

Death 691

Death... and me

Chapter 691: I am not worthy

Sister Orb then explained, [First, you'll need to increase the size of the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm. That means expending 8000 Destiny Points for it.]

"Are you telling us that the perk that comes with the next Dimensional Realm upgrade is an increase in size?" Rean asked with a hint of confusion. After all, Sister Orb never told them what the Dimensional Realm upgrades would give them unless it was some kind of reward.

However, Roan shook his head, saying, "That's not a perk. The Dimensional Realm would increase in size regardless if it gains some new ability or not. In fact, the Dimensional Realm had increased in size during the last two times we upgraded it."

Sister Orb confirmed Roan's words, saying in response, [Correct. I still can't tell you what its new ability will be. However, an increase in size always happens regardless, so it's not a secret to start with.]

"Alright, then. What will we use the bigger Dimensional Realm for?" Kentucky asked since he was also listening.

It was then that Sister Orb looked at him. She didn't have eyes, though. Nevertheless, Kentucky was sure she was doing exactly that. Kentucky then began to look around his body before asking, "Uh...is there something wrong with my feathers?"

Sister Orb giggled before continuing, [Nope. I'm looking at what you are, not at what you have. It turns out that I know what race that tree is from.] Sister Orb then asked quite an unexpected question at Kentucky. [Say...have you decided where you'd make your nest already?]

Kentucky felt a chill on his back after hearing that.

Outside underground, the demon tree kept his Spiritual Sense spread, trying to find where those two guys it saw before went. 'That's not possible. I'm absolutely sure I saw them, and they only had cultivations at the Nascent Soul realm. How could they escape my senses?'

Suddenly, a voice echoed in the demon tree's mind through a Spiritual Sense Message, saying, 'Hello there, sir. Would you mind giving us a little of your time?'

"Who's there?!" The demon tree immediately shot its vines in the direction that the Spiritual Sense came from. However, it once again passed through empty air, hitting nothing. "Where are you? Show yourself!"

Obviously, Rean and Roan once again opened a very small hole connecting the outside world with the Dimensional Realm. He also used his Light Bending Skill to conceal it from the eyes of any of the guards there at the moment. Because of the Heavenly Tree's rage, the Zasfins had been flying all around, trying to find the ones who had used Spiritual Sense on it before.

Unfortunately, the demon tree went on a rage once again, causing quite a few of those Zasfins to be thrown away by its Spiritual Energy burst. Nevertheless, when its vines hit the point the twins were using to communicate with it, they had already closed it. Right after that, they opened another one just a few meters away from the original point.

'Sir, we mean no harm. We're here to simply make you an offer. If you don't want it, we will leave straight away,' Rean said as he kept his skills active.

Once again, the demon tree attacked the point where the Spiritual Sense was coming, but it turned out to be useless. Whoever was there, it simply couldn't hit it at all. It even tried to use a few of its skills, but nothing seemed to work. In the end, the demon tree couldn't detect the presence of the Dimensional Realm. Eventually, the tree gave up before answering back with a Spiritual Sense, 'Hmph! What kind of deal could I possibly have with a coward that doesn't even dare to appear before me?'

Rean laughed in response, not minding the tree's harsh words at all. 'You will have to forgive me in that regard, senior. I'm just a puny Nascent Soul Realm cultivator at the initial stage. If I come out, you'll just wipe me out in an instant. I'm just too weak.'

'Is that so? Then, why should I even listen to you?' The Demon Tree didn't relent at all. 'Just go away. This Heavenly Tree already has everything it wishes. There's nothing else you can possibly offer me that I can't get myself.' It rarely ever heard the other Transition Realm Zasfins of the Soul Rulers, so why should it lower itself in front of an ant?

Of course, Rean didn't give up just because of that. In fact, he seemed very confident. 'Senior, don't put the cart before the horses. I'm pretty sure that you don't really have everything you wish.'

'Hoh...?' With that, the Demon Tree's curiosity was piqued quite a little bit. 'In that case, why don't you tell me, then? What is it that I don't have, but you can offer me?'

Rean then laughed out loud, saying, 'Come on, senior. We both know that you're a World Swallowing Cedar.'

The Demon Tree's demeanor instantly changed. No one knew just what kind of Demon Tree it was, even the Soul Rulers that it had an agreement with. 'Who are you?'

Rean shook his head, responding with a smug tone, 'Who I am is not important. The important part is that you know very well what you would love to have above you but can't get your branches to hold. I...can give you that.'

Nevertheless, that was enough for the World Swallowing Cedar's core to tremble. 'You can't be serious! There's no way you can get me that. They are dead! All dead! The last one seen on this planet was tens of thousands of years ago! Although I won't say they've gone extinct, I can at least guarantee that they don't exist on this planet anymore.' Even though the tree spoke like that, it couldn't help but feel excited. Just...just what if he was telling the truth?

Rean smiled at that answer. Even though he seemed confident, he had absolutely no guarantee that Sister Orb's plan would work. After all, that included bringing the World Swallowing Cedar into their own Dimensional Realm! Just how ridiculously dangerous would that be? Who could ensure their safety?

Nevertheless, Rean continued the negotiation. 'Senior, you know very well from where my Spiritual Sense is coming from, right? I'll allow your Spiritual Sense to pass through the hole connecting to the place I am at the moment. I'm sure you've tried that already. It's just that here in this, I'm the absolute god. I was preventing your Spiritual Sense from coming inside.'

Before the tree could answer, it felt whatever was barring its Spiritual Sense to disappear. There truly was a very tiny hole. Not even the smallest of its vines would be able to pass through. Nevertheless, it

was possible for the tree's overwhelming Spiritual Sense to pass. It's just that once inside the Dimensional Realm, it could only travel until the points Rean and Roan wanted it to. No more, no less.

Suddenly, the Demon Tree shone more brightly than ever, making even the Zafins around the tree cover their eyes. The World Swallowing Cedar's Core was reverberating with chaotic energy due to its emotions. Right in front of it, the World Swallowing Cedar saw a Minokawa. A real, very real, living Minokawa! It was very weak, only at Stage Five, but the World Swallowing Cedar was absolutely sure that it was the real deal.

'How can that be? There's no way that a Minowaka egg could have survived until now.' It was then that the Demon Tree understood. 'You... You! You're not from this planet, right?' Sure enough, that was the only possible explanation in the World Swallowing Cedar's mind. There's no way to keep an unhatched egg alive for this long. That being said, the Minokawa in front of it couldn't possibly have been born in the same world as it. Let alone after it turned into an ice world with such a harsh environment.

'Hey, big tree. Have you seen any other Minokawas like me before?' Kentucky asked, curious about his own race. He had heard it from Rean and Roan, who heard it from Reliance. Nonetheless, those were all legends.

However, the World Swallowing Cedar ignored Kentucky's words as it noticed something different. 'This Minokawa...it's not a pure one, is it?'

Rean nodded. 'Correct. It has gone through a mutation. However, it doesn't mean it's a mixed breed. Instead, it evolved from its original form. This Minokawa is even stronger than a normal one. If you really know about Minokawas, I'm sure you'll be able to tell this much.'

The tree agreed with Rean's words. 'Indeed. It is definitely stronger. It can use Soul Power as well, which the others that I know couldn't. It's a one in a million specimen.' Eventually, the World Swallowing Cedar calmed down before changing its tone. His excitement also died as he thought about something. 'You wanted to offer me something. Are you telling me this Minokawa would select me for its nest?'

Somehow, Kentucky also felt like this World Swallowing Cedar was simply perfect. It was as if they were connected somehow. This also explained why Kentucky knew even without seeing it before that this tree was a Demon Tree. After all, he only had Clad's words. It was because it could feel its presence. 'You made it look like selecting you wouldn't be a good choice.'

