

## Death 531

Death... and me

Chapter 531: Marriage

Wulio's expression immediately changed as he replied.

"Are you crazy? First Brother is a lunatic. He would have my head cut off if I decided to join someone with a Chrole Bloodline. No, wait! Isn't Calina hiding here so she won't be hunted down? Wasn't that the reason you faked your death?"

Calina shook her head as she answered.

"I'm also a direct descendant, so I have the right to the throne as well. I want to become the empress so I can stop this war between Sasamil and Chrole from happening."

Hearing that, Wulio burst out in laughter.

"Hahahaha! Really? For real? Hahahaha! No way! Hahahaha! That's too funny! That's definitely the best joke I've heard in a long, long time."

However, seeing Calina's dark expression cut off his laughter in an instant.

"Oh boy... You can't be serious, right? There's no way you can make it! Trust me, this action will be nothing more but akin to suicide. It has nothing to do with your rights to fight for the throne or not. None of the princes and princesses fighting for it will allow someone with a Chrole Bloodline to intervene in the dispute."

Calina then took a deep breath before saying.

"I know that very well. However, I can't just give up and let it happen."

Roan was more interested in another problem, though.

"You just said it yourself. None of the princes and princesses would allow that. However, what about you? What do you think about Calina joining the fight for the throne? After all, you're a direct descendant with a pure Sasamil Bloodline."

Wulio nodded after hearing that as he responded truthfully.

"To be honest, I don't like the idea either. After all, the Sasamil Empire has always been ruled by those with the purest bloodline and best skills. I can't say I would feel comfortable knowing that someone with a mixed bloodline took the throne."

Sure enough, it would be a miracle if Wulio suddenly thought differently from the others.

He then looked at Calina as he smiled, saying.

"I have nothing against you as a person, but I don't think it's the right thing for you to join the fight. At least, I wouldn't support you since I can't guarantee that Chrole won't use you somehow. That's how I feel."

Malaka, Rean, and Roan narrowed their eyes. However, Wulio understood what they were thinking.

"Are you afraid that I would go and tell on everyone now that I know that Calina will enter the fight for the throne?"

Roan nodded in response.

"Shouldn't I?"

Wulio shrugged his shoulders.

"You should. However, you don't need to worry because I won't."

Calina immediately asked.

"Why?"

"Simple. I'm absolutely sure that you won't take the throne even if you participate. You have no background, no support, no influence, no achievements, nothing! Besides, you're extremely young. Since you're a princess of the Empire, then you should know that Imperial Father won't last long. Simply put, you don't have that much time to grow into a person that could threaten First and Fifth Brother."

For Rean and Roan, that was more than enough. Of course, as long as that was true.

'What do you think, Roan? Can we trust him?'

Roan shook his head as he replied.

'It doesn't matter if we do or not. We can't do anything to Wulio to start with.'

Rean had to admit that Roan was right.

'That's true. Wulio's very strong and has never dropped his guard in front of us. Even if we use the Lakure Race or the Dalamu Sect, he could simply reveal his identity. Even worse, he could reveal Calina's identity.'

Roan nodded.

'That would definitely be a bad thing for us. However, I do believe Wulio is telling the truth. That's what my countless years of experience tell me.'

Rean didn't doubt that. Roan's judgments were usually right.

'Good. Wulio doesn't know about our talk with Huan Qelol, so I can understand why he thinks like that. Let's keep it like this.'

However, Malaka wasn't satisfied with Wulio's answer.

"Then, what does Calina need to do to gain your support?"

In the end, she just wanted to help Calina. However, her own power was too limited for that. Wulio was different. Even if he showed no interest in the throne, he was still one of the Emperor's sons. Rean and Roan also admitted that Malaka had asked a good question.

Wulio was taken aback by that question.

"What she needs? Hmm... I haven't considered it. However, I don't think it's a good idea to ask me."

"Why?"

"Because if she finds out what it needs to gain my support, that means she has a chance of reaching the throne. That's not something I want to see happening."

Malaka immediately shook her head as she said.

"That's not what I meant at all! Let me rephrase it. What would Calina need to gain your trust and, after that, your support? Calina truly wishes to stop this war. She isn't going to betray the Empire."

Calina felt a little emotional seeing Malaka say so much for her sake. However, she quickly recovered and looked at Wulio.

"I want to know that as well. There must be something I can do to convince you."

Wulio shook his head as he replied.

"Even if there was, it would be useless. After all, I don't want to take part in the fight. However..."

Wulio began to walk around Calina as he looked at her from head to toe.

"Hmm... Not bad at all. I might consider it an option if you decide to marry me. This way, I can prevent you from betraying the Empire in the future if you become the empress. Besides, you're quite the stunning beauty at the moment. How about that?"

One must remember that Calina was already nineteen years old. She was a true beauty as well, no doubt. Of course, that was because she used a Yin Energy Cultivation Technique.

"I..."

Sure enough, Calina didn't know what to say as her face flushed red. That was way too sudden. Sure, that would give her a huge advantage. Unfortunately, the one she liked was Roan. Then again, what was more important? Her feelings or the Empire?

Wulio then laughed out loud.

"There's no need to make your decision now. We have several years ahead of us inside this natural formation. You can give me an answer later."

Calina could only nod in the end.

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Chapter 532: First day

After Wulio left, Rean and Malaka looked straight at Roan, with Rean asking.

"Don't you have anything to say?"

Roan looked at them with a puzzled expression, asking.

"About what?"

"About Wulio asking Calina to marry him to give his support, of course. I'm sure Calina's very interested in your opinion."

Sure enough, Calina's interest was piqued as she looked at Roan. Even Roan could tell that she also wanted to hear what he thought on the matter.

"Hmm... It all depends on whether he's true to his words or not. From my perspective, he's quite the lax type, so he might not take this idea very seriously. However, if you two do marry, Calina would indeed be in a better position to fight for the throne. In conclusion, you should take his offer."

Calina's expression immediately became gloomy as Rean and Malaka shook their heads in dismay. This guy really couldn't understand anything at all!

"How can you say that?"

Malaka nodded as she added.

"You're just way too dense!"

Roan began to feel annoyed.

"The hell are you talking about? You asked for my fucking opinion, and you got it. Is there anything else I should say?"

Rean and Malaka looked at Calina with apologetic expressions as they apologized.

"Sorry, Calina. That's just how this idiot is."

Calina bitterly smiled before shaking her head.

"It's fine. In a certain way, his way of acting is also why I feel like this."

Roan felt even more annoyed that they were obviously talking about him but were pretending he wasn't even there.

"Enough with the bullshit. Since we've almost guaranteed that Wulio won't do anything, we should focus on training. With the Lakure Race members not being allowed to kill us anymore without a good reason, we should make good use of it. I'll have all of you challenge other members of their race for sparrings every now and then. Also, I will remake our cultivation time schedule to match the fact that we don't need to travel to fight anymore."

Rean then looked at him before asking.

"What about the Red Crystals? Are we giving up on them from now on?"

Malaka immediately gave her opinion on that.

"I don't really like those crystals. They destroy all the life around them to obtain that energy. Each one can wipe out the vegetation and other lifeforms in a 10km radius at the very least."

Roan then explained.

"It doesn't matter. I already asked what those crystals are. It seems like the Lakure Race spent all those thousands of years making them in the underground world. Although they've made a few after so long, they aren't unlimited and have fixed lifespans after being activated. Well, at least that's what I heard. Since that's the case, we should indeed aim to grab as many as possible for Kentucky."

Obviously, as many as possible for themselves as well.

Calina then put those thoughts about marriage and her feelings for Roan on the side for now. Following that, she asked.

"And how do you expect to get them?"

Rean pondered pver it a bit.

"How about challenging them with the victor paying back. We do have a few Rank Four Spirit Stones, so we don't lose out in terms of value. Add on the fact that they are only used for a single purpose, which is for that ancestor of them. Once he finishes, they'll become quite useless without something like Kentucky to eat them."

Roan nodded.

"That's a way to think about it. How long did you agree to heal their poisons every day?"

"I agreed with them that I will heal their poisons for half a day each time. This will allow me to balance my training and cultivation with you."

Although Rean said half a day, one must remember that time passed ten times faster in this place. However, they still received light from the outside. That meant Rean would heal their poisons for five days while cultivating for the next five. That was beneficial since it would give him time to stabilize his cultivation and prevent any hiccups.

Roan was satisfied with the proposal.

"That's more than enough. Now, then. Take this time and go check on how the others from Dalamu are doing. I'll give you the training schedule tonight."

