

Death 1631

Death... and me

Chapter 1631: Can't Rely On Them

[Quest Objective: Enter Jhiod Continent without relying on any of the top five powers of Lebgram.]

Rean and Roan were taken aback to see that. That's exactly what they were intending to do. But now, the quest would fail if they did that. Then again, Rean and Roan immediately got another idea that would comply with the quest's objective... too bad the System didn't stop there.

[Failure Condition: Leaving Lebgram Continent]

Their mouths twitched after that. "Fuck this shit!" Lebgram wasn't the only continent surrounding Jhiod, after all. Since they couldn't rely on the top five powers of Lebgram, they just needed to go to another continent and do that. Unfortunately, that option was now gone... unless they didn't mind if the quest failed.

[Quest time: Ten years.]

'At least the time is long enough to match the official opening of the continental barrier,' Rean and Roan thought.

After that, the System mentioned the rewards.

[Quest Reward: Based on the time necessary to get to the other side.]

[Baseline: 300000 Destiny Points, quest completed in less than a year.]

[270000 if less than two years but more than one.]

[240000 if less than three years but more than two.]

[210000...]

The description continued until the last year. Obviously, the last reward was 30000 Destiny Points if the quest was concluded there.

The twins then waited a bit more, but it seemed like the System was done explaining.

"This is going to be complicated. Depending on how long it'll take for the official opening to happen, we might have to wait for nine years."

Sister Orb then gave them a piece of good news. [Hey, it's not all that bad. Haven't you noticed? There's no punishment for quest failure. That means you can also completely ignore this quest and rely on one of the top powers of this continent to get on the other side. All that will happen is that you won't get a single Destiny Point from it.]

The twins had to admit Sister Orb was right. Well, they had no intention to break the rules of the quest since they definitely wanted as many Destiny Points as possible. Besides... "That's a very generous reward just to get to the other side of the continental barrier," Rean mentioned.

Then again, how would they get to the other side without relying on the top powers of Lebgram? Was that even possible? After all, cultivation was out of the question.

Roan then shook his head, saying, "Let's head to the center of the continent first. That's going to be the best place to gather information." He then looked at Rean before asking, "I won't save Divine Stones. Is that okay?"

Rean nodded in response. "Definitely. Destiny Points are more important than any amount of Divine Stones."

Rean then returned to the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm with Luan, leaving Roan alone to take the teleport formations. Surprisingly, Roan really didn't save Divine Stones. He didn't care about paying extra to get to use the teleport formations straight away instead of having to wait their activation times. The only good thing was that he didn't need to use Rank Two Divine Stones for that.

It went without saying that Roan got to the center of the continent in a flash, as he didn't spend more than a few minutes in each Formation Guild of each city. No more than three days had passed so far, although the Dimensional Realm was down by over 5000 Rank One Divine Stones in exchange.

Rean then came out of the Dimensional Realm before saying, "I'm going to exchange some Rank Two Divine Stones for Rank One again. We still have more than half of them, but I would rather be safe."

Roan didn't mind, saying, "That's fine. Just remember that Destiny Avoidance Mode is not working anymore. There's a good chance that you will catch a bit of attention if you trade too many of them like last time."

It was then that Rean got an idea. "Perhaps that's a good thing, no? We're in the Transition Realm. Anyone who comes after us is definitely someone powerful enough and with some information. Chances are that we will get some Peak Transition Realm or Initial Stage Void Tempering Realm cultivator to come after us. Naturally, such experts are of little concern to us."

Roan narrowed his eyes in response. "But if these experts turn out to be someone from the top five powers, we would be infringing the system quest's rules."

[Not really.] Sister Orb intervened there. [The quest only said you can't rely on them to get through the barrier. It didn't say anything about getting information from them. As long as the reason for you to get through the Continental Barrier isn't directly connected to them, then it's fine.]

Roan was happy to hear that. "If that's the case, I'll follow Rean from the shadows during this trade. Just remember that you will need to leave the city if you really want to be attacked."

"What if our opponent is too strong?" Rean asked. Well, the twins could even fight those in the Peak Stage of the Void Tempering Realm with their actual strength. Even an Initial Stage Space Bending Realm cultivator wasn't out of the question if they joined forces. After all, they now had an incredibly small amount of control over spatial powers.

Roan shrugged his shoulders once he heard that. "Then we'll just give all our spatial rings to them."

Sure enough, they wouldn't leave many things inside the spatial rings.

With that, Rean went to the main bank of Ducla City, Gromel Clan Bank.

Death... and me

Chapter 1632: High Profile

That's why the manager of the bank immediately came to attend Rean. Transition Realm cultivators still demanded respect, let alone two. As for Roan, he brought Celis out as well and was outside, watching the interaction. "I'm the manager of this bank, Bigas. How can I help the two sirs today?"

Rean nodded with a smile before answering in a clear voice, "I have a large quantity of Rank Two Divine Stones to trade. Can we go to a more private area?" One didn't need to be a genius to know that Bigas wasn't the only one to hear that. It was just the start of their plan to catch attention.

Bigas immediately smiled back. Naturally, his bank wouldn't reject such good deals. "Of course, sir. Please, follow me."

He then brought Rean and Kentucky to a concealed area where they didn't need to worry about eavesdropping. However, Bigas wasn't the only one there. He was also accompanied by an expert from the Gromel Clan that came out just for this deal. Rean and Kentucky could tell that the man was at the Peak Stage of the Transition Realm. Most likely, Bigas was afraid that Rean and Kentucky would try to force something with their higher cultivation. Well, neither of the two was the least bit worried about the extra guy as Rean made his offer. "I have ten thousand Rank Two Divine Stones that I wish to trade for Rank One Divine Stones. How many Divine Stones can you get me for them?"

