

## Gacha 691

### Chapter 691 - Space Element Test

As soon as he passed the gate, he arrived in a place like the previous floor. The difference was there were many trees around him, unlike the previous barren land.

Suddenly, a dark cloud started forming into a massive entity. The thunder started clamoring around the area.

Alex narrowed his eyes while observing his surroundings with Spirit Eyes. He thought, "I am on the sixth floor right now. There are only four elements left, and this time is surely Lightning Element judging by the cloud above me alone. Still, Lightning huh..."

As usual, the golden words appeared before his eyes.

"The thunder comes before lightning, but the answer lies in between. Go seek the path of Heaven and Earth."

Alex frowned upon seeing the riddle and couldn't help but comment. "What the heck is this riddle? No, I should say that this might be the first riddle that has more mystery behind it."

He thought for a moment as the thunder became louder. Knowing that he only had a little time to think before something big would happen, he muttered to himself. "Thunder comes before lightning is a natural phenomenon. However, what does it mean the answer is between them? Is there something between them? I don't recall a single thing from my knowledge.

"Besides, there is still that last sentence. Seek the path of Heaven and Earth? Is there any path like that?" He was utterly confused by this riddle. Looking at the previous riddle, he realized that each word contained a clue, but this time the answer he sought must be quite exceptional. He could see this from the word choices of this riddle.

\*Rumble!\*

A thunderous sound echoed across the region before Alex looked up and found powerful energy inside the cloud.

The powerful energy formed a bolt of lightning inside before striking forth. Alex was wondering whether he should destroy it or avoid it due to the experience he had on the previous floor.

In the end, he decided to avoid it by leaping to the side. However, something ridiculous happened. Right before the lightning hit the ground, it turned and chased him as if it had a consciousness.

Alex turned around while flying backward before he decided to stop and raised his sword. After measuring the energy inside the lightning, he waved his sword and released a powerful Sword Wave.

"Blade of Conquest."

The Sword Wave and Lightning clashed against each other, resulting in an explosion. He leaped backward as he found something was wrong. Although it was already too weak to kill him, Alex was still

surprised to see the Lightning could win against his Blade of Conquest. This was especially true when he saw the Lightning that seemed weaker than his Blade of Conquest shattered his attack.

Alex thought for a moment before letting the attack him. This time he slashed his sword with Heaven Light Slash and completely destroyed the Lightning.

"Thunder and Lightning..." Alex looked up as soon as he destroyed the lightning and tried to find anything between both of them. He thought he could find something with his Spirit Eyes, but it was futile. Other than the lightning flash, he couldn't find another clue.

"Or maybe the real lightning is in the Space Realm?" He thought for a moment before raising his hand and channeling his Spiritual Energy. "Spatial Gate!"

Yet, another attempt failed as the Spatial Gate couldn't be summoned. There was simply no Space Element around the area like the previous floor. He thought for a moment and looked left and right, wondering if he had something he could use.

"Other than the field being 250x250 meters wide, I can't see anything else." Alex narrowed his eyes, but before he could do anything, the lightning flew down once more.

He tried to avoid it again to see whether it chased him again or not.

As he expected, the lightning followed him again, so Alex had no choice other than striking his sword toward this lightning.

"Triple Draws and Heaven Light Slash!"

These two techniques shattered the lightning in an instant, but he suddenly looked at his hand and realized the power behind the lightning became stronger.

"So, is this like a time limit or something? The moment I can't pass this floor within the time limit, I will be expelled?" He muttered to himself before flying around the area while staring at the cloud. "The black cloud is the most suspicious right now. Although I can't see anything abnormal inside the cloud even with my Spirit Eyes, I feel this cloud will be the clue."

The next bolt arrived after another minute and flew to Alex. Having troubled with the lightning that gradually increased its power, he decided to flee from the lightning as long as possible while thinking about the solution. Unfortunately, the lightning speed was faster than him, so he needed to destroy it after another minute.

He continued flying for another few minutes and started becoming frustrated. "The answer lies between the Lightning and Thunder, but I can only see the flash of the lightning before the actual lightning strikes forth... Wait, a blue flash from the lightning? Is that the answer? Should I go inside the cloud first to see the flash, or do I need to strike it right at the flash?"

After contemplating for another minute, he nodded. "I will try the second option first. If nothing happened, I would try risking myself inside that black cloud. Still, I need prediction and precision to strike at the flash."

Alex took a deep breath and flew right below the cloud as he waited for the lightning to start to appear. He waved his sword a few times when the flash appeared, but to no avail. His accuracy and timing were

too off as he couldn't hit the flash a single time. Even so, Alex didn't give up and sent a few more Sword Waves before one of his attacks finally hit the flash.

This was not a simple flash without a body. Instead, the real body was the lightning itself traveling around the cloud. The moment his attack hit, a series of explosions occurred behind the cloud and blasted him away.

"!!!" He was startled for a second and flew down a little bit. Looking up right after, he found that the Dark Cloud was dispersed before slowly trying to fuse once again. At this time, there was no lightning that he could exploit, so he could only think about his next move.

"What shall I do to pass this floor? Earlier, there was nothing behind the cloud, no portal or whatsoever. However, the proof that I can do something as ridiculous as that means there is a chance for this to be the answer." Alex contemplated for a few seconds before he narrowed his eyes. "I might have missed something. And there is still that second sentence. What does it mean to seek the path of Heaven and Earth? This is simply an illusion world, not a real world.

"If this is a real world... Wait!" Alex gasped as he focused on his Spirit Eyes to see the cloud. When he didn't find a single clue inside the cloud, he looked down and finally saw what he needed. "This is really the meaning behind the second sentence. Heaven means Sky, while Earth means Ground. The sky is related to the first clue where I need to strike the flash between Thunder and Lightning. The earth is related to energy underground."

He descended while observing the energy. The shape of the energy indicated an item or something from its size and characteristic, but Alex chose to be careful in dealing with something like this. He started digging the hole and realized there was a very thin line connecting him and the ball.

"I didn't notice this." He thought for a moment, and the lightning struck forth. Without waiting for the answer, he quickly came out of the hole and prepared his sword.

Due to how close the ball with him now, he somehow realized there was another string connecting the ball with the lightning.

"Don't tell me!" Alex gritted his teeth in annoyance as he shattered the lightning strike. He then looked at the palm-size transparent ball and realized why the lightning chased him. "This ball produces that energy to make me a Lightning Rod."

Although he wanted to destroy this ball right now, he restrained his hand and flew to the sky. The ball started glowing brighter as he flew closer to the cloud until he stopped right in front of the cloud and raised the ball to the point it touched the cloud.

It didn't have any reaction, and Alex realized that he needed to use it another way. He waited for the right time before throwing the ball to the flash. His timing was perfect and impeccable after the training to strike the flash earlier.

Suddenly, the ball shone and the clouds dispersed to the side, creating a huge circle in the sky. Light flew out of the ball and created a powerful reaction not far above it.

Alex smirked as he saw a portal being opened. Without wasting a single second, he decided to go through the portal and arrived on the seventh floor.

The portal immediately closed itself as soon as he arrived. Alex was stunned by what he saw next. "This... Isn't this a Space Realm? Although the realm is red, I can feel a powerful Space Element around this place. In other words, Space Element is my Seventh Test... I don't know if I should be happy or not.

"On one hand, I can reach this stage, which is good. On the other hand, to have Fire Element first while Space Element seventh, does the tower indirectly insult me that I still have a long way to go in the way of Space Element? Well, I can't really complain though. I still have many flaws and need more practice." Alex sighed, shook off the idea of insulting him, and started looking around.

Walls and walls filled his vision. The red path looked like it was dyed by blood and made it look eerie. Still, Alex put his poker face, not afraid of something like this. Instead, he was waiting for the golden words to appear before moving.

After another minute, the golden words finally appeared.

"Which one is our reality, and which one is our illusion? The two worlds can't meet but can influence each other. Reach the end of this labyrinth and find the portal to the Eight Floor."

Alex narrowed his eyes before glancing at the four paths he could try. Thinking for a moment, Alex imagined a sword to appear. It wasn't his usual sword, but a really ordinary sword.

This sword had a use for him as Alex stabbed it right in the ground on one of the paths. He decided to walk to the path on his left after he couldn't find a single clue with his Spirit Eyes.

"I can only try I guess." Alex took a deep breath and walked inside it.

Turning to the left, turning to the right, he kept advancing like crazy in this three-meters wide path. Suddenly, he found energy moving around.

It was invisible for the n.a.k.e.d eyes, but he had his Spirit Eyes. He was surprised to see a minotaur shape energy carrying a huge club moving toward him. Not wasting a single second, he took out his sword, preparing to fight. Yet, the minotaur walked past him. It literally walked past him as if Alex wasn't in his way.

Alex was confused with this matter too, but he quickly recalled the first sentence of the riddle. "Which one is reality, and which one is the illusion? Does that mean I am in reality right now while the minotaur is in the illusion? Still, there is no way the riddle will be this easy. I assume the minotaur might have something to do with this test."

Having no clues on what was going on, he decided to proceed toward the end of this path. Of course, he left his swords in every single path he had gone through to make sure he didn't go to the same path twice, especially dead-ends.

This test took him around ten minutes before he finished exploring the entire western area from his original position. In the end, he only found a dead end without a single clue there. He even checked it with his Spirit Eyes and left with disappointment.

"I need to try again in another direction." Alex shook his head and walked back.

## **Chapter 692 - Fighting a Centaur**

As soon as he returned to his original position, he stabbed another sword to the North Passage and started exploring. In the middle of his exploration, he found another monster shaped energy that passed through him as if he was air. However, unlike the bull's body like Minotaur, this one seemed to have four feet like those of a horse and a human body.

"A Centaur?" Alex narrowed his eyes and shook his head. "I will note it down in my mind first."

He continued exploring the maze while trying to use all of his skills. However, Spatial Gate seemed to be off limits in this place because he couldn't call it despite this much Space Energy around him.

"It sucks not to have that technique, but I can still use other Space Techniques like Spatial Bind and Space Plates. But..." Alex raised his hand and used his Space Bind. The chains formed into a real chain in this realm as he furrowed his eyebrows. "As expected, this is a Space Realm. Even if I use the Space Cut, I'm sure I will create a real Sword Wave. The problem is..."

Alex, this time, released his Blade of Conquest, and he could only see the Energy flying forward. He clenched his fist and destroyed the Sword Wave himself. "It seems the function is still the same. What is in the real world will affect the real world, and what is in here, or Space World, will affect whatever in this place. And I can understand why the riddle says that both can influence each other. The only problem is to search for the portal to the eighth floor."

Having formulated his plan, he proceeded deeper and deeper before he arrived at the end of the path and saw something amazing. There was a glowing vortex in front of him with a small core in the middle of the vortex.

His Spirit Eyes was telling him that the energy mostly connected to the other realm, making him hesitate.

Alex thought for a moment and sighed, "I don't know what this is for, so I think I will go back first and search for the other two paths before deciding my action."

With that thought in mind, Alex tried again from the start and went to the path on his right earlier. As he predicted, he once again met another creature. This time, he was surprised when he saw an elf. Luckily, it didn't attack him, and Alex could proceed safely to the end and found another dead end.

It had a big difference from the first dead-end that didn't tell him anything. He found out that there were golden words on the wall, so he came closer to read these words.

"Kill the Four Holy Knights, and you shall have the key to the next floor. If you defeat them without reading this sign, then you are unlucky because you are not careful. Having failed to see your opponent first without any information about them is rash. Hence, the next floor will be your doom.

"However, if you bring the tusk in the North Passage and place it in front of this sign before defeating them. You won't get any trouble on the next floor." Alex narrowed his eyes and let out a sigh of relief. "It seems I am lucky because I choose to check the other paths first. This floor might take two or three times the usual time I use to clear a floor, but I think this is the most educational one."

Alex smirked and quickly went toward the last passage. Just like the sign said, there was a palm-size tusk in the last place. He picked the tusk up and ran toward the third passage. Along the way, he met the fourth creature, which was a skeleton carrying a wand.

