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Chapter 618 Divine Cultivator

Lauryn let out a sigh as she continued talking about her past, "Although we were able to wipe out the Whitley family, all eight respectable families suffered severe casualties as a result. As it would take time to determine the distribution of the Whitley family's properties, the respectable families all went into dormancy. Chaos broke out when the respectable families' influence over Chanaea weakened. That was when you established Asura's Office."

Jonathan shook his head and let out a wry chuckle after hearing that.

"Are you trying to say that the establishment of Asura's Office was only possible because the respectable families had to recover from the war?"

"I know it's unfair to say this of Asura's Office..." Lauryn mumbled nervously.

Although Jonathan had saved Lauryn while they were in Summerbank Abyss, him using her like a tool had also left her traumatized.

As a result, Lauryn would always think twice before saying anything for fear of angering Jonathan.

"What's wrong? Are you afraid of me?" Jonathan asked when he noticed how cautious she was being.

Lauryn nodded instinctively, only to shake her head seconds later.

"Not exactly... I'm just unsure of what I should say because your temper can be quite unpredictable."

"Okay, you are afraid of me. All right, we'll refrain from arguing about how Asura's Office was established. Tell me more about the respectable families. I want to know what the eight families faced when going against the Whitley family," Jonathan said.

"About fifty God Realm fighters and three Divine cultivators."

Jonathan shuddered when he heard Lauryn's reply.

The Whitley family has three Divine cultivators? This reminds me, Joselle is an ancient beast. While I don't know the full extent of its powers, Joselle's strength had decreased to the level of a Divine cultivator when the seal was almost complete. And yet, Vladimir and I weren't able to hurt her even after teaming up. While Joselle isn't technically a Divine cultivator, it was enough to give me a glimpse of how powerful Divine cultivators are. The fact that the Whitley family had three of them showed just how powerful they were. But, if I look at it from a different perspective, the eight respectable families

must've been pretty formidable themselves if they were able to completely wipe out the Whitley family!

As if she had read Jonathan's mind, Lauryn continued,

"The respectable families have a very strong connection that allows them to benefit from each other, and that connection grew increasingly stronger when they teamed up. Although they were able to eradicate the Whitley family, the eight respectable families suffered heavy casualties and had to rely on each other to recover from the damage. They have been using marriages of convenience to strengthen the relationship between them over the years, but that doesn't mean they aren't plotting anything behind each other's backs. If my calculations are correct, another revolution should take place in ten years if Asura's Office hadn't been established."

Jonathan gave it some thought and said, "Given everything you've told me, that is indeed possible. It's the same as fighting a war. Soldiers are bound to be exhausted after a huge battle, and that applies to all parties involved. That will result in a brief ceasefire where everyone recovers and prepares for the next battle. The one who recovers sooner will seize the opportunity to attack the other. In other words, they'll be kicking their enemy while they're still down."

I'm glad I wasn't part of anything like that, but I also feel like I've missed out on a great opportunity. Had I not established Asura's Office, the eight respectable families would start another war in about ten years. Regardless of who emerges victorious in the end, all eight respectable families would be at their weakest then. However, with Asura's Office rising to power so quickly, the eight respectable families are forced to team up once again. Well, I suppose I wouldn't have known the power of the respectable families if I didn't establish Asura's Office, let alone consider taking them on. Fate sure has an amusing way of messing with people, huh?

With that in mind, Jonathan decided to ask the question that had been bothering him the most. "By the way, Lauryn, do you know if the Osborne family has any Divine cultivators?"

Although Asura's Office was incredibly powerful and had become the largest military force in Chanaea, the highest-ranking cultivator they had was Jonathan, who was in the God Realm.

The firepower available to modern military forces could easily suppress those with cultivation levels equal to or below the Superior Realm. As cultivators who have reached the Grandmaster Realm were able to use force fields, ordinary firearms were pretty much useless against them.

It would take really powerful sniper rifles and explosives just to hurt them.

As for someone from the God Realm like Jonathan, one would have to use weapons of mass destruction in order to pose a threat to him.

Of course, direct hits from tanks and artillery fire would still hurt him if he didn't have protective equipment on.