Bigas' heart almost stopped there. Let alone him, even the expert in the corner of the room couldn't help but widen his eyes. Even half that amount of Rank Two Divine Stones was a fortune for him. Obviously, that also meant a huge deal for the bank.

Bigas then took a deep breath before asking, "Can sir prove you have this amount?"

Rean nodded before holding a spatial ring in front of Bigas. He took his protection of the spatial ring off, allowing Bigas to take a look inside. Sure enough, Bigas sent his Divine Sense into the spatial ring and immediately saw the ten thousand Rank Two Divine Stones. There was no mistake there. "Th-Thank you, sir."

Bigas then pondered over the issue. Naturally, he couldn't offer the standard price since Rean would definitely ask for more because of that huge amount. If he insisted, Rean would simply leave the bank and go somewhere else to trade, which would be the worst thing possible. He would definitely be blamed for losing such a huge deal. "H-how about 23 Rank One Divine Stones for each Rank Two?" Usually, the normal price was 20 per each.

As mentioned before, a Rank Two Divine Stone had around ten times the amount of Divine Energy as a Rank One Divine Stone. However, because they were much rarer and especially because they were much better to cultivate with, the price was much higher than just ten times the amount.

Rean closed his eyes in response. Back when he traded the first ten thousand Rank Two Divine Stones, he got a deal of 27 Rank One Divine Stones for each. 'Sure enough, the prices don't change much regardless of the continent. Should I force the prices up to 27 again? No, I don't want to look desperate. Instead, I want to look like someone who has even more of them.'

Having come to a decision, Rean then made a counteroffer. "25 Rank One Divine Stones, and we have a deal. I'm sure you know the other banks would love to accept such a good trade." In the end, he didn't ask for 27 like last time.

Bigas pondered a bit before replying back, "Can we make it 24, sir? I have to show some results for the higher-ups, after all. I'm sure the other banks will try the same thing even if you said that."

Rean laughed in response. "Hahaha! Alright, alright. I won't make things difficult for you. At least you won't say I'm being petty with such a small issue. You've got yourself a deal."

Rean's words immediately caught the attention of the expert watching the trade and Bigas himself. It definitely looked like Rean had many more than that. 'Could it be that this guy found a hidden Divine Stone mine? Or maybe he robbed some other big power that we don't know about?' Well, their first thought wasn't far off the mark.

Bigas didn't waste time, though. "Please wait a moment. I'll immediately prepare the Divine Stones for sirs." Even if the Gromel Clan intended to do something, they absolutely couldn't do it in their own bank. They would definitely wait for him to go out. First of all, there was a good chance that they would inform someone else about this deal instead. Besides, since Rean spoke in a loud voice outside regarding his huge number of Divine Stones, they can simply say that it was his fault for being robbed. He wasn't

careful enough to hide his intentions in the bank. If he said it was the bank's people that came after him, they would have the perfect excuse to deny his words.

Eventually, Bigas came back. "Here are your Divine Stones, sirs."

Death... and me

Chapter 1633: Can't Break

Rean and Kentucky then left the bank and began to make their way to the city's exit. At the same time, Roan and Celis followed from afar. Since Rean and Roan had their connection, there was no need for them to use Divine Sense to know where Kentucky and Rean were going.

Rean and Kentucky soon arrived at the city's exit. After all, their cultivation was very high. Covering a distance of a few hundred kilometers was basically nothing. However, they weren't paying attention to their speed. Instead, they had the Divine Sense bending skill active. It's just that it was set to a very weak level. Any Divine Sense could break through it.

One must remember that other than bending Divine Senses, it could be used to detect Divine Senses of other people and measure their cultivation. 'Hehe! To think they would come this fast.'

Roan, who was watching everything, nodded in response. 'Indeed. Whether it's the Gromel Bank's people who came or not matters little. What matters is that they sent someone at the Void Tempering Realm. Not only one but two of them.'

Kentucky and Celis could tell why that level of cultivation was used. Whoever was coming after them believed that this cultivation was too high for Rean and Kentucky to feel their Divine Sense.

Once outside the city, Kentucky reverted into his Minokawa form before Rean jumped on his back for them to fly away. To make things more believable, Kentucky flew quite fast, being only enough for Roan and Celis to follow from behind. That would give the impression that Rean wanted to get away with his fortune as quickly as possible.

They didn't have to travel for long for the enemies to show themselves, though. Just a few hundred kilometers away from the city, the two Void Tempering Realm cultivators already showed themselves, blocking Rean's path. They both used armor and helmets that made it impossible to tell what they

looked like. Rean could tell that there were inscriptions on those armors capable of stopping Divine Sense from seeing inside.

Rean and Kentucky then stopped in mid-air with dark expressions. "What do you want?"

Both enemies had cultivation at the Middle Stage of the Void Tempering Realm, so they were very confident in their capabilities. They were sure Rean and Kentucky would have nowhere to run.

One of them smirked with a disdainful expression. "We've heard that you got quite a lot of Divine Stones. How about sharing some of them with poor people like us?"

The other guy laughed in response. "Hahaha! Some of them? No, no, brother! They're so rich, so they definitely won't mind giving all of their Divine Stones to us." He then looked at Rean and Kentucky before asking, "Isn't that right?"

However, Rean showed an even more disdainful expression, telling him, "Share with you? Hahaha! What a joke! I can't help but find it funny. I openly talked about my fortune, and soon, two fishes took the bait. I can't believe you didn't find it strange at all that I didn't try to conceal my deal with Gromel Bank. Are you two really that stupid?"

