

## Death 1981

Death... and me

Chapter 1981: Underworld Relic

That was true. It was obvious that it was important, but the twins still had no idea why it was important.

"It's a deciding factor." Fagund was the first one to talk.

Of course, the twins didn't understand that, with so little to work with. "What do you mean?"

Fagund looked at Rui, who just nodded back. It wouldn't take more than a minute for Titia, Doohan, and Salahi to arrive at the meeting hall, so Fagund used Divine Sense from that point onward. 'This isn't the only competition. In fact, there are five different competitions to decide who'll be keeping the Underworld Relic for the next thousand years. The Underworld Soul Guiding Contest is one of those competitions.'

'Underworld Relic?' Neither Rean nor Roan knew about it.

\*Pin!\*

Immediately, the Soul Gem System activated.

[The Underworld Relic appeared right after the division of the Universe. Due to the power it provides, it's safe to assume that this relic is made with one of the Universe Foundation Fragments.]

[New Quest Available: Get close enough to the Underworld Relic. The system will check if a fragment is contained inside.]

[Time Limit: Unlimited]

Rean and Roan glanced at each other for a moment but didn't say anything. The moment they heard about the Underworld Relic, they kind of imagined the system would show itself again. If there was something surprising, it was how the system didn't give any rewards or failure conditions in its message.

Of course, Fagund didn't hear the system and simply continued to explain. 'At the moment, it's being kept by Elder Devil Mephisto's clan. The Underworld Relic was an item that we believe appeared during the formation of the Underworld. The clan that holds the relic will receive a boost in cultivation speed by the laws of the Underworld.'

'So, it's a Devil Stone that provides more Divine Energy?' Rean and Roan asked back.

Fagund shook his head as he replied, 'No, it has nothing to do with Divine Energy. Well, you still need Divine Energy to cultivate. However, it'll become way easier to cultivate if your clan's Elder Devil has it. Do you remember when we talked about a devil's influence?'

Rean and Roan nodded in response. Back in Fraghal City, they heard from the devil they killed that they couldn't talk anything about their master. That they were under the influence of the High Devil from Fraghal City. Such things happened in all areas controlled by strong devils, and the Underworld wasn't any different.

'Every single devil under a certain devil's influence will benefit from the Underworld Relic. Well, Elder Devils have already reached the peak of the universe's cultivation, so they can't increase it. Nevertheless, it's extremely beneficial to their clans. Not only that, but it also grants a considerable boost in strength to the Elder Devil themselves, even if their cultivation can't progress anymore.'

The twins nodded in the end. 'So it can be directly linked to the overall strength of the top clans. No, it probably works for smaller clans as well. It's just that smaller clans without Elder Devils don't have a say in it.'

'That's correct.' Fagund confirmed the twins' words. 'One competition is held every 200 years. They're fixed topics, and Soul Guiding is one of them. Well, I was really lucky to find you two in the Realm of Gods. The Underworld Soul Guiding Contest is the only one where Void Tempering Realm is the limit. The other four competitions also have limitations, but they're much higher.'

'I'm surprised that the Elder Devil holding this relic is even willing to give it away this easily,' Rean couldn't help but comment.

'Hahaha!' Fagund laughed in response. 'Give it away that easily? Do you think it was always like this? Dream on! A long time ago, the devils would go into huge wars because of this relic. The worst part was that you couldn't hide it. No formation, skill, or any other trick can prevent Elder Devils from feeling its location. When the Elder Devils themselves battled, much was lost in the areas they fought. The one holding onto it would always be in danger.'

'It wasn't before the Elder Devils lost too much that they understood that one Elder Devil would never be able to keep it safe by themselves. Sure, the relic gave this devil a boost in strength, but it would be ridiculous to believe they could fight all the others on their own. The relic wouldn't stay in the same hand for more than two or three hundred years on average. Sometimes not even a decade.'

'In the end, these five competitions were created by the Elder Devils themselves. The clan that wins it will keep the relic for a thousand years. There's also the rule that Elder Devils are prohibited from taking part.'

'I can see why your clan considers this competition so important.' Roan admitted that it was a much better method than the Elder Devils fighting each other. 'If the relic could be hidden, it would be another story. But since it couldn't, then they came to the best decision. Only a single Elder Devil can use it, after all. Alliances would be useless if the others could only watch. Not to mention that the rest definitely wouldn't just stay still during it.'

Fagund agreed with him. 'There are more reasons why this happened, but the ones you mentioned are also part of it. Don't ask me why they decided to have five competitions instead of one. They had their own plans in mind. In any case, the clan that wins the most of these contests will receive the Underworld Relic.'

'What if five clans get one victory each?' Rean thought it was definitely possible.

'Then these five clans will choose one representative with a cultivation realm limit and have them fight. Same thing if, for example, two clans get two victories. It's just that only these two would fight for the right of having the relic.'

Suddenly, the door of the meeting hall opened again as three Light Devils entered the room.

Seeing that, Fagund finally finished his explanation. 'Anyways, that's basically the reason why these competitions happen.'

Death... and me

Chapter 1982: Need To Check First

"Clan master, we've arrived." Titia, Doohan, and Salahi quickly paid their respects to Rui, who just nodded back at them.

Rean and Roan looked at the three and immediately saw their cultivations. Titia and Doohan were at the Peak Stage of the Void Tempering Realm. As for Salahi, he was at the Late Stage, just like the twins themselves.

Fagund then took the initiative and explained what they intended to do. "These two devils here are Gean and Doan. I have asked them to participate in the Underworld Soul Guiding Contest. Naturally, that means two of you won't be able to take part in it since only three slots are available."

"This..." The three devils were taken aback as they looked at Rean and Roan. They obviously didn't like that at all. "Young Master, you can't take this opportunity away from us! We've been training Soul Guidance ever since it was decided we would be the ones representing the clan."

"I agree." Tapir suddenly intervened. "That's why the clan master decided to have you five go to the Path of Reincarnation and check which one is better. If you three perform better than these two devils, you'll obviously retain your spots."

Titia, Doohan, and Salahi couldn't complain about that. In fact, they would eventually ask for such a thing to prove they were more worthy. Since it looked like the other elders weren't convinced with Rean and Roan, then that was perfect. "Yes, Elder Tapir. We can depart anytime."

