

Death 2071

Death... and me

Chapter 2071: Shady City

Roan wasn't kidding. Ever since they arrived in Higher Realms, every city housed at least a few tens of millions of habitants. Usually, they had over a hundred million, with some of those cities surpassing the billion mark. The Underworld wasn't any different in that aspect either. Still, the city right in front of him fitted completely inside Roan's Divine Sense. That was a first for him in the Higher Realms. In fact, he didn't need even 10% of his Divine Sense range to see it entirely.

"Is it even a city? Well, it has around a hundred thousand inhabitants, so I guess it qualifies as one. Still, this is truly a spec of sand for the Higher Realms standard..."

Sesame laughed at Roan's reaction. "Hahaha! It's small, isn't it? However, that's how it is supposed to be. This is Dark Web City, a place where only shady businesses are made. You won't find a single proper organization in this place."

Roan looked back at Sesame. "This is the cultivation world. Is there really such a thing as proper organizations?"

Sesame nodded. "There should be one or two out there, right? In any case, a lot of them at least try to look good on the surface. You won't find it here, though. Every single business here does not hide that they work on the dark side of the world of cultivators."

"Yet, believe it or not, this Dark Web City is one of the oldest cities of the Underworld and even the Higher Realms. Every single organization here has ties with different Elder Devils, so they aren't afraid of anything. Since there are so many Elder Devils involved, you won't find lonely Elder Devils trying to cause trouble as it would bother the rest," Sesame explained.

Roan was more than satisfied with that. "That's good enough for me."

Sesame then began to approach the city entrance with Roan. Naturally, they were disguising themselves so that others would think them to be Devils. Roan had Rean's appearance change skill, while Sesame's cultivation was at the peak of what you could find in the Higher Realms. They were both safe in this regard. Not to mention no one would expect anyone to cause trouble in Dark Web City, which they don't intend to do anyway.

They passed through the gate after paying the entrance fee, which was quite an exorbitant amount that you wouldn't find anywhere else. Immediately, several Divine Senses, some at the Space-Time Realm, scanned the two before quickly retreating. It was normal that such a place would have quite a few high-level experts to keep order.

As they walked, Roan asked Sesame with his Divine Sense, 'If you ask about information regarding Belial, won't he be informed about that? We only have a limited time before he goes back, considering he left at all. There is always a chance that he hasn't come out.'

'You don't need to worry about that,' Sesame wasn't worried. 'Although the Elder Devils keep the businesses running, it is not like they are on friendly terms. Seeling information about each other is more than welcome as it might hinder the other part. As long as we don't go after an organization that has ties with Belial, we should be fine. Besides, even if someone informs him, buying information about the Elder Devils isn't that uncommon in this place.'

'But that was the way things worked when you were still able to come out of the Swamp of No Return, right?' Roan asked back. 'So long has passed. I wonder if things are still like the way they were before you got stuck inside there.'

Sesame didn't deny the possibility. 'It might be true. I don't think that to be the case, though. We will find out. Don't forget, I might not be as strong as the Elder Devils in the Underworld. However, if all I have to do is escape, then I'm confident I can do so. We are fine.'

Roan nodded. He knew that defeating and killing an opponent were two completely different things. The order of magnitude in the difficulty of the first option was truly much higher, especially with similar-level beings.

Sesame seemed to know exactly where and what to ask. Roan wouldn't have a bad time with his experience, either. Not too long, they found an information seller that seemed to have nothing to do with Belial's forces in the city. With Roan's caution side, he forced Sesame around for quite a while longer to make sure that was the case.

"Hum? Information about Elder Devil Belial?" Inside a sealed chamber, an old Elder Devil looked at Roan and Sesame with a smile on his face. "Obviously, we have it. However, Elder Devil-level information is quite expensive."

"Price is not an issue. As long as the information is legit, we can pay for it. Of course..." Sesame then released some of his aura, although he suppressed it to look like a Space-Time Initial Stage Devil. That was definitely very high cultivation, nonetheless. "I hope you and your friends won't have any 'not-very-safe' ideas regarding this statement of mine."

The Devil's smile disappeared momentarily before it quickly returned. It's just that this time, it seemed a little forced. Sure enough, no one would buy a fight with a Space-Time Being for no reason. "But of course, sir! We might be dealing with 'not-very-honourous' deals here. However, we need to at least provide reliable service to our clients; otherwise, no one will pay anymore."

Whether Sesame and Roan believed the Devil's words or not didn't matter. With his display of strength, Sesame has taken himself out of any possible plan of being robbed once he leaves the city. Especially since Space-Time Devils are usually closely related to Elder Devils, thus it was another reason not to cause him trouble.

"Good!" Sesame nodded, satisfied. "We need information about Elder Devil Belial, especially the place where he lives."

The Devil Dealer quickly nodded. "No problem. It will cost you a hundred thousand Rank Five Devilish Stones."

"Deal." Sesame didn't even bat an eye and paid the Devil straight away.

Death... and me

Chapter 2072: Accidental Rumor

The Devil was impressed that Sesame didn't even try to negotiate after giving such a high price. After all, it was Rank Five Stones. Those weren't easy to find just anywhere. But Sesame was an old monster that lived in the Underworld for a very long time, even before the Swamp of No Return received the Fragment's fall. It was definitely a high amount to others, but not as much to him. Especially since Devilish Stones weren't of much use for his race, as he was like Rean and Roan, he needed Divine Energy.

Sesame then threw a Spatial Ring to the Devil containing exactly a hundred thousand Devilish Stones. The Devil Dealer was obviously ecstatic to receive that as a part of the payment would be given to him. "R-Right! I'll get you all the information you requested straight away. Just a moment, sir."

Not long after, the Devil returned with a Jade Slip, giving it to Sesame right away. "Please, check the contents, sir. Our organization can guarantee that at least 50% of the information should be up to date. As you know, things change as time goes by, so part of the information might not represent the actual state of affairs anymore."

Sesame already knew how things worked here. "50% is a very high number. I'm satisfied with it. If things turn out well, I'll come back straight to you for a few more deals."

The Devil was obviously happy to hear that. "Great! By the way, one of the pieces of information that is absolutely accurate is Elder Devil Belial's home location. He hasn't moved out for hundreds of thousands of years as the area suits his cultivation very much."

