

Death 451

Death... and me

Chapter 451: Unexpected

One hour quickly passed in the Formations Guild as Rean talked with everyone else. Eventually, Turin, Saya, Zako, and the other elders came out to give their results.

"We are pleased to see the many inventions displayed during the last phase. Except for three of them, we had quite some conflicts between who would be the other seven. After all, we only have ten slots available."

"Anyway, we had a total of 37 elders overseeing the exam this year, so we used a voting system to decide the first ten places. We only did one pass of votes for each position. For example, all elders voted on who should be in the first place. Then, all of us voted again to decide who would be in second place. That's how we came up with our decisions."

"If you are not in the top 10, don't think that your work was not worth it. Except for a few cases, most of the formations shown in the last phase deserve to continue being developed."

"Very well, let's start."

10th: Luan Fole and his Breeze Concealment Formation.

9th: Giampol Dinsve and his Heat Sinking Formation.

8th..."

One by one, Turin announced the positions of the Formation Masters. The ones selected couldn't help but become ecstatic as the rest looked at them with jealousy and expectation.

"4th: Qia Sasamil and her Multi-teleport Formation System."

Qia's eyes immediately lit up after hearing that.

"I did it!"

Rean smiled and nodded while Milo and the others complimented her.

"3rd: Rean Larks and his Water Reclaiming Formation."

Rean was surprised to hear that. Of course, he was anything but sad with his result. His objective was to join the Formations Guild so that he could get unlimited access to the repository. He could then get the Jade Slips with the formations he wanted to study and go back to Jialin Country.

Qia then hugged him once again before saying.

"3rd place is great! Anyone who makes it into the top ten has absolutely nothing to complain about."

Rean totally agreed with her.

"I know. I'm very happy to see my Water Reclaiming Formation doing this well."

Turin continued his announcement.

"2nd: Havek Sasamil and his Light Formation."

"What?!"

This time, even Rean was taken aback. He was pretty sure that Havek would take first place. The others were even more sure about it. Surprisingly, he didn't.

However, Havek didn't seem to find it hard to believe.

"Even a super genius like me would find it difficult to take first place with formations I just came up with. Besides..."

Havek then looked in a certain direction where he spotted a female Formation Master.

Rean and the others followed Havek's eyes and soon found the girl.

"Who is she?"

"Did anyone pay attention to the examination of her formation?"

"I didn't. I was more worried about my own formation."

"What kind of formation did she create?"

Rean pondered for a bit. Even he didn't pay that much attention to her before.

"If I'm not wrong, her formation was-"

Before Rean could talk, Turin announced in his place.

"1st: Balia Loskrey and her Nutrients Absorption Formation!"

No one had heard that name before. Turin obviously noticed that and began to explain.

"This is a marvelous formation for farming! Rean's formation can separate the impurities in the water, which can be used for farming. However, Balia's formation is different. It slowly absorbs the minerals deep in the ground and brings them up."

"It can be made into a huge formation capable of covering an entire farm. The good thing is that it can operate on ambient Spiritual Energy alone. All one would need to do was to set it up around a year before starting the planting. The results would be much stronger plants with a lot more nutrients."

"For those at the Energy Gathering Realm and below, food is of extreme importance. In fact, we had quite a bit of difficulty deciding between her and Rean in this aspect. But ultimately, Sasamil Country is a country where water isn't hard to be obtained due to the constant tropical rain. So a method to use the nutrients that are usually too deep for the plants to absorb has greater importance."

Rean nodded. He made the water reclaimer, which could be used in case there was no water. But food was still a lot more important in an empire with Sasamil's average weather. He didn't find it the least bit strange that the Formation Masters took her Formation instead.

Turin then continued.

"To be honest, the hardest pass was for the position of first place. From the 37 judges, 13 selected Balia, 12 Havek, and 12 Rean. That shows just how good each of their formations was in our eyes. If I could, I would count all three of them as first place of this year's exam. However, it's not possible."

"For second place, Havek Sasamil got 15 of the 37 possible votes. Rean Larks got 9, Qia Sasamil 7, and Waka Mantil 3. The remaining were single votes into different formations."

"Anyway, you can see how it went."

Everyone couldn't help but pay attention to Balia. After all, she was quite the dark horse. In the previous exam, she was only in 79th place.

Balia, on the other hand, dropped her head in embarrassment. It turns out that the girl herself was quite shy. She always did her best to not catch anyone's attention, and it did work very well until the very end.

Rean then shrugged his shoulders before saying.

"Well, I finally got what I wanted. Now I can finally get the jade slips in the repository and go back to Jialin with Master."

Qia glanced at him and said.

"What are you talking about? There is still our marriage remaining, you know?"

Rean nodded.

"Of course! How could I forget the future happiest day in my life?"

Havek completely ignored Rean's play with Qia and asked something else.

"So, what did you want to talk about?"

But before Rean could say anything, Turin called the winners over.

"Come to the stage. It's time for your prizes."

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Chapter 452: End of Alchemist Exam

In the Alchemist Guild, Oligan continued with the testing of Cross-Realm pills. Kobe Vuis had two batches of pills. However, the first batch failed to help the Foundation Establishment Cultivator in breaking through. Now his second and best batch was going to be tested.

Sometime later, the same scene of a burst of Spiritual Energy coming out of the cultivator who tested his pill had appeared.

"Joan Taran, Five Pills for a breakthrough."

Joan almost jumped for joy. That result put him in 5th place since the other two with five pill breakthroughs did worse than him in the previous phase. One must remember that the tiebreaker was decided by each person's position in the other tests so far. There weren't a lot with second batches either, so he had hope of making it into the top 10.

"Next, Cluhe Sol."

Sure enough, Cluhe Sol's second batch was much better than the first one, so he got a breakthrough with only four pills. His position in the previous phase was worse than Lita's, so he was now in third place. Still, his best one would come in the last batch. He was one of only three to make three batches of pills until the very end.

'Hmph! I might not surpass that Light and Dark freak, but I can definitely fight for the second position.'

The tests continued, and someone else also got a breakthrough with four pills. To make things worse for Cluhe, it was the same person who did better than him in the fox stage, so he fell to the 4th position straight away.

