

Death 791

Death... and me

Chapter 791: White Calamity

Going back to the present, Red and Rean had arrived in front of a store. It was quite small compared to the ones found in this city. Not to mention that it looked old and worn-down.

Red looked at it and couldn't help but ask, "Is it here?"

At this moment, Rean couldn't help but get nervous. For him, walking in the middle of Watisan City wasn't nearly as dangerous as this place. Nevertheless, he took a deep breath as he nodded, saying, "Yeah. It's here."

Rean then opened the store's door and made his way inside. There were quite a few old items for sale inside, but nothing of high quality. Rean ignored that as he looked at the counter where an old Zasfin rested on the chair.

Once Rean approached, the old Zasfin opened his eyes before smiling, saying, "Oh, we have a customer." He then slowly got up as he asked, "What can I help you with? We don't have anything incredible, but I can guarantee that all the items here can do what they're supposed to."

Rean then took a deep breath before shaking his head. Soon after, he took a token from his bag and passed it to the old Zasfin. As soon as the Zasfin saw that token, his smile disappeared as his eyes narrowed. A very serious expression soon appeared on his face as he looked at Rean from head to toe. "Do I know you?"

Rean shook his head, responding, "No, but your old lady should definitely know about me." Rean paused for a moment as he gathered the courage to say the next words. "Tell her that 'White Calamity' is here."

The old Zasfin didn't know what that meant, but he knew who Rean was talking about. He then grabbed Rean's token right after, telling him, "Wait here. It might take some time before she arrives." The old Zasfin then disappeared at the back of the store. From the same place, a little Zasfin boy came out and sat on the chair to take care of business while the old man was out. He only glanced at Rean for a moment before putting his attention on something else.

Red, who was on Rean's shoulder all this time, couldn't help but ask through a Spiritual Sense Message, 'In the end, just who is it that you wish to meet? I've asked you many times so far, but you always dodged the question.'

Rean smiled in response. 'There's no point telling you if she doesn't come out. In fact, there's a very high chance that my identity will be exposed, and the two of us will die here.'

'What?! You didn't say anything about dying!' Red was obviously taken aback.

Rean shrugged his shoulders in response, telling him, 'What are you complaining about? Don't forget that we could have killed you back then, so why would you care whether you die now or not?'

Red's mouth twitched after hearing that. He knew that Rean was talking the truth. 'Hmph! If I see things go out of control, I'll leave you behind and disappear from here. Don't blame me for that.'

Rean nodded, saying, 'Don't worry, I'll also make a run for it if the situation calls for it.'

Rean waited in the room for a few hours with no sign of the old Zasfin returning. However, no one appeared to try and attack him either, which was already very good news. In his mind, if his identity had been leaked to the Soul Rulers, this store would have been surrounded a very long time ago.

Without much to do, he started to look around and see if there was anything he wanted.

'Hmm...?'

It was then that he found a small purple pot thrown in a corner. It wasn't really being displayed, just piled up with other things that looked of no value. Rean couldn't help but grab it and look inside, just to see that it was empty. However...

'Weird... I definitely can feel some kind of power coming from this little pot. It's somewhat similar to Life Force, but...not exactly.' Rean was puzzled by that and decided to take it with him. That being said, he brought the pot to the counter where the Zasfin boy was playing. "Say, how much does this pot cost?"

The boy looked at it for a moment before he turned around to grab a book on the shelf. After going through a few pages, he finally found what he was looking for. "It's 200 Rank Two Spirit Stones."

"So cheap..." Rean couldn't help but wonder if they couldn't see that this pot had something different in it. Nevertheless, it wasn't as if he knew anything about the item either. Well, one must understand that 100 Rank Two Spirit Stones was cheap for someone like Rean, but not everyone in the world. "Here, there are twenty Rank Three Spirit Stones in this bag. I believe the exchange rate is still 1 to 10, right?"

The boy checked the bag and nodded, saying, "It is...although I don't think someone would give Rank Three Spirit Stones instead of Rank Two. In any case, our deal is done, so you can't take it back."

Rean smiled and placed the pot away. That price meant nothing for him, after all. 'Still, why is she taking this long? The Soul Rulers' headquarters shouldn't be this far away.'

It was then that a voice came from behind the store, saying, "I can't believe that you really dared to show your face here again. Can you give one good reason for me to not skin you alive right now?"

As the female voice came out, a beautiful woman made her way into the store. On her side, one could see the old Zasfin that had left the shop following her.

Rean couldn't help but become nervous again as he bowed to the woman, saying, "Long time no see, Lady Sevinia."

Sevinia Haphel, Ophele's mother and the leader of the Hapel Clan, one of the biggest clans within the Soul Rulers organization. She was also the one who arranged for Rean to not be put in the Bloodline Trial Control Formation like Roan. Instead, Rean was left in the clan to help Palaris and Ophele with the development of formations.

Death... and me

Chapter 792: So That's How It Is

Sevinia didn't look the least bit pleased with Rean's respectful behavior. "Do you have any idea what we've gone through after what you did in the Soul Rulers' headquarters? Most of the Soul Rulers' members considered us as the culprit since it was us who brought you and your brother."

Sevinia became more furious the more she thought about that. "My relationship with the organization's leader was destroyed. My clan's position fell to rock bottom. Not to mention that all of our clan members are being ostracized every day because of that. Is that what we get after helping humans as well as we could after so many years? If not for us, the soul extraction process would still be excruciatingly painful torture. The conditions of the kids in the Bloodline Trial Control Formations wouldn't have been that good either."

"I might as well tell you right now that all of those changes have now been revoked. It was considered that doing such things for humans was a waste of time in the end. If not because of that, we might not be in a war with the risk of losing more than half of our territory to the demon beasts."

Sevinia then approached Rean and grabbed him by the neck, saying, "However, I have you now. Perhaps I can use your body in exchange for all the damage you've caused. How about you start talking about where we can find Celis?"

Rean was already in the Nascent Soul Realm. That being said, he could exchange oxygen for Spiritual Energy, so he wasn't really feeling suffocated by Sevinia's actions. He knew that he was in a precarious situation, though. Yet...

"Hehe! I'm well aware of the risks of coming here and delivering myself to you. However, for you to be here without an army of Soul Rulers' experts show that you're still interested in that letter we sent you. Am I right?" Rean asked with a weird grin on his face.

