

Divine Path System - Chapter 3 - Truth

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Varian woke up from the surreal dream, but her words couldn't get out of his head.

"Save Sia"

"What was that?...Was it real?" Varian muttered, trying to make sense of what had just transpired.

'Is this even real? What if I'm just hallucinating?' He paced in his room. It was a small bedroom with a comfy bed, a closet, a desk with a palm-sized black box and a pair of shiny gauntlets on it.

Varian's emotions were a mess. A part of him wished it were all false.

Another part of him questioned what if it was all true? Then he'd have to find this girl, Sia. His only source of information on her — his dreams — revealed she is a cadet of the Earth Imperial Defense Academy, Defense Academy in short.

That meant he couldn't contact her or find any information on the net. Ever since the Pluto War, the Military became stringent and not a single file of cadets exists in the meta net. It can only be accessed by Military Officers of the same academy.

So, should he wish to contact her, he would have to join the Defense Academy.

But the minimum conditions to join the Academy are Level 2 Awakened and not 19 years old with an outstanding performance in entrance exams.

The entrance test was on the 45th of this month. Today was 36th. He had merely 10 days.

'There's no way this is going to happen. Level 0 to Level 2 in 10 days? I am not the young master of those big families. This would be futile. But if that's her last wish...'

Varian's emotions and rationale clashed.

He tried to fight the frustration building inside and picked up the black box. It was an old-fashioned safe meant to keep important things. It can only be opened by preassigned members or the contents would be destroyed.

He found it in the debris of his old home after the incident. He didn't remember seeing it but he was a preassigned member to open it except... he couldn't. But he got into the habit of trying to open it whenever he was frustrated.

"Damn it." Varian tried to pull it open with all his strength and failed. This was the hundredth time since the past year, but he couldn't care less. His frustration only continued to build up.

'Next year I'll be 19 and I wouldn't be able to participate in the entrance. Now's the last chance to participate. If I miss this chance, it means I'll never fulfill whatever mom was hoping. I couldn't make her proud when she was alive. I should at least fulfill her last wish. But I'm still unawakened. So how... ?'

Varian covered his face and sighed before he finally noticed something. His dragon bracelet, which was usually of normal lustre, was now exceedingly bright.

Varian didn't know much about it despite it being the heirloom. His great-great-grandfather found it shortly after the cataclysm Blink.

It changed many hands and ended up with his mom before he took it.

In this day and age where all accessories were either sophisticated techs or Star Treasures used to enhance one's powers, it was too rare to possess this accessory, which was nothing special.

He only wore it in her memory.

Varian slightly tapped the eyes of the dragon and expected for something to happen.

'Maybe this accessory was actually a 9 Star Treasure? Jokes aside, it must at least be something special, right?'

He widened his eyes as the bracelet really shone, and a mechanical voice appeared right in his mind.

[Divine Path System initiated. Please fulfill the requirements to activate.]

"Who?" Varian's body instinctively assumed a fighting posture before shifting his gaze to the bracelet.

"Divine Path System... are you the bracelet or in it?" He was ready to remove the bracelet in the blink of an eye should something happen.

[Bracelet is a mere carrier of the System. However, even the material the bracelet is made of is more valuable than everything your civilization can offer.]

Varian's face twitched at the seemingly arrogant answer of the system. This must be a prank.

"Is this the prank of a Telepath?" Varian looked around the house but didn't dare to move rashly.

Telepaths were capable of telepathy and high hypnosis. Hypnotising a person, a monster, even an Abyssal were normal things to Telepaths. Though in Non combatant professions, they served as excellent mental doctors and psychologists; they were one of the worst enemies.

Varian didn't want to be killed by a telepath. Especially not when his mother's last words were finally showing him a direction in life.

'Save Sia'

So he must get out of his predicament without offending the Telepath.

Mind (Level 1-3) —> Telepaths (Level 4-6) over Telekinesis (Level 4-6)

[This System is beyond your current comprehension. Only know that System had compensated you for preventing your awakening for 18 years]

Varian was still wondering what the heck was going on, but once he heard System's words, all he felt was a burst of rage.

"Prevent me from awakening? Why? Who the hell are you?" Varian found it hard to keep himself from grabbing the bracelet and ripping it apart. He grabbed his hair hard from the sheer insanity of the situation and the what-ifs.