"Kobe Vuiz, Four Pills for a breakthrough. Very good. Next!"

Kobe was delighted to hear that result.

"Hahaha! I'm definitely guaranteed a slot in the Alchemist Guild Main Branch with that!"

Surprisingly, he didn't really care what position he would have in the end. All he cared about was to enter the Alchemist Guild. He didn't mind whether he would finish in first or tenth. However, Cluhe gritted his teeth once again. He felt his confidence shaking a lot recently.

"Fuck!"

Finally, it was Lita Xue's second pill bottle. Just like Roan, she only made two batches, with the second being her best one.

Roan didn't pay attention to her during the concoction process since he was working on his own pills. In the end, he could only ask Old Worm.

'Any thoughts?'

Old Worm nodded.

'That girl might give you a surprise this time. However, that is because the cultivator and the pills are of the same element. In a neutral pill competition, she would stand no chance against you.'

Roan shook his head.

'I don't mind. Use all the advantages in your favor. That's what I would do if I used one of the five elements.'

All of a sudden, Roan opened his hand in front of him as Water Element accumulated on it. Soon after, it turned into a small sphere of water that froze not a second later. The ice bead then fell to the ground, where it shattered.

Old Worm looked at that and nodded.

'All cultivators can use all elements. That's a rule that never changes. With your great control over Yin Energy, it won't be long before you can control the Water Element at almost the same level. At that time, you will be able to make Water Elemental Pills as well.'

Roan nodded as he thought about Rean. He wasn't the only one getting used to another element other than Light and Darkness.

Suddenly...

Boom!

A burst of Spiritual Energy came out of the cultivator testing Lita Xue's pills. In an instant, everyone looked at her with surprise in their eyes. Old Worm and Roan, on the other hand, just nodded.

'As expected.'

"Lita Xue, one pill for a breakthrough."

WOW!

Nobody expected that someone would surpass Roan's score. Naturally, that attracted even more attention. However, everyone began to have doubts in their minds as well.

'If Roan had one of the five primary elements as his affinity, wouldn't he be able to do it as well?'

Lita Xue sighed in relief as she looked at Roan on the other end of the room. To her surprise, Roan gave an approving nod. However, she could tell that Roan wasn't surprised at all.

'Did he expect it?'

Lita quickly shook her head and placed those thoughts behind. The important thing was that she really achieved a breakthrough with a single pill. Of course, she also thought about the possibility of Roan doing the same thing if he had one of the five primary elements. But there was nothing she could do about that, nor would she hold back just because she knew of it.

Cluhe Sol felt helpless. He was very confident in his last batch of pills, but he knew he wouldn't surpass Roan's two-pill score, let alone Lita's single pill. He was expecting to beat her with a three-pill breakthrough, but that was now impossible.

The tests continued. Finally, the test arrived at Cluhe, Kobe, and Joan's third batches. They were the only ones to make three of them, so this last phase was quite fast.

Sure enough, Cluhe achieved his objective, and the cultivator who took his pill achieved a breakthrough in three pills. Kobe and Joan's pills were better than before, but neither got a three-pill breakthrough, so Cluhe still snatched the third position back.

With that, the test was finally over. Oligan then called the alchemists, who made it to the top ten on the stage and announced their positions.

"Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's exam. We now have the ten most qualified alchemists who will join the main branch.

1st: Lita Xue

2nd: Roan Larks

3rd: Cluhe Sol

4th: Kobe Vuis

5th: Joan Taran

6th..."

Roan then looked at Werxa before sending him a Spiritual Sense message while Oligan made his announcement.

'Is this enough to see Huan?'

Werxa narrowed his eyes as he looked at the boy. In the end, he sighed.

'I can't guarantee anything.'

Roan nodded, not minding at all.

Oligan quickly finished saying the names of those who placed in the top ten before announcing.

"Now, the rewards!"

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Chapter 453: Welcome

At the Formation Master Guild, the top ten Formation Masters were rewarded according to their position.

"1st Place: 500 Rank Four Spirit Stones! Also, unlimited access to the Formation Master Guild repository. Last but not least, 30% discount on any material bought from the Formations Guild Shop for one year up to 1000 Rank Four Spirit Stones in value."

"2nd Place: 450 Rank Four Spirit Stones. The same unlimited access to the guild's repository and 30% discount up to 900 Rank Four Spirit Stones in the Guild Shop."

"3rd Place: 400 Rank Four Spirit Stones..."

Everyone could see where it would end. One could say that the guilds' rewards were very generous. Just the Rank Four Spirit Stones alone were already a dream-like prize. Rean, as the third place in this competition, obviously got 400 of them. But what he was really interested in was the discount in the guild's shop. There were bound to be many materials he needed which he could now buy at a lower price.

"And with that, this year's Formation Master Guild Exam is over. For those who were close and are still of age, please come back next year. As for the rest, don't give up on your path as a Formation Master. There are other ways of joining us. Even if you don't, this side-occupation is still worth your effort."

clap, clap, clap...

All the spectators applauded when the reward ceremony was over. After that, they all gathered together to exchange experiences and ideas. Rean, of course, did the same thing. Still, he was surprised that Havek also wanted to participate.

"Even if others can't be compared to this master, they might still have some useful ideas. Once I learn more about them, it will be their moment to shine. One could say that giving such meager help to me is the same as their lives' greatest fortune. Logically, this master doesn't mind enlightening a few laymen in the ways of formations."

Everyone around Havek shook their heads. They simply didn't have the energy to refute this guy anymore. Besides, he was really good when it came to sharing information, so it was worth hearing all the bullshit first. At the same time, Havek sent Rean a Spiritual Sense message.

'As soon as this gathering is over, I want to hear your proposal.'

Rean nodded.

Qia was also there, and she had a few elders interested in her Multi Teleport Formations System. They were all people with some influence or were related to companies or merchants. Her idea would be of great help to them.

"Please calm down. My idea is still far from being good enough. Once I resolve the main issues, I will post the blueprints in the Formations Guild Network."

Rean laughed as he also occupied himself with his talks.