He passed it without care and went to the sign before placing the tusk in front of it.

Suddenly, the floor started glowing and the words written on the sign replaced by another one.

"Both Realms are real, whether it's the real world or space world. You need to wary against a being who can live in this Space World for a long time because it can be considered one of the world's dangerous beings. If you want to fight the four holy knights, go to the Southern Passage and activate the Space Element by touching it."

Alex narrowed his eyes and took note of these words. Although it didn't serve any purpose to him, he thought it was new knowledge to him since there was nothing like this in his inheritances.

"Anyway, I have finished this side mission. Now I will go to the second passage and fight those four creatures." Alex nodded and ran back to the energy vortex. Before doing anything, Alex took a deep breath and contemplated over the riddle first to check whether he was on the right track.

"I don't see anything that can be misinterpreted... If I take the fact that this test doesn't know my Spirit Eyes, they must know that I can't see the beast. Or at least, a normal person won't be able to see them unless they touch the vortex. That's why I will pretend that I don't know them and think whether I miss a single clue." Alex thought for a moment and shook his head.

He then glanced at the vortex in front of him and stretched his hand. He touched the core with his index finger, and the vortex shone brightly.

It illuminated the entire realm as his vision turned from red to blue, no, it should be the realm color. Not long after, a thunderous roar echoed across the entire labyrinth.

"This is... The realm suddenly changes; no, it's replaced. I am in the same realm as those beasts now." Alex frowned and glanced at the top. Unfortunately, he couldn't go to the sky to see the entire maze because there was this energy preventing him. However, he realized that the situation would start getting complicated after this point.

Taking out his Sword and Spear, Alex began walking. The Centaur that seemed to be guarding this passage appeared right in front of him, clenching his two-handed sword. A sharp Sword Intent came out of the Centaur along with the sword and alarmed Alex. It then charged at Alex and swung his sword.

Alex furrowed his eyebrows and struck his sword with his rank 8 Sword. To his surprise, the Centaur suddenly pushed him back.

"I am losing in strength?" Alex was stunned and retreated a few steps. He could only see the energy from the Centaur, but couldn't discern his cultivation. The only thing he knew from that exchange was that the Centaur had 10-Star Martial Monarch raw strength.

"Dragon Aura. Spirit Step!"

Alex didn't hesitate to activate two techniques that boosted his strength and charged at the Centaur. "I can't waste my time against you because I don't want to fight you with the other three."

Noticing the three energy signs moving toward him, he decided to end this battle as soon as possible.

"Heaven Light Slash and Triple Draws!"

Suddenly, the Centaur showed an unbelievable speed as it struck all six attacks in a split second. At the same time, it sent another slashed right from his right.

"Not good!" Alex glanced at the attack and activated his Phoenix Aura to create a powerful fire armor and a few Space Plates to block it.

The Centaur smirked as it continued its swing, shattering all Alex's Space Plates and fire armor in a single swing. It even went toward Alex's neck.

"Seriously?" Alex immediately shifted his stance and blocked this attack with his Sword and Spear, albeit he got blown away. "That is not a 10-Star Martial Monarch Strength anymore. It's already far higher than Ryuu's! This test is insane."

He took another deep breath to calm his heart and raised his hand.

Releasing his Original Blade Path, Alex became serious.

Alex then leaped forward while his hand was still pointing at the Centaur. Suddenly, twenty chains appeared in the other realm and circled around the Centaur. Yet, the Centaur could still move its body around and tried to break free from the restrain.

Of course, there was no way Alex would let him free. Many Space Plates appeared around the Centaur's body, especially around his arms to prevent him from moving.

Meanwhile, Alex's weapons started glowing as he flew to the Centaur and slashed him a few times.

"Roar!" The Centaur roared and watched Alex cut his body, albeit...

Alex passed the Centaur and twitched his eyebrows. "Seriously?"

He turned around and found that the Centaur had broken free. Although there were a few cut wounds in his upper body, it could only hinder him a little. Alex bit his lips and thought, 'In that instant, the Centaur shattered my Space Plates and Space Bind before shifting his body a little bit to avoid vital areas.

The Centaur raised his sword and accumulated powerful energy around the sword before releasing it with all of its might.

"You want to challenge me in that aspect?" Alex smirked as he used everything he got and sent his Sword Waves. The Centaur also sent a powerful shock wave through the ground and collided with Alex's Sword Waves.

Unfortunately, the Centaur underestimated Alex for once. Behind his Sword Waves were many powerful techniques jumbled into one. They were Triple Draws, Mythical Fire Slash, and Space Cut. The three techniques were used with his sword and spear, creating twelve Sword Waves covered with his Absolute Blade Intent.

Although six of the Sword Waves broke, the other six were still going toward the Centaur.

Surprised with the result, the Centaur quickly slashed his sword to break Alex's Sword Waves, albeit...

"Boom Boom Boom!"

A series of explosions resounded across the labyrinth as the Centaur made its appearance. Unlike the first time, he lost one of his hands and many deep cuts on his body. It wanted to roar once more, but Alex wouldn't let him as he appeared right beside him with all of his strength.

"Triple Draws. Heaven Light Slash. Space Cut."

He changed Mythical Fire Slash with Heaven Light Slash because it was better for close range. Besides, he also had another plan as soon as he saw the Centaur lose its hand.

Half of these twelve Sword Attacks were going toward the other hand while the rest aimed at his swords.

Having lost its powerful arm, the Centaur gritted his teeth as he realized he couldn't keep up with Alex's attacks if he only had one hand. Even so, he didn't give up and tried his best to fend all these twelve attacks. Yet, it was still unreachable.

Alex cut another hand and blew his sword away before sending the Centaur's head flying. The body slowly fell down to the ground, but no blood was spilled as the Centaur suddenly disappeared as if it was an illusion.

Unfortunately, he had no time to care about it and quickly regained his breathing.

As he was about to turn around, the other three Holy Knights finally arrived.

The first one was a Minotaur, a bull that could stand up like a human. It carried a huge club with its right hand. This monster seemed to be a similar type to the Centaur and would truly trouble him again.

Meanwhile, the second monster was an Elf. However, her hair was white, and her skin was purple, revealing her identity as a Dark Elf. She raised her bow and drew an arrow, aiming it at Alex. Unlike the muscle type, she seemed to be a silent type where she sniped with the bow. Luckily, his Spirit Eyes should be able to counter the movement of her arrows, preventing her from ambushing him.

The last monster was a skeleton holding a staff. It wore a long black robe that made this skeleton somehow look graceful. Alex didn't need to think about this monster and classified him as a Lich. He needed to get ready with the Dark Element attack. If it were a curse or poison, he wouldn't need to worry because his Pure Fire could destroy them.

Alex finally turned around and looked at the three monsters. "This is going to be troublesome."

### **Chapter 693 - A Hard Fight**

"This is going to be troublesome." Alex squinted his eyes and gritted his teeth. "Looking at their weapon, the Minotaur will fight me in close combat while that Lich will support him with its Dark Element. On the other hand, the Dark Elf would try to assassinate me the moment I leave my back open."

"It's really hard to fight, especially considering their strength could be higher than Ryuu. If only I can see their power..." Alex clicked his tongue as he saw the boundless energy reside in their body. The amount of energy was similar to those in the 9-Star Martial Monarch, like the Centaur. However, they should be troublesome and had some hidden power like the Centaur's extraordinary strength, Alex thought.



The three creatures didn't let him think any longer and attacked him. The Minotaur appeared in front of him, showing the speed at the same level as him. Meanwhile, the Dark Elf shot him with her arrow to give cover fire.

Alex looked at the last monster who was gathering all Dark Energy around him. The situation was dangerous, especially for him, making him wonder whether Ryu would be able to solve an assault like this.

"Pure Fire." Having no choice other than fighting with his full strength, he utilized his Pure Fire and Dragon Aura. He leaped toward the Minotaur while avoiding the arrow before slashing his weapons right in front of the Minotaur.

The Minotaur was not a pushover and swung its club toward him. Unfortunately, Alex already had preparation and summoned all the chains and Space Plates to stop his movement for even a split second.

"Heaven Light Slash." Alex combined the attacks with his Space Cut and Triple Draws, summoning twelve attacks. He was sure that was enough for the Minotaur until he saw a Dark Aura coming from beneath its feet.

"Dark Claw!"

"Moo! Grand Slam." The Minotaur also struck Alex.

A few dark spikes came out of the ground and destroyed half of Alex's attacks before the Minotaur shattered the other half. It didn't stop there as the swing forced Alex to summon his Space Plates and Phoenix Aura. Luckily, its strength was a little bit weaker than the Minotaur, so these two techniques were enough to block the attack, albeit the force still blew him away.

The Dark Elf didn't let this chance slip and appeared not far beside Alex and released her arrows.

"Flame of Extinction." Alex also used his attack and shattered the arrow. Luckily, there was a big difference between her element and Alex's Pure Fire, allowing him to survive from this arrow's assault.

The Minotaur advanced once again and struck Alex with its giant club.

Alex glanced at the Dark Elf and the Lich first before he smirked. The Minotaur club was easy to dodge, but the problem would be if the Lich helped the Minotaur once again. Hence, Alex swung his sword and spear simultaneously, but in different directions.

The first one was toward the Minotaur while the other one was toward the Lich.

"Mythical Fire Slash!"

The Lich saw these three Mythical Fire Slashes and felt the Three Space Cuts. He put his hand on the ground and created the spikes earlier, but formed multiple layers to make sure it had enough strength to block Alex's attack. Unfortunately, the Lich underestimated Alex's strength, or maybe overestimated himself.

Those several layers of Dark Wall were not enough to stop Alex's attacks. It kept advancing until everything was broken, and the Lich unleashed a dark attack from his hand. The clash created a shock wave that somehow got dampened by the Space Element around.

Meanwhile, the other attacks from Alex were shattered by the Minotaur. Alex already predicted that his attacks would be like this and struck once more at the Minotaur's weapon.

"Heaven Light Slash!"

Obviously, Alex was still losing in terms of strength as the Minotaur blew him away.

Seeing this, the Dark Elf drew her arrow and shot Alex.

Little did they know that this was within Alex's calculation. After seeing how her arrow got easily destroyed by a single attack, Alex realized there was a big difference in strength between these three creatures. No, he would say there was a big gap in their specialization.

The Minotaur and Centaur had an unbelievable strength that would be troublesome if they fought together. Meanwhile, the Dark Elf had very little presence and made a little sound when moving, making her hard to track. Alex didn't care about this as he locked the Dark Elf by using his Spirit Eyes. As long as he knew her position, her power wasn't that powerful as the Minotaur and Centaur. On the other hand, the Lich's techniques were mostly for support purposes. It wasn't packed with strength. If it wanted to create a powerful skill, the Lich needed time like how the first time he blocked Alex's attack.

Knowing all of their characteristics in the first exchange, Alex formulated a new plan in his head and made sure he could kill one of them in the next exchange. At the very least, he had experienced how it felt to fight with the Centaur, giving him an image of what he needed to do. And his first target was one of the weakest but the most important role, the Lich.

As soon as he was blown away, Alex created hundreds of Firebirds. He wished he had mastered Sherry's technique and turned them all into swords to create a stronger attack, but he had no time to regret it. He sent all of those Firebirds toward the Lich. Meanwhile, he created a few Space Plates in front of him to block the arrow from the Dark Elf.

Seeing this condition, the Minotaur suddenly appeared right in front of the Lich and blocked all of the Firebirds with its giant body.

"Moo!"

"Boom Boom!"

Alex rained them down with his Firebirds without mercy. When it was over, the Minotaur was almost charred black, but his energy was still strong. At this moment, it was easy to see that the Minotaur only got physical injuries.

"What a tough monster," Alex complained before smirking. "Though, I can simply change my target. I will show you the advantage of having two elements."

