

Death 481

Death... and me

Chapter 481: Short Circuit

Rago looked at the hole and then thought about something.

"Now that I think about it, the people who were first enveloped by this thing weren't pushed away. They were taken inside."

Droman nodded as he responded.

"Exactly. That's one more reason why I think it's a natural formation."

Kocei once again looked at one of his subordinates and ordered.

"Alright, go inside and check if everything is okay."

The man quickly acknowledged and moved in the hole's direction. However, as soon as he tried to pass through it, the formation seemed to gain life as multiple arcs of red lightning spread around the hole. Those arcs then aimed at the guy, quickly obliterating him down.

The guy simply didn't have the chance to defend himself as he was sent flying by the attack.

Boom!

He crashed to the ground at such an extreme amount of force that a crater spanning a few meters appeared around him.

"What?! Impossible! That shouldn't have happened!"

Droman didn't know what to say. He was sure that the hole was safe to pass, so why did that happen?

Rean didn't waste his time and immediately moved in the guy's direction. The man's body was completely charred, his breath incredibly faint. They only knew he was alive because they could feel it through their Spiritual Sense. However, he definitely wouldn't last long like that.

Although Rean moved quickly, Kocei was even faster. He quickly took a healing pill from his bag and fed the man. Immediately, the pill began to take effect as the healing properties spread around his body.

Of course, Rean still gave his support when he got close.

'Life Style, Second Form, Instant Recovery.'

Everyone looked as Kocei's subordinate healing slowly. This time, even Rean had problems healing the guy. The injuries were too severe, and the difference in their cultivation was too big. It took quite some time before Rean's Light Energy was able to stabilize the guy's condition. However, Rean stopped at that point.

"Alright, that's enough for now."

Kocei narrowed his eyes as he asked.

"Aren't you going to heal him completely like what you did with his hand before?"

Rean shook his head as he replied.

"The difference between that hand injury and this one is like heaven and earth. Besides, a lot of Red Lightning Energy is still present in his body. It would take me quite some time to get rid of that. Also... Senior Kocei has noticed it already, right?"

Kocei looked at the man and sighed. How could he not notice? The man's dantian was destroyed in the previous attack. His cultivation was continuously dropping as they spoke. Unfortunately, even Rean's Light Element had no use in that situation. Rean was basically giving Kocei the chance to choose whether it was worth using more pills to heal him or not.

"Just say whatever you want to finish the job. He's a loyal subordinate of our Jialin Royal Family. I can't just pretend that I'm not seeing him."

Rean smiled before saying.

"One Hundred Rank Four Spirit Stones."

Everyone around took a deep breath. Although it wasn't any heaven-defying price, it was still quite expensive. One should remember that even Nascent Soul Realm cultivators have a lot of difficulties gathering that number.

"Aren't you a little too greedy?"

Rean shrugged his shoulders as he answered the question.

"You can also use your own pills to heal him. However, I believe the pill you just fed him before isn't any less expensive than what I just asked you."

Roan was the one who told Rean about that just a moment ago. That's why Rean came up with this idea. Roan had nothing against it since they really needed Rank Four Spirit Stones. After all, the Circuitry Teleport Formation inside the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm used them for teleports over a thousand kilometers.

"But it was your Master who opened the hole."

Rean smiled as he said.

"He never said it was safe. Otherwise, we would have entered it first. You knew very well that there was a risk, but you took it anyway."

"Fine! Take it."

Kocei passed 100 Rank Four Spirit Stones, much to Rean's appreciation.

"Thank you for the support."

Rean's hair changed into black and white as he used Roan's Dark Element to get rid of the Red Lightning Energy in the man's body. At the same time, his Light Element continued to heal him.

'It was indeed a frightening attack. If it was Roan or me, it would have been an instant death.'

Because of the Red Lightning Energy and the difference in cultivation between him and the target, Rean took more than 20 minutes to finish. Eventually, Kocei saw that the guy's body was fine and used his Spiritual Energy to force him to wake up.

The guy slowly opened his eyes and looked around, not knowing what had happened. However, he quickly remembered how he was struck down by the Natural Formation. Following that, he noticed how all the Spiritual Energy was escaping his body nonstop. Only then did he see that his Dantian was no longer there.

"This..."

He was just about to panic when Kocei slapped his head.

Pah!

"Focus on rebuilding your Dantian. You didn't lose your changes from the Body Transformation, so you can create a new dantian straight away. Don't worry, the Royal Family will give you financial support for your cultivation."

The man quickly calmed down and focused his attention on entering the Energy Gathering Realm once again. As he did that, Kocei gave another one of his subordinates an order.

"Bring him back to the Royal Palace and arrange for him to be treated."

"Yes, Ancestor."

Finally, Kocei looked at Droman, who was analyzing the Natural Formation, trying to understand what went wrong.

"Let's leave this shameless disciple of yours aside. What happened with the formation? It's obvious that you also didn't expect that."

Droman nodded as he said.

"Indeed. I also can't understand what's happening here."

Droman wasn't the only one. A few other Formation Masters stepped forward and analyzed the formation with him.

"Droman isn't wrong. That thing shouldn't have happened with a Natural Formation. I saw the runes Droman used, so it should have worked."

"I agree. However, it's a fact that the formation retaliated, but for what reason?"

Rago pondered for a bit before asking.

"You said that a Natural Formation shouldn't have done such a thing. Does it mean that it is not natural?"

Droman and the others were taken aback by that question. However, they quickly reached a conclusion because of that. Droman then looked at the Rohe and Royal Family Formation Masters before asking.

"Are you guys thinking the same thing as me?"

"Yes. That's the only explanation possible."

"I also think the same thing."

Everyone looked with puzzled expressions at the three Formation Masters, waiting for them to explain.

Finally, the Royal Family Formation Master looked at everyone else.

"If we're not mistaken, someone's controlling it. However, this is, without a doubt, a Natural Formation. I would say that someone is at the Natural Core of this formation, controlling it to prevent others from entering."

Mia couldn't help but ask.

"Is it possible to control a Natural Formation?"

"It is. However, one must spend a very long time analyzing it. After all, Natural Formations are agglomerations of coincidences that turn into Formation Runes. They are completely random. Naturally, it is excruciatingly difficult for us Formation Masters to understand it."

Everyone could tell where it was going.

"A very long time. That meant someone knew about this formation's existence and had been studying it for a very long time. However, we don't know who or why."

Zuan then sent a Spiritual Sense Message to Rean, Roan, Old Worm, Droman, and Mia.

'Do you guys think it has something to do with the Chrole Empire?'

Mia shook her head, responding.

'I don't think so. It's too flashy! Although we're much closer to the Chrole Empire's border in the north than the Capital, this is already quite far.'

Old Worm agreed with Mia.

'What's the point in building this thing in such a remote place? That would give them no advantage at all.'

Roan nodded as well.

'Indeed. We are far from everything that could be considered important to the Empire. There are three more countries to pass by from the Chrole Empire to reach this place. From a strategic point of view, starting something in this place would be useless. At most, it could be used as a distraction for another event, and even so, it would be quite a poor choice of placement.'

'Of course, I'm only saying this relying on the information we have at the moment. I can't guarantee that it's like this. Who knows, there might be some heaven-defying treasure capable of destroying countries inside this thing or whatever...'

Zuan narrowed his eyes.

'A treasure, huh? Considering how big this thing is, it might really be related to a treasure. After all, there are natural treasures in this world. It's just that they're far rarer than Natural Formations.'

Their Spiritual Sense message only lasted a second or two. Soon after, Droman went back to work with the two other Formation Masters.

"This is still a Natural Formation. Even if someone is using the core to control this thing, it isn't easy at all."

"Correct. We should be able to come up with a way to conceal our presence as we pass through."

"What about the Red Lightning? Wouldn't we be easy prey inside this thing?"

"That's fine. The Red Lightning Energy is accumulated in the red barrier alone. As long as we don't get too close to the barrier, it won't target us."

Of course, no one knew what to expect inside after passing through that thing.

Rago then asked something else.

"Wait, won't that take forever for you three to do it?"

Droman and the other two Formation Masters nodded. They would indeed need some time.

However, it was then that Droman received a Spiritual Sense message from Rean.

'Master, just create a short circuit.'

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Chapter 482: We are going too

Droman felt like he was struck by lightning. In the past, he wouldn't even know what a short circuit meant. However, he had heard and experienced it way too many times already.

'Would it work here?'

Rean nodded.

'It should work, no? Red Lightning is still electricity. Fortunately, this is a Natural Formation. All that happens is natural, so those who are controlling it won't be able to deal with this problem. In any case, it's not like we have a much better idea.'

Rean already asked Sister Orb about her ability to control it, however...

