

## Lightning 101

### [Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

#### Chapter 101: Gravis vs. Escura

Gravis charged upwards, right to the battlefield of Escura, the bird and the tree. His Energy reserves were at only about 20%. He could not use much more in a fight since he still had to keep up his lightning movement. It was better if he ended the fight very quickly.

Escura initially had trouble fighting the bird and the tree at the same time, but the tree was slowly losing strength. Its attacks were not as vigorous as in the beginning anymore. The fire, on the other hand, was getting wilder and wilder. Gravis was nearly exclusively charging through fire by now, on his way to the battlefield.

The bird and Escura were also starting to feel the heat, and their battleground was moving upward, away from the fire. Gravis finally arrived after several seconds of charging. The bird noticed Gravis and immediately used its wind so that Escura would lose her balance just when he arrived.

SHING!

Gravis saw his chance and buried his saber deep into Escura's torso. The bird's timing was just too perfect, and with Escura only having so much concentration to spare due to the bird and the tree, she couldn't defend properly. At least, she was able to stop the saber from completely bisecting her by using a lot of her lightning.

"Finally, you're here!" she shouted with hatred, seemingly not noticing the saber in her torso. She immediately used her lightning to force the bird away and then took out a jade token. Without hesitation, she broke the token, and a Formation Array was created around their battlefield with a diameter of ten meters.

Gravis' eyes narrowed. He had used a similar Formation Array against the centipede, and he knew that this Formation Array could keep things out or keep them in. Gravis could also judge that he could probably not break it. Escura wouldn't be so stupid as to use a Formation Array that would break under his attacks.

"You bastard!" Escura shouted in rage. "I wanted to use this Formation for a while, but you never got close enough!" Escura lifted her spear and pointed it at Gravis. "Now, you can't escape anymore."

Gravis lifted his eyebrows in confusion. "Why didn't you use this earlier?" he asked calmly. He was in an incredibly dangerous position right now, but he was used to life and death struggles. This was nothing different.

Escura clenched her teeth. "This Formation Array is for protecting our disciples from a calamity so that we could wait for reinforcements. It was not worth it to use on you since it is incredibly expensive and the only one we have." Escura's eyes shined in hatred. "But I should have used it. The others would still be alive then."

Gravis looked at her neutrally. "Do you honestly think I wanted to fight you? I told you that I don't want to kill you guys! You just had to retreat!" he shouted again.

Escura gnashed her teeth so hard that blood flew out. "Shut up!" she shouted as she charged at Gravis. Escura couldn't admit her mistake. If she had known how all this would end, she would have either retreated or used the Formation Array from the start. She regretted it so much that she hadn't used the Formation Array right at the beginning.

Gravis carried deep regret due to his killing of Gorn, and Escura carried deep regret due to the death of all elite disciples of her guild. Both people were regretting something they had done. It didn't matter who came out victorious. The victor would still be regretful for what they had done.

Gravis killed the whole Lightning Guild from Earth Town, but did that mean that he wanted to do that? Absolutely not! He wanted to repay the Lightning Guild for their help and for Gorn's death, but he couldn't offer his life to them. Kill the Lightning Guild's disciples or die. Both choices were full of regret for Gravis. Ever since they met, there was no outcome but regret for both sides.

The bird was trying to damage the Formation Array, but it couldn't break it. The tree had stopped attacking and was concentrating on stopping the fire, which was slowly claiming its life. The bird looked at Gravis and Escura fighting and got an idea.

Gravis managed to defend himself, even if just barely. Escura was incredibly exhausted, and she couldn't use her full strength anymore. Her lightning bolts grew weaker, and Gravis used his last remaining Energy to block the lightning bolts. They weren't even fighting on the walls anymore but were walking at the bottom of the Formation Array.

Both were running out of Energy, yet there was a stark difference between the two. Escura's strength stemmed entirely from her Energy, but Gravis still had his physical power. In sheer combat power, Gravis' physical body rivaled someone at the fourth level of Energy Gathering, and it was not so easily exhaustible. Gravis could use his full physical strength for hours on end.

Yet, Escura's attacks were still more powerful, and Gravis had already received multiple injuries. Half his shoulder was blown off, and a big hole was burned into his intestine. His lightning resistance would make the lightning attacks from someone at the fourth level of Energy Gathering, which was one level higher than himself, useless. Someone at the fifth level could injure him lightly with their lightning, yet Escura was on the sixth level.

The lightning was a genuine threat to Gravis, and he had to continually think about which body part he could sacrifice to continue fighting. Escura kept getting more and more shocked as Gravis' fighting strength wasn't reducing at all. To her eyes, his fighting strength was even increasing, but that was only due to her own fighting strength weakening.

She had hit two vital spots already. One was in the middle of Gravis' chest and another one at his liver. Theoretically, Gravis should have trouble breathing already, but she couldn't see any of that. This confused her immensely and increased her desperation. She had hit multiple parts of his limbs with her lightning, and a lot of flesh had been burned off already.

Unbeknownst to her, Gravis was using her lightning the same way as the lightning in the Lightning Tower. He let the Destruction Energy destroy the non-essential parts, while he manipulated the Life Energy to gather at his chest and liver. Due to all the injuries, his fighting strength slowly started to lower, but not as quickly as Escura's.

Escura was sweating profusely, and her breathing grew increasingly heavy. The physical exertion took its toll, and she felt like her body was about to burn to a crisp. She hadn't been this exhausted in forever. Gravis was also breathing heavily and sweating, but it didn't seem as exaggerated as her.

She shot at Gravis with her spear again, and he blocked. This time, he was only thrown away for a little bit since her attacks were starting to be less and less effective. She had to end this quickly. Suddenly, her eyes widened in shock as she saw her hand, which carried the spear.

She gasped as she saw blisters on them. Escura quickly looked at the rest of her body and noticed that everything had burns, and they grew more severe. She quickly realized that the immense heat she was feeling was not due to her exertion. Escura looked down and saw an intense blaze happening right below her feet.

The bird had already seen that Gravis didn't seem to mind the fire and had started to fan the flames, with its wind, directly below them. A majestic bonfire was cooking the underside of the Formation Array, where they were fighting. This was the same trick Gravis had used to kill the centipede, yet it was now used by a bird to kill their enemy.

Gravis had noticed it long ago. Escura didn't have nearly as much fighting experience as Gravis, so when she was in a genuine life and death situation, she didn't think about watching her surroundings. She was fully concentrating on killing her enemy. For a soldier, that might be a good mindset, but was it really conducive for a cultivator?

Gravis had enough experience to watch his surroundings. Winning was not important. Finishing a mission was not important. Only survival was important! He had been biding his time and trying to waste as little Energy as possible. He only had to wait for her to burn to death.

Escura grew more horrified as the blisters on her body seemed to imitate bubbling water, in her mind. This was a horrifying visual, and her fear won over her hatred. She quickly shot upward with her last remaining Energy. The Formation Array was under her control, and she could leave it if she wanted.

WHOOM! SHING!

Suddenly, an incredible pressure appeared, and she froze. Gravis had kept his Will-Aura hidden for just the moment when Escura lost her Battle Intent. It would only work once as a surprise, and he had to make that one chance work. All this patience had finally paid off, and Gravis severed her lower body. If she had looked at him with battle-intent, she might have been able to block.

Sadly, she didn't look at him and was only running away in fear. There was nothing she could have done. Her body started falling, and Gravis watched her as she fell through the Formation Array's floor, right into the fire.

Gravis took a deep breath and sat down in the Formation Array. He had to wait until it was over before he could do anything. He had just calmed down when...

"It's not over yet!" shouted Flern as he used his sword to attack Gravis.

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**Chapter 102: End of the Battle**

DONK!

Flern bounced away as his body hit the Formation Array. He hadn't seen the Formation Array due to the fire obscuring his vision. Flern rubbed his nose, and tears involuntarily came out of his eyes. He had faceplanted into the Formation Array wall, and if one got hit in the nose, tears would involuntarily appear in their eyes. It was instinct, and it couldn't be suppressed.