Little did they know that one of the Firebirds had yet to explode, and it carried Alex's Space Mark. He realized soon after that he could actually use this technique despite the explanation of Space Mark telling him he could only create a mark in living beings. It turned out that the explanation itself was

wrong. What it meant by living beings were the ones that were created from the real world, not Space World. This was why a single Space Element user couldn't use it.

This underestimated technique was elevated once more to the point Aileen wanted to learn it. This was a variant but not a variant because the Firebirds were like living beings for him. However, Aileen thought that he could actually make a Space Imprint on their weapons or arrows and teleported. Alex still had yet to master this technique due to the limited time, along with the trial and error process. It wasn't like Aileen didn't practice for years to create a single variant of her Space Technique.

Hence, Alex could barely imprint a Space Mark on a single bird. But that was enough for him because, at this time, he could utilize it by teleporting right behind the Lich and Minotaur.

"Die." As soon as he appeared, he slashed his weapons at the Lich and Minotaur. "Mythical Fire Slash."

The Sword Waves appeared again. The Lich and the Minotaur realized that their positions were aligned. If the Sword Waves killed the Lich, it would immediately fly to the Minotaur. They shifted their bodies, trying to avoid, if not destroy Alex's attacks. But...

"I'm sorry, but I can't have you move!" Alex raised his hands and summoned chains and Space Plates to bind them.

"Moo!" The Minotaur roared as he used every ounce of his strength to move his body. Knowing that he couldn't save the Lich, he jumped to the side in order to save his life.

The Lich was struggling for his life as he summoned another wall to block these attacks. Albeit, it was already hard for him to fend half of Alex's attacks, let alone this full-power attack.

The Sword Waves cut the Dark Walls and finally sent the Lich's head flying. The skeleton body immediately lost its energy and fell to the ground while the head still had some energy. Meanwhile, the Sword Waves continued its way toward the escaping Minotaur.

"Boom!" The Minotaur was a bit too late because of the surprise attack and decided to sacrifice one of its arms to escape. He grabbed his club from the other hand and jumped toward Alex.

Alex furrowed his eyebrows, never expecting the Minotaur to attack him right after. "No! He wants to help the Lich!"

He instantly realized the Lich was still alive when he saw the Energy on the Lich's skull and leaped toward the Lich.

He and the Minotaur slashed their weapons at the same time with the Lich's skull right under them. Alex used his Dragon Aura and Spirit Step to increase his strength and stomped the skull. However, before he could do so, the Minotaur kicked the Lich's skull toward the Dark Elf, asking her to take care of him.

Alex didn't let it happen and created Space Plates to stop the head mid-air and let it fall down. The Dark Elf then released her arrow toward Alex, which once again was blocked by his few Space Plates, albeit this time the arrow was a little different. The arrow exploded and released a dark cloud.

"A smokescreen?" He snorted as he could see everything with his Spirit Eyes. He summoned a few chains to bind the Dark Elves and sent one Firebird equipped with his Space Mark.

Seeing Alex wanted to kill the Lich, the Minotaur utilized his strength once more. "Grand Slam!"

If the Minotaur had two hands, Alex might be scared, but he only had one hand. The Minotaur couldn't push him even if he used all of his strength. Suddenly, Alex felt pain in his abdomen before he realized the Minotaur actually kicked him and blew him away. The Minotaur then ran toward the Dark Elf to help the Lich creating his body again.

Alex, of course, didn't let them do so. The Firebird that he sent earlier finally reached the Lich. "Space Mark. Activate!"

He, who was blown away, appeared once again above the Lich's skull. In front of him was the bound Dark Elf, and behind him was the raging Minotaur. Even so, Alex stomped the Lich's Skull and shattered it into pieces before sending many Firebirds toward the Minotaur to slow him down as he made his way toward the Dark Elf.

But stopping the raging bull was easier said than done. The Minotaur still charged at him with full speed without caring for the injury he got from the Firebirds. Albeit, that raging head missed a single Firebird, and it cost him his life. As soon as that particular Firebird arrived, Alex teleported behind the bull and slashed his weapons.

"Mythical Fire Slash!"

The Minotaur was taken aback by this attack and quickly swung his club backward without looking, albeit the strength wasn't comparable to Alex's twelve Sword Waves. It split the bull into half and disappeared.

Alex then looked at the Dark Elf. She stretched her hand toward the Minotaur and the Lich as if she was sad. She glanced at Alex for a few seconds before creating an arrow in her hand.

At first glance, she looked like she wanted to fight to the last breath, so Alex raised his weapons, but...

\*Stab—!\*

She used that arrow to pierce her own heart and died. Before falling to the ground, she looked at Alex mysteriously and disappeared.

Meanwhile, Alex fell on his butt and let out a sigh of relief. "That was hard. How can there be such terrible creatures like that in Illusion?! The difficulty was far too different than the other floors."

### **Chapter 694 - Light and Dark**

The fight drained more than a third of his Spiritual Energy, and with the addition of the continuous usage from before the previous floors, Alex had only less than a third of his Spiritual Energy. Hence, he decided to take a break for an hour.

"I never thought that I would fight like that." Alex shook his head before finding a green gem on the floor. It was dropped by the Dark Elf judging from the location. Alex furrowed his eyebrows and took the green round gem. "According to the sign, they would give me a key to the next floor. So, does that mean this is the key?"

His Spirit Eyes didn't tell him anything besides the fact that it contained powerful energy. He sat on the floor and looked at the ceiling. "I still need to complete the other two elements before fighting the last floor. According to Ryu, there is no element on that floor, so what is the riddle there?"

Alex couldn't predict the riddle at all as the only thing he could do was to recover his Spiritual Energy. Alex wondered if this place had a timer or not and sighed. He forgot to ask Ryu about this. No, this question didn't appear in his mind.

"It seems I can't stay too long here. If I am in the middle of Lightning Tribulation, the Lightning won't let me have the chance to recover my Spiritual Energy. Although this is a different tribulation, I still can't be here too long." Alex recalled that they were trying to recreate their own version of Divine Tribulation, the last tribulation to ascend to the God Stage.

After recovering for about an hour, he managed to reach forty percent of his Spiritual Energy and decided to continue his test. He stood up and started walking to the first passage, where he didn't find anything. No matter what, there must be a clue to put this key, and he might have missed it. He was going to recheck the passage and went to the eighth floor.

A few minutes later,

Alex was still wandering around the maze and had yet to find the entrance. Despite searching carefully with his Spirit Eyes, there was no secret entrance or whatever in the dead-ends until he finally found the last dead-end.

Whether it was his Spirit Eyes playing him or it was a reality, he could see an energy sign behind the dead-end. It was right behind the wall, so he was frustrated.

He ended up taking out his sword and struck the wall. However, nothing happened to the wall, not even a scratch. Alex twitched his eyebrows and wondered if he needed to turn around and search from scratch.

"If only Spatial Gate works here, I can bypass a wall like this in no time." Alex gritted his teeth before he remembered the riddle. "Wait, both worlds can influence each other, right?"

He straightened his body and waved his sword.

"Space Cut!"

The Sword Wave flew toward the wall and obliterated it. Alex could have such an idea because he found out that the energy in front of him was actually thinner than the other walls in his surroundings.

Little did he know that he could simply use his Spatial Gate here. Due to how he checked that he couldn't use Spatial Gate despite the tremendous amount of Space Energy, Alex forgot the fact that he had changed the world by touching the vortex's core. And there was nothing like this previously because the key actually absorbed the wall energy, making it thinner, so Alex had an easier time and gave him a signal.

Luckily, there was no defense mechanism that sent him out because of this, and Alex might probably not know about it for eternity. The wall that had been obliterated led him to another room like a hidden

room, and he found another vortex there. Unlike the first vortex, this blue colored vortex was, in fact, a portal to the next stage.

Beside the vortex stood tall a podium where Alex could place the key, and he put the key down without hesitation. The energy that sealed the vortex disappeared. Alex passed the portal and stepped on the eighth floor.

The moment he stepped on the next floor, he was shocked by the blinding light and forced him to close his eyes. It was too bright to the point he couldn't force his eyes open.

In the end, he kept closing his eyes and only relied on his Spirit Eyes to look at his surroundings. No monsters came to his sight, so he was a bit relieved as he waited for the golden words to appear, but he realized he couldn't see right now.

Suddenly, a high-pitch voice resounded across the entire floor.

"The light is the one illuminating the world from darkness. Yet, too much light would blind one's eyes. At this point, where would humans live if they can't see anything? And how could they even search for their house without looking? Search the portal to the next floor. There won't be any monsters on this floor, and you will recover your Spiritual Energy depending on how much time you need to go to the next floor."

"!!!" Alex was surprised by the condition right now. If he knew there was no monster and the tower would recover his energy, he wouldn't waste an hour on the previous floor. Even so, he didn't regret it. His careful personality wouldn't let him go unless he was certain about it. This was why the ones that played the biggest part in his growth were actually the spies.

Their information let him make a decisive decision and advance faster than anyone else without being scared of trouble. If he didn't have them, he couldn't imagine where he would be right now.

Alex shook his head and sighed. "Anyway, I will do my best and search for the entrance to the next floor as soon as possible. I hope I can recover most of my energy, if not full recovery."

With that hope in mind, he began thinking about how to find the entrance. "Hmm... The normal answer will be to feel it, right? Maybe using my Absolute Blade domain to sense it or something, but if this place is huge, it will take a long time. I wonder if my Spirit Eyes can see the portal energy. Anyway, I can only start searching now."

Alex summoned his Firebird and let it stay here because he would know he came back to the original spot by using his Space Mark. After that, he flew to a random location that wasn't far from his Firebird because it would explode if he were too far.

The exploration started as Alex was searching in all directions with his Domain and Spirit Eyes, albeit he couldn't sense nor see a single thing. He decided to explore deeper in one direction until he reached the edge.

Whether he was lucky or not, he could see a vortex of energy.

"To think I found it this early." Alex entered the portal without hesitation. The brightness that forced his eyes closed suddenly disappeared, and he knew he had gone to the next floor. The Spiritual Energy

started filling his body up, recovering all the energy he spent on the seventh floor. With the addition of the energy he recovered on that floor, his Spiritual Energy recovered to eighty percent. Alex was ready for another fight.

He then opened his eyes, only to find complete darkness.

"Where am I? I can't see anything." Alex thought for a moment before recalling the element. "I see. This must be the Dark Element floor. I need to pass this stage before I can reach the last floor. Still, Darkness huh... I can't see a single thing in this darkness."

He thought for a moment and used his Fire to light up the area. However, the bright flame could only light up a few centimeters of the ground. It was very surprising since his flame could usually cover quite a big area. It seemed that the darkness was a kind of swallowing the light.

The same occurrence happened as something whispered to his ears.

"Just as the complete light would blind everyone and make them unable to live. Complete darkness will also make someone crazy like there is nothing real in this world, only darkness. In the darkness, which one is actually real and fake? Answer this question, and the path shall open for you."

Alex furrowed his eyebrows and took a deep breath. "A complete darkness... Do you think this is a black hole? Though there is no gravity pulls in this place. Joke aside, it means I can't rely on my eyes again, right? I still have Spirit Eyes and Domain... Wait?!"

He suddenly felt something was wrong as the Domain that he used earlier was gone. He tried to release it again but to no avail. "My domain is sealed? That means I can't sense my surroundings?"

Alex furrowed his eyebrows before releasing his flame as strong as possible and brightening the area slightly.

"Fu." It took him a quite amount of Spiritual Energy, so he wasn't planning on doing that. Besides, he had completed his objective. He only had one path in his front, whereas the other paths were blocked by a wall. He thought, 'Although I don't know the answer to this riddle, I still need to walk forward, right?'

Alex thought for a moment, nodded his head, and started walking.

Suddenly, a creature crept in the darkness, flying toward Alex at fast speed. Unfortunately, Alex could see the sign of energy and slashed it like nothing. The creature didn't have the strength like the one he fought on the seventh floor, so he kept advancing.

