

Death 821

Death... and me

Chapter 821: Too Bad!

After that, they sat down to talk about what happened. As for Kentucky, Roan sent him straight away to help the demon beasts conquer the Freten and Gargoc Regions. With the Stage Nine Demon Beasts, it wouldn't take too long.

"Spatial item to escape?" Roan narrowed his eyes as he could not help but say, "I didn't know they could create such items."

Phex shook his head as he replied, "They can't. Even for us demon beasts, it's obvious that the level of that thing far surpasses what we can forge on this planet."

"Can you tell me in detail what you felt when Fikin activated that spatial item?" Rean asked as he thought of a possibility.

Phex, Frin, and Xaon nodded before telling Rean what they saw and felt with their Spiritual Senses.

"I see..." Rean nodded before saying, "Yes, it's definitely not something you can create on this planet. In fact, even in our Sunkan Planet, it would have been impossible."

"How come?" Roan asked in response.

"Simple! The spatial fluctuations were just way too numerous. No teleport formation here or in Sunkan could reach that level of power. Besides..." Rean then looked at Phex's group as he asked them, "your Spiritual Senses can cover over a thousand kilometers, right?"

Phex nodded, saying, "My Spiritual Sense is the largest other than Darian, but Darian isn't here at the moment. My Spiritual Sense can go up to 1600 kilometers. Of course, once it surpasses a certain threshold, 1300 in my case, it becomes a little difficult to discern things."

Rean smiled as he continued, "That's the point. No teleport formation, be it here or in Sunkan, could teleport someone over 1000 kilometers." Of course, Rean didn't count the Soul Gem Circuitry Teleport

Formation. "However, Phex still wasn't able to capture Fikin's presence after that teleport. If even a teleport formation can't do that, let alone an item."

Roan had to admit it made sense. "I understand where you're coming from." Obviously, Roan was thinking about the Bestial Sacred Ground. "Phex and the others did say that the path to the 'Realm of Gods' was open in the past. Chances are that the item Fikin used was a remnant of that time, brought here by one of the so-called Realm of Gods' residents."

"Indeed." Xaon also thought it to be plausible. "Then again, even the other Soul Rulers' Ancestors, Sect Leaders, and Zasfin Emperors seemed to be shocked when they saw Fikin using that. Most likely, none of them knew that Fikin had such an item on hand."

Frin couldn't help but ask, "Does that mean Fikin can run away anytime he wants?"

Roan immediately shook his head as he said in response, "Definitely not." Surprised, Rean and the others asked why. "That's because of the amount of damage you inflicted on him. Which one would you choose? Revealing the existence of that spatial item or forever sacrificing your Soul Power?"

None of them needed to think twice before answering in unison, "Revealing the spatial item, no doubt."

Roan smiled before continuing, "However, he preferred to sacrifice his Soul Power instead of showing that spatial item until the very last moment. If that spatial item was something he could use at any moment, he definitely wouldn't have almost died and suffered such a huge loss. He would have teleported away first." Roan then lifted one finger as he continued, "That means this item of his could only be used once! Only a life-saving treasure with that characteristic would be worth keeping hidden, even if it meant sacrificing his Soul Power."

Phex didn't find any issues with Roan's logic as he said, "I see what you mean. In the end, Fikin still had a chance to escape after using the Soul Mark Immolation Art. However, if he used the bead, he would indeed guarantee his safety, but the item would be gone forever. In his position, I would also prefer to keep the bead since my life is a lot more important than my Soul Power."

None of the demon beasts or Rean refused that logic. The difference between an item you could use many times and one that you couldn't was just that important. Especially when it concerned an item like that akin to a second life.

Roan then waved his hand, not looking too concerned as he said, "Well, it wasn't as if any of us wasn't expecting Fikin to have some life-saving treasures. Just how many did you see the Zasfins or the demon beasts themselves using one during this time, huh? It's just that it was a little bit more impressive than what we expected."

Soon after, he changed the topic, telling them, "Let's focus on the conquest of the Freten and Gargoc Regions. As for Aite and Wesdin, we won't touch it as those are the regions that will be used to give war merits to the Hafel Clan. If we use our strength to take it, the whole plan will be useless. Besides, it'll look like we're concerned with the Zasfin forces in those two regions, which will help the Hafel Clan's cause even more."

Frin immediately got up and nodded after that, saying, "Good! I'm heading out to help with it."

However, Roan shook his head as he told him, "There's no need. We won't find any resistance there anymore."

"What?!" Naturally, Phex's group was taken aback.

Rean laughed as he looked at their faces. 'Sure enough, demon beasts aren't that good with strategies.' He then explained, "Isn't that obvious? The Aite and Wesdin Regions are well protected. As for Freten and Gargoc, nothing can stop us from taking it anymore. That meant the Zasfins won't leave their forces defending those two regions. Instead, they'll definitely send all their forces to reinforce Aite and Wesdin to make sure they won't lose those two regions at the very least."

Suddenly, a demon beast arrived at the scene before giving a report, saying, "Commander, all the Zasfins are retreating. What should we do?"

Roan nodded as he soon ordered, "Let them go. Focus on building our defenses in Humk, Freten, and Gargoc."

Sure enough, it was just as Rean and Roan explained. They just needed to be careful in case the Zasfins tried to do something else. Still, for the moment, this war had been won by the demon beasts for sure. If they succeed in putting Hafel Clan as the next Soul Rulers' Organization Leader, everything will be over.

"The only problem now is Fikin, the one who would be the biggest issue when putting the Hafel Clan there," Roan said. "Then again, there's nothing else we can do on our side anymore. The only ones who can deal with this problem are the Hafel Clan. We did what we could for them already. If they really want to have a member of their clan as the leader, this is the moment to show their cards."

Meanwhile, somewhere on the south side of the planet, there was a set of ruins forgotten by all. Almost no one knew that it even existed. This location couldn't be any further away from the Soul Rulers' headquarters, located at the north.

Suddenly, spatial fluctuations appeared inside a building at the center of the ruins. Not long after, a silver flash of light appeared before a figure came out of it. Naturally, that was Fikin. On his hand, there was a silver bead brimming with silver light. However, the light on the bead was a lot fainter than before.

Crack, crack, crack...

Shatter!

Following that, the bead shattered, leaving only dust and a gloomy expression on Fikin's face behind. Well, the fact that Fikin didn't have Soul Power anymore left him even angrier.

"I swear all of you will pay for this."

However, it was at this moment that a voice reached his ears.

"Unfortunately, you won't have the chance to do that."

Hearing that, Fikin felt a chill on his back as he looked behind.

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Chapter 822: They Are At It Together!