Meanwhile, Gravis took out some pills from one of his sacks. He had earned a lot of money back in the Proxy-Lightning Guild, and he had, of course, also bought some medicinal pills to treat some of his injuries. Taking them during a fight wouldn't help much, because he had to actively concentrate on making the compressed Life Energy in the pills rotate around his body.

Escura and all the other disciples also had such pills, but taking them during a fight was meaningless. Gravis simply sat down and concentrated on healing.

"Coward! Come out of your Array and face me!" shouted Flern, full with battle intent. When the bird had seen Flern attacking the Formation Array, it started flying away from the tree, loudly screeching the whole way. It knew that it couldn't stop Flern, and if it remained, it would die to him. It could only fly away, for now.

Gravis ignored him and the bird and continued concentrating on his healing while he sat in the natural fire, which had reached the inside of the Formation Array, by now. Flern grew angry as he saw how Gravis disregarded him and shot fireballs at the Formation Array.

BOOM! BOOM!

They all hit the Formation Array, but nothing seemed to work. Escura had explained that the Formation Array was to protect the disciples in a calamity and to stall for time. If people managed to attack through the Formation Array, wouldn't the Formation Array be completely useless?

Yet, what about the natural fire below Gravis? The Formation Array only cared about attacks and living beings. It didn't let anything come through its walls that had a will behind it. The bird would be blocked, just like its wind attacks. Flern would, of course, also be completely blocked. Even Gravis was imprisoned in the Formation Array and could do nothing but wait.

Natural elements without a will were ignored. How would one keep the air fresh inside the Formation Array if it even blocked the airflow? The creators of the Formation Array were not stupid and thought about all eventualities. The best distinction between attacks and nature was the will, and that was how the Formation Array distinguished attacks.

Of course, the Formation Array could also be used as an impromptu prison and execution ground. The controller of the Formation Array could leave it and could will their attacks to hit the inside, while blocking all other attacks. The person inside could then only be a living target for everyone outside. Of course, the controller needed to still be alive for that.

Escura was dead, and without her control, the Formation Array shifted to its default operation mode, which was stopping everything from entering and exiting. Gravis simply ignored Flern and concentrated on healing. Escura said that the Formation Array was for stalling for time, so it would probably hold for a long time.

"Come out and face me!" Flern continued shouting as he threw more fireballs at the Formation Array. He didn't know that this was the protection Formation for the Lightning Guild in Earth Town. He believed that it was a Formation Array that Gravis deployed, and he doubted that Gravis could have a strong one. Flern thought that if he continued attacking, the Formation Array would surely break.

Unbeknownst to him, the Formation Array wouldn't care, even if people at the peak of Energy Gathering attacked. If such a person attacked, it might reduce the duration by a little, but the Formation Array wouldn't break. Gravis didn't answer Flern. Flern might as well use up all his Energy. That would be even better for Gravis.

"You coward! Face me like a man!" Flern continued shouting while attacking the Formation Array. "Stop hiding behind your Formation Array!"

Flern had long abandoned his fire wheel and stood on top of the Formation Array. By now, he was using his fire in a concentrated beam of high temperature to burn a hole through the Formation Array. In his mind, he would burn through the Formation Array at some point.

Multiple hours passed.

Flern had started sweating in exhaustion by now due to his Energy sharply decreasing during that time. The tree had wholly extinguished the fire by now. The tree was nearly entirely burned, and it was missing half of its trunk. The Formation Array, which had been close to the tree before, now stood in the middle of the air since many meters of the tree had burned away.

The tree was nearly dead, but it could still keep its life. It didn't care about the two people still fighting on the Formation Array. It just wanted to rest and not fight anyone, anymore. It would be hard enough to survive the following time. Luckily, many dead cultivators lined the floor around it, and it used them as nutrients. Without all these nutrients, its death would have been guaranteed.

One could see how new bark appeared all around the crooked tree, but its majestic self couldn't be seen anymore. Before the fight, it was towering, stable, and broad. It looked sturdy and reliable and seemed to be able to support the heavens. Now, a lot of holes and parts on its trunk vanished, and it looked crooked.

The trunk was wider at some parts and thinner at others. It looked like the growth of the tree had been utterly chaotic. Nearly all of the gigantic leaves were burned off, and one would think that this was a sickly, old, nearly dead tree. This whole fight had proven to be a calamity for it.

Flern stopped attacking after a while. With all his exhaustion and the hours of nothing else happening, his battle intent had vanished. By now, he had realized that he couldn't shake the Formation Array. He could only wait.

"Hey, where did you get this Formation Array from?" asked Flern in an exhausted voice as he sat down. "It's really strong!"

Gravis looked up at Flern and thought about some things.

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**Chapter 103: Talk**

"It's not mine. It's from that woman," Gravis answered nonchalantly. He was also bored, and he wanted to get some information from Flern. Maybe that guy would know how long the Formation Array would hold.

"Escura?" he asked.

"Don't know her name. The woman in the sixth stage," he explained.

"That's Escura. Where is she, by the way?" he asked.

"Killed her," answered Gravis.

"What?" Flern's eyes widened. "You killed Escura?"

"Yep. That's her Formation Array," Gravis plainly answered.

"Wow, that's really impressive," said Flern with excitement and respect. "I can feel that you are only at the third level, and you killed someone at the sixth. If I hadn't seen you fight with my own eyes, I would never believe that. Man, you're really powerful."

Gravis lifted an eyebrow. Flern's behavior didn't make much sense in his eyes. "I killed all your brothers. Shouldn't you hate me?" Gravis asked, confusedly.

Flern spat to the side. "If they died in battle, they were too weak. The Fire Guild only accepts strong people, and if they died, it proved that they were not up to standard! I could even say that you helped us weed out the weaklings," Flern explained nonchalantly.

Gravis furrowed his brows. "This makes no sense. Didn't you care about them? Don't you want to avenge them? Is there really no grief in your heart?" he asked. Flern's whole personality didn't make sense in Gravis' eyes.

"No, not the slightest bit," Flern smiled and looked to the sky. "We all want to reach the peak, and in order to reach it, we need to temper ourselves in life and death battles. If we die in a battle, then it was never our destiny to reach the peak. I might also soon die, and I will join my brothers in the afterlife. Then, we can all drink to our uselessness," he explained with a laugh.

"So, you don't believe in free will and in changing your own destiny?" Gravis asked.

Flern laughed bitterly. "How can there be free will under Heaven? If it wants to kill us, it can send a peak Magic Beast, and we would all die. Everything is up to Heaven. If Heaven disapproves of us, we will die. If it does approve of us, we will be able to ascend at some point. I trust in Heaven's plan for me."

It didn't matter how much Gravis thought about it. He couldn't understand Flern's thought process. Flern acted like life didn't matter to him, and that death was not a failure or the end. "Are all people in the Fire Guild like you?" Gravis asked.

"Most of them," explained Flern. "Though we have some people who fear death. Tch," he spat to the side. "If they fear death, how can they put their life on the line in a real fight? Those are the thoughts of a weakling!"

Gravis sighed. "I don't agree with you on that," he said. "I fear for my life when I fight. If I die, I won't be able to see my family again, and I would disappoint all the people who sacrificed their time and wealth on me. If I didn't fear death, I wouldn't be able to bring out my full potential in a fight. If I fight for nothing, losing wouldn't be an issue, which would lower my will and battle intent. The fear of losing something pushes me forward in a fight, and I can surpass myself."

Now, it was Flern's turn to be confused. "But if you fear losing your life, then why are you cultivating? If you value your life, why don't you just stop and live with your family?" he asked.

Gravis looked to the horizon and watched as dusk was coming. From this height, the sundown looked very beautiful. The layer of clouds was close to Gravis, and the different angle made the whole forest glow in a different light. Gravis could see a mixture of long shadows and light hitting the trees.

"Because I want to be free," Gravis said after a while. "If I don't become strong, I will always be below Heaven's hand. It has used me before, and I never want this to happen again. I can only live a life without regrets if I become stronger than Heaven. Well, I guess living a life without regrets is already impossible for me since I have done something that I deeply regret," Gravis said with a helpless sigh.

