't have any issues understanding it."

Rean didn't mind and followed Vaz.

Outside, Roan and Celis were brought to the office where they would be included in the purging organization by Himatikia. "Here we are." Himatikia then looked at the people around and found who she was looking for. "Jimey, I brought some work for you."

Death... and me

Chapter 1538: Lively Tower

Jimey was just one of the few members in the office inside the organization. After all, there wasn't a need for many people since the purging organization didn't take many new members every year. With that said, this office was responsible for more things than just registering new recruits. "Hmm? Oh, come on! I've just finished adjusting the resource budget for the new recruits for this month. Can't you wait until the next one?"

Celis couldn't help but comment through a Divine Sense message, 'Due to the main reason of this organization's existence, I thought this place would be a lot more... gloomy...' However, it was anything but that. All the areas they passed by were quite lively. The people here didn't seem to be carrying burdens or anything like that. In fact, Jimey's attitude only reinforced that thought.

Roan agreed with Celis on that point. 'I had the same idea. However, if you think a little about it, you will see it isn't hard to understand. The purging only happens once every hundred years, after all. There isn't really a need to act all dark. At least not while you're with members of the same organization as yours.'

Himatikia didn't like Jimey's complaint, though. "Stop the bullshit. You only do that once a month, and you're complaining? If you want, I'll change jobs with you. Do you want to go out and play judge in my place?"

Jimey immediately shook her head as she replied, "Over my dead body!" Jimey knew very well how burdensome it was to watch those challenges. She then looked at Roan and Celis, asking, "Sigh... whatever. What is this? A Peak Stage Eight Demon Tree? That's a very, very rare thing to see in our Upside Down World. As for the boy... isn't he quite weak to be joining us?"

Himatikia shook her head, saying in response, "That's none of your concern. I have Grand Elder Levid's permission to add these two to our ranks. Also, I need you to prepare three new badges. This boy's brother is also joining the organization. It's just that Grand Elder Levid had something to discuss with him, so he didn't come with me."

Jimey shrugged her shoulders after hearing that. "Who am I to go against old Levid's words? Wait here for a moment. I'll prepare the new badges."

In any case, it didn't take long. Around thirty minutes later, Jimey returned to the room where Roan and Celis were waiting. "Here you go. Just put a drop of your blood on it, and the badge will bind itself to you. No one else other than you will be able to ever use it."

Celis took the opportunity to ask, "What can I do with these badges?"

Jimey, who was preparing to leave, could only stop her steps and answer in the end. "You're joining the organization, and you don't know even that? What is old Levid thinking?" Nevertheless, she still explained. "Whatever. You'll have access to all the cultivation facilities of the tower. Well, there aren't many things. Just some Divine Energy gathering formations and things like that."

Following that, Jimey pointed at Roan and Celis's badges, saying, "Can you see the numbers? Since our organization doesn't have that many members, everyone has their personal space. The first one is the floor. The second number is your room. Because humanoid races and demon beasts have different lifestyles, your living floors are different as well. The rooms for the demons have a lot more height so that the demons can go back to their original size while they're resting."

Celis was happy to hear that... even though he wouldn't use it. He was planning to go back to the Dimensional Realm as soon as a chance appeared. "What about the resources? I heard from Grand Elder Levid we could get some Divine Stones. What rank are they?"

"Rank? Hahaha!" Jimey laughed out loud when she heard that. "What other rank could it be if not Rank One? Do you think we can get high-level Divine Stones in this place? You definitely came from outside for you to ask such a thing. Anyway, you two, as new recruits, can only have ten Rank One Divine Stones per month. Go to the distribution center on the 4th floor after you complete a month here."

Celis couldn't help but sigh after hearing that. Compared to the Rank Three Divine Stones he still had in the Dimensional Realm, the organizations' Divine Stones were basically useless. 'Roan, come with me to my room. That place is most likely out of everyone's views. Once we get there, I'll head back to the Dimensional Realm to cultivate.'

Roan didn't mind it. 'Alright.'

Jimey then exchanged a few more words with Roan and Celis before she was finally able to leave.

Himatikia, of course, was still there. "Alright, this concludes the process. I'll go bring this extra badge to Grand Elder Levid. Is there anything else you want to know?"

Roan nodded in response, asking, "You can't possibly let us stay in this place for free. Even though it can't compare to what we had outside, I know this is probably one of the best places to be in this Upside Down World. What do we need to do while we're not purging?"

"Oh! That! Of course, you can take on many different duties while being here. Usually, they're simple things like guarding the facilities and following the elders to help set up the challenge formations. In the end, what people expect from us the most is that we carry our purging duties every hundred years without mistakes and bias," Himatikia explained.

Roan and Celis didn't mind it. "Alright, I guess that's all we need to know."

Himatikia was happy to hear that. "Good. Anyway, you can go explore the organization. Your badges also work as keys. If there's any door it can't open, it's because you aren't allowed in there. Understood?"

Roan and Celis nodded once again. "That's very useful."