Both the Jialin and Guntao forces were separated into several groups around the valley. They were all kept far away from the center, where the formation core and the ancestor was located. As one could imagine, both humans and Lakures were very wary of each other. Jana told them to try and get in between each other, but it wasn't that easy.



Somewhere in the valley, Dalamu Sect forces could be found. Well, just a small part of it, which included Tiria. This was the group that Rean, Malaka, and Calina came to take a look at. As for Juvian, he was put in another group somewhere else.

"Elder Tiria, long time no see."

Tiria's expression immediately became dark as she looked at Rean's group.

"Long time no see? Are you fucking kidding me? First of all, how the hell are you two here in the natural formation? Did you forget how important you and Roan are for the sect at the moment? We can't let anything happen to you two!"

Rean laughed, not minding too much. He then patted Malaka's head before saying.

"Well, you couldn't expect me to leave my little sister alone, right?"

Tiria looked at Malaka and Calina with a dark expression.

"One's already nineteen while the other is eighteen. Not only that, but Illia and Malaka have amazing cultivations for their age. What's the point of their training if you come and rescue them every single time? Are you looking down on us women that much?"

Malaka couldn't help but cry as she lamented.

"Sob, sob... I told Rean that as well. But he didn't want to listen to me. He always treated me like a kid, as if he doesn't think that a woman can do anything alone at all."

Calina nodded with a sad expression.

"That's true. Rean and his brother are truly unbelievable. They simply don't care about what we think."

Rean almost vomited blood! Since when did he say that?

Sure enough, Tiria's expression became even worse after listening to the two girls.

"It seems like someone needs to learn a lesson."

Rean felt like crying.

"Wait, wait! I never thought like that at all. How come you believe those two and not me?"

"Didn't you say you couldn't leave your little sister? Isn't that a perfect example of looking down on women?"

"Like hell it is! What's wrong with a brother protecting his sister?"

Tiria then looked at Malaka and Calina.

"Illia, Malaka, did you need Rean or Roan's help in the end?"

The two girls shook their heads in response, with Calina responding.

"When they found us, we were already out of danger. We escaped calamity with our own strength. It was then that they insisted on staying with us from now on."

"This..."

Well, it wasn't a lie. When the two finally arrived, Calina and Malaka were already out of danger anymore. It was Roan's hell-like training that put them in danger showing its effects.

Tiria smiled brightly right after as she touched Rean's shoulder.

"Oh, so you two were basically useless while putting yourselves in danger by coming here, right? How amusing!"

Rean couldn't help but look at Calina and Malaka as he sent them a Spiritual Sense message.

'Why are you doing this to me?'

The first one to answer was Malaka.

'Did you forget how you sacrificed me that day when we tricked Calina and Luina to get naked in front of Roan? Since you betrayed me, why shouldn't I do the same?'

Calina was the second... for the same reason.

'I won't forget the time you had me strip for Roan since you knew it would be useless. It's time for revenge.'

Rean didn't know whether to laugh or cry. How could they still remember that event from over four years ago? Isn't that too much of a grudge? Besides, where is Roan that he isn't receiving the punishment with him?

Well, Rean's next hour with Elder Tiria could be said to have been anything but pleasurable. He made sure to remember that, though.

When Tiria was finally done with him, she finally entered the topic at hand.

"Now, then. Let's go back to what matters. Why did you come out?"

Rean sighed as he explained.

"There wasn't much of a reason to not do so. Roan and I were pretty sure we could escape even if things turned south. You should know that already. Our cloning technique is great for these things other than battling."

Tiria pondered over it for a bit and nodded.

"I still think you two shouldn't have come. However, it's obvious that this place is also helping with your own cultivation. Not to mention Malaka and Illia's. Since the time here passes much faster, it will help you grow stronger to protect yourselves outside."

"So, what do you think about the forced living conditions? Do you think both sides can become friendly enough before the natural formation opens? Or better yet, do you think we can even survive until then?"

Rean confirmed that.

"At the very least, they won't do anything to all of you while I'm still healing their poisons. Obviously, there are just way too many Lakures here, so I definitely won't finish before the formation opens. All I can say is that time will tell. Of course, I hope Elder Tiria and the others will do their best not to anger them. You have quite a few years ahead to achieve some level of trust as well."

Tiria already knew it. That's what all this negotiation was about, after all.

"I'll try. Now, what about this ancestor of them?"

Sure enough, that was another topic they couldn't avoid.

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Chapter 533: Let's Start!

Nevertheless, Rean shook his head.

"I'm not so sure either. I simply can't understand why this ancestor suddenly changed the rules for his own race. He definitely doesn't like us. Perhaps he understands that his race wouldn't be able to gain anything if they decide to take the whole human race as their enemy."

Tiria nodded in response. She also heard about the change in the rules around a year after the natural formation activated.

"Considering how they changed their stance of killing everyone to talk, that might really be the case. Nevertheless, we better be careful from now on. I just wish I could speak with him."

"Roan and I tried to ask for that before, but we were refused at the very instant we brought it up. You can try it as well. Perhaps Jana has changed her mind? Who knows?"

Tiria pondered over it for a bit and gave up the idea, saying.

"Better not since it could infuriate them."

After that, she looked in a particular direction and saw one of her female subordinates taking care of a four-year-old kid.

"By the way, what's the story behind that kid? You shoved her to me as soon as you came back to the valley and didn't tell me anything."

That was true. Rean would have to spend time healing poison, so he couldn't take care of the girl.

"We named her Sana. We found her in one of the cities that were wiped out. Her mother had given her one of those fake death pills, but I noticed she was still alive thanks to my Light Element Affinity. In any case, I couldn't simply leave her behind, right? Those Lakures were literally killing everyone they saw during that time."

Tiria sighed but nodded her head in the end.

"You did the right thing. Don't worry, now that no one is trying to kill each other, it is better for you to leave Sana with us. Just focus on your training and healing the Lakures from now on."

Tiria and Rean then discussed a few other things. At some point, Sana noticed Rean in the distance and came running in his direction.

"Lean, I want see Sista Ob."

Sure enough, she couldn't talk very well at the age of four yet.

"Rean, she had been asking the same thing for quite a while. Who's Sister Orb?"

Rean laughed as he came up with an excuse and an idea.

"That's something Roan invented for her with his Spiritual Energy. He made a ball of Dark and Light Elements and talks to her as if it had its own life. We didn't have anything like toys available, so we came up with a few things on our own. It turns out that Roan's toy was the idea Sana liked the most."

Tiria was genuinely taken aback by those words.

"Wait! You must be kidding, right? That Roan? The same one capable of freezing someone's soul with just his looks?"

Rean laughed out loud.

"Hahaha! Surprising, right? All of us were surprised as well. Next time you see him, ask Roan to demonstrate."

Malaka and Calina, who had only been listening so far, looked at each other while trying to hold their laughter. Sure enough, they very much wanted to see Roan doing it.

"Very well... Now, then. You should go take a look at the other sects and the Royal Family groups. They definitely want to hear about you and the plans as well. Otherwise, they would feel too nervous about doing anything."

Rean nodded and left soon after. Calina and Malaka stayed behind, though. They would meet up with Rean and Roan later.

Rean then went to each of the separated groups while being followed by a few Lakure Race members who kept their eyes on him. After talking things through with everyone, he went back to see Roan.

Finally, everything was back on track, so only time could tell whether everyone could somewhat get along or not.

Later, Roan gathered everyone and passed them their new training schedule. Things went between cultivation, rest, training, challenging Lakure Race members for sparring, and other miscellaneous things. Roan had even arranged a training schedule for Wulio, who was already used to it. Wulio noticed that Roan's management of these things was excellent, so he had asked Roan a long time ago to do it for him as well.

"Oh! Thanks. Still, what's this arena thing?"

Roan smiled before saying.

"Although it has been agreed upon that both races won't attack each other, there are still many who aren't happy with the status quo. That said, we need some place where they can relieve their anger. That's why I came up with this arena thing and talked with Jana. She recognized that it would be a good thing as long as neither side died or was crippled. I believe this is a great way to let off some steam."

Wulio was quite happy to hear that. At least, Rean's group wouldn't need to go around challenging everyone. They just needed to do that in the arena. It was a simple idea, but it was very effective due to the actual circumstances.

Sure enough, Jana used her Spiritual Sense to send everyone a message about the arena later.