Sevinia's expression turned dark as she looked straight at Rean's eyes, responding, "How long has your Demon Beast Alliance been planning all of this? I refuse to believe that it happened while you were here."

Unfortunately for her, that was really a plan drafted by Rean and Roan while they were in the Soul Rulers' headquarters. First of all, they didn't even know about the existence of the Demon Beast Alliance until they arrived in Koran Forest. Naturally, the demon beasts had nothing to do with it.

However, the letter was completely different. This was something that the twins thought after they discovered that the war would happen. During Rean's time in the Hafel Clan, he learned a lot about their method of communication. That being said, he used one of those channels to send Sevinia a letter through the name of White Calamity. That's why she knew that it was Rean who was looking for her. It was also because of these events that Rean knew about this old shop.

Of course, in Sevinia's eyes, the real masterminds were the Divine Demon Beasts of the Demon Beast Alliance. Rean and Roan were nothing more than some pawns. She couldn't be blamed for that either since anyone would think like that, especially after the twins appeared on the Demon Beast Alliance's side after the destruction of the headquarters. In fact, quite a few of her clan members died due to the explosions at that time.

Sevinia kept holding Rean by the neck for some time before finally letting him go, asking, "Is what you said in the letter true?"

Rean nodded, replying, "Yes. As you should already know, it's simply impossible for the demon beasts to conquer the entire world. Once they take half of the available territories, your Zasfin armies will become a lot more compressed on the other half. It would bring no good for either side to continue the war after that. At the moment, the battle is only continuing because neither side wants to give up the best territories. Besides, your Soul Rulers organization made it very clear that they still hope to continue operating in this world as the sole bosses. After all, they did attack the Spiritual Energy Field in the Sea Beasts' Territory."

Sevinia looked immediately at the rabbit on Rean's shoulder after hearing that. As one of the top members of the Soul Rulers before the twins' attack, she obviously knew about Red's existence. "If not because of this guy's failure, we would have succeeded. Even after we prepared the entire terrain for you to get your revenge, you still didn't accomplish it. To be honest, I thought you died in there. Only now did I understand how Rean got this close to the headquarters without being found."

Red didn't feel good about it either, saying, "Your organization said that I would be alone in the Spiritual Energy Field's Dimensional Realm. However, that wasn't the case at all."

Sevinia narrowed her eyes, saying in response, "But we succeeded in holding off all the Divine Demon Beasts outside. How come someone was protecting it? From what we know, only Divine Demon Beasts like you should be able to enter that place."

Red then glanced at Rean for a moment. He already heard that the twins had some kind of connection with the Minokawa. They used it to get access to the Dimensional Realm. However, he did promise he wouldn't talk about it. "Hmph! In any case, that's why I failed. What's the point in talking about it right now anyway? It's over, so just forget it." After that, Red changed the topic, taking advantage of that situation to ask something else. "By the way, is it true that the Bestial Blood Pond is being filled with the blood of the dead demon beasts in the entire world?"

Sevinia narrowed her eyes when she heard that. However, she knew that Red had already failed, so she didn't care too much about it, especially considering her clan's actual situation. With that, she replied, "Yes, it is."

Red's blood began to boil in anger after hearing that, shouting in anger, "So, you really did lie to me!"

Death... and me

Chapter 793: Deceased

Sevinia shook her head, though. "I knew about the plan, but I've never seen you personally until now. Well, it's not like I would have told you the truth either since the demon beasts are the Zasfin's enemies. However, I didn't participate, so look for someone else to accuse."

It didn't matter whether the Hafei Clan was involved or not. The fact was that Rean proved to Red that he was lying. The Bestial Blood Pond truly kept filling up automatically, without the intervention of Phex or any of the other Divine Demon Beasts at all. Besides, no demon beast was sacrificed as Red thought. Only the ones who died would have their blood taken away by the Sacred Ground. "Hehehe...so that's how it is..."

Rean intervened at that point before Red lost his cool, telling him, "Alright, that's enough for now. Red, you can think about that later since you can't do much with your strength." Rean then looked at Sevinia, asking, "So, are you in or not?"

Sevinia snorted in response, saying, "In or not? You still haven't explained anything other than the fact that it would work."

Red calmed down as Rean and Sevinia continued to talk. Finally, he decided to inquire Rean about it. "Just what is it that you promised her that she hasn't killed you yet?"

Rean saw that there was no need to keep it hidden anymore, so he opened his mouth, telling him, "Oh! The Hafei Clan has held quite a few high and low positions in the Soul Rulers organization during its time. However, because of their more lenient opinion regarding the humans, they never had a clan member as the Soul Rulers' leader. It was always someone else."

Rean continued, "Now, because of Roan, Kentucky, and I, that position is as far as it could possibly be. In fact, they might even be excluded from the Soul Rulers or wiped out because of us." Rean then smiled before saying, "What I promised her was enough war merits to bring her clan to the top again and probably...even have one of their members become the next Soul Rulers' leader."

Red and the old man beside Sevinia were taken aback after hearing that. The Hafel Clan couldn't be more hated at the moment, so how could that be possible?

It was then that Red had an idea, soon voicing out his hypothesis as he asked, "Wait! Did you say war merits? Are you planning to give up on the demon beasts so you can get a higher position in the Soul Rulers?"

Rean looked at Red as if he was looking at an idiot as he replied, "Where the hell did you get that idea? Even if I really did such a thing, do you think the Soul Rulers would accept me back in their ranks? I would be lucky enough if they didn't torture me before dying."

Red had to admit that Rean was right. "Then...what do you mean by war merits?"

With that, Rean began to explain his thought process. "Because their clan is part of the Soul Rulers, they also have a part of the Zafins' army to control. It has nothing to do with whether or not the Soul Rulers trust the Hafel Clan to command part of the army or not. It's just that the Soul Rulers work on a system of sharing. As much as they don't like the Hafel Clan right now, the rules still say that the Hafel Clan has the right to take part in it. They would only be barred if it was proven that they betrayed the Soul Rulers, which isn't the case." Rean then patted Sevinia's shoulder as he continued, "They only made a slightly bad call when they took in my brother and me. It wasn't as if they wanted that outcome."

Sevinia's mouth twitched in response as she pinched Rean's hand to the point she almost tore a piece of it out.

