

## Death 2041

Death... and me

Chapter 2041: A Way Around

Naturally, Rean's group heard Sister Orb's words. "What do you mean?"

[It's not like you can't figure out,] Sister Orb explained. [Even an Elder Devil couldn't escape this place. I mean, so many devils and even some other races entered this place. However, there were no records of anyone ever leaving. If you consider the chances, someone of the countless beings who came into the Swamp of no Return should have luckily moved in the right direction and exited it after being lost. Yet, not a single one did. Even if we use Luan's ability to see the Space Element, I don't think that it will be enough to get away from this place. Something will most definitely prevent us from doing it.]

Roan narrowed his eyes in response. "I have also thought about this possibility, but I didn't intend to go back before getting the fragment to start with. Since it has come to this, I agree that Sister Orb is probably right."

"Alright, then we can't go forward, and we can't go back. In that case, what do we do? Should we return to Luman's settlement? At the very least, Luan will be able to guide us back there," Kentucky mentioned. "I don't have any idea how to counter this repealing effect of the space flow. I can't even tell that we are being repealed at all."

Everyone went silent as Kentucky continued to fly. They were trying to think about a solution. It was then that Luan remembered something. "The Demon Beasts we have been fighting in this Swamp. We know that they have some interaction with this Swamp."

Roan looked at Luan with a puzzled expression. "True... However, do you know if they can ignore this repealing effect? Even if they can, can we use it in our favor?"

"I don't know." Luan immediately shook his head. "But I'm trying to think about something."

"Space Flow, Repealing Effect, Senses Misdirection through the manipulation of Space... It is all related to Space Power." Rean suddenly thought something. "Can't we use our own Space Power to counter it?"

"How?" Everyone immediately looked at him.

Immediately after, Rean used his Soul Origin Energy and gathered the Space power around him. Following that, he covered Kentucky, Luan, and Roan with it. "The point is, we are being affected because the space power isn't ours. In that case, we might as well use some energy to make the surrounding Space Power our own. Now that I'm controlling it, this Space Power is mine, not the Swamp's anymore. Luan, use your eyes and see if this repealing effect has diminished at all."

Luan's pupils immediately began to rotate as his vision altered from the real world to the elemental one. He could clearly see Rean's Space Power being surrounded by the Swamp's Space Flow. He continued like that for a few minutes until his expression lit up. "It is working! The repealing power is still affecting us, but not as severely as before. We were moving at 20% of our speed without Uncle Rean's Space Manipulation, but now we are somewhere around 30 to 35%."

Rean then looked at Roan and Kentucky. "Well, that confirms it. You two should join hands with me and expand the Space Manipulation around us. If we share the Soul Origin Energy burden, we might be able to keep it running for a few days before we need to stop to recover."

\*Vup!\*

Immediately after, Celis came out of the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm. "Since that's the case, I guess I have no other choice but to stop cultivating for now. It will be better than keep absorbing Divine energy inside the Dimensional Realm."

Roan, Kentucky, and Rean nodded before they all used their own Soul Origin Energy to gather the Space Power around themselves. Sure enough, the field around their group extended for a few tens of meters, making a distinct contrast between the Swamp's Space Power Flow and their own.

Luan kept looking at his surroundings while Kentucky flew forward. It didn't take long for his expression to get even better. "This is great! We have restored our flight speed to around 90% of the real one. This effort has nullified the effect of the Space Flow of the Swamp by almost four times."

Hearing that, Kentucky couldn't help but ask. "That's weird. How come no one thought about this method before? They wouldn't get lost if they did it."

Luan immediately disagreed. "No, it is different. What we are nullifying is the repealing effect. This Space Field that our group created can not affect the Senses' Misdirection. No, that's not correct. It can help with it. Unfortunately, it can only help within the range of the Space Field."

They obviously understood. It was meaningless to be able to not get lost within a range of a few tens of meters. Even Luan, who could create a field several hundred or even several kilometers of range, would find it meaningless. Luan would literally need to create a Space Manipulation Field capable of covering at least half of the entire Swamp of no Return to make use of it to leave the Swamp.

It was okay to nullify the repealing effect within a few tens of meters of range. But there was no point in not getting lost within the same range. They didn't need a Space Field for that.

"Alright, now that we countered most of the Space Repealing Effect of the Swamp, let's keep going. Kentucky, try to fly as fast as possible but take the management of Soul Origin Energy into account. Every time we deplete 50 to 60% of our energy, we will stop to recover. Rean and I have the highest pool of Soul Origin Energy, so we will match the consumption with Celis and you to have proportional spending," said Roan.

Kentucky nodded and actually stopped to use his energy to fly. Instead, he increased the speed with his body's strength alone. That way, he could make his energy last even longer. "Leave it to me."

Death... and me

Chapter 2042: It's Beautiful

Going back to the matter of the Demon Beasts in the swamp, it was believed that the further the twins' group went into the swamp, the stronger they would be. Now that they found a way around the repealing effect, they did indeed encounter stronger Swamp Demon Beasts more often as time passed.

However, that only continued until the Swamp Beasts reached the level of Elemental Space Realm Initial Stage. With the twins' group's many methods, they could fight against opponents who were an entire Realm above themselves. Let alone when they worked together. If anything, those Demon Beasts proved to be great opponents for training instead.

But after they encountered a few Swamp Demon Beasts at this level, the frequency they found more of them reduced the further they went. Forget about Swamp Demon Beasts at the Middle Stage Elemental Space Realm. It was hard to find Space Bending or even Void Tempering Realm Swamp Demon Beasts.

Finally, after they kept being guided by Luan for over a hundred years, all signs of Swamp Demon Beasts completely disappeared. Not only the Demon Beasts but the Swamp Trees also decreased in number drastically. Or, one could say that signs of life were a lot more difficult to be found.

"Father, the flow of space is already many times higher than when we found a way to counter the repealing effect. Even with our Spatial Field reducing the repealing effect by more than 80%, the repealing effect is so strong that we are once again traveling at 20% of our real speed or something like that," Luan suddenly mentioned.

No one was surprised by that. Luan had kept them up to date with the changes in the environment during the past hundred years or so, after all.