Of course, they weren't. Both experts only followed Rean and Kentucky this far to see if they had someone's protection. They also found it strange that Rean would be that open about his Divine Stones in the middle of the crowd back in the Gromel Bank. However, their Divine Senses and especially their natural spatial perception didn't pick anyone. That's why they decided to make a move. "Hmph! Who are you trying to fool here, brat? We know very well no one was following you."

"Then you two are truly terrible at detecting the presence of more enemies," said a voice from afar. A moment later, Roan and Celis appeared as well.

That shocked the two Void Tempering Realm guys. Only after Roan and Celis got close enough did they appear inside their Divine Senses. However, they didn't panic. They could see those two cultivations as well. As for avoiding their Divine Sense, they attributed that to some treasure they were carrying. "Hehe... Hahaha! You scared me for a moment there. In the end, two ants became four. Just a bunch of Middle Stage Transition Realm idiots."

Rean shrugged his shoulders in response. "Is that so? Then why are you wasting so much time? Oh, right! You're still afraid there's a trap or something, right? Very well. Let us start this playtime."

Immediately, Rean, Roan, Kentucky, and Celis attacked.

'Life Style, First Form, Enhancement!'

'Death Style, First Movement Form, Shadow Steps!'

Sure enough, Rean's group launched themselves against the two enemies.

Seeing that they were really about to fight, the two guys didn't hold back as well. Immediately, they brought out their weapons, a saber and a spear. Divine Energy, Fire, Wind, and Lightning Elements gathered around them. After that, spatial powers joined together, increasing their strength even more.

"Don't get ahead of yourself, ants!"

'Thunderfire Thrust!'

'Saber Fire Storm!'

Their attacks charged head-on against the twins' group as they were sure their opponents wouldn't be able to fight against the difference in cultivation.

Unfortunately for them, a giant Minokawa suddenly appeared in front of their attacks!

'Dark and Light Divine Armor!'

Kentucky's feather blades and scales shone with Light and Dark Element as their own defensive powers increased several times. Yes, Kentucky decided to take both Void Tempering Realm attacks with his own body!

Boom, boom!

Kentucky's body was indeed hit as he was sent flying back. Lightning, Fire, and Wind elements raged around his body for a moment as well. However, that was all. Kentucky quickly stabilized himself in the air and used his Divine Energy to dispel all of that as he snorted at those two. "Hmph! So weak! Can't even break a single feather of my body."

Death... and me

Chapter 1634: Too Strong

Suddenly, Rean and Roan appeared by the two guys' sides in a flash, showing a speed that far surpassed what a Middle Stage Transition Realm cultivator should be capable of.

"Not good!"

They finally understood that the twins' group wasn't lying. They definitely had the power to defeat them even with the cultivation difference. There had never been any higher cultivation level expert to aid them as they first thought. However, that didn't make things for them any less dangerous.

Immediately, the two of them used their own movement techniques, aided by the spatial power they could control. They definitely didn't want to fight the twins head-on after what they saw Kentucky doing. It was better to retreat first.

Rustle... rustle... rustle...

Unfortunately, it was then that they heard some weird sound. Before they could react, the surrounding area had been enveloped in countless vines. There were several layers of them, forming a cage that was simply impossible to leave without getting rid of the vines first.

'Divine Energy Draining Prison!'

Celis didn't give them any chance as his ability as a World Swallowing Cedar activated, robbing the entire area inside his vines of the Divine Energy it had. That made it impossible for the two Void Tempering

Realm cultivators to recover any more Divine Energy. On top of that, if they stayed there for much longer, the Divine Energy in their own dantians would be emptied by Celis' ability.

Well, they had no time to think about it at the moment. That's because the twins were right above them.

"Don't get ahead of yourselves, ants!"

Immediately, they gave up running away and attacked the twins instead. The demon beast was one thing, but the twins definitely wouldn't be as resistant as that Demon Bird. Besides, their attacks on Kentucky earlier still sent him back several hundred meters, so he wasn't going to participate in this attack with the twins.

'Saber Firestorm Congregation!'

A skill similar to Three Claws of the Dragon, creating several copies of his own saber imbued with Wind, Fire, and Space Power. The guy obviously couldn't fuse his elements with Space Power, but he could definitely use them together as he attacked the twin closest to him, Rean.

'Thunderfire Spear Descending the Heavens!'

The other enemy's spear was once again filled with Fire, Lightning, and Space Power as he attacked Roan from above. If it hit Roan's body head-on, it definitely would do more than just leave a few light injuries.

It was obvious that both the enemies stopped underestimating the twins' group. This time, they went all out, pouring all their strength into their strikes.

Though, Rean and Roan could only thank them for that. It was finally time to test their own strength at the Middle Stage of the Transition Realm, as well as their weapon intents!

'Death Style, Sword Intent!'

'Life Fire, Fifth Form, Myriad Fire Slash!'

Rean was especially happy as he could test out a new skill. Just like the Third Form of Death Style, this one also created copies of his sword. Back then, the twins recognized that Three Claws of the Dragon, as well as any energy copy of anything they made, were losing effect as their cultivation got higher. That included Three Claws of the Dragon and the Mirage Assault Clones.

However, Rean was able now to resolve the problem with the sword copies at the very least. That's because sword intent increased the power of the energy blades to almost the same level as the real one. Thanks to that, it wasn't wrong to say that the copies were as good as the original one. They only lacked a very small amount of power since there wasn't a real sword there. Then again, Rean's Myriad Fire Slash created not only two but nine copies! Nine copies with almost the same power as the main sword! How strong was that? Not to mention he was fusing Light and Fire Element in that attack.

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang...

Shatter, shatter, shatter, shatter...

Unsurprisingly, Rean's Myriad Fire Slash broke right through all the saber copies from his opponent!

"What?!"

