

Death 431

Death... and me

Chapter 431: Myriad Elemental Protection Formation

As mentioned before, the Earth fields were left for last, so the next one was Water. Obviously, that was the field where Havek made his Water Protection Formation. In the end, it was as he mentioned. His Water Formation also destroyed the Spiritual Energy Blast Formation. It's just that it used corrosion instead of destruction, which used three blasts' worth of energy.

Nonetheless, Havek passed as well since he did what Rean did first. Saya felt even more delighted to see these kinds of talents appearing in her guild. Of course, Rean left more of an imprint than the others since he wasn't part of the Imperial Family, so his resources were lacking compared to them.

The tests continued after that.

Milo was able to hold four strikes, which still put him in the top 300. Artin was the next one, and surprisingly, his protection formations defended six strikes, which put him high above others.

"Hahaha! Milo, you were so full of yourself before because you arrived here first, but look at the results. You couldn't even perform as well as me."

Milo's expression became dark as he replied.

"Hmph! You know very well that my specialty isn't defensive formations. Just wait until the next phase. I'll leave you eating dust."

Rean and Havek weren't considered since their tests finished differently. The blasts their formations received had no meaning.

Eventually, there was Qia's Defensive Earth Formation.

Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom..

"Qia Sasamil, eight blasts. Well done. Next!"

Artin and Milo looked at Qia with their eyes wide open. They didn't expect she would smash both their results that easily.

"What are you looking at? This lady can obviously do this much. I've been practicing formations for way longer than you two, and Master had always been very strict in her training. It's only natural that I can do better than you two."

Havek then got close and looked at her with some interest.

"Wh-What? Do you still think my result was bad?"

Havek then shrugged his shoulders as he replied.

"It wasn't as amazing as this god here, but I have to admit you surpassed my expectations a little bit. Perhaps you might have some use for my rival in the future. Well, rejoice. Your status has been upgraded from a burden to a quasi-burden! Believe me. This is an honor coming from me, your ancestor."

Qia was fuming! The more she heard this guy talking, the more she wanted to kill him. If Havek wasn't a part of the Sasamil Imperial family, she would definitely get rid of him.

Rean, on the other hand, began to find this guy's narcissism quite funny.

"Don't let it bother you, Qia. Although this... rival... of mine is like that, it's not like he's some demon or anything. Don't worry, I truly think you did quite well."

Qia became a little red as she ecstatically asked.

"Really?"

Rean nodded in response.

The tests naturally continued after that. Because the Earth Element was the most used field, it also had the highest number of participants who went to the next phase. Unexpectedly, there was another surprise in the end. A Formation Master named Ginsey Fole, from one of the subordinate clans, had resisted the Spiritual Energy Blast Formation nine times! Ginsey didn't do well in the first phase, but he showed his true ability in this one.

That number even caught Havek's attention.

"Oh! It's Ginsey. As I thought, he's pretty good when it comes to defensive formations."

Rean couldn't help but ask.

"Do you know him?"

Havek nodded.

"His teacher is a Formation Master known for managing the defensive formations of the Fole Clan. He also takes part in the junction managing of the Capital's protection formation. It's only normal that his disciple would also have a knack for defensive formations."

Rean didn't know the guy, so it was the first time hearing about that.

It didn't take long before the tests were over. Obviously, the majority were disappointed with their failure, while the few who had passed focused their attention on the next phase.

Turin saw that everything was done and immediately stepped forward to do some more talking.

"Congratulations to the three hundred who have advanced to the next phase. Those who failed can stay behind to watch the rest of the exam. Now, let's not waste time and go into further detail of your next

tasks. Well, most of you have probably noticed it already. We just had a defensive formation test, so now we are going to test your skill in offensive formations."

Turin then looked at the other Formation Masters before asking.

"Is the guild's measurement formation ready?"

"Yes, Senior Turin. We can start any time you wish."

Turin nodded, satisfied.

"Activate!"

As soon as Turin said that, a massive formation took form in the Earth testing field. Within seconds, a giant dome spanning 10 kilometers in diameter had appeared. That dome had several layers. The spectators could see that the closer the layer was to the center, the more energy it had. It was also possible to see the protection formation using the Earth Element of the field to strengthen itself with one's Spiritual Sense.

Of course, that wasn't all. Four more domes appeared, one inside each of the Elemental Testing Fields. Just like the Earth Element dome, the other domes also used the elements of their own fields to increase the layers' defensive strength.

"This is the Guild's Myriad Elemental Protection Formation. It uses twenty layers of defense to create a powerful barrier. The good thing about this formation is that it can be used with basically any primary element. Your objective is pretty simple. Select any field you like and build an offensive formation to attack them. You will have one hour to do it this time."

"We have specially designed these ones to be weaker than a real formation. That way, we'll be able to measure your formations more accurately through the number of layers they can destroy. Each of these protection formations have a total of twenty layers, with the innermost one being the most powerful."

"That's all regarding the mechanics. You have another thirty minutes to ask the assistants for the materials you want. After that, the test will start straight away."

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Chapter 432: Smelling Good

Meanwhile, in the Alchemist Guild, everyone looked at Roan with their eyes wide open.

"What the hell is he doing?!"

"Is he planning to cook the Green-Spotted Fox?"

"Shouldn't someone stop him?"

"But we're in the middle of the exam. Even if the fox dies, it only means that he'll fail."

"He should fail already. Who the hell would throw the fox inside the cauldron?!"

Both examiners and spectators didn't know what to do. Even Werxa was at a loss for words since he had never seen someone do what he did.

"Errr... Guild Leader... Should we stop him?"

Werxa could not help but sweat a little but shook his head in the end.

"He did well so far, so I believe... he has a plan... I guess. He should know that if his Green-Spotted Fox dies, he would be disqualified. The same will happen if his fox's body receives any permanent damage."

The other elders could only nod and wait to see what would happen in the future.

Old Worm, on the other hand, seemed pretty calm. Well, Old Worm's expressions rarely changed, so his guild companions by his side couldn't tell if he was surprised by that or not.

"This... Fauk, do you know what your disciple is doing?"

Old Worm looked at the people by his side and simply nodded.

"Yes."

Unfortunately for them, that was all he said.

Roan could tell that most of the eyes were on him, but he couldn't care less. At the moment, the cauldron still didn't heat up. However, the fox felt a sense of danger and tried to escape from there. Unfortunately for it, Roan had closed the cauldron when he threw it inside, so it couldn't force its way out. Not to mention that it was just a Stage One Demon beast. There was no way it could be stronger than Roan.

Roan ignored the fox struggling inside the cauldron and threw even more wood at the cauldron's fire. Eventually, the fox could feel it beginning to burn it alive and started to scream. The others looked at it and felt that it was too cruel, especially the females. Suddenly...

Bang!

Roan kicked the caldron with the fox inside.

"Shut up!"

His aura and Spiritual Energy made the fox fear it more than its own burning body. That wasn't alchemy anymore, but torture instead. He forced the fox to suffer in silence. However, the quiet fox only added more to the heavy air.