There, he saw an old man smiling directly at him. The old man's smile didn't comfort Fikin, though. Instead, Fikin's face had become even paler than it was before.

"Impossible! You can't be here!" Fikin exclaimed in fear.

That man was none other than the 'deceased' Hafel Clan ancestor, Duran Hafel!

Duran then laughed in response after hearing that. "Hahaha! Why? It was the two of us who found these ruins," the old man commented as he rubbed the old construction. "Naturally, I also know of it."

Fikin was already panicking, not believing his eyes. "But you're dead! DEAD! I killed you!

The old man shook his head as he replied, "No, but you definitely got close." Suddenly, the old man disappeared before appearing right in front of Fikin and grabbing his neck. His smile was now gone as he reminisced over some past memories.

In normal circumstances, Fikin wouldn't have fallen so easily under Duran's hand. After all, he was considered the strongest Transition Realm Zasfin of the Soul Rulers. Unfortunately for him, he didn't have Soul Power anymore. Not to mention the severe injuries all over his body and his depleted Spiritual Energy reserves. At this moment, maybe even Rean and Roan would succeed in killing him, let alone another Transition Realm cultivator.

"Do you remember? We both found that secret chamber. We couldn't believe our eyes when that happened. There were a huge amount of cultivation resources, cultivation techniques that were way above anything we had in the Soul Rulers organization. And, above all, the remnants of that senior from the Realm of Gods."

"But then, what did you do? You attacked me from the back! Me, who was your friend for several centuries, was betrayed, just like that! Do you know what the first thing I thought when we saw that? I thought that we were BOTH destined to do great things in the Soul Rulers organization. Yes! Both! How naive was I to believe that centuries of friendship had meant something to you."

As Duran kept talking, his mood became worse and worse.

"No. For you, it had never even been worth shit at all! It was as important as the fucking dirt on the ground!"

Fikin couldn't talk because of the hand on his neck, so he could only use Spiritual Sense to communicate. 'Both of us? Indeed, you were naive! I couldn't risk letting this information escape outside. You had always been the loyal type, and you would definitely tell your clan about this place. For what? Our higher-ups at that time would reward us with some crumbs before taking everything else for themselves!'

'How could I let that happen?' Fikin didn't show the least bit of regret. 'If I didn't kill you, how would I become the strongest member of the organization and eventually its leader? Today, even though I left the leading position for someone else, I'm still the one who holds the greatest authority in the organization. I've realized all my dreams! If achieving that meant I had to kill someone, then so be it.'

Fikin then snorted at Duran as he continued, 'However, are you sure you want to kill me? If I die, the Soul Rulers will crumble under the hand of the demon beasts. Are you really willing to let the Soul Rulers organization disappear, together with your beloved Hafel Clan?'

"Hahaha!" Suddenly, Duran began to laugh out loud again as he said, "Oh Fikin, Fikin...how could you be so blind? Look at me. Not only did I avoid death, am I not at the peak of the same cultivation realm as you? You've obtained all the resources and cultivation techniques for yourself, but I still reached this level. It's just that I took longer than you. After all, you did have all the resources here."

Indeed, that was something Fikin couldn't understand. It wasn't as if Duran had an outstanding talent or anything, nor did he have the Soul Rulers' help since everyone thought he was dead. With that, how did he reach that level? No, there was one thing that puzzled Fikin even more. 'How did you survive? I remember very well! When we entered the chamber, the defense formation left behind by the senior of the Realm of Gods activated. It opened a spatial rift that destroyed literally everything that fell inside. I saw your body turning into dust once I kicked you there!'

Duran shook his head after hearing that as he replied, "That's where you're wrong. Then again, I can't blame you for that. After all, what do guys at our meager level know about Spatial Laws, right? We can't control it at all, unlike the people of the Realm of Gods."

Duran then explained, "What you saw happening inside that spatial rift did look like destruction. However, that was only an effect of the space laws inside. Don't get me wrong, I really felt like my body

was being ripped apart, but that was only a side effect of the spatial distortions inside the rift. I only came to understand that because I had been inside."

Duran couldn't help but shiver a little as he remembered that event as he continued, "Still, if I had stayed there for too long, I would have definitely been dead. I guess I have to thank the senior from the Realm of Gods, who left that formation behind. His formation made the spatial rift very, very stable, so I could still resist the distortion. If it was just a bit worse, even someone at our actual level would have been wiped out in a second."

"However, through luck, I didn't die. Instead, that formation broke down while I was inside. Well, you definitely know it since you were there. The formation's destruction caused another rift to open. I didn't know where I would end up, but I didn't have much choice, so I threw myself inside."

"Surprisingly, I was brought back into the real world. It's just that I had lost most of my cultivation and could barely move due to my injuries. Nevertheless, I was alive. From that point onwards, I had only one objective in mind, revenge! When the white-haired boy came to talk with my Hafei Clan about the demon beasts' plans, I couldn't help but think, it was destiny! I immediately accepted forming an alliance with the demon beasts at that moment. Now, lo and behold, here we are."

Fikin was alarmed when he heard that. The demon beasts and the Hafei Clan! They were at it together!

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Chapter 823: Conclusion

'Yo-you can't! If you really follow the demon beasts, what will happen to our Soul Rulers organization?! Are you dooming our Zafins forever just for this?' Fikin thought that what could happen to his organization was a worse fate than what could happen to him.

Duran shook his head as he replied, "Don't worry. From the very start, the demon beasts didn't have the intention of controlling the entire planet. Didn't you see how much behind we were in terms of combat ability compared to them? The only reason those below the Elemental Transformation Realm could put up a fight was because of their Soul Marks."

Duran then snorted as he continued, "Can you imagine what would happen if we didn't have those Soul Marks? It's really a pity. In the past, our Zafin Race didn't need Soul Marks to fight against the Demon

Beasts. Just our natural Soul Power was more than enough. We have grown weak after the planet was reigned over by us. The lack of enemies contributed to that."

"The demon beasts, on the other hand, could see this fact clearly. They know very well that they are stronger and aren't idiotic enough to get rid of our Zasfin Race. If they do, they will be the ones dooming themselves." Duran then smiled once again after that. "That being said, the plan was very simple. Help our Hafel Clan become the organization's next leader through war merits, and so they did."

Suddenly, Duran increased the strength he was using in his hand, choking Fikin. "However, for that to happen, there was one last obstacle, you! To be honest, I wasn't sure if the demon beasts would succeed. However, I was the only one who knew about the Teleportation Bead other than you. That being said, I just had to wait. I knew it was impossible for you to die as long as you had the Teleportation Bead. But then again, I was sure you wouldn't use it unless you reached an extremely unfavorable situation. I was just afraid that the demon beasts wouldn't be able to force you to use it, which obviously didn't happen. Hahaha!"