Ouch!

"Slightly bad call? Is that what you call what happened?" Naturally, she was angry at how Rean treated the issue.

In any case, Rean quickly healed his hand with Instant Recovery as he laughed. Well, that was just his way of covering his nervousness. "Hahaha! I'm joking, I'm joking!" Of course, his explanation continued. "Because their clan has access to a small part of the Zafins' army, they can still use it to gain credit back. In fact, I believe your Hafel Clan is putting most of its effort on it, right?"

Sevinia didn't try to hide it, replying, "Since you already know of it, what's the point in denying it? Now, stop beating around the bush and tell me what you and that brother of yours are planning. Whether I'll capture you here or agree with your plan will depend on how realistic your plans are."

For the next hour, Rean went through everything he and Roan worked on. The more Rean talked, the more Sevinia's expression changed. Of course, Red and the old man beside Sevinia were just as impressed. In the end, Red couldn't help but exclaim, "Are you crazy?! There's no wa-"

However, the old man cut Red's words short as he instead said, "No, it can work!"

Sevinia was taken aback as well, not expecting the old man to open his mouth. "What are you saying? Who said you could intervene in this conversation?"

However, the old man only put a hand on Sevinia's shoulder before shaking his head, saying, "It's fine, Sevinia. You don't need to pretend anymore."

Red and Rean looked at that situation, puzzled. However, as soon as the old man said those words, Sevinia's demeanor towards the old man completely changed as she asked, "Ancestor...are you sure it's okay?"

"Ancestor?!" Rean and Red were terrified to hear that word. In the Soul Rulers' organization, only one type of Zasfin could be called an ancestor, Transition Realm cultivators! However, this old man wasn't doing anything else other than taking care of an old and worn store forgotten by its city. How could that be? Shouldn't someone like him be together with the other ancestors of the Soul Rulers?

The old man didn't change at all, though. He still looked like a frail man as he was when Rean first met him. He then introduced himself, saying, "Nice to meet you. My name is Duran Hafel, one of the deceased ancestors of the Soul Rulers' organization."

"Deceased?" That word only puzzled Rean and Red even more.

The old man smiled in response as he replied, "Simply put, everyone thinks I'm dead."

Death... and me

Chapter 794: Only One Way

Duran then changed the topic as he continued, "Well, it's not something you need to be concerned about. I have my reason to be like that. I just mentioned it so that you wouldn't open your mouth in case you get captured or something like that. Now, let's talk about the plan. Will the Divine Demon Beasts really do it?"

Rean nodded, saying, "They will. They, too, are very aware that taking control over the entire planet is impossible. The Zafins have constructed a strong foundation after so many years, expanding as much as possible. At the moment, ending this war is the best option, even for demon beasts like them. It's just that the Zafins won't give up the best territories that easily."

Duran obviously knew about that, saying in response, "We've gained control over those continents ever since we got Celis, which has been a very, very long time. Even I feel like it would be a waste to simply let all of that go."

Rean shook his head as he replied, "It'll be impossible to defend everything since those regions aren't all close to each other. The demon beasts will definitely succeed in overtaking some of them with just sheer strength and numbers. You must understand that other than the Demon Beast Continent, most of the different areas they have control over are not as good as what the Zafins have. That being said, they have no need to defend them since the Zafins would need to take their forces from the good areas to attack. The demon beasts can simply ignore defense and focus on all-out attacks."

There was one thing that Sevinia didn't understand, though. "But why would you come up with this plan if you can already take some of the territories by yourselves?"

Duran knew the answer for that, saying, "That's simple. Even if they do take it, our side won't give up that easily. It's not like you don't understand how prideful the Soul Rulers organization is. The reason to help us with this plan is so that a member of our clan takes the position of leader. With that in hand, we can stop that from happening."

Rean smiled in response, saying, "Good thing that you understand."

Red asked something else, though. "But what if the Hafel Clan becomes the one who wants to take the territories bac-ah!" Red already understood why even before finishing his question.

Rean noticed that and smiled once again as he said, "Seems like you get it. It's because of us that the Hafel Clan would get to be the next leader. If we reveal our plans after that happens, do you think the other clans would stay quiet? In the end, both demon beasts and the Hafel Clan would be in a position where they couldn't break each other's promise since it would be detrimental for both sides. Nothing good would come of it."

Duran and Sevinia nodded after hearing that. That also worked as insurance for them. After all, if they get overthrown because the plan was found out, the next leader would definitely attack the territories again. That's not what the demon beasts wanted.

At the same time, back in the Demon Beast Alliance, Phex, Roan, and Frin were having a conversation. Phex had come to ask for his opinion on the war happening on his side. After all, Roan proved that he was a much better commander than any of them.

However, what Roan decided to talk about was not what Phex and Frin expected. "Wait! Rean did what?!"

Roan repeated his previous words, saying, "He went to Watisan City to meet the leader of the Hafel Clan, Sevinia Hafel."

If Phex or Frin had found out about it from someone else, they would have laughed it off. After all, Rean must want to die to do such a thing. Even if they believed those words, they would think that Rean betrayed the demon beasts by doing that. However, the one saying it now was none other than his brother, Roan. And from the looks of it, that was something Roan and Rean decided together.

Phex calmed down first and finally decided to ask, "For you to come up with this bomb, it seems like you aren't trying to betray us, right?"

Roan snorted as he replied, "Hmph! Isn't that obvious? Why would we do such an idiotic thing and stay here in the Demon Beast Alliance? We did that because we obviously want to get the most out of this war."

Phex and Frin looked at each other and nodded after that as Phex said in response, "Alright, tell us more."

Roan then proceeded to explain the same thing as Rean did to Duran and Sevinia. "If we do that, we can keep control over the good territories for the next few thousand years. Only after the ones involved in this plan ascend or die would this agreement disappear in the darkness. However, by that time, both sides would have already consolidated their positions. Simply put, it will have nothing to do with us anymore. Whether the demon beasts or the Zasfins of the future lose their territories, they will only have themselves to blame."

Phex and Frin looked at Roan with weird expressions, saying, "You do know that our demon beasts have been confined in the Demon Beast Continent for a long time, right? I don't think they'll stop attacking just because we got a few of the good territories."

