

## Lightning 461

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

#### Chapter 461: Beast vs. Human

Gravis felt incredible nervousness and shock when the Red King unveiled his secret. This would change the whole dynamic between the white ape and him. The white ape was extremely powerful and had a high standing in the Empire, while Gravis was basically a weak nobody.

Yes, Gravis could be considered as a breeder for the Empress, but how many of those were there? Gravis had no idea, but he was sure that there were more breeders than level two Emperors in the Empire. Additionally, with the Empress' influence, she could get as many new mates as she wanted, but she couldn't get new level two Emperors as easily.

This meant that this situation had transformed into a situation where a way less valuable resource threatened a very valuable resource of the Empire. Just the danger alone that he posed might be enough reason to kill him. So, why had the Red King decided to tell them his secret now? Why was he putting his reward on the line like that?

Meanwhile, the white ape realized several things. He specifically remembered that some minutes ago, Gravis had told him to send another beast if he tried to access the ore. Back then, the white ape had no idea why Gravis wanted another beast. After all, the white ape was easily powerful enough to annihilate him. Yet, with the revelation of this new information, it all made sense!

Gravis wanted him to send another beast because Gravis could kill him. If Gravis were desperate enough to try to access the ore, it meant that he was in a situation where he saw no other way to survive. At that time, Gravis might even decide to kill him. After all, he would think that he would already be doomed to die anyway.

The white ape looked at Gravis intently. They were currently over 40 kilometers away from each other, which meant that the white ape was just barely inside Gravis' Spirit Sense. At such a distance, Gravis would, at least, get an opportunity to formulate a thought. From this distance, the white ape wouldn't have a chance of killing him.

The white ape also realized the complex threat that they posed to each other. Both of them could kill the other one with a thought. Such a situation had never happened as far as the white ape knew. Usually, beasts with similar power wouldn't be able to instantly kill the other one.

The only situation where that would be possible was if one beast were many times stronger than the other one. Yet, that made it impossible for the threat to carry both ways. After all, one of them was way more powerful than the other one.

"Why didn't you tell us earlier?" the white ape asked Gravis.

Gravis looked with narrowed eyes at the distant white ape. "Because as long as you don't realize my threat, you would have no reason to kill me, which would give me no reason to kill you. If I kill you, the Empress will kill me, but if you kill me, due to your relationship with the Empress, you won't die."

Gravis explained all of this coldly and threateningly. The whole dynamic had changed, and he had to make it clear that he wouldn't hesitate if the white ape decided to attack him.

The worst situation would be that the white ape didn't believe him and attack him to test it. In that situation, either Gravis would die, or the white ape would die, which would also result in Gravis' death.

The white ape tried to wrap his head around this situation. The relationships between beasts were straightforward and direct. A more powerful beast would either ignore a weaker beast, make it join their Tribe, or kill it. Complex relationships were uncommon for beasts. Politics was more of a human thing.

"As soon as you try to test me, I will die, no matter if I kill you or not. As soon as the choice needs to be made, my life is over. That's why I can't tell you and can't let you get close to me right now," Gravis threatened. He had to stop the white ape from trying anything!

Surprisingly, the white ape only put his fingers to the bridge of his nose in an expression of frustration. He took the whole situation way easier than Gravis would have ever believed.

"Gravis," the white ape said after a frustrated sigh. "Why do you make this situation so complex?" he asked.

"Because it is," Gravis said.

"No, it isn't," the white ape answered with another sigh. "You're one of my Empress' mates. If I were to kill you, I would be trampling all over my Empress' dignity. Our situations are identical. As long as one of us makes a move, we both will die. So, why would I want to kill you?" the white ape explained.

Gravis' doubt and carefulness didn't decrease. "Normally, I would believe you due to your lightning affinity, but I can't bet my life on something like that."

"Why do you think I unveiled your secret?" the Red King suddenly asked Gravis. "It was because I know the Grand Elder and the Empress. He is speaking the truth. He can't kill you just like that. So, since you have a similar standing, I decided to unveil your secret."

"If someone doesn't know that another one can instantly kill them, they don't have all the necessary information to make an informed decision," the Red King said. "Isn't that something you said while you still had your Tribe? I've heard that from some of my soldiers and thought it was quite a good philosophy."

Instead of thinking about these words, Gravis only sneered. "That's true for friends. I don't know anyone here, and immediately putting my life in their hands would be naïve and foolish," Gravis said.

BANG!

Suddenly, the Empress hit her throne with one of her hands out of anger. "Ridiculous!" she shouted. "You are part of the same Empire as the Grand Elder! How dare you say that you are not friends!?" she shouted in genuine anger.

Gravis wasn't intimidated by this outburst. He already had his back to the wall. "So, you're telling me that there are no beasts with ulterior motives and schemes inside your Empire, Empress?" Gravis asked.

"Of course there are!" the Empress answered immediately with a lot of confidence. "Yet, not giving your comrades the trust they deserve because of a minuscule minority of scheming weaklings is disrespecting them! My Empire won't allow such a thing!"