Later that day, Rean finally got some time to talk with Havek in private. Well, or so he tried. Unfortunately, Qia was glued to him whenever he went. In the end, he simply gave up and allowed her to come together. After all, she would be going back with him after their 'fake' marriage. It wasn't like he could hide it from her anyway.

"So, what was it?"

Rean nodded before saying.

"Elder Droman and I began to work on a completely new type of formation. This type of formation will introduce a new system in the world of Formation Masters. I saw how you worked with the Communication System's features to create that Light Formation. Not to mention that you came up with that idea on the spot. That's why I'm offering you this. Do you want to participate?"

Havek and Qia were taken aback. A new system for formations? They were obviously interested in it.

"What is this formation about?"

Rean shook his head in response as he said.

"For now, it is a secret. However, I will tell you that it will create a huge wave in the Formation Masters community. I want you to participate because I truly believe you can bring a lot to this new endeavor."

Qia immediately lifted her hand.

"Hi! I'm more than willing to participate!"

Rean scratched the back of his head as he said.

"Well, you were going back with me, to begin with, right? So I was going to show you this thing either way."

Havek closed his eyes as he pondered on this issue.

"Does it mean I will be under your command?"

Rean shook his head as he laughed.

"Hahaha! Would a Formation Master God like you be willing to simply take orders?"

Havek laughed as well.

"Hahaha! It's good that you understand. Very well, what are your conditions?"

Rean couldn't help but think how good it was to talk with intelligent people. Havek knew from the very start that things couldn't possibly be that simple.

"First of all, I will not be staying in the Imperial Capital. This is a secret project between my master and myself. You must keep it outside other people's eyes until we finally conclude the basics of this new system. You will also be included in the list of people who developed this in the end, so don't worry. You will get your credit."

"Last but not least, this new type of Formation System will be given to the Formations Guild later. That means it won't be something exclusive for the Sasamil Empire. You and Qia are part of the Sasamil Imperial Family. So before we continue, I need to know if you are willing to leave your Imperial Family out of this."

Qia didn't even need to think. Before she faced her feelings, one must remember that her first idea was simply to be free from the Imperial Family's constraints with that marriage. For that to work, she obviously couldn't do things that would jeopardize her matrimony. However, Havek was even faster than her in agreeing with it.

"It's only that? Who cares about the Imperial Family? As long as it doesn't go against my beliefs, I don't mind it at all."

Qia followed right behind.

"Of course, you can count on me as well."

Rean brightly smiled as he looked at the two, saying in response.

"Well, then. Welcome to the Dalamu Sect's Formations Hall."

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Chapter 454: Bring Your Brother

As Rean talked some more with Havek and Qia, he also spoke with Roan through the Soul Connection.

'I just finished here. How about you?'

Roan nodded as he replied.

'The Alchemist Exam finished a few days before yours.'

Roan's prize ceremony wasn't much different from Rean's. He got 450 Rank Four Spirit Stones since he was in 2nd place. He also received the same unlimited access to the alchemist repository, including taking them with Jade Slips out. Of course, discounts on materials for pills were included as well.

After that, Roan was called over by Werxa, who confirmed his participation in the competition that would happen seven years later between all empires and other powers.

'I see. Have you seen Huan since then?'

'No. Werxa said that he was going to try, but it wasn't guaranteed. Well, chances are that I will be refused since Huan doesn't have a reason to spend time on some new alchemist at the Earth Level.'

Rean agreed with Roan on that point. He also can't use Qia for that since he would be refused even faster. Huan had been neutral so far, so any private conversation with anyone from the Imperial Family was out of the question.

'By the way, this is what I got on my side.'

Rean then explained to Roan about Qia and Havek. With their help, especially Havek, there would be a good chance of making more Destiny Points faster.

'As long as you're sure you can trust them, I don't mind.'

Rean nodded.

'You don't need to worry about that. Oh, right! Have you gone to buy that skill you wanted before? Dark World, wasn't it?'

'No. I didn't know if Werxa would call me or not, so I made sure to be present in the Sect's residence since then. However, there's no progress. Of course, I can go there once you come back. If Werxa appears, I can teleport straight back if necessary.'

Rean didn't mind since he had a lot to think about after what he had learned during this competition. He had to put all his thoughts in order, so he wouldn't be going out to start with.

Somewhere else in the City's Core Region, a man drank tea while looking at his garden. He looked like a scholar, with clear robes and a few documents in his hand. Just like that, time passed in the garden without anyone bothering him.

Suddenly, a cold breeze passed by him, which made the man sigh.

"You disappear for years every time. When you finally come back, you enter other people's houses as if it was nothing. You know, making sure no one notices that you're using a clone is kinda hard."

The man smiled as he sat on another chair before taking a cup of tea for himself.

"It's fine. With everything you know about me, I doubt anyone would notice it anyway. And even if they do, so what? It's not like they could go out and accuse me in the open, right?"

If Rean and Roan were here, they would be shocked. The ones talking were none other than Old Worm and Huan Qelol. Not only that, but the two seemed to know each other for a long time already.

"By the way, should I call you Faulk? Or maybe Hagen? Orvil might work as well. You have too many identities that it's getting more and more confusing."

Old Worm shook his head.

"It's not like you don't know me."

Huan sighed in response.

"Fine... Did the prophecy at least turn out to be true? Before your grandfather passed away, he used all his cultivation to look for a way out for Sasamil. Still, I find it hard to believe in things like that. "

Old Worm pondered for a bit before saying.

"Hum... I might have really found the right one. At first, I found it hard to believe grandfather's words. After all, what would one of them do in a place like that? Nonetheless, it was not like I had much of a choice. I was really shocked when I found out that someone had really come in the end."

Huan was taken aback by those words.

"What?! Are you sure?"

Old Worm nodded.

"You know very well that none of them can hide from me as long as we're not too far away from each other."

Huan calmed down as he nodded.

"So, are you going to make your move already?"

Old Worm shook his head.

"No. It's too early. Let them struggle for a few more years. Besides, I found two fascinating kids. I never thought our empire could give birth to something like them."

All of a sudden, a man appeared in the garden. However, neither Huan nor Old Worm seemed to care about it.

"What is it?"