Roan shrugged his shoulders as he said, "That's your problem to solve, not mine. If you're really thinking about the future of the demon beasts, you will have to convince them. First of all, it's not like both sides will suddenly become friends after the war is over. Battles will still happen here and there. It's just that something like taking over a continent won't be possible anymore. In any case, they can release their anger as much as they want."

Phex pondered over it a bit and had to admit it made sense. "Well, that might work."

Still, he couldn't help but ask, "However, you still haven't told us how you will make a Hafeel Clan member become the next Soul Rulers' leader."

Roan shrugged his shoulders as he said, "At their present stage, there's only one way. War merits." Sure enough, Roan said the same thing as Rean.

Death... and me

Chapter 795: I Must Be Tired

Naturally, Phex immediately thought of the same issue as Red did, asking, "Are you saying that you'll help them win battles against our armies?"

Roan shook his head as he replied, "Not quite. Instead, we need to get rid of Fikin and a few of their ancestors."

Phex and Frin felt chills behind their backs after hearing that. "Ahem...you do know that Fikin and the other ancestors are in a similar level of power as us, right? Defeating them is one thing, but killing..."

Phex and Frin were confident in their strength. However, they weren't delusional. They were well aware that killing any of the ancestors would be a nigh-impossible task. Though, the same could be said about themselves.

However, Roan looked at them as if they were a bunch of idiots. "I wonder how you're still considered the Demon Beast Alliance's leaders. Can you be any worse than that?"

Phex and Frin's mouths twitched after hearing that, instantly feeling like smashing Roan's head in. They were Peak Stage Nine Divine Demon Beasts, while Roan was just a puny Nascent Soul Realm cultivator. When was the last time when they were humiliated by such an ant? "You better control your mouth, little guy. Demon beasts aren't very good at swallowing insults."

Roan couldn't care less, though. "Hmph! Then stop to think before opening your mouth. Alright, I'll give you one more chance. What is it that you have that the Zasfins don't?"

Frin and Phex went silent straight away. What is it that they have? The Demon Beast Army? No, that's not the case. The Bestial Sacred Ground? That can't be it either since they couldn't bring it from its location. It was then that Phex remembered the time they were attacked in the underwater palace, instantly saying, "Ah! That, that...that might actually work!"

Frin wasn't in the underwater palace back then, but he knew what happened. Nevertheless, he was still puzzled as he hastily asked, "What is it? What is it?! Don't leave me hanging like that!"

Roan nodded in satisfaction as he continued, "It seems like you've understood the point here. You can keep coming back to fight at peak condition, but what about the Zasfins' ancestors?"

"Come back to fight at peak condition?" Frin was even more puzzled now.

Roan sighed after hearing Frin's dilemma and soon began to explain to him. "When Stage Nine Demon Beasts and cultivators at the same level battle, they're bound to leave the area injured and weakened. Unless you're successful in an ambush or something like that, both sides will definitely sustain some damage," Roan explained. "The problem is that experts of your level would take a very long time to recover...or so was the case before. However, you have Rean and me."

Phex nodded as he continued where Roan left off, saying, "Injuries that I would have taken a few months to recover were done within just four hours. Even Darian's blood loss was replenished in record time. Usually, he would need years, if not decades, due to his age and level. But it only took weeks, thanks to them. If we use this to our advantage, we can keep attacking, attacking, and attacking even more."

Roan agreed with Phex, saying, "Exactly. It doesn't matter who will get defeated in the first few battles against the Zsfinns. As long as you succeed in injuring the Zsfinns, that'll be more than enough. They probably have pills and things like that to help them recover, but just how rare and hard are they to concoct? In your case, Rean or I can simply use Light Element to resolve everything. Of course, Rean is much better at this task than I am."

Frin couldn't help but ask, "If that's the case, why would we stop after simply taking a few of the good territories? We can literally dominate the entire world after we defeat all the Zsfinn ancestors."

Phex and Roan immediately shook their heads, saying in unison, "That would be a terrible idea."

"Why?" Frin couldn't see the problem with that.

Roan then explained first. "What's the point of a planet where only a single power reigns?" Roan then pointed at the Zsfinns' side. "Have you not seen just how weak the Zsfinns that lacked battle experience was? If not because of the foundation in their territories, we wouldn't even need to do such a thing. If you really take everything, the demon beasts will lose a common enemy. It might look nice at first, but it's detrimental in the long run."

Phex agreed with Roan as he said, "Not only that, but demon beasts aren't very good at delicate tasks like formations, pill making, and so on. If we get rid of ZASFINS, we would also be unable to get such items as we did before in the Demon Beast Cities."

"Last but not least, demon beasts, humans, and ZASFINS can develop much faster when they have someone to fight against. You can look at the humans who live in the Demon Beast Continent. They only make up a small amount of the continent's population, but each of them is much stronger than a similarly leveled ZASFIN as long as the ZASFINS don't use their Soul Marks. If the humans had Soul Marks, they could totally trash the ZASFINS at the same level." Roan then looked at Frin with a serious expression as he asked, "Do you really want the demon beasts to turn out like that?"

Frin scratched the back of his head with his paw-like hand, muttering in a whimper, "No..."

Phex then thought about something else as he soon asked, "Wait! If Rean is so important to this plan like you said, then why did you send him to Watisan City? Are you crazy?"

Roan shrugged his shoulders as he replied, "It had to be him or me. No one else would work. Only if it came from our mouths would Sevinia accept it."

Phex and Frin were taken aback as they simultaneously asked, "Why?"

Roan faintly smiled before dropping another bomb, telling them, "Because it was us who destroyed their Bloodline Trial Control Formations and took Celis away. Well, we sent almost the entire headquarters to the sky in the process."

Phex immediately laughed out loud after that. "Hahaha! I must be going crazy." He then looked at Frin, saying, "Can you believe that I heard they destroyed the Soul Rulers' headquarters and kidnapped Celis? They, two Nascent Soul Realm humans...I must be tired..."

Frin's expression was weird as he replied, "That's such a coincidence. I could swear I heard the same thing as you did."

Death... and me

Chapter 796: Their Problem

Roan shrugged his shoulders as he replied, "Whether you believe it or not is not my problem. I just thought that this was the right time to tell you about that event."

Phex and Frin's expressions changed once more as they finally understood that they heard it correctly. "Impossible! How would you be able to do such a thing? Even if all the Divine Demon Beasts attacked their headquarters together, we wouldn't be able to pull that off. That place is a fortress."