Sesame and Roan looked into the information in the Jade Slip and saw that it had a lot more than they needed, including some pieces about Belial's cultivation methods.

-It is known that Elder Devil Belial cultivates the AfterLife Fog Mantra, created by himself. It's a cultivation that heavily relies on the energy of dead souls to create illusions different from any conventional method. Strong Soul Power and Mental Awareness are advised to anyone intending to get in contact with this Elder Devil. At the very least, a Soul Protection treasure is needed.-

Sesame and Roan looked at each other and nodded. They didn't say anything and simply left the room, getting back in the street a minute later.

Back inside the chamber, a voice echoed in the Devil Dealer's ear. "He seems quite wealthy. His Space-Time Initial Stage might be troublesome. However, if we join forces with Fugrin and Valamidos, we should be able to trap him. It will be even easier if you take action as well, Nassar."

The Devil Dealer's expression had completely changed after Sesame and Roan left. He didn't seem to be afraid of Sesame's cultivation at all. Due to the formations set in place in the chamber, one could not pry on the other part's cultivation unless they allowed it by themselves. That's what Sesame did a moment ago, for example.

Turns out that the Dealer, Nassar, is also a Space-Time Realm Devil, and he is at the Peak-Stage at that. Yet, he immediately shook his head. "If you want to die, be my guest."

There was a sudden gasp of surprise as a new Devil appeared in the chamber. "Is his background this problematic?" Naturally, the new Devil wasn't worried about Sesame's Initial Stage Space-Time Realm. He could only guess that Nassar knew who the Devil was.

Nassar shook his head again, though. "He has no need for a background, Kegrive. I'm pretty sure that small Black Devil is also at the Elder Devil Realm."

"What?!" Kegrive was obviously the other Devil's name. "I've never heard about an Elder Devil similar to him. Is he disguising himself? No, wait! Are you sure he is an Elder Devil?"

Nassar could only shake his head again. "How can I be sure? If someone at that level tries to hide their cultivation from me, that is easy. Also, I don't know who he is. The reason I said he is at the Elder Devil level is nothing but a gut feeling. My instincts saved my life countless times during my life, and I'm not about to ignore them now."

Nassar then looked at Kegrive with a sly expression. "Of course, I might be wrong and he is truly just an Initial Stage Space-Time Realm Devil. If you want to try your luck, by all means, be my guest. Who knows? Perhaps I'm trying to fool you so that I can catch those two alone and take all their wealth for myself." That was definitely a possibility in the Underworld, or better, in any Cultivation Realm. "Just don't expect me to be there with you."

"Hmph!" Kegrive immediately gave up the idea, though. "I've known you long enough to understand when you are joking or not. Since they are that dangerous, I'm definitely not involving myself."

Nassar nodded. "It's good that you understand. Besides, we got a very high payment. That's already a great deal, so let's be satisfied with what we have." However, Nassar's smile turned cold at that moment. "We won't try our luck, but that doesn't mean others wouldn't."

Kegrive obviously understood what Nassar was trying to say. "Hahaha! Leave it to me. Some rumors that escaped by accident are common in this Dark Web City. I'll make sure these 'accidental' rumors will reach the right Devils."

Nassar didn't say anything and just got up before leaving the room.

Roan and Sesame didn't have any intention of continuing in the city since they were running against time. They left through the nearest entrance before disappearing in the distance.

Around an hour later, news of the sudden demise of two Space-Time Realm Devils who went out to rob some foreigners spread around the city. These Devils heard the 'accidental' rumor about the wealth being carried by Roan and Sesame and decided to make it their own. Well, they shouldn't have done that.

Death... and me

Chapter 2073: Developments

After Sesame put away the two Devil's Spatial Rings, he opened another Spatial Gate and left with Roan. On the way, the two analyzed the information on the Jade Slip.

"I didn't expect the Devils to really use the Dead Souls that were supposed to go to the Reincarnation Path," said Roan as he read the details. Turns out that Belial truly used dead souls, which other Devils couldn't do. As mentioned before, Devils love Living Souls, which greatly improves their cultivation speed. Dead Souls, on the other hand, were pretty much useless in general.

Sesame pondered a bit. He obviously had a must more extensive knowledge than Roan, so he could make some guesses. "If I'm not wrong, the trick behind it is that Belial doesn't directly use the Dead Souls to increase his cultivation. Instead, he might have found a way of using them to channel Devilish Energy in an easier way. Of course, this is just a conjecture."

Roan had to ask. "Is it okay for Devils to take away the Dead Soul that was supposed to go into the Reincarnation Path?"

Sesame shook his head. "I don't think it is a good thing. But then again, Belial is an Elder Devil. Besides, it seems like he had never passed his cultivation method to others. You probably already know that Dead Souls have little use to Devils. But that's not all. They are also harmful to them."

Roan nodded. "We could guess that the other Elder Devils didn't intervene in exchange for Belial not sharing his methods. If his technique got out and all the Devils used it, it might have a bad effect on the Reincarnation Path. The Soul Energy that creates new souls in the Reincarnation Path is recovered with their deaths, after all."

Sesame then continued to look into the Jade Slip. "Well, his cultivation methods mean little to us. With your Divine Sense Bending Skill and my Treasure Hunting ability, we will know whether Belial is present at home and if the Fragment is really there. If Belial is there, then it's better to not risk it."

Roan had no issues with the plan. "That's good. Anyway, from what I can see here, he lives pretty near to the Reincarnation Path. It makes sense since he uses Dead Souls. How come he didn't appear during the last Soul Guiding Competition?" During the competition the twins won, there were quite a few Elder Devils and their descendants. Yet, Belial, who lived close by, didn't come, nor did any of his clan members.

"That's pretty simple," Sesame could imagine the reason. "We know that the other Devils most likely know Belial has a fragment himself. Would they also let Belial try for the Underworld Relic?"

Roan had to admit Sesame was right. "That makes sense."

Thanks to Sesame's capability to travel through space, the journey back to the Reincarnation Path was quite smooth and fast. From there, they used the Jade Slip to find the exact location of Belial's Clan.

