

## Lightning 231

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

#### Chapter 231: Conspiracy

"Elder Byron, someone at the Tree-Stage appeared!" Gravis immediately sent with his ring.

"What? That's the leader of the Greens! I am pretty close because I was worried about you. Try to stall for time! I have a contingency plan!" came the urgent voice of Elder Byron.

There was nothing Gravis could do now except stall for time. He was utterly spent, and even if he weren't, he still wouldn't have a chance against someone at the Tree Stage.

"This has been a fair fight! Why do you involve yourself?" Gravis shouted.

The man narrowed his eyes, but his eyes wandered towards Gravis' right hand. Then, he pointed towards Gravis' right hand. "There is no fairness in this world! You have attacked my disciple, so it is only just that I will get involved!" the person shouted.

Gravis was a little confused about the elder pointing to his right arm while saying this. Just like the others, the elder wore a green cloak. He hadn't taken out his weapon yet, but Gravis was sure that he would also use a long sword.

"Do you feel no shame to save your disciple when he has lost in a fair fight!?" Gravis shouted aggressively.

The elder moved his hand in a cutting motion, and a wave of sword force appeared that shot right at Gravis' right hand. Gravis quickly pulled it back, evading the slash.

"It doesn't matter!" the person shouted, pointing at Gravis' right arm again with more fervor. "You Greys think yourself better than us, but I will prove that the Greens are the only ones worthy of taking over this weak world!"

BANG SHING!

The elder got pushed forward violently by sword force and then cut at Gravis' right arm again. Gravis sidestepped the attack barely, but part of his thumb was cut off. "Why are you point at my right arm!?" Gravis shouted.

The person pointed more violently at Gravis' right arm and shot more crescents. None of them targeted Gravis directly as they all shot towards his right arm. Then, the person stomped the ground violently and shouted into the surroundings. "We will prove that we are the only worthy ones!"

Manuel, who had regained control over his body by now, now also looked at Gravis' right arm. Then, Manuel charged forward. Manuel barely raised his sword with his nearly destroyed hands and attacked Gravis' right hand, for some reason. Gravis wanted to retrieve his hand, but his arm suddenly got gripped by the new person's mighty hand, immobilizing it.

SHING!

Manuel cut off Gravis' right hand and then summoned wind to fly away again. Gravis kicked the new person away, distancing himself. Then, he immediately used the remaining Energy inside his body to fully heal himself. Gravis then quickly turned back to the person, but his eyes widened in shock.

The person no longer wore a green cloak. Instead, he wore green robes that were indicative of the Wind Sect. On top of that, his eyes no longer showed rage but were looking seriously at Gravis. 'Also, has Manuel just used wind to fly away? Where was his sword force?'

"Can you see clearly now?" the person asked with a solemn voice.

Gravis was confused. He looked around and saw that Manuel and the elder were also wearing the same green robes as the new person. Those were the robes of the Wind Sect! What the hell was going on?

"What?" Gravis asked involuntarily in confusion.

SHING!

The head of the new, green-robed person left his body as two daggers cut through his neck, decapitating him. Gravis' confusion and shock grew. The other two people were also staring in shock at what just happened.

"SECT MASTER!" Manuel shouted with panic and rage.

'Sect Master?' Gravis thought in disbelief. 'Was this person the Sect Master of the Wind Sect? Why are they people of the Wind Sect? What is happening?'

The body of the Sect Master fell over, revealing a new person behind him. Gravis took a deep breath in shock. "Elder Byron?" he asked.

Yet, this Elder Byron was different. Their faces were the same, but he was no longer wearing the grey cloak. Instead, he wore robes that were as black as night. He also carried two daggers that emanated the darkness element.

Elder Byron smiled smugly, and his laugh echoed into the surroundings. "Finally!" Then he violently kicked the body of the Sect Master away. "You always remained inside your Sect but look at what happened to you now! This has all gone perfectly!"

Gravis remembered how the Sect Master had pointed at his right arm violently when they had met. Gravis looked over towards his right arm, and his gaze stopped at the ring that Elder Byron had given him. His mind worked overtime as he tried to understand the situation, and when he came to a result, his eyes widened in horror.

"You used that ring to create illusions!" Gravis shouted.

Everything shot through Gravis' mind.

The Greens flew on swords? The Wind Sect could also fly!

The Greens used crescents made out of sword force? That was the wind blade of the wind cultivators!

Manuel was using a funnel to concentrate sword force? He was concentrating wind, which also explained the non-lethal force that it generated!

The cultivators he had fought had all been fighting exactly like wind cultivators! They even used the same weapons! The Spirit of the powerful person that Gravis had felt after his last fight? That had been Elder Byron, who had kept watch over Gravis' fight to create appropriate illusions! The time Elder Byron said that he would still keep his imprint on the ring to retrieve it in case Gravis died? Bullshit! He left his imprint on the ring to control it remotely!

Gravis remembered the membrane that appeared around him when he had first put on the ring. His vision and Spirit passed through the membrane, which enabled Elder Byron to change everything that Gravis saw or felt! Gravis also remembered how Elder Byron had laughed when Gravis had first put on the ring. The Greens? They had never existed! There was never any force from another world.

Gravis also remembered the first group he had fought. When he pulled out his saber and told them that he wanted a fight, they had retreated with their arms held like they didn't want to fight. Elder Byron changed it so that they mocked him, but in actuality, they just wanted to show that they didn't want a fight. Yet, Gravis had killed them.

Gravis felt Elder Byron's power, and he felt that Elder Byron was also at the Tree Stage. Elder Byron wasn't some guy from another world, but the Sect Master of the Darkness Sect! Gravis also realized why Elder Byron was using him to achieve his goals.

'The Spirit Bottles!' Gravis thought. Every Spirit Forming cultivator left part of their Spirit inside a bottle that remained in the Sect, and if they were killed, it would get destroyed with the element of the killer. If a darkness cultivator hunted people from the Wind Sect, the Darkness Sect would become a target of the powerful Wind Sect.

But what if someone with the lightning element killed them? Then the Wind Sect would become enemies with the Lightning Sect. Of course, the Lightning Sect would deny everything. They also knew about Gravis and would tell the Wind Sect about Gravis.

The Wind Sect thought it was Gravis' lone doing since he was not affiliated with any organization. Like this, the Sect Master would have no qualms about leaving his Sect and attacking Gravis since he was way stronger. This would leave him alone and vulnerable to an ambush from the Sect Master of the Darkness Sect.

'I've been used!' Gravis thought in a mixture of frustration, rage, grief, and helplessness.

"BYRON!" Gravis shouted in absolute rage as he shot towards Byron, who just smiled smugly at Gravis.

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#### **Chapter 232: Naïve Arrogance**

SLAP!

Gravis got slapped away, and many of his teeth left his mouth. He spun a couple of times and landed on the floor.

"Oh, Gravis, Gravis," Byron said with a mocking tone. "You feel yourself superior by knowing about the worlds and thinking that you know Heaven better than anyone else. Yet, precisely that made you a perfect target."

Byron walked closer to Gravis. "People from a different world? Who could possibly believe that?" he mocked as he walked closer. "Heaven telling me all your secrets? No one would believe me if I said that Heaven spoke to me."

Byron kneeled down and lifted Gravis by his hair. "You thought yourself so knowledgeable and wise, yet you believed shit that no one with a rational mind would believe."

Gravis suddenly punched since he had no weapon anymore.

THUMP!

Gravis' fist hit Byron's chest, destroying parts of his robes, but otherwise, Byron didn't move. Gravis had no more lightning, so he wasn't able to load his punch. Byron's body was way more powerful than Gravis, and he ignored the punch. Byron continued smirking, grabbed Gravis' arm, and then slapped him with the other one.

SLAP!

Gravis was shot into the distance again, his arm getting ripped off as it still remained in Byron's grip. Parts of Gravis' face caved in as he started spitting blood.

Clank! SLAP!

Manuel's sword was stopped by Byron's hand, and he also got slapped into the distance. "Keep yourself out of this, boy. You're next," Byron said mockingly.

"How did you know that I was from a higher world?" Gravis asked with his Spirit since his mouth couldn't form any more words. This was the only open question for which Gravis had no answer.

Byron laughed again. "Heh, that's the interesting part, isn't it?" Byron said as he walked over to Gravis. "The Guild Master of our Proxy-Darkness Guild found out that you have a Will-Aura instead of Heavenly Pressure. He reported it to the Guild Master of the Darkness Guild in the Middle-Continent."