Flern raised an eyebrow. "You want to become stronger than Heaven? Aren't you a Heavenborn?" Flern asked with genuine confusion.

Gravis shook his head. "I have a family, and Heaven is my enemy. I am not a Heavenborn," he confessed.

Flern looked at the sky. "Heaven is your enemy, huh? I've never thought about becoming stronger than Heaven or even fighting it. That is a lofty goal. I admire you for that." Flern was silent for a couple of seconds. "By the way, what exactly happened to get you in this situation?"

Gravis had to wait for the Formation Array to wait anyway, so he told Flern what had happened in the Lightning Guild. When he told Flern about Jaimy, Gravis grew incredibly angry and narrated everything through clenched teeth. When he told Flern about how he had killed Gorn, tears nearly appeared in Gravis' eyes. He tried to keep the grief suppressed, but talking about it opened the old wound again.

Of course, Gravis didn't tell him about his unique lightning, his Will-Aura, or his Elemental Synchronicity. Those were secrets that he couldn't tell anyone. Any one of those secrets could make him the enemy of the Heaven Sect, and he couldn't become their enemy, yet. He first had to get enough strength.

Flern sighed. "Man, that's really fucked up. I couldn't even imagine the guilt I would feel if I killed someone so close to me, even if it was only on accident. You're really in a tough spot. Killing people of the Lightning Guild would only make you feel more guilty, while at the same time, you can't give up your life. In my eyes, it doesn't matter what you do. It will be bitter and tragic either way."

Flern sighed again. "Man, even though you have a never before seen talent and can kill people three minor realms above you, I wouldn't want to be you."

Gravis put his arms on his knees and looked at the horizon, where he could only see the last rays of the day. "I know," Gravis muttered. "I don't see any good way out of this situation. I can only repay the Lightning Sect when I reach power on par with them. Yet, in my way to get there, I would have to kill more disciples."

Gravis looked up into the dark sky. "At least, I have a goal. The way to the goal will be full of regret and pain, but I can resolve everything when I finally reach it. I can give the Lightning Sect everything they need, and I can make it the strongest sect in this world. I can only repay Gorn and all the dead disciples by making the Lightning Sect the strongest sect in history."

Flern also sighed. "That is a lofty goal and probably the only thing you can do to resolve part of your guilt," Flern sighed again bitterly. "But I don't think it will resolve all your guilt. Some of it will probably stay forever with you. Man, I really don't want to be you."

Gravis felt a lot better after he shared his burdens with Flern, yet, did he look at Flern like a friend? Definitely not! Without the Formation Array, Gravis would probably be dead already. Flern would have killed him, and this whole situation wouldn't have happened. Gravis couldn't forgive someone for trying to kill him, just because they had a pleasant conversation. His life was too important for that.

But Gravis also decided against killing him directly. Gravis looked at Flern. All the karmic luck had already left Flern when Gravis started sharing his burdens with him. If Flern believed in Heaven so much, he might as well die to it.

"How long will this Formation Array hold?" asked Gravis.

"That should be the Protection Formation Array in case of an eventual calamity. I have one too! It holds for twelve hours, so it should vanish in six more hours," Flern explained.

Gravis and Flern talked more for some hours until...

SWOOOOSH!

Suddenly, an absolutely apocalyptic wind arrived out of nowhere and tore Flern into multiple pieces. Gravis wasn't surprised and looked up at the sky. There, he could see a gargantuan bird with a wingspan of nearly 100 meters. Gravis was sure that this was a high-grade Energy Beast.

Gravis could also see the wind bird from before flying around it. The two birds had the same build and the same kind of feathers. The big bird was probably the small bird's parent.

The big bird looked at Gravis with hatred, and Gravis looked back.

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#### **Chapter 104: Nature**

The big bird looked at Gravis with hatred and tried its best to destroy the Formation Array, yet nothing it did seemed to damage the Formation Array. The Formation Array would still remain for around two more hours, and Gravis would not be in danger for that duration.

A high-grade Energy Beast was unkillable for him, and Gravis was thinking hard about a way to get out of this situation alive. He could only hope to fall to the ground quickly and maybe hide in some hole.

"Scree!" The smaller bird shouted at the bigger one to stop. Gravis had helped it defend their nest, and it was thankful for it. Beasts were not as vengeful as humans, and they looked at people and other beasts in a simple way. If you were weaker, you were food. If you were stronger, you were a predator. Yet, beasts could also band together to defend something. The bird had fought together with the tree, after all.



The big bird threw a glance at the complaining smaller bird but still looked at Gravis with hate. It understood its child, but for some reason, it really hated Gravis. It wasn't even sure why. It just hated him and wanted to destroy him with everything.

It continued attacking the Formation Array, ignoring the smaller bird. The smaller bird grew angrier and jumped on the back of the big bird. The big bird ignored the smaller one and only concentrated on destroying Gravis.

PLUCK!

The smaller bird pulled out a feather from the bigger one, and it immediately screeched aggressively. It threw the smaller one away and looked at it. The smaller bird continued screeching about, and the bigger one started paying more attention to it.

Gravis kept watching, and he thought that maybe for once, he wouldn't need to fight his way out. Maybe, they wouldn't try to kill him. He only had aggressive encounters with beasts up until now, and this situation was something entirely new for him.

Gravis also got some time to think about the earlier situation and the fight. If the bird had such a strong parent, then where had it been during the fight? Gravis also remembered how the bird screeched from time to time while fighting. That was probably not a screech to attack or intimidate the fighters, but a shout for backup.

Yet, backup had never arrived. Gravis narrowed his eyes as he realized that this was probably Heaven's doing. If such a strong beast were flying around, the guilds would have never attacked Gravis. On top of that, the bird might have completely ignored Gravis since their strengths were just too far apart.

The smaller bird had left the battlefield about nine hours ago, screeching wildly. It took nine hours for it to find its parent, which was incredibly long for its speed. Would such a fast and strong bird keep its child alone for so long under normal circumstances? Gravis doubted that. Heaven had done something to make the bird leave the area.

Heaven's first plan of getting Gravis killed by the guilds had failed, and now it used its backup plan to use the bigger bird to kill him. Gravis was already fully healed, thanks to the pills, and his Energy had also fully recovered by now. Even though Gravis was nearly in his top-condition, this was actually the closest that Heaven ever was to killing him.

Jaimy might have hurt him severely, but Gravis had survived in the end. Yet, if this bird decided to attack Gravis, it would be over. Gravis expected that he would die with a certainty of over 95% if it attacked.

The birds continued communicating, and after a while, the bigger bird looked at Gravis again. It was still filled with hatred, but there was no more killing intent in its eyes. It landed on top of the Formation Array and looked at Gravis, aggressively and imposingly. It was warning him not to do anything stupid.

Gravis only continued sitting and looked the big bird in its eyes. Many beasts would see that as a provocation, but Gravis wanted to show his sincerity. Gravis tried to show that he only wanted peace and didn't want to fight anymore, reflecting his true feelings.

After a while, the bird started grooming its feathers, which showed that it was calmer than before. No bird would keep their eyes away from an enemy. After a while, the big bird left for the tree and perched atop its crown. It looked around at the barren tree and moved some wood around.

Judging by the branches' positions in the tree's crown, Gravis could guess that the bigger bird's nest was around that part. Of course, that nest had already burned down. The big bird couldn't possibly fit into the hole where the smaller bird had its nest.

"Caw!" The smaller bird circled around the Formation Array containing Gravis, constantly making noise. Gravis guessed that it was probably asking if he needed help.

"I don't need help," Gravis said. "It should disappear in some hours."

Gravis was not sure if the bird understood him, but it could probably glean some emotions out of his voice. It heard that Gravis wasn't desperate, angry, or fearful. That probably meant that everything was alright. Even though it knew that Gravis was stronger than it, in a fight, it showed no fear anymore. Probably because of its parent looking over from time to time.