"A few arenas close to where the humans are staying have been opened. You can challenge each other or the other race. Killing and crippling are prohibited. I also made sure to keep someone on the lookout to prevent it from happening. Other than that, you can do whatever you want."

In an instant, the news became a hot topic. Of course, there were many more Lakure Race members than there were humans. That being said, not all of them would be able to challenge them. In the end, they came up with a queue. As for the humans, they were incredibly delighted. After all, they would have a chance to train themselves while being locked in this valley. They already knew that the Lakure people were powerful because of those red meridians over their skins. They would be the perfect targets while there was no risk of dying.

Rean, Roan, Malaka, Calina, and Wulio didn't let the chance slip either. They immediately went to different ones where they could train their own techniques. Unsurprisingly, many challenged Rean and Roan straight away.

Obviously, they didn't let the opportunity pass.

"I accept your challenge, but it'll be too boring if that's all. How about we bet on something?"

Everyone from both sides looked at them.

"What kind of bet?"

"Anything can go as long as it isn't too exaggerated. Oh, right! This is a good thing for your Lakure Race people. As you know, I will only heal your race's poison for half a day while I use the other half to cultivate and train. If you beat me in the arena, I will immediately heal your poison even though it's my free time. How about that?"

Immediately, the Lakure people's eyes lit up! Naturally, many of them were very interested in this bet.

Sure enough, someone jumped on the arena straight away.

"I accept your bet! What do you want if I lose?"



Rean smiled before saying.

"You guys know that I have some interest in those red crystals outside the valley. Give me one of them if you lose."

"What?! Impossible!"

"Why?"

"These things aren't something we can offer. They're extremely difficult to make. It took thousands of years to make that the number of crystals we currently have. That's the only reason we have so much now. However, each one lost is quite a big blow to us even if we have a lot at the moment. Besides, we need them for the ancestor."

Rean dropped his head in response as he thought up of a solution. The main reason Roan offered to head to this arena was that they could get the crystals. Of course, combat training was another goal as well.

"What about this? There will be no need to bet. You just need to put one of those red crystals on the line, and I will fight ten of you one after the other. Also, it won't matter if I lose or win. I will heal the poison of your bodies regardless of the outcome. However, I will get one of the crystals nonetheless."

Someone couldn't help but ask.

"If that's the case, wouldn't it be better to not fight and simply ask for the crystal in exchange for your healing?"

Rean shook his head as he said.

"No. I'm here to train. One can't progress in cultivation just by absorbing energy. I'm here to challenge you guys, so let the ten fights be part of the payment for the crystal. Besides, I'm pretty sure that a few of you want to fight me as well, right?"

The Lakure Race members looked at each other. Some really wanted to accept it. However, that was their ancestor's life-absorbing crystals. They couldn't do it without permission.

It was then that a voice echoed in everyone's minds.

"I accept your idea. However, it won't just be limited to ten people. You will have to heal another thirty if we give you one crystal. However, you don't need to battle thirty of them, neither ten. Just three is enough. Otherwise, you won't have the energy to heal everyone afterward. Also, you can't have more than one life-absorbing crystal per month. They're too important for us."

Everyone recognized that voice. It was none other than Jana. No one knew why she accepted using the life-absorbing crystals, but no one complained either. They all wanted to get rid of their poisons.

Rean pondered for a bit before nodding.

"Alright. However, it can't be anyone above the Core and Soul Fusion Realm. Otherwise, it'll take too long to get rid of their poisons."

Jana smiled as she nodded.

"We have a deal."

With that, Rean jumped on the arena as he looked at his opponent.

"Let's start!"

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Chapter 534: Kentucky's Success

Unfortunately for the twins, Rean was the only one capable of making that deal. Roan tried to use the crystals as part of the bet as well, but he was refused. He could only use the arenas as a method to train his combat skills.

The arenas all around the valley had instantly become a hotspot. Because there weren't enough humans to fight, the Lakure ended up challenging each other as well. Of course, the most heated arena was still the one Rean fought in. Everyone wanted to be next in line on getting their poisons removed ahead of time.

As for the second most famous one, it wasn't Roan, nor Calina, Malaka, or Wulio's. The second most famous arena was Kentucky's!

\*Creee!\*

\*Boom!\*

Another explosion of dark and light flames came from the arena as a Lakure Race member was sent flying out of it.

\*Chick!\*

"This fucking bird! Is it really just a Late Stage-Three Demon Bird? It just sent Rubio, a Core and Soul Fusion Realm Initial Stage Lakure flying!"

"Well, yeah. But it was also pushed to its limit. Look, Rubio left many injuries on the bird's body."

"Is that something to brag about? This thing jumped stages and a realm to defeat Rubio."

While they were talking, Light Element began to gather around Kentucky as his injuries slowly closed one after another. It wasn't only the Lakure Race members who felt helpless. The humans felt the same thing. Kentucky was almost as overpowered as the twins.

"Just how much Spiritual Energy does this bird have? It's already the third battle it won, and it still has enough to heal itself."

"Hmph! That's because its opponents are too weak. We shouldn't underestimate it anymore."

"Someone has to give it a lesson!"

However, what really bothered them, or what bothered the males, to be more specific, wasn't his strength, but something completely different.

\*Chick, chick!\*

"So cute!"

"Did you see how strong it can be with its plumpy body? I love it!"

"I want to hug it so much!"

"Beat them all, fluffy!"

"I'll brush, wash, and brush your feathers later, so don't be afraid of getting dirty."

As always, Kentucky attracted all the women, may it be humans or Lakures. He was a literal chick magnet. Not to mention that the bird itself loved to be pampered by them. Naturally, Kentucky became the bane of both human and Lakure males.

"I want to kill this bird so much!"

"Who the hell thought that it would be a good idea to bring this bird into the arena? Come out, I swear I won't beat you up... that much!"

"Gah! I can't take it anymore! It must be sapped dry of energy already!"

After saying that, the guy hopped on the arena and challenged Kentucky for a battle. He was right about one thing, though. After three battles, Kentucky had nearly depleted his Spiritual Energy. Because of that...

\*Boom!\*

Kentucky lost his fight as he was sent flying outside the arena, colliding on the ground. With that, all the guys felt like they had been avenged... for a few seconds.

"Kentucky!"

All the women ran in his direction and helped him up. They used their own skills to help him heal while petting and cleaning the demon bird.

\*C-Chick...\*

"My poor Kentucky."

"We'll help you get better, don't worry."

"Come, let's clean you up. Those bad guys won't touch you anymore."

At the same time, many of the women gave a deathly glare at the males who were complaining about him. Their meaning was obvious. If you think of harming our Kentucky again, you die!

All the males gritted their teeth in anger. It didn't matter anymore whether they were humans or Lakures. They were all united for one reason. That was to destroy the damned bird. Well, the truth was that they were just jealous...

A Lakure Race member then suggested.

"We need to do something about it, or that thing will take all the women for itself."

A human from the Lagan Sect on his side immediately nodded as he replied.

"Brother, it seems like we truly understand each other. How about we find a way to fry the bird?"

"Oh! I love the idea!"

"But how will we take the bird away from the women? I feel like I'll die if I get close to the bird right now."

"This... We need to put our heads together to think up of a solution."

Rean was nearby healing someone's poison when he saw all of it happening. He seriously didn't know whether to laugh or cry anymore. That's because he could totally tell the truth. Kentucky wasn't weak at all! Sure, he had consumed most of his energy, but he could still win that last battle if he put in the effort. However, Kentucky preferred to be pampered by the females instead. When Kentucky was struck by its opponent in the arena, it made sure that it would fall close to the females' location. It even knew how to make it even more dramatic by kicking on the ground several times and pretending to be very weak after that. It was all on purpose!

'How the hell can a demon bird be this perverted? Could it be that all Minokawas are like him?'

Nevertheless, Rean was quite satisfied with the result.

'However, what a weird turn of events. To think that Kentucky would become the first reason females and males of both races would unite together for one cause. This is far from being enough, but that is definitely a good start. I guess there is nothing better than to love or hate the same thing. I'll make sure he participates more in these challenges. Hahaha!'

After some time, the Light Element stopped gathering in his surroundings as he looked at the guy in front of him.

"It's done. As long as you don't go back to the underground world, your body should be free of the poison from now on."

The Lakure Race guy nodded but didn't say anything before leaving. Sure enough, it wouldn't be that easy to break the barrier between them. Nonetheless, Rean smiled as he got up and stretched a little.

"Well, I'm done with the healings for today. Time to go to the arena."