Byron continued approaching. "The Guild Master didn't mind since he knew that the Heaven Sect would kill you, but imagine his surprise when he found out that you joined the Heaven Sect. After that happened, he reported this development to me, and I got interested."

Byron stopped before Gravis and gestured widely to the surroundings with his open arms. "I was really interested in that development. Heaven allowed someone that wasn't its child to join the Heaven Sect and profit from its resources? How could that be possible? There was no precedence for this development. At that point, I started thinking."

Byron put his hands in his pocket and snickered. "Why would Heaven allow such disrespect towards it? Heaven has struck people down before, so why hasn't it killed you? On top of that, I also found out about the Basin of Nature incident. Heaven was angry and struck all the surroundings, but it didn't dare strike you. What could possibly stop Heaven from killing someone that insulted it?"

"Power is everything! The only thing that could stop Heaven was someone more powerful. Someone like that could only exist in a higher world. You might ask yourself, if I knew about your background, why I still decided to use you."

Gravis didn't say anything. There was nothing he could do right now. He was completely spent, and Byron's power completely eclipsed his own.

Byron continued explaining. "Two incidents gave me all the clues I needed." Byron lifted one finger. "The first one was that Jaimy incident. If your backer from the higher world were allowed to interfere, they would have never allowed for anything like this to happen."

Byron lifted a second finger. "The second one was your fight with that elder from the Fire Guild. That was basically suicide, yet no one interfered. People from a higher world know more about cultivation than us nobodies, so they would also know that saving you would prevent you from further tempering your will. After all, you would always think that you wouldn't die anyway since your backer could always interfere. So, all in all, you are by yourself."

Byron laughed slightly. "Of course, that's all conjecture. I wouldn't base my plan on just that. The most important clue was your talk with that girl from the Wind Guild."

'Wendy?' shot through Gravis' mind.

Byron saw the look on Gravis and knew that he knew which girl he meant. "After you joined the Heaven Sect, I was informed by the Guild Master of the Darkness Guild. Starting at that point, I have sent one of my most trusted elders to keep watch over you. Of course, he couldn't watch you while you were inside the Heaven Sect, so he always remained outside."

Byron knelt on one knee beside the laying Gravis. "We from the Darkness Sect pride ourselves in our supreme stealth. On top of that, who in the Middle-Continent was able to feel the Spirit of someone at the Sapling Stage? No one."

Byron snickered again and lifted Gravis by his hair. "You talked so affectionately with that girl and told her everything, not thinking about anyone listening. After I heard about that, I started planning. A powerful lightning cultivator not affiliated with any power and with no knowledge about the Core-Continent? You were perfect!"

"You had no idea about battle-techniques, and I knew that. How do you think the people without an element cultivate? Do you honestly believe that there had never been a power that used battle-techniques instead of elements? There were plenty, so our stock of battle-techniques is big. I just randomly grabbed a fitting one for you and said it was from a different world. Again, no one else in the Core-Continent would believe that."

Gravis limply hang down by his hair. He had no lightning, nearly no Spirit, and his body couldn't injure Byron. He was helpless.

"By the way," Byron said as his head neared Gravis'. "If you didn't fall for my claims, I would have directly killed you. So, in some weird way, you should be thankful for your naïve arrogance."

Splash!

A mixture of blood and spit hit Byron's face. Even though Gravis was helpless, he still wanted to show his hatred and disrespect towards Byron. Byron wiped his face with one hand.

SLAP!

Gravis was slapped away again and then lost consciousness. The continued slaps had been too powerful.

"Anyway," he said as he walked over to Gravis' unconscious body. "You have outlived your usefulness. Time for you to die."

BANG!

An incredibly powerful lightning strike hit the area between Gravis and Byron, but this lightning bolt didn't originate from Gravis.

Out of the crater walked an incredibly old man with long silver hair. His back was severely bent, and he used a long staff for support when walking.

"How about you don't kill him? I have taken a liking to this boy," the old man said with a weak voice.

Byron's eyes narrowed.

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#### **Chapter 233: Old Man Lightning**

"What are you doing here?" asked Byron with narrowed eyes. His whole casual, disdainful demeanor was gone, replaced with anger and seriousness.

The old man laughed slightly. "I've been with you for around three weeks. Couldn't you tell?" the old man said with a smile.

"So, you've been here all this time?" Byron asked. "Then why didn't you stop me from killing the Wind Sect Master?"

The old man smiled slightly. "You know that I don't interfere with politics, little Byron."

Byron's eyes narrowed even further. "I'm over 140 years old," he stated matter-of-factly.

The old man switched his walking cane to a different hand. Apparently, his current hand had gotten tired. "You'll always be little Byron, no matter how old you are." The old man then looked at the sky in remembrance. "I still remember the young boy that accompanied old Darkness. You were still a youngster back then. How long has it been since you and my little lightning bolt played?"

Byron gritted his teeth. "Are you mocking me?"

The old man coughed slightly, but with a smile. "Oh, little Byron, I don't have time to mock you. Life is precious, and mine is fleeting, at best. I'm going to take this kid with me. You go do whatever you want."

Byron was still solemn. He knew exactly how dangerous it was to let Gravis live. Gravis had an unprecedented cultivation speed and battle-strength. From his talks with Gravis, he also knew that Gravis would need less than a year to reach the Seed Stage. This meant that in a year, Gravis had the ability to fight him, though not defeat him. In another couple of years, when Gravis reached the Sapling Stage, Byron wouldn't have a chance anymore. He was sure of that.

"You can't protect yourself from Ancestor Darkness while protecting this kid. Don't make a mistake, old man," Byron said threateningly.

The old man laughed slightly. "Old Darkness isn't here right now."

Byron sneered. "How would you know? We, darkness cultivators, are the best at stealth."

The old man kept his calm as Gravis' body started floating due to his Spirit. "I know old Darkness, and he is too busy with other stuff. He won't waste his time here. You probably don't even have a method to contact him, even though you are the Sect Master. Old Darkness has always been a helpless introvert, always plotting in a dark corner playing with his knives," the old man narrated.

Byron still kept his solemn look, but inside, he was growing afraid. The old man was right. Ancestor Darkness wasn't here right now. Even if Byron could call him, he probably also wouldn't come. Ancestor Darkness never cared about such things. He only cared about becoming more powerful. He would probably even tell Byron that it was his own fault for provoking Old Man Lightning.

Whoosh!

One of Byron's rings glittered slightly, but no one noticed. The ring was inside his coat, which no Spirit could penetrate. As Byron moved to the side, his body vanished as a perfect afterimage remained. This afterimage even exuded the Spirit and aura of him. Not even the old man was able to see through this. After all, this was one of Byron's most powerful items.

It was still night, and Byron perfectly used the night to hide his presence. He didn't even use his Spirit as he kept himself perfectly hidden. As the Sect Master of the Darkness Sect, Byron was the supreme expert in stealth, only second to Ancestor Darkness. Slowly, he neared Gravis. Byron knew that he couldn't hurt old man lightning. The only thing that he could do was kill Gravis.

Clank, Thump!

Byron just shot forward from a one-meter distance when the end of the walking cane went between his legs and made him trip. This had happened so quickly and suddenly that Byron couldn't regain his balance and faceplanted. Meanwhile, Gravis just floated away a little to create some space for the faceplanting Byron.

"Be careful, little Byron," the old man said with concern. "Don't play too rough, or you will hurt yourself."

Byron spat out a mouthful of dirt, and his eyes exploded in rage. With all his power, he burst forward and charged at old man Lightning.

THWACK!

The head of the cane hit Byron's head, throwing him away. After over 20 meters of flying, Byron recovered. No blood was coming out of his forehead, but for some reason, it still hurt like hell. Byron touched his forehead and felt a small protrusion growing. This made Byron even angrier as he readied himself for another charge.

"I said, don't play rough, or..." said Old Man Lightning as his eyes suddenly narrowed. A powerful pressure assaulted Byron, making him unable to move. "Does grandpa have to slap a bitch?" Old Man Lightning said with a darker voice.

Byron took a deep breath. Old Man Lightning had always been kind, even to the enemies of the Lightning Sect. It had been such a long time that Byron had completely forgotten about Old Man Lightning's nickname, which he had when he was young.

'Lightning Tyrant,' Byron remembered.