Gravis felt like this situation was strange. The Empress had just acknowledged that there were scheming weaklings in her Empire, but she still advocated for trusting everyone. Wasn't that just inviting trouble?

"Yet," Gravis shouted back, "by trusting everybody, you leave your back open to this minority of schemers. If everybody trusts them, they can use everybody's trust to their advantage!"

"Then that just means you aren't powerful enough!" the Empress shouted back. "Power is everything, and if some scheming weaklings can kill you, it only means that you were not powerful enough! A schemer's path will never reach the top! So, as long as you reach the top, what can they do to you?"

Now, Gravis was a bit taken aback. That's right! Why had he suddenly forgotten that power was everything? Hadn't he told that to everyone inside the River Tribe? Hadn't he repeatedly said that, in front of supreme power, schemes were worthless?

Gravis had also forgotten that these were beasts and not humans. There was an incredible amount of scheming humans, but scheming beasts were incredibly rare. In truth, Gravis had only met a single beast that could be considered lying and deceitful: Shira. He hadn't met any other beast similar to her.

Gravis remained silent as he fell into thought. 'Have I betrayed the very thing that I have taught the River Tribe?' Gravis asked himself. 'In front of power, all schemes are meaningless. Wasn't that what I have told everyone? Yet, now, as soon as I got surrounded by more powerful beasts, I fell back into the exact mindset I warned everyone about.'

Gravis remained silent for some more seconds and looked at the horizon. Surprisingly, the Empress also remained silent. By now, the Empress knew that if Gravis disagreed, he wouldn't hold himself back. Putting up a show also didn't seem to fit his character, judging from what she had seen.

As more time passed, Gravis began to feel worse.

'I'm a hypocrite,' Gravis thought to himself with disgust. 'I have looked down on Cynthia's hypocrisy. Yet, now, I have fallen into the same thing. I said one thing but did the other.'

After some seconds, Gravis sighed and turned back to the Mountain of Pride. Then, he lowered his upper body and bowed to the Mountain of Pride. "I have committed a mistake. I have forgotten that power is everything and have begun to scheme."

"In the past, I have said that power is everything and have looked down upon beasts that schemed. Yet, I have become just that kind of beast. Thank you, Empress, for showing me my error," Gravis said slowly and sincerely.

The Empress remained silent for a couple of seconds while all the other beasts didn't dare to say anything. This whole situation was way beyond their ability to handle, and they just tried to keep themselves out. This was between the Grand Elder, the Empress, and her new mate. It had nothing to do with them.

After some seconds, the Empress furrowed her brows and looked at Gravis.

"Stop being weird!"

[Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

**Chapter 462: Weird**

Gravis was a bit taken aback by the comment. How was he weird? These things were obvious, and someone as powerful as the Empress should be able to see the logic in his decisions. A smart, educated, and thought-through decision couldn't be called weird!

"How am I weird?" Gravis asked, genuinely confused.

"Your personality keeps changing!" the Empress transmitted to him in frustration. None of the other beasts should hear her talking like this. After all, she still needed to keep up her image in front of her subjects.

"First, you walked with arrogance to the group of Lords that said they could defeat a Half-Step King."

"Then, you seemed domineering and impressive after killing that level four Lord."

"Then, you appear like you don't care after your so-called fight with the red hawk."

"Then, you appear like an embarrassed child after winning against that mammoth."

"Then, you appear like a schemer with trust issues."

"And now, you appear like you have just immediately changed your personality just because I have said some words. Even worse, everything points to the fact that you genuinely meant that. How is it even possible that a beast can change that easily and quickly!?" the Empress nearly rambled.

"I can't get a read on your personality because it seems all so jumbled up! Then, you have these strange powers that are so strange that not even I, a level three Emperor, know how they work!"

"Your personality is weird! Your powers are weird! You are weird!" the Empress concluded after her rant.

Only Gravis and the white ape heard what the Empress had said. Such rambling would show an indecisive side of the Empress and wasn't something that the other beasts were supposed to hear.

The white ape only sighed when he listened to the Empress. He didn't like how casually she put it, but he wholeheartedly agreed. Gravis was weird!

Gravis felt a bit embarrassed when he heard her ramble. However, he also understood that his conduct seemed weird in the eyes of beasts that didn't know him. Hell, his personality was even somewhat weird when compared to humans.

All of these rapid changes of mood and conduct from him had reasons behind them, but it would take forever to explain all of them to her. Additionally, she probably wouldn't even be interested in such a long session of explaining.

Yet, the Empress' words relieved Gravis. She had appeared distant and untouchable the whole time. The way how she killed all these Lords and Kings had also made her appear heartless, arrogant, and cold. On top of that, she had this aura of pride around her, which made her appear even more distant.

But with all these casual words and sentences, she appeared to Gravis just like any other beast. Of course, everybody knew that the more powerful beasts were still just beasts. Yet, one often forgot that fact when confronted with supreme power and such prideful conduct.