Fikin couldn't help but say in a panic, 'You're committing a grave mistake! I'm the head of the Soul Rulers organization! If I die, the organization will definitely crumble! Your clan will crumble with it as well!'

Duran shrugged his shoulders as he replied, "Well, if that happens, that just means our Hafel Clan wasn't destined to become its leader." Duran's eyes then turned ice cold after that. "Well then. We've talked a lot, but I know you're using every second to try and recover your energy, even if just a bit. I'm not in the mood to risk letting you escape, so I'll see you in the next life."

'Wait!'

Unfortunately, Duran didn't hear it as his Spiritual Energy enveloped Fikin. Soon after, Fire Element gathered and started to burn the man alive. Duran didn't have Fire Affinity, but it wasn't anything hard to control at his level. Fikin tried to scream in pain, but Duran's hands on his neck didn't allow even that. Eventually, the screams stopped as the charred body became motionless, leaving only spatial equipment behind that Duran caught with his hand. Everything that Fikin considered important was inside that thing.

Duran then looked at the charred body and snorted as he coldly said, "Where do you think you're going?"

Suddenly, Duran made a grabbing motion in a certain direction of the room. As if a formless force was applied, something was dragged into his head. It looked like a small blue fire, quite hard to see. However, if one looked closely, one would see the resemblance of Fikin's face inside it. That...was Fikin's soul. "Truly impressive. The senior from the Realm of Gods really had amazing techniques. You are even able to separate your soul from your body. Oh well. I'll take my sweet time looking into your secrets in the Spatial Ring."

One must remember that Xiria was able to acquire a Spatial Bracelet in the past, so there was nothing weird with an Ancestor of the Zasfin Race to have one Spatial Ring, which was obviously much better than Xiria's bracelet.

Fire once again enveloped Fikin's soul as his expression contorted once more. The pain inflicted on his soul was even worse than the one in his body. Eventually, the soul disappeared as well. This time, Fikin was dead for sure.

Duran then looked up as he let out a long sigh. He had finally achieved his objective, so now, he felt somewhat empty. 'It's finally over. I wonder what I'll do from now on.' It was then that he remembered one of the terms when he negotiated with Rean. 'Hmm...that boy said that they could also allow me to use the path to the Realm of Gods. It's just that they weren't sure if they could open it or not. But then again, that was a path used by the demon beasts, so I might fall into severe danger if I pass through it...'

Suddenly, Duran began to laugh out loud as he thought out loud, "Hahaha! Why should I care? Just the fact that I'll be joining those Stage Nine Demon Beasts in this endeavor is already a near-death sentence. If they turn at me together, I'm probably done for. Well, I have nothing else to lose anymore, so I guess I'll give it a shot. Besides...demon beasts are a lot better at keeping their words than our Zasfin Race."

Duran then looked at the ruins where everything had happened one last time. He already returned there to check in the past, but Fikin had cleaned it completely, so there wasn't even a single Spirit Stone left. "Then again, I wonder just who that senior was?" Duran murmured as he took a badge from his own Spatial Ring. This was the only clue he had about the deceased guy.

Duran then shook his head before putting those thoughts behind. Perhaps, he would be able to find the guy in the Realm of Gods. After that, he took flight and disappeared into the distance. As for the ruins, no one knew when someone would come to check them again. Even if someone did, there wouldn't be anything left anyway.

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Chapter 824: Upside Down

Back at the Soul Rulers' headquarters, there was a building separated from the area Rean and Roan destroyed. The security there was almost as tight as the one kept for the Soul Stone and Bloodline Trial Control Formations. Inside, however, one wouldn't even find more than three or four Zafins working at once.

Well, there wouldn't be much of a reason to have many Zafins there to start with. All one would find inside were several shelves with some glass jars on each of them. Each of those jars had several inscriptions on their bottom and top, though. Inside, one would see a small wisp of blue flame. On top of that, there was a name under them.

Sevinia;

Latife;

Guile;

Palares;

Vance...

Each and every important member of the Soul Rulers' headquarters who was at least in the Elemental Transformation Realm had their names under a jar. Obviously, Fikin just so happened to have one as well. It was placed at the very center of the building, in full display for anyone to see.

Those jars were connected to the souls of each of their owners. They couldn't be used against them, though. It was simply a way of determining whether someone was dead or not. If the jar's owner died, the blue flame would disappear, making the jar shatter apart in the process.

During this war, many Elemental Transformation Realm Zafins died, and even a few Transition Realm ones passed away. That being said, the few workers in this place had been quite busy during the past few weeks.

Crack, crack, crack...

Suddenly, the sound of another jar breaking echoed in the building. The workers there could only sigh in response, knowing that another Zasfin had died in the war.

Shatter!

With that, the jar broke apart as the blue flame disappeared. However, when one of the workers went there to see who had passed away this time, his body froze in place, muttering in shock, "It can't be..."

However, he only stayed still for a moment before rushing at Fikin's jar at the center as he shouted, "Ancestor Fikin is dead!"

Without hesitation, the Zasfin worker spread his Spiritual Sense and spread the news to others. One Transition Realm Zasfin, someone who stayed to guard the fort, arrived at the room not too long after as he hastily asked, "Where is it?!"

The worker quickly pointed at the center of the room, showing the place where Fikin's jar was located. All he could see was the broken pieces of it as the blue flame was long gone. "How can that be? Fikin is our strongest member! The report said he escaped the demon beasts!"

The ancestor looked at the Zasfins behind him and asked, "How long has it been?"

"Just a few minutes ago. As soon as we saw it happening, we contacted you and the others outside," the Zasfin responsible for the building answered in response.

"What?! You told the others as well?!" The ancestor almost exploded in rage, feeling like killing the guy right now. This kind of information was supposed to stay hidden until they could deal with the situation. However, it would now go out of control.

Well, the guy did it on purpose for the sake of his group. He and his companions understood the severity of this issue, after all. That being said, they knew that the Zasfin Ancestors would try to keep it hidden

for as long as possible, which meant that they might be killed to prevent news from spreading. As loyal as they might be to the Soul Rulers, they weren't willing to die just to because they did their job.

Sure enough, the news had already reached most of the clans in the Soul Rulers organization. After all, many of them had members of their families working as protectors of the building with the jars in it. Once they heard about Fikin's jars breaking apart, they immediately used their Thoughts Transmission Talismans to tell their clan leaders.