Since Divine cultivators were more powerful than God Realm cultivators like himself, Jonathan had yet to come up with an effective means of fighting them.

Putting their attack power and special abilities aside, the physical speed of Divine cultivators alone proved too much for modern weaponry to keep up with.

Therefore, only cultivators were capable of killing them.

Jonathan stared intensely at Lauryn as he waited for her answer, but she simply shook her head and said, "I'm sorry, Jonathan. I can't tell you that."

"Why not?" Jonathan exclaimed in displeasure.

As Lauryn had promised to help him out after he had rescued her in Summerbank Abyss, her not answering his questions left him feeling very dissatisfied.

"You don't know where the respectable families are and if they have any Divine cultivators? I'm starting to wonder if you're actually trying to help me out here, Lauryn. For all I know, you could be a spy sent to gather information on me!"

"It's not that I don't want to tell you. I really don't know that much because my information is from ten years ago. The eight families mobilized at least eight Divine cultivators when they attacked the Whitley family back then. Respectable families need to have Divine cultivators in order to gain a foothold in the country. According to the archives, three of the fifteen respectable families were wiped out because they lost all their existing Divine cultivators and couldn't produce new ones in time. In order to buy the Whitley family some time, the three Divine cultivators of the Whitley family fought valiantly against the eight Divine cultivators from the other respectable families. In the end, their bodies disintegrated upon death, and the Divine cultivators from the other families returned with severe injuries all over. A year after that, all the families put word out that their Divine cultivators had fully recovered, but no one was able to verify if they were telling the truth."

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Chapter 619 Bound By A Treaty

Jonathan activated his spiritual sense and surrounded Lauryn with it while listening to her.

He did that in order to detect changes in her movements which could indicate that she was lying.

Being a fellow cultivator herself, Lauryn could clearly sense what Jonathan was doing.

As Asura's Office and the respectable families have always been enemies, she had expected Jonathan to react like this when she came to see him.

Even so, she had no choice but to put up with it to avoid marrying Jay.

Jonathan frowned in frustration when he saw that Lauryn was indeed telling the truth.

"Are you saying that I'll only be able to find out about that after attacking the respectable families?"

Lauryn nodded helplessly in response. "That's right. The battle from ten years ago was simply far too chaotic. All the Divine cultivators held back in battle as they didn't want to reveal their hand. In doing so, they provided the three Divine cultivators from the Whitley family some breathing room. Grandpa once said it's impossible for all eight Divine cultivators to survive that battle. However, the respectable families all had tons of methods to hide the truth from each other, so we couldn't tell if they survived simply by looking at the extent of their injuries."

The look on Jonathan's face turned gloomy when he heard what she said.

How am I supposed to eradicate the respectable families like this? Do I just attack the Osborne residence with a bunch of underlings? Even if we manage to make it to the front door, a Divine cultivator could just show up out of nowhere and destroy us all!

Jonathan rubbed his forehead as he racked his brain to come up with a strategy to deal with the Divine cultivators.

"By the way, someone from one of the Whitley family's branch families has recently risen to power. Apparently, he has gotten so powerful that none of the respectable families dared make any sudden moves," Lauryn added.

Jonathan looked up at her in surprise.

"A member of the Whitley family... Are you referring to Joshua?"

"Yes, that's him," Lauryn replied with a nod.

"How could it be Joshua?" Jonathan still found it unbelievable even though Lauryn had confirmed his guess.

Joshua's identity is far too special. If Lauryn knows he's a Whitley, then the other respectable families must know that too. There's no way they'd just sit by and let him become a commander-in-chief!

"Actually, Joshua is the real hero here."

Lauryn let out a sigh as she recalled Joshua's past.

"While going through the Whitley family's remaining properties, the eight respectable families found out that someone from one of the Whitley family's branch families had become a section chief in Yaleview. That person was none other than Joshua Whitley himself. Right as they were planning on killing him, they realized his family had been ostracized so much that he didn't even know he was from a respectable family. Since the order they received was to kill all direct members of the Whitley family, Joshua was spared as he didn't fit that classification. Since all of Chanaea was plunged into chaos after the Whitley family's annihilation, the country desperately needed a commander-in-chief to maintain order. Whoever obtained that role would be able to benefit their family greatly, so the eight respectable families argued over who it should belong to. Eventually, they decided to have Joshua take the role because of his unique identity. They figured he would make the perfect candidate as he couldn't possibly colla

borate with any of the eight families. Despite being constantly monitored by them, Joshua was able to free himself from the eight families' clutches and become the true commander-in-chief of six hundred thousand soldiers."