Time passed and over one hour passed. Because the fox was still a Stage One Demon Beast, it had its own Spiritual Energy. The cauldron's temperature wasn't anything heaven-defying either. Thanks to that, the fox resisted as much as it could until now.

Sometimes, it felt like screaming in pain again, but Roan's Spiritual Energy immediately attacked it, warning it to be quiet.

Except for the examiners, who had to keep their eyes on all the alchemists participating in this phase, all the other Spiritual Senses focused on Roan's cauldron. The cauldron wasn't any divine treasure, so it wasn't hard for their Spiritual Senses to penetrate into it.

"The fox is at its limit."

"It's going to die."

"I know it's just a demon beast without intelligence, but still..."

If they could tell that, Roan obviously wasn't oblivious to the fox. Still, he kept waiting as the paste and the fox boiled together. Only when he saw that the fox was really going to die did he nod his head.

"That should be enough."

Roan's hair changed into a mix of white and black once again as a burst of Light Element entered the cauldron. It immediately enveloped the Green-Spotted Fox, which healed its injuries at hasty speeds.

'Life Style, Second Form, Instant Recovery!'

Roan might not be as good as Rean. Nevertheless, his own Instant Recovery was powerful enough to outstrip the damage caused by the boiling medicinal paste. Soon, its fur that had been burnt began to grow again as the withered skin disappeared while the pain subsided. Other than that, Roan also used his Light and Dark Elements to get rid of the impurities from the boiling paste.

Everyone was shocked by Roan's actions once more. They had seen him changing his hair color a few times already and understood that it was related to his Light Element control. However, they didn't know that the Light Element had such a powerful healing power.

"Alright, you're back to full health. Stay there and cook for a while longer. Your smell is starting to get good."

The rest of the spectators didn't know whether to laugh or cry. He healed the fox just so that it could cook more. Just how much more do you intend to torture it?

Werxa, on the other hand, narrowed his eyes as his Spiritual Sense took a close look at the fox's conditions.

'Isn't this Green-Spotted Fox a little bigger than before?'

Of course, the other alchemists participating also noticed Roan's way of doing things. Still, because they had to prepare their own pastes, they couldn't spare too much time on it.

Two hours into the competition, the first alchemist had finished his medicinal paste. He looked around and saw that everyone else was still working or... cooking... and wondered if he was too hasty. Nonetheless, there was no turning back now, so he immediately applied his paste to his own Green-Spotted Fox. After that, he gave a sleeping pill to the fox. That way, it wouldn't move too much as his paste was absorbed by the fox's body.

Even though he was the first to finish, the next one didn't take long to appear. As if a chain reaction occurred, many more alchemists began to conclude their own pastes one after the other. Naturally, they did the same thing as the first guy. They applied the paste on their own foxes before giving a sleeping pill to them.

According to the general time, it would take at least three or four hours for the foxes' bodies to fully take in most types of medicinal pastes. The rule only said that they had to finish concocting their pastes in four hours. The time the foxes needed to absorb the pastes wasn't part of this limit.

It was at this moment that...

Bang!

The lid on Roan's cauldron exploded! His fox immediately jumped out while howling in happiness. It was finally free from the torture, so how couldn't it be delighted?

Pah!

However, Roan quickly knocked its head, which made the fox feel quite dizzy.

"Stop wasting time. Attack the dummy there."

Everyone was taken aback by that. Not only did Roan not apply any medicinal paste, but he also didn't give his fox time to rest either. But that wasn't all. Only now that the fox came out did they notice that it had become quite taller than the other green foxes.

"Wait!"

Werxa couldn't help but come out on his own.

"You made your fox go through quite a harsh treatment. As the stated rules, any permanent damage to it in exchange for strength would result in disqualification."

Roan nodded, not minding it too much as he responded.

"I know. The fox is fine. You can check it as much as you want."

Werxa nodded as he touched the fox's body and sent his Spiritual Energy inside. However, he really couldn't find anything wrong with the fox.

"This... how does it look so... healthy?"

The other examiners couldn't help but do the same thing. Sure enough, none of them could find anything wrong with the fox at all. In fact, it looked healthier than ever!

Roan then looked at Werxa.

"Are you done? Let's go ahead with this test."

Werxa's mouth twitched after hearing that. Roan didn't show as much as a single hint of respect to the Guild Leader. This was a kind of treatment that he rarely received from anyone. Still, he was also curious to see just how well Roan's Green-Spotted Fox would fare in the strength test.

"Ahem... Are you sure you want to do it already? Your fox just finished being cooke- cough, cough. It just finished absorbing your medicinal paste, right? You could give it some time to rest since all the other foxes would also need time to absorb the other participants' pastes."

Roan shook his head in response, saying.

"It rested a lot in the cauldron, so it can do the test already."

Rested? You call that rest? Is this guy's vision of the world that twisted?

"Errr... Alright then, have his fox attack the dummy."

Death... and me

Chapter 433: Spiritual Copper Wire

Rean pondered for a bit and thought about his circuitry formation. However, this was something that he hadn't shown to anyone other than Droman. Of course, Roan knew it as well, but he didn't care about it since it wasn't his field. However, it was also true that Droman and Rean were planning to show the Circuitry Formation to the Formations Guild instead of the Imperial Family.

'Should I take this chance to give them an example?'

In the end, Rean shook his head.

'I still haven't had time to work with it. With just so much time to build a formation, I'm done for if something goes wrong. Well, they just said that the number of layers destroyed would be our final results. There are no rules stating that the formation had to be standing by the end of the test. Maybe I should make another one-time-use formation to use the full power of the runes.'

Rean then looked at the dome inside the Lightning Field when all of a sudden, he got an idea. He looked around and saw that the other five Elemental Domes were located very far from other elemental fields. Each one of them was at least 5km away from the borders of the other elemental areas. Besides, the closer one was to the edge, the weaker the field's elemental support would be.

'The distance is quite far, and I would lose too much support from the Lightning Element from the Lightning Field if I build it closer to the other fields. However, attacking a Lightning Type Defensive Formation with an Offensive Lightning Formation is pretty inefficient... No, wait!'

'Lightning Formations can use Spiritual Energy to guide Lightning to the place they want. However, the amount of Spiritual Energy I would need to guide it out of the Lightning Field would consume most of the power necessary for the Lightning Strike itself.'

'But... what if I don't need to use Spiritual Energy to guide the Lightning? Lightning released without Spiritual Energy Guidance will simply follow the path with the least resistance. Maybe I can use a wire? However, a wire capable of holding a Lightning Formation Strike's power would need to be incredibly thick. Besides, how will I make it leave the wire to attack the other protection formations?'

It was then that Rean remembered an experiment he saw on TV in his previous life. During that test, a thin copper wire was attached to a rocket that was launched in the middle of a storm. The result? They got a lightning strike that came down in a straight line. The trick was that the copper wire was so thin that it got pulverized as the lightning passed by it. Nevertheless, the path of lightning was still created.

