

Lightning 261

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Chapter 261: One Year

Gravis asked Old Man Lightning about Byron's strength, and he said that Byron is probably one of the weakest ones. However, it was incredibly hard to kill him due to him having the Darkness Element. Byron was incredibly good at stealth, and when he saw an enemy that he couldn't defeat, he would just hide and run away. That was how he managed to escape from Lasar without any injuries, back in the Wind Sect.

Lasar, in comparison, was probably the strongest Sect Master out there. That had nothing to do with him having the Lightning Element but with him having gone through the tenth Stage of Energy Gathering. Just like Old Man Lightning, Lasar would need a level two Unity Will to ascend and a level one Unity Will to reach the Self Stage.

Going through the tenth level of Energy Gathering didn't increase the power of the Spirit but doubled the amount of Energy someone had. With this, Lasar could either hold out for longer or release way stronger attacks without using more Energy, comparatively speaking.

Yet, Gravis wasn't an impatient, hot-blooded youngster. If he just ran straight into the Darkness Sect to get his revenge, he might not return. He first had to make sure that he actually had a chance of winning. The win wouldn't need to be assured. Having a chance was already enough. After all, if Gravis' victory were assured, then wouldn't he waste an excellent tempering opportunity?

Like this, Gravis first exchanged a large amount of his Contribution Points for body tempering pills. He quickly ate those, and his body also reached the Spirit Seed Stage. With this, he wouldn't need to care about any Sapling Stage cultivators. As long as their attacks didn't hit him, he could destroy them without much effort.

Yet, if he wanted to take revenge on the upper echelon of the Darkness Sect, he would require superb dodging abilities. Even though Sapling Stage cultivators weren't very dangerous, their attacks could still injure him.

Gravis had already decided on how he would take revenge. He wouldn't slaughter the whole Sect. After all, even though the disciples had similar temperaments, they shouldn't be liable for what their leaders did. He decided to kill the Sapling Stage elders and Byron. That would be plenty enough for his revenge. A corrupt leadership would only raise corrupt disciples.

The Darkness Sect had the single other Self Stage cultivator outside the Heaven Sect, except for Old Man Lightning. This person was called Old Darkness. At least, that's what Old Man Lightning called him. The Darkness Sect called him Ancestor Darkness. Of course, Gravis would have no chance against someone at that level.

Though, two things made Old Darkness irrelevant to all this. First of all, just like Old Man Lightning, Old Darkness never involved himself with what the Sect did. In actuality, he was even more distant than Old Man Lightning. He was basically not even part of the Darkness Sect anymore. So, that person had no guilt in the matter with Gravis. There was no reason to kill him.

Second, and most importantly, Old Man Lightning would stay by his side. Of course, Old Man Lightning wouldn't involve himself in any fights. Neither he nor Gravis wanted that since Gravis wanted some tempering. Old Man Lightning would only involve himself if Old Darkness appeared.

One had to know that there were differences between Self Stage cultivators. This was apparent by the fact that 90% of all Self Stage cultivators lost their fights against the priests, while Old Man Lightning won. Even before his fight with the priest, Old Man Lightning was already stronger than Old Darkness. Now, with his level two Unity Will, Old Darkness couldn't even put up a fight against him. It was similar to the situation between Byron and Lasar.

So, in order to get ready for his goal, Gravis spent his time playing Dodge Ball. This training was invaluable when fighting against multiple people. He would fully make use of it until he couldn't improve anymore.

And like this, nearly a full year passed.

BANG, BANG, BANG, BANG!

The Spirit Seed was violently shooting around his Spirit Space, and Gravis only moved his body just as much as necessary. One pulled back shoulder here, another leaning of the torso there, though sometimes he still needed to actually take a step or jump. By now, the Spirit Seed only touched him very rarely.

PACK!

Gravis caught the Spirit Seed in his hand. By now, it wasn't as small anymore. In actuality, it was already as big as a ball. After all, his training hadn't stopped in all this time. He was about 95% on his way to the Sapling Stage. In about three weeks, he would reach the Sapling Stage.

"It's about time. In around two months, the war for resources will start. If I don't get to it now, I won't have any more time," Gravis said to himself as he left his Spirit Space.

He opened his eyes and stood up from the grass outside the Sect. He did some stretches and then started walking to Old Man Lightning's house. Surprisingly, lightning was no longer coming out of Gravis' abdomen. Instead, it was coming out of his chest.

After a couple of weeks of training, Gravis realized that if his lightning didn't conform to his dantian anyway, then why even store it there? So, he moved his lightning right into his chest. Like this, it wouldn't look as ridiculous, and it also wouldn't strike the ground when Gravis sat down. That had been annoying.

His chest was also wider than his abdomen, which made less lightning leave his body. It now looked like some white, aggressive ball grew out of his chest. Some of the stray bolts reached his neck, but not always. At least, it didn't look as ridiculous as lightning growing out of his dick.

He also tried to change the form of his stored lightning. If he managed to change its form into an elliptical one instead of a spherical one, nothing would poke out anymore. Sadly, the lightning always popped back into its previous form as soon as Gravis stopped using his Spirit on it. It, apparently, liked the spherical shape and wouldn't consider any other one.

Whoop!

Gravis' visible lightning vanished as he shoved enough of it into his Spirit to no longer be a danger to other people. By storing it in his chest, his new threshold was 80% of his maximum, and he kept it at precisely that threshold all the time. Instead of shoving it periodically in there, he had developed a habit to passively channel it into his Spirit.

He stepped into Old Man Lightning's house and walked up to him.

"You want to go ahead with it?" Old Man Lightning asked nonchalantly.

Gravis shook his head slightly. "Not completely. I first need to test my strength against something with similar power."

Old Man Lightning smiled. "Oh, you mean?"

Gravis nodded. "Yes. I'll hunt a high-grade Spirit Beast."

Old Man Lightning combed his beard. "Which one?"

"I already know which one," Gravis said. "Most of the high-grade Spirit Beasts don't care about fighting. I don't have an interest in fighting something that has no enmity with me or any interest in fighting back. So, I chose the beast living near Quake City, the Ogre."

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Chapter 262: Oath

Old Man Lightning combed his beard, pleased. "That's a good decision, Gravis," he said with a smile.

Gravis nodded. "It's hard finding high-grade Spirit Beasts that actually want to fight. After all, they have reached the end of their cultivation journey. Why would they want to temper themselves then? Yet, this Ogre seems to be different, at least by what I have read about it. Apparently, it's making a lot of troubles for everyone."

Old Man Lightning nodded. "Yes. It's called the Ogre due to its similarities to the mythological creature. In actuality, it's just some big ape or gorilla. I haven't seen it myself, so I don't know."

Gravis lifted an eyebrow. "I was wondering about that name. So, there's some mythological creature called Ogre?" he asked.

Old Man Lightning scratched his chin. "Well, calling it mythological might be a hyperbole. As far as I know, we once had those creatures."

"And I'm guessing we don't anymore?" Gravis asked.

Old Man Lightning nodded. "Yep. The Ogres were a species of big, hairy, human-like brutes. I think they could be counted as a mixture between a human and a beast."

Both of Gravis' eyebrows lifted. "A mixture of human and beast? How would that even work?" he asked.

Old Man Lightning rubbed his beard in thought. "It's hard to explain. Anatomically, they were pure beasts, yet surprisingly enough, they managed to mate with humans. That's why they were so peculiar."

Gravis put his hand on his chin in thought. "Mate with humans as a beast? I didn't know that was even possible."

Old Man Lightning shrugged. "Well, it isn't anymore. We, humans, like having beasts due to the potential tempering we get from fighting them. That's why the beasts still exist, even though we could probably eradicate them. But those Ogres went too far. You should know how something as simple as a beast reacts if it finds a weaker mate."

Gravis furrowed his brows. "It will just take the mate and do whatever it wants with them," he said.

Old Man Lightning nodded. "Exactly! The issue was that Ogres were smarter than normal beasts but dumber than humans. This allowed them to learn about the concept of unnecessary cruelty. Beasts normally only fight to survive or grow, but the Ogres fought and played with way weaker victims just to pass the time. Unfortunately, they were too stupid to see the bigger picture. After many years, the humans were fed up with the Ogres and just eradicated them."

Gravis nodded. "Makes sense. And this Ogre is not an actual Ogre, right?"

Old Man Lightning waved his hand with dismissal. "Nah. It's just some ape that seems to have too much fun with flaunting its power. As far as I know, it just runs around, shouts, and beats everything up it sees. I guess that is kind of its hobby."

"How long has it been doing this?" Gravis asked.

Old Man Lightning hummed. "I think for a little more than 70 years or something."

Gravis lifted an eyebrow. "That's pretty long. How come it is still alive even though it's basically provoking every living thing in its surroundings?"

Old Man Lightning smirked. "That's because it occupies the perfect spot."

"Could you explain?" Gravis asked.

"Well, Quake City is the main city belonging to the Earth Sect. The only humans the Ogre is annoying, are people from the Earth Sect. Therefore, no other Sect would send their people to hunt it. After all, a high-grade Spirit Beast is something that only a Sect Master can take on, and that not even reliably. It's a big risk to hunt such a powerful beast. So, in all these years, the Ogre only fought people from the Earth Sect."