The smaller bird was excitedly flying around Gravis and the bigger bird. It was happy about the exhilarating fight that it fought previously. It usually only looked for prey, and prey wouldn't be able to give a good fight. It was not in a beast's nature to fight opponents that could kill it. The bird victoriously flew around, proclaiming its dominance to the surroundings.

The tree also started regrowing some branches and leaves. Gravis was astounded by the tree's healing speed since it had only been nine hours since its near-death. Gravis continued watching the birds and the tree, and he felt peaceful inside.

There were cruel sides to nature and calm sides. In nature, when two opponents met, they would fight to the death, but if there were no opponents, everything could live in harmony.

Of course, that was only true for the strong ones. Below Gravis, lots of beasts and animals would still fear and fight for their lives. Only the apex predators of an area could do what they want. Only the apex predators could live in peace.

Gravis' motivation to become stronger increased again. He was still regretting everything about killing Gorn, but his motivation to become strong increased again. Only with strength, could he live like the birds. Only with enough strength could he be free and do whatever he wanted. He never wanted to be under anyone's rule again, yet that dream was still distant.

Looking at the two birds living together in harmony with the tree, Gravis got reminded of his family. Everything in the world was against them, but due to his father, Gravis wouldn't need to fear anything in his homeworld. It was similar to the two birds on the tree.

Gravis looked up at the sky. "Father, I am not sure if you can hear me, but I will do my best to return. I will not give in to Heaven, and I will become strong!"

Nothing happened in the sky, but Gravis felt like his father heard him.

"I will return!" Gravis said with determination.

## Lightning Is the Only Way

### **Chapter 105: What Happened?**

For the last remaining hours in the Formation Array, Gravis decided to check his Will-Aura. He was happy when he saw that it had increased again. Another life and death crisis was over, and he had gotten the reward. Gravis also noticed that he was able to compress his Will-Aura into a small circle now, which he could place wherever he wanted.

The circle would have a radius of five meters, and that increased the power of his Will-Aura even further. Based on what Gravis had seen previously, he expected that his Will-Aura, when fully concentrated, could make someone at the third level unconscious.

Someone at the fourth level probably couldn't move anymore inside of it. Of course, all of this was only true if the receiver had an average will. There were people with stronger and weaker wills, and Gravis couldn't be sure about how everyone reacted. He could only calculate according to the general standard.

The strength of a Will-Aura didn't increase with the cultivation level of a person, but a higher cultivation level for the user would decrease the enemy's resistance. Its inherent strength stayed the same, but if Gravis, theoretically, were at the ninth stage of Energy Gathering, he would be able to make someone at the ninth stage of Energy Gathering unconscious.

People at the same level as Gravis had some resistance to Will-Auras, while people lower than him in cultivation had no resistance. The resistance doubled for every increase in the level of Gravis' opponent. Right now, it was strong enough to make someone at the same level unconscious. This was already very terrifying since that showed that no one was his match at the same level.

Of course, there could be others who went through many life and death fights, and they would also have their own Will-Aura. That would reduce Gravis' Will-Aura's effectiveness. Gravis pondered about other usages of his Will-Aura, and he got some ideas. Such a Will-Aura was not only useful for fighting.

PLOP!

The Formation Array burst like a bubble, and Gravis started falling. Long expecting this outcome, Gravis simply threw his saber at the nearby tree. Initially, the Formation Array was touching the tree, but a lot of wood had burned off. Luckily, it was only ten-meters, and Gravis could still pull himself to the tree.

Gravis arrived at the tree and looked around. The smaller bird had noticed him and screeched. It then landed on the branch, which led to its nest and cawed at Gravis some more. 'Does it want me to come?' he thought and decided that he might as well go. If the parent wanted to hurt him, it would have already attacked.

Gravis used his lightning movement to move up the tree, to the branch. When he arrived, he saw the bird, and it walked closer. Gravis wasn't sure what it wanted, and he shot a look at the parent bird, which was still at the top of the tree. It looked like it didn't care about Gravis, but he noticed that it shot him a couple of glances from time to time.

Gravis walked closer, and the smaller bird lightly tapped Gravis' face with its beak. Gravis lifted his hand and touched its beak, scratching it. The bird didn't seem to mind and let him scratch. It then went closer

with its head and rubbed it on Gravis' side. That was a little weird for him because its head was bigger than Gravis' whole torso.

Gravis felt more courageous and started ruffling its feathers, which the bird seemed to like since it released some soft caws. Gravis decided to continue scratching it for a while.

"SCREE"

The bird shouted and then shot away. It circled a little on the tree and then hovered in mid-air while looking at Gravis. Then, it started aggressively releasing its winds, still cawing at him.

"Do you want to fight?" Gravis asked involuntarily, even though he knew that it couldn't understand him. The bird just cawed again and released a wind-wave at Gravis. The wind-wave was not really strong, but it could be considered as a rough shove. Obviously, it wanted to fight.

Gravis was unsure about that and looked at the parent bird. It just looked at him and gestured nonchalantly with its head to its child. Apparently, the parent was okay with it. Gravis looked back at the smaller one and guessed that a small spar couldn't hurt. They had fought together, and if he could repay it by sparring with it, why not?

Gravis took out his saber and looked at the bird with battle-intent. Even if he was more powerful than it, he should still act realistically and be a good opponent for the bird. The bird cawed at Gravis, and Gravis shot a weak lightning bolt at it. The lightning bolt was about as strong as the bird's earlier shove.

The bird cawed excitedly and charged at Gravis. Gravis smirked and readied his saber.

"I wonder when leader will return," said one guy to the other. They were inside a blackish-blue building inside of Earth Town and played some cards. They were the weaker disciples of the Lightning Guild, who had been left behind in the town. They were just staying there so that no one would steal their stuff while the elites were away.

"Don't know. Could be anywhere from now to a couple of days," the other answered. "That guy is probably very slippery, and they haven't found him yet. Who knows how long they have to search for him?"

"What if he killed them?" the first guy asked with a serious look at the other one. The other one looked at him with confusion but then noticed that the first guy couldn't completely hide his smile. The second one just looked at him with a ridiculing look, and then the first one broke out in laughter.

"Man, could you imagine if I actually meant that?" he laughed, and the other guy joined him. A guy who had just broken into the Energy Gathering Realm, killing their whole department of Earth Town? That would be the biggest joke!

BOOM!

The door nearly exploded as someone charged through it. The two guys immediately narrowed their eyes and readied their weapons, but when they saw who it was, they sighed. "Man, don't surprise us like that," one of them said to the arrival.

The arrival was someone in the fourth level of Energy Gathering and was part of the hit-squad that had been sent to deal with Gravis. "Contact the main guild! Everyone's dead!" he shouted loudly in panic.

The two guys looked at him in shock and then broke out in laughter. "Senior brother is way better at this than you!" the second guy said through laughter to the first guy.

"Ahaha, yeah, I can't compare to senior brother!" the guy laughed.

SLAP!

The new arrival slapped the first guy with his full power, and the poor man shot away and hit the wall. The second guy looked in shock at the new arrival and took a deep breath through his teeth.

"I am not fucking joking!" shouted the new arrival directly and with a big serving of aggression. "I saw everything!"

The first guy stood up again and wanted to complain to his senior brother, but he halted that thought when he heard that his senior brother was actually serious. "What happened?" he asked, instead of complaining.

The new arrival released a deep sigh to relieve stress and started narrating. "We followed the tracks of the betrayer, and then we saw him fighting with some bird atop a huge tree. We quickly charged to him and surrounded him atop the tree."

The new arrival started scratching his left shoulder as he remembered a particular memory. "The first one that charged forward was bisected before he could even do something. I was the second one that charged in, but we didn't know that the huge tree was actually a Magic Plant. I used too much force in my lightning, and that angered the tree."

The guy sighed deeply. "Out of nowhere, it shot me far away. I was over two kilometers up in the air and falling. I thought I was gonna die."

The others looked at him in shock. That was impossible for them to survive. Some elements could help people survive from such a fall, but lightning was not one of them. "How did you survive?" they asked, noting that their senior brother didn't even seem injured.