Rean then raised his hand after that. "That's good and all. But let's not forget that my brother and I were born in the Realm of Gods. We've never been to the Path of Reincarnation before."

[Well, at least not recently. Hahaha!] Sister Orb added from within the Dimensional Realm. However, the others couldn't hear her.

Rean's mouth twitched a bit after hearing that, but he ignored her words. "Naturally, we've never guided any soul. You'll need to explain to us how to do it."

Even Roan wasn't very confident. After all, his job on the other side of the Universe was quite different. He also guided souls, but he went out to bring them to the Path of Reincarnation himself. He did have an idea, though. 'Perhaps I can use the same method I used to extract souls from their dead bodies.' Though, he didn't mention that out loud.

Titia, Doohan, and Salahi obviously found that ridiculous. "You don't even know that? Then why are we wasting our time at all?!"

"Enough!" Rui immediately stopped them. "If it's this easy to win, then just go there and beat these two devils. You three are Light Devils with high aptitudes. Since Gean and Doan don't know how to do it, then it should be much easier to keep your slots. Now, you'll go there and prove it. Understood?"

The three nodded without thinking twice. If anything, at least they could use this chance to train a little more around the Path of Reincarnation before the contest two years later.

"Tapir." Rui looked at Tapir right after. "You will bring them there. Get a few more Void Tempering Realm devils from the devil branches to keep an eye on these five while they're there."

Tapir didn't mind. "Yes, Clan Master."

Hearing that, Fagund quickly took the opportunity. "Clan master! I want to go too. I wish to watch the test between those five with my eyes."

Rui thought it was a good opportunity for Fagund to learn, so he simply nodded. "Very well, then you go and try it yourself. See if you can guide a few souls. It'll be useful for you in the future."

"Thank you, clan master." Fagund was happy to hear that. After he successfully made contact with the angels in the Realm of Gods, it seemed like his great-grandfather gained more confidence in him.

For the twins, that was an even better deal. The idea was to release Beelzebub in some hidden place near the Path of Reincarnation without anyone noticing. It definitely wouldn't be that easy to do so if they had to wait for that contest. However, if they went now, there shouldn't be as many eyes in there as it would be in two years. That would give Beelzebub a headstart as well. "Both of us can leave straight away as well."

"Very well." Rui didn't seem to have anything else to talk about. "Tapir, you go with them."

Tapir quickly used his Spatial Powers and grabbed Rean's group, including Fagund. The same happened to Titia and the others. After that, he made a cutting motion with his hand in the air, opening a fissure in space. With that, he jumped inside with everyone and disappeared.

Behind, Rui was left with a few doubts. 'Too much luck involved for it to be a plan of other Elder Devils. However, something still doesn't feel right.'

"Losferu." Rui looked at another one of the High Devils of his Light Devil Clan. "You go after Tapir as well. Let me know if you find anything out of the norm. As low as the chances may be, I don't want to risk losing our clan's participants while they're near the Path of Reincarnation."

Losferu was another Light Devil. In fact, he looked quite human as well. The difference was that he couldn't summon more than four wings on his back. Nevertheless, his position in the clan was very high. "Yes, clan master." Immediately, he also opened a fissure in space and entered it.

Tapir didn't head straight to the Path of Reincarnation. Instead, he stopped by the devil branches to get some help. Because of his cultivation, he couldn't enter that area, so he needed more devils at the Void Tempering Realm to follow Rean, Titia, and the others. As for this devil branch, it was the place in the Light Devil Clan where normal devils lived.

After enlisting ten devils for the task, Tapir once again dove into a space fissure with everyone.

Death... and me

Chapter 1983: Distraction

At the same time, in the angels' realm, Heaven...

Just like the Underworld, Heaven didn't have continental barriers. However, the angel races had always been much more united than any other realm. All its Archangels, which was the title given to angels who had reached the highest realm, worked together with their own clans for the realm's prosperity.

At the center of all those angel races stood the city of Arcadia. By far, it was the biggest city in any of the realms, housing tens of billions of angels. There was no such thing as territories in Heaven. All locations were open for any angel who wished to come and leave, except for some specific places that the angel races considered very important.

In a gigantic tower that reminded one of a spearhead, two of these Archangels, including the angels' selected leader, could be found. The twins heard about this person in two different places. One of them was back on Earth. The second time was when they talked with their father. "Sir Gabriel, Archangel Liran has arrived."

Gabriel gently smiled at the angel that reported and nodded. "Thank you, Guvos. Please call him in."

A moment later, Liran entered the room where Gabriel waited. "Gabriel, it worked well. The Light Devil Clan's young master was able to go to the Realm of Gods as you expected."

Gabriel's smile widened, but he didn't talk about Liran's words at first. "How was it? Was the Light Devil Clan doing fine? How are their wings?"

Liran narrowed his eyes in response, saying, "They were repulsive. It's truly a shame. Their next leader was only a Nascent Soul Realm Light Devil, but he could already summon all his six wings. Nevertheless, there were tainted by dark feathers and the Light and Dark Element constantly clashed around him. Such a lifeform shouldn't be allowed to carry the angel races' six wings. It's disgraceful."

Gabriel shook his head, though. "Liran, they were created to be a link between Heaven and Underworld. The fact that they're still devils but have descendants capable of summoning six wings at such a young age is remarkable. It's not their fault that they ended with that role and form, and we should strive to help them when the time comes. Not to mention their clan master is also an Elder Devil willing to be loyal to our angel races. That's how the angels should act."

Liran quickly nodded, feeling somewhat ashamed. "Yes, Gabriel. It was my mistake to say these horrible words. It's just that seeing our immaculate wings being contaminated by dark feathers made me forget

about it for a moment. When the time comes, we shall take them under our protection and help them clean their wings. Perhaps we can even turn them into a part of the angels, depending on the results."

Gabriel nodded, satisfied. "It's good that you know, my friend. Don't misunderstand me. I also find such wings a sore to the eyes. However, we shall not hold them accountable for what you could call to be our own mistakes. Don't forget that the devils also have a similar race here in our Heaven for the same reason."

Liran then looked through the window, his eyes fixated in a specific direction. It wasn't possible to see it from that tower, but he knew the Dark Angel Race was located in that direction. "Sigh... mutual exchange ended up like this."

