

## Lightning 221

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

#### Chapter 221: Borrowed Power?

The traveling people didn't notice Gravis slowly coming closer. If they did, they wouldn't be traveling this leisurely. When Gravis was only one kilometer away from them, he activated his Spirit. He had no intention of attacking those people with an ambush. The fight would be over before he could even warm up like that. Gravis wanted some tempering.

As soon as Gravis activated his Spirit, all four of them immediately turned around to see Gravis just one kilometer away from them. Yet, when they saw Gravis' cloak, they narrowed their eyes.

"Oh? You're from the Greys, right?" the voice of the leading figure of the group appeared in Gravis' head. "And here I thought you wouldn't ever appear. We were waiting for you." Gravis could hear the arrogance in the voice, which only confirmed the relation between the Greens and the Greys more.

Gravis stopped a hundred meters away from them. The four people were all watching him without readying their weapons. Though, at least they had landed. With his Spirit, Gravis could now get a better look at their weapons. All four of them carried long, thin swords. Gravis guessed that the other world, even though it didn't have any elements, was probably still divided. Those four were probably all part of the same organization since all their weapons were identical.

Gravis narrowed his eyes but didn't attack. He still wanted to hear what the Greens were going to say. Everything that Elder Byron had said was only from the side of the Greys, so it might be possible that not everything he said was the truth. "What's the relation between the Greens and the Greys?" Gravis asked.

The leader looked a little surprised, but his grin only widened. "Interesting! You don't immediately trust everything someone says. That's a good mindset, boy," said the leader.

By the sound of his voice and posture, Gravis was sure that the leader of the Greens was a middle-aged man. Sadly, the cloak blocked their bodies and faces, which made it hard to identify them. On top of that, the cloaks also seemed to stop Gravis' Spirit from looking at their real faces. Gravis could still see their silhouettes with his Spirit, but he couldn't see their faces.

"Answer the question," said Gravis with a harsh tone.

The leader laughed a little again. "As you probably already know, we don't come from this world. We are here for some kind of exchange program," he said with mirth in his voice. Obviously, he wasn't taking Gravis seriously. "The Heaven of our homeworld has chosen that old bastard Byron over our Sect Master for this exchange. Of course, our Sect Master wasn't happy with that." The person stopped speaking after saying that.

Gravis lifted an eyebrow. "So, you and the Greys are enemies, right?" Gravis asked evenly.

The leader laughed again. "Of course. We volunteered for being some kind of test for the Greys in this world." The person laughed another time. "So, yes, we are enemies. If we manage to kill that old bastard Byron, we will be the new representatives of our world."

Gravis only continued looking at the leader with narrowed eyes. "What about the Elemental Sects?"

"What about them?" the leader asked in arrogance. "We don't care about them... yet. We first need to kill Elder Byron. After that, we will, of course, replace the Greys and become the overlords over this world. How can elemental cultivators ever reach the strength of our pure martial way?"

"Why do you think elemental cultivators are weaker than you?" Gravis asked.

"Simple," the leader stated as he started walking closer. "The elements do not belong to people. People copy the usage of the elements, yet the elements will always remain outside help. What are we? We are humans! We have a mind, a will, a body, and Magic. Our martial way does not need the help of something that is not inherently human to become powerful."

By now, the leader had come pretty close and stood just a couple of meters before Gravis. "This world's reliance on outside help is damaging your own power." The man pointed at Gravis while the other Greens stood behind him. "You are part of the Greys, so you should've realized that by now, or did old bastard Byron not give you any techniques, yet?" He said with a laugh.

Gravis kind of understood the leader's mindset, but the basis of his ideology was unstable. In actuality, Gravis was of the opposite opinion. It was not that he was borrowing outside power with his lightning, but that he was making something that was not human into his own.

He was not just using the power that a human inherently had, but also adding outside things to his being. Like this, his own being would grow and would become more powerful. The more he added to himself, the wider his array of weapons would become.

"Alright," sighed Gravis. "Those were all the questions I had. Then," Gravis retrieved his saber. "Let's have a proper fight!" he shouted.

The four people all lifted their hands to show that they didn't want anything bad and retreated slowly. "Oh wow, the little boy wants to fight," said the leader sarcastically, as he retreated. "What can you even do? You're at the initial stage of Spirit Forming, while everyone here is at least at the Seed Stage. Are you actually suicidal?" he said with a laugh.

BOOM!

Gravis immediately exploded forward with his maximum acceleration and kicked the closest person at the Seed Stage. Though the leader was closer, Gravis knew that killing him directly wouldn't guarantee a sure kill. Someone two full levels above him surely had the ability to resist such a thing. He first planned to kill the other ones.

BANG!

The person hadn't even managed to move their rapier in a block before Gravis hit his chest with a kick, which was fully loaded with lightning. The person immediately exploded as a shower of blood got blasted into the distance. Gravis immediately watched the others, ready for any counterattack, but surprisingly, no one attacked him.

Instead, they retreated a little and readied their rapiers. Yet, their faces showed some visible amusement and even a little disdain. Gravis thought that this was a little weird, but those people were

from a different world, after all. Maybe they had a similar mindset to the Fire Sect, where the death of one person simply showed their weakness.

"Hoh, that's not bad," said the leader, "but what about-"

CLANK!

The leader attacked out of nowhere and stabbed his rapier at Gravis with unreal speed. Gravis barely managed to block the rapier with his speed, but he still got shot into the distance. 'Spirit Forming Body,' Gravis judged, 'and an even more powerful one than mine. Physical attacks will be an issue.'

The two other people took out their weapons, and something peculiar happened. Yellow light appeared around them as their weapons started glowing. Gravis was not sure what they were doing, but it couldn't be anything good.

WHOOSH!

Their weapons left their hands and started circling in the air violently. Two whirlwinds of some kind of sword force were generated and shot straight towards Gravis.

Gravis had never seen such an attack.

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#### **Chapter 222: Close Fight**

These whirlwinds of this mysterious sword force shot right at Gravis, and Gravis immediately decided to dodge. He had no idea what kind of techniques those people were using, so he was more careful than normally. Gravis had taken advantage of many opportunities when his enemies had underestimated him in the past, so he knew the danger of underestimating one's enemies.

BANG!

Gravis shot his lightning at one of the two whirlwinds, right at the rotating weapon. Yet, strangely enough, the weapon moved weirdly and managed to dodge the lightning. Gravis was incredibly surprised since he had been sure that he had hit the weapon. Luckily, his lightning seemed to have achieved something, and the whirlwind of sword force weakened. With another hit of his saber, the whirlwind was destroyed, creating a path for Gravis.

SHING!

Gravis had walked straight through the first whirlwind to dodge the second one when a crescent made of the mysterious sword force shot right towards him. Gravis felt the power of this crescent and knew that if he tried to block it, he would be severely injured, at least. Seeing no other way, he jumped back, straight into the other sword whirlwind.

BANG!

Gravis unloaded around 20% of his lightning into the surroundings, destabilizing the whirlwind. The whirlwind was destroyed, but not before opening several deep cuts on Gravis' body. This pain was nothing to Gravis, and he immediately continued fighting.

BANG!

Gravis accelerated again with his lightning and charged straight at another one of the Seed Stage cultivators. But of course, this time, they were prepared for him. The person immediately blocked Gravis' saber with his rapier.

BANG!

A concentrated bolt of lightning shot out of Gravis' saber, going straight for the unassuming person, dodging the blocking rapier. Yet...

"Move!"

The blocking person was shoved away by a released shockwave of the Sapling Stage cultivator. Gravis' loaded attack with his saber missed its target, only scorching the shoulder of the person. The Sapling Stage cultivator had just saved the life of one of his comrades.

Gravis narrowed his eyes at that. 'Sure enough, Sapling Stage cultivators are difficult to handle. This will be a bitter fight,' he concluded.

WHOOM WHOOM WHOOM!

All three of those people immediately activated their Will-Aura. The Will-Auras of the Seed Stage cultivators were no issue, but the Will-Aura of the Sapling Stage cultivator was incredibly powerful. It not only had the suppression of two levels, but Gravis also felt that it had been concentrated.

The leader of the Greens was the first person that Gravis had seen in this lower world who had the ability to compress their Will-Aura. Gravis actually felt himself slowing down a little. Together, the three Will-Auras were stronger than Gravis'. He originally intended to surprise them with his Will-Aura, but that plan fell flat.

SHING!

A horizontal, incredibly wide crescent of sword force shot at Gravis. He immediately realized that this was a full-power attack from the Sapling Stage cultivator. Gravis had no way to block this attack since it easily eclipsed all the power he could muster, except for the Lightning Crescent.

He only had one way to evade, which was to jump. Of course, Gravis knew that this was precisely what they wanted. If he jumped, it would be difficult for him to evade while in the air. Unfortunately, he had no other choice.

