

Grand Ancestral Bloodlines

Chapter 16: Valiant Old Woman

Himari and Elena quickly helped Ryu recover as all eyes focused on Titus. If it was a normal injury or even a normal gathering, they wouldn't care to end all festivities right now for Ryu's sake. However, neither of these things were the reality.

For one, a wielder of the heavenly pupils bleeding from their eyes only represented one thing: over-exertion! Who here didn't know that Ryu was born with the first ranked heavenly pupils? A wielder of the Mysteries of Heaven and Earth being injured in such a way meant that there was a massive upheaval on the horizon, one that none of them could ignore. How could they allow such information to leak at this time?

Secondly, this event was put together by the Tatusya Clan to probe the current Shrine Plane's situation and solidify bonds. They all understood the importance of this. Whether it was for familial love or practicality, Ryu had to hold it together!

"I'm sure that many of you are wondering why the Tatsuya Clan issued this summons. Truthfully, it isn't because this old man believes his son's birth date is so important. The matters of the younger generation are trivial and are unworthy for such esteemed and honored guests to be involved in. Rather, I called you all here to witness a moment in history and to benefit from this rare opportunity!"

Titus' words alleviated many of the doubts and pent up frustration many there had. Honestly, they had forgotten this anger after seeing friends of old, however, Titus' words reminded them that these theatrics were actually all for a boy with his mother's milk still leaking from his lips.

This said, the fact Titus was admitting all of this himself made them feel inwardly comfortable. Before, they had no choice but to come for fear of offending this powerful Clan, but now it could be said that they were happy they came. It was clear that Titus had the charisma of a leader.

After collecting himself, other than slightly reddened eyes that ached with he looked at the light, Ryu was fine. He couldn't help but look toward his father with a hint of pride in his eyes. Ryu was well aware that he didn't have the disposition of a leader... he was too cold, too calculating and completely unsociable. So, he had always admired his father's leadership talent.

"You may have all guessed reason since that silly brat of mine let the cat out of the bag, but today the Tatsuya Clan will allow you all to be witness to the bestowment of a treasure we've kept for generations, the Origin Flame!

"As legends would have it, the Origin Flame is a source of enlightenment. Many tales claim that in the moment it chooses a master, it will release a wave of Heavenly Law, making comprehension of higher realms far easier." Titus smiled lightly, allowing the weight of his words to build up. He didn't have to fabricate these tales, these were truths everyone who had heard of this flame knew.

The Origin Flame was a miracle of the heavens. It had the ability to bestow enlightenment to those in its presence, making resonating with the Natural Order far easier. The Master of these flames would be the greatest beneficiary of this, allowing them to see through the essence of all things.

This flame was by no means the greatest offensively, such a title was reserved for Core Flames. This flame was also not the best for alchemy or blacksmithing, such an honor was harbored by Earth Flames. It didn't have any special healing abilities either, such a thing was exclusive to Holy Flames.

Not only could this flame not harm a fly, it was completely docile! However, what it did have was absolute control and sovereignty!

Raging energies became as calm as a peaceful rivers. Impossible to comprehend concepts slowed before your eyes, awakening within your mind. Nature would grow fond of you, causing rampaging beasts to bow and heavenly treasures to present themselves.

Origin Flames were the last sparks that remained from the beginning of all things... Whether these rumored abilities were true extent of their capabilities, even these immortals were unaware. But, wasn't coming out of their secluded practice worth it for just the possibility?

"Our Tatsuya Clan could have taken advantage of this moment alone, but the Golden Era of our Shrine Plane wasn't ushered in by selfishness. The foundation of this Era is comradeship and brotherhood, it's because we come together that the state of affairs today is so harmonious and peaceful.

"I share this opportunity with you all to continue facilitating this culture. The Tatsuya Clan will never treat you poorly, so I hope that you take care of us as well."

Those here were moved by Titus' words. They almost simultaneously hung their heads in shame for how poorly they reciprocated this kindness. Those who gone out of their way to humiliate Ryu earlier in the night felt even worse... None doubted Titus' word. Even if he was lying, they were certain that there weren't any malicious intentions behind his true purpose. Thinking to this point, those of the older generation who had been stuck at bottlenecks for an ungodly number of years couldn't help but sit up straighter.

Servants with cultivation so profound that many raised eyebrows glided into the room, holding a box so black that it reflected no light whatsoever.

This box was quite larger, requiring six such servants to hold. Yet, despite the number of them, the strain on their features was clear.