Right now, the Empress appeared much more approachable. Would some heartless God complain like this about someone being weird? Probably not.

Gravis shook his head a bit. "Okay," he answered. Then, he turned to the white ape. "So, you won't kill me, right?" he asked as he returned to the original topic.

Both the white ape and the Empress were surprised about the fact that Gravis had just thrown the Empress' rant away with a simple okay. Yet, the white ape was happy to get back to the original topic.

"No, we are in the same position. We can't kill the other one without the Empress killing us after that, and I don't intend to throw my life away to kill a Lord," the white ape said.

"Hey, don't gloss over this topic by going on a tangent!" the Empress interrupted them with annoyance.

"You were the one that went on a tangent by calling me weird, Empress," Gravis answered.

The Empress became a bit annoyed when she heard that, but she decided against dignifying that with an answer, mainly because Gravis was right.

Then, Gravis turned to the white ape again. "So, can you keep watch over the ore? If I have this ore available, I won't be able to temper myself. After all, I would always have an option to fall back on with this ore, which wouldn't put enough pressure onto my mind."

"I understand," the white ape interrupted before Gravis could continue. "I know how tempering works, and yes, I can promise you that if you are in a fight, you won't be able to touch this ore without dying."

"Great, thank you," Gravis answered. Then, he waited a bit. "And sorry for thinking that you were going to kill me. I have assigned my thinking pattern to you, which was my mistake."

The white ape sighed.

"I said, stop being weird!" the Empress transmitted again.

"Oh, come on!" Gravis transmitted with frustration. "How was that weird?"

"Apologies are unnecessary. Words are empty. Let your actions speak for you! No beast cares about anyone apologizing to them," the Empress said.

"But if I don't apologize first, how will the Grand Elder know which intentions my action have? He might think that I still hold some sort of grudge against him-"

"I said, stop being weird!" the Empress interrupted Gravis again. "What's with all this convoluted and unnecessary stuff!? Just follow your personality and act how you want. Whatever happens, happens!"

Now, it was Gravis' turn to become frustrated. He knew all these concepts about psychology and knew the most efficient method of clearing any remaining doubt towards himself. Yet, the Empress just said that all of this was unnecessary.

To Gravis, this situation felt like he was a father that told his child about two Clans fighting, while the child only answered with, "but fighting doesn't help anyone! Why don't they just stop?". There were too many complex and interwoven reasons behind the situation to have such an easy solution.

Yet, suddenly, Gravis' eyes widened in realization. 'I forgot, these are beasts, not humans. They act way simpler. Of course, they also wouldn't hold a hidden grudge without letting me know about it. Something as sneaky and conflict-averse as that is only something that humans do. Maybe, I am actually in the wrong by overcomplicating a simple situation?' Gravis thought to himself while scratching his metallic chin.

The Empress and white ape were confused by Gravis' sudden silence and thoughtful expression. At least, they thought it was thoughtful. His face looked more like he needed to take an urgent shit.

"You're right," Gravis transmitted to both of them. "I have overthought this situation and have made it more complex than necessary. I will show you how I am with my actions."

The white ape grew confused again while the Empress looked with narrowed eyes at the distant Gravis.

"What did I just say?" the Empress asked Gravis seriously.

"That I should let my actions speak instead of spouting apologies. That's also why I didn't apologize just now," Gravis answered.

"No, that's not what I said," the Empress transmitted back with some annoyance.

"I said, stop being weird!" she transmitted with frustration.

Gravis gnashed his teeth. "How was that weird!? I did exactly as you said!" Gravis transmitted back with anger.

"Yes, that's weird! Your personality and conduct keep changing the whole time! That's weird!" she answered with anger.

"Well, beasts can be wrong," Gravis answered while crossing his arms. "I just saw the error in my ways and adapted. What's the problem with that?" Gravis asked.

Now, the Empress also gnashed her teeth. "The problem is that changing your personality and principles isn't that easy! You can't just hear some words and immediately change how you think!" she transmitted back.

"Yes, you can," Gravis answered curtly.

The Empress waited for Gravis' follow-up, but no follow-up came. This annoyed her even more. "No, you can't!" she transmitted back as she stood up from her throne.

"Well, I just did," Gravis answered.

The Empress stewed in her annoyance for a bit. The white ape saw that and sighed. He hadn't seen the Empress act this wildly in a while. Somehow, this mere Lord was able to get such an intense reaction from the Empress, even though she could kill him with a mere thought.

After some time, the Empress sat back down and sighed, not hiding it this time. She just couldn't be bothered right now. "You know," she transmitted to Gravis. "I've never come across such an annoying and frustrating beast like you."

Gravis grimaced like he had just heard something ridiculous. "How am I annoying? I'm just learning and adapting. Shouldn't you be happy about my willingness to change?"

The Empress groaned after hearing this. She just wanted this whole situation to be over.