A small glimmer of realization appeared in Gravis' eyes. "And since the Earth Sect fights very defensively, the Ogre can just run away as soon as it sees itself in danger. After all, earth cultivators are the slowest of all."

"Exactly!" Old Man Lightning said with a snap of his fingers. "This thing has been a huge issue for the last couple of decades, but the Earth Sect has no way to kill it."

Gravis rubbed his chin. "Interesting," he said and remained silent for a couple of seconds. "By the way, do you have an accurate map of the Core-Continent?" Gravis asked.

Whoosh!

A big map appeared in front of Gravis, hovering in the air. Gravis studied it and remembered every detail of this map. Something as simple as that was not difficult for a Spirit Forming expert. After finishing, Gravis nodded, and the map vanished again.

"Thanks! I'll be going now," Gravis said.

"Do you mind if I watch?" Old Man Lightning asked with a smirk.

Gravis shrugged. "Sure, why not? But please don't involve yourself, even if my death is certain."

Old Man Lightning smirked at Gravis' attitude. This was really a perfect mindset for cultivation! "I wouldn't dream of it! I swear upon my cultivation."

Gravis nodded and left the house. Swearing upon one's cultivation wasn't really some solemn oath with repercussions or anything. It was the same as if someone just said that they would promise something. It wasn't like some mystical force would destroy someone's cultivation if they broke such an oath. Keeping one's promise was entirely up to the individual.

Though, that was different for people cultivating lightning. After all, lightning abhorred hypocrisy and falsehood. If someone swore an oath like this while cultivating lightning, the backlash of breaking such an oath might actually make their lightning go berserk and kill them.

Earth cultivators would have a similar thing happening if they broke such an oath. After all, fully believing in their own path was the core tenant of the Earth Sect. Though, they would probably just not be able to advance anymore if they broke such an oath. It wasn't as ridiculous as their element killing them, like with lightning cultivators.

As for the other Elements? Such a promise had no binding power. The only thing forcing them to abide by it was their own personality and self-respect. If they broke it, nothing would happen.

Wind cultivators loved freedom anyway, so being bound by an oath was stupid for them. Water cultivators adapted to anything, so it also made no difference. Darkness cultivators? No one would even believe their oaths.

One would think that light cultivators would follow such an oath, but that also wasn't true. Surprisingly, the light and darkness cultivators were nearly identical in mindset. The only difference was that the light disciples acted righteous, while the darkness disciples just straight up said that they don't care. Darkness disciples were greedy assholes, and light disciples were greedy assholes that acted like friendly people.

Fire disciples also wouldn't care about any oath. After all, they were all about using every tool to win a fight. Breaking an oath was just one of their tools. So, all in all, one could only trust the oaths of lightning cultivators and earth cultivators.

As for the Heaven Sect? That was a mixed bag. Just like Heaven ignored its own rules, the Heavenborn could also do whatever they wanted, but another thing was stopping them. Their weak will, and therefore, their need for validation and respect.

Someone with a strong will didn't need riches, pleasures, or other people telling them how awesome they were. Only the path forward was important. Since the Heaven Sect didn't have a path forward and also didn't need a will, their face was incredibly important to them. That's why they didn't break any

promises. They just thought that it was beneath them. Of course, if they were to get backed into a corner, that would quickly change.

So, after hearing Old Man Lightning's promise, Gravis could actually temper himself. By swearing on his cultivation base, Old Man Lightning made it abundantly clear that he would not involve himself in the fight. If he hadn't done that, Gravis might have had some doubt in the back of his mind that the old man would save him.

Something like that would be the absolute worst-case scenario! If Gravis believed that Old Man Lightning would save his life, he would gain no tempering at all, even if Old Man Lightning wouldn't involve himself. It wasn't important what Old Man Lightning did, but what Gravis believed.

Imagine this scenario: A new cultivator gets thrown into the same practical test that Gravis went through. Yet, a stronger person would say that they would save his life if he were about to die. That new cultivator would get no will tempering during that test, even if that stronger person had lied. Like this, the cultivator would risk his life and also get no benefit from tempering. He was basically risking his life for nothing.

By swearing upon his cultivation, Old Man Lightning extinguished every doubt in Gravis' mind, allowing him to fully temper himself.

Like this, they left the Lightning Sect and traveled towards Quake City.

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Chapter 263: The Ogre

As soon as Gravis took out his Lightning Board, Old Man Lightning grew interested. "Hey, can I have one?" he asked.

Gravis looked at the old man with a smirk and retrieved another one. "Try it, but it's pretty hard to control it at first. Here, I'll show you."

Gravis gave Old Man Lightning some tips on how to use the Lightning Board correctly, and then they shot off. In the beginning, Old Man Lightning was a little clumsy, but he quickly adapted. After all, he had supreme control over his body.

With Gravis' higher lightning density, he was able to move way faster than before. His speed on the board had increased by half again, which was insanely fast, but that wasn't the end. Due to his lightning poking out of his body, its inherent magnetism also pulled the board upwards. Of course, the passive magnetism of his lightning wasn't enough to lift the board and his weighty body. Still, that made him even faster. Yet...

"WOOOOOOW!" Old Man Lightning transmitted with his Spirit as he shot through the area. His lightning was way denser than Gravis', so he was also way faster. He even started circling Gravis with insane speeds.

Right now, Gravis' speed was a little faster than Old Man Lightning's speed without the board. This already showed how fast and powerful Old Man Lightning was. Yet, Old Man Lightning's speed on the Lightning Board was just insane. Gravis guessed that he would need to reach the Tree Stage to reach such speeds.

CRK!

Suddenly, the Lightning Board under Old Man Lightning cracked apart. Apparently, he had been too fast for the board. After all, the Lightning Board was made by forgers in the Middle-Continent. They weren't able to make a Lightning Board that was able to resist such speeds.

Old Man Lightning tumbled and fell to the ground. His insane speeds made him tumble and roll for several kilometers until he finally stopped. His tumble left a wake of destruction behind. Gravis stopped beside Old Man Lightning and saw his destroyed clothes and dirty body.

"Hahaha!" Gravis broke out into loud laughter. After all this time of Old Man Lightning abusing him, it was finally Gravis' turn to see Old Man Lightning getting abused.

BZZZ! Whoop!

Old Man Lightning incinerated all the dirt on his body with his lightning and retrieved new clothes. Then, he gritted his teeth and looked at Gravis in annoyance. He quickly summoned his cane and shot it towards Gravis.

BZZZZ!

Gravis, who had seen that coming long ago, quickly moved his lightning from his chest into his head. After leaving the Sect, his lightning had already recovered to full, so when it went into his head, Gravis' head was seemingly replaced by a ball of lightning. The cane halted, and Old Man Lightning gritted his teeth further in frustration. This was not the first time Gravis had done that.

The first time Gravis got the idea, Old Man Lightning wasn't prepared for it. So, he had hit Gravis' head with his cane, which made the lightning shoot out, destroying the majority of Old Man Lightning's arm. Ever since that day, Gravis hadn't been hit with the cane again.

"I might just kill the Ogre myself if you don't stop laughing!" Old Man Lightning said with frustration.

"Oh, shut up," Gravis said between laughs. "You already swore upon your cultivation."

"Tch," Old Man Lightning spat to the side. Of course, he only said that out of frustration, and Gravis knew that. Old Man Lightning wouldn't risk endangering Gravis' tempering for something as simple as Gravis laughing at him. "Give me another one."

Another Lightning Board appeared. "This is my last one, so please, try not to destroy it, okay?" Gravis said.

Old Man Lightning didn't answer and just accelerated on his new board, though this time, he wasn't traveling at his full speed. He only moved about as fast as Gravis.

Like this, they traveled for a little over half a day until they reached their target. On the horizon, they could see Quake City already. It was an absolutely massive city. Not only was it many kilometers wide, but it also resembled a mountain. The buildings at its edges were so big and bulky that they created a wall all by themselves. Due to that, Quake City didn't even need any walls. The buildings were just too massive and cluttered.

Like before, Gravis' Spirit wasn't able to enter the city, even though it was well within his range. "How many people are in the city?" Gravis asked.

"That's not that easy to answer," Old Man Lightning said. "Quake City acts as a hub for the Earth Sect. Many holes around the city act as tunnels to the Earth Sect. Just for your information, the Earth Sect is around 200 kilometers to the north of Quake City. Therefore, the top cultivators in the city can change anytime. Right now, there are three Sapling Stage cultivators in the city."

Old Man Lightning's Spirit was too advanced and powerful to be blocked by the city's Formation Arrays. After all, he was at the Self Stage. He could see everything inside the city without any issue.

Gravis rubbed his chin. "Interesting. That's a lot of elders. Doesn't the Earth Sect only have like five of those?"

"They have five elders and two disciples at the Sapling Stage," Old Man Lightning answered. "Those two disciples are both Ascender's Talents. As far as I know, one of them is even very close to having a Unity Will. You should know that it only takes a single day to reach the Unity Realm from the Tree or Self Stage if your will is powerful enough. One more tempering opportunity for that guy and he only has to wait to ascend."

"Oh, that's pretty impressive," Gravis said. "By the way, do we have any Ascender's Talents?"