"Surprisingly, a demonic beast bird passed right below me. I landed on its body, killed it, tore off its wings, and used them to glide to the floor. I was incredibly lucky," he narrated.

The others looked at him in shock. A bird just so happened to fly below him? What were the chances of that? Their senior brother had probably used up generations of accumulated luck from his ancestors to pull that off.

"Anyway, I landed on the ground and wanted to go back to the fight, but I couldn't, even if I wanted to. Everything was in chaos, and the whole tree was burning. I only caught some glimpses through the fire and smoke, but when I saw our Leader's corpse falling out of the fire, I knew that everyone was dead. I immediately ran back to the guild, then and there."

The two were so shocked that they couldn't believe what he was saying. "Are you sure leader is dead?" one asked for confirmation.

"She fell down the tree in more than one piece," their senior brother said in seriousness.

The others gasped. "I'll immediately run to the guild!" said one of the two and ran to the back of the guild, where some big demonic beast birds stood. He quickly climbed on one and shot away, towards the main guild.

### [Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

#### **Chapter 106: Shopping**

"It takes a lot of work to produce just one Nine-Eves Pill, and you only want to pay 50 gold for one?" said a grey-haired old man in red robes towards a younger one in annoyance. The old man was no longer talking politely since he had been arguing with the "customer" for many minutes.

"No one in the middle-continent would buy pills for the Body Tempering Stage," the young man answered. "Who else would buy Nine-Eves Pills around here? They would only go bad. So, might as well sell them to me!"

SLAM!

The old man slammed the table and pointed with his finger aggressively at the young man. "Are you insulting our Medicine Pavilion?!" he shouted aggressively. "Are you insinuating that we wouldn't be able to keep our pills fresh for some measly weeks?"

The young man just grinned while leaning back on his chair, keeping away from the old man's wildly flowing spittle. "No, but you need to sell your stock," he said casually. "Come on, you are a company, and you only want to make money. Just sell some of them to me for 50 gold. A customer for those won't just fall from the sky."

BOOM!

The roof exploded, and a body hit the floor of the room. The old man and the young man got thrown back by the impact, and a big cloud of dust and dirt whirled through the room.

CHING!

Before the old man could say anything, a sack of gold was thrown to his feet. "This should be enough for the roof," Gravis said. "I want to exchange for Magic-Stones."

The two people still couldn't comprehend the situation. Someone broke through the Medicinal Pavilion's roof and then said that he wanted to buy something. Who would do such a thing? Why not just use the front door?

Gravis wanted to speed up his cultivation, and he needed Energy Stones for that. One of the reasons why he visited Earth Town earlier was to exchange for Energy Stones. Absorbing those would expedite his cultivation tremendously, but sadly, he had been chased out of town before he could even ask for those.

Gravis had run from Earth Town previously without entering. Why was that? That was because there were probably a lot of strong people in there and he would be surrounded. The guards had already seen him and had already rung the alarm. Buying something in that situation? Very difficult.

Yet, with his new and improved Will-Aura, Gravis got some ideas. One of them was charging through the gates and knocking every guard unconscious along the way. If no guard actually noticed him, no alarm would be rung. Also, the Fire Guild and Lightning Guild in Earth Town were basically annihilated.

The issue with that plan was that bystanders would probably notice something, which could be problematic. With that plan, Gravis would need to enter and leave very quickly.

Yet, before running to Earth Town, Gravis had seen the bird and got an idea. No one would care about a bird passing over the city. People couldn't fly, and they knew that no Energy Beast would dare attack the town, at least no Energy Beast below high-grade.

It had been a couple of days since the fight, and Gravis had communicated with the bird a lot. He had even given it a name: Skye. They could communicate somewhat, and Gravis was able to explain his idea to Skye. Skye accepted, and Gravis rode it to Earth Town.

They flew 50 meters above the town, and Gravis jumped off when they were directly above the Medicinal Pavilion. Gravis would survive a fall from this height, so he wasn't worried. He fell through the roof, and that was how he had arrived in the Medicinal Pavilion.

The old man could finally wrap his head around the situation, and he looked at the sack of gold before him and counted the gold inside it. There was ten gold inside it, and that would easily pay for the damages. The old man stood up and dusted off his robe.

"Magic-Stones go for at least 500 gold. No one will accept less than 500 golds, because you can find gold everywhere, but not Magic-Stones," he explained with an interested look. The other young man was not sure what he should do. A new guy just crashed through the roof. Was he supposed to complain and say that he was here first?

"600 gold alright?" Gravis asked, and the old man's eyes shone. That was more than alright.

"Sure! How many do you want?" he asked with a smile.

Gravis still had a little over 12,000 gold from his time in the Proxy-Lightning Guild, and he wanted to exchange all his money. "20, please," he said as he put all his sacks of gold on the floor.

The old man checked some of the bags and weighed the remainder with his hands. "Checks out, here!" he said as he threw over another sack. Gravis caught it and looked inside. He could see 20 shimmering, blue stones. He guessed that with these, he could probably rise another level in the Energy Gathering Realm.

Gravis jumped and left through the hole in the roof. The young man followed him with his eyes, while the old man was looking through the gold with a happy expression. The young man stood up. "So, about my Nine-Eves Pills," he said, and just like that, the old man's good mood was gone again.

Gravis jumped down to the plaza and started sprinting to the town's exit. He had finished what he came here to do, and there was no reason to remain. Every guard that Gravis saw got knocked unconscious by his Will-Aura. Some passersby noticed that something was wrong, but Gravis was already gone before they could do anything.

When he arrived at the town's gate, he saw that it was closed and some guards were standing around it. Gravis simply knocked all of them unconscious and climbed over the wall. Many people noticed and pointed with their fingers at him. It was rare to see anyone trying to climb over the walls since the guards on top could shoot anyone down with their specialized bows.

Yet, to the surprise of everyone watching, every guard in Gravis' vicinity was knocked unconscious. Gravis easily jumped over the wall and left Earth Town behind. He ran towards the big tree since that was an excellent place to stay for a while. There were three Energy Beasts around, which were not aggressive towards him, while one was even high-grade.

Heaven would need to bring its absolute A-game to do anything to him while he was there.

### [Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

#### **Chapter 107: Outsmarted**

Gravis returned to the tree without any accidents happening along the way, yet that didn't fill Gravis with confidence. If Heaven didn't make a sound, it only meant that it was preparing something else. Every time that Heaven struck with one of its schemes meant that there was another dangerous period coming for Gravis. Heaven wouldn't send things that he could easily overcome.

Under normal circumstances, Gravis would have died under the Lightning Guild's hand. If he hadn't outplayed Escura with that one trick and forced her to ignore all consequences, he might have died. Only by enraging her was he able to get the tree and the bird involved in the fight. There also was the addition of the Fire Guild. Would Gravis have won against both guilds at once if he had fought alone? Definitely not!

Every day, Gravis hunted Energy Beasts for food and to prepare for something else, but he never spoke his reason out loud. Heaven could hear everything, but it couldn't read his thoughts. As long as he kept his plan a secret, Heaven wouldn't be able to prepare itself.

Heaven had no issues with letting Gravis hunt low-grade Energy Beasts. They were not dangerous enough for him to temper himself, so who cared? That Gravis always returned after a hunt made it even easier for Heaven to plan its next step. Heaven could gather its forces more easily as long as he remained there.

Heaven couldn't control humans, so it was way harder for it to guide humans to his location. As for high-grade Energy Beasts? That was equally as hard. The Heaven of this lower world couldn't completely control such powerful beasts. It could only instill some feelings, but not completely control them, like with demonic beasts. That was easily shown when the parent of Skye spared Gravis' life.

Gravis had already absorbed all the Energy Stones, and they were just enough to get him to the fourth level of Energy Gathering. His Energy was now about double as powerful as his physical body, which further reduced his body's effectiveness. Gravis was still sure that he could kill people on the sixth level, but that would be harder than jumping two realms while he was at the third. As for people on the seventh stage? If Gravis couldn't catch them by surprise, winning was very hard.

