

Lightning 1231

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Chapter 1231: Grandpa

Gravis and Mortis left Manuel's faction together with Aris and Exar.

It was time for the tournament.

"What's even the point of this tournament?" Exar asked with a bored voice. "The strongest level one Ancestral Gods won't take part in the battle anyways. In my opinion, the title of strongest level one Ancestral God might as well be worthless."

"Relax," Gravis said with a chuckle. "Don't look at everything through a cynical lens. Just take it as an amateur Cultivator award."

Exar snorted. "Amateur Cultivator award," he repeated with ridicule. "If the Lightning Peak Sect hadn't offered such great rewards, I would feel humiliated with such a title."

"That was only a comparison," Gravis said with a groan. "Coming out as the strongest in this tournament would still result in your name being known all around the world."

"I think it sounds fun," Aris interjected from the side with a smile. "I haven't sparred in forever. I wonder how it feels like to spar again."

Gravis scratched the back of his head.

He also hadn't sparred in forever, except for that thing with Narcissus, but that didn't count.

Back in the lower world, too much sparring could prove dangerous, but at their current level, they wouldn't lose their edge, even if they sparred for hundreds of thousands of years.

If someone has done something for long enough, they would never lose their edge.

As Gravis thought about sparring, some old memories returned to him, which made Gravis chuckle a bit.

"Aris," Gravis said. "I just remembered all the times the beasts have confused me for you."

"In the middle world, right?" Aris asked, a nostalgic expression appearing on his face. "I was never there for when it happened, but you seemed quite annoyed about it."

Gravis laughed. "Yeah, and remember when I visited you after my Realm Break, and you all looked down on me?"

"Dad, please. That's no longer me," Aris said with a bitter smile.

Gravis only chuckled again. "You offended so many beasts back then. It was actually impressive. Honestly, when you were young, you acted more like your grandfather instead of me."

"Please don't compare me to grandfather," Aris said carefully. "I'm not even in the same universe concerning power as him."

Gravis only laughed some more.

From the side, Mortis only looked at Aris from time to time.

It felt rather weird for Mortis to look at the father-son pair.

After all, in Mortis' memories, he was Aris' father.

However, Mortis wasn't distraught. He had made his decision, and he believed that it was the correct one.

Gravis was a better father for them.

Gravis dug up some more embarrassing moments of Aris' past and told them to Exar, who only looked with boredom towards the front.

Exar wasn't really the enthusiastic kind.

In fact, Gravis hadn't seen Exar smile, laugh, or joke around before.

Exar also didn't have a partner, as far as Gravis knew.

On top of that, Exar was one of the very few of Gravis' friends that hadn't gone through Samsara before.

Now that he thought about it, Gravis actually knew nothing about Exar's past.

However, after realizing this, Gravis didn't ask Exar.

Exar felt like a person that preferred to keep people at a distance.

Exar was basically a proud and taciturn person that only focused on his power. Yet, he was also loyal and helped those that helped him. In addition to the prideful aura emanating from him, Exar appeared like the perfect image of a genius Cultivator.

It was like Exar was exactly how someone would imagine an otherworldly genius to be.

Meanwhile, Aris felt like a kind elder, ironically enough.

In a sense, Aris appeared to be more mature than Gravis when the two of them were together. Gravis always joked around, and Aris only answered with friendly smiles and friendly comments.

If one didn't know Gravis and Aris, one would think that Gravis was the grandson that told his grandpa what he had achieved recently. The grandpa only praised him and nodded with a warm smile.

When Gravis saw that image in his mind, he turned to Aris.

"Why are you acting like a grandpa?" Gravis asked with a frown.

Aris blinked a couple of times in confusion. "What do you mean?" he asked.

"I'm joking around, laughing, having lighthearted fun, and you only put on a warm smile and nod. Additionally, you keep saying please, which feels a bit weird. Why do we need to have politeness between us?" Gravis asked.

Aris looked with a skeptical expression at Gravis while Mortis and Exar looked with evaluating expressions at Aris.

Exar turned away again without saying anything while Mortis nodded.

"You too?" Aris asked Mortis.

Mortis nodded again. "You have the distinct aura and feel of a grandpa on you."

"I honestly don't understand what you mean," Aris said. "Isn't it normal to talk politely with the people you respect? I'm just talking normally with you all. Do you really think a social gathering is the correct place to talk about how I conduct myself?"

Gravis and Mortis blinked a couple of times in surprise.

"This isn't really a social gathering," Gravis commented slowly.

"Two people are a pair. Three people are a small group. Four people are a gathering," Aris explained. "It is common courtesy to keep private conversations for situations where there are at most three people present."

Gravis and Mortis only looked with surprise at Aris.

Now that the correlation between a grandpa and Aris had been drawn, Gravis and Mortis noticed more and more how Aris acted like a grandpa.

Social gathering?

Private conversation?

Being polite to people you respect?

Aris looked with a confused expression at Gravis and Mortis, who only looked at Aris with a curious expression.

"Please, let's not talk about this right now," Aris said. "We have more important things to do right now, and we can talk about this at home when we have peace and quiet."

"Do you want peace and quiet?" Gravis asked suddenly.

"Of course," Aris answered with surprise. "Who doesn't want that?"

"Oh," Gravis ohed slowly.

"Are you still on about this entire thing?" Aris asked with furrowed brows. "I thought I made myself clear."

Now, even Exar looked at Aris again.

Gravis and Mortis were very interested in Aris' "outburst".

After some seconds, Gravis looked with a solemn expression at Aris and nodded. "I understand," he said.

"Thank you," Aris answered.

Then, Gravis turned to Mortis. "Mortis, I made grandpa angry."

Mortis nodded with furrowed brows. "Please be careful of your words in the future. Grandpa shouldn't go through so much stress at his age."

"Enough of this!" Aris spoke quite loudly. "We can talk about this when we're back at home! We should concentrate on the tournament for now!"

Exar looked at Aris again with an evaluating expression.

Gravis and Mortis only looked at Aris with intrigue.

Then, Gravis slowly leaned towards Mortis and whispered, "now you made grandpa angry."

SHING! SHING!

Then, Gravis and Mortis accelerated and teleported even faster, leaving Aris and Exar behind.

Aris gritted his teeth for a bit, but then his expression slowly transformed into a frown, ending in a sigh.

"You really act like a grandpa," Exar said from the side.

Aris looked with narrowed eyes at Exar. "Are you now also starting with that joke? Honestly, sometimes, when I see dad act like that, it's hard to believe that he's my father."

Exar only looked evenly at Aris.

"I don't joke."

"You really act like a grandpa."

Aris' frown only deepened.

"I'm not old," he quietly said to himself.

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Chapter 1232: Group

Eventually, the four of them arrived at the meeting place for the Eternal Fire Sect.

Aris and Exar wouldn't be the only Cultivators from the Eternal Fire Sect that would take part in the tournament.

The four of them were the last ones to arrive, and they saw 15 other people hovering in the sky.

14 of them were level one Ancestral Gods, while the last one was a level six Ancestral God.

Obviously, these 14 people were the participants, while the more powerful person was a Vice-Sect Master that would accompany them.

The two groups looked at each other with interest.

Some of the members had already heard of Aris and Exar. After all, the powerful people in their Sect were not unknown to them.

They had already anticipated that some people from Manuel's faction would join, and they hadn't thought much of it.

However, when they felt Aris' and Exar's Battle-Strength, a deep shock went through their beings.

So powerful!

The members didn't even look at Gravis and Mortis as their full attention laid on Aris and Exar.

Yet, there was one person that didn't look at Aris and Exar.

The Vice-Sect Master looked at Gravis with furrowed brows.

Gravis looked at the Vice-Sect Master and grinned. "Long time no see!" he said.

This was the same Vice-Sect Master that had summoned the Sect Master when Gravis had requested permission to visit his friends.

The other members were shocked when they saw how casually Gravis greeted the Vice-Sect Master.

Yet, as soon as they actually noticed Gravis, they took a deep breath.

Who didn't know about Gravis?

Everyone had heard what Gravis had done in the headquarters of the Eternal Fire Sect.

He would also take part!?

Then, what was even the point of joining!?

"Will you also take part in the tournament?" the Vice-Sect Master asked Gravis.

"Nope," Gravis answered. "I'm only here as insurance and emotional support for these two."

The Vice-Sect Master looked at Gravis for a couple of seconds.

The Vice-Sect Master had also gone through a ridiculous number of political schemes and enemies, and he knew exactly why Gravis declined to take part in the tournament.

Unveiling his power could prove to be Gravis' downfall.

His power was too conspicuous, and all the powerful Sects in the world would have their eyes on this tournament.

"Are you confident in being able to keep your power a secret?" the Vice-Sect Master asked.

Gravis only smiled.

Then, Gravis' Battle-Strength seemingly changed, and his Will-Aura weakened.

At this moment, Gravis felt like a slightly above-average level one Ancestral God. He wasn't outstanding, but he also didn't appear weak.

He only looked a bit weaker than the other participants.

As soon as Gravis' aura changed, everyone looked over with shock.

The 14 participants hadn't felt Gravis become weaker but suddenly becoming stronger.

In their perception, Gravis had felt like an incredibly weak Ancestral God before, but now, he felt like someone that could nearly fight them.

The Vice-Sect Master was also quite surprised when he felt the change in Gravis.

Everyone tried to find out how Gravis had done it, but they just couldn't.

It was like he had truly changed.