"Neutron Star Core!" Those of the Weapon's Forging Guilds all but fainted in shock. The material this box was made out of was none other than the densest and hardest mineral in existence. A single cubic centimeter weighed millions of jin! Who could even imagine how heavy this large box was?

However, to hold the Origin Flame, such measures weren't just warranted, they were necessitated.

"Haha! I hope I'm not late!"

Just as the black box was placed before Titus, the domineering voice of a valiant middle-aged woman shook the hall. Everyone could only look over to find Old Mistress Holy Wing standing in gold, silver and pink diamond armor, a short sword to her hip.

She strode forward as though she was walking into her own home, a domineering sneer hanging from her well maintained cherry lips.

Chapter 17: Old Mistress Holy Wing (1)

Old Mistress Holy Wing was indeed valiant. Although she had retired from her position of Priest Saintess, handing it down to her daughter – Elena's mother's half-sister and Ryu's half-aunt – she was no older or less powerful than Ryu's grandmothers.

Her beauty was clear. Despite looking about fifty or so years old, her skin was soft and supple, not to mention healthy. Her hair still swayed with a shimmering crystal light and her pink eyes pierced through the very air itself.

Seeing her rival walk in, Mistress Kunan's eyes flashed with anger while Priest Saint Kunan's became filled with a complicated light. At one point in time, he had loved this woman as well, but he chose his Vorena instead. However, instead of respecting that decision, Old Mistress Holy Wing forgot all boundaries and realms of etiquette to forcibly take his seed. As a result, he had a daughter in this world he could count on a single hand the number of times he had seen... A daughter he had never even held in his arms.

This sort of pain bore a hatred for this woman deep in Priest Saint Kunan's heart. All tethers of love had been shattered by her eons ago. If it wasn't for that fact she was still a mother of his child, Priest Saint Kunan would have drawn his weapon and cleaved her in two!

As for Mistress Kunan, she understood the feelings of her husband well. Although she gave him a hard time, these were wounds she would never tread on. She despised this woman to the depths of her soul. If it wasn't for her love's sake, she too would have cleaved this wench in half!

Titus showed no obvious reaction to Old Mistress Holy Wing's entrance. His eyes were calm, but the slight swaying of his flaming red hair told anyone who knew him that he was truly angered.

"Valeska, what brings you here?" Titus asked apathetically.

Old Mistress Holy Wing tilted her head. "Little boy, you're still ten billion years too young to address me in such a way."

"Grandmother!" Elena stood with a rage deep in her eyes. "Must you do things this way?!"

"Grandmother? You still have the face to call me by that title when you've spit in the face of everything I've built?! You're no granddaughter of mine!"

Who didn't know the teachings of the Holy Wing Clan? Marriage was forbidden. Men were to be used, not fallen in love with. Their doctrines were so simple to remember that only a fool would forget. Yet, one of their Saintesses ignored these rules entirely, rules that had been in place for several Eras!

If it was up to Old Mistress Holy Wing, she would have tied Elena up and locked her away until that little bastard cripple Ryu died a rotten death. But, Elena was too intelligent and the Tatusya and Kunan Clans were too powerful. Since Elena decided to stay of her own accord, would Mistress and Priest Saint Kunan allow Valeska to do as she pleased? Would Titus and Himari allow their son's lover to be taken right before their eyes? Of course not!

No matter how valiant Old Mistress Holy Wing seemed, she was simply a cornered chicken with barely the ability to squawk.

A normal granddaughter would have been hurt to hear these words, but Elena had heard them too often. Even the greatest of insults fell on deaf ears when used to impunity. Elena only felt a deep seeded disgust for her grandmother's ways.

The truth of the matter was that this was more serious than it was made out to be. When a Clan was formed there were a few things it needed. The first was a Holy Land, the second were Founding Members, and the third were Clan Texts.

The Holy Land was simply a place adequate enough to birth a prestigious Clan. They were usually areas of resounding Feng Shui or markers of auspicious events.

The Founding Members were even simpler to explain. They were the core members of the soon to be formed Clan. The more powerful they were, the more binding the Clan Texts would be.

Then, there were the so-called Clan Texts. These were ancient rules put in place by the Clan's founders and a proxy by which the standards of the future generations were measured. They were also the means by which Core Teachings or techniques of a Clan could be stored.

What did the act of Elena's defiance mean? It was no less than slapping the faces of these Founding Members.