'That should work. If the copper wire is immediately destroyed while still showing the right path for the lightning strike, then I won't need to care about removing it from the wire later.'

Rean then looked at the Lightning Protection Formation inside the Lightning Field and smiled playfully.

'Well, no rules say that I can't do it, right?'

Rean immediately rushed to the Water Element Field and began to analyze the formation. Havek was there as well, so he was surprised to see Rean.

"I thought your abilities focused on Lightning Type Formations."

Rean laughed as he answered.

"Indeed."

Havek was taken aback but laughed in the end as well. He could tell that Rean was going to try something crazy again.

After that, his body burst with Light Element as it entered the Water Protection Formation. The participants couldn't build their formations yet. However, an analysis was still allowed. In fact, the examiners expected the Formation Masters to do it since analyzation was an essential part of being a Formations Master.

Rean didn't have much time to analyze since he had to ask for the necessary materials, so he only looked at it for 15 minutes before asking for the materials. After that, he looked at the assistant and began to make his requests.

The assistant was taken aback by that sudden list. Most of the items didn't have anything wrong. But when Rean asked for a thin spiritual copper wire that could go from one field to another, he didn't know what to say. Still, copper was indeed listed in the available material list. In the end, the assistant could only grit his teeth and flash away to prepare such a weird request.

Meanwhile, Rean rushed back to the Lightning Field and... jumped over the Lightning Protection Formation! The Lightning Formation was indeed using the Lightning Element to fortify itself. However, it

didn't change the fact that it was solid. So one could really stand above it. Rean looked down and saw the several layers inside it as well.

"What is he doing?"

"Is he intending to attack the Lightning Formation from above?"

"That makes no sense. The Lightning Field Element is evenly distributed. Doing such a thing would be a waste of time."

Rean quickly finished thinking about it and soon came down.

Just as the test was a minute away from the start, the assistant came back with the materials Rean asked for. He was forced to teleport to the Blacksmith Guild and pay quite a price for their members to forge such a long and thin spiritual copper wire. Immediately, everyone's attention was dragged in Rean's direction. After all, Rean had almost 10km of it in the middle of his material pile. Naturally, Saya, Droman, and the other elders noticed this as well.

Unfortunately, they didn't have any time to ask anymore. That's because the thirty minutes were gone, just like that.

Turin, who also couldn't help but look at Rean's materials, then stepped forward to do some talking.

"Time is now up. The third phase of the Formations Guild Exam shall now begin. Remember, only one hundred of you will make it to the final stage. Just like before, you have one hour to build your formations. The test starts now!"

As soon as Turin announced that, all the participants put themselves to work. As for Rean, he grabbed everything and jumped above the Lightning Protection Formation. There... Rean began to build his own formation. Yep, he was making the formation on top of the testing formation.

"Is... that valid?"

Death... and me

Chapter 434: Bulkier

In the Alchemist Guild, everyone paid attention to the bulkier Green-Spotted Fox from Roan. After all, everyone else's foxes were still sleeping or haven't even been applied with medicinal paste yet. Roan was literally starting the strength test hours ahead of the second contender.

Oligan saw the assistants activating the formations around the dummy, which would test the fox's attack power. At first, none of them thought that they would need it so soon, so it was deactivated just a moment ago, waiting for when the tests were supposed to really start.

"Alright. We have trained the foxes to attack the dummy in the same way, all the time. However, there are bound to be small variations between each attack. After all, foxes are also living beings. That being said, we will take the average number of ten assaults."

One of the spectators couldn't help but ask.

"Senior Oligan, what is the average attack power that you expect to see in this test?"

Oligan looked back at Werxa, who nodded at him. There wasn't really an issue telling this much.

"Usually, we would expect an increase of 200 to 250 points on average. Of course, the foxes only benefit from this much from the medicinal paste because they were weak to start with. Otherwise, you wouldn't see their power increasing by 50% just like that."

"What about the number necessary to reach the top 100?"

"That changes from time to time, but I believe that any fox that achieves an average of 850 attack points should be able to put themselves in the top 100. If we're lucky, we might see a few alchemists getting close to 1000 points or maybe surpass it. Of course, it will be nigh impossible to see such a thing."

Everyone nodded. That made things a lot clearer for the test they were about to see.

Oligan then waved at the assistants before saying.

"You can start."

One of the trainers then came forward before giving a command to Roan's Green-Spotted Fox. As soon as it heard the trainer's voice, its eyes became sharp as it pounced at the dummy.

Rawr!

The fox accelerated from a previously agreed point and attacked it. It was a simple bite attack like any other canine would do. Still, both the acceleration and the bite would be different now that the medicine had an effect. In less than an instant, a chunk of the dummy disappeared, leaving a big gap behind.

"What?!"

Everyone immediately heard the trainer's surprised voice. However, no one knew if this was a good thing or not. After all, none of the spectators had seen the tests against these dummies before. Only when the points came out did they finally understand the difference.

-Attack Power: 1434-

Unsurprisingly, the room went silent. Didn't Oligan just say that it would be hard to see anyone surpassing 1000 points? That didn't seem to be the case just now.

Oligan's mouth twitched as everyone stared at him.

'Why are you looking at me? I also didn't expect to see this, you know?'

Of course, on the surface, he didn't lose his calm.

"Ahem... Someone go there and verify the measurement formation. There might be something wrong with it."

The Formation Masters invited by the Alchemist Guild nodded and went forward to check. Even they thought that they might have done something wrong to it.

Roan, who was observing everything, then said.

"There's no problem with the formation. That was the average result that I already expected. This fox was only a Stage One Demon Beast, a pretty weak one at that. That's why the medicinal paste had such a superb effect."

Oligan and the others were taken aback by Roan's words. How could he be sure that it would be this high? Does it really help to cook your fox that much?

Still, Oligan quickly came back to himself and shook his head in response.

"Unfortunately, others might think you said that to take advantage of an error in the formation. We still need to verify it."

Well, even he had his doubts that the formation might really have a problem. After all, it was near a threefold increase in power. That was a huge deal.

Roan shrugged his shoulders and didn't say anything else after that. He was just trying to save his time.

As the Formation Masters checked the measurement formation, a few other alchemists finished preparing their pastes. Lita Xue and Cluhe Sol were two of them. They had been hearing the commotion so far. Unfortunately for them, they couldn't pay attention to what was happening since they were focused on their medicinal pastes.

Eventually, they finished applying the paste on their foxes before putting them to sleep as well. Only then did they have the time to ask what was happening.

"Over 1400? Seriously?"

Lita Xue narrowed her eyes as she looked at Roan.

"So he wasn't really killing his fox."

Cluhe Sol felt even more indignant.

"How can his fox be well and kicking? He literally cooked it with the Medicinal Paste."

After some time, the Formation Masters looked back at Oligan before saying.

"There are no mistakes. The measurement formation is working perfectly fine."

Obligan nodded as he looked at the foxes' trainers.