Obviously, they couldn't see through Gravis' Law of Perceived Reality, not even the Vice-Sect Master.

Only a Divine God could see through Gravis' illusion, and only when they questioned their own perception while looking at him.

For anyone below the Divine God Realm, no matter how much they questioned their own perception, they wouldn't be able to see through Gravis' illusion.

"Happy?" Gravis asked with a smirk.

The Vice-Sect Master only nodded after a bit. "As far as I can tell, your illusion is perfect, but that's only from my perception. Are you confident in being able to deceive the eyes of a Divine God?"

Usually, the Vice-Sect Master wouldn't even ask such a question. What level one Ancestral God could fool a Divine God?

However, he knew that he couldn't evaluate Gravis with normal standards.

"Quite confident," Gravis answered. "There are some ways for such powerful people to see through my illusion, but they won't use them against some random level one Ancestral God."

The Vice-Sect Master nodded. "Alright, but you are accompanying us by your decision. If anything unforeseen happens, the Eternal Fire Sect won't protect you. We can't afford to offend the gathered Sects."

"I know," Gravis said.

Then, the Vice-Sect Master looked at Mortis with calm eyes.

However, these calm eyes were only for show.

The Vice-Sect Master had noticed that Mortis' Will-Aura was seemingly more powerful than his own while feeling incredibly weak.

He felt exactly like the normal Gravis, which shocked the Vice-Sect Master beyond all belief.

It was like there was a second Gravis.

Yet, their auras were very different. Additionally, he had never even heard of this white-haired man.

Where did he come from?

Why was he here?

Who was he?

"And you are?" the Vice-Sect Master asked.

"I'm only here to keep an eye out for any underhanded tactics someone might employ against us," Mortis said. "You won't even notice I'm here."

The Vice-Sect Master doubted Mortis' words, but then, Mortis suddenly disappeared.

Everyone looked with surprise at where Mortis had just been, and they all tried to find him.

However, it was impossible.

Not even the Vice-Sect Master could find him!

This unknown, white-haired man also had such strange powers as Gravis!?

Of course no one could see through Mortis' intangible state. The only beings that could find Mortis in his intangible state were Heaven's Magnates. In order to see Mortis, one needed to know the True Law of Perceived Reality, and only Heaven's Magnates knew that Law.

However, Mortis could still see and perceive the entire world in his state.

"Fine," the Vice-Sect Master said. "If you find anything suspicious, inform me. I will take care of it."

"Sure," Gravis said.

The Vice-Sect Master nodded and gestured for Exar and Aris to join the other members.

"Vice-Sect Master, I think there's no point for me to join the tournament," one of the members said while looking at Aris and Exar. "I thought that I had a chance to enter the top three, but I doubt I will. I might have overestimated myself."

The Vice-Sect Master only nodded. "You can leave."

"Thank you," the member said before leaving.

After the member left, another seven left for the same reason, leaving only six plus Aris and Exar.

The remaining members also thought that they didn't have a chance, but they wanted to see the Lightning Peak Sect, which is why they stayed.

However, there was one member here for a different reason.

It was a young woman with a cold expression and pink hair.

Gravis had already noticed her when he had arrived due to the Battle-Strength.

As far as he could tell, she was at the awkward phase of her Battle-Strength. Normal people one level above herself were too weak, while people two levels above her were slightly too strong.

In essence, she could jump 1.5 levels.

Yet, surprisingly, she wasn't here to win the tournament.

No, she was here for tempering.

How would that be possible in a public tournament?

Well, she had heard some insider information from one of her friends, and she knew how the tournament would work.

Usually, it would be impossible to temper oneself in this tournament, but by requesting one thing, it became possible.

If she found a perfect opponent, she would willingly put her life at risk.

This was the perfect opportunity to finally gain the ability to jump two levels.

After some talking, the group left for the Lightning Peak Sect.

Five members were here to sightsee.

One member was here to temper herself.

Two members were here to win.

The Vice-Sect Master, Gravis, and Mortis were here to keep everything in order.

In total, there were eleven Cultivators in this group.

It was time to go to the Lightning Peak Sect!

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Chapter 1233: Other Contestants

The eleven Cultivators left the Eternal Fire Sect and traveled to the nearest city.

The Vice-Sect Master was at the front, the members following him.

Gravis was at the back. Since he kept his Battle-Strength hidden, he decided to also keep a low profile by being behind the members. This would make it appear like he wasn't powerful enough to travel with the members.

Mortis simply traveled alongside them in his intangible state.

After about an hour, they all reached the closest city and used the Teleportation Formation Array to get to the Lightning Peak Sect's main city. The fee for teleporting there was the highest one Gravis had ever seen, being at 100 God Stones!

100 God Stones was nothing to the current Gravis, but 100 God Stones represented 100 million Immortal Stones.

That was half of what Gravis had earned in the Gravitas when he had been in the Immortal Realm.

Gravis had had to work for nearly a millennium to get that kind of money as an Immortal, and he had been very good at making money.

Yet, that was only enough to teleport to that city.

This price meant that people below the Immortal King or maybe even the Immortal Emperor Realm wouldn't be able to come here without a powerful backer that paid for them.

Gravis guessed that this was probably the way the Teleportation Formation Arrays stayed profitable.

The price was a method to keep unworthy Cultivators of inferior power out of the city.

The teleportation finished quickly, and the eleven of them looked at the city around them with awe.

The buildings were greyish-black and immensely tall. All of them had several stone decorations on them, making them appear powerful and majestic.

On top of that, snow continually fell in the streets.

Gravis looked at the snow and his brows raised in surprise.

'I think that's Zero Blaze,' Gravis thought.

Zero Blaze was the Mixed Element of Zero and Blaze, and it was a level eight Law.

One might believe that it made no sense to combine fire and water, but the True Laws worked in weird ways.

Zero Blaze could either exhibit properties of both its components or none of them.

If Zero Blaze exhibited both properties, a violent storm of hot and cold Energy would ravage the surroundings, creating an unimaginable explosion.

Yet, if it didn't, it simply was warm snow.

"Are you sure this city belongs to the Lightning Peak Sect?" Gravis asked the Vice-Sect Master.

"This is Northsky City. A Peak Sect has more than one Law Comprehension Area for a level nine Law. The Lightning Peak Sect doesn't only have Law Comprehension Area for the Law of Heavenly Lightning, but also for the Law of Heavenly Fire and the Law of Heavenly Zero. Northsky City is located in the middle between those two Law Comprehension Areas."

"The Formation Arrays on the city transform the properties of Zero Blaze into its natural opposite, making it harmless."

"However, as soon as you leave the city, you will be bombarded by seemingly harmless snow, which will immediately explode with the force of a Peak Ancestral God as soon as it touches something it doesn't like," the Vice-Sect Master explained.

"Interesting," Gravis said. "So, no Ancestral God can leave the city?"

"Correct," the Vice-Sect Master answered. "The power of the Law Comprehension Areas for level nine Laws are impossible to overcome for Ancestral Gods."

Gravis scratched his chin in thought. "Then, what about the Eternal Fire Sect? How come you guys can just sit on top of such a Law Comprehension Area?"

"That's classified information. We have our ways," the Vice-Sect Master answered neutrally.

"Fine," Gravis said. "So, anyway, how do we get to the Lightning Peak Sect?"

"Follow me," the Vice-Sect Master said.

The group followed after him, and after a single teleportation, they all arrived at the northern gate.

Several guards stood at the gate, and they were inspecting a group of Ancestral Gods in front of them.

Gravis noticed that there were two level three Ancestral Gods and three level one Ancestral Gods in that group. 'They're probably also contenders.'

The group of Ancestral Gods looked over at Gravis' group, and their faces transformed into grimaces as soon as they saw them.

The two level three Ancestral Gods were two Vice-Sect Masters of their Sect, while the three level one Ancestral Gods were contestants. Not every Sect was as powerful as the Eternal Fire Sect.

As they looked at Gravis' group, they realized that they had taken the tournament lightly.

All of the contestants of Gravis' group felt at least as powerful as their members, and three of them felt even more powerful.

The Vice-Sect Masters didn't like what they were feeling right now.

Two of the people in the Eternal Fire Sect's group could even rival them, the Vice-Sect Masters, while one of them felt close to being at their power.

Even more, the power of the person leading them felt unapproachable to them.

They couldn't even feel at what Realm the Vice-Sect Master of the Eternal Fire Sect was.

The two Vice-Sect Masters acted like they didn't see the group from the Eternal Fire Sect and left after the guards were finished with their registration.

"Bluegrave Sect, Sub-Sect of the Darkest Stygian Sect," the Vice-Sect Master explained to Gravis. "They are not greeting us due to our bad relationship with the Darkest Stygian Sect."

"You know their name?" Gravis asked in surprise.

"I'm a Vice-Sect Master. It's my job to know," the Vice-Sect Master answered.

"Next!" one of the guards suddenly shouted.

The group of the Eternal Fire Sect walked over and stopped in front of the guards.

In their perception, these guards were like Gods from a different plane.

They were so unimaginably powerful!

Not even their Sect Master felt this powerful!

Most of the members had never seen anyone as powerful as these guards!

And yet, they were only guards!

Gravis was barely able to feel the power of the guards, but also only because their Realm was at the same level as Gravis' Will-Aura.

Yes, these were level nine Ancestral Gods.

These two mere guards were as powerful as the Ancestor of the Eternal Fire Sect.

Peak Sects sure were powerful.

