

Death 761

Death... and me

Chapter 761: Details Your Ass!

As much as Malo was respected, his reasoning still made a lot of sense. Since more of the Freedom Sect members were women, it would be weird to have him as the sect leader. It was then that a shadow fell from the sky, right in front of everyone.

Bang!

Following that, a proud Demon Bird put one of his wings on his chest before suggesting, "Since Malo doesn't want to do it, let me, the great Kentucky, take charge of it! I'll be the best sect leader ever!" Well, he just wanted even more attention from the girls, that's all. However...

Bang!

Suddenly, a white-haired young man instantly appeared behind the idiot bird before kicking its head to the ground as he cursed, "Sect leader, your ass!" Naturally, that was none other than Rean. "You better not get in the way of everyone's decision again. Let's head back and cultivate!" Following that, Rean used his Spiritual Energy to grab Kentucky and forcefully bring him away from the scene, much to Kentucky's sadness.

Though, just before disappearing in the distance, Rean left a few words behind, telling them, "Oh! Just so you know, I like the name Freedom Sect. It's truly fitting your situation." After saying that, Rean was gone once again. Of course, everyone there knew that Rean, Roan, Kentucky, and Gola were definitely watching the event with their Spiritual Senses.

Meanwhile, everyone looked at that scene, not knowing what to do. "Well...I do love Kentucky, but I agree with Rean that he isn't exactly fit for a sect leader..." said one of the girls in the crowd. Immediately, all the other girls and few boys nodded vigorously. Nothing good would come out of that idea.

Poliana then quickly recovered from the mishap before returning back to the main topic. "Ahem...now that the issue has been dealt with, we can continue our conversation. So, Malo appointed me as a possible sect leader. Does that mean that we can appoint anyone we want?"

The girls and boys nodded in response. Malo, too, did the same thing. "Alright. The sect leader must be someone old enough, so the minimum age to be appointed shall be twelve years old. To be honest, twelve is too young for my taste, but that will be fixed in just a few years after the decision. Anyone below this age is prohibited from being appointed, but they can vote."

Falas agreed with Malo, saying, "He's right. Well then, at the moment, we have Poliana and Malo as options. Is there anyone else who wants to appoint someone? Or does anyone want to appoint themselves to take up the mantle of a sect leader?"

There were over 3000 Freedom Sect members here. Obviously, there were a few who liked the idea and appointed themselves or others to the position. In the end, there were 17 names on the board. From what it looked like, it was perhaps the most democratic election of a sect leader ever in thousands of years.

Still, Malo couldn't help but complain, asking, "Can't I take my name off? I really don't see why you would put someone who doesn't even want to be a sect leader on the list."

Glennie shrugged her shoulders, saying, "Removing one's name isn't part of the rules, so bear with it. In any case, why are you afraid? You said it yourself, our Freedom Sect is mostly filled with women, so it's only logical that a woman will win.

Malo had to admit that Glennie was right. "Well, that's true." Malo then looked at everyone before saying, "Alright, let's start the voting process. Write the name you want on a piece of paper and bring it here. We'll tally all the points once we gather everyone's choices."

The entire process lasted for two hours. Eventually, the well-awaited result was out.

1st Malo - 3158 Votes;

2nd Poliana - 120 Votes;

3rd Linda - 41 Votes;

4th...

Malo looked at the numbers on the board as his mouth twitched nonstop. "WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?!" Following that, he pointed his finger at everyone below as he shouted, "What is wrong with your heads? I'm a man! Also, I don't want to be the sect leader! For fuck's sake, can't you take it seriously?"

One of the female kids in the crowd immediately answered, "But I like Big Brother Malo."

Malo rebuked, "Then, hate me!"

One of the very few boys also said his piece, uttering, "Brother Malo is the greatest among all of us. Gender doesn't matter. We need someone who cares about all of us, and that person is you."

Malo rebuked them once more, "Then, select Poliana. She's in the Middle Stage of the Core Formation Realm, just one stage below me. She definitely cares about all of you as well!"

"But Big Sister Poliana wants Big Brother Malo to be sect leader too," said another girl in the crowd.

"And I want her to be sect leader. Shouldn't she, a woman like most of you, take priority in your decision?" Malo still didn't relent. "If she isn't enough, what about Glennie, Falas, or Wataba? Come on!"

The same Glennie, Falas, and Wataba Malo mentioned immediately shook their heads as one of them replied, "We also prefer to have Malo as the sect leader." The three then tried to avoid Malo's eyes as if they were trying to hide something.

Malo's expression became grim after hearing that. That's because he knew those four girls more than anyone else. He could totally see that although they looked serious, they were holding their laughter as well as they could. "You're doing it on purpose! Is that how you want to define the future of our Freedom Sect?"

Poliana, who was ahead, then lifted her hand and began to chant to the crowd, "Sect Leader Malo, Sect Leader Malo, Sect Leader Malo, Sect Leader Malo..."

Everyone, whether they were boys or girls, followed suit, soon chanting in unison, "Sect Leader Malo, Sect Leader Malo, Sect Leader Malo, Sect Leader Malo, Sect Leader Malo..."

Eventually, Malo felt cornered when suddenly, he dashed away, trying to escape...or so he wanted to. Unfortunately, just like how he knew the girls well, the girls also knew him just as much.

Grab, grab, grab, grab!

"Let go! Let go of me!" Malo shouted without a care for the world.

"No can do! Can't you hear your loyal subjects? They're asking for you." Poliana and the girls obviously didn't let him have his way.

Malo was crying already. "Since when were you my loyal subjects? First of all, would my loyal subjects restrain me like this?"

Poliana laughed while making sure to not let Malo go. "Hahaha! Just details, just details..."

"Details your ass!"

And just like that, a very 'willing' Freedom Sect leader had been selected.

Death... and me

Chapter 762: The First One

Later, Malo's group went to see the twins to talk about what they decided to do. Well, it was more like a group of people holding a hostage during a trial, or so it looked like when one looked at Malo. Somehow, Roan couldn't help but remember the time he was forced into the Reincarnation Door

because Rean didn't let him go. And that...made him feel quite pleased. 'It's good to see that I'm not the only one.'

Nevertheless, he quickly put those thoughts behind before looking at everyone, saying, "So, you decided to transform this place into a sect for humans, huh?"

Poliana nodded, replying, "Yes. In the end, we don't really want to separate. Sure, we'll take opportunities to head out and gain experience. But ultimately, we want to head back to our sect."

Falas agreed with Poliana, continuing where she left off, "We do have everything we need. Ancestors, which would be you four. We also have the elders, the disciples, and a harmonious environment."

Hearing that, Rean warned them, "Although I don't mind being considered one of the ancestors, you better understand that we're not here for you anymore. We won't intervene unless something grave happens. For example, another Stage Five or Nascent Soul Realm cultivator suddenly decides to attack this place. If not for something like that, you will all deal with whatever problem yourselves. Are you sure you're up to the task?"

Glennie nodded, responding, "Don't worry, Rean, Roan. We already have our sect leader to make sure everything works out. Right, Malo?"

Malo looked with a gloomy expression at Rean and Roan as he asked them, "Ahem...Rean, Roan, don't you think it's a bad idea for a man to be the sect leader of a sect mostly filled with women?"

Rean and Roan shook their heads as Rean replied, "Why would it be? Since it was the women themselves who selected you, then it's fine. We would have a problem with it if you forced your way into the position, which is obviously not the case." They were definitely enjoying Malo's suffering, so how could they say something different?

Malo felt even more dejected after hearing that. "Is there really no other way? I just want to focus on my training, nothing else."

Rean then patted Malo's shoulder, saying, "Don't worry. Being a sect leader, especially one in a sect full of women, will definitely help in your development."

"What kind of development?" Malo asked, somewhat confused.

Rean then looked through the window as he soon said, "Isn't it such a nice day today?"

Malo's mouth twitched in response, cursing inwardly, 'Even you don't believe it at all! You just don't want to take this role either!'

On the side, Kentucky's face was as gloomy as Malo's, muttering, "I really wanted to be the sect leader."

"Shut up! You just wanted more attention. Don't you think I can't tell?" Rean rebuked.

"So what?! I love being treated by them. They brush my feathers, give me food, pet my body... it's great! What's the problem with that?!" Kentucky didn't let go either.

Well, his words were more than enough for even Malo to agree that Kentucky definitely couldn't be the sect leader. "Sigh...fine. I'll see what I can do. However, I won't sacrifice my training schedule for this position. With that said, I can only 'lead' when I'm free. If not, all of you will have to help me."