As soon as he got there, Rean saw that it was already full of Lakures and humans. Of course, Lakures were still the majority by far. Everyone moved aside, paving a way for Rean, waiting to see which arena he would choose so that they could challenge him. Sometimes, Rean healed his opponents' poison even though there was no bet or life-absorbing crystals on the line. That's why the arenas he participated in were the most famous ones.

Going back to the topic of the natural formation. According to the Lakure Formation Masters, the energy of the natural core would last four to five years at most. That's because of the Saint Realm experts that were attacking the formation from the outside. As time passed, more of them joined in the tandem attacks to help deplete the formation's energy.

While that was the case, Jana didn't seem to be preoccupied anymore. Some time ago, she received a message from her ancestor and came to see him. She found out that he was 'fortunate' and found a way to break out of his jail faster. Whether the life-absorbing crystals still gave him energy or not wouldn't change this fact. That was the reason why she accepted Rean's proposal for the crystals.

As for the people outside the barrier, they could only wait. The Sasamil Family's experts had already done what they could. Ernian Sasamil tried to request the help of an Elemental Transformation Realm expert of his family but was refused outright. Unless it was a real emergency, they would not come out. So far, this was something that only affected a few small countries at the borders. It wasn't worth their attention.

And just like that, time began to pass in a flash. Before anyone knew it, three more years had passed inside this natural formation. In other words, it has been six years and two months since Rean's group got there.

After so long, Rean ended up healing thousands of Lakure Race members. By now, everyone got used to his relaxed manner and even got along with him. The same thing could be said for the other humans and Lakures as well. Little by little, they came to talk with each other more. Surprisingly, there were even a few couples that came out of it. Of course, compared to the total number of Lakures and humans in this place, they were almost negligible. Still, that was more than enough for Rean and Roan.

The best part was that there wasn't tension in the air anymore. Both sides got used to seeing the other race, and even the separated groups were dismantled. The only rule was that the humans should not get close to the center of the valley. That was all. Jana made sure that this one rule wouldn't be broken.

Of course, there were still a lot of Lakures that didn't like the humans, especially those who came out of the underground world recently. Unlike the others, they didn't have time to interact with the humans on the surface.

There was one reason why their progress had been this fast, though. It could be found in one of the arenas.

"Kentucky, Kentucky, Kentucky, Kentucky, Kentucky!"

Thousands of women shouted this name the black and white-feathered demon bird ascended to the arena. If one looked closely, they would see that Kentucky had many female accessories on his body. However, the bird puffed its chest in pride as it showed them. Suddenly, it stretched its wings as it looked at the crowd.

\*Chiiiiiiiick!\*

"Kyaaaaa! Kentucky! We love you!!!"

Everyone time Rean saw that scene, his mouth couldn't help but twitch a little.

'This might be the first fan club of the cultivation world...'



While the female Lakures and humans cheered, the guys gritted their teeth even harder in response. For the Lakure Race's men, they couldn't care less about their hatred for humans anymore. Not to mention that the male humans were in the same boat as them since the human females left their side because of the demon bird. They all shared a hatred that surpassed any past event. They even created their own team where race didn't matter. Its name? The Alliance of Those Who Want To Beat the Shit Out of That Fucking Demon Bird!

Even Rean's poison healing fights had been outdone by Kentucky's battles. Kentucky was by far the most famous character in the Lakure Race at the moment. Some even thought he had surpassed the so-called ancestor.

Soon enough, the battle started as Kentucky and his opponent fought in the arena.

However, it was at this moment that the ground began to tremble. At the same time, an enormous burst of Spiritual Energy came from the center of the valley.

Death... and me

Chapter 535: The Rule

"What's happening?"

"It's coming from the center of the valley."

"Has the natural formation finally run out of energy?"

Rean narrowed his eyes as he looked up at the sky. Sure, the natural formation seemed to be a lot dimmer now. However, it was not to the point where it would crumble.

'Sister Orb, is it breaking?'

[No. Although I'm far from being able to take control over it, I finished analyzing the formation already. I'm sure that the formation can last at least one more year, probably a few months more.]

Rean and Roan nodded in response. Since that was the case, then only one option remained.

'Seems like that so-called ancestor is finally coming out.'

Jana, Xila, and the other high-level experts of the Lakure Race looked at the valley's center, excited. Without hesitation, they all rushed there to see the event.

Down below the natural formation's core, one could find the chamber where Laro was locked. However, all the chains and the inscriptions over them began to break one after another.

\*Shatter, shatter, shatter...\*

As they broke apart, the power released by it affected the whole valley and the surrounding regions, making them tremble nonstop. However, Jana and the others didn't care about it. They already arrived at the chamber's location and could only pay attention to the sealed door.

Eventually...

\*Bang!\*

The final chains disintegrated as the chamber's door was blasted open from inside. Following that, a far stronger burst of Spiritual Energy came from inside as a figure appeared at the door.

"Sigh... thousands of years seeing nothing more than four corners. Truly annoying."

Jana, Xila, and all the other experts immediately kneeled down as they said in unison.

"Congratulations, Ancestor."

Laro looked at the guys and smiled. He knew who they were, but it was the first time he had ever seen their faces with his own eyes.

"Thanks. Now, then. You guys can leave me alone for now. I used too much energy to break the seal, so I need to rest."

"Yes, Ancestor."

Everyone couldn't help but feel a little sad that they could talk more with him. However, Ancestor Laro's recovery was their main priority. Jana immediately ordered many of their Saint Realm experts to guard the surroundings to stop anyone from entering.

After they left, Laro looked in a particular direction.

"So, I'm out now."

Old Worm then appeared out of thin air.

"I can see that. Just take this last year or so to talk with your people. Remember, your Lakure Race has to give support when the time comes."

Laro nodded, replying with a snort.

"Hmph! I will keep my word, don't worry. However, wouldn't it be much easier to solve things if you get involved?"

Old Worm shook his head as he said.

"I can't. Since you're out now, I can tell you this much. There's a rule between experts at our level. We cannot intervene in secular world affairs. Only those at Elemental Transformation and below are allowed to meddle. After all, you know very well just how much destruction would happen if we decide to fight. Of course, I'm talking about direct fights. We can still rule over our own territory and things like that. The rule is only to not use our power."

"Same goes for you, Laro. If you decide to directly intervene by attacking someone, everyone else will join hands to get rid of you. If that happens, I doubt your Lakure Race will be spared either."

Laro understood.

"That makes sense. I had a few of my members explore the surroundings before the natural formation was activated. After a few thousand years, the planet seems to have recovered from our battle to some extent."

Old Worm shook his head as he said.

"Not completely. The amount of Spiritual Energy available in heaven and earth is not even half of what it was before. Because of that, we have very few Elemental Transformation Realm cultivators in the world. As for people at our level, only a single guy has appeared since the end of the war."

Laro was taken aback, asking.

"That bad? Thousands of years and only one guy surpassed the Elemental Transformation Realm?"

Old Worm nodded with the same serious expression as always.

"Do you think this is a bad result? It was already a miracle that he was capable of doing it. You should remember very well the conditions of the world after the war between us was over. What you see now is already a major step. Perhaps our world can finish recovering in the next ten thousand years. It would be great if that happens."

Laro sighed before nodding.

"Talking about the others, they won't come after me looking for trouble, right?"

Old Worm shook his head.

"I already used a special method to contact them. We do have the power to get rid of you, but that would be in exchange for massive destruction once again. Especially taking into consideration the situation where you focus on running away. We have agreed that we won't do anything to you as long as you don't do anything stupid. Of course, just like everyone else, you can try to lead your race to conquer territories. It's just that you can't participate in the battles."

Laro didn't mind it at all.

"That's already good enough. However, we don't have the numbers to wage war against any empire, so we will stay by ourselves and blend in Sasamil for now. After all, that's the agreement between you and me. However, once the term of our agreement finishes, I'll take my Lakure Race to find a spot for ourselves. I heard about the Maril Region, where no empires have been established for a very long time. That might be a good place to start."

Old Worm shrugged his shoulders as he said.

"That's up to you."

Laro then used his Spiritual Sense to check the conditions of the outside world and the formation.

"I didn't expect the humans and the Lakures to get along that well. After all, it has been only three years since both sides began to live together. Was it also because of those twins?"

Old Worm nodded with his deadpan face.

"I'm also quite impressed with them. Rean can use the Light and Dark Element to get rid of your Lakure Race's poison, so he gathered a lot of support and goodwill. As for Roan, he's as cold as ever. Of course, the one who really made things turn out like this was that demon bird."