Old Man Lightning nodded. "Strictly speaking, we have one, but we actually have two," Old Man Lightning answered. "One of them is a boy called Therm. He constantly roams around the Core-Continent, and he hasn't returned in like two years. He is a cultivation madman, just like you. The last thing I heard of him was that he was tearing through the wilds, battling anything he sees. He wants to condense a Unity Will before reaching the Tree Stage."

"Interesting. And the other one?" Gravis asked.

"The other one is Little Lightning Bolt," Old Man Lightning said. "Normally, we don't count Sect Masters as Ascender's Talents, but Little Lightning Bolt fulfills all categories. He just took over the seat of the Sect Master because the previous one ascended."

Gravis looked like he remembered something. "Speaking of, where is Lasar? I haven't seen him in the past weeks," Gravis asked.

Old Man Lightning smiled with pride. "He went out to temper himself too. Seeing me about to ascend has rekindled his motivation. He is currently searching for a high-grade Spirit Beast that's willing to fight."

Gravis was a little surprised. "Then why didn't he go after the Ogre?"

"He suspected that you were interested in testing your power, so he left the Ogre for you," Old Man Lightning said. "You are very young, and searching for months would waste valuable time for you. For him, wasting some months is nothing."

Gravis smiled bitterly. "Wow, he even considers me at a time like this."

Old Man Lightning waved his hand dismissively. "It's the job of us elders to look after the new generation. He would've done the same for anyone else in the Sect."

"Thank you," Gravis said. "By the way, now that I think about it, isn't our Sect undefended right now with you here with me?" Gravis asked.

"Nah. I informed the elders, and the Sect is on lockdown until I return. After all, this shouldn't take longer than a day," Old Man Lightning said nonchalantly. "Even if someone attacks, the Formation Arrays can hold out for that time. On top of that, everyone knows exactly what I would do to them if they attacked in my absence. As long as the High Priest doesn't get involved, I can do whatever I want."

Gravis nodded. "True. Anyway, I'll go search for the Ogre now. Try to stay at least 100 kilometers away from our fight. I don't want to get distracted by you."

Old Man Lightning spat to the side. "Little shit, commanding me like I'm your descendant. Fine!" Old Man Lightning said in exasperation.

With that said, Old Man Lightning distanced himself from Gravis until he no longer was inside Gravis' Spirit's range. When Gravis heard Old Man Lightning's answer, he chuckled a little to himself. After all his hardships under Old Man Lightning's cane, Gravis was finally able to annoy him back.

After some seconds, Gravis put his Lightning Board away and started running through the surroundings. The Ogre roamed around the mountains in Quake City's vicinity, so it should be somewhere in the surrounding 500 kilometers. With Gravis' Spirit, it shouldn't take too long to find the Ogre.

And sure enough, after only a couple of minutes, the Ogre appeared inside Gravis' Spirit. It was a massive gorilla, nearly ten meters tall. Ten meters wasn't really big for Spirit Beasts, but that wasn't important. Its smaller size actually made it even faster and more mobile than other Spirit Beasts. Yet, right now, it wasn't showing any of these tendencies. Right now, it was sleeping on the side of a mountain.

Gravis smirked when he saw that and quickly moved towards it.

"I haven't had a proper fight in a while."

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Chapter 264: Gravis vs. Ogre

As soon as Gravis reached a distance of ten kilometers, the Ogre woke up. 'Interesting. Spirit Beasts don't have a Spirit, but they have some kind of sense that makes them feel danger. All the previous Spirit Beasts I killed had only reacted when I reached a distance of five kilometers. So, high-grade Spirit Beasts have a range of ten kilometers. Good to know,' Gravis thought.

The Ogre looked in the direction of Gravis and started punching its chest in a show of dominance. The pounds were thundering, and Gravis could even hear them very clearly from such a distance. 'That's a powerful body. Its body is probably multiple times stronger than mine. I need to use my lightning to make up for the speed difference.'

"UWAAA!" the Ogre shouted aggressively and started charging at Gravis. Surprisingly, the ground beneath its feet didn't explode even though it was shooting itself forward with incredible power. Gravis didn't evade and took out his saber. He knew that he couldn't match the Ogre's power, even if he added his lightning. Yet, Gravis had a plan, and that required him to collide head-on with the Ogre.

Gravis and the Ogre quickly closed in on each other, and Gravis used his preloaded saber to attack back. The Ogre punched with its right fist, while Gravis attacked said fist with his loaded saber.

BOOOOOM!

The surrounding 100 meters exploded as a shockwave annihilated everything. Blood splashed as a huge crevice was torn into the Ogre's fist. Its middle finger was destroyed while the saber went halfway into its hand. The Ogre shouted in rage and pain while Gravis was shot into the distance with unreal speeds, barely retrieving his saber into his Spirit Space.

BANG BANG BANG BANG!

Gravis destroyed a massive amount of trees and boulders as he shot back. His saber was still fine, luckily, but his right arm was basically annihilated, along with his shoulder and some torn muscles. All in all, Gravis' injuries were way more severe than the Ogre's.

Gravis rolled a couple of meters more until he finally stopped.

BZZZ!

He used about 40% of his body's inherent Energy to reach his peak condition again.

"RAAAAA!" The Ogre shouted in rage as it shot at Gravis with bloodshot eyes. "DIE!" It transmitted to Gravis with an incredible amount of fury. "DIE! DIE! DIE!" it continued transmitting.

Gravis smirked when he saw that. His plan was a success. The Ogre had gotten an injury, while Gravis only used 40% of his inherent Energy.

Gravis' goal had been twofold. First of all, he wanted to injure one of its hands, which would make it act in one of two ways. Either it would not use that hand as much anymore, or it would be blinded by rage and make the injuries on its hand more serious. Both were good outcomes.

The second goal was the Ogre's mental state. Beasts didn't have powerful wills. After all, they were mostly controlled by their instincts. If such a beast got injured by its opponent, it would either become apprehensive or enraged. Both mindsets would make the beast weaker in combat. Either it would hesitate in attacks, or it would attack more directly to vent its rage. Just like with the injury, both outcomes were beneficial to Gravis.

Obviously, the Ogre was enraged. Its pain was completely forgotten as it abused its right hand to accelerate, leaving bloody fist-prints along its way. The Ogre quickly closed in on Gravis' position while Gravis resummoned his saber. Gravis readied himself and stood in a battle-position, waiting for the Ogre to reach him.

"RAAA!" the Ogre shouted in anger as it punched with its left fist. Gravis had already been prepared for that attack. His pre-dodging appeared again after a long while. He hadn't been that outclassed in speed for a long while, which hadn't required him to use such a risky maneuver. After all, one wrong dodge could become fatal. Gravis still remembered his incorrect dodging against Elder Red, back in the Fire Guild.

Whoom! BZZZZ!

Gravis barely managed to sidestep the massive fist with the help of his lightning as the attack's mighty wind blew his hair back. After sidestepping, Gravis didn't actually attack but passed the Ogre instead, using more lightning on his legs to make him as fast as possible. Why was he doing that? Wasn't that a good opportunity? The answer to that came swiftly.

BOOOOOM!

Gravis had placed a Lightning Bomb behind him when the Ogre had charged at him. His Spirit had become more powerful with his breakthrough, but it was still not as dense as his lightning. Gravis had used 30% of his Spirit for the Lightning Bomb, and it only managed to absorb around 20% of his lightning before it exploded. The Ogre, blinded by its rage, had attacked with its full power. Of course, that punch directly hit the Lightning Bomb, making it explode violently.

"RAAAAA!" the Ogre cried in rage as it shot backward due to the explosion. Yet, surprisingly, its left fist wasn't that injured. It only showed some red marks and some cuts. One had to know that the Lightning Bomb was one of Gravis' most powerful attacks. That it didn't even manage to majorly injure the fist would appear surprising to the untrained eye.

'As expected,' Gravis thought. This had confirmed Gravis' suspicion.

Yet, even though the Ogre wasn't really injured, the shockwave still threw it backward, right into the waiting Gravis. Instead of attacking with his saber, Gravis made his feet explode with lightning as he jumped up with all his power.

BANG!

The Ogre was ten meters tall, and even though it shot back, it still flew over Gravis. After all, its center of Gravity was pretty high off the ground. Just as the Ogre passed over him, Gravis kicked its body with all his physical power. His foot exploded with lightning, but the Ogre wasn't injured. Though, that wasn't Gravis' plan. He had something else in mind.

"RAAA!" the Ogre shouted as it shot into the air. Gravis might not have been able to injure the Ogre, but his powerful kick had enough power to shoot the Ogre into the air. Gravis had gained a lot of experience in fighting Spirit Beasts in the past year, and he also noticed how effective it was to throw them into the air.

Beasts generally didn't use their inherent elements in a smart way since they lacked creativity. Of course, Skye had been an exception. Instead, most beasts used their element to empower their attacks or to defend themselves. Gravis had already realized the Ogre's element as soon as he saw it.

Fittingly enough, the Ogre had the earth element. That was why the ground beneath its feet didn't explode when it accelerated, and also why the explosion didn't injure its left fist. A stable ground made for better acceleration, and the earth element also hardened its fists. On top of that, the only reason why Gravis even considered matching the first attack was that the Ogre hadn't taken him seriously at that point. If it had, Gravis' body would have been distributed onto the surroundings.