Back on the battlefield, Vance and the other Transition Realm Ancestors were recovering from their injuries. However, the air in the area was quite gloomy as they knew that they already lost this war. The best thing they could do now was secure the places they had control of. Their army had fewer regions to defend, so they've become a lot more concentrated. On top of that, they had to wait for Fikin to come back so that they could talk about it.

Well, Vance and the other two Transition Realm Zasfins of the Hafel Clan were gloomy for another reason, the fact that Fikin escaped. As the highest members of the Hafel Clan, they obviously knew about the real plan to get rid of him. Of course, they wouldn't tell anyone about it. Little did the others notice, but the injuries they sustained were one of the most superficial as the demon beasts who fought them were warned to not make things difficult for the Hafel Clan.

Suddenly, a Zasfin subordinate arrived in the resting area with a pale expression. Naturally, all the Zafins understood that something bad happened.

"What is it? Are the demon beasts attacking the Aite and Wesdin Regions as well?" Vance asked straight away, trying to keep up his act.

"N-No, the Demon Beast Army is still consolidating their position in the Humk, Freten, and Gargoc Regions." The Zasfin then paused for a moment, gathering the courage to deliver the real message, stammering, "We just received a Thoughts Transmission Talisman Message from the headquarters. Ancestor Fikin's Soul Jar...bro-broke apart!"

Immediately, all the Ancestors, be it from the Soul Rulers or the other organizations throughout the world, were left appalled! "What the hell did you just say?!"

The subordinated sweated cold as he repeated the message. "Ancestor Fikin...is dead."

"Impossible!"

"We have an eye on the demon beasts' side. Phex and the others haven't left at all."

"Who could kill Fikin?"

"First of all, no one knows where Fikin went, so how did anyone find him?"

Vance's group, however, was doing their best to hide their joy. All three of them thought about the same person. 'It's Ancestor Duran! It must be him! He did tell us that this was his chance to get revenge, and he really did it!'

And just like that, the Zasfin World, or at least the world that knew of Fikin and the Soul Rulers, was turned upside down.

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Chapter 825: I'm Fikin's Best Friend

Suddenly, Rean received a message from Sevinia. Or, to be more precise, from Qia, who was still there to help exchange information in an instant. 'Wait...what?! Fikin is dead?!' Rean, of course, was shocked by the news. 'Alright, I'll tell everyone.'

Naturally, Phex, Frin, and Xaon were just as surprised.

Rean then looked at Phex's group as he asked, "Was it any of you? Perhaps...it might be Darian?"

They immediately shook their heads vigorously as Phex replied, "We don't even know where he went, so how could we have done it? Unless...he suddenly died from the injuries he sustained during our battle. As for Darian, he's busy with the Sea Demon Beasts' territory. It would be even more impossible for him."

Roan doubted that as well, saying, "I don't think he would die from injuries."

"We also thought the same thing," Phex and the others said in unison. "But then again, who could have killed him?"

It was then that they thought of a possibility. "Could it be that guy named Duran?" Of course, even though they mentioned him, there was no way to check it.

Roan then decided to simply ignore it, saying, "Forget about it. The point is that Fikin is dead, so the Hafel Clan will find it much easier to have one of their ancestors become the next leader. We just need to wait and see what happens."

With the demon beasts' objectives concluded, no more territorial conquests happened after that. Of course, many small battles continued to happen around the world, but nothing that could change the outcome of the war that much.

In the end, out of the world's 37 continents, the demon beasts took control of 20, leaving the Zasfins with 17. The reason was the same one as mentioned before. The Zasfins were present in almost every continent except the Demon Beast Continent in the past. Once they were driven out, the Zasfins' forces gathered.

With fewer territories to defend, the forces present in each of them were more concentrated. Taking their territories would need tremendous effort and even more battles from the Transition and Stage Nine experts and demon beasts. Neither side wanted to continue that anymore. Besides, even though the demon beasts had the advantage, they didn't want to turn out like the Zasfins, weak due to the lack of a common enemy.

Of the world's 37 continents, 15 of them were considered to be of high quality. They were located in the best areas and had the best concentration of Spiritual Energy overall. For example, Aite, Humk, Freten, Gargoc, and Wesdin just so happened to be located inside these continents.

Nine of them ended up in the demon beasts' hands while the other six stayed with the Zasfins. Naturally, these six continents were mostly located in the northern hemisphere, which was also where the Soul Rulers' headquarters was located. The Demon Beast Continent had always been in the south, so it made sense that almost all their nine high-quality continents were located around there.

A week quickly went by as the flames of war disappeared. However, the work was far from over. Be it the demon beasts or the Zafins, both of them had a lot of things to do.

Back in the Soul Rulers' headquarters, all the ancestors were gathered in a big hall, together with other important members, to decide the Soul Rulers' future. Vance and Sevinia Hafel were obviously there as well.

Pankun, one of the Transition Realm experts of the organization, was at the center as he was chosen to start the discussion. There wasn't really much meaning in him being selected since all the Ancestors held similar positions regarding their power in the organization. It's just that Pankun was used to do those things.

"Now then, we simply couldn't find out where Fikin died. We just know that none of us knew about his spatial equipment that allowed him to flee from the demon beasts. Because of that, we have no idea where he was sent to, nor how he died. Nevertheless, the fact still stands that he's definitely dead. That's for sure. The Soul Flame Jar is more than enough proof of his passing." Pankun talked with conviction, making sure that everyone was listening.

"However, our Soul Rulers organization can't go without a leader. It had always been like that, and it should continue like that. Otherwise, we might fall apart. If that happens, we'll really be doomed to fall under the hands of the demon beasts. I believe no one here wishes for that to happen, right?"

Sure enough, everyone in the room nodded. Even without the Soul Control Formations, the Soul Rulers had gathered enough strength to be the leader of the Zafins of the world. Well, half of the world wasn't theirs anymore, though.

"Very well. When it comes to strength alone, Fikin was above us all. However, the rest of us aren't that much different. It all falls into who has the best affinity against the other. That being said, we can't use these criteria to choose the next leader. Instead, I would like to call for a voting session."

Immediately, the room went alive as everyone displayed their concerns for that method. After all, it was a fact that some clans had more members than others, so they would stand a higher chance of being selected.

"Silence! This is the best method. Even if some clans have more members, it's not like they're the only ones. I'm sure quite a lot of you have your own opinion as to who should be the next leader, and it might not even be someone from the same background as you. Unless someone has a better idea, we will proceed with voting. Now, who wants to participate? The only requisite is to be above the Elemental Transformation Realm."

Suddenly, a voice echoed in the entire hall as it said, "I recommend Vance Hafel for the position. I hope everyone will give your vote to him."