"Bring another Green-Spotted Fox here. As long as its power is around 400 and 600, then the formation is really working fine."

The trainers didn't waste time and quickly brought not only one but three foxes. Not long after, they had the foxes attack the dummy.

-Attack Power: 502-

-Attack Power: 534-

-Attack Power: 483-

Oligan and the others finally began to accept that Roan's fox was really that strong. After all, those new foxes left some marks on the dummy but were not able to bite a chunk of it like Roan's fox.

"Continue. Roan's fox still has nine more attacks to do so that we can get its average attack power."

The trainer nodded and immediately sent it to attack the dummy.

Rawr!

-Attack Power: 1613-

"It... increased again?"

Roan nodded as he said.

"The fox wasn't used to its new power, so it was obvious that it was somewhat clumsy during the first attack."

Everyone couldn't help but think.

'Then...just how strong can it get?'

Death... and me

Chapter 435: Lightning Field First

The other elders immediately looked at Saya. After all, she was the Guild Leader here.

"Well... No rules say that you can't build your formation above the protection formation. However, that's quite a risky move since it might be affected by the other formations' attacks when the test starts."

Rean knew that, but he didn't care. That's because the Lightning Field was the field with the least amount of participants, to begin with. The chances of something happening to his formation would be very low. In his eyes, it was worth the risk.

'I will need three formations to complement the Lightning Strike Formation. Those would be the Elemental Absorption Formation, the Spiritual Energy Absorption Formation, and the Shooting Formation. Fortunately, they are quite simple compared to the Lightning Strike Formation. Besides...'

Rean then looked at the Protection Formation right below his feet and smiled.

Nevertheless, making four formations at once was anything but easy. If not because Rean was extremely confident in his proficiency in Lightning Formations, he would never try such a risky move.

First, he built the base of all work, the Spiritual Energy Absorption Formation. He worked so fast that it was completed in just three minutes. Soon after, he fused the Lightning Strike and Lightning Absorption Formations together with it. All three formations related to Lightning, so Rean knew every rune and material necessary perfectly.

"This... Is he building a Triple-Layered Formation?"

"What are you so impressed about? Look at the top contestants of the last phase. They are all making Triple-layered Formations."

"Indeed. They're all aiming for single strike formations."

"Because they can't use Spirit Stones, the Spiritual Energy around their formations would be consumed in a flash. There won't be enough for a second or third strike. In that case, they might as well throw everything against the Protection Formations at once."

It was true. Havek, Qia, Milo, Artin, basically everyone was making a similar type of formation. The types of attack formations were different from each other. Nonetheless, they all aimed for a single powerful destructive, corrosive, piercing, or whatever strike.

Havek was in the Water Field. He obtained several types of corrosive materials to make his formation. His formation would try to corrode several layers of the protection formation at once. That was quite a bold move since there wasn't enough Spiritual Energy. Of course, being the genius he said he was, his face brimmed with confidence.

Qia made things simple. In fact, she didn't really have an element she excelled in. In the defensive formation exam, she went to the Earth field because Earth was the best for defense. This time, she went to the Fire field simply because it was perfect for offensive formations. She decided to make a single-point explosion formation for her trial.

Saya paid special attention to Rean, though. Of course, Droman did the same thing. They were curious to see just what kind of gimmick Rean would pull off this time.

"Guild Leader, are you planning to take that boy as one of the representatives?"

Saya nodded.

"For now, he seems to be a good choice. He's only sixteen, so his age matches the under 25 requirement from seven years in the future. Still, let's see how he performs in the test first. After all, he hasn't measurably passed the previous tests. I can't tell yet whether he really has some talent or if he's just crazy."

All the elders agreed with her. In the first test, he forced his way through the movement restriction formation. In the last one, he destroyed the formation that was supposed to test his defense. It was hard to guess what he was capable of.

After fifty minutes into the exam, Rean finally finished his triple-layered formation. Anyone who looked at him would be able to see the beads of sweat on his face. Sure enough, as good as he might be with Lightning Formations, making a triple-layered formation in just fifty minutes was still an arduous task.

Surprisingly, Rean wasn't done yet.

'Life Style, First Form, Enhancement!'

Rean then jumped down from the Protection Formation and flashed away. A minute later, he brought a big stone back. The ones who looked at that became puzzled as they thought.

'A stone? In a Lightning Formation?'

'Wouldn't its earth property obstruct the Lightning Formation instead?'

Rean didn't know what the others were thinking, nor did he care. He quickly jumped above the protection formation and started to build the shooting formation. As mentioned before, such a formation wasn't anything hard to make. It merely gathered some Spiritual Energy and used the energy to shoot any object put on it.

Rean then placed that stone above the formation, where it began to float. Following that, he attached the spiritual copper wire to both the stone and the Lightning Strike Formation behind him.

The shooting formation took longer than the Energy Gathering Formation, though. That's because Rean didn't want to use the Spiritual Energy from the surroundings when the test started. So he had that formation gather and hold Spiritual Energy on its own. When the time for his formation came to be tested, it would be fully charged and wouldn't use the surrounding Spiritual Energy. Thanks to that, the Lightning Strike Formation wouldn't be affected.

'Fortunately, it doesn't need a lot of spiritual energy, so it will only take a minute or so to absorb the amount necessary.'

58 minutes. That was the time Rean used to finish all the preparations. By now, most of the Formation Masters in the exam already finished their own formations as well.

Saya, Droman, and the others could tell what Rean was trying to do... and thought the idea was quite funny. Their only doubt was whether it would work or not.

Seeing that one hour was up, Turin finally announced the end of the building test.

"That's enough! Those who haven't finished their formations are disqualified. As for those who did, stay beside your formations so that you can activate them. Let's start the test. First, the-"

It was then that he received a Spiritual Sense Message from Saya.

'Go to the Lightning Field first. I want to see what that Rean boy can do.'

Death... and me

Chapter 436: Private Talk

In the Alchemist Guild, everyone looked at Roan's Green-Spotted Fox as it destroyed the dummy with every attack.

-Attack Power: 1653-

-Attack Power: 1694-

-Attack Power: 1703-

-Attack Power: 1712-

-Attack Power: 1715-

-Attack Power...

In the end, Roan's Fox achieved an average of 1674 points. It would have been even higher if he excluded the first attack it did. However, he didn't care about that since he was sure that it would be enough to pass this test.

Old Worm looked at that as well and nodded, satisfied. He had seen Roan use this method before on himself. Unfortunately, his body was well developed, so the change wasn't that big. In the past, Roan had also forced Rean, Malaka, and Calina inside his cauldron. After that, they all reached a tacit

understanding to never talk about that harrowing experience ever again. They knew way too well just how the fox felt to be cooked.

Werxa's eyes lit up as he looked at that number.

'1674 points! That's ridiculous! Hahaha! Seven years from now, this boy will shine! I need to talk with his master after the competition is over.'

Still, he quickly calmed down as he looked at Roan's cauldron. After that, he replayed the process in his mind.