With that, Liran decided to return to the main topic. "Gabriel, the demon beast, humanoid, and spirit races are seriously gonna do it. I don't know if they'll be able to win against the devils with the Gods' Dividing Barrier in place. Nevertheless, the communication system they discovered will give them a reasonable chance."

Gabriel was a lot more optimistic, though. "Not just reasonable. The chances are totally on their side."

"How come?" Liran asked back.

Gabriel looked in the direction of the Temporal Path's entrance. Arcadia could be said to have flourished because the Temporal Path was located nearby. That was also the reason most Archangels lived in this city. "Their alliance is planning to talk with that being."

"What?!" Liran was shocked to hear that. "Are they crazy?! If they irritate that thing, it would be disastrous to the Realm of Gods. Convincing it to act would cost a ridiculous price! Just meeting it would already be painful, even for us."

"I know." Gabriel had considered that fact. "In any case, that already shows how determined they are to drive the devils out of the Realm of Gods. The good thing is that I don't think the devils considered this possibility. No, to be more specific, the devils simply think the humanoid, demon beast, and spirit races wouldn't actually try it out."



"But... if they convince it..." Liran could already imagine the consequences. "The Realm of Gods' Core. It has its own conscience and is unimaginably powerful. However, due to the events of the past, it has suffered damage that hasn't been repaired even now. The smaller cracks on it created the continental barriers, and the main crack ended up as the Gods' Dividing Barrier that separated the four territories."

Gabriel agreed with Liran. "Indeed. It's still fully focused on repairing itself and simply couldn't care less about which races live on it. For the Core, all wars and deaths are meaningless. If the alliance truly succeeds in paying the right price, I believe it should make the Gods' Dividing Barrier disappear for a few days. For the alliance of those three races, the important part is traversing the barrier with their top experts without having to fight the restrictions of the Gods' Dividing Barrier first."

One must not forget that the Gods' Dividing Barrier blocked everyone above the Space Bending Realm. The higher the realm, the harder it was. Naturally, experts at Placake's level would suffer a lot before they even stepped into the devils' territory in the Realm of Gods. Or... they might be able to make the barrier disappear long enough to have everyone cross first.

Gabriel... was right about his conjectures. "The moment the alliance moves is the moment we descend into the Underworld."

Death... and me

Chapter 1984: Into the Reincarnation Path Area

Well, it would still take decades until the three races' alliance prepared for the attack.

Back in the Underworld, the twins' group came out of a spatial fissure, being carried by Tapir. They were still somewhat far away from the periphery of the Path of Reincarnation, though. That's because the area outside of it was sealed by formations for safety purposes.

"Come with me." Tapir immediately grabbed Fagund and began to fly toward the Path of Reincarnation.

Rean, Roan, and the other devils could fly on their own, so they just followed Tapir from behind.

It didn't take long until they arrived in another city, Fekis. The city wasn't that big, though. That's because only Elder Devil and some High Devil clans had access to it. No more than a million devils or so

could be found inside. There were more devils in this place, but most of them were working inside the surrounding areas near the Path of Reincarnation.

Tapir passed right above the city's walls, landing on a big building at the center a moment later. Naturally, Rean and the others did the same.

Tapir walked into the building while he spoke. "Here we are. Come inside so that we can prepare your Soul Counting Bracelet."

"Soul Counting Bracelet?" The twins immediately understood. "So that's how you can tell how many souls we were able to send into the Path of Reincarnation."

Fagund nodded. "That's correct. We just need a drop of your blood, and the bracelets will be bound to you. It's a very simple and effective item, especially since rewards are given to the devils guiding the souls."

"That makes sense." One couldn't expect that devils of such big clans would work for free. They needed some incentive. With that said, each soul successfully guided into the Path of Reincarnation was worth Soul Points. "It's a very effective system. How many points is each guided soul worth?"

"They're all worth the same amount," Fleus, who also came with them, answered. "It doesn't matter how strong the soul is. The method to guide them is the same."

"Well," Rean shrugged his shoulders in response. "It doesn't matter much to us."

Roan nodded in agreement. "We only care about winning the competition for you. We won't stay long enough to gather the necessary points to buy anything worth the effort."

"That's true." Fagund agreed with the twins.

Tapir came back while they talked and gave his orders. "I gave them your names already." After that, he threw five bracelets at Rean, Roan, Titia, Doohan, and Salahi. "Use your blood to bind the bracelet and put them on."

Titia, Doohan, and Salahi had done that before, so they didn't waste time.

Rean and Roan saw how the bracelets shone for a moment. They tried the same thing, and they quickly felt the link between themselves and the bracelets. It wasn't anything strong, but it couldn't be faked either. Eventually, they put on the bracelets, which changed in size to adapt to their arms on their own. They had to be like that so the various devil races could use them. "Is that all?"

Fagund nodded once again. "Yep."

"Alright, I want two devils following each of you." Tapir decided to start the test straight away. "Fleus, you will follow the twins."

Fleus accepted Tapir's orders. "Yes, Elder Tapir."

Of course, Rean and Roan weren't the only ones going. Fagund also came along to watch. "Elder Tapir, I'll follow them as well."

Tapir didn't mind before passing some beads to all the devils around, except the devils who would do the soul guiding. Those beads looked like cat eyes, although they were all red. "These are my Watching Soul Eyes. I'll be looking at your progress from here in the city."

Rean, Roan, Titia, Doohan, and Salahi would be focusing on the task, so they couldn't share their attention to control those Watching Soul Eyes. The devils following them would act as Tapir's eyes inside the periphery of the Path of Reincarnation since that area had a cultivation limit to enter. Tapir was way above the Void Tempering Realm, so he couldn't follow them inside.

"Alright, just go ahead. The competition will last five days, so I'll give you five days as well for this test," Tapir explained.

Titia, Doohan, and Salahi didn't waste time and flew to the Path of Reincarnation. Fleus quickly did the same and carried Fagund himself. The other four devils that would be watching the twins did the same, leaving only the twins behind.

"Hey, you still haven't explained how we guide souls!" Rean couldn't help but complain as he also took flight and followed Fleus.

Seeing that everyone was gone, Tapir also left. The Light Devil Clan had its own zone in the city, where he would stay while he watched all the participants.