'As your 17th birthday gift, I saved up money to hire adventurers. You will awaken. I believe in you.'

'If I awakened like everyone else, perhaps she would be still alive.'

[It's a Test. You are Chosen and now eligible to activate the System] The cold voice of the system held no regret whatsoever despite Varian's rage and grief.

"Fuck your test. I lost my mom." Varian pulled off the bracelet and picked up his gauntlets. The gauntlets were pitch black and had spikes at the knuckles.

Without hesitation, he smashed the bracelet to the ground and started a rampage.

"Boom!"

"Boom!"

"Boom!"

The room's high quality metal creaked, and the floor shook.

Varian kept on punching the damned thing on the ground. He called names. An Heirloom it was, supposed to be a blessing but turned out to be a curse.

'What if I lost you too?' her words kept ringing in his ears like it was yesterday.

The black gauntlets were made of a high metal alloy and a beast core boasted of high endurance. It was the best star treasure Varian could afford.

They survived all the fights in the past year, but now, they started cracking.

The spikes were the first to crack, then they spread to the fingers and finally the palm area with the beast core.

"Crack!" the gauntlets turned to smithereens. The beast core was smashed to the bracelet and turned into powder.

Varian sobered up and glanced down at the bracelet with red eyes. It was as exquisite as ever, without a scratch.

[It's good to vent. Now, let's talk]

The bracelet shone once again and, as if it's a miracle, the splinters of his gauntlets, the cracks on the floor all rearranged themselves.

In front of Varian's eyes was the gauntlet he just destroyed, perfectly intact. The cracks on the floor disappeared as the tiles reverted to normal.

"This..." Varian held his breath. He touched the gauntlet and felt the beast core which had just turned into powder intact.

Being shocked was an understatement.

Telekinetics can also control objects, but they cannot join a broken gauntlet by piecing things together.

Time Awakeners can alter the flow of time for them or for others, but there's no such thing as turning back time.

Neither can bring back a destroyed beast core.

It was not that there aren't more powerful things in the Federation. There were Sovereigns who were the epitome of strength that could slay millions with ease.

But something like this had broken Varian's fundamental world view. It was akin to jumping from a building and flying instead of falling.

Varian sat down on the floor to listen for once. He had neither forgiven nor forgotten, but if he couldn't damage it, listening to what it got to say would be the best idea.

[Truth be told, even if you awakened without my interference, based on your origin grade, you would have awakened at 16 in Body Path.

Despite your hard work, due to the lack of resources and proper guidance, you'd stay as Level 1 when your mother would be attacked.

You won't be able to save her regardless]

"Nonsense! If I was a Level 1, I could at least stall it until she can escape or someone can rescue us. You might have weird powers, but I'm not buying your BS." Varian stood up and turned to leave.

[In fact, it wouldn't matter even if you were a Level 2. She would still die. You would still live] The System commented.

Varian grabbed the bracelet in angst and hissed, "What do you mean? Why would she still die? Why do I get to live? Why?!"

[Find it yourself.]

"You..." Varian almost smashed the bracelet again, but this time, he held back. "You sent the strange message earlier, right? The last moments of... her"

[Indeed. System follows the principle of equivalent exchange. The equivalence is decided in our perceptions.

For you, not awakening for 18 years is a tremendous pain. But what is given to you is the Truth you would never know otherwise.

In fact, you won't get it now. Only once you know the whole truth will you understand how important it is and how fair it is]

Varian wanted to retort, but at this point, he felt it was useless.

He didn't know the truth behind her death. He didn't know why she would die regardless, even if the System prevented awakening. He didn't know who Sia was. He didn't know why his mother asked him to save her.

But he did know one thing — Where to start.

He just needed a confirmation.

"Hey System, I am 18 already. Can I awaken if I enter the Dungeon and fight magic beasts?" He held his nerves and awaited the answer that'd decide the course of his life.

[A Pleasant Surprise awaits you]

'Save Sia' Varian recalled her last words and wanted to do something he avoided for a year.

Awaken.

He picked up the bracelet and put it on his left wrist. It merged into his body.

Varian steeled his resolve and opened his comm. A holographic 3D display opened and Varian found the contact of the Adventure Team that Gareth, the hall master recommended.

He contacted them and set the time and venue.

Tomorrow, he'll Awaken!