Roan nodded at Luan. "I can also feel the difference in the flow of space now that it is this high. That doesn't bother me. What bothers me is that we haven't found a single Swamp Demon Beast in the past 20 years."

Rean looked around before saying. "It is probably because of the concentration of Dark Element and its higher decaying effect here in the swamp. We have Roan, so we don't really need to be scared of any amount of Dark Element. Perhaps the Demon Beasts aren't as tolerant as Roan, so they can't live here."

Roan narrowed his eyes. Something told him that things weren't so simple. Sure, the Dark Elements and the Decaying Power were ridiculously high, but he felt that the Swamp Demon Beasts, at least the high-level ones, shouldn't have a problem living within it. They used this same Dark Element to cultivate and get stronger. It should be beneficial to them instead.

Celis also noticed something else. "The time difference has also increased a lot. It can't compare to what we felt back in the Realm of Gods when we got into the Natural Formation. The problem is that I can't even tell if we are moving much faster or slower than the time outside the swamp."

[Even I can't tell that,] Sister Orb's voice echoed in their minds. [It feels like it is constantly changing. As if sometimes it is hundreds of times faster than the normal time flow, and sometimes it is hundreds of times slower. I can't tell if we are gaining or losing years to the outside world anymore.]

They expected that the time flow would get faster and faster, but it turned out that the Space-Time Flow of the Swamp got even more unpredictable now that they were so far inside. The Sense of Direction Loss, Repealing effect, and now a messed up Time Flow. Back in Luman's settlement, they at least knew that it was just faster. Now that they had spent over a hundred years traveling, just what could have happened outside. They didn't forget that the Realm of Gods was about to go to war against the Underworld to take back the Northeast side of the Realm of Gods' Territory.

"Hum?" Suddenly, Kentucky's eyes caught something far in the distance. As the one with the best long-distance eyesight, he was the first to notice it. "There is something ahead."

Rean, Roan, Celis, and Luan quickly looked in the direction Kentucky pointed out but couldn't see anything. They weren't surprised as they knew Kentucky could see further away. After a while, they also began to see the same thing.

It looked like a gigantic wall that extended to both sides and reached high in the sky. Even though they were getting closer, they still couldn't see the end of the wall regardless if they looked right, left, or up. It was impossible to fly more than a few tens of meters in the sky, so the idea of flying over that wall immediately disappeared from their minds.

At some point, Luan's Elemental Pupils also got close enough to see the difference in that area and his eyes lit up. "It's there! The flow of space and time is coming from that wall!" In Luan's eyes, the wall ahead acted like some kind of beacon. The Space Power gathered in front of it before being shot in all directions.

He then looked up with his eyes after they got closer and finally understood. "I see... So that's how it works..."

Roan and the others immediately looked at him. "What did you find?"

Luan took a deep breath and explained. "Father, the flow of space is acting like a loop. I don't know how, but that wall pulls the Space Power from above and releases it at our level. Its control is so precise that it forms a loop. If I'm not wrong, the Space-Time flow spreads forward at our level all the way to the Swamp's Borders. After that, it rises into the sky and makes its way back to the wall. Once it reaches the top of the wall, it is pulled by the wall and released at our level once again. I wish you could see what my eyes are seeing. It's beautiful."

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Chapter 2043: Give a Try

Rean looked at the same wall as he was more interested in another issue. "That's good and all. But... how do we get past this thing? We obviously can't fly, and I refuse to believe there is a way underground, either."

Kentucky began to fly to the right side as he followed the wall. "What else can we do? We can only look for an entrance. I'm more curious about who built this thing."

"That's true," Roan agreed with Luan. "We thought that the swamp came into existence because of the Fragment of the Universe. But now that this wall is here, perhaps things aren't that simple." He continued. "Of course, it could also be because this wall was already here even before the Fragment fell into this place, but I found it more likely that this wall was built for the Fragment inside."

[That's considering there is a Fragment inside.] Sister Orb took the opportunity to warn them. [So far, the system hasn't shown any reactions to a possible Fragment.]

Luan looked at the wall. "Probably because this wall is blocking everything. Not even my Elemental Eyes can see through it. How are your Divine Senses? Can they get past it?"

Rean, Roan, Celis, and Kentucky immediately shook their heads. "No. Whatever this thing is made of, it isn't allowing our Divine Senses through."

They weren't very surprised by that. They had seen many formations and items in the past that could block Divine Sense. It just meant this wall was made of similar materials, and that could also be blocking the System's Senses toward the Fragment.

"Well, there is a piece of good news," Luan suddenly mentioned. "There is no need to keep the Spatial Field anymore. This wall is controlling the Space-Time Flow, but it is making the phenomenons like the Direction Senses Loss and Repealing Effect start a few kilometers away from it. The only thing that is still being affected at the moment is the time speed."

Rean's group then stopped using their Soul Origin Energy, making the Spatial Field disappear straight away. "At least we don't need to stop every few days to recover. We won't get lost with this wall here, either."

"Kentucky, just focus on using your energy to fly now. We need to cover as much distance as possible to find an entrance."

Kentucky didn't mind. "Alright, leave it to me."

Kentucky's energy immediately filled his wings, and his speed increased several times. Celis also took the opportunity to return to the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm to continue his cultivation now that they didn't need him anymore.

Just like that, several days went by in a flash. Now that they couldn't get lost, they were able to tell that they were not flying in circles. The wall was truly that enormous. It's just that they didn't know how long it would take to make a complete round around it.

There were still no Demon Beasts here, either. If anything, the area around the wall seemed completely deserted and identical. Fortunately, they didn't need to care about it for too long. On the 17th day, since they began to fly by the wall's side, Kentucky finally picked something in the distance with his eyes. "Oh! Seems like we are here."

Not too long after, Rean and the others also noticed the same thing. It was a gate on the wall. It wasn't that big when you take the wall's size into consideration, but it was definitely enough for even Kentucky to pass through with his true form. Well, the only problem was that it was closed.

However, just as they approached the gate...

\*Blup...\*

They suddenly felt like they had passed through some wall of water. For a moment, their movements became sluggish, and they couldn't turn back at all.