There wasn't anything wrong with that request since the leader was going to be chosen by vote. However, the problem was that no one knew who the man that talked was.

Pankun narrowed his eyes in response as he asked, "Who are you?"

The old man smiled before answering, "I'm Fikin's best friend, Duran Hafel."

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Chapter 826: Plan in Action

"Duran Hafel?" That name only made the Soul Rulers puzzled. How come they didn't remember anyone called that? What was even more impressive was the fact that a Transition Realm Zasfin that they didn't know about existed. Of course, it wasn't like he was completely unknown.

Surprisingly, the first one to remember that name was Pankun as he said, "Duran Hafel...Duran Hafel...ah! I remember you. You and Fikin spent most of your time together, doing missions all the time. Didn't you die during an exploration over two thousand years ago? If I remember correctly, you and Fikin were ambushed by the demon beasts. "

Duran almost laughed out loud when he heard that as he thought inwardly, 'If only they knew the truth, hehe!' Of course, he didn't say that out loud. Instead, he kept his stern face before confirming Pankun's story, saying, "I'm glad you still remember me, Pankun."

Duran then looked around and could see that very few Zasfins seemed to recall his name as well. It's just that they didn't say anything. "However, we didn't die during that time. Instead, I was gravely injured, so

Fikin had to hide me somewhere else. If you're asking why I didn't come back later, that was something that Fikin and myself decided."

"Why?" one of the ancestors watching the scene asked.

Duran then smiled before pointing at himself as he replied, "Because I was the only one who could match Fikin in direct combat."

Wow!

In an instant, the hall went alive. Everyone knew that Fikin was the strongest Zasfin for thousands of years. None of the Transition Realm Zasfins that came after him could match his strength. For Duran to say that he was as strong as Fikin was very bold.

Duran then continued, "Fikin and I found an inheritance from a senior of the Realm of Gods, and we could use it to increase our strength. Unfortunately, that inheritance was inside the demon beasts' territory in the southern hemisphere. On our way back, we were ambushed and almost lost it. After all, both of us were nothing but two Saint Realm Zasfins. There were plenty of demon beasts at our level and stronger. Fortunately, we used one of the items we found there to escape. You all probably know what it is, that silver bead."

Sure enough, everyone knew what the silver bead was since they saw Fikin using it to escape.

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Seeing that the Zasfins there understood, Duran didn't waste time as he continued with his story. "Once we escaped, we understood that the demon beasts knew about us. That being said, we came up with a plan. Both would use the senior's cultivation resources and techniques to increase our strength. However, one of us wouldn't come out. Instead, he would stay in the shadows, cultivating as well."

"It wasn't hard to guess who should be doing that. I was severely injured and would take a long time to recover, so we both agreed that Fikin would be the one to reappear. As for me, I was declared dead. Since then, only a few members of my clan and Fikin himself knew of my existence," Duran explained.

"But why would one of you hide?" Naturally, they still wanted to know the reason behind that.

"Isn't that obvious? If both Fikin and I suddenly started to become too strong, it would look suspicious, especially since I lost most of my cultivation before I used that senior's resources. Also, the demon beasts knew we had found something. It was better to be safe than sorry. Or do you think everyone here is an altruist and wouldn't covet our rewards?" Duran's eyes turned cold as he asked that question.

None of the Zasfins there opened their mouths. At the same time that the Soul Rulers organization was an alliance, it also had its own struggles. It was certain that the stronger Zasfins would demand Fikin and Duran's items for themselves.

Duran then sighed as he finished it off, saying, "Last but not least, we wanted insurance."

Pankun couldn't help but ask, "Insurance for what?"

Duran then showed a sad expression as he replied, "Insurance for what just happened to Fikin. If our strongest Zasfin died, we would need someone with enough power to have things back on track. Not to mention that this someone would act as a deterrence against the demon beasts. That's why I'm here."

Suria, another Transformation Realm Zasfin, could not help but snort in response as he could not help but say, "You say that you're as strong as Fikin, but would we believe that? As far as I know, you might be the one who killed him. After all, you seem to know a lot more of his methods than us."

"Kill him?" Duran laughed out loud after hearing that. However, he didn't look the least bit happy. Instead, it was as if he was holding his rage inside. "We're at war against the demon beasts! They took a lot of our territories! Tell me, what good would it bring to kill Fikin? Doing such a thing would only pull our Soul Rulers organization down."

"As for whether or not I'm as strong as him, why don't you try it out?" Suddenly, Duran's Spiritual Sense spread out, pressing everyone in the room down. The only ones who could resist it were Zasfins at the Elemental Transformation Realm and above. However, even the Transition Realm Ancestors couldn't help but feel shocked. That's because they could truly feel Duran's Spiritual Sense affecting them.

Duran then pointed at Suria, saying, "Come. If you still think I'm bluffing, you can bring two more Zasfins to help you fight me. If you win this 3 vs. 1, I'll admit I'm not as strong as Fikin."

"That won't be necessary," Pankun said as he raised his hand. "I remember Fikin's Spiritual Pressure very well, and I can tell that yours isn't any weaker than his. Instead, I would like to ask. Do you know what happened to Fikin?"

Duran shook his head as he answered, "I spent my last week trying to pinpoint the place he teleported to. I went to our agreed location after I heard about the outcome of the war, but I found nothing there. I'm afraid that he either succumbed to his injuries or..."

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"Or what?" Pankun asked back.

"Sigh...or he died to the Spatial Transfer." Duran looked up to the ceiling as he continued, "That senior's inheritance was really, really old. We weren't sure if the things he left behind were still safe for use or not. Since Fikin could escape with the Silver Bead, he should have enough resources to heal himself. The only thing I think that could kill him is an error during the displacement."

No one there knew the risks of an error during a Spatial Transfer of that caliber since the only Teleport Formations available on the planet couldn't teleport very far. They couldn't simulate the spatial fluctuations generated by a teleport of who knows how many thousands of kilometers. Considering that Fikin was seriously injured before the teleportation, if the item was really damaged, he might have died from the spatial distortions.

One point made everyone more or less accept that theory's possibility: the fact that Fikin died shortly after the teleportation. If he had been killed, then the one who did the job must have been waiting for him from the very start. That didn't seem possible since no one could guarantee that Fikin would use that item or not.

As for whether it was Duran who killed Fikin or not, no one could prove it. Besides...he was too strong for them to try to force anything out of him. Well, there was also the issue regarding the demon beasts, so having a Zasfin as strong as Fikin on their side would be of great help.

Death... and me

Chapter 827: The Next Leader

Still, there was one thing that the Zasfins were confused about. "Why did you not nominate yourself? Instead, you appointed Vance Hafel for the position."