In his youth, Old Man Lightning was a crazy individual. If one didn't know that he cultivated lightning, one would think that he was a madman from the Fire Sect. As soon as anyone said anything bad about anyone he cared about, Old Man Lightning went insane.

He even attacked the headquarters of other Sects directly. Of course, he didn't have the strength, at the time, to topple them, but he always managed to survive. Old Man Lightning had created an avalanche of headaches for his Sect Master when he was young.

Though, it was not only his Sect Master. Old man Lightning had been a headache for every single Sect when he was young, with no exceptions. That also included the Heaven Sect. He even had a two-digit kill-count against executioners of the Heaven Sect.

Every time he went insane and killed swathes of cultivators, the Heaven Sect would send executioners at him. Yet, Old Man Lightning always won. The Heaven Sect even sent executioners at the same Realm as him, with no success.

At some point, they started sending no more executioners. Sure, their priests could kill him, but then where would they put their face? Like this, they just let him do whatever he wanted as long as he didn't go completely overboard.

Byron sheathed his daggers and calmed down. There was no sense in throwing his life away. Gravis might be a danger to his life in the future, but if Byron continued attacking, he wouldn't even live to that day. On top of that, he had more important things to do. After all, he had achieved his goal of killing the Sect Master of the Wind Sect.

Without the Sect Master, most of the Formation Arrays of the Wind Sect didn't work anymore. Like this, Byron could sneak into the Wind Sect and assassinate the whole upper echelon. After that, the Darkness Sect would swoop in and annihilate the rest. With this, all the wealth and resources of the Wind Sect would belong to the Darkness Sect. With those resources, they could finally kill their enemies.

Byron looked at the severely injured elder of the Wind Sect and Manuel. The elder was barely clinging onto life, and Manuel had also been injured severely by Byron's slap. Byron narrowed his eyes as he planned his future course of action.

"You're in luck," Byron said to Manuel, who looked at Byron with a death stare. "Killing you now would alert the Wind Sect to what's coming. I'll let you stay alive for a couple more hours. Cherish the time," he said as he vanished into the darkness.

Manuel and the elder became panicked. With their Sect Master dead, no one was able to defend the Sect from Byron's attacks. Was their Wind Sect about to be annihilated?

"Esteemed Senior! Please wait!" shouted Manuel as he ran towards Old Man Lightning and knelt on the floor with both his knees. "Please, save the Wind Sect! It's our home, and I will do anything you want! Please!" Manuel shouted with tears in his eyes.



Manuel had an incredibly powerful will, yet the possible demise of his home still made him cry. Manuel had grown up in the Wind Sect, and it was his home. It occupied the most important place inside his heart. He would do anything to protect it, even if it meant giving his own life.

Pat, pat.

Old man Lightning patted the head of Manuel with a smile. "I'm sorry, but I don't involve myself in politics," he said, destroying all hope in Manuel's mind, "but my little lightning bolt had already seen something like this coming when he heard that Gravis killed people from the Wind Sect. He is already inside the Wind Sect."

Manuel looked at Old Man Lightning with confusion. "Little lightning bolt?" he asked.

Old man Lightning laughed slightly. "The current Sect Master of the Lightning Sect," he said.

A heroic, blood-soaked figure with long silver hair appeared in Manuel's mind. The Lightning Monarch was being called little lightning bolt by this person? Who was this person?

Clank, clank!

The old man hit the floor twice with his cane, and he started floating on some lightning. This was the classic Lightning Movement that everyone used. Lightning also appeared around Gravis' body, but only for a short time. It quickly vanished as Gravis' body flopped to the ground. Old Man Lightning's eyes shone with interest when he saw that. In the end, he simply put the bloodied Gravis over his own back, like a little kid. Then, he shot into the distance.

"Nothing will happen to your Sect," came the voice of Old Man Lightning inside Manuel's mind.

Manuel was first shocked and then overjoyed. He kneeled deeper towards the direction of Old Man Lightning.

"Thank you, Senior!" he shouted with all his power.

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#### **Chapter 234: Lasar**

After around half an hour, Byron reached the Wind Sect. Even though the Wind Sect was well within the range of his Spirit, he didn't release it since there were Formation Arrays that had the power to feel the Spirits of others. Like this, Byron snuck into the Wind Sect. Yet, surprisingly, the Sect was utterly empty. Even though it was in the middle of the night, there should be, at least, some guards walking around.

The Wind Sect was located in the middle of a mountain range that was filled with forests and vegetation. The buildings were all shaped like high towers instead of the usual form of houses. Basically everyone in the Wind Sect could fly, so they took advantage of that fact by making the area of the Wind Sect as small and as high as possible. It would be easier to defend such a small Sect instead of a clunky, big one.

Byron quickly reached the widest and highest tower in the Sect and easily climbed it. The tower was gigantic and majestic and was nearly a kilometer high, while the entrance was located around 500 meters above the ground. Byron had no issues in reaching that height. Something like this was no obstacle to someone at the Tree Stage.

When Byron reached the doors to the inner sanctum, he stopped. The doors were closed, and even though he was a Tree Stage cultivator, he couldn't dematerialize himself. He had to physically open the door to enter. Yet, that didn't matter to him. There was no other exit, so no one inside could escape. Byron readied his daggers. As soon as he opened the doors, he would charge in and kill everyone. Speed was critical in this matter.

BANG BANG!

Byron kicked the door open and charged in, still in stealth. Yet, as soon as the door had moved, a gigantic lightning bolt hit the middle of the room, illuminating all the surroundings. Byron hadn't expected this, and his stealth failed due to the sudden illumination. 'Doesn't matter. I just need to kill everyone!' he thought and continued charging. There was no time to think, and the lightning could have appeared from any number of Formation Arrays.

WHOOOOOSH!

An incredibly mighty gale appeared out of nowhere. 'They were prepared for me!' he shouted in his mind as he was pushed out of the palace and into the air. Byron quickly readied himself. Even though fighting in the air was disadvantageous, he was still powerful enough to withstand the attacks until he landed. After that, he would have no issue in picking off one elder after another.

Yet, no one attacked him. Byron narrowed his eyes and used some kind of movement technique to cling to the gigantic tower again. Since he had been noticed, there was no reason to no longer use his Spirit. His Spirit quickly engulfed the entire Wind Sect, and his face scrunched up into a grimace when he saw the people.

At the entrance of the inner sanctum, five people stood. Four were the Sapling Stage elders from the Wind Sect, who looked down at the hanging Byron with serious eyes. Byron had expected that, and he would have no issue in killing them. Their concentrated attack earlier was troublesome, but they couldn't all concentrate on every attack all the time.

What threw his entire plan out of the window was the last person. A nearly two-meter-tall, muscular, silver-haired man stood beside the elders. His chest bulged with power, and his eyes exuded powerful lightning bolts. An enormous, three-meter-long spear was held in his right hand as he also watched Byron.

"Lasar!" Byron shouted through gritted teeth. "What are you doing here?"

Instead of answering, Lasar turned to the elders. "Proof enough?" he said.

The elders narrowed their eyes further. Inside, they were incredibly furious. They only checked the Spirit Bottles every couple of hours, and they wouldn't have known that their Sect Master had died before Byron had already assassinated them. Without the Sect Master of the Lightning Sect telling them, they would have died. On top of that, their Sect Master was dead, which made them incredibly angry.

Lasar had entered the Sect with urgent news and told them that Byron would come to assassinate all of them. Of course, they didn't fully believe him. Yes, their Sect Master had died to someone with the darkness element, but they trusted the power of their Sect Master. If Byron had killed their Sect Master, Byron would surely be severely injured. He wouldn't dare enter the Sect with such injuries.

Yet, here he was, healthy and at his peak. They wouldn't have believed it if they hadn't seen it with their own eyes. Sadly, there was no running away from the truth. The healthy Byron was proof enough that their Sect Master had died without putting up a fight. They felt humiliated. Without their Sect Master, they had no one in the Tree-Stage. Any one of the other Sect Masters could annihilate their Sect like this. They could no longer remain neutral.

"As I said before, you can relocate your Sect to the area behind my Lightning Sect. Not even the Darkness Sect will dare to attack you there," said Lasar with an imposing voice.

The elders grimaced. Yes, the Darkness Sect had attacked them, but they were also only in a neutral relationship with the other powers. What was stopping them from destroying the Wind Sect? The Fire Sect wanted a battle, and a war against a weakened Wind Sect sounded great in their minds while the Light Sect was filled with holier-than-thou hypocrites.

