

Divine Path System - Chapter 2 - Red Pluto Day And Girl Of Dreams

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"If only I wasn't frozen." Varian stomped his foot. The closed wound opened and bleeding started once again. The sensors prompted the medical bot to tend to his wounds.

Varian neither felt the pain nor the bot's actions.

His mind was on that night. He could only recall the scene until he fainted. He neither remembered her last words nor what happened after that horrific scene.

Most puzzling of all, he never understood how he survived.

Though the investigators told him that his mother's last attack damaged the Fire wolf's nervous system and killed it moments after her death, he found it hard to believe. That, however, was the only truth he was offered.

The door to the locker room opened, and a man with a heavy build entered the room. He looked to be in his 30s, with his bald head and big beard adding to his mature bearing.

"Good day, Mr. Gareth." Varian greeted the Hall Master with a genuine smile.

Varian used to be an optimist. Despite being an Unawakened when his peers all awakened by 16, he didn't complain. He trained.

He finished his high school two years early and planned to train an entire year to take the Earth Trooper Academy entrance test. It produced some of the finest soldiers of the Human Armed Forces.

After enlisting as a soldier, one's duty could go from as near as Mercury to as far as Neptune. It was a glorious service, one which Varian's dad saw as the ultimate duty.

Varian thought 1 year would be the perfect chance to awaken and his mother's surprise gift only made it plausible.

The moment when she revealed the gift, he was sure he'd awaken and enter the Earth Trooper Academy as an honor student.

Fate was fickle. After her death, Varian lost all purpose and Self-belief.

It wasn't exactly failing to save her that hit him so hard. He knew the chances of death were high for both of them. It was being paralyzed to even try to save her that broke him.

Realizing he couldn't move even when his mother's life was under threat, his fire died. He never saw himself as worthy again.

The doctors told him body was paralyzed under fear. Many adventurers had similar cases of being frozen in fear when their teammates were eaten by magic beasts.

So, Varian also told himself the same thing, over and over. The fuel of saving everyone that propelled him his entire childhood now set him on fire. It burned his self-belief to ashes.

He gave up the Earth Trooper entrance and searched for ways to numb his pain. There was one solution he came up with — Fighting. Since fighting unawakened wouldn't be enough, he'd fight awakened.

Gareth helped him out and employed him to be a trainer to newbies who are still figuring out their powers through direct combat.

To others, it was perhaps a normal employment. But to him, it saved him from going insane.

"It was a bloody match. You're going to be popular." Gareth grinned and seated himself in a comfy chair. He had the look of a rogue adventurer. There were rumors that he used to be a high rank adventurer, which meant he was at least level 7.

"I'm sorry I lost control. The Hall might be affected." Varian sighed.

Injuries were allowed in duels to a permissible degree. Breaking all ribs wasn't really permissible.

"What can happen to the Hall? I'll see who dares slander?" Gareth patted his chest and chuckled. A strong aura radiated from him and the wind stilled.

He was publicly a Level 4 Space Adept. He had the capital to be confident. With a snap, he can freeze the space and kill any level 1 awakener. Even level 3s wouldn't stand a chance against him.

"Then I'll consider myself lucky that the level 1 was unskilled. If he was really skilled, I'd lose." Varian shrugged.

Varian could take on many level 1 awakeners. It was because of his experience and their inexperience.

However, since every Awakner had more physical stats than him, even if they learnt a significant portion of his skill, they could outmatch him.

And then there was limit to how far skills could take him.

A normal person could never beat a level 2 Awakener. Varian tried and failed so many times that he lost count.

As they progressed in their path and advanced the levels, Awakeners turned into an insurmountable peak. A level 9 Awakener was equivalent to a Nuclear bomb of earth before Blink.

This was why Varian always wanted to awaken in the past.

Of course, it was only until that night.

Then his life took turns before he ended up here to numb himself.

Or that was what he told himself. Perhaps in the deepest corner of his mind, he was doing this to help others achieve what he couldn't — Save the world. Save family.