Poliana and the others nodded after hearing that. They knew that one thing was right about Malo's complaints. This was, after all, a sect mostly filled with women. Leaving everything up to Malo to take care of would eventually turn to be a disaster. The reason everyone wanted him to be the sect leader was due to how much the sect members trusted Malo. He had always been a role model for both women and men in their lives.

Wataba then gave him a pat on the back as she laughed, saying, "Hahaha! That's obvious, isn't it? Now then. How about we discuss what our next steps will be?"

Rean raised his hands, saying, "First things first. Although this war between demon beasts and Zasfins should take a long time, it will eventually be over. That said, this is the Demon Beast Continent. I don't think the demon beasts will allow a human sect to take root here for long. Remember, you have to think about the day you'll be moving to the new continent if we win."

Malo couldn't help but ask, "What if the demon beasts lose?"

Rean playfully smiled at Malo, saying in response, "Why are you asking me? You're the sect leader. Make your own decisions. Besides, you do have a few 'elders' on your side to think about it." Rean then pointed at the airship stationed outside. "You have an airship capable of moving everyone at once. That's why I bought that thing with our merit points. Get the jade slip maps, investigate the regions, think about it well! It's all up to you guys now."

Malo immediately felt the pressure on his shoulders increasing. "O-okay. In that case, we should not think about building anything big for the time being. After all, it'll be annoying when the time to leave comes."

Poliana couldn't help but ask Rean, "Can't we simply use your Spatial Dimension to move things?" However, she immediately noticed the problem with that question. "Oh, right...forget what I said. We're talking about a scenario where we wouldn't have your help."

Roan was satisfied to hear that, saying, "Very good. Seems like you all understand what I meant about taking care of yourselves. Don't always assume that Rean, Kentucky, Gola, or I will be here to help you."

Malo then switched the topic, saying, "Okay, we have enough Spiritual Energy to cultivate, thanks to Celis. However, we'll need to amass resources so that the sect can survive even if Celis disappears. Simply put, we need Spirit Stones."

Rean agreed with him. "Exactly. The Spirit Stones that Roan and I have are plenty, but those Spirit Stones are ours. With that, don't expect me to give you any from now on."

As Rean said that, Malo suddenly had an idea. "Right! We need to think about missions for our sect, right? Then, that shall be the very first one."

Death... and me

Chapter 763: Little by Little

Malo then looked at Poliana and told her, "Pass on my orders. Those who are strong enough to go out are required to look for Spirit Stone Mines. The Demon Beast Continent has never been denied of its Spiritual Energy because of the agreement with the Soul Rulers. Besides, demon beasts aren't very keen

on looking for those mines themselves. With that said, there must be many undiscovered Spirit Stone Mines everywhere."

Rean and Roan faintly nodded before they turned around. While doing so, Rean told them, "Seems like you do know how to act. In any case, you can ask Burio's group for help. They took care of your entire group for years and have also lived in tribes before. They should be able to give you some insights. Alright, we're going back to cultivate. Don't bother us if it isn't important."

With that said, Rean and Roan left the room and went back to cultivate. They also had to drag a certain Minokawa away together.

Things moved as Malo ordered. Those who were in the Foundation Establishment Realm and above formed quite a few groups and went out to explore the region. In the end, the Blood Rabbit kept his word. There were simply no signs of Stage Five Demon Beasts in the area at all. Well, Red himself often appeared to take a few carrots away.

Malo was right. A week later, one of the groups that went outside came back. They had identified a possible location of a Spirit Stone Mine. When Malo and the others went to check and verify, they confirmed that it was really a mine. Not only that, but it was quite close to their living area.

"How's the investigation of the new mine?" Malo asked one of the Freedom Sect members called Rafin, responsible for checking the area.

"It is as you thought, Malo. Except for the five peaks area where we expelled all the demon beasts, the rest of the region around has a lot of them. I confirmed at least five packs with one Stage Four or more demon beasts inside. If we decide to mine this place, we'll need to deal with them first," Rafin explained.

Rafin was one of the very few males in the Freedom Sect. He and Malo were quite close since they were just one year apart. Rafin had a Red Color Aptitude and a Wind Element Affinity. He was very good at keeping himself hidden and was swift when he decided to flee. Not to mention that he was also in the Core Formation Realm. With the cultivation technique given to him by Roan, Rafin became a very good scout for them.

Glennie was there as well, so she rebuked Rafin, "It's not Malo anymore. It's sect leader, okay?!"

Pah!

Malo then slapped the back of her head, saying, "Sect Leader, your ass! I hate that title, so let them call me by my name."

"But..."

"No buts! This is a sect leader's order!" Malo still didn't like the fact that he was forced into this position. With that said, he might as well use it to make things go as he liked. One of those things was his repulsion for that title.

Malo then looked at Rafin and nodded, responding, "I understand. Thanks for the report. Take the chance and call Suana over."

Soon, the girl called Suana arrived at the scene, asking, "Do you need something, Malo?"

Malo then told her about Rafin's report, saying, "Alright, I need you to put up several Demon Beast Extermination missions."

Suana ended up being responsible for the 'Missions Hall'...although the Hall itself didn't exist yet. She was two years younger than Malo's group, being 16 years of age. Also, she had what one would call the 'worst' aptitude color in the Freedom Sect, not considering Burio's group. With that said, she had a Blue Color Aptitude. Nevertheless, she excelled at keeping everything in order, and Burio's group often relied on her to help with the management of all the kids' issues. That's why Malo decided to put her as the Mission Hall's 'elder.' Well, not that she was that old to be an elder, of course.

"It's all well and good. However, there's a problem with the missions, Malo," Suana said that with a helpless expression.

Malo also sighed when he heard that, saying, "The rewards, right?"

Suana nodded as he replied, "Yeah...our Freedom Sect members don't mind helping the sect begin to take its roots. However, I've been putting a lot of different missions according to the request of the

other elders. Changing what was just a training settlement into a proper sect is very complicated. With that said, our members have been doing several types of tasks while we still have no rewards whatsoever to give them."

Malo nodded, saying, "It's fine. I asked Senior Rean to help with that. Although he said he won't intervene, we simply don't have any other Formation Master. That being said, he at least agreed to build several formations that could be used as rewards. For example, he's making ten Spiritual Energy Gathering Formations. However, they will only be used for those who have Sect Points."

Malo then asked, "You did mark down everyone's Sect Points as I asked from the start, right?"

Suana nodded, saying, "Of course! There's even a group that has amassed over 100 points already."

"That's very good." Malo was satisfied with that. "That's only one of the things we are working on. After we start the mining of Spirit Stones en masse, we can also offer Spirit Stones as rewards."

Glennie, who was listening to everything, also added, "That's not all. Rean and Roan won't intervene directly, but they agreed to start giving classes on side occupations. Rean will teach Blacksmithing and Formations, while Roan will teach Alchemy. It will happen every morning starting next week. We can use the formations, pills, and equipment built by the disciples as rewards as well."

Suana couldn't help but mention, "Oh! So that's why we have so many requests for finding herbs, ores, and things like that."

Malo smiled in response, saying, "Exactly. There's no need to worry. We are putting everything in place little by little."

Death... and me

Chapter 764: Just Bored

One might think that Rean has obtained a lot of materials from his blacksmithing gig during his time in the Demon Beast City. However, what he got were all Heaven-level ones. It was simply impossible to use them for those at the Core Formation Realm and below in the Freedom Sect. With that said, they needed lower-level ones.

Fortunately, it wasn't as if Kentucky couldn't identify their locations. It's just that Kentucky never cared about any ore below the Heaven-level. Malo then requested him to at least point the directions where they could find ores so that missions could be given to the sect members. That's how they found most of the low-level materials for Rean to start his teachings.

Three weeks soon went by, and everything proceeded smoothly. Of course, the Freedom Sect still lost one or another member during the missions. After all, although they cleaned the Five Peaks area, the rest of the surroundings was still the territory of the demon beasts. It took some time until these events stopped.

Eventually, Rean stopped cultivating together with Roan as the two came out of their rooms. Malo had already built most of the wooden buildings that Rean and Roan requested for the side occupations. The good thing was that both Rean and Roan predicted that they would need more tools for the teaching, so the Dimensional Realm had a lot of them. Forgers, cauldrons, anvils, mortars, and other related items, they already had them.

On Rean's side, he decided to hold one class for Blacksmithing and one class for Formations each day. On the other hand, Roan only knew Alchemy, so he used the same time to teach it alone.