Reluctantly, Gravis jumped over the attack while keeping an eye on the others. All three of them smirked and retrieved a second weapon. The second weapons floated beside them, and they quickly jumped onto them. Directly after that, they started flying on the backs of those weapons. Like aggressive hawks, they shot towards Gravis from all sides.

BOOOM!

Gravis had no other choice but to unload nearly all his saved lightning. If he didn't, he wouldn't have the power to resist their combined attacks. His surroundings exploded with lightning. Of course, his enemies

had expected something like this and used their own, peculiar ways to block Gravis' attack. Their swords flew around them, creating some kind of barrier. Gravis' lightning hit them, and they got flung back.

BOOM!

Gravis used some of his last lightning to pull himself to the ground by creating magnetism that pulled down his weapon. When he landed, he used every last shred of his lightning to explode forward again. After this, his lightning storage was utterly empty. His opponent readied his weapon to block. He knew that Gravis was out of lightning since that explosion had been too powerful for someone at the initial stage of Spirit Forming. He only had to survive one attack.

CRACK!

Even though Gravis had used all his lightning, he still had other weapons. While bursting forward, he had readied the Rakshasa Saber Technique, loading it with all the inherent Energy in his body. The thin rapier that blocked Gravis' saber broke apart, and the force of the Rakshasa Saber continued towards the target.

The wave hit his chest, but the rapier had weakened the wave enough so that it didn't prove fatal. Of course, the person was still severely injured. A cut nearly bisected him, but his ribs had managed to stop it, though many of them had broken. The person was thankful that he was still alive.

BANG!

Gravis infused his left fist with the mixture of Spirit and will and punched the person right on the chest. The person was blasted into pieces, just like Gravis' fist. The mixture of Spirit and will was volatile and wasn't meant to be used with one's body. Gravis had barely managed to land the punch before his left arm was transformed into a bloody mist.

Sadly, there hadn't been any other way. He had been completely out of lightning and inherent Energy. He already had no other weapons remaining. If he didn't manage to achieve a kill, he would die. If surviving required sacrificing an arm, Gravis would do it.

Gravis quickly turned around to the remaining two people, who just looked at him in surprise. 'Chance!' Gravis shouted in his head. He used the full power of his body to burst forward again. Of course, without the addition of his loaded lightning, he wasn't very fast. He attacked with his saber again, but his current opponent had learned from his predecessor's mistakes. Instead of blocking, he jumped back, releasing a wave of sword force that shot right at Gravis.

Meanwhile, the leader flew right at Gravis with insane speed, way faster than Gravis. He would not commit any more mistakes! He had already underestimated Gravis several times, and that wouldn't happen again. The leader neared Gravis faster than Gravis closed in on his target. On top of that, a new wave of sword force was blocking Gravis' way forward.

SHING!

Gravis sidestepped to the left to evade the sword force, but that slowed him down. The leader immediately closed in on him, and Gravis could feel the power inside the person's rapier. If that hit him, he would die. Yet, instead of evading or blocking, Gravis pushed what remained of his left arm forward, like he intended to punch the leader from a distance.

BANG!

Out of everyone's expectations, a condensed Lightning Spear shot out of that stump, right at the incoming weapon. The eyes of the attacker widened in shock. Wasn't Gravis out of lightning? Where did that lightning come from? Before he could react, the condensed Lightning Spear hit the rapier, exploding in the process. The leader was immediately shot into the distance since he hadn't had the opportunity to block the attack properly.

When Gravis had killed the earlier person, the changed Heaven's Balance Cultivation Technique had refilled over half his lightning. His enemies had no idea about Gravis' ability to regain his element by killing others, which caught them by surprise.

Gravis had not used his lightning for acceleration to get them by surprise. They had to believe that he was out of Energy and helpless. Everything was for this moment. The Sapling Stage cultivator was dangerous, and he had managed to save the life of one of his brothers already. As long as he was not occupied, Gravis wouldn't be able to kill the last Seed Stage cultivator.

Yet, where did that condensed Lightning Spear come from? Didn't he need to condense it first before he could use it? Of course, he had to condense it first, but was it necessary to condense it outside his body? If he could condense it outside his body, couldn't he also condense it inside his body? He was immune to lightning, after all. Others would explode from something like this, but due to Gravis' constitution, he had the ability to do that without any drawback.

With the leader occupied, Gravis could finally concentrate on the remaining cultivator.

BANG!

Everything happened in the blink of an eye, and Gravis immediately used his lightning to burst forward with all his power. The eyes of the last Seed Stage cultivator widened, and he flew upwards with his weapon. He lost all his guts and only wanted to survive until the leader managed to reappear again.

BZZZZZZ!

Gravis ran until he stood below the cultivator and immediately summoned the sphere of lightning. He had used about 20% of his Spirit for the sphere, which quickly ate over 20% of his lightning. The ascend of the cultivator was halted as everything metallic on him got pulled towards the ground. Flying was already challenging for their cultivation level, and such powerful magnetism easily overpowered him. If he were on the ground, he would be able to easily resist the pull, but not while he flew in the air. Like this, he shot towards the Lightning Sphere.

BOOOOM!

The Lightning Sphere was unstable since it absorbed more lightning than it had Spirit, so it directly exploded, destroying everything in their surroundings. The cultivator was completely incinerated and vanished into thin air, while Gravis absorbed his Energy, refilling his storage.

The leader of the Greens had just returned but stopped before the explosion. Instead of charging into it, he narrowed his eyes.

Gravis turned towards him and readied himself.

Gravis had around 70% of his lightning left, while his Spirit was only at around 40%. He also only had a stump for his left arm. The inherent Energy of his body had been used up with the usage of his Rakshasa Saber, making it impossible for Gravis to heal.

They both looked at each other, readying themselves.

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#### **Chapter 223: Pathetic Whimper**

The two watched each other. The leader was not injured, while Gravis only had one arm left and didn't have his full lightning or Spirit. Yet, he didn't give up. With the death of the other three people, the Will-Aura's of the two combatants evened out until they were basically equal. None of the two was suppressed by the other's Will-Aura.

BOOM!

The earth beneath Gravis exploded as he started running. He didn't use his lightning for acceleration this time since he had to save it for a better moment. He might be able to catch weaker opponents by surprise with his ridiculous acceleration, but he doubted that it would work against someone at the Sapling Stage, especially when that person had already witnessed his acceleration before.

"HAAA!" the leader shouted in rage as he released a mighty blow. A wave of sword force appeared in Gravis' way. It was not just a simple crescent that could be easily dodged, but a true wave, nearly five meters tall. Gravis either had to commit to wildly jumping over it, or he had to block. Yet, when Gravis saw the bottom of the wave, he noticed something peculiar.

BANG!

Gravis shot some of his lightning to the ground in front of him, creating a big, diagonal hole. Gravis quickly ran into it and used more of his lightning to dig forward. He had seen that the wave was not destroying the ground, which meant that the person didn't want to waste his Energy.

This also showed Gravis another thing. Contrary to the attack's imposing image, the sword wave was only meant to lead Gravis into a difficult position. If the enemy had wanted to kill Gravis with this, it would indiscriminately tear the ground apart.

WHOOM!

The wave passed over him, and Gravis jumped out again, running straight for his enemy. Yet, his eyes widened in shock at what he saw.

WHOOSH!

'This fucker is escaping!' Gravis shouted in his mind. This guy was fighting someone two whole realms below himself and even had the face to flee in front of such an opponent. The guy had only shot this sword wave to occupy Gravis. After shooting the sword wave, he immediately jumped onto his second sword and started flying into the distance.

'You want a chase, eh? Then let's give you one!' Gravis shouted into his opponent's mind with his Spirit. Gravis retrieved his Lightning Board and jumped onto it while running. He didn't waste any time and accelerated with his full power.

The leader had a head start, and the distance between them was widening, but at some point, the leader couldn't increase his speed anymore, while Gravis didn't even come close to reaching his maximum speed. According to Gravis' feeling, the enemy was flying right below the speed of sound. He probably didn't have enough push to break through the sound barrier. Gravis grinned when he saw that.

BOOM!

A loud boom appeared around Gravis as his speed crazily climbed. To him, it was nearly effortless to break the sound barrier. It only cost a lot of his lightning, but there was nothing he could do about it. Of course, without his Lightning Board, such speed would only be a dream. As soon as Gravis' speed climbed, the distance between the two rapidly shrunk.

The leader of the greens noticed, and his eyes showed anxiety. He was a person that had already given up on the path to power, so his life was more important than real life and death tempering. He didn't want to fight someone that could realistically kill him, even if he had a good shot at victory. He knew that he could break through the sound barrier to also reach supersonic speeds, but that would cost too much Energy. He only hoped that the people he contacted would arrive on time!

They grew closer and closer, and after half a minute, only around 100 meters was between them. Gravis smirked as he knew that his opponent would have issues soon. There was something that his opponent had neglected.

The person shot forward, but suddenly, he started feeling a pull from behind him. At first, he didn't notice it, but it got stronger and stronger. After some seconds, he finally noticed what was happening.