"What stops your side from killing us?" asked one of the elders.

"My word," said Lasar directly.

"And what will you do if one of your allies attacks us regardless?" asked another one.

"Annihilate them," answered Lasar.

The elders looked at each other unsurely. The only reason why they were even considering this was that the lightning cultivators were always honest. Lightning was direct and without falsehood. If Lasar, the Sect Master of the Lightning Sect, promised something, he would keep it. There was no other outcome.

"Tch, so what?" came the shout of Byron. "Even if he gives his life for you, it doesn't mean that the Lightning Sect will follow."

The elders didn't like Byron involving himself, but he had a point. This was only the promise of a singular person, though an important one. It was very difficult to decide how to proceed.

"As the Sect Master of the Lightning Sect, I have the right to extend this promise to the whole Lightning Sect," Lasar said.

"So?" said Byron. "Your disciples haven't given that promise themselves, and if you die, what is stopping them from breaking a promise they haven't made?"

The elders agreed again. It was a risky decision that could annihilate their Sect. Of course, they would never ally themselves with the other side as well. After all, it was the Darkness Sect that wanted to kill them. They wavered between trying to remain neutral or joining the Lightning Sect's side. They could probably hide and turtle up until someone broke into the Tree-Stage.

Lasar didn't seem impressed. "You ask what's stopping my disciples from breaking the promise in case of my death?" he asked. "I can tell you what's stopping them. In the case that I die, and the Lightning Sect tries to renege on its promise, what do you think the old man will do?"

The eyes of the elders widened in enlightenment. What would Old Man Lightning do if the Sect broke a promise? That madman would probably kill every person of the upper echelon that agreed to that himself and build an entirely new Lightning Sect. He might be old, but he still had enough time to rebuild the Sect. With him taking direct charge, who would dare attack the Lightning Sect?

"I might die, but grandpa won't. He has, at least, another hundred years," Lasar said.

"And why are you so sure that Old Man Lightning will keep his word?" Byron said threateningly.

Yet, this time, the elders only looked at Byron with ridicule. Old Man Lightning breaking a promise? That was impossible. He had once promised someone, while being drunk in a bar, that if someone attacked him, he would make the attacking party pay.

Someone from the Fire Sect had then killed the person due to some misunderstanding some years later, and Old Man Lightning had submerged the Fire Sect in a sea of terror for over five years. The whole Sect Alliance was nearly dissolved because of him. All because of a promise he had made when he was drunk.

"Alright, we'll relocate our Wind Sect to your Lightning Sect, but we won't involve ourselves in the war," one elder said, and then looked at Byron with killing intent, "unless it's against the Darkness Sect."

Byron gritted his teeth. As soon as Old Man Lightning had appeared, his whole plan was thrown into disarray. Everything was falling apart.

"Also, would you be so kind as to please clean out the Wind Sect of any darkness vermin you find?" the same elder said to Lasar.

Lasar looked with killing intent at Byron and readied his spear.

"Gladly!"

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#### **Chapter 235: Regaining Consciousness**

The unconscious body of Gravis lay inside a comfy bed. The room had a window that showed the dark outside, but the room's interior contrasted the outside. The room was painted in a bright color, and lots of comfy chairs and furniture decorated it. There was even a beautiful fireplace, which contained a peaceful fire that was heating the room. The whole room exuded the charm of a lovely home.

WHOOM! BANG!

As soon as Gravis regained even a sliver of consciousness, he immediately jumped up, released his Will-Aura, and released 30% of his lightning in an explosion. He had lost consciousness, and as soon as someone noticed him regaining consciousness, they would be prepared for him. He had no idea why he was still alive, but it couldn't be for any good reason.

The room exploded into fragments and debris as everything was destroyed. Gravis immediately shot off into one direction with all his speed. He was still missing one leg and an arm, yet that didn't stop his acceleration. He immediately noticed a building far away and shot his lightning toward it while grabbing some metal from his Spirit Space. The magnetism pulled Gravis forward violently.

BANG!

Surprisingly, the building wasn't destroyed when Gravis shot his lightning at it, but that didn't matter. The lightning had done its job of shooting him into the distance. Now, Gravis had time to look at his surroundings.

He was outside a gigantic congregation of black buildings. The sky thundered in constant lightning, yet all of the lightning only hit one colossal tower in the middle of the buildings. It seemed like the tower was attracting the lightning.

'Wait! Lightning and black buildings? Is this the Lightning Sect?' Gravis thought as he shot through the air. He also saw a lot of disciples running around in confusion as they heard the explosions. They all wore blackish-blue robes, just like the disciples of the Lightning Guild. After Gravis had that thought, something neared him with unreal speed. It was so fast that Gravis couldn't even react.

BANG!

A cane hit him on the back while he was in the air, shooting him straight to the ground. Gravis hit the ground with incredible force while the surroundings exploded. One shouldn't forget that Gravis' body weighed over a ton. As soon as he hit the ground, he lost control over his breathing as his lungs were nearly crushed. It seemed like a miracle that the impact hadn't broken any bones.

"Destroy my house, will you!?" came an angry shout from beside him, but Gravis didn't even realize what happened before he got kicked in the side. The kick perfectly hit his stomach, and some medicinal soup or juice quickly left his body through his mouth. Meanwhile, Gravis got shot into the distance until he hit a boulder.

"Here I go and save you, and what's the first thing you do?"

BANG!

Another kick shot Gravis into the distance. The kicks were incredibly painful, but Gravis' Will-Aura still allowed him to control himself. Gravis regained control over his body and barely evaded another kick.

"You dare dodge!?" an angry shout came from beside him.

BANG!

The cane hit the still injured side of Gravis' head, which spun him multiple times in the air until his face hit the ground.

WACK, WACK, WACK!

Blows from the cane rained down on Gravis' body, not allowing him to dodge or block. Every time he tried to evade or block, the cane would change its trajectory. He was utterly helpless.

"You ungrateful piece of shit! Every single other person that even touched my home would already be dead!" Old Man Lightning shouted as he continued beating Gravis with fervor.

By now, Gravis realized that he wasn't in danger anymore. Yes, the hits were painful, but they didn't injure the critical parts of his body. If that person wanted him to die, he would already be dead.

"I'm sorry, alright!?" Gravis shouted in-between blows. Gravis was actually feeling a bit guilty. Apparently, this person had saved him, yet Gravis had destroyed his house. Yes, Gravis would still have done the same if that happened another time, but that didn't change the fact that he still destroyed the house.

"You're sorry? Good! Then go rebuild my house!" Old Man Lightning shouted, no longer beating Gravis with his cane.

Now, Gravis finally had some time to breathe. He used his Spirit to look at his surroundings and the old man. Gravis became shocked as he realized that he couldn't feel the Spirit or will of the angry old man. By all intents and purposes, the old man felt like a normal, mortal old man. Of course, the painful bruises across Gravis' body proved that this wasn't the case.

Gravis had felt the Spirit of Byron previously, as long as he hadn't activated his ring. Yet, Gravis was sure that this old man didn't carry any of those artifacts. Nothing was blocking Gravis' Spirit from inspecting the old man, and he saw not a single artifact. Except for maybe that powerful cane. Any ordinary cane would have broken after the first hit.

'I can't feel his Spirit and will even though he isn't masking his presence? That can only mean one thing!'

"You're at the Self-Stage?"

WACK!

The cane hit Gravis' head again.

"Rebuild my fucking house!" Old Man Lightning shouted in anger.

"Alright, alright!" Gravis said and started searching for stones. He quickly found some of the black stones around ten kilometers away. Apparently, the Lightning Sect was built beside a vein of those stones.

BZZZ!

Gravis body immediately regenerated since the inherent Energy of his body had refilled already. Walking and transporting the materials would be a pain otherwise. He hadn't healed himself before because if someone attacked him, he could surprise them with his regeneration. Gravis immediately shot off towards the distance toward the ore.

Meanwhile, Old Man Lightning was surprised about the immediate healing of Gravis. 'This boy has a lot of strange powers,' he thought with interest. 'He also absorbed my lightning previously, which should be impossible. I wonder how he achieved that.'

When Gravis arrived at the ore, he used his lightning to cut or melt it. Surprisingly, the ore seemed to absorb the lightning. It even seemed to become harder.

"You idiot!" came the voice of Old Man Lightning in Gravis' mind. "You can't destroy Balzar with lightning! That's the whole point of why we use this ore as our building material! Don't you know anything?"