Fleus didn't explain, though. "It's better if you see it for yourselves."

Fagund also added, "Don't worry. We're basically here to see which one of you is the best for the task. As much as Elder Tapir hates normal devils, he understands that your first day really counts."

Rean and Roan could only do as Fleus said and follow the group into the Path of Reincarnation. Well, even if Fleus wasn't showing the route, there was no way the twins would miss it. That's because both of them could recognize the gigantic portal-like thing in the distance. Or better, they could recognize what was inside it. 'That's definitely the Path of Reincarnation.' Since they had been there before, they knew what it looked like.

The twins' group flew for another half an hour or so when suddenly, the twins felt that they had passed through some kind of barrier. They didn't see it, but they knew it was there. It's just that it didn't stop them.

Fleus just smiled at them as he also felt that. "We have entered the periphery of the Path of Reincarnation. What you just felt was the barrier that prevents those above the Void Tempering Realm from entering. Come, I'll show you how to guide a soul."

Death... and me

Chapter 1985: Permanently Destroyed

It was quite easy to find them. The closer one got to the Path of Reincarnation's entrance, the higher their numbers were. Obviously, there was the problem of other devils working in the area. Most of the devils from the big clans spent most of their time here, so souls were being fought for all the time. It's just that the fights for the souls weren't real fights.

Instead, they were soul-guiding fights. The twins saw how the devils below used some kind of power that attracted the souls to them. The devils that succeeded would have the souls absorbed into their bracelets. In the end, the devils with the best soul-guiding powers would get the souls.

Fleus looked for a free soul in the midst of all of that and finally found one. "Here, come with me." He quickly came down from the skies with Fagund, stopping a few meters away from a soul that had just arrived from the other realms.

However, as soon as he started to use his own soul-guiding power, another devil approached and did the same thing. The soul began to fly back and forth, not knowing which soul guide to follow. "Hmph! How many times do you think I've done this?!" The power that was coming from Fleus' body then increased, making the soul completely ignore the other devil. Eventually, Fleus looked at Roan. "Raise your bracelet."

Roan nodded and lifted his bracelet above his head. The soul, being guided by Fleus, then got close to it before Roan's bracelet shone. A gentle red light enveloped the soul, quickly being absorbed by the bracelet.

The other devil that fought Fleus narrowed his eyes but understood that his and Fleus' abilities were too different. He wasn't afraid of being attacked because of that, though. He simply turned around and left as if nothing had happened.

Seeing that, Roan took the chance to ask. "So battles are prohibited in this place?"

Fleus and Fagund nodded in response. "Exactly. Even if you try to break this rule, you won't be able to do so. The laws of the Underworld will bind you since they consider it to be a risk to the Reincarnation Cycle. Everyone here is pretty much safe."

Rean and Roan understood that 'pretty much' didn't mean 'completely' safe. However, they simply thought that the risk was due to the Soul Devils that might be born in this place.

Rean, instead, was more interested in what Fleus did. "What was that power coming from your body?"

Fleus smiled and was just about to teach the twins how to do that. Then again, Fleus didn't have the chance to do so. At that moment, Roan had a disgusted expression on his face. Before Fleus could say anything, Roan's hand, the one that had the bracelet, was raised up in the air once again. At the same time, Roan's body began to emit the same soul-guiding power as Fleus.

"This..." Fleus was taken aback. "Is it really your first time doing this?"

\*Huuuuuuuuu...\*

\*Uooooohhhhh...\*

\*Auuooooohhhhh...\*

Yet, little did he expect what happened right after. Everywhere in a radius of almost five hundred meters, the souls began to fly in Roan's direction. They looked more like sharks that smelled the scent of blood. Even though they had no sentience, they all looked to be excited.

\*Huuuuuuuuu...\*

\*Uooooohhhhh...\*

\*Auuooooohhhhh...\*

"What?!"

"The hell?!"

"Who's that guy?!"

All the devils in that area couldn't do anything. Some of them were fighting for the souls, and others were trying to capture souls that no one had claimed. Yet, it didn't matter. All the soul-guiding powers in the area became completely useless as the souls only cared about one being, Roan.

One by one, the souls began to enter Roan's bracelet. There were so many souls that the bracelet simply couldn't take that many at once. That caused the area above Roan's head to become a cloud of souls, gathering even more attention.

'Hmph! Show off!' Rean couldn't help but complain. How could he not know why Roan was so good with it? Roan was Death, after all.

Hearing that, Roan glanced at him for a moment. He didn't bother to answer Rean's words, though.

Eventually, the area was completely cleaned of souls, leaving only a bunch of annoyed eyes. It went without saying that the other devils in the area didn't like Roan's actions at all. But at the same time, they wondered just who he was since none of them had ever seen such a powerful soul-guiding power.

Fleus and Fagund, naturally, were just as shocked. "Is it truly your first time in the Underworld?"

Roan nodded. "It is."

Well... it was his first time in this one... at least...

"Let's head somewhere else." Seeing everyone watching them, Fleus decided it was better to move locations for now. He quickly grabbed Fagund and took flight, being followed by Rean, Roan, and the other four Devils, who were there to watch them.

While they flew to another area, Fleus finally asked the question in everyone's heads. "How did you do that? Your soul-guiding power was definitely stronger than mine. I admit that. However, it wasn't supposed to be that effective."

Roan looked back at Fleus with a puzzled expression, telling him, "I'm more curious as to how your method of guiding souls is incredibly dogshit. The moment you used it, I could tell how terrible it was.

The other devils around should just kill themselves as they were even worse. It was embarrassing to just watch you move."

Fleus felt like his heart was stabbed at that moment. "You truly don't know how to hold back your words, do you?"

"The truth is always faster," Roan answered.

However, that only hurt Fleus's feelings even more. "Fuck you! I'm not bad! You're just too fucking good!"

Back in Fekis City, there was another pair of eyes in shock. He then remembered how he gave the groups five days to guide souls. "I just hope Titia, Doohan, and Salahi's confidence don't get permanently destroyed..."

Death... and me

Chapter 1986: Too Many

Tapir quickly snapped back to reality from the shock he received from Roan's abilities. "That brat called Doan is perfect for the contest two years later. But how can he be that good? My Light Devil Clan already has one victory in the previous four contests. There's a very good chance we'll get the second one with his. In any case, his Soul Guiding Energy is definitely stronger than the others, but I'm certain there's something more to that."