\*Blup...\*

A second later, they left that environment and appeared right in front of the gate. "This... what was it just now?"

Luan once again activated his Elemental Pupils and looked back. Only then did he see the difference. "It seems like some kind of Spatial Membrane. We have just got past it. Still, it doesn't seem like it had any kind of offensive power."

Roan jumped from Kentucky's back and flew close to that Spatial Membrane. He touched it and felt the Space around his hand stretched forward. Yet, he felt like the Spatial Membrane was forcing his hand back the further he pushed his hand until he finally couldn't move it anymore. "Seems like this Spatial Membrane allows entrance but not exit."

Rean also tested the Spatial Membrane and asked. "Should we attack it?"

Roan nodded. "It's better to see if we have a way to retreat before we try to do anything to that gate."

Everyone agreed, and they tried to get through the Spatial Membrane. Too bad it didn't work. Whether they used attacks or Rean used formations, nothing seemed to work against that Membrane. It was a weird thing. It didn't matter the strength of the attack. The Membrane acted exactly the same way as if the attacks used against it were all identical.

Meanwhile, Luan kept focusing on the chances of the Spatial Membrane, trying to find any clues. It wasn't before two days of trials and errors that he finally called it out. "Father, there is no point continuing anymore. It's not that this barrier is too strong, but that our understanding of Space Power is too limited. From what I could see, this is not the kind of obstacle that can be overcome with pure strength."

Roan put his White Scythe away and nodded. "I was thinking the same. I can't see what you can, but I can feel it. We will most likely need some grasp of Spatial Laws to work on this thing. That's not something we can achieve at our level."

Roan and the others then turned to the gate a few hundred meters away. "Well, we can only give this guy a try now."

Death... and me

Chapter 2044: He Never Changes

Rean approached the gate, which had several inscriptions on it. After touching them for a while, he quickly noticed. Those were not inscriptions related to formations. They were just marks carved with not much of a purpose. Nothing but aesthetic work. A small hole went deep inside the gate at the very center.

"Is this thing a keyhole?" Roan also noticed the hole before asking the others around him.

Rean tried to pic inside the hole with his Divine Sense and Soul Power Scan. Surprisingly, it did go through the hole, even though the material of the wall and gate could block them all. Unfortunately, it reached a small open space just a few centimeters in diameter inside the gate, where he couldn't see anything. "It doesn't seem like a keyhole to me, at least."

Rean then had an idea and quickly reached the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm. Right after, a small insect that looked more like a mechanical puppet appeared on his hand. "Good thing I bought some of those back in the Realm of Gods when we passed by the Puppets Guild. It is small enough to enter the hole, and its eyes will let me see what it can see through our connection with Divine Sense."

The Puppet Insect crawled from Rean's hand into the hole and went all the way inside the small empty space inside. With the help of the Divine energy stored inside its body, it shined with a yellow light, illuminating everything there. Rean then commanded it to take a look around so that he could see what the space looked like. Only then did he see a foam-like protrusion coming from the back of the small space.

Roan could see Rean's memories, so he couldn't help but ask. "What is that?"

Rean looked at Roan with the same weird expression. "No idea..."

Rean then controlled the insect to examine that protrusion. Too bad that the insect couldn't get close to it. There were no formations around, but there was some kind of energy that blocked anything that tried to get close to it. "Seems like the same Spatial Membrane is protecting that foam or whatever it is."

In the end, Rean couldn't find anything else. He tried a few other methods to examine that thing, but it was all for nothing. "What do you think?"

Roan shook his head. "It's not a formation, right? Since we couldn't get through the Spatial membrane here, I doubt we can get through the one inside the hole."

The two of them, as well as Kentucky and Luan, then tried to open the gate a few more times until suddenly...

\*Bang!\*

A loud sound came from the side, catching the twins' and Luan's attention. It was Kentucky who had simply kicked it with all his strength after losing his patience. "Ouch, my feet! This thing is hard as fuck!"

Roan's mouth twitched a bit. "What if there was something protecting this gate? We already have no way out of this place. Are you trying to kill us?"

Kentucky didn't seem to care too much. "Didn't Rean and Sister Orb already say that there are no formations in this place? What would kill us? If anything, I hoped that something would happen. At least we could figure something out."

Roan wasn't very happy, but he calmed down a second later. There was no point in arguing about it since nothing happened anyway. "Whatever. Let's try to figure out a way to open this thing."

Rean pondered a bit and began to take out several materials from the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm. "Let me try to use a formation to open it. Now that Kentucky has shown that there are no security measures in this place, I might as well see if it will work. Perhaps I can create a force strong enough to force the gate open."

Roan nodded. "Kentucky's kick was quite strong, but the gate didn't move at all. How much stronger will your formation be?"

"That's the good thing about formations, right?" Rean asked in response. "They take a long time to build, but they can definitely create an effect several times stronger than a cultivator's actions. Give me a few hours. I believe my formations will have a pushing force of at least ten times Kentucky's full body strength, and it will be a continuous force."

Luan, Kentucky, and Roan didn't have anything against Rean's plan and took some distance to let Rean do his thing.

Rean worked for over 13 hours, drawing a formation on both the ground and the gate itself. Whether that hole was a keyhole or not didn't matter. They didn't have a key to start with.

\*Uoonnn...\*

Rean activated the formation, which rapidly drained the several Rank Four Divine Stones' Energy he had placed inside. They could see that the force applied by the formation was indeed many times higher than Kentucky full strength kick.

\*Crack, crack, crack...\*

Too bad it was all for nothing.

\*Bang!\*

The formation reached its limit and finally broke apart, destroying all the materials used to create the force. As for the gate, it once again hasn't moved a single millimeter. "Sigh... brute force doesn't seem to work either."

Everyone came back and looked helplessly at the gate. "Let's try to attack the gate together. The pure brute force didn't work, but maybe it can't withstand Soul Origin Energy attacks."

Rean and the others nodded and took their weapons out. Not long after, the sounds of explosions could be heard from afar as their group assaulted the gate with everything they had. Well, it didn't work either. Not even a scratch was left behind after more than an hour of attacks nonstop.