"I'm worried about you. You can't stay like this forever. You should visit a dungeon and try to awaken. Even though you just turned 18, give it a shot. We never know what we're capable of until we try." Gareth's face turned serious.

He was about to give his usual excuse but Gareth cut him off "If you're trying to say you want safety but don't have enough money to hire an Adventurer Team, I'll cover the costs and you can pay me back later. Heck, pay me only if you Awaken, else treat it as me splurging money. I'm filthy rich."

Varian tried to come up with a counter but failed. Gareth looked him straight in the eye and raised an eyebrow. "Real Reason."

Varian gazed back for a while and finally sighed. "I... don't think I'm worthy. I am not suitable. If I awaken, I'll only put more lives in danger."

A person who was frozen in fear when their loved ones were in danger, can he be relied to protect others?

If he became a soldier and one day, the Abyssals, far stronger than any magic beast, attack his comrades or even civilians, would he be able to rescue them or ... would he be frozen in fear again?

If he did awaken, the people he would protect would increase from tens to hundreds, and perhaps even thousands.

Seeing the magic beast froze him once in fear. That cost him his mother.

So when he freezes in fear facing Abyssals, the cost would be thousands of lives. A sin far too heavy for him to risk.

There was no guarantee that he'd not be frozen in fear once again. Even the doctors told him that the same situation would likely occur throughout his life and suggested giving up on joining army entirely.

So he gave up.

Perhaps logically, he should direct all his energy to be the greatest Awakener and avenge his mom. But he didn't just work on logic.

There was an unshakeable fear and guilt. She died, he survived. Why him?

Gareth observed Varian's expression and sighed in melancholy "We're living in tough times, everyone will lose someone close. The best way to honor them is to keep moving forward and use our strength so that others won't lose their loved ones."

'I'm only trying not to endanger others.' Varian sighed in his mind and responded with silence.

Gareth stood up and walked to the door before turning to Varian. "It's time for the Red Pluto Event. I won't force you, but I'm leaving you the contact of an Adventure Team I know. If you change your mind, contact them." He swiped

his comm; the all in one communication device on his wrist and shared the contact with Varian.

Varian checked the contact and glanced at the date. Today's 36th of 7th Month, 520 YAB (Year After Blink).

So I'm 18. Pluto Ceremony will start, gotta go.

Varian forced himself to smile and left the Training hall. He reached the Stadium on his hover bike. The stadium was a gigantic blue oval.

It was filled with spectators and murmurs, numbering at least a hundred thousand. It's spacious enough and designed to fit them comfortably.

Varian took a seat and gazed at the huge 3D holographic screen.

A man in a military uniform appeared on the screen. He had a scar on his cheek, which must be left on purpose since today's medicine could heal even the scariest of diseases.

The stadium was silenced at once as they gazed at the legend of a man, Evander, Commander of Earth Forces.

"We grieve the losses of a billion humans when Pluto was conquered. We will not rest until we take it back and honor their deaths..."

The day Pluto was conquered six years ago by Abyssals — 36th of the 7th Month, Septe was declared Red Pluto day and observed every year.

From Mercury to Neptune, across all Human Federation, humankind mourned the loss of a fellow billion and of Pluto, a lost home

It was also reaffirming the oath of vengeance against Abyssals. Every human will do whatever in their capacity to ensure the victory of the Human Federation against Abyssals.

Unlike the passionate audience, Varian was losing interest. Speeches like these were the driving forces of his dream since childhood, but for a year, all he felt was the monotony of life.

There were only two things in his life other than fighting. Recalling his mom's death and a strange dream.

A girl with brown hair and golden eyes haunted him in his every dream. She was a stranger. But somehow, he knew her name. Sia.

He checked his school records, neighbors, and every record. He never knew a girl named Sia. Nor could he see her face in the dreams — it was covered by mist.

The only good silver lining was the dreams only occurred when he was asleep.

"This generation needs Heroes. Where do these heroes come from? From you young people. Do not aim to be a level 9. Aim to be a Sovereign.

A Sovereign is an honor to their home planet!

The Protector of the Human Federation!

The Nightmare of Abyssals!