Laro used his Spiritual Sense and immediately found the bird that Old Worm was talking about.

"My Spiritual Sense was limited inside the chamber, so I couldn't see things properly before. Is that bird what I think it is? No, it's a little different, especially that white and dark feather crown on its head. The real one doesn't have it. Is it a mutation? Still..."

Old Worm nodded.

"So you can recognize it as well?"

Laro glared at Old Worm with an angry expression.

"How could I not recognize it? That's our Lakure Race's guardian demon beast, Minokawa. Well, I'm the only one who saw it alive and is still here. The other members of my race wouldn't be able to recognize it at all. Let alone that it has somewhat mutated. However, I thought they had all been killed by you guys back then during the war. There should be more in other planets, but not in this one, so I'm confused."

Old Worm nodded.

"I know how you feel. From what I know, the twins found this Minokawa egg when they went out for a sect mission. I confirmed that it was the truth later. In the end, no one knows how this egg appeared there. Perhaps it is a remnant from the old times that we let escape."

Old Worm continued.

"In any case, do me a favor. Don't speak about it with the others. Unless they come out and pay very close attention to this bird, they won't recognize it at all. Even I had a hard time noticing it, and I have been living in the same sect for many years."

Laro narrowed his eyes as he offered.

"I want to raise it for our race."

Old Worm immediately shook his head as he replied.

"It has already accepted a master."

Laro didn't mind as he continued.

"I just need to kill him without it noticing. As long as it never finds out, it will be easy to shift its belief, especially since it's so young."

However, Old Worm's expression turned darker than usual.

"I told you that black-haired boy is my disciple, right? He's the master. In fact, it has recognized two masters, the other being his brother. Do you think I'll let you take their lives?"

Laro was taken aback once more.

"Just how fucking lucky can you get? That boy is already a heaven-defying genius, his brother not the least bit worse. On top of that, you also got our guardian beast because of them? Fuck you!"

Old Worm's expression relaxed after hearing that.

"It was all thanks to my ancestor who passed away."

"Thanks to your ancestor? What are you talking about?"

Old Worm then shook his head before saying.

"Forget it."

Laro thought that there was something more to it but didn't continue to inquire.

"Whatever. Still..."

Laro continued to look at Kentucky.

"How can a Minokawa be hated and loved so much like that?"

Old Worm faintly smiled as he answered.

"That's what I was talking about. In either case, Kentucky was the main reason behind the progress of both races. Well, it definitely doesn't know it since it only cares about girls. Were the Minokawas that perverted back in your day?"

Laro's mouth twitched in response. The more he watched, the more he felt like Kentucky was tarnishing his memory regarding the race's guardian beast. Kentucky became 'super scared' with the ground trembling and buried himself in the middle of the female cultivators. All of them were hugging him, saying that he would be fine. As he got that treatment, the men on the other side gritted their teeth in fury... and jealousy.

"Who the hell trained that bird to be like this?"

Somewhere outside the natural formation...

\*Achoo!\*

Elder Reliance looked around as he rubbed his nose.

"Is someone talking about me?"

Death... and me

Chapter 536: Talking with Laro

Old Worm shrugged his shoulders as he said.



"Well, at least he's strong. I'm going out now, so take your sweet time recovering."

Laro sighed in response and decided to ignore the demon bird. At least its actions had served greatly for their purpose of reconciliation.

A few days later, Laro finished recovering his energy. It would take a long time for him to truly be at his peak again, but at least he could protect himself if need be. Following that, he used his Spiritual Sense to send a message to everyone in the valley. Both the Lakure and the humans heard it in their minds.

"Come to the center of the valley."

Rean's group, obviously, heard the same thing. Since it was the ancestor's orders, Jana didn't try to stop the humans, so it was their first time here. Under them was the natural formation's core. Of course, Jana wasn't afraid of anyone playing any tricks since the ancestor was here as well.

After some time, a man appeared in the sky as he looked at all the Lakures and humans.

"My name is Laro. I'm the last survivor from the war between humans and Lakures back when we were sealed."

In an instant, all the Lakure Race members knelt down as they looked at Laro in delight.

"Long live the ancestor!"

"The ancestor is free!"

"With the ancestor here, we will be free as well!"

Erbec, Suan, and the other humans also watched the guy. The moment their Spiritual Sense reached his location, they felt frightened. Laro wasn't trying to hide his cultivation, so even the Nascent Soul Realm cultivators could feel it. Obviously, as someone above the Elemental Transformation Realm, he was

terrifying in front of the human's eyes. None of the cultivators they had seen in the past had even gotten close to that amount of power.

Laro then looked at the two Soul Forging Realm cultivators of the human race before saying.

"I've heard that you wish to negotiate with us. To be honest, that was my intention as well after thinking things through. Although I'm confident I can survive in this world, that same can't be said for my Lakure Race members."

Erbec and Suan sighed in relief. Sure enough, they were right about the negotiation.

"However, I doubt you can talk on the Sasamil Empire's behalf, so it's still early to tell what will happen."

Erbec immediately answered.

"As I mentioned in the past, we will do our best to make this negotiation happen. After all, this is an untimely moment for the Sasamil Empire to go into war, so they can only negotiate."

Laro nodded. Old Worm told him that their meetings and deal were to be kept secret, so he couldn't bring Old Worm's name out.

"I hope that's the case. I've been observing both sides' interactions until now. Although we have more Lakure Race members here, both have been able to reach some degree of mutual understanding. That's what I expected."

After that, he redirected his attention to the Lakure Race only.

"All of you. I'll be negotiating with the Sasamil Empire once the natural formation goes down. Meanwhile, you better get ready for anything. The formation will last for another year and a bit, so use this time to train. If everything goes well, we won't need to fight, but you know what will happen if it doesn't."

Everyone immediately nodded.

"Yes, Ancestor!"

"Good."

Laro then looked at Rean in the middle of the crowd. All of a sudden, Spiritual Energy came out of his body and enveloped Rean. Before Rean could do anything, he was brought up high in the skies. Not only him, but Roan, Kentucky, Calina, Malaka, and Wulio were brought up as well.

"Jana, is this the group you told me about?"

Jana immediately nodded.

"Yes, Ancestor."

Rean and Roan were ready to bring everyone into the Dimensional Realm if Laro decided to act. However, Laro just faintly smiled at them.

"How amusing, a bunch of brats made this scene down there happen."

Obviously, he was talking about how Rean's group came up with the plan to have the humans and Lakures live together in the valley. Jana constantly reported to him the changes that occurred, so he was up to date with everything. Obviously, Kentucky and Rean were the ones who caught most of the attention. Rean's healing abilities and Kentucky's fan club helped a lot with the relationship of both races.

However, Roan and the others also helped with what they could. Roan often held classes to help those at his level with cultivation and fighting. Even the Lakures who didn't like humans couldn't help but appear in his lessons. Let alone humans.

Calina and Malaka were the leaders of Kentucky's fan club. The two girls succeeded in making the females of both races join it. Well, it was all thanks to Kentucky's charm as well. Last but not least, and the most unexpected one, was Wulio. He wasn't exactly part of Rean's group, but he put in a lot of effort as well. He understood that the men's hate for Kentucky would be a great way to pull the males together. Sure enough, he succeeded as well. Perhaps that was his way of showing Calina his presence.

Laro then looked at Rean before asking.

"We have many, many more Lakure Race members sealed in the underground world. I know you can heal their poisons, but it would take over a hundred years if you go over them one by one."

Rean bitterly smiled as he said.

"There is a limit as to what I can do. You can't ask me to stop cultivating and training just to do that from now on. Otherwise, I would reach the end of my lifespan before I can even finish every single one."

Laro nodded. He wasn't an idiot.

"I know. I just wanted to ask if there's any way you can heal several of them at once. If the problem is Spiritual Stones, I can arrange it for you as long as they aren't Rank Four or higher. However, I can give you the remaining Life-Absorbing Crystals. It seems like you and your brother are very interested in it because of this demon bird."

Rean shook his head in response. First of all, Rank Three and below level Spirit Stones wasn't something he lacked to start with. The red crystals were indeed a great thing, but it doesn't change the fact that Rean can't do any better than that.

"Unfortunately, I don't know any way of doing that. In my opinion, the best way to work around it is to have the alchemists' assistance and see if they can come up with a pill with similar effects. That way, it could be mass-produced. Of course, this is just an idea."

Laro narrowed his eyes as he asked.