[Are you crazy? Do you have any idea just how gigantic this thing is? Worst of all, it doesn't follow any manmade pattern. I won't say it's impossible, but with the Soul Gem System's actual processing power, I believe it would take over a year to simply finish analyzing it, let alone controlling it. I don't think anyone here wants to wait that long.]

That's why Rean decided to try a short circuit in the formation instead.

Droman then looked around with his Spiritual Sense and quickly found a few low-level demon beasts and other animals. He needed to check the Lightning Current first, so those beasts would need to be the sacrifice.

Droman then left the other Formation Masters behind for a moment. A few minutes later, he brought a lot of those beasts to test.

"Droman, what are you doing?"

"I have an idea. Get away from the barrier. I need to test something."

The other Formation Masters looked at each other and nodded. Not long after, Droman used the same method as before and opened another hole in the Formation.

"There you go!"

He then threw the demon beasts through it. Sure enough, the Red Lightning quickly gathered around the hole, striking the demon beasts soon after. Rean and Droman then paid close attention to it. Naturally, the rest of the people were puzzled by Droman's actions. It was as if he liked to see the demon beasts being killed by that.

"Alright, this should be enough."

Droman came down and immediately began to draw a new formation. This one used a few concepts from the Circuitry Formations but wasn't really considered part of them. The other Formation Masters looked at his Formation and became perplexed. They could tell that Droman was making a Lightning-type Formation. However, they had never seen the one he was making before.

"Still, it seems to be quite weak. Is he planning to use Lightning against Lightning?"

"That would be useless. If there's one thing this barrier is good at, it's Lightning Type attacks. Besides, if just attacking the barrier was enough, the Saint Realm ancestors would have broken through it a long time ago."

Of course, Zuan, Kocej, and Rago tried that already when they went up to check how tall the red barrier is. Unfortunately, their strongest attacks couldn't even scratch the barrier.

Droman ignored everyone as he worked on the formation. Thankfully, it was quite a simple one. It's just that others wouldn't be able to recognize it. That being said, it only took him a few minutes to finish making it.

Rean and Qia also understood that Formation very well, so they knew it would work just fine. The only doubt was whether Droman could create a short circuit against the Red Lightning.

"Alright. Let's try it out!"

Droman put a few Rank Two Spirit Stones in the formation before activating it. Following that, the Formation generated a specific type of Electrical Current, which was then transformed into Lightning that struck the barrier.

The barrier immediately noticed the incoming attack as Red Lightning gathered in front of it.

Judging by the power shown by the two formations, anyone could tell which one would lose. Droman's Lightning Strike was hundreds, if not thousands of times weaker than the barrier. Neither the Formation Masters nor the other cultivators expected it to work at all. However, it was then that something incredible happened.

The Red Lightning easily held Droman's Lightning back. Unfortunately, it began to act strange soon after. Red Lightning then began to accumulate on the position where the attack was made. Seeing that, Droman immediately warned everyone.

"Get back!"

There was no need to say that twice. Everyone saw what happened to the last guy who was struck by the Red Lightning, so no one would be idiotic enough to stay close.

Red Lightning continued to accumulate in that place. The Formation Masters finally understood that the Red Lightning was turning chaotic. A few moments later...

Boom!

An enormous explosion of Red Lightning Spread throughout the red barrier, followed by an intense red light. Everyone had to close their eyes due to how bright it was. A chain reaction seemed to occur as the entire thing several kilometers around the center point suffered the same fate. The next time they opened their eyes, the area around the initial attack was wiped out. As for the red barrier itself, there was a gigantic gap expanding tens of kilometers. Of course, compared to the red barrier's size, several tens of kilometers was basically nothing.

"This..."

"How did such a weak formation achieve this result?"

"That explosion was frightening..."

Droman ignored everyone, though. He quickly grabbed another demon beast and shot it through the gap in the red barrier. This time, however, no Red Lightning came down as the Demon Beast landed far inside.

"It worked!"

"Great!"

"We can finally enter!"

"Wait, should we really enter?"

"What, are you going to stay outside? Fine by me. If there's any treasure in there, it'll be easier for me to get it."

"Hmph! We'll see about that."

Droman didn't care about those words.

"Look at the Barrier. It's recovering."

Zuan noticed something else as well.

"That's not all. Look at the demon beast you threw inside the barrier."

Everyone then followed Zuan's eyes, looking at the demon beast. At the moment, it began to move extremely fast. They all knew that it was nothing more than a Stage One demon beast, so how could it achieve such a speed?

"Wrong. It's not that it became faster all of a sudden. Pay attention to its movement. It feels more like I'm seeing an accelerated jade slip recording."

"This..."

"It's true."

Everyone couldn't believe what they were seeing. However, one thing was obvious. The time flow inside the barrier was several times faster.

Droman couldn't help but comment.

"Time is the only thing that even Formation Masters can't deal with."

The other two agreed with him.

"I've heard about the legends that the ascenders can use it, but I thought it was a joke."

"You aren't the only one. I really can't fathom how it's happening."

Everyone looked at that with startled expressions. However, Kocei and the other ancestors quickly recovered.

"That doesn't matter right now. What we need to know is whether we should enter or not. From what I can see, that demon beast moves at least 15 times faster than it should. So we should expect a time flow increase of that magnitude."

Zuan shook his head as he said.

"This is just the border of the red barrier. There's a chance that the effects would become even stronger as we go further inside."

Rago agreed with Zuan.

"I'm sorry, but I won't be able to accompany you. I have my Rohe Sect to take care of, after all."

Kocej and Zuan didn't find that strange. In fact, neither of the two intended to enter that thing either. The Royal Family had only two Saint Realm cultivators, so losing Kocej would be a massive blow to them. Let alone Zuan and Rago, who were the only Saint Realm cultivators of their sects.

Suddenly, another group of cultivators began to approach them. Not only one, but two different groups.

"It's the Lagan Sect and Laan Sect."

Laan Sect was the newly created sect after Jialin won the war. Their two Saint Realm cultivators came from Laan City that disappeared in the past. Well, only one of those two came this time, Fuka. As for the Lagan Sect, Burin Falan was their only Saint Realm expert, so he was obviously the one who came.

"That was quite the explosion. Thanks to that, we finally found you guys," said Fuka from the Laan Sect.

Zuan shrugged his shoulders, not finding it strange.

"Well, this is a problem that involves all sects of our countries. In fact, I can already imagine other countries taking action as well since this barrier also invaded their territory. It's good that you arrived."

Burin then asked.

"What about the Imperial Family? Should we warn them?"

Qia, who had been close to Tiria and Zuan all this time, nodded.

"Hello, seniors. I'm Qia Sasamil. I already used a Thoughts Transmission Talisman to tell them about what is happening here. However, the capital is that far, so they will take some time to arrive."

The others then looked at Qia and Rean. Sure enough, they also received the information that Rean married a Sasamil Family Member, and a direct descendant at that. Even the Umbral Sect dropped any ideas of trying something against the twins after that.

"Oh! Nice to meet you, princess."

Those ancestors then introduced themselves to her. Of course, due to their difference in cultivation, they didn't overdo things, nor Qia wished for that. After that, Zuan gave them a quick explanation of what they found so far through a Spiritual Sense Message.

Droman warned everyone in sequence.

"The barrier is closing. What are the ancestors' decisions?"

Zuan, Kocej, Fuka, Burin, and Rago pondered for a bit before saying.

"Let's each send a team to check things. That's the best we can do."

Rean and Roan, of course, contacted Zuan with a Spiritual Sense Message.

'We're going inside with them.'

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Chapter 483: Where are the Twins?

Zuan shook his head as he replied.

'Out of the question. You should understand how important you are to the sect at the moment. I can't allow anything to happen to you two. Simply put, you two are too weak.'

Roan didn't care what he said as he retaliated with his own response.

'How many Nascent Soul Experts do you have here, to begin with? We both know that you won't send all of them. After all, if something happens to them, it would be a great loss for the sect. You and the others will have to gather Core Formation or Core and Soul Fusion Realm experts to make up for the Nascent Souls' low numbers.'

Rean agreed with Roan.

'Back when we were at the Initial Stage of the Core Formation Realm, we combined were already able to fight at the Core and Soul Fusion Realm level. Let alone now that we are in the Middle Stage. Don't worry, we have our own way to escape danger if something happens.'

Zuan snorted in response as he remained adamant in his decision.

'I don't care. I'm definitely not risking your lives. Do you hear me?'

Rean and Roan sighed but didn't say anything else. Of course, they wanted to enter because Malaka and Calina were there. Their lives depended on Calina on top of that. The fact that they were still alive showed that Calina was alive as well. However, they didn't know for how long that would be the case.