The Ogre reached a height of fifty meters and was completely cut off from the ground. Without the ground, it was more difficult to use the earth element. As long as it touched the ground, it could use the

earth to empower itself, but if it didn't touch the ground, it could only use its inherent Energy, which was not much. Beasts had pitifully little Energy inside their bodies.

BZZZZZ!

Gravis summoned a gigantic Lightning Bomb above himself. Before using it, he had about 40% of his Lightning and 70% of his Spirit remaining. One had to remember that every usage of lightning on Gravis' leg to accelerate cost a whole 20%, while 10% of that was quickly reabsorbed every time.

Gravis had used 62% of his Spirit in this Lightning Bomb, which was just enough to barely hold all his lightning without exploding. After all, the Lightning Bomb always absorbed as much lightning as it could. After summoning it, his lightning was empty while he only had 8% of his Spirit left.

SHING!

Gravis jumped upward with all his physical power and moved his saber through the Lightning Bomb, absorbing it immediately. Without waiting, Gravis slashed forward, destroying his saber in the process. This high-grade Spirit Weapon had enough hardness to resist his Lightning Crescent when he had been at the initial stage, but now, the Lightning Crescent was too powerful.

Luckily, such a strike didn't create a counterforce for Gravis since it just cut the air. Due to that, Gravis' jump wasn't halted.

Whoop!

Gravis summoned a sheet of metal before him and held onto it. The violent magnetism of the Lightning Crescent and Gravis' jump pulled him upwards, making Gravis fly right behind the crescent. In nearly no time, the Lightning Crescent hit the Ogre as it was still flailing helplessly in the air. Unfortunately, it didn't have the wind element.

BOOOOOOOM!

A gigantic explosion out of lightning, over 200-meters-wide, appeared in the sky. It vanished just as quickly, but the shockwave destroyed the whole mountain on which Gravis and the Ogre had fought. Even the people inside Quake City noticed the distant, white light, even though the city was nearly 200 kilometers away.

The mountain was blown into smithereens as debris and giant boulders flew for kilometers. Any living thing that had been in the surrounding kilometer got annihilated, while the flying boulders destroyed stretches of land like meteors.

Gravis had closed his eyes and blocked them with his hand before the explosion happened. After all, he knew his own attack. After the explosion vanished, Gravis opened his eyes again. He needed to use his eyes right now since the shockwaves in the surroundings made using his Spirit impossible.

Gravis saw the remains of the Ogre and realized that it was still barely alive. It had used its wide arms to block its torso, neck, and head. Due to that block, it managed to barely stay alive.

There was nearly no skin left on its body, and only brittle bones remained of its limbs. Even its torso and head were severely injured. The arms hadn't been able to block the whole explosion, after all. Bits and pieces of burnt skin, muscle, and bone fell down, passing Gravis' body.

'Good thing I have a contingency plan!' Gravis thought. The reason why Gravis had jumped after his attack was twofold. Firstly, the closer he was to the explosion, the more lightning he could reabsorb. Secondly, if the Ogre still had some movement ability after that attack, it might be able to escape. Gravis wanted to be absolutely sure about his victory.

PACK!

Gravis hit the remaining bones of the Ogre's arms and grabbed them. After that, he used them as a foothold to shoot himself at the Ogre's neck. It was still too stunned and shocked to react to anything. The muscles and skin on its neck were nearly completely destroyed, and Gravis saw some holes in its arteries and trachea. Gravis grabbed everything that looked like a tube in the Ogre's neck and pulled with all his power.

Pssssshh!

Blood and air violently shot out of the Ogre's neck as both tubes were torn apart. Then, Gravis kicked the Ogre with all his power to gain distance. After all, if it somehow managed to move a part of its body in a desperate attempt to hit Gravis, he could die. Its body was still many times more powerful than Gravis'.

BANG! BOOM!

Gravis and the Ogre fell for several hundred meters since the Lightning Crescent had annihilated nearly the whole mountain. Gravis immediately jumped up again and shot towards the place where the Ogre fell.

After some seconds, he arrived and saw it. It tried to move around as its survival instincts kicked in, but without much luck. Its flailing destroyed some of the surroundings, but it wasn't doing much. Gravis simply watched it flail around. It was about to die, and there was no sense in endangering himself by coming closer.

Like this, Gravis watched the Ogre coldly as it slowly lost its life.

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Chapter 265: Visitors

Gravis waited for several minutes in which the Ogre started losing his Life Energy. Its body was doing its best to heal, but the loss of Life Energy due to the injuries was just too rapid. Before it came even close to regenerating its neck, its Life Energy was already used up. After that, it slowly stopped moving.

Whoom!

Gravis felt the Energy inside the Ogre entering his body, which confirmed the Ogre's death. Sadly, Spirit Beasts didn't have much Energy, so it only gave him a minuscule amount back. Gravis had absorbed around 10% of his lightning back while being inside the Lightning explosion and got another 5% from the Ogre's death. The couple of minutes of rest also recovered another 5%. This meant that right now, Gravis had 20% of his lightning, and around 10% of his Spirit left.

"I wonder if I can fit that into my Spirit Space. It should fit, theoretically," Gravis said.

Whoop!

The corpse vanished and reappeared inside Gravis' Spirit Space. One shouldn't forget that the size of his Spirit Space had become bigger after his breakthrough. If the Ogre were standing upright, it wouldn't fit, but with big parts of its body missing and by changing its position, Gravis managed to squeeze it in. Though, he also had to move his Spirit Seed out of the way. Otherwise, the seed would just burn through the corpse. That thing was an incredibly concentrated and potent loaded ball of lightning, after all.

After that, Gravis stretched himself a little. "That was a good fight," he said.

Gravis had used all his Spirit and lightning to win that fight. If he hadn't managed to use the Lightning Crescent, he wouldn't have been able to win. The fight had been short, but Gravis had used all his power in a swift but powerful burst.

By now, the shockwaves had calmed down, and Gravis could use his Spirit again. Having nothing better to do, Gravis checked out his surroundings. "Weird, why isn't the old man here yet? There's no reason for him to wait."

"Hey, old man, I'm done. You can come over now," Gravis shouted. Old Man Lightning wasn't inside his Spirit's range, but Gravis was sure that he was inside Old Man Lightning's Spirit's area.

"You'll see why," the voice of Old Man Lightning appeared inside Gravis' mind, making him lift an eyebrow.

"The only reason why you wouldn't come is that there is probably another fight approaching," Gravis muttered. "At least, I can't think of another reason."

"Well, I wouldn't call it a fight," Old Man Lightning transmitted back. "Let's just call it diplomacy," he said.

"Diplomacy?" Gravis asked, but before he could ask any further question, multiple people entered the range of his Spirit. Gravis looked at them and realized that they were from the Earth Sect. Their clothing, weapons, and demeanor fit perfectly. On top of that, the group was quite powerful. Gravis saw two Sapling Stage cultivators and around ten Seed Stage cultivators.

One should remember that the Earth Sect only had seven Sapling Stage cultivators in total. Having two of them here was quite impressive. "They probably noticed the commotion and came to check the place out," Gravis said, seemingly to no one in particular. Of course, he was talking to Old Man Lightning.

"Do you think they will reward me for killing the menace that plagued their Sect for decades?" Gravis asked. He couldn't transmit his thoughts since Old Man Lightning was outside his Spirit's range.

"Not sure," Old Man Lightning sent back. "The people of the Earth Sect are weird in some way. I really can't predict what they'll do."

Gravis waited for them to reach a distance of 40 kilometers. After all, a Sapling Stage cultivator only had a Spirit with such a range. Gravis noticed that the eyes of the two leading people changed. One of the people was an older man with thick brown hair, while the other one looked nearly identical to him. The only real difference between them was the age. One was old, while the other looked to be in his twenties.

Their eyes showed a glint of surprise. Gravis guessed that that was probably due to him not being injured and his weird cultivation. After all, the inherent Energy of his body corresponded only to the tenth level of Energy Gathering. This, together with his Spirit, made for a lot of confusion.

Gravis waited until they closed in some more. It took nearly a full five minutes until they crossed another 20 kilometers. Earth cultivators really weren't the fastest. After they reached a distance of about 20 kilometers, they stopped. Gravis guessed that they stopped at that distance so that even the Seed Stage cultivators could see him.

"Why are you here?" asked the older man at the Sapling Stage.

"I killed the Ogre," Gravis transmitted back.

The eyes of the people narrowed in doubt. "Don't lie to us!" the older man said again. Who was Gravis kidding? They could feel that Gravis' Spirit was only at the Seed Stage. How could someone at that Stage accomplish something that their Sect Master couldn't?

PLOMP!

A huge, mangled body appeared beside Gravis. The eyes of the cultivators widened in shock. They quickly recognized the corpse as nearly everyone had seen the Ogre at least once. Even though it was nearly unrecognizable, its thick bones, mighty chest, and powerful muscles allowed them to identify the corpse.

Whoop!

The corpse disappeared again. "Happy?" Gravis asked evenly.

The people looked with shock at each other, but the two leaders still showed narrowed eyes. "Who helped you?"

"Was just me. Was an honest one-v-one," Gravis stated. Then, Gravis rolled his eyes. "You'll probably also doubt that. Wait a second."

BZZ!