'Unless someone is as proficient in the Light Element as he is, they will never be able to copy his achievement. Even the Water Element's healing properties wouldn't be able to keep up with it. Let alone heal the fox's body this perfectly. Still, he also needs Yin Energy for his Dark Element control, which means he's practicing both Yin and Yang cultivation techniques. Just how does he not have a cultivation defect? Also, what is his actual elemental affinity when he cultivates? He hasn't used any other element so far.'

Werxa's doubts were the same as most of the alchemists and spectators who knew about the requirement for the Dark and Light Element. However, they couldn't be blamed for that. After all, where have you ever seen someone being born with an affinity towards those two elements? Well, the Light Affinity was because of Rean, though.

After the test was over, the dummy began to regenerate itself. That was quite a simple piece made between the formations and blacksmith guilds. It was quite useless for high-level cultivators, but it really showed its advantages in situations like these.

Roan then looked around and spotted Old Worm in the middle of the crowd. Since the others' foxes would take several hours to wake up, he might as well leave for the moment. However, just as he was about to go there, he received a Spiritual Sense Message from Werxa.

'I need you and your master to come to my office. I already told Faulk to bring you there.'

Roan then looked at Old Worm, who nodded his head. Roan then changed direction and left through another door. Old Worm had some difficulty leaving the place since his 'friends' were filling him with wave after wave of questions. Unfortunately for them, he didn't have the patience to answer and ignored them all.

A few minutes later, Roan and Old Worm arrived at Werxa's office and knocked on the door.

"Enter."

The two got inside and simply stayed there, staring at Werxa with an annoyed expression. Obviously, it looked like they didn't want to be here.

'What is wrong with these two? I'm still the Alchemist Guild Leader in the Sasamil Empire, you know? Shouldn't you feel honored that I called you over?'

Of course, he didn't say that out loud.

Well... if it was anyone else, that might have been the case. It's just that Roan and Old Worm didn't give a damn to Werxa's status.

"Ahem... The reason I called you two here is because I would like to invite Roan to participate in the next guilds' group competition that will take place seven years from now."

Roan narrowed his eyes as he looked at Old Worm, asking.

"Is it of any use?"

"The rewards aren't bad."

"Alright."

"..."

"..."

"..."

Werxa felt like crying.

'Is that all? Hey! It's a competition between all the empires and other regions of the world! Shouldn't you at least ask about what it is? What to expect? Why I'm selecting you? Things like that! Come on! Can you two act like any other proper human being? Many of the young alchemists outside would probably kill for this opportunity!'

Doing his best to keep his feelings hidden, Werxa continued.

"Ahem... The guilds' group competition this time will be a joint collaboration between the four main side-occupations. It means that the Formations, Blacksmith, Talisman, and Alchemist Guild will work together. Naturally, the other three guilds will send their best competitors as well."

"The reason I selected you is that you're still sixteen years old. The competition rules ask for participants under 25 years old. So you're perfect for the requirement. Of course, this is just an early talk. If you don't enter the top 10 in the last phase, this conversation will be meaningless. Well, after seeing your abilities, I doubt you'll fail anyway. That's why I used this pause in the exam to talk with you two."

Roan ignored that and asked something else.

"What are the rewards?"

Werxa shook his head.

"It hasn't been selected yet. However, it is as Faulk mentioned. The rewards are usually excellent. However, there are a few things that are always present. For example, the first three groups always receive 1000 Rank Five Spirit Stones. That much is guaranteed."

Roan nodded. Rank Four Spirit Stones are already very rare and hard to obtain. Let alone Rank Five. This would be an insane boon to him and Rean.

"Okay. Is there anything else?"

Werxa didn't know whether he should be happy that they accepted it so quickly or sad that they didn't seem that interested.

"I would like you to stay in the guild and focus solely on alchemy for the next seven years."

Roan immediately shook his head.

"There's no need. I have way too many things to do during this time. However, you can test my ability again once we get close to the competition. If I'm not on par, just bring someone else."

Old Worm looked at Roan for a second but didn't say anything. That was his decision, after all. He was probably called here just because he was Roan's Master.

Werxa then tried to insist so that Roan would change his mind. Unfortunately for him, Roan was adamant about his decision. Well, Roan had all the shit about Calina to resolve, so he couldn't really stay around. Besides, he was the type who preferred real-life experience to improve his techniques and cultivation. If he secluded himself for the next seven years, it would impact his own development.

Werxa sighed in the end and could only add.

"In that case, make sure to take all the jade slips with the materials necessary for your self-improvement. Just remember that you can't spread it around without our consent."

Roan agreed with him as he said.

"I was going to do that from the very start."

Werxa nodded, satisfied.

"If there is something you need, let me know. Of course, you need to pass the last phase first."

Roan and Old Worm then turned around, but just as Roan was about to leave, he stopped his steps before looking at Werxa.

"Do you think you can arrange a private chat with Huan Qelol?"

Even Old Worm showed a hint of surprise with that question. After all, Huan Qelol was the prime minister in the eye of the storm around the throne succession.

Death... and me

Chapter 437: Really

Once again, in the Formations Guild...

Turin was taken aback for a moment. Usually, they would leave the best Formation Masters of previous phases for last. Rean got a 'perfect' score together with Havek, so he would select Fire, Earth, and Wind Fields first. Still, since the Guild Head gave her orders, he could only comply.

"First, the Lightning Field! We will test the formations closest to the target first."

As soon as Turin said that, everyone looked at Rean. After all, he made his Formation right on top of it.

However...

"Oh! So I'll be the last person to be tested then?"

Turin looked at Rean, responding with a question.

"What do you mean?"

Rean shrugged his shoulders as he said.

"Well, my target is the Water formation on the Water field, so I'm the furthest one from my target."

Only then did he remember that it was true. Everyone could tell that Rean wasn't aiming for the Lightning Protection Formation but for another one. In the end, no one was further away from their target than him.

"Errr... Ahem... Even so, you are the closest one to the Lightning Protection Formation, so I will start with yours. Are you fine with that?"

Rean didn't seem to care, though.

"Sure. I thought it might have been wrong to use mine first since that was not my target. I don't really mind if you want to test it first."

Turin then looked at Saya, who nodded at him.

"Alright, you can activate your formation first. By the way, what do you call this formation of yours?"

Rean pondered for a bit before saying.

"Well, I didn't really think of a name, so let's just use Lightning Shot."

"That's... quite straightforward."

"Yep. Simple is best."

Rean didn't waste any more time and immediately placed his hands on the formations. After adjusting the aim of his Shooting Formation, he activated it.

Shoo

Just like that, the stone was shot in the distance while the thin copper wire followed behind. That was quite unappealing and lackluster, though. Alright, it was utterly and inexplicably boring...

However, Havek's eyes shone as he saw the stone flying in the Water Myriad Elemental Protection Formation's direction. He then looked at Rean on top of the Lightning Myriad Elemental Protection Formation with an idea in his mind.