Tapir then shook his head in the end. "Forget it. As long as we get the victory, that's what matters. They asked to be sent into the Swamp of No Return as a reward, so they'll be gone from my Light Devil Clan either way."

Back in the Path of Reincarnation's periphery, Fleus decided to put the matter at the back of his head. "Let's go deliver the souls to the Path of Reincarnation."

Roan nodded in response before their group continued to fly, this time in the direction of the Path of Reincarnation's entrance.



Rean was still very curious, so he used their Soul Connection to ask Roan. 'What's the difference between you and the other devils? That power you used to gather the souls was just too good.'

Roan glanced at Rean for a moment and began to explain. 'It's not like you don't have an idea, right? You're right if you think it's because I was a Death Spirit in my previous life. To create the Soul Guiding Power that Fleus talked about, you have to use your own soul to act as a beacon. Back on the other side of the Universe, the method is the same.'

'There's a difference between the devils and me, though,' Roan continued. 'Here in this half of the universe, they rely on Soul Power and Divine Energy to manifest the Soul Guiding Power from their souls.'

Rean immediately understood. 'There's no such thing as Spiritual or Divine Energy back on the other side, so you obviously didn't rely on that in the past. However, your Soul Guiding Power could extract the souls of dead bodies. How come?'

Roan nodded. 'That's the point. I had the natural talent as a Death Spirit to manifest the Soul Guiding Power without the need for Soul Power or Divine Energy. In fact, we didn't call it Soul Guiding Power to begin with. Well, the name doesn't matter here, so I'll just stick to Soul Guiding Power or Energy for now. The devils here don't have this innate ability that I had as a Death Spirit. Instead, they use Divine Energy and Soul Power to create something similar. It's just that it's an incredibly poor copy.'

'When I tried to use my Soul Guiding Power, I was able to create it without needing any other energy at all. I can produce the 'beacon' with my soul alone. You could say that I'm using the real Soul Guiding Power while they're not. Perhaps they don't even know about its existence.'

'I see...' Rean knew where Roan was coming from. 'You already had 'purer' Soul Guiding Power because of your memories as a Death Spirit. When you added our Divine Soul Power to the mix, it amplified your capability of gathering souls several times.'

Roan confirmed Rean's words. 'Exactly. A Death Spirit isn't much different from a dead soul when you delve deep into it. In a certain way, you could say that I'm pretty much a Soul Devil... although my soul is alive, not dead.'

Rean found it funny. 'Now that you say that, the speed you absorbed the souls did remind me of the description of Soul Devils that Fleus and Fagund talked about. Do you think I can do the same thing?'

Roan pondered over it for a bit. 'Another reason the dead souls like me this much is probably my Dark Element Affinity. Your Light Affinity has always been much better when it comes to living souls. You even created that new Soul Binding Contract because of that. But here in the Underworld, with dead souls, Dark Element definitely has the advantage. In any case, we can exchange elements. Maybe you can achieve good performance using my memories and Dark Element.'

Rean noticed that Roan also shared his memories on how to use Soul Guiding Power. It also included memories from the time he was still a Death Spirit. As they flew forward, Rean concentrated on those memories for a moment, assimilating them into his own. After some time, he raised his hand above his head and started to do the same thing as Roan.

Sure enough, the souls they passed by immediately grew excited and tried to go after Rean, completely ignoring the devils who were trying to capture them at first. Rean's range wasn't as big as Roan's, nor was the excitement he caused in the souls. Nevertheless, his Soul Guiding Power was definitely much better than all the devils they passed by.

\*Huuuuuuuu...\*

\*Uooooohhhh...\*

\*Auuooooohhhh...\*

Fleus felt like crying as he watched a huge stream of souls following them. Everywhere they passed by caused more and more souls to join Rean's stream, angering the devils even more. "C-Can you just stop, please? I truly don't want to have all the devils near the Path of Reincarnation following us."

Hearing that, Rean looked back, allowing him to see what Fleus meant. It wasn't just a stream of souls that followed them. Many more devils were doing the same thing, cursing Rean nonstop. "Oops..."

Rean immediately stopped using his Soul Guiding Power, causing all the souls following his group to suddenly stop in their tracks. Having lost their beacon, the souls returned to their still state. Well, it

didn't last long, though. That's because all the devils following their group stopped together with the souls. So many souls were gathered in the same location, so how could they not take that chance to capture them? More souls meant more points, after all.

Yet, it was at that moment that the souls suddenly started to gather on their own.

"This..." Fleus didn't even know what to do anymore. "You had so many souls following you that now that they're free, they're trying to form a Soul Devil..."

Death... and me

Chapter 1987: Poor Fleus

"Ahem..." Rean quickly pointed at Roan. "You should be thankful that it was me who gathered them. My brother here would have been much better."

That was true. Roan's Soul Guiding Power was definitely superior to Rean in all aspects.

Roan didn't seem to care, though. "What now? Do we simply let the Soul Devil take form?"

"No." Fleus shook his head. "The devils are taking this chance to absorb even more dead souls into their bracelets. That Soul Devil won't absorb anywhere near enough souls to finish taking form, let alone grow strong enough to pose a risk to the devils."

Fleus was correct. Soon, the Soul Devil ran out of souls in its surroundings to grow. Worse than that, the devils around began to use their Soul Guiding Power to tear the Soul Devil apart.

\*UUUHHHHHHHHHOOOOOOO...\*

Eventually, with one last scream, the Soul Devil burst and released all the souls contained inside it. In Rean and Roan's eyes, it was very similar to when they killed the devils in the Realm of Gods and released the living souls they had extracted. The difference was that these souls were dead and couldn't be used for the devils' cultivation.

"Let's leave this place while the devils are focused on the spread souls. It'll be worse if we wait until they're done since it was Gean who caused the souls to escape them in the first place."

Leaving those souls behind, the twins' group continued to fly. This time, they didn't catch anyone's attention along the way for a change.

After flying for a while, Rean and Roan noticed a bunch of devils gathered on the ground. Beyond that point, it was almost completely empty, as if there was a barrier impeding the devils from continuing. The only thing that moved further were the souls themselves.

