

Death 711

Death... and me

Chapter 711: I'm Looking Forward to It

"By the way, what's your name?" Rean asked, noticing that he still didn't know this man's name.

The man looked at Rean with a face showing that he still didn't trust Rean that much. Nevertheless, he answered his question. "You can call me Burio."

"Alright, Burio. As I mentioned, I need people who haven't given up on their fates and who don't have attachments to this tribe," Rean explained one more time.

That day in the tribe, humans disappeared from every corner. All of them had something in common as well. They were usually the cause of trouble, with some of them always being punished. As Rean took them one by one, he found out that a few were already dead, just that the others didn't know about it. None of them were surprised, though. Humans were just slaves. If they didn't work at all and kept trying to escape, what could they be used for?

Unfortunately, Rean didn't find everyone he needed. Not that there were any more humans unwilling to serve the Zafins, but because they also had families and friends that they didn't want to leave behind. Rean couldn't bring the rest with him since it might turn into an issue back in the valley. Of the extra nineteen that Rean requested, only another five fulfilled the criteria. He had found ten of them, but four decided that they didn't want to go for whatever reason. Another problem was that it was easier to find men willing to leave than women, but Rean wanted women since it would be easier to take care of kids.

Without any other choice, Rean took flight and headed in the direction of another tribe with the six humans in hand. Well, he was using his Spiritual Energy to hold them, though. Rean refrained from passing by any medium or big tribe, even if they were rarer. He only paid visits to small ones.

In the end, Rean finished gathering the humans he needed after visiting the fourth tribe, which was quite far away from Koran Forest. In any case, he was satisfied. Of the twenty people, Rean got fourteen women and six men. "Alright, everyone. I have all twenty of you, so we're heading back to my dwelling now."

Burio, who was the first to be picked up by Rean, couldn't help but ask, "Where's your home? Is it some other tribe? Is there a human tribe that we didn't know?"

Rean shook his head, answering, "No. My dwelling is in the Koran Forest's Core Region."

Immediately, everyone's eyes changed as one of them responded, "That's the Demon Beast territories! Are you crazy? Not even the Zasfin chiefs dare to head into the core region without reason."

"Hahaha!" Rean laughed out loud when he heard that, replying, "That's exactly why it's there. That's a place where almost no Zasfins will get close." Rean then smiled, continuing, "Don't worry. Everything has already been prepared. I won't say that there are absolutely no risks, but it's probably safer than the tribes you've lived in."

Everyone looked at each other, obviously with multiple doubts. Nonetheless, they already accepted coming with Rean, so they decided to give it a chance. Besides, seeing a human with so much strength as Rean was more than enough to provide them with some hope.

Due to the fact that Rean had to pass by four tribes, his journey took a total of two days to finish. Fortunately, he wasn't afraid of entering the Demon Beast region since he had his skills. That being said, he returned to the valley without any issues on the way.

Burio and the others saw how Rean approached the valley, which was covered by mist.

Creeee!

Suddenly, all the humans shivered as a black and white big demon bird came flying in their direction. "Shit! We were found out!"

Rean couldn't help but laugh, responding to that statement, "Hahaha! Of course, we were. I told him that we're here."

"What?!" The humans were taken aback when suddenly, the demon bird stopped in front of Rean.

"Rean! You're back." Obviously, that demon bird was Kentucky. "Are these the humans you went out to find?"

Rean nodded as an idea popped up in his mind "Yeap." Suddenly, he pulled the humans in front of Kentucky and asked, "Are they enough as food for you?"

Burio and the others were frightened.

"You tricked us!"

"Let us down!"

"I curse you!"

"How can you do it with other humans?!"

Kentucky, who received a Spiritual Sense from Rean, immediately nodded, saying, "They should suffice. I've been hungry for an entire day already. There are no better delicacies than human flesh." Kentucky then opened his mouth as he approached Burio at the very front.

Just as Burio thought that his life was coming to an end, Kentucky couldn't hold back anymore and started to laugh out loud. "Hahaha! Sorry, Rean. I can't. I just can't. Hahahaha! This is too funny!"

Ran, of course, laughed even more. "Hahaha! Come on, you were doing so well. Hahahahaha!"

The humans were taken aback when out of nowhere, Rean threw all of them on Kentucky's back as he apologized, "Don't worry, everyone. We were just playing with you." Rean then pointed at Kentucky under them before saying, "His name's Kentucky, one of my best friends. Oh, right. Girls, be careful. He's quite a perverted bird who loves breasts."

"Shut up, Rean!" Kentucky couldn't help but retort after that.

The humans didn't know what to say as Kentucky made his way into the valley. At first, the mist was too thick to see anything. However, it suddenly disappeared as if it had never been there. Not only that, but

when the humans looked back, they noticed that they could see the sky again. The mist was nowhere to be seen anymore.

"Such a magical thing..." Burio muttered, forgetting for a moment the prank that Rean and Kentucky did.

"Hey, look!" A woman called Solan pointed to the valley's center as she said, "There really are a lot of kids."

Everyone looked in the direction Solan pointed at, and sure enough, they saw the over three thousand kids there. "Rean wasn't lying... it seems."

Rean nodded, responding, "I wasn't. I really need adults to take care of the kids. Don't worry, it won't be for free. As long as you're here, you will also be able to cultivate. To be honest, I'm actually looking forward to it."

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Chapter 712: Organizing

At the center of the crowd of kids, Roan stood in midair, looking at the kids over eight years old working on the houses. As he mentioned before, the kids would have to work on it by themselves as a way of training. Of course, they were all very clumsy and couldn't deal with the workload very well. Many cried, complained, and tried to escape.

Unfortunately for them, Roan had Celis nearby. If any of them tried to escape, a root would shoot out of the ground, grab the kid, and put them back to work again. As for the orders, Roan was in the Nascent Soul Realm. He simply used his Spiritual Sense to control all of them.

Nevertheless, it was obvious that the work would take forever. After all, it wasn't as if Roan was that good with kids.

Roan then looked above his head as he saw Rean approaching with the humans he captured. Soon, he asked, "Didn't I say to only take ten or so?"

Rean shrugged his shoulders, responding, "I thought that it wouldn't be enough. After all, we have over three thousand kids here. Don't worry. I made sure that none of them had any cultivation or attachments to the tribes they lived in."

Roan nodded not long after, not minding it too much. Since Rean already brought them here, then he might as well use these people. "Alright, so be it." Soon after, he descended to the ground with Rean and the newcomers. "As you can see, we have a lot of kids here. Your work is very simple. You will be responsible for taking care of them."

Burio, Solan, and the others were still somewhat at a loss, but they nodded nonetheless. "Sure...but we will be able to cultivate as well, right?"

Roan nodded as he brought out many manuals. Other than that, he also took out an Aptitude Measuring Orb and an Elemental Affinity Test Orb. Naturally, that was so that he could test their talent and find out which cultivation manual would be the best for each one.

Roan then looked at everyone and asked, "Who here knows how to read?" In fact, Roan wasn't expecting anyone to raise their hand. After all, he already knew that these tribes were quite isolated from the rest of the world.

Surprisingly though, a woman called Kovfei, who seemed to be in her forties, raised her hand and replied, "I was responsible for taking care of the previous chief's kids of my tribe in the past. I lost my position when the new chief ascended, but I still retained my reading knowledge."

Roan was more than satisfied by that as he said, "Excellent. You'll be responsible for teaching the others here how to write and read. You can think over the best schedule for everyone as well. That being said, you don't need to pay attention to the kids until you finish teaching all the adults."

Roan then took a few Spirit Stones out and threw them at the adults before continuing, "You won't go unrewarded. The faster you all finish learning, the more Spirit Stones you'll get. However, I'm only giving you one month to finish. For those who take longer than that to learn, expect the proper punishment."

Burio narrowed his eyes and muttered, "So, we will also be treated like slaves here, huh?"

Rean patted his shoulder as he shook his head, responding with a bitter smile, "Of course not. Roan's punishment couldn't possibly be as gentle as the punishment a slave gets back at your tribes. It's a lot more terrifying."

Burio's mouth twitched as he responded, "Was I supposed to be happy with that?"

It was then that Burio and the others saw a trembling Demon Bird by their side. Obviously, it was Kentucky, trying his best to comfort them. "He-hehe...do-don't worry. Yo-yo-you wo-wo-wo-won't die."

Just what kind of terrifying memories did they just trigger to make a Stage Five Demon Beast that scared?!

Roan snorted in response, saying, "You better crack your heads to learn from her as fast as possible. But before that, come forward and touch the crystals. I need to know how much aptitude you have."