The Demon Tree was taken aback for a moment before agreeing with Kentucky, responding, 'That's because I'm not. Little guy, go away. There are many World Swallowing Cedars out there in this Universe worth of your power. I...am not worthy.'

Death... and me

Chapter 692: Celis

Those words left the group speechless. Since when did this World Swallowing Cedar become so soft? It's a Stage Ten World Swallowing Cedar! Of course, they didn't know the name of the realm, but they know it was that strong. Even so, that World Swallowing Cedar said it wasn't worthy of a Minokawa. In that case, just how strong and bigger can a World Swallowing Cedar become?

Nevertheless, Kentucky couldn't help but have a better impression of the guy. After all, he was prioritizing himself over his own wishes. 'Say...why would you pass over this chance? Is it just because you think you're weak compared to other World Swallowing Cedars?'

The Cedar nodded, saying, 'Exactly. You seem very young, and the fact you're alone with these humans proves that you haven't seen another Minokawa or World Swallowing Cedar before. A true World Swallowing Cedar could grow all the way out of the atmosphere. But look at me. I'm no more than a sapling compared to them, even after living for so long. I don't have much chance of getting stronger. You, on the other hand, have the entire world ahead of you.'

Sister Orb intervened at that point, saying, [You can't get stronger because you don't have a Divine Demon Beast living with you. If Kentucky here decides to make you his nest, your synergy will definitely help both sides. Naturally, you'll be able to surpass this bottleneck you've encountered so far.]

It turns out that the World Swallowing Cedar has been at the peak of Stage Ten for a very, very long time. Surprisingly, Sister Orb was right. He was stuck on a bottleneck. Nevertheless, the World Swallowing Cedar said, 'It's true that I would have a chance if a Minokawa or another Divine Demon Beast uses me as a nest. However, it isn't that high. If I fail, it'll be very hard for this Minokawa to be accepted by another World Swallowing Cedar in the future due to the soul agreement between us.'

Soul Partner. That's Sister Orb's trump card to get this World Swallowing Cedar. If Kentucky and the Cedar make this agreement, they'll be connected for life. Building a nest on it will allow their energy to match each other. The World Swallowing Cedar would then provide the Minokawa with the world's Spiritual Energy. At the same time, the Minokawa would provide the Cedar a chance for evolution. Rean and Roan only found that out a few minutes ago when Sister Orb explained it to them.

'Alright, I've decided. I want you to be my nest.' Kentucky said as he widely opened his wings. 'I don't know why, but I can tell that you aren't faking your emotions. Perhaps this is a bloodline memory between us Minokawas and the World Swallowing Cedars. In any case, you're truly thinking about my well-being first. That being said, why would I want any other? You're perfect.'

The World Swallowing Cedar was taken aback but immediately refused after that. 'I'm happy that you think this way, but I can't do that. Minokawas are so rare already. How can I ruin the future of one with your level of talent? Besides, there's one more reason I can't accept your offer. I'm locked down here. There's no way I can leave.'

'Locked?' Rean's group got could not help but become confused after hearing that. 'We thought you were here because of some agreement with the Soul Rulers.'

The World Swallowing Cedar didn't deny, replying, 'It's not wrong to say that I have an agreement with them. Simply put, I will prevent most of the world's Spiritual Energy from going outside the places where I and my seeds are located. At the same time, I won't dry up this planet completely. In exchange, they won't destroy me. After all, I'm a Stage Ten Demon Tree. There's no lack of formations around me that prevents my body from escaping.'

Rean's group understood, with Rean soon saying, 'So, you're basically a prisoner here.'

The World Swallowing Cedar confirmed Rean's words. 'Yes. However, this was a choice I made by myself. The Zasfins could have destroyed me a long time ago, way before I became a Stage Five Demon Tree. Thanks to this agreement, I have evolved to become a Stage Ten Demon Tree. There's no one preventing me from using the Spiritual Energy of the planet either. Chances are that I would die way before I reached this level, so it's not like I've gotten a bad deal.'

Rean then smiled before saying, 'What if I say we can take you out? Would you be willing to form a Soul Agreement with Kentucky?'

'Take me out? Hahaha!' The World Swallowing Cedar couldn't help but laugh at that. 'With your strength? What a joke! I'm already being polite enough because you let me see a Minokawa. Stop dreaming and take this Minokawa away before the Soul Rulers find out about you. The further you go, the better. If possible, leave this planet as well.'

Kentucky shook his head, saying in response, 'It's fine, it's fine. We can definitely bring you out. It will all depend on whether you want that or not. As long as you agree with it, we can bring you out. If you're doubting our intentions, then how about we do a Soul Agreement first?'

The World Swallowing Cedar was quite surprised by their confidence. Otherwise, why would the Minokawa offer to become his Soul Partner first? 'Can you really do that?'

Rean nodded, saying, 'As long as you accept it, I guarantee you that we can.'

'I'm warning you, Minokawa. You will have a much better chance of getting stronger if you go out and find another World Swallowing Cedar,' the Cedar said, still with some misgivings about it.

Kentucky opened his wings again and used one to pat his chest as he responded, 'That's my decision, and my decision is for you to be my Soul Partner. No more complaints.' Kentucky was as confident as the twins that he wouldn't be held back at all. After all, he knew about everything regarding the Soul Gem System and is connected to it to some extent.

The World Swallowing Cedar went completely silent. For several minutes, not a single word came out of its Spiritual Sense. However, Rean's group didn't say anything, waiting for it to make its decision. According to Sister Orb, once Kentucky and the Cedar completed their Soul Agreement, the Cedar wouldn't be able to harm Kentucky, and the same went the other way around. Naturally, the Cedar wouldn't be able to do anything to the twins either since it's the same as harming Kentucky, who was connected to the twins.

Only 16 minutes later did they get an answer for the World Swallowing Cedar. 'Sigh...I truly want to refuse, but I can't help but wish to go further into my path. I'm probably damaging your future prospects, so you better be prepared.'

Kentucky laughed out loud in response, saying, 'Hahaha! I, the great Minokawa, will never be held back.'

As soon as Kentucky finalized his words, something weird happened. Some kind of light came out of his forehead, traveling through the hole Rean and Roan kept open to the outside world. At the same time, a similar light also came out of the World Swallowing Cedar's Demon Core. Rean's group watched that as the two lights passed by each other. In the end, the World Swallowing Cedar's light entered the Soul

Gem Dimensional Realm and Kentucky's forehead. The same thing happened with Kentucky's light and the Cedar's Demon Core.

'This...' That was truly unexpected. There was no ritual or anything like that. The moment the two sides decided to live together, the conditions were fulfilled. 'Is it that easy?'

The Cedar laughed in response, saying, 'Easy? No, nothing like that. For our Soul Agreement to work, we must be sincere to each other. If there's as much as a single evil thought in this deal, our souls would never connect to each other.' The Cedar seemed quite happy as it said those words.

[He's right.] Sister Orb cleared up their doubts. [Only if they were truly thinking about each other would this happen.] Sister Orb then looked at Rean and Roan. [Well then, their part is concluded. It is up to you two now.]

'Wait! What is this?' Suddenly, the World Swallowing Cedar called their attention as he felt something different. He wasn't the only one. Rean, Roan, and Sister Orb also felt the same thing. It's just that they already felt something like that before.

'Well, well, well. I thought something like this might have happened, but I wasn't entirely sure about it,' Rean said with a smile.

Roan nodded as he explained. 'Our Souls are also connected to Kentucky. Now that the Cedar and Kentucky are connected, we can now feel its presence as well.'