"Why don't you just use your Spiritual Energy on several people at once?"

Rean shook his head as his hair changed into a mix of black and white. Following that, a ball of Dark and White Spiritual Light appeared on his hand as the amount of each light's color changed constantly.

"To eliminate their poisons, I need to balance the amount of Light and Dark Element coursing through them. Each person has their own body structure, so it varies from case to case. Suppose I do the same amount for everyone. In that case, chances are that nothing will be achieved other than multiple deaths or excruciating pain."

"The problem here is that I can't control my Spiritual Energy and Elements well enough to work on more than two or maybe three people at once. Three people would already be stretching it a lot. You must understand that the poisons have already fused with your own blood. Controlling the Dark Element to target one of the poisoned parts while using the Light Element to protect the body is hundreds of times more difficult than you think."

Rean wasn't lying. He also didn't like to see when the poison flared up around him. Unfortunately, there was only so much he could do alone. It was completely different from just healing one's injuries with his Life Style's Instant Recovery. After all, doing that only needed Light Element, and the amount didn't matter as long as Rean didn't try to harm someone on purpose. It's just that it got a few moans from everyone now and then...

Roan can somewhat use the 'Life Style's Purification' skill as well. However, he wasn't as good as Rean in terms of Light Element Control, so he would only be able to work on a single person. Not to mention that Roan would take much longer to finish each one. That said, he didn't even try meddling into this issue.

Laro sighed as he looked in a particular direction. No one could see anything in that place, but he knew Old Worm, or Jakiro, was watching him from there.

Following that, Laro pondered for a bit before asking.

"That being said, the higher your cultivation, the higher your control. If you get stronger, you will be able to heal more people at once, right?"

Rean smiled in response.

"Indeed. That's also one of the reasons why I only spend half a day healing them. I can then use the other half to cultivate and increase my cultivation. At some point, I'll be able to heal more people at once, and faster as well."

Laro nodded before saying.

"Very well. I can only wait as it seems. I'll arrange for the human alchemists to try and figure something out. But until then, I'll be relying on you."

Rean didn't mind.

Laro also looked at Roan and the others.

"As for the rest of you, just keep doing whatever you did so far."

After that, he released Rean's group and began to speak.

"Well, then. You all have one more year and a few months in this accelerated time. Be sure to make the most of it. I'll let everyone know once the time has come."

Death... and me

Chapter 537: How to get free

After that, Laro sent Old Worm a Spiritual Sense message.

'Is this good enough for you?'

Old Worm nodded with his expressionless face.

'Yes.'

Rean's group then looked at each other, not knowing what to say. Naturally, everyone else looked at them as well. After all, they were able to catch the ancestor's attention to a certain extent. Some were even jealous.

Nevertheless, with that out of the way, Rean's group had their green card to keep their training as they saw fit. Jana then told everyone to disperse, leaving only Rean's group behind.

"Since your cultivation is directly linked to how many Lakures you can heal at once, the ancestor asked me to give you these life-absorbing crystals. In the end, he needed most of them, but the rest can stay with you."

Rean's group, especially Kentucky, looked at the Lakure Race members who brought many of those crystals over.

"This... How many are there?"

"There are 55 remaining crystals. However, there will be no more after this since it isn't worth the materials used to make them. Also, now that they aren't in use anymore, they will gradually lose their power. With that, you better use them in less than a year. Of course, you can bring them to absorb more life again, but that'll kill everything around them, as you've seen before."

Rean shook his head as he said.

"It's fine. As you've noticed, we're giving it to Kentucky. It's very beneficial for his growth. I'm sure he'll be able to consume everything in less than a year. As for us, we can't use its energy for some reason."

Jana nodded as she replied.

"Only someone who is at least in the Elemental Transformation Realm can make use of the crystal's energy. Our ancestor is obviously someone like that. However, I'm quite impressed that your demon bird is capable of such a thing."

Rean shrugged his shoulders as he said in response.

"Not really. Most of the crystal's energy is lost, so it's far from perfect. Nevertheless, that's good enough."

Of course, she knew that. What she didn't realize was that the twins benefited from it as well. Though, it was mainly because it didn't seem that the twins' cultivation was any faster than Malaka, Calina, or the geniuses of the Lakure Race. Little did she know that the twins' Spiritual Pools were far larger than everyone else. That's why it seemed like they cultivated at the same speed as others. Otherwise, they might have reached the Core and Soul Fusion Realm by now.

Jana then turned around and left with her subordinates. From that point onwards, the center of the valley was free to be visited as long as no one got close to the natural formation's core. After all, who would be idiotic enough to attack someone like Laro? That would be a huge joke.

Another thing that changed was that Laro allowed the cultivators to head out of the valley and do whatever they wanted. If they didn't want to come back anymore until the natural formation disappeared, that would be fine as well. No one would be following them.

However, Erbec and the others knew that their relationship with these Lakure Race members was the key to negotiation. At the same time, it was linked to the rewards they would receive themselves for achieving such a result. There was no way they would go out at this point. The same could be said to the Nascent Soul Realm cultivators present.

It was then that Roan came to see them.

"As you can see, the natural formation is quite dim now. We can even see the other side. Why don't you have someone go to the natural formation's border and check if the scouts can see the other side? You might not be able to talk or use Spiritual Sense with them. However, you can totally write words on a board and use those to communicate."

Erbec and the others nodded.



"We've already arranged that. The sects and Royal Family members will each send a Nascent Soul Realm cultivator to check the barrier later today."

Tiria, who was there as well, nodded.

"Juvian will be going there on our Dalamu Sect's behalf while I wait here. If everything goes as planned, we can already start the preliminary negotiation."

Roan was satisfied with the answer.

"That's good, then."

After talking about a few more things, he soon made his way out.

Suddenly, a little girl came running in Roan's direction.

"Roan!"

Roan then looked at her.

"Oh. It's you, Sana."

It's been seven years already, so Sana had grown up quite a lot. Sure enough, she was brought out of the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm when she was only four years old. That being said, Sana only had a few memories of that place. At some point, she ignored those memories as she spent more time with everyone. Even if she asked about it, they could just say that it was just her dreams or something like that.

"Where are Rean and the others?"

"They're training, as always. I'm going back to do the same as well."

Sana became disappointed.

"You guys only know how to train, train, train, cultivate, cultivate, cultivate. You're too boring!"

Roan didn't seem to care as he said.

"And you should be doing the same. Well, I can see you've reached the Organs Change Stage of Body Transformation, so your results aren't too bad."

Sana was one of the quasi-inexistent kids in the whole place. There were just a very few exceptions due to different reasons. Naturally, she almost didn't have anyone who she could play with. That's why she was more attached to Rean's group since they took care of her since she was a baby. As for Sister Orb, she had never seen her again. Even she began to think that Sister Orb was nothing more than a dream.

Well, Sister Orb was pretty gloomy about it. But she knew that her existence couldn't be disclosed, so she always stayed silent.

Roan entertained the girl for a few more minutes and finally left. Everyone only had one more year or so in this place. They had to make sure to use the time to the fullest.

A day later, Juvian and the other experts from the sects and Royal Family arrived at the border of the natural formation. Sure enough, they were right. It was now possible to see the other side. It's just that their Spiritual Sense and voice couldn't pass through it.

It didn't take too long for them to find a few more cultivators inside the natural formation. As one could imagine, they didn't bring everyone to the valley three years ago. That would be idiotic in case they were attacked and died. Someone had to stay out to tell others what to expect. However, it was now unnecessary.

After some time, they also found the area where the Jialin and Guntao Saint Realm forces were attacking the natural formation. Naturally, Ernian Sasamil and his forces were there as well.

They had been thinking of the worst-case scenario until now. After all, it was now possible to see the other side, but their experts never appeared to see them. Only those low-level ones could be talked to, but even they didn't know what happened to the high-level ones that went to the valley. Naturally, everyone was taken aback when Juvian and the others appeared.

Without being able to talk or use Spiritual Sense, they could only use big written words to communicate with one another. Well, that was enough since they had a lot of time. Eventually, Erbec explained the whole situation after a few hours.

'I see... Lakure Race, huh? An expert that is probably above the Elemental Transformation Realm as well. However, they don't want to start a war. The deployed natural formation was so that they had enough time to bring their experts out of the underworld and free that ancestor. That's too big for me to decide what to do on my own. This time, I'm sure the family will send someone at the Elemental Transformation Realm to preside over this situation. As for our own ancestor... I wonder if he would come out too...'