Or, at least, that was what she thought. In reality, she felt quite happy inside. Gravis' unusual conduct had blown away the grey clouds of the seemingly infinitely ongoing monotony of her life. She was always here on the mountain, just trying to understand Laws. After a long while, she could finally release and vent some of her emotions.

Of course, she didn't want to admit that to herself. Admitting that she liked being annoyed would make her feel even weirder than Gravis. This was also one of the big reasons why she didn't just kill him. She thought that she wanted this situation to end, but in actuality, she didn't want this conversation to end.

"So," Gravis transmitted slowly after several seconds of silence. "About that fourth opponent..."

The Empress took a deep breath with closed eyes as she tried to calm down.

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

#### **Chapter 463: The Competition Ends**

"There is no one willing to battle with you anymore, Gravis," the Empress transmitted with some annoyance. "Last time, only the wolf was ready to battle you, and I doubt that anyone wants to fight with you now."

Gravis grimaced when he heard that. "Okay, but are there maybe some other outstanding level five Lords around? I really need some tempering," he asked.

The Empress sighed again as she massaged the bridge of her nose with her fingers. "Why do you want to temper yourself so badly? I don't get it. You are not ready to learn a new Law, but you still want to gamble with your life. What's the reason?" she asked.

"Well," Gravis answered. "You saw that aura that made my first opponent slow down?" he asked.

The Empress nodded.

"This aura only grows by putting my life on the line. The only reason why it even has such a strong suppressive effect on a beast a whole level higher than me is that I have tempered myself a lot already. If I don't keep tempering myself, eventually, it will become less useful."

The Empress remained silent for a bit as she thought about what Gravis just told her. "I've never heard of something like this, but your powers are strange to begin with. What's your plan? Why do you want to temper yourself now?"

"Well, as long as I manage to increase it some more, I might be able to win against a King while I'm a level four Lord," Gravis admitted. "If I don't increase it now, I'll have to wait until I'm a level five Lord to fight a level one King."

For some reason, the Empress sighed again. Gravis had no idea why she reacted like this.

"Gravis," she transmitted, "even if your strange aura becomes more powerful, you will still have no chance against a level one King. Think about it. The most outstanding level five Lords in this event can fight two levels above themselves. Yet, not even one of them says they can fight a level one King, even though, theoretically, a level one King is two levels above them. Why is that?"

Gravis didn't know why. He had seen the talent of the level five Lords. They all knew Laws that increased their Battle-Strength significantly. Why weren't they able to battle level one Kings?

"I don't know, actually," Gravis transmitted. "I don't have much knowledge about the higher Realms since the Red King is the first King I've ever met. Obviously, due to our relationship, he didn't tell me anything."

The Empress was a little taken aback when she heard that. "You have had no guidance from any Empire or Kingdom?" she asked.

She was so surprised about this fact because Gravis' Battle-Strength and experience in battle were too powerful for some beast that hadn't received any guidance. Had Gravis achieved all of this power without a more powerful beast guiding him? This almost seemed impossible.

Gravis shook his head. "No, I have only had Lords around me, and all these Lords had been either my friends or underlings," Gravis explained.

Now, a lot more things made sense to the Empress. Gravis' weird behavior and trust issues also made some sense now. After all, he only had had underlings and enemies. "Have you ever been part of a Tribe or Kingdom of someone else?"

Gravis shook his head. "No. The only Tribe I had been a part of was one that I have created myself. Of course, that Tribe doesn't exist anymore."

The Empress had no questions regarding Gravis' destroyed Tribe. Tribes came and went daily. An enemy invading a Tribe and eradicating it with only the Tribe Leader surviving happened all the time.

Instead of continuing the conversation, the Empress looked at the other beasts. Hundreds of Kings and Lords were still waiting for her to do anything. They had watched the Empress, the white ape, and Gravis just standing around and looking at each other.

Of course, the beasts knew that they were talking, but they didn't know what they were talking about. As long as the Empress didn't order anything else, they just continued standing and waiting there.

"I'll explain some things to you later. First of all, I need to end this whole matter," the Empress told Gravis.

Then, she turned to the present Kings and Lords. "The competition is over," she announced. "Gravis will be my mate."

None of the present beasts were surprised about that. Gravis had proven his power, and it was only natural that he would be chosen. Feelings like entitlement were incredibly rare among beasts, and they simply accepted this matter. Their candidates just hadn't been powerful enough.

"All candidates will join my Empire. The Kings will all receive the standard reward. The Grand Elder has taken note of your contributions and will remember you," the Empress proclaimed.

The Grand Elder nodded and stepped forward. "Tell me what kind of rewards you want," the white ape said.

After that, everything became silent again. The Kings were probably all talking with the Grand Elder via voice transmission. After some seconds, one King after the other left the Mountain of Pride, all flying off in different directions.

After around half a minute, nearly no Kings remained anymore. Now, only the Empress, the white ape, the Red King, Gravis, and the other candidates remained.

"Candidates," the Empress announced to the gathered crowd. "To the north of the Mountain of Pride, you will find my army Commanders. They have gone through many such meetings and know what to do. Fly to the north, and my Commanders will contact you."