The World Swallowing Cedar was taken aback after hearing that. 'You were connected to the Minokawa?! How's that possible?! This kind of connection is just way too rare in the cultivation world. Besides, I've never heard such a thing was possible with humans.'

Rean shook his head, saying in response, 'We can explain that later. In any case, this is a good thing since it also helped Kentucky.'

Sister Orb agreed with Rean, responding, [Exactly. World Swallowing Cedar, we will follow with our plan to take you out of here. Do you have anything you want to do in this place before we start?]

The World Swallowing Cedar calmed down after hearing that. 'No, I don't. By the way, it's too annoying to keep hearing World Swallowing Cedar every time. I also have a name, so just call me Celis.'

Death... and me

Chapter 693: The Soul Gem Dimensional Realm Upgrade

Following that, the hole connecting both the Dimensional Realm and the outside world disappeared. After that, Rean and Roan went to Sister Orb and touched her to access the Soul Gem Reward System after more than three years.

[Dragon Bones - 5000 Destiny Points] (New)

[Spiritual Energy Absorption Upgrade Level 3 - 10000 Destiny Points] (It will go to 15% when they buy it, they have 10% at Level 2)

[Soul Gem Dimensional Realm Upgrade Level 3 - 8000 Destiny Points] (New)

[Yin Yang Bathhouse - Reward from Destiny Strugglers Title]

[Soul Connection Range Upgrade level 4 – 20000 Destiny Points] (10000km) (New)

[Soul Gem Blacksmith Workshop - 1000 Destiny Points] (New)

[Soul Gem Alchemy Workshop Upgrade Level 3- 3000 Destiny Points] (New)

[Soul Gem Electrical Formations Repository Upgrade Level 3 - 3000 Destiny Points] (New)

[Total Destiny Points: 12402]

Sure enough, the number of Destiny Points they had didn't change at all after the Soul Gem System went into hibernation. "Alright, that's more than enough to buy the next Soul Gem Realm Upgrade." With that said, they both selected the option.

[Soul Gem Dimensional Realm Upgrade Level 3 - 8000 Destiny Points] (New)

[Confirm Selection?]

"Yes," Rean and Roan answered at the same time.

[Soul Gem Dimensional Realm Upgrade starting...]

As soon as that happened, a huge amount of Spiritual Sense began to be absorbed from the outside. It was so fast that even the Zafins noticed the difference in the amount outside.

"What's happening?"

"Something's taking all the Spiritual Energy."

"Can you see anything?"

Seeing that, Celis intervened, responding, "It's me, idiots." He knew that it must be something going on with Rean's group that was causing that phenomenon. In fact, he was also shocked by the amount of Spiritual Energy being absorbed from his dwelling place. To counter it, Celis absorbed even more Spiritual Energy from the world through its roots and the help of its seeds.

Inside the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm, Sister Orb was feeling quite pleased. [Sure enough, Celis is a World Swallowing Cedar. I was afraid that we would need a very long time to get enough Spiritual Energy, even with the amount present here at the moment. However, Celis is bringing even more of it to us.]

Rean, Roan, and Kentucky didn't pay too much attention to Sister Orb. That's because they were seeing the changes happening to the Dimensional Realm firsthand. Not only them, but even the kids had shining eyes from the event.

The first change was the ground, which was nothing but a black and flat extension without any color. From the very center of the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm, the earth began to appear as it spread outwards. At the same time that happened, the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm then expanded in all directions.

All elements gathered, giving life to that bleak place. Grass grew from the ground beneath Rean and the kids. Clouds appeared as the roof of the Dimensional Realm turned sky blue. Even more impressive was something that looked like a sun taking form above it. Nonetheless, it didn't look like that the sun was really there, which gave a weird feeling.

Sister Orb then explained to them, saying, [That's not a fake sun, but a real one. It's just that it isn't here but somewhere else. The Soul Gem System is using its spatial laws to bring the sunlight from the nearest sun outside. If we move to another planet in the future, the same thing will happen again with the nearest sun there. Of course, we must be in the same solar system for that to be possible. If we're too far away, the system wouldn't be able to do so.]

Finally, Rean understood what that meant. "Wait! The system is creating an atmosphere, just like real planets!"

Sister Orb laughed in response, saying, [Hahaha! Exactly! That's the new ability of the Soul Gem System's third upgrade, Life Sustainability! From now on, the Soul Gem System will also be able to generate its own Spiritual Energy, just like any other planet.]

Rean's group was quite surprised by that. Such an ability was quite excellent to have. Of course, Sister Orb immediately explained the shortcomings of the Dimensional Realm's new form, [However, you better not think you can use the Spiritual Energy of the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm instead of the outside world's energy. It's still way too small. Even the lack of Spiritual Energy in other places of this planet is several times higher than what the system will generate. You still need the outside's Spiritual Energy.]

Rean wasn't disappointed by that, saying, "That's not a problem. We can simply do the same thing as we always did, absorb the outside world's Spiritual Energy to feed the Dimensional Realm."

Roan agreed with Rean, responding soon after, "He's right. I personally am very interested in this new ability since I can now plant my own herb garden. For an alchemist like me, this is a very good outcome. Also, in case we ever end up in a place with no Spiritual Energy whatsoever, we'll be able to use the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm as a last resort."

Creeee! "Rean, Roan, look! There's so much space in here I can even fly now!" Sure enough, the Minokawa still had a child-like mind. Not only that, Rean and Roan soon noticed that Kentucky had quite a few kids on his back...all women.

"Alright, just make sure to not drop them," Rean said with a smile. He wasn't afraid of the kids falling from up there since Kentucky was holding everyone with his Spiritual Energy. From the looks of it, Kentucky was already obtaining the kids' trust.

The process continued for quite some time. Trees grew in the distance, a river appeared out of there, being filled up by the water element in there. The Soul Gem Dimensional Realm was truly becoming a small paradise. Eventually, it finished its expansion, expanding to a radius of 20 kilometers. The crowded place with kids now had more than enough space for everyone.

Outside in the underground where Celis stayed, several Zafins appeared in front of it. Celis didn't treat them the same way as the guards around, though. "Well, well, well. Neither of you have paid me a visit in a very long time. What do you want now?"

An old man, who seemed to be the leader of the group, stepped forward and said, "Celis, we received a report about what was happening with the Spiritual Energy here. Not only that, but it just so happened at the moment the entire headquarters blew into the skies." The old man's face became darker as he continued to ask, "Do you have something to do with it?"

Out of nowhere, Celis began to laugh out loud, not hiding his feelings at all. "Your headquarters blew up? Hahaha! Now, that's a piece of good news. Now I know why the consumption of Spiritual Energy suddenly disappeared from there. I must say, whoever did this, they have my thanks. I've waited a very long time to see you bunch suffer, even if just a little."

Celis continued, "However, I have nothing to do with it. Or could it be that the mighty Ancestor Fikin believes that I could escape all the formations set in place to hold me down? Also, that I did that and then came back here just to be questioned by you guys."

Fikin was obviously the name of the old man in front of Celis. Although their sizes were worlds apart, the Spiritual Energy Pressure that Fikin and Celis exuded was definitely at the same level. "Do you want me to put you under the Mara Fire again?"

Celis's demeanor immediately changed when he heard that, saying, "Tch...forget it. You're no fun. First of all, as long as you bunch are around, is there any meaning in blowing up the headquarters? In the end, you can build everything again in a hundred years or so. For us, such a time is nothing." Celis obviously seemed to fear the so-called Mara Fire.

Fikin narrowed his eyes. Celis was right. Even if the headquarters lost all its formations, they could rebuild it as long as they were here. No one would try to take their power since no one was as strong as them. "You still haven't answered what you used all the extra Spiritual Energy for." Fikin pointed out. After all, it was too much of a coincidence.