Gravis furrowed his brows. "Then how did my lightning destroy your house?"

"Tch," a disdainful sound appeared in Gravis' mind. "Just because it can absorb lightning doesn't mean that it can't be destroyed with the force of an explosion. The shockwave of your lightning isn't made out of lightning, after all, is it?"

Gravis grimaced a little. "Then how am I supposed to cut it? I don't have tools." Gravis couldn't use so much lightning in an explosion every time to mine some stone. That would take forever.

"That's not my fucking problem, is it? If you don't have tools, use your hands!" came the annoyed and still angry voice of Old Man Lightning.

Gravis was growing a bit annoyed, but he told himself that it was understandable that the old man was angry. He would also be angry if someone destroyed his home. Gravis readied his fist and punched the ore.

BOOM!

His fist hit the ore, but it still remained in one piece, which surprised Gravis.

"Put some back into it!" Old Man Lightning shouted.

Gravis gritted his teeth and punched harder, and finally, a big piece of ore fell off. Gravis shook his fist for some time. His right hand wasn't happy with hitting something so hard. The piece was too big to fit in Gravis' Spirit Space, so he carried it to the destroyed house with his hands.

The piece was very heavy, even more so than Gravis had thought. The ground below him cracked, and he needed to quickly shoot forward before his legs sunk into the ground. All in all, the work was exhausting.

Gravis arrived at the destroyed house's location and noticed, to his delight, that it hadn't been that big according to the debris. It probably only had two floors.

BOOM!

Gravis threw the stone to the side, and it created a loud sound. The other disciples looked over and watched him with interest. Some of them were surprised that Gravis was still alive after destroying Old Man Lightning's home, while others laughed at his misfortune.

Gravis looked at the ore and then at the destroyed house.

"How am I supposed to cut this huge stone into uniform sizes?" he asked himself.

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

#### **Chapter 236: Punching Boulders**

Gravis looked at the three-meter-high piece of pure ore and had no idea how to punch it into uniform pieces. He didn't have such fine control over his strength.

'Wait!' Gravis immediately realized something. 'I don't have such fine control over my strength? Wouldn't that be an issue?' Gravis thought. 'Punching such a hard ore into uniform pieces seems impossible right now, but is it really? I remember some guy in my homeworld creating beautiful artworks by punching some stone only once. I still remember that I thought it was incredibly impressive.'

Gravis started looking at the stone differently and then turned to Old Man Lightning, who had been following him all this time. Gravis started watching Old Man Lightning with squinting eyes. 'Is this some kind of training? If so, how does he know that I lack such fine control?'

WACK!

The cane hit Gravis' head again. "Stop staring at me with those squinting eyes!" Old Man Lightning said, annoyance apparent in his voice.

Gravis rubbed his head and grew a little annoyed. This old man didn't have to hit him all the time. "Do you want to show me that I don't have control over my power?"

WACK!

Another hit with the cane. "Stop being a smartass and start punching!" Old Man Lightning said, but inside, he felt surprised.

'This boy is smart. He already realized my goal before he even punched it once. Quite impressive!' Old Man Lightning thought.

Gravis looked with annoyance at Old Man Lightning. "Just be honest! Are you?" he asked directly.

The grip around the cane tightened, but no additional hit came. The word "honest" had hit the right spot. Honesty was the most important thing in Old Man Lightning's heart. "Yes, now go punch!" he said through gritted teeth.

Initially, he had planned to annoy Gravis by forcing him to punch the ore until he despaired. Then, he would gracefully appear and tell him about the use of this exercise. Like this, this innocent young boy would be surprised about his increased power and look at the old man with shining eyes filled with gratitude.

Yet this little shit had to see through the whole point of this exercise in an instant, ruining his plans! Old Man Lightning had been so proud of his sudden spark of inspiration. In reality, he didn't really care for his home. Every time he got angry while inside his house, he would also explode like this. After all, it was lightning's temperament to lash out. The Sect would then rebuild his house in a matter of hours since they were very experienced in that.

But there was no one else who ever dared to touch his house. If he let Gravis off without punching him, maybe some other disciples wouldn't fear his mighty cane anymore. Everyone that crossed him or the Sect had to get a beating! This was an iron rule, and there were no exceptions!

While Old Man Lightning lamented in his failed plan, Gravis started concentrating on the stone. Yet, before he started punching, he thought about the advantages of finer control.

'Now that I think about it, I have quite fine control with my saber, but whenever I punch or kick with my body, I just unleash my power into the opponent. This has always worked in the past since my opponents' bodies were, at most, slightly stronger. But, when I punched Byron, it achieved nothing. Who knows, maybe with finer control, I would have been able to penetrate his defense and injure his organs. After all, organs are not as powerful as bones and flesh.'

Gravis also realized why he didn't have any fine control over his body. His body had grown too quickly, and he was always busy with training something else. Back in the Middle-Continent, he was busy with increasing his Realm and compressing his Will-Aura. He had some time while staying with the "Greys", but at that point, he hadn't even thought about refining his control. After all, it had always worked.



Gravis grew excited as he realized another method to increase his battle-strength! With more battle-strength, he had better chances of getting appropriate resources. No one at the Tree or Self Stage would care about resources that increased one's Spirit, for example.

Of course, those resources also wouldn't work on Gravis due to his peculiar Spirit, but that was only a hypothetical. As long as he was the strongest in his Realm or slightly above his Realm, he could get any resources he wanted.

The only fight for resources he fought had been the tournament for the fourth level of the Lightning Tower, back in the Proxy-Lightning Guild. Since then, he hadn't been involved in any more of those fights, but that didn't mean that such fights would never happen in the future. Gravis had to be ready for every eventuality.

Gravis concentrated at the boulder and gauged how much power he needed to break it into two even pieces. Then, he readied himself and punched.

BANG!

The boulder broke into four different sized pieces, and Gravis grimaced. 'This will be troublesome.'

'Wait! Didn't the ore harden when I used lightning? So, theoretically...'

Gravis looked at the other buildings and saw the sizes of their bricks. Gravis then used lightning and infused it into one of the boulders. He moved it around until it took the identical form of one of those other bricks. Then, Gravis punched.

BANG!

The boulder broke apart again, but a perfectly measured brick, identical to the other ones, remained. Gravis smirked.

WACK!

"No cheating!" Old Man Lightning said in annoyance.

Gravis turned to the old man with an annoyed sneer. "I know! I only tried it out! I won't sabotage my own training. Also, you don't have to hit me every time. I have ears, you know?"

WACK!

"Shut up! Less talking, more punching!" Old Man Lightning said.

By now, Gravis had enough. "Shut up, old man! You're not helping by constantly hitting me!"

"Oh!?" Old Man Lightning said with a warning tone.

With a more bruised body, Gravis continued punching the boulders. It had been a couple of hours since he started diligently training. 'There is no reasoning with this stubborn, old brick wall. That ass is so stuck in his own ways that I can't even reason with him! As soon as I get powerful enough, I'll show him!'

Sadly, Gravis only dared to think such stuff. If he said anything like this, he would get another beating. It might feel good to release his annoyance and anger, but the only thing that would follow would be physical pain. All in all, it was not worth it.

Even worse, the old man was always watching. After around an hour of punching, Gravis had decided to take a small break, but not even five seconds into it, a cane shot at him from a distance. Gravis, of course, was very used to sneak attacks and quickly blocked it. Yet, what followed wasn't a charging cane, but a charging old man. He, apparently, took offense to Gravis not accepting his beating.

Like this, Gravis continued punching boulders one after the other. When the boulders got too small, he would push them to the side. In regular intervals, some people from the Lightning Sect arrived to take those boulders away.

It took a lot of resources to mine these boulders, so there was no reason to let them go to waste. After all, nearly no one in the Middle-Continent had the power to mine those. All the materials for the houses in the Lightning Guild in the Middle-Continent came from here. Only people in the Spirit Forming Realm could destroy this ore, and some Guild Master or Vice-Guild Master surely wouldn't waste their time with mining.

Even though Gravis was angry with the old man, he grew exhilarated when he saw his progress. Punching the boulder wasn't as painful anymore, and the boulders came closer to matching the image in his head.

This was something that Gravis had rarely seen. Progress through training.

Most of the time, he was just munching on pills or killing people to increase his Realm. The last time he felt something like this was when he was compressing his Will-Aura. Before that, the only other time, when his strength had increased by training, had been when he learned Martial Arts with William, back in Body City.