"It should be that place," Sesame exited the Spatial Gate once again with Roan, and both looked in the distance. Instead of a clan, it could be said to look more like a small city. The Clan area was enormous.

Sister Orb immediately warned them from inside the Dimensional Realm. [I can feel the presence of several formations. You better be careful when you decide to approach it.]

Sesame and Roan had no intention of getting close, though. "Sesame, what is the range of your perception regarding the Fragments?"

"The Universe Fragments are absolutely top ranked within the things I can feel the presence. If it is in this place, I will find it." Sesame seemed pretty confident. "There is no need for us to enter the Clan. Let's fly around it to see if I can detect it from outside first."

"No problem," Roan agreed with him. "I can feel some Elemental Space and two Space-Time level Divine Senses. Fortunately, I'm already at the Spac Bending Realm, and their Divine Senses are too far. They can't break through Rean's Bending skill."

Sesam sighed in response. "This skill of yours is truly great. You can hide from higher-level enemies and use it to tell their approximate cultivation and location." Of course, he wouldn't waste time on that. "Forget it. Let's go."

Back in the Swamp of No Return, the explosion of Dark Element and Develish Energy settled down a little. The Elder Devils that had been monitoring the situation finally noticed that the Spatial abilities responsible for making one lose their way inside the Swamp also disappeared. Not only that, but time returned to normal in the Swamp Area, which confirmed their suspicions.

Mephisto, the one who lost the Underworld Relic during the last competition, was the first one to take the initiative. He wanted to know if he could find anything in the Swamp that could replace the Underworld Relic. Even Elder Devils got lost inside, so whatever was provoking that phenomenon was bound to be very useful even for Devils at his level.

Mephisto wasn't the only Elder Devil there. All the others were using their Divine Senses to keep an eye on each other. Seeing that Mephisto ignored the possibility that the Swamp might come back to normal and jumped inside, the other Elder Devils couldn't hold back anymore and sped inside. Naturally, they all made a beeline to the Center of the Swamp.

There was an exception, though. It was Rui, the Light Devil Clan leader. He held the Underworld Relic in his hand, ready to use it if necessary.

"Clan Leader, aren't we going after them?" One of his subordinates also saw the movements and asked Rui.

Rui shook his head, though. "There is no need for us to risk it. We just got the Underworld Relic, which is enough for our Clan at the moment. Besides, you know 'who' is about to descend into the Underworld. We should focus on that instead."

Suddenly, Rui noticed that another Elder Devil appeared on his Divine Sense Range, quickly speeding into the Swamp. "Seems like even Belial couldn't hold himself back."

Death... and me

Chapter 2074: Unexpected Location

"Shall we go back to the Light Devil Clan, then?" Rui's subordinate asked back. Since they weren't going inside, there wasn't a point in being there.

However, Rui shook his head as he ignored Belial. "We are the holders of the Underworld Relic. If something goes wrong, it is our duty to use the Underworld Relic to save the other Elder Devils if necessary."

Still, his subordinate didn't understand. "Isn't it good if they get stuck there? Once 'they' come, the least the amount of resistance, the better. By the way, master, have you received any other news about them? Do you know when it will start?"

"I haven't. But with our lifespan, it won't matter if it is today or a thousand years later. We just need to wait." Rui stopped this conversation there. "Let's not talk about it anymore. We need to at least keep the appearances."

The guy could only close his mouth and wait outside the Swamp of No Return with Rui.

Back in the Belial Clan, Sesame and Roan were flying far away from the formations. Sister Orb couldn't hack into them with the system turned off, but she could at least feel their presences, which already helped a lot. Also, at Sesame's speed, it only took a few minutes to cover the entire surrounding area of the Belial Clan range.

However, after completing the round, Sesame stopped right in front of the Belial Clan once again. "Nothing... I couldn't feel the presence of the Fragment of the Universe Foundation at all."

Roan sighed in response. "Well, it's not like it was guaranteed that it would be here. First of all, since we were able to find the Belial Clan with such ease, so can others. It makes sense that even though Belial might not be carrying his Fragment, he didn't hide it in this place."

Sesame thought the same. "Well, then that's about it. This Belial Clan Range is pretty huge, but not huge enough for the Fragment to escape my detection. If it was inside, I would have felt it even though we didn't get in there."

"Forget it," Roan didn't mind. "It's time for Rean and me to return to the Realm of Gods. Can you leave us-" Suddenly, Roan stopped his words and looked in a certain direction away from the Belial Clan.

Sesame naturally noticed that. "What is it? Did they notice our presence?"

Roan shook his head. "That's not it. I just got an idea..."

After explaining it to Sesame through a Divine Sense message, Sesame immediately grabbed Roan and opened another Spatial Gate, leaving the Belial Clan Range. The place they were going was quite close, so another Spatial Gate connecting to the outside quickly appeared in their vision.

Coming out, Sesame's cat ears suddenly twitched and began to release a faint wave of energy. Roan saw that and tried to use his Divine Sense to identify what it was. Unfortunately, he quickly noticed that he had no idea what kind of energy that was.

A moment later, Sesame's eyes lit up as he pointed his paw in another direction. "I can feel it! It is just like when we were inside the Swamp of No Return. It's the same feel as the Fragment. I also felt it when we left the Swamp, but that one was most likely the Underworld Relic you mentioned, so I didn't stop to feel it."

Roan coldly smiled as he looked in the direction Sesame pointed his paw. "Sure enough, he is quite daring." He was looking at none other than the Reincarnation Path. This place was kept under constant vigilance. "Even the Swamp of No Return couldn't compare to the importance the Elder Devils put in the Reincarnation Path. That said, it was hard to believe Belial would get close to this place."

Sesame couldn't help but ask. "How did you know that?"

Roan continued. "What better place was there to hide such an important item than right under the nose of all other powers?"

Sesame still couldn't believe it. "But it is too risky! Any wrong step and one of the Elder Devils or their subordinates constantly watching this place might have bumped on it."

Roan shook his head. "There are two reasons why no one would expect that other than the one I told you. First is the fact he didn't appear in the Soul Guiding Context. As you know, it was one of the competitions used to decide who would be the next Underworld Relic Holder. Since he has a Fragment, he doesn't participate. Since he doesn't participate, no one would expect him to make an appearance anyway."