There were more and more monsters coming toward him, but they all died in Alex's hand. Normal people would surely get in trouble for this, but they just had the wrong opponent. Alex's Spirit Eyes allowed him to walk in the darkness, and no one would be able to sneak attack him.

He could only walk forward anyway, so he kept walking blindly while recalling the question over and over again. However, the last two sentences confused him. He asked himself. "Which one is real, and which one is fake? Maybe it's a kind of physiological question? I heard that when someone can't see something that attacks them, their sense will abruptly feel like you have been attacked from multiple directions even though there is only one real attack, if not none.

"It's more like a fear state. That's why they are restricting the Domain in this place, like how they restrained my Spatial Gate on the seventh floor. Luckily, I have Spirit Eyes, so I have nothing to fear. The problem is how I will find the path?"

Alex sighed and pondered the question a few more times, but the result was still the same. There was no path or whatsoever, and he had walked for more than fifteen minutes. He also fought some creatures along the way, and all died the same way as the first one.

Suddenly, he saw a huge sign of energy in front of him and thought this must be it. He followed the path and arrived at a blue circle that appeared out of the darkness. It didn't glow or anything, but the scenery behind that gate allowed him to recognize it was a portal to the next floor. He then realized the problems.

"This riddle only wants to trick people. With a mentality like that, they will feel walking for fifteen minutes is like fifteen days with their sense of time going off because of the darkness. That's why normal people will usually get trapped here and why the riddle says complete darkness can make someone go crazy... Or at least that's what I think. The answer to this riddle is only my path is real. As long as I believe I am walking in the right path and advance in the right way, I can finally reach the goal."

Alex smiled and finally answered all nine elements' riddles. He was a bit proud of himself and went to the next floor.

#### **Chapter 695 - The Situation outside the Tower**

Outside Potential Tower, the Great Elders were watching the disciples coming out of the tower.

A blue light shone brightly, and when the elders saw it, a trace of astonishment appeared in their eyes. It turned out that the one that shone was the Ninth Floor of the tower.

The disciples below were stunned when they saw this.

"What?! Someone has reached the Ninth Floor?!"

"Who is it?"

"Space Temple's Ryuu? Dark Temple's Amelia? Or Fire Temple's Daphne?"

The excitement was also transferred to the Great Elders as their hearts started beating rapidly, especially the three Great Elders. They were wondering whether it was their disciples or the others. This excitement was mixed with anxiety.

On one hand, they wished their disciple was the one who came out. On the other hand, they wished their disciple didn't come out yet and only came out after reaching the highest Floor.

Their eyes glued on a platform next to the Potential Tower, where the Tower usually teleported them outside. It was a small white platform without any interior, and they gulped down the moment an array appeared on the platform.

"Who is it?" They thought while looking at each other.



Suddenly, a female appeared out of the array. Everyone would think it was either Dark Temple's Amelia or Fire Temple's Daphne. Aileen became dejected after seeing her figure before she was stunned. The woman that appeared turned out to have pink hair tied into a ponytail. She was wearing a one-piece white dress with some pink stripes.

"That is..." Aileen gasped as the other Great Elders became speechless.

"No way!"

"This... This is impossible!"

"Really?"

"She can reach the ninth Floor? Has the Potential Tower become so easy?"

"That is Maya Ai from the Space Temple!"

The disciples were utterly shocked by her appearance as well. Their bewilderment was justified because Maya Ai was known as the laziest Great Elder's disciple and rumor said that Aileen had given up on persuading her. Yet, the same person had just reached the Floor that only a few people were capable of.

However, Aileen suddenly teleported to her front and hugged her tightly. "Are you really Maya? You have reached the Ninth Floor?"

"Master... You are suffocating me." Maya patted her back a few times.

"Ah!" Aileen was too excited just now and quickly released her. She calmed down a little bit and asked. "Have you really reached the Ninth Floor?"

"Of course." Maya nodded with a smile. "At first, I was not sure as well. I just remembered that Alex's teaching about the spear and somehow became my strongest weapon for this tower. Unfortunately, I failed not long after entering the Ninth Floor. If only I trained myself more."

"Good child! You are a good child." Aileen hugged her once more as she pictured Alex in her mind and thought. 'That person is really a godsend. To think that Maya can achieve something like this... Ah, I can retire after Ryu reaches 7-Star Martial Saint, I guess. Maya will be supporting him. I shouldn't be a cheapskate to Alex. I will come up with something later.'

After calming down her excitement, she snapped her finger and appeared on top of the tower, regrouping with the other Great Elders. She smiled smugly. "Hehe... To think that my Maya can reach the Ninth Floor!"

"Hmph!" Viola and Melva snorted and looked away while the other Great Elders were staring at Maya curiously.

"Great Elder Aileen, this is truly surprising to see your disciple reach the Ninth Floor. I don't mean I'm underestimating her in any way of course." Licht squinted his eyes and stared at Maya.

Maya twitched her eyebrows and hid behind Aileen.

"Great Elder Licht! I hope you don't scare my disciple away." Aileen smiled brightly while releasing her aura. She was filled with joy and anger at the same time. Maya was scared of Licht because of his brain, so she needed to stand up for her.

"I don't mean to be offensive. Still, to see another disciple reaching the ninth Floor makes me happy." Licht shook his head.

Not long after, Amelia, Ryuu, and Daphne came out in succession. The shock shook the Freedom Sect once again. Usually, Ryuu would rank third after Daphne and Amelia, but today, he managed to pass Amelia. Although it was unclear how their progress, they usually used the time to measure their talent. Hence, Aileen was the biggest winner in this event.

Aileen was smiling this whole time, looking at the other Great Elders with contempt.

The event was supposed to end after these three came out of the tower, but... To everyone's surprise, the Great Elders didn't end the event yet as if they were waiting for someone.

The red-haired girl behind Viola whispered to her master. "Master, why haven't the Tower closed yet? All of us have come out."

Viola glanced at Daphne and shook her head. "I haven't told you this yet. But you can say that we are still waiting for someone."

"Someone?" Daphne tilted her head in confusion.

"Just wait, and you will know." Viola smirked before glaring at Licht. "Great Elder Licht, I hope you still remember our agreement, right?"

"I won't do anything bad. I am ready to lay my life for this." Licht said with a solemn expression.

Viola looked into his eyes for a few seconds before nodding her head. "Then, I will wait."

Only the Great Elders knew about this matter. Even Ryuu and Maya only knew that they were waiting for Alex, not the deal that Licht wanted to talk about.

They were waiting for another hour and made the disciple confused. But that confusion turned into an uproar when the Potential Tower shone in blue light.

"This?" Daphne was utterly shocked. They were on top of the tower, AKA, the tenth Floor. Seeing it was light up, it meant someone reached the Tenth Floor. "Someone reaches the Tenth Floor?"

"You are wrong, Daphne. Look at the tower as a whole!" Viola said with a serious expression.

"!!!" Daphne's body shook before she flew off the tower, and she dropped her jaws to the ground when looking at the tower. "This is—!"

The Great Elders closed their eyes as their expression turned grim.

Meanwhile, the disciples around the tower fell into silence. They never saw something like this in their entire life, and that silence turned into an uproar not long after.

"What?!"

"The entire tower shines?"

"No way? Normally the tower will only shine on one particular Floor to let the others know they have reached and been defeated on that particular Floor. This... This shouldn't happen!"

"Do you mean there is someone who can light up the entire tower?"

"What does that mean?"

"Whatever it means, we will know it as soon as the person appears on the platform."

"That's right."

Unfortunately, when they turned to the platform, four Great Elders: Melva, Licht, Viola, and Aileen had stood in front of the platform. As soon as the array appeared, Licht and Melva raised their hands and created a sphere. It was acting like a curtain to prevent anyone from spying.

"What?"

"Who is the one that can light up the tower?"

"That's right. We want to know that person as well!"

The disciples were raging, but could only shout from afar as there was no way they could fight the Great Elders. Meanwhile, Daphne was looking at the middle-aged Great Elder from Thunder Temple, Riadon.

He looked at her along with the other Great Elder disciples and sighed. "I shall explain it to you. First of all, do you know why the Potential Tower would shine like that?"

They thought for a moment and shook their heads before Ryuu realized something. "Someone reaches the tenth floor?"

"Close."

"Someone beat the Potential Tower?" Maya opened her mouth wide before recalling Alex's figure while the others were speechless.

Riadon took another glance at their expressions and nodded. "If we reach the eight Floor and get defeated, we will be recognized as someone who has passed the eight Floor. However, there is another saying about this and one that somehow hit our mental hard, so we don't use it anymore.

"The saying came from a few thousand years ago. They were classifying those who managed to lit up the eight Floor as someone who had beaten seven floors. Depending on how someone looked at this matter, they would likely feel better knowing that they had reached the eight Floor, right? It would boost one's confidence, and the training might become even smoother when hearing that."

The Great Disciples nodded in agreement while the disciples fell into deep thought. Ryuu agreed with his statement. He would rather learn that he had reached the ninth Floor because he knew that he would reach the Tenth Floor after that. However, if he learned that he only managed to beat eight floors, it would mean that he had another two stages to go. It might even hurt his self-esteem. And the others also realized this.

Riaddon sighed and continued. "Anyway, that is the history of the tower. As for the real reason, why would someone light up the entire tower... Let's take it to another perspective. If you have reached the Tenth Floor, the top Floor will shine, only the top Floor. Because you have failed on the top Floor while there is no proof if someone says he/she has beaten the entire tower.

"This trick was once used by a disciple and got caught red-handed that he was lying. We once believed it, but everything changed when Great Elder Maxwell appeared before us and beat this tower.

"The tower shone like this as well, and he explained it to us that only someone who had beaten the tower would light the entire tower. At the same time, he told us not to seek the tower's secret no matter how curious you are. We, of course, obeyed the advice of Great Elder Maxwell.

"Rather than learning about the truth, we would be better searching for the way to let someone beat the peak again." Riaddon paused for a moment, so Ryuu and the others could swallow all the information first.

"A way? Is there really a way to conquer that hard tower?" Daphne asked while sweating.

Riaddon looked at the rest and realized that they were also curious. He glanced at the other Great Elders whether it was alright to tell them, and they nodded, so he continued. "We are not really sure about this, and even if we say a way, it's simply raising one's chance to beat the tower. It will depend on your wisdom and talent again.

"After looking at this person, we have realized something. People can only have one element, right? Then why could this person and Great Elder Maxwell beat this tower?"

Ryuu suddenly realized because he knew Alex personally. "Dual Elements!"

"!!!" Daphne and the others widened their eyes.

"The tower itself usually tests you from the easiest to the hardest for your element. No matter how hard we try, we will have our arch-enemy. Like Fire and Water, Water and Ice, Fire and Ice, and so on. Not long ago, we suddenly realized something absurd. What if we have two elements? Does that mean we can fight our weakness with the second element?"

"Just like how people who have mastered their weapons would have a better chance to advance higher. We think that if we give an additional element to someone, she can reach even further. And today, we are convinced. Once again, this is not a sure way, but it surely increases one's chance to reach the top Floor and might beat it.

"I am afraid after today, we might have a joint event with the other temples to create someone that can withstand two elements and have enough talent to nurture both elements and the weapon. As for who they are, it will probably decide in the next Council Meeting... To think we will hold the Council Meeting a few times within this short time." Riaddon sighed. "Still, I somehow want to see if this will really succeed as it will also open our horizon."

The others gasped at such an explanation.

"Now, our job is to wait until Great Elder Licht finishes his business." Riaddon looked at the white sphere.

**Chapter 696 - Potential Tower's Purposes and Alex's Cheat Sheet**

Meanwhile, on the top floor one hour ago, Alex just entered after beating the ninth floor.

He was startled by the sight as he entered something like a throne room.

The red carpet led to the majestic golden throne, some full golden armor that looked like they were alive, and tidy golden pillars.

Alex looked left and right, wondering where the Golden Words were. He waited for another minute before the golden words appeared.