"You're from the Eternal Fire Sect?" one of the guards asked, looking at the Vice-Sect Master.

"Vice-Sect Master of the Eternal Fire Sect," the Vice-Sect Master said politely. Then, he gestured at the members behind him. "Eight contestants, one observer."

One of the guards looked with furrowed brows at the group. "Only eight? The Skywater Sect brought 18. Aren't you guys supposed to be at a similar level of power?"

Obviously, the guards didn't give the Eternal Fire Sect any face, but that was to be expected. After all, these two guards could flatten the entire Eternal Fire Sect.

"Originally, we were supposed to be 15, but about half of them left after they saw our two most powerful contestants," the Vice-Sect Master explained politely.

The two guards looked at the group and quickly focused on Aris and Exar. They also threw a small glance at the pink-haired woman, but the other two were more interesting to them.

Then, one of the guards nodded. "Quite impressive. These two might not even need to fight in the preliminaries. Of course, that decision is up to the inspector."

After that, the other guard summoned ten emblems and gave them to the group. Eight of them had swords on them, while the other two had one eye each on them.

"These emblems will teleport you to the Lightning Peak Sect," the guard said to the group before looking at the people behind them. "Next!"

The members of the group took their emblems and crushed them.

After Gravis crushed his emblem, he arrived in a luxurious room with the Vice-Sect Master. The contestants were nowhere to be seen.

Gravis guessed that they were probably in a separate area with the other contestants, so he didn't worry.

"Do you know when the tournament will start?" Gravis asked.

"We came rather early. There should still be about ten years before it starts," the Vice-Sect Master answered.

Gravis released a sigh. "That's good."

"You seem relieved," the Vice-Sect Master commented.

"Well, Mortis didn't get an emblem, so he has to come here on his own. He said he will take around eight months to get here, and I feared that the tournament would start before he arrives."

The brows of the Vice-Sect Master furrowed. "Can he?"

Gravis nodded. "The Zero Blaze isn't an issue to him."

"What about the defenses of the Lightning Peak Sect?" the Vice-Sect Master asked.

"They shouldn't be a problem," Gravis said with quite some confidence.

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Chapter 1234: Lightning Peak Sect

"The defenses of the Lightning Peak Sect are a problem," Mortis transmitted to Gravis.

Gravis grimaced.

Eight months had already passed since Gravis had arrived in the Lightning Peak Sect, and he had already regretted his confidence.

Gravis had tried to look at the area where all the contestants were, but, surprisingly, a Formation Array stopped his Spirit Sense!

This was the first time this had happened for a very long while.

Gravis had been flabbergasted when he noticed that a Formation Array was resisting his True Law of Freedom.

Gravis had thought that the True Law of Freedom would allow him to ignore these restrictions, but that wasn't true, apparently.

As soon as Gravis' Spirit Sense had come into contact with one of the Formation Arrays, he had felt the concept of Suppression resisting his Law of Freedom.

If Gravis forced it, he could get through the Formation Array, but there was an issue.

The Formation Array didn't only have the True Law of Suppression inside itself, but also the True Law of Control. The True Law of Control in the Formation Array didn't stop Gravis' Spirit Sense, but it kept watch over how the Law of Suppression acted.

Tons of people tried to inspect their surroundings with their Spirit Sense, which was why the Formation Array didn't sound an alarm as soon as it felt one.

However, if something broke through the oppressive force of the True Law of Suppression, it would immediately notice and alert the leaders of the Lightning Peak Sect.

If Gravis hadn't also known the True Law of Control, he would have attempted to break through, and he would have been noticed by the Lightning Peak Sect.

'This design perfectly counters the True Law of Freedom. It is essentially impossible to know the True Law of Freedom and the True Law of Control at the same time since the two Laws are polar opposites in the way of comprehension.'

'However, that doesn't mean that everyone is missing the same Law. Some are missing the True Law of Freedom, and some are missing the True Law of Control. Because of that, people with different Laws can work on the Formation Array, essentially creating one that mimics the True Law of Perceived Reality, but without the overpowering strength.'

'All five Laws of Perceived Reality are in the Formation Array. Even more, its design is devious.'

'If someone only knows the True Law of Freedom, they will try to break through the Formation Array, and the Law of Control will alert the leaders.'

'If someone only knows the True Law of Control, their control over the Formation Array will be stopped by the True Law of Freedom inside the Formation Array, which will also alert the leaders.'

'The True Law of Control in the Formation Array counters the True Law of Freedom, while the True Law of Freedom in the Formation Array counters the True Law of Control.'

'In both cases, the person that attempts to get through the Formation Array will walk into a trap.'

That was also the reason why Mortis couldn't enter the Lightning Peak Sect.

Mortis could become intangible, but that state could be countered with the True Law of Perceived Reality.

In a sense, the Formation Array didn't completely copy all the concepts of the True Law of Perceived Reality, but it used all its individual components in a combinatory fashion. It was basically a rudimentary version of the True Law of Perceived Reality.

Mortis could theoretically get through the Formation Array, but the leaders of the Lightning Peak Sect would notice that someone had barged through their defenses.

As soon as Mortis had seen the defenses, he decided to stop.

Sure, they wouldn't be able to find him in his intangible state, but Mortis didn't want to take any chances.

If they could build something that could stop Mortis in his intangible state, they might also have built something that could spot Mortis in his intangible state.

It was too risky.

After some discussion, Mortis left the Lightning Peak Sect again and went back to Northsky City.

Remaining here was pointless.

'I underestimated the Lightning Peak Sect,' Gravis thought as he sipped from his drink.

At the moment, Gravis lay on a comfy bench while looking at the sky inside the Lightning Peak Sect.

The Lightning Peak Sect was located in a building over 10,000 kilometers wide, on top of gigantic mountains with flattened peaks.

The mountains were all over 100,000 kilometers tall, but they only acted as foundational stones for the Lightning Peak Sect itself.

The Lightning Peak Sect was made of pure white materials, and it looked like a gigantic mansion, which had been enlarged several times over.

There actually weren't that many rooms in the Lightning Peak Sect, but all of the rooms were just massive.

It was like Gravis had been shrunken to the size of a dust mite and floated into the mansion of a rich hegemon.

Everything was huge.

At the moment, Gravis was on one of the many huge balconies as he looked at the sky.

'I can't get enough of this,' Gravis thought.

Above him, a spectacle of elemental apocalypse took place.

A huge mountain punched through the middle of the Lightning Peak Sect, much taller than all the other mountains by far.

On top of the mountain was a sea of Heavenly Lightning, and it blanketed the skies for nearly a million kilometers.

The Heavenly Lightning violently shot around in a display of destruction, but, surprisingly, the center was the calmest part.

The most violent parts were the edges.

Surrounding the Heavenly Lightning from all sides but below was a dome of unfathomably powerful wind. The wind and the Heavenly Lightning clashed with each other at their borders, destroying themselves in a cacophony of eternal destruction.

When they both destroyed each other, the destructive Energies were transformed into pure Energy, which then fell to the Lightning Peak Sect below it.

This was one of the rarest spectacles in nature, a level nine Law Comprehension Area inside another level nine Law Comprehension Area.

Usually, if something like this happened, one of the two Law Comprehension Areas would be destroyed, but not here.

Heavenly Wind was fighting Heavenly Lightning the entire time, but none of them ran out of Energy.

Why was that?

Because of the powerful Sect below them.

The many Divine Gods inside the Lightning Peak Sect below the level nine Law Comprehension Areas pulled in an incredible amount of Energy from the world, which then got absorbed by the two Law Comprehension Areas.

The Law Comprehension Areas fought each other with the surplus Energy, which would then be transformed into a shower of pure Energy falling down at the Sect.

'It's a bit like a Cosmos,' Gravis thought. 'The Cultivators pull in the outside Energy, which then gets transformed by the filters, which are the Law Comprehension Areas in this case. Lastly, the pure Energy arrives at the place with all the Cultivators.'

Gravis watched the spectacle for another year, but then, something happened.

Gravis' eyes widened as he looked at a certain place in shock.

"Are you insane, Mortis!?" Gravis transmitted to Mortis with shock.

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Chapter 1235: Rules

In Northsky City, the two guards were talking to a level one Ancestral God.

"You are here to participate?" one of the guards asked.

"Yes, I hope that's okay. If it's not, I can leave. Just don't be angry, okay?" a rainbow-haired girl said nervously.

The guards were surprised by the girl's appearance. Having exotic hair colors was normal for Cultivators since their hair often showed what Element they had a great affinity for.

However, rainbow-colored hair was a new one.

Did that mean that she had a talent for all the Elements?

Was that even possible?

"From which Sect are you?" the guard asked.

"I'm unaffiliated," the girl said nervously.

"Unaffiliated?" the guard asked with surprise.

This was an unaffiliated level one Ancestral God, which was very rare.

On top of that, she felt rather powerful. She felt about as powerful as someone that could jump 1.5 levels.

"Yes, is that a problem?" the girl asked nervously.

"No, I was just surprised," the guard said.

SHING!

An emblem with two swords appeared, and the girl took hold of it.

"Destroy the emblem, and you will be transported to the living quarters of the contestants," the guard explained. Then, he looked behind the girl. "Next!"

The girl quickly thanked the guard with a bow and walked to the side.

Then, she broke the emblem.

In the instant she broke the emblem, she felt a weak feeling of Control take hold of her, and her eyes narrowed.