The first class was Blacksmithing, so Rean brought everyone to one of the big forging buildings that were built for it. "Hmm...sure enough, Blacksmithing isn't very popular among women," Rean said as he looked at the participants. The Blacksmithing, Alchemy, and Formations courses were not obligatory. With that said, anyone could choose to participate or not. There was no lack of cultivators out there that didn't know a single thing about any side occupation whatsoever.

Rean's Blacksmithing class had 209 participants. Of these 209, 95 were men. One must remember that of the initial 3589 kids rescued, only 187 of them were men. The rest were women. For 95 of the 187 males to appear in the Blacksmith Side Occupation Class while only 114 of the 3002 women came showed the huge difference in interest.

Rean then shrugged his shoulders before continuing, "Oh well, I'm still happy to see that we got this many. Alright, let's start. First, I'll teach you the basics about the tools we are using. After that, we'll jump to the basics of melting, molding, and tempering. Just so you know, none of you will do any forging today, so just pay attention."

Later on, the disciples left the Blacksmith building with many notes in their hands. As Rean looked at them leave, he couldn't help but think, 'I wonder how many of them will still be here one week later.'

Soon after, he quickly shook his head before heading to the next building, the one constructed for the Formations class. This time, the difference was as clear as day. There was a good number of men, with 41 of the 187 existing in the sect. However, there were 419 women, which was a stark contrast. 'Well, this was more or less the amount I expected. I believe that the difference is even bigger in Roan's class.'

Following that, Rean pointed at a room on the back of the building, telling him, "That is the Formations Repository. I gathered many books regarding formations over the years, and I'm proud to say that my collection has everything you need to go all the way to the Heaven-level. However, it will follow the same system as the books for Blacksmithing. You have one free hour to look at them per day. However, if you want to have more time, you will need Sect Points. Don't try to take the books out if you don't have the points. With my formation in place, you won't get very far."

This was another way of using the Sect Points to acquire rewards. Roan, of course, followed suit with the study materials for Alchemy. To make things fair, Rean added everyone in this rule, Malo included. Malo and the older sect members didn't mind it since they wanted to set an example.

"Alright, everyone. Let's start by working on what a rune is." Rean then took out a hundred books regarding the basics of formations and distributed them to the class. "Form groups of four or five people since there aren't enough books for everyone. This will also be good for you to discuss what you guys learned later."

Suddenly, a red streak of light passed by, stopping on the top of one of the tables. Rean narrowed his eyes and couldn't help but ask, "Red, what do you want here?"

Obviously, it was the Blood Rabbit, Red Streak. "What's with the angry face? This Lord has some interest in this Formations class of yours. You should be honored."

Rean's mouth twitched for a moment, but he decided to not dwell on the issue. "Fine, you can learn as well. However, you can't intervene in my teachings, deal?"

Red nodded, saying, "You have a deal with this Lord."

The disciples of the sect felt a little apprehensive, though. After all, they all knew already that Red was a Stage Six Demon Beast, equivalent to a Soul Transformation Realm cultivator. Noticing that, Rean said a

few more words, easing their worries, "There's no need to worry. Red won't do anything bad to you. You can treat him the same way you treat your friends."

Red didn't like that, though. "Who said anyone could treat this Lord in a friendly way?"

Rean shrugged his shoulders, saying, "You do as I say, or you won't get to participate in the class. Also..." Rean then glanced at Red with a playful smile before continuing, "I'll cut your share of carrots in half if you cause problems."

Red's expression became dark as he said in response, "I dare you to do such a thing."

Rean shrugged his shoulders after hearing that, saying, "As long as you take the class without causing problems or acting all mighty, that won't happen."

Red narrowed his eyes for a moment before finally nodding. "Fine! This Lord will allow this kind of treatment."

Well, the truth was that Red was just bored...

Death... and me

Chapter 765: Badges

Rean still found it strange that a demon beast like Red would want to learn formations. Nevertheless, he started his lessons. It started at the end of the morning and lasted into the afternoon before the class was finally over.

Rean looked as the girls and boys left the enormous room and talked to each other about his class, much to his satisfaction. However, what surprised him was the fact that Red really kept listening until the end. Not only that, but he also stopped to make a few questions of his own. 'I thought he would leave after just a few minutes. After all, I just used the written lessons and theoretical knowledge. I didn't touch any formation at all. Well, since it seems like he truly wants to learn, I guess I can only keep at it.'

On Roan's side, his class was also over after some time. During the first day, he basically made everyone study the herbs in the books, trying to memorize their types and effects as much as possible. He basically stayed there to answer any possible question that the girls and boys might have.

As one could expect, Alchemy did a lot more to the girls' liking, although there were a few boys there as well. In total, there were over 700 girls, which made the 20 or so boys look as if they weren't even there.

Roan noticed Rean coming in his direction before Rean asked, "So, how was your alchemy class? Was it full of girls as we've expected?"

Roan nodded, replying, "Obviously. Not that it changes anything, though. I sent them to the herb garden after the class was over so that they could put today's practice to use. Now, let's see how things are going to go a week later."

"A week later?" Rean was puzzled as he asked, "Aren't you giving daily classes?"

Roan shook his head this time, saying, "Of course not. In the end, you need to memorize the herbs and their effects before anything else. There are too many of them, even for a planet that has been cold most of the time. Before they can at least list 50% of the ones available in our books, there will be no point in doing any practical training."

Rean couldn't help but laugh after hearing that. "Hahaha! So you ended up doing the same thing as me, huh? It's just that I had my formations' students memorize the Earth Low-level runes instead of herbs. I guess only in blacksmithing will I be doing daily classes."

"Don't they need to memorize the materials used in blacksmithing?" Roan asked in confusion.

Rean shook his head, replying, "There aren't many differences when it comes to blacksmithing. At least, not as many as runes for formations. For Earth Low-level ores and things like that, the processes are pretty much the same due to their uses."

Roan nodded, not minding it too much. Rean was the Blacksmithing expert, so it wasn't his place to say otherwise. "Anyways, let's use the rest of the day to cultivate."

"No, I need to finish crafting the Sect Tokens. At the moment, I'm the only one who can make them. Of course, I won't keep doing only that. I'll make a hundred or so today, then I'll continue tomorrow," Rean said. "Once I finish this hundred, I'll head back and cultivate."

Roan nodded and then disappeared right after. Since that was the case, he decided to check the herb garden in the Dimensional Realm. Unlike the herb garden made by the disciples, his own garden had a lot more rare herbs. Of course, the disciples' herb garden had many more herbs instead. After all, they all went out often and brought back what they could find.

Rean also went inside the Dimensional Realm since he had his own workshop there. Not to mention that the equipment there would give much better results.

There, Rean took out a piece of paper with two drawings. In the end, he left the sect's emblem for Malo and the others to decide how it would look. On one side, it was very simple. There wasn't anything more than a cloud and the name of the sect. Well, for a sect called Freedom, a cloud was indeed quite fit.

On the other, there was an emblem of a bird. Or, to be more specific, it was an image from Kentucky. 'Just why would you select Kentucky?' Of course, Rean knew the real reason. 'Alright, alright. Kentucky had always been popular among the girls. In a sect where most of the disciples are women, it makes sense that the dumb bird convinced them to do that.'

Rean was right. Kentucky used the fact that they didn't want him to be the sect leader to ask for that. By pretending to be sad, most of the girls quickly fell into his spell and voted to have his image on the back of the sect's badge.

'Sigh...whatever. I did say they could choose anything, so I can't complain.' Rean then began to work on the badges one after another. It couldn't simply be a piece of metal. It would also be connected to a Circuitry Formation Device that Rean created some time ago. Its use was very simple. It had a few other badges that Rean gave to the Sect's 'higher-ups,' which could be used to record how many Sect Points a disciple had. So far, they had been using ink and paper, but they couldn't keep it like that forever, right?

Rean eventually finished the first 100 badges and left the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm. After that, he simply passed the badges to Suana before saying, "Just use the authority badges you and the others have to save the users' names and ID numbers in these Disciple Badges. After that, you can add Sect Points into the Formation Core based on each person's name and ID number. Once a disciple accesses a terminal in any of the Sect's buildings, it will show him how many Sect Points they have. As for what they intend to do with it, that's their problem to deal with."

Suana nodded as she sighed in relief, thanking Rean as she said, "I can finally get rid of all those papers. Thank you, Senior Rean."

Rean smiled in response before turning around and returning to the cultivation room. Roan was already there. They might be teaching the disciples, but they wouldn't forget their own cultivation either.