With that, Himatikia decided to leave. "Now then, I'll be going. Let me know if you need anything."

Once she was gone, Roan and Celis finally had the chance to go to Celis's allocated room. There, Sister Orb confirmed there were formations that impeded others from prying inside. Only then did Roan send Celis into the Dimensional Realm and left Celis's room to take a look at the tower.

Death... and me

Chapter 1539: Yeah, I know

Back in the underground area, Rean was told about the intricacies of the formation and how the cultivators and demon beasts there planned to make it work. Only with that could he finally get the full picture of the thing. 'It's quite obvious that they lack the necessary knowledge for formations. They had to combine many formations together to obtain the result of a single more sophisticated one. This kind of thing is visible everywhere in the formation.'

However, he had to praise the people there for their ingenuity. He understood why it took thirty years to get to this point. That's because they didn't have the knowledge to make things like this. They had to discover everything on their own. 'If I was here thirty years ago with my knowledge right now, it wouldn't have taken more than three months to get the same result. Then again, I don't know if I could do what they did if I was in their shoes.'

Nevertheless, there was a problem. Rean could finally tell how they would escape the Upside Down World, as well as why it was so secretive that information about it couldn't get out. Of course, Roan, who was watching everything through their connection, didn't understand what was happening, so Rean had to explain to him.

'Basically, what they're trying to achieve is a forced breakthrough,' Rean explained. 'A big part of the formation itself will create a temporary shield. It has been accumulating Divine Energy for a long time and should be enough to withstand even the continental barrier for quite a few minutes.'

Rean continued, 'However, the real trick is the way they'll pass through the barrier of this Upside Down World. Just think of it like they're shooting a cannon. The rest of the formation is also accumulating Divine Energy to launch the cultivators inside the shield through the barrier. I've gone into the hole in the center of the formation that is connected to the barrier of this world. After analyzing the barrier's power for a moment, I've reached the conclusion that this formation would most likely shoot the people and demon beasts inside to a distance of a few hundred kilometers.'

Roan couldn't help but ask, 'Is it enough to pass through the formation?'

Rean thought about that as well. 'That's the point. My answer to that is I don't know. The Formation Masters here have no idea as to how far the barrier that covers the Upside Down World extends. If this place is really a dimensional realm, then it might extend thousands of times further.'

Roan denied that notion, saying, 'The system exactly wants us to stop them from trying this thing. That means that they most likely can pass through the barrier.'

Rean then mentioned, 'That depends. Do you remember that you mentioned that the cultivators and demon beasts here might just be feeding the Upside Down World? Perhaps the Soul Gem System just doesn't want the Upside Down World to lose its food.'

However, Roan didn't think it anymore. 'That's most likely not the case.'

'How come?' Rean asked in response.

Roan then explained, 'Simple. You said that this formation can only shoot a limited amount of people. You also told me that this project is being kept secret to the point of even using Soul Binding Contracts. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe this formation wouldn't be able to shoot anyone a second time, right?'

Rean was surprised that Roan deduced that. 'That's true. From what I can see, once the formation activates once, all the runes will overload. In fact, the overload of the runes is also part of the reason why the formation can shoot so far into the barrier. Once it's done, the formation will be destroyed in the process. Without a doubt, the guys in this project don't want other people and demon beasts to know since everyone would want to leave with them. There's no way this formation can support too many passengers. I would put the maximum capacity to around 300 or so members.'

Roan nodded in response. 'That's the reason right there. 300 cultivators and demon beasts would change almost nothing in the Upside Down World. If everyone in this world is really being used as a means of feeding something, there's no need to care about these ones escaping. The purging itself would get rid of hundreds or thousands of times more cultivators and demon beasts than the formation will let escape outside.'

Rean understood where Roan was coming from. 'I see... if there's no need to care about such a small number of cultivators running away, there's no need for the Soul Gem System to start this quest either.'

'Exactly.' Roan confirmed Rean's words, nodding. 'However, the quest did start. That means the problem is with what will happen when the formation activates. Perhaps it'll break through the barrier and the beings inside will reach someplace they were not supposed to. Perhaps they'll pass through the barrier, and it'll break something in turn. Who knows? The Upside Down World might simply explode because of that.'

Rean agreed with Roan when he heard that. 'Whatever the reason may be, the goal is to not let this formation work.'

Roan then warned Rean about something else. 'Don't forget, the quest just said to stop the cultivators and demon beasts of the Upside Down World from escaping. The Soul Gem System has never said that the formation you're taking part in is the thing that will accomplish it. Of course, given the chances, this is most likely the one, but we better be ready if something else happens. After all, the purging organization's members aren't the only ones who want to leave this place.'

Rean bitterly smiled in response. 'If this isn't what could bring them out, then I have no idea what it could be. For now, I'll focus on this one.'

Roan nodded and then asked something else. 'So, do they have everything they need to succeed?'

Rean shook his head, saying, 'No. At the actual stage, they would all die, but they know that. However, they're very close to getting it to work, albeit poorly due to their lack of knowledge of formations. It's just that they haven't noticed it yet.'