Celis didn't seem to care, though. "It's quite simple. With all the headquarters' formations gone, all the Spiritual Energy they used stopped here. It's not that I gathered it, but that I had nowhere to redirect it. You are a formation master yourself, and you can't even figure out this much?"

Fikin felt that something was fishy. Nevertheless, he already verified all the formations around Celis. He was sure that none of them got affected by whatever happened in the headquarters. Besides, he couldn't see the kids that were captured anywhere with his Spiritual Sense. As far as he knew, Celis didn't have any way to hide such a thing from him. Otherwise, Celis would have done so a long time ago when the defenses weren't as strong as now.

Fikin then waved his hand, signaling for the other ancestors to leave. Right after, he turned around before saying, "You better be telling the truth, or you will regret it."

Celis snorted in response as he replied, "Hmph! You need me, so how bad can you be? Shoo, shoo! I don't wanna see your face anymore."

Fikin didn't say anything and disappeared right after.

Death... and me

Chapter 694: It's gone

As soon as that conversation ended, Rean's Spiritual Sense reached Celis once again, saying, "Those guys are quite terrifying."

"Obviously. They're all on the same level as me. For someone like you and your Nascent Soul Realm cultivation, they might as well be considered gods," Celis said, feeling quite satisfied. "By the way, it was you who blew up their headquarters, right?"

Rean nodded, responding, "Yep. It was very hard, you know?"

Celis didn't doubt that. "I can imagine. In any case, very good job. It was really satisfying." After saying that, Celis changed the topic. "Well, how was it? You really caused a scene a moment ago with all that absorbed Spiritual Energy. Did you get what you wanted?"

"Yes," Rean answered. "Senior Celis, my brother and I will move your body into a Dimensional Realm. You will feel some kind of pulling power enveloping your body. Don't fight it since that's what will set you free from this place."

"Very well, go ahead." Celis couldn't care less about how Rean would do that. Even if he wanted to cut his roots and branches out, he wouldn't complain. He's a Demon Tree at the Stage Ten level. He could recover those parts later as long as he has enough energy.

"Good! For that, we'll have to come outside and focus on your body. Can you protect us while we do that?" Rean asked.

As soon as he said that, many white vines began to congregate around Celis's trunk, leaving just a gap between them and the trunk itself. No one from outside would be able to reach Rean and Roan as long as the vines were there. "Just come inside this place I made. You'll be able to touch my trunk, and no one will stop you. Even if those Ancestors of the Soul Rulers come back, they would need some time to be able to break my defenses."

Rean and Roan then looked at Kentucky, who nodded at them, saying, "Don't worry. I can tell Celis is not planning anything against you."

With that said, Rean and Roan immediately went out of the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm. They appeared with Rean's Light and Spiritual Sense Bending Skills active and moved inside the free space made by Celis. There, they touched his trunk and tried to feel his body through Rean's Light Force perception.

"You truly are big," Rean said as his own Life Force traveled through Celis's body. "I'm already several kilometers away, but I'm nowhere near to reaching the end of your body."

Roan nodded in agreement. He wasn't as good with Life Force as Rean was, so he was having an even harder time.

Celis understood their issue and immediately said, "Oh! So that's the problem? Just one sec." As soon as he finished saying those words, he used his own Spiritual Energy to sever all his roots that were being used to reach the other powers of the world. Just like that, his roots that have been there for so many years were gone.

Rean couldn't help but ask, "Is that really okay? Those roots are also part of your body, no?" Naturally, he was concerned that Celis might die because of that.

"Hahaha!" However, Celis laughed in response. "You're mistaking me for a demon beast. That's not good. Don't forget, I'm a Demon Tree. As long as the roots haven't been completely destroyed, I can grow them again with enough Spiritual Energy. This is a small price to pay if it means I can leave this shitty place."

Rean smiled and then focused on Celis's body once again. This time, it was much easier for him and Roan to reach the end of Celis's body. "Senior Celis, we're going to pull you away now."

Tremble...

The earth quaked as the Spiritual Energy of the surroundings went into chaos. The Zafins guarding the place were taken aback and immediately looked at the World Swallowing Cedar. It was obvious that whatever was happening was connected to it.

The leader there immediately turned to one of his subordinates before saying, "Quick, call the Ancestors back. Something's definitely not right."

However, before the guy could even take out the Thoughts Transmission Talisman, something unbelievable happened right in front of everyone. The World Swallowing Cedar...disappeared!

"What?!"

"Impossible!"

"Am I dreaming?"

No one could believe what they saw. As for Rean and Roan, they entered the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm as soon as they sent Celis in.

Rean and Roan teleported Celis to an enormous patch of green that didn't have anything.

Bang!

The moment the Cedar fell on the ground, the entire Dimensional Realm trembled as well. As for the kids, their eyes widened when that enormous tree appeared in front of them.

Wow!

"It's so big!"

"What is that?"

"I remember seeing it before. It's called a tree."

"So, this is a tree?"

Rean, Roan, and Kentucky then stopped in front of Celis. Rean then smiled before saying, "Senior Celis, moving you in was really hard. Hahaha!"

Celis was as shocked as the kids in the distance, asking, "What is this place? Did you teleport me to another planet?"

Roan shook his head, responding, "No. This is just a Dimensional Realm no more than 20 kilometers in radius. Nevertheless, it should be more than enough to sustain you."

Celis was even more shocked to hear. "A Dimensional Realm...I've never seen one before. I only heard about spatial items, but none should be this heaven-defying."

Kentucky then flew up and landed on Celis's top, saying, "Hahaha! Don't worry, Celis. I'll explain everything later." However, Kentucky couldn't help but ask something else, "By the way, why is your cultivation falling?"

Celis was taken aback and immediately checked his Demon Core. Sure enough, he noticed his cultivation going down really fast. "What?!"

Not long after, a black and white orb floated in front of Celis and said, [Ahem...you said you didn't mind the price to pay to leave that cave, right? Well...it just so happened that we needed your energy. I'm sorry, but I'm going to take some of it.] As expected, the World Swallowing Tree's Demon Core was what the system needed.

Death... and me

Chapter 695: There we go

Celis felt like crying. Unfortunately, he didn't have eyes to shed tears. "The hell? Stop right now!" Vines shot out of Celis's body and attacked the Soul Gem Orb. Celis wasn't holding back at all. However, just as they were about to reach Sister Orb, they froze in place.

[That won't do, my friend. In this Dimensional Realm, I'm god. Don't worry. You and Kentucky have selected each other, so I won't kill you or anything, nor will I stop your cultivation. It's just that you'll have to cultivate again for a while.] Sister Orb said with a smug tone.

Kentucky, Rean, and Roan couldn't help but ask, "Sister Orb, is it really fine to take his cultivation away? You see...he's really strong, and that would help us a lot in the future." Sure enough, someone at the Transition Realm would be a powerful asset, and Celis was at the very peak of it.

[No can do. It's not me who's taking Celis's cultivation away, but the Soul Gem System itself. Before it's done with the extraction, nothing will stop it. Even you two won't be able to stop it.] Sister Orb sighed.
[Well, this was an option mission, so...]

They understood what Sister Orb meant. If they simply ignored it, Celis wouldn't lose its cultivation. Well, Celis would be locked in the underground forever as well.

Celis tried his best to resist, but his cultivation was taken away faster and faster. In the end, he understood that there was nothing he could do other than to watch it disappear. "Thousands of years of effort, gone just like that...why did I accept becoming the Zasfins' prisoner in the end?"

Kentucky patted the trunk of Celis as he tried to comfort him, saying, "Hey, it's fine. We can cultivate again. Besides, you became a prisoner because they didn't give you any other choice either. If you didn't, they would destroy you, afraid that you would destroy their planet instead. However, as long as you're here, that danger won't come again."