Time passed in a flash as another month went by. Rean and Roan had just finished another round of cultivation with Kentucky and Celis when suddenly, Roan felt a token on his waist tremble with energy. Roan quickly took it out before spreading his Spiritual Sense to talk with Rean, Kentucky, and Celis. 'We have a new mission.'

That token was given by the Demon Beast Alliance so that they could be warned about the war missions. It was a lot better than having someone always delivering jade slips with their mission on it. Of course, that was thanks to their high performance as well.

Rean's group then gathered close to Celis to discuss it. "This token is really convenient. So, what does it say?"

Roan nodded before taking it out for everyone to see. Rean's group then sent their Spiritual Sense inside when suddenly, their expression turned weird.

Death... and me

Chapter 766: Poseidon

Rean couldn't help but ask, "What do they mean by fixing the Spiritual Energy Fields? What Spiritual Energy Fields? How come I've never heard of it before?"

Roan nodded, saying, "Indeed. I'm also confused as to what they mean by that. Somehow, it doesn't look to be related to the war."

Kentucky pondered a bit before he had an idea. "Spiritual Energy Fields...probably related to Celis, no? Maybe these fields are something that happened after we took Celis away. But...why would they ask us to help?"

Celis immediately answered, "There should be no such thing. I don't want to brag, but I'm very good at what I do. If there's really a Spiritual Energy Field in need of repair, it has nothing to do with me. First of all, I don't even know what these Spiritual Energy Fields are supposed to be."

Roan nodded, saying, "They aren't explaining the content of the mission, after all. In any case, it's good that it has nothing to do with Celis. Otherwise, I wouldn't know if we should check it out or not. Since it's not related to Celis, it must be something else." Roan then looked at Rean and Kentucky before saying, "In any case, we are fighting for the Demon Beast Alliance, so we need to head out."

Before leaving, Rean warned Malo that they would be out, so they would be on their own. Of course, Celis would stay as always since it was better if he kept cultivating nonstop.

Other than that, Rean also told Red about his trip. "What? How am I suppose to work on the formations now?"

Rean shrugged his shoulders, saying in response, "Isn't that simple? Just head to the repository and study by yourself. To be honest, I didn't expect a demon beast to be this interested in it. However, your progress during this month or so has been remarkable. I'm sure you can self-study for a while. It's just that I won't be here to answer your questions."

Red pondered for a moment before he jumped on Rean's shoulder, saying, "No need. This Lord will go with you."

Rean was taken aback, asking in response, "Why would you do that? You won't get anything from me doing that, you know?"

"Hmph!" Red snorted. "As if you had anything that really interested this Lord. This Lord only has some small interest in Formations and your carrots. However, this Lord feels like he has been taking a lot more than giving until now. After all, I simply told the Stage Five Demon Beasts to not get close to these five peaks. It hurts this Lord's pride to not be able to do anything else."

Rean shrugged his shoulder in response, saying, "Well, it's not like I expected anything else from you anyway."

Red felt like giving Rean a beating. "Shut up, and let's go before I change my mind."

Rean sighed but didn't refuse. Any extra help was more than welcome, after all.

Of course, Rean, Roan, and Kentucky also had their reservations. 'Would it be okay to bring him along?'

'It should be... probably. After all, he's also a demon beast. I don't think he would try to jeopardize an official mission of the Demon Beast Alliance,' Kentucky said with a Spiritual Sense Message.

Roan nodded in response. 'That makes sense. Perhaps, he also received a mission to keep an eye on us. Who knows? After all, it's weird that over a month has passed, but Red never went outside to participate in the war.'

Rean agreed with Roan on that. 'That as well. In any case, it shouldn't be a bad thing. Phex and company have more than enough power to get rid of us, not to mention that they know where we are. It would make no sense to use Red to disturb our mission... whatever the mission might be.'

Red noticed the silence of Rean's group, though. It was quite obvious that they were discussing something through Spiritual Sense. "What? Are you unhappy with this Lord's help?"

Rean smiled in response, saying, "Of course not! We just find it intriguing that a Lord like you decided to help. Well, you did say you wanted to pay back, so let's keep it at that."

Red didn't seem to mind. "Whether you believe it or not, that's your problem. Since this Lord said that he will help, then he will help. By the way, what is this mission about? It's about that war again, isn't it?"

Only then did Rean remember that they hadn't asked Red about it. "Oh, right! We did receive a mission, but we aren't sure if it's related to the war between the demon beasts and Zasfins or not." Rean then showed the content of their mission to the Blood Rabbit before asking, "Red, have you ever heard about Spiritual Energy Fields?"

Red immediately narrowed his eyes when he checked the content of the mission in the token. "Spiritual Energy Fields...it has been some time since I've heard of them."

Rean and the others' interest was immediately piqued. "Do you know of it?"

Red nodded and started to explain, "Yes. There's a place in the Demon Beast Continent called the Forbidden Zone. No demon beast can enter it without permission. From what I know, the Spiritual Energy Fields are what feed this Forbidden Zone with Spiritual Energy."

"Is it some kind of dangerous place?" Roan asked straight away.

Red shook his head as he hastily replied, "I have no idea. Only the Stage Nine Demon Beasts can allow someone to enter that. Obviously, a Stage Six Demon Beast like me can't. Also, the Spiritual Energy Fields are not located inside the Forbidden Zone. They just provide it with energy. With that said, this mission should not require you to enter it."

"I see..." Rean couldn't help but become curious. "I wonder what are they trying to feed inside this Forbidden Zone. In any case, it seems like it has nothing to do with us. After all, we won't be entering it."

Kentucky found it strange, though. "But why would these fields need a fix? If it's just some kind of repair, I don't see the reason to call us out. They could have some other weaker demon beasts do it for them. Was there a reason to select us?"

Red had to admit Kentucky was right. "That's true. The Spiritual Energy Fields can only be fixed with the Divine Demon Beasts' blood. Why would they need you there?"

Those words fell like a lightning strike on Rean's group. "Divine Demon Beast Blood? What do you mean?"

Red then explained, "Well, I don't know much. However, it seems like those Spiritual Energy Fields have a deep connection with Demon Beasts, especially Divine ones. Their blood can be used to increase the strength of the fields, which will then be used in the Forbidden Zone. As for what it will be used for, I have no idea."

Kentucky immediately asked, "Does that mean they'll have to kill Divine Demon Beasts to offer their blood?"

Red laughed in response. "Hahaha! Are you crazy?! The Demon Beast Alliance would never kill their Divine Demon Beasts. They are the future of the alliance, after all. Once they reach Stage Nine, they will help with the continent's protection."

Rean's group sighed in relief after hearing that. From the looks of it, there was no risk of death for Kentucky. Of course, those were Red's words. It didn't mean he was right or that he was telling the truth. But at least, that was already something.

Rean's group then flew to the border of the Demon Beast Continent. In the end, the Spiritual Energy Fields were located far, far away from the Forbidden Zone, which was situated in the continent's center.

The continent's land was then left behind as Rean's group proceeded into the sea. The location given to them was inside the Sea Demon Beasts' territory. They passed by several Sea Demon Beasts on the way and quickly noticed that their levels increased very quickly. It didn't take long for Stage Five Demon Beasts to appear among them.

However, these demon beasts only looked at Rean's group without doing anything. It was as if they were already waiting for them to come, so they didn't attack. The levels continued to increase after that. Initial, Middle, Late, Peak Stage Five...eventually, Stage Six Sea Demon Beasts also entered the twin's Spiritual Sense range.

At this point, even Red began to feel somewhat apprehensive. This was not land but underwater. Although they didn't need to worry about suffocating since they could use Spiritual Energy to substitute oxygen, the environment was definitely a poor choice for them to fight.

The deeper they went, the less light there was. For Roan, that was beneficial since his strength was mainly based on Darkness and Yin Energy. However, it didn't take long for them to notice some light appearing in the distance. At first, it was hard to see. But it began to become brighter and brighter as the shape of buildings began to take form in front of their eyes.

Rean's group was taken aback when they finally figured out what it was. It was an underwater Demon Beast City. Obviously, it was made for Sea Demon Beasts. At the very center of the enormous city, there was a huge palace as well.

However, what truly caught Rean's group attention wasn't that. Instead, it was the ridiculously enormous maelstrom above the palace itself. Although it didn't affect the buildings below, it was still much bigger than the city itself.

Seeing that, Rean couldn't help but comment, "Hey, look! It's Atlantis! Perhaps we can find Poseidon there."

Death... and me

Chapter 767: Using

Roan's mouth twitched in response to Rean's words. "Then what? Is Ariel there too? Ursula perhaps? Go to hell!"