"Follow their orders. Starting today, you are part of the Icy Pride Empire," the Empress proclaimed.

'Icy Pride Empire?' Gravis thought. 'Is that the name of the Empire? I mean, the Empress does have the water element, which can transform into ice. She also has comprehended the Law of Pride. So, I guess calling the Empire Icy Pride makes sense.'

The Lords all lowered their heads to show their subservience. Then, they flew towards the north. Gravis thought that seeing so many several-kilometer-long beasts flying into one direction looked quite imposing. A human Sect would probably be quite intimidated if they saw such an endless cloud of massive beasts flying towards them. Gravis wondered if non-natural middle worlds also had such beast Empires.

After all the Lords left, only four beasts remained on top of the Mountain of Pride: The Empress, the white ape, the Red King, and Gravis. Right now, Gravis was, by far, the largest beast present, towering over all other present beasts.

Of course, that was only because the other three beasts had control over their size. Gravis had already seen the true size of the Red King, which was gigantic. He also wondered if the white ape and the Empress were bigger or smaller if they revealed their actual size.

"Red King," the Empress said as she turned to him. "You have brought an outstanding mate for me. Tell me, what reward do you want?"

"I want time in the Infernal Depths," the Red King answered immediately.

The Empress wasn't surprised. "I've thought as much. As you know, normally, only Emperors that are part of my Empire are allowed to enter the Infernal Depths, but since you brought me such an excellent mate, I will allow it. You can enter the Infernal Depths and stay there for ten years," the Empress said.

The Red King's body shook out of excitement. He had wanted to enter the Infernal Depths for an incredibly long time. Ten years should easily be enough for him to comprehend a more powerful Law.

The Infernal Depths was one of the highest-graded Law Comprehension Areas in the entire world. The fire inside the Infernal Depths was on the same level as Punishment Lightning. If one managed to comprehend all the secrets of the Infernal Depths, they would gain access to this powerful fire.

Of course, the Red King knew that he wouldn't be able to understand everything with his current Realm and with only being allowed to stay for ten years. Yet, even comprehending the weaker Laws inside the Infernal Depths would increase his power by a lot.

Theoretically, the Red King could have already become an Emperor. Yet, as soon as he would become one, he would only be able to temper himself against other level one Emperors. However, all Emperors were incredibly outstanding. The Red King might be very powerful for his Realm, but he would only be slightly above average if he became an Emperor right now. That was not what he wanted.

The Red King wanted to be outstanding, and to become outstanding, he needed to increase his Battle-Strength as much as possible. Right now, he didn't appear interesting to other level one Emperors, which gave him the security and time to comprehend more Laws.

"Grand Elder," the Empress said. "Bring the Red King to the Infernal Depths and explain everything important to him."

"Yes, Empress," the white ape said. Then, he looked at the Red King and motioned with his head to follow him. "Follow me," he said.

The Red King threw one more glance at Gravis with a smirk. "This is where we part ways. I won't miss you for even a second," he transmitted.

"Same goes for me," Gravis answered. "Who knows, maybe I will already be powerful enough to kill you when you return?"

The Red King snorted. "Sure, good luck," he said sarcastically. Then, he left with the white ape without saying another word.

And with that, only Gravis and the Empress remained on top of the Mountain of Pride.

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

#### **Chapter 464: Secrets of the World**

Gravis just looked at the Empress nervously. Now it was official. He was to be her mate. Yet, Gravis still didn't want to have any children, and he really wasn't sure how he should tell that fact to the Empress.

"Gravis," the Empress said, making Gravis' nervousness rise more. "Did you come from a lower world?" she asked.

Gravis was surprised when he heard that. How did she know? Yet, he quickly calmed down as he realized something. Of course, she would know about the lower worlds. After all, the beasts in many lower worlds would end up in this middle world.

"I came from a different world, yes," Gravis said.

The Empress sighed. "That's what I've thought. Usually, when you become a Spirit Beast, you get scouted by the Tribe, Kingdom, or Empire where you currently reside in. Then, they will teach you all the relevant information."

"Yet," the Empress said as she looked at Gravis more closely. "Even ascenders would be taught the basics. As you surely know, the ascenders appear randomly anywhere in our world, which means that

they all get easily found by the Tribes. After all, the sudden appearance of a Lord inside one's territory will get noticed very quickly."

"For some reason," the Empress continued, "You haven't gone through any of that. I wonder, where have you materialized?" she asked.

Gravis wasn't sure how he should answer the question. Land beasts obviously had some enmity with sea beasts, and if he told her that he materialized in the ocean, she might think he was a sea beast. Would she kill him then?

Gravis sighed. 'Well, might as well ask, right?' Gravis thought.

"Before I tell you, could you please tell me why there is this enmity between sea beasts and land beasts going on? Also, could you please tell me what makes a land beast a land beast and a sea beast a sea beast?" Gravis asked.