Celis was still dejected, though. Nevertheless, the process didn't stop.

Stage Ten, Nine, Eight, Seven...

As Celis's cultivation was taken away by the system, he gradually got smaller as well. Branches withered as roots retracted. The big old barks also fell down one after another, hitting the ground with loud thuds due to their weight. Eventually, Celis's cultivation stopped at the same level as Kentucky, Initial Stage Five. That wasn't a coincidence, though. Due to the link between the twins and Kentucky, the World Swallowing Cedar also had its cultivation limited to the twins' progression. Or, to be more specific, it got limited by Kentucky, who was limited by the twins.

Pin!

[Congratulations, Hosts. The mission Soul Gem System Processing Power Upgrade has been completed successfully.]

[Mission Rewards:]

[Soul Gem System Processing Power Improved by 2.16 times.]

[Destiny Points: 30000.]

[New Title Acquired: Grade 2 Efficiency]

[Authority Level Increase: 13.]

Wow!

Rean couldn't help but become excited, shouting, "So many Destiny Points!"

However, just as Rean was about to ask more about that, Celis's body began to transform. "The hell? What now?!" Naturally, Celis felt even more helpless. Wasn't his torture already over?

Crack crack crack...

Many cracks began to appear on Celis's trunk. Not only that, but Celis also saw how his Demon Core was cracking at the same time. "So I'm going to die, huh? Sure enough, it was too good to be true." Surprisingly, Celis didn't seem angry anymore, just sad.

[Dying? What are you talking about? There's no way you would die, idiot.] Sister Orb rebuked.

Naturally, everyone was puzzled by that, especially Celis. "What do you mean? My core is cracking. It'll break apart at any moment."

[That's not it. It's just that your body and core were too old. Not to mention that they were supposed to be used at Stage Ten. If we leave it like this, there will be side effects. That being said, the Soul Gem System left some of your own power by the side to work on a rejuvenation,] Sister Orb said all of that while the transformation continued.

However, it seemed that only Celis understood what she really meant. "I see...that's what this system you talked about wanted, the world essence that I accumulated after all this time."

Out of nowhere, a shattering sound came from Celis's body, and all the remaining old parts broke away. As if it was a bird coming out of its shell, a much younger and smaller World Swallowing Tree appeared. The same happened to Celis's core, which was much smaller but was brimming with life force.

Even Roan was shocked by that. "Does that mean the Soul Gem System has the power to make one young again?" Sure enough, that's what everyone thought.

Sadly, that wasn't the case. [Of course not. Hahaha!] Sister Orb replied as she laughed. [This only happened because the system used the world essence that Celis accumulated for a very long time. Also, it only worked because Celis is a Demon Plant. You must understand that plants are completely different lifeforms than demon beasts or humans. You can forget about using the same thing. As for Celis, he had returned to his prime. However, he paid a high price for that, his cultivation.]

Sure enough, it was too good to be true.

"Hahaha!" However, Celis laughed out loud. "Who cares if I lost my cultivation in exchange? Look at me! I'm young again! Not only that, I have all my experience of breakthroughs, so it'll be very easy to do it again as long as I have enough energy." Celis seemed very happy now that he looked at the new him.

Rean smiled in response, saying, "Well, all's well that ends well."

It was then that Rean saw Kentucky flying up and down as he carried many of Celis's old branches, leaves, and barks up. "What you doin', Kentucky?"

"Can't you see the big opportunity? Celis's old parts are very high level. They will make the perfect nest! Not to mention they're obviously very compatible with Celis himself. How can I let such an opportunity pass up?" Kentucky said as he worked on grabbing the parts as fast as possible.

It was quite weird, though. Kentucky never cared about something as a nest before. But now, it seemed like he was working on a life-changing task.

Celis was obviously even more satisfied as he said, "Great! Let me help you." Several of his vines shot out as he helped Kentucky with the project. After that, the two then entered their own world, not paying attention to anything happening around them.

Roan shrugged his shoulder as he turned around. "Leave them be. That has nothing to do with us." Following that, he glanced at Sister Orb and said, "By the way, we've reached Authority Level 30 and got a new title. It's time to see what we got from them."

Sister Orb agreed, saying, [Indeed. You have a lot more privileges now, so you can ask more questions. However, the system hasn't finished all its tasks yet...]

Pin!

[System Upgrade Finished. Entering Second Phase.]

The Soul Gem System's robotic voice soon echoed in Rean and Roan's minds once again.

Sister Orb sighed as she muttered, [I knew it. There we go.]

Death... and me

Chapter 696: More Questions

Rean and Roan were taken aback by that, with Rean asking, "What?! Is there something else?"

[Just sit and watch. Your easy lives will become quite complicated from now on. Hahaha!] Sister Orb said as she laughed.

A few seconds later, the Dimensional Realm seemed to tremble once again. The spatial borders seemed to grow stronger, making the twins' ability to see the outside world disappear. Following that, Rean and Roan felt their control over the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm weaken.

"This..." Naturally, they couldn't understand why that was happening.

Nevertheless, those questions didn't last long. That's because the system soon started to talk in its robotic voice once again.

[Phase Two Initialized.]

[Hosts have obtained the initial boost in power provided by the Soul Gem System. However, Hosts must rely more on themselves. That being said, Hosts' control over the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm has now been downgraded due to their higher level and experience.]

Roan narrowed his eyes, already guessing what that meant. Fortunately, the Soul Gem System continued to explain.

[From now on, hosts are denied access to the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm if danger is present. It will be up to the Soul Gem System to decide if the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm is available for use or not.]

[Warning: Hosts must be aware that even if they are at risk of imminent death, they will not be given access to the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm.]

[Second Warning: It won't be possible to bring anything out of the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm if hosts are in danger. Hosts must be careful to and keep the things they consider important outside.]

[Third Warning: Soul Gem Dimensional Realm won't allow any sentient living beings not connected to the hosts in a month's time. They will all be expelled after the time is up.]

[New feature added: Soul Gem Dimensional Realm Entry Pass. This feature allows hosts to mark a specific living being not connected to them to enter the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm. Each pass costs 10000 Destiny Points.]

With that, the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm finished its explanation.

Rean and Kentucky, of course, were shocked after hearing all of that. After all, they did really count on the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm up to this point. "Is that really fine?! What if we get in a really shitty situation?"

Sister Orb laughed in response, saying, [Hahaha! Didn't you hear? Even if you are in an imminent death situation, you won't be allowed to enter it.]

"But..." Rean was just about to continue when suddenly, Roan cut him off.

"Enough! What is there to complain about? If you haven't noticed yet, it just means we're now playing on an even field as other cultivators. In fact, we still have the advantage of using the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm on different occasions." Roan didn't seem disappointed. Instead, he looked very satisfied. "I hated this idea of always being able to escape. But in the end, even I've gotten used to it. Now, our real training can finally start."

Kentucky then landed on Roan's side, saying, "As expected of death, no fear of dying at all."

"Hmph!" Roan ignored Kentucky's remark and looked back at Sister Orb, asking, "By the way, what about the other abilities? I want to know what the new title gives us."

[Oh, right! There was that as well.] Sister Orb then began to explain. [You got the Grade 2 Efficiency Title. Look over there.] Sister Orb used Spiritual Energy to point in a specific direction. There, Rean and Roan saw that a new formation had appeared. Or, to be more precise, a Circuitry Formation, a very big one at that. [That's the World Essence Gathering Formation.]

"World Essence Formation? Does it have anything to do with the World Essence Celis talked about before?" Rean asked, puzzled.