Rean laughed as he replied, "Hahaha! You say that, but you do know your things, don't you?"

"Hmph!" Roan snorted in response but didn't answer.

As for Kentucky and Red, they had no idea what Rean and Roan were talking about. Well, Rean and Roan didn't answer their questions anyway.

Soon after, Rean's group made their way into the Demon Beast Underwater City. Sure enough, the city was full of high-level Sea Demon Beasts. With Rean's Spiritual Sense bending skill active, there was no lack of Stage Six and Seven Demon Beasts there. Those at Stage Eight were also present.

However, above all that, Rean could feel the Spiritual Sense coming from a Stage Nine Demon Beast, a stage which was no weaker than what Phex or Xaon had achieved.

Eventually, they arrived in front of the palace, which seemed to be responsible for the huge maelstrom above. Now that they were close, it was possible to tell that the whirlpool wasn't only made with water but also Spiritual Energy. Or, to be more precise, Spiritual Energy was what allowed the vortex to form.

There were a few demon beasts guarding the giant doors of the palace. Fortunately, Rean's group didn't even need to talk with them. That's because they came forward themselves to do the honors. One of them asked, "Are you Kentucky and his humans?"

Sure enough, compared to Kentucky, Rean and Roan were not seen with good eyes.

"That's me," Kentucky replied. "We came here for the Spiritual Energy Field mission passed by the Demon Beast Alliance." Kentucky then showed the token from which they received the mission.

The demon beast in front nodded before looking at one of its subordinates, a shark-type demon beast. "Bring them to Master Darian's place. He's already expecting them to come."

The shark nodded in response. "Yes, sir." Following that, he turned around while glancing at Rean's group, telling them, "Come with me. Master Darian has everything ready for you."

Rean's group didn't know what the shark was talking about, but they still made their way there nevertheless. They passed by several giant rooms, halls, and other various locations in the palace. Along the way, the demon beasts all looked at them but didn't say anything. From the looks, receiving anything other than Sea Demon Beasts inside was a very rare occasion.

Eventually, Rean's group reached the center of the underwater palace, where they saw a few demon beasts waiting for them. Immediately, they recognized one of them. "Senior Phex."

Yes, the Stage Nine Phoenix was there as well. "Oh! So you've come. That's good, that's good." Phex then came forward and patted Kentucky's head...completely ignoring the twins and Red's existence. "How has your life been so far? Is everything okay? I've given you quite a few hard missions in this war, but that's because I wanted you to improve."

Kentucky nodded in response, replying with a tone of satisfaction, "I'm doing well. Thanks to the battle experience and the rewards from the merit points, I've already reached the Middle Stage Five level."

"Hahaha! Yes, yes. I can see that." Phex's smile disappeared as he looked at the twins with a stern face. "At least it seems like you're feeding him with the Heaven-level materials. That's good. Minokawas need

a lot of them, or their defensive capabilities will drop in the long term. For your own good, you better keep treating him well."

Rean bitterly smiled, saying, "Ahem...I've always fed him with Heaven-level materials ever since he was born. Senior Phex has no need to worry about it."

Phex's expression relaxed a bit after hearing that. Right after, a man with a huge black shell on his back approached their group, saying, "So, you're the Minokawa Phex talked about, huh? It's good to see another Divine Demon Beast appearing on our planet."

The man seemed extremely old and frail. However, Kentucky could tell that he was terrifying. At the very least, he knew that he wasn't his match at all. Not to mention that he didn't lose in terms of bloodline either. With that said, Kentucky couldn't help but ask, "And you are?"

"Oh! You can call me Darian. I'm a Divine Demon Beast, just like you. To be more precise, I'm a Black Tortoise," the frail old man answered. Obviously, just like Phex, he was using his human form at the moment.

Rean and Roan already guessed that, though. After all, Darian's Spiritual Sense was slamming on their Spiritual Sense bending skill. "I'm sorry to interrupt you guys. However, we came here for the mission. We're quite curious. What is this Spiritual Energy Field repair thing? We heard it has something to do with a forbidden zone at the center of the continent, but that's about it."

Kentucky nodded, continuing, "Indeed. I also heard that my blood would be necessary. Is that true?"

Phex and Darian looked at each other before looking back at Kentucky. "It's true." Following that, Darian waved his hand while looking at the other Sea Demon Beasts in the room. Those demon beasts understood the signal and quickly made their way out of the hall, leaving only Phex, Darian, and Rean's group inside.

However, Darian looked at Rean's shoulder. Or better yet, he looked at the small Blood Rabbit. With their difference in cultivation, it was very obvious that Red was a Stage Six Demon Beast in Darian's eyes. "I haven't heard about you. What are you doing here?"

Red, who had kept silent until now, had some difficulty explaining, "I...I came here to he-help the twins and Kentucky." Kentucky was a Divine Demon beast, but his aura was only at Stage Five. That didn't put any pressure on Red at all. However, Darian and Phex were different. They were both Stage Nine Demon Beasts. Their pressure was so suffocating that it was even hard to breathe. "I've b-been getting well-acquainted with them, s-so I decided to pay it b-back with this mission. I d-didn't expect to find e-esteemed seniors in this place."

Rean almost laughed right there and then. Red always used 'this lord this and this lord that.' But in front of Phex and Darian, he didn't dare try to appear mighty.

Phex then shook his head in response, saying, "You can go and wait outside as well. We can't discuss the next topic with you in here."

Red didn't dare to complain as he quickly made his way out after that. Rean's group didn't mind since Red came because he wanted to. Whether he was here or not made no difference for them. At the very least, not while Phex and Darian were here.

Finally, Darian looked back at them and explained, "The Spiritual Energy Fields were built with the help of Divine Demon Beasts' blood. They are what feed the Forbidden Zone at the center of the continent."

Kentucky immediately asked, "And what is it that you have in the Forbidden Zone?"

Phex continued, "There, you will find the Bestial Sacred Ground. It's a holy land for us demon beasts. That place has been there for as long as any of us can remember. It goes even further back than any records we have. It wouldn't be wrong to say that it's at least tens of thousands of years old."

Rean's group was taken aback as Rean muttered, "Now, that's what I call old."

Darian continued to explain, "You would find about it sooner or later as long as Kentucky continued to live in this world. The Forbidden Zone, or the Bestial Sacred Ground, is the reason why our Demon Beast Alliance doesn't lose out to the Zasfins and their Soul Marks. It provides us with the strength necessary to challenge the Zasfins back."

It was then that Rean understood. "I see...so that's what's happening here." Rean then looked at Roan before saying, "Ever since we started to fight demon beasts on this planet, they've always been much stronger than the demon beasts back in Sunkan. We thought it was because of the harsh environment, but it seems like that wasn't the only reason."

Roan agreed with Rean, replying, "Indeed. That makes a lot of sense now. After all, there was a huge lack of Spiritual Energy, so it was weird that they were stronger instead."

Darian nodded in response to their words before saying, "It's good that you understand. As for how the Bestial Sacred Ground operates and things like that, I'm afraid we can't tell you about that for now."

Roan then asked something else. "That's good and all. But what does it have to do with the Spiritual Energy Fields? Also, why does it need to be fixed?" Sure enough, Roan was more interested in how their mission was related to it.

Phex explained that part, saying, "The Spiritual Energy Fields have always been able to provide enough Spiritual Energy to the Sacred Ground. However, due to a sudden change in there, the Spiritual Energy Fields are not enough anymore. Because of that, they're breaking apart. Your mission now is to help us fix these same fields. Naturally, we need Divine Demon Beasts' blood to do that."

"Sudden change?" Kentucky asked.

Darian shook his head in response, saying, "You will know in due time, but not now."

"Okay...but what about my blood? Why can't it be you two?" Kentucky was obviously curious about that.

Phex then shrugged his shoulders, answering, "Simple. That's because it takes a very long time for demon beasts at our level to replenish our blood. We're in the middle of a war, so we can't allow ourselves to grow weak. However, for a Stage Five Minokawa, and a very young one at that, a couple of days will be enough for you to return to your peak condition."

He then smiled soon after as he continued, "Just so you know, Gulan's doing the same thing in another Spiritual Energy Field, so don't think that we're using only you."

Death... and me

Chapter 768: Give It Back, Huh?

Rean and Roan looked at Kentucky after hearing that. After all, it was his decision on whether he wanted to do it or not. Of course, even if they wished to run away, that wouldn't be possible either. Nevertheless, they wouldn't force Kentucky to do it.

Kentucky could only sigh in the end and nod, though. "Alright, let's do this. What do I need to do? Just open a cut and let my blood flow out?"