Roan could only call it off. "Alright, that's enough. We are only wasting energy here."

Everyone had gloomy expressions on their faces. They couldn't go forward, nor could they go back. They were completely trapped in front of the gate. They stopped in front of it and looked at the gate helplessly.

Rean once again looked at the small hole in the gate before...

"OPEN SESAME!"

Roan almost vomited blood. "Why don't you go back to earth and ask Ali Baba to see if he changed the password? You might as well join his group and become the 41st thief."

Rean got angry as well. "Fuck you! At least I tried something. What about you?"

\*clang, clang, clang, clang, clang...\*

It was then that the sounds of heavy lockers being opened began to come out from the gate. A few seconds later, the gate started to open by itself.

Roan, Luan, and Kentucky looked at that with shocked expressions.

As for Rean, only a weird smile appeared on his face. "Errrr... Ahem! See? Ali Baba is an old-fashioned man. He never changes his passwords..."

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Chapter 2045: Sesame

The gate continued to open as dust from countless years fell off the joints. It took almost an entire minute just for the many mechanical locks inside the gate to be taken care of. Finally, the gate opened as the twins' group watched from outside. It's just that they didn't expect to hear a question as soon as it happened.

"How do you know my name?"

Rean and Roan were surprised to see the owner of the voice. "A... cat?"

On the other side, a black cat looked at them with suspicion in his eyes. It was truly a cat, be it in size or appearance. It also had no cultivation. However, there was a problem. Even after traveling in the Realm of Gods for so long, they had never seen a cat before. Sure, there were races that had similar traits to cats, but they were often Demon Beasts with strong bodies or Humanoid Races with some fur and cat ears. As for a real cat, that was a first.

Rean and Roan had never thought much about it. After all, cats were breeds from back on Earth where Spiritual and Divine Energies don't exist. It was normal for them to not be anywhere as strong as the ones found on this side of the Universe.

The cat was also surprised to hear Rean and Roan's words. "You know cats? That shouldn't be possible... There are no cats on this side." Still, he quickly regained his composure and repeated his previous question. "Forget it. So, who sent you here? How do you know my name?"

Rean looked at Roan, who nodded at him before Rean began to talk. "You say that we know your name, but we don't. Could it be that your name is Sesame?"

The cat narrowed its eyes before nodding. "That's correct. Other than my master, no one was supposed to know I was here. Let alone know my name. Where did you hear the name Sesame?"

Rean scratched the back of his head. "To be honest, I didn't call your name. Instead, Open Sesame was supposed to be a secret password to open a cave in a story from back in my home. I was frustrated that we weren't able to open the gate regardless of the methods we used. That reminded me of that story, and I just shouted the same password out of helplessness."

"A story...?" The cat didn't quite believe it. Still, it had been countless years since he last saw any living being or any being at all. "What was the name of the story?"

However, before Rean could answer, Roan intervened. "Before we continue, will it be a problem if you let us inside?" Well, Roan wasn't expecting the cat to let them enter. But then again, he and the others were ready to rush inside if the cat refused. After all, if they didn't take this chance, they would be trapped in front of the gate forever.

"Sure, come in." Surprisingly, Sesame didn't seem to care and simply invited them inside. "Come with me."

Naturally, the twins' group didn't waste time and passed through the gate. As soon as they did that, the Soul Gem System's Voice echoed in Rean and Roan's minds.

[Universe Foundation Fragment Detected!]

[Due to the division of the Universe, the fragment fell into the Underworld. This fragment was then used by a time and space displacement artifact capable of surpassing even the strongest beings of the Universe in its power of manipulation of Space and Time.]

[New Quest Available: Acquire the Artifact or the Universe Foundation Fragment contained inside it.]

[Reward: 500000 Destiny Points.]

[Warning: After the Universe Fragment is acquired, the system will receive an update. Destiny Points will only be accessible through quests. On the other hand, quests will give much higher rewards. Any Destiny Points used in an upgrade related to the previous system will be reimbursed.]

[Time Limit: Unlimited.]

[Failure Conditions: Leaving the Swamp of no Return without the Artifact or the Fragment inside it.]

[Failure Penalty: 500000 Destiny Points.]

The twins were happy at first when they heard that there was really a Fragment in the Swamp of No Return, even more so after seeing the reward for acquiring it. However, they were taken aback by the system's warning and fell into a dilemma. They had made a lot of points through the Destiny Chancing Rewards, and they had even bought an upgrade that extended the sensorial range of this method. Sure, the system said it would give back the Destiny Points used, but was it worth it?

'Sister Orb, what's happening here? Why did the system suddenly decide to change?'

[That you will have to ask Soul Gem himself. But from what I can see, this upgrade wasn't something that was added now. It had always been part of the system's upgrade plan. Perhaps Soul Gem himself wasn't expecting you to be close to acquiring four fragments this early.]

Roan narrowed his eyes in response. 'That's weird. We got close to a fourth fragment before, our father's one. If detecting the fourth fragment was a requisite for this system's warning, why didn't it do the warning when we met father?'

[That's because the system didn't detect the fragment in your father's possession. At the moment, you two only know that your father has a fragment, but the system hasn't felt its presence at all. For the system, it was the same as not knowing about it.]

'I see...' Roan had to admit Sister Orb was right. Turen had never brought out the fragment in his possession when they talked. And they knew it was being used to keep the dimensional realm aperture inside the Temporal Gap. That was most likely the reason why Turen didn't show it to them as it was being used.

Sesame noticed that the twins' stopped for a moment and asked back. "What are you waiting for? Come in already. Otherwise, I'll close the gate."

The twins quickly put that matter to the back of their minds and followed Sesame.

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Chapter 2046: Another World

"It doesn't seem like you receive a lot of visits in this place. Aren't you afraid we would try something?" Rean couldn't help but ask while Sesame guided them.

"Try something? With this pitiful cultivation of yours? Hahahahaha! What a joke!" Sesame then looked back at the twins' group before raising one of his black paws. The movement was slow, seeming not threatening at all.