Duran shrugged his shoulders as he replied, "I have lived my life in the shadows, only bothering with my own cultivation. If not because of what happened to Fikin, I wouldn't even appear at all. Being the Soul Rulers' leader? I don't want to even think about all the bothersome tasks that come along with that. Fikin liked the attention, so he was fine with it. However, I'm totally different. "

Duran then warned the Zasfins after that. "Once everything stabilizes, I'll be leaving again. Obviously, I can't be a leader like that. Fikin was almost always available, after all."

"Leave?" The Zasfins were confused. "Shouldn't you stay and help prevent the demon beasts' actions?"

Duran nodded as he replied, "And I will. Once this election of a new leader is over, I'm going to talk with the demon beasts."

Once again, everyone was surprised to hear that. "Talk with the demon beasts? We shouldn't talk! We should find a way to take what is ours back."

Duran snorted in response, taking their arrogance down a peg as he said, "Ha! What a joke! After you lost Celis, the Bloodline Trial Control Formations, and many Ancestors, do you think you have what it takes to take everything back? Besides, I was watching the war against the demon beasts from far away. Truly, I couldn't be more ashamed for being a Zasfin."

Duran's voice got deeper as if he was releasing his anger. "Thousands of years of control over this planet for what? To get a bunch of good for nothings that couldn't contend against mindless demon beasts? The lack of a common enemy made all the lower-level Zasfins look like a joke! Forget about taking the demon beast territories back. You should be grateful if I can convince them that we should keep things like this. Otherwise, I'm not sure if even I will be able to hold them back."

Everyone went silent after that, especially the Zasfins, who had cultivations below the Elemental Transformation Realm. How could they not understand Duran's words? They were there in the war, so

they saw how in one-on-one fights, most of the Zasfins would be at a disadvantage against demon beasts of the same level, only holding them back because of the Soul Marks.

"Forget it. I won't argue with all of you about this. My job is to protect the Soul Rulers and Zasfins, which was the agreement between Fikin and me. I'm also a Zasfin, so I'm obviously angry over what happened. Nevertheless, I can also see an opportunity here. Perhaps, now that we all have a common enemy, we Zasfins can really improve. Maybe it will be the trigger to reopen the path to the Realm of Gods that has long since been lost."

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The Realm of Gods. Which Ancestor of the Soul Rulers hadn't thought about this? They knew that they were wasting their years in this place without being able to ascend. One day, they would also run out of vitality. "Could it be that you know something about breaking the barrier?"

Duran then pointed in the direction of the demon beast territories. "It's just a small chance, and none of you would like to hear it. But yes, I do have an idea."

With that, all the Zasfins stopped thinking about going against Duran. As minuscule as the chance might be, there was no Transition Realm Zasfin in that room that wouldn't want to try it out.

Duran then sat down in a corner before saying, "Anyways, I just put my clan member's name on the table. You guys can decide if you want someone else to participate in this election. There's no need to worry. I won't complain or say anything even if Vance doesn't win. This is my word as a Soul Ruler."

The room went silent as the clans looked at each other. Although no one said anything, Spiritual Sense Messages were running everywhere.

'What a joke! After what he said about the Realm of Gods, would any clan dare to indicate someone else? All our ancestors would allow that to happen.'

'Look at the Ancestor's eyes. They looked like dead fishes until a moment ago because of our losses at the war. But now that they saw a chance of entering the Realm of Gods, even though it could totally be a lie, they still look like they've gotten a second chance at life.'

'Ramu, I know that you wanted to become a candidate for the position of leader of our organization. However, I have to disappoint you this time.'

'I understand, Ancestor. Ramu won't say anything.'

Similar conversations went back and forth until, eventually, Pankun resolved to speak. "Ahem...I guess everyone already had enough time to decide who will participate in the election. Now then. If you have a name to give or if you want to be a candidate yourself, please step forward."

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Sure enough, the entire hall was silent, without a single Zasfin daring to step forward. After a minute or so of silence, Pankun understood that no one would try to contend against Vance. "Since no one else wants to participate, I believe there's no need to have a vote session. The only question is whether Vance wants to be the next leader or not."

Surprisingly though, Vance immediately shook his head as he replied, "I don't." Well, he couldn't be blamed for that. He's also one of the Ancestors, which meant that he was at the Transition Realm. After hearing about the path to the Realm of Gods, he obviously wanted to participate as well. Who cares about being a leader when one had the chance to break through to the next level? "Instead, I will name Sevinia. She has more than enough abilities to take the position even if she hasn't reached the Ancestors' level yet."

Sevinia immediately stepped forward. She was still in the Initial Stage of the Elemental Transformation Realm, so it would be a long, long time before she could think about the Realm of Gods. She would love to be the next Soul Rulers' Organization Leader while it.

Pankun nodded before asking once more, "Anyone against it?"

After a few moments of silence, Pankun then announced, "Very well. Sevinia of the Hafel Clan is now the next Soul Rulers' Organization Leader."

Death... and me

Chapter 828: The Demon Beasts' Path

Once that decision was made, the Transition Realm Zafins quickly changed the topic. "Duran, right? So, tell us more about the path to the Realm of Gods. How do you intend on helping us break the barrier?"

Duran was already expecting that, so he began to explain, "Our Zasfin Race's Path to the Realm of Gods is gone. There's simply no way to bring it back."

Everyone didn't understand. "Didn't you say you had an idea? If you say you can't open it, then what do you intend to do?"

Some even started to show dark expressions as they said, "You didn't say that just so we would end up selecting your Hafel Clan member as the next leader, right? If that's the case, you better be prepared for the consequences."

Duran snorted in response as he replied, "Hmph! Did you forget what I said? I told you that you definitely wouldn't like my idea. However, I do have a way that MIGHT, and I repeat, MIGHT be possible."

Soon after, Duran pointed in the direction of the Demon Beast Continent once more. No, this time, his intention was something else. "When I was talking, I told you how I had been looking for Fikin's location in secret, right? During that investigation, I found something about the demon beasts' Bestial Sacred Ground. It seems they're preparing to open their own Path to the Realm of Gods."

Immediately, the Transition Realm Zafins' eyes widened. They obviously knew of the Bestial Sacred Ground. After all, that was one of the reasons they couldn't take the Demon Beast Continent for themselves back when they acquired Celis.

"I saw in the records that the demon beasts' Path to the Realm of Gods was located in their Bestial Sacred Ground. However, their own path had also been completely closed for a very, very long time. How do you know it'll open again?" Naturally, that was the question in everyone's mind.