'Alright. Sorry for asking, Elder Zuan.'

Zuan nodded, satisfied. It was already a significant exception to bring them here, to begin with.

Well, the fact was that Rean and Roan already expected that answer. They only tried it just to be sure. Since it didn't work, they would need to enter it by themselves. And with that...

'Sister Orb, this thing won't block the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm's Circuitry Teleport Formation, right?'

[Obviously. This thing is not a spatial formation to start with, so why would it be able to block you outside? However, without a save point, it can only teleport you randomly in the direction you want. I can't guarantee anything else after that.]

The twins nodded, not minding it too much. Even if they were teleported inside the earth, they can use their own strength and come out slowly. Although Earth Element wasn't their forte, it isn't as if they couldn't use it.

Rean and Roan then turned around and sat by a corner as they waited. Zuan and the others saw it and nodded. Zuan knew that their sister was in there, but the twins' lives were a lot more important. Not to mention that unlike other missions, the other powers would notice the twins straight away if they entered. That wouldn't be good if they were targeted inside.

Zuan then returned his attention to the selection of the teams. In the end, he and Mia decided to use Tiria and Juvian. Those two were already used to working together, so this Nascent Soul Realm combination could prove to be great in an emergency. After that, he went through the Core and Soul Fusion and Core Formation Realm elders and disciples.

There were a few familiar figures in this group, like Elder Hulian from the Iron and Blood Faction and Odeni Fuller from the Sect Entrance Exam. Between the Core Formation Realm cultivators, it was possible to recognize a few Inner Sect disciples that they fought against before.

The other sects quickly finished selecting their own members as well. It was just that by now, the red barrier had already closed. Well, it mattered little since Droman simply created another short circuit. Just like that, another enormous gap was opened once again, however...

"We better not do this too many times. This is a Natural Formation, so it can adapt. The gap created using my method was only half of the size of the previous one."

Rean almost laughed out loud when he heard that. Not only him, but Qia was doing her best to do the same. They knew that Droman was lying. All he did was change the current to another type. It was such a subtle detail that no one else noticed. However, the couple definitely did since they knew it very well. Droman was just trying to make his ability more valuable.

Nonetheless, the gap was already created. The experts could only grit their teeth and enter straight away. Zuan and the others looked as those people passed through the gap and suddenly accelerated. Well, they knew that it was just the time acceleration inside that made it look like it. Eventually, the barrier closed again, and they were not able to see anything else anymore.

"By the way, how will we know if they decide to leave?"

Droman appeased that cultivator.

"Don't worry. As long as you strike the red barrier, it will retaliate with that Red Lightning. Once I see that happening, I can make the same formation to open a gap once again."

The other two Formation Masters couldn't help but ask.

"By the way, what kind of formation is that? I've never seen that arrangement of runes before."

Droman laughed in response as he said.

"Right? Unfortunately, it's a secret, so I can't tell you."

Mia ignored that as she looked at the barrier.

"All we can do now is wait. Fortunately, it shouldn't take too long to obtain some results."

Kocej nodded.

"True. Since the time inside seems to be at least ten times higher, the events in there will happen a lot sooner for us outside."

Zuan also added his own comments.

"In any case, we're just vanguards. When the experts of the Imperial Family or other interested countries arrive, more of them will enter this thing. I just hope they have another way to get inside since Droman can't use the same formation forever."

"The Imperial Family probably has its own ways. Even our Formation Masters were confident that they could pass through it, let alone them. I wouldn't be surprised if the Imperial Family's Formation Masters have a method as fast as Droman's to get in there."

It was at this moment that Zuan noticed a problem.

"Hmm? Where are the twins?"

Mia, Droman, Qia, and the others felt a chill on their backs. They quickly looked to the side where they were sitting just a moment ago. However, because they were all concerned with the red barrier striking back at the experts entering it, they forgot the twins for a moment.

Rean and Roan already expected that it would happen, so they sat in a place where they knew they would be forgotten, even if for just a moment. They sat quite far in the back, far away from the natural formation. Rean then kept his Radar Skill on, waiting for a moment that the experts' Spiritual Senses relaxed their attention on them. Obviously, they took that chance to enter the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm without even a single person noticing it.

"Did they enter through the gap as well?"

"Impossible! We were all looking directly at it with both of our eyes and Spiritual Senses. Do you think two Core Formation Realm brats could avoid our detection?"

"But it's a fact that they disappeared. At the very least, I can't see them with my Spiritual Sense."

Of course, this conversation was only happening among the Dalamu Sect's members. The other sects still haven't noticed the twins' disappearance. Well, they weren't paying attention to the twins to start with.

Zuan spread his Spiritual Sense everywhere, but even his Saint Realm cultivation couldn't find them.

"Those idiots!"

Even though they didn't see it, Zuan, Mia, Droman, and Qia were sure that they definitely entered the natural formation. The only question was how...

Going one day back in time, when the natural formation first appeared. Or better, ten or so days' time inside the formation...

Calina and Malaka were blinded by the red light of the formation, not seeing anything. The same thing happened to Kuana, her friends, and the other cultivators at the valley entrance. However, Calina quickly noticed that bright light disappear as something embraced her together with the other girls.

Immediately, she heard Malaka's voice.

"Don't worry, it's Kentucky. He's covering us with his wings."

That warning wasn't for Calina since she also understood that straight away. Malaka was talking to Kuana, Laffey, and Cassia. Because they were too close to each other, Kentucky didn't try to separate them. There wasn't enough time, so he took all five inside.

Kuana's group quickly calmed down as they waited. It was still possible to see the intense red light coming from the gaps in Kentucky's wings. Finally, the red light began to disappear around a minute later. Only then did Kentucky open his wings again.

Malaka and the other girls looked around and saw that all the camps had been swept away. As for the cultivators, they were still alive but had obtained a few injuries. The only ones who seemed to be fine were those who had methods to protect themselves or those who had higher cultivation like the Core and Soul Fusion Realm experts.

"Kentucky, are you okay?"

Malaka looked at the demon beast and saw some of his feathers and scales had some smoke coming out of them. Those were the ones that stayed outside.

Chick! Chick!

Kentucky then flapped his wings to cool them down. From the looks of it, it was nothing more than a hot breeze for the Minokawa.

Kuana's group then looked at the bird before looking at Malaka and Calina.

"Although, it was a coincidence that we were close. I'll thank you for the help."

Malaka quickly hugged Kentucky.

"You did a great job, Kentucky!"

Chick!

The bird then spread its chest as if it was saying. You can count on me!

Calina smiled at that before turning her attention to the surroundings.

"Now then, just what happened here?"

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Chapter 484: Attack!

Quite a few cultivators with paper-thin defense were caught off guard with their guards down and received quite serious injuries, mostly burns. Seeing that, Calina and Malaka immediately tried to help a few of them. Although Water Element wasn't as good as Rean's Light Element, it was still the most commonly used element for healing. Naturally, Calina knew a few healing abilities. As for Malaka, Mia made sure to carve a few of those skills inside the happy-go-lucky girl's brain as well.

Kuana, Cassie, and Laffey couldn't help but ask.

"Shouldn't you two be more worried about yourselves?"

Calina shrugged her shoulders as she replied.

"We are. That's why we are healing them. We might need everyone's strength depending on what's happening here."

Malaka agreed with Calina.

"Look around you. Does it seem like we're safe already? Our entire surroundings are covered in this red light. We better have more people to discuss about it."

Kuana's group pondered for a bit and decided to help as well. It's just that none of them was a Water Element Affinity cultivator, so they couldn't do much.

Suddenly, someone began to talk in the skies.

"Oh! There's a lot of ants here as well. This damned valley has several entrances, so we have cultivators everywhere because of these useless rocks."

Everyone looked above and saw a man floating there. However, he looked quite different from a normal person. His body had several red line patterns that didn't seem to be a tattoo or anything like that. The rest of their skin, however, was very pale, almost like ghosts. That only enhanced the presence of the red lines.

Since he could fly, it was obvious that he was at least in the Core and Soul Fusion Realm. However, the Core and Soul Fusion Realm cultivators in the groups immediately narrowed their eyes. They couldn't feel that person's cultivation at all.

"At least Nascent Soul Realm," said the guy Calina was healing. He then got up, albeit with some difficulty.

"I'm fine, thanks. By the way, you can call me Wamo. Well, better than that, you should think about how to escape this place. I don't think that guy there came with good intentions."

The girls were soon taken aback by those words.

Suddenly, they began to hear sounds of explosions coming from slightly afar. From the looks of it, some battle started somewhere else.

"Oh! They already started. Well, I better finish my job here as well."

Sure enough, the man in the skies began to gather energy, preparing to attack the cultivators below. However, he narrowed his eyes as he looked at a particular location.