From time to time, he was fighting with Skye. Usually, doing a lot of spars would weaken his Will-Aura, but Skye was too weak to have an impact on his will. It was no danger to Gravis, so a spar was more like playing for him. He wouldn't need to concentrate on attacking since he could just play around with it.



Skye would go hunting once a day and would share its prey with its parent. The parent bird remained on the tree each day and would not leave. It still felt uneasy and a little guilty that its offspring nearly died while it was away, so it vowed to be more careful from now on. Its hatred for Gravis also vanished after a while, and it accepted him as a companion. It even allowed Gravis to ruffle its feathers from time to time. That just felt too good to decline.

Yet, this particular day, Skye returned without prey after hunting for a couple of hours, and it complained to its parent. The parent bird was way faster and could hunt further away without leaving for a while. If it went out to hunt, it wouldn't be an issue to catch food. Gravis noticed this, and his eyes shone. It was time!

"You don't have to go!" Gravis shouted, and the birds turned to him. Gravis took the recently slain Energy Beast and threw it closer to Skye's nest. He normally only shared part of his prey with the tree. In order to carry such a massive beast up the tree, he would need to use more force in his lightning movement, which would injure the tree slightly.

Gravis always threw a leg of his prey to the tree's roots before doing that. The tree accepted it, and Gravis wouldn't be attacked by it. Energy Plants were not smart, but they were more in tune with nature and could understand some emotions of other living things. It felt that Gravis didn't want to hurt it, so it accepted the legs and let him do whatever he wanted.

The birds looked at the prey, and the parent bird used its wind to carry the Energy Beast to it. Using wind to carry up something that weighed multiple tons showed its superior might. Skye screeched happily and began eating. Gravis had always kept his new prey just for this occasion.

Gravis knew that Heaven would have issues sending enemies to him as long as the parent bird remained. A high-grade Energy Beast was an absolute hegemon in the middle continent, and it would take multiple people at the ninth level of Energy Gathering to slay it.

So, when Heaven had readied its weapon, it would surely do something about the bird. What was the easiest way to get it to fly away? Remove all food in the surroundings and force it to hunt! Like this, it would be gone when the new squad of enemies arrived. On top of that, Heaven would probably send multiple people at the seventh level of Energy Gathering, at least.

Gravis smirked at Heaven. "Bet you didn't expect that, eh?" he said smugly, and for a second, Gravis thought that he saw a lightning bolt fly across the sky. He couldn't be sure if he saw it correctly since it was too fast and too silent. Yet, Gravis was sure that Heaven must be frustrated right now. "Just try to stop your squad of lackeys now."

Sure enough, one hour later, Gravis saw four people arriving at the bottom of the tree. Gravis' smug grin only grew wider when he saw their levels. Three of the people were at the eighth level of Energy Gathering while the last one was at the seventh. Without the parent bird, Gravis would have died 100%. If he hadn't expected Heaven's scheme, he would have died.

"Enemies!" Gravis shouted loudly while looking at the humans. They were all clothed in blackish-blue robes, showing that they were from the Lightning Guild. He didn't want to kill more disciples, but that wouldn't stop him. It was either his life or theirs. He didn't like killing them, but it was a necessity. He

had spared the first couple of lightning disciples before, and that was how he got into his previous calamity.

He wouldn't make the same mistake again. No more sparing of lives! If someone came to kill him, he would kill them, no matter their strength or faction! Even if they were at the Body Tempering Realm, he would still kill them if they showed animosity. He couldn't gamble with his life anymore, since that would make it even easier for Heaven.

After Gravis' shout, the birds turned towards the new arrivals and looked at them. Skye grew excited and screeched aggressively while circling the tree.

"CAW!"

The parent bird released an imposing and loud caw that resonated in the surroundings, and Gravis felt his whole body shake due to the shout. Skye quickly calmed down, looked at the humans, and flew behind its parent. Its parent felt the strength of the new arrivals and knew that any of those four could kill Skye easily.

The parent bird opened its wings imposingly and made its wind circle the humongous tree aggressively. The storm was thunderous, and its sound even made Gravis' ears hurt. The surrounding trees at the ground got turned over and started circling the big tree imposingly. The big bird looked at the new arrivals aggressively and clearly showed its hostility. If they dared to come closer...

The four disciples looked at the tree with ugly grimaces. There had been no info about this mighty bird. The surviving disciple of the Lightning Guild had only told them about Gravis, the tree, and the smaller bird.

The big bird had only returned multiple hours after the fight was over. The surviving disciple had not seen it and, therefore, hadn't reported it. This bird would make everything more complicated for them.

Yet, the disciples still had a plan and looked at Gravis with killing intent.

### [Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

#### **Chapter 108: Turn of Events**

"We'll go with plan B," said the leader of the disciples. Even though two others were also at the eighth level of Energy Gathering, he was their leader for a reason. The reason was that he had a Will-Aura. It had just recently condensed, yet that made him nearly invincible in his level. On his level, the others could only release 80% of their fighting strength while he activated his Will-Aura.

"Silvio, it all depends on you now," said the leader as he passed something to the disciple at the seventh level of Energy Gathering. "We won't be able to kill the bird, but we can keep it at bay for some seconds. Follow the plan!"

"Don't worry! I won't make a mistake. The betrayer will die today!" shouted Silvio as he looked at Gravis with thick killing intent. Silvio had been romantically interested in Escura, and he wanted to court her, yet the betrayer had killed her. His fury had exploded when he heard about it, and he had screamed to the heavens in hatred.

When the hit-squad was prepared, Silvio was absolutely adamant in coming with them. Initially, due to Gravis' danger, no disciple under the eighth level was allowed to participate, but Silvio went mad when he had been denied. He turned everything over and even ignored all the people who tried to suppress him. He even accepted heavy punishment and debt, just to convince everyone to let him come along.

Originally, the three other disciples were not happy with him tagging along, but when they saw the bird, they were thankful. It would need all three of them just to occupy the bird for a couple of seconds. Without him, they could only return in failure.

"We're going in!" shouted the leader and shot forward. The others followed closely behind him, and they all charged up the tree with their full power, leaving a trail of destruction along the tree. They had been informed about the tree, but the tree couldn't compare to even the weakest of them.

Escura, who was at the sixth level of Energy Gathering, could already kill the tree in a one-on-one if she weren't disturbed by others in her fight. The tree tried its best to stop them, but just their lightning movement already tore all the branches apart. The tree couldn't even delay them.

The parent bird screeched loudly, while Skye flew away, to safety. It couldn't get involved in this fight, even if it wanted to. The parent bird took to the air and charged at the congregation of eighth level disciples. Silvio split off from the other three and charged towards Gravis.

Gravis saw this and readied himself. He had an idea of what they were planning, and to stop them from succeeding, he would have to gamble with his life. This could go wrong very quickly, and a single mistake or missed timing would spell his doom. But if he managed to succeed...

Gravis charged down, running straight at Silvio. Silvio grew excited when he saw that. If Gravis reached him, Gravis would die 100%!

Gravis and Silvio came closer, and just before Gravis reached a ten-meter distance from Silvio, Silvio took out a jade token. "You're dead!" he shouted and crushed the token.

WHOOM!

At least he tried to, but suddenly an intense pressure appeared out of nowhere. He knew Gravis was a Heavenborn, and he was prepared to receive Gravis' Heavenly Pressure, but this pressure was way stronger than he had expected. Silvio froze for a split second due to the shock.

Gravis shot a lightning bolt at Silvio's hand, which loosened the jade token, and it left his hand. Gravis quickly caught it and ran towards the other battlefield.

"Stop!" shouted Silvio and shot his strongest lightning bolt at Gravis. Gravis already expected that and loaded his weapon with 20% of his whole Energy reserve and blocked it. He managed to block the attack, but his arm, carrying the saber, was still scorched black.

Silvio, who had been sure that this lightning bolt could severely injure Gravis, was shocked when he saw that. He hadn't even started charging forward because he had concentrated everything on that lightning bolt. His eyes opened wide, and his jaw dropped as he saw Gravis getting closer to the other disciples.