However, Rean and the others immediately felt like their lives were hanging on a thread. They all subconsciously jumped back with all their might, appearing several hundred meters away from their previous position. Roan, of course, held Luan in one of his arms since Luan wasn't fast enough.

\*Raaassssshhhhh...\*

That was the right decision. The moment they disappeared, three tears appeared out of nowhere, showing the spatial storms behind the fabric of space. They even looked like to have been made with claws. Or, to be more precise, by Sesame's claws.

"As I thought, you guys aren't too bad. You noticed the danger even though I didn't release a single iota of Divine Energy. If you didn't, I guess you would have been torn apart already. So, do you think I need to be afraid of you?" Asked Sesame with a smug expression on his face.

Luan looked at the tears in space with his Elemental Eyes and couldn't help but ask. "Sesame... No, senior Sesame. Just like you said, I didn't see any Divine Energy being used at all. Still, space moved as you wished. Was it because you comprehended Space Laws? Although you used an attack, it looked a lot more like space itself was following orders."

Sesame looked with surprise at Luan. "Oh-ho... Those are some nice eyes you have there, little guy."

Finally, Sesame turned around again and continued to walk. "Anyway, don't waste more of my time. Entertaining guests can't be done at the entrance either. We can talk more about this story from your planet in my house."

Rean and Roan looked at the sweat on their faces but followed Sesame nonetheless. Kentucky and Luan weren't any better as they did the same.

The gate was connected to a tunnel, so they couldn't see what was on the other side straight away. Only after leaving the tunnel did they get an idea of the place they had entered.

"This..." Lush green valleys, sun-like illumination, rivers, animals and so on. It looked like they had completely left the Underworld. The only thing that made them remember that this place was still the Underworld was the fact that although there was sun-like light, the sky wasn't blue. There wasn't any sun there to start with. Still, light shined everywhere from the bleak sky.

Another thing was that their group's Divine Senses weren't being hindered anymore. Rean and Roan, after entering the Space Bending Realm, could now expand their Divine Senses over 200000 kilometers when no impediment was in place. It was the first time since their breakthrough that they had the chance to use the Divine Senses to their full extent.

Nonetheless, as far as they could see, the green and lively world continued. There were even many Demon Beasts living in this place. The only problem was that none of them were stronger than Foundation Establishment Realm. One must remember that in the Realm of Gods, everyone is already born in the Foundation Establishment, and the same goes for the Underworld, which is a realm at the same level as the Realm of Gods. It was obvious that those Demon Beasts and Plants were born at that level and had never had the chance to cultivate further.

"There is absolutely no Divine Energy whatsoever in this place. Or, to be more precise, Devilish Energy of the Underworld," Sesame understood what they were thinking and commented. "Let's go down there."

Rean's group could see that down the valley ahead, there was a small village. In fact, within the 200000 kilometers of the twins' Divine Sense, that village was the only place that had buildings, even though there were very simple. Just some huts and straw houses.

'Father,' Luan called Roan through Divine Sense, 'This place's Spatial Environment is very weird. Now that Sesame said that there is no Divine Energy, I noticed that that's not all. The Spatial Environment here is literally keeping everything out. No Divine Energy, Devilish Energy, Dark Element, etc. Once the Divine Energy within our bodies is spent, we will have no way to recover other than the Divine Stones inside the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm or our Spatial Rings.'

Roan nodded. He also couldn't feel Dark Element at all. That also included Yin Energy. The same went for Rean. He couldn't feel Light Element or Yang Energy either. Simply put, this place was pretty much the

same as the other half of the Universe. The only exception was Space Element, which was truly abundant in their senses and especially Luan's eyes.

It only took their group a few minutes to reach the village. The twins' group could tell that there were a lot of humans inside. Not humanoid races, but real humans like Rean and Roan. In total, they counted 1542 of them. It was easy to do with their Divine Senses.

"Sesame!"

Suddenly, a boy came running from inside the village entrance. Sesame seemed to know the boy as well and quickly jumped on his shoulder. "Oh, Little Iban! Did you finish your work already?"

The little boy was only five or six years. He heard Sesame's words and nodded vigorously. "Yes, I did! Father already let me out." He then grabbed Sesame and began to pet him in his arms. The boy seemed very fond of Sesame.

Naturally, he also noticed Rean and Roan's group, especially the huge Black and White Kentucky. "Sesame, that's a very big bird!"

Sesame acted as the protector of this village, so the boy didn't really feel any sense of danger.

"Purrrrrrr, yes, he is very big, purrrrrrr... and fat." Sesame looked just like any normal cat, purring nonstop.

Kentucky wanted to complain that he had become a lot slimmer as his cultivation improved. That his slightly fatter look was normal for Minokawas. Too bad that he was quite cautious about Sesame, so he could only curse in his mind.

"Iban, bring me to my house, will you? Since you did your work well, you can pet me on the way."

Iban nodded. "Yes."

The twins' group looked at each other and followed. Sure enough, their presence caught everyone's attention. The village wasn't big. Everyone knew everyone. Seeing new visitors had never happened in their lives. Since they can't cultivate, they can only live for as long as a Foundation Establishment human can, which is around 200 years. Countless generations have come and gone without something like this happening.

Finally, they arrived at Sesame's house after a few minutes. "Alright, Iban. Go back home. I need to talk with these new friends."

"Okay!" Iban didn't want to let Sesame go, but he could only do as Sesame said.

Kentucky was too big, so he couldn't enter the house. He could only change into his human form before doing so.

Sesame then jumped into an old cat mat to lie down. Only then did he pay attention to the others. "Alright, let's talk."

Death... and me

Chapter 2047: Ask Away

"Let me start, then," Roan was the first to talk. "Why did you let us inside? Sure, we got your name right by chance. However, was it really enough for you to open that gate? It seemed like it hadn't been open for a very long time."

Sesame nodded. "Indeed, the name wasn't everything. First of all, you were the only ones to make an appearance. No one else has arrived at that gate yet due to reasons you are very familiar with. If not for this brat's eyes, you would never have done so. As for the reason I opened the gate, it was because I felt a very familiar aura coming from you."