Darian nodded, replying, "Yes. However, let me and Phex prepare the Spiritual Energy Field first." Darian then went to the center of the palace, which seemed to be the core of the vortex above it.

Phex was also there, just looking. "Oh, by the way, you'll get 400 Merit Points for this task."

This time, Rean's group had to admit that this wasn't a bad trip. 400 Merit Points was more than they would get in five or so missions. Before, they bought the airship. Perhaps there would be something much better this time. Besides, it also proved how important the Demon Beast Alliance considered these Spiritual Energy Fields to be.

In the center of the hall, the roof suddenly opened above Darian. Following that, the vortex that was above the palace began to descend in Darian's direction. Spiritual Energy raged as the water moved. Even for Rean's group, it was quite hard to stay close to it, let alone being inside it like Darian was doing.

At some point, the entire palace began to shine with a red light. Many different patterns appeared on the ground, which even Rean couldn't recognize. 'Sister Orb, are these things...formation runes?'

Sister Orb, who was always observing what was happening, immediately confirmed as she said, [Yes. There's definitely a formation enveloping the entire palace. No, to be more precise, the formation envelops the entire underwater city and its surrounding region.]

Rean couldn't help but ask, 'What level is this formation? Or is it possible that this is a natural formation like the one we saw in Sunkan?'

[It's not natural,] Sister Orb responded. [It's just that it surpasses the Heaven-level. Whoever did it was probably someone above the Transition Realm or Stage Nine.]

Rean felt a chill on his back when Sister Orb said the term 'Transition Realm.' However, contrary to what he thought, the Universe didn't try to get back at Sister Orb. 'Errrr, wasn't it supposed to attack anyone who mentioned it?'

[Uh? Are you an idiot? I have the protection of the Soul Gem System, you know? The Heavens of this half of the Universe can't detect me. Naturally, it can't hear me when I talk about the Transition Realm.] Sister Orb explained.

Rean's mouth twitched in response before asking, 'Why the hell didn't you say that earlier?'

[You never asked.]

Rean felt like crying after that. 'No, forget it. Nothing good will happen if I dwell on this topic. I just have to accept that you're useless.'

[Hmph! You guys don't know how to appreciate what you have.]

Sister Orb then continued, [Leaving that aside, it's a formation made by a Formation Master above the Heaven-level. It explains why it resisted the test of time as well. From what I can see, it's quite well made. As for what the Black Tortoise is doing, it's not really fixing it.]

'Not fixing it?' Rean was taken aback. 'Then...what is he doing?'

[No one in this world should have the necessary mastery to fix such a thing. I might be wrong since it's too complicated for me to analyze in a short span of time. However, I believe that this formation has a self-repairing system. What the Black Tortoise is doing is basically activating this system...though I'm not sure if Darian knows about it or not.] Sister Orb seemed quite impressed as she said those words.

Rean nodded in the end, responding, 'I see. Well, as long as they know how to control it, that should be okay. Sister Orb, save the properties of these runes in the Formation Repository System. Although you might not be able to analyze it, I can draw some ideas from it later.'

[Alright.]

The activation of the formation lasted over an hour. Phex stayed by the side, doing nothing whatsoever. However, it seemed like Darian was starting to feel tired. It was then that Rean's group understood that Phex was only there to protect Darian, not to help with the formation itself.

Suddenly, a gap appeared in the vortex surrounding Darian as he looked at Kentucky, telling him, "Come in. I need your blood now."

Kentucky nodded and went inside, albeit somewhat scared. The vortex was a lot stronger than he could resist, after all. If not for Darian's protection, he would definitely be mincemeat the very instant he entered.

Darian then pointed at a small hole on the ground before telling Kentucky, "Release your blood there. It will be absorbed so that it can be used to repair the Spiritual Energy Field."

Chomp!

Kentucky's beak then moved in a flash before it opened a small cut on his wings. He might have a strong defense, but his beak could definitely pierce through if he didn't harden it.

Kentucky's blood soon entered the hole and disappeared inside. Kentucky couldn't tell what was happening there since even his Spiritual Sense couldn't pierce through the ground. That was already considering that his Spiritual Sense and Soul Power were merged, which made them even stronger. 'Such a sturdy Anti-Spiritual Sense Formation,' Rean and Roan thought from the outside since they couldn't see through it either.

As Kentucky's blood entered the formation, the red light enveloping the entire underwater palace intensified. Soon, the formation turned the whole city a shade of red as well. After all, the formation wasn't just under the palace.

The vortex above the palace, which raged with Spiritual Energy and Water Element, suddenly reduced in speed. The frenzied energy also became smoother as the red light mixed with it.

Rean and Roan then noticed that a stream of Spiritual Energy began to descend and enter the ground at the very center of the vortex. That was the same Spiritual Energy that was raging in the whirlpool before. It wasn't heading to Kentucky, nor was it being used by Darian. It truly disappeared in the ground. 'It should be this way that the Spiritual Energy is being transported to the Bestial Sacred Ground,' Rean thought for a moment.

Kentucky and Darian seemed to be feeling very tired. However, everything was going smoothly, and it wouldn't take long for the process to be over. However, it was then that Rean and Roan's expressions changed.

Soon after, Rean, Roan, Phex, and Darian looked in a certain direction at the same time as Rean shouted, "Someone's coming!"

Phex and Darian looked at the twins with surprise in their eyes. That's because what they felt just now was the Spiritual Sense of someone at the same level as them. With the twins' cultivation, it shouldn't be possible for them to feel it. However, Phex and Darian put those thoughts away for now. What mattered now was who was coming.

Phex's body then disappeared from the hall before reappearing outside. At the same time, he sent a Spiritual Sense Message to everyone, telling them, 'Continue the process. I'll keep them occupied.'

Darian nodded as he took out a Thoughts Transmission Talisman. He put it on his forehead, and a second later, it burnt out. As one could imagine, Darian called out the other Stage Nine Demon Beasts.

Outside, five figures appeared before Phex in a flash. Before, Rean and Roan used the Spiritual Sense bending skill to tell that these guys were coming. But now, the enemy didn't seem to be bothered covering their cultivation. With that said, Rean, Roan, and even Red could see them with their Spiritual Senses.

Phex looked at the Zasfins in front of him and coldly smiled, saying, "Pankun, Suria, and even Kumo, huh? The other two seem to be new, so I don't know them. It seems like having control over the World Swallowing Tree all this time helped your Zasfin race raise quite a few experts."

They were some of the Transition Realm cultivators from the Zasfin race. Pankun, the first name Phex mentioned, just so happened to be the leader of this group. "Hehe. It has been a long, long time, Phex. To think I would encounter you in this place. I'm truly lucky."

Phex laughed in response, replying, "Lucky? Do you dare say such a thing in front of a Phoenix inside the Demon Beast Alliance's territory?"

Pankun didn't seem bothered, though. "So what if we're inside your territory? We have nothing to fear as long as you're not being helped by the Bestial Sacred Ground."

Phex's eyes narrowed, asking in response, "What do you mean?"

Suria, who was beside Pankun, answered that question. "Are you trying to play dumb? We already know that the Spiritual Energy Fields have problems. Without it to feed the Sacred Ground, you won't receive power from there."

Kumo then used his Spiritual Sense to verify the situation below, saying, "That's enough. They're already working on fixing the Spiritual Energy Fields. The more we talk, the worse it'll be."

Phex snorted when he heard that. Soon after, his body began to change as it soon took the form of an enormous phoenix, not any bit smaller than the palace below it. "Do you think you can cause any trouble to me?"

However, Pankun shook his head, replying, "That depends on you. Before we battle, we have an offer." Pankun smiled as he said that. "If you give the World Swallowing Tree back to us, we can pretend that nothing happened."

Phex's suspicions were confirmed after hearing that. "Give it back, huh? As I thought, something did happen to Celis. But I didn't think you really lost him. That's a very good piece of information."

Back in the palace, Rean and Roan couldn't help but let out a bit of sweat...even though they were underwater.

Death... and me

Chapter 769: Weird

Pankun snorted after hearing Phex's words. "Hmph! Who are you trying to fool here? Fikin already knows that you left Celis inside the Bestial Sacred Land. That's the only place where you would be sure that the World Swallowing Tree is safe. Otherwise, we would have found Celis already."

Phex laughed after hearing Pankun's words. However, he didn't try to deny it this time. He knew that his Demon Beast Alliance didn't have Celis. However, if the Zafins thought they did, that wasn't a bad thing either. "Alright, alright. However, you can forget about having Celis back. After all, it's not like we're holding him in place with formations or whatever. If we try to force anything, he would definitely fight back."