Burio and the others swallowed some of their saliva and began to come forward one by one. Sure enough, they all had average aptitudes. After all, geniuses weren't easy to find. The best one was at the Yellow Color, with most bring Gray and Brown. The Yellow Color Aptitude was a guy called Sans.

Following that, they all tested for their Elemental Aptitude. After that, Roan took a look at the cultivation manuals they had and passed each one of them a specific manual. Rean and Roan had quite a lot of them since they copied those manuals from the Dalamu Sect and the Hazel Clan in the Soul Rulers' headquarters. Of course, only Kovfei could understand what was written there.

"Cultivation manuals! I've only seen the previous chief holding his one once!" Kovfei said as she read through hers.

Naturally, the others were also excited to hear that those were the real deal. Too bad they couldn't understand what was written inside. "Kovfei! You need to quickly teach us how to read!"

Pah!

Kovfei slapped the back of the guy's head in response. "Quickly, your ass! It took me over a year to become more or less proficient at it. Don't expect to understand what's written there anytime soon since many of the terms inside are quite complicated," Kovfei said after she checked her own cultivation technique manual.

Roan also gave Kovfei a warning, telling her, "You're prohibited from reading the contents in the cultivation manuals to them. If they want to use them, they'll have to understand them themselves." Naturally, that was a good way to guarantee that everyone would pay attention to the classes.

Rean then warned the newcomers after, saying, "However, don't forget that your work here is to take care of the kids. We're busy, after all. Make sure you share the workload correctly and don't leave the kids unsupervised."

Burio and the others nodded after hearing that. They understood how everything would work. Big rewards for those who work hard, and punishment for those who laze around. They didn't know how terrifying Roan's punishments are, but their lives here were better than their previous ones since there were no such things as rewards in their old lives.

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Chapter 713: We Understand

Around two weeks had gone by since Rean brought those humans to the settlement. By now, he was about to finish the valley's protection formation. After all, the protection formation had to be able to hold even those demon beasts at Stage Five, so it wasn't easy to build, especially one that would cover such a big area like the valley. In Rean's calculations, even the so-called Stage Six Blue Luan would need quite a few strikes at full power to break it apart.

'Great! With Celis' ability to gather Spiritual Energy in the valley and the Energy Gathering Formations included, the protection formation itself should be able to work without Spirit Stones.' Rean thought to himself as he built it to be auto-sufficient since they didn't have that many Spirit Stones to start with.

Rean then spread his Spiritual Sense and called Celis, who was at the center of the valley. "Celis, I'm going to turn on the formation now. You'll feel a very big pull of Spiritual Energy at first, so try to keep up with it. This is the moment the formation is charging up. Once it finishes building the layers of protection, the consumption will drop down to near-normal levels again."

Celis didn't mind, responding, "Sure thing. I'm ready anytime you are."

Rean headed to the core right after that, which was placed close to Celis for security measures. Celis was a demon tree, so he didn't need to move or battle to cultivate. Since he wouldn't move, he might as well take care of it just in case.

"There we go!" Rean then stomped his feet on the ground, immediately starting a chain reaction. "The Nine Trigrams Protection Formation, Circuitry Variant, ON!"

Roan, who was watching it unfold from a distance, couldn't help but ask, "Was there a need to call out the name?"

Rean shook his head in response, saying, "Not really, but it was cool, don't you think?"

Roan ignored Rean after that, not even bothering to give an answer.

The Nine Trigrams Protection Formation was made with eight trigrams on eight different points of the formation, while the last one was located at the core. Unlike the real one, the link between the trigrams was not formed through Spiritual Energy but through Electricity! With that, the amount and speed of information at which the formation worked increased by multiple folds.

Soon enough, the entire valley was covered by a thin white layer that expanded underground. Rean formed the protection formation with the idea of layering it with the concealing one, covering its existence as well from both eyes and Spiritual Sense.

"Success!" Rean couldn't help but feel excited, seeing it working on its first activation. "Celis, how is it? Can you manage the Spiritual Energy consumption?" Rean asked the World Swallowing Cedar right after.

"The initial pull of Spiritual Energy was quite something, as you mentioned," Celis answered straight away. "However, once the layers of protection finished forming, the consumption also decreased. If it's just this amount, I can keep it running for basically forever. Not to mention that as time passes, my power will increase, and I'll be able to gather more Spiritual Energy."

Rean was very satisfied with that. "Great! I'll tell Kentucky that he can come down now. No one will be able to enter the valley without us knowing, so there's no need for him to keep watch."

Kentucky, who was feeling very bored recently, immediately dived down into the valley as he said, "Finally! Celis and I can continue constructing my nest."

Rean smiled as he nodded, saying, "Well, that's up to you. I'm going to check on the kids, so you guys do whatever you want."

Sometime later, Rean arrived at Roan's location. Right in front of him, there were queues and queues of kids waiting for their turn to come. At the very front, Burio and the other adults, assisted by Malo and the older kids, were taking care of the procedures. "How is it?"

Roan knew what Rean was talking about, responding with a solemn expression, "As we thought, these high Soul Purity Kids all have very high talent. The worst among them all have Blue Color Aptitude with at least five orbs of Elemental Affinity."

Rean nodded, not finding it strange. "These kids were gathered from all around the world, so it makes sense. Soul Purity, in the end, is connected to their own talent as cultivators. At the same time, I think it's safe to say that there are almost no other humans around the world with a high talent for Soul Power."

Roan agreed with him, saying, "True. It also helped the Zasfins prevent any talented humans from growing up since they took all of them. Of course, there are also exceptions. It isn't as if because they have high Spiritual Energy Aptitude and Elemental Affinity that they would have high Soul Purity."

Rean understood what Roan meant. "Indeed. Considering the size of this world, 3589 kids are not enough to count for all of the Blue and higher-level talents. Simply put, having high Spiritual Energy Aptitude and Elemental Affinity doesn't mean you have high Soul Purity. However, the opposite definitely happens. Anyone with high Soul Purity definitely has high Spiritual Energy Aptitude and Elemental Affinity."

As Rean said that, he noticed the looks on the face of Burio and the other adults. Between the twenty adults that Rean brought to help take care of the kids, only one of them had Yellow Color Aptitude while

the rest had Brown or below. However, all the kids they were testing here had at least Blue Color. How could they not be shocked?

Rean then spread his Spiritual Sense and connected to Burio and the others, telling them, "There's no need for you guys to be worried. You will still gain the same amount of cultivation training as any of these kids. Whatever you achieve in the future will depend on your own efforts. This world isn't based on talent alone. I can guarantee you that."

Burio and the others took a deep breath before nodding. Rean wasn't lying since he saw how Roan treated everyone equally during their own training. Their future prospects weren't as great as these kids since they were already much older. Nevertheless, with the conditions given to them and everyone else, they could go much further.

"We understand."

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Chapter 714: Getting Better

Under the lead of Burio and Malo's group, the construction of the houses proceeded without too many issues. Rean created the blueprints and explained to them how they worked. Of course, he created very simple ones so that there wouldn't be errors.

Of course, that wasn't everything that happened. After checking and noting down all their aptitudes, Roan worked on a training routine for all kids so that they could cultivate. In the end, out of the 3589 kids, 2469 had Blue Color Aptitudes with at least five Orbs of Elemental Affinity. Another 957 had Red Color Aptitudes and at least six Orbs of Elemental Affinity. Last but not least, 163 showed Purple Color Aptitudes and seven or more Orbs of Elemental Affinity.

Among those 163 kids, the five kids at twelve years old were included, which were Malo, Poliana, Falas, Wataba, and Glennie. That pretty much confirmed that the Purple Color ones had the most stable souls. That's why they still haven't been sent to turn into Soul Stones since their soul took much longer to reach the chaotic phase where they couldn't control the Bloodline Trial Formations anymore.

Chaotic phase. That was one thing that Rean was worried about. From what it looked like, their souls were very close to breaking apart, with Rean seeing many of the kids crying with intense headaches. However, it wasn't all bad news. Thanks to that, Rean learned to apply Soul Power to his Instant

Recovery skill. The fusion of Light Element and Soul Power allowed Rean to enter the realm of Souls, healing them. Not to mention that the power of his Instant Recovery skill also increased for normal flesh wounds. That being said, Rean worked on all the kids with problems, repairing their damage for three days straight.

With all the issues regarding their Souls resolved, several spaces were cleared so that they could serve as arenas while thousands of wooden weapons were made. Roan didn't want to take care of the kids forever, so he worked on making them stronger enough to defend themselves. Every day, one could hear the sounds of kids crying and shouting in these crude arenas.