The enemy's saber copies weren't weak by no means, as they were all imbued with Space Power. Unfortunately, that couldn't make up for the difference in strength. Third Grade Star Body, Third Stage Sword Intent, Rean's own Dark Star Sword that was definitely better than his opponent's saber, plus the fusion of Fire and Light Element with Yang Energy. Last but not least, Rean's capability to at least feel the opponent's spatial powers at close range. Let alone this guy, Rean would have won this exchange even if his opponent was at the peak of the Void Tempering Realm!

Of course, Roan wasn't any slower.

'Death Style, Scythe Intent!'

'Death Style, Death Scythe!'

By far, this was Roan's strongest attack up to this day. Death Scythe already had a cutting power that exceeded any single target attack that Roan had in his repertoire. Now that he had the Third Stage of the Scythe Intent added, one could only imagine just how ridiculous and powerful it became. Even Rean couldn't launch an attack as powerful as that one.

Swish!

There was no explosion, no burst of Divine Energy, nothing! All that happened was Roan's Death Scythe cutting the enemies' Thunderfire Spear Descending the Heavens. Both the guy's attack and spear were separated in two, opening a path for Roan's scythe to reach his opponent. It was too late to dodge as the opponent had never thought Roan's attack to be that powerful... he was slashed in half right there and then. Not even the armor he was wearing was able to stop Roan's attack. He was as dead as he could be!

Death... and me

Chapter 1635: Unnecessary Question

Rean then pointed at his own opponent, who was now missing all four limbs. For a Void Tempering Realm cultivator, as long as they were willing to pay the price, they could get their limbs back. However, this definitely wasn't something the guy could do at the moment. "You could have aimed to take his limbs, just like what I did. Look, he's very much alive and afraid of trying anything else."

In response, the guy wanted to cry. His partner was dead, and he was in this shitty situation. Nevertheless, Rean was right. He was too afraid of trying to escape at all. Celis' prison was still up, so there was nowhere for him to go. Even if it wasn't, with his injuries, he didn't believe he could escape. Not to mention no one would try to help him either.

Rean then approached the guy with a smile, saying, "Hehe! Sorry, sorry. It wasn't part of the plan to kill your boyfriend there."

"Who the hell's my boyfriend?!" The guy felt even worse now.

Rean showed a puzzled expression in response. "What, you weren't in a relationship? But you were both using matching clothes... well, armor, but even so... I thought you had something more intimate between you two going on."

"Go to hell! If you want to kill me, just do that already! You already got mine and that guy's spatial ring. That was your objective, right? Just get over with it already." In the end, he had already given up any struggle.

Rean shook his head, though. "Kill you? That's not gonna happen. I can even heal your limbs back to normal free of charge and let you go on top of that. How does that sound?"

Naturally, Rean's words caught the guy's attention. "It's obvious to me you wanted to attract someone with power. What is it that you wanted to ask?"

As for Roan, he approached the guy. Well, Roan did indeed take the guy's spatial ring. It's just that he was disappointed with the contents. "Shit. The armor and spear I destroyed were the things of most value in his possession. He has around two hundred Rank Two Divine Stones and a few thousand Rank Ones. Other than that, he was basically a nobody."

"What?! He was a Void Tempering Realm cultivator! How can he be that poor?!" Rean asked, shocked.

The survivor of the two wanted to cry even more now, replying, "Do you think everyone is rich like you? If we were so healthy, why would we even accept this job to rob you?! Hehe! Just wait until you reach the Void Tempering Realm. You will understand just how much of a black hole this shit is when you start gobbling Divine Stones nonstop. It's fucking expensive!" The guy obviously didn't doubt the twins could reach that level. With their strength, one would need to be an idiot to think they couldn't.

Rean and Roan had to admit the guy's words made sense. "That's true." They heard it from Havek himself about how expensive it was. And that was considering that spirits had different ways of cultivating, so they didn't rely as much on Divine Stones as demon beasts and humanoid races.

Roan then threw those thoughts away as he asked, "Forget it. First, what's your name?"

The guy, seeing that he wasn't going to be killed straight away, immediately answered. "Lrist."

Roan nodded in response. "Alright, Lrist. We're looking for a way to enter the Jhiod Continent. Do you know anything about it?"

Lrist was taken aback to hear that. "Could it be that you're not from Lebgram?"

The twins didn't deny it. "That's correct."

Lrist finally understood. "No wonder I have never heard about you before. Considering that you have such strength at such a low level of cultivation, it would have been impossible for you to not be famous by now."

He continued, "Anyway, everyone from the surrounding continents want to enter Jhiod. However, the entrance is very strict. Only those who are authorized or those with higher cultivation levels can do so. Even I would have no chance to do that. Anyways, since you asked, the best way is to join one of the top five powers of Lebgram."

Hearing the top five powers being mentioned, Rean finally asked about that. "So, who are the top five powers fighting for control over this continent?"

"You're really new to the continent to not even know that. In any case, the first of the five is the Lebgram Royal Family. A very long time ago, this continent was controlled by them. Even now, they're considered the strongest of the top five. That's where the continent gets its name. Well, I believe it will change if they lose in the end."

"The other four obviously have feuds with each other as well. However, they have a fragile balance where they will join forces if the Lebgram Royal Family try something against one of them. The Lebgram Royal Family might be powerful, but definitely not as powerful as the four together."

"Anyways, the other four are the Levile Clan, Trust Guild, Acacia Sect, and Tibian Merchant Organization. You could say that while the Lebgram Royal Family holds 30 to 40% of the strength of the continent, these other four hold the remaining 60 to 70% between them."

Rean couldn't help but ask in response, "So why don't they join forces to get rid of the Lebgram Royal Family's experts?"

Roan looked at him as if he was looking at an idiot. "Hmph! And which one of those four groups wants to send their experts as a vanguard?"