Roan had another question as well, asking, "What is the difference between the Universe Essence we got that time and the World Essence?"

[You are both correct. World Essence is similar to the Universe Essence you got before. Of course, the latter is a lot more efficient. Also, it's the same one that Celis had gathered after a long time.] Sister Orb continued, [The World Essence that this formation is gathering is coming from the Soul Gem

Dimensional Realm itself. After all, it's not wrong to say that the Dimensional Realm is a tiny planet itself. Naturally, it also generates World Essence.]

Celis, who had been listening to everything until now, then explained, "In my case, I used World Essence to increase my own cultivation. How can I say it...? It's much better than Spiritual Energy." Kentucky already gave him a quick explanation of the twins' situation and what the system was about through Spiritual Sense messages. That's why he could already give his opinion in that conversation.

Celis couldn't help but feel somewhat sad as he said, "Sadly, the system took everything from me. I intended to use that to break through into the next level. As long as a chance of escaping the Soul Rulers came, I would try it straight away. Unfortunately, I have nothing anymore."

"World Essence...something better than Spiritual Energy..." Rean couldn't help but have many ideas now that he heard of it.

[That is only one of its uses. You can figure out what else you might use this thing for in the future,] Sister Orb said, excited.

Roan narrowed his eyes, asking another question, "Would it be a bad thing to take the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm's World Essence away?"

[No. Unlike what Celis was doing to the planet, the World Essence Circuitry Formation only gathers small bits of it that escape involuntarily. It doesn't touch the main source itself. Besides, it's many times more efficient than Celis was.]

Celis couldn't help but defend himself, responding, "It's not like I had much choice, okay? If a moment came that I could use to escape, I would need everything I could use. Naturally, I had little time to think about the world."

Roan thought that to be the case, soon saying, "Alright. Then, let's move to the authority level. It's time to ask more questions to the Soul Gem System."

Death... and me

Chapter 697: The Breaking Point

The twins touched the Soul Gem Orb and went to the authority level options. It was there that they could acquire most of the information and ask questions. However, as soon as they selected that option in the system, they noticed another option on it that didn't exist before.

-The Unification Plan-

"Wait, isn't that the plan the Artifact Spirit talked about in the past before the underground palace disappeared?" Rean asked in surprise.

Roan nodded, responding, "The one and the same. Let's take a look."

The two didn't waste time and immediately selected that option. However, as soon as Rean and Roan did that, their vision went dark as they collapsed on the ground.

"Wake up!"

Not long after, the twins felt like someone was calling them.

"Wake up! Come on, wake up!"

However, it didn't matter what they did. Rean and Roan simply couldn't open their eyes. It was then that they noticed something off as they communicated through their Soul Connection. 'Hey, why do I feel like you are in the same body as me?'

Roan agreed with Rean, replying, 'It's not just a feeling. I think we are in the same body.'

Just as they were about to continue that conversation, they heard a lazy voice coming from their body. "Oh, come on! Can't you see it's too early? Let me sleep some more."

Eventually, light entered their eyes as they noticed themselves lying down on a bed. Whatever the body they were in was doing, it wasn't something they could control. 'We're in the same body, but we aren't the ones controlling it,' Roan said after seeing that.

Rean, of course, noticed that as well. 'We selected the option 'Unification Plan,' so this should be some kind of memory or recording. We're just spectators.'

Bang!

Soon after, a woman kicked the door of the room open. "Sleep your head! How can someone with your cultivation even sleep anymore? If you don't get up right now, let's see how I'll kick your ass until you do!"

With that, the man got up, albeit unwilling. "Sigh...have you never slept before in your life? Can't you see how good it feels to simply let go of your worries and let your mind slip away?" The man which Rean and Roan were watching stretched as he looked at the woman in front of him.

"Hmph!" The woman snorted in response. "The last time I slept was when I was still a mortal. Now I have all the time of the Universe to do everything I want, so why would I throw it away with something as useless as sleeping?"

"All-time in the Universe, huh?" Those words somehow made the man's expression slightly change as he murmured, 'If only it was true...'

"Did you say something?"

"Nope. So, what did you come here for?" the man asked right after.

The woman's mouth twitched after hearing that question, responding, "Are you trying to buy a fight with me? You're the top researcher of the Unification Plan, for fuck's sake. Everyone's waiting for you in the lab, so move your ass already, Gem."

Rean and Roan confirmed their suspicions as soon as they heard that name. 'Sure enough, we're watching Soul Gem's past.'

Gem scratched the back of his head as he walked out of the room. "Fine, fine...I'm heading to the lab. Come on, Fila, we can't let everyone waiting."

"Shameless!" Fila retorted as she followed Gem.

Along the way, many other researchers paid their respects to Gem as he simply waved his hand, not caring about that too much. From the looks of it, the only one who dared to treat Gem so harshly was Fila. Everyone else seemed to be even afraid of saying anything.

Eventually, the two of them stepped on a teleport formation and disappeared with a flash of silver light. The next time they saw something, they were already in a completely different place. It was outer space, as thousands of cultivators from different races could be seen moving everywhere.

Gem then looked in a certain direction, just to see an enormous sphere of White and Dark Light. From Rean and Roan's perspective, that sphere was who knows how many times bigger than any sun they knew about. That was especially the case for Roan, who had much higher knowledge of the Universe in the other half of the Universe than Rean.

'Just what is that thing?' Rean couldn't help but ask.

'I don't know, but I can guarantee that this Unification Plan has something to do with it,' Roan answered straight away.

That wasn't all. The most impressive thing was that even though the sphere was enormous, the formations around it were even more frightening. It was as if the formations were holding the sphere down, not allowing it to move.

Quite sometime later, a few other researchers approached Gem and Fila. "Gem, all the preparations are almost done. Can you go ahead and check everything?"

Gem nodded, saying, "Alright, let's head to the control orb."

Gem then made his way to the center of a group of formations in the distance. Due to his cultivation, controlling space wasn't anything difficult, so what seemed thousands of kilometers became nothing more than a single step to him. Obviously, all the other researchers around him were able to do the same.

However, what surprised Rean and Roan at this moment was the so-called orb that Gem mentioned. It was none other than the Soul Gem Orb that they knew so well!

'So this is where Soul Gem created the Soul Gem System, huh?' Roan said through the twins' Soul Connection.

'It seems like it. However, I still don't know what this Unification Plan is about.' Rean was also curious about everything that was happening.

Gem approached the orb and touched it. At that moment, all the formations around the sphere of White and Dark Light shone as streams of Spiritual Energy flowed into it. Following that, the sphere also sent its power back to the formations. It was truly an incredible view.

A few seconds later, Gem took his hands off the orb, announcing, "Seems like everything is fine. We can start the first phase. Initiate the Breaking Point."

Death... and me

Chapter 698: Release Your Energy

Rean and Roan couldn't help but link this current phase to the Severing Day that they heard in the past. Back when they were talking with the Artifact Spirit, he said that the Vuvre Organization that Soul Gem was part of had experienced a calamity. Something went horribly wrong with their plans.

Fila, who was by Gem's side, couldn't help but ask, "Gem, is it really okay to start now? We should wait and obtain more results from the Extinction Sphere."

Gem smiled as he patted Fila's head, responding with a light yet bitter smile, "Unfortunately, I don't think we have enough time. If the Extinction Sphere expands any further, no formation will be able to hold it down anymore. If that happens, our Universe and all the lives in here are doomed."

"Says the guy who didn't want to wake up a while ago," Fila retorted. Of course, she was only playing around. The tests she mentioned would take many years, not only a few extra hours like Gem's sleep would.