A small bit of lightning appeared above Gravis' hand and vanished again. "You believe me now?" Gravis asked. Everyone knew that being dishonest was an issue for lightning cultivators. The only proof that was better would be to swear upon the name of Heaven. Of course, something like that was only reserved for important matters.

Everyone's eyes widened again in shock, yet their eyes then showed emotions that Gravis would have never expected. They showed sadness, melancholy, grief, and similar emotions. 'What's up with them?' Gravis thought.

Yet, Gravis was sure that those emotions didn't appear because of the Ogre's death. After all, if they had liked the Ogre, they would have reacted with shock, rage, and hatred. But if they wanted the Ogre to die, they should be elated, happy, or relieved. Melancholy and unaggressive sadness made no sense to Gravis.

"Thank you for telling us," the younger person said politely, but then he narrowed his eyes in coldness. "But I have one last question. This is important, so please answer truthfully."

Gravis furrowed his brows. "I have no reason to lie. Just ask."

The young man took a deep breath and closed his eyes to calm down. Then, his eyes shot open, and he looked at Gravis with concentration.

"Are you blind?"

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Chapter 266: Stubbornness and Loyalty

Gravis looked at them with unamused eyes. "Are you actually for real with that question?" Gravis asked.

Back when he had first seen his new look, he had expected that a lot of people would question his vision, but that surprisingly didn't happen as often. It actually made sense. After all, the chances of a blind person reaching such power were low. Having no vision was a severe detriment in the Body Tempering and Energy Gathering Realm.

The younger of the two Sapling Stage cultivators continued narrowing his eyes. "Just answer the question!" he shouted. Apparently, he was quite serious about this question.

Gravis snorted. "No, I'm not fucking blind," he said with an annoyed tone.

All the people's eyes narrowed, yet the sadness in their eyes also reappeared, confusing Gravis. 'What's up with them?' he asked himself.

The older person took a step forward. "Then, you must be Gravis, right?" he asked.

Gravis lifted his brows in surprise. "You know my name?" he asked in surprise.

The older person closed his eyes and then sighed in melancholy. Their unfitting display of emotions towards the current situation made Gravis think that he was under an illusion again. He looked through his whole body and also his belongings. Of course, that was unnecessary. After all, he wore nothing that could be considered an artifact or something similar. Even his weapon had been destroyed.

The older person looked at the other cultivators and nodded severely. The others also sighed but then opened their eyes with determination.

Whoosh!

Shields, pikes, clubs, and spears appeared in all their hands, making Gravis lift an eyebrow.

"Then, we must fight to the death!" shouted the older of the two Sapling Stage cultivators.

It took a couple of seconds to process this new development. After seconds of calculating every eventuality, Gravis answered only one word.

"What?"

"Today, either you or us will die! There is no other way!" the younger of the Sapling Stage cultivators said with battle intent.

"Why?" Gravis asked, trying to understand the situation. The fuck was going on?

The cultivators shot forward, but they were still about 20 kilometers away. It would probably take another couple of minutes to reach him. Their slow speed made for an interesting contrast to their motivation to kill him. The rather wide distance also didn't help.

Seeing that no one answered him, Gravis asked again. "So, could you explain why we are suddenly supposed to fight to the death after I killed the beast that made problems for you for the last couple of decades? I don't get it," he said.

"We are thankful that you took down the Ogre," said the younger person, "but you have disrespected the Earth Sect, and there is no redemption from that! You must die today!" he shouted threateningly.

Sadly, Gravis felt no threat from them. First of all, even while not being at his peak condition, killing them wouldn't even be an issue. On top of that, in comparison to him, they were moving about as fast as slugs. This was about as unthreatening as they could get.

Gravis blinked a couple of times. "When did that happen?" he asked.

The cultivators charged with all their speed. "You have invaded the Earth Guild in the Middle-Continent and destroyed all the houses! This is a humiliation to the entire Earth Sect! Therefore, you must die!" the older person shouted with power and battle intent.

Gravis looked like he remembered something. "Oh, that," he said. "I was only paying the Earth Guild back for what they have done. They disrespected me first, so I just repaid that favor." Gravis shrugged and shook his head. "I really don't get how this suddenly became a life and death enmity."

"Your reasons for doing that are irrelevant!" shouted the older person aggressively. "We are one entity, one organization, one Sect, one family! Anyone or anything that hurts our family must die!"

By now, the earth cultivators managed to close in by another kilometer. Only 19 more to go!

Gravis sighed and rubbed the bridge of his nose. "So, let me get this straight. Hypothetically, if the Guild Master of the Earth Guild wanted to kill or suppress me for absolutely no reason, you still wouldn't allow me to take revenge?" Gravis asked.

"No!" the younger person shouted. "We are one family, and no matter what someone in our family has done, we will stand by their side! Even if they become a monster or become the enemy of the entire world, we will always stand by our family!"

Gravis rubbed his chin in thought. "Loyalty, huh?" he muttered. "Loyalty is a good trait, I suppose, but don't you think you are taking it a bit too far? Unwavering loyalty can become injustice and unfairness."

The cultivators were still very motivated and angry. "Justice and fairness don't exist! The bigger fist is always right, and as long as we all stay and hold together, nothing will break us apart! With this, we have the biggest fist, and are therefore right!" the younger person shouted, still charging with all his speed.

Gravis hummed a little. "I guess that makes, at least, some sense," he said, "but I think you are oversimplifying a complex situation. Say, are you actually just using all these excuses to temper yourself?" Gravis asked with interest.

"Of course not!" shouted the older one in anger. "This is what we believe, and masking our beliefs like this would dishonor them! Earth doesn't give, and there is no reason to hide our beliefs! Today, either you or us will die!"

Gravis looked evenly at the "charging" disciples. They still had around 17 kilometers to go. "You do realize that you have no chance of victory, right?" Gravis asked. "I am fast enough to evade the Ogre, and my attacks are strong enough to kill it. Your defenses mean nothing in front of me."

For the first time, the older man gnashed his teeth. "We know that! We know that we are running into our deaths, but we can't betray our beliefs! Our beliefs are what defines us!" he shouted with battle intent, anxiety, sadness, and a little bit of fear.

Gravis' eyes widened. 'So that's why they were so sad when they saw me,' he concluded. 'They saw me and my power and knew that they had no chance against me. The whole melancholy and sadness they felt was for the loss of their own lives. The question about me being blind was probably just a shot in the dark, hoping that I was someone else that just looked similar to... well, myself. Fuck, this situation is so surreal.'

For the first time in a long while, Gravis wasn't sure what to feel. Obviously, they stepped over his bottom line by intending to kill him, but they were also kind of pathetic while doing so. They were not even a small threat. On top of that, they weren't running into the fight to win, but to die. Gravis scratched his head as he tried to comprehend the ridiculousness of this situation.

Suddenly, Gravis thought of something. "Did you tell me all this from such a great distance so that I could flee from all of you?" Gravis asked.

The Spirits of some of the cultivators shook. They didn't need to answer as their Spirit already told Gravis everything. Yes, that was precisely their plan. They needed to defend their beliefs, which forced them to attack him at full force, but they also didn't want to lose their lives. Only by forcing Gravis to flee would they be able to keep both.

The cultivators didn't answer anymore as they continued charging. Now, this situation finally made some kind of sense. Gravis rubbed his chin in interest and a slight bit of amusement. 'I wonder if their beliefs or their lives are more important to them.'

"No worries," Gravis said with a smile. "I'll stay right here! Take as long as you need."

Like this, the disciples started becoming nervous again.

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Chapter 267: Belief or Life?

The earth disciples started closing in while Gravis waited calmly. Yet, after another minute, Gravis grew impatient. "This is taking too long. I'm coming to you," he said.

BOOM!

Gravis pushed himself forward with his physical body, assisted by some of his lightning. He wasn't fully loading his feet but only using it to go a little faster. After all, he had to be prepared for the "fight".

Even while only using a slight bit of his lightning, he was already double as fast as the earth disciples. As they saw him closing in, they grew more nervous and fearful. This wasn't how this was supposed to go! They wanted to keep their beliefs and their lives! If this continued, they would just die. Yet, they had already committed to it and couldn't just back out now.

After a couple of seconds, both sides finally met each other. When 100 meters was between them, they stopped.

BANG, BANG, BANG!

Their huge shields hit the ground with mighty sounds. They built a fortification with their shields with impressive speed. After that, they waited for Gravis to approach.

"What's up?" Gravis asked. "Why did you stop? Don't you want to kill me?" he asked.

"Go ahead! Attack us!" the older person shouted. "If you attack us, you will see what will happen!"

Gravis saw this and got reminded of his fight against the Guild Master and Vice-Guild Master of the Earth Guild. This was exactly the same.

"But isn't it you guys who want to kill me?" Gravis asked. "Isn't waiting like this without attacking already a betrayal of your beliefs?" Gravis asked with amusement in his voice.

The people gritted their teeth. On the surface, they didn't want to admit that, but their emotions begged to differ. They felt rage and frustration at Gravis' words. Not because he was provoking them, but because, in their eyes, he was forcing them to kill themselves. Why couldn't that stubborn guy just leave? In their minds, Gravis was simply too cruel.

BANG, BANG, BANG!