"Sit on the throne."

There were only four words and somehow baffled him. Looking at all previous riddles, this one didn't look like a riddle. Instead, it was ordering him to reach that golden throne.

Of course, Alex didn't immediately step forward. There was no telling that this was actually a riddle that he needed to solve.

"Maybe there is a secret passage that leads me to the real throne? Or I might not need to do that and simply walk straight to the throne." He crossed his arms and contemplated while looking around with his Spirit Eyes. However, there was nothing suspicious in the throne room.

"What should I do? Should I simply go straight? But there is a chance for it to be a trap and activate these golden armors that will attack me." Alex leaned his back on the wall and started looking for a secret entrance by using his hands. Albeit, a layer of energy suddenly appeared, preventing him from going to another place other than walking on the red carpet.

"I have no other choice." Alex sighed and stepped forward.

As soon as his foot stepped on the red carpet, the array activated, and the pressure started gathering around him.

Alex furrowed his eyebrows as he felt the pressure that wanted to rip him into shreds. He gritted his teeth and released his Spiritual Energy along with his Pure Fire before starting to walk to the Throne.

"Is this challenging me?" He thought while looking around. The armors didn't move, so it slightly made him feel relieved, and he somehow thought about something absurd due to this. "Wait? I have been solving the riddles until now... What if there is actually no riddle on the last floor? No, I should say that the riddle is that there is no riddle, and I'm just overthinking this."

Alex contemplated for a moment and glanced at the throne. "I will get my answer up there."

Having decided what to do, he gradually walked toward the throne while enduring the pressure. It seemed that the pressure wasn't that powerful, so Alex somehow managed to reach the throne without difficulty.

He looked at the throne for a minute before sitting on it.

"Hoho... To think there is finally someone that can sit on this throne again after that old fox." A blue shadow suddenly appeared in front of him and turned into an old man.

"Old Fox? Are you challenging me, Old Ri?" Another person appeared, and Alex was stupefied when he saw that person.

"Hmph. You are the Old Fox!"

The second shadow ignored him and looked at Alex with a smile. "Yo. We have met again... To think that Freedom Sect is really useless. Even my disciple can reach this place faster than them."

"Disciple?" The old man had a face of surprise.

"Of course." He shrugged. "It's already ten thousand years, and no one can actually finish the trial we have set. How can I not say useless?"

Alex quickly rose from the throne, cupped his hand, and bowed respectfully. "Alexander Sirius greets Master."

"Haha... Good!" The second shadow, Maxwell, laughed while sweating inwardly. He never expected that his disciple was the reincarnation of the 'Alexander Sirius', and somehow, he didn't dare to announce that his disciple was him. Alex's previous achievement was that terrifying. "I left a piece of my soul here after I conquered this tower five thousand years ago. So, yeah. This soul is connected to my real body."

The old man twitched his eyebrows. "To think that he is really your disciple. I don't know whether I need to be happy or not."

Maxwell shrugged before saying to Alex. "Anyway, there are still a few old men here that built the tower with me ten thousand years ago. However, they are staying asleep because we have agreed to only have one of us to guide the new blood since it's not normal to have someone beat the tower. Though, I make my appearance because it's you. Just say it's a special case, and I'm not supposed to be here anyway."

"You Old Fox." The old man snorted. "I will be explaining the situation for him, but I will give you the chance to ask him first."

Maxwell thought for a moment and shook his head. "I will go later since I don't have that many important questions."

The old man looked at him for a while and nodded. "Alright. I will introduce myself first. I am Ri Xheo, the first Great Elder of the Ice Temple. Back then, the first Great Elder of Water Temple appeared when your master came here, so he wasn't here anymore. Anyway, I shall explain this tower first for you while leaving the God Stage stuff to Old Maxwell."

Alex glanced at Maxwell first and nodded his head.

"This tower's purpose is to have someone experience all the elements in this world while the last test is a simple strength test. I feel that you can withstand it without any problem, so I won't say much about it.

"What I want to talk about is your trial. After getting the memory about what happened in your trial, I can conclude that you are literally a monster scarier than your master.

"The first floor was to test your perception. We wanted to see whether you had the vision and the necessity to explore something unknown. Though I was surprised as to why you could finish it that fast.

Anyway, on this floor alone, I could see that you are a careful person. Normally, people would jump inside the magma without checking the surroundings, but you chose to have a fruitless investigation before storming inside the magma. Knowing that you had no prior knowledge about this tower, I can only say that was truly remarkable.

"As for the second floor, the water world. It was similar to the first world, but we wanted to test you whether you could think that the situation might not be as complicated as you thought it would be. However, I can say that you were pretty lucky.

"The Ice memory wanted you to stay true to your heart. I will say bullsh\*t when someone says you sometimes need to give up your life to protect someone you love. I was a selfish person and always believed that I lived for and together with my loved ones, not died for them. That way, I would have a brighter future. If it were something hopeless, my family would rather die alongside me despite how I said they needed to leave. Well, they took that stubbornness from me.

"Anyway, on to the fourth floor, Earth Floor. We wanted you to think outside the box, and the digging was the right answer. After all, we wanted the disciples to know that there are many ways to survive as long as you learn more and more. In other words, this was a test of knowledge.

"The fifth floor, Wind Floor... I had nothing to say about this floor other than to see your adaptability and reaction speed for the next floor, Lightning Floor. On this floor, we wanted to teach you that everything might not appear in the front. There might be someone behind your back that would backstab you in the back. So, you need to be careful at any time and could react to any plots.

"The Space Floor one, I could only say my condolences. The monsters were adjusted with your talents and strength. After knowing that you had Sword, Spear, Alchemy, Array, Pure Fire, and Space element, the monsters were adjusted carefully. Of course, the monsters that lived inside the Space World or Blue Layered Realm truly exist, so you should be careful if you meet them.

"Meanwhile, the Light Floor wanted you to not rely only on your eyes. You still have many things to your advantage, and I can say you used them well as you reached the next floor in no time.

"The next is the Dark Floor. Its only purpose was to train your mentality. You couldn't be afraid in every situation and should keep your cool. I saw that you were bravely advancing the tunnel that easily and reached this floor.

"As you might already know, the riddle of this floor was that there is no riddle. Sometimes, you didn't need to think much and solved the trouble with your strength. Though your strength alone has been abnormal.

"All in all, this tower wanted to teach you about Strength that can be used in any situation, to always keep your calm, be confident, Element Control, and be true to yourself." Ri finished his explanation with a smile before taking his Space Ring. "This is my Space Ring, so there are mostly Ice Element things inside. This is also another teaching, so you shouldn't expect that all you needed will come to you as it is. Sometimes you won't get it even after trying hard."

Alex cupped his head and bowed as he gratefully accepted the Space Ring. "Thank you, Elder Ri."

Old Ri waved his hands and smiled. "I'm going to go back to my slumber then."

Seeing the disappearing Old Ri, Maxwell came closer. "I can't say many things about the Divine Tribulation because every person will have a different Tribulation, unlike the Usual Lightning Tribulation. I can only suggest you go to Ascension Island when you feel like you want to break through.

"There is a huge altar with many pillars surrounding it, and you need to stand in the middle of that altar. It will then trigger the tribulation for you. What makes everyone wonder is the fact the island has no actual shape because the island's geography will always change when someone has a breakthrough. But don't worry. The only place that won't change is the altar.

"Besides, only peak 10-Star Martial Saint can go to that place, so you can't accompany your little wife when she undergoes her tribulation. Do you understand?"

Alex nodded. "I trust Fira."

"Good." Maxwell nodded. "Anyway, you don't need to worry about the Divine Tribulation that much. As long as you prepare whatever you can and do your best, the result will follow."

"I understand, Master." Alex nodded solemnly.

"Anyway, I don't think I can give you any other advice for your development. Instead, I want to ask about your condition. Are you well?" Maxwell asked with a smile.

"Yeah." Alex nodded. "Though I am currently fighting against two influences."

"In my era, there were five influences on the Continent: Blackwade Clan, Snow White Mountain, Fire God Clan, Phantasm Sect, and Ancient Blue Family. Which are your opponents?"

Alex thought for a moment. "There are two additional influences on the continent, Divine Kingdom and Drunken Pavilion. Master's friend, Elder Manness, is the founder of Drunken Pavilion. As for my enemies... I am openly fighting the Fire God Clan at this point while facing the Snow White Mountain and Ancient Blue Family in the dark. I haven't decided whether to fight these two as well."

"Fire God Clan, huh... That clan has too much pride, so I don't think you will have a problem if you are careful enough in inciting their rage. You can even ask for help from Manness. Just ask him if he has changed his wet pants, and he will help you, trust me." Maxwell smirked. "As for the Snow White Mountain... I heard that your Pure Ice Servant got her Sacrificial Element taken by someone else, right?"

"Yeah." Alex nodded.

"They must be planning to use that forbidden technique to call their Ancestor. That's why you better destroy that ritual, so you won't have a hard time later. They don't want a slave because of this, even if she has a Pure Ice Element. Usually, they will need to use around five years for that."

"!!!" Alex opened his eyes wide. "So, they caught Letizia to sacrifice her?"

"Yeah."

"If she hasn't gotten imprisoned, I am afraid that they have successfully put their ancestor in her body." Alex didn't know whether to be happy or sad. To think her slave status actually helped her. "Still, she has been imprisoned for two years. In other words, I still have another three years to resolve this matter."



"Good. Just destroy their ritual, and their ancestors will disappear. Though you might take the full brunt of their anger."

"At least, Letizia is going to be safe because they don't know that I'm her master." Alex nodded.

"As for the Ancient Blue Family... They are the most logical ones as they measure everything from benefits. As long as you can give them some benefit, they will simply sit on the sideline."

Alex thought for a moment and bowed. "Thank you, Master. I am more confident now."

"Good." Maxwell smiled. "I think it is better for you to go out now."

Without waiting for Alex to reply, Maxwell waved his hand as Alex slowly disappeared. "Let us meet again after you reach God Stage."

Alex cupped his hands and bowed once more. "See you later, Master."

### **Chapter 697 - Negotiation**

"See you later, Master." Alex took a deep breath and finally realized that he had teleported to somewhere else. He looked around and found he was inside a barrier or something with four Great Elders inside.

"Hello, Young man. I am Licht, The Great Elder from the Light Temple." An old man stepped forward.

Alex didn't know this old man until Aileen introduced him. "He is the one who wants to meet you."

Viola nodded. "Don't worry. If he wants to do anything, I will beat him up."

"Hello, little monster. I am just watching from the sideline." Melva waved her hand and smiled seductively.

Alex retracted his gaze from Melva almost spontaneously and stared back at Licht. "I am Alexander Sirius. Nice to meet you, Great Elder Licht."

He didn't say he was a disciple and went straight to his normal status, drawing a clear line between him and Freedom Sect.

Licht narrowed his eyes and nodded after a while. "Good. I want to talk to you about the Potential Tower. First of all, I want to confirm whether you have beaten the tower completely or not."

"I have... I even met Great Elder Ri Xheo," said Alex with a solemn expression.

"!!!" The four Great Elders were taken aback. They had prior knowledge that Alex didn't know anything about Freedom Sect, let alone that particular individual. Seeing him blurt out his name only made them convinced that he truly beat it.

"I see. The first Great Elder from Ice Temple, Ri Xheo." Licht nodded. "Alexander. I don't think you want to hear any pleasantries, right?"

Alex nodded. "Let's cut to the chase."

"Fufu, a serious man, my type." Melva joked.

Viola and Aileen rolled their eyes. "Hungry Grandma."

On the other hand, Licht and Alex ignored them and proceeded with Licht saying. "Let me give you an offer first. Because you have finished this Potential Tower, we have agreed to give you a Lesser Space Element as a reward. However, I am offering you another way to acquire the best Space Element that Space Temple can offer."

Alex narrowed his eyes. "At what price?"

"I want you to annihilate two big influences on the surface. This way, we can come back to the surface without worry."