"We've arrived," said Fleus as he descended from the skies, not going past that point either. "Any dead souls that appear this close to the Path of Reincarnation's entrance don't need guidance. They're attracted by the path itself, so devils are also prohibited from trying to capture them here. It's also here where we'll release the souls inside our bracelets."

Fleus then raised his arm forward, using his Divine Energy in the bracelet. "This is all you need to do. Make the flow of Divine Energy run in the opposite direction of what you did when you captured the souls, and the bracelet will release all of them." He was just showing it, though. He didn't have any souls in his bracelet.

Rean didn't have any souls either because he didn't try to capture them. All he did was gather the souls while he was training and leave them to the other devils in the end.

Roan, as the only devil with captured souls, repeated Fleus's actions.

\*Huuuuuuuu...\*

\*Uooooohhhhh...\*

\*Auuooohhhhh...\*

All the souls in Roan's bracelet were released one after another, immediately flying in the direction of the Path of Reincarnation.

"When you're this close, there's also no risk of Soul Devils taking form. The attraction force of the Path of Reincarnation is a lot stronger than the force necessary to give birth to Soul Devils," Fleus explained. "Don't worry. The number of souls you released into the Reincarnation Path is registered in the bracelet itself. Once you come out, it'll tell you exactly how many souls you helped get into the Path of Reincarnation."

After a while, all the souls from Roan's bracelet left, leaving it empty. "Just one question. Since I can get so many souls inside my bracelet, isn't there a risk of a Soul Devil taking form inside it?"

"There isn't." The one to answer that was Fagund. "The bracelets can't hold enough souls for that to happen. Not to mention that they're separated into the gems in your bracelet, so it's not like they're all together in the same place."

Roan looked at his bracelet and the seven black gems on it. "So that's how it works. Very clever."

Roan quickly turned around, preparing to leave. "I understand how to do it now. I'm going to capture more souls."

Rean quickly did the same. "Well, I also want one of the three slots for that competition, so I'm going as well."

"There's no need." Yet, they were stopped by a voice that came from the Watching Soul Eyes. Obviously, Tapir was watching everything unfold up until that point. Not only that, but Tapir was so focused on the twins that he completely forgot the Watching Soul Eyes that were following Titia, Doohan, and Salahi.

"Elder Tapir!" It was the first time Fleus heard Tapir through the eyes. He thought they could only be used to see and nothing else.

Tapir ignored Fleus and continued, "Continuing with this test would be meaningless. You two can come out already. Fleus, Fagund, and the other four guys can do the same thing. I'll be waiting for you in Fekis City."

Roan pondered over it for a bit and thought it was a good chance. "Titia, Doohan, and Salahi are still here. How will you decide which one of them will get a slot?"

"I'll simply let them continue their test during the next five days," Tapir answered. "The one with the highest number will get the last slot."

Roan nodded after hearing that. "In that case, I would like to take a look around the Path of Reincarnation's periphery on my own. I'll see you outside before the five days are over." Roan didn't even wait for Tapir to answer before taking flight and disappearing into the distance.

Fleus didn't even try to follow Roan. The difference in strength between them was just too big, and so was their speed. "Sorry, Elder Tapir. He can even bend space, so it's impossible for me to catch him."

"It's fine." Tapir didn't mind as he had already got the results he wished for. "In that case, let Fagund train his Soul Guiding Power and come back before the five days are over."

Fagund immediately grew excited. "Great! I wanted to try that too!"

"What about you, Gean?" Fagund asked Rean, who didn't follow Roan.

"Me? I don't have interest in this place, so I'll just stick with you two."

"Fine by me." Fleus didn't mind. "Perhaps you can teach us a few things."

Rean smiled after hearing that. "Weren't you supposed to be my teacher a moment ago?"

"Fuck that!" Poor Fleus...

Death... and me

Chapter 1988: I'll Give It a Try

'Are you okay going out alone?' Rean asked Roan through their Soul Connection.

Roan nodded, actually preferring it that way. 'It's fine. If you stay with Fagund and Fleus, you can keep them occupied. For them, we're new to the Underworld, so there's nothing wrong with me wanting to take a look around. Plus, they said it themselves. You can't fight in the Path of Reincarnation's periphery.'

'Alright.' Rean followed Roan's plan. 'I'll contact you if anything happens. Leave our connection open so that I know when you find a good place to take Beelzebub out.'

Roan didn't mind and continued to fly around. At the same time, he contacted Beelzebub in the Dimensional Realm. 'Do you know a good place where I could leave you? I'm already inside the Path of Reincarnation's periphery.'

'What?! Really?!' Beelzebub was taken aback, not expecting it to happen that fast. Then again, the twins didn't give him any information before sealing him up again. 'Wait, let me think about it for a bit!'

Beelzebub checked the many memories from the other souls and his own, trying to remember the time he was near the Path of Reincarnation. After a few moments, he finally recalled a good place. 'Right! Which side is Fekis City in relation to the Path of Reincarnation's entrance?'

'If I consider the Path of Reincarnation to be north from my position, Fekis is south-southeast from here. I'm somewhere in the middle at the moment,' Roan replied.

Beelzebub immediately began to point in the direction he wanted. 'Great! It isn't far. Fly northwest until the Path of Reincarnation is on your right. Once there, head straight north until you see a bunch of mountains. It's the only place in the periphery where you can see more than two mountains at the same time. There are more mountains in the area, but they're too far from each other.'

'Those two mountains are inside an area of the Path of Reincarnation's periphery where very few dead souls arrive. That's because the concentration of Dark Element there is slightly lower than in the rest of the place. It's almost imperceptible, but dead souls are very sensitive toward that. That's the best place to let me out without catching anyone's attention.'

Roan didn't waste time and immediately shot into the distance, ignoring everything else. The area where the devils could gather the souls was enormous, but not to the point where it would take too long to fly through at Roan's level.

At the same time, Rean, Fleus, Fagund, and the other devils that followed them went to a quieter place near the area where the cultivation limit was imposed. That's where Fagund would try to use his Soul Guiding Power for the first time.

"This should be good enough. Not many souls appear here due to the distance from the Path of Reincarnation's entrance. On the upside, you won't find many devils fighting against you for them either."