Of course, Rean knew that they were all kids, so he put Kentucky and Celis in charge of entertainment. At the end of the day, Kentucky would bring many kids to fly around the valley, while Celis used hundreds of its vines to grab the kids and play around.

Of course, Celis couldn't help but ask Rean, "Just why the hell is a Demon Tree like me previously at Stage Nine doing this? If I apply just a little bit of strength, I can crush them all or suck them dry of their blood and flesh. Don't you think this is the right way to use a World Swallowing Cedar?"

Rean shrugged his shoulders as he said with a smile, "Hey, why don't you think more positively? All these kids are extremely talented and can possibly become powerhouses in the future. Wouldn't it be nice to know them all if you need their help one day?"

"I...guess so?" Celis still had his doubts but decided to leave them aside. It's not like he can do anything anyway, nor did it impede his cultivation.

Two months went by as more and more simple wooden houses were erected. The kids began to get used to Roan's hellish training and were more willing to do so, thanks to Rean's rewards for their efforts. Kids of a medieval world weren't hard to please since simple things like candies would do the trick. Under the watch of Burio's group, they would select which kids performed best during the day, and those ones would get the sweets.

It was also during these weeks that the talent of the kids truly showed themselves. All of them, with the help of the environment's Spiritual Energy, entered the Energy Gathering Realm without issues. One must remember that Celis was able to increase the Spiritual Energy in the valley to be equivalent to Rank Three Spirit Stones. The only exceptions were those kids below five years of age. As mentioned back when Rean and Roan reincarnated in the tribe, kids more or less below five years of age couldn't cultivate even if they wanted to.

Roan paid special attention to those with Purple Color Aptitudes. Let alone two months. Most of them didn't even need two weeks to go through all the stages of the Body Transformation, quickly entering the Energy Gathering Realm. Some of the Red and Blue Color Aptitude kids were quite competitive, so they put even more effort just so that they wouldn't fall behind them. For Roan, that was a very good thing.

Among those with Purple Talent Color, the ones who stood out were obviously the oldest ones like Malo and company. After all, them being older made them a lot more mature and intelligent. They could grasp things easier and understand the importance of putting in the effort. Above all, they weren't willing to be captured again so that they would become Soul Stones in the future.

However, as soon as any of the kids reached the Energy Gathering Realm, their cultivation speed plummeted. Well, it wasn't as if they were having problems, but it was because Roan explicitly prohibited them from charging through the ranks. As good as their talents were, their future would be cut short if their foundations weren't stabilized.

One might think that Roan could help everyone by making Cultivation Stabilizing Pills. However, Roan didn't even consider doing such a thing when Rean asked him. "Cultivation Stabilizing Pills? Ha! What a joke!" Roan looked at him as if he was an idiot as he said, "Let alone the fact that it would take forever to make enough pills for all these kids, you need to first think about the materials necessary. Can you gather enough materials to concoct tens of thousands of Cultivation Stabilizing Pills? Don't forget that only one isn't enough. You need quite a few of them after a breakthrough."

Roan then pointed at the herb garden he was creating in the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm as he continued, "This garden will only be ready in a few years. Also, the herbs there will only be used for you and me. After all, the higher the level of the pill, the harder it is to make, and more failures will happen. Forget about feeding all the kids with it. Besides, they're already very lucky to have an environment with dense Spiritual Energy."

Rean had to admit that Roan was right. "Well... I guess I can't complain. Still, when did you start building that garden?"

The one who answered that was Celis, responding, "I'm a Demon Tree, remember? I have a very high sensitivity towards plants. All I had to do was have Kentucky bring a few of my seeds around this core region, and I was able to analyze the areas. I then told Roan where most of the rare herbs could be found after that."

Rean couldn't help but feel impressed by Celis. "That's truly an amazing ability." He also understood another point. "Oh! No wonder you and Kentucky have such great synergy and want to be together. While you can feel the presence of rare herbs, Kentucky can feel the presence of rare metals. You simply complement each other way too much."

Kentucky agreed with Rean, saying, "That's true. Oh, right! I forgot to tell you that I found a deposit of Heaven-level ores around 1600 kilometers to the north. Well, there's also the fact that it's outside our territory, so I didn't try to get close to it, though."

Rean's eyes lit up after hearing that. "Heaven-level ores! That's great! I have forged another Black Star and White Star for Roan and me, but they're still in the Earth Peak-Level. All the Heaven-level ores we had in the past have been eaten by you, after all."

Kentucky then puffed his chest as he replied, "Yes, but thanks to that, I have unparalleled defense! Even Roan has some difficulty cutting through it. If not for those ores, I wouldn't be as strong." Kentucky truly thought it was a well worth trade. Well, it really was if one thought about how much help Kentucky could provide.

Roan nodded his head in response, saying, "He's right. His defense is hard to break through at the moment, even with your White Star. However, I was using Earth Peak-Level equipment. Considering Kentucky's strength, Earth-level weapons simply won't do anymore. If not because Rean's weapons far surpass the level of normal Earth-level equipment, I doubt I could break through his defense without using special means. We should head there and take those ores so that you can forge something better."

Rean then looked behind as his Spiritual Sense spread through the valley. He saw how Burio and the others were cultivating, training in the arenas, working on the constructions, taking care of the babies, and so on. "I think everything here is more or less organized already, so we should be able to leave for a short while. With Celis fuelling the Protection Formation, none of the Stage Five Demon Beasts should be able to break through it while we're outside."

Roan pondered a bit and nodded before looking at Celis and saying, "Very well. Celis, we'll leave this place on your hands for now."

Celis didn't seem to mind. "Yeah, yeah, yeah. Just go already. My seeds are spread around the core region, so I'll be able to call you if something happens."

With that, Rean, Roan, and Kentucky soon departed.

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Chapter 715: Demon Beast Alliance

On their way out, Rean couldn't help but ask Kentucky, "Isn't it bad for Celis to have his seeds spread outside the valley? What if someone identifies it?"

Kentucky shook his head as he assured Rean, "It's fine. His seeds only grow up to become small trees that don't look any different from other plants. Well, that's because Celis can control their appearance as he sees fit. In the end, even if someone analyzes it closely, they wouldn't find anything. Of course, that's only if Celis doesn't order them to turn into Spiritual Energy Beacons like what he did for the other powers of the world until now."

Rean nodded in satisfaction after hearing that. "That's good, then. Anyways, let's speed up. It's only 1600 kilometers away, so we should be able to arrive there in less than one hour with your current speed, Kentucky."

Kentucky nodded after hearing that. Spiritual Energy soon gathered around his body as white and black flames spread on his wings. He then flapped once, creating a shockwave behind as his body shot forward with Rean and Roan on his back. Soon, they disappeared in the distance. Also, thanks to Rean's Light and Spiritual Sense Bending Skills, no one could see anything.

The territory that Rean and Roan were planning to visit was controlled by a pair of Ice Salamanders. They were real siblings and helped each other keep their territory protected while sharing the local Spirit Vein, both at the Middle of the Stage Five Level.

At this moment, their heads were down in front of another demon beast. It had enormous blue wings, even slightly bigger than Kentucky's. Each feather exuded a crystalline chill that surrounded the entire Demon Bird's body. If not because of its size, many women would love to have one as their pet due to how beautiful it looked.

"So, have you found the deposit already?" the Demon Bird asked while it looked at the Salamanders as if they were food. It really used words, not Spiritual Sense, proving that it had already surpassed the Stage Five level.

'N-no. We've been excavating the entire area for over a year. However, we still have had no luck finding it,' one of the brothers answered, using Spiritual Sense instead.

'Sorry, Gulan. Our territory is over 500 kilometers in radius. Without knowing the specific location of the deposit, we can't possibly find it anytime soon.' The other brother also felt helpless from the question.

As one could imagine, the demon bird called Gulan was none other than the strongest demon beast of the Koran Forest, the Blue Luan. It had received the report about Kentucky's arrival. However, it hadn't gone there to see him since it was busy with something else, which was the mineral deposit under the Ice Salamanders' territory.

The salamanders didn't know how, but it seemed like the Blue Luan had a way to tell that such a deposit really existed in their territory. Unfortunately, there's just so much they could cover together. Also, demon beasts at Stage Four and below were of no help since they didn't have any intelligence. Even if they found something, they wouldn't know better to report or not.

The Blue Luan was afraid of some other power finding it, so it hadn't left the place ever since. At the very least, with its Stage Six cultivation, it would make others think twice before pissing it off. It wasn't as if the biggest tribes didn't have anyone capable of fighting it, but they would definitely need more than a single Soul Transformation Realm cultivator to contend against it.