Rean scratched the back of his head after that. "Sorry, sorry... that was an unnecessary question."

Death... and me

Chapter 1636: There is one way

Roan hadn't asked that much, but it seemed like it wasn't any big secret since this guy mentioned that. "Simply put, each side knows that they're being played with by Jhiod. However, none of them can afford to enrage the Jhiod Continent. No, to be more specific, if they start losing ground, they can't afford to not accept the Jhiod Continent's help. This truly seems like an incredibly shitty situation to be in."

Lrist nodded in agreement. "Indeed. Anyway, the reason I told you this much is that this is your best bet to get into Jhiod Continent. Every time the official spatial gate between Jhiod and Lebgram opens, each one of those five powers will send their experts to do business on the other side and vice versa. If you join one of them and help them get some victories on their side, they might make an exception and let you go there."

Rean and Roan couldn't help but sigh after that. As the System's quest mentioned, they couldn't use the top five powers. "That won't be possible. We need some other way of entering Jhiod that doesn't involve us meddling in the power struggles. After all, we signed the contract that we must not intervene in their fight." Well, the contract was useless, but it at least served to use as an excuse.

Only then did Lrist remember that point. "Oh, right! All new Transition Realm experts that arrive in our Lebgram Continent must sign the Soul Binding Contract with those clauses."

"It's quite idiotic," Rean could not help but say. "Only those at the Transition Realm have to sign it. Asking Void Tempering Realm cultivators or above to do the same is useless since they can use their Spatial Powers to get rid of the seal in their souls."

Lrist shook his head in response. "The reason Soul Binding Contracts are used on those at the Transition Realm is that it is cheaper. The continent has other ways to prevent outside experts at the Void Tempering Realm or above from intervening as well."

Roan wasn't surprised by that. Even though he had never asked, he was sure that Lebgram Continent and Jhiod had their ways of doing it.

Suddenly, Rean threw a pill at Lrist, telling him, "Alright, swallow it."

"What's this?" Lrist looked at the dark and white pill in front of him. It gave off a very strong herbal scent, but he couldn't tell anything else other than that.

Rean shook his head. "Just swallow it already. It's not like you have a better choice."

Although unwilling, Lrist could only do so.

Soon after, Rean touched his shoulder.

'Life Style, Second Form, Instant Recovery!'

Immediately, the pills' medicinal properties rushed to the areas where Lrist lost his four limbs. At the same time, Rean's Instant Recovery used its medicinal power to obtain the nutrients necessary for regrowth.

"This..." Lrist knew pills that could recover one's limbs. He would definitely acquire some if he escaped this situation. However, none of them worked as fast as this. He would need many of them, and the process would take a very long time. However, at Rean's speed, his four limbs would be back to his body in just a few minutes.

Roan didn't say anything as he just watched, waiting for it to be over.

Eventually, all of Lrist's limbs were back to normal. It's just that Lrist would have to train them once again from the start. "What a powerful healing ability..."

Rean then smiled at him, saying, "I just wanted to recover your limbs so that you know I wasn't lying about our deal. However, you better think twice if you think you can escape this place. You will need much more than just your new four limbs to do that."

Then again, Rean didn't need to say that. Lrist could see that Celis' Divine Energy Draining Prison of vines was still up. Not only that, now that he had been inside it for this long, all the Divine Energy in his dantian was gone. He could recover it later, but definitely not now. He simply had no chance whatsoever if he tried to escape. Let alone the twins, even some common Transition Realm cultivators would be enough to stop him in this state. "Don't worry, I'll answer everything." Of course, he still had his doubts about Rean's words, but he could only comply with them.

It was then that Lrist thought about something. "By the way, how come you didn't ask as to who sent me or anything like that yet?"

Rean shrugged his shoulders in response. "It doesn't matter. We don't care about who sent you since the objective is obvious; rob us of our Divine Stones. We don't want more trouble, so we won't pry any further into this question. Later you can just say we're from some big power or whatever if your senders ask anything. After all, your friend did die."

Lrist shook his head, clarifying, "That guy and I didn't have any kind of meaningful relationship. He only joined forces with me because we were both asked the same thing. For people like us who take these kinds of jobs to make a quick buck, it's obvious that we might die at any moment. We accepted this knowing the risks."

Roan nodded, satisfied. "That's good." He then went back to the main topic. "Well, how is it? Do you know another way that doesn't involve the top five powers?"

Lrist scratched his head before saying, "Well... there is one way..."

Death... and me

Chapter 1637: It Seems

Lrist explained, "Once every nine years, the Jhiod Continent's representatives start a competition in all the continents around it to look for talents willing to join the Jhiod Sect."

"Jhiod Sect?" Rean asked straight away.

Lrist nodded, explaining, "Yes. It's the Jhiod Sect that controls the Jhiod Continent. Well, you could probably guess that already due to the sect's name. Anyways, you need to enter this competition and win to get a vacancy. If you do, there will be no need to get involved with the top five powers."

The twins were quite confused, though. "That seems quite simple. Why wouldn't we like this?"

Lrist couldn't help but laugh in response. "Hehe! As if it was that easy. This competition has a very, very high risk of death. You must understand that Jhiod Continent isn't small. They don't lack places where they can get talents in their own soil. So why would they even start a competition to look for recruits outside? Obviously, they will only accept the cream of the crop."

Roan narrowed his eyes, saying, "That doesn't make sense. With their power, they can simply issue a recruitment notice, and those top geniuses would come willingly. There's no need for competition at all. What's the point in it?"

Lrist shrugged his shoulders, saying, "Now, you have asked too much from me. You will have to ask the Jhiod Continent's experts themselves if you want that answer. At the very least, I don't know why."