Rean looked around and saw the moment a dead soul appeared. It was quite strange. Dark Element gathered in the area... as did a small amount of Light Element. It's just that the Light Element was barely noticeable because of the much more present Dark Element. Not even a second passed before a dead soul appeared right in that place. The Dark and Light Elements then dispersed as fast as they gathered. "There's a new soul there and no other devil nearby from what I can see with my Divine Sense."

"Great!" Fagund quickly dashed in the dead soul's direction, followed by Fleus and Rean.

"Okay, I'll try it now." Fagund's Divine Energy and Soul Power then fueled his soul-guiding energy, causing the soul to take notice of his presence. However, it was too weak. As a result, the soul only barely moved. "Eh? That bad?"

"Hahaha!" Fleus laughed in response. "Young Master, that's normal. You at least caught that dead soul's attention for a moment. When I first came here, I couldn't do even that."

"What about me?" Rean asked with a smile.

Fleus's mouth twitched after hearing that. "You can just find a place to bury yourself and never come out. I don't want to remember what you did."



Fagund calmed down a bit and tried to increase the strength of his Soul Guiding Power. However, he was still a Nascent Soul Realm devil, so he couldn't do as much as Rean and Fleus did. As for the soul, it still seemed to have noticed something but didn't follow Fagund's orders to enter the bracelet.

Rean patted Fagund's shoulder and used his Divine Sense to talk. 'You're doing it wrong. Well, at least it's very different from what my brother and I did.'

Fagund knew that. 'I know, but I can't replicate what you two did. Even Fleus wasn't anywhere near it.'

Rean pondered over it for a bit. It was true that Fagund wasn't a Death Spirit in the past, like Roan. Nor did he have Roan's memory, like Rean did. In any case, Rean felt like it was possible for him to do much better than what he saw from Fleus and the other devils. 'Try doing it this way. Instead of fueling your Soul Guiding Power with your Divine Energy and Soul Power, try to use it without their support.'

Fagund was puzzled by Rean's words. 'But if I do that, I won't be able to even manifest my Soul Guiding Power.'

'That's not it.' Rean disagreed. 'It's just that you're too focused on the Divine Energy and Soul Power part. You can't even control your Soul Guiding Power at all, so what's the point in fueling it? First, get used to manifesting it. Only then try to add Divine Energy and Soul Power. Remember, your own soul is what acts as a beacon to the dead souls, and the Soul Guiding Power is kind of a representation of that. Just try to spend the next few hours doing only that.'

Fagund pondered over it for a bit before eventually nodding. He did have the next five days, after all. 'Cool, I'll give it a try.'

Death... and me

Chapter 1989: Freeing Beelzebub

Fleus had his own pieces of advice to give Fagund as he tried to get used to his Soul Guiding Power for the next few hours.

Going back to Roan, he passed by many devils and souls on his way to the mountains Beelzebub mentioned. At the same time, he used Rean's Divine Sense bending skill to see if there were any Divine Senses watching the place. Surprisingly though, the only Divine Senses he could feel in the Path of

Reincarnation's periphery were the ones from the devils inside. 'I thought I would feel some High Devils' Divine Senses by now, but there's nothing so far.'

Beelzebub didn't find it weird. 'Forcing a Divine Sense into this area is very difficult because of the power from the Path of Reincarnation's entrance and the cultivation limit barrier. Considering the number of devils walking inside and the fact you can't attack others, the High Devils don't see much of a reason to look into this place. Not to mention you would need many of them to cover the entirety of the entrance's surroundings. Who would want that?'

'Aren't they afraid that a Soul Devil might appear without them noticing?' Roan couldn't help but ask. 'Now that I think about it, what if a Soul Devil becomes too strong for the devils here to deal with? Will the Elder Devils simply wait for it to come out before dealing with it? After all, there's a cultivation limit to get into this place.'

'No,' Beelzebub immediately denied that. 'The Elder Devils can enter this place even with the cultivation limit. The problem is that they would suffer a lot while staying here. Now to answer your first question, it's almost impossible for a Soul Devil to grow strong enough to challenge an Elder Devil without anyone noticing. That's why so many devils are used in this soul-guiding job. If a Soul Devil becomes stronger than the Void Tempering Realm devils, you can be certain that a High Devil or even an Elder Devil will be sent to deal with it straight away. Even if they have to suffer the backlash.'

'That makes sense.' Roan nodded. 'It also explains why you want to stay hidden until you recover completely. You're afraid of them coming after you before that.'

'Shut up!' Beelzebub definitely didn't like the remark. 'Just leave me close to the mountains, and we'll be done with each other.'

'It won't take long then,' Roan said as he was able to see the mountains far in the distance. A few hours of flight was enough to reach the area Beelzebub would come out of.

Roan looked around and confirmed that he could see more than two mountains at once. When he arrived in the middle of two of them, he could even see four, although the fourth was almost out of sight due to the distance. 'Okay, we're here. Is there a specific mountain you want me to bring your altar out?'

Beelzebub pondered over it for a bit. 'There is. One of these mountains should have two peaks on the top. It would be the only one... if things didn't change while I was out. Can you see it?'

Roan found it easily. 'Yes, give me a minute.' He shot in the direction of the only mountain with two peaks in his sight, arriving there in a moment. 'We're here.'

'Good! If that's the same mountain I'm thinking of, you should be able to see quite a few caves with your Divine Sense.' Beelzebub couldn't help but grow even more excited.

Roan did indeed see the caves Beelzebub mentioned. He filtered them out, choosing one where no devil was nearby at that point. But he needed to be fast since the devils would eventually come to take a look. Any area that wasn't verified for too long would usually fill up with more dead souls, after all. 'Alright, I'm bringing you out.'

Inside the Dimensional Realm, the seal on the altar disappeared before the altar itself vanished in thin air. In the next second, the altar slammed down on the ground in front of Roan.

\*Bang!\*

Beelzebub didn't care about any of that. Even if Roan couldn't feel the presence of anyone watching them, he wasn't sure about that. Using the power available to him, the altar dug into the earth and disappeared from Roan's sight.

Seeing that, Roan used his Divine Sense to talk with Beelzebub, who was getting further and further away. 'With that, we're done here. I'll use that vial of yours if I need your strength in the future.'

Beelzebub couldn't care less. 'Yeah, yeah, yeah, just get the fuck out of here already. I won't absorb any souls for the next few days to make sure no one's watching.'