Roan shook his head in response as he said, "In fact, it wasn't that troublesome. You know...things become a lot easier when your race is completely underestimated. Let's just say that humans being slaves on this planet helped a lot in making the Zasfins drop their guards."

Frin immediately asked something else after that. "Wait! If that is true, then where's Celis? Also, that World Swallowing Cedar was a Stage Nine Demon Tree, so it should be gigantic. How did you bring it out?"

"Do you remember the Freedom Sect that we temporarily created in the Demon Beast Continent?" Roan asked. Phex and Frin nodded in response before waiting for Roan to continue. "That's where you can find Celis. However, don't expect Celis to do the same thing for you as he did for the Zasfins."

Phex immediately shook his head as he responded, "No can do! I knew that something must have happened with the World Swallowing Cedar for the Spiritual Energy to come back to normal. But I always thought it had escaped on its own, and I haven't heard from it ever since. If Celis is really there, I will immediately pay him a visit and request his help. If he retrieves the Spiritual Energy of the Zasfins' side, this war will become several times easier. World Swallowing Cedars are also Divine Demon Beasts...or Plants. I'm sure he'll consider it. Not to mention that it would work as revenge against the Zasfins for him."

Roan shook his head as he reiterated himself, "I'm not saying that you would have a problem making Celis accept it. I'm pretty sure that Celis would love to take in all the Spiritual Energy from the Zasfins and focus it on the demon beasts to get back at them. Unfortunately..." Roan stopped there.

"Unfortunately? Unfortunately what?! Say it!" Phex and Frin were even more curious now.

"It's just that Celis suffered a huge drop in cultivation after escaping from the Soul Rulers' headquarters," Roan explained.

Frin found it weird, though. "So what? You and Rean can heal us, so you can definitely heal it as well, right?"

Roan never said that Celis was injured, just that Celis's cultivation had dropped. However, he wouldn't try to fix this mistake. Following that, he shook his head as he replied, "We can't. That's because Celis's cultivation dropped to the Stage Five level. It's one thing to heal injuries, but recovering cultivation is a completely different thing. Light Element can do nothing about it."

Phex and Frin were shocked when they heard that. "Stage Five! Celis's cultivation dropped to Stage Five! How could that be..."

Roan assured them, saying, "Don't worry. Celis accepted it as a price for escaping the confinement made by the Soul Rulers. If it was you, would you mind losing your cultivation if you could stop being their puppet?"

Phex and Frin went completely silent after hearing that question. They were both Divine Demon Beasts, just like Celis. Naturally, they know how humiliated Celis would have felt during all this time. Sure enough, they probably wouldn't mind losing their cultivation if it meant that they could escape.

"Sigh...if Celis is only at Stage Five, then there's no way he can stop the world's Spiritual Energy anymore. At most, he can control the Spiritual Energy of a small region," Phex said those words with a gloomy expression. "In any case, I'll go pay Celis a visit to see how he's faring. As a Divine Demon Beast, I ought to do so."

Roan didn't mind that. Telling them about Celis was already part of the plan since they couldn't hide him forever. Wartime was the best moment since the demon beasts needed him and Rean the most.

"Still, you haven't explained how you brought Celis out of there. Even if Celis's size decreased after regressing to Stage Five, it's not something you can move around as you wish. I have no doubt that the protection around Celis was even more strict than the formations that existed there." Sure enough, Frin didn't forget that part.

Roan didn't want to talk, though. "That's a secret. Do you think we would reveal everything that easily? Our human race is the weakest out of the three on this planet, so we need some insurance."

Phex wasn't surprised to hear that, eventually saying, "So be it. As curious as I might be, the important part is that we don't need to worry about Celis stealing our Spiritual Energy anymore." Following that, he went back to the previous topic. "Now I understand why you said that only you or Rean would be able to convince Sevinia. After what you did and the fact that they brought you there, that might be their only chance at getting back on their feet."

Frin couldn't help but say, "Still, I find it too dangerous. Rean's life is a must for the plan to work. In fact, even without the Hafel Clan's help, we could probably make the plan work as long as Rean was here. We would just be careful not to completely take over the planet."

Roan shook his head, saying, "Wrong. You all plan to go to the Bestial Sacred Ground, right? If you succeed in opening the path to that so-called Realm of Gods, will you stay here to protect the demon beasts?"

Frin was taken aback, muttering, "This..."

Phex sighed as he understood what Roan meant. "He's thinking much further ahead than you or I. Let's be honest. None of us, who have been at the peak of Stage Nine, would let that chance pass up. Once we leave, who will keep the Zafins at bay? However, having the agreement with the Hafel Clan would ensure that status."

Roan was satisfied with Phex's words, saying, "It's good that you understand. This is not only for you but for the human race on this planet as well. That's all."

Death... and me

Chapter 797: Straight

Back on Rean's side, he just finished explaining the same plan to Duran and Sevinia. Of course, he left out the fact that he would be healing the Divine Demon Beasts while explaining the plan, instead telling them that the demon beasts had a way of using the Bestial Sacred Ground to do that instead. "So, how is it?"

Hafel understood why the demon beasts would eventually succeed in claiming the territories and why they didn't want to completely dominate the planet. He couldn't be more aware of the lack of combat experience the Zafins had after being in control over the world after so long without real enemies.

"Very well. What do you need from our side?"

"Let's wait a few days. I need to go back, so I'll leave someone else in charge of passing the messages over to you. There's no need to worry. It's someone I trust. Just pretend that this person is one of your slaves that you've acquired recently." Rean smiled as he talked about that.

Duran didn't see an issue with it. With that, he said, "That's fine. I'll wait for this person to come. But until then, you have to stay here. There are a few things I want to talk about with you."

Rean wasn't surprised by that. After all, after accepting the plan, they would obviously have many concerns. "That's fine. I'll answer everything as much as I'm allowed to."

Duran nodded after hearing that, saying, "That's good." He then looked at Sevinia before saying, "Go back and prepare our army. We need to be ready for any possible call."

Sevinia couldn't help but become worried, though. "But Ancestor...what if they want to lure our Hafei Clan's army into a trap? Wouldn't we suffer even more than we are right now?"