In the end, Heaven-level materials were just too rare. The planet had lacked Spiritual Energy for thousands of years. That being said, such precious ore deposits were hard to find, let alone form. If one was found, it would definitely attract many other powers to fight for it. That's what the Blue Luan didn't want to happen.

"Keep looking. I want to find it in at most one more year. If you fail, I can make do with your Demon Cores instead." The Blue Luan's threat weren't empty words. It truly had the power to smash the brothers alone.

'Yes, Gulan.' The two Ice Salamanders immediately took flight before leaving the scene.

The Blue Luan then focused its Spiritual Sense in their territory once again. It tried to use it to find the deposit many times, but it understood that it was too far below for its Spiritual Sense to reach. The more barriers along the way, the weaker a Spiritual Sense became. Spiritual Senses heading underground was obviously one of the best natural barriers.

However, it was then that it felt something else flying inside its Spiritual Sense. The sense was very faint, almost imperceptible, but it was still there. The Blue Luan's expression turned dark as it shot forward in the direction of that feeling.

Rean, of course, noticed the moment another Spiritual Sense touched his Spiritual Sense bending skill. However, when it appeared in his senses, it was already too close for him to order Kentucky to turn back. "Shit! Someone just found our location."

Roan nodded as he also had the same skill active. Although not as strong as Rean's, it still had the ability to feel when another Spiritual Sense touched it. "It's a very strong Spiritual Sense, not something a Nascent Soul or Stage Five Demon Beast can have."

Kentucky then looked at Rean and Roan before asking, "What should we do then? Should we enter the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm and wait for whatever it is to leave?"

As always, they didn't have their Spiritual Sense active since they couldn't hide it from others. That being said, they didn't know who was heading towards them. Well, it wasn't like they didn't have an idea, though.

Roan thought it was a good opportunity to test out the Soul Gem System's rules and decided to try. "Let's go into the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm."

Rean and Kentucky nodded as the twins tried to enter and push Kentucky inside together. However, nothing happened to them other than a robotic message popping into their mind.

[Danger detected, access denied.]

Sure enough, the system wasn't kidding when it made the new set of rules active. If there was any danger and this danger was aware of the twins' presence, they wouldn't be able to enter the Dimensional Realm anymore.

"As expected, we can't enter." Roan didn't seem that worried, though.

Rean and Kentucky nodded, with Rean saying soon after, "In that case, we might as well spread our Spiritual Sense and take a look. After all, we have already been found."

The three agreed on that as their Spiritual Sense spread outwards as the bending skill disappeared, revealing their group. Soon after, their Spiritual Sense detected the other side.

"So that's the Blue Luan, huh?" Rean muttered as he looked at the blue Demon Bird coming in their direction. "It's even slightly bigger than Kentucky."

Kentucky nodded as he replied, "Indeed. Also, his size isn't just for show. I can tell that he isn't strong only because of his cultivation. He can definitely fight those at the same level and easily win."

Following that, the twins and Kentucky received a Spiritual Sense Message as the Blue Luan made its way to their location. 'Who are you? What are you doing in this territory?'

Rean and Roan then looked at Kentucky, who understood what they meant. Right after, he answered with another Spiritual Sense Message, saying, 'My name is Kentucky. I'm the new demon beast who claimed the Mountain Bull's territory.'

Around a minute later, the Blue Luan finally appeared in their vision, not taking long before it stopped in front of them. "So you're the new guy, huh? Are these two your slaves?" the Blue Luan asked as it looked at Rean and Roan's slave collars. From the looks of it, those collars were of very high level.

Kentucky nodded as he noticed the Blue Luan's thoughts, using his real voice as he answered, "They are. If you want, I can present you with a similar slave collar for you to use in other humans. However, it will only work on humans. Zasfins can use their Soul Power to deactivate it, so it's useless against them."

The Blue Luan was taken aback by Kentucky's answer, responding back in shock, "Wait! You can talk?!"

Kentucky smiled in response as he replied, "The same way you could back when you were at the Stage Five level. Am I wrong?"

Rean and Roan were the ones to be surprised this time as they asked Kentucky through a Spiritual Sense. 'Kentucky, is this Blue Luan the real deal? Only a Divine Demon Beast would be able to talk with words at Stage Five, after all.'

Kentucky slightly nodded as he responded through Spiritual Sense. 'He is. My bloodline is screaming at the moment, unwilling to submit to this guy's aura. He's the first demon beast I've seen in my life that makes me feel like that. Also, I'm pretty sure he can feel the same thing from me.'

Sure enough, the Blue Luan quickly understood what was happening. "I failed to recognize you because of this weird crown. After all, I've only heard about your race. So you're a Minokawa, right? Or perhaps a half-breed? No, your bloodline aura is too strong for you to be a half-breed. It's a mutation, huh?"

Kentucky didn't try to hide it as he answered, "Indeed. I have mutated, so you could now say that I'm slightly stronger than I should have been because of that." Kentucky then changed the topic as he asked, "Anyway, you are the first Divine Demon Beast I've ever seen other than me. How come you can live in this place without those Zasfins trying to capture you?"

The Blue Luan couldn't help but laugh out loud, saying, "Hahaha! Because those idiots wouldn't dare to go against the Demon Beast Alliance of this planet."

"Demon Beast Alliance?" This was the first time the twins and Kentucky heard of such a thing.

Death... and me

Chapter 716: Test

The twins' group weren't the only ones surprised by it, though. The Blue Luan also found it strange that Kentucky, a Divine Demon Beast like himself, didn't know of its existence. "Wait! It can't be that you really don't know about it, right?"

Kentucky nodded, responding, "I heard about them, but I've never tried to get in contact before and avoided it." Of course, that was all lies.

Nevertheless, Gulan believed that since he refused to believe that another Divine Demon Beast like himself didn't know of it. "So, you're one of those who think you can do everything alone. Well, that's quite a common thing for demon beasts, let alone Divine ones. However, you should count yourself lucky. It's because the Demon Beast Alliance exists that the Soul Rulers don't go all out after you."

Kentucky snorted in response, saying, "Hmph! Even if they come, they'll have to pay the price to take me away." As always, Kentucky kept up his overbearing act.

Gulan laughed in response, though. "Hahaha! With your cultivation, you're nothing against their top experts. Anyways, forget about it. Whether you want their help or not is not my problem, nor do I care." Gulan's eyes then narrowed before continuing, "I don't want to fight another Divine Demon Beast again, so leave this place. This territory is under my control, and I won't allow you to take anything from it."

Rean and Roan looked at each other after hearing that as they could imagine why the Blue Luan was saying that. Soon, one of them said to Kentucky through Spiritual Sense, 'Kentucky, ask him if he's looking for the Heaven-level ore here.'

Kentucky nodded in response before asking Gulan, "Are you looking for the Heaven-level ore deposit?"

Gulan's expression turned dark as soon as he heard those words. "How do you know that? This information shouldn't have been known by anyone." As he said that, Spiritual Energy, Yin Energy, and Water Element began to gather around him. Gulan was ready to bury Kentucky's group here if their answer wasn't to his liking.

Kentucky then smiled before saying, "How about we make a deal? I'll tell you where the deposit is located, and you'll introduce me to the Demon Beast Alliance. I'll also keep quiet about this deposit and even help you mine it if you wish."

Gulan was taken aback to hear those offers, prompting him to ask, "Why would you do that?"

"Simple," Kentucky answered. "The fact that another Divine Demon Beast like me is part of this alliance tells me a lot about it. I want to know what would make a Blue Luan take part in such a thing. There are bound to be a few benefits for a Divine Beast like me there, right?" As one could expect, it was Rean and Roan who told Kentucky to ask that.

The Blue Luan calmed down a little as he thought about the pros and cons of the offer. Eventually, he decided that getting to know where the deposit was located was a lot better than leaving it to the Ice Salamanders to search. "Very well. However, aren't you afraid that I'll kill you as soon you show me the location?" Sure enough, anyone in Gulan's position would think that.

Kentucky laughed in response as he said, "Hahaha! You can try if you want. I'm not exactly your match in head-on combat, but I'm very confident in my escaping abilities." Kentucky wasn't lying. In fact, if Kentucky, Rean, and Roan worked together, they probably would be able to take the Blue Luan head-on. It's just that Rean's group didn't wish for the Blue Luan to know of their real power.

Gulan didn't know whether Kentucky was playing with him or if that was true. However, the fact was that he needed to find the deposit. "Very well, where's the deposit?"