After that question, the Empress quickly realized that Gravis counted himself as a sea beast. Yet, she didn't seem to mind much. "The generally accepted reason is that the sea beasts are different from us. They want to transform the land into sea, while we want to transform the sea into land. That's the official reason why we war with each other."

"Of course," the Empress continued, "the environment doesn't really affect us at all. As you know, Lords don't care where they live. Water and land make no difference. Therefore, this generally accepted reason for war doesn't really hold under scrutiny."

"The real reason is just that we all need enemies," the Empress explained. "A genuine war where everyone tries to kill the other side with every possible way is great tempering. That's why everyone wants to have enemies."

The Empress looked at the horizon. "I don't know how everything started, but at some point, the sea beasts and land beasts started encroaching on the other's territory. Everyone acted like this was an affront to them, but in reality, they were excited about the war. Then, everything just became bigger and bigger until the two halves of the world were in constant war with each other."

Gravis nodded. "So, there isn't really some deep enmity. The beasts simply established two about equally powerful parties so that they can kill each other for tempering."

"Yes, that's all there is to it," the Empress said. "As for your second question, that's a bit harder to answer. There is no real definition for sea beasts and land beasts starting at the Lord Realm. Both can live wherever they want, and they also change their bodies to become more powerful."

"Due to that, sea beasts start growing arms and legs to further their Battle-Strength. At that point, they also become nearly indistinguishable from land beasts. In reality, there are no real criteria that decide if you're a land beast or sea beast."

"In the end," the Empress said, "it all comes down to your personal choice. Simply join one of the two camps. As soon as you join, you will be part of that side. So, right now, you count as a land beast, even if you have been a sea beast in the past."

Gravis listened intently. Yet, as he listened to more of the secrets of the world, he realized that everything was way more straightforward than he had expected. So, in the end, it was all about tempering again.

This situation could be compared to the relationships of the Sects in the lower world, but there was still one crucial factor that was different. In the lower world, the war between the Sects hadn't actually been a real one. Yet, the war in this middle world was a genuine one. Both camps tried to eradicate the other side with everything they had.

This difference was important. In the lower world, no one had to fear their Sect getting eradicated. Yet, in this world, this danger was real. At first glance, this didn't seem much different. After all, the individuals would die either way in a fight.

Yet, the difference became important when one looked at the reasons for cultivation of the individual. Not everyone was ready to sacrifice themselves for supreme power, but many were ready to sacrifice themselves for their home. Silva was a good example of that.

If Silva were a human in the lower world, he could've lived out his time in peace without fighting. Yet, here, this wasn't so easy. The sea beasts would want to attack his Tribe no matter what. Because of this whole dynamic, even someone as relatively peaceful as Silva would be forced to risk his life in battle.

The important distinction here was that the individuals in the lower world had a choice. They could decide if they wanted to become powerful or not. Yet, this choice didn't exist in this world. Either you die, or you become powerful.

Of course, Gravis also understood another thing, which had bothered him for quite a while.

"And if someone creates a Tribe made out of both sea beasts and land beasts, it would undermine the whole feeling of enmity between both parties, right?" Gravis asked.

The Empress nodded. "Every powerful beast knows that it's possible to live together with the other party without any issue. Yet, we want to keep the war going. Such a huge war is perfect tempering. So, when a Tribe with a mixture of both sides appears, both sides see them as an enemy."

The Empress leaned back on her throne. "Also, making such a Tribe is pointless," she said.

A couple of minutes ago, Gravis would have disagreed, but now he understood more about the world. "Because if the Tribe manages to conquer the world, no more enemies will be left. Yet, since we all need enemies, the beasts would just search for the next best reason to go to war, which would be the difference between sea beasts and land beasts again."

The Empress nodded. "Exactly. No matter what happens, everything will default back to this war. Why is that? That's because this war is the most effective method of tempering, at least, for the greater collective."

"A mixed Tribe could have a better tempering experience since everyone is their enemy. However, it's also very dangerous," she said, "the chances of death are way too high."

Gravis nodded. Now, he knew more about the world and finally realized why everyone didn't want a mixed Tribe to appear. It wasn't because of some deep enmity or belief. It was just that such a Tribe

encroached on the tempering of both sides. The warring parties didn't mind if beasts joined the opposite side, but they minded it very much if beasts kept themselves neutral.

Some seconds of silence passed.

The Empress had no more questions regarding Gravis' past, but Gravis had a question regarding something she had said previously.

"So," he started, "why do you say that I would still have no chance against a level one King?" he asked.

The Empress remembered that this was the original topic. "The reason for that is the gift that every King receives when they become a King."

Gravis was a bit taken aback. "Gift? What kind of gift?" he asked.

"As soon as you become a King, the world will grant you a gift. This gift is the same for every beast, but also different for every beast," the Empress explained.

'The same but also different?' Gravis thought in confusion. Yet, he didn't need to ask since the Empress just continued talking.

"Every new King receives enlightenment on a Law, which is most compatible with the King," the Empress explained.

Gravis' eyes widened in shock.