"Second, it is his cultivation method," Roan added.

Sesame remembered that information only now. "Right! The AfterLife Fog Mantra!"

Roan nodded. "Correct. According to the information we got in the Dark Web City, the AfterLife Fog Mantra is a cultivation method that relies on Dead Souls and focuses on their Soul Energy for the usage of illusions. So, what better place is there to hide the Universe Foundation Fragment if not in the Reincarnation Path Area? The amount of Dead Souls in this place is so big that no one will notice if there is some special formation making use of their energy. Something tells me the AfterLife Fog Mantra is just perfect for it."

"How come your Soul Gem System didn't detect this fragment when you first came here?" Sesame asked back, confused.

Sister Orb was the first one to answer. [For the same reason that the system couldn't feel the presence of your Fragment back in the Swamp of No Return. It only detected your Fragment after entering the walls and passing the protection formation. If there is some special power protecting the Fragment Energy, it can block the System Detection. In this case, not only was your very high-level protection formation in place, but the Fragment was also being used by Hex, who drew out its Spatial and Time power. It made detection almost impossible without getting close enough. I don't think Belial's concealment is any weaker than the concealment of the last Fragment we acquired.]

Death... and me

Chapter 2075: The Perfect Candidate!

Roan was satisfied with Sister Orb's explanation. "That makes sense. Anyway, Sesame, bring us to the Fragment. Of course, be careful. I don't think that Belial left only an Illusion behind to protect his Fragment."

Sesame quickly grabbed Roan once again and teleported away with his Spatial powers. The Fragment was quite close, so there was no need for a Spatial Gate.

'Sister Orb, pay attention to see if you can perceive any Formation other than the Formation used in the Reincarnation Path.' Roan didn't let his guard down while Sesame moved.

With Sesame's speed, they arrived at the location in just 20 or so minutes. Immediately, Sister Orb warned them of a result. [You were right. I can feel the presence of three formations ahead.]

Sesam and Roan looked in the direction of the Fragment and could see an area with quite a few Dead Souls passing by. However, they quickly noticed that those Dead Souls seemed to be losing their Soul Energy slightly as they passed through that region.

The surprising thing was that the energy lost by those Dead Souls was pretty low. If one didn't come here knowing exactly what they were looking for, such a minute change in the Soul's Energies would pass completely unnoticed. Even if one did notice, they wouldn't think much of it as the amount of energy being lost was just too small to affect the souls. The Souls were still able to pass by and reach the Reincarnation Path in the end, so there were no problems.

Sesame and Roan were still concealing themselves, so no one could see or feel them with their Divine Senses. As mentioned, the Reincarnation Path is heavily guarded, so patrols were present in all the regions around it all the time. Let's not forget the teams that were responsible for guiding the souls that got too far away and couldn't find their way to the Reincarnation Path.

Right now, Sesame and Roan were seeing a small group of those Devils entering the range of the Fragment Location. The same location where Sister Orb felt the presence of three formations. Nonetheless, these patrolling Devils passed by the area without any issues. No formations were activated, and no attacks were sent. It was as if there was nothing wrong in the area.

'Sister Orb, what kind of formations do we have there?' Naturally, the two of them asked Sister Orb straight away.

[What I can tell with the limited time I had to check is that the main formation is obviously the Illusion one. The second formation seems to be connected to the first as an energy source. It's just that the energy source is the Soul Energy you can see coming out of the Dead Souls passing by. The formations over there don't seem to use Devilish Energy. No doubt these two are using Belial's AferLife Fog mantra method in some way. As for the third one... it is completely silent.]

'Are you saying it is turned off?' Roan asked back.

[No,] Sister Orb said. [I can't tell what it will do, but it isn't hard to guess that it will activate if it detects danger to the Fragment inside.]

'So, a slaughter formation?' Sesame raised his guard even more.

Yet, Roan quickly denied that idea. 'It's impossible to be a slaughter formation.'

'How come?' Sesame looked at Roan curiously.

Roan pointed at the group of Devils that passed by that area a moment ago. 'If a slaughter formation activates and kills those Devils there, for example, their death would immediately be identified. I refuse to believe those allowed inside the Reincarnation Path Area don't have their Soul Flames being kept so that their higher-ups can find out if they suddenly die.'

'A Slaughter Formation would not only not help Belial's cause but would attract unnecessary attention instead. Belial is not here at the moment, so what could he do if someone found out about his secret here? The same goes for trapping formations. If the patrols and the Soul Guides don't come back after a while, someone will come after them to investigate.'

'That's true...' Sesame got a little more relaxed. 'If it is not a Slaughter or a Trapping Formation, then what?'

Roan pondered the issue and could only think about a single possibility. 'If I were Belial, I would want to have a way of coming back here as fast as possible. He is an Elder Devil, after all. The best thing is to be here by himself. Which means... It must be a teleport formation or a formation capable of warning Belial of the sudden change.'

Sesame used his ability to feel the Fragment before saying, 'I know exactly where the Fragment is located.'

[You can?] Sister Orb couldn't help but ask. [Even after getting this close, I still can't feel the presence of the Fragment. Are you sure you know the exact location within those formations?]

Sesame nodded and asked back. 'Yes, I'm sure. I told you, my abilities work differently from anything you know. If you want to conceal a fragment from me when it is close by, you will need something of equal or higher level. That's why your Soul Gem System Dimensional Realm is the only place my ability can't see through.'

'The Control Orb was given to Gem by Sister Orb when she was still the Universe's Sentience, after all.' Roan didn't find it surprising, especially with the system's ability.

[Your Pixiu Race is really quite good.] Sister Orb then asked the obvious question. [So, how will you do it? Don't ask me to analyze and hack the formations there. The system is off at the moment. Even if it wasn't, their level is too high. It would take me over a year to take control of those formations without anyone noticing.]

Sesame nodded. 'We would need someone who knows about those formations. The other Elder Devils should have countermeasures for Belial. They aren't idiots. It's just that I doubt we will find an Elder Devil willing to help us with it. Even if one appears, they will definitely take the Fragment for themselves. And that's if they don't try to kill us first.'

An idea immediately popped into Roan's mind. 'Oh! Don't worry. I think we have the perfect candidate!'