"Flee!" Silvio shouted with all his might, but the others couldn't hear him over the apocalyptic wind around them. The parent bird was proving to be a more than formidable opponent, and they couldn't

spare even a single glance. The bird took up their full concentration. They were all entirely unloading their lightning on the bird, and their Energy reserves were already starting to get low. Without using absolutely everything, they couldn't keep it at bay.

They all shot another fully loaded lightning bolt at the bird, but only a single one reached it, and that didn't even leave an injury. The other two lightning bolts got blocked by a sudden Formation Array.

"Silvio, you idiot! Why are you..." the leader shouted. He was outside of the Formation Array as he turned to the others, but stopped when he saw Gravis inside the Formation Array. His eyes grew wide, and he immediately started running down the tree.

The other two disciples saw Gravis and unloaded all their lightning on him, but Gravis had quickly left the Formation Array and willed it to block the attack. "Kill the other one!" Gravis shouted with all his might, as he shot a weak lightning bolt at the fleeing leader.

The bird quickly saw what was happening and realized what Gravis wanted. It ignored the two captives and flew straight at the fleeing leader. Trying to flee alone from a high-grade Energy Beast bird with the wind element? Gravis only smirked in disdain.

Gravis knew that the Lightning Guild took him seriously now. They would probably use everything in their arsenal to stop him. When Gravis saw that the disciples didn't flee earlier, even when they saw the bird, he knew that they probably prepared a Formation Array to contain him.

Would they contain the bird in the Formation Array and attack him? Gravis doubted it. If they could, they probably would do that, but the last Formation Array he had seen only had a diameter of ten meters. Such a small space couldn't even contain the bird's torso.

Gravis already expected that such Formation Arrays were supremely expensive. The whole Lightning Guild in Earth Town only had a single one, which was only meant for emergencies. One Formation Array to protect a whole congregation of disciples? That showed its immense worth.

How expensive would a Formation Array be if it had the size to contain the bird? If such a Formation Array were easily produced, there wouldn't be any high-grade Energy Beasts anymore. Gravis knew that they took him seriously, but to use such an over the top Formation Array that could contain a high-grade Energy Beast? Gravis doubted that.

Of course, a lot of that was only speculation, and there was still a significant risk for Gravis. He could only gamble. Gravis presumed that if the disciples didn't have an Array Formation, they would have never engaged the bird. It was just too powerful.

The big bird chased the leader of the disciples, and Gravis turned to Silvio, who was angrily charging at him.

"Let's have a proper life and death battle!"

[Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

**Chapter 109: One-on-One**

Silvio's eyes were full of rage, hatred, and panic. He saw the big bird following his leader and gaining ground extremely fast. The two other disciples in the Formation Array panicked and used everything they had to destroy the Formation Array, even though they knew that they couldn't break it.

When he heard Gravis' shout, his rage exploded, and he released an enraged roar with all his power. He released a massive lightning bolt that shot at Gravis, but Gravis only sidestepped. Silvio was blinded by rage, and his attacks were fueled with his anger. He used his whole body to attack, which only made him telegraph every attack very clearly.

Silvio continued shooting his lightning at Gravis, and he moved with all his speed. His hatred exploded to the sky, and he was wasting all his Energy. When he saw Gravis dodging everything, his rage grew even more, which didn't help at all. Every attack from him left a vast area of destruction on the tree, while Gravis wasted as much time as possible, not counterattacking.

The tree got involved and tried to stop Silvio, but his violent lightning destroyed everything that got close to him, which wasted even more Energy. Gravis didn't want to see the tree getting hurt and charged down the tree. "Come, let's fight on the ground!" he shouted with mirth, and Silvio chased him, blinded by rage.

Gravis had killed his love! Gravis had used Silvio's inadequacy to doom his senior brothers! Gravis had dodged all his attacks, which enraged Silvio even more! In Silvio's eyes, there was nothing but Gravis.

Silvio was faster than Gravis, but whenever he released a lightning bolt, he stopped for a second. One couldn't release a fully powered Energy attack while simultaneously using their element to move. A fully powered attack required the concentration of every last bit of Energy, after all.

They both left a colossal ravine of lightning and destruction behind while moving down the tree. Luckily, the tree noticed that they were moving away, so it decided against sacrificing more branches to stop them. The sooner they left, the better. It had just recovered from the earlier calamity, and now it was close to death again.

When they started closing in on the ground, the parent bird returned with a bloody beak and some remaining body parts in its claws. The leader hadn't survived for even a minute. The bird noticed Silvio following Gravis, and killing intent shone in its eyes.

"He's mine!" shouted Gravis at the bird and shot a small lightning bolt at the Formation Array. The bird followed the lightning bolt with its eyes and saw how it shot into the Formation Array and hit a disciple, who was trying to break out of the Formation Array.

A light of understanding shone in its eyes, and it understood multiple things. It saw how the attacks of the disciples were blocked, while Gravis' attack went through. It guessed that its own attacks probably won't be blocked and that it could reign havoc inside the Formation Array. It looked one last time at Gravis and saw his battle intent.

The bird released a casual caw to show that it understood. Gravis had shown his battle intent, and the bird understood that he wanted to fight with Silvio. The bird shot off and charged towards the Formation Array. The captured disciples saw this, and their faces turned white. Death was coming.

The pressure the bird released when it had looked at Silvio made him sober up. Fear replaced his anger, and he grew incredibly agitated. A glimpse of death made him forget all about his anger.

"Don't worry. It won't interfere with our fight," Gravis told him while looking at him. Gravis' lightning movement didn't require him to look forward while moving since it was equally as fast, no matter in which direction he moved.

Silvio narrowed his eyes and calmly readied himself for the coming battle. His Energy reserves were already down to under 50%, and he saved it for the upcoming fight. He shot no more lightning bolts as they both charged to the floor.

They quickly arrived, and they continued running for about a kilometer. When Gravis judged that the tree wouldn't get injured anymore due to their battle, he slowed down and readied his saber. "This seems good. Let's go!" he shouted to Silvio.

Could Gravis use the bird to kill Silvio? Of course, but Gravis knew that he needed to temper his will further. Opportunities to temper his will were rare for Gravis since Heaven always only sent enemies to Gravis that made him nearly helpless. When Gravis was hunting for Energy Beasts the last couple of days, he had never met a middle-grade Energy Beast, because Heaven refused to send him enemies on his level.

He had to use every opportunity for tempering, and Silvio was a more than formidable opponent. Gravis knew that his chances of winning were not very high, but if he didn't use this new opponent as tempering, then he might lack the last bit of strength to survive his next encounter with Heaven's schemes. Gravis was prepared to risk his life, because only by continually risking his life, would he have the ability to reach the peak. The will was the most important!

Silvio also stopped and looked at Gravis seriously. Gravis had gotten one over him before, and he wouldn't underestimate Gravis again. He looked at Gravis like he was the strongest enemy he had ever faced!

Silvio readied his spear in a battle stance. He completely calmed down as he took a deep breath to ready up. Yet, just when he had finished, Gravis was already directly in front of him, slashing with his saber.

"Relaxing in a fight? How stupid are you?" Gravis asked while attacking, and Silvio's eyes widened. He had only lost his attention for a split second to get into the right mindset for a battle. He hadn't thought that Gravis would be so dirty to attack him while he was still readying up.

Silvio barely blocked the attack with his spear, but he completely lost his balance. Gravis continued attacking like crazy, and in order to stop Gravis from injuring him severely, he used one hand to stop Gravis' physical attack with lightning.

Blocking an Energy attack with lightning was no issue, but blocking a physical attack with only lightning ate up a significant amount of Energy. Gravis' saber was stopped in Silvio's hand, but it retreated quickly before he could clasp his hand around it. Silvio shot one last stab at Gravis while he was retreating, but Gravis parried it. Even though Gravis had parried the attack, he still got thrown back.

Silvio looked at Gravis with more hatred as their distance increased. He had lost his attention once, and it wouldn't happen again.

WHOOSH! CRRK!