"Why don't you introduce yourself?"

Another man then began to float in the air as he stopped in front of the guy.

"I'm an elder of the Yulo Sect, Cimo Gnilore. It was my time to watch over the valley so that things wouldn't go out of control. I can see that you have quite a few friends in the other parts. Who are you guys? How did you create this ridiculously big barrier? What are you planning?"

Some of the cultivators below rejoiced with Cimo's appearance.

"It's Elder Cimo!"

"He's also a Nascent Soul Realm cultivator."

"We're saved!"

The man in the skies ignored the voices below before introducing himself.

"You can call me Troga. As for who I am, what we want, and how we did it, I can't tell you."

It was then that Troga disappeared from his position as he attacked Cimo.

"Impudent!"

Cimo also disappeared as he counterattacked.

Boom, boom, boom!

Immediately, the area around the two Nascent Soul experts transformed into a forbidden zone to the other cultivators.

Calina and the others looked at that and immediately understood. They had to use this chance to escape. As for the injured people, they couldn't worry about them right now.

"Let's go!"

Malaka, Kentucky, and a few other cultivators they helped heal immediately turned around and fled into the forest behind. Calina didn't dare to ask Kentucky to fly since it would only make them a bigger target.

Well, they weren't the only ones. Many other cultivators that could still move also began to flee.

Suddenly, a ray of light crossed the skies as it moved in Cimo and Troga's battle. Soon after, Troga and the new guy began to fight against Cimo.

"Shameless!"

Troga didn't care.

"Hahaha! It was your bad luck to be in this place today. No, in fact, you're quite lucky. After all, we are only Nascent Soul Realm cultivators. Our Soul Forging Realm members are quite busy at the moment."

Troga's friend narrowed his eyes after hearing that. Just like Troga, he also had the same red lines on his body and the ghost pale skin, but with different patterns.

"Troga, don't speak more than you should."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah. This guy won't live for much longer, so who cares? Raro, you're too serious."

Cimo wanted to learn more about these people, but he was at a serious disadvantage. In the end, he could only turn around and flee as well. Troga and Raro immediately followed, much to the cultivators' relief below.

Boom!

Suddenly, an explosion came from the place where some of the cultivators had come from. It turns out that Troga and Raro were just two of the enemy's experts. They had much more of them in hiding. Not only that, but they all had those red line patterns on their bodies, whether they were men or women. It's just that the new ones were not in the Nascent Soul Realm, but in the Core and Soul Fusion and Core Formation Realm.

Calina's group was no different as some of those enemies appeared in front of them.

"Take them down!"

Wamo then took the front and ordered the people around.

"Don't dwell on this. Focus on escaping. If they hold you behind, you will eventually be swallowed by their numbers."

Calina and Malaka finally noticed Wamo's cultivation. It turned out that Wamo was in the Core and Soul Fusion Realm. However, it puzzled Calina. Those in the Core and Soul Fusion Realm should have been able to resist that Red Light with ease. How did he get injured by that?

'Forget it. It's not the time to consider such things.'

Wamo brought his sword out and immediately slashed at one of the enemies.

'Ray Cut!'

Fire and Wind Element gathered around Wamo's Sword as a Fire Blade flew in the enemy's direction. The guy didn't even have time to react as he was cleaved in half before burning to a crisp.

Calina and Malaka couldn't help but think.

'As expected of a Core and Soul Fusion Realm cultivator, he's a Dual Element user. However, this guy is quite strong for his Middle Stage cultivation.'

Nonetheless, it was a good thing for Calina's group.

Malaka and Calina quickly refocused their attention on their own enemies after that. Fortunately, their enemies were in the same cultivation as the two girls.

'Glacial Icicles!'

'Flow of the Dragon Staff!'

Calina's enemy was taken aback by that attack. The Glacial Icicles were several times faster than he imagined. Malaka's opponent was even more frightened since Malaka displayed a level of raw strength far above his own with just her staff.

Calina's enemy tried to step back to defend against her attack when all of a sudden, he noticed he stepped into a pond of water.

"Not good!"

It was too late.

'Water Prison!'

The guy didn't even have enough time to escape as his body was enclosed by the water prison. Immediately, he began to release his attacks, trying to break through the skill.

'Water Blades!'

Unfortunately, hundreds of Water Blades began to attack him from all sides. He could only defend against a few at the same time while he used his Spiritual Energy Barrier to fend the rest off. However, he wouldn't last more than a few seconds like that. Immediately, he sent his companion a Spiritual Sense message.

'Help me!'

Boom!

However, when he used his Spiritual Sense to look at his companion's state, the latter's head was crushed by Malaka's staff. After so many dangerous life and death situations, Malaka had finally got

used to killing. Well, she still hated it, though. But when the time asked for it, she didn't hesitate anymore.

The enemy in the water prison resisted for as long as he could. But in the end, he was cut into several parts by Calina's Water Blades. Once inside the Water Prison, Calina's attacks were really frightening.

It took some time to explain, but all of that happened in just a few seconds.

Wamo looked at that and was also surprised by the two girls' strengths. However, the one that really caught his attention was someone else.

Creee!

Clang, Clang, Clang, Clang...

Kentucky moved like a flash of Black and White Light. Black and White Flames burned around his body as his wings hardened like blades. According to Elder Reliance, Minokawa Feathers can be as sharp as swords, and Kentucky showed that right now.

High speed, sharp blades, and high defense. Kentucky was creating its own slaughtering field. Not only that, but he also knew his own strength very well. Kentucky only targeted those at the Middle Stage of the Core Formation Realm or below. Only those ones would be able to be finished fast enough.

"What is this bird?!"

"Send someone to stop it!"

"We are losing our advantage in numbers!"

Finally, two Peak Core Formation Realm cultivators noticed the issue and attacked Kentucky from the sides.

'Limitless Blade!'

'Fire Dawn!'

One physical and one elemental attack appeared in Kentucky's direction. Wamo saw that and tried to stop the two, but he was immediately stopped in his tracks.

'Earth Spears!'

The spears formed extremely fast, almost piercing through him.

"Your opponent is me!"

Wamo narrowed his eyes. Obviously, that was another Core and Soul Fusion Realm cultivator.

'Seems like I won't be able to give support to the bird.'

However, Kentucky didn't need his help to start with. He had never gone too far from Malaka and Calina, so the two girls were immediately able to provide support.

'Water Dragon Strike!'

'Death Water Style, First Form, Flowing Dragon!'

Death... and me

Chapter 485: You Are Kidding

A Water Dragon made of Water Element came striking down against the enemy's Fire attack. Not only that, but its power was far more frightening thanks to Calina's Yin Energy Support. The enemy was still at the Peak of the Core Formation Realm while Calina was in the Middle Stage. Nevertheless, he was quite unfortunate that Calina was a Water Element user. It was pure common sense that Fire was weaker against Water, so Calina's attack broke through the enemy's attack in a single go.

"What?!"

The guy could only jump back to avoid the Water Dragon Strike from Calina.

Seeing that made Calina smile, though.

Creee!

Suddenly, a Flash of Black and White Flames appeared right where the guy was going to land. Obviously, it was Kentucky. He had gone out with Malaka and Calina for missions several times during these years, so the Minokawa already knew how to react to the girl's support.

In his panic, he could only try to defend as fast as possible.

'Fire Tornado!'

Fire Element gathered around him as it spun at high speeds, forming a fire wall in front of Kentucky. Unfortunately for him, the skill was conjured way too fast, so it didn't have time to form completely before Kentucky's blade-like wings cut through his Spiritual Energy defense and his body right after.

"Im-impossible..."

The guy saw his other half standing there as his upper one fell to the ground. A few moments later, everything went dark for him.

On Malaka's side, she used the same attack she used against Roan back then. It wasn't that he didn't see her, but that he refused to believe that a Middle Stage Core Formation Realm would try to block his Limitless Blade.

Malaka's staff gathered Water Element on its own as Malaka did the same. A Spiritual Water Dragon formed around Malaka's staff soon after. The head of the dragon then opened its mouth as it bit the

enemy's blade. The Limitless Blade hit one side of the Flowing Dragon's head. What the guy didn't expect was that the Flowing Dragon Skill worked like that. It used the force of his own attack to increase the spinning of the Flowing Dragon Tail. With that, the other side of Malaka's staff came crashing down on the guy's head even faster than the Limitless Blade Skill the enemy used.

Bang!

Unlike the guy who used the Fire Dawn attack, this one was using a melee attack. If even Roan couldn't completely avoid this surprise attack back in the Blue Orchid Sect, then let alone this guy. Worse than that, Roan head still mitigated more than half of the attack's power back then. Unfortunately for this guy, his reaction wasn't even close to Roan's.