Death... and me

Chapter 2076: Paying a Favor

Somewhere else in the Reincarnation Path surrounding area, deep inside a mountain, there was a black soul standing still. It looked more like a huge black fly, though. Above it, several Dead Souls kept seeping through the roof, entering the black soul and disappearing inside. Still, the number of Dead Souls that appeared was nothing compared to the constant flow of Dead Souls arriving around the mountain. This was the Underworld, after all. All the dead Souls of this half of the Universe arrived here.

The Black Fly-Like Soul was none other than Beelzebub. The twins left it here so that he could recover his strength. Back then, the twins found out that Beelzebub was a special case. He wasn't a Devil but a Soul Devil instead. Soul Devils are born when a big concentration of Dead Souls gather together instead of moving into the Reincarnation Path. Usually, the birth of Soul Devils was prevented by the Devils, and that's because of Beelzebub, who reached the level of an Elder Devil for being able to use Dead Soul for his cultivation.

As a Soul Devil himself, he could simply eat the other souls and increase his power that way. It was countless times more effective than Belial's AfterFile Fog Mantra, for example. It reached a point where the other Devils had to join forces to kill Beelzebub. Unfortunately for them, they failed, and Beelzebub was just sealed away in an altar. In the end, the twins reached an agreement with Beelzebub and got him free in the Reincarnation Path once again.

'This is going pretty well. In just a few more years, I will have recovered most of my power. Then my revenge against those fuckers who sealed me will finally start. Hahahaha!' Beelzebub was in a great mood in recent years due to the fact that his recovery wasn't found by anyone so far.

There was only one thing that bothered him at the moment, and that was the fact that he was in a pact with Roan. If the twins called him out, he would be forced to go wherever they were and accomplish one favor. The pact was the only thing he truly couldn't go against, even if he wanted to. Other than that, Roan and Beelzebub also agreed that Beelzebub would not touch the twins' group for the next 1000 years after they separated.

Only a few decades went by, so he was powerless to do anything. 'Hmph! Just a thousand years. When the time comes, I'll just use the sleeve of my soul that I left with that idiot to find their group. Then I can get the Universe Fragment Back.'

Beelzebub then put those thoughts behind his mind and focused on absorbing the Dead Souls that arrived. He could go several times faster and attract several times more Dead Souls. However, that would definitely catch the attention of the patrols in the Reincarnation Path, so he had been very careful with it so far.

Suddenly, Beelzebub heard a voice echoing in his mind. 'Beelzebub, I have a job for you.'

Beelzebub had left the sleeve of his soul so that the twins could contact him at any time when they needed him to pay that favor. He just didn't expect it would happen so soon. 'Oh! That was fast. Are you sure you want to use that favor now? Remember! Once I pay this favor, we will have nothing to do with each other anymore. Also, this favor has to be something that I can accomplish. As per the agreement, I will not throw myself into a suicide mission.'

It was then that Beelzebub noticed something now that Roan unsealed his Soul Sleeve. 'Wait, you are here in the Reincarnation Path. Why did you come back?'

'That's related to the favor I need from you. However, I need to know if you have heard about an Elder Devil called Belial.' Roan didn't waste time with meaningless conversation.

Beelzebub's mood immediately became worse after hearing that name. 'If I know that Elder Devil? How can I not know?! He was one of the Elder Devils responsible for my near demise in the past. That fucker's cultivation ability can also use Dead Souls' energy. He was one of the main culprits for what happened.'

Roan couldn't help but faint smile. 'Oh, so do you have a countermeasure to his AfterLife Fog Mantra? I heard that it is one of the most annoying cultivation methods to deal with within the Elder Devils.'

Beelzebub found it strange that Roan touched on this topic. 'So you know about him this much, uh? However, if you are expecting me to fight him, forget it. I'm not fully recovered yet. I told you, our agreement doesn't include impossible missions, especially ones that could put my life in danger.'

'Don't worry,' Roan obviously wouldn't do that. 'I just need to know if you have a way to deal with his illusions. You are a Soul Devil who uses Dead Souls, so you should be at least at the same level as him regarding this topic, right?'

Beelzebub confirmed his words. 'I'm not just at the same level. I'm definitely several times better. Anyway, it doesn't matter now. What is it that you need me to do then?'

Roan didn't bite around the bush. 'I need you to help me recover the Fragment of the Universe Foundation that he is protecting.' Roan didn't hide the fact that a fragment was in play since once Beelzebub saw it, he would immediately identify the item.

Beelzebub was taken aback. 'What?! Did he put his hand on a Fragment? That I didn't know.' Yet, Beelzebub quickly recovered. 'However, how exactly do you expect me to do it? You aren't an idiot, so you definitely don't intend to send me to fight him.'

Roan continued. 'That's correct. What I need you to do is to get rid of some formations he set up. However, we are running out of time, so I need you to come now.'

Without another choice due to the pact between him and Roan, Beelzebub could only comply. 'Fine, I can feel your presence, so I'll be there in a minute.' Right after, the Black Fly-Like Soul disappeared from within the mountain.

Death... and me

Chapter 2077: Obligation

Sesame immediately felt the oscillations in the fabric of space. He quickly retreated and hid just in case. Of course, he heard about Beelzebub from Roan, but it was better to be cautious. Sure enough, a Black Fly-like Soul came out of space and appeared near Roan.

Roan, however, wasn't the least bit worried. He was the one who checked the terms of the pact he did with Beelzebub and was absolutely sure there were no gaps that could be exploited. "So you came. You didn't let anyone follow you here on purpose, right?"

"Hmph!" Beelzebub felt offended by his words. "Do you take me for an idiot? If I did something like that, I would risk showing my presence to those fuckers who sealed me. So, where is this Fragment of the Uni-"

However, just as he was about to finish his words, his perception noticed something. "Did you break our pact? How dare you mount a trap for me here?! Come out!"

Beelzebub quickly attacked the spot where Sesame was hiding, forcing the Pixiu to come out. "Hum? I don't remember your face... Still, you are definitely in the Divinity Realm."

Sesame checked Beelzebub's strength with his Divine Sense and finally relaxed. He could tell Beelzebub was indeed at the Elder Devil level. However, his power was lacking for some reason. "I'm not here to attack you. Instead, my instruction is to protect this human you are talking to. As long as you don't try anything funny, I won't do anything either."