The shields cluttered as the fortification decided to move forward. They did this one step at a time, and they were moving even slower. Yet, this time, Gravis didn't mind that. They could move as slow as they wanted. Even mortals were able to cross a distance of 100 meters without taking too much time.

Gravis waited for a couple of seconds as they steadily got closer. After around 15 seconds, they reached a distance of five meters. Even with their slow speed, attacking from such a close range wouldn't be an issue to them. Yet, they just stopped again, not attacking at all.

Gravis snickered a bit and took some steps forward. The shields wavered a little as Gravis walked closer. After taking a couple of steps, Gravis stopped. Right now, only half-a-meter was between him and the shields. He was well within the range of their attacks. Still, no attack appeared.

"What are you doing?" the voice of Old Man Lightning suddenly appeared inside Gravis' mind. Old Man Lightning had come into the area of Gravis' Spirit, so Gravis could finally talk with him without having to shout everything.

"I want to see if their beliefs or their lives are more important to them," Gravis transmitted with amusement.

"You know," Old Man Lightning answered. "That is kind of cruel. After all, their beliefs are their cultivation. As soon as they break them, their Spirit will break, and their element will leave. They would fall back into the Body Tempering Realm."

"I know," Gravis answered directly with no change in emotion. "The Earth Guild in the Middle-Continent told me as much."

"Then why are you still doing this?" Old Man Lightning asked. "Don't get me wrong, I'm not mad or anything. I also don't disagree with that. After all, they have said that they would kill you. I am just interested in the reason."

"Well," Gravis answered. "To us, life is obviously more important than our so-called beliefs. Yes, lying or deceit would be bad for our cultivation, but as long as we stay alive, we can always recover. So, while they probably value their beliefs as much as their lives, I don't. Right now, they have only said that they are going to kill me. Yet, saying that and actually attempting it is a huge difference, in my opinion. If they only say it, they will lose their cultivation, but if they go through with it, they'll lose their lives."

"Hmm," Old Man Lightning hummed a little. "That actually makes sense. Then, sure, go ahead. I'm also interested in how this will go down."

Old Man Lightning and Gravis had been talking calmly for a couple of seconds while the earth cultivators remained still. "I'm still waiting!" Gravis said.

"Attack and see what happens!" one of the Seed Stage cultivators said. In fact, that was precisely the disciple that stood directly in front of Gravis.

Gravis laughed a little. "Alright! Don't mind if I do," he said, and the shield wall shivered a little again.

Gravis slowly lifted his right leg. "I am going to kick your shield now. No worries, you won't die. I'll do it very slowly, okay? You can counterattack whenever you want!"

"Go ahead!" shouted the disciple. He tried to sound imposing, but panic and fear coated his voice.

"Here I go!" Gravis said.

BANG!

Gravis kicked the shield, and the person behind it got shot away. One had to remember that only very few people had a body equally as powerful as their cultivation. All the present Seed Stage cultivators had, at most, bodies equal to the initial stage of Spirit Forming. The kicked person shot over all the people behind him. Luckily, he was an earth cultivator and had a powerful shield. Thus, he didn't receive any injury.

No counterattack came, even though Gravis' attack was very telegraphed. This was the perfect opportunity for a counterattack. When Gravis saw this, he snickered a bit. "Still no counterattack?" he asked.

The shields rustled again as another person replaced the previous spot. They also didn't answer. Slowly, Gravis lifted his right leg again.

"Another kick is coming. Please be careful, okay?" Gravis said with a mocking tone.

BANG! Whoosh!

Gravis kicked, but surprisingly, the person's spear in front of him also shot at him. Gravis, of course, was ready for that. He was playing with them, but he had never lowered his vigilance. Gravis summoned a bit of lightning in his left, outstretched hand, making the spear move to the side. The spear missed, while Gravis' kick shot the person away.

BANG!

Suddenly, a concentrated lightning spear shot out of Gravis' right hand and shot at the flying disciple. Gravis had been prepared for anyone that valued their beliefs over their lives. The power of his kick made the shield go to the side, creating an easy path for his concentrated lightning spear to hit him. The spear hit, and the disciple got incinerated.

Gravis felt the dead disciple's Energy enter his body, refilling his lightning a little bit more than what he had used for the spear. The people behind the shields shook in nervousness. A brother of theirs just died. By now, they had abandoned the possibility of keeping their beliefs and lives.

"The first idiot that values his beliefs over his life has died," Gravis said mockingly. "By the way, I'll be right back. Just wait here." Gravis said and then ran past the barricade. The barricade didn't attack or stop him.

The first disciple that Gravis had kicked stood a hundred meters away from the barricade, very slowly walking back.

Whoop!

Gravis appeared right in front of him, making the disciple halt his breathing. He froze and wasn't sure how to react. He had been singled out! Why was it him?

"I'll now move my hand very slowly towards your neck. You can counterattack if you want. You can, of course, also flee. Don't worry. I won't chase you," Gravis said with a smirk.

Gravis' hand slowly inched towards the disciple's neck. "Life or beliefs. Decide!" Gravis said.

The disciple's mind stopped working with a cacophony of emotions. His beliefs told him to attack, but his instincts told him to run! The two sides inside of him pulled him in two different directions. He felt like his own mind was tearing him apart. What was he supposed to do? He couldn't decide!

Pack!

Gravis reached the neck of the disciple. "Too late."

CRACK!

The neck of the disciple broke, and Gravis tore off his head for good measure. "Indecisiveness is bad," Gravis commented. The items inside the dead disciple's Spirit Space popped out of his corpse while Gravis absorbed the Energy.

Whoop!

Gravis quickly ran back to his old position before the barricade.

"Alright, I'm back. Let's continue!" With that, he lifted his right leg again.

The disciples behind the shields shivered in fear.

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Chapter 268: Shattering of Beliefs

The barricade shivered again as they saw Gravis lifting his leg again. Their indecisiveness grew with the previous two deaths. Imagining death and seeing death was a big difference. Yes, they went through a lot of life and death tempering, but they hadn't been in a fight where they were this outclassed! On top of that, all their previous fights had always included both their lives and beliefs. Yet, now, they had to choose between the two. This choice tore them apart on the inside.

BANG!

Gravis' kick hit, and another disciple at the Seed Stage shot into the distance. No counterattack came. Just like before, Gravis vanished from the barricade. He quickly reappeared before the disciple that had just landed. The disciple froze in fear, and Gravis repeated the same thing as before. The others didn't stop him. They were still indecisive about their decision. Gravis' hand slowly moved towards the throat of the disciple, who still lay on the ground.

"AAHH!" the disciple shouted, and he attacked Gravis with his pike. Gravis simply evaded the attack. An attack made out of fear was easy to evade. After evading the attack, lightning appeared around Gravis' hand, and he slapped the disciple.

BANG!

The head of the disciple was reduced to ash. His Energy entered Gravis as his belongings popped out of his body. "Third idiot down!" Gravis said.

Did Gravis feel bad? Not at all! If he were weaker, he would have died to them. If he were weaker, they wouldn't have announced their goal of killing him at that distance. Like this, they would have suddenly attacked him from a close range. Weakness didn't absolve one of their decisions. They wanted to kill him, so he felt no remorse in killing them. They had chosen their path, knowing fully what awaited them at the end.

Gravis cleaned his hand off the blood and ash. Then, he turned around and looked at the barricade again.

"AAHHH!" three disciples shouted with rage, panic, and fear. They charged forward with all their power, leaving the barricade. They had decided that their beliefs were more important than their lives. When Gravis saw them, he slowly walked closer to the charging disciples.

Whoosh!

The first disciple stabbed forward with his lance, trying to hit Gravis. Obviously, Gravis easily sidestepped the attack. Another lightning-filled hand ended the disciple's life. Then, Gravis turned to the other two.

CRR!

The charging disciples rammed their feet into the ground in order to stop, destroying the ground in the process. One of the disciples hyperventilated, screamed, and threw his weapons to the side.

BANG!

The sound of an explosion happened as the Spirit of the disciple broke into pieces. All his belongings left his body and appeared around him. What the others didn't see was that his element also left his body. The disciple shouted in pain when that happened and grabbed his head.

BANG!

The other disciple did the same. His Spirit broke apart, and all his belongings left him. When Gravis saw this, he smiled. This time, it was in relief. He didn't feel bad about killing people that wanted to kill him, but he also felt like killing those people was a waste. After all, as long as they still had their lives, they could change. Recultivating also wouldn't be an issue. After all, they still retained their Will-Auras and physical power.

"Good! At least two of you have some brains!" Gravis shouted. "You have chosen life, and I won't betray you! You can always recultivate and build new ones." Then, Gravis walked closer to the first disciple and put his hand on his shoulder, making the disciple freeze in place. "You also don't need to cultivate the earth element. Maybe you'll find one that fits you better."

The cultivator wasn't sure how to react as a cacophony of emotions attacked his mind. He could do nothing else but stare at Gravis. Right now, he was lost and had no idea how to proceed with his life.

Gravis walked past him and also smiled at the other disciple. Yet, before Gravis reached the much smaller barricade, someone left it. Surprisingly, it was the younger of the two Sapling Stage cultivators. He looked decisively at Gravis while Gravis looked back with a lifted eyebrow.

Clank, Clank!