'Gravis didn't experience this feeling of control. This means that only the contestants get this kind of force placed on them,' Mortis thought.

Yes, this girl was Mortis.

'It's probably only there to check up on our locations and our status, but it will be troublesome if the Lightning Peak Sect finds me,' Mortis thought.

If Mortis hadn't known the True Law of Control, he wouldn't even have felt that slight feeling of control that tried to cling to his being.

Mortis let the feeling of control envelop him, but he kept a tiny part of his right index finger free.

Then, Mortis vanished as the emblem took effect.

Mortis arrived at-

BANG!

Mortis' head suddenly exploded in a shower of blood as soon as he arrived, and his lifeless body slumped to the ground.

SHING!

An Elder arrived at this place in less than a second, and he looked at the girls' body with a frown.

He had just felt how one of their contestants had suddenly died, which wasn't supposed to happen.

The Elder turned back time with the True Law of Time and looked at what happened.

As soon as the girl appeared, her head suddenly exploded without reason.

There had been no external Energy.

It was like the girl had just killed herself.

The Elder looked with a solemn expression at the images, and he quickly recorded them.

This could have several reasons.

For example, another Peak Sect might have poisoned her, and the poison got triggered by being transported here. If this girl had a powerful background, her background could make things difficult for the Lightning Peak Sect and maybe join another Peak Sect. After all, she had died in the Lightning Peak Sect.

The Elder didn't believe that the girl just suddenly decided to kill herself for no reason.

There were probably external factors at play.

'Her corpse is devoid of Energy,' the Elder thought. 'If she killed herself, she wouldn't be able to make all her Energy vanish.'

'I should inform the Vice-Sect Master,' the Elder thought.

SHING!

And then, the Elder teleported away.

He didn't deal with the body since the body would degrade into Energy after some years anyway.

Additionally, they might need the body later on.

The only thing he did was put the body to the side.

...

At the side, the intangible Mortis looked at everything calmly.

"Are you insane, Mortis!?" Gravis' voice transmission suddenly arrived.

"What? It worked, didn't it?" Mortis answered.

"Yes, but so many things could have gone wrong!"

"But they didn't," Mortis answered.

Gravis' hands moved forward in his chair like he wanted to strangle an imaginary person in frustration.

Some Ancestral Gods looked over in confusion.

What was that Ancestral God doing?

Eventually, Gravis relaxed and released a sigh.

"Well, it worked out," Gravis transmitted to Mortis dejectedly.

What had Mortis done?

When Mortis had arrived, he had immediately pulled all his Energy out of his body in a stream of Heavenly Lightning, which was in an intangible state.

In physical reality, one would only see the girl's head explode, but in one of the perceived realities, one could see a stream of Heavenly Lightning leave the girl's right index finger until a man formed.

Then, when nearly everything had left the girl's body, her head exploded.

All of this had happened in less than an instant.

The coating of Control was still over Mortis' old body, leaving his true body without the coating.

Now, Mortis was inside the Lightning Peak Sect, and no one knew he was here.

As far as they were concerned, everyone was accounted for, including the corpse.

"So, how's the contestants' area?" Gravis asked with interest.

Mortis walked through the grand hall and through a hallway until he arrived at another huge room.

There, Mortis saw a sea of people.

There were so many!

Mortis could see over 10,000, and probably even more would arrive in the next years.

"Busy," Mortis answered. "At the moment, everyone is just waiting. Over 90% of them are just sitting down and meditating. They probably want to keep themselves at their peak for the tournament. Some others are talking. The ones talking are either very weak or very powerful. Everyone in between is meditating."

"Can you see Exar and Aris?" Gravis asked.

"Exar is leaning on a wall with closed eyes, while Aris is talking to some other Cultivators in a friendly manner," Mortis said.

"Makes sense," Gravis answered. "They don't belong to the weak or average ones. How are their chances? Is there any competition?"

"Yep," Mortis answered. "There are about seven other Cultivators that can jump two levels."

"That's quite impressive," Gravis answered.

"Wait a sec," Mortis said as he found something of interest.

One of the contestants had just taken out a jade token, which had tiny words written on it.

Mortis immediately read everything in an instant, and he scratched his chin in thought.

"What?" Gravis asked. "You just said wait a sec, and now you're not saying anything. Did something happen?"

"Take a look at this," Mortis transmitted to Gravis as he sent Gravis an image of the jade token.

Gravis looked at the image of the jade token, and he blinked a couple of times in surprise.

"Tournament rules?"

Gravis read through the rules, and after he was done, he scratched his chin in interest.

"The Lightning Peak Sect sure is capable," Gravis answered.

"They are," Mortis said.

From what Gravis had read, the tournament wouldn't exactly be sparring.

In fact, every fight would be a life and death battle, but inside a resurrection Formation Array.

These Formation Arrays were unimaginably expensive, and only the Heaven Company sold them.

As the name suggested, these Formation Arrays would resurrect someone that died inside it.

The Heaven Company sold these resurrection Formation Arrays to help the Divine Gods overcome the last few hurdles before the Heaven's Magnate Realm.

The Lightning Peak Sect owned one of them, and the tournament would be held inside the Formation Array.

The other rules of the tournament were very standard.

The fights would be one-on-one battles, and the winner would be the one that killed their opponent.

However, there were two interesting rules.

First of all, if both candidates died, the fight would result in a draw, and in the case of a draw, none of the combatants would move forward.

The stated reason was that the Lightning Peak Sect was looking for the strongest, and if someone got a draw, it meant they were not the strongest. The only exception would be the final group stage since there could be a rock-paper-scissors scenario.

The other interesting rule was the ability to turn off the Formation Array.

However, the contestant had to manually ask for that ability before the battle, and it would only turn off for them.

The opponent would still be under the effect of the Formation Array unless they also requested an exemption from the Formation Array.

Because of that, three kinds of fights could take place.

First, both contestants would be under the effect of the Formation Array, which would result in a spar.

Second, one contestant would be exempted, which would result in that contestant either dying or getting great tempering. In both cases, the opponent would survive.

Third, both contestants would be exempted, resulting in a genuine life and death battle.

"That's interesting," Gravis said. "This means that the current power of the participants isn't actually the final power level of everyone."

"People can become stronger during the tournament in exchange for risking their lives."

"This might actually be more interesting than I had anticipated."

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Chapter 1236: Peak Sects

Over the next couple of years, more people gathered.

Near the end, nearly 500,000 level one Ancestral Gods had gathered in this place.

The fateful day had only been 1.7 million years ago, and all of these people had managed to shoot through the Star God Realm during that timeframe and become Ancestral Gods.

They either were people that rushed through the Realms or very talented Cultivators who just comprehended Laws at a very fast rate.

Yet, it was still immensely difficult to comprehend a level eight Law in such little time, which meant these Ancestral Gods were probably the strongest ones out of all the new Cultivators, except for the ones in the Peak Sects.

When it was time for the tournament, the onlookers all went to the central arena of the Lightning Peak Sect.

The arena was about ten kilometers wide, which seemed way too small for fights at the Ancestral God Realm, but the arena had a Formation Array around it that expanded its internal space with the True Law of Space.

From the outside, it was only ten kilometers wide, but inside, it was millions of kilometers wide.

One might think that it would be quite difficult to witness a fight several million kilometers away, but the onlookers were all Ancestral Gods. Their Spirit Senses stretched way further than that.

When Gravis entered the area for the audience around the arena, he noticed that he was one of the weakest onlookers in terms of Realm.

Most people were between the third and seventh level of the Ancestral God Realm, while some of them were at the eighth or ninth level. There were even around ten Divine Gods in the area, but Gravis wasn't powerful enough to guess their exact level.

There were seven balconies above the audience area, but they were still empty. Gravis guessed that some important people would probably be there in the future.

"An Elder just arrived," Mortis transmitted to Gravis.

"What's he doing?" Gravis asked.

"He's pulling out all the contestants that can fight two levels above themselves. Apparently, they don't need to join this round. Oh, he just said that our hall is only one of two halls. He said that there is a second hall with just as many participants, and we will only fight the people from the other hall. This is to prevent information gathering," Mortis transmitted.

"So, there are actually about a million level one Ancestral Gods participating in this tournament? That's quite a lot," Gravis answered.

"Yes, the reaction was mixed when everyone in this hall heard that piece of information. I think some plans just got ruined," Mortis said.

"So, it's actually senseless that you're in there," Gravis transmitted.

"Seems like it," Mortis answered. "Oh wait, the Elder also pulled in that pink-haired woman from the Eternal Fire Sect. Apparently, the other side has three more Ancestral Gods that can jump two levels than our hall, which means that the Elder has to get the three next-strongest Ancestral Gods."

"Quite powerful," Gravis commented.

"The stronger Ancestral Gods just left the room, and now the Elder is explaining that the people left in the room can still win. They just have to risk it all and grow more powerful. If they want to win, they have to risk it. However, they can also just fight normally," Mortis narrated.

"Makes sense," Gravis answered.

At that moment, several people appeared at the seven balconies.

As soon as these people arrived, everyone looked over in silence.

The representatives of the seven Peak Sects!

When Gravis saw them, he had to take a deep breath.

So powerful!

Gravis couldn't even fathom their power!

He couldn't even tell who was more powerful between them!

Even more, Gravis saw some familiar faces among them.

"Welcome, everyone, to the tournament of my Lightning Peak Sect!" a powerful-looking man in the central balcony announced.

Gravis recognized that person.