Roan snorted at Beelzebub. "And you say you aren't an idiot. If I had planned against you, my soul would be gone already. You should know that better than anyone else. He is indeed just here to help me. Besides, with your perception, you should be able to tell that this cat here isn't much stronger than you are at the moment."

Only then did Beelzebub relax a little. Indeed, he could tell that Sesame wasn't a Devil but a living being instead. In the Underworld and especially in the Reincarnation Path Area, he had absolutely no reason to fear Sesame. He might even be stronger instead. "Whatever. However, you truly surprised me. Space Bending Realm Late Stage. Just what kind of tricks did you use to reach this level so fast?"

Roan didn't try to hide it from him. "Swamp of No Return."

Beelzebub immediately understood the situation. "I see... Although only a few decades have passed for me, you have been cultivating for several more times longer in that time messed up place. I'm impressed that you managed to come out at all. But then again, after what I saw you and that idiot of a brother of yours are capable of doing, I can accept it somehow."

Beelzebub then glanced at Sesame and warned. "I have my eyes on you. If he told you about my identity as a Soul Devil, you should know better not to cause any trouble."

"I don't need to hear it twice." Sesame simply agreed.

Beelzebub didn't ask Roan about Rean since he knew that they had that huge Dimensional Realm. He was bound to be there in Beelzebub's head. "So, what do you want me to do... Wait!"

Immediately after, Beelzebub flapped his wings, causing a wave of Soul Energy to pass through the land ahead. "So this is what you were talking about. Indeed, there is no doubt this is a formation put up by that Belial. I would never mistake his AfterLife Fog Mantra properties."

Roan nodded. "That's correct. The Universe Foundation Fragment is inside this place."

"How come Belial isn't here? First of all, how could he risk leaving this Fragment in the open like this?" Beelzebub found it strange.

However, Roan had no intention of explaining. "You don't need to know. All you need to know is that one of those formations will probably call him here straight away. That's why I called you. Since you are a Soul Devil, you should be able to nullify those formations ahead, especially the one that could somehow bring Belial here."

Beelzebub closed his eyes and felt the Soul Energy he released over the area, analyzing the situation in detail while making sure to not activate the formations by mistake. "You did the right thing. There is an Illusion Formation, the Fog Mantra Soul Concealing Formation. It can act directly on the soul of the target, making them ignore the things it wishes to hide."

"The second one is just an energy source formation that captures the energy of Dead Souls to provide the other two," he added. Roan, obviously, got even more confident since Beelzebub's analysis was the same as Sister Orb's.

"The first two aren't a problem. Well, they aren't a problem because I'm the one you called, a Soul Devil at the Elder Devil Level. The third one is the really risky shit. You probably guessed that it is a Teleportation Formation, and that's right. However, you got one thing wrong. This formation wasn't made to bring Belial here. Did you forget Elder Devils can't enter this Reincarnation Area unless they pay a heavy price?"

He continued. "Instead, this thing will teleport the Fragment away. Not only that, it was very cleverly made. To get to the Fragment, you have to first deal with the illusion. The same can be said about the teleport formation itself. So whether you try to take the Fragment or deactivate the teleport formation, you have to deal with the illusion first. But if you do that, the teleport formation will activate straight away. You can say bye-bye Fragment if that happens."

Even Sister Orb's check couldn't see that far. When it came to Deal Souls-related things, Beelzebub was truly in a league of his own.

However, Beelzebub was feeling quite gloomy. 'Fuck, if not for that pact...'

Roan obviously could guess what Beelzebub was thinking, but he didn't care. "Alright, here's the favor I need from you. Recover that Fragment and give it to me. Then we will have nothing to do with each other anymore. Once a thousand years are gone, you can come after Rean and me if so you wish."

Death... and me

Chapter 2078: How's that possible?

If Beelzebub knew that he would be so close to another fragment and could do nothing but see it disappear, would he have made the pact? Probably would since the other choice was to stay sealed in the altar. Nonetheless, it definitely feels bitter to do so. With the pact in place, as long as he truly considers it possible, he can't lie or pretend it is not. "Fine! It just means you will hold onto these things for now. You better not lose them to someone else."

"That's not your problem," Roan couldn't care less about Beelzebub's words. "Just make sure that no one notices you."

"Hmph! As if someone could find me here once I'm trying to hide for real." Beelzebub then quickly moved to the area with the formations. Following that, a huge amount of Soul Energy came out of his body, spreading around the area.

The Soul Energy used was different from the Soul Power everyone uses, like the twins' one, for example. He was truly using the Soul Energy of the Dead Souls. The illusions of the AfterLife Fog Mantra tried to act on Beelzebub's mind. However, how could someone that used Dead Souls as the main source affect a being pretty much made of it? Beelzebub simply ignored it completely.

The Soul Energy of the Dead Souls began to sip into the runes of the illusion formation. The runes of the formation didn't change at all. However, the energy they were made from began to shift towards Beelzebub type. Beelzebub was doing something similar to what Sister Orb did. He was not trying to destroy or deactivate the formation but make it his own.

It took only a few minutes before the Soul Energy of Dead Soul completely fell into Beelzebub's control. For the teleport formation inside it, the illusion and source formations didn't stop, so it didn't find anything wrong.

Well, at least Beelzebub thought nothing wrong happened. What he didn't expect was that the moment the shift of Soul Energy type was completed, Belial immediately felt it all the way back to the Swamp of No Return.

Belial was already at the wall where Sesame once received the twins. Just like the other Elder Devils, he was helping to attack the formation so he could gain access inside. The other Elder Devils knew that Belial wouldn't bring his fragment with him, so they didn't join forces to attack him as there was no reward.

Besides, if someone really attacked Belial at this moment, the rest might have used the opportunity to get inside the walls and take the treasure before them. They were all being very wary of each other, just like any other cultivator would do.

Suddenly, shock appeared all over Belial's face. "Not good!" He couldn't believe that he had lost contact with his Illusion Formation. Turns out that as an extra measure, he also left a sleeve of his soul in the formation. Once Beelzebub finished transforming the formation, his sleeve of soul was also affected. Belial tore space apart without saying anything, quickly creating a Spatial Gate before getting inside.