How did Gravis accelerate his Lightning Board? He was summoning lightning right in front of him to move forward, and lightning had an intense magnetism. The closer he got, the harder his lightning pulled on the magnetic items of his opponent, especially his weapons. Like this, his opponent slowed down even more while Gravis grew even faster.

When Gravis saw that his opponent noticed the pull, Gravis no longer hesitated. As soon as his enemy had decided to retreat, his life had been forfeit. If he had fought, he might have had a chance to kill Gravis. Sadly, he had tried to flee, which sealed his fate. No one close to Gravis' power could reach his speeds.

Even though it didn't seem like it, his opponent also had incredible speeds. Reaching the sound barrier without any vehicle was very impressive. Gravis guessed that probably only people from the Wind Sect could reach such speeds. The other world really had some powerful techniques.

Gravis' opponent had just noticed the pull when Gravis decided to finish the fight. The lightning that pulled his Lightning Board forward expanded as a sphere with all of Gravis' remaining Spirit and will appeared in its place. He had just checked his lightning storage and noticed that it was slightly lower than his Spirit storage since such acceleration also cost a lot of lightning.

The sphere immediately absorbed all of Gravis' lightning, becoming incredibly powerful. With the increase of power, the magnetism also increased significantly. Gravis had specifically waited for this moment. If he had waited until he got even closer, his opponent might have retrieved his weapons into his Spirit Space to resist the pull. Gravis had to time this just right.

The opponent slowed down with incredible speed and even stopped. After that, he started flying towards the sphere, of course, not by intent. Just as he had started picking up speed, he shoved everything he owned into his Spirit Space, including his clothing. Everything metallic vanished, and the person finally regained control again. Sadly, it was too late.

Gravis immediately jumped upward and lifted his saber. He closely sailed past the bottom of the sphere, but his saber slashed right through it. The Lightning Sphere immediately vanished, and Gravis, still being in the air, slashed downward with all his power.

WHOOOOM!

An incredibly long and incomprehensibly fast Lightning Crescent appeared before him, shooting right for his target. The person had just regained control of his body, and he was still battling with the inertia of the forced stop. There was no way for him to move quickly enough to evade, and even if he could, the crescent would hit the ground right behind him since it was shooting diagonally downward. As a last-ditch effort, he retrieved all his weapons for a last block.

BOOOOOOM!

A powerful explosion engulfed everything in a 100-meter-diameter. The earth, air, and stones got reduced to dust as a shockwave exploded into the horizons. The explosion only appeared for a split-second, but the sound and vibration lingered for an extended period. After several seconds, everything went silent again.

Step. Step. Step.

Gravis walked forward, carrying an empty handle. Just like his previous saber, this one also didn't survive the explosion. His steps echoed throughout the gigantic, bowl-shaped crater. The only thing that Gravis found were some fragments of some weapons. His opponent had vanished from the face of the earth. There was no way that he had survived this attack.

Gravis found nothing and released a bitter sigh. "Thanks for the tempering, asshole," he said sarcastically. Gravis had really been excited for the fight, especially since he had been pushed very hard in the fight against the three other people. Yet, the thing that was supposed to be the climax could now only be considered a pathetic whimper.

Gravis kicked some dirt in frustration and then turned around. He looked for his Lightning Board, but for some reason, he couldn't find it. He searched for several seconds with his Spirit, but it was like it had vanished. After some seconds, he facepalmed.

"I fucking destroyed my Lightning Board," he groaned.

Plomp!

Another Lightning Board appeared before Gravis, and he jumped onto it.

"That's exactly why I ordered five!"

Due to him killing someone, his lightning was nearly full again. Without further ado, he sped back to the Greys.

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### **Chapter 224: Naivety**

Yet, just when Gravis started accelerating, he immediately stopped since he had noticed something.

"Who's there!?" he shouted into the surroundings, but nothing appeared.

Just now, he had felt like someone was watching him. It felt similar to a Spirit, but it was not completely the same. It just felt like someone was watching him. Gravis never had this feeling before, and he trusted his instincts. He was 90% sure that someone was watching him.

Yet, just when he had shouted, the feeling completely vanished. Now, Gravis was 100% sure that someone had watched him. The feeling wouldn't have vanished just like that otherwise. Gravis narrowed his eyes. 'This is troubling. Has this person seen the whole fight? The feeling was very subtle, and I'm sure that I wouldn't have noticed it in a fight. What was going on?'

Gravis increased his speed. 'Someone who can keep their Spirit nearly completely invisible in front of me. I'm 90% sure that the watching person is a Tree Stage cultivator. I can't fight someone like that!' Gravis felt a little nervous while accelerating more and more. Yet, surprisingly, even after over ten minutes, no one arrived. The feeling also didn't appear again.

'What is the goal of that person?' Gravis thought. Yet, the more he thought, the more confused he got. If that were an enemy, they would have attacked him. He was injured, and his Spirit was nearly empty. There was no better opportunity than this. Yet, if that person was a friend, why would they vanish suddenly? On top of that, Gravis didn't have friends with such power. Was it a neutral party?

Gravis suddenly got an idea. 'Was it a powerful Heavenborn? Maybe they have noticed the fight and appeared, but noticing the robes of my enemy and me, they just continued watching? Elder Byron had said that Heavenborn weren't allowed to interfere in this struggle, after all.'

The more Gravis thought about this, the more reasonable it seemed. 'This is the only explanation that I can come up with that makes sense. Everything else is too farfetched.'

After coming to that conclusion, Gravis' nervousness vanished. There were not many people in the Tree Stage in the Core-Continent. Tree-Stage cultivators were at the level of Sect Masters. How many of those would just casually walk around? The highest probability was that it had been a powerful Heavenborn.

After traveling for another twenty minutes, Gravis moved his Spirit to his ring and willed it to contact Elder Byron. "I'm done with the mission. The whole group is dead. Where are you right now?"

"Oh?" the surprised voice of Elder Byron appeared from the ring. "You're done? That's great! I knew that getting you to join us was the right decision! We are still at the same spot as previously. Quickly come back so we can get you some proper body tempering pills!"

Gravis smiled and cut the connection. While the fight with the group leader didn't particularly increase his will, the previous fight against the other three was excellent tempering. He had come close to dying a couple of times and even used nearly all his weapons. The only thing he hadn't used was his lightning parrying, which would influence the swing of a weapon. Their weapons had been too swift and light for that.

And now, he would get more tempering for his body! This was great! The increase of his maximum amount of lightning by absorbing the Energy Stones had also expedited his training speed in regards to his Realm. A higher lightning threshold meant faster lightning regeneration and more lightning to push into his Spirit. Originally, he would have needed a full year for a breakthrough, but now, that time had been cut to ten months total.

'I'm getting stronger. In ten months, I can even fight Tree Stage cultivators. Though...' Gravis mind trailed off as his smile was replaced with a grimace. 'I have underestimated the cultivators of the Core-Continent. Originally, I thought I could maybe take two or three Sapling Stage cultivators at the same time, but apparently, I had been too naïve.'

Gravis thought about the fight and had noticed that the fight had had some close calls. This had been a fight against three Seed Stage cultivators and one Sapling Stage cultivator, though it could actually only be counted as two Seed Stage and one Sapling Stage cultivator. Gravis had immediately destroyed the first one before he could even put up a fight.

Gravis looked at his left arm-stump and felt his nearly completely empty Spirit. 'I even used the Energy inherent in my body, which I normally save for healing. I already had to fight so intensely against such a group. Two Sapling Stage cultivators would have been even harder. The chances of me winning against two of those are actually below 50%.'

Gravis thought more about this situation and noticed that he had been truly naïve. 'The person even managed to condense his Will-Aura. I guess a condensed version of a Will-Aura is a requirement to reach the Sapling Stage. Someone who has such a powerful Will-Aura went through a lot of intense struggles. No one at that realm is inexperienced.'

Gravis gritted his teeth. 'I've been so stupid! I have judged their power just based on their Realm and ignored the fact that every single one of them also has incredible fighting experience. I took the fighting experience standard of the Middle-Continent and applied it to the Core-Continent. If I went into Fear City with this mindset, I might actually have died.'

Gravis thought more about the battle and the Core-Continent on his way to the Greys' camp. After some more minutes, he arrived. Gravis saw the others already present, though Creed was still missing. Creed was not nearly as fast as Gravis, so he was probably still on his way back.

When the others saw Gravis, they all smiled with excitement.

"Nice going, Gravis!" Drake walked over and lightly punched Gravis' chest in a sign of camaraderie. Though his eyes still seemed icy. The iciness of his eyes and his warm gesture and comments clashed violently, making for a weird scene.

"You're incredible, Gravis," both twins said and walked forward, heartfelt smiles blossoming on their faces.