Erbec then looked at the experts on the other side before writing in the air with his Spiritual Sense.

"Very well, I'll tell the Sasamil Family about it, so you just need to wait a little more. Wait here until they send a higher-ranked representative."

Juvian and the others nodded in response.

"Alright."

With that said, Qia finally had time to ask her own questions. She had stayed here all this time, waiting to receive any news from Rean and the others. It had been almost ten months outside the formation, so she was worried sick.

Juvian laughed as he then told everyone thing Rean had done for them. Well, he already said the same thing to Erbec anyway.

"He got to stop the battle by intentionally receiving... a beating?"

Naturally, her expression was as perplexed as the others when they heard that.

Juvian took his time to talk with Qia since she was Rean's 'wife.' No one bothered with that either.

Qia was basically the only one on Rean's Formation Team in this place. Droman was responsible for the entire Communication System, so he had to go back to the sect at some point. Still, he received the information about the situation a few days later. Obviously, Havek Sasamil got it as well.

"Hahaha! As I told you, my rival wouldn't die that easily. Just wait until he sees how much the project has advanced in the past nine months."

Droman nodded as he said.

"It's good as long as he's fine. It's just that... How will he free himself from there if he has so many Lakures to heal?"

Sure enough, that was one of the main questions in everyone's minds.

Death... and me

Chapter 538: Quick Action!

Time passed as everyone used the extra time to cultivate and train. Soon, half of the time the formation could still work passed in a flash. Only six to eight months were available to the formation's natural core energy, according to Sister orb. Nothing much happened during this time, though. It's just that Laro didn't come out to negotiate with the people outside. He wanted to talk after the formation had gone down.

Rean's group, of course, improved by leaps and bounds during this time. The same could be said about the others.

Today, Calina was finally going to make her last breakthrough under the Core Formation Realm. Calina had made her breakthrough to the Late Stage of the Core Formation Realm over five years ago, after all. With Rean's massive amount of Rank Three Spirit Stones from the Communication System, she had no problem with Spiritual Energy. The same could be said for Malaka.

Suddenly, a burst of Spiritual Energy came out of her dantian and spread outwards. Everyone in a kilometer around her noticed that as they looked in her dwelling's direction. However, they quickly ignored that and returned to do their own things. There were several breakthroughs happening every day in the valley, so no one found anything strange about it.

Roan looked at the condition of Calina's dantian after she finished her breakthrough and nodded.

"That went better than I thought. I was afraid that you might have cultivated a little too quickly. However, it seems like the Foundation Stabilizing Pills I gave you after your last breakthrough did the job. This time, however, I don't want you to take the pills. Otherwise, your body will form an immunity against it. Take your time in letting your foundation naturally calm down. Refrain from cultivating for the next two months or so."

Calina smiled as she nodded. She was now in the Peak of the Core Formation Realm.

"Thank you, Roan."

Malaka then hugged Calina.

"Congratulations."

Calina couldn't help but laugh.

"Thank you as well."

She then looked outside and focused her sights on the natural formation in the sky. However, it was far dimmer than before to the point that it almost seemed non-existent.

"Seems like we won't be able to use this time acceleration formation for much longer."

Roan nodded.

"There's no helping that. The natural formation isn't something we can intervene with. It was already great that we were here when it happened."

Calina then thought about how the time for her to go back to the capital was getting closer. Of course, just a little less than a year had passed outside, though. She still had around a decade even after the formation went down. At least, that was Roan's expectation.

It was then that someone entered the room as well. Immediately, Calina's face had a weird expression on it. There was only one person capable of making her feel helpless like that at the moment, which was Wulio.

"Congratulations on your breakthrough. It seems like it won't be long before you reach the same realm as me."

Calina bitterly smiled as she replied.

"Thank you."

Wulio nodded before asking.

"So, the time's almost up. Have you decided what to do about my proposal?"

Malaka narrowed her eyes when she heard that.

"Do you really need to force Calina to marry you to gain your support? First of all, do you even love her?"

Wulio looked at Malaka with a puzzled expression as he responded.

"What are you talking about? This is just a political marriage of sorts. I'll give her my support as one of the Emperor's sons. In exchange, I'll be able to keep a close eye on her in case she decides to join the

Chrole Empire's side. If she really is doing it to stop a war from happening between our Empires, then this is her best option."

Roan then looked at Wulio before asking.

"And if you find out that she's really doing it for Sasamil Empire? What will you do from there onwards? What will be your position if she becomes the empress?"

Wulio laughed as he replied.

"Hahaha! Well, I'm giving her my support, but I seriously doubt she'll become the empress. First Brother will do his best to stop it, and so will Fifth Brother. Well, the other direct bloodline princes and princesses won't stay idle either."

"However, let's consider that she somehow succeeds in taking the throne. In that case, I'll do my job as her husband. When an Emperor ascends to the throne, his wife becomes the empress. The same thing happens the other way around. I'll become the Emperor. However, the one who really holds power is the one who made his way up there. The other is just a symbolic existence. For me, that's perfect. I won't need to take care of anything other than keeping an eye on her. In exchange, I will have unlimited resources and free time. How could I not be happy to be her husband at that time."

Just as he was finished talking, a voice came from the entrance of the room.

"I see... That being said, you at least believe that Calina has a very small chance of becoming the empress."

Everyone looked in the direction of the voice and saw Rean making his way into the room.

"Congratulations, Calina."

Calina smiled at Rean as well.

"Thank you."

Wulio, on the other hand, was taken aback by Rean's words. However, he quickly recovered before saying.

"There's one thing I came to understand in this cultivation world. The heavens will never close all doors. There's always a chance. I'm simply taking that chance in my hands in case it appears."

Roan was more than satisfied with that. At least, Wulio had a reason to help Calina. Well, that was considering that what he was saying was the truth.

However, Calina then looked at Roan as she asked.

"Don't you mind it even a little bit?"

Roan was puzzled by that question. However, he quickly had an idea.

"Are you talking about the chances that he might betray you? That's something I can't guarantee. At least, I do believe he's being serious."

Wulio smiled as he looked at Calina and Roan. He wasn't a dense person like Roan, so he could totally tell what was happening here. Still, it didn't seem like he minded that.

Rean and Malaka felt like crying already. How can he be that oblivious?

Surprisingly, Calina didn't seem to be disheartened by Roan's answer. Instead, it had finally reached a point where she began to get angry. Soon after, she got up and looked at Wulio before saying.

"I accept your proposal."

Malaka and Rean were taken aback by that. Did she finally give up? However...



\*Vup!\*

Calina grabbed Roan's arm and pulled him over. Roan wasn't expecting anything like that at all, so before he could even react, Calina stole a kiss from him!

Death... and me

Chapter 539: That Hurts

Rean couldn't help but feel a sense of deja vu.

'I've seen this happen before...'

Roan looked at Calina, who had pressed her lips on his own with wide eyes. Malaka, obviously, found it incredible and couldn't stop grinning.

As for Wulio, he simply shrugged his shoulders at the sight. Obviously, he didn't really love Calina to start with, not to mention that they weren't married yet. Even though his 'future wife' was kissing someone else, he simply didn't care. Besides, he knew very well that Calina liked Roan.

Eventually, Roan came back to himself and immediately pushed Calina aside.

"What the hell are you doing?"

Calina laughed with her face as red as it could possibly be.

"What else do you think I was doing? I was kissing you!"

"Why?"

Calina already threw caution to the wind, so she went straight to the point.

"Because I love you."

Roan began to feel a headache coming as he massaged his temples.

"Love? I couldn't care less about such a thing. First of all, I don't believe it exists. It's all about body attraction and who you feel to be the best candidate for your reproduction. Those feelings act in your brain, making you mistake it for some bullshit name like Love."

Malaka and Rean didn't find Roan's reaction surprising at all. They knew that he never gave any importance to it.

Of course, Calina already expected that as well. She had been living with Roan for a long time, after all.

"Oh, is that so? Using your words, I guess I consider you the best partner for children. What about you? Do you have any problem in having me as your children's mother?"

Wulio couldn't help but ask Rean and Malaka through a Spiritual Sense message.

'Isn't this getting a little out of hand? They're talking about children already.'

Rean shrugged his shoulders as he replied.

'It should be fine. I doubt Roan would take things further than this. He doesn't want to stay with anyone, after all.'

Malaka agreed with him.

'Rean's right. I'm more impressed with the fact that you don't seem to care much about it.'

'Of course. After all, Calina and I would just have a political marriage. Whatever she does before it doesn't concern me. Then again, I guess a kid would be going too far in this situation.'