As everyone got ready to begin the first phase of the plan, Gem called forth the main members who would work with him on this phase. "Let's go through the procedure one last time. First, we need to use the power of all cultivators, demon beasts, and demon plants here to fill the formations with as much energy as possible."

"Second, we will use the Severing Formations Array to cut the Extinction Sphere in half, separating its yin and yang properties. As you already know, the chaos created by that yin and yang fusion fuels the sphere. In exchange, it grows even stronger and more destructive. If we don't stop it, it will just get bigger and bigger. Not to mention that its expansion speed would increase exponentially."

"In theory, once Yin and Yang are separated inside it, the chaotic energy inside it should stop growing. Most likely, it'll dissipate due to the lack of one another. Of course, we also have a contingency plan in case that doesn't work. The outer time formations will be activated soon after, freezing the time around the Extinction Sphere. It'll need a ridiculous amount of energy to keep working, but that's our only choice if we want to survive."

"Now for Unification Plan Phase 2. Because of the strength of the Extinction Sphere, the severing of its power will also cause great damage to our Universe. That being said, we must heal it straight away. And that's where the Control Orb will take place. It has been collecting the Extinction Sphere's Yin and Yang for a very long time. On top of that, instead of making it turn chaotic, the orb has harmonized the Yin and Yang inside."

"If everything goes according to the plan, the Control Orb should be enough to at least prevent the Universe's collapse. After that, it'll start healing itself little by little. At least, that's what the tests we ran before showed."

Gem's expression turned solemn as he asked one last time, "Are there any questions? If you have any doubts, ask now."

The entire place was silent after that. After all, Gem had gone through this kind of discussion with everyone countless times. Nevertheless, everyone paid attention as if it was their first time hearing it.

Eventually, Gem smiled at everyone before waving his hands. "Good! Everyone, head to your positions. We'll start soon."

After everyone left, Fila looked at Gem and asked, "Do you think they'll come?" Her expression was dark, as if she was waiting for something.

Gem shook his head in response, saying, "I don't know. I have put all the security measures in place, so it should give us some time if they appear. However, they aren't any weaker than us, so we don't know what they're capable of."

Fila nodded and then moved away as she spoke, "Then, let's make it work on the first try."

Soul Gem smiled in response before returning his attention to the Control Orb in front of him.

While he prepared for the plan to start, the twins were having a discussion through their Soul Connection. 'So, this is the cause of Severing Day, the Extinction Sphere. Roan, have you ever seen something like that before?'

'No,' Roan answered straight away. 'Let alone seeing it, I've never even heard about it. I had quite a high position inside the organization back on the other half of the Universe. However, I still know nothing about it.'

Rean nodded, responding, 'I understand. Now then. What about the power they're afraid of?'

Roan pondered over it for a bit before saying, 'Most likely, it has something to do with the guys who found our location and destroyed Sunkan Planet. As to what they are and why they want to stop the Vuvre Organization, that I don't know.'

Surprisingly, Rean had an idea in his mind as he said, 'From the looks of it, this Extinction Sphere isn't something that anyone can create. That being said, it could only be a natural occurrence. Perhaps the Vuvre Organization's enemy thinks that they should stop the natural cycle...or something like that.'

Roan didn't agree or deny the notion. 'You might be right. However, we must not forget that we still don't know who's right or who's wrong here. Perhaps this so-called enemy is doing the right thing by trying to stop Soul Gem's group. We need more information.'

Rean had to admit that Roan was right. 'Alright, let's keep observing.'

A few hours later, Fila came back to Soul Gem's side, telling him, "Gem, everyone is in position and is ready to follow your commands. We can start anytime."

Gem nodded as his body turned tense. In the end, there were no guarantees about what they were trying to do. Even though that was the case, Gem steeled his resolve as he thought to himself, 'It is still better than waiting for our extinction.'

Eventually, Gem put his hands on the Control Orb as his Spiritual Sense spread to connect with everyone participating in the plan. As soon as he did that, all the formations began to shine once more. "We're now starting the first phase. Release your energy into the formations!"

Death... and me

Chapter 699: Assault

All the experts around the Extinction Sphere began to pour their Spiritual Energy into the formations all around them. The slightly weaker ones, on the other hand, poured their energy into the protection formations. Everyone was tense, afraid that the plan might fail.

However, Soul Gem made sure to keep his calm as he controlled the formations to separate the energies in the Extinction Sphere. In the beginning, the process was very slow. However, as he gradually got more and more used to it, the speed at which the Yin-Yang Chaotic Energy became separated from each other increased.

"Good, good!" Gem, Fila, and everyone else couldn't help but get a bit excited as they noticed the Extinction Sphere was starting to lose its power. It wasn't anything significant yet. However, as long as they kept at it, they would eventually succeed.

Unfortunately, not everything was that easy.

Vup, vup, vup, vup, vup, vup, vup...

Out of nowhere, tens, hundreds, thousands, perhaps even more Spatial Gates began to appear one after another. From inside, countless spaceships appeared without stop. Following them were cultivators from all races as well.

Gem narrowed his eyes as he watched that, saying with a hint of anger, "So they came after all."

From afar, Soul Gem saw an old woman approaching the protection formations with a dark expression. Once there, she used her Spiritual Sense to talk with Soul Gem, saying to him, "Gem, that's the end. You can't stop the natural order of things. This Universe has been in existence for way too long. It's only normal that its destruction day has arrived. If you truly wish to survive, just leave it be."

Soul Gem snorted in response as he replied, "Hmph! I wish to survive, and I wish for all other races to survive as well, Tuana. How about those who can't leave? Are they simply doomed? Fuck that! I won't allow that to happen! Not on my watch!"

Tuana was obviously the old woman's name. Following that, she waved her hand and had her forces spread all around the Extinction Sphere, just outside the protection formations. "If you weren't doing anything, your forces would be able to contend against mine. However, most of your experts are focused on the Severing Formations Array. Do you think you can stop me?"

Everyone got nervous when they heard that. After all, it was true that the main experts couldn't stop their job at the moment. They were necessary for the plan to work.

However, Soul Gem simply smiled in response, saying as if he was taunting her, "Is that so? Then, why don't you try it out? Let's see if you can break through the protection formation I personally created."

Tuana narrowed her eyes for a moment before quickly recovering, muttering in a cold tone, "As you wish."

Following that, she raised her hand and gave the order, "All forces, attack! We don't need to win. As long as we destroy the Severing Formations Array, it'll be impossible for them to rebuild it in time. The Extinction Sphere would become way too big to be contained anymore."

WOAHHHH!!!

All the forces on Tuana's side immediately took action, charging at the protection formation between them and the Severing Formations Array.

Soul Gem wasn't any slow either, commanding, "All the forces stationed at the Protection Formations, pour your energy inside them. The rest shall keep channeling their energy into the Severing Formations Array as planned."

Gem's experts were taken aback. They thought that Gem would pause the plan and focus on the defense. It would cost them a lot to restart the array later, but at least they could protect it. They didn't expect Soul Gem to order them to keep running the plan.

Seeing the conflicted expression on everyone's faces, Soul Gem just smiled and said, "Trust me. I know what I'm doing."

In the end, everyone gritted their teeth and followed Gem's orders.

Tuana saw that as well. Nevertheless, she didn't stop her attack. However, just as the first wave of assault arrived at the protection formation...they stopped.

"What?!"

"Impossible!"

"How can that be?"

Immediately, all the attackers' expressions changed. They were at the peak cultivation realm of the Universe. As good as that protection formation could be, they shouldn't have been able to stop their attacks. Especially considering that the ones channeling them weren't even the top experts of Soul Gem's group.

It was then that they noticed something off. It wasn't because their attacks had been stopped. They had simply slowed down! However, the rate at which they were slowed down was so ridiculous that it looked more like they had completely halted. Not only that, but the further they moved, the slower they got.