Gravis rubbed the back of his neck in embarrassment. He wasn't used to having friends, so this still felt weird to him. The last friend that he could spend time with had been Ballor. Sadly, he had died very quickly in the first practical test. It had been two years since then. Aion was also Gravis' friend, but they had never had the time to bond peacefully.

"Alright, alright. Calm down, everyone," Elder Byron berated them, but his warm and excited smile betrayed his true feelings. "So, Gravis. What did you think about the fight?" he asked.

Gravis' smile vanished, and he sighed. "I've been too arrogant," Gravis said, surprising the others. Gravis had just killed four people above his Realm, and one of them was even two Realms higher. Such battle-strength was unprecedented! If he didn't have the right to be arrogant, then who did?

Elder Byron smiled like he had expected the answer. "That is what I wanted to show you with this fight. If I have sent you only against one Sapling Stage cultivator, you might not have realized the true strength of cultivators in the Core-Continent. People in the Core-Continent are proficient in teamwork, and if you fight more than one of them, you need to be very careful."

Gravis nodded solemnly. On this day, he realized the power of the cultivators in the Core-Continent.

"Anyway," Elder Byron smirked and retrieved a sack full of pills. "I have your body tempering pills." Then, he threw them towards Gravis. "I took all your Contribution Points for these pills. This is what you wanted, right?"

Gravis nodded and retrieved the sack. He looked inside and noticed many new pills that he hadn't seen before. They felt way more powerful than the ones that he had robbed from the Heaven Sect. He guessed that this small sack of pills was about as good as the whole mountain of pills that he had stolen from the Heaven Sect. Gravis smiled in excitement as he saw them.

Elder Byron saw Gravis' heartfelt smile and laughed. "I'm happy that you like them." Then, he gestured with his head towards a direction. "Let's pack up. Creed will arrive on the way. We should move since staying at the same place could make us a target. Gravis, you can cultivate on the way."

The Greys all nodded and put their cloaks over their heads. Then, they retrieved their belongings into their Spirit Space and left the campsite.

Meanwhile, Gravis was eating pills like a madman.

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#### **Chapter 225: Ploy**

It had been a month since Gravis joined the Greys. They had been traveling all around the Core-Continent, and they had also found two more groups of the Greens. Though, these groups had been weaker than the Group Gravis had fought. They had only consisted of Seed Stage Spirit Forming cultivators. Due to that, Gravis had not joined those fights. After all, the others also had to temper themselves.

Gravis was only interested in fights that could temper his will. Multiple fights against weaker opponents could even damage his will, so he didn't participate. Of course, Elder Byron also knew about this, so he hadn't even asked Gravis to fight those groups. So, the fight had fallen to the other members of the group.

The first fight had been against two people at the Seed Stage. Lory and Lena had been sent, and they had returned with life-threatening injuries. Luckily, they had managed to kill their opponents. Gravis had, of course, already fully healed his body with his Life Lightning. When they appeared, he quickly

healed the one who was more injured. Yet, surprisingly, the healed twin hadn't healed her sister after recovering. It seemed like they took their oath to never heal anyone again very seriously.

The other one also recovered with the help of some pills. Gravis breathed a sigh of relief when they both recovered. He had spent the last month with the Greys, and he grew to like them. This was the first instance of truly belonging to a group. Gravis had kept himself away from the Proxy-Lightning Guild, afraid that his Karmic Luck would infect them. Luckily, he didn't need to worry about that now. Lowering the Karmic Luck of the Greys would make the Heaven from the other world protest.

The second fight had been a one-on-one. Drake had fought a cultivator at the Seed Stage. Of course, Drake had also been at the Seed Stage. Yet, Drake never returned. He had died in the fight. For a second, Gravis thought about the possibility that his Karmic Luck had played a role in that outcome, but that was only a baseless suspicion. He regularly checked the Karmic Luck of the others, and there had been no change in them. The only explanation was that Drake had been weaker than his opponent.

Gravis sighed in sadness, but he didn't lose control over his emotions. Yes, it hurt when a friend died, but Gravis was used to this. On the path to power, many people would die. Ballor had died, Gorn had died, Wendy had died, and Saron had probably also died. This was nothing new to Gravis, though he still felt a little hurt to lose another comrade.

The Greys held a ceremony for their fallen comrade. Sadly, they had no body to bury, so this ceremony didn't bring closure to everyone. Luckily, all of them had Will-Auras, and something like that wouldn't impact their path forward. Actually, the opposite was true.

Emotional pain would shake people's will, and if they managed to get over it, their will would become even stronger. This was also a form of tempering. When Gravis' mind was in a dark place, he even thought of the idea of getting friends just to temper his will by them getting killed. Of course, this had only been a momentary thought. Gravis would never do anything like that. If he did that, he wouldn't be able to consider himself a human anymore.

On one particular day, Gravis was concentrating on his Will-Aura. His last fight had increased his will again, and he managed to condense it a little more. Though 95% of his Will-Aura still remained uncondensed. Obviously, tempering a Unity Will was way more challenging than tempering a normal Will-Aura.

On this day, one of the twins came to him. Gravis looked at her and realized that it was Lory. By now, he had managed to tell the two apart. They had spent over a month together, after all. "Hey, Lory," Gravis said with a smile.

Lory smiled back. "Hey, Gravis," she said with a playful tone. "I have something to show you. It's a surprise!"

Gravis lifted an eyebrow. "What?"

Lory giggled a little. "If I told you, it wouldn't be a surprise, silly!"

Gravis laughed a little in embarrassment and rubbed the back of his neck. "Yeah, that was stupid of me." Then, he stood up. "So, what do you want to show me?"

Lory winked at him. "Just follow me, okay?" Then, she turned around and walked away.

Gravis followed her, but his eyes involuntarily went to her swaying hips. He immediately recovered and concentrated on the back of her head. 'Though it can't be comfortable to walk like that.'

Suddenly, Gravis got a thought. 'Is she coming onto me?' Gravis looked back at her behind, noticing the swaying from left to right. 'I don't think she walks like this normally. I'm about 70% sure that she is coming onto me.'

Gravis smiled bitterly. 'I hope I'm mistaken.'

They continued walking for a while and entered a forest. They quickly reached a lake inside the forest, and Lory stopped walking. "Isn't the lake beautiful?" she asked with a smirk.

Gravis looked at the lake and agreed. "Yeah, it looks pretty nice," he said and then turned to Lory. "Did you want to show me this lake?" he asked.

Lory giggled a little. "Just wait a little longer."

Gravis scratched the back of his head in confusion.

SPLASH!

A splashing sound came from the lake, which confused Gravis. His Spirit was always active, so he would have noticed any beast or fish jumping out of the lake. His Spirit had not picked up on anything, which confused him. Yet, when he looked at the direction of the splash, his eyes widened, and he took a deep breath through his teeth. What did he see?

The other twin, Lena, just came out of the lake. Usually, that wouldn't be surprising. The surprising fact was that she was completely naked. Gravis had never seen a naked woman before, so he was stunned for a short amount of time. Lena's and Gravis' eyes met, and Gravis immediately turned around. "Sorry! I didn't know that you were bathing!"

No wonder he hadn't noticed the splash. The Greys always wore their rings, which made them invisible to the Spirit of others. Lena was still wearing her ring. Meanwhile, Lory saw Gravis' reaction and giggled. "So, do you like your surprise?" she asked.

Gravis was not sure how to react. Was this some prank or some joke? Gravis didn't know how to answer, so there was some silence for a while. Surprisingly, Lena hadn't said anything yet.

"So? Did you enjoy our surprise?" This time, it was Lena that said that, and Gravis immediately realized that they had both played a part in that. Normally, Lena should have been embarrassed or angry when Gravis arrived, but instead, she sounded playful and even a little... husky.

Gravis finally realized that they were really coming onto him. This had all been a ploy to attract him. Instead of answering, Gravis looked at the sky with an uncomfortable expression.

'This will be troublesome,' Gravis thought bitterly.

[Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

**Chapter 226: The Way Forward**

Gravis thought about the best method to come clean with them. Was he attracted to them? He was a teenager, so of course, there was some attraction to the opposite sex, but that was not the issue. He knew that he wouldn't remain in this lower world for long, and creating any kind of romantic relationship would be troublesome. He was not interested in some short-term ecstasy if he knew that it wouldn't last.

Gravis sighed and wanted to say something, but his back shivered as a soft hand touched him and traveled down. "Why are you not saying anything?" he heard Lena say. "Am I not beautiful?" she asked with a sad voice that would elicit pity in any man's heart.

And just like that, all the plans and words, that Gravis had, went out the window. This whole thing had thrown all his plans to the wind. He turned around and tried to remove the hand, but then froze when he saw the still naked Lena. Like this, he froze again.

The two women giggled again. "So, you actually are interested," Lena said while walking closer. Gravis took a deep breath and took a step back.

Gravis closed his eyes to regain his bearings. "Yes, you are beautiful," he said, eliciting a smile from the two women, "but I'm not interested."