The staff Rean made for Malaka was obviously an Earth High-Level staff that could gather the Water Element independently. He also used his superior forging method, so it was even better than most Earth Peak-Level weapons. The staff broke through the enemy's Spiritual Energy Barrier as if it was made of glass, hitting his head.

Plash!

Just like the previous enemy, this one also lost its head straight away. Blood spread everywhere as the guy's body fell to the ground.

Wamo, Kuan's group, and the other cultivators around them were taken aback by the two girls and the bird's power. Obviously, they hadn't shown their real strength when fighting those previous enemies before.

"Good job!"

Wano and the others felt reinvigorated as they increased the pressure on the enemies. With the two girls and Kentucky free, they immediately gave support to the others around.

Wano's opponent saw that the situation was turning sour, so he immediately attacked Wano with even more strength. However, the moment Wano avoided the enemy's attack, the guy turned around and aimed one of his skills at Calina, who was the closest to him.

"Not good!"

Wano quickly recovered and flashed in the guy's direction. Unfortunately, he was delayed by the previous feint... or so it seemed.

'Those girls and that bird are quite a frightening group.'

The moment Calina was about to be hit by the enemy's attack, Malaka, Kentucky, and Calina herself turned around and retaliated together. At this moment, everyone could tell that Calina had positioned herself in that position as bait for the Core and Soul Fusion Realm enemy.

'Ice Dragon Strike!'

'Flow of the Dragon Staff!'

Creee!

Malaka and Kentucky were definitely better when it came to speed. So the two arrived in front of Calina in a second. Right above them, Calina's Ice Dragon Strike, which used a lot of Yin Energy to freeze the Water Dragon Strike, came crashing down together with Kentucky and Malaka's attack.

"Impudent! Do you think that your joint attack can make up for the enormous gap in cultivation? Die!"

Earth and Fire Element gathered around his body as the ground under him turned into a pool of lava. Following that, the lava seemed to gain life as it transformed into a wave that aimed at Calina's group.

'Magma Wave!'

However, Malaka and Calina's voice echoed inside the man's head at that very moment.

'Of course, we don't expect to win. However, holding you down for a second won't be a problem.'

The man got a foreboding feeling. One second? That seemed like nothing. However, at his level, one second was basically an eternity. He totally didn't believe that Calina's group could really hold his attack for even one second.

Boom!

Unfortunately for him, he totally underestimated the trio's combination attack. His Magma Wave wasn't just blocked. It even showed signs that it wouldn't breakthrough Calina's group attack at all. Simply put, the two sides entered a momentaneous equilibrium for a second.

Unfortunately, one second was more than enough.

'King's Fire Sword!'

Wano's speed suddenly increased far beyond what he had shown so far, arriving at the enemy's back in a split second. His sword burst forth with Fire and Wind Elements, slashing the enemy's Spiritual Protection in one go.

"Nooooo!"

Swish!

One head was then sent flying, but no blood came out. The scourging flames of Wano's sword cauterized the injury instantly. Sure enough, Calina was right. Wano was much stronger than his cultivation showed. Calina exactly betted on this hidden strength.

With the only Core and Soul Fusion Realm cultivator on the enemy's side dying, the rest of them immediately turned around to flee. Their mission was to hold these people down long enough for more reinforcements to arrive. However, that was not worth trading their lives for.

Calina and the others didn't pursue them either. From the very start, their objective was to flee.

"Let's go. We don't have enough time to care about them."

Everyone turned around and began to flee from the place. However...

Thud...

At this moment, Calina and Malaka heard the sound of something falling on the ground. When they turned around to look, it turned out to be Wano. It seemed like he had overexerted himself in the previous attack, so he collapsed soon after.

The other cultivators in their group saw that but immediately ignored it. It was unlucky to have their only Core and Soul Fusion Realm dying here, but they didn't want to carry him either. In just a second, the cultivators already ran far away, completely ignoring what was happening to Wano. Well, not everyone did that, though.

"Kentucky!"

Malaka and Calina called the Minokawa out at that moment.

Kentucky nodded as he flashed back, pulled Wano with his beak, and threw him on his back. Following that, Kentucky used his Spiritual Energy to hold Wano so that he wouldn't fall.

After that, Calina and Malaka continued to run away with Kentucky right behind them. Kuana, Laffey, and Cassia sighed in relief and followed them as well. Before long, everyone was gone from this place. The reinforcements did arrive in the end, but it was already too late.

The battle continued like that until all the survivors died, with just a few, like Calina's group managing to escape.

Around ten days later, deep inside the valley.

A few cultivators wearing red robes were sitting around what seemed to be a giant core made of some red material. Under their feet, it was also possible to see a very complex formation that seemed to be linked to that same core.

At some point, a woman dressed in the same red robe entered the place. She looked at the red core floating in the air before turning to one of the cultivators controlling the formation.

"Vueni, how are things going?"

The man who had that name turned to look at the woman and said.

"A few fishes might escape the net, but they will be of little concern in the future, Jana."

That was obviously the woman's name. She nodded at that report before asking.

"What about the seven cities that were caught inside the Protection Formation?"

"We sent one Nascent Soul Realm to each one of them with a bunch of other warriors. It shouldn't be long before we wipe them out."

Jana pondered for a bit before saying.

"Make sure to keep the Natural Formation working. As long as it stands, we should have enough time to establish ourselves. Those idiots outside will notice that someone is controlling the Natural Formation and will think they can break it. Unfortunately for them, it won't be that easy."

Jana then looked at the other cultivators in the room, be it male or female.

"Everyone. We have been trapped for too long already. It's time to show the world that they've made the wrong choice back then."

"Yes!"

Bzzzz!

Suddenly, a weird sound came from the Red Core, which called everyone's attention. At the same time, Vueni's complexion turned pale.

"Impossible!"

Jana looked at Vueni.

"What is it?"

In the end, Vueni could only say with a bitter smile.

"Someone made a huge hole in our protection formation."

"You're kidding, right?"

Death... and me

Chapter 486: Change In The Natural Formation

Jana was taken aback by Vueni's words.

"What?! That's impossible! Even someone in the Transition Realm wouldn't be able to force their way inside by brute force. Wait, could it be that Yulian Sasamil..."

Vueni immediately shook her head.

"It definitely isn't Yulian. The formation wasn't broken by brute force. However, I can't tell what was used to make it happen."

Jana quickly calmed down after hearing that.

"That's right. It can't be Yulian. First of all, only a single day has passed outside even though ten or so days have passed here. It's far from enough for the Sasamil experts to arrive in this place. It seems like there was some flaw in the Natural Formation that we didn't account for."

Vueni agreed with her.

"That means that only the cultivators from the surrounding countries could have done it. In that case, it's still fine. At most, only a few Nascent Soul Realm cultivators should have entered to investigate what's happening."

Vueni then looked at the formation under his feet before asking.

"Should we transform the Natural Protection Formation?"

Jana pondered for a bit before asking.

"Wouldn't it drain the Natural Core energy a lot faster?"

Vueni nodded.

"Yes. However, if they can already open a hole this easily, it'll be useless to keep it as it is. Once I activate the transformation, the formation's properties will change, not to mention that it would be several times more resistant. We wanted to use it to hold Yulian back if he appeared, but it seems like we need to do it right now."

Jana then looked in a certain direction on the ground as she pondered about the idea.

"The ancestor will need a lot of time. Will we be able to give him enough?"

Vueni shook his head.

"I don't know. However, that's our best bet at the moment. If worse comes to worst, we might need to go all out to defend him for as long as possible. However, the priority right now should prevent any more cultivators from entering this place."

Vueni and the other experts looked at Jana, waiting for her decision. In the end, Jana gritted her teeth before saying.

"Very well! Go ahead and change the formation. I'm sure the ancestor knows how tight on time he is, so he should be doing his best at the moment. We can only hope that he'll make it in time."

Vueni nodded before looking at all the other experts.

"Begin!"

In an instant, several Spirit Stones were brought out and placed in the formation on the ground. Surprisingly, each of the Spirit Stones was Rank Six ones! Just a few hundred of these stones would be enough to make two countries wage war if necessary. However, they were being used here without any care. That showed just how important these people think their plan was.

This natural formation had been here for a very long time. Its very existence was linked with these people with red line patterns on their bodies. At some point, they found it and made sure to keep the formation core hidden. After that, they spent many years creating the formation under the Red Core so they could control it.

However, just controlling it wasn't enough. It had to be able to hold everyone out for their own purposes. Unfortunately, this Red Core was too powerful, a real wonder of mother nature. Because of that, its essence kept escaping to the outside. It was that essence that made so many Masput Rocks appear in the valley.