The man was Huan's butler, who had been working with him for hundreds of years, Wuxin Fonlas. He had Huan's complete trust, so Old Worm knew him too.

"It's the Guild Leader again. He asked if you could see that youngster he was interested in."

Huan narrowed his eyes and was just about to refuse. However, Old Worm gave an order in his place.

"Tell him that Huan will see that alchemist tomorrow."

Wuxin was taken aback as he looked at Huan. Well, Huan was also surprised by that.

"What do you mean?"

Old Worm faintly smiled as he replied.

"I told you I found two interesting fellas, didn't I? Take this chance to get a good look at them. You will probably hear a lot more about them from now on."

Huan narrowed his eyes before nodding.

"Very well. Let's see just what is so good about them. Perhaps, you might take the two under your wings."

Old Worm shook his head, though.

"Things are not that simple when it comes to those two."

Huan's curiosity increased after hearing that. It was rare to hear Old Worm saying such things about anyone.

"Wuxin, make sure no one knows about this meeting. We already have enough problems within the Imperial Family. Also, make sure that the two of them come."

Wuxin quickly nodded as he turned around to prepare everything.

Later that day, Roan was invited to the Alchemist Guild, where Werxa looked at him with surprise.

"I don't know where you got this luck, but Huan accepted to see you. However, he asked for absolute secrecy."

Roan quickly nodded. It was already good enough that he even got this meeting.

"Also... for some reason, he wants you to bring your brother as well."

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Chapter 455: What to talk about

Roan couldn't help but ask.

"Why does he want to see both of us?"

Werxa shrugged his shoulders as he replied.

"Well, he is the Prime Minister of the Sasamil Empire. I just discovered a day after the end of the Alchemist Exam that your Light Element comes from your brother. Perhaps he found out the same thing and got curious about that. Well, even I am curious, to be honest."

Roan shook his head as he said.

"There is nothing to be curious about. We were born like this, that's all. With your influence, you should have found about it as well, right?"

Werxa nodded.

"Obviously. Still, it doesn't make me less curious at all."

Werxa continued.

"Anyway, Huan wants to meet you two tomorrow morning. Just come here to my office, and I will bring you to him."

Roan agreed with that before he left the Alchemist Guild. As for Werxa, he was left behind, pondering about what this was all about.

Later that night, Rean returned from the Formations Guild. Of course, he and Qia were not married yet, so he returned alone while Qia was brought back to the Imperial Palace by her Master.

However, he soon noticed Roan's dark expression when he entered the Sect's residence.

"You know, it's already cold to be near you. If you don't improve your expression, the maids will probably freeze to death."

Roan glanced at Rean, completely ignoring the comment.

"Huan accepted to see me."

Rean was surprised to hear that.

"Really? That's great, then. Make sure to keep our Soul Connection open so that I can hear the conversation as well."

"There's no need. Huan wants to see the both of us."

"What?!"

Rean didn't expect that twist.

"Why?"

Roan shook his head as he answered.

"I'm not sure. There's a chance that he already knows about our Elemental Exchange, so he's curious to see it with his own eyes. Or maybe it's because he is an alchemist as well."

Rean understood from where Roan was coming.

"So he wants to see you using Dark and Light Elements while concocting and, at the same time, the effects on both of us that allow such a thing to happen."

Roan confirmed.

"Exactly."

Rean couldn't help but ask, though.

"But, why did you change your mind all of a sudden? Before, you didn't want to go see him, right?"

"Well, it's not like I didn't want to see him, but I thought it was impossible at our level."

"I see. In any case, this is a good thing. I also wanted to talk with Huan."

Roan narrowed his eyes again.

"Why?"

"Isn't that obvious? It would be a lot better to get his support once we reveal that Calina is alive."

"For that, you will need to tell him that she is alive."

Rean didn't seem that concerned, though.

"That's not a problem. Calina wasn't anyone important in the battle for the throne anyway. Even if he finds out about it, he won't tell others. That's because he doesn't want to take part in the fight for the throne... Or at least, not at the moment. We can use this fake death to our advantage to promote Calina."

Roan pondered for a bit and had to admit that Rean's words made sense. As long as Huan wanted to stay away from the fight for the throne, he won't go around telling other direct descendants' secrets. Let alone someone who was pretending to be dead since it might be part of Calina's plan to take the throne

as well. Alerting others about her fake death was the same as saying that he wanted to take a side to the throne war.

"It really might work. However, there's no guarantee that he won't open his mouth."

Rean shrugged his shoulders as he said.

"So what? Are you saying that it's worth losing such an opportunity? Even if he does, the fact is that everyone doesn't think that Calina can do anything in this situation. Or better yet, they will all think that Calina faked her death to stay as far as possible from the throne fight. Who cares about a princess with a half-Chrole bloodline who doesn't want anything to do with their fight?"

Roan agreed with Rean.

"Very well. Let's do as you say."

Still, Roan was quite surprised that Rean thought about all of that alone.

Rean, on the other hand, had another question.

"I know what I want to discuss with him, but what about you? You requested this meeting for a reason, right?"

Roan nodded.

"I want to know his opinion about the Throne War. We do have many ways to pry into the information of the Imperial Palace. Your marriage with Qia, Tissan's information sharing, and the Dark Web organization. Besides, Old Worm seems to know even more than we do. Still, knowing what Huan thinks will be much better to get a full picture of the situation. After all, he is in a neutral position, so there will be no bias."

"But, would he really talk about it with us?"

Roan shrugged his shoulders as he replied.

"Just like your plan of talking about Calina, there is no way to guarantee that my ideas will work either. We can only try. As for it turning into a bad situation for us, I doubt that would be the case now that you will be married to Qia, and I'm an Alchemist Guild member. We can simply use the same excuse as always, saying that we want to let our sect prepare for what is coming."

Rean nodded in response.

"Indeed. Other small sects might not have worked, but thanks to the Communication System that is under the sect's name, it would be hard to not believe in our intentions."

"Exactly."

Rean and Roan then discussed what they would talk about once they met Huan for the next few hours, trying to come up with anything useful. Only then did the two finish their talk. However, just as Rean was about to leave, he remembered to tell Roan about something else.