The two women furrowed their brows. This was not what they had expected.

Before they could answer, Gravis continued. "I am only interested in power for now." Gravis took another deep breath. "Yes, I am attracted to you, but, and this might sound rude, it's only physically," Gravis said directly without hiding anything. Being direct and honest was the best option in his mind.

"Listen," Gravis said, now opening his eyes and looking into Lena's eyes. His eyes were focused, not swaying downward. He had managed to regain his bearings. "I'm not interested in any romantic relationship at the moment. My goal is the peak, and a romantic relationship would keep me bound to this world. You guys know that I am from a higher world. Anything that keeps me from reaching my goal is not something that I want. Sadly, that includes romantic relationships. So, I'm really sorry, but I can't accept this."

Lena and Lory lifted an eyebrow and looked at each other. Then they turned to Gravis at the same time and spoke simultaneously. "So?"

Now, Gravis' plans were thrown into disarray again. He quickly shook his head. "What do you mean with, so?" he asked.

Lena crossed her arms, pushing her sizable chest upwards. "This was never intended to be romantic," she said with a smile.

Now, Gravis was confused again. "Then why all this?" he said, widely gesturing to his surroundings.

This time, it was Lory that spoke up. "We also don't want a romantic relationship," she said, walking closer. "Just consider this... a trade. You make us feel good, and in exchange," Lory walked closer again and moved a finger down Gravis' chest, "we make you feel good."

Now, Gravis understood. "So, this is all just about sex?" he asked with a lifted eyebrow.

Lena ruffled her hair in frustration. "You really make it hard to keep the mood going," she groaned. "Yes, this is all just about sex! We are all adults here. Not every flick needs romance," she said in frustration.

Gravis looked unamused at her. "I'm 17, you know?" he said directly.

The eyes of the twins widened in shock. "How are you 17?" Lena asked in shock. Gravis was pretty strong and had a powerful body. His white hair and strange eyes also added some mystery to him. They had expected him to be in his 20's, at least. It was hard to tell the age of cultivators since their bodies aged way slower. Someone that looked like 20 could be in their 50's.

Gravis looked with confusion at them. "What's so strange about that? How old are you?" he asked.

The brows of Lena and Lory furrowed. "Don't you know it's rude to ask women their age?" Lory said.

Gravis sighed in exasperation. "Yeah, sorry. I forgot," he said.

Yet, surprisingly, the two giggled. "We're just messing with you," said Lena with a cute smile. "We're both 35. Though I have to say, you are way younger than we thought. You have reached such strength while only being 17. We didn't even consider that."

Gravis didn't try to understand the situation. The mood of the two women jumped around. First, they were playful, then frustrated, then playful again, then angry, and now playful again.

"Anyway," Gravis said after a while. "I'm also not interested in a momentary flick," Gravis said.

Both raised an eyebrow at the same time. Sure enough, they were twins, and even their facial expressions were synchronized. "Why not?" Lory asked.

Gravis looked into her eyes. "Because if I give in to my urges, I build a connection with my current situation," he said, confusing the two. "If I indulge too much, I run the risk of becoming happy with my current situation. This could have an impact on my drive forward. While I still have not achieved my goal, I can't risk becoming complacent."

Before the two could answer, Gravis continued. "I have not indulged in something like this, so I have no idea how I will act in such a situation. Yes, one quick flick won't damage my will, but as soon as I do it once, the threshold of acceptance gets lowered. One time could create a second time, and a second time could easily create a third time. Indulging in my current situation could be a slippery slope."

Gravis sighed again. "Maybe I am too careful about this, but I don't want to risk losing the focus on my goal. Yes, I am attracted to you, but my goal is more important to me." Gravis slightly nodded his head in apology. "I hope you understand."

The two twins looked at each other.

Whoosh!

A robe appeared around Lena. Yet, instead of answering, they still looked at each other unsurely. Gravis watched them in silence, not sure why they were looking at each other like that. There probably was something that he didn't know about.

"Were we wrong?" Lena asked Lory.

Lory was also unsure and looked at the ground. "I don't know."

After a while, Lory turned to Gravis. "Gravis, I have a question," she said, sounding normal again. There was no more huskiness, playfulness, or frustration in her voice anymore.

Gravis nodded. "Ask," he said.

"Why are you so hellbent on achieving your goal, even if it means giving up happiness?" she asked.

Gravis looked at her. "Because I know that if I become complacent in my current situation, I might be happy, but I will have regrets. I want to achieve true freedom, and I can't do that without sufficient power. If I find a lover or even create a family, I would be happy, but in the back of my mind, I would regret giving up on my goal. As soon as I stop on my path forward, I run the risk of falling behind. One of my brothers fell victim to this."

Lory and Lena looked at each other again, and both sighed. "Is that the reason why it is so difficult for us to progress? Are we too preoccupied with momentary happiness?" Lory asked Lena.

Gravis lifted an eyebrow. "Why? You are both still young and are even a stage higher than me."

Lena sighed. "Yes, we are still kind of young, but we have actually reached the Seed Stage over seven years ago, and we didn't make much progress in that time. We always remained stuck in that realm. We know that it's because of our Will-Auras."

Gravis lifted an eyebrow in confusion. "So? Just go temper your will," he said.

Lory and Lena groaned in frustration. "We know that!" Lory said, slight anger in her voice. "We always plan on tempering our wills, but every time we plan on leaving for a fight, we kind of don't go through with it. We have lots of time, so why do it right now? Tomorrow is another day." Lory looked at the sky. "That's how it's been for seven years."

Gravis now also sighed. This was precisely the situation that he wanted to avoid. If he procrastinated once, he would run the danger of procrastinating again. As soon as he did it once, the second time would become even easier.

Though one shouldn't forget that both twins had a Will-Aura. Their wills were incredibly powerful, but it was still difficult to jump into a situation that had a real possibility of death. As Gravis looked at them, he got the thought that they were probably not afraid of dying but afraid of the other person dying.

Maybe it was their desire to protect each other, which made it hard for them to seek danger. Gravis couldn't imagine how close their bond was. The only sibling he ever got to know was Orpheus, and they hadn't grown up together. Losing someone that always stayed at one's side was a harrowing thought.

"Gravis, I'm sorry, but could you leave us?" asked Lory carefully. "Lena and I need to talk. I'm sorry for bringing you into this situation."

Gravis nodded solemnly. "No problem. Take care," he said and then left for the campsite.

Lena and Lory looked at each other with uncertainty and a little bit of guilt. They stayed silent for a while.

"What have we been doing for the last seven years?" Lena asked Lory.

Lory was unsure and looked at the ground.

They had a lot to talk and think about.

### Lightning Is the Only Way

#### **Chapter 227: Change in Goals**

Two days after Gravis talked with the twins, something surprising happened. The twins had left the Greys. Elder Byron had informed Gravis that they had changed their mind and didn't want to be part of the Greys anymore. Gravis was a little confused but also felt like he understood the reason.

After they had talked, they had probably decided on their future path. Maybe they would return to the Water Sect? Maybe they decided to stop increasing their power? Gravis was not sure, though he thought the possibility that they were no longer interested in cultivation was more likely. There was basically no better group to temper their wills than the Greys. Leaving the Greys probably meant that they finalized their decision to no longer temper themselves.

Gravis was a little sad to see them go, but it was their decision. It was supremely rare that people could walk their paths to power together. Talent, luck, hard work, risk, death, and many other things could stop a cultivator from following their path. Gravis was never destined to stay in this lower world, and how many people actually ascended from this lower world? Probably not that many.

With this, only three people remained in the group of the Greys, from an initial amount of six. Drake had died, while the twins had left. Right now, it was only Elder Byron, Creed, and Gravis. On top of that, Creed was very rarely present. That was because he was busy scouting. He had never cultivated any element, so it was very easy for him to move around without suspicion. That made him the perfect scout.

Right now, Gravis and Elder Byron sat together, eating and drinking. The campsite felt lonely with only those two present. "I think I'm partially at fault that Lory and Lena left," Gravis said with a sigh.

Elder Byron smiled warmly and drank from a mug. "Don't worry about it," he said with dismissal. "You're new, so you're not used to this constant coming and going. It's actually normal that so many people leave. Speaking of, I think I should go search for some new blood. We can't just be three people, can we?" Elder Byron laughed.

Gravis smiled bitterly. He didn't regret talking to the siblings, but he still felt a little guilty about making Elder Byron lose two members. Though, he preferred this situation over the twins dying. Someone who didn't have an iron will to gamble with their life wasn't fit for the cultivation world. Such a doubt could make someone hesitate or flee from a winnable fight.

"Would you mind telling me about your homeworld?" Gravis asked Elder Byron.

Elder Byron continued smiling. "There is not that much to talk about," he said. "Cultivators in my homeworld don't use elements. We are basically all cultivating different battle-techniques, similar to the Rakshasa Saber I gave you. The combination of will and Spirit creates a force that can keep up with the destructive properties of the elements. Of course, you need a powerful will first."