"A familiar aura?" Roan narrowed his eyes. "Whose's aura?"

Suddenly, the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm trembled in the twins' minds. The Soul Gem Orb then shined before a spatial gate appeared connecting to the outside world. Finally, the Orb exited the Dimensional Realm and appeared in front of everyone.

The twins' group was shocked to see that. Yet, Rean, Roan, and Kentucky still remember that it had happened once before.

Following that, the projection of a small man with long hair appeared above the Soul Gem Orb. As for Sister Orb's AI, she fell asleep while the Soul Gem Orb got active. "The familiar aura should be mine," said the figure.

"Soul Gem!" Sure enough, that was none other than Soul Gem, who didn't appear ever since the twins got the first Universe Foundation's Fragment.

"Master!" Sesame opened his eyes wide when he saw the man. Although he had felt Soul Gem's aura, he truly didn't believe that Soul Gem was there. He was supposed to be dead, after all.

"Hey, Sesame. How have you been?" Soul Gem looked at the cat in front of him and smiled wide.

Sesame shot from his mat, trying to catch the man. Unfortunately, Soul Gem's image was just a projection. He passed through the image as if it didn't even exist. "This..."

Soul looked back where Sesame landed and shook his head. "Only my Soul remains. My body is long gone. I know I promised to pet you a lot when we met again, but the circumstances are as such."

Sesame regained his composure before he looked at the twins' group with hostility. "What did you do to master?"

They all felt a chill on their backs. If Sesame wanted them to die, they would die. There was simply no escape from this cat.

Of course, Soul Gem didn't let it happen. "Don't worry, Sesame. They are our friends. It was thanks to them that my Soul has been recovering over the past hundreds of years. Besides, it was me who got them into this boat, not the opposite."

Sesame finally calmed down and looked at Soul Gem with a gloomy expression. "Master, what happened back then? The Extinction Orb almost destroyed the Universe, and you disappeared as a

result. You didn't allow me to accompany you during the day that the formation was going to be activated, so I don't know much."

One must remember that Soul Gem tried to use the Severing Formations Array to get rid of the Extinction Sphere that threatened to destroy the entire Universe. It was going to grow forever until it swallowed everything.

Gem sighed in response before he used his Divine Sense to explain everything to Sesame. "And that's how I ended like this. I spent countless years gathering enough energy in this Soul Gem Orb before sending it to the other half of the Universe. I needed an existence of that side so that I could have a link between both sides. That will allow me to unify the two halves again. Of course, this is just in theory. I don't know if it will work. For now, the twins are collecting the fourteen fragments of the Universe's Foundation necessary for the plan."

"This..." Sesame was truly shocked by everything he heard. "Master, I wish to go with you to help." Still, Sesame quickly made up his mind and decided to help with this quest.

Rean and Roan were surprised to hear that. If they got someone like Sesame on their side, doesn't that mean they will have someone with cultivation at the peak of the Universe? They are sure that Sesame is no weaker than any Elder Devil, Archangel, or Divinity Realm beings from the Realm of Gods.

Unfortunately, Gem immediately shook his head. "You can't. We both know that your Soul is attached to this place. If you leave, your life will not last more than a hundred years. Coming back will not save you, either. Once you leave, the countdown will start, and no one can stop it."

"I don't care!" Sesame didn't care at all.

"I care!" However, Gem wasn't willing at all. "You are my friend. If helping me means you have to die, I might as well give up everything now. This is the end of this discussion and also an order. You must stay!"

Sesame dropped his head and could only nod with a sad expression. "Okay..."

"Ahem..." Finally, someone in the twins' group decided to intervene. "So... It has been a few hundred years since we saw you, Gem. Sister Orb said that because you made your first appearance back then, your Soul fell asleep. Could it be you are fine now?"

Soul Gem was already expecting that question. "Unfortunately, that's not the case. Just like the first time, it was my friend's aura that helped me to wake up. Of course, I'm a lot better than I was back then. I should be able to stay awake for a few more hours before I get to sleep again. It is all thanks to the Destiny Points you accumulated."

For the twins, that was more than enough. "Good! We wanted to talk for so long, but you simply didn't appear. Now we can talk more about what exactly we are doing here since, even now, it has been quite a blurry journey."

Soul Gem nodded. "Definitely. Ask away."

Death... and me

Chapter 2048: More About Gem

"First, tell us more about the Vruve. What do you think they are planning. From what we know, they are hiding inside the Temporal Path. Should we worry about them? What I find extremely puzzling is how all the fragments we have known the location so far are not in their hands instead." Roan was the first to ask.

"Vruve!" Sesanem heard those words before anger filled his mind. "So it was really those 'end of times' idiots!"

Gem raised his hand, signaling for Sesame to stop before he began to talk. "You are correct, Roan. With their resources, I wouldn't be surprised if half of the Fragments were in their hands at the very least. For them to not come out to take the fragments definitely isn't a good sign. However, I don't know why they aren't proactively looking for the fragments. What I do know is that they probably have at least one of the two Fragments that you don't know the location of."

Rean and Roan weren't surprised by that. "They have a Temporal Gap inside the Temporal Path. Our father was only able to open a temporal gap in that place because of his own Universe Foundation's Fragment. I guess it makes sense that they have their own to keep their gap open and stable."

Gem nodded. "Indeed. Also, they probably have the last two. That's because, different from your father, the Vruve Organization is enormous even though they are well hidden. The Temporal Gap they created most likely uses at least two Fragments to give everyone inside all the space they need."

Yet, Gem warned them. "Of course, this is just theory. Perhaps they found a way to open that Gap without the need for any fragment. Still, it is better to think that they do. You never know what an organization like theirs could possibly develop."

Roan pondered a bit before asking. "Do you think it is possible for them to track the fragments inside the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm? After all, they found our location back in the Mortal Realm and destroyed an entire planet trying to get rid of you."

"Extremely unlikely," Soul Gem immediately answered. "Their best chance to find the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm was during its early stages of activation. That means, during the time they attacked us back on Sunkan Planet. After that, the system continued to evolve and gather more Destiny Points. Even now, I'm surprised they succeeded at all. After so many years, they definitely kept their eyes open to my return. Too bad they have no chance anymore. Now that I got the Fragments inside the Dimensional Realm, I made it completely undetectable."