"Oh, right! According to Qia's Master, Mom and Dad should arrive tomorrow as well."

Roan nodded.

"Sure enough, they can make such a long journey several times faster than us. Very well, we will see them tomorrow."

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Chapter 456: Meeting Huan

The night quickly passed. The next morning, Rean and Roan went to the Alchemist Guild to see Werxa. It was a good thing that they were seen doing it. Roan was an alchemist and just got 2nd place in the Alchemist Exam. As for Rean, he was his twin brother, after all. Why couldn't he tag along? That served as the perfect cover so that Werxa could bring them to see Huan.

"Alright, you two come with me."

Werxa then guided them through a secret passage in the Alchemist Guild's building. Once they arrived outside, they already had different appearances.

Later on, Werxa used some obscure passages that brought the twins to a huge mansion's backyard. However, that backyard also had a few guards. Nonetheless, the guards looked at Werxa and simply ignored him, letting the group pass as if they were nothing more than air.

After some time, they entered a garden. That was the same garden Huan had talked with Old Worm just a day prior. As one could imagine, Huan was once again sitting at his table, drinking tea. Court sessions were usually held during the afternoon, so Huan had a lot of time to take with them.

Werxa then came forward and sat on a chair as well.

"You know, Huan? It's kinda hard to talk to you nowadays."

Huan narrowed his eyes as he looked at Werxa. If it was anyone else, it would have been quite disrespectful to do something like this. However, Werxa represented the Alchemist Guild Headquarters in the Sasamil Empire, so his status surely wasn't any lower than Huan.

"You talk as if you don't know the situation we're in. Anyway, I didn't agree to your request so that I could talk to you. Go away already. I want to have a private talk with these twins."

Werxa shook his head as he replied.

"I brought them here, so they're under my protection. What if you decide to do something to them?"

Bang!

"Do you think I would raise my hands against some kids?!"

Werxa laughed in response.

"Come on, come on! It was just a joke. Of course, you wouldn't do such a thing. Still, why leave me in the dark? I'm also curious to hear why you accepted this meeting."

Roan then came to Werxa's side before saying.

"In fact, I also asked for this opportunity to talk with Huan in private. Guild Leader, go outside. I'll meet you there once we finish."

Werxa looked at Roan with some concern. Still, he sighed in the end and warned Huan.

"I want to send this youngster to the next competition between the other nations of the world, so you better not do anything to him, okay?"

Roan told Rean about the offer he received, so they knew what Werxa was talking about.

Huan was losing his patience already.

"Just get the fuck out, will you?"

Werxa then got up and walked to the exit. Of course, he didn't leave the mansion. He only went to a place where Huan wouldn't complain if he was waiting.

Huan finally let a sigh of relief as he looked at the twins.

"So you two are the Dark and Light Element users. I heard in my reports that you two were born with some kind of spiritual link, is that right?"

It wasn't any secret that Rean and Roan could exchange their elements, so they simply nodded. Soon after, their hairs changed into a mix of white and dark as they manipulated both elements at the same time.

"Indeed, we were born this way. As to why it happened, we don't know. Still, it's a very convenient thing."

Huan nodded.

"I can understand why there are some people interested in you. Thanks to that, you became dual-element users way before entering the Foundation Establishment or Core Formation Realm. Even now, you don't need to worry about getting used to a second element. It is part of your constitution already. That means you can start getting used to a third element as if it was your second one."

Huan's Spiritual Sense entered the twins' bodies. Still, he couldn't help but become surprised by what he saw.

"What a sturdy foundation. Both your bones and organs are above those at your level as well. Really impressive. If I'm not wrong, ordinary Late-Stage Core Formation Realm cultivators shouldn't be much of an issue to you two, right?"

Rean and Roan nodded. Well, if they go all out and work together, they could even fight Core and Soul Fusion Realm experts at the initial stage.

Huan looked at the two for a while longer before finally mentally admitting.

'No wonder he took a liking to you two. Could it be that you two are somehow related to that prophecy?'

Huan quickly came back to himself as he said.

"Very well, I got what I wanted already. Go ahead, what do you want to talk with me about?"

Roan was the first one to respond.

"We know that our Dalamu Sect has become one of the triggers for the war after we developed the Communication System. That being said, I would like to hear your opinion about what will happen in the fight for the throne. At the very least, how long you think it will take for the emperor to make a decision."

Huan was surprised to hear that. However, he also knew of the communication system and the repercussions it brought up. He just didn't expect that these two young boys would bring this kind of issue up. After all, a sect would try to keep this kind of situation out of the ears of such young geniuses like them.

"Why should I tell you about the Imperial Family? This would be seen as an act of betrayal, you know?"

Rean shook his head in response.

"There is no need to be afraid. I'm marrying Qia, a direct descendant of the Imperial Bloodline. I'm not considered an outsider anymore. It's just that getting this kind of information from someone else would be too biased."

Huan pondered for a bit before laughing.

"It seems like you came well prepared for this chat, huh? Very well, let me tell you what I think."

Rean and Roan were taken aback by that. They didn't really expect Huan to accept that easily. Well, it was still a good thing, so they didn't complain.

Death... and me

Chapter 457: Shock

Huan could tell what the twins were thinking.

"Did you think I would refuse to answer until the very end?"

Rean and Roan nodded straight away, which made Huan laugh.

"Hehe... Well, I wouldn't do such a thing in normal circumstances. However, this is anything but normal circumstances, to begin with."

Huan then looked at the twins before asking.

"First, tell me what you know so far. I'll talk about my part after that."

The twins nodded as they told him what they found out. Of course, they didn't say how they got all the information.

"I see... First, it is not wrong to say that the situation won't reach a breaking point anytime soon. This is just speculation from someone who's watching from the sidelines. Still, I believe that a successor won't appear during the next few years. After all, the Emperor isn't that bad."

Rean immediately asked.

"So the emperor is really dying?"

Huan laughed at those words.

"Dying? Hahaha! Well, it's not like you're totally wrong. That's all I can say."

Roan narrowed his eyes. Not totally wrong? What does that mean? He really wanted to know. After that, he asked something else.

"Who do you think will ascend to the throne in the end?"