Kentucky then flapped his wings as he shot in the distance, telling Gulan, "Come with me."

Gulan quickly flapped his wings soon after and followed Kentucky from behind. Although it only took a few minutes to arrive at the location, with their speed, they covered over a hundred kilometers in the distance. Eventually, Kentucky stopped above an open field that had grass growing and only a sparse number of trees. "Here we are."

Gulan was quite surprised by the sight since he was expecting the deposit to be under some mountain or similar place. "Are you sure? I can't feel anything." Gulan's Spiritual Sense went as deep as possible, but he only saw dirt and rocks.

Kentucky smiled before nodding, explaining, "It's here. However, neither of us will be able to feel it with our Spiritual Senses since it is too deep. I believe your Spiritual Sense can't go more than three or four kilometers into the ground, right?" Gulan nodded and waited for Kentucky to continue. "The deposit is over ten kilometers down there."

Gulan narrowed his eyes as he pondered over Kentucky's words for a bit. "Wait for me here. I'll be right back." Without waiting for Kentucky's answer, the Blue Luan soon left in a flash of blue light.

Around thirty minutes later, Rean and Roan saw the Blue Luan come back, followed by two demon beasts. Naturally, those demon beasts were none other than the Ice Salamanders. Gulan went to find them so that they could excavate the place. After all, as a Demon Bird, Gulan didn't want to go underground where it would be at a disadvantage.

"You two, head down there. The deposit should be over ten kilometers underground. If you find something, come back up straight away," the Blue Luan ordered.

The two Ice Salamander brothers didn't know what Kentucky and those two humans were doing there, but they didn't dare to question Gulan. Soon after, the two descended and penetrated into the ground. As land demon beasts, they didn't have much difficulty making their way down.

Gulan and the twins' group waited for another 40 or so minutes before eventually, the Salamanders shot out of the ground once again as one of them gleefully said, "Gulan, it's there! There's a huge deposit of Earth-level ore, so we believe the Heaven-level ore should be in the center."

Gulan couldn't help but get a little excited. He would be able to trade those Heaven-level ores for many things beneficial for himself with the Demon Beast Alliance or even the Zasfins themselves. However, he quickly looked back at Rean's group as he pondered about something.

Suddenly, out of nowhere, Yin Energy, Spiritual Energy, and Water Element gathered around the Blue Luan as he shot forward, shouting, "Die!"

The world around Rean and Roan froze over as they were enveloped by some kind of ice field. That made their movements a lot slower, which took them aback. However, they didn't panic. In fact, Rean and Roan didn't even move and only waited on Kentucky's back.

Following that, Kentucky's body burst with black flames that devoured all the Yin and Ice Energy on the surroundings, boosting his own power as he flapped his wings. In the next second, he disappeared from his position in a flash of black light.

Gulan's eyes widened when he saw it. He was sure he had taken them by surprise, but the Minokawa still reacted in time. Not only that, but the Minokawa displayed a speed just slightly slower than his own even though he was an entire stage below himself.

The pursuit only lasted a few seconds when suddenly, Gulan stopped in the air. Kentucky, too, stopped as he looked back at Gulan with a smile and asked, "Is your test over?"

Gulan was taken aback for a moment when suddenly, he burst out in laughter. "Hahaha! So you noticed, huh?" Kentucky nodded and waited for Gulan to continue. "Yes, this was just a test. However, if it turns out that you were too slow, I wouldn't have stopped. After all, dead bodies tell no secrets," Gulan said as the energies around his body calmed down.

Kentucky couldn't help but comment, "I was still slower than you, though."

"True." Gulan nodded. "However, although I wasn't flying at my full speed, I think you weren't either, right? Since I can't guarantee that I can kill you, I better not try. Besides..." Gulan looked at Rean and Roan. "They might only be flies compared to you or me, but they could still run away if I focused on you. The opposite would also be possible if they flee in different directions as I won't be able to focus on you, so you would end up escaping."

Gulan then turned around before saying, "I'm going to pay a visit to your valley once I finish excavating the ore there. You better keep your part of the deal, or I won't stop until I get you." Following that, Gulan left.

Rean and Roan looked at Kentucky before asking, "How is it? Do you think he can catch or fight against the three of us together?"

Kentucky, as a Divine Demon Beast, obviously had a better sense of Gulan's strength as he answered, "Our chances would be slim, with Gulan most likely being the stronger side. I would say a 20-80% chance of victory. Obviously, we have the 20%. If we focused solely on fleeing, I would give it a 70% chance of success. Of course, I can't guarantee anything since I haven't seen his full power."

The twins nodded, not doubting Kentucky's assessment.

Rean couldn't help but comment, though. "Our chances will be much better if I can forge us Heaven-level swords. Kentucky, was that the only deposit you found so far?"

Kentucky pondered over the question for a bit before saying, "There was another one, but that one's very far away. It's also outside the Koran Forest, close to one of those big tribes we passed on the way."

The twins nodded after hearing that. The question now was whether it was worth the risk or not.

Death... and me

Chapter 717: Folit Tribe

Considering that Rean's group traveled over 20 thousand kilometers away from the Soul Ruler's territory, it was understandable that Kentucky bumped along another deposit on the way. After all, a little half of the course was traveled through teleportation. The rest was done on Kentucky's back.

Nevertheless, Rean thought it was strange. "Big tribes...didn't we avoid passing near their homes? How do you know there's one close to that deposit?"

Kentucky nodded as he explained, "We did avoid them. It's just that my perception is strong enough to feel it even though we went around those tribes."

Roan didn't seem to care as he said, "Let's head there, then. It seems like this Blue Luan will stay here for a while, so we don't need to be afraid of him coming to our valley anytime soon. Besides, with Kentucky's speed, we won't take more than a day to arrive there." Sure enough, Roan didn't like the feeling of lacking in the weapons department

Kentucky and Rean looked at each other before nodding. "Alright."

Without wasting any more time, Kentucky flapped his wings before darting into the distance. Of course, they stopped by the valley to tell Celis what happened. After that, they left straight away.

Back by the Blue Luan's side, his mind was still recalling his encounter with Kentucky. 'Another Divine Demon Beast...Isn't there way too many already? Something must be happening on this planet for this

to happen.' Gulan then remembered something as he thought, 'The old geezer must know something about this. I'll ask him about it later without revealing this Minokawa's existence.'

A day quickly passed as Kentucky made his way to the other Heaven-level mineral deposit. Sure enough, Rean confirmed that this one was close to one of the big tribes of the Tribes' Zone, the Folit Tribe. However, when they arrived there, they were taken by surprise.

"Close to the Folit Tribe? This is the Folit Tribe!" Roan said with a dark expression as he looked at the lights in the distance. The tribe was located at the base of an enormous mountain. The tribe was so big that it completely circled the mountain itself. The twins could tell that at least a few hundred thousand people lived there from the size alone. The weird thing was that from halfway up, the mountain was deserted, with no buildings whatsoever.

Nevertheless, Rean and Roan knew that it wasn't empty. That's because they could feel the Spiritual Sense of the tribe's experts coming from the mountain top.

"Soul Transformation Realm for sure. Three of them at that," Rean commented as he kept his distance. Because he was too far away, those experts' Spiritual Sense didn't have enough strength to pierce through his Spiritual Sense bending skill. That being said, they didn't perceive the presence of Rean's group.

"Kentucky, are you sure it's there?" Roan asked one more time to make sure.

"Yes. There's quite a lot of Heaven-level ores there. Not only that, but it seems like the mineral is at the Heaven Middle-level," Kentucky answered as he also looked at the tribe.

Rean pondered for a bit before saying, "What about we head underground? The deposit should be quite a few kilometers underground anyway, so those experts' Spiritual Senses shouldn't be able to detect us."

Kentucky immediately shook his head as he clarified, "Wrong! The mineral isn't underground, but at the very top of that tribe's mountain instead. It seems like this tribe has already found it and mined it completely. I can't feel anything underground."

"That makes things complicated..." Roan's expression was still dark as he formulated a solution. "Three Soul Transformation experts. Rean's Spiritual Sense bending skill won't be able to drive them away once we get too close. Besides, the mountain top probably has some kind of formation to protect it."

Rean then had an idea as he suggested, "Can we lure the tiger away from the mountain?"

Roan nodded, replying, "I thought about that as well. However, what to do about the protection there? Besides, I refuse to believe that all three Soul Transformation Zafins there would leave the tribe at once."

"Can we fight them?" Kentucky asked as he was very eager to try it out.