"Can't they use their own Fragments to find ours?" Rean couldn't help but ask.

Still, Gem shook his head. "I obviously considered this possibility. They can't."

The twins wouldn't 100% believe Gem's confidence. But that made them more relaxed anyway. "That's good. Now, the question we are most curious about. How exactly do you intend to use the Fragments to unify the two sides of the Universe?"

"It's surprisingly very simple. But at the same time, it is very hard. First of all, your cultivation must reach the Divinity Realm. Only by reaching that Realm will your understanding of Space and Time Laws be good enough to approach the Universe Foundation Pillar. Without that, no one can help you get close to that thing."

"Once you get there, the Fragments in our possession will be attracted by the Foundation Pillar and fuse with it again. The Foundation Pillar is located in the gap between the two halves of the Universe, and fixing it will allow the two halves to be Unified."

"Of course, there is one last detail. And that is the part where I had to go to your side of the Universe to take you with me. Because the Foundation is located within the gap between the two halves, it is not connected to any of the sides. It will need a being born from each side to make the link between the two halves. It's like I said. The process is quite simple but very hard at the same time. Just reaching the Divinity Realm will take a very long time." Finally, Gem finished his explanation.

"I see... if it's like you said, it is indeed easy and hard." Roan had his doubts, but it didn't seem like Soul Gem would be able to answer them anyway.

Rean, on the other hand, thought about something else. "Gem, back during the time we saw your memories, we followed you during the day that you were attacked. The Vruve Organization was your organization, but it is now the enemy. How come?" Rean was right. Vruve was an Organization led by Soul Gem. Only after his disappearance did it become their enemy.

"What else could it be? The events in the Extinction Sphere area weakened our forces by a lot. After I was gone, Tuana's forces simply had to capture everyone." Gem answered with a sad expression. "She had Fila in her hands and probably still does. Fila had the highest knowledge of the organization after me. All the secrets of my Vruve Organization could be acquired from her. Tired forces, knowledge of your enemy, bad timing, etc. They had everything. Fortunately, I was at least successful in splitting the Extinction Sphere as I planned."

His words reminded Roan of something else, though. "Right! When we saw your memories of the calamity day, it only went to the point where you were injured and then decided to embrace the Control Orb. After that, we saw nothing more. In the end, how did the Universe get separated in two? We didn't see past that point."

Soul Gem nodded. "So you didn't see what caused the Universe's separation, uh? Nor did you see what happened to the Extinction Sphere. Very well, let me show you." Soul Gem immediately spread his Divine Sense and sent his memories into everyone's minds in the room.

Death... and me

Chapter 2049: Sentience

Gem's Divine Sense spread once again and sent his memories of the past direct into everyone's minds.

Back then, the moment he embraced the Control Orb, several black and white threads emerged, enveloping Soul Gem in a cocoon. Gem's body and the Divine Origin Energy in his Datian were quickly consumed by the orb. As for his soul, it was pulled into the orb, merging with it.

Outside, Tuana's forces tried to attack the Control Orb. Unfortunately for them, it wasn't as if all of Soul Gem's forces had been defeated. To be more specific, the battle hasn't even started yet. Things only changed when Fila stabbed Gem from behind. If you don't take those who were operating the gigantic formation, all the other members with free hands were completely fine.

Naturally, they wouldn't let Tuana and her forces simply attack Soul Gem and do nothing. Not to mention that the formation holding Tuana's forces outside hasn't completely disappeared yet. The only risk was Fila, but how could she attempt to do anything else with so many members of the vruve organization around her? Through Gem's orders, they were able to quickly immobilize the girl.

\*Boom, boom, boom...\*

Attacks rained on the Space-Time formation while the cocoon pulsed near the Severing Formations Array. No one could tell what was happening. However, Rean and Roan's group were seeing Soul Gem's memories, so they obviously knew what was occurring inside the cocoon.

It turns out that Gem had never told anyone what the Control Orb was. Everyone knew that it was the core of the Severing Formations Array, but Gem had never told anyone where he got it.

The Extinction Sphere was a Universe Destruction Calamity that appeared every time a Universe got way too old. But it wasn't all. Once the Extinction Sphere swallowed everything, it would use the energy to give birth to another Universe anew. Everything would start from zero once again. In other words, it was a renewing process. It was neither good nor evil.

It turns out that everything in the Universe has its opposite. Naturally, the Extinction Sphere was no different. If there was an Extinction Sphere, there had to be something that could counter it. You could also call it the Universe's one contingency plan. It's one chance to avoid destruction. That contingency plan was none other than the Control Orb, and only Soul Gem knew about it.

While receiving Soul Gem's memories, Rean couldn't help but ask. "Wait, then where did the Control Orb come from? Also, how did you know about it?"

Soul Gem smiled, already expecting that question. "That's because the Universe itself told it to me."

"What?!" Everyone in the room was taken aback. "The Universe has sentience?"

"Is that really hard to believe?" Gem answered with another question. "You have seen other things with sentience in the past, like the artifact spirit. They were born from heaven and earth into objects that shouldn't be able to. Naturally, the Universe is capable of the same thing. First of all, the Universe itself is the sole oldest thing in the Universe. After so long, it would be weird if it still hadn't acquired sentience by then."

Gem then winked at everyone. "Of course, only I knew about it. Now, I hope you all won't tell others about it. Most of the time, the Universe's sentience is in deep slumber. You can't blame it for that. After all, it has experienced the passage of time to a ridiculous degree. It has seen the rise and fall of countless powers. Nothing can really raise its interest anymore."

Roan pondered a bit before asking. "The way you say it, it seems like the Universe itself doesn't really care whether it is destroyed or not."

This time, Gem was surprised. "Smart! You were right. The Universe's sentience didn't really care whether it was destroyed or not. It was already in a dull state, seeing everything as nothing more than normal. That included its own calamity. If anything, the Universe welcomed it. Its destruction could be said to be its chance of getting free of the burden of existence."