He was the new Sect Master of the Lightning Peak Sect. Gravis didn't know his name, but he had seen him in the Heaven Clash.

"Please, a warm welcome for our guests!" the Sect Master announced as he gestured to the right-most balcony.

On the right-most balcony was an extremely old man with long white hair and a long white beard. He was carrying a long, grey staff, which somehow felt ancient to Gravis.

"The Vice-Sect Master of the Eternity Sect!" the Sect Master announced.

The audience applauded politely, while the old man only slowly nodded once.

Gravis knew the Peak Sects. After all, he had been born into this world, and he had learned all about them when he had just been a kid.

The Eternity Sect's techniques all focused on the Primordial Force Laws.

Exar would be a perfect fit for them.

The Sect Master gestured to the next balcony.

On the next balcony, Gravis could see a very scantily clad woman with bright pink hair. She smiled warmly at everyone, and she even winked at the audience with a giggle.

"The Vice-Sect Master of the Mortal Sect!" the Sect Master announced.

'So, that's the famous seductress of the Mortal Sect,' Gravis thought.

Mortal Sect was a weird name for a Peak Sect, but their name actually had a deeper meaning. The Mortal Sect concentrated on the Emotional Laws, and they do so by emulating the pleasures and struggles of mortals. That was why they were called the Mortal Sect.

The Sect Master gestured to the next balcony.

On the next balcony, Gravis could see a young girl with lively green hair. Her smile was radiant and bathed everyone in an aura of peace and tranquility. On her back, surprisingly, was a bow. These weapons were very rare.

"The Vice-Sect Master of the True Life Sect!" the Sect Master announced.

Gravis knew the True Life Sect. No explanation was necessary since it was obvious what that Sect focused on.

The Sect Master gestured to the next balcony, which was to his left.

On that balcony, Gravis saw a middle-aged man with black hair and a stalwart gaze. On his back were two swords, and he radiated an incredibly sharp aura.

"The Sect Master of the Heavenly Divine Sect! What an honor for him to arrive personally!" the Sect Master announced.

'The Sect Master of the Heavenly Divine Sect?' Gravis thought.

'I saw his son once!'

Gravis remembered the conversation he had had with his father when he had been just twelve. Back then, the Opposer had told Gravis to go to Master Linus' shop. Gravis had seen the son of the Sect Master of the Heavenly Divine Sect order some weapons back then.

The son had been a bit arrogant in front of Master Linus, but when he had seen Gravis, he had acted very deferentially and scared.

Back then, Gravis had also believed that the Heavenly Divine Sect was only an upper-level Sect, but, apparently, they were a Peak Sect.

The Heavenly Divine Sect concentrated on pure Weapon Laws. Back then, Gravis had had no idea what that was.

The Heavenly Divine Sect was basically the Purist Sect of the highest world.

The Sect Master gestured to the next balcony.

On the balcony, Gravis saw a familiar face.

"The Vice-Sect Master of the Lost Wind Sect!" the Sect Master announced.

Yes, this was the Vice-Sect Master that had watched Gravis while he had worked as a torturer. This was also the person that gave Gravis ten God Crystals.

The Vice-Sect Master of the Lost Wind Sect only nodded once.

The Lost Wind Sect was the antithesis of the Lightning Peak Sect, and also the Peak Sect with the worst relationship with the Lightning Peak Sect.

The Lightning Peak Sect concentrated on the bright, explosive, and powerful Elemental Laws. Laws like Heavenly Fire, Heavenly Lightning, Heavenly Zero, and Heavenly Wind.

Meanwhile, the Lost Wind Sect concentrated on the Laws of Heavenly Darkness, Heavenly Earth, and Heavenly Metal.

The Lightning Peak Sect was bombastic and explosive.

The Lost Wind Sect was meticulous and calm.

Funnily enough, the name Lost Wind Sect came into existence after the Lightning Peak Sect had become the supreme power regarding the Law of Heavenly Wind. In order to never forget that shame and humiliation, the Lost Wind Sect had taken up the name of Lost Wind Sect.

They had lost their wind.

The Sect Master gestured to the last balcony.

On the last balcony, Gravis saw a woman with half black and half white hair. Her clothing was also half black and half white, but in the middle of her robes, a glint of purple could be seen.

"The Vice-Sect Master of the Twilight Council!" the Sect Master announced.

The Twilight Council concentrated on the Heavenly Purity and Heavenly Stygian Laws, and they used all the other Laws as support for these Laws.

In their opinion, Heavenly Purity represented the peak of defense, while Heavenly Stygian represented the peak of offense. By mastering both, they would be the most powerful Sect.

And, sure enough, they were a Peak Sect.

After the Sect Master introduced everyone, he looked at the crowd again.

"For our first fight, we have an appetizer. Two of the most powerful contestants will fight each other!" the Sect Master announced.

Gravis nodded. It made sense to open the tournament with a blast.

As the Sect Master informed everyone about the rules of the tournament, Gravis got contacted by Mortis.

"Aris just left the room to fight."

"How do you know that?" Gravis asked. "I thought you were in the other room."

"There are only weak Formation Arrays between the rooms. They are not as strong as the Formation Arrays around the building," Mortis answered. "Anyway, it seems like Aris is going to be the first one to fight."

After the Sect Master finished his explanation, he declared the start of the tournament.

One of the rooms opened, and Aris stepped out.

Gravis only smiled with pride at Aris.

That was his boy!

Then, the other room opened.

When Gravis saw Aris' opponent, his mind halted.

"Who's his opponent?" Mortis asked.

Gravis couldn't answer.

He knew Aris' opponent very well!

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Chapter 1237: Dramatics

"Gravis, who's the opponent?" Mortis asked again after Gravis hadn't answered in quite some time.

Gravis' shocked expression slowly transformed into a complex expression, but eventually, Gravis only smiled warmly with a bitter tone.

Aris' eyes also opened in shock as he saw his opponent.

Surprisingly, Aris' opponent's eyes also opened in surprise.

In front of Aris stood a beautiful woman with short black hair. She wore simple clothing, quite a contrast to the robes nearly every other Cultivator was wearing.

She carried a black saber in her right hand, and her blue eyes looked onto Aris in shock.

It was Cera.

Aris and Gravis hadn't seen Cera in nearly 1.5 million years.

Back then, Cera had battled with all of Gravis' friends, and she had come in dead-last. Due to her shame and anger, she left Opposer City without informing anyone else.

She was a beast, and her mentality was the mentality of a beast. Her power was very important to her. It didn't only dictate her life but also her philosophy, wellbeing, confidence, and pride.

Being the weakest one out of a group was one of the most shameful things in her mind.

Because of that, she had left to become more powerful.

But now, she was here.

She was a level one Ancestral God, which already put her in the upper 10% of all Cultivators born after that fateful day. On top of that, the Elder had evaluated her Battle-Strength as being able to jump two levels, which put her amongst the absolute elite, the best of the best.

She had become powerful.

Gravis transmitted the image he was seeing to Mortis, and Mortis also fell into silence.

Their lost daughter was still alive, and they could see her right in front of their eyes.

The two of them only looked at each other for a while.

Aris' expression slowly transformed into a warm smile.

When Cera saw that smile, her brows furrowed, and she looked to the side.

"You two can start," the Sect Master announced. "We don't need a starting signal. You can attack whenever you want."

The Sect Master thought that Aris and Cera were waiting for a start signal.

Aris looked at the Sect Master with a polite smile. "Thank you, senior, but we haven't started fighting yet because we are related by blood. This is the first time we've met in a long time. We're simply a bit surprised."

The Sect Master's eyes widened in surprise, and the other Ancestral Gods looked with confusion at the Sect Master.

The Sect Master was the only being whose Spirit Sense could enter the arena. He was also the one that protected the sides of the arena. Because of that, he was the only one that heard Aris' words.

The Sect Master scratched his cheek a bit in thought.

Then, he got a great idea.

"Something has come to light," the Sect Master announced to the audience, and the audience looked at him. "It seems like these two are family, and they haven't met each other in quite a while."

The audience understood now why the two of them hadn't started fighting yet.

"Wouldn't it be a shame to have such a fight at the beginning of the tournament?" the Sect Master said with a smirk. "Wouldn't it be far more interesting to let them fight each other in the finals?"

The Sect Master grinned as he extended his arms. "Long lost family finally meets again, but an army of powerful Cultivators stand between their meeting! Will they become more powerful and overcome all the other contestants, or will they fail?"

Aris' and Cera's eyes widened in surprise. They also heard the Sect Master.

"We can fight," Cera said with furrowed brows, her voice filled with conviction. "We have fought before, and he has always won, but not this time. This time, I'm the more powerful one, and I want to prove it to him! I want to fight him right now!"

What Cera didn't know was that her speech was now also heard by the audience.

The audience became interested in the exchange.

There was a rivalry going on!

The Sect Master only grinned even more. "Tensions are high, and the intensity of their conflict can be felt by everyone! I hope everyone is excited about the eventual conclusion!"

WHOOM!

Suddenly, Aris and Cera felt a force of teleportation envelop them. However, the force didn't immediately teleport them away.

"You have five seconds!" the Sect Master announced.

He wanted to make it as dramatic as possible.

Aris only smiled bitterly and looked at Cera with care.

"I'm happy everything's alright with you," he transmitted. Talking took too long right now.

Cera only looked away from Aris, not wanting to meet his eyes.

"How is he?" she asked.

Aris only smiled.

"Powerful," Aris answered.