Duran shook his head, replying, "We are in no position to be picky at the moment. You know that better than anyone else. Besides...you do know that I have some issues as well, which I would love to get over with now that an opportunity has appeared."

Sevinia's eyes widened as she remembered something from the past. "Ancestor, you can't be talking about-"

"Enough!" Duran cut Sevinia's words short. "I've already made my decision."

Sevinia quickly bowed after that. "Yes, Ancestor."

Red and Rean didn't know what was happening, but they were pretty sure it had something to do with Duran's 'death.' Otherwise, why would he pretend to not be around?

Sevinia quickly left after that. In the end, only Duran, Red, Rean, and the boy at the counter stayed. Rean and Red looked at the boy, who didn't seem to care about what was happening. Duran noticed that, of course. "Don't worry. Just pretend he doesn't exist. Now, let's talk a bit more."

Just like Rean mentioned, a week went by as he waited in Watisan City. Thanks to Red's concealing ability, none of the Spiritual Senses that passed over the store noticed that he was, in fact, a human. Another thing was that Duran seemed to also have a way to hide his presence. Every now and then, some random customers entered the store to buy something, but they would leave not too long after.

While Rean waited, Roan received a new visitor. "Roan!"

He looked behind and saw a black-haired girl rushing at him. Surprisingly, a rare smile appeared on his face, one that wasn't cold or disdainful. Well, it was very faint, though. However, just as the girl jumped to hug him, Roan stepped to the side, making the girl grab nothing but air. "This is not the right time for this kind of thing, Calina."

Naturally, it was Calina who arrived. As always, she kept her blonde hair dyed so that she wouldn't catch too much attention. Even if she was in the demon beasts' side during this war, blonde hair was still way too rare. She preferred not to risk it. "You're no fun. Can't you at least show some reaction?"

Roan shrugged his shoulders as he replied, "Maybe another time." Well, that was already a very big commitment from Roan. He then used his Spiritual Sense to check on Calina's progress.

"Oh-ho...Peak Stage of Core and Soul Fusion, huh? When we separated ways, you were just in the Initial Stage. You've improved a lot during these years." Roan then looked at Calina's demeanor and noticed that she had become a lot more mature during this time. "Leaving your overreaction when you saw me, it seems like you've had your own deal of experiences. How many times did you get close to dying?"

Calina bitterly smiled as she pointed at a few areas of her body. "So you still noticed the scars, huh? Well, you always said that I couldn't rely on being safe all the time like I was when I was with you and Rean. That being said, I tried to be a lot more careful. Nevertheless, there were a few moments that I really thought I was done for."

Calina then gave Roan a knowing smile as she continued, "However, you're not the type of person who would care about how I look, am I right? For you, we're all just bags of bones and flesh."

Roan nodded straight away as he quickly replied, "It's good that you understand that. Your appearance is the last thing I could possibly care about. If anything, those scars make you look a lot more attractive since they're proof of your development. Sadly, I also don't care whether they're there or not. It wasn't your body I took an interest in, but yourself."

Calina really liked that part of Roan. If he thought about something, he wouldn't feel flustered to say it. He would always put it in words that were as clear as possible. Well, seeing Frin by the side listening to everything they said made her feel embarrassed, though. "You could at least wait for us to be alone to say those things."

Frin was a Stage Nine Divine Demon Beast. It's just that he was in his human form. In any case, he lived for way too long already, so he couldn't care less about the two lovebirds either. "Don't mind me. I just need to keep this guy safe."

Death... and me

Chapter 798: Tell Them to Retreat

Eventually, Calina decided to check on Roan's cultivation, only to be taken aback as she exclaimed, "Wait! Middle Nascent Soul Realm?! How the hell did you cultivate so fast?!"

"Simple. Rean and I had a lot of Spiritual Energy back in the Soul Rulers' headquarters." Roan then changed the topic as he said, "Anyways, forget about me. Let me take a look at your training routine. After so long, you probably made a few changes by yourself, right?"

Calina was still shocked by Roan's cultivation, so she more or less handed her routine while thinking about the injustice from the twins' cultivation speed. 'What was all my effort for? I feel like a turtle when I look at him.'

Roan quickly checked it with his Spiritual Sense before saying, "Hmm...not too bad. You added a few new skills to your repertoire. What is this Prison Vortex?"

Calina felt even worse after seeing that Roan didn't think anything about his improvement. Nevertheless, she quickly recovered as she already understood that the twins were anything but normal. With that, she replied, "Prison Vortex is similar to my Water Prison. However, I don't try to capture

anyone with it. Instead, I keep myself inside it. It acts as a defense field made with Water Element and Yin Energy."

Roan narrowed his eyes after listening to her explanation, saying, "But it would make your mobility very poor."

However, Calina smiled when she heard that as Water Element gathered around her. Yin Energy also fused with the water as an orb of water spun around Calina. The water inside truly acted like a vortex, rotating at very high speeds. However, unlike Water Prison, Prison Vortex was very small, spreading out no more than 3 meters away from Calina.

Soon after, Calina used her own movement technique and charged at Roan. It only took a moment before Calina stopped right in front of Roan, just before he was hit by the Prison Vortex. Much to Roan's surprise, her speed wasn't any slower than any average Peak Stage Core and Soul Fusion Realm cultivator. On top of that, Roan could tell that she wasn't moving as fast as she could. "I see...so you compressed the vortex as much as possible while increasing its spin so that you could keep your movement speed while moving it together."

Calina nodded as the Prison Vortex disappeared and the water fell on the ground. "Exactly. At the moment, a length of three meters around me is my limit while not losing any speed. In any case, it works very well as defense. Just so you know, there was a time where I got surrounded and was forced to run away. I received attacks from everywhere and what kept me alive was this skill."

Calina then lifted a finger before continuing, "There's one more advantage I have with this skill of mine."

However, Roan already understood what it was before Calina could even say it, saying, "The Spiritual and Yin Energies inside act as a sensor for you. That being said, anything that touches it will immediately be felt by you. Against enemies who can hide their presence from Spiritual Senses, this is definitely a very helpful skill."

"Sigh...you really are no fun. Couldn't you have waited for me to say that?" Calina lost her drive right there and then.

Roan didn't care, though. "Anyways, since you're here, I'll put you on Rafin's group."

"Rafin? Who's that?" Calina didn't know about the Freedom Sect yet, so it was normal for her to ask about it.