The young man threw his two weapons to the side. "I've never agreed with this whole stubborn belief thing," he said calmly but decisively. "Yet, I was forced to accept it. Everyone around me followed that system, and I couldn't cultivate without it. I was afraid of losing all my progress, so I stayed true to this. Not anymore!" he shouted.

BANG!

His Spirit broke apart as his belongings appeared around him, but he didn't shout in pain. He only gritted his teeth. "This whole belief thing is retarded!" he shouted angrily through his gritted teeth. "This whole thing is messed up! We are supposed to create our beliefs when we reach the Magic Gathering Realm, but how could someone at that Realm know how the world works!? Am I supposed to follow whatever I thought was right when I was a child!? That's so stupid!"

The young man sounded incredibly frustrated and angry. All his bottled up anger came to the surface and burst forward. He had been unhappy for a long time, always accepting his current circumstances. He didn't want to lose his progress, so he had forced himself to accept his current situation. His mind had adapted and even started believing that this way was right. Yet, deep inside, he had never agreed.

"Fuck the Earth Sect and its retarded cultivation system!" he shouted with all his power. Even though his cultivation was destroyed, he still had a powerful body. His voice echoed for multiple kilometers and shook some trees. "I have enough of this fucking bullshit! Even if I reforge my beliefs, right now, I am just a child in the eyes of my future self! My future self will think that I am an idiot right now, and my future self is probably right! I will grow, and I won't be bound by the stuff I believed when I was younger!"

Gravis watched this with a smile. The disciple's speech resonated with him. Wasn't he also very different from his past self? Skye's parent's death had shown him how much he had changed, and he also somewhat believed his past self to be a naïve fool. If one always clung to the things they believed in the past, they would never grow.

"Good!" Gravis shouted and even clapped. "I am impressed by your mindset! What's your name?" Gravis asked.

After releasing all his frustration and anger, the young man took a deep breath. "I'm Eros," he said. Then, he walked closer to Gravis. "Can I join the Lightning Sect?" he asked.

Gravis' brows shot upward in surprise. "Why the Lightning Sect specifically?" he asked.

Eros looked in the direction of Quake City with narrowed eyes. "Because everyone has the right to revenge! You don't know, but I have an enemy that has killed someone very dear to me. When my power eclipsed that enemy, the Earth Sect forbade me from taking revenge. I hadn't been part of the Earth Sect when that bastard had taken my mother's life, so I wasn't allowed to take revenge."

Gravis rubbed his chin. "How come?" he asked.

Eros snorted in disdain. "Because he was an administrator of some town under the Water Sect. Since the Water Sect and the Earth Sect are in an alliance, my 'petty revenge' would endanger the 'family'. Therefore, I was forced to swallow my hatred. I think that everyone has the right to seek their own justice. If someone steps on your bottom line, your family shouldn't force you to swallow that enmity. This thing gnawed at me every day, and I finally want to take my revenge!"

Eros' eyes showed an incredible amount of willpower and motivation. His eyes were basically burning with fervor. Gravis also realized that Eros' Will-Aura was rather powerful. He was probably only one or two tempering experiences away from achieving a Unity Will. Gravis guessed that Eros was an Ascender's Talent.

"Good!" Gravis shouted and put his hand on Eros' shoulder. "I am certain that the Lightning Sect will accept someone like you!" Then, Gravis walked to the barricade and stopped in front of it. "Life or Beliefs!?" he shouted again.

Clank, Clank, Clank!

Several disciples dropped their weapons as their Spirits cracked apart. It seemed like Eros' speech had woken them. Hearing something from someone else was completely different than hearing it from their idol. Eros was an Ascender's Talent and the idol of nearly every disciple of the Earth Sect. His speech resonated with them and their minds burned with decisiveness.

Gravis saw this and smiled. "Great!" Then, he turned to the last two people. They still held their weapons. One was at the Seed Stage, and the other was the older cultivator at the Sapling Stage.

"I won't betray my beliefs," the older one said with decisiveness. "I am not as weak-willed as the others. The wills of these traitors are weak, and they won't achieve anything in the future."

BANG, BANG!

Lightning exploded under Gravis' feet as he shot forward suddenly. A lightning-filled kick exploded on the older person's shield, nearly breaking it apart. The power of this kick was multiple times stronger than his previous ones. The older person hadn't expected Gravis' sudden attack, so he hadn't been able to counterattack. Like this, he flew into the distance.

BANG!

Gravis had regenerated a lot of his lightning by now and shot forward again with all his power. He reached the spot below the flying person in nearly an instant. "I don't know what they'll achieve," he said, and then kicked the back of the flying person with a lightning empowered kick, obliterating him. "But, you'll achieve nothing!"

Clank.

The last Seed Stage disciple dropped his weapons and screamed in terror. He clutched his head and started running towards Quake City with all his power. He still believed in the Earth Sect and didn't want to betray his family. However, he had betrayed his beliefs by not dying to Gravis, so his cultivation got destroyed. He would rebuild his cultivation in the Earth Sect. After all, that was his home.

Gravis saw this and sighed. People were different, and not everyone believed the same thing. There were bound to be people that disliked the Earth Sect's system, but there were also people that agreed with it with all their hearts. Gravis let the person flee. After all, the guy hadn't attacked Gravis.

Even if that guy reported everything to the Sect Master, Gravis wouldn't mind.

Killing the Earth Sect Master would just be more tempering for him.

[Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

Chapter 269: Eros and Old Man Lightning

The surrounding disciples were quite surprised by Gravis' quick dispatching of the elder. They knew that he was powerful. After all, he had managed to slay the Ogre. But knowing about Gravis' power and actually seeing it was a big difference. The elder hadn't even been able to put up a fight while Gravis hadn't even released his Will-Aura.

After finishing off the elder, Gravis went through the belongings of the deceased disciples. There were a couple of weapons, some pills, and some Energy Stones. The haul of Energy Stones was surprisingly small. Gravis guessed that everyone in the Spirit Forming Realm would probably use up their Energy Stones as soon as they got them. Having a more powerful dantian was incredibly useful in a fight, after all.

Gravis didn't touch the belongings of the living disciples, even if they were just strewn around. He had decided against killing them since they had betrayed their beliefs already. After checking all of this, he

turned to the disciples. "I'll be going now. Do whatever you want. I just hope that you won't rejoin the Earth Sect after this, but even if you decide to do so, I won't stop you."

The disciples looked at each other, some with smiles, others with fear and anxiety. Not everyone fully disagreed with the Earth Sect, but seeing how their beliefs could mean their death, they decided against rejoining the Earth Sect. Not everyone was ready to give their lives for a "greater good" or an organization in this case. Their own lives were still the most important thing in their minds.

Some of the disciples talked with each other. Some said that they had been craving for tempering for a long time, yet, due to the Earth Sect's well-being being placed above every individual life, they hadn't gotten the tempering they wanted. This was the most significant talking point.

"If you want tempering," Gravis said to the disciples, "I would suggest going to either the Lightning, Fire, Darkness or Wind Sect. Of course, your temperament should fit the elements. The Fire Sect are battle-maniacs. The Lightning Sect honors honesty and fairness above anything else. The Darkness Sect wants power above anything else, while the Wind Sect chases freedom. Whichever fits you best should be the Sect you should go to."

The disciples listened to Gravis, and some of them were surprised by his relatively objective description of the different Sects. One had to know that most disciples had never come into contact with more than two Sects in their life, including their own. Most of them only saw the other Sects in the war, or if they had to visit them. Gravis' intimate knowledge with so many Sects was rare.

"Why do you not tell everyone to join the Lightning Sect?" Eros asked. "Future Seed Stage cultivators are incredibly useful to any Sect. Any one of these people could become an elder in the future."

Gravis smiled a little. "As I said, the Lightning Sect values honesty and fairness above all else. Telling them that the Lightning Sect is the best would betray what I truly think. The Lightning Sect isn't the best. It's just the most fitting for me. Yet, it might not be the most fitting for everyone else."

The eyes of the disciples' opened in surprise. It felt unreal that someone was saying that their own Sect wasn't the best one. In the Earth Sect, anyone that didn't say that the Earth Sect was the best would become unpopular with everyone instantly. Gravis not following that could be considered as a kind of culture shock to them.

Eros smiled bitterly. "I guess I still need to learn about the way of lightning," he said.

Gravis smirked. "No worries. I think you'll be a good fit, and as for your enmity, no one in the Lightning Sect will stop you. No one will stop you from taking your revenge. As long as your hatred is strong enough, no one would even stop you from taking revenge on the Sect Master," Gravis laughed a little, "Of course, you first need to be powerful enough for that."

Eros' eyes widened. "Something like that is possible? Has that happened before?"

"It happened two times in the last couple of millennia," a new voice resounded as Old Man Lightning arrived. "Due to everyone being fair and honest, enmities between Lightning Sect cultivators are very rare, though."

The disciples were surprised by the arrival of Old Man Lightning. When they still had had their Spirits, they hadn't felt this person. "Who might you be?" Eros asked carefully.

Old Man Lightning waved his hand dismissively. "I'm just an old man who wanted to see Gravis' fight with the Ogre. You can call me Old Man Lightning," he said.

The disciples didn't find the old man strange. After all, there were a lot of old people inside the Sects, and they couldn't guess the power of a person just based on their age. Yet, Eros' eyes shone in recognition and shock. "You're Old Man Lightning?" he asked.