The other Elder Devils obviously saw it, but none of them were willing to stop the guy. Since Belial wanted to leave, they more than welcomed it. One less Elder Devil to care about.

Back in the Swamp of No Return, Beelzebub didn't have a good expression on his Black Fly-Like face. "Fuck! I knew he had left something behind. But the Soul Sleeve was so faint that I didn't detect it in time." Beelzebub then calmed down and immediately worked on the Teleport Formation. There wasn't much time before Belial arrived as he knew very well how fast traveling through Spatial Gates was for Elder Devils.

"Did something happen?" Roan noticed the change and asked Beelzebub through a Divine Sense message.

"Belial is coming here," Beelzebub only said as he continued to work.

Roan obviously understood it wasn't good news. "He went to the Swamp of No Return. Sesame is also in the Divinity Realm, so he isn't much slower than you, Elder Devils. Sesame, how long do you think Belial will take to arrive?" Roan preferred to hear it from Sesame since he didn't trust Beelzebub.

Sesame didn't need to think much to give an answer. "If he comes at full speed, it should take at least 20 to 25 minutes."

Beelzebub also understood this. That's why he hasn't left yet. Besides, he truly believed it would be easier to take the fragment back from Roan in the future than let Belial take it back now. "Almost there... almost there..."

"It's fine," Roan calmed down. "Belial is an Elder Devil. He can't enter the Reincarnation Path, right?"

"Wrong!" Belial immediately corrects Roan. "Because of his AfterLife Fog Mantra, he can disregard most of the pain of entering this place. Why do you think the other Elder Devils dislike him so much? It's not only the fragment."

The teleport formation under Beelzebub tried to activate as well. It was also connected to Belial's Sleeve of Soul. However, Beelzebub was able to interject and stop it from working. "Alright, I stopped the formation. Just one more minute, and you can take the fragment."

However, Roan didn't wait for that. "Sesame, location!"

Sesame nodded and immediately teleported with Roan into a specific place in the area. With his ability, he could feel its exact location without issues, much to Belial's surprise. 'How did they know it was there?'

Neither Roan nor Sesame explained. Sister then opened a spatial gate connecting the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm and the outside world. Sure enough, the fragment underground immediately felt the presence of the other fragments inside and shot out like a bullet. Since the fragment in the Dimensional Realm was much bigger, it attracted the fragment inside instead of being attracted out.

Beelzebub didn't just look at it. He used a part of his soul, just like Belial did with the formation, to attach it to the fragment. In the future, he could come after it.

'What?!' Unfortunately for him, the moment the fragment entered the Dimensional Realm, he completely lost contact with the part of his soul. 'How's that possible?!'

Death... and me

Chapter 2079: Another Fragment

Even Sesame's Pixiu Race ability couldn't pierce through the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm concealment, let alone Beelzebub's connection with his Soul Sleeve. Of course, Beelzebub put those thoughts behind his mind and used another Soul Sleeve, trying to attach it to Roan instead. 'There you go!'

Roan then looked at Beelzebub after confirming that the Fragment entered the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm. "Alright, see you in a thousand years, then."

Sesame didn't wait for them to talk about anything else. He quickly grabbed Roan with his Spatial Power before opening a Spatial Gate to get out of there. In the next moment, the two of them were gone.

Beelzebub had no intention of staying there either. He was in his own environment and wasn't really afraid of Belial. However, being found by Belial here would mean that all the other Elder Devils would find him too. That definitely couldn't happen. He used his power to wipe out all traces of his existence. Following that, he disappeared into the ground. He wouldn't stay here, but he definitely wouldn't leave the Reincarnation Path Region. He just decided that he would lie low for a few years, just in case.

"NOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

Sure enough, a scream was heard a few minutes later where Roan, Sesame, and Beelzebub had just been. That was none other than Belial himself. It was so loud and covered in so much devilish energy that it attracted the attention of many Devils patrolling the surrounding area. "HOW?! How did anyone see through my AfterLife Fog Mantra?!"

Soon, several of those Devils arrived at the location... They shouldn't have, though. Belial was fuming, trying to figure out who took away his Universe Foundation Fragment. It was supposed to be impossible for anyone in this area to see through his Illusion. Every time a new group of Devils arrived, he grabbed them and forcefully Soul Searched their memories. That kind of invasive method completely destroyed those Devils' minds, but Belial couldn't care less.

Soon, the other Devils not too far away noticed that they were losing contact with the other patrols, so they were forced to contact their superiors. Unfortunately, by the time the high-level Devils forced their

way into the Reincarnation Path Area because of the cultivation restrictions, there wasn't anyone there anymore.

Belial was unwilling, but he knew he couldn't stay there. That's why after capturing all the nearby Devils and searching all their souls, he left without leaving any trace. He could only go back to his Belial Clan territory while thinking about what happened. 'The Swamp of No Return! They knew I couldn't bring my Fragment to explore the Swamp changes since there was a risk I could lose it. It was all planned out! But who was it? It was definitely one of the Elder Devils, but who?'

Suddenly, Belial remembered something. 'Wait! Rui! That's right! When I entered the Swamp of No Return, I saw that Rui didn't follow the other Elder Devils. He stayed out instead! He obviously saw me as well! That fucker, isn't the Underworld Relic enough for you?'

However, Belial quickly calmed down. 'Wait, that doesn't make sense. Other than me, no other Elder Devil should be able to enter the Reincarnation Path Area this easily. Let alone a Devil that uses Light Elements in the Underworld. But then again, I refuse to believe anyone other than an Elder Devil could enter the Reincarnation Path and find my hidden formation.'

'Besides, all the Devils are always aware of the location of the Underworld Relic, me included. I'm sure the Relic hasn't left the borders of the Swamp of No Return until now. Would Rui really leave the Relic behind to come after my Fragment? That would be too idiotic as there was no guarantee of success. First of all, how would he know it was there?'

Belial shook his head. 'No, it can't be Rui. It was definitely someone else... Another Elder Devil that can enter the Reincarnation Path without anyone noticing... Was there an Elder Devil capable of doing such a thing?' It didn't take long for a very old memory to pop into Belial's mind. 'No, it can't be! That guy is dead, DEAD!' He obviously remembered Beelzebub, especially the fact that Beelzebub would definitely be able to find his illusion formation. 'Maybe another Soul Devil appeared in the Reincarnation Path without anyone noticing...? That seems even more unlikely...'