Rafin was Malo's aide, one of the few boys in the Freedom Sect. He was very good at scouting and moving silently. His speed was also top-notch in the Freedom Sect, with Malo even recognizing it.

Of course, Calina also became puzzled about what this Freedom Sect was about. With that, Roan explained how they succeeded in rescuing all the kids in the Soul Rulers' hands. He also talked about Celis, whose actions were why the planet was mostly covered in snow back then. Of course, he told her that Celis was on their side now...just a 'little bit' weaker than before.

Roan then talked about how they found out that all the kids with high Soul Purity also had very high cultivation aptitudes, which shocked Calina. After all, hearing that their Freedom Sect had 163 Purple Color Aptitude members was not something she could have dreamt of back in Sunkan. Even her Sasamil Empire didn't have that many Purple Color Aptitudes. Let alone having 957 members with Red Color Aptitude.

Last but not least, he told everything that happened until they reached the Demon Beast Continent and how they left it for Malo and everyone else to decide what to do. Naturally, that was the moment the Freedom Sect was created. He even pointed out at the big airship outside, which the sect members who came to participate in the war used to arrive here.

"To think that so many things happened while we were separated." Calina looked at Frin beside Roan before using a Spiritual Sense Message, asking, 'Why would you use an airship to go to the Demon Beast Continent with them? Wouldn't it be easier and safer to use the Dimensional Realm? After all, they all know about it since they have been there during the escape from the Soul Rulers' headquarters.'

Roan shook his head and explained the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm's new limitations through a Spiritual Sense Message. 'That being said, you can't think about yourself to be safe just because you're close to me, understood?'

'Such a thing happened?' Calina was obviously surprised by that as well. However, she had to admit those abilities were very overpowered. 'Well, it just means you guys are a little bit more like the rest of us, so it makes me a little happier.'

Roan nodded, responding, 'That's true.'

Suddenly, another demon beast arrived, looking at Roan before saying, "Commander Roan, Rafin sent a message saying that there are a few strange movements on the Zasfins' side."

Roan pondered over it for a bit and asked, "Was it in the Calau Swamp Region?"

The demon beast immediately nodded in response. "Yes."

Roan nodded as he replied, "Very well. Tell the whole army on that side to retreat."

Death... and me

Chapter 799: Don't We Have You?

Frin didn't understand Roan's orders, prompting him to ask, "Why would you make them retreat? That's a strategic location that would give access to either your army or Linton."

Linton was a Stage Nine Demon Beast...or Demon Insect, to be more precise. He was a Purple Reaper Mantis. Of course, Linton wasn't a Divine Demon Beast. Nevertheless, he had the strength to back up his position. One must remember that there were only Phex, Xaon, Frin, and Darian as Stage Nine Divine Demon Beasts. Considering the scope of an entire planet at the moment, even they couldn't control everything by themselves. Not to mention that Frin wasn't commanding anything since he must stay close to Roan to protect him.

As for the Calau Swamp Region, it was located between Roan and Linton's armies. However, because Roan didn't like to rely on unknown variations, he took it for himself to protect that region with his forces. Naturally, the retreat order confused Frin.

Roan just shook his head in response, saying, "Don't worry. Everything has gone according to plan." Roan then looked at the demon beast who brought the information, ordering him, "Tell Linton to manage some of his forces in case there's a need to defend from an attack coming from the swamp. At first, the Zasfins should come after my army since I'm the one causing most of the problems. But just in case...one more thing, give this jade slip to Linton." With that, Roan threw him a jade slip.

"Yes." The demon beast immediately left after that.

Roan then looked at Calina, who was quietly observing everything. "Here, take this." Just like Qia, he also sent Calina a jade slip, telling her, "You should be able to use it to find Rafin and his group. As long as you show it to him, he will allow you to join his forces."

Calina couldn't help but ask, "I don't exactly fit as a scout, you know?"

"I know. However, it's not like they never battle. Your mission is to protect Rafin's group in case there's a need for it. You can probably learn a thing or two from his concealing techniques as well," Roan said that without even blinking.

Naturally, Calina felt somewhat sad. They had just reunited after so long, but they hadn't talked for more than a few minutes before Roan dispatched her. "Can't we have a little more time together?"

Roan looked at Calina after that, slightly puzzled. "For what? I'm watching over the army most of the time, so it'll just be a waste of time. Just go ahead and use this chance to train."

Well, it wasn't like Calina didn't expect that. She had followed Rean's group for many years, after all. "Fine...but after the war is over, we need to take a break."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah. Just go already." Roan then returned his attention to the jade slip maps.

A few days later, Roan received information that the Zasfin Army passed through Calau Swamp. The majority of it was coming his way, while a small number went after Linton's forces. "Very well. Tell the Freedom Sect members to prepare for battle. The Zasfin Army will have to pass through Javeza Hills if they want to arrive here faster. That being said, that is where the battle will happen."

Frin found it strange, muttering, "You left the swamp empty, and now the Zasfin Army is on our doors. Then, when I thought you had a plan, you simply asked our forces to fight at Javeza Hills. I don't understand. If you kept the swamp defense line up, it would have been much harder for the Zasfins to attack."

Roan nodded, saying in response, "Exactly! And that was the issue."

"The issue?" Frin was even more lost after hearing that. "Fighting in the Swamp while we had the defense lines up would be advantageous for us. However, we'll be on a more even ground when it happens in Javeza Hills. How come there's an issue in the swamp?"

Roan sighed as he answered, "Can't you see? It's exactly because we had defense lines there that the Zasfins wouldn't attack. If they don't attack, we'll stay on a stalemate forever. Don't forget that the longer we take to move forward, the more time they have to build defenses. Emptying the Calau Swamp was necessary to lure the enemy inside."

Frin finally understood after hearing that. "So that's the problem, huh..." Still, he had to ask something else. "But wouldn't it be bad? We will mutually lose our forces. We don't have the advantage, after all."

Roan snorted when he heard that. "Hmph! What are you talking about? Don't we have you?"

"Me?!" Frin was taken aback once again. "I'm here to protect you, not to participate in the battle. What if someone attacks this place while I'm out? Besides, they definitely have someone at a similar level in case I really join the fray."