'In that case, it's your job to make sure they don't realize it,' Roan replied. 'Instead, make sure this formation becomes useless. Understood?'

Rean sighed as he replied, 'Yeah, I know...'

Death... and me

Chapter 1540: You Won't Believe It

In the underground area where the formation was, Rean gathered with the other Formation Masters and began to teach them about higher-level runes, principles, combinations, etc. From what he was doing, his objective was obvious. He wanted to obtain their trust, especially Vaz's. "Did you see? That's why the stacking of your formations has gone bad so far. The superposition of runes was creating incompatibility, and it still is right now. I'm truly impressed you made it work without it exploding."

Vaz was the first one to ask questions. "I understand the principle. However, it also requires materials hard to get our hands on in the Upside Down World. Is there a way to circumvent this issue?"

Rean nodded, replying, "Yes, we can use substitutes with similar properties. It's just that since they aren't as good as the originals, we will need more stabilizing, flow, and control runes. However, it's not like we're substituting quantity to make up for quality. The process is different with these materials. That's all."

Someone immediately wanted to give it a try, asking, "Alright, can you show us a few examples? If possible, use some simple materials."

"No problem at all. If it is cheap materials, I have them in my spatial ring. Still, you should start searching for materials of better quality in the Upside Down World. After so long, we have a lot of people who turned into statues and were brought here. They most likely all had their spatial rings, just like my brother and me. Perhaps we'll be able to find some of them. After I help revise the formation, I'll make a list with everyone's help, listing the materials we will need for it."

Vaz was satisfied with that, nodding as he said, "Then let's start."

With that, Rean immediately took the materials and began to create some simple and fast formations. They didn't have much use, but it served to prove his ideas, which was more than enough to convince everyone. A few days later, the levels of the Formation Masters had increased by a lot. Sure, most of them had been working with formations for a long time. It's just that they didn't have the study materials necessary to improve. Rean's knowledge was like an oasis in the middle of the desert. In short, they all absorbed it like sponges. For the first time in years, the hard expression on everyone's faces began to ease up as they felt that they were much closer to completing the formation.

On some days, Vaz called Rean over to discuss some stuff. "Rean, come take a look at these blueprints." By now, he had no doubt that Rean was the most accomplished Formation Master in their group by far. A good thing was that Rean did not use a single Circuitry Rune. Instead, he only used the traditional ones to obtain their respect.

As Rean looked at the information, he immediately understood it was related to the core of the formation. "This... isn't this the core of the Barrier Breaker Formation?" After so long, he had obviously heard the name of the formation already. "Is it really fine to show it to me? I just joined your group a few weeks ago."

Vaz snorted in response, telling him, "Ha! If you aren't qualified to see and help with it, then is there anyone in this place who can?"

Rean shook his head. "That's not what I mean-"

"I know what you mean," Vaz cut Rean's words short. "You have largely helped us increase our knowledge in formations. Thanks to you, we're not only four Golden-level Formation Masters anymore, but seven. Three of our guys had finally made a breakthrough thanks to your support. Besides, it would be idiotic to try and jeopardize this operation since it could be the key to getting us out of this shitty-ass place. Don't worry, you can take a good look and tell me what you see wrong."

Rean pretended to be nervous, murmuring, "But... this is the culmination of over thirty years of development. So far, the formation isn't complete but is moving towards it. What if what I say causes a problem with the formation? I can't bear the responsibility. In fact, I think I would be killed if I was the culprit for such a problem. Due to the complexity of the formation so far, I doubt you could rebuild it."

Vaz shook his head, though. "There's no need to worry. If this fails, we can simply start all over again. Besides, it's now obvious to me just how jumbled our formation is with the knowledge you shared so far. Perhaps the new one will be much better."

Eventually, Rean decided to accept. In fact, he was sighing inside, thinking, 'The problem is that the runes I taught you to use would never bring a better formation to life. In fact, they would lead to much worse results. Sorry for that...' Of course, he kept these thoughts to himself.

Following that, Rean began to work with Vaz on the core of the formation. Sure enough, he gave Vaz several different ideas that, on the surface, looked good. Even Vaz couldn't see anything wrong with most of them. The ones where he found some issues were put there on purpose for him to see. That way, he wouldn't think Rean was too perfect, giving himself more confidence while leaving Rean leeway.

Meanwhile, Roan had found a few interesting things of his own. He went out with the other members of the purging organization to help with the challenges. That helped him obtain a better grasp of the powers in the Upside Down World and detect possible threats.

However, there was a particular power, or this power's leader, who shocked Roan with his presence. 'There's a new rising power in the Upside Down World. It seems like their leader is someone who came from outside as well. Believe it or not, they already acquired more territory in the last eight years than anyone else did in several decades or maybe even hundreds of years.'

Rean couldn't help but ask, 'And why should I be concerned?'

'You won't believe me even if I tell you,' Roan said in response.