Unfortunately, that wasn't a good idea as Roan responded, "Even if we decide to fight, we'll probably fall into a standstill. However, for a tribe with three Soul Transformation Realm cultivators, they're bound to have even more Nascent Soul ones. Once beings at that level join the fray, we'll be forced to retreat. Not to mention that we can't use our Soul Marks since it'll reveal our identities, bringing the Soul Rulers here sooner or later."

Rean couldn't help but say, "I guess the only thing remaining is... negotiation? Or perhaps just give up on this one and look for another deposit?"

However, it was then that Kentucky got an idea, suggesting, "Hey, what about some help?"

Rean and Roan's interest were piqued as both of them thought of the same thing. "Could it be..."

Kentucky nodded in response, saying, "The Blue Luan seems to want Heaven-level materials a lot. If we join forces with him, can't we take this tribe down? Besides, he's the leader of the Koran Forest, so he can probably order a few of the Stage Five Demon Beasts to come out and help."

Rean found a problem with that idea, though. "I don't think it'll work. After all, you're only at the Stage Five level. I don't think the Blue Luan will agree to form an alliance with you when it can bring its own forces to obtain the material instead. In the end, the Blue Luan will have everything for itself."

Roan agreed with Rean, saying, "I think the same. Besides, this tribe shouldn't be as defenseless to the point where a demon beast attack would take it down. After all, the top experts of both demon beasts and Zasfins of the Tribes' Zone rarely fight each other. There must be something else in play here. Maybe some agreement, or perhaps this tribe can obtain help from different tribes quickly and vice versa. It's just like the Soul Rulers probably know about the Blue Luan's presence but didn't even try to tame it since it would put the Demon Beast Alliance against them."

Kentucky dropped his head in disappointment. He thought that was a good opportunity to try out his strength in a real dangerous battle.

"So...negotiation?" Rean asked at the end.

Roan pondered over it for a bit as he looked inside the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm. Inside it was his herb garden, which seemed to have a few good herbs for use. Perhaps he could use it to concoct a Heaven-level pill. Back in the Soul Rulers' Headquarters, Roan didn't simply stay put in the formations. He also took some time to enter the Dimensional Realm to practice his alchemy skills while his clone stayed outside. Also, with Rean's status in the Hafel Clan, he was able to provide Roan with a few good herbs to work with. It's just that Roan had never tried any Heaven-level pill until now, so he was stuck in the Earth Peak-level.

"A Heaven-level pill... I haven't tried it yet, but I'm a little confident in succeeding. I just don't know if it's worth using the herbs I gathered for this occasion," Roan was still somewhat unwilling as he said.

Rean shook his head as he responded, "It's definitely worth it. Would you really be okay if our Earth Peak-level swords broke during a battle in the future? Don't forget we can't enter the Dimensional Realm if we're in danger."

Roan agreed with Rean, eventually saying, "Alright. Let's head back to the valley since I need time to prepare."

Kentucky couldn't help but feel somewhat sad, asking, "What about me?! If you only get enough metal for forging, then I won't have anything to eat."

Rean shrugged his shoulders as he replied, "At the moment, our safety is the main priority here. Besides, it's not like you can't go around trying to see if you can find another deposit of Heaven-level ores."

Kentucky sighed but didn't complain in the end. "Fine...once the Blue Luan stops by and goes away, I'll leave for a while to look for it."

Rean and Roan nodded after hearing that. If Kentucky found one, that would be for the best since they could save on pills.

"By the way..." Rean looked at Roan and asked, "What kind of pill would you make that it would be worth trading for Heaven-level materials?"

"What else could it be? In the end, the most important thing for cultivators is to advance into the next realms and increase their lifespan," Roan answered. "Naturally, I would concoct a few Cross-Realm Pills for Nascent Soul Realm cultivators."

"You mean, pills for them to breakthrough into the Soul Transformation Realm?" Rean immediately asked in response.

"Of course not! The Soul Transformation Realm is different when compared to other breakthroughs. It needs the cultivator to find their own path. Instead, my pills will help out with the breakthroughs of the Middle, Late, and Peak Stages," Rean explained.

However, that also brought up another question in Kentucky's mind as he asked soon after, "Does that mean there aren't pills for breaking through to the Soul Transformation Realm?"

Roan pondered a bit before nodding, explaining, "There is a pill called Near Emptiness. It will free your mind from all unnecessary thoughts for several days in a row. From what was written in the alchemy book I read, it would help you understand what this path of yours is. However, it's quite dangerous since you wouldn't react to anything else during this time. That means that even if someone attacks you, you would completely ignore it and continue to focus on the task you put your focus on. Besides, it's not guaranteed to work at all."

Rean then shook his head after hearing that, saying, "It doesn't matter. Let's head back to the valley first."

Death... and me

Chapter 718: Good Thing For Humans

Back in the valley, Rean's group continued to cultivate. Every now and then, they would have Burio's group take care of the kids. However, they brought Burio and the others exactly because they didn't want to spend too much time doing that. That being said, their group eventually grew used to managing all those kids at once, using the older kids to help with those tasks as well.

A few days later, Rean and the others felt a vibration come from outside, showing that something hit Rean's protection formation. Naturally, they immediately took flight and exited the valley to see who it was. Well, it wasn't like they didn't know who it would be.

"Gulan, you came here faster than I thought. Usually, it takes a lot longer to mine a deposit like that," Kentucky said as he looked at the enormous crystalline blue bird in front of them.

The Blue Luan nodded while he looked at the valley covered by mist. "I have those two lizards doing the underground work for me. Well, I'm happy you've kept your word since no one had appeared to bother me during that time. Now then, you said you wanted to see the Demon Beast Alliance, so I'm here to bring you there. However, whether they accept you or will do anything against you is not my problem, so you're on your own if things go south."

Kentucky didn't complain as he replied, "Very well." Following that, he looked at Roan and ordered, "Stay here and protect the valley during my absence. I better not see anything out of place once I'm back."

Roan bowed to Kentucky in response, politely saying, "Yes, master." Soon after, he descended into the valley once more. However, it was just a pretense. Instead, as soon as he passed through the Spiritual Sense barrier, he headed straight into the Dimensional Realm. Although the Blue Luan was here, it wasn't for a fight. That being said, the system didn't consider it a dangerous situation and allowed Roan to enter. In the end, they might not be able to enter the Dimensional Realm during dangerous times, but the system didn't say anything about leaving it. With Rean outside, Roan could appear by his side at any time if necessary.

The Blue Luan then turned around before zooming into the distance. Kentucky, of course, did the same thing and followed the Blue Luan. As for Rean, he stayed on Kentucky's back since he couldn't keep with their flying speeds.

Along the way, Gulan looked at Kentucky and asked, "By the way, how did you build that formation on that valley? Even my Spiritual Sense can't pass through it, which shows that it's at the Heaven-level." The Blue Luan was the master of the Koran Forest, so he knew what could be found in the valley. With that said, he wasn't curious about the valley itself, but what Kentucky was doing there that needed him to hide it.

Kentucky laughed in response, answering, "Of course, it's at the Heaven-level. After all, I paid for it." Kentucky continued, "As long as you have enough Spirit Stones, you can get one of the Zasfins to do the dirty work for you. During my journeys, I found a lot of idiots who thought they could do whatever they wanted with me. Well, they died, and their possessions had turned into mine. You could say that I'm quite wealthy myself. Of course, I can't compare to someone like you who rules an entire Demon Beast Forest."

Gulan nodded, saying, "Indeed. I've lived here for over 200 years, so I did obtain a few things of value as well. It's just that I never thought about asking a Zasfin to do anything for me. Aren't you afraid that this Zasfin would play some tricks with the formation?"

Kentucky shrugged his shoulders as he said, "Why should I? it's just a Spiritual Sense Barrier Formation and a Protection Formation. The cores of the formations are inside the valley, and my subordinates are also there. I can simply destroy them, and the formations will go down."

Gulan narrowed his eyes, finding it a little hard to believe. 'However, there's a chance that the Zasfin thought that Kentucky was part of the Demon Beast Alliance, so the guy didn't try anything. Also, a Zasfin that can build a Heaven-level formation is definitely at the Nascent Soul level at the very least. It isn't strange that he can come and go without the other demon beasts noticing. Especially after Kentucky made that place his territory,' The Blue Luan concluded as he thought. For him, it also didn't matter much since he was much stronger.

The travel took several days since it was outside the Koran Forest. In fact, it was also outside the Tribes' Zone, further to the south. At some point, the sea showed itself as the land stayed behind. Nevertheless, the Blue Luan didn't stop. Rean looked at the jade slips and saw that they were going in the direction of a continent called Gartrin. The only problem was that there wasn't much information about it in the Jade Slips.