"Do you think I'd believe that?" Pankun asked in response with a dark expression.

Phex couldn't care less, shrugging his shoulders as he said, "So what if you believe me or not? If you want to fight, then you're welcome to try. I don't know how you know about the issue with the Bestial Sacred Land, but that doesn't mean I'm weaker than some puny Zafins."

Pankun's group understood that there would be no negotiation in the end. Also, there was the fact that the Spiritual Energy Field was being fixed as they talked, so they had to act right now. "Hmph! Do you think we waited to appear for nothing? We selected this exact place because we knew it would be a burden for any demon beast other than Darian himself. We're actually lucky in this regard. Phex, as a Fire Demon Beast, your power is even more affected. Don't blame us for being impolite."

Suddenly, the five Zafins separated as a faint blue light shone on their feet. At the same time, their Rank Ten Bloodline Marks appeared on their heads, increasing their Soul Power more than two times.

Seeing that, Phex narrowed his eyes as he muttered inwardly, 'The Shared Soul Battle Formation, huh. These guys are really serious.'

The Soul Battle Formation was able to share the Soul Power between their users to increase their overall strength. It also improved the flow of Spiritual Energy with the assistance of stronger Soul Power. However, it was a very hard formation to be used, and any mistake might injure one's soul. It looked simple, but it was far from simple, that's for sure.

The faint blue light coming from Pankun's group then spread all around, enveloping the entire city.

'Quagmire Domain!'

At that instant, Rean, Kentucky, and Roan felt their strength plummet. It was as if something was pressing over their Dantian and Soul Power. They might have their power fused naturally due to the connection between their Dantians and Souls, but they were still affected by it. Well, in actuality, the twins and the Minokawa got off easy. The fusion between the two powers reduced the effects of the domain by a lot. If it was anyone else at their cultivation level, they would now be weaker than a Core Formation Realm cultivator. In their case, their power was suppressed to the Core and Soul Fusion Realm instead. In Kentucky's case, the Stage Four level.

However, it only lasted for a second before a fiery red light emanated out of Phex.

'Burning Hell Domain!'

It didn't cover the entire city like Pankun's group did. Instead, it only affected the Palace and its surroundings. That was to be expected, though. After all, Phex's domain was fighting against a domain made by five Zafins at the same time. Not to mention that the environment was disadvantageous to him.

Phex didn't seem to mind it, though. As long as he could stop the Zafins' domains from affecting himself, that was more than enough. Of course, a domain needed a lot of Spiritual Energy to keep itself running. In Phex's case, he had to keep it up while fighting the Zafins' domain to make sure his own domain wasn't crushed. Of course, that made him use even more energy. With that said, Phex didn't waste time and attacked.

'Assault of Phoenixes!'

Immediately, thousands of burning birds took form inside Phex's domain. Each bird looked like him, only smaller in size. Following that, Phex shot forward as the copies followed. He was a demon beast. There was no way he would stay on the defensive.

Of course, the Zasfins didn't feel the least bit threatened. If they were alone, it would be hard, but they were five here. Besides, it was a common thing for Zasfins and even demon beasts to be born with Water Element Affinity. Naturally, this group that came after Phex was completely formed with Zasfins that had that affinity.

'Cyclic Water Aegis!'

'Sea Engulf!'

'Ice Age!'

Kumo and the other two Zasfins used Water and Ice-based defensive abilities. As for Pankun and Suria, they focused on attacking.

'Ocean Rage!'

'Expanding Water Bolts!'

Phex's copies began to disintegrate one by one as Phex himself crashed against Pankun and Suria's attacks.

Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom...

Nevertheless, neither side held back as more and more Spiritual Energy was added to the attacks. Unfortunately, there was a limit to how much Phex could do alone, so he began to lose ground against the Zasfins.

Seeing that, Kentucky couldn't help but ask, "Senior Darian, shouldn't you help him?"

However, Darian shook his head as he replied, "I can't stop the repair process of the Spiritual Energy Field. He will need to hold them off on his own for a few minutes until it starts working again."

"A few minutes?!" Kentucky was taken aback. He had never seen such a high-level battle before. In any case, he was certain that Phex was slowly being trapped in a corner.

Rean and Roan were more worried about something else, though. "What about us? There are five Zasfins there. What if one of them leaves that battle to attack us?"

"There's no need to worry," Darian responded with a faint smile. "This palace is protected by the Spiritual Energy Field. Although it's weaker for now due to the repair process, it isn't something a single Zasfin can easily break. Besides, they're using the Shared Soul Battle Formation. If one of them leaves that formation, it'll break apart. If they want to make it in time, they'll have to join forces to attack the palace's protection together. For that, they need to get rid of Phex first."

That didn't make Rean's group feel any better, though. After all, they could see how much of a disadvantage Phex was in at the moment.

'Phoenix Dive!'

'Hell Splash!'

'Fire Reborn!'

Phex used his best skills consecutively. Unfortunately for him, the Zasfins were able to counterattack and defend against everything. It was simply the difference in power. The environment didn't help him out either.

'Omnidirectional Water Waves!'

'Water Vortex!'

'Myriad Water Cannon!'

Arrgh!

Suddenly, Phex was hit by one of the attacks as he shot back like a meteor. He then slammed onto the palace, or more specifically, onto the palace's protection field. Nevertheless, Phex quickly got up as the next attacks were already coming at him.

'Phoenix Streak!'

His body transformed into a streak of fiery red light as he disappeared from his position.

Boom, boom, boom, boom...

Unfortunately, the attacks that were directed at him hit the palace's protection field, weakening it. If Phex had the choice, he would have blocked them. 'Shit! I can't give them time to attack the palace.'

The Zasfins couldn't see it, but the palace's protection field was really weak, a lot more than they imagined. If they focused on it, Phex would have a hard time. With that said, Phex shot in their direction once again without holding back.

Creeeee!

A phoenix cry came out as Phex's body burnt with Fire Element and Yang Energy. His Burning Hell Domain then decreased in size as if it was losing ground to the Zasfins' domain. However, that was wrong. Phex's domain wasn't losing power at all. Instead, it was compressing itself in a smaller range.

Neither of the Zasfins knew of it. No, to be more precise, they didn't know it was possible. 'What's he doing?'

Darian smiled when he saw that, though. "Phex seems to be angry now."

"Angry?" Rean's group didn't understand what he meant by that. "Wasn't he angry from the very start?"

Darian shook his head as he told them, "No. This is what it looks when he's actually angry."

Outside, Phex's eyes turned bright red, just like his burning feathers. Suddenly, he opened his wings, from which several of his feathers spread everywhere. No, to be more precise, they formed an enormous sphere.

The Zafins didn't know what was happening, and they didn't intend to let Phex finish whatever he was trying to do. That being said, they all attacked at the same time.

Unfortunately for them, their moment of hesitation cost them valuable time. Phex's feathers began to burn together with his body before they all connected together to form a giant ball of fire. No, it would be better to call it a miniature sun instead.

'Dawn of the Sun God!'

That enormous ball of fire then moved in the Zafins' direction, burning everything to nothingness, even the water itself.

Pankun understood that Phex was using an attack that none of them knew about and that it was much stronger than he had imagined. With that said, he also changed their strategy, ordering them, "Give up the assault. Focus your full energy on your defensive skills."

Immediately, they followed his orders.

'Cyclic Water Aegis!'

'Sea Engulf!'

'Ice Barrier!'

'Counter Wave!'

'Ocean Repealing Vortex!'

Phex crashed against the defensive attack, and soon, a stalemate was created. Phex's attack was obviously monstrously strong. Then again, he was fighting against five Zafins at once. It made sense that they could at least hold him back.

However, Roan narrowed his eyes as he muttered, "Weird..."

Rean, Kentucky, and Darian's attention were piqued by his words. "What is it?"

Roan then explained, "Demon beasts and Zafins haven't fought for millenniums, right? Although it seems that the Zafins didn't expect Phex's attack, I refuse to believe that they didn't at least consider him to have gotten stronger during this time. I wonder, is this fight really the main point here?"

Immediately, Rean and Kentucky felt a chill on their backs. After all, Roan was very good at those things.

Death... and me

Chapter 770: Only Choice!

Tremble!

As if hearing Roan's words, the entire palace suddenly trembled. At the same time, Darian's expression turned ugly as he cursed.

"Impossible!"

Rean's group didn't know what was happening, but they were certain that it wasn't good.