By now, Gravis was taking no more breaks. He was completely entranced by the feeling of his strength slowly growing stronger.

Like this, he continued punching boulders.

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

#### **Chapter 237: Force Lines**

Gravis had been punching boulders for over a day by now. It was exhausting, and Gravis had wanted to take a break multiple times already but always forced himself to do one more. At some point, punching "just one more time" had become ingrained in him. He just continued to punch without stopping.

This whole experience was something that he had never gone through. He never had to train since everything always came naturally. His physical strength increased with pills. His Realm increased by simply pushing lightning into his mind. His battle-strength increased by fighting. His Will-Aura also increased by fighting. Nothing had ever needed him to physically train like this before.

The only time when something similar happened was when he was training Martial Arts with William, but that had been different. He only had to learn the movements then. It hadn't involved pushing his body to his limit.

The punching of boulders increased his control over his power substantially and also somewhat increased his physical power. However, the increase in physical power achieved by training was different than when taking pills. Of course, taking body tempering pills increased his power many times faster than this repetitive punching, but the training still achieved something else.

'The physical power of my whole body is not increasing very fast. On top of that, not all my muscles are becoming stronger. The biggest increase in power appears in my upper arms, back, and chest. My lower arms and legs don't get a significant increase. I know that in a proper punch, my legs and hip need to work with me, but I can't use my full power here since that would just destroy the boulders.'

Gravis thought about many eventualities regarding this training. 'Even though those muscles are becoming more powerful, as soon as I take more body tempering pills, everything else will easily catch up. Then, all the increase in muscles that I have achieved right now will disappear.'

Yet, Gravis continued punching with fervor because he realized something else. 'Yes, my progress will disappear, but that's only relatively speaking. If I take some body tempering pills, my other muscles will catch up, but what about my currently trained ones? There is only a finite amount of medicinal power inside a pill, so if it doesn't need to strengthen my currently trained muscles, there is more left for the other ones.'

'All in all, increasing the power of those muscles saves me some pills in the future.' Gravis then laughed bitterly. 'Of course, I still need to train the other ones if I want to reach the next level of my body without pills. If I were to do that, I would need to train everything for probably three years.'

'But if my goal is only to cut the pill consumption down by 50%, I would probably only need to punch for like a year or so. Of course, I won't do that since I have better things to do. Right now, only my control is important,' Gravis finished his thoughts.

By now, he was pretty good at controlling his physical power. Fitting bricks appeared more and more frequently. There was still some chance involved, but the frequency of the bricks appearing increased. That meant that his control had increased.

A normal human wouldn't be able to gain such fine control over their power this quickly, but Gravis was a cultivator. He knew his body incredibly well, and his Spirit allowed him to keep track of everything. With the Spirit always giving perfect feedback every time Gravis punched, his control was bound to improve rapidly.

His Spirit always kept watching over his body and the boulders. He saw how the power coursed through the boulder and how much power he used. After a while of watching, Gravis was entranced by the slow image of the boulders breaking and by the pattern that his power created while punching them.

The boulders always broke differently, and Gravis saw the pattern of the breaks. He saw how his power hit only one spot yet shot throughout the boulder in the shape of many rough lines. Not every line managed to break the boulder, but that didn't mean that the power didn't affect them.

After some more hours, Gravis had lost all feeling in his body. It felt like he was an outsider looking on, and it felt like his body was punching without him. Of course, that was only an illusion. When someone worked steadily, their brain and Spirit would disconnect after some time as everything became automatic. Of course, this could only happen if someone was very familiar with what they were doing.

As Gravis' Spirit disconnected from his body, he started getting entranced by the shapes that his power created when punching boulders. By now, he was fully concentrating on these shapes and even tried to manipulate them.

BANG!

A weirdly shaped boulder appeared this time, which surprised Gravis. This was the shape that he had wanted to achieve. He had only played around with this thought, but the shape actually became real. Like an onlooker, Gravis looked at his body, which dully continued to punch. 'I think I know what just happened,' he thought.

'Until now, I was only punching with my body. I was only trying to gain control over my physical strength, yet why is that necessary? Why should I ignore my other tools?' he thought.

Gravis realized that he hadn't used his Spirit until now, except for watching. He had only focused on his physical control and had tried to ignore everything else. Yet, wasn't the Spirit and the mind the controller of the body? After all, his body was only a tool that followed the orders of his Spirit. How was the body supposed to know what to do if the Spirit and mind didn't give an order?

With this newfound way to control his body, Gravis started experimenting. He willed the lines in the boulders to move into different pictures and patterns. Not everything followed these patterns, though. As soon as the lines started growing into complex shapes, his body wouldn't be able to correctly release the appropriate amount of force.

'I only need to practice and further refine my control!' Gravis shouted in his mind.

Sweat was flowing down his body like a waterfall, and his muscles were aching due to the constant abuse. This had happened multiple times by now. Normal cultivators needed to regenerate their bodies when that happened, which would take multiple hours, at least. Lucky for Gravis...

BZZZ!

And his body was fully healed again. Such, in comparison, minor damage to the body didn't need much Life Lightning to heal. The passive regeneration of the inherent Energy in his body was way faster than the exhaustion of his physical power. He could continue like this for years without a pause.

Food? That had stopped being relevant at the second half of Energy Gathering. The Energy in the air could be absorbed, which was more than enough to keep his body in top form. The body converted the Energy into many things that it needed and also expelled waste with it. Due to this, there was nothing that Gravis had to do. He could fully concentrate on punching without any distractions.

Gravis completely lost himself in manipulating the force lines going through the boulders and started creating more and more complex objects with only a single punch.

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

#### **Chapter 238: New House**

WACK!

A cane hit Gravis' head, breaking him out of his concentration.

"Stop wasting all the good Balzar!" Old Man Lightning shouted with anger at Gravis.

Gravis stopped punching as he rubbed his head in annoyance. He looked at Old Man Lightning, but before he could complain, he noticed all the "stones" in his vicinity. The stones all came in different shapes and sizes. Some of them were pyramids, while others were squares. There were even more complex shapes like dodecahedrons.

Gravis even noticed some disciples of the Lightning Sect looking at some of the stones in appreciation. By now, the disciples only took away the ugly, useless stones but left the beautiful ones lying around. Gravis even saw an elder looking at the stones in appreciation as he happily combed his beard.

Many of the stones were even placed in multiple lines, according to their forms. The stones at the start of each line had the rough outline of the final shape, while the last one showed the best example of this form. Apparently, the disciples had created a "path of progression", showing Gravis' progress in controlling his physical power.

What shocked Gravis was the sheer amount of stones. There were so many that it was hard to count. "How long have I been punching?"

WACK!

Another hit with the cane. "You've been at this for three full days! Look at all the Balzar you wasted!"

Gravis rubbed his head in annoyance. 'This old brick wall is back. Man, I had so much fun!'

Nevertheless, Gravis didn't show his annoyance. If he did, only more beatings would follow. Instead, he evenly looked at Old Man Lightning. "I think I have enough control over my physical power now. Could you answer-"

WACK!

Another hit with the cane. "I don't care about your control! Rebuild my fucking house!" Old Man Lightning shouted.

'Oh yeah... that...!' Gravis thought as he remembered the initial reason why he started doing this. "Alright, I'll rebuild your house, but after that, I want to talk with you."

Old Man Lightning looked at Gravis like he wanted to hit him again but stopped. Instead, he just turned around and left. Meanwhile, the one elder, who had been watching and listening, started talking to Gravis.

"Hey, do you mind if we take the stones? This shows a good path of progression for some of our disciples, who don't have such fine control yet," he asked politely.

Gravis quickly shook his head. "No, no, it's alright! It's your ore in the first place."

The elder smiled and nodded politely. "Thank you." Then he turned to the others. "You heard him! Take them away! You know where to put them!" he shouted.

The stones started vanishing one by one as they were put inside their Spirit Spaces. Then, the disciples started running back into the Sect. One shouldn't forget that Old Man Lightning's "home" was outside the Sect and not inside. Gravis looked with interest as the disciples moved in unison.

WACK!

A cane appeared out of nowhere, hitting Gravis' head and then vanishing. "Rebuild my fucking house!" came a shout inside Gravis' head. Gravis gritted his teeth in anger but started punching more boulders. As soon as he finished rebuilding the house, he would get some answers. He still didn't know what actually happened after he went unconscious.