What? Joshua rose to power with the help of the eight respectable families? I feel like something is off about Joshua's past, but I can't quite put my finger on it. He relied on the resources from the eight respectable families to quickly rise to power, only to kick them all aside after gaining a foothold in Yaleview. A man with such schemes can't possibly have gotten this far with sheer luck alone. Was it something the Whitley family left behind? Joshua may be from a branch family, but the others must've really hated the Whitley family to the bone if they wanted to wipe it out completely. I might be able to use this to my advantage in the future.

"Lauryn, you said the eight respectable families would also plot against each other while supporting each other. Is it possible to drive a wedge between them?"

Since Jonathan wasn't powerful enough to take the eight respectable families out himself, he decided to change up his strategy and have them fight each other instead.

However, Lauryn simply told him, "Absolutely impossible."

Jonathan was a little surprised at how confident she sounded. "Um... Shouldn't you at least give it some thought before answering my question? Why are you so confident in their unity?"

“This has nothing to do with confidence. The respectable families are bound by a treaty. Since the annihilation of the ridiculously powerful Whitley family, everyone was afraid that they would someday receive the same fate. As such, the eight respectable families came up with a rule to prevent that from happening. If one of the respectable families makes a move, the other families will team up unconditionally and annihilate said family completely. Those who try to take a neutral stance will also be annihilated unconditionally,” Lauryn replied helplessly.

Jonathan couldn't help but gain a newfound respect for the eight respectable families when he heard that.

They teamed up to take out the Whitley family and signed a peace treaty afterward to keep themselves unified against both internal and external forces? Well, I can't say for sure if they won't backstab each other, but I know it's definitely impossible to drive a wedge between them. Now I see why Lauryn was unable to talk Anderson out of it. With a treaty like that, there's no way he'd agree to stand with me! D*mn... Is there really nothing else I can do about this? Do I really have to wait ten years or so for them to start another war? Must I become a Divine cultivator for this to work? There's no telling how long that would take!

His train of thought was interrupted when Harry came over.

“Did you need something?” Jonathan asked.

“Mr. Goldstein, someone by the name of Colton Blackwood has just barged in. He says he's looking for Lauryn.”

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Chapter 620 Three Free Shots

Jonathan turned toward Lauryn and asked, “Colton Blackwood? Is he a family member of yours? Why is he looking for you here?”

Lauryn, too, froze in shock when she heard what Harry said.

“He's my cousin. How does he know I'm here, though? I may have suggested to my father that we back out of the scheme against Asura's Office, but he'd never tell anyone about it. If he did, I'd have been captured and locked up before I could even leave the house!” she exclaimed in confusion after a brief pause.

Even so, they couldn't just ignore Colton since he was already here.

“Come on, let's go have a look,” Jonathan said as he stood up and began walking down the mountain.

At least twenty soldiers were lying on the ground outside the front door of Edenic Heights.

Their guns had all been disassembled and tossed aside.

Over a hundred soldiers had their guns pointed at a young man with glasses and a handheld fan in his hand.

He was wearing a suit and looked particularly sharp with that penetrating gaze in his eyes.

In his hand was a half-open fan with random-looking ink patterns on it.

That man was none other than Lauryn's cousin, Colton Blackwood.

Despite having hundreds of guns pointed at him, Colton showed no fear whatsoever as he said arrogantly, "You're nothing but servants at Jonathan's beck and call, so you aren't qualified to fight me. Tell Jonathan to come and see me, or things are going to get messy!"

"Looking for me?" Jonathan asked with a chuckle.

Colton turned toward the direction of his voice and saw both Jonathan and Lauryn making their way through the crowd.

"Ah, Lauryn! Thanks for saving me the trouble of looking for you! Come home with me and receive your punishment!" Colton said.