Roan immediately related it to the huge number of Destiny Points they would get from the quest. After all, it seems way too easy for the reward given. Suddenly, he thought about something. "Wait, how long does this competition last?"

Lrist pondered over it for a bit before answering, "If I'm not wrong, it can range from one to nine years. There are several stages of the recruitment... or so I'm told. You can look at it as if there were nine batches. Each year a certain number of cultivators or demon beasts are selected."

The twins nodded after hearing that. That explained why the system gave a different reward depending on how long they took to complete the quest. "What's the competition about?"

Lrist shook his head in response. "No idea. You will have to check it by yourselves. However, there's one good thing about this competition."

"What is it?" everyone asked.

"The fact that you don't need to wait for the official opening to go to Jhiod Continent. Just so you know, the official opening that the top five powers' experts use to enter Jhiod only opens every nine years. However, the cultivators and demon beasts selected by the Jhiod Sect are sent there every year," Lrist explained.

"Have you never thought about trying it?" Rean asked this time.

"Hahaha!" However, that question only made Lrist laugh. "Are you crazy? Let me make things easier for you to understand. When I say the death toll is high, I'm not kidding! More than 90% of the competitors end up dead as dead people can be. Their cultivation levels simply don't matter."

Immediately, Celis had an idea. "So that's how it is." Everyone looked at him, waiting for Celis to continue. "It's okay for Lrist to not know this since it doesn't seem like he's anyone important."

Lrist's mouth twitched in response. 'Do you have to really rub salt into an open wound that deep, bro? First of all, I'm a Void Tempering Realm cultivator! I'm not that bad, am I?' Well, he didn't say that out loud.

Celis continued, "Everyone wants to join Jhiod as it seems the best place to cultivate, or so everyone here believes, right?"

Lrist nodded, saying, "As far as I know, at least."

"That's the point," Celis pointed out. "Jhiod doesn't want other continents to become too strong and shake its own position. What better method to get rid of the surrounding continent's power than eliminating their future generations? 90% of the participants, which I'm absolutely sure is not small, end up dead in the competition. No geniuses, no strength, no future problems."

Lrist's eyes widened after hearing that. He was considered a genius within his own area, but he knew he wasn't a real genius. Now more than ever, he was happy that he was like that. 'Fortunately, I didn't try to take part in the competition.'

Rean, Roan, and Kentucky had to admit Celis's words made sense. "Very well thought, Celis."

Nevertheless, Lrist couldn't help but ask, "But, why don't the powers of the continents around stop their geniuses from participating?"

Roan was the one to answer that. "They can't. Even all of them together aren't as strong as Jhiod Continent alone. If they intervene with the competition, the powers behind the intervention are bound to be wiped out. It's a vicious cycle they can't afford to escape from."

Kentucky nodded in response, continuing, "Not only that, the few who pass the tests are the top of the top and those top of the top end up in the Jhiod Sect's hands. Get rid of those very good and below, and leave the best for themselves. Is there be a better strategy than that?"

Lrist still had his doubts. "But if that's the case, wouldn't it be better to simply take all of them in? Not only the top of the top ones?"

Roan snorted in response. "You've become too used to playing under the Jhiod Sect's hands. Your mentality is already one that simply accepts anything." Roan continued, "Tell me. If Jhiod Sect simply accepts everyone, how many geniuses or very good cultivators will end up in their continent every year? Remember, they're all people and demon beasts from outside."

After that, Lrist understood. "I see... if too many outsiders join, the Jhiod Sect will start losing its grip on the situation. They are strong and numerous, but definitely not as numerous as several continents together. That's why they can only take a few every time."

Roan nodded in response. "You aren't completely useless, it seems."

Death... and me

Chapter 1638: Travel Insurance

Because the Jhiod Sect sent people and demon beasts every year, the official opening every nine years had no meaning anymore. That only served to reinforce the idea that the system chose this quest for this point.

Lrist was still a little stunned after everything he had heard so far. However, he still answered Roan's question. "The answer to that you will find close to the border between Lebgram and Jhiod Continent. There is a city there called Infal. All the tests happen there. Other than that, I don't know much more."

Rean and the others nodded in response. "Very well."

Soon after, Celis dispersed his Divine Energy Draining Prison. They had nothing more to get from Lrist, after all. "Well, you can do whatever you want. We'll be taking our leave."

Before Lrist could say anything, they all boarded Kentucky, who shot straight back to the city.

While they did that, Lrist looked as the twins' group disappeared in the distance and sighed in relief. In the end, they kept their side of the deal and let him go. 'I hope I'll never see these guys again.' That wasn't all. He also made a decision after what he discussed with the twins' group. 'I'm gonna head the fuck out of this continent. How the hell have I never thought about all of that? It was so obvious! Let me see... Litan went to Untraí Continent to look for someplace to create a guild. I'm pretty sure he won't mind getting some extra help.' With that, Lrist was never seen in Lebgram Continent again.

Back in the city, everyone except Roan entered the Dimensional Realm before he went straight to the Formation Guild. The only thing Roan felt annoyed about was that he was close to the border between Lebgram and Jhiod Continent before. However, he teleported back to the center of the continent to gather information that he would have probably acquired there anyway. In other words, it was a waste of Divine Stones.

Nevertheless, Infal City was quite a big city compared to the cities one would usually find on the borders of the continents. It had over 800 million citizens, which almost made it a big city by the Realm of Gods' standard. Obviously, it was mostly because the geniuses that had no connection with the top five powers came to this place to try the test.

That wasn't all. Jhiod's reputation wasn't spread only in the continents bordering it. It also reached the continents further away. With that said, one would get cultivators and demon beasts from other

continents coming to this city to try their luck. Not everyone had a Kibin Race member like the twins to traverse the continental barrier, but that didn't mean others didn't have their own methods. Erithean, for example, simply used his high cultivation to do that.