If it was a small clan or if Elena was an insignificant branch member, this would hardly matter. But, the fact that the Holy Wing Clan was a Founding Clan of the Shrine Planes and Elena was a Saintess of their ranks made this problem massive!

When the Clan Texts are disobeyed, the Fate that the Founding Members provided takes a hit. If these rules continue to be violated, there will be a time that this Ancient Fate will cease to recognize its current generation members entirely! If this were to happen, the ability for the Holy Wing Clan to protect itself and birth future talents would take a major hit, one substantial enough to cripple and even destroy them!

Simply put, while Elena found these rules barbaric and disgusting, Old Mistress Holy Wing saw them as necessary for the survival of their Clan!

One could debate about what fools the Founding Members were all they liked, but the Clan Texts were set in stone several Eras ago. It was then the obligation of the current generation to either fall in line like Old Mistress Holy Wing or destroy it all and start from scratch.

It might sound valiant and noble to choose the latter, but how many could really afford to do so? It simply couldn't be helped that the values of the past generations wouldn't be in line with that of those today... But, without the protection of these past generations, a Clan's only option was to become a subordinate to others or risk destruction.

Seeing that her granddaughter only sneered at her comments, Old Mistress Holy Wing's gaze turned cold before snapping away entirely.

"I've simply come to partake in the festivities, you wouldn't turn this old woman away, would you?"

Chapter 18: Old Mistress Holy Wing (2)

Ryu suddenly stood, his eyes closed, and his hands clasped behind his back. In that moment, he inexplicably became the center of attention. This was a dispute between

the strongest cultivators of the highest Immortal Plane, yet a mere mortal took center stage!

His footsteps were deliberate, and slow, resounding through the hall steadily.

The blood that had just coated his cheeks had long since been wiped away, revealing his devilishly handsome appearance to the fullest extent. If one didn't sweep their senses over his meridians, they would be certain that he was an expert of experts, a man who stood above the world loftily... A man who saw them all as nothing but ants.

Priest Saint Ventus' eyes narrowed at this display. It was clear to him and those of the older generation that this wasn't an act, and even if it was an act, who could say they could fulfill such a role so perfectly?

Although Priest Saint Ventus hadn't told his grandson this, the moment he heard that the Origin Flame was being gifted to Ryu, his probing became meaningless, this was why he didn't have his grandson continue.

While others might not understand the full history of the Origin Flame, he and many others of the oldest generation did. Think about it for a moment... Why was Titus so certain that the Origin Flame would accept Ryu as its master? No matter how docile such a flame was, could it really be accepted by just anyone? Could it really call anyone 'Master'? Of course not!

The reason Titus was so certain was because those with heavenly pupils ranked within the top ten were said to be the Masters of Origin. Each were given a heaven shaking ability that had existed since the beginning of time itself, allowing them to be the only ones an Origin Flame would accept.

If the Mysteries of Heaven and Earth Pupils were paired with the Origin Flame, the results would be catastrophic for their movement!

For Titus, giving this flame to his son was just another method of prolonging his life. It would bide them at least a few more hundred years to find a cure for Ryu's False Spiritual Foundation. However, to Priest Saint Ventus, this was akin to giving wings to a tiger.

So, even without knowing what the full extent of Ryu's abilities would be after this event, he had resolutely decided that they couldn't delay matters any longer. The problem was that after seeing Ryu's current demeanor, he feared that it was already too late... Would such a man really need the Origin Flame? He seemed as though he already had the world in the palm of his hand!

To Ryu, however, he didn't mind any of this. He usually restrained his aura to the utmost, not because he was scared to unleash it, but rather because he found doing so useless. His eyes always seemed to see much clearer when everyone thought he was a

good-for-nothing cripple. It was just that right now... He was very angry. In fact, his blood was boiling.

"Why did you come here?" Ryu made his way to the black box of neutron star core, resting his eyes on it. Although he was speaking to Old Mistress Holy Wing, he wasn't facing her at all.

The Old Mistress sneered. "Didn't you hear what I just said to your father? Or are your ears crippled as well? He has no right to question me, so since when was it yours?!"

"Oh? He doesn't have the right to? I see..." Ryu's hand glided across the exterior of the black box. It seemed smooth on the outside, but it was actually incomparably rough, like fine grade sandpaper. Ryu's frail hands became cut in an instant, but he didn't seem to notice the blood dripping from his palm.