'So that's what you're up to!'

Rean didn't care. He was more worried whether such a thin copper wire would break on the way there. If it was normal copper, he was sure that the pressure would have been too great. However, this was Spiritual Copper Wire, so it was many times more resistant.

Fortunately, it reached the target without any problems. However, just as the stone was about to smash against the protection formation's wall, Rean activated his Lightning Strike Formation.

"It's now do or die! Hahaha!"

The Lightning Strike Formation immediately came back to life. Spiritual Energy in the surroundings disappeared in a flash as everything entered the Formation. Not only that, but the Lightning Element Absorption Formation was also activated, absorbing all the Lightning Element in the surroundings.

Until there, everything played as the Formation Masters expected. However, what happened next shocked everyone. They thought that Rean selected the top of the Lightning Protection Formation because of its altitude advantage. That way, he could save Spiritual Energy after shooting the Stone with the copper wire.

Unfortunately for them, they only had time to hear a cracking sound when all of a sudden, the entire first layer of the Lightning Protection Formation shattered. All the Lightning Element contained on it was then absorbed into the Lightning Strike Formation Runes. It wasn't over, though. The second and third layers also crumbled right after. Before Rean's attack had even started, he had already destroyed three layers... it's just that this one wasn't his target.

The Lightning Runes finally reached their limits and released the Lightning Strike!

Zap!

For a second, the world around everyone turned a bright blue thanks to that one Lightning Strike. It was also the first time in their lives that everyone had seen a Lightning Strike follow a straight line. Even Lightning Strikes conducted by Spiritual Energy didn't move that perfectly.

Everything took some time to explain, but just like thunder, it all happened in a flash! In the exact moment that the stone smashed and crumbled against the Water Protection Formation, the Lightning Strike arrived, guided by the Spiritual Copper Wire. During its way here, the copper wire was pulverized, just like what Rean saw in his previous life on TV.

Kabrum!

Shatter, shatter, shatter, shatter, shatter, shatter, shatter, shatter, shatter, shatter, shatter, shatter, shatter, shatter, shatter, shatter, shatter!

Water Element was weak against Lightning. That was common knowledge. Naturally, the Myriad Elemental Protection Formation that used the Water Element to strengthen itself suffered from this option. The Spiritual Energy in the surroundings of Rean's Formation wasn't of much use. His Formation's real attack power came from the three layers of the Lightning Myriad Elemental Protection Formation. The Spiritual Energy was only there to make sure the Formation wouldn't go out of control.

That's why Rean became so tired after completing the Triple-Layered Lightning Strike Formation. In normal circumstances, it wouldn't have been something hard for him to do. However, he had to build the runes in a way where they would break apart after taking in so much Lightning Element at once. It was a must for that Formation to be at least resistant enough for a single strike. Naturally, it was a big challenge even with his greater talent for Lightning Formations.

From the twenty layers of the Water Myriad Elemental Protection Formation, seventeen of them shattered almost instantly. Only the three innermost layers were able to stand after it ended. Nonetheless, the third outermost one had several cracks on it, showing that it would have collapsed if just a little bit more power was applied.

"Hahaha! There are no rules stating that I can't use the Lightning Myriad Elemental Protection Formation's layers to charge my Lightning Strike Formation. Thank you for the support!"

The test field went silent once again as the same thoughts appeared in everyone's minds.

'Is that really, reaaaally valid?'

Death... and me

Chapter 438: Paying Attention

Old Worm then sent Roan a Spiritual Sense Message.

'Is it about the war for the throne? You already got the information you needed. In fact, I also got things sorted on my side, so Mia would be prepared. There's no need for you to involve yourself in this any further.'

Roan shook his head in response.

'I have my reasons for having a talk with him.'

At first, Rean and Roan thought that getting an audience with Huan would be useless. However, there was also the fact that they didn't know if they would be able to get something like this. After all, Huan wasn't someone you could pay a visit to anytime you wanted.

As for entering his house without anyone perceiving it, that was even more of a dream. As the right hand of the Emperor, there should be no lack of high-level cultivators present. Otherwise, the princes and princesses fighting for the throne would have used other methods already to get in contact with him alone. Let alone that Huan himself was known for having very high cultivation as well.

However, the Alchemist Guild was considered a neutral power. It would not take part in the Throne Struggle. Perhaps, Huan wouldn't mind allowing them to see him.

Of course, there was another reason why Roan made such a request. It was present in the information he got from the Dark Web Organization. It was stated that Huan was also an alchemist and often concocted pills for the Emperor.

Werxa, as the guild leader, knew very well about the situation in the court as well.

"What would a kid like you want from him? Let me warn you. I don't know if you understand what is happening with the court now. Still, our Alchemist Guild doesn't take part in any countries' internal struggles. You shouldn't get yourself involved with Huan or any of those people."

Roan didn't care.

"I do know what is happening with the Imperial Family at the moment. You should know as well that it won't stay hidden from the masses for long either. Still, don't worry. I have no intention whatsoever to involve the Alchemist Guild in it. I just need one answer from you. Can you do it or not?"

Werxa narrowed his eyes as he looked at Roan and Old Worm. In any normal situation, he would have sent them out without even caring about their reasons. However, Roan was vital for their guild at the moment.

"Let's see how you fare in the Alchemist Exam first. Depending on your result, I might consider giving you that chance."

Old Worm sighed before saying.

"Since you already decided, then I won't stop you. In that case, you might as well stop holding back and show them the alchemist you really are."

Roan nodded as he turned around and left the room with Old Worm. However, they didn't see the shocked expression on Werxa's face.

"Holding back?! He was holding back?! Are you fucking serious?!"

Old Worm wasn't joking when he said that Roan's combo of Light and Dark Element was simply way too good for alchemy. Others might not know, but Old Worm had never thought about acquiring a disciple in his life. His guidance at first was basically due to Roan's incredible memory and focus on the work. Only when he saw what those two Elements could do did he finally change his mind and put his all into teaching Roan.

The weird thing was that both Old Worm and Roan had never talked about becoming a disciple and the other a master. It was extremely rare for the two to even call each other by names, let alone using honorifics. Their situation was ambiguous, just like that.

After returning to the Alchemist Test Room, Roan and Old Worm sat in a corner and waited. While they did that, all the other alchemists attended to their own Green-Spotted Foxes. It might be impossible to surpass Roan's results, but there were still 99 more slots available for the last phase. With Roan's overwhelming results so far, they were pretty sure he would finish in the top 10. Nevertheless, the guild would also accept 9 more alchemists.

Well... there are also those stubborn ones like Cluhe, who didn't want to admit that they would lose to Roan or anyone else.

The alchemists themselves massaged their foxes while they slept to help their bodies absorb more of the Medicinal Paste's efficacy. Others used some lotions approved by the guild's exam, etc. And just like that, three hours passed until finally, the first Green-Spotted Fox woke up.