Huan shrugged his shoulders as he replied.

"Who knows? The Emperor hasn't shown any preferences so far. Otherwise, you would have seen a crown prince or princess already."

Rean didn't like the answer, though.

"Come on, Prime Minister Huan. You are the closest person to the Emperor, so you should have an idea at the very least, right?"

Roan obviously thought the same thing as Rean.

Huan looked at Rean before smiling.

"Well, I won't say that he doesn't have any idea. Still, even he isn't sure about it yet."

"Who is it?"

Huan shook his head as he said.

"He didn't tell me. I'm not lying. I really don't know who it is. It's just that he only has an idea in mind."

Roan nodded as he asked.

"I understand. So, you're thinking of the same thing as the Alchemist Guild. The next Emperor or Empress won't appear anytime soon. Would you give it a decade?"

Huan nodded.

"With the way things are going, that would be indeed a good estimate."

Rean also added.

"In that case, who are you planning to side with? Is it really true that you will only side with the person the Emperor chooses?"

Huan pondered for a bit before saying.

"Not really. The Emperor didn't make me the Prime Minister so that I could be his puppet. We are friends, but when it comes to the Empire's future, I have the freedom to do whatever I want. If I see that his choice is poor, I will refute it. You must remember that it isn't just because the Emperor selected someone that he or she will become the next sovereign. He also needs the approval of the court. At the same time, his selection would need to gain the recognition of the rest of the direct competitors."

Rean and Roan nodded. With an empire at this size, the Emperor's decision would indeed weigh a lot. Still, he can't just ignore everyone else.

Roan then looked at Rean before he nodded. Rean understood his meaning, so he went ahead with the next part of the plan.

"What if I say that a new competitor for the throne would appear soon? Would you believe me?"

Huan's expression changed for a second before it quickly returned to normal.

"A new competitor? Who are you talking about?"

"Calina Sasamil."

"Calina..."

Huan thought about that name for a moment before asking.

"Isn't that the name of the half-blood direct descendant who died?"

Rean nodded.

"The one and the same. Calina hasn't died, though. She is very well alive and kicking."

"Oh! Now that I think about it, the place she died was really located in the region of your Jialin Country. So she faked her death, huh?"

Rean nodded as he said.

"You don't seem that surprised."

Huan laughed in response as he said.

"Well, she is far from being the first one doing it. This is a war for the throne, after all. Still, it is not a good thing to fool the Imperial Family, you know?"

Rean smiled, not caring too much.

"It's fine. There's one thing about the information you can get that isn't wrong. Calina was really targeted because of her half-Chrole bloodline. If we didn't intervene by coincidence, she would be dead already. It shouldn't be a surprise for someone of your status that Chrole Bloodline descendants are being targeted, right?"

Huan didn't mind confirming it.

"I see what you mean. That is Calina's way of keeping herself alive. By the way, was it her who sent the two of you here?"

Rean nodded, not mind that lie at all. Their plan was to make Calina the next Empress, so they had to make it look like she was planning everything.

"I see. Well, what makes you think Calina has a chance of taking the throne to begin with? She has no influence whatsoever. Her being considered dead wouldn't help with that either."

Roan then looked at Huan before saying.

"It's quite simple. Once the Emperor makes his move, one's influence will matter little."

Eventually, an expression of shock appeared on Huan's face as he looked at the twins. However, he quickly noticed a faint smile appearing on the twins' faces. He, the Prime Minister, had fallen for their trap. His expression quickly returned to normal before saying with a displeased voice.

"You have quite the guts to play with me like that, you know?"

Roan always thought that the Emperor would make a move. Rean didn't have a reason to doubt it either. All the information they had been collecting so far was to guarantee that they would be ready for it. Still, neither of them had any confirmation... until now. Huan's expression when they mentioned that was all the confirmation they needed. From now on, they could work on this line of thought.

Death... and me

Chapter 458: It's Your Job!

Rean then laughed as he said.

"It's fine, it's fine. No one's here to eavesdrop anyway, so who cares? If you're afraid that we will spread this news, rest assured. It won't happen. Well, it's not like someone would believe us anyway."

Huan then mentioned.

"I could destroy your plans by simply spreading the news that Calina is alive, you know? I have no doubt that the First Prince's faction would be more than willing to go after her in your Dalamu Sect's territory."

Rean shook his head as he said.

"That would be the same as saying that you want to take one side. After all, they would mean you messed with one of the candidates' plans for this throne fight."

Huan shrugged his shoulders in response.

"I can simply use someone else to spread this news without others knowing that I did it."

Rean still didn't seem to care.

"That would still mean that you want to choose a different side. Others might not know of it, but you do. Are you really going to step over your pride to bring this news out?"

Huan snorted as he asked.

"Are you waging a war of words with me, boy?"

"Hahaha! As long as it works, then why not? This is a secret meeting that no one knows about anyway."

Huan narrowed his eyes as he looked at the twins once again. Still, he sighed in the end once he thought about Old Worm the previous day. If not for that, he would teach these twins a lesson. He only said that he wouldn't kill them to Werxa. A small beating wouldn't be that much to worry about.

"Whatever. So what if Calina joins the fight later? What does it have to do with me anyway? You said it yourself, right? The princes and princesses' influences won't matter in the end."

Rean nodded.

"That's not entirely true. You said it yourself as well. If the Emperor's decision is not of your liking, you wouldn't mind refuting it. In that case, even if she is chosen in the end, she will still need your approval."

Huan narrowed his eyes.

"So you want my support. Why should I do it? It's not like she would be better or worse than other candidates. If anything, the others have a lot more experience."

Rean nodded as he said in response to his words.

"They do. However, most of them still wish to attack Chrole. However, that would be the most idiotic option out of all of the possible options. Calina, on the other hand, has a half bloodline between Chrole and Sasamil. She is perfect for mediating this conflict once she is chosen by the Emperor. Chrole would have a reason to at least hear what she says, and Sasamil would be hers, to begin with."

Huan shook his head as he asked.

"Do you think it would be that simple?"

Rean smiled once more.

"According to this answer of yours, it seems like you also don't wish for this war to happen."

Huan didn't mind.