"Two influences? Are you insane? There are seven influences out there, and I need to destroy two just to get a Space Element? I can't see anything other than extortion." Alex raised his voice. Of course, he wanted to destroy the Fire God Clan, and the entire Freedom Sect should know about it. However, none of them knew about his grudge against Snow White Mountain or Ancient Blue Family.

Alex was known as someone who would attack if someone stepped on his tail. However, he was by no means a maniac who would kill without apparent reason.

"Our Freedom Sect has the ability to contend with two influences or three if we use everything we have. Although there are still five more influences in case we eliminate two, we still can hold on against those five influences if we are hiding in our sect. Not long after that, they will realize our true strength, and there is a possibility of one of them joining forces with us. In that end, we can say our position there will become stable.

"Of course, having this power will also make others think we want to dominate the world, but we have no intention to do so. We can simply start spreading our disciples around to disperse our strength.

"And we know about your relationship with the Fire God Clan. You can say that you have fulfilled one of the objectives if you destroy the Fire God Clan, and you only need one more. We will also help you if you want to destroy the Fire God Clan and another influence with all our strength.

"Besides, we can grant you more benefits if you think that our assistance and the most powerful Space Element we have are not enough for you." Licht raised his hand and looked very confident.

Alex thought for a moment. Whether it was because he solved so many riddles earlier or his true nature all along, he could see this matter differently. He said, "Let see... There is no assurance that I will destroy the Fire God Clan. I don't care about your ambition, but surely that there is still a chance of you being the ruler of this entire world. You can say this now, but it will be different in the future after you gain power.

"Even if you say that you won't do it, it doesn't mean the others won't, especially when the Freedom Sect can contend with three influences at once. And there is no telling when you will backstab me."

Alex paused for a moment as Viola and Aileen wanted to rebuke him. He simply raised his hand and stopped them. "We won't ever do it? I can still say the same thing. Anyway, my point is there is no balance in this deal. You don't know how high the price I need to pay to destroy a single influence and what I will bear from it. Now, tell me why should I accept your proposal?"

Rose might not have a Space Element in this world, but it didn't mean she couldn't get it later. That was why the enticement of Space Element wasn't that big. As for him, the moment he destroyed the Fire God Clan, there might be someone who might want to take revenge or something. It wasn't really possible if he left the world, but it would be troublesome if they tried to manipulate things behind the scene.

Unlike the other continents, the peak power was on the Heavenly Continent, so he was a bit refraining himself from killing them because this would be his place until he reached God Stage.

"I know that if you create a ruckus on the other continents, you can hop over another continent as they won't be able to chase your cultivation speed. However, it will be different if there is us in your back. We will back you up on this continent, and I am prepared to use my life on the line. Even if you want me or the other Great Elders to swear a Heavenly Oath to you, I won't mind.

"Even if I need to make a full loyalty Heavenly Oath, I am ready. However, please don't do it to the future generations and leave this to our heads only." Licht said as a representative of the Council.

Alex narrowed his eyes before he was startled by the sudden appearance of his system.

[I think it's a good choice to use them, Host.]

'What do you mean?' Alex asked in his mind.

[Fire God Clan aside, the one we are going to destroy most likely is Snow White Mountain. However, there is no telling about the future. If we are not going to destroy them in the future, we can simply give it to them. Of course, if you are allowing the Freedom Sect to destroy them, it will mean you have forgiven them to a certain extent. You then need to think about karma and stuff.]

[You can ask Freedom Sect to kill them, not torture them such as r.a.p.e and other things, considering they were mostly women. As for benefits, I don't think you can get many things from them. Not because it's bad, but because they are too low for your level. Your Inheritances are the best.]

'Suppose I take their offer, everything doesn't really make sense, and all I want is to reach God Stage. Even if they offer me benefits, I only need to reach the Martial Saint Stage before becoming a God.'

[I know. That's why you can have them to fulfill a few of your promises. You can hold that promise for now and say it later, depending on if you need it or not. If you don't need it, you can say they can't attack this person or can't touch this influence and so on.]

'True enough. If they don't agree with that because they don't know what I will do in the future, I can reject them. After all, they know my cultivation stage and my real age. True that my cultivation speed gets slower and slower, but it will still be less than a decade before I reach God Stage with this pace.'

Alex thought for a moment.

[That's right. After that, you can have your disciple in their place for training, as this is what they owe. Full training, not only Space Element, but the bow and Thunder Element.]

The system was trying to help him brainstorm this deal because Anya wasn't here. Besides, it would be better to settle this once and for all at this moment.

Alex contemplated for a while before thinking. 'Five wishes are enough, I guess? And I can have Rose to inherit this deal. Besides, I can seal my power and appear again in this world in the future, so I will obliterate them if they do anything to Rose. She is under your jurisdiction after all.'

[You can certainly do that. Besides, we are capable of razing this whole world to the ground if we want.]

Alex took a deep breath and looked at Licht. "Heavenly Oath? I am sure that you have investigated me. You won't need to wait for long before I reach God Stage and leave this place. In other words, that Full Loyalty Oath will only bind you for a few decades at most. Do you think it's really useful to me?"

Others might think he was arrogant, especially after seeing how Alex confidently said he could reach God Stage easily. But they couldn't say it as well, because he might really have the ability to do so. Licht bit his lips as he couldn't do anything about this as Viola and the others would stop him if he threatened Alex.

Even if he had their corporations, a person like Alex might have a trump card. That was why he didn't dare to make Alex his enemy.

"However, I will state my terms first. Seeing how you want me to destroy two influences, I can't agree because I am not a person who will destroy someone with just the slightest enmity. Hence, I will change the term. Fire God Clan aside, I might fight another influence later, but the one who will destroy them is you, not me.

"Secondly, I want you to take care of my disciples in her study later. Not only the most powerful Space Element you have, but also her Bow Mastery, Thunder Element, and Potential Tower. You shall aid her until she reaches God Stage, and you can't force her to do anything she doesn't want.

"Lastly, I want you to promise me five things that I will only say in the future. And this promise can be inherited to my disciple," Alex stated his three terms. In fact, he never really cared what would happen in this world, he only worried about a few people in his life. "One more thing, you need to decide it right now like how I decided this spontaneously.

Licht looked down, contemplating the matter while the other three Great Elders were sweating inwardly. They were wondering what kind of person in front of them. He was young but very terrifying. They were convinced that no matter how Licht wanted to manipulate the conversation, Alex would return it more harshly. In other words, in this battle, Licht lost.

On the other hand, Licht finally looked at Alex with a serious expression. "I will agree if you promise me that the wishes won't harm my Freedom Sect."

"Unless you are in the wrong," Alex added again, stopping Licht to gain momentum.

Licht gritted his teeth and sighed. "Deal."

Alex then stretched his hand, and they shook hands. Licht could only sigh and scream inwardly, 'This little freak.'

The other Great Elders then were invited and made their own Heavenly Oath about the agreement, including Alex.

## **Chapter 698 - Post Potential Tower**

"Since we have agreed with the deal, I am going back now," said Alex while glancing at Aileen.

"Sure. I will be back with Ryu and Maya later, and thank you personally." Aileen nodded with a smile. As for Viola, she sent a thought transmission to Alex and asked. 'Did you meet your Teacher there? I heard from him that I would meet the first Great Elder there.'

'Yes.' Alex didn't nod and kept looking at Licht.

"You can go back first. The rest of us need to talk about this and dismiss the disciples after this, so we can't accompany you." Licht tried to make a poker face even though he was super pissed.

Aileen then snapped her finger and created a Spatial Gate for him. "Here you go."

Alex smiled and went through the gate. "Thank you."

As soon as he arrived in front of his house, Alex's expression turned serious as he entered the house.

"What should I do now? I have six months left here, but I think I have learned what I want to learn."

Alex couldn't come up with an answer until he decided to call Anya. "How is the situation over there?"

"We are having a good time here. Not only the Divine Kingdom seems to be aware of us here, but they also are not trying to investigate us simply because they don't want to get dragged in the complicated relationship between us and the Fire God Clan. To be honest, they are just afraid because the Ancient Blue Family hasn't moved yet, considering you have fought them on the Sacred Continent. That's why they are playing wait and see card first." Anya replied.

"How about the rest?"

"There is nothing big except the fact that there is a slight difference landscape on this continent. It's due to the Earthquake of course. The Fire God Clan is hiding in their home this whole time and gets criticized."

"I see." Alex nodded and thought for a moment. "Do you need my help on the surface?"

"You can just rest there. We are preparing to attack the Fire God Clan when you return to the surface."

"I mean, I have learned what I need to learn, and I can practice the rest on the surface."

Anya thought for a moment and answered. "It's still better for you to stay there. Although the situation is under control, we don't really have a big base on the surface, so you might need to take some time to make one. Of course, only in your spare time."

"Seriously?" Alex suddenly worried about them not having a roof this whole time.

"Don't worry about us. We are staying in a nice comfy house far from civilization."

Alex thought for a moment. This wasn't exactly a safe place because there was still a chance for him to get attacked by the Freedom Sect. However, he would get distracted as soon as he entered the surface. So, this was a little bit hard to call for him.

"Alright. I will stay here and return with my strongest strength." In the end, Alex decided to stay in Freedom Sect.

"Sure. Give me an update when you are going back six months from now."

"As your order Ma'am." Alex smiled.

Alex then tossed Anya's card back to the Inventory and waited for Aileen to come back as he thought about his future action. "I will reach 8-Star Martial Monarch within these six months while training my Alchemy Skill and Array Mastery. I am afraid that we will need a powerful strength against the Fire God Clan.

"As for what Pills and Arrays, I am going to think about it now." Alex paused for a moment and thought. "There are many pills that suits me. Though I also need to work out with Firia. Maybe I should ask her what pills I need to train for? After all, she has become a rank 8 Alchemist.

"Meanwhile, I need to learn the Illusion Array, Simulation Room, Barrier Array for the starter. As for Teleportation Array, this will be useful if I need long-range teleportation. Not only it has a longer distance than the Spatial Gate, but the Spiritual Energy needed is also lower. This is not my main priority though.

"All in all, if my prediction is correct ... Depending on my previous and current progress, I can say that I will master two pills within one and a half months. Luckily, it won't take too long for the arrays because I have gotten used to them already, and the symbols are relatively the same, only the number of symbols is different. That's why I am confident in mastering them within two and a half months, not three months.

"I will use the rest of the two months to raise my cultivation. It's not like I am abandoning my cultivation in the first four months with my training, so I should be able to reach peak 7-Star Martial Monarch after those few months and breakthrough in the fifth month. The last month is simply extra training. I can also add some Space Element training menu in between." Alex thought for a moment and nodded, satisfied with the schedule.

When he thought that, he realized there were people outside his house.

Alex activated his Spirit Eyes and knew it was Aileen and the others, so he quickly came out of his house. "Great Elder Aileen, Ryuu, and Maya."

"You are really one of a kind. To think Licht couldn't even twist his own words. He had underestimated you this whole time and thought that you had yet to experience many things in your life because you are too young. Whether it was unfortunate or fortunate, he lost in the argument." Aileen smiled.

Alex scratched his head and said embarrassedly. "Haha... Overpraise."

"No. It was really a good show." Aileen waved her hand. "Anyway, I am here because I want to thank you for my disciples' progress. Not only Ryuu, who usually ranked third in the younger generation ranking, finally reached the second rank, Maya also reached the Ninth Floor. Truly, thank you very much."

She cupped her hands and bowed slightly. Ryuu and Maya also followed her action with a smile.

Alex was taken aback and quickly helped her up. "It's only a transaction between us. Great Elder has taught me about Space Element with everything you have, so I should pay you back by teaching Maya seriously. As for Ryuu, it's his talent that let him reach that stage."

"Haha... You are really... If you are not Great Elder Maxwell's disciple, I will snatch you away. No, I should say I want to marry you if you are younger." Aileen laughed abruptly. That showed how much Aileen actually admired his power and intelligence. If she learned Alex's past, he wouldn't dare to believe it because he had changed so much.