'I'm pretty sure humans don't have that!'

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

#### **Chapter 465: Giving the Empress a Choice**

Gravis thought about what the Empress had said for a while. 'I'm absolutely sure that no human would get something like that as soon as they reach the Nascent Nourishing Realm. Father said that there is some kind of secret weapon that humans get when they reach the Nascent Nourishing Realm, but this surely isn't it.'

Gravis looked at the horizon with narrowed eyes. 'I think this is another one of Heaven's ways to keep the beasts powerful enough to serve as tempering. The beasts probably don't have access to this secret weapon that humans have, which is why Heaven bestows a Law upon the beasts.'

'Additionally, for beasts that haven't come into contact with the Laws before, understanding a Law might give them the start they need to understand more. I'm pretty sure that Heaven teaches the Laws differently than when I have absorbed the Punishment Lightning. Otherwise, this would make no sense,' Gravis thought.

Then, Gravis looked at the Empress again. "I've got another question."

"Go ahead," the Empress said. She didn't really mind talking to Gravis. After all, the whole matter with the competition had passed, and now she had way too much time on her hands again.

"Are there situations where beasts immediately die as soon as they become Kings?" Gravis asked.

The eyes of the Empress widened. "How did you know?" she asked.

Gravis had already put his armor away and scratched his chin in thought. "So, there is. That's what I have expected."

'This is a double-edged sword,' Gravis thought. 'The Law of Punishment Lightning has basically been granted to me by the lightning itself, not by Heaven. Father has said that this might make it harder for me to understand my first other Law, which had been proven true. Without my father's guidance and the unreal pressure in my fight against the Golden Dragon, I wouldn't have understood the Law regarding the materials.'

'I'm sure that Heaven wouldn't give beasts this same disadvantage. After all, Heaven wants all the beasts to become powerful. Therefore, Heaven must transport the minds of the beasts into some kind of plane where they can fully concentrate on the Law that fits them the most.'

Gravis narrowed his eyes. 'Yet, not all beasts are able to comprehend Laws. This means that some beasts just wouldn't be able to leave this space. According to what I know of Heaven's conduct, it wouldn't allow such inferior beasts to survive.'

"Hey," the Empress said with some annoyance, "I asked you how you knew that." She had watched Gravis looking at the horizon for a while now, even though she had asked him a question.

The Empress' words had pulled Gravis out of his thoughts, and he looked back at her. "I was lost in thought. I didn't know that specifically, but it made sense in my mind," Gravis answered.

The Empress furrowed her brows. "How does this make sense? If you don't know about this, there is no way to extrapolate something like this from context clues. So, how did you know?" she asked again.

Gravis sighed. "I have a lot of secrets, and I don't want to tell just anyone about that. I'm sorry for that," Gravis said.

The Empress grew more annoyed. "I've been answering your questions with patience, but you say you can't answer my own?" she asked with annoyance.

Gravis sighed again. "It's complicated," he answered. "Due to my background, I know a lot about the workings of the world, but that knowledge is precious. I can tell you with certainty that I know things about the world that no other beast in this world knows."

If any other beast had said these things to the Empress, she would have scoffed at them. Yet, Gravis' powers and conduct were incredibly strange and atypical. He had shown powers that could be considered impossible.

"What do you want in exchange for these secrets?" the Empress asked. She had thought about threatening Gravis, but as far as she had seen, Gravis didn't appear to be a beast that was susceptible to threats. So, she approached with a trade.

Gravis' eyes shone as he looked at the Empress. "There is something that has been bothering me for the longest time, and if you can accept this condition, I will tell you as much about my secrets as I'm allowed to share."

The Empress' brows furrowed some more. "As much as you're allowed to share? Who can force you to keep your secrets with me present? You said yourself that you are not part of any stronger Empire."

Gravis had a complicated expression on his face. "Sadly, that's part of my secrets. I can only tell you that I haven't lied to you once," he said.

The Empress grew frustrated when she heard that. Why was Gravis so secretive all of a sudden? On top of that, she remembered that he was still a Lord. Why did it feel like she was speaking to an equal rather than someone way weaker than her? This whole situation felt surreal to her.

After some seconds, the Empress sighed again. She decided to concede. It felt weird to her to concede to some Lord, but the potential gains may be worth the loss. If Gravis' secrets were bullshit, she could still kill him out of anger later.

"Alright, what's your condition?" she asked.

'This is it!' Gravis thought with motivation.

"You have probably noticed that I'm very different from other beasts," Gravis said.

The Empress sneered. That much was obvious.

"One of these differences is my relationship in regards to a life companion and offspring," Gravis said.

The Empress lifted one of her eyebrows in interest but didn't say anything.

"To me, children are something that may be even more important than my path to power. I don't want to have children currently since I will be forced to establish an emotional connection with them. As long as they are present, I won't be able to easily move forward on my path anymore."

"That's why," Gravis said with a sigh, "I don't want to have any offspring while I'm in this world. This is my condition."