Aris also wanted to say that Gravis was here, but he knew that Gravis' Law of Perceived Reality would be broken if someone seriously powerful closely inspected him.

Cera only sighed, but she was teleported away before she could speak more with Aris.

Aris was also teleported away at the same time.

Gravis was a bit annoyed that the two of them were separated again, but he also realized that the Sect Master's actions could result in Aris and Cera becoming more powerful.

There was a way to temper oneself in this tournament by turning off the Resurrection Formation Array.

Competition was fierce, and if the two of them wanted their rematch on the grand stage, they had to overcome everyone else.

There were really powerful people in the competition, and it wasn't a certainty that the two of them would reach the finals.

At the moment, the two of them could probably reach the finals, but that was only considering the current power of everyone.

During this tournament, several people were bound to go through several tempering opportunities, making them more powerful.

The currently strongest might not even reach the top 10 in the end.

'Quite a good tournament model,' Gravis thought. 'I thought that the winner would already be set in stone since everyone can feel the Battle-Strength of the combatants, making the tournament boring, but right now, everything's up in the air.'

"Let's see if these two can meet each other again in the finals!" the Sect Master shouted, "but for now, let's take a look at their fiercest competitors!"

The audience's attention was immediately grabbed.

"Exar just left," Mortis transmitted to Gravis.

Now, Gravis also became interested.

"For this fight, the Resurrection Formation Array will not be turned off, no matter what the competitors say! The losing competitor also won't be disqualified from the tournament! This fight is only an exhibition match between the two people that the Lightning Peak Sect currently sees as the two strongest competitors!"

"Let's meet them!"

The Sect Master gestured to the right, and Exar appeared.

"The currently strongest opponent the little girl has to get over to meet her family again!" the Sect Master declared.

The audience nodded in appreciation.

Exar truly felt very powerful.

Exar didn't look at the audience and only looked at the front with a cold gaze.

Many of the onlooking Ancestral Gods were impressed by the prideful and stalwart expression of Exar. If only they had such an outstanding disciple in their Sect.

"However!" the Sect Master shouted with a grin, "this competitor also has a goal. He just doesn't know it yet!"

The audience looked with intrigue at the Sect Master again.

Exar had heard the Sect Master, but he didn't look over.

"There is one more competitor, but at the current moment, this competitor is unrivaled. If there were no way to increase your power during the competition, this competitor would undoubtedly claim first place!" the Sect Master announced.

Exar's eyes narrowed.

He had expected that there would be people that could rival him in this tournament, but he hadn't expected that someone would take part that could outclass him to this degree.

"Meet the current favorite of the tournament!" the Sect Master announced as he gestured to his left.

SHING!

A new person appeared.

It was a young man with red hair, red eyebrows, a wild red headband, and a long crimson spear. He looked disheveled and unkempt, but there was an aura of violence and dominance around him.

He was the perfect example of a violent, free man that didn't care about affiliations or organizations.

He was only interested in power.

When Gravis saw the man, his eyebrows furrowed.

This guy could nearly fight three levels above himself.

On top of that, he had a Will-Aura equivalent to a level six Ancestral God, which was insanely strong for a level one Ancestral God.

The Sect Master hadn't lied.

This person was, without a doubt, the strongest competitor at this very moment.

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Chapter 1238: Conflict

Exar looked at his opponent with cold eyes, as the opponent looked at Exar the same way.

However, the opponent's gaze also hid another emotion.

Disdain.

This Cultivator thought that he could fight him?

He could feel the man's Battle-Strength, but he still didn't surrender?

However, the man also didn't forget that the tournament could increase the power of many competitors.

Maybe, Exar could prove to be a challenge to him in the future.

He hoped Exar could become worthy of fighting him.

Exar readied his sword.

WHOOOOM!

However, his opponent's Will-Aura immediately suppressed Exar. Exar had expected to be suppressed, but he hadn't expected that his opponent also knew the level six Law of Suppression.

This essentially made it nearly impossible for Exar to move.

The audience looked with surprise at Exar's opponent.

This guy could easily enter a Peak Sect's Core Disciples without any kind of test or evaluation!

That was incredibly hard for a mere level one Ancestral God.

"You can't even fight me at the moment," the red-haired young man said to Exar coldly. "Killing you now would only reduce my status."

Exar didn't answer as he only looked into the young man's eyes.

"Become powerful! The next time we meet, I want a real challenge!"

"Don't disappoint me," the young man said before retrieving his Will-Aura and turning his back to Exar.

The Sect Master had allowed these words to be transmitted to the audience, and the audience felt quite impressed.

This truly was a powerful genius!

His enemy couldn't even fight him!

After some seconds, Exar looked at the Sect Master without a change in expression.

"I concede," he said.

The audience was surprised by the direct surrender, but they realized that Exar was accepting that he was weaker.

Even when his opponent had openly provoked him, he had stayed calm.

That was an admirable quality.

Someone with such a personality could go far.

The Sect Master only grinned.

SHING!

Exar and his opponent were teleported away.

"I hope everyone is excited about the tournament now!" the Sect Master shouted. "We have a lot of powerful competitors, and the four you have seen earlier are just four amongst over a hundred with similar power!"

The Sect Master had managed to truly make the audience invested in the tournament.

In one of the balconies, the Vice-Sect Master of the Lost Wind Sect only scoffed. The other Divine Gods noticed the action, but they didn't interfere.

It was public knowledge that the Lost Wind Sect and the Lightning Peak Sect were hating each other at best.

They were simply complete opposites.

The Sect Master of the Lightning Peak Sect only shot a short, smirking look at the Vice-Sect Master of the Lost Wind Sect.

He was essentially telling him that his introverted, sneaky Sect could never pull off such a grand and exciting event.

"For now, let's meet the other contestants! We have over a million contestants here, and we have a lot to go through! So, let's start right now!" the Sect Master announced.

And then, two normal contestants entered the arena to fight.

For the first few fights, the audience was still quite invested, but by the thousandth fight, they became a bit bored.

They wanted to get to the powerful Cultivators.

At the moment, the fights weren't different from normal fights between their juniors.

They wanted to see outstanding Cultivators fighting other outstanding Cultivators.

They didn't want to slog through this tedious boredom.

Luckily, Ancestral Gods were very fast, and one fight was often finished in less than five seconds.

With the time between fights, one fight took around eight seconds on average.

Because of that, the first round would only take a bit less than two months, which wasn't that long for Ancestral Gods.

While all of this was going on, a discussion had broken out amongst the members of the Peak Sects.

"I know that you're still new to this, but you can't just act like a common ruffian now," the Vice-Sect Master of the Twilight Council transmitted to the other members, but specifically to the Sect Master of the Lightning Peak Sect.

"Says who?" the Sect Master of the Lightning Peak Sect answered. "I'm near the peak like all of you, and I can decide how I want to act."

"Honey, you are a Sect Master of a Peak Sect now," the Vice-Sect Master of the Mortal Sect said. "You can act however you want inside your Sect, but please, don't make yourself appear like some loud village salesman in front of the entire Cultivation world. Do it for me, okay?" she said with a wink.

The Sect Master only smirked with disdain at her. "That's coming from you? If I look like a loud village salesman, you look like the local village whore."

"Tch," the Vice-Sect Master of the Lost Wind Sect spat with disdain. "In my opinion, his conduct is perfectly in line with the Lightning Peak Sect. Insulting others to feel better about yourself, holding a grand event just to show your power, you are simply an idiot blinded by vanity."

The Vice-Sect Master of the Mortal Sect had become quite angry at the Sect Master of the Lightning Peak Sect, but the words of Vice-Sect Master of the Lost Wind Sect had calmed her down a bit.

Right, why should she care what that guy said? He obviously had insecurities, and such an unstable person will lash out at everyone around them like a wild animal. He probably was just very bitter because he had a small penis.

"Oh my, the edgy boy from the Lost Wind Sect is talking grandly at a social event," the Sect Master of the Lightning Peak Sect ridiculed. "I know that you have no idea how to talk with others, which is why I will overlook your words. I know that you just can't help it."

The Vice-Sect Master of the Lost Wind Sect only snorted. "Is that supposed to be an insult? Way to prove my point in the most pathetic manner."

"No, it's the truth," the Sect Master answered. "How many new recruits does your Lost Wind Sect get again? Oh right, a tenth of our recruits! Your Sect is filled with people that can't even talk properly with the outside world, which is why everyone is ignoring you."

"But it could also be because you are only focusing on three Elements, not four. Man, if only you had an additional Element that fit your Sect."

The Vice-Sect Master of the Lost Wind Sect narrowed his eyes, but he wasn't the one to answer.

"So, the number of focused Elements is now a demonstration of power?" the Vice-Sect Master of the Twilight Council commented. "Then, what does that make us or the Heavenly Divine Sect?"

The Vice-Sect Master of the Lost Wind Sect only smirked quietly to himself.

The Sect Master frowned.

He had made a mistake.

The Vice-Sect Master of the Lost Wind Sect had pulled him into a trap.

'I need to be more careful,' the Sect Master of the Lightning Peak Sect thought.

"Rules for everyone might not necessarily count for the truly outstanding ones," the Sect Master said to the Vice-Sect Master of the Twilight Council. "Truly outstanding people can make a single Element triumph over all of them. Your Twilight Council knows that, and you have proven so. Please, don't interpret bad intentions into my words."

The Vice-Sect Master of the Twilight Council only let out a short hmp and looked away. The only reason why he had even spoken up was that he also disagreed with how the Sect Master conducted himself.