Alex shook his head. "Anyway, I am going to stay here for another six months even though I have learned everything I want."

"Sure. You can stay here for as long as you want. Besides, we can have some exchange with Space Mark because it's a really intriguing topic. I never expected that the unpopular manual actually has such an effect. Now my imagination is endless and eager to test them one by one." Aileen pumped her fist.

Maya pouted and crossed her arms. "You only know about Space Mark because I have learned this technique. If not, you might not have an interest in it."

Aileen patted her head and smiled. "That's right. Our Maya is the best, especially since she starts taking the training seriously. Your talent is by no means lower than Ryuu's, but you are too lazy. I am waiting for you to be the best and replace me in the future."

Maya looked away, embarrassed of her past. Ryuu only cupped his hands and bowed.

Aileen then turned back to Alex. "Anyway, I will give you a token later and a certain insignia, so you know which ones are our spies. They will surely aid you on the surface."

Alex nodded. "Thank you."

Aileen thought for a moment before asking. "So, what do you want? With your talent and that deal, there are many people that hold interest in you, you know. You can even take them as your bride, especially Viola's Disciple, Daphne. She was totally bewildered about your strength and wanted to know like a hungry beast. Though that is precisely the reason why she is called the number one of the younger generations."

Alex maintained his poker face while waiting for Aileen to stop laughing. "I never thought about that kind of relationship, so I need to reject it."

"Don't worry. We know what to do. No one learns about your identity yet and will never learn, I guess. Anyway, Licht has handled the situation, so no matter if you train here for a few months or a few years, you won't get discovered." Aileen nodded, assuring him with a smile.

"Thank you." Alex glanced at Ryuu. "Congratulations on your new ranking."

Ryuu clasped his hands and smiled. "Thank you, Alex. Though I can't be compared to you, who beat the entire tower."

Maya pouted again. "Why would no one actually remember me this whole time?!"

Ryuu and Alex laughed it off while Aileen sent a thought transmission to Alex. 'We won't ask you about your experience in the Potential Tower because Great Elder Maxwell has warned us in the past.'

'Hmm?' Alex furrowed his eyebrows and recalled the real purposes' behind each mission. From his knowledge, the test might be different for each disciple, but the purpose is still the same. That's why if they know the purpose, they might be able to beat it. Maxwell and Ri Xheo didn't tell him anything or simply forgot to tell him that he couldn't tell his experience to others. But like master like disciple, Alex also forgot to learn the truth about Freedom Sect. There were a few things he couldn't ask Aileen, albeit he could only sigh.

'There is one more thing I want to ask.'

'What is it?' Alex asked.

'We are planning to have someone get another element in their body. There is only one reason we dare to do this. You and Your Master have beaten the tower with two elements, so we think if two elements can actually help...'

Alex thought for a moment. It was true that his Fire was actually helping him inside that tower, especially with his firepower, while his Space Element's support ability truly aided him from time to time. Although there were some severe cases where he couldn't use some abilities, it still raised his chance to victory. Albeit...

He remembered that he needed to fight powerful monsters because he learned too many. After considering several factors, Alex answered, 'I do think having two elements will help you overall. However, the user still needs to practice and keep up with the other element. We also need to see his affinity for that element.'

'If he/she can train two elements at the same time along with the weapon, he/she will certainly have a higher chance to succeed.' Alex nodded with a serious expression.

'Yeah. We came up with the same hypothesis. That's why we are going to use this year's evaluation to search for a disciple, no matter if they are a Great Elder Disciple or a normal disciple. We will nurture their strength. After all, we don't dare to have the old one here. Not only is there a risk of that destroying their long foundation, but we also consider their fighting style.'

'Youngsters like you who have high cultivation and not many experiences are very welcome. After all, you can be reckless and try to search for a new fighting style that suits yours. Anyway, I just wanted to ask you about it. Now that we are done here, I need to leave.'

Alex nodded.

Aileen then patted Ryuu and Maya. "Let's go back."

They nodded and followed her through the Spatial Gate.

Aileen and the others went back as Alex returned to his bed. He wanted to recover his Spiritual Energy first before enduring the hellish training.

...



And then finally, after six months of training, Alex once again stepped out of his house with all of his equipment, ready to return to the surface.

### **Chapter 699 - Back to the Surface**

Six months later,

After a nice session of training, Alex had reached 8-Star Martial Monarch. He didn't forget to learn two pills: Sun Strength Pill and Abyss Soul Pill according to Firia. As the name implied, it was the next version of his strength and soul pill, which he abruptly took in the process. He felt that his strength wouldn't lose against a 2-Star Martial Saint at this point.

Meanwhile, the other pills would be managed by Firia because she had learned many pills, including the pill that could raise one's talent. Alex wanted to make that pill and gave Rose one while selling the others.

He didn't forget about the four arrays too. Everything was going according to the schedule, and no one was left.

In the meantime, Aileen also visited him from time to time as they discussed Space Mark. Due to how advanced Aileen's experience and knowledge about Space Element was, Alex somehow managed to create at least ten marks at the same time. This would be very useful in the upcoming battle.

Alex took out Anya's card. "Anya, I am going out today."

"Noted. I will meet you right in front of the cave as our plan."

"Well, there is a problem. It seems that they are going to escort me until I am out." Alex talked with an unsure tone.

"It doesn't matter. They are striking deals with you not long ago, so we should show our face as well. Though, it will only be me, Firia, and Leoz that will welcome you. We can't show all of our strength, can't we?" Anya smirked as she thought about showing their dominance.

"Don't you think it is unnecessary?" Alex asked and furrowed his eyebrows.

"It's necessary for us. After all, you have been under their care these past eighteen months. Although it's not really important, just say that this is a courtesy." Anya persuaded him.

Alex thought for a moment and nodded. "Alright. Do as you like."

"Thank you."

He then put her card inside the Inventory again and made sure he didn't leave anything inside. At first, he wanted to leave a wisp of his soul, but he refrained himself. He thought that Evelyn might come to this place and trained here, but he didn't know when she would come. If the Freedom Sect had resurfaced, she wouldn't get this message. Hence, it would be better to say it to her through the system.

After finishing all the matters inside the house, Alex then walked outside the house and found the three people that had accompanied him for the past one and a half years had been waiting outside.

"I'm sorry for making you wait." Alex smiled and nodded.

Aileen waved her hand, telling Alex it was fine. "Anyway, are you really going to leave?"

"Yes. I need many important things to do on the surface."

"Alright... Still, your cultivation speed is insane. I remember that the first time you came here, you were only a 6-Star Martial Monarch, and you had reached 8-Star Martial Monarch without a problem." Aileen narrowed her eyes and sighed.

Alex laughed inwardly. If he didn't have anything and only cultivated, he might be able to advance 3 stars within a year. It was already too low for the current him, considering he could advance one star in a month previously.

"Are you going to participate in the Seven Influences Banquet?" Aileen asked.

Alex thought for a moment and nodded. "Yes. I need to go to that banquet no matter what, especially if I want to keep my end of the bargain."

'This guy.' Aileen squinted her eyes and took a deep breath. She still kept smiling as to prevent Alex from noticing anything. "I see. We can't really help you with this matter. However, we have many spies inside all those influences. If you have the insignia that I gave you months ago, you will know our spies and can order them as you like, including passing the message to us. If they don't believe you, you can simply give them the token, and they will obey right away."

Alex nodded. "I will remember it."

"Anyway, I just want to say that if you have any problems, you can come to us. After all, we are relying on you right now."

"I understand." Alex didn't reply that he would rely on them. Licht must ask her to say it because he could say that it was a part of the promised five wishes or something along the lines. They might not be able to trick him, but Rose was different. That was why he wasn't planning to ask their help unless it was the time to uphold their agreement. He wanted to have his record as clean as possible.

Aileen sighed inwardly and realized what Alex was thinking. She thought, 'I have said it to him, Old Licht. It seems you won't win against this guy, especially if you are at a disadvantage.'

"I am going back then." Alex nodded.

"Ryu and Maya will escort you to the surface." Aileen smiled and pointed her hand toward Ryu and Maya.

"Haha... Let me see you off, Alex." Ryu smiled. He couldn't be more impressed with a guy and somehow had Alex to be his role model.

"Hmph. It's not like I want to accompany you, alright? It's simply because of the benefit that you brought to this place. If not, I won't even accompany you." Maya crossed her arms and looked away. Although Ryu and Aileen were the number one and number two in her heart, Alex undeniably became the number three.

Not only had he helped her for her cultivation and weapon, but he had also helped Aileen and Ryu. Hence, she had a certain affection with this person called Alex, of course, not a romantic one.

When Alex saw her acting like a tsundere, he couldn't help but recall the ultimate tsun-tsun couple, Fabio and Vera. These two would surely have a symphony with her... Not that he could say it though.

Alex smiled and nodded. "Then, I am in your care."

Aileen then waved her hand and created a Spatial Gate toward their Teleportation Array.

Ryuu stretched his hand and asked Alex to go inside the portal before activating it.

Aileen waved her hand with a smile, seeing them off.

As soon as they arrived in the previous water cave, the two disciples that were guarding the gate bowed to them, especially to Ryuu and Maya, as they realized these two.

Ryuu smiled and said, "Good work you two. I am bringing our guests out, so please watch the gate for us as we will come back soon."

"Yes." They cupped their hands and bowed simultaneously.

Ryuu then led Alex through the cave until he arrived at the previous hole where Alex came one and a half years ago.

As Anya said earlier, Anya, followed by Firia and Leoz, were standing right above the ground. Ryuu and Maya noticed their presence and were shocked. They were astonished when they saw two 1-Star Martial Saints and one 4-Star Martial Saint.

"I am back." Alex appeared before them without waiting for Ryuu and Maya to react.

"Welcome back, Alex." Anya and Firia said at the same time, signifying their status.

Ryuu and Maya were shocked once more. They looked at each other and sent a thought transmission.

'They are... Alex's wives, right?'

'It seems to be that way.' Maya nodded furiously.

'Now that I can see why he never had any interest from those women in the sect. His wives are so amazing.'

'Yeah.'

When they were thinking about it, Alex already finished talking with Anya and Firia and turned around.

"These two are Ryuu and Maya. They have been helping me inside the sect."

"Thank you for helping our Alex." Firia smiled gracefully.

"No. It's us who should thank you." Ryuu hurriedly regained his bearing and thanked them.

"I think it's time." Alex smiled at Ryuu and Maya. "We shall meet again if the opportunity comes."

Ryuu nodded his head while Maya waved her hand awkwardly.

Alex then flew away with the others.

"By the way, how is the situation on the continent? When are we making a move?" Alex asked while flying.

"No need to hurry. The Seven Influences Banquet will only start in two weeks. We can go there in a few minutes with your teleportation anyway." Firia assured him with a smile.

Alex thought for a moment and nodded. "Then, how about the ticket situation?"

"You mean the invitation? We acquired them from the Blackwade Clan not long ago. I am planning to inform you after this..." Anya sighed.

"Well, the problem will be who will accompany you for this banquet... Or are you planning to go alone?" Firia asked.

"Hmm, I don't know what this banquet is all about to be honest."

"This banquet is simply for the talented younger generations to show off their power," Anya answered him bluntly.

"Well, show off is the right word, I guess." Firia scratched her cheek and made a weird smile. "They will have a set of events for you to show off your power... Albeit, this is only about your other power like Poem, Alchemy, and so on. After that, they will move toward the battle event where they could challenge one another."

Alex furrowed his eyebrows. "I heard that the current successor of the Fire God Clan has a brain. It will be hard to anger him."

"If you want to kill him, that is... But our priority is to have a nice chat with the Fire God Clan and for you to see the other geniuses from other influences. You might be able to see whether they are a threat or not." Anya added.

"True enough." Alex nodded in agreement. "Killing that guy will only be a bonus."