"A time formation? Even so, how can it stop so many of my experts?" Tuana was truly shocked at that sight.

"Hahaha!" Soul Gem only laughed as he saw that. "You aren't wrong, Tuana. This is a Time Formation. However, it's not just that. It's also a Space-Time Formation. Not only are those attacks slowed down, but the distance they have to cross to reach the protection formations are not that close either. The distance you see between you and I can't even be considered a millionth of what it really is."

Tuana didn't give up on her offense, though. "Space-Time, huh? So what? We're all versed in Space Laws as well. I just have to mess with it, and this effect will be gone."

As soon as she said that, Tuana and all the experts on her side used their own space laws to affect the formations' space control. However, they soon found out that it didn't work.

"How...?"

Soul Gem continued to smile as he controlled the Severing Formations Array. "Quite simple. Those Space-Time formations are being fuelled by none other than the Extinction Sphere. If you want to break it, you better generate a force even bigger than that. Hahaha!"

The nervousness among Soul Gem's forces suddenly began to subside. The crisis had been averted, just like that. They weren't free yet, but they at least had the necessary time to focus on their work.

Tuana's experts continued to attack nonstop, though. After all, it was better than doing nothing. And just like that, many hours passed as the Extinction Sphere began to reduce in size.

Nevertheless, Soul Gem felt that something wasn't right. He had his Spiritual Sense focused on Tuana all the time, but she didn't look like someone who was losing in this battle at all. 'I'm missing something...'

Out of nowhere, the Extinction Sphere began to tremble as it became even more unstable. Soul Gem wasn't surprised by that since it was already in his calculations that it would happen. After all, they were essentially destroying a giant ball of energy. Nevertheless, this was one of the most critical moments of the plan as the control of the Severing Formations Array would be much harder from now on.

"Hehe! Soul Gem, I have to admit that you've far exceeded my expectations. To think that you would create a barrier this sturdy, keeping all my forces out. I truly didn't want to reveal this, but it seems like I have no other choice," Tuana said with a smile.

Tuana then raised her hand, which made Soul Gem focus all his senses on her. Whatever she was planning to do, he was ready to counterattack with his full strength. However...

Swish!

All of a sudden, a sword pierced through his heart as an immense power caused havoc in his body. Before he could do anything, that energy had left a big hole in his body. Soul Gem was shocked. Not because Tuana truly had a plan, but because of who attacked him.

"Fila..."

Death... and me

Chapter 700: Stop Him!

Fila and Gem had known each other for many, many years. Research leaders of the Vuvre Organization? No, Soul Gem wasn't anything like that back when they met each other. Fila and Gem met way, way back, back when Soul Gem was still a Nascent Soul expert. That being said, it was impossible that Fila had been put as a spy to watch Soul Gem from the very start.

Then again, he truly couldn't understand why she had attacked him at this crucial moment. Haven't they always been friends? They had gone through many things together. Simply put, Soul Gem trusted Fila more than anyone else in the Universe, or so he did until this moment.

In the end, Soul Gem ignored the confusion in his mind as he used his Spiritual Sense to ask while coughing up blood, "Why? Just why you, of all people? I don't understand..."

However, it was then that he noticed. Fila's eyes were blank, as if her soul wasn't even there anymore. However, although they were blank, Soul Gem could see the tears flowing out of her eyes. At that instant, rage filled his mind as he understood what had happened. "I see...that time in the Golden Realm while we were fighting Tuana's Wafrol Forces."

The Vuvre and Wafrol Organizations had been at war against each other for even longer than Soul Gem was alive. Both sides knew that one day, the Universe would meet its end. Soul Gem and Fila entered the Vuvre Organization much later.

One of these battles happened in a place called the Golden Realm. Due to certain circumstances, a powerful natural treasure gave birth to that realm, and both forces were battling for it. At that time, Soul Gem and Fila were at the forefront, trying to contend against the Wafrol Forces. Although he wasn't the head yet, Soul Gem had already occupied a very high position in the Vuvre Organization.

Unfortunately, they were at a disadvantage due to the reaction speed after the realm was discovered. The Wafrol Forces arrived much earlier, putting the still small Vuvre forces on their backfoot. It was at that time when that happened. The Wafrol Forces launched a surprise attack, catching the Vuvre Organization unaware, preventing them from reacting.

The battle quickly escalated as the Vuvre Forces were killed one after another. Eventually, Fila, who was commanding one of the groups, was taken down by the enemy. At that time, Soul Gem thought she had died. Even so, he gritted his teeth and controlled his fury. He kept managing all the forces until finally, their own reinforcements arrived. And just like that, three days of battle kept going, with the Vuvre Forces losing time and time again.

The situation was quickly controlled, forcing the Wafrol Organization to retreat. Of course, it was still considered a big victory for the Wafrol Forces even though they didn't wipe out the Vuvre Forces completely.

Soul Gem didn't care about any of that, though. As soon as the situation stabilized, he took a group and went to the battlefield where Fila was last seen. It was then that he found her. It turned out that Fila had used some kind of secret technique that hid her in a subspace hard to detect. Nevertheless, she was unconscious and would take over a year of healing and resources to simply wake up again.

Even so, Soul Gem was surprised that it worked. Even if that subspace was hard to find, considering how deep into the enemy's line her group was, they should have eventually noticed it. However, he decided to attribute it to luck. Perhaps the Wafrol Forces were so focused on wiping the entire Vuvre Forces out that they missed this point.

After many years, Fila had recovered completely. Also, since she went back to act as she always did, Soul Gem didn't think anything was wrong with her. Besides, he had checked her soul for any damage but couldn't find anything.

Back to the present, Soul Gem finally understood that things weren't so simple as it is now. "Tuana, you've really done it this time."

Boom!

Spiritual Energy burst out of Soul Gem's dantian, blasting Fila away from him. Even though his injury was extremely severe, he was still a peak expert of that Universe. He wouldn't go down that easily. Soon after, a few of the experts around Soul Gem captured and sealed Fila's cultivation.

Nevertheless, the damage was already done. The Space-Time Formation was destroyed during that minute gap when Soul Gem lost control over it.

"Hahaha!" It was then that Tuana's cackle echoed in Soul Gem's mind. "You're correct. It was back in the Golden Realm that I took her. I have to say, for someone with your intelligence, I'm impressed that you never noticed anything. Perhaps that's just how important you consider her to be that you didn't even think of this possibility."

Tuana continued, "We had the absolute advantage in the Golden Realm event, so how come your forces were still able to hold for three entire days? Don't you think it was weird?" Tuana couldn't help but recount those events. "The truth is, making this girl my slave would have been impossible in any other circumstance. However, I simply had to tell her that if she didn't accept it, I would wipe out your forces, including you. She knew that I could do that, so she accepted my offer. In exchange for becoming my slave, I would let you survive that calamity."

"Did you know?" Tuana asked. "She had always hoped that you would notice the problem. That you would stop her before she could do anything. Unfortunately, you never doubted anything. Soul Gem,

this is what happens when you go against the rules of the Universe. Its extinction has already started. That's the natural order of things. Now, give up and accept your fate."

Soul Gem grieved as he looked at Fila, muttering, "I see... so that's why..."

He looked around and saw that his companions couldn't hold back anymore. The experts on his side had also used a lot of their energy in the Severing Formations Array, so they were at a disadvantage against the Wafrol experts as well.

Soul Gem bitterly smiled at the sight, letting out a sigh as he said, "It seems like this is my only choice."

Soon after, Soul Gem's dantian radiated a white and dark light as he embraced the Control Orb.

At that moment, Tuana had a bad feeling, prompting her to shout, "Stop him!"