The Sect Master hadn't acted in a dignified manner in this tournament. He had treated it as a party he was hosting.

This wasn't only the Lightning Peak Sect's event. The other Peak Sects were also involved in this tournament, and they had also invested some capital.

This tournament was supposed to bring the hidden geniuses of the world to light.

It was supposed to be a grand battle for supremacy and recognition.

Yet, the Sect Master of the Lightning Peak Sect had degraded it to mere entertainment with his words.

The only Peak Sects that didn't mind the Sect Master's conduct were the True Life Sect and the Heavenly Divine Sect.

The True Life Sect was very relaxed, and they went along with the flow.

The Heavenly Divine Sect only cared about power, and they didn't put any relevance to how others acted.

Words were irrelevant.

Only power was important.

The Mortal Sect cared quite a bit about conduct because, like mortals, they valued their status and the perception of others.

The Lost Wind Sect obviously took every opportunity to ridicule the Lightning Peak Sect.

The Twilight Council put pride and solemnity on power, and they felt like the Sect Master was besmirching their image.

The Eternity Sect didn't really care, but the representative from them cared. He didn't like noise, and the Sect Master of the Lightning Peak Sect made a lot of noise.

The audience didn't notice the conflict between the Peak Sects, but they also wouldn't be surprised if they noticed.

It was normal for competition to occur between the most powerful Sects.

There were simply too many Peak Sects, and there had to be conflicts in philosophy.

As the leaders continued to argue, the first round finished.

Then, the second round finished.

And another one.

Another one.

Another one.

Eventually, only level one Ancestral Gods that could jump two levels were left.

That left around 400 competitors since a lot of the weaker ones had become more powerful with tempering.

And then, it was time for the actual tournament.

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Chapter 1239: Price of Power

Gravis became interested in the tournament again.

Now, the actually powerful contestants would fight.

During the past couple of months, only weak Ancestral Gods had fought each other, and if one of them managed to raise their Battle-Strength to a level that allows them to jump two levels, they immediately qualified for the actual tournament. At that point, they wouldn't need to fight in the preliminaries anymore.

The preliminaries didn't exist to reduce the contestants to a certain number but to weed out the weaker contestants. The preliminaries had continued until everyone either got disqualified or reached a sufficient power level.

And now, from nearly one million participants, only about 400 were left.

All of them could jump two levels.

This was astounding. After all, the tournament managed to create an additional 300 level one Ancestral Gods that could jump two levels, and even more, these powerful Ancestral Gods would now fight until someone could jump three levels.

Additionally, by now, nearly every single participant asked for the Formation Array to be turned off for them. They had already come so far, and they had to do everything they could.

In a sense, this tournament wasn't even a tournament.

It was a meatgrinder.

From the one million participants, nearly 800,000 had actually died, which was insane.

These were the best Cultivators of the new generation, and 80% of them had died today.

All of that just to create 300 more Ancestral Gods that could jump two levels.

And now, even more of them would die to create some Ancestral Gods that could jump three levels.

By the end of it, a Cultivator that could jump four levels might even be born. They might not have the Laws to jump four levels, but their Will-Aura could be so powerful that they could just directly suppress their opponent.

That red-haired man had been one such Cultivator. His Will-Aura could suppress someone four levels above himself to 50% of their speed. Sadly, 50% of the speed of a level four Ancestral God was still eight times as fast as the speed of a level three Ancestral God.

Yet, if that red-haired man could increase his Will-Aura even more, he might be able to suppress someone four levels above himself to 75% of their speed. At that point, his opponent's speed would only be three levels above him instead of four, giving him a chance at victory.

'This is a gigantic refinery,' Gravis thought. 'I expected that the Peak Sects wanted to find the most talented Cultivator to add to their ranks, but that's only half-true. In reality, they gathered over a million genius Ancestral Gods in one giant refinery.'

'The ambition of the combatants would drive them into the refinery, hoping that they would be the hardest. They are hoping that everyone else would be ground down by them, and not the other way around.'

'One million talented disciples just to create a single person that could jump four levels.'

'Even more, this person wouldn't even need to rely on the Peak Sect's resources to jump four levels. If they now also got access to the resources, they could become the most powerful Cultivator in the Ancestral God Realm that could jump four levels.'

'They are not just trying to get the most powerful level one Ancestral God, but also a future Peak Divine God. Someone with such Battle-Strength must have the talent to become a future Sect Master of a Peak Sect.'

Gravis snorted.

'If some people would realize this underlying reason for the tournament, they would believe the Peak Sects to be cruel. After all, they were essentially pressuring all the scattered coal in the world until they got a single diamond.'

'However, can they even be angry? The Peak Sects give everyone the opportunity to resurrect. They also don't force the Cultivators to take part.'

'The Peak Sects haven't opened their bag to collect all the coal in the surroundings. No, they simply opened their bags, and the coal jumped into the bag of its own volition.'

BANG!

In the arena, a Cultivator that could jump two levels had just died.

They hadn't activated the Formation Array.

The opponent fell onto their knees, keeping their body somewhat upright with their nearly broken sword.

They had survived!

At the same time, the audience cheered in support.

The surviving fighter looked at the audience, and he felt like he was in a dream.

All of these people were seniors much more powerful than him. They were all far older than him, and they could all kill him with but a thought.

Yet, at this very moment, thousands of extremely powerful Ancestral Gods and even some Divine Gods cheered for his victory.

At this moment, he knew that he would no longer be unknown.

Every important Sect knew him now.

He no longer needed to only support his own Sect.

Now, he could join whichever Sect he wanted. Additionally, even if he didn't join these Sects, the Sects would still be polite towards his Sect. After all, no Sect wanted to offend a Sect that had such a talented disciple.

He hadn't even nearly won the tournament, but he knew that his life had already changed.

At the same time, his Will-Aura increased until it reached the fourth level of the Ancestral God Realm.

At this very moment, he was in the more powerful half of Cultivators that could jump two levels.

He knew that it wasn't over yet.

He could go further.

He would risk his life one more time, and he would transform his life.

Gravis saw all this, and he noticed the emotional change in the candidate.

'Transformation, huh?' Gravis thought. 'This is the essence of Cultivation. Whenever you stand before a fight, you might regret your choices, and you might have wished that you've never started cultivating.'

'Yet, when you win, the incredible feeling of transformation and growth envelopes your entire being. You realize that you have stepped into a new level. You have already gone through so many painful fights, but you are still alive. You know that so many people have died in the fight you have just won, but you have become stronger.'

Gravis sighed.

'I know that feeling very well.'

Gravis looked at the tournament, and he saw one brutal fight after the other. Nearly every single fight ended with one genius dying.

The best Cultivators were dying in droves.

How many Sects had lost their most outstanding disciples?

How many futures of how many Sects had been destroyed?

Nearly all the outstanding geniuses had died, and for what?

To create just 300 incredibly powerful geniuses.

And now, those would die.

For what?

To create just something like ten people that could jump three levels.

And then, they would also die to create just one or two people that could jump four levels.

The price to create such a peak genius was insane.

As Gravis thought about this, he thought about his own past.

How much had been sacrificed to increase Gravis' Battle-Strength to such a degree?

The first major boost had come when Gravis' Spirit had been forged with Destruction Lightning.

Something like this had never happened before, and Orthar would make sure that it would never happen again.

Gravis had essentially changed the Laws of the entire Cosmos that day, which could be seen as a form of sacrifice for his power.

The next boost of power had come when Gravis had decided to abandon his old body for a beast's body. Gravis had lost all semblance of humanity with his new body, which was also a heavy sacrifice.

The next boost had come when Gravis had eaten the corpse of the lower Heaven. Without it, Gravis' body couldn't have become lightning.

The next boost had come when Gravis had reached the lowest point of his life to comprehend the level four Laws of Suppression and Freedom. Additionally, the middle Heaven had forcefully trained him for centuries.

With all of that, Gravis had become powerful enough to jump four levels.

All of that, for four levels.

The thing that allowed Gravis to jump five levels was the creation of Mortis, and everything following that gave Gravis the chance to jump six levels.

One thing had been grander than the previous one.

In order to jump four levels, one needed to gather so many geniuses and refine them, but to jump six levels, one needed to change the entire Cosmos.

Gravis' influence had changed the entire Cosmos for eternity, and it was like the entire Cosmos revolved around him.

Sacrificing a million Cultivators was nothing in comparison to changing the entire Cosmos.

All of that...

For only two more levels.

'I guess jumping four levels is the most the Sects can achieve,' Gravis thought. 'There probably aren't even enough level one Ancestral Gods to make someone reach the power to jump five levels. Additionally, at that point, it's impossible to injure one's enemy without at least one level nine Law.'

'Jumping five levels requires the support of Orthar or father.'

As Gravis thought about all these things, the tournament in front of him went on unabated.

That pink-haired woman from the Eternal Fire Sect had also fought.

Sadly, she had died.

Exar and Aris had also fought, and the two of them had won.

Cera and the red-haired man had also won their fights.

Then, another round passed, and they all became even more powerful.

By now, the Will-Auras of the average combatants had gone beyond the fourth level of the Ancestral God Realm. Some of them were on the level of level five Ancestral Gods, and some of them were on the fourth level.

75 people were left, and they were all powerful enough to easily jump two levels.

Some of them could even attempt to jump three levels, but the chances of success were meager.

However, they weren't zero.

The tournament was showing its effect.