"There are twenty-three Founding Clans of the Shrine Plane. Of these twenty-three, six currently control nine Shrines. Of these nine Shrines, my Tatsuya Clans controls two and have a marriage alliance with the only other Clan that supersedes this feat." Ryu spoke with an eerie calm, in fact, his speech was almost too slow, yet it somehow stifled others from speaking atop of him.

"You protect your Clan Texts for the sake of self-preservation. You're a coward who hides behind your bravado and childish heart. Yet, you dare to provoke a Clan that could obliterate yours ten times over. You tell me, is that valiant? Or is it the epitome of stupidity? I wonder how your Founding Members would feel, hearing about a descendant of theirs who seemed hell bent on destruction?"

The temperature of the room dropped several dozen degrees. The words Ryu had just spoken were absolutely taboo. Speaking of war and the destruction of Clans so nonchalantly?! Wasn't he afraid of bringing about public outrage?!

Old Mistress Holy Wing's beautiful face contorted in anger, her ample chest heaving. However, her control over her emotions made it clear to everyone just how true his words were. Of course, a destruction of ten times over was a massive exaggeration. In fact, the Tatsuya Clan would have to ally with all four Clans bonded together by marriage to have assurance of erasing the Holy Wing Clan from their Plane.

Of course, these four Clans were represented by Ryu's four grandparents. Such a movement toward war would be unprecedented. But, seeing the look of love and pride the four old monsters had when they looked toward this grandson of theirs, those in the surroundings couldn't help but shiver.

Didn't you all like spreading rumors about how domineering Ryu's backers were in helping their precious son and grandson fulfill his wishes? How do you like it now that your false bullshit has become reality?

Ryu lifted his hand, looking at his bloody palm. "Of course, I don't say any of this seriously. I only felt the need to correct Old Mistress Holy Wing about the appropriate seniority here. Age means nothing in the face of the larger fist, don't you think?"

In the end, Old Mistress Holy Wing shook her head, her anger becoming replaced with a smile.

"So you mean to say that I couldn't have come simply to celebrate my grandson-in-law's birthday?"

"You could have." Ryu said indifferently. "But, I seem to remember that you're very good at separating and cleaving families apart. In fact, thousands just bore witness to your severed relationship with my fiancée. Your face is quite thick to call me your grandson-in-law."

Surprisingly, Old Mistress Holy Wing ignored the jab toward her and Priest Saint Kunan's past.

"Fine, fine. I'm here to recollect a debt. The oh so grand Tatsuya Clan wouldn't be so shameless as to renege, right?"

Chapter 19: Old Mistress Holy Wing (3)

Ryu's silver eyes flashed blue for a moment as they opened, swinging toward Old Mistress Holy Wing's figure.

"And what debt is that?" Ryu asked faintly.

"There are many." Old Mistress Holy Wing stretched her voluptuous body. The armor that covered her seem flexible beyond reason, following her movements as though made of latex.

"For one, I heard my son was crippled by your cuckold grandmother today. My Holy Wing Clan might have laws that bind us mothers to give our sons away, but does that dampen my motherly love? I'm truly hurting."

"WHORE!" The news that Supreme Priest Adofo was yet another man Old Mistress Holy Wing had lured into her bed sent Priest Saintess Kunan into a rage. Lightning crackled ceremonial hall, followed by an overwhelming presence. The weak immediately foamed at the mouth, unable to handle such an expert's anger.

A flash of pain lit Mistress Kunan's eyes. For her husband to still be so enraged by the actions of this woman, could it mean that he still had feelings for her? Losing control of his emotions like this before everyone... Even if he didn't have such feelings, who would believe him?

As for Old Mistress Holy Wing, she didn't care about her old lover's outburst. Considering how many years her granddaughter and Ryu had been engaged, how could she not be used to sparring with this little cripple? The first time, she took a massive loss. But, would she continue to allow that to happen? Of course not. She adapted, learned how to push Ryu's buttons, learned to goad him, how to properly attack and retreat seamlessly. Her title of genius was not empty!

"The second debt involves my granddaughter. Since she's clearly been recruited by the Tatsuya family, the Holy Wing Clan would like an appropriate price for her head. I've spent 600 years trying to change her ways, but it's now clear to me that this is impossible. I don't think my words are unreasonable, or is it that the Tatsuya Clan is so big and strong that they can take the disciples of others as they please?"