In the end, he couldn't think of a solution. 'I have to investigate Rui first. Although I don't think it was him, I can't guarantee. It might have been one of the Elder Devils in the Realm of Gods as well. Perhaps one of them came back to the Underworld without me knowing.' Following that, he summoned his entire clan and sent them out to investigate. It wouldn't be long before someone noticed that something was happening, but that had nothing to do with the twins' now.

Sesame brought Roan far away from the Reincarnation Path before he looked at him. "Roan, I think that Black Fly-Like Soul Devil did something to you. A moment before I pulled you inside the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm, I felt a fluctuation of Soul Energy near your body."

Roan nodded. "That's to be expected. The Fragment inside the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm has already fused with the other Fragments. Whatever he did with the Fragment was completely destroyed during the fusion. Not to mention that no one can locate anything that has entered the Dimensional Realm either."

"Alright, come with me into the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm. I believe Sister Orb should be able to deal with it." Roan didn't think for long and immediately pulled Sesame inside the Dimensional Realm with him.

[Hum?] As soon as Roan entered the Dimensional Realm, Sister Orb noticed the change. [Roan, there is a Sleeve of Soul attached to your Dantian.] Roan was right. As the supreme god of the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm, nothing could get inside without Sister Orb knowing.

Death... and me

Chapter 2080: We Need To Find Belial

"Sure enough... Sister Orb, remove it for me." Roan was very satisfied with that.

[Right away.] It only took a second, and Beelzebub's Sleeve of Soul was already sealed by Sister Orb. [Should I destroy it?]

Roan shook his head. "No, it can be useful later. Just make sure it can't be used to find our location."

[No problem.]

Roan then looked at the Fused Fragments, which was quickly growing. "Two Fragments in a span of a few hours. This trip to the Underworld went better than I thought."

Sesame was also impressed by that. "To think that the situation in my home would lead to this outcome. I say... you have quite a scary mind on your head."

Roan didn't seem to care about the compliment. "Whatever. The good thing is that Belial will most likely doubt the other Elder Devils, so it is even better. It will shift the attention away from us." Roan then looked at Sesame. "By the way, the Reincarnation Path was very restrictive with the cultivation of those who get inside. You are in the Divinity Realm, so how come you could get there without any backlash?"

Sesame shook his head. "That restriction is related to Devils. Although you could say that the Devils and I are in the same cultivation realm, we are basically different. I entered that place back when the Fragment hadn't fallen yet and it was the same."

"That makes sense..." Roan didn't feel any backlash either, even though he was in the Space Bending Realm, so he guessed that it was the case. Space Bending Realm was also above the allowed Realms inside the Reincarnation Path region, after all.

Rean was working with Hex, but he did see everything that happened. "Alright, we don't know about any other Fragment in the Underworld. Should we go back to the Realm of Gods now?"

Roan nodded. "Just wait for the Soul Gem System to finish its upgrade. Then we can spend the Destiny Points and think about it."

Sesame didn't think it to be a good idea. "I would lie low here for a few years first. Let alone Belial, the sudden change in the Swamp of No Return will prompt the Elder Devils to tighten their defenses around the Temporal Path. They will probably think that there is a chance the changes there were related to the Races from other Realms. I know I would definitely consider it. Besides, they will be very suspicious once they find out there there is nothing left back in my home. Especially the fact that I'm not there."

Roan felt it made sense. "Very well. We shall stay hidden in this place for a while. It is a good chance to test if the time change from Hex can be implemented into the Dimensional Realm as well. Besides, now that we got an extra Fragment, chances are that the System will go through another change as soon as it wakes up."

"That's true..." Rean and the others agreed with Sesame's plan in the end.

"By the way, Sesame. If you wish, you can go back. It hurts you to stay out of your land, right?" Luan still remembered the restriction around Sesame.

Sesame didn't seem burdened for it at the moment. "Don't worry. We have been out for a day only. I can stay away for a few years and still make a full recovery once I return. I won't say that I don't feel the restrictions, but they aren't bothering me right now."

Everyone then discussed a few more items before they returned to their own things.

Meanwhile, Sesame predicted the Elder Devils' reactions correctly. He did mention that there would be a need for at least five Elder Devils to break through his and Gem's formation. There were definitely more than five at the moment, so they succeeded in taking the formation down.

However, not only were there no living beings other than normal plants, but Sesame was also not there. The older Elder Devils were present during the agreement all those years ago, so they knew that this place was supposed to have a Divine Realm Demon Beast. They also found the crater that the Spatial and Time Sphere created, but it was completely empty.

Mephisto used his Divine Sense in the area and narrowed his eyes. "I can feel the remaining oscillations of huge Spatial and Time powers. Whatever was here before most likely was responsible for the Swamp of No Return's abilities and expansion."

"I can feel that too." Eisheta did the same thing as Mephisto. Well, all the other Elder Devils in the area did. "Also, there is no need to say 'whatever' was here. We all know that this place most likely had one of the Universe Foundation Fragments. What could hold such a power other than one of those things? Even the Underworld Relic, which is also created out of one of the Fragments, couldn't get through the Spatial Restrictions. That proves that the item inside this place was at least at the same level. At most, the Underworld Relic could be used to find the way out of the Swamp."

"Close to the border, there are remnants of several buildings," Mavis remembered something. "However, they got removed, and only the marks are still there. It was very recent."

Mephisto could only shake his head. "The Pixiu's name was Sesame, right? It has really been a very long time. There is no doubt he took the Fragment away then. We need to find him. Regardless of who of us end up with the Fragment, we can't allow it to leave the Underworld."

Obviously, Sesame never told the Devils about his attachment to this land, so the Elder Devils didn't know he would need to come back soon or later.

"Talking about Fragment, what happened to Belial?" Moloch soon remembered that Belial was helping to break the formation when he suddenly left in a hurry. "Could he have something to do with it? Perhaps he found out that Sesame left and after him."

Sure enough, they all found it suspicious how Belial suddenly bailed out. "Let's go! We need to find Belial."