This year as well, we honor the rising heroes who train hard to bring us peace and hope to see a Sovereign rise from this group of young men and women." Evander ended the speech and kick started the award ceremony.

Young men and women ranging from 18 to 21, cadets of Trooper Academy, Planet Guard Academy, and Defense Academies of Earth received medals for their achievements.

Some were level 6 Enhanced, others were level 5 Beast Morphers, a few Level 4 Space Adepts, and so on.

Varian found at least one awakener from every path. Awakeners. Not normal people. Not him.

As his gaze aimlessly wandered on the screen, it halted at a particular person. His body stiffened for a moment and he used his comm to get a magnified view of the screen.

Zooming in, he observed the woman holding the prizes. To be precise, her uniform — The standard blue camouflage uniform, common for all cadets, with a fire emblem on her sleeve.

Looking at the emblem, Varian's palms sweat profusely and his breaths turned short.

Something clicked in his mind and before he could even think, he was in a dark space. The only source of light was in front. It was coming from a person. A girl.

She looked like a ray of hope in his ocean of darkness.

There she stood, the girl who kept haunting his dreams since his mother's death.

Her golden eyes gazed at him with a myriad of emotions he couldn't fathom. Brown hair flowed down to her waist. Fog covered her face. But this time, he could see what she was wearing. It was the standard blue camouflage uniform, with a fire emblem on their arms.

It was the same uniform! Earth Imperial Defense Academy Uniform!

Varian looked at her and tried to move. This time too, his body wouldn't budge. He stopped trying and stayed in place as she approached him, like she did in every preceding dream.

She was at an arm's reach and stretched her hands to cup his cheeks.

In a pleading tone, she whispered, "Save me."

"Who are you?" The darkness faded and Varian found himself facing a blue ceiling.

He realized he was on his bed back at home. Closing his eyes from the annoying light, he asked his comm, "What happened?"

"You fainted during the ceremony. The caretaker robots followed the protocol and sent you home." Isha, his AI assistant, answered from his comm.

"Right. I dreamed of that girl... Sia again." Varian shook his head and tried not to sound crazy.

These dreams started right after his mother's death that day and haunted him ever since. He assumed they resulted from his guilt and regret. But soon, they occurred too frequently. From once a week to once a day and now, even twice or thrice a day.

Varian's initial conclusion was that these dreams were a mental illness. He even consulted the doctors specializing in mental abilities — Level 4 Telepaths.

Telepaths were awakeners who awakened in the Mental Path, advanced in the first three levels and in the fourth level, chose Telepath path over Telekinetic path. They're specialists in treating all mental illnesses because of the very nature of their power.

Mind (Level 1-3) —> Telepath (Level 4-6)/Telekinetic (Level 4-6)

His dreams were dismissed as Ptsd and there was nothing they could tell about this unfamiliar girl he never met in real life but kept haunting him in his dreams.

They even confirmed his memory was fine. Varian had doubts about their expertise but lacked the funds to consult a higher level doctor who surpassed Telepath level 6 — Level 7 Psychics.

However, all these dreams only happened when he was asleep. Never did he dream nor faint when awake.

"I'll need another checkup." Varian got up from the bed and gazed out of the window.

The two suns in the sky stayed the same since he could remember. Only he changed. He dreamed. Struggled. Failed.

He didn't know what he was trying to achieve in life. Become an Awakener? His guilt made him feel unworthy to even try. Kill himself? It felt like an insult to his mom who gave up her life for him.

"If only there was a way for everything to be better, no matter how hard it is." Varian looked at the sky and sighed.

Unknown to him, his dragon bracelet changed subtly. The Dragon's two eyes shone with black and white colors.

[Divine Pathway System initializing 100%]

[On basis of Balance, Host is shown a piece of Truth]

The bracelet shone gray and before Varian could respond, his consciousness was pulled into the scene a year ago.

It was a familiar night. A ruined home, a bloodied room. and her dying body. Varian saw his mom turning to him. Her eyes didn't show any fear. She opened her lips and muttered something.

This time, he could hear her properly.

"Save Sia."