At some point, a cultivator entered the valley without them noticing and found some of the Masput Rocks. In the end, he left and spread the information, which brought all those cultivators to look for the Masput Rocks. One must remember that these rocks were extremely important for those under the Core and Soul Fusion Realm. After all, it was one of the main components of the Cross-Realm Pill.

However, so many cultivators wandering around would eventually find the existence of the Red Core. Naturally, the existence of the Natural Formation would be found out as well. These people's initial plan was to keep hidden until the time was right. Still, they were forced to activate the formation when they noticed that the cultivators began to get closer to the truth.

Suddenly, the Red Core began to tremble as some kind of blue energy came from the formation below it. Not too long after, a powerful burst of Spiritual Energy came out of it and shot through the skies. As soon as it reached the ceiling of the Protection Formation, it began to spread outwards.

Back to the present time, the Sects and Royal Family forces were still waiting. For them, it had just been one hour since their teams entered the formation. As for Zuan and the Dalamu Sect members, it was also one hour since Rean and Roan had disappeared. However, they couldn't think about it for long because a few powers from Guntao, a nearby country, appeared there.

One of them seemed to be the leader of this group, so he came out to talk.

"Kocei, I talked with your brother before coming. I hope you don't mind the fact that we had to enter Jialin."

Kocei narrowed his eyes, but shook his head in the end.

"There is no helping it, Tuise. With this situation, it would be idiotic of us to try to stop you bunch from coming. Besides, I believe that the other countries where this red barrier reached are also receiving quite a few guests."

Tuise nodded his head, satisfied.

"So, I heard some nice things before arriving here. It seems like you have a way to open this Natural Formation, right? Would you mind opening it for us as well? Of course, I won't enter it, just a few of my subordinates."

Koeci didn't seem surprised by that. Spies existed everywhere. Considering how many cultivators the Sects and the Jialin Royal Family brought to this place, one or two people with a connection with other countries might have been here as well.

"Alright. The more people investigating this phenomenon, the better. In any case, the Sasamil Family's experts are coming as well."

Koeci then looked at Droman.

"Would you mind opening it again, Droman?"

Droman shook his head in response as he said.

"The number of times I can use it is limited. Unless there's something in for our Dalamu Sect, why should I do it?"

Tuise's expression became dark. He was a Saint Realm expert, so why was a Soul Forging Realm acting that high and mighty in front of him? However, Zuan quickly appeared on Droman's side as he smiled. For now, he could only put the twins' issue on the side.

"Now, now. You can't blame our Formation Master for it. After all, they need to spend a lot of Spirit Stones in their research. I'm sure a Saint Realm expert like you and me wouldn't mind paying a few Spirit Stones to get a chance to enter ahead of the others, right? After all, what if there was some treasure to be gained? It's definitely worth the risk if you consider just the core of this natural formation. Of course, if you can enter on your own, then you don't need to pay anything."

Tuise wasn't the only Saint Realm expert in his group. However, this was still the Jialin Country. Not to mention that Jialin had the advantage on Saint Realm experts at this moment.

"How much are you talking about?"

Droman smiled before lifting one finger.

"It's very cheap, just one hundred Rank Five Spirit Stones."

Tuise almost vomited blood. Cheap your ass! Even a Saint Realm would feel the pain of losing such an amount of Spirit Stones. However, he immediately noticed the look of the other Saint Realm experts from the Jialin Country. They were obviously enjoying his plight.

Tuise turned around to talk with the other two Saint Realm experts of his group. It turns out that they already tried to open a hole, but failed. Their Formation Master believed they can eventually succeed, but that would take a very, very long time. As one could imagine, they didn't know what to expect inside, so it might really be a race for treasures as far as they knew. Time was something they couldn't afford at the moment. Eventually, those three joined hands and put together one hundred Rank Five Spirit Stones.

"Here you go. Now, open it."

Droman smiled brightly at the sight of the stones before nodding.

"Right away."

He quickly made his formation. Sure enough, another explosion happened because of the red lightning before an enormous hole appeared in the formation.

However, it was at this moment that everyone noticed something strange.

"Hey, look up there!"

Droman and everyone else looked as the red barrier seemed to change its color. It was still red, but some kind of faint blue light was now covering it. Simultaneously, the red lightning seemed to disappear as it was replaced by a red and blue fire.

"This..."

"The Natural Formation is changing."

"Just how many Spirit Stones would one need to do something like this?"

Old Worm looked at the formation change and narrowed his eyes.

'I see... To think it's them...'

Droman noticed an even bigger issue.

"Everyone. If there's anyone else who wishes to enter, go now. My method only works against this specific natural type of lightning formation. Once that transformation finishes, I won't be able to open it anymore. But you better think twice about it since it also means that you could get trapped in there."

Immediately, everyone's eyes changed. The Soul Forging and Saint Realm Experts wouldn't enter the formation even if they knew Droman could reopen it, let alone now. However, it also made it difficult to gather people willing to enter since they would probably get trapped for real. Not only that, but considering the speed that the formation was repairing itself, they only had a few minutes to decide before the hole closed up completely.

At that moment, no one noticed... But Old Worm had just disappeared while they talked.

Death... and me

Chapter 487: Safe For Now

Calina's group encountered a few enemies along their way outside the valley's inner region. Fortunately, they were strong enough to get rid of the obstacles on their own. Eventually, they found a hidden corner where Calina and Malaka could look at Wano's condition.

Calina was better at healing skills, so she took care of Wano. At the same time, Malaka and Kuana's group looked around to make sure they were alone. Kentucky was quite large, so Calina had him conceal himself instead of walking around.

All of a sudden, Wano let out a grunt while Calina healed his injuries. It was then that he opened his eyes, allowing him to realize that he hadn't died yet. After looking at his surroundings, he could tell that they had indeed escaped after that battle.

"I know I told you before that you should care more about yourselves, but I'm very glad you ignored those words. Thank you for carrying me away."

Calina shook her head as she replied.

"Without you there, it would have been too difficult for us to escape from the Core and Soul Fusion Realm guy. Some of us might have even died."

Wano shook his head as he rebutted.

"The others might have indeed died. However, you and that friend of yours are different. It's obvious that your abilities far surpass your cultivation levels. If I'm not wrong, you two and that bird would have escaped regardless of the losses."

Calina smiled before saying.

"Look who's talking. You're in the Middle Stage of the Core and Soul Fusion Realm, right? Even though that was the case, you displayed a level of power far above your cultivation level in that last attack of yours. I just don't understand how you became injured like this. The initial red light shouldn't have caused you all this damage."

Wano bitterly smiled as he said.

"Usually, that would indeed be the case. However, I wasn't prepared when I was hit by it."

"What do you mean?"

Wano looked away, trying to avoid eye contact as he muttered.

"Ahem... I was... uh... sleeping..."

Calina's mouth twitched in response. They were in the middle of a gathering with several cultivators from everywhere. Who would dare sleep in a place like that? Then again, that also explained how such a dodgeable red light was able to leave such a severe injury behind. When Wano used his last attack, his body failed to resist the backlash, so he collapsed.

"Weren't you afraid of someone robbing or even killing you while you were asleep?"

Wano laughed.

"I didn't think anyone would even notice I was sleeping. Hahaha! Just between us, I can sleep while standing with my eyes open."

Calina didn't know what to say about this guy.

"You're weird."

Wano laughed once again, not trying to deny that claim. He tried to get up once again, but his body was still aching all over.

"Stay still. It will take a bit more time before I finish closing your injuries with my healing skill. If you have some healing pills, this would be a good time to take them out."

Wano shook his head as he said.

"Believe or not, I'm quite poor."

"Alright. Just stay still since we will need your strength if we get ambushed again."

Wano nodded and then closed his eyes. He also used his own Spiritual Energy to help heal himself after that.

Meanwhile, somewhere close to a city called Arolan, two figures appeared out of nowhere. The moment they appeared, they were several hundreds of meters in the air, so they immediately fell down due to the pull of gravity.

Naturally, those two were Rean and Roan. After using 1000 Rank Three Spirit Stones, they teleported to the maximum distance possible with the rank of their Spirit Stones. If they wanted to teleport further than 1000 kilometers, they would need to use Rank Four Spirit Stones instead.

As mentioned before, Sister Orb could only control the direction of the teleport, but not the place. That's why they appeared far above the ground.

However, Rean and Roan immediately ignored the altitude as they scanned their surroundings. At the Middle Stage of the Core Formation Realm, they could totally resist a fall of that level without any issues.

Fortunately, they didn't see anyone in their field of view as they landed on the ground.

"Alright, we're here. Kentucky is in the southwest direction."

Roan nodded.

"He seems to have stopped moving. However, we can tell that he's still a bit too close to that valley."