Gravis felt his emotions rising as he remembered Byron, but he quickly suppressed them and concentrated on the stones again. There was no reason to get angry right now. He could save that all for when he was powerful enough to kill that bastard.

BANG!

Gravis punched one big boulder, which perfectly fell apart into many identical bricks. When Gravis saw that, he nodded with a smirk. 'That's some good progress.'

Like this, he continued punching enough boulders to rebuild the house. It only took a couple of hours. As soon as he had enough bricks, he started stacking them in the shape of a house. After he created a rough outline, he infused his lightning into the stones, making them harden and fuse. Not every house had a completely fused exterior since that required a lot of lightning.

Gravis easily had enough lightning to completely fuse the house in a matter of hours due to his unique Destruction Lightning and his huge storage. Yet, Gravis still needed to refill his storage a couple of times. The stones required way more lightning than he thought. All in all, it took him about a day to finish the exterior of the house.

After the day, Gravis rubbed his forehead and looked at his finished work. The house had two floors with some windows. However, he didn't create any rooms. After all, he had no idea about the interior of the previous house. Who knew what kind of rooms the old man wanted.

After he was finished, he tried to contact Old Man Lightning, but there was an issue. He couldn't feel the Spirit of Old Man Lightning, which made it impossible for Gravis to contact him.

"Old man, I'm done!" Gravis shouted into the surroundings. Yet, no answer came. Though there also came no flying cane, which probably meant that the old man was happy with the house. Gravis was sure that the old man heard him since he always diligently watched Gravis to distribute beatings.

"So, can we talk now?" Gravis shouted after a while. And again, no answer came.

Gravis grew annoyed and started searching through every person inside the Sect with his Spirit, but he couldn't find the old man. 'I'm sure that old brick wall is inside the Sect! He can probably hide from the sight of my Spirit with his cultivation. Well, then I have to find another way.'

Gravis looked over at the entrance of the Lightning Sect, where two guards currently stood. 'Well, if I'm here already, I might as well look around. I also need a new saber. I hope they accept gold since I don't have anything else.' After thinking that, Gravis walked over to the entrance.

CLANK!

"Halt!" said one of the guards as they stopped his way forward with their spears. "You're not part of the Lightning Sect. Why are you visiting?"

Gravis was a little surprised at first but then realized that they were right. He wasn't part of the Lightning Sect. It was okay for him to walk around outside the Sect, but the inside was probably not so easy for him to reach.

"I would like to exchange for a Spirit Weapon with gold. Is that possible?" Gravis asked.

The two guards looked at each other and then nodded. One of the guards retrieved some kind of badge and threw it towards Gravis. "This is a visitor's badge for merchants. You are only allowed to walk to the plaza and then into the Exchange Hall. If you go anywhere else, we'll throw you out."

Gravis took the badge and pinned it to his black shirt. He was no longer wearing the grey cloak due to the whole thing with Byron. Right now, he was wearing his black shirt and black cloth pants again. After he pinned the badge onto his shirt, the guards retrieved their spears and let him pass.

Like this, Gravis took his first step into the Lightning Sect.

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

#### **Chapter 239**

As Gravis walked through the Lightning Sect, he looked around. The buildings were made of Balzar, just like the Lightning Guild in the Middle-Continent. Gravis guessed that only a material like Balzar would do when building under a constantly raging thunderstorm.

One should know that natural lightning had around the same Energy density as someone at the ninth level of Energy Gathering. Lightning cultivators had an increased resistance to lightning, but that didn't make them immune to it. If some stray lightning bolt hit them, people below the ninth level of Energy Gathering had a very real chance of dying.

Not everyone inside the Lightning Sect could be a Spirit Forming Expert. There were just too many people. On top of that, they also had to teach the next generation, and they, obviously, didn't have enough strength to resist natural lightning.

Gravis had already looked around the Sect with his Spirit. Surprisingly, a lot of buildings isolated his Spirit. Though, after further thinking, this seemed logical. How annoyed would the Sect Master become if hundreds of people constantly watched him? It was also logical to block the warehouses that held the Sect's wealth. If no one knew what was in there, no one would become too greedy.

Gravis counted around 5,000 people with his Spirit, which was a little surprising. After all, the Lightning Guild in the Middle-Continent had well over 10,000 disciples. One would think that the Lightning Sect's headquarter would have the largest congregation of disciples, but apparently, they had less than their guilds in the Middle-Continent.

Gravis had also seen the cultivation of most people. With his Spirit, that wasn't very hard. Around 1,000 people were at the Spirit Forming Realm, while around 3,000 were at the Energy Gathering Realm. The remaining disciples were at the Body Tempering Realm.

As Gravis thought about it, it actually made sense. Spirit Forming experts were at the peak of this lower world, excluding the High Priest, of course. Even though this was the Core-Continent, Spirit Forming experts were still rare. Having 1,000 of those in one place was already impressive enough.

Gravis also noticed that many of the Energy Gathering cultivators had powerful wills. About 50 of them even had condensed their Will-Aura already. Gravis guessed that reaching the Spirit Forming Realm wasn't the only way to reach the Main Sect from the Middle-Continent. Impressive geniuses probably could also be sent here.

Like this, even though the Lightning Sect was smaller in scale than the Lightning Guilds, it burst with power and talent. Based on the numbers of Spirit Forming experts he saw, Gravis could also calculate the approximate number of Spirit Forming experts in the Core-Continent.

With around a thousand per Sect, he came to 7,000 people. Of course, the loose cultivators without any affiliation to a Sect and the Heaven Sect had to be added to that number. The problem was that Gravis had no idea how many Heavenborn were at the Spirit Forming Realm.

Heavenborn were very rare in comparison to normal people, but every single one of them had a wide-open way to the Spirit Forming Realm, without any bottleneck. While the branch of the Heaven Sect in the Middle-Continent only had around ten people, Gravis guessed that the Heaven Sect in the Core-Continent had way more. Maybe also a thousand? Maybe more?

All in all, Gravis concluded that this lower world probably had around 10,000 Spirit Forming experts, but not more. Finally, the full strength of this lower world opened up before Gravis. Gravis could now see the ceiling that the power of this lower world had. Now, he only needed to break through it to get home.

As Gravis looked at the thundering sky, he felt something. He watched the lightning, and it felt like the lightning up in the sky was also him. Unconsciously, Gravis lifted his hand to the sky. 'Come here!'

BZZZZ!

The lightning in the sky stopped hitting the tall tower and instead went straight for Gravis. Hundreds of lightning bolts hit his body, illuminating the surroundings. The disciples jumped back in shock as they averted their eyes. All this concentrated lightning was too bright, making them temporarily blind.

Meanwhile, Gravis felt incredibly alive. All the lightning shot into his dantian, which started growing violently. This was the same process that happened when he had absorbed his 5,000 Energy Stones. Slowly, Gravis' lightning storage started expanding.

Yet, the lightning that hit him was different from his own Destruction Lightning. This was natural lightning, which had 50% Life Energy mixed into it. Gravis' body had no use for Life Energy since it was already fully healed. Because of this, the lightning was split up into Destruction Lightning and Life Lightning.

The Destruction Lightning got absorbed by Gravis, while the Life Lightning simply passed through him into the ground.

CRK, CRK!



The ground below Gravis broke open as a sapling started growing violently. The sapling grew rapidly, pushing Gravis up with it as it grew multiple meters per second. Gravis had no time to pay attention to his surroundings as he entirely concentrated on his body and dantian.

By now, his dantian couldn't be seen anymore. All the lightning had outgrown his dantian, swallowing it whole. Gravis grew incredibly excited as he felt his lightning storage becoming increasingly more powerful. His lightning storage had already grown by over 30%!

Outside, the sky slowly started getting brighter. The dark clouds slowly thinned as the disciples' faces became white. The natural lightning storm was getting used up! If this continued, no more lightning would rain down onto the Lightning Sect. The lightning was essential to their Sect! If there was no lightning, how would they keep their Lightning Tower working? This was bad!

The Lightning Sect had been built here because of the abundance of lightning. As long as some of the clouds remained, the lightning would regenerate. This allowed them to have an inexhaustible storage of lightning. If they had to use Energy Stones to keep the tower working, they would waste an astronomical amount of wealth.

One had to know that the Lightning Tower wasn't only used for condensing a Lightning Seed. It also worked as body tempering. Disciples would choose the appropriate level, and the lightning would injure their bodies. After that, they only had to heal.