"Yeah. Didn't I just say that?" Old Man Lightning answered with a bit of annoyance.

Eros put his hands together and bowed in politeness. "I'm sorry if I have offended you with-"

WACK!

Eros fell over as the mighty cane struck him. "I have no idea what you're apologizing for, but you sure annoyed me by acting like a wimp in front of me!" Old Man Lightning shouted. "Do you think my self-confidence is so fragile that I require young people to show their subservience!?"

Eros didn't know what just happened. He had been bowing politely, and suddenly he fell to the ground. He hadn't even seen when Old Man Lightning had attacked. After standing up quickly, he bowed again. "I'm sorry for my-"

WACK!

And he was on the ground again. "Stop apologizing!" Old Man Lightning shouted and then groaned. "Oh, man. I already see it coming. You're gonna be a pain in my ass," Old Man Lightning said with frustration.

"Excuse me," another disciple stepped forward, "but in the Earth Sect, we were required to show perfect politeness to our superiors. Please don't misunderstand Eros."

Old Man Lightning looked at the new disciple with narrowed eyes, making the disciple nervous. After some seconds, Old Man Lightning pointed at the new disciple. "You!" he shouted, "I like you! You saw something that didn't conform to your definition of fairness to someone else and stood up for him! You'll come with me to the Lightning Sect!"

The person blinked rapidly in confusion. He had gone against someone with higher seniority, yet, instead of being reprimanded, he was being praised? Before he could even think what to say, his mouth had already answered in confusion. "Okay?"

Old Man Lightning nodded with praise. "Good!" Then he turned to Eros and pointed at the other disciple. "You should learn from him! He stated everything directly and didn't say anything superfluous like 'oh, I'm not worthy' or similar stuff."

Eros looked at the disciple, and the disciple felt very nervous. Eros was the disciple's idol, yet the old man had just said that his idol should learn from him. The disciple didn't feel worthy of something like this. He quickly lifted both of his hands and waved them rapidly. "No, no. I didn't do anything! I'm sorry, Eros!"

WACK!

The disciple fell over. Old Man Lightning looked at the downed disciple and snorted. Then, he turned to Eros.

"Forget everything I just said."

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Chapter 270: Serious Issue

After a lot of talking, all the cultivators made up their minds on which Sect they would join. Eros and that other disciple that had stepped forward earlier decided to join the Lightning Sect, while the others decided to join other Sects. Temperament was important. Thus this decision had not been an easy one for the disciples.

Surprisingly enough, most of the cultivators decided to join the Fire Sect. Though, if one thought about it, it actually made sense. Being suppressed for years, always having to think about the Sect first, had changed the temperament of a lot of disciples. They wanted to release their long-suppressed hot bloodedness and battle intent. This changed the temperament of most of the disciples into battle maniacs after they had found their new freedom.

The Fire Sect and Earth Sect were about as opposite as any two Sects could get. The Earth Sect always defended, while the Fire Sect always attacked. Yet, when someone with one disposition was pushed too hard, their mindset might do a complete 180. This was what had happened to these former Earth Sect disciples.

Gravis, Old Man Lightning, Eros, and the last disciple went back to the Lightning Sect while the others traveled to their new Sects by themselves. They had bodies inside the Spirit Forming Realm, so their survival shouldn't be an issue. They might not be able to take on Seed Stage cultivators, but they could win against cultivators at the initial stage of Spirit Forming. Getting to their new Sects wasn't a problem.

After traveling for over two days, the four people reached the Lightning Sect. Gravis and Old Man Lightning had to slow down due to their new members. After they arrived, the group split apart. While the two new disciples went through the procedures of joining the Lightning Sect, Gravis asked Old Man Lightning about the saber fragments from that one priest the old man had killed.

Old Man Lightning smiled. "I already guessed that you were interested," he said with pride. "The fragments have already been reforged into a new saber. Your Contribution Points wouldn't be enough to exchange for it, though. The addition of the Ogre's corpse gives you a lot more Contribution Points, but you are still just short." Then, Old Man Lightning snickered a little. "But, I guess, with those new disciples that you convinced to join, it's enough. Here, take it!"

An utterly red saber appeared before Gravis. It shone with a multitude of different Formation Arrays, some of which Gravis had never seen before. This surprised him quite a bit since he had learned a lot about Formation Arrays in his homeworld, even if that knowledge could only be considered basic.

"What's with these new Formation Arrays?" Gravis asked as he inspected the saber.

Old Man Lightning snickered again. "Normally, your Contribution Points would be enough to exchange for three Peak-Grade Spirit Weapons, but this saber has taken up all of them. These new Formation Arrays are one of the reasons why this saber is so expensive."

"So, is this saber stronger than a Peak-Grade Spirit Weapon?" Gravis asked.

"No," Old Man Lightning said with a smirk.

Gravis frowned. "Then why is it so expensive?"

Old Man Lightning continued smirking. "Because these new Formation Arrays have specifically been created for your Lightning Crescent, and it took me a lot of work to design them. These new Formation Arrays allow you to unleash your Lightning Crescent up to and including the Sapling Stage. After all, what would you do if you destroy your saber already at the first trial of the inheritance? The future ones would become way harder like that."

Gravis looked at Old Man Lightning with a raised brow. "So, this thing that I will go to is an inheritance?" Gravis asked, unsure.

Old Man Lightning waved his hand dismissively. "Don't think about it. Joyce will tell you everything when the time comes."

Gravis noticed the thoughtfulness that Old Man Lightning put into the saber and smiled. "Thank you. This saber is perfect for me," he said.

Old Man Lightning waved his hand again dismissively. "Don't mention it. After all, you have exchanged for it with Contribution Points, so it's rightfully yours. I'll need to talk with the elders. In the meantime, you should think of a good time when we should pay the Darkness Sect a visit. When you got one, inform me. See you later!" with that said, Old Man Lightning walked to the Sect Hall.

Gravis nodded and then left the Lightning Sect again to plan out the fight. Meanwhile, Old Man Lightning entered the Sect Hall and saw two elders sitting on their thrones, talking about some things regarding the Sect.

"We need to talk," Old Man Lightning said as he sat on his own throne beside the Sect Master's.

The elders were surprised by the serious expression on Old Man Lightning's face. "Should we call the others?" they asked.

Old Man Lightning nodded.

The two elders narrowed their eyes and went outside to contact the other elders. After about a minute, all the elders gathered. There were six in total, leaving four thrones empty. The Lightning Sect had ten thrones for elders just as a precaution for any additional elders. The Lightning Sect only had six elders in total right now.

"Everyone's here," said the elder who sat closest to the Sect Master's throne. He wasn't the strongest elder, but the one who had held the position the longest. He was already very old, looking even older than Old Man Lightning.

Old Man Lightning nodded. "Have the disciples with Destruction Lightning shown a different behavior than the other ones?" Old Man Lightning asked.

Everyone looked at the elder responsible for internal affairs. His whole job was to be informed about how the disciples felt and what they all did. The cohesiveness and morale of the Sect was important. "We have noticed a percentual increase in deaths in fights between the disciples. The number of fights between Sect members hasn't gone up, but the deaths have increased. Of course, that is only logical.

After all, the disciples with Destruction Lightning are more powerful than the others in the same Stage," the elder narrated.

Old Man Lightning combed his beard while he furrowed his brows. "This would seem logical, but I think you are attributing the additional deaths to the wrong thing," Old Man Lightning said.

The elder raised his brows. "Then what do you think is the case?"

"As most of you know, I accompanied Gravis to watch his fight with the Ogre. Gravis won the fight, by the way," Old Man Lightning said.

The elders clapped a little. "That's really impressive!"

Old Man Lightning lifted his hand to silence the elders. "This is not the issue," he said with seriousness. "The battle between the Ogre and Gravis drew over some disciples of the Earth Sect. There were two at the Sapling Stage and ten at the Seed Stage."

The elders knew about the Earth Sect's weird behavior, so they didn't ask if Gravis got a reward, even though that seemed to be the most logical conclusion. "How did that go?" one elder asked.

Old Man Lightning took a deep breath. "Apparently, the Earth Sect had some stupid and unnecessary enmity with Gravis, and they said that they would kill him. After that, they charged at him."

Now, the elders were very interested in the situation. If Gravis killed those people, the Earth Sect wouldn't be happy with the Lightning Sect. Now, they understood why they were all gathered. "How many died?" one elder asked. They didn't even consider that Gravis lost.

"Four died, while all the others had their beliefs broken," Old Man Lightning said.

The elders fell into thought again. With the Earth Sect's irrationality, they might actually declare war on the Lightning Sect because of this. Yet, that was hard to conclude. After all, the Earth Sect was hard to understand. "So, we should make preparations for a war?" one elder asked, while the others nodded.

"That's not why I have gathered you here," Old Man Lightning said, surprising the elders. There was something more important than a war with another Sect?

"Is there something more important than an eventual war with the Earth Sect?" one elder asked with a confused expression.

Old Man Lightning continued combing his beard while he furrowed his brows. "I noticed something about how Gravis handled the situation. I think there is something that we have neglected to take into account, and if we don't acknowledge this issue and plan ahead for it..."

"The whole Lightning Sect might break in two."