"Do remember that Elena has lived more than nine cycles of one hundred thousand years? If we calculate the number of resources she's cost our Holy Wing Clan in that time, it's quite a sum. In addition, this number doesn't include blessings she's received from the Light Shrine as a Saintess and it also doesn't include the value of the Core Teachings she's taking with her. Totaling all of this together and I'd say it'd cost an arm and a leg even for your lofty Clan."

Hearing these words, the calloused Elena trembled, her eyes involuntarily watering. She had thought that by now, she would have been used to all of the words her grandmother could throw at her. But, the thought of her own flesh and blood selling her off like some cheap slave, even tallying things down to the final penny... It hurt. It truly hurt.

"The third debt is even more momentous. It can't be that your Tatsuya Clan forgets the history of this Origin Flame, right? Origin Flames themselves are the last sparks from the beginning of all things, even a Clan as powerful as yours can't lay claim to a treasure like this alone. Did you think you could just hand it out as you pleased? In case you forgot, this Origin Flame was given to the then Leader of our Founding Shrine Plane Clans, your Tatsuya Clan ancestor. It's meant to be used in the event of crisis. You can you ignore my Clan Texts, but can you ignore your own as well?"

"You believe that we should sit idly by as you use such a precious heavenly treasure on a cripple who'll be dead before the next time I have an itch for a strong burly man?" The Old Mistress Holy Wing's features grew obscene as though she was imagining the next man she'd con into her bed.

By this point, there wasn't a single member of Ryu's family that wasn't trembling in rage or suffering the effects of deeply concealed scars opening once more. To describe this woman as vile... It was too good for her! Still... The only one whose visage was as calm as an iceberg was Ryu.

"Your first debt is inconsequential. You seem to love to speak of Clan Texts, so how could it be that you don't know that your Clan's laws don't simply describe 'giving your son away'. Actually, the true law of your Clan requires you to slay all male offspring. The

reason you don't follow this law anymore is because a truly valiant woman of your past paid a heavy price in order to change the wording."

Old Mistress Holy Wing's playful expression froze. This was an absolute secret of their Clan's upper echelon. Even Elena wouldn't know something like this. How the hell did he find out?!

"That said, the price she paid wasn't heavy enough, so the wording only changed from sever life to sever all ties. According to your Clan's laws, he's no longer your son. Why you would bring this up knowing this truth is beyond me. Did you simply want to flaunt how far the legs an expert of your caliber can spread?"

A chilly light involuntarily emanated the moment she heard these words, but the response was eight immediate killing intents locking onto her body. Even Old Mistress Holy Wing couldn't remain nonchalant when she realized the eighth aura was her own granddaughter's.

"Your second debt is even more shameless. I seem to remember Elena selflessly sharing the Holy Ruin I found for her with your Clan. In case you forgot, it was an Origin Grade Ruin. I hadn't sought any remuneration because I had thought that we were family. But, since this is apparently not the case, after deducting the resources the Holy Wing Clan poured into Elena, I believe you are the one who still owes us the astronomical price, no? Of course, this doesn't include my personal expert's fee as the highest ranked Ruins Master of the Shrine Plane."

Old Mistress Holy Wing's features distorted. But, in the end, she gritted her teeth. She had only brought up the first two debts in order to anger Ryu's family, she had never expected to get any real compensation for it. But, the fact Ryu answered to them seriously made it feel like he was belittling her, like she was the cripple and he was the supreme expert!

However, her hopes in the third debt came crashing down in the next instant.

"As for your third debt, unfortunately for you, this Origin Flame isn't the same one you speak of. That Origin Flame is mature while this one is a mere embryo. This was found, once more, by my hand and it was by my father's prowess that it was collected.

"To claim it as the work of your vile ancestors, aren't you too shameless?"

Chapter 20: Inner Devil (1)

In the beginning, those few thousand guests who hadn't dared to make a sound until now were wondering why it was that the lofty Tatsuya and Kunan Clans were allowing a little boy to handle their problems. Weren't you powerful Clans? Weren't you the number one and two existences on this Plane? How could you allow a baby to do your bidding?

However, the more Ryu spoke, the more shocked those in attendance became. Even someone as experienced and intelligence as Old Mistress Holy Wing was pushed into a corner in just a few moves.

It wasn't just that Ryu had won a battle of words, but he also understood propriety in his measured attacks. He never went forward too fiercely, but he also didn't hold back too much either.

For instance, Ryu revealing the dark and disgusting past of the Holy Wing Clan could be considered a severe punishment. In fact, many began to look upon the Holy Wing Clan with contempt. It was one thing to hand baby boys to their fathers, but to kill them?! How inhumane!