With this, the Lightning Tower worked as a faster way of training one's body. After all, due to the abundance of lightning, it was cheaper to temper their bodies in the tower than to buy pills. Of course, buying pills was still faster, but way more expensive.

If there were no more lightning, the Lightning Tower would lose its price advantage. The contribution points would then be used for physical rewards, creating a massive dent in the Sect's purse.

The disciples looked at Gravis with hatred.

This guy was about to destroy their home!

[Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

**Chapter 240: Freya's birch**

WACK!

A cane hit Gravis in the side of the head, throwing him off the mighty, newly created tree. His body hit the side of a building, but his body didn't break it since Balzar was so hard. Instead, his body slid down the wall, towards the ground.

"I take my eyes off of you for five fucking seconds, and you summon a calamity!" came the angry shout of Old Man Lightning. "Destroying my home not enough for you? You wanna destroy the whole Sect now?"

Gravis rubbed his head and grew annoyed. "What's your problem, old man? I only absorbed some lightning! Is it against the rules?" he shouted with annoyance.

Old Man Lightning pointed towards the sky. "Look what you've done! The clouds are as weak as never before! If I hadn't stopped you, they would have vanished! With your reckless actions, you have nearly doomed the Lightning Sect!" he shouted violently.

Gravis looked up at the sky and noticed that some parts of the clouds had parted, light shining through them. By now, Gravis had realized his blunder. What would the Lightning Sect be without lightning? He might have really overdone it this time.

"Hey, I'm sorry, okay?" Gravis said after he calmed down. "I didn't realize that I absorbed this much lightning. I'll pay you back, okay?"

Old Man Lightning narrowed his eyes.

WACK

He appeared beside Gravis without any warning and whacked him with his cane again. The cane hit the side of his head, throwing him to the ground again.

Gravis immediately shot up again, annoyance, and a bit of rage in his eyes as he looked at Old Man Lightning. "I said, I'll pay you back! What more do you want, you old prick?"

Instead of growing angry, Old Man Lightning looked at Gravis with interest. He played around with his beard a little as he thought about something. "You're not being influenced by the temperament of lightning after absorbing so much of it?" he asked with interest.

The first hit with the cane was to stop Gravis, while the second one was to test if Gravis was influenced by the temperament of lightning. After all, that was a genuine issue that happened to a lot of disciples. If someone absorbed too much lightning in too short of a time, they would start going berserk, attacking everything that even slightly annoyed them.

Gravis now realized why the old man had hit him again. Most of his annoyance vanished, but not all of it. "No. That happened once to me already, and I committed a grave mistake. Luckily, lightning's temperament won't ever influence me again."

Old Man Lightning raised an eyebrow. "Bullshit! Everyone can be influenced by lightning's temperament, even me. What makes you different from everyone else?"

Gravis still rubbed the hurt side of his head. "Because I am lightning. Lightning's temperament is my temperament. There is no difference between the two."

WACK!

Another hit with the cane. "Bullshit! That's not how cultivation works! You think you can lie to me? You think I'm a naive kid like you?"

Gravis stood up again, looking with anger at Old Man Lightning.

BZZZ!

Suddenly, a bolt of lightning shot from the newly grown tree onto Gravis, surprising everyone. This new tree had control over lightning? Also, why was it shooting lightning at Gravis? Wasn't it born due to what Gravis had done?

Gravis hadn't expected that this tree would suddenly shoot lightning at him, so he didn't react. On top of that, he was immune to lightning. The lightning bolt hit him, yet, instead of getting absorbed by his dantian, like normal lightning, this lightning bolt went through his whole body. It passed every organ, muscle, and bone, healing his body from the injury that the cane had brought upon him.

Gravis knew what had happened, but he almost couldn't believe it. "Life Lightning?" he uttered with shock as he realized what had happened. 'This tree has control over Life Lightning? How is that possible?'

"What did you say!?" shouted Old Man Lightning violently and loudly, but not with aggression. Instead, his voice sounded incredibly shocked. "Did you just say that this was Life Lightning!?" he asked Gravis, shaking his body violently.

"Yes!" Gravis said through the shaking of his body, getting more annoyed at the old man by the second.

Plonk!

Old Man Lightning let Gravis' body fall and turned to the tree. The tree was in the middle of the central plaza, taking up basically all the space. Its trunk was already over 30 meters wide, and its highest branch reached nearly the same height as the imposing Lightning Tower.

Surprisingly, the tree had no leaves. By all intents and purposes, it looked dead. Yet, the lightning that it had just shot at Gravis had shown otherwise.

Gravis had no idea what was going on, but Old Man Lightning seemed to know this kind of tree. He looked at the tree with wonder and amazement.

"Freya's Birch," Old Man Lightning said with shock.

Some of the disciples looked with shock at the tree after hearing those words, but most of them only showed confusion. Was this tree able to control Life Lightning? How was that possible?

"Hit me with your lightning!" Old Man Lightning shouted at the tree. Yet, the tree didn't react. Apparently, it wasn't a fan of the person that hit its creator with his cane multiple times. It was a newly born organism, not knowing anything about the world. It only knew that Gravis had created it, so it didn't want to help anyone else.

The old man continued shouting at the tree to hit him with its lightning while Gravis looked at it with wonder. Gravis extended his Spirit to the tree, and he felt a resonance of closeness and warmth from the tree. While inspecting the tree, Gravis also noticed its strength.

'Mid-Stage Energy Plant,' he concluded. That was quite impressive for a newly born tree. This thing was probably around as strong as that one tree where Gravis had met Skye.

'Also, aren't birches supposed to be white? Why is this thing brownish-grey?' Gravis thought after remembering the supposed name of the tree.

"Hello?" Gravis spoke to the tree with his Spirit. After saying that, the tree slightly swayed. Gravis was pleasantly surprised when he saw that. Communication with the Spirit was different than with words. The Spirit directly transmitted the concepts to the other person.

Speech tried to convey a concept by transforming it into words. The other person had to decipher the words and try to understand the concept that the first person tried to convey. Of course, this was not efficient since it was hard to translate complex concepts into words.

Spirit was better in that sense since it wasn't necessary to know any words. While this tree, obviously, wasn't able to understand words, it understood the concept that Gravis' Spirit conveyed. The concept was only a warm greeting and acknowledgment of its existence, after all.

The disciples only kept on watching in confusion. By now, their hatred towards Gravis was forgotten. Right now, they were only interested in the tree. Many of them thought about eventual uses of Life Lightning and grew excited. A free heal, whenever they wanted, was always useful.

Gravis walked closer to the tree, ignoring the old man that was still arguing with it. When he came closer, a branch extended towards him. Gravis didn't evade since he knew that the tree didn't want to do anything bad to him.

The branch coiled around Gravis' torso, pulling Gravis up. After some seconds, it put Gravis down at the position where he previously stood when he had involuntarily created the tree. By now, Gravis realized what it wanted. The feeling of hunger that came from it afterward only proved his suspicion.

"Hey, old man!" Gravis shouted.

By now, Old Man Lightning stopped arguing with the tree, looking at Gravis. "What?" he shouted.

"It wants more lightning," Gravis shouted from about 500 meters in the air. The tree was pretty big, after all.

"There is no more lightning!" Old Man Lightning transmitted with his Spirit. Shouting from such a distance seemed stupid. "If you absorb any more lightning, it won't ever regenerate."

Gravis thought about this for a second but then got another idea. "Hey, old man. What about the lightning of your disciples?" he transmitted.

By now, Old Man Lightning seemed to have calmed down. He was no longer looking at Gravis like he had created a calamity. After all, something positive came out of Gravis using up so much lightning.

"That won't do!" Old Man Lightning transmitted. "Freya's Birch only eats Life Lightning. Of course, that diet can be supplemented with Energy Beasts and Spirit Beasts. Sadly, the corpses of such beasts can only help it regenerate its current storage of Life Lightning. In order to increase its cultivation, it needs pure Life Lightning."

"Oh, then that's no issue," Gravis said.

"Just make the disciples attack me with their lightning, and I'll make as much Life Lightning as it wants."

Old Man Lightning's eyes widened. "You can do that? How is that even possible?" then, he started combing his beard again in thought. "Though, you also created the tree by absorbing lightning," Old Man

Lightning transmitted with a sigh, "I guess I should stop trying to understand you with normal logic. Alright, I'll make the disciples use their lightning on you."

"But," Old Man Lightning said with narrowed eyes. "We really need to talk after this!"

Gravis nodded with a smirk. "Sure."