"Yeah. Seeing how you act with Song Jiaoren will also make the Ancient Blue Family think twice whether to cooperate with the Fire God Clan. After that, we can start pressuring them and have them not participate in the battle against the Fire God Clan." Anya smirked evilly.

"True enough. Evelyn is going to be there, right?" Alex asked.

"Yeah. Though she will be accompanied by hand-picked disciples, and it seems she has so many suitors in the Drunken Pavilion." Anya laughed.

Alex shrugged. "If she has taken a liking for a guy, I will surely give her my blessing."

"You will meet one of them in the Seven Influences Banquet, and it will be from one of their disciples." Anya sighed.

"Is this going to be the 'You are not qualified to be with her' again?" Alex twitched his eyebrows in annoyance.

"I suppose." Firia rolled her eyes as she said, "If you can have Song Jiaoren to stop him, he will naturally stop. Unless he is a fool or something along the line, you can simply shame him with Evelyn and kill him afterward. Don't worry. It will be so clean that no one would know."

"Isn't it easy to know since he offended me or something?"

"And do you think that Manness will care about it?" Firia stuck out her tongue. "Drunken Pavilion is not like other influences. The elders are only responsible for their branches all over Heavenly Continent, so you won't need to worry about it. With your status, that Manness won't make trouble."

"That's right. Although he is a son of an elder, we can simply eliminate that elder, considering that elder is only a 6-Star Martial Saint Elder. Leoz will be powerful enough for him... Or maybe level up Nelson and have him assassinate him. Although we are not fighting the Drunken Pavilion, it doesn't mean we are easy to bully. We need to make a clear conscience with that Manness too." Anya grinned evilly.

"Anyway, we can talk about the rest when we arrive." Firia clapped her hand and stopped the conversation.

"I know that, but I am curious about one thing. How do you acquire the Invitation from Song Jiaoren?" Alex asked.

"Oh that." Anya recalled the report and started telling him. "Nicole was in charge of it, and the process was like this..."

#### **Chapter 700 - Preparation for Seven Influences Banquet**

"Nicole was in charge of it, and the process was like this..." Anya started telling him the story.

...

Two weeks ago, inside Song Jiaoren courtyard, the person in question just came back from the meeting of their family.

"Fu. Tomorrow will be the time to go toward the Seven Influences Banquet. There are many things I need to do in this Seven Influences Banquet." Song Jiaoren sighed as he changed his clothes to something comfortable before starting his cultivation.

As soon as he changed, he suddenly felt a presence outside his room and shouted. "Who are you?"

No one would actually disturb him in his room unless they were his close family. However, he couldn't recognize this Spiritual Energy at all, so he raised his guard to the maximum.

A female voice resounded across the door. "Please, don't say such a thing. I am coming here again to pass you the words of my master. Haven't you waited this whole time for it?"

"This voice..." Song Jiaoren suddenly remembered this voice and furrowed his eyebrows. "Spirit Nest?"

"Correct." Nicole slowly opened the door and made her appearance.

"So, you have chosen this time to make your appearance... To think that we couldn't catch a single person despite knowing you are there..." Song Jiaoren sighed.

"Doesn't Young Master Song Jiaoren want to invite me in? This talk will be a bit long after all, considering it will be about the Supreme VIP Card." A smile appeared on Nicole's serious face.

Song Jiaoren thought for a moment and nodded. "Fine. Come in."

Nicole walked slowly inside the room and reached a couch. "Then excuse me."

"So..." Song Jiaoren walked toward the window and leaned back. He recalled that this woman was so weak before, and within a few years, she managed to reach Martial Saint was already incredible, making it look incredible. There was her espionage skill to boot. To think that such a talent was under the Spirit Nest, it made him more curious about the person called Alexander Sirius.

"My master, Alexander Sirius, wants to meet you in the Seven Influences Banquet. However, he doesn't have an Invitation." Nicole stopped as Song Jiaoren could speculate the rest.

"So, you are just passing that message. It's easy then. Just tell the guards that I am inviting him inside." He raised his hand and somehow thought Alex was a fool because he sent his subordinate to a dangerous place like this for that message alone.

"Of course. If it's that easy, I won't be here. Unlike a normal person, my master doesn't want to have trouble. Suppose that he can say that you have invited him inside, the guards won't believe him... Especially since no one actually knows our Spirit Nest. At the same time, there is a possibility of someone witnessing such an event and embarrassing my master, like saying he is a beggar or something.

"We will be insulted that way. Hence, we are not going the normal way." Nicole smirked slyly as she glanced at the paper on his table.

"What do you want then?"

"We simply want your Invitation there." Nicole pointed her finger at the paper.

"Ho..." Song Jiaoren narrowed his eyes, leaking a bit of his aura. "If I am giving you this, then how can I enter the banquet?"

"Haha, Young Master Song Jiaoren loves to joke. Your fame has been spread all over the Heavenly Continent. The guards will surely give you a pass even without the invitation." Nicole chuckled.

"Do you think that is enough? There is still a chance of me being embarrassed when someone knows that I don't have the invitation."

"Then I can only say that Young Master has wasted a very big opportunity." Nicole smirked.

"A very big opportunity? Although you are mysterious, I don't think you are qualified to say it to my face!" Song Jiaoren twitched his eyebrows. "I know that you have been trading with us... Around a few ten thousand Spirit Crystals. But that's all."

"In the end, you are underestimating us again." Nicole shook her head. "Do you think we will trade everything with you?"

Song Jiaoren's face was distorted a little bit.

"I am not allowed to say the specific, but I should be able to tell you this. The amount we are going to trade will be far higher than the loss the Divine Kingdom suffered during the previous incident." Nicole smirked, threatening him.

"!!!" Song Jiaoren opened his eyes wide and thought. 'Divine Kingdom has suffered the most because of the previous incident. According to the report, the loss exceeded their first speculation, and she said he could offer far more than that? Still, her cultivation has risen to the same level as me, 1-Star Martial Saint, within a few years... Is she telling the truth?'

He couldn't immediately accept them and didn't need to give Spirit Nest a face because he had yet to determine whether the Supreme VIP Card is really in their hand. However, this deal was truly interesting.

"The Divine Kingdom has suffered five years of their revenue, and you are telling me you can trade far higher than that?" He narrowed his eyes.

"Of course. That is our strength. The Blackwade Clan and the Divine Kingdom weren't the only ones that took advantage of the previous incident... We were the biggest winner."

"Ho." Song Jiaoren's heart skipped a beat, and quickly regained his bearing. "I didn't even see your Spirit Nest when we were fighting those monsters, and you are saying you were the biggest winner?"

"Do you think we will let you observe us just like that? How do you think we have been hiding this whole time?"

What Nicole was true. Song Jiaoren didn't know whether this Spirit Nest was a new influence or not. Alex might be their leader, but their sudden progress and such made him think there was actually a huge amount of resources poured into Alex and this person. That was why he couldn't dismiss the thought.

"Suppose I give you the Invitation, what and how will you contact me at that time? There is also a chance that you might even want to embarrass me later."

Nicole shook her head. "We have no assurance for you. If you trust us, we will contact you. Else, we will just see whether anyone would take the deal. After all, the Blackwade Clan might be able to monopolize the situation to a certain extent, but if we choose to emerge, you might want to think twice."

He thought for a moment, grabbed the paper, and threw it to Nicole. "This life is a gamble. Whether I win or not, I will place my bet on the Spirit Nest. I want to rebuke many of your arguments, but I don't want to delay this matter any longer. If Spirit Nest doesn't have the Supreme VIP Card, my Blackwade Clan won't wait and fight you."

"Fufu... Young Master Song Jiaoren is indeed a man worthy of his reputation. I know that my negotiation skill is far from perfect, but you still decide it this way." Nicole stood up and bowed slightly. "Since I have fulfilled my task, I will excuse myself."

"Wait!"

Nicole stopped and turned around. "Does Young Master need anything, or do you want me to pass a message to my master?"

"..." Song Jiaoren didn't answer her for a minute before saying. "If the Spirit Nest abandons you, come to this place. I will surely get you a position within this clan."

"As a retainer of my master, I am thankful for such high praise regarding my ability. However, I need to decline your invitation. After all, my master is the best, and that won't change," said Nicole with confidence before she disappeared from his room.

Song Jiaoren let out a long sigh as he looked outside his window. He wanted to cultivate earlier, but it seemed his mind wasn't fit to cultivate right now. "Spirit Nest, huh... Let's see what you got. I'm looking forward to this year's Seven Influences Banquet."

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"That's what happened a few weeks ago," Anya explained. Luckily, Nicole wasn't here or else, she would be embarrassed.

Alex then opened his Inventory and found the invitation before closing it again. "This will be interesting."

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He wasn't the only one who thought that way. Inside the Snow White Mountain, a woman sat down while looking at the snow outside. "This year's Seven Influences Banquet will surely be interesting. They have looked down on us for too long. I will reverse all their thoughts with this Sacrificial Element. Just you all wait."

Unlike the Snow White Mountain, Fire God Clan had a gloom atmosphere.

"What should we do, Patriarch? Are we not participating in this year's Seven Influences Banquet?" One of the elders asked.

"Our reputation has been greatly hit by the Spirit Nest a few times. If we don't join, where can we put our face?" The Patriarch gritted his teeth.

"Still, Second Young Master will be in danger if he participates."

"I know. Eric is a smart man. I will leave two 8-Star Martial Saints elders with him, along with two rank 8 Teleportation Array Plates." Leo gritted his teeth.

"Two rank 8 Teleportation Array Plates?" The elders were shocked by his statement. It was considered as a life-saving treasure even for Fire God Clan, and Leo wanted to have Eric bring two... This...

"What? Do you have any objections? If we are not coming to this year's banquet, our name will be tarnished. With such a name, our economy and reputation will be gone, and the disciples might even start leaving the clan. This is a heavier blow than the two rank 8 Teleportation Array Plates." Leo roared, shutting all the elders up.

Although they didn't want to admit it, Leo was right. They had no choice other than to do this, and it was only a single influence that forced them to make such a decision. They never knew the extent of Spirit Nest power, so they could only prepare for the worst.



Unfortunately for them, all of this was within Alex's calculation.

The elders had no choice other than agreed with such a proposal. The wealth of a clan could be restored over time, but when the clan started declining, the situation would only become worse after that point.

"Call Eric here."

...

At the same time, Drunken Pavilion also had the same topic. Evelyn was kneeling in front of Manness along with the other disciples.

"All of you shall go to the Seven Influences Banquet." Manness rose from his seat and announced.

"Yes, Pavilion Master." They answered in unison.

He then walked toward Evelyn and smiled. "Evelyn... If my prediction is correct, I am sure that man will be there."

"!!!" Evelyn opened her mouth in surprise before it turned into a giant smile. "Really?"

"Yeah. After watching Maxwell, I am sure he is far more monstrous than him. There is no way he would let this opportunity pass."

"I can really meet big brother Alex..." Evelyn was so happy to the point she unconsciously stood up and pumped her fists.

"It seems this time Seven Influences Banquet will be amazing. Give me a report after you come back, alright?" Manness smirked. "Like master like disciple, both of them seemed to create a huge mess first before leaving (this world)."

"Yes." Evelyn nodded furiously.

...

In Phantasm Sect, especially inside a tower near the sea.

A man smiled as he changed his clothes while humming happily. "Are you sure you want to follow me to the Seven Influences Banquet?"

The question was targeted to a woman behind him. She looked at him with a smile. "Yes. Are you curious about why I want to follow you?"

"Hmm, not really?"

"Then what if I say it's because of a man?" She smirked, teasing him.

"So, your heart holds such a man..." The man wasn't angry or happy. He stared at the woman and asked, "Are you going to leave my side then?"

"Fufu... I am just teasing you. Our relationship isn't like that, so you don't need to worry. I have pledged myself, or have you forgotten about it?"

"No way. Unfortunately, only a few elders that are close to me accept this... Wait a bit more, alright?"

"I know their worry. That's why I am going to prove myself that I am worthy." She grinned.

"Oh, you little girl."