Roan nodded in response. 'Fine. Don't forget that the Soul Guiding Contest will start in two years. Because of that Underworld Relic, there should be a few Elder Devils watching over it. For your own good, you better stop absorbing souls until it's over.'

'Hmph!' Beelzebub knew that. 'You don't need to tell me. I've already waited this long, so I don't mind adding a few extra days to that. Now, when are you leaving? Just go already. Someone might notice that something's off.'

Roan finally took flight once again and shot out of the cave. Whether Beelzebub would be found there was not his problem anymore. Thanks to their pact, Beelzebub wouldn't be able to say anything about him anyway.

'Rean, I released Beelzebub.' Roan took the chance to tell Rean as he made his way back.

'I saw.' Rean obviously never stopped observing. 'Where are you heading now?'

Roan thought about it for a moment. 'To Fekis City. I don't have anything else to do until this contest starts anyway.'

'Very well.' Rean agreed that it was the best thing to do. 'If you continued to gather souls, you would catch more attention than necessary. I'll head back to Fekis City once I'm done here.'

Death... and me

Chapter 1990: Not True

Surprisingly, nothing happened during the next few days. Beelzebub stuck to his word and just hid, not gathering a single soul.

On Rean's side, Fagund kept following Rean's advice and improved his Soul Guiding Power. By the end of the fifth day, Fagund was able to guide a soul into his bracelet without much struggle. He wasn't as good as Fleus, whose cultivation was much higher, but he was definitely doing well for someone in his realm.

Nevertheless, the time for them to return to Fekis City had arrived, where they gathered with Titia, Doohan, and Salahi. Roan just so happened to be in the Light Devil Clan's mansion already.

Titia and the other two went to the meeting hall, having confident expressions on their faces. Anyone could tell they were very pleased with their results when they met Tapir. "Elder Tapir, we have returned."

Tapir nodded before looking at his subordinates. "Call Gean, Doan, Fleus, and Fagund here. Let's get this over with."

"Yes, Elder Tapir."

A moment later, everyone was gathered in the same room.

Tapir immediately started talking. "Alright, show me your results."

Yet, Titia, Doohan, and Salahi didn't want to go first. They wanted to see how Rean and Roan did before showing their results. That way, it would be even more humiliating.

Well, Roan simply showed the results of his bracelet without much concern. After all, he at least tried to do it once and got 39 souls. It was obviously the result it showed. As for Rean, his bracelet showed literally zero. He did gather a ton of souls, but he never sent them into his bracelet, so there were no results there.

Fagund and Fleus looked at each other after that. Why did the twins even bother showing their results? After all, it didn't matter anymore. However, they didn't say anything and just kept watching.

"Hahaha!" Salahi couldn't help but laugh out loud after seeing that. "Is that all you could do in five whole days?" He then looked at Fagund, who he knew was the devil that recruited the twins. "Young Master, that's why you shouldn't just call anyone you find on the streets. One of them wasn't able to get a single soul!"

Fagund bitterly smiled in response. Not for himself, but for Salahi instead. "Just continue..."

Salahi's bracelet then shone, allowing everyone in the room to see his results.

-560 Guided Souls-

The pride on his face was obvious for everyone to see. "You might be extremely talented, having the ability to bend space at your cultivation level. However, the three of us trained for this competition for over a hundred years. In a head-on fight, we probably would lose, but there's no way we'll lose to some devils who weren't even born in the Underworld."

Rean and Roan glanced at the guy for a moment. In fact, Rean even felt pity for him. 'Well, he's tooting his own horn for no reason, so we're definitely not intervening.' The twins thought for a moment.

"I'm next!" Doohan went after Salahi. After showing his bracelet, the results were there for everyone to see.

-731 Guided Souls-

"731 souls?!" Salahi was taken aback. "How did you get that many?!"

Doohan snorted in response. "Hmph! That's because I studied a lot about the areas in the Path of Reincarnation's periphery. Not to mention I tried every single day as well. Your results were good, but they couldn't possibly beat mine. Don't worry, though. You won't lose your slot since these guys didn't get a better result than yours."

Salahi didn't quite like that.

"Enough!" Unfortunately for them, Tapir wasn't in the mood to watch them bickering. "Titia, you're last. How many did you get?"

Titia sweetly smiled before revealing the results of her time in the Path of Reincarnation's periphery.

-927 Guided Souls-

Both Salahi and Doohan were shocked by the result. Doohan's result was already very good, but Titia's was just unbelievable. "How..."

Titia didn't seem that excited, saying, "I spent some time trying to understand my own Soul Guiding Power. That's all." Soon after, she looked at Tapir. "Elder, I believe I will do an even better job two years from now."

Nevertheless, Salahi and Doohan quickly recovered. That was right. They had two more years to sort things out and catch up to Titia's level. There was no way they would stay put and let her steal the limelight... or so they thought. "Just you wait..."

Even Tapir had to admit he was impressed with Titia's result. However, he looked at the twins at the very next moment, who didn't seem to care about Titia's result at all. Well, even he wouldn't have cared if he could do what the twins did. "Very well, the results are clear for everyone to see."

Titia, Doohan, and Salahi waited for their names to be announced. At this point, the announcement was nothing but mere formality.... or so they thought...

"The three devils taking part in the Underworld Soul Guiding Contest will be Doan, Gean, and Titia. Salahi and Doohan are out." Tapir didn't dwell over it as it was better to tell them straight.

"What?!" Even Titia was shocked by the results. She had been chosen, but Doan and Gean's names were spoken even before her own. "How's that possible?!"

Sure enough, Salahi and Doohan couldn't accept that. "Elder Tapir!"

"Shut up!" Tapir obviously knew what they wanted to say. "I'm doing it for the clan. Doan and Gean were chosen for a simple reason, they're better than the three of you. I don't like devils who use living souls for cultivation, but I definitely won't put my feelings above the clan's interests."

"Better?!" Nevertheless, Doohan didn't relent. "The best one between them was Doan, and he only got 39 souls after five days. His brother didn't even get a single one! I can't accept that!"

Fagund sighed before he used his Divine Sense to tell what happened on the first day of the Soul Guiding Test. It went without saying that Titia, Doohan, and Salahi found that hard to believe. "There is no way that's true."