Elder Byron then looked up at the sky, scratching his chin. "Though, I do envy the healing properties of water and light. In a large scale conflict, just a couple of those healers would multiply the fighting power of one side." Elder Byron then scoffed and took another mouthful of his wine. "It's actually sad that this world is fragmented based on elements. Imagine the power of a group of people with mixed elements."

Gravis nodded. "I've also thought about this. Such a group could use someone with the earth element to block powerful attacks or keep one or more enemies occupied. Someone with the water or light element could tend to anyone that got injured, and the remaining elements could attack under the protection of the earth cultivator."

Gravis also drank another mouthful. "I think one earth cultivator, one water cultivator, and one fire cultivator could take on a Spirit Beast of equal ranking," Gravis said.

One shouldn't forget that beasts were incredibly powerful. Under normal circumstances, it would be impossible for a group of three people at the initial stage of Spirit Forming to kill a low-rank Spirit Beast. That beast would just kill one person after the other. Yet, if the group could make the enemy focus on the person with the most powerful defense, they could get multiple attacks in.

Elder Byron nodded in agreement. "Yeah, and the more people you have with different elements, the more powerful the whole group becomes. I think a group of five people with different elements and good teamwork would even have a chance against a Spirit Beast one level higher than themselves."

Gravis rubbed his chin in thought. "That's difficult to say," he said slowly. "The frontal attacker would need to be able to resist such attacks. That is not easy. On top of that, the group needs to combine their powers. I'm not sure if simply unloading all their Energy on the beast would topple it. They would probably also need to exchange injury for injury, which is difficult since one wrong step would doom them."

Elder Byron nodded multiple times. "Yes, but it is possible, right?"

Gravis lifted an eyebrow in an unsure expression. "I think? Theoretically, it should be possible, but it's hard to find such a group."

Elder Byron smirked. "You know, if I ever reach my goal, I'll probably make such an organization in this world. I hate to see all this wasted combat potential."

Gravis looked with skepticism at Elder Byron. "Isn't your goal to destroy the Elemental Sects?"

Elder Byron harrumphed. "When did I ever say that?"

Gravis looked unamused at him. "You tried to convince me that 'the Elemental Sects' demise' would only be just and fair."

Elder Byron rolled his eyes. "Yeah, okay. I did say that. I had to act dramatic, alright?" Elder Byron said with exasperation. "I need to keep my persona up when I am in disguise. Saying that we only want to prove ourselves wouldn't have fit, right?"

Gravis thought back to Elder Byron's aura when he first talked to Gravis and had to agree. Elder Byron had seemed very sinister at that point and saying that they only wanted to prove themselves would have seemed lackluster.

"So, you're not hellbent on destroying all Elemental Sects?" Gravis asked.

Elder Byron nodded. "Yeah. Killing them is unnecessary. Even though I believe the path of my homeworld is more powerful, it doesn't mean that we can't allow for other ways."

Gravis looked at him critically. Elder Byron didn't seem genuine. He was not looking into Gravis' eyes, and he had spoken hastier than before. Gravis was sure he was lying.

Elder Byron looked with nervousness at Gravis, and sweat ran down his forehead. After some seconds, he groaned in exasperation. "Okay, okay! I lied!" he said.

Gravis actually laughed a little when he saw that. Elder Byron was really a lousy liar. Maybe that was the reason why he was always so honest?

Elder Byron sighed. "The truth is that I initially had planned to destroy the Elemental Sects, but my mind changed."

Gravis was more interested now. "Oh, why?" he asked.

Elder Byron looked uncomfortably at Gravis. "Because of you."

Now, Gravis' expression was back to skepticism. "Explain," he said.

Elder Byron rubbed the back of his neck. "I followed you when you went out to test the Rakshasa Saber."

Gravis wasn't really mad about that. It would have actually been weird if he hadn't followed Gravis back then. Giving someone he just met a technique and then not watching them? Such a mindset would practically invite scamming. Yet, judging by Elder Byron's uncomfortable expression, he was probably looking at it as a breach of trust. Gravis could only laugh slightly.

"It's alright," Gravis said, making Elder Byron release a sigh of relief. "You are probably surprised about the combination of the Rakshasa Saber and my lightning, right?"

Elder Byron nodded. "Exactly. Initially, I had believed that combining the power of our different cultivation techniques would be impossible, but you have shown me otherwise. If I can bring techniques from my homeworld to this world and prove their superiority, I can establish an organization that allows talented people from both sides to meet and work together. I'm sure that it would only take a matter of time until more such techniques would be created."

Gravis could only agree. Even though the only reason why he could infuse the battle-technique with his lightning was due to his unique Spirit, it didn't mean that there weren't any other methods. There would surely appear many more ways to combine the two different cultivation paths with enough time and people.

"I'll still stay only until the Greens are dealt with. This won't change my decision," Gravis said and then emptied his mug.

Elder Byron smiled again. "That's no problem. I don't force-" Elder Byron stopped talking, and his eyes traveled to his ring.

Gravis also narrowed his eyes.

After some seconds, Elder Byron spoke to his ring. "I'll ask Gravis. Stay at standby and keep watch. Try not to be noticed."

Gravis' eyes glimmered.

Finally, he had some work to do!

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

#### **Chapter 228: Manuel**

"I guess I have some new opponents?" Gravis asked with motivation. Others might dread the appearance of a dangerous enemy, but Gravis welcomed it. His goal was the peak, and he couldn't allow himself to lose his advantage. As soon as he would stop tempering his will, his will would become weaker in comparison to cultivators in the same realm. It wouldn't directly become weaker, but his will would grow slower than his opponents' will, and at some point, they would be equal.

Yet, instead of smiling or growing excited, Elder Byron looked unsure. Gravis guessed that the opponents this time were more powerful than the last ones. "Who are the opponents?" Gravis asked.

Elder Byron still looked at his ring in contemplation. "One person at the Sapling Stage and one at the Seed Stage," he said.

Gravis lifted an eyebrow, unsure why Elder Byron was acting like this if the opponent was even weaker than the last time. One shouldn't forget that Gravis' will had become more powerful after the last time, and his body had also grown quite significantly. It wasn't on the level of a body similar to the Seed Stage, but it was still more powerful than before.

"Is there something unusual about those two?" Gravis asked.

Elder Byron nodded. "The Sapling Stage cultivator is only average, but the issue is the Seed Stage cultivator."

Gravis furrowed his brows. "In what sense?" he asked.

"This isn't just a normal cultivator at the Seed Stage. That person is the heir to the leader of the Greens, Manuel." Elder Byron looked up and into Gravis' eyes. "He is one of the few people that can fight above their level. Back in my homeworld, Manuel had already managed to defeat someone at the Sapling Stage. This was a couple of years ago, and he is probably also pretty close to reaching the Sapling Stage himself by now. He might be even stronger than the person beside him."

Gravis was quite surprised about that. He hadn't met such a genius before in this lower world. Fighting one level above oneself in the Spirit Forming Realm was like fighting two levels above oneself in the Energy Gathering Realm. 'So, this is one of those heavenly geniuses of the Core-Continent, huh? That's pretty impressive.'

"I know that you don't fear Manuel in a one-on-one fight, but it's different if there is another person at the Sapling Stage there. Let me tell you, the only thing that Manuel needs to reach the Tree Stage is time. His Will-Aura has already reached the level necessary to reach the Tree Stage. This is a person that has a realistic chance of ascending to a higher world in the future. We call those people Ascender's Talents," Elder Byron explained seriously.

Gravis narrowed his eyes again. 'Then, that means that this group is even more powerful than the last one. Maybe even more than just a little bit. I can't underestimate the battle experience of such a genius.'

Elder Byron looked at Gravis, who remained silent while thinking. After some seconds, Elder Byron spoke up again. "You don't need to go. This might be above your limit."

Gravis perked up like he had been awoken from a dream. "Oh, no. I'm just thinking about my strategy for the fight."

Elder Byron was a little surprised by Gravis' attitude. Apparently, Gravis hadn't even thought about declining and was already making plans for the fight. Elder Byron sighed. 'That's an impressive mindset,' he thought and then looked up into the sky. 'Do all people from a higher world think like this?'

Gravis remained silent for over a minute until he stood up. "Can I exchange for some things?" Gravis asked.

Gravis looked at his new saber as he rode on his Lightning Board. His old saber had been destroyed in his last fight, and this would be its first fight, although, probably also its last one. This saber was just as good, or bad, as the previous two. If he had to use his Lightning Crescent, it wouldn't survive the day. Sadly, Elder Byron couldn't get a better saber this easily. Such high-level gear was nearly exclusive to only the Elemental Sects.

Of course, Gravis had gotten this saber already over a month ago. He wouldn't walk around without a weapon. Instead, he had exchanged some of his gold for some other items, which would help him in his upcoming fight.