Because of that, the city constantly received cultivators and demon beasts in human form from everywhere, just like the other continents around Jhiod. That also explained why no one was really surprised that Rean and Roan weren't from Lebgram when they talked about it. Such a thing was surprisingly common around here.

In the Formation Guild of Infal City, a teleport formation was activated four days later. Soon after, a black-haired man stepped out, quickly leaving the Formation Guild. Following that, three more guys appeared by his side after he went to a concealed corner. As one could imagine, it was Rean, Roan, Kentucky, and Celis, with Kentucky and Celis being in their humanoid forms. "Alright, let's gather some information."

It went without saying that the test to enter Jhiod was the most famous thing in Infal City. With that, it was quite easy to find information regarding this issue. In just a few hours, the twins' group was already in front of a giant building, which was by far the biggest in the entire city.

-Jhiod Sect is Waiting For You-

Or so said the board in front of the building.

Roan's mouth couldn't help but twitch a little after that. "What the hell is this? Did we come to a travel company by mistake?"

Rean laughed in response. "Hahaha! Hey! Maybe they can give us some brochures inside. You know, those pamphlets with tourist attractions from Jhiod Continent."

Celis and Kentucky were lost when they heard these words. Then again, they didn't come from Earth, so it was obvious.

Roan then shook his head after that. "Stop the bullshit, and let's get inside."

However, just as they were about to enter the building, an attendant quickly came to them. "Welcome, welcome! Would you like to join Jhiod Sect? Here, have these promotional jade slips and see which sector suits you best."

Roan then looked at Rean with a dark expression, saying, "See what you did?"

Rean almost tumbled to the ground after that. "How the hell is it my fault?! I've never thought they would really have something like pamphlets here. Well, they're jade slips, but still..."

The attendant didn't know what the twins were complaining about. "Err... Is there something wrong?"

Rean quickly shook his head. "Oh, sorry, sorry. It's nothing. We just happened to see a similar thing in the past." Rean then changed the topic. "I'm curious, though. I heard that joining the Jhiod Sect was extremely hard, and the majority died trying. I mean... should you be treating this place more seriously? It feels more like you're trying to sell some travel insurance."

The attendant nodded in response. He didn't know what travel insurance was, but he had an idea. "Oh, so that's the case. Well, a lot of people die, right? We're just trying to make things more lively to alleviate the burden. If you check the jade slips, you'll see all the good things that you'll get if you pass the test. Don't you think it's nice?"

Death... and me

Chapter 1639: Whatever

Surprisingly, at least 30% of the beings there were demon beasts in humanoid form. That meant they were all experts at the Transition Realm and above.

"I'm impressed with the average level of cultivators and demon beasts here. I can barely see anyone below the Transition Realm, and that's only the humanoid races," Rean mentioned.

Rean then looked at the attendant after that, asking, "By the way, what's your name?"

"Sir can call me Dipsy," he answered in response. "I'm just one of the numerous attendants of the Jhiod Sect's Trial Building."

He continued, "As for the number of high-level experts, that's normal. You have to understand that only people and demon beasts of that level could really pay to teleport all the way here to take the test. Anyone at the Elemental Transformation Realm and below would probably find it hard to afford."

Everyone had to admit Dipsy was right. Even if one waited for the teleport formations' activation, that wasn't something anyone could easily afford. Besides, those who came from outside the continent were definitely rich to start with.

Dipsy also mentioned, "The other reason is that it would be quite crazy to enter the tests without being at least in the Elemental Transformation Realm. It's already this dangerous, so you have to have the strength to back yourself. The tests are often known for being impossible to finish for anyone below that level."

Roan couldn't help but ask after that, "We heard about how dangerous those tests are, but not about the tests themselves. What are they about?"

Dipsy immediately began to guide the twins through the wall after hearing that. "Oh! Then please follow me!"

When they arrived at the center of the entrance hall, Dipsy pointed in several directions. "On your left, you have the Volcano Hell test. This is pretty good for Fire Element Affinity cultivators and demon beasts. Well, good for the ones who survive, that is."

"Starting from the Volcano Hell test on the left and moving to the test beside it, the next one is the Snow Golem Island test. It is obviously a good place for Water Element users... as long as they don't die."

"The next one is the Life Siphon Forest test. This one would be good for a Water and Earth Element user that could merge them into Wood Element. Pretty much any user of both elements can do that, but how proficient you are will definitely help here. Right, Fire Element is also quite useful... as long as your heart is still beating in the end."

"The next one is the Thunderstorm Breakthrough test. Lightning Element has the advantage, of course. It's quite a fast test if you don't get charred to bits."

"Next, the..." Dipsy continued to showcase the multiple tests available... and how it would be good to not die in them. The twins' group couldn't tell anymore whether he talked like that normally or if he was just messing around.

Eventually, Dipsy finished showcasing the tests to the twins' group. "How is it? Did you like it?"

Rean nodded before saying, "Definitely... until the part that you mentioned how good they are if you stay alive."

"Well, no one wants to die, after all," Dipsy added. "So, as you can see, we have a total of twelve tests. This month's test is the Deep Sea Monster Assault. Do you wish to give it a try? The test will start eight days later."

Roan narrowed his eyes in response. "Wait, how many tests do we need to pass?"

Dipsy smiled in response. "Oh! I knew sirs would notice. That's correct. Passing a single test is far from enough. If you want to join Jhiod Sect, you have to pass all twelve tests these next twelve months. Of course, you can give up and come back later. A lot of people and demon beasts do that."