In the end, it took Rean's group two weeks of nonstop flight and more than 100 thousand kilometers to arrive there. That showed just how big this planet was compared to what Rean remembered about Earth.

"This is the Gartrin Continent, but a few of the Soul Rulers also call it the Demon Beast Continent," Gulan explained. "Although they're very sparse in this continent, I wouldn't be so bold as to say that there are no Zafin settlements here. In any case, most of them are very small. As for cities and others, there aren't more than four or five of them in the entire landmass."

Kentucky couldn't help but ask, "Why would the Zasfins even live in a place like this? Isn't it too dangerous for them?"

Gulan shook his head, responding, "Those Zasfins are here mostly for the sake of trading. After all, the demon beasts have materials that the Zasfins want. The opposite is also true. With that said, you'll see that the cities where the Zasfins live here are also filled with demon beasts everywhere. The Soul Rulers and the Demon Beast Alliance have agreed to not fight each other while inside the cities."

Gulan then smiled, continuing, "Of course, the story is completely different when you're outside. Whether you're a Zafin or a demon beast..." Gulan then looked at Rean. "...or even a human, anyone can attack you, and you can do the same back. The Demon Beast Continent is one of the best places to train since Zasfins and demon beasts can engage in combat to hone themselves. Too bad the Soul Rulers try to keep this place's existence as unknown as possible."

"Why is that?" Naturally, Kentucky had to ask.

"Isn't that obvious?" The Blue Luan looked at Kentucky as if he was an idiot. "The Zasfins must keep the control over the Zasfins of the planet. That being said, they pose themselves as the strongest force here. It would be bad for business if the Zasfins knew that another force with a similar level of power existed."

Rean couldn't help but ask another question after that. Of course, he used Kentucky to do that since he had to keep up his pretense as a slave. "I don't understand. Why would the demon beasts let it stay like this? If they have a similar level of power, shouldn't they be able to oppose the Soul Rulers? Considering our demon beast instincts, I can't see why the demon beasts would accept such a thing."

The Blue Luan looked at Kentucky and nodded. "Indeed. Such a thing should have never happened. However...the Soul Rulers have the World Swallowing Cedar."

Rean and Kentucky felt their hearts skip a beat. "Wo-World Swallowing Cedar? What is that?" Of course, they totally knew what it was. However, no one knew that they had it.

Gulan then continued, "Well, since you're also a Divine Demon beast, you'll find about it sooner or later after joining the alliance. The World Swallowing Cedar can control the Spiritual Energy of the entire world. That being said, it could have deprived the Demon Beast Continent from having any Spiritual Energy at all."

"However, that would definitely enrage the Demon Beasts living here, which would cause a war between both sides. In the end, the Demon Beast Alliance and the Soul Rulers have formed an agreement. The World Swallowing Cedar wouldn't affect the Demon Beast Continent's Spiritual Energy. At the same time, the Demon Beast Alliance wouldn't contest the Soul Rulers' show of strongest power."

Gulan then looked at Kentucky with a serious expression as he added, "Very few know of this, so you better not go around opening your mouth, understood? This balance between the demon beasts and the Soul Rulers is quite fragile. With that, both sides might come after you to make sure no one would disturb it."

Rean's group couldn't help but feel a chill on their backs. Celis was now gone, so the Soul Rulers couldn't control the Spiritual Energy anymore. That being said...what would happen with this agreement between both sides? "Ahem...Gulan, you did notice that the Spiritual Energy on the planet has increased several times, right? It's happening literally everywhere."

Gulan sighed in response before saying, "Don't ask me. I also don't know what's happening. One of the reasons I agreed to bring you here was that I needed to investigate this situation. Otherwise, why would I make such a huge journey all the way here? Just to introduce yourself to the alliance? I'm not that free."

Although they didn't say it, Rean's group already imagined what might happen now. Roan then smiled as his eyes shone. 'Without Celis...the Soul Rulers' pretense of unrivaled power might be in jeopardy very soon. This might be a very good thing for the humans.'

Death... and me

Chapter 719: The Old Man

Rean and Kentucky could not help but agree with Roan. The entire world now had Spiritual Energy that could be used. That being said, such an agreement had no use anymore. The only doubt was whether the Demon Beast Alliance knew of Celis's disappearance or not. In the end, the fear of new powers and organizations appearing among the Zafins wasn't the only reason the Soul Rulers needed Celis so much. Well, that was something for them to worry about at another time.

"Gulan, are we heading to one of those cities?" Kentucky asked, changing the topic.

The Blue Luan shook his head as he replied, "No, it would make no sense to have the Demon Beast Alliance be located in a place where Zafins could come and go all the time. We're heading to the center of the continent, where you can basically find only demon beasts." Gulan then looked at Rean again as he continued, "You better hide this human in the middle of your feathers since some of the demon beasts along the way might try and find trouble with you because of that."

Kentucky nodded as Rean immediately got down. Unless someone was looking from above, they wouldn't notice Rean at all. Nevertheless, they had just arrived in the Demon Beast Continent, so they had to travel for two more days before reaching the Demon Beast Alliance Gulan mentioned.

At some point, Kentucky noticed many demon beasts flying, not only bird types. Demon bears, wolves, insects, and even those originating from the seas, all of them were flying. Obviously, they were getting closer and closer to the center of the continent, so Stage Five Demon Beasts gradually became more common. Sure enough, the Spiritual Energy of the Demon Beast Continent must not have been affected for it to have this many high-level demon beasts.

Eventually, Kentucky noticed a mountain range in the distance that extended as far as his eyes could see. Also, the number of Spiritual Senses that he could feel had ballooned many times, showing that many Stage Five and Six Demon beasts were there. Obviously, the place was bound to also have those at Stage Seven and above. It's just that Kentucky's cultivation was too low to feel their presence.

On the other hand, Rean could sense everything. He kept his Spiritual Sense bending skill active all the time, so he could feel the huge beacons of Spiritual Sense coming from there. Let alone Stage Seven, Rean could even feel the Spiritual Sense of Rank Eight and even Rank Nine Demon Beasts. 'What a terrifying place. It doesn't lose to the Soul Rulers' headquarters at all.'

After some time, the Blue Luan descended at one of the mountain bases, where it met a few demon beasts guarding the place. "Tell the old geezer that Gulan has come to pay him a visit."

The demon beast on the front seemed to already know who Gulan was, so he simply nodded and used his Spiritual Sense to tell the others. Soon, an invisible barrier appeared in front of Gulan before some kind of entrance opened in front of it.

'As expected, demon beasts also use formations,' Rean thought for a moment.

Kentucky then followed Gulan up the mountain. However, Rean immediately noticed many eyes turning in his direction. He was able to hide from the demon beasts a while ago with his Spiritual Sense bending skill. But right now, he was just too close to them, so it had no effect anymore. It was just too much for him to handle.

Fortunately, none of those demon beasts came to find trouble with him or Kentucky. From the looks of it, Gulan had already used a Spiritual Sense Message to explain the situation. Of course, it didn't change the fact that the demon beasts didn't like his presence there.

Their group soon arrived at the mountain top quite quickly. There, they saw a red-haired old man sitting on a boulder, solemnly looking in the distance. Rean was quite surprised by that since he didn't expect to see a human in this place. However, he didn't take long to notice that he was wrong. After getting a little closer, he saw that the old man had a few feathers protrude out of his body while talons extended out of his toes. He did have a humanoid figure, but he definitely wasn't human. His eyes were also different, showing a fiery red glow.

The old man then looked at the Blue Luan with a stern face, saying, "Brat, why do you take so long to come and see me? You haven't paid a visit for over ten years! Is that how you treat your grandfather?! If you had taken any longer, I would have dispatched a squadron to bring you back even if they had to tie you down."

Grandfather?! Kentucky and Rean were taken aback to hear that. Initially, they thought the man to be another variation of humans, just like Lakures and Zasfins. However, never in their wildest imaginations did they imagine this Blue Luan to be this man's grandchild.

Gulan snorted in response, replying, "Hmph! If not because I needed to ask you something, I wouldn't have come here in the first place. You're too annoying, old geezer."

As soon as Gulan said that, the world around them began to tremble as the old man's expression turned dark. Rean didn't even need to use his Spiritual Sense bending skill to tell that this guy was extremely powerful. He was only slightly lacking to Celis before he lost his cultivation. It showed that he was also in the Stage Nine Level, though not at the peak like Celis was. Nevertheless, he was just as terrifying!