"Obviously. Still, I do understand the other princes and princesses as well. The Chrole bloodline had spread inside the Imperial Family. Only now, with this huge opposition, it ceased to happen. Them being afraid of Chrole taking over Sasamil isn't totally unfounded. If Calina, a half-bloodline, really is chosen by the Emperor, everyone would become even more concerned."

Rean didn't deny that.

"That's true. However, this is an inevitable step whether everyone likes it or not. Without seeing what Calina will do for the Empire first, you can't expect people to simply accept her out of nowhere. This is an Empire. Changing the opinion of others is not something that can be done in just a few days. It will take years of effort, as everything else does."

Huan then asked the twins.

"And what if she really decides to side with them and push the Empire into a fusion with Chrole? Can you guarantee that she won't change her mind? Don't try to be naive here. The Imperial Family members themselves wanted her dead. Would she have a reason to wish for their wellbeing?"

Rean couldn't answer that. After all, he can't predict the future. Calina seemed to be deadset on stopping this possible war. However, does it mean that she doesn't want both empires to be together? Even if she doesn't for now, what about the future? There is no doubt that she will receive harsh treatment from most Imperial Family Members if she succeeded in taking the throne. Would her heart not waver to the Chrole side at that time?

Rean then gritted his teeth as he pointed at Huan.

"That's where you come in! You, more than anyone else, must support her so that she will never think about such a thing!"

"What?!"

Huan was taken aback by that answer.

"Are you throwing all the weight on my back, just like that?"

Rean didn't care as he continued.

"That's the only way out if you don't want her to change her mind in the end. You are the Prime Minister, so act like one. Give your support to the Empress. Or at least, do it as long as the sovereign is doing their best for the Empire. That's your job!"

Huan felt a headache coming.

"Do you even know how complicated such a thing would be? Don't speak as if all that is needed is to have my support."

"It's not only your support. At that point, if the Emperor is still alive, he will be supporting her as well. The Prime Minister and the previous Emperor. Although that is far from being enough, that's an excellent start. I'll be honest here. I don't think the Emperor wishes for a war either."

Huan was speechless as he thought about the talk with Old Worm.

'Is this why you were so interested in them? Fine, I admit. They are interesting... and fucking annoying as well!'

Huan then massaged his temples as he replied.

"My support will be given to the one who deserves it. That's all I can say. If Calina can prove herself, then I might consider the idea. Let's see what happens when the time comes."

Rean sighed in relief as he looked at Roan. This was his idea to start with, so Roan decided to stay by the sides and just observe till the very end.

Death... and me

Chapter 459: Going Back

"As long as you keep her in mind, then that's okay. She has the talent and the resolve to do it."

Huan shrugged his shoulders as he replied.

"That's what you're saying, not me. I only believe in what I see, and the First and Fifth Princes are the best ones so far. Even if it turns into a war, in the end, I will still select the one I think that's best suited for it."

Rean and Roan nodded.

"Well, is that all you wanted to ask? I have a court session this afternoon, so I can't waste too much time here. I've seen everything I wanted already, after all."

Rean then continued.

"Well, you probably won't answer it anyway. I want to know what happened to Vagro Sasamil and his wife. They are Calina's parents, after all. I know that it seems like Vagro tried to start a coup, but this story doesn't seem right. The only thing I'm certain is that they are alive."

Huan pondered for a bit before saying.

"You're right. I can't tell you anything about that. Anything else?"

The twins shook their heads. They really didn't expect to get an answer to that question anyway. Still, Roan got his confirmation about the time, while Rean got to put Calina into the man's head. That was basically everything they came here for. Well, they didn't even think they could have a chance to meet Huan before, so the current situation was already great.

"Very well. Let me call that annoying guy back."

A few moments later, Werxa returned to the garden and sighed in relief. The twins seemed to be fine, which was what he cared most about.

"So, will you still not tell me what that was all about?"

Huan shook his head.

"It has nothing to do with you. Anyway, you three can leave already. Remember, this meeting never happened."

Werxa, Rean, and Roan then went to the exit, soon leaving Huan's mansion through the same secret passage as before. Huan then stayed there, looking at the cup of tea.

"How long will you keep looking? Come out already."

As soon as Huan said that, Old Worm then appeared in the garden like a ghost.

"So, what do you think?"

Huan glanced at him before saying.

"Are they really just 16 years old? It doesn't seem like that. First of all, how can they cultivate that fast without a Light or Darkness cultivation manual?"

Old Worm nodded as he said.

"I know. That's why they're interesting. Rean and Roan definitely have some secrets hidden, but I won't pry into it. Everyone has their own secrets, after all."

Huan sighed and added.

"Alright. I have to admit that the Light and Dark Element exchange was intriguing. I just don't understand why they want to promote Calina to the throne. Was it really her who convinced those two to follow her? It doesn't matter how I look into it. They don't seem the type that cares about imperial power."

Old Worm shook his head as he responded.

"It's not like having a member of the Imperial Family owing them is bad either."

Huan narrowed his eyes before letting out a sigh.

"Fine. Let's just see what will happen in the future, then. Perhaps they have some connection to the prophecy. I'm going to the court session."

Old Worm nodded and immediately left the garden without anyone noticing.

Back at Rean and Roan's side, Werxa showered them with questions. Of course, they didn't say anything related to the conversation, much to Werxa's displeasure.

"Fine. Anyway, let's go back to the guild. You need to come out the same way you entered to not raise suspicion."

After they came back, Rean and Roan bid their farewells before leaving the Alchemist Guild.

On the way back, the two talked through their Soul Connection.

'What do you think?'

'Huan accepted the information way too easily.'

'So you also think that way. I thought Huan would laugh it out and not take my claims about Calina to heart.'

Roan nodded.

'I can't help but feel like he was expecting that.'

Rean agreed with him.

'He said that it wasn't anything rare for direct descendants to fake their deaths during the fight for the throne. Still, he took it too lightly.'

'Do you think he already knew about Calina's fake death? If so, then he also knows where she is and what she's doing.'

Roan shook his head in response.

'I don't know. However, there is one thing bothering me.'

Rean knew what he wanted to say.