Gem didn't let Roan ask his next question, as he knew what it would be. "You want to know what the Control Orb is and why the Universe gave it to me, right? After all, if it didn't care about what was happening, there was no need for it to help me top the Extinction Sphere."

Roan and the others nodded.

"To put it simply, the Universe was bored," Soul Gem gave a rather unexpected answer.

"Bo...red?"

Gem smiled. "Don't look at me. I'm not the Universe's conscience. Back then, when we found the Extinction Sphere, my Vruve Organization obviously moved out to try to stop it. In the Universe's eyes, that was a meaningless act. Nothing should be able to stop it other than itself. But in the end, through countless tries and errors, my Vruve Organization was able to create a formation that was capable of stopping the Sphere's expansion."

"The Universe's sentience was truly amazed by that... or so it told me. We have accomplished something that he deemed impossible. That's why its interest was picked for the first time in eons. That day, when the formation activated and stopped the Extinction Sphere's expansion, I was pulled into a separate space by the Universe's sentience. Can you imagine just how scared I got? I mean, I already had the highest possible cultivation in our Universe. How could someone be able to take me away without me noticing."

"However, when I felt the power of the presence in front of me, I understood that I was nothing but an ant in its eyes. Divinity Realm? Ha, not worth mentioning at all. I even wondered if the being in front of my eyes was what one would find if they were able to surpass the Divinity Realm. Of course, I discovered that that being was the Universe itself," Gem sighed as his eyes shined with admiration and reminiscence.

Death... and me

Chapter 2050: The Details

Gem continued after a few moments of silence. "Anyway, the Control Orb was what the Universe created to counter the Extinction Sphere. At the same time, it was a test."

"A test?" Roan and the others were naturally attracted to his words.

Soul Gem nodded. "The Universe Sentience would have a much better chance of achieving success in destroying the Extinction Sphere if it acted on its own. That said, why would it give the Control Orb to me?"

Rean immediately understood. "Although it was surprising that your formation stopped the Extinction Sphere's growth, it wasn't as if the Universe Conscience cared. It still had no intention of trying to save itself. If I'm not wrong, it gave you the Control Orb as a chance."

Gem was happy to hear Rean's words. "Very good! That's exactly what happened. That day when I was pulled into a separate space, the Universe's Sentience explained that that was a test. It didn't care about its own fate, so he decided to let the beings of the Universe decide the outcome."

"The Control Orb had the power to separate the Yin and Yang energy of the Extinction Sphere. However, just the Control Orb itself was far from enough. It was something that the Universe Sentience created for its own use. How could it show its true power in the hands of a human like me? So what if I was in the Divinity Realm? For the Control Orb, the amount of energy I could provide was the same as a drop in the ocean, and it needed an ocean to work."

"Still, for me, that was enough. I had created a formation capable of stopping the Extinction Sphere's growth. Unfortunately, I was completely clueless about how to destroy it. The Sphere was just too powerful, after all. Ultimately, the Control Orb gave me what I needed, a chance! Too bad that as soon as the Universe Sentience gave me the Control Orb, it sent me away straight away. I never had the chance to talk to it again. I had so many questions..." It was easy to see the regret in Gem's eyes.

Suddenly, Roan remembered something. "Then from where came the idea that the fragments could help one to surpass the Divinity Realm?"

"Most likely, it is because it is no secret that they are part of the Universe's Foundation. But then again, it is like I said. You need all the scattered fragments if you want to get close to the Foundation Pillar. Whether it works or not, I have no idea," Gem explained. "The only doubt is why the Vruve Organization hasn't moved out to acquire them all. But that is a question we have no answer for."

Gem then continued from where he had stopped. "Now, with the Control Orb and its power, I knew what I had to do. It was thanks to it that I created the Severing Formations Array. Someone else would probably think about how to provide the Control Orb enough energy for it to counter the Extinction Sphere. But for me, that wasn't going to be enough. I wanted a guarantee. So instead of providing it with enough energy, I devised a formation capable of copying its power."

"As you already know, it was a success, even though Fila intervened in the end. In a certain way, it was because I had never told anyone about what the Control Orb really was that even Fila's attack wasn't enough to stop me."

Rean's eyes lit up when he heard that. "You intended to fuse with the Control Orb from the very start! Fila's attack only forced you to do that before the planned time."

"Hahaha!" Soul Gem gave Rean a thumbs up. "Yeap, that was the plan from the get-go. The only way for the Severing Formations Array to copy the Control Orb's power was to create a link between the two. This link had to be strong enough to surpass anything. Just using the Control Orb as the Severing Formations Array's core wasn't enough. The ultimate connection would be made through the use of my body and soul. No one knew it, but the Severing Formations Array had part of my soul inside it."

How could the others not understand? "That's why your soul is damaged, and you are constantly in slumber. It is because you lost that other part of your soul in the event."

Gem nodded. "Yeap. Thanks to you guys, however, I have recovered more than 50% of my lost soul. I hope you continue to gather more and more destiny points in the future."

Rean still had doubts, though. "Okay, we know that the plan worked, and you got the Extinction Sphere destroyed. But how did the foundation get damaged? How did the Universe get split in half as a result? How did the Soul Gem system come to life? If you were in a slumber because of the damage in your soul, how did you formulate the plan of going to the other side of the Universe to get someone from there?"

"So many questions..." Gem couldn't help but feel a little overwhelmed.

"Just answer them one by one," Roan also added.

Gem pondered a bit and nodded. "Alright, the first question then. I was already expecting the Universe to be damaged when the Extinction Sphere was destroyed. However, I didn't expect it to split the Universe in half. That was way more than I intended."

Roan had an idea as to why that happened. "Fila's sudden attack, right? She was controlled by Tuana and attacked you. That forced you to start the destruction of the Extinction Sphere ahead of time."

"Exactly!" Soul Gem didn't deny Roan's words. "The Space-Time Formation that I created to stop Tuana's forces wasn't just to keep them at bay but to give the Severing Formations Array enough time to initiate. Or, to be more specific, to initiate in a well-controlled manner. Obviously, that didn't happen," Gem finally entered into the details of the event.