Duran shook his head as he said in response, "I don't. As far as I know, this is just a possibility that the demon beasts are considering possible. It seems like the Sacred Ground, which was left behind by the higher demon beasts of the Realm of Gods, is being activated."

Naturally, the one who told Duran about it was Rean. That was one of the bargains he offered for the Hafel Clan to join their cause. Little did Rean know that Duran would have taken his offer even without it. After all, Duran only wanted his revenge against Fikin, so the Soul Rulers' leader position and the Path to the Realm of Gods were just additional rewards in his eyes.

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"If you want to know how I discovered this information, it has to do with my ability to keep myself concealed. Until the moment I raised my voice, none of your Spiritual Senses caught my presence, right? I used this ability of mine to infiltrate the Demon Beast Alliance's territory and got close to the Bestial Sacred Ground," Duran explained.

Everyone had to admit that Duran was right. Let alone now, they had never felt his presence during the thousands of years he had lived. That just showed how good that ability of his was. Of course, they all thought that Duran's ability had something to do with that so-called inheritance that he and Fikin found in the past.

However, now that Duran finished talking, all the ancestors understood why Duran said they wouldn't like his idea.

"You intend to use the demon beasts' Path to the Realm of Gods, right?"

"That's too risky! We would need to enter their Bestial Sacred Ground!"

"First of all, is it possible for a Zasfin to enter that place?"

"That's not all. Even if the demon beasts open the path, wouldn't it lead to the demon beasts' Realm of Gods? How dangerous would it be to appear there? Chances are that the demon beasts watching it would kill us at first sight."

Duran kept hearing complaints until he finally lost his patience. "Silence! Then, what do you intend to do? Die here without the chance to enter the Realm of Gods? Is that okay for all of you? I don't know

about you, but I refuse to wither on this planet until my lifespan is up, and it won't take too long for that to happen."

Sure enough, Duran's words silenced all the Transition Realm Zasfins. Whether they were at the Initial or Peak Stage of that Realm, all of them wouldn't want to let the chance of heading to the Realm of Gods pass up. That's their only chance to continue their path of cultivation.

"Now you understand the predicament."

"First, there's no guarantee that they will be able to open the path."

"Second, there's no guarantee that they would allow us to enter that place."

"Third, there's no guarantee we can even get close to it due to its restrictions."

"Fourth, there's no guarantee that the demon beasts won't use this chance to trap and get rid of us in the Bestial Sacred Ground. After all, I'm pretty sure we would definitely do it. Why would we let such a great chance of getting rid of our worst enemies pass?"

"Fifth, we can't ask the demon beasts for insurance since they definitely wouldn't give one to us. Let's be honest. Neither of us would give it to them either in their position."

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"Sixth, considering that everything goes according to plan, we might be falling right into enemy territory after passing through the path. We might be killed by the demon beasts watching the passage the very next second."

The more Duran talked, the more the Ancestors' expressions turned worse. Nevertheless, he stomped the ground and continued, "However! I will take this risk! Now then, that was my idea. Whether you wish to follow me in this endeavor or not, that's your problem."

As soon as Duran finished his words, a very old Zasfin, someone who was obviously at the Peak Stage of the Transition Realm and close to the end of his lifespan, stepped forward. "Hehe! This old man has nothing else to lose. As meager as the chance might be, I'll accompany you."

Little by little, those Ancestors stepped forward as well. No one could blame them. In the end, the allure was too strong.

Seeing that, Duran smiled with a satisfied expression, saying soon after, "Well, at least we'll be able to fight back with these numbers in case we get fooled. Hahaha!"

Death... and me

Chapter 829: What Really Matters

The news about Sevinia's ascension spread fast, quickly arriving at every corner of the ZASFINS' territories. All the ZASFINS that knew about the Soul Rulers were obviously surprised. However, they also knew that with Fikin's death, a new leader was supposed to take his place. It's just that no one expected Duran's appearance.

Naturally, it didn't take long for the information to reach the demon beast territories as well. When they heard about the Hafel Clan member, Sevinia, becoming the next Soul Rulers' Leader, they were obviously delighted. Of course, only those involved in that negotiation felt like that. The majority didn't really care much about it.

"Fikin's best friend, huh?" Roan couldn't help but mutter.

"Whether it's true or not, the fact still stands that none of us expected the ZASFINS to have someone as strong as Fikin. Surprisingly, it was Duran himself." Rean also felt the situation too good to be true. Duran's appearance was too much of a coincidence.

Kentucky didn't seem to mind as he said, "Who cares? With Duran there, the Hafel Clan obtained the position we need them to."

"That's true." Gulan, who was also back from the area where he was fighting, agreed with Kentucky.

"The question now is what will happen from now on." Darian wondered. Sure enough, the fights in the Sea Demon Beasts' territories were also done.

Roan then explained, "We need to wait. According to our plan, the Zafins should send their leader to come and talk with the demon beasts. If everything goes well, it shouldn't take long before the Zafins enter in contact with us."

Roan was right. It only took a few days before a representative of the Soul Rulers organization arrived in the demon beasts' newly acquired territory. He simply came to deliver a message that the Ancestors and the leader of the Soul Rulers organization wished to have a conversation in the borders of both power's territories.

"Well then, let's go." Phex and the others didn't waste time, heading straight to the place mentioned. Both sides kept an eye on the borders, with the region selected being a very well watched region. That being said, they knew it would be too hard for an ambush to be done there.

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There was also one more thing. Rean wanted to take that opportunity to get Qia back. After all, she was still being kept as a means of communication and assurance by the Hafel Clan.

Later that day, the Ancestors of the Zafins and the Stage Nine Demon Beasts appeared in the selected area. They kept quite the distance from each other, using their Spiritual Senses to make sure everything was okay. Eventually, both sides sent a few of their members forward to talk.

On the Zasfin's side, Sevinia, Duran, Pankun, Kumo, and Suria were the ones to come forward.

As for the demon beasts, Phex, Darian, Frin, Xaon, and obviously Roan were their members. Even though Roan was just a Nascent Soul Realm human, it wasn't a secret to anyone anymore that he was the commander of the central army during the war. It was also him who forced the Zafins back with huge losses time and time again.

If the Zafins knew of his capability back when he was in the organization, they would have definitely gotten rid of him and his brother straight away.

Both sides looked tense, but the negotiations started anyway. Phex, of course, as the strongest Divine Demon Beast, did the talking on their side. "So, what would the oh so prideful Soul Rulers want to talk with such low lives like us, demon beasts?" Obviously, Phex was being sarcastic there. He was implying that if they were really like that, then what would the Zasfin, who lost to them, be?