Jonathan shot Lauryn a curious smile when he heard that.

"What's up with this cousin of yours? Why does he sound like he's reciting a cheesy line from a movie or something?"

"Don't worry about him. He's been like that since he was a kid," Lauryn replied while rolling her eyes.

She then had the soldiers make way for her as she walked up to Colton and asked, "What brings you here, Colton?"

"I overheard your conversation with your father the other day. He told me to follow you after you left because he wanted to know where you'd go. Now that I've caught you fooling around with Jonathan, I'm going to take you home for your punishment!" Colton replied while reaching for Lauryn's arm.

Bam!

A loud thud rang out, and Colton was knocked back a couple of meters.

Lauryn then slowly pulled her arm back and acted like she had hit him by accident. Of course, she knew full well that Colton's cultivation level had reached the advanced phase of the Grandmaster Realm, which was two stages higher than hers.

"Colton, you've always been the nicest to me in the family. Please go home and try to talk Father out of it. The Osborne family isn't worthy of teaming up with us!" Lauryn whispered in his ear.

Colton's left arm trembled slightly as he stared at his reddened palm.

He then tossed his fan into the air and let it slide open as it landed in his hand. "I'll give you one last chance, Lauryn. Come with me obediently, or I will have to use force."

"So what if you use force?" Jonathan asked as he sat down on a chair.

After detecting the spiritual energy from Colton's fan, Jonathan gently swiped his palm and pulled a sword out of his storage ring.

"Lauryn, I will lend you a hand if you can't beat him," Jonathan said as he used his spiritual energy to send the sword flying toward her.

As if she had eyes on the back of her head, Lauryn reached out behind her and caught the sword without even looking.

With the flick of a finger, Lauryn activated her Grandmaster Realm force field.

"Colton, you do know about Jay, right? Do you really want me to go back and marry him?"

"That's up to the family to decide. If you go back with me, I can help make a plea on your behalf," Colton replied with a frown.

Lauryn shook her head. "Don't make me do this, Colton."

"You can't beat me."

Colton waved the fan in his hand, causing countless ink traces to come flying out of it.

After spreading out in the air, the ink traces seemingly came to life and took the shape of a few snake-like creatures.

"Soul-sealing!" Colton shouted as he sent the five snakes formed by the ink traces toward Lauryn.

“Raining Light!” Lauryn yelled as the sword in her hand emitted a bright light that enveloped her entirely.

The five black snakes scattered into countless pieces when they came into contact with the light. However, as Lauryn retracted her sword and stepped back, the pieces rejoined and became snakes again.

“You can hack at them all you want, but it won’t do you any good! The ink traces will regenerate as long as I supply them with spiritual energy!” Colton shouted coldly.

“Skyslayer!” Lauryn shouted through clenched teeth when she saw the snakes coming her way again.

These ink traces came from his fan, so his fan must be connected to them somehow. If I destroy his fan, I’ll be able to stop the ink traces!

With that in mind, she then delivered an upward slash at Colton’s fan.

Although Lauryn was right about the fan controlling the ink traces, she was still just a Grandmaster Realm cultivator.

Her speed and strength were nothing compared to Colton’s.

Through his spiritual sense, Jonathan could see that Colton had simply taken a step forward and pressed his fan down on Lauryn’s wrist.

The sword energy from Lauryn had missed Colton by an inch from the side.

“I knew you wouldn’t actually stab at me.” Colton then pulled his hand back as he continued, “Seal!”

On his command, four of the black snakes entangled themselves around all four of Lauryn’s limbs.

With her spiritual energy sealed, the fifth snake charged straight at her mouth.

The snake would go straight for her heart if it managed to enter her mouth.

Even the most powerful of cultivators would lose all mobility and be reduced to a cripple after having their heart sealed.

However, the snake was inches away from Lauryn’s face when it crashed into a spirit shield.

“Trying to take her away after barging into my territory? Looks like the Blackwood family really has no respect for me, huh? Soul-sealing is child’s play! Here, I’ll give you three

free shots at me. You can take her with you if you can defeat me!" Jonathan said with a smile as he walked up to Lauryn.