'The fact that he agreed to at least consider Calina's position even though her father tried a coup not long ago, right?'

Roan nodded.

'In normal circumstances, Huan wouldn't even try to hear you since that coup was a bad stain on Calina's records. Once she tried to ascend to the throne, others would definitely point it out. That and the fact that she has a half-Chrole bloodline would make most people immediately give up.'

Rean sighed after hearing that.

'It is as we thought. There is a lot more behind this event between Vagro and the Emperor.'

Roan agreed with him.

'In any case, we can just wait for the changes to happen to see how we will deal with it. For now, our main objective here in the capital could be said to have been completed. Let's just finish the rest of the arrangements from now on.'

'Alright. Mom and Dad should arrive anytime soon, so let's go back.'

The two then sped up to the teleport formation and went back to the Dalamu Sect's residence in the Inner City.

Sure enough, it was like they were informed. Sometime after they arrived, an enormous flying demon beast appeared above the Dalamu Sect's residence. Normally, such a thing wouldn't be permitted unless the demon beast was at the 7th stage and accompanied by another Saint Realm cultivator. However, it had the crest of the Sasamil Imperial Family, so it was allowed to ignore those rules.

On top of the bird, one could see a few people. Rean and Roan only needed a single glance to identify two of them, their parents in this world.

Death... and me

Chapter 460: Helping Out

The flying demon beast quickly landed on the garden of the residence. Turen and Harmalia then came down as they looked around their surroundings with curious eyes. They had never gone further than the closest city of the Varen Tribe, Astreg. But right now, not only did they leave the country in one go, but they were also brought to the Imperial Capital.

They still hadn't taken everything in. After all, their knowledge about the Empire was basically nil. That showed just how isolated the Varen Tribe was. Even Jury only knew about their Empire's name. He had no idea how to get there. Sure enough, Jury also came together as the representative of their Varen Tribe. Alanda then stayed behind to act as the interim head of the tribe.

The twins then came forward to see them.

"Mom, dad, you finally arrived."

Harmalia's eyes lit up as she spotted her kids.

"Rean, Roan!"

They could see her holding their little sister in her arms, who had grown quite a bit in the past year or so. Harmalia then put Rana down and quickly hugged the two.

"Why do I have to always wait a few years every time to see you two? You should come and visit us more often, not the other way around."

Rean smiled as he apologized.

"Sorry, mom. But look, I got to bring you to the capital of the Empire, didn't I? I even got you a daughter-in-law who's a princess."

Roan snorted after hearing that but didn't comment. He knew better than anyone else how much Rean didn't want that to happen.

"What, you have a problem?"

"Nope. I hope you two will be happy for life and that your mutual love grows even bigger."

Rean's mouth twitched, but he didn't talk back.

Turen then put his hand on Rean's shoulders before asking.

"So, tell me. Is it true that you impregnated a princess?"

Rean almost vomited blood. He had already forgotten about that rumor after the exam.

"Ahem... Don't worry, that's all just a misunderstanding. Qia is not pregnant at all."

Harmalia narrowed her eyes as she said.

"Explain everything. Don't hide anything from us. What the hell happened?"

Rean could only repeat the same excuse as always, pretending that they were really in love with each other and all that. Roan enjoyed seeing Rean doing that since he knew that Rean didn't want to do it.

"I see. To be honest, your mother still doesn't know very well what it means to marry a princess of the Empire."

Turen agreed with her as he added.

"We only began to get an idea after we entered this city and got to fly on that demon beast. Is the Empire really that powerful? How much stronger is it than Jialin?"

Rean laughed out loud in response. But just as he was about to answer, a little hand grabbed his and Roan's clothes. They looked down and saw the little girl looking at them with curious eyes.

Rean couldn't help but get down to take Rana in his arms... or so he tried. Unfortunately, Roan was faster.

"Don't get close to her. Those who impregnate women before marriage are not good examples."

Roan then looked at the little girl with a faint smile before saying.

"Rana, your brother is a playboy. Make sure you never get close to him."

Rean's eyes went dark.

"Are you looking for a fight?"

Roan snorted as he said.

"You? Can you even do something to me?"

"You might be stronger, but my recovery is faster than yours."

"It will also make you use more energy."

"It's enough as long as I give you a good beating."

"You can try."

Rean then grabbed Roan's robe as he shouted.

"Let me hold her a little!"

Roan didn't give up, though.

"In your dreams!"

Suddenly...

Pah! Pah!

Turen slapped the heads of the twins.

"What kind of example are you showing to her?"

giggle

It was then that they heard a faint laugh coming from the little girl who watched the twins' argument. The two then looked at Rana and couldn't help but smile.

Harmalia was especially surprised since, as their mother, she knew how difficult it was to make Roan smile. The number of times it happened could probably be counted on two hands.

"Well, she seems to like you two even though she hasn't seen you since you left the tribe last time. She is almost two years old, you know?"

Rean and Roan nodded. Soon after, Rean's hand lit up as Light Element gathered on his finger. Roan knew what he was going to do, so he did the same thing. However, his finger had the Dark Element.

They touched the little girl's head, and soon, she fell asleep. Well, it was better to say that she was knocked out.

"What did you do?"

Harmalia became a bit concerned. However, Turen quickly held her back.

"Don't worry, they are her brothers."

Harmalia looked at Turen's smile and calmed down.

Roan then fed a pill to Rana before the twins worked together to clean all her meridians. Roan's Dark Element destroyed any impurity that might be there, while Rean made sure to protect them. If they found any path that didn't seem good, Roan destroyed it, and Rean healed it right after while making sure to achieve the correct form.

This was basically the same effect that Roan infused in his pills. However, with Rean and Roan controlling the Light Element and Dark Elements, it worked several times better. The pill's medicinal liquid was quickly used with the Light Element to achieve the best possible recovery.

Of course, Rana was still two years old and hadn't cultivated yet. Because of that, her meridian paths were still closed. Only after she had gone through the Body Transformation would she finally start to open the channels. Nonetheless, with the twins' help, she would definitely have a much easier time doing so.

As one could imagine, they made her fall to sleep because the Dark Element stung a lot. They didn't want Rana to experience that.