However, as annoying as his words seemed to be, none of the Zasfins that came to talk seemed angry. Eventually, Sevinia, as the new leader of the Soul Rulers organization, began to speak. "How could that be? The demon beasts showed that they really had the strength to stand on their own. That's why we decided to negotiate instead of keeping this meaningless fight going."

"Oh?! Negotiation, huh?" Phex smiled in response. "Well, we already obtained enough territories for our demon beasts to spread. Alright, tell me. what is it that you want to negotiate?"

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Sevinia nodded as she said in response, "We want a truce. Be it the demon beasts or the Zasfins, continuing this battle won't result in much for both sides. Sure, we know that the demon beasts have the advantage at the moment, but we can definitely make your group pay a very high price if you decide to press forward."

"High price, huh? Well, I won't deny that now that the Zasfins have gathered in the remaining areas, it would be annoying to conquer any more territories. In any case, we have more than enough space for the next thousands of years." Suddenly, Phex's expression changed as he continued, "However, there are plenty of us here that wish to continue. After all, your Soul Rulers organization kept most of us confined in the Demon Beast Continent for a very long time. How exactly do you intend to appease their anger?"

Sevinia wasn't surprised by that. Well, in fact, she had already discussed it with the demon beasts through Qia and Rean. Everything happening here wasn't anything more than an act for the Zasfins who didn't know about it.

Sevinia's expression then turned dark as she replied, "There isn't really a need for us to do that. Haven't you killed a lot of our members? That should have been more than enough already. Don't think that we will let you step on our heads just because we opened negotiations. Let's be honest here. Even if you

have the advantage at the moment, you can't do much about the actual situation. Is your Demon Beast Alliance really willing to force us? If that's the case, we don't mind keeping you company till the end."

Roan was satisfied with Sevinia's words. 'Very good performance. Now, let's hear the part that matters.'

Death... and me

Chapter 830: The Play Continues

The Zafins were obviously more than pleased with Sevinia's approach. After all, it would feel way too weird if they just took a passive stance all this time. One must remember that the Zafins still thought that the world should have been only theirs.

Phex snorted after hearing Sevinia's words, though. "Are you telling me you have no obligations whatsoever after those many years of forced isolation? Hmph! If you don't want any compromise, our demon beasts don't mind taking this war till the very end. Do you think we're afraid of taking things too far?"

Suddenly, Duran lifted his hand as he said, "We might not know each other, but I believe you've already heard of me. I'm Duran Hafel, and I'm here to talk on behalf of my friend that you killed, Fikin."

Darian, who was on Phex's side, immediately shook his head, saying in response, "Killed? We certainly tried, but that guy escaped at the last moment. Your race should have seen it as well."

Duran ignored that fact as he said, "Is that so? Well, I guess no one here can prove if it really wasn't you." Duran then changed the topic. "However, I'm not here to put the blame on anyone. Death is a common sight during wars, and Fikin was far from being the only one dead."

With that, he showed a serious expression before saying, "The war has already been won by your Demon Beast Alliance. Because of that, both sides lost way too many forces. Then again, I won't deny that we kept you imprisoned in the Demon Beast Continent. Say it, what compromise do you want from us? Depending on what it is, we might be able to reach an agreement. Just don't go too far since we're also not afraid of dragging this on till the very end."

Phex nodded, satisfied. "Now we're talking." Soon after, he looked at Roan and then at the many humans in the middle of the Demon Beast Army behind him. Obviously, he hadn't forgotten the promise

the Demon Beast Alliance made with them. "First, we demand the act of human slavery to be banished. All humans in your Zasfin territories have to be sent to the Wringan Continent."

Wringan Continent wasn't one of the high-quality regions. Still, all the humans participating in the war knew that the continent given to them, in the end, wouldn't be anything impressive. They just needed a place where they could flourish for the years to come.

"Second, neither side is allowed to take control over the continent for the next two thousand years."

All the Zasfins were taken aback by the demands. After all, it had nothing to do with the demon beasts themselves but the humans who were the weakest race in this war. Nevertheless, they quickly put those thoughts aside since that wasn't the main problem.

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"Impossible!"

"Do you know how much the slaves are needed in the Zasfin world?"

"Who do you think will do the work if they're gone? Us? Such things are beneath our honorable race."

"This is too much!"

"You are being too crazy to wish giving the humans so much space."

Such voices were raised everywhere in the back. However, Duran quickly intervened, shouting, "Silence!"

Duran's words, at the moment, weighed more than Sevinia's, so everyone had really shut up straight away. Well, for the ancestors, the position of humans was something they didn't really care about that much anymore. Only those below the Elemental Transformation Realm raised their voices. Instead, they saw a chance in this condition put forward by the demon beasts.

Naturally, Duran also saw the same chance, saying, "We can give the humans back to you. However, this is a compromise too big for our race. That being said, you need to do us a favor. Do that, and we'll send every single human in the ZASFINS territory to you."

Phex narrowed his eyes in response. Well, he already knew what Duran was going to ask, so it didn't matter that much. "The ones making demands should be our Demon Beast Alliance. However, unlike you ZASFINS, demon beasts know how to keep their words. If what you ask isn't too much, we'll try to make it happen."

Immediately, the Ancestors of the ZASFIN Race's eyes lit up. The time they were waiting for finally arrived.

Duran smiled at Phex as well, quickly stating his condition. "I found out that your Bestial Sacred Ground has shown some reactions. From the looks of it, there's a chance that the Path to the Realm of Gods will open there."

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Phex immediately showed a shocked expression, saying, "How did you find about it?"

Duran didn't tell him how, though. "How I did it doesn't matter. What matters is whether you're willing to let us use your demon beasts' Path to the Realm of Gods. If it helps, the other ZASFINS at my level don't mind helping you make it happen. I believe your Demon Beast Alliance wouldn't refuse an extra hand in such a huge endeavor, right?"

"This..." Phex, Frin, Xaon, and Darian seemed to hesitate. Well, Rean, who was watching from behind, had to put quite some effort to not laugh at that act.

Duran then struck the iron while it was hot, continuing, "You should truly consider this option. Not only would your demon beasts not lose anything by allowing us to take part in this, but your job will also become a lot easier. For this chance, our ZASFIN Race wouldn't mind enforcing a law prohibiting the slavery of humans in our entire territory for as long as you want."

The Transition Realm Zafins on Duran's side and the others behind nodded. For the Realm of Gods, they were willing to do almost anything as long as it didn't spell calamity for their race on this planet. For them, humans slaves were still just that, slaves. Whether they would cause problems in the future or not, it could only happen far, far in the future. It would be the job of the Zafins of that time to deal with it. Well...the twins were an exception, though. It's just that they could do nothing about it.