"All twelve..." The twins were quite surprised by that. Nevertheless, it explained why the rate of death was so high. One might be good at some specific elements, but definitely not all of them. A Fire Element Affinity cultivator would obviously struggle in this Deep Sea Monster Assault since it happened in the water. There was no such thing as a surface for the candidate to escape to.

Kentucky thought about something else, though. "You said we can give up?"

Dipsy nodded, replying, "Yep, you can give up at any time. All you need to do is crush the participant badge we will give you, and you'll be instantly teleported out of the test area. You won't be able to try it again until next year, though."

"It seems it's far more dangerous than I thought," Roan mentioned.

Rean and the others agreed with him. "If you can escape that easily but still have a 90% death rate, then it's so hard that you don't even have the time to give up before dying."

Dipsy's smile didn't disappear, though. "That's not entirely correct. A lot of the dead simply don't want to give up no matter what. Some people and especially demon beasts don't like the idea of sitting an entire year until the next test."

"That doesn't make sense," Roan pointed out. "Even if you fail this one, you could try the next ones after each month."

Dipsy then put a hand on his head. "Oh! Sorry, sorry! I forgot to mention. Once you start the test, you have to succeed in all twelve consecutively to be accepted. Suppose you succeeded five of them but failed the sixth. The results from the five tests before would become null and void. It doesn't matter which test you start with, but you have to finish all of them."

Roan glanced at Dipsy, wondering if he had really forgotten or just did not mention it on purpose. "Whatever."

Death... and me

Chapter 1640: Going their own ways

"Just give us a moment to think about it," Rean told Dipsy.

Dipsy obviously saw no problem with it. "Sure. I'll wait by the entrance if you need me for anything else. If you want, you can head straight to the counters at the Deep Sea Monster Assault area and sign for it. Just present your IDs there."

Well, only Kentucky and Roan had IDs, but it wouldn't be a problem to make new ones for Rean and Celis in Infal City itself.

Rean then looked at everyone before saying, 'The question here is whether we want to enter those tests with the four of us or not. If not, we can have only Roan or I take the tests since we can carry everyone else in the Dimensional Realm. Perhaps it would be good for the two of us at the same time since we don't know if the other one might fail one of the tests.'

Roan pondered over it for a bit before saying, 'We should all try the tests. They will serve as a good way of training even if we fail. Celis, especially, has been in the Dimensional Realm all this time doing nothing more than cultivating.'

Celis was taken aback to hear that. 'I was a Peak Stage Transition Realm World Swallowing Cedar before, remember? I don't really need training as I'm well aware of my own strengths and weaknesses at this level. I would rather keep cultivating.'

Rean looked at the Minokawa after that. 'What about you, Kentucky?'

Kentucky shrugged his shoulders in response. 'You know me. I don't like annoying things. Since Celis doesn't want to go, I don't either... or so I wanted to say. However, I only had one chance to test my fighting prowess since I reached the Transition Realm. Not only that, all I did was block the attacks of two weaklings. That isn't good at all. I want a real challenge to see how far my defense has improved.' Kentucky had never stopped consuming high-level metals. That obviously helped him increase his defense, although it had a limit depending on his cultivation. It's just that this limit was never reached since his cultivation was too fast, thanks to the connection with Celis, Rean, and Roan.

Celis looked at Kentucky for a moment. 'It's quite rare of you to be this proactive.' After so many years, Celis had obviously understood Kentucky's personality. 'Sigh... fine, I'm going in with you. We have our pact together, so we're stronger when we're close to each other. We might as well see how well our combination goes.'

Roan was obviously happy to hear that. 'Good! In that case, I won't join you. We will take the tests at the same time, but we will go our own separate ways.'

Rean couldn't help but ask, 'Does that mean I have to go alone?'

Roan nodded. 'I don't want to stay close to you if I can help it.'

Suddenly, the idea didn't look so bad. 'Now that you say that, it really is a good idea.'

Rean then contacted Havek in the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm and told him about the events outside. 'That's about it. Do you want to take part in the tests?'

Havek snorted in response. 'Ha! As if! I only care about my cultivation because it's directly related to the level of formations I can create. I obviously have no interest in such things. Unless extremely necessary, don't get me involved in it.'

Rean bitterly smiled in response but didn't insist. He kind of expected this kind of answer from Havek already. That guy only cared about formations. And that was all.

It was then that Celis thought about something. 'Wait! Can we even join the tests as a group?'

Roan spread his arms in response. 'Look around you. Can't you see the huge number of cultivators and demon beasts here? Do you think they're all here simply waiting for the test to start? If you pay attention, you can see many groups forming everywhere. Just spread your Divine Sense a little, and you will hear lots of conversation about people and demon beasts trying to form their own groups.'

Celis did exactly that. Sure enough, Roan was right. A lot of the cultivators and demon beasts were truly trying to form groups or had already formed one and were recruiting more participants. That only made Celis smile, though. "Kentucky, come with me. Let's join that demon beast group over there."

Kentucky was taken aback. "Eh?! Weren't we going just the two of us?"

Celis shook his head, telling him, "We're just not joining the twins since they're too strong. The other groups are bound to be weaker than us, so we can use them to scout ahead."

Kentucky found it strange, though. "But many of them are at a higher stage of the Transition Realm or are even in the Void Tempering Realm. Won't they force us to take the vanguard instead?"

Celis laughed in response. "Hahaha! I sure hope they try."

Kentucky's eyes lit up as he laughed as well. "Hahaha! I sure hope they try it too." Immediately, he followed Celis. As for how they would fare, the twins would find out once the test was over.

Roan then looked at Rean and said, "Alright, I'm off. I'm going to find some random team as well. You should do the same."

Rean agreed with him. "Sure. Let me know if you need something through our connection."