Suddenly, the old man's body began to change form. Fire burst out of his body as his hands turned into fiery wings. His body also increased in size several times within a few seconds as pointed eyes replaced his human-like ones. In any case, it did not take too long for a Demon Bird, much larger than Kentucky or Gulan, to spread its red-feathered wings open as they burned with intense heat as he said with a stern tone, "It seems like I'll have to teach you a lesson again, or you won't listen."

Rean and Kentucky were already trembling all over. That guy could definitely wipe them out in less than a second.

However, Gulan didn't seem to be afraid of him at all. Instead, his expression changed as he looked a lot more gentle. "Come on, grampa. You know I'm just joking. A Phoenix like you shouldn't take things to heart that quickly. Come on, you're frightening my friend here."

A Phoenix! Kentucky immediately understood why he was trembling so much. As a Divine Demon Beast himself, he knew that the Demon Bird in front of him was at the very peak of the Divine Demon Beasts.

"You're saying that just to escape punishment, aren't you?" the Phoenix asked as it ignored Kentucky and Rean.

Gulan shook his head in response as he answered, "Of course not. My grampa is the best Phoenix ever, so how could I try and do such a thing? I was just joking so that grampa would show me his unrivaled Phoenix form that I haven't seen in such a long time."

The fire emanating out of the Phoenix suddenly calmed down before completely disappearing, leaving behind only the fiery red feathers. The expression of the Phoenix had also eased a lot until out of nowhere, the Phoenix shot forward and embraced the Blue Luan with his much bigger wings. "Hahaha! Good boy! Of course, you wouldn't do such a thing to your grampa."

Crack, crack, crack...

Rean and Kentucky could only hear the sound of bones cracking from sheer strength as the Blue Luan struggled to breathe while being embraced by the Phoenix's wings. "G-Grampa, you're killing me..."

Fortunately, the Phoenix eventually calmed down and let Gulan leave. Following that, it began to change once again, returning to its red-haired humanoid form as he reminded Gulan, "Love is pain. Remember that."

The Blue Luan then fell on the ground as it used its Spiritual Energy to start healing itself. As it did that, the old man, or the Phoenix, looked at Kentucky and the human on its back as he muttered, "Well, well...it has been a very long time since I last saw a Minokawa. Not to mention that this is the first mutated one to appear in front of me. Say, chick. Where'd you come from?"

Kentucky showed utmost respect as he answered the old man. "I've been wandering everywhere since I was born, so I can't exactly tell you where I came since I've only obtained sentience at Stage Four."

The old man nodded, saying soon after, "I see...that's quite a weird situation. Minokawas are very protective of their offspring. For you to be alone on this planet is truly odd. However, I have never heard of a Minokawa landing here in the last tens of thousands of years. I truly can't tell how you appeared here."

The old man then looked at Rean, as well as the slave collar on his neck. With a single glance, he could tell that the slave collar was of very high-level, more than enough to keep a human at Rean's level under control. Of course, Rean made the collar himself, so it definitely looked real since it was real. It's just that no one had control over it other than himself. "You got a human as a slave? And one at the Nascent Soul Realm at that, how unexpected."

Kentucky nodded, responding, "Yes. However, he wasn't a Nascent Soul Realm cultivator before. It was through my help that he reached this level. It took me some work, but it's very convenient to have such a strong subordinate."

However, the old man laughed as he said, "Hehehe! Is that so?" Soon after, the old man clapped his hands.

Pah!

Shatter!

In the very next instant, Rean's slave collar then shattered into pieces as the old man said, "Well, I know for a fact that he isn't actually your slave. However, I can tell that he isn't your master either since you two have a mutual connection instead of that between a master and a subordinate. With that, just who are you, human?"

Death... and me

Chapter 720: The Tale

Rean and Kentucky were left aghast when that happened. It was one thing for the old man to tell that Rean's act of being a slave was fake. It was still within their realms of comprehension. However, how exactly did he find out about their connection? It was something achieved through the Soul Gem System, after all.

The Blue Luan was also surprised to hear that since it didn't expect the slave thing to be fake since they were talking about humans here. Humans had no power whatsoever on this planet, so for Rean to be a slave was well within Gulan's expectations. He truly believed that it was thanks to Kentucky that he had reached the Nascent Soul Realm.

Rean then took a deep breath as he checked the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm.

[Access denied.]

Sure enough, the system didn't allow Rean to enter at all. As for Roan, he was watching everything through his connection with Rean. It's just that he didn't think he would be of much help in this situation. Roan could come out, but he didn't have the necessary strength to allow them to flee at all.

With that said, Rean gave up any ideas of escaping before jumping down from Kentucky's back as he said, "No wonder senior is a Stage Nine Demon Beast. To think that you could even feel the connection between Kentucky and I. That's true. Neither Kentucky nor I am each other's masters. Our link is more like that of a friendship, something that happened by pure luck when Kentucky was born."

The Phoenix nodded, not finding it strange at all. "That's what I thought. So, who are you? I'm one of the elders of the Demon Beast Alliance, so I have a very good grasp of the demon beasts roaming on the

entire planet. If there's one thing I know, that's the fact that we absolutely don't have a Minokawa. But lo and behold, here's a Minokawa! A mutated one at that."

The old man Phoenix then spread his Spiritual Energy, which quickly entered Kentucky's body. A second later, he retracted it and said, "Sure enough, you weren't born on this planet. The Yin Energy in your body is slightly different from the natural Yin Energy present in this ice world. Well, it's not an ice world anymore, but you know what I mean."

That was something that Rean and Kentucky didn't know. However, they quickly received a message from Roan in the Soul Gem Realm as he told them, 'He's right. The Yin Energy on this planet is slightly different. However, I didn't expect anyone other than me to be able to perceive that. No, to be more specific, the Phoenix shouldn't have noticed the difference. It was the fact that he knew that Minokawas didn't exist in this world that made him check Kentucky's body to confirm.'

Rean and Kentucky soon understood what the Phoenix meant. Following that, Rean sighed as he nodded, replying, "That's true. We aren't from this planet."

Gulan was truly shocked now as he could not help but exclaim, "What?! For real?!" He still held some doubts about his grandfather's words, and there was a reason for that. "Our planet hasn't received a single visitor in tens of thousands of years! How come you two appeared out of nowhere? There's also the fact that your cultivation levels are far from being able to pull off something like that."

The Phoenix narrowed his eyes before asking, "Who brought you here, and why?"

Rean looked at Kentucky for a moment before looking back at the old man as he replied, "No one brought us here. We were teleported against our will instead." That wasn't a lie, so Rean could say it without a problem.

"Teleported against your will?" The old man Phoenix found it strange. Why would someone teleport a Minokawa and a human to their planet? "Explain."

Rean bitterly smiled before explaining, "Our planet got destroyed, so in order to escape, we had to use an ancient teleportation method back on our world. We didn't know whether it would bring us to another place or whether the place we teleported in would be far away from our home planet. By the time we realized that we were teleported, we were already on this planet."

It wasn't wrong to say that the Soul Gem System was an ancient method of teleportation. After all, it had been in existence for who knows how long. Ancient might not even be enough to describe it. On top of that, it covered the Soul Gem System's existence very well. After all, how could he and Kentucky come to this planet if not through teleportation? They simply didn't have the necessary cultivation to travel through space like the enemies who destroyed Sunkan Planet.

The Phoenix kept his Spiritual Sense tightly locked on Rean, trying to catch any signs of lies. However, it felt like Rean was seriously telling the truth, prompting to say, "Alright, then. I want you to tell me everything you know about this planet of yours, including its name. Perhaps I might know something." He also looked at Gulan before continuing, "You can come as well."

Gulan nodded before the old man enveloped Rean, Kentucky, and Gulan with his Spiritual Energy. In the next second, all four of them had already disappeared from the mountain top. Rean and Kentucky couldn't even make sense of what was happening around them. The old man's speed was so ridiculously fast that all they could see was just a hazy blur. When they finally stopped, they were in the middle of a small island located on a lake.

There weren't many things there, just a small hut and very simple furniture. Nevertheless, it was quite a weird place to be in, considering that the old man was a demon beast. In any case, neither Kentucky nor Rean said anything.

The Phoenix then looked at them before saying, "Alright, no one will be able to hear or see us in this place. Go ahead, tell me what you know. You better not lie to me."

Rean and Kentucky nodded before they talked about the world they lived in before. Of course, they only mentioned things not related to the Soul Gem System. Fortunately, the system's existence was just too hard to believe, so not talking about it didn't raise suspicion. And just like that, Kentucky and Rean's tale lasted several hours as it continued on through the night.