Rean agreed with Roan.

"Anyway, we chose this direction because it would be close to Arolan City. We better go there to check how things are going before heading in Kentucky's direction. The city will give us a good idea of how the situation is inside this formation."

Just as they were about to head out, Sister Orb's voice echoed in their mind.

[Hey, you two. Look up.]

Rean and Roan then looked in the direction Sister Orb pointed out. Sure enough, they also saw how the Natural Formation changed all of a sudden.

'Sister Orb, what's happening?'

[The guys we thought to be controlling the Natural Formation have just changed it. I can't tell what they did to it, but I'm sure it's not the same formation anymore. It can hardly be called a Natural Formation now. It would be better to say that they used the Natural Formation as a model for this new formation. It's just that the energy core is still the same.]

Rean understood what Sister Orb meant.

'Basically, you're telling me that the short circuit method wouldn't work anymore.'

[Correct. Well, if you two want to leave, it won't be a problem since that barrier can't stop the Circuitry Teleport Formation. However, you shouldn't expect any reinforcements anytime soon other than the ones who entered first.]

The twins nodded.

'That's fine. We're basically taking Calina, Malaka, and Kentucky out with us, and that's enough.'

Having said that, the two of them immediately headed in Arolan City's direction. Considering the time acceleration, they knew that at least ten days have gone by in this place already. If there were really enemies, Arolan had probably been taken control of by now. They could use this chance to gather some information.

Death... and me

Chapter 488: Last Moment Help

While that was happening, the first team of Nascent Soul Realm experts moved together with the Royal Family's experts. At the front was the only Soul Forging Realm cultivator that came with them, Erbec Jialin. All of them were moving in the valley's direction so that they could check on what was happening.

However, they had to stop since they also saw the same phenomenon that occurred to the red barrier.

"What's happening to the barrier?"

"No idea. Then again, it doesn't seem like good news."

Tiria and Julian looked at each other as they pondered if they should continue moving forward. The other Nascent Soul Realm cultivators from the other sects also did the same thing. It was then that Erbec spoke.

"I don't know about you all, but my Jialin group will keep moving forward. If you think you should retreat, by all means, go do it."

Without even waiting for the others' responses, Erbec continued moving ahead. Tiria and Julian were the first ones to react to that. They quickly turned to the other members of Dalamu behind them and asked if they wished to continue. In the end, all of them decided to keep at it.

Lagan, Rohe, and Laan Sect also decided that they might as well continue since they were inside. Of course, Laan Sect's experts were the ones with the best reason to continue. After all, they had just settled themselves in Jialin, so they needed to show some presence. This event just so happened to give them that opportunity.

Rean and Roan were quite far ahead since they used the maximum range of the Circuitry Teleport Formation. Finally, they were now quite close to Aloran City, allowing them to see its walls from a distance.

However, they didn't get any closer. That's because even from far away, they could tell that something was off.

'No people are coming out or going in.'

Rean nodded as he said.

'Considering the situation, the city exits are supposed to be crowded to the brim with people. After all, they also needed to investigate. The fact that no one's there is strange.'

Roan pondered a bit before saying.

'Can your Hidden Radar Skill detect any Spiritual Sense from where we are?'

Rean shook his head as he replied.

'No. I've kept it running ever since we've arrived, but nothing so far.'

Roan nodded.

'That might be good or bad for us. Good because there aren't any Nascent Soul Realm experts with Spiritual Senses big enough to reach this place... And bad because the city might have been finished off already. There might be no one inside anymore.'

Rean sighed before thinking about what to do next.

'Let's use my skill and try to approach the walls without being detected. If things go south, let's enter the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm straight away.'

Roan agreed with him as the two immediately departed. Rean had been bending only Spiritual Sense so far, but now it also bent light, which immediately concealed the twins from naked eyes.

Roan also helped out by controlling the shadows as best as he could as well. And just like that, they reached the west wall of Aloran City. At this point, Rean finally began to feel the presence of a few Spiritual Senses. However, none of them had enough power to pass through his Fourth Form.

The twins didn't use their own Spiritual Senses, though. After all, not even Rean could prevent others around their cultivation level from feeling it. Nonetheless, they acted quickly as they jumped over the wall. It was then that they saw why no one was outside. That's because the inhabitants were all dead. There were bodies everywhere as far as they could tell. The only ones walking seemed to be some people with strange red patterns on their bodies.

'Who are those people? Are those tattoos?'

'I don't know. However, they don't seem to be tattoos or anything like that. I might be wrong, but I feel like those lines are part of their body constitution.'

Roan believed Rean's judgment in this kind of issue since he was the one to always focus on recovery. Not to mention that Rean had performed Sect Duties in the sect's Healing Hall several times as well.

Roan then shook his head and changed the topic.

'It seems like the massacre was done just a while ago.'

Rean sighed as he nodded.

'Those guys down there are probably looking for survivors. This city seems quite large, so I wouldn't be surprised if they found a few more hidden somewhere inside.'

Rean and Roan then looked at each other and nodded. They didn't have time for the people in this city, nor could they do anything at their current level. In the end, they could only ignore that fact and return to their initial plan, which was to get information.

The two looked around, looking for an easy target. Rean left this part to Roan since he was better at judging an enemy's strength without using Spiritual Sense. Finally, Roan's eyes lit up as he looked at one of those people.

'That one. Let's go.'

The twins jumped down from the wall and made their way to the target. With Rean's Light and Spiritual Sense bending skill, no one noticed them passing. Of course, Roan was helping with the shadows.

The guy they aimed for had a spear in his hand as he walked by the corpses on the ground. Every time he passed by a corpse, he would pierce it with his spear. That was an easy and fast way of confirming if someone was really dead or not. After all, you never knew if someone was using some technique to look like they were dead.

Sure enough, the method really helped. So far, this guy was able to identify two fake deaths between the thousands of corpses he checked. Let alone the other members who were also doing the same thing.

Rean and Roan quickly arrived at the street where the guy was doing his job when all of a sudden, Rean felt a very faint amount of life force from a baby on the ground. Not only that, the guy was moving right at it.

'You can't be serious.'

Roan asked what was happening, so Rean explained through their Soul Connection as he immediately dashed forward.

'Life Style, First Form, Enhancement!'

Roan couldn't help but curse inside.

'Fuck!'

Without any other choice, he could only use the same skill as Rean as he followed by his side. He wanted to first wait for an opportunity until a gap in the scanning of the Spiritual Senses appeared before they attacked. However, it was obvious that Rean wouldn't wait for such a gap.

Just as the spear was about to pierce the baby, it was hit by something else as it was sent flying.

"What?!"

The guy was taken aback, but he immediately understood that someone had attacked him. However, just as he was about to call for help, he felt an intense pain in the back of his head. His vision turned dark right after. Before he could even start to fall on the ground, his body disappeared in midair.

That wasn't the only thing to disappear, though. The baby's 'corpse' also disappeared at the same time. Sure enough, Rean couldn't let that happen.

Roan then looked at Rean before saying.

'Someone definitely saw this guy disappearing from their Spiritual Senses. Let's get out of here.'

The two immediately left the scene soon after that.

Death... and me

Chapter 489: Catch!

Sure enough, it only took a few seconds for other cultivators to arrive at the place where the last guy disappeared.

"Where's Fiok?"

"I don't know. He just disappeared out of nowhere."

"His spear is still here, though."

"Spread out. Look for any clues."

Unfortunately for them, Rean and Roan were long gone. They quickly arrived at the walls of the city before jumping down and disappearing in the distance. Once they felt that they had distanced themselves enough, Roan went ahead and complained.

'Are you crazy? What if there was some high-leveled Core and Soul Fusion Realm cultivator or above close by? Your Spiritual Sense and Light bending skill has a limit. If the Spiritual Sense is too strong, the skill won't be able to bend it completely before touching our bodies.'

Rean didn't care as he replied.

'So what? Did you want me to just watch as that guy pierced the baby? He aimed straight for the head, for crying out loud! My Light Element might be good at healing, but I can't bring people back to life.'

'Do you think that baby was the only one? There are definitely other survivors in similar conditions back there. Are you going to save all of them as well? The Life Force in the baby was already weak, to begin with, so he would die soon either way.'

Rean shook his head as he said.

'No, he wouldn't. The one I believe was his mother dying while holding him. However, the baby has no injuries whatsoever. I don't know what she did, but the baby's state is due to some other problem. In fact, you probably know more about this than me. Is there any sort of pill that can make you look like you're dead?'

Roan was taken aback for a moment. However, he quickly recovered as he pondered over the question.

'There are a couple of pills capable of doing that. Can you confirm that the baby took one of those?'

Rean nodded.