Did your vile ancestors really hate men so much? It wasn't as though the Holy Wing Clan practiced techniques of lovelessness or abstinence. If they had, they wouldn't choose men at all, instead, they would recruit young women from society and become a Sect. However, they didn't do this because there was no need to.

What did this mean? Didn't it mean that the Founding Members of the Holy Wing Clan were simply immoral deviants of society? What was the difference between them and a Cursed Cult? And they actually dared to take the namesake of 'Holy'? Did they believe that their shit smelled of roses and lavender too?!

It could be said that this was a heavy blow for the Holy Wing Clan. Whether it be prestige or Secular Fate, both would take a substantial hit, all because of Ryu's words.

Still, this wasn't so far that it caused irreconcilable hatred. This was why Ryu's attack could be considered to be measured. Didn't Old Mistress Holy Wing dare to call his grandmother a cuckold? Dare to call him a cripple? Dare to sell off her granddaughter like a slave? It was clear to everyone here that Ryu's counter was what she deserved! At the same time, this meant that if the situation escalated, the moral high ground would still lie with the Tatsuya Clan!

These sort of trivial nuances about moral superiority and equivalent exchanges might seem meaningless to normal society. But, in an Era where Fate was the most important commodity, and public image was something it was heavily reliant upon, these things were necessary.

At the same time, Ryu's family members suddenly felt incomparably comfortable, as though all of their grievances had found a debt and debtor all at once. Their Ryu had protected not only their honor, but he had desecrated the honor of this vile woman.

"Since the debts have been laid out appropriately, why don't you tell me the real reason you came here today?" Ryu watched as his once bloody palm dried, flaking with red and white before revealing a completely healed hand beneath. After eating so many heavenly treasures, it was quite easy for Ryu's weak body to heal.

Ryu's words made those who heard them tremble. He's still unwilling to let her go? Isn't it obvious that she came to make trouble about the Origin Flame? Since you've already exposed the hoax, is there a need to continue? You'll just embarrass her more!

Anyone with intelligence could understand Ryu's meaning. 'It can't be that someone of your stature came here to make trouble about something so trivial, can it? Go ahead, tell me the real reason you came.'

Ryu was pretending not to understand her true purpose, but if Old Mistress Holy Wing admitted that this was all she came for, wouldn't she be slapping her own face?

Old Mistress Holy Wing's face shook violently, but she didn't have a response. She could only feel the several thousand gazes on her as her skin flew through all the colors of the rainbow before settling on a deep black.

She didn't want to take a step back, but at the same time, she didn't want to take a step forward. Had she really lost to a cripple again?

However, that was when her eyes lit with a disgustingly contorted light.

"Young Master is correct, I have been quite shameless and thick-skinned today. Your Third Grand Elder can't be considered my son, I've cut ties to him. I also concede that you are an outstanding Ruin Master, I don't doubt for a moment that your words are the truth. Truly amazing, to actually find an Origin Flame on your own, I must say that I'm very impressed."

Many felt like cleaning out their ears, were they hearing all of this properly? Had she lost her mind? Or was she truly taking a step back?

"And finally, I lost my mind in anger. My precious Elena will always be my little granddaughter. It was I who held her small body in my arms, it was I who nurtured her and watched her grow, how could I ever sell her off to another family?"

Black lines grew on the faces of those watching this spectacle. She was clearly only saying all of this so that she wouldn't have to reimburse Ryu for the Holy Ruin.

"I apologize. I've never been very good at tempering my Mental Realm. In fact, it's a terrible weakness of mine. You're right, I did forget my true purpose in coming here."

"About six or so cycles of one hundred thousand years ago, I had a meeting with Priest Saint Ventus. Of course, this was before I abdicated my position to my lovely daughter and Elena's mother, so we spoke as equals then. At the time, young Gale had just completed his Core Training and Little Elena was just about to exit hers."

"Back then, we had decided Little Elena's first male partner." Old Mistress Holy Wing paused. "I'm aware that I've told you this story before and it was handled properly then, I

wouldn't be so foolish as to bring the same issue before such a mighty Ruin Master once again, it would be an insult to you and me.

"Instead, I bring this up for the sake of Little Gale. He's given way to Young Master Ryu already, allowing a lady he saw as his own to be taken away, but the affair left a dark shadow over his heart, making his cultivation slower than it ought to be.

"Would the esteemed Tatsuya Clan would allow this young man the chance to remove his inner devil?"