Just like Roan's fox, this fox also seemed a little larger than before. However, it still couldn't compare to Roan's fox. After the examiners confirmed that the fox was in a perfect health state, they brought it to be tested against the dummy.

It used the same attack, but everyone could see that its dash and bite were far behind what Roan's fox did.

-Attack Power: 829-

-Attack Power: 843-

-Attack Power...

This one's average points ended up being far behind Roan's one. However, he felt excited nevertheless. In the end, he got an average of 856 points—his chances of being in the top 100 were very high now.

As if a chain reaction happened, one Green-Spotted Fox after the other woke up from their slumbers. They all felt full of energy, ready to take the test, and so they did.

The majority only showed results around 750 and 800 points. Some got above 900, which obviously made them very happy and prideful. At this point, everyone simply ignored Roan's results. It was as if he wasn't even fighting in the same league anymore.

A guy called Joan was the first one to present a fox that surpassed the 1000 point barrier... after Roan. His average results finished with 1007 points.

Cluhe came next and amassed 1045 average points. Still, this prideful man didn't feel the least bit happy. He was worlds apart from Roan in both exams, which deeply bothered him.

Unfortunately for him, another guy surpassed his result with an average of 1051 points. His name was Kobe Vuis. He was also a disciple of one of the Alchemist Guild members. The number could still be considered in the error margin, but Cluhe felt worse nonetheless.

Finally, it was Lita Xue's turn. Roan, who had been keeping his eyes closed all this time, finally opened it as Lita's fox came forward. Surprisingly, Old Worm also paid attention to her as he commented through Spiritual Sense messages.

'Her abilities are quite similar to yours and Rean. The difference is that she can use both elements independently, while you have your connection with Rean to use the Light Element. I'm sure your results would still be above hers even if you didn't use Light Element, but she's still a remarkable alchemist.'

Roan was surprised to see Old Worm talking so much. Still, he could understand. After all, he also commended her abilities in the previous phase.

'Just like me, her existence was a pile of coincidences. Born woman, having an affinity towards the Fire Element, cultivating a rare Yin Energy Cultivation Technique to control water. Since she's already a woman, it made it easier for her to achieve that Yin Energy control. Of course, she has the talent, and I can tell how much effort she put into it.'

Old Worm agreed with Roan as he lightly nodded.

Lita's fox attacked the dummy, and sure enough...

-Attack Power: 1189-

Her fox was far above others, only losing to Roan. As her fox continued the barrage of ten attacks, it got used to its new strength as the points increased. In the end, she finished with an average of 1268 points, much to Werxa's delight.

Death... and me

Chapter 439: Confidence!

The rest of the tests continued in the Alchemist Guild. In the end, no one got close to Roan or Lita's points. Oligan, seeing that all the foxes had gone through the test, then announced the results.

"Alright, the top 100 for this exam are decided.

1st - Roan Larks, 1674 points;

2nd- Lita Xue, 1268 points;

3rd- Kobe Vuis, 1051 points;

4th- Chuhe Sol, 1045 points;

5th- Joan Porem, 1007 points;

6th- Farkol..."

Some were happy, others not that much. But in the end, the top 100 who would participate in the last phase had been decided.

"The 200 who didn't make it to the next phase can step aside to wat-"

Rawl! Rawl! Rawl!

Suddenly, the sound of foxes' barking came from the side, which made Oligan narrow his eyes. The foxes were being kept in a building close to the alchemy testing hall. Still, the commotion was quite loud for their sounds to reach here.

"What's happening?"

A trainer quickly went there to check. A few minutes later, the barkings were finally over. When he came back, he felt helpless.

"One of the foxes challenged the alpha after we brought them back."

Oligan found it strange.

"Isn't the alpha already a Stage Two Demon Beast? The foxes we used for the test were only Stage one."

They had brought the alpha as well so that it could keep the order in the middle of all those Green-Spotted Foxes. One must remember that the guild got thousands of them to test.

"It is... However, Roan's fox broke through as soon as it arrived there. It then trashed the previous alpha, taking the position of alpha from it. That's why it took us this long to calm them down."

Broke through to Stage Two...

Everyone looked at Roan again. Not only did he get the first position, but his medicinal paste also allowed the fox to achieve a breakthrough? Is cooking really that effective? Wait, the previous alpha was also a Stage Two demon beast, and it was at that stage for way longer as well. How come it was trashed that easily?

No, that's not all. If Roan had waited like Werxa had mentioned before, his fox would have had a breakthrough. In that case, just how high would his points be?

Still, Roan looked as if he didn't care even a single bit.

"Ahem... since they calmed down, then let's continue. Just in case, bring those foxes away so that they won't interrupt the exam anymore."

The trainers nodded and left right after.

"Now then, the final phase can finally start. Well, there's no surprise that the last stage is pill concoction. After all, we are alchemists. Put everything you know together and give me your best concoction."

"Of course, we all know that pills can have several different elements. For example, a Fire Element Energy Gathering Pill is a lot more effective for a Fire Affinity cultivator than another element. Two Energy Gathering Pills might use completely different materials because of that, and the same case applies for other pills."

"That being said, it's only natural that some would be more powerful while others wouldn't be. It would be hard to judge someone because of that."

"To work around this issue, we decided on five specific pill recipes. Each one of them is focused on one of the five elements. We can't allow you to use recipes that would obviously have better effects because of their materials and your own affinities."

After Oligan said that, the assistants gave a jade slip for each of the 100 finalists. It did not take long for the cultivators to understand which pill they would be making.

"Earth High-Level Cross-Realm Pills?"

"They really selected something annoying."

"Well, it is the finals, after all. Using a hard pill like this should be expected."

Werxa then looked at Roan with a smile.

'We only have recipes of the five elements. I can finally see what your real elemental affinity is.'

Oligan continued.

"As you know, the Earth High-Level Cross-Realm Pills are used for breakthroughs into the Core Formation Realm. However, the higher one's cultivation is, the harder it is to achieve a breakthrough. We have gathered several cultivators with different elemental affinities at the peak of the Foundation Establishment Realm. All of them have been in this realm for at least 30 years without being able to breakthrough."

Suddenly, many old cultivators at the Peak of Foundation Establishment Realm entered the room and positioned themselves on the side. They couldn't help but feel excited since this was a chance they thought that would never come.

Seeing that their test subjects arrived, Oligan proceeded with the explanation.

"Cross-Realm Pills are very expensive due to their materials, not to mention that usually, you would need more than one. Let's not even talk about materials necessary for Core Formation Realm breakthroughs. Obviously, they didn't have the Spirit Stones to buy such a thing. However, they are perfect for our test."

"Your test is simple and hard at the same time. Concoct a pill using the Element you are best at and make one of these sirs enter the Core Formation Realm. Your results will be based on how many Cross-Realm Pills you will need to make one of them succeed. Well, that is considering that you'll succeed at all."

"Of course, remember that this is a tough pill to concoct, so you will have an entire day as your time limit. Even if you fail the concoction, you can ask for more materials and try again. After all, failures at this level are common, even for the best alchemists."