'Don't worry, just look at how annoyed Roan looks right now, and you'll easily understand that this thing has no future. To be honest, we wanted him to answer Calina's feelings, but it just won't happen.'

Roan was indeed very annoyed. However...

"If I give you the kid you want, will you forget about this? We can have sex right now if you are in the time frame for conception as long as you give up this love idea. By the way, tell me when you had your last period and the time interval between each one. I can calculate the best time for it."

Everyone almost vomited blood after hearing that. Roan wanted to impregnate the girl and leave her alone! The most impressive thing was that he thought he was doing a favor to Calina.

Of course, even Calina didn't expect such a proposal. Unfortunately, she wanted his kid so that they could stay together, not so that he could leave her right after. Without a doubt, that only made Calina furious.

"Idiot! What's the point in having your kid if you aren't going to stay there with me to take care of it?"

Roan narrowed his eyes as he asked a question in response.

"Wasn't a kid what you wanted?"

Wulio, Rean, and Malaka couldn't help but show weird expressions.

'Just where the hell is this conversation going?'

Calina continued as she said.

"No! I just said that to see if you could stay with me. I understand that you don't believe in Love. I get it. However, I do believe in it! I truly love you. Why don't you get it?"

Roan shook his head as he said.

"Let's consider that Love does exist. Aren't you forgetting something else?"

Wulio, Malaka, and Rean already knew what Roan was going to say.

"What is it?"

Roan then looked deeply at Calina and said in the most serious tone possible.

"I don't love you."

Sure enough, Roan also got straight to the point. It was basically the same situation with Rean and Qia at the moment. Rean didn't love her, so the two can't really be together. They were only in that political marriage situation but had never done anything with each other. Well, Qia had tried hundreds of times, but Rean was steady as a rock.

Calina then dropped her head, dejected. Still adamant, she then asked.

"Even if you don't love me, don't you like me even a little bit?"

Roan answered straight away.

"It depends on what kind of 'like' you're talking about. I like how much effort you're putting into becoming an empress. I like how much effort you put into the training I give you. I like how considerate you are when any of us have a problem, and you try to help to the best of your abilities. I like how your friendship with Malaka is important to you to the point where you'd protect her with your life."

Calina and the others were taken aback as Roan talked. That was a lot of likes... However, he wasn't finished yet.

"I like how you look genuinely sad when you can't perform according to my expectations as if it was the most important thing. I like how you can easily bring your feelings out, only losing to my idiot sister in this regard. I like when we go all out together, and you try to be mindful of everyone's actions. I like..."

Roan continued to list all the 'likes' he could think about. However, that began to make Calina's face become redder after some time. Of course, he had eventually run out of things to say which he liked about Calina.

"As you can see, there are many things I like about you. However, this isn't Love at all."

Rean and the others' mouths twitched as they simultaneously thought.

'Would you really pay such close attention to someone you don't love?'

Malaka then asked Roan with an elated expression.

"So many likes! Then, what do you like about me?"

Roan snorted as he responded straightforwardly.

"I don't like you."

Oof... that stings! Poor Malaka almost cried just then.

Death... and me

Chapter 540: Didn't Give Up

Rean patted Malaka's head as he said.

"Don't worry, your brother here still likes you very much. What's so good about being liked by an ice block?"

The girl was a grown-up lady already, but she still liked it when Rean treated her that way.

"Reaaaaan!"

She immediately hugged her brother as she cried... or pretended to do so...

However, Calina ignored that comedy show. Her mind was full of Roan's 'likes' that continued replaying in her head nonstop.

'I didn't know he had been paying attention to me this much. What do I do? I thought he would give me a straight answer, but then he began to talk like that. Idiot! How can I not love you even more after that! What are you aiming for? Are you playing with my feelings?'

'No! Roan would rather lose a limb than waste time playing with someone. That means he really does like all of that in me. Can you really say you don't love me after all of that? Then again, what if he isn't lying? What if he simply likes those parts of me but doesn't really want to have anything to do with me? If it's Roan, it's totally possible! Ahhhhh! This is driving me crazy!'

After destroying Malaka's hopes for 'likes,' Roan noticed that Calina had gone silent.

"What is it? Have you come to terms that it won't work?"

Calina finally came back to herself as she looked at Roan and replied with a hint of uncertainty.

"Err... maybe?"

Calina wasn't sure. However, that was good. Not being sure still meant she had a chance.

"What do you mean by maybe? Even after everything I said, you still hold such hopes?"

Rean, Malaka, and even Wulio couldn't help but agree with Calina. That 'maybe' was a big one right there.

Roan then looked at Wulio before asking.

"Shouldn't you say something? She already agreed with your marriage. Aren't people used to not wanting their women to like other men and vice versa?"

Wulio shrugged his shoulders as he responded.

"Why should I spoil the fun?"

Malaka and Rean nodded vigorously, with Rean saying soon after.

"Brother Wulio, you really know your shit!"

"Hahaha! But of course!"

Roan finally lost his patience after hearing that.

"Fuck all of you! I'm out of here."

However, Rean immediately stopped him.

"Wait, wait, wait! We still need to discuss this marriage thing about Calina and Wulio."

He also commented through their Soul Connection.

'Besides, it's also directly linked to whether we die in this mission to make Calina an empress or not.'

Roan's steps froze in place as he unwillingly turned his body back.

"Fine! Let's put an end to this love talk and just get straight to the point. Calina, you accepted the marriage with him, yes?"

Calina was taken aback for a moment before nodding her head. She then quickly calmed down as she shifted her focus back on the main issue. Well, all the 'likes' still lingered in her head, though. It's just that she did her best to not think about them.

"Ahem... Correct. I want to stop this war between Sasamil and Chrole. For that, becoming the empress is the best option. If I have Wulio as my husband and states that he wants to support me instead, that would make my position a lot more stable."

Calina was truly a lot more focused on her wish to stop this conflict. She considered it a lot more important than her own feelings.

Wulio nodded after hearing that.

"I still think you have almost no chance, but I'll give you my support. However, you will need much more than that."

Roan shook his head as he said.

"No need. When the time comes, support won't matter during the decision. Your support will only matter after Calina becomes the empress. Only then will it matter a lot. She will need to consolidate her position."

Wulio was taken aback, making him ask Roan.



"One's support won't matter on the decision on who's going to be the Emperor or Empress? How's that possible?"

Roan shook his head as he responded vaguely.

"I'm not sure yet, but that's what our investigations had turned up. Just make sure you're there when the time comes."

Wulio felt that it was ridiculous. The amount of support the candidates took was always linked to their chances of becoming the next sovereign. How could it suddenly change? Also, how come he, the ninth prince, did not know about it?

"You're lying!"

Rean and Roan shrugged their shoulders.

"Whether we are lying or not will be answered in the future. Of course, there's one more thing."

"What is it?"

Rean then got closer to Wulio as he said with a serious expression.

"If we are right and support won't be needed to become the next Emperor and Empress, that means you'll also obtain the same chance. What will you do when that time comes? Will you offer your help, as you've said, or will you fight for the throne as well?"

"This..."

Wulio was taken aback. He wasn't lying. He didn't want to become the emperor since it would be too much work. He didn't like it. However, he couldn't deny that another reason was that he didn't think he

had any chance of winning the throne. Wulio dropped his head as he pondered over such a possibility until he eventually reached a decision.

"Forget it. I'm just too unfit to become an emperor. Unlike Calina, I don't like to take anything seriously. The empire would only decline in my hands. Watching over Calina's actions would be the extent of what I can do."

Rean and Roan nodded, satisfied.

It was then that Malaka thought about something.

"Wait. Calina, could it be that you want your relationship with Wulio to be the same as Rean and Qia?"

Calina was taken aback, and so were Rean and Wulio. However, Calina's face suddenly became red in response.

"I knew it!"

Wulio couldn't help but ask.

"What are you talking about?"

Rean then looked at Wulio. Since they were more or less allies now, he decided that he might tell this much.

"The truth behind Qia and my relationship is like this..."

Wulio listened to Rean's explanation and finally understood.

"I see... So you two are free to do whatever you want, even secretly marrying someone else."

Wulio looked at Calina before saying.

"That's fine by me. That only means I will be far freer to do whatever I want. Besides, I'm not exactly the loyal type."

Calina sighed in relief after hearing that.

"Thank you, Wulio."

Malaka and Rean finally understood when they heard that.

'No wonder she didn't give up on Roan...'