Lightning Is the Only Way

Chapter 1240: Red-Haired Man

The tournament continued.

In one fight, Aris had nearly died. As the fight had been going on, Gravis had felt nervous beyond compare.

He wanted to help Aris, but he knew that he couldn't help him.

After all, Aris didn't know the Law of Freedom.

If Gravis helped him now, Aris' Cultivation journey would forever end.

In the end, Aris had managed to comprehend the Law of Divine Purity. Together with his level eight True Law of Lightning Manipulation, Aris managed to push the Law of Divine Purity to its absolute limits, which allowed him to come out victorious.

Aris had transformed.

He now knew two level eight Laws as a level one Ancestral God, and his Will-Aura had reached the level of a level six Ancestral God.

Aris could now attempt to jump three levels.

Aris had the chance to win against the red-haired man now.

In comparison, the red-haired man hadn't even fought.

The Sect Master of the Lightning Peak Sect knew that every opponent he sent against the red-haired man was a waste. The red-haired man wouldn't become more powerful, and the opponent would be disqualified. Because of that, the red-haired man hadn't fought yet.

At this very moment, the red-haired man was still the most powerful contestant, but the others were quickly closing in.

After another round, there would be some people that could fight him.

'I wonder what his plan is,' Gravis thought. 'I know that he isn't here to win the tournament. So, why is he here?'

Gravis had noticed something very peculiar regarding the red-haired man, which gave Gravis the realization that he wasn't here to win the tournament.

Yet, why was he here?

Gravis wasn't sure.

Cera also barely managed to survive, and she managed to comprehend the level eight Law of Lightning Manipulation. Together with her Law of Divine Stygian, she now also knew two level eight Laws. Her Will-Aura was also on the level of a level six Ancestral God.

She was at the same level as Aris.

When Gravis saw Cera become more powerful, pride and warmth filled his heart.

His daughter had grown so much.

Exar had also grown to the same level, but his Form Laws were still more outstanding than his competitor's. Gravis expected that Exar was the most powerful combatant except for the red-haired man at this moment.

At this moment, only 16 people were left.

From over a million competitors, only 16 were left.

The weakest person could jump 2.5 levels.

Nearly every single member in the audience had lost one of their geniuses, and the mood had soured.

At this very moment, the competition had nothing to do with them anymore.

This had become a show performed by geniuses that could only be found in Peak Sects.

One more round took place.

Cera managed to comprehend the level eight Law of Physical Strength. As a beast, she had always focused on her body, and she had already gained quite some insights into the Law of Physical Strength.

Now, she had finally comprehended it.

With this, Cera now knew three level eight Laws, and her Will-Aura had reached the level of a level seven Ancestral God.

Cera could now fully jump three levels.

Surprisingly, Aris comprehended the same Law. It seemed like they both focused on similar Laws. The only level eight Laws that were different were the Mixed Elemental Laws. Aris knew the Law of Divine Purity, while Cera knew the Law of Divine Stygian.

They were very similar, but one had a kinder aura, while the other one had a more serious and sinister aura.

Exar had also won, and the Law he had comprehended had shocked the onlookers.

Exar had comprehended the True Law of Pride, a level nine Law!

A level one Ancestral God that knew a level nine Law!

When that had happened, the representatives of the Peak Sects had looked at Exar with greed.

They wanted him!

The Lightning Peak Sect said that they had made the tournament and that they deserved him.

The Lost Wind Sect said that Exar was very silent and prideful, which perfectly fit them.

Surprisingly, the Twilight Council said they were not interested in him. However, they quickly followed that statement up by saying that they wanted Aris and Cera. They perfectly demonstrated the contrast between light and darkness the Sect stood for.

The Heavenly Divine Sect didn't say anything. Exar was powerful, and it was his decision whom he wanted to join. The Sect Master of the Heavenly Divine Sect believed that the power of his Sect was more effective than words.

The True Life Sect didn't involve themselves. Life had its ways, and Exar would end in whatever Sect that he was destined to join.

The Mortal Sect said that he had comprehended an Emotional Law, which meant that he was a perfect fit for their Sect.

The Eternity Sect said that Exar mainly used the three Laws of Primordial Force, showing that he was basically already their member.

Of course, their discussion didn't reach the ears of the public.

The last person that had fought in this round was the red-haired man.

He had fought his opponent, and he had been injured quite badly, but it was like he had never lost his control.

He hadn't comprehended another Law, but his Will-Aura had also increased to the level of a level seven Ancestral God.

The round eventually ended, and only eight people were left.

The Sect Master called all eight contestants out into the arena, and the audience looked at them with awe.

Eight people.

All of them could jump three levels.

All of them had Will-Auras at the seventh level of the Ancestral God Realm.

All of them knew three level eight Laws.

One of them even knew a level nine Law!

Exar was the definite favorite of the competition.

After everyone had their chance to look at the competitors, the Sect Master announced that the groups no longer matter. From now on, everyone could fight everyone.

"I want to fight him," the red-haired man suddenly said as he pointed at Exar.

Silence.

The Sect Master had just tried to hype up the crowd, but the red-haired man had interrupted him.

The arena was silent, but the Sect Master felt the atmosphere heat up after the red-haired man's words.

This had done far more for the crowd than his words.

The Sect Master grinned. "Then, so be it!"

SHING!

The other six combatants were teleported away, leaving only the red-haired man and Exar in the arena.

Exar took out his sword as he coldly looked at the red-haired man.

"Deactivate the Formation Array," Exar said.

The Formation Array was quickly deactivated for Exar. Such a request wasn't strange anymore, and everyone had gotten used to it.

The red-haired man didn't ask for his Formation Array to be deactivated, and Exar frowned.

"You think I'm not confident," the red-haired man said evenly.

Exar didn't answer, but he was right.

The only reason why the red-haired man wouldn't deactivate the Formation Array was that he thought he would die otherwise.

"You believe that you are now one of the most powerful Ancestral Gods," the young man said. "You are filled with pride, and you believe that the geniuses of the Peak Sect are only more powerful than you because they have an ocean of resources backing them."

Exar didn't react, but his face showed a bit of disdain.

How could a random person know him?

"You believe yourself to be superior, and that's true to some extent," the red-haired man said as he slowly took out his spear.

"However, that is only true with your current vision."

"You look at the public Cultivators, but you ignore the unknown Cultivators. You believe them not to be part of your world. You don't count them in your level. They are special after all, right?"

Exar's eyes narrowed slightly.

"You are only two steps away from the peak, but instead of looking at the people on the peak, you look down and at the other people on your elevation. You don't look up."

"And that's why you have such a great affinity towards pride, but not humility."

For some reason, Exar became a bit nervous.

The audience was quite surprised about the red-haired man's words.

For some reason, these didn't feel like empty or boastful words.

It was like he was speaking of an essential truth.

"Yet, you don't realize that these people you are ignoring can step onto your level," the red-haired man said, and slowly, his cold expression was transforming into a warm smile.

'Is that why he has come?' Gravis thought.

This smile felt so familiar to Exar.

"Exar, we are in a tournament right now," the red-haired man said. "Additionally, you have deactivated your Formation Array."

Suddenly, the red-haired man's spear moved with impossible speed.

Exar felt an apocalyptic force pass by his head.

BOOOOOOM!

The wall of the arena nearly exploded as the Sect Master of the Lightning Peak Sect was taken by surprise.

He hadn't expected such a powerful attack to be unleashed in this tournament, and he hadn't been ready for it.

Exar stopped thinking for a moment.

How was this man so powerful!?

"What if I wanted to win?" the red-haired man asked with a smile. "If I wanted to win, I would need to kill you, you know?"

"Do you think I wouldn't dare to?" the red-haired man asked with a smile.

"Exar," the man said slowly. "Don't forget all the things I have taught you. Don't only look to the side, but also look up."

Now, Exar knew who was standing in front of him.

The red-haired man's Battle-Strength suddenly violently climbed.

The eyes of the onlookers opened as the red-haired man's Battle-Strength suddenly became impossible for them to feel.

However, all the Divine Gods stood up with shocked expressions.

They had never felt anything even remotely like this!

How could someone with such a powerful Battle-Strength even exist!?

Then, the red-haired man looked away from Exar, and his eyes focused on Gravis, who only looked at him with a raised eyebrow.

"It's time for you to enter the public's eyes," the red-haired man transmitted. "By staying hidden, you are putting yourself under too much danger and too little danger at the same time."

"I'm doing this for a reason," the red-haired man said with a smile.

SHING!

And then, the red-haired man was suddenly gone.

The Sect Master's eyes widened, and he teleported away.

He had just felt someone burst through the Lightning Peak Sect's defenses!

However, no matter what he did, he couldn't find the person!

They had vanished into thin air!

After some seconds, he had returned with a thoughtful expression.

He knew that only a person that knew the Law of Perceived Reality could pull off something like that.

Gravis smiled bitterly.

'So, that's your plan, huh?' he thought.

'Is that why you joined the tournament, Arc?' Gravis thought. 'You wanted to teach your disciple something, and you want to push me into the public?'

At the moment, Gravis was unsure what he should think.

WHOOOM!

Gravis felt the gaze of the Sect Master of the Lightning Peak Sect focus on him.

The Sect Master had questioned his perception, which had broken Gravis' illusion.

Now, the Sect Master of the Lightning Peak Sect saw the true Gravis.

And, right now, the Sect Master's eyes had widened with shock as all his senses concentrated on Gravis.