"Alright, that's all. Any questions?"

Roan then raised his hand as he said.

"My Elemental Affinity is Darkness."

Everyone looked at Roan, thinking they had heard it wrongly.

"What did you say?"

"My Elemental Affinity is Darkness."

They couldn't be blamed. After all, it was common knowledge that the Dark Element could only be used if you cultivated some Yin Energy ability. No one was supposed to be born with Darkness Elemental Affinity. Naturally, they thought that Roan was one of those who used Yin Energy Abilities. Roan and Old Worm didn't mention it earlier, either.

Werxa's mouth twitched as he looked at Roan. Fortunately, he quickly came back to himself and ordered.

"Quick! Bring an Elemental Affinity Orb."

In less than a minute, the orb was already in front of Roan. Sure enough, the orb went completely black after Roan touched it. The small orbs around it that measured his talent with that Element also lit up one after another with black lights.

"This... There's actually someone in this world with a Dark Element Affinity?"

"What should we do? We have absolutely no recipes for Earth High-Level Cross-Realm Pills for the Dark Element. No, I don't think we have any recipe for this kind of pill to start with. After all, it would only be effective on someone with a Dark Elemental affinity."

Werxa and the others wanted to talk more about this sudden news. However, they had to deal with the exam first. The examiners then looked at Werxa, waiting for his decision. After all, it wouldn't be a fair test for Roan.

It was then that Roan said.

"Just bring me the materials for a neutral pill. That's more than enough for me to win this thing."

Now... that's what you call confidence!

Death... and me

Chapter 440: Original

Turin had another problem with Rean's way of doing things. There was still the fact that he didn't destroy the layers of a single Myriad Elemental Protection Formation, but two. Should they consider both formations' numbers or only one of them?

'There is no need to count both formations. Just use the Water Myriad Elemental Protection Formation's numbers. After all, he will not fail this test even if we deduct those three extra layers that had been absorbed.'

Saya said through a Spiritual Sense message to Turin.

Turin finally sighed in relief after announcing the result.

"Rean Larks, seventeen layers destroyed."

Rean smiled as he nodded. After that, he returned to the area outside the elemental fields to observe the rest of the competition. As for the rest of the competitors, they had seen just how powerful that strike was. They all gave up taking first place straight away. As crazy as Rean's idea might have been, he didn't break the rules. None of them had the confidence of breaking through seventeen layers, much less more than it.

A few of them also noticed another point of Rean's formation. At first, he analyzed the Water Myriad Elemental Protection Formation before the test started. Saya, Havek, the elders, Droman, and a few other spectating Formation Masters could tell that he hit the right spot. It made it even more impressive since his Shooting Formation's aim was also nearly perfect.

The tests continued as everyone began to fight for second place and below. Havek was in quite a dilemma. He was happy that his 'rival' was this strong. However, he was also sad because he knew that his corrosive formations wouldn't be able to pierce seventeen layers either.

Shatter! Shatter! Shatter! Shatter! Shatter! Shatter! Shatter! Shatter!

"Ginsey Fole, eight layers. Next!"

Shatter! Shatter! Shatter! Shatter! Shatter! Shatter! Shatter! Shatter!

"Dian Surteri, nine layers. Next!"

Havek's turn quickly arrived as well.

Havek's formation focused on a single extreme small point of the formation. It then used its power to open just a small hole as it passed through the layers. The level of damage was far from enough to break the layers. However, that tiny hole was all that his Triple-Layered Formation needed to inject the corrosive substance that melted everything around.

In the end, Havek didn't shatter any layers, but he created a passage big enough for several people to pass at the same time. That was obviously considered a successful attempt. It also caught some attention since he was the only one who didn't use brute force. Even Rean had relied on a powerful one-time strike.

"Havek Sasamil, fourteen layers. Next!"

Rean looked at the result given to Havek's Formation and sighed.

'Sure enough, this guy is frightening. He did that while using a Water Formation Against another one. If I had struck the Lightning Myriad Elemental Protection Formation instead, I don't think I would have done Fourteen Layers.'

Havek then came back with a gloomy expression.

"And here I thought that a Piercing Corrosive Formation would get me first place. You really opened my eyes today."

Rean shook his head.

"We both know that if I had attacked the Lightning Formation, I wouldn't get a result as good as yours."

Havek didn't care.

"That's not the point. The fact that you came up with such an idea shows that I'm still lacking. What matters are results! That's all."

Rean couldn't help but get a better impression of this guy. As narcissistic as he might be, he didn't think he was invincible. He reached that level through sheer effort, not just through talent.

The tests continued either way.

"Artin Luvel, seven layers. Next!"

Artin came back, shaking his head.

"Sigh... It seems like this is where I stay. I would need at least eight layers to have a chance into the top 100."

Rean put a hand on his shoulders as he said.

"Well, between over ten thousand Formation Masters, you reached the top 300. There is no need to feel like that."

Artin shrugged his shoulders and just accepted his words. After that, he looked at the other tests.

"Qia Sasamil, eleven layers. Next!"

Qia came back with a prideful expression. That result wouldn't only put her in the top 100, but in the top 10 as well. She quickly held Rean's hand again before saying.

"See? I can also do it."

Rean smiled as he nodded.

"Milo Dian, eight layers. Next!"

Milo also came back after that.

"Eight layers, huh? I'm not sure if this is enough for me to pass."

Artin laughed as he said.

"Well, you still did more than me, so you have a chance. I don't even have a chance anymore."

"So what? Being better than you is a given. Who would feel happy with that?"

"Are you looking for a fight?"

"What fight? You lost already, don't you see? Hahaha!"

Rean and Qia also laughed, making Artin feel even gloomier.

In the end, it was as everyone expected. Rean's result was absolute. In fact, no one reached Havek's level either. Seeing that all the results were out, Turin ended that exam.

"1st - Rean Larks, seventeen layers;

2nd - Havek Sasamil, fourteen layers;

3rd - Waka Mantil, twelve layers;

4th - Bia Shian, twelve layers;

5th - Uriu Taran, eleven layers;

6th - Qia Sasamil, eleven layers;

7th...

93rd - Milo Dian, eight layers..."

"Hahaha! I did it! I'm in the finals!"

The results of those with the same number of layers destroyed were decided based on their previous phases. Fortunately for Milo, he had done better than the others, so he passed with eight layers.

"Congratulations to the top 100. You are now in the final phase. However, before I continue, let's go back to the Formations Guild. Everyone, step on the Teleport Formation in the center. We will send everyone back."

Those who passed, who failed, and those who were spectating did as they were told. Soon after, with a flash of silver light, they all disappeared from the testing field.

"Now that we have only a hundred participants left, we have enough space here in the guild to work with it."

"Anyway, the next exam is obviously related to formations. We tested your analysis ability, your defensive formations, and your offensive formations as well. As for the last theme... it is originality. Don't just rely on your senior's efforts and the formations they created. Show that you can do more than just copying others. You will have one day to make an original formation!"