'I can tell that through my Light Element and his Life Force. As long as I use my Purification skill, he will immediately recover. That being said, I couldn't simply leave him there to die, right? Or are you saying that you would be able to ignore it as if nothing had happened?'

Roan narrowed his eyes as he answered.

'Probably. I always put the end result above all.'

Rean glanced at him and smiled in the end.

'Probably, huh? So be it, then. Well, it was obvious that the baby's mother used it to make it look like her child was dead, so I'm going to at least keep the kid safe until we're out.'

Roan simply stopped caring.

'Whatever.'

The two then moved quite far away from the city. There were two instances where they fell into someone's Spiritual Sense. However, their Divine Senses were not strong enough to break through Rean's Spiritual Sense and Light Bending skill. Finally, they got far enough from the city and entered the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm.

Sister Orb immediately appeared in front of them.

[What are you going to do with this baby?]

Rean smiled before taking the kid.

'Life Style, Third Form, Purification.'

Rean's hair changed into black and white as Light Element entered the baby's body. Soon after, Dark Element followed and began to destroy all the toxins that were keeping the baby in that faux death state. Suddenly...

Waaaaa, waaaaa...

Sure enough, the baby woke up and immediately began to cry.

"There you go, little girl. Sure enough, that was a fake death."

Roan got closer and nodded.

"Seems like it. I only know two pills that can achieve that effect, and one is made for high-level cultivators. In the end, there was only one option left, the Mortal Death Pill. It's quite expensive, so his parents must have been quite wealthy."

Sister Orb couldn't help but ask.

[So, what do you want to do with this kid?]

Rean looked at Sister Orb before saying.

"Isn't that obvious? Sister Orb, from now on, you'll be Mommy Orb. Congratulations!"

[Congratulations... Your ass! I know nothing about babies, alright?]

"What are you talking about? Weren't Roan and I babies in the past as well?"

[Shameless! Where have you ever seen other babies with old geezers' souls? This little girl is the real deal! First of all, we don't have milk in this place to feed her.]

"Well, you'll have to make do with the food we have at the moment."

Roan didn't seem to have the patience for that, so he turned around and headed towards the cage.

"You two can keep discussing what to do with the girl. I'm going ahead."

Rean was taken aback.

"Hey, wait! I want to listen as well! Sister Orb, catch!"

Suddenly, Rean threw the baby in Sister Orb's direction.

[Ah!]

Sister Orb immediately used the Spiritual Energy of the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm to hold the baby before she hit the ground.

[Are you crazy?! If you're trying to kill the baby, why did you save her in the first place?]

Rean smiled as he headed to the cage as well.

"What are you talking about? The Sister Orb that I know would never let the little girl fall to the ground even if she had to use her orb body to stop it."

[Fuck you! You can't do that to me!]

Too bad that Rean had entered the jail already. Sister Orb then looked at the crying girl, not knowing what to do.

[Well, it's only a temporary measure. Now... what should I do with you?]

Back inside the cage, the man with the strange red patterns on his body was still unconscious. Roan couldn't help but touch it, just to see if it was really part of his body or if it was put there later on.

"Hey, those things are real. They're seriously part of his body. Not only that, but it doesn't feel like his body had transformed, and then these red lines appeared. It's more like he had it in the first place."

Roan nodded.

"All of these guys had the same red lines on their bodies, both men and women. It's just that they have different patterns."

Rean then sent his Spiritual Sense and Light Element inside to examine the man from head to toe.

"Hmm... I'm not sure if I should call him human. Most parts are similar, but there are a few differences as well."

Roan thought up of a quicker way to find that out.

"Forget it. I'll wake him up, and we can confirm everything from his mouth after that."

Death... and me

Chapter 490: Interesting

Roan immediately summoned a bit of Dark Element and used it on the guy. Sure enough, the pain immediately woke him up. Only a few could really resist the pain of having their life force and organs destroyed from the inside. The good thing was that he had already destroyed the guy's dantian, so he was as strong as an ordinary person, lacking the offensive to harm the twins.

"Ahhhh!"

"Oh! Seems like you're finally awake. Now then, let's continue like this for a bit longer so that you understand I won't accept silence as an answer."

And that he did. Even Rean was a little puzzled by that since Roan would first ask questions before using more Dark Element to force them to talk.

'Hmm? Could it be that you also didn't like how he almost killed the baby?'

Roan glanced at Rean but refused to answer. Well, that only made Rean laugh more on the inside.

It wasn't until the guy almost passed out that Roan finally stopped his torture.

"Alright, that should be enough. So, how about you tell me who you guys are and what your objectives are?"

Unfortunately...

"Kill me..."

Roan smiled after hearing the answer. He immediately summoned his Dark Element again and used it against the guy.

"I'll continue like this until you decide to talk."

However, the guy continued to cry without uttering a single word.

Unfortunately for the man, Roan understood what he was waiting for and murmured on his years.

"Are you expecting to eventually die with this method? That's not gonna happen so easily."

Roan's hair changed into a mix of black and white before he used Rean's Instant Recovery skill. In just a few seconds, all the damage caused by his Dark Element was healed.

"Look how nice it is! I can keep doing this forever without being afraid of you dying. Isn't that great? Show me that you have a strong will so that I can beat my previous record of longest interrogation."

Roan then looked at Rean before asking.

"Oh, right! How long did the longest one last? I don't remember."

Rean almost laughed after hearing that. So far, no one lasted more than a few minutes. The record was set by Calina's protector, the same one who betrayed her in the Profound Abyss.

"Hum... I believe it was around 20 minutes. However, this guy seems very determined. Who knows, he might last half an hour?"

Roan nodded.

"Did you hear that? Come on! Make sure to not open your mouth for at least 20 minutes, okay? Do that for me, and I'll be very happy."

The guy began to feel the taste of despair. He could tell how Rean's Light Element healed all the Dark Element's damage, just to be destroyed once again in an endless loop. Obviously, the pain he felt was the worst he had ever felt in his life.

"I'll talk, I'll talk!"

Bam!

Suddenly, Roan sent him flying against the jail's bars.

"Fuck you! I told you to resist at least 20 minutes, but you couldn't last even two. Are you doing that on purpose? Very well, now we're going to do it until 30 minutes have gone by as punishment."

Even Rean, who wanted nothing more than to kill that guy, felt some pity for him now. For the next half an hour, all one could hear was the shrill screams of the guy in the jail while he asked to be killed. Well, that only made Sister Orb more annoyed.

At the moment, she had enveloped the little baby girl with Spiritual Energy and stopped the sounds of torture from reaching her.

[Can't you be more discrete? I finally made her stop crying, for fuck's sake.]

Rean immediately answered.

'Sorry, sorry. Do you need me to come out and help?'

[Sigh... forget it. I'll bring her to the bathhouse to clean all of the dirt and blood on her body.]

'The bathhouse?! Won't the Dark Element make her feel a lot of pain?'

[Idiot! I'm the supreme god of this Dimensional Realm. I can obviously separate the Dark and Light Element from it, creating a gap with just clean water to wash her.]

'Oh! In that case, I'm counting on you, Mommy Orb.'

[Fuck you. I'm ignoring you from now on.]

Rean laughed again as Roan continued his 'special' treatment to the guy in the jail. Eventually, the thirty minutes were up.

"Remember, you better tell what I want. Otherwise, I will have you break the previous record even if we have to stay here for the next entire year."

"Yes, yes!"

Roan nodded, satisfied.

"Well, answer my first two questions. Who are you, and what do you want to do?"

"I'm Fiok Ulica, member of the Lakure Race."

"Lakure Race? What's that?"

"Lakure Race are the real ancestors of this planet. We were here way before other cultivators arrived."

Roan nodded.

"I see. That means you came from some empire or country dominated by your Lakure Race, right? Could it be that you're trying to get more territory for your race? That doesn't seem right since it wouldn't make sense to acquire more territory somewhere your race isn't present."

Fiok laughed after hearing that.

"Empire? Country? Hahaha! How nice would it have been if we had such a thing. No! We were banished and then sealed in the underground world. We lived there for many, many years. Our history is longer than any other country or empire in this world."

"Banished? Well, that explains why you're so white. If it was an underground world, then you would've never seen the sun at any given time. Of course, such an extraordinary story is quite hard to believe."

Roan narrowed his eyes when Rean said that.

That only made Fiok even more afraid.

"It's true! It's really true! If you ask any other member of my race, I guarantee that they will tell the same thing!"

Rean nodded before asking.

"Let's assume it is true. Why did you get banished and then sealed? Wouldn't it be much easier to simply kill you all?"

Fiok shook his head as he replied.

"It wouldn't. After all, our ancestors were no weaker than the invaders."

Rean and Roan couldn't help but feel that the story was getting more interesting by the second.