Suddenly, a humongous storm appeared in their surroundings. Yet, instead of attacking them, the storm completely cleared the surrounding kilometer of forest. Only a big clear area of earth remained. Shortly after that, the big bird landed at the edge of the newly created makeshift fighting arena and watched.

The bird had already killed the other two disciples and wanted to watch the fight. This would surely prove to be entertaining.

### Lightning Is the Only Way

#### **Chapter 110: Just Like Back Then**

The big bird watched from the side while Skye stood beside it. They were both very interested in this fight. There were not many occasions where they could watch a battle to the death. The parent also wanted its child to learn from the fight. It knew that both Gravis and Silvio were stronger than Skye, so its child could surely glean some tactics from watching the fight.

Silvio didn't shoot a look at the birds even once. Gravis had taken him by surprise two times already, and he couldn't afford a third time. Did Silvio completely believe what Gravis had said about the bird not getting involved in their fight? Usually, he wouldn't believe that, but this time, he had no choice.

If he considered the possibility that the bird would get involved, then why was he even fighting? His death would already be a certainty. So, in order to not lose hope, Silvio could only believe in the possibility that the bird wouldn't get involved. If it did, his mindset would be drowned in a sea of terror and helplessness.

His Energy reserves were already down to under 40%. Blocking Gravis' earlier physical attack has eaten up an entire 10% of his total reserves. He couldn't afford to let that happen again.

Gravis shot forward at Silvio in an attack. The initiative was essential, and if he got hold of it, he would be at an advantage. Gravis used a chop with his saber, his Martial Arts fully integrated into every attack of his. Silvio didn't block passively but used his own attack to stop the saber. With his superior Energy, he could completely destroy Gravis' balance.

BANG!

The two weapons hit, and Gravis' saber was shot upwards, while Silvio still had his weapon under control. Without waiting for another second, Silvio's spear thrust towards Gravis' torso.

BANG!

Suddenly, Gravis' saber hit the spear again and redirected the attack. Silvio's eyes widened. How was this possible? Gravis had utterly lost his balance, and it should be impossible for him to regain it that quickly.

What Silvio hadn't seen was that Gravis knew that he would lose a direct exchange, so he had already prepared a backup plan. When his saber shot upward, a lightning bolt left it and hit the ground. Similar to the principle behind lightning movement, the thick lightning bolt pulled the saber downward in another slash. His usage of lightning was brilliant.

Gravis had thought a lot about potential usages of lightning back in the Proxy-Lightning Guild, and he had also seen the ingenious usage of wind from Skye. Only using lightning as an attack seemed a waste of its potential. There were undoubtedly more uses for it.

After the saber redirected Silvio's attack, his torso was wide open, and Gravis stepped closer to him and slashed with his saber. Lightning came out of his saber and hit the ground behind Silvio. Silvio couldn't retrieve his weapon in this short time frame, so he could only lift his hand and block the physical attack again with his lightning.

**BZZZ! BANG!**

Silvio blocked the attack with his lightning but surprisingly lost only 5% of his total Energy reserves. This didn't make him happy but more worried. Why was this attack only half as strong as the previous one? Silvio suddenly felt an incredibly strong impact on his chest. Gravis had used the lightning, which had hit the ground behind Silvio, as a powerful string to guide his saber in an attack.

While the lightning was using the saber as an attack, Gravis let go of his weapon and unloaded his full physical power into a punch. Silvio's attention was preoccupied with the saber, and he hadn't put up any other defenses. Which idiot would let go of their weapon in a fight?

Silvio flew backward for several tens of meters. When he finally managed to stabilize himself, he vomited a mouthful of blood. While Gravis' body was slowly losing its advantage in a fight against higher tier opponents, it was still incredibly powerful.

The bodies of cultivators in the Energy Gathering Realm would also increase with every level up, but the increase was negligible in comparison to the growth of their Energy. If Silvio hadn't been three levels higher than Gravis in the Energy Gathering Realm, he would have died to this attack.

Yet, he was still heavily injured. Several of his ribs broke and stabbed through his lungs. A cultivator wouldn't die to that since they had tempered their organs and blood previously, but it was still incredibly painful and bothersome to heal.

Gravis immediately charged after him. His enemy had been stunned by the attack, and he needed to take advantage of that. All these attacks were ingenious and surprising, but they would only work once. If Silvio had seen his attack coming, he would have attacked with his spear. He would have known that he wouldn't die from such a hit, but Gravis obviously would.

Gravis released his saber again and let it shoot to Silvio, while he quickly circled him so that Silvio couldn't keep watch on both Gravis and his saber. Silvio clenched his teeth and extended his hand to block the saber with his lightning, while he shot his spear at Gravis.

Contrary to his expectations, Gravis didn't go in for an attack but jumped back. Silvio felt the saber hit the lightning on his hand, which meant another 5% of wasted Energy, but without Gravis there to retrieve it, he could grab ahold of the saber. That would doom Gravis.

Silvio kept watch on Gravis, so he couldn't also look at the saber. When he felt the attack weaken, he grabbed to the approximate location of the saber. Yet, he felt nothing. A cold shudder went down Silvio's back, and he turned to the saber.



It laid on the ground, still. That made no sense. Their fight was so fast that it wouldn't even have fallen 20 centimeters in the time where all this happened. How was it already on the ground? Suddenly, out of nowhere, the saber shot at Silvio with unreal speed.

'What?!' Silvio couldn't even formulate a proper thought in this scenario. It was absolutely impossible that Gravis had pre-planned that action because lightning couldn't be placed with a timer. When it got released from the body, it would immediately do what it was supposed to do. Delaying it, was impossible.

It was also impossible that Gravis had given the saber a new "command". There had to be a medium for lightning, so Silvio would have seen lightning creep from Gravis' body to the saber. It couldn't just teleport to the saber. There was no lightning connecting to the saber, so how did it move by itself?

In order to achieve this maneuver, Gravis had made use of his Elemental Synchronicity. If lightning went into the earth, under normal circumstances, it would get swallowed up. Yet, with Gravis' Elemental Synchronicity, he could control the earth under him and create a tunnel for his lightning. This allowed him to hide his actions from Silvio's senses and move his lightning to his saber, undetected.

Out of carefully honed reflex, Silvio blocked the saber with his spear. Not forgetting Gravis, Silvio also shot a nearly fully-powered lightning bolt to his approximate location. That wasted more of his Energy, and Silvio slowly started to feel the panic set in as his Energy reserves started dwindling due to his wasteful actions.

CRACK!

Silvio easily blocked the saber, but a humongous impact hit his left knee. Gravis had charged over and slid on his behind while Silvio's lightning bolt shot over his head. With a fully-powered kick, Gravis decimated Silvio's kneecap.

Due to his kneecap getting destroyed, Silvio started falling over, right on top of Gravis. He turned to him while falling and saw another kick quickly approaching his face. Silvio managed to barely block the kick to his face with his spear.

SHING!

Silvio only had the kick in his eyes and failed to see the lightning coming out of one of Gravis' hand. The saber, which had still been in the air due to Silvio's block, got pulled to Gravis' hand and severed Silvio's dominant arm on its way.

Silvio couldn't formulate a coherent thought in that situation, and the last thing he saw in his life was Gravis grabbing the saber and it quickly approaching his face. Silvio had died.

Gravis looked at half of Silvio's head flying away and sighed in relief. Silvio had much more power than him, and every collision threw Gravis violently back. Gravis was outclassed in speed, power, and defense. The only advantage he had was his fighting experience.

Gravis was also surprised that he didn't even need to use his Will-Aura. In comparison to beasts, humans didn't have nearly indestructible bodies when they were on the same level. Gravis only had to hit something to deal damage. This made it possible to injure people who were even multiple levels higher than him.

Gravis slowly stood up and dusted off his robes. He looked at Silvio's corpse and got reminded of his first fight with a low-grade demonic beast. He still remembered the lion from the practical test and how it had also outclassed him in speed, defense, and attack. Back then, he won thanks to his experience and his Will-Aura.

The same thing had repeated itself. Yet, just like that time, a single mistake could have cost him his life.

"This is really just like back then," Gravis sighed as he remembered his homeworld.