Gravis traveled for a total of two hours until he stopped. In comparison to last time, he wasn't chasing the group but waiting for them. Surprisingly enough, this new spot wasn't far away from the previous fighting spot. But in comparison to last time, his opponents didn't travel to but actually came from Storm City.

Gravis didn't meet Creed along the way since there was no reason for Creed to show Gravis the way. Creed had already retreated since this was not a fight that he could get involved in. If Creed involved himself in this fight, he would only be a hindrance to Gravis.

Gravis was standing in the middle of a vast road in the middle of the night. Some hills with some nearly-dead trees were in the surroundings, but no humans could be seen. The animals were also very sparsely populated since there was a lack of living vegetation. This was one of the reasons why Gravis waited at this spot. If he could choose his fighting spot, he wouldn't choose an area full of life.

Gravis wouldn't mind some collateral damage, but if he could avoid it without impacting his performance, he would. His grey cloak covered his whole body, including his head and face, while he carried his new, black saber in his right hand. The full moon was behind him, making Gravis cast a long shadow even though it was in the middle of the night. Like this, Gravis waited for his opponents.

It didn't take long for his opponents to enter Gravis' Spirit. Of course, they weren't able to sense him due to his ring. If Gravis hadn't activated his ring, his opponents might avoid him, and that was not what he wanted. He wanted a fight!

Gravis observed the two people. They both wore green cloaks, which didn't cover their faces. They were both flying around three meters above the ground, riding on some broadswords. Gravis was sure that those broadswords weren't their main-weapons since the last group had all fought with speed and finesse. They were all from the same organization, so they should have similar fighting styles.

One of the two was a greying, middle-aged man with a missing eye. His black hair was very short, emanating the aura of a veteran. If one didn't know any better, one would confuse this person with a drill sergeant.

The other person was a young man, seemingly being in his late teens or early twenties. His hair was dark green and very long, even passing his waist. His eyes and face radiated a feeling of heroism, and his appearance was the textbook definition of the look of a heavenly genius from legends. He had a penetrating gaze, oozing confidence but not arrogance. Yet, if one looked closely, one would feel that the feeling behind those eyes reminded one of someone else. Those eyes felt similar to Gravis' eyes.

'He's powerful,' Gravis thought. 'I'm pretty confident that I would win against him, but it wouldn't be easy. But with the addition of the other person, this will be an incredibly dangerous fight. This fight might actually come close to the fight against Red in terms of relative power.'

The two people came closer, and just when Gravis wanted to activate his Spirit to gain their attention, they both stopped by themselves. Manuel was holding a hand before his companion to stop him from moving forward, looking down at Gravis with a severe look. Gravis was similarly looking up at Manuel, and their eyes met.

Manuel had already noticed the danger of Gravis before he even released his Spirit.

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

#### **Chapter 229: Manuel's Experience**

"Why did we stop?" the older person sent to Manuel with his Spirit. Then, he noticed that Manuel was watching a cloaked person on the street, and his eyes widened. The man hadn't noticed that another person was here since he only kept track of his surroundings with his Spirit. Of course, Gravis was invisible to the Spirits of others. "Is it because of him?"

Manuel continued looking into Gravis' eyes. "Yes, it's because of him. I think he's the person that has assassinated Skear's group."

The eyes of the older man narrowed as he also watched Gravis. "Skear's group wasn't weak. This person might be the tempering you were searching for."

"No," Manuel sent back.

The man furrowed his brows. "What do you mean with no? Is he too weak? Did he have help in the last fight?"

Manuel never took his eyes off Gravis. "The opposite. I can feel his power. My instincts are telling me that if I were to fight him, I would die. This is not tempering. This is suicide."

The older man took a deep breath. He knew that Manuel had supreme fighting experiences and his instincts were extremely good in gauging an opponent's power. Without further ado, the older man

concentrated on one of his rings and sent a message to his master. He didn't doubt for a second that Manuel could be wrong.

"Together, we have a chance," Manuel sent to the older man again. "It won't be easy, but if we win, our wills will become more powerful."

The older man continued looking at Gravis. "You know that I'm not interested in tempering myself anymore. I value my life, but if you want this fight, then I will lay my life down for you. Giving my life for an increase in power for you is reason enough."

Manuel still didn't move. "You know that I don't want you to sacrifice yourself. Yet, I feel this burning sensation inside myself. I want to fight him."

Gravis furrowed his brows. They had been watching each other for several seconds now, and Manuel wasn't doing anything. Gravis decided to take the initiative.

WHOOM!

Gravis released his Spirit so that the two people could feel it. The eyes of the older man opened in surprise while Manuel continued looking at Gravis in concentration. "He's only in the initial stage?" the man sent to Manuel, who slightly nodded in response.

What was happening? Manuel was sensing incredible danger from someone a whole level below him? Was that even physically possible? Manuel was an Ascender's Talent, and those were the strongest geniuses that existed. If the man didn't have unwavering trust in Manuel's instincts, he would never believe that Gravis could be a danger to himself.

"I think I know who that person is," Manuel sent to the man.

"Who?" the man answered.

"Do you remember the stories about an Energy Gathering disciple at the sixth stage killing an elder level figure in the Middle-Continent? I think this could be him. The timeframe fits," Manuel sent.

The man took another deep breath. "Those stories were real? I thought someone was just seeking attention."

SHING!

A saber appeared in Gravis' right hand, and the other two people grew even more vigilant. Gravis was getting bored by now. He had mentally prepared himself for this fight, but it just wasn't happening. 'Well, if they don't start, then I will.'

"I will start now!" Gravis shouted and readied himself in a battle-stance. The two men also took out their weapons. Just as expected, both of them were using thin, long swords, similar to the previous group.

BZZZZ!

Lightning appeared around Gravis' body, and the two people shot towards Gravis, involuntarily, of course. His lightning magnetized everything metallic on their bodies. On top of that, they were very close to each other.

BOOM!

Gravis pushed the mixture of Spirit and will into his saber but didn't use any Energy or lightning. Like this, his strike would become more powerful than usual but wouldn't use up many resources. Gravis immediately slashed towards them, and a grey crescent appeared, shooting straight towards them. The man's eyes widened.

BANG!

Manuel kicked the elder on his side with his full power, making the elder and himself fly into two different directions, evading the slash. The elder felt pain in his left shoulder due to the kick, but nothing was broken. Manuel had saved his life. The elder grew angry at his lapse in judgment. Even though he had trusted Manuel's instincts, he had still taken the situation somewhat lightly. That had nearly cost him his life.

He quickly readied himself with his sword and watched Gravis, who was charging right at him. Gravis had chosen the elder first because the elder had less combat experience than Manuel. With enough pressure, the elder would make a mistake. By now, the elder was on the ground, making it easier for Gravis to attack him.

BANG!

The saber hit the sword as it blocked the attack. Yet, Gravis used the saber's loaded point to release a fully-loaded lightning bolt that shot right towards the elder, bypassing his sword. At least, it would have, if it weren't for Manuel.

BANG! BOOM!

Gravis got violently pushed to the side, making the loaded attack shoot off in a different direction. Gravis didn't know what pushed him like this, but at least this attack didn't injure him, which meant that this attack could only be used for disrupting the opponent's balance. If it could, Manuel wouldn't have used it only for this. Meanwhile, the bolt exploded on a dead tree far behind the elder, incinerating everything in its surroundings.

The elder narrowed his eyes again and gritted his teeth violently. He had been saved again by Manuel. He hated this feeling! Ignoring everything that happened behind him, he loaded his sword and shot a fully loaded attack at Gravis, who still hadn't regained his balance. This was a fully loaded attack from a person two levels higher than Gravis, and he couldn't block this with normal means.

BOOM BOOM CLANK!

A massive cube of gold appeared before Gravis, and the attack sliced right through it. Behind the cube of gold, a Lightning Board appeared angled in such a way that the slice would have to penetrate the foot-wall and the board itself, which it did. Lastly, the slash hit Gravis' blocking saber, and Gravis got shot into the distance. Yet, due to the additional materials weakening the strike, his saber wasn't damaged, and Gravis wasn't hurt.

After flying for around ten meters, Gravis regained his balance by using his magnetism with his items. He stopped flying barely above the floor and quickly returned to his upright position. The elder was surprised that Gravis managed to block his fully powered attack.

Meanwhile, Gravis quickly checked up on Manuel to see what he had used to make him lose his balance. What he saw was Manuel holding some metallic object on a stick. It looked like a metallic funnel, with the wider part pointing towards Manuel and the smaller part pointing towards Gravis.

Gravis quickly realized what this was. This device would funnel the sword force into the bigger opening, increasing its pressure and shooting it out faster and more powerful than before. Of course, this attack wouldn't be dangerous without any additional Energy, yet it was enough to make Gravis lose his balance. 'Sure enough, he has lots of combat experience,' Gravis thought.

'But that's exactly what I want!'