The faint red light that covered the city constructions and its surroundings started to fade away as the vortex above the palace formed again. The vortex of Spiritual Energy and Water Element above the palace also began to take form. Not only that, but it looked even more chaotic than before.

Suddenly, Darian made a cut on his wrist as his blood began to flow into the Spiritual Energy Field formation together with Kentucky's. The fading red light once again intensified, forcing the Spiritual Energy Field to calm down once more. However, Darian didn't have a good look on his face.

Obviously, Kentucky couldn't help but ask. Of course, he used Spiritual Sense Messages from now on so that the conversation wouldn't last more than a few seconds. 'What's happening? Why is the Spiritual Energy Field suddenly losing energy? It's as if our blood is being wasted.'

Darian nodded, responding, 'That's what's exactly happening. Someone or something is acting against the Spiritual Energy Field's core under the palace.'"Following that, Darian looked at the battle outside. Phex and the Zafins had reached a heated moment in their fight, and neither side would back down anytime soon. The first one to do so would definitely receive a backlash due to the raging energy. 'The Zafins were waiting for this moment. I can't stop controlling the Spiritual Energy Field, and Phex can't come down to help.'

Rean couldn't help but ask, 'The city has a few Stage Seven and even Stage Eight Sea Demon Beasts. Can't you ask them to go see what's going on? Or could it be that the enemy down the palace is also as strong as you and Phex?'

Darian shook his head, answering, 'That's impossible. The core of the Spiritual Energy Field is protected by the ancient formation. Unless you're a Divine Demon Beast, you shouldn't be able to approach it.'

Roan narrowed his eyes. 'Divine Demon Beast? Then...one of the Divine Demon Beasts betrayed the alliance?'

The one to answer that was Kentucky, saying, 'No, I don't think that's the case. If there was another Divine Demon Beast nearby, Phex, Darian, and even I would have noticed it. Am I right, Darian?'

'Correct.' Darian nodded. 'Divine Bloodlines resonate with each other. Unless you have some type of skill capable of blocking it, it shouldn't be possible. Unless...'

'Unless what?' Kentucky asked in response.

Darian's expression was dark as he thought of a possibility. 'Unless the demon beast's level is too weak for us to perceive. A Divine Bloodline becomes more prominent the higher the stage of the demon beast. So, unless we use Spiritual Sense to detect it, we won't feel its bloodline. For example, we can't feel Kentucky's presence unless he gets close enough due to his Stage Five cultivation.'

Immediately, Rean's group understood what was happening. From what Phex said, there were only six Divine Demon Beasts in the world, including Kentucky. Four of them were at Stage Nine, leaving only two below that level. One of them was obviously Kentucky. As for the other...

'Gulan!' Kentucky said with a dark expression. There was only the Blue Luan in the end.

'That's weird. Isn't Gulan Phex's grandchild? Why would he do such a thing?' Rean asked.

Darian shook his head, saying, 'I don't know. This is only a possibility. Unless, of course, there's another Divine Demon Beast that we don't know of. Well, we didn't know about Kentucky until a while ago, so I wouldn't be surprised if there was another one.'

Kentucky agreed with Darian. 'That's right! Wasn't Gulan supposed to be in another Spiritual Energy Field? How come he appeared here? It doesn't make sense since the other Spiritual Energy Field is supposed to be quite far away.'

There came the issue. If it wasn't Gulan, then who could it be? However, it was at this moment that Rean's group noticed a problem. 'Wait! Where's Red?'

Immediately, the Spiritual Sense messages stopped as only the sounds of fighting outside could be heard. Rean looked everywhere and even used his Spiritual Sense together with his Soul Power. However, Red was nowhere to be found. 'It can't be Red, can it?'

Darian knew that Red was the rabbit they talked about a while ago. They had sent him outside the room since they were about to discuss some information about the Forbidden Zone. Darian also used his Spiritual Sense but could see that Red was nowhere in the palace. The only problem was that it wasn't

possible to verify the core of the Spiritual Energy Field. Once again, it was protected against such things as well.

Darian then looked at Rean and Roan with a dark expression, asking, 'You brought that thing here, didn't you?'

Rean immediately nodded as he replied, 'We did. However, we only met him a while ago. Besides, we had no idea he was a Divine Demon Beast. Not only that, we didn't even know about this Spiritual Energy Field to start with. Also, is Red really a Divine Demon Beast?'

Kentucky confirmed Rean's words, saying, 'That's true. I was there when Red first appeared.'

Rean tried to use his Spiritual Sense to reach underground to look for Red, but it was useless. 'Sister Orb did say that the level of the Formation Master who made this thing was definitely not something you could find on this planet. I guess it's normal that my Spiritual Sense can't reach underground.'

Darian didn't know whether to believe it or not. After all, if they were really planning such a thing, would they leave Kentucky in his grasp? Kentucky couldn't leave the center of the hall where Darian is located, after all.

Kentucky found a problem, though. 'Wait! If it's Red, how could Darian and Phex not notice his Divine Demon Beast Bloodline? Even I didn't notice anything in these months we stayed together. Although the distance can make it hard to detect low-level Divine Demon Beasts, Red was right in front of Phex and Darian just a moment ago. Still, they didn't feel anything.'

Rean then remembered something as he cursed, 'Shit! Red's special ability! Did you forget? I built a sensory formation that should be able to detect any demon beasts with cultivations above Stage Four. However, it simply didn't work on Red at all!'

'What do you mean?' Darian asked.

Rean then proceeded to explain Red's peculiarity. Be it his formations or his Spiritual Sense, Rean, Roan, and Kentucky couldn't feel his presence at all. At least, not while Red was trying to hide it.

Darian was surprised to hear that, muttering, 'A Blood Rabbit did that? It doesn't make sense. As far as I know, Blood Rabbits don't have such an ability.'

Although the conversation looked long, no more than a few seconds passed while they used Spiritual Sense to talk.

'What should we do, then?' Kentucky asked. After all, both he and Darian had clear signs of exhaustion. If their blood continued to be wasted like that, they would eventually run out of it. It was especially bad for Darian due to his level.

Unfortunately, Darian seemed desolate, saying, 'There's nothing we can do. Without a Divine Demon Beast's Bloodline, no one else can enter the core region of the Spiritual Energy Field. It's not like there's a barrier or anything. Instead, it's a separated dimension.'

'How did Red get close to it? Don't you have anyone protecting the place?' Roan asked. In fact, Rean and Kentucky were also curious about it. Since it's such an important area, shouldn't it be fully watched?

Darian nodded, responding, 'It is protected. Just like you said, there are quite a few Stage Seven and even two Stage Eight Demon Beasts there. I can only think that this rabbit used that skill that can hide itself from everyone's Spiritual Senses to pass without being detected.'

'That makes sense.' Roan had to admit Darian was right.

Rean then tried to access the Dimensional Realm. After all, he might be able to use the Circuitry Teleport Formation to teleport directly inside. However, Roan stopped him, telling him, 'Don't be stupid. If you do such a thing here, how will you explain the existence of our Dimensional Realm? As bad as it might look, the situation would be much worse for us if our secrets are found out.'

Sister Orb, who was hearing everything, also added. [Unfortunately for you two, even if you could hide the Dimensional Realm's existence, you wouldn't be able to enter. The System is considering the situation dangerous enough to block anyone from entering it. Simply put, you wouldn't be able to use the Circuitry Teleport Formation even if you wanted to.]

Rean pondered a bit before giving an idea, asking, 'Senior Darian. Do you mind if Roan and I try to enter it?'

Darian was taken aback. 'Didn't I say that only Divine Demon Beasts with Divine Bloodlines can enter it?'

Rean nodded in response before saying, 'You did. However, you should know already that Kentucky has a connection with Roan and me, right?'

Darian nodded after hearing that. Phex had talked about that. Also, he noticed that when he first saw Rean and Roan together with Kentucky.

Rean then continued, 'Maybe... just maybe...we might get access to this Dimensional Realm by using this connection.'

Darian narrowed his eyes, asking, 'And why should I trust you two that you won't make things worse?'

Rean shrugged his shoulders, saying, 'Because at the moment, you have Kentucky in your hands. Besides, I don't think you have much choice with Phex locked in battle outside.'

Roan heard that plan but didn't say anything. For him, it would be a good chance to test his power. If Red really was a Divine Demon Beast, then it was worth a shot.

In the end, Darian gritted his teeth as he looked at Phex's situation. Not only did they need to finish repairing the Spiritual Energy Field for themselves, but Phex would also eventually lose if he kept using that much energy. Only with it repaired would the city's protection be up once again. 'Fine! I'll let the demon beasts guarding the entrance know that you're coming.'