Roan agreed with Frin's last statement. "They definitely have someone on your level...but that doesn't matter. Just make sure that you battle over the Zasfin army. The shockwaves of your battle should be more than enough to wipe out a huge amount of their forces. As for me, you don't need to worry. No one will find me."

"And what if the Zasfin expert on their side tries to do the same thing and pull the battle to our side? If I was him, I would definitely try it."

"True." Roan didn't deny that. "Fortunately, you're a Divine Demon Beast, a Silver Fenrir. As for the Zasfin expert, he's just one enemy. Phex was able to fight several Zasfins underwater as a Phoenix. Can it be that you can't hold a single Zasfin in place?"

"Well...if it's just one or two, that should be possible. Though, the other side probably knows that as well, so I don't think there's only one or two there." Frin was still somewhat doubtful.

"There's no need to worry. Just go and do what I told you. Everything will be fine," Roan eventually said, not minding Frin's concerns at all.

Death... and me

Chapter 800: Frin's Hope

Roan was still the main commander of the army, so Frin had no choice but to do what he told. In any case, Roan wouldn't risk his safety, making sure his commands were sent while keeping a safe distance. That being said, he headed straight into the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm. As for the demon beasts that stayed behind to protect him, they were simply told that he was using a special concealing technique to hide from them.

If the Dimensional Realm didn't undergo that change, Roan wouldn't have done it like that. He would first use his White Star to gather Light Element and keep the Spiritual Sense bending skill working. If he felt the presence of the Transition Realm Zasfin, he would enter the Soul Gem Dimensional Realm straight away. However, he knew for a fact that he would be barred from entering this time. He didn't want to risk it, so he went straight inside it after Frin left. All the orders he had to give were given, so he wasn't that much concerned either.

On the battlefield of Javeza Hills, Rafin, as well as many other Freedom Sect members, arrived while bringing a nigh uncountable number of demon beasts at Stage Four and below. Of course, the Zasfin Army wasn't any worse, bringing their own forces. They finally got to take a good position by passing through the Caleu Swamp, so their commander would be sure to use this opportunity.

Frin was right about one thing. The Zasfins had access to Celis for a very long time, so they had quite a lot of Transition Realm Zasfins that stayed in the Soul Rulers' headquarters or were the leaders of other organizations. That being said, this army was followed by three Transition Realm Zasfins to keep it safe against the demon beast experts.

On the demon beasts' side, Frin arrived at Javeza Hills almost at the same time as the army. Naturally, the Transition Realm Zasfins noticed that with their enormous Spiritual Senses. "Isn't that the Silver Fenrir from the south? I thought he was staying back to protect the Demon Beast Army's commander. What do you think, Huo?"

The leader of their group, Huo, agreed as he replied, "Indeed, Deny. Have Orba on the back go out and check the area where their commander is located. Chances are low, but we might be able to get rid of him."

The last Transition Realm Zasfin, a woman by the name of Kika, also added, "It's worth a shot. We have always been caught on our backfoot ever since that commander of theirs appeared."

An Elemental Transformation Realm Zasfin subordinate immediately nodded behind the Transition Realm Zasfins after hearing that. Soon after, the Zasfin took out a Thoughts Transmission Talisman and put it on his forehead. The talisman burnt a few seconds later, confirming that the message was sent.

Well, that would be proven to be useless. By the time the Transition Realm Zasfin arrived in the place where Roan was staying, Roan would have already disappeared.

The battle in Javeza Hills didn't take long to start. Rafin and Calina already met each other beforehand. With that said, Calina joined Rafin's Freedom Sect members to fight in this battle. This was the only human group under Roan's command that only had humans and no demon beasts. After all, demon beasts at their level wouldn't have sentience yet. Naturally, they wouldn't be able to act as scouts.

As Frin looked over the situation with his Spiritual Sense, the Zasfin commanders on the other side did the same. Eventually, they knew that there was no point in holding back anymore and gave the order.

"Attack!"

All the demon beasts at Stage Four and below only understood that they had to kill any Zasfin, and so they did. All of them rushed forward, caring little for their own well-being. The Freedom Sect members also joined the fight while Falas, Glennie, and Wataba kept an eye on them. They were in direct contact with Rafin, who used his group not for battle, but to watch over the battlefield to try and find the best places for their members to fight.

However, little did everyone know that an enormous Silver Fenrir would pass by their heads as soon as the two armies encountered each other.

Boom!

Ahhhhhh!

Zasfin corpses were scattered everywhere as Frin passed through their army, causing havoc. No one there could possibly stop a Stage Nine Demon Beast like him.

Of course, the Zasfin leaders didn't expect Frin to join in on the battle straight away, let alone the fact that he would target their forces. However, they quickly reacted and headed into the fray as one of them shouted, "Stop!"

Frin faintly smiled after seeing this and welcomed the three ZASFins, saying, "So, you guys are finally out. I was wondering how many I'd have to kill before you three appeared. Anyways, let's play!"

Frin didn't even give them the time to answer before he transformed into a streak of silver light that charged at the ZASFins.

'Silver Radiance!'

His body shone with silver light. Frin's fur then raised on their ends, turning as sharp as well-forged spear tips. Last but not least, his strength increased by leaps and bounds. In the end, Frin was a melee attacker, so all his skills were all based on close range.

Of course, the ZASFins didn't stay still either. "You're only one being. Do you think you can defeat all three of us?!"

'The Ruler's Shield!'

'Myriad Water Strike!'

'Dawn of the Giant!'

Huo's group immediately acted and worked together to stop Frin's assault with their own skills.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom...

At first, the Zasfins had a smug expression on their face, seeing that they could indeed stop Frin on his path. However...

Ahhhh!

Arrrgh!

Noooooooo!

That only lasted a moment when they saw that the shockwaves of their fight were destroying their army even faster!

"You!" Huo was furious. He immediately understood why Frin took the initiative. He wanted to fight above their army. If it continued like that, it wouldn't matter who won the fight in the end since their Zasfin army would be wiped out.

Of course, Huo immediately reacted to that and sent a Spiritual Sense Message, hastily saying, 'Kika, leave Frin to us. Attack the Demon Beast Army as well.'

Frin could only bitterly smile as he saw Kika leave the battlefield. He knew where she was going. Unfortunately, there was little he could do since he was only one being while they were three. He could at most hold two Zasfins down, not three. 'Roan, I hope you knew what you were doing.'