### Lightning Is the Only Way

#### **Chapter 230: Fight Against Manuel**

BOOM!

Gravis used his full acceleration with his lightning and body to quickly reach the elder again. Even though the elder was prepared, he was still taken by surprise by Gravis' ridiculous acceleration. He hadn't used that in this fight before, making it impossible for the elder to react appropriately.

BANG!

Manuel had appeared before Gravis, having summoned a humongous shield before him. Gravis' kick exploded on the shield, blowing it into fragments that shot towards Manuel, who stood right behind it.

Clank, clank, clank!

With impressive control over his weapon, Manuel blocked all the fragments with his sword. Meanwhile, the elder pointed his weapon over Manuel's shoulder, releasing a concentrated beam of sword force.

CLANK!

Gravis angled his saber over his still outstretched leg, making the beam deflect off of the surface of the angled saber. The direction of the beam changed, and it shot into the sky. If he had blocked it directly, Gravis would have been pushed back, but with this maneuver, he wouldn't have to retreat. The beam's force pushed Gravis towards the ground, which immediately exploded with lightning as Gravis shot forward again.

WOOSH!

Manuel sidestepped the second kick as if he had seen it coming. Apparently, he was also proficient in pre-dodging, just like Gravis. Manuel immediately started slashing towards Gravis' outstretched leg, intending to cut it off.

SHING! BOOM!

Gravis' right leg was cut off at the knee, but a concentrated lightning spear came out of the leg's stump, hitting Manuel right in the chest. The flesh on Manuel's chest exploded off, and he got shot away. Gravis had traded his leg for a severe injury.

SHING!

The elder released an attack as Manuel shot away, and it shot towards Gravis. Gravis quickly kicked his severed leg with his stump, making it hit the crescent of sword force. His body was powerful, and such a hastily released attack didn't have the full power of the elder. As his severed leg hit the sword crescent, both of them exploded into a wave of destruction and blood.

SHING!

Gravis quickly used his saber and cut off a diagonal chunk of the stump that was his right leg and then shot forward at the elder again. Gravis slashed with his saber, and the elder blocked it with his sword.

Clank! SHING!

While the sword blocked Gravis' saber, Gravis' leg nearly cut off one of the elder's arms. How was this possible? Gravis had cut off a diagonal chunk of his leg to sharpen his own bone into a sharp pike. The protruding bone had part of it cut off, which made it pointy. It was painful, but winning was more important! The shorter range of his leg also helped him pull this stunt off since it was easier to hit something closer to him.

The elder's left hand only hung from a thin strand of muscle and skin. Apparently, his body hadn't been as tempered as Gravis'. If it had been, Gravis' wouldn't have been able to sever the bone of the hand. The elder was shocked dumb by this development, and he couldn't react to Gravis' next attack, which was a loaded fist hitting the flat side of the blocking sword.

BANG!

The sword stayed in one piece, but with the elder shocked and only having one hand to block the attack, the sword shot backward and pierced the elder's torso. It stabbed into the middle of his torso, with only the hilt remaining visible. The eyes of the elder widened as Gravis punched straight at him.

BANG!

Another huge shield appeared before the elder as Manuel had returned. Manuel had retrieved the shield from his Spirit Space and placed it right before the elder to block the attack. The shield exploded again, and its fragments shot backward again. But this time, there was no Manuel to stop the fragments since he was still in the process of running back. Thus, the fragments all buried themselves in the elder's body. The elder was also shot back due to the force.

Gravis gritted his teeth in frustration. He had been so close to killing one of them! This was the third time that Manuel had saved the life of the elder. At least the elder was severely injured now. Meanwhile, Manuel was very close to Gravis again and readied himself for an overhead slash. Gravis used his sharp stump to kick towards Manuel's hands, but his leg was too short.

BZZZZ! BANG!

Gravis used 50% of the inherent Energy of his body to make his leg instantly regenerate. Manuel's eyes widened, and the kick hit Manuel's hands. Sadly, Gravis hadn't had time to load his kick with lightning. Yet, some of Manuel's fingers still broke due to the kick.

BOOM!

Gravis' other leg exploded with lightning, shooting him forward while his right leg was still outstretched. Manuel had lost his balance due to the kick, and he managed to barely hold his saber above his head. Yet, the kick would arrive before he could regain control over his saber.

BOOM!

Another shield appeared, and more fragments shot at Manuel, but this time, he didn't have the luxury to block those. Some of them buried themselves in his torso as he barely avoided others. The force of the fragments shot Manuel into the distance.

BZZZZ!

Gravis' body released lightning again, and the jagged fragments pulled themselves out of Manuel's and the elder's bodies, creating multiple blood fountains. The fragments hit Gravis' hand but got stopped easily by the magnetism.

THUMP!

Something with a humongous weight appeared before Gravis. It was some kind of construct with four long, metallic bars that were held together with some non-magnetic materials. The bars pointed at the elder. Gravis immediately put the fragments between the four bars. Gravis had created this thing with the materials that he had exchanged with Elder Byron.

BZZZZ!

Lightning appeared on all four bars, and the fragments started floating inside of it. Then, the lightning shot forward along the bars and became stronger, pulling the fragments with it. As the fragments passed the tip of the four bars, a small explosion appeared behind them as they shot out with unreal speed. The elder quickly blocked with his sword since he had no time to dodge.

Clank, clank, ptsh, ptsh!

Some of them got blocked, while other fragments buried themselves deeply into the elder's body. The elder, who had just gotten back on his feet, got shot into the distance again. By now, Manuel had gotten up again and charged towards Gravis. Gravis quickly angled his contraption towards Manuel. Then, he retrieved some liquid metal and made it appear inside the contraption, using his lightning again to make it float.

WHOOM!

Manuel used his funnel and pushed Gravis away from his contraption. Then, the contraption vanished, but it wasn't put into Gravis' Spirit Space, but into Manuel's. He wouldn't allow such a dangerous weapon to stay outside. As long as Gravis didn't have physical contact with it, he could manipulate it, just like Gravis.

Gravis regained his balance and charged forward again. Yet, this time, he wasn't using his lightning. He had used it too many times, and his storage was running low. He had to remain frugal with it now. They came closer to each other, but suddenly, Manuel lowered himself and spun around once, creating a circle of sword force that grew bigger as it shot away all around him.

Gravis quickly jumped over it, but he knew that this was what Manuel wanted. Manuel wouldn't have made such an easily avoidable attack without reason. Sure enough, Manuel had already pulled his sword close to his body, gathering all his strength for a stab.

BZZZ! WHOOM!

Lightning appeared on the floor, attracting the sword as it pushed forward, slightly changing its angle. Due to this, it only went through Gravis' kidney, creating a clear hole in Gravis' body. Manuel quickly reacted and took out his funnel again.

BANG!

Yet, another concentrated lightning spear appeared, pushing through the weak sword force and hitting the funnel. The funnel was metallic, and the lightning went through it, right into Manuel's hands, which quickly blackened. On top of that, Manuel was electrified, making him unable to move for a short time.

BZZZZZZZZZ!

A violent sphere of lightning appeared before Gravis, and he pushed his saber through it. The sphere vanished, absorbed by the saber, and Gravis slashed right towards the middle of the area between Manuel and the elder. The elder had just barely gotten off of the floor just 20 meters away from Manuel, while Manuel had just regained control over his body. The explosion of this attack would destroy everything in a 100-meter diameter. There was no way for them to survive. Gravis slashed down.

BOOOOM!

Suddenly, Gravis was surrounded by a gigantic, thick, metallic fortress, many meters tall and thick. The slash hit the inside of the fortress, and the explosion destroyed everything around him, including the metallic fortress. Half a second later, the explosion had already vanished as the surroundings thundered and trembled. Gravis didn't feel any Energy entering his body, which signaled that both of his opponents were still alive.

Gravis had no idea why they were still alive. This fortress wouldn't have been enough to shield them completely. Without hesitation, he used his eyes to look for Manuel. Gravis knew about the brightness of the explosion, which was why he had closed them for a second. The Energy and disorder in the surroundings made it impossible for a Spirit to get an accurate look at the surroundings. On top of that, the explosion should have blinded them. He still had a chance!

Gravis quickly spotted Manuel and saw many metal fragments before and behind him. Apparently, a second fortress had been summoned around him and also around the elder. Gravis was baffled about the size of their Spirit Spaces. Such a fortress took up way too much space, yet there had been three? Gravis quickly threw that thought out of his head and charged at the blinded and disoriented Manuel. Gravis quickly kicked with all his power.

BANG!

Gravis hit something metallic and immovable. The bones in his leg got obliterated while its flesh exploded. Gravis was tremendously shocked. How did something this powerful appear out of nowhere?

Whom!

The thing disappeared, and Gravis froze when he saw a person appear. A middle-aged man with long green hair stood between Gravis and Manuel. He was looking intensely at Gravis, and when Gravis felt the power of this person, he despaired.

'Tree Stage!'