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

#### **Chapter 466: The Devastating Truth**

The Empress furrowed her brows in confusion. "You want to reach supreme power without having any offspring?" she asked in confusion.

Gravis nodded. "If I have children, I will love them with all my heart. They would be like another life of mine, and I can't rest and cultivate easily as long as I don't know if they're safe or not. Right now, I don't have the power to protect them from danger."

"Yet, I also don't want my path to end in this world. As soon as I have enough power to protect them, I would be at the peak of the world, which means that I can ascend into the next world. Because of that, I can't have children in this world. I'm sure that I can help you some other way. If you want, I will also just join the Empire as a normal beast," Gravis explained.

The Empress had a very complex look on her face. She wasn't really angry or frustrated about the fact that Gravis just said that he didn't want to do the one thing that his position required of him.

Her face looked more like complex pity.

"Gravis," she said slowly. "Do you know why everyone wants to become my mate?" she asked.

Gravis narrowed his eyes as he heard that question. This question seemingly came out of nowhere. Was the Empress trying to entice him to reconsider?

"Isn't it because of the feeling of power that they might feel after bedding an Emperor and the associated status?" Gravis asked.

The Empress shook her head. "This might motivate some of the Lords, but not so many of them. Additionally, why do you think I give out so many rewards to the Kings for a good mate?"

Gravis also thought about that. "You probably also get something out of this, right?" he asked.

The Empress nodded. "Yes. I am searching for powerful beasts so that I can learn about the Laws of Life," she said.

"Laws of Life?" Gravis asked, taken aback.

"Yes. Gaining insights into the Laws of Life is difficult. Yet, by watching the creation of a new life, I receive a lot of insights about the Law of Life. As soon as my children are born, I don't care about them anymore. I am simply using this process to further my understanding of Laws," she explained.

If any human heard these words, they would be shocked and appalled. Yet, Gravis understood that beasts really didn't care about their offspring. Mortal animals might care about them, but it was completely different for beasts on the cultivation path.

The beasts were walking a path to power, and an incredibly vast majority would die on that path. Artificially increasing the offspring's power with the parents' help would make it only more challenging for the offspring to become powerful themselves. That's why beasts in the cultivation world didn't care about their offspring.

Heaven probably also had a hand in that. If beasts also cared about their offspring like humans, they might not reproduce as crazily as they did now. After all, a child one cared about could be considered a burden if love was involved.

Of course, humans would never consider their children a burden. Children brought light and happiness to their lives, and Gravis wasn't different in that regard. If he ever had children, he would love them with all his heart.

"And what do your mates get out of this process?" Gravis asked. "You said there is more than just my earlier stated reason."

The Empress still retained her look of complex pity. Surprisingly, she remained silent for a couple of seconds, making Gravis nervous. He had expected her to scoff at him or grow enraged by his disrespect. Yet, the Empress only looked at him with pity. What was going on with that?

After these seconds of silence, the Empress sighed again. "You are really unlucky," she said.

Gravis lifted an eyebrow. "I'm unlucky? How come? Is it because I don't get that reward the other mates get due to not mating with you? I'm fine with that. Not getting the reward might seem like a loss, but having children might stop my path entirely. I'll accept that trade any day," Gravis said.

The Empress looked to the side. "That's exactly it. If you want to reach supreme power, you must accept the current circumstance," she said.

Gravis was shocked when he heard that. "Wait, what? Are you saying that you will kill me if I don't accept?" he asked.

The Empress shook her head. "No, I won't," she said. Then, she sighed again. Right now, she actually felt some real pity for Gravis.

"Why are all the potential candidates in the previous competition Lords and not Kings or Emperors?" the Empress asked.

Gravis narrowed his eyes. "I don't know," he said.

"The reason for that is the necessary breeding that Lords are required to partake in to become Kings," she said.

Gravis felt his insides shake. "Necessary breeding?" he asked.

The Empress nodded. "A level five Lord can't become a King without having produced a certain amount of offspring," the Empress said, making Gravis' world freeze out of sheer shock.

"If a beast hasn't produced enough offspring, they will be forever stuck at the level of a level five Lord. No matter how much they eat or how many Laws they comprehend, the evolution to become a King will just never take place. This is one of the absolute rules of the world."

Gravis' world had completely stopped, and he couldn't comprehend what was happening right now. "W-what?" he asked subconsciously.

The Empress still looked at Gravis with complex pity. "Normally, a level five Lord needs to produce around 1,000 children to become a King. Producing so many children is incredibly difficult and time-consuming for Lords."

"The reward that my mates get from me is that their offspring will become Divine Beasts. For some reason, as long as your offspring is a Divine Beast, you don't need to have so many children. You only need to bring three Divine Beasts into the world to become a King," the Empress explained.

To Gravis, the world was spinning and going out of control right now. What was the Empress saying? He was required to have children in order to reach the Nascent Nourishing Realm? This was a joke, right?

Yet, this was only Gravis' optimism speaking. Deep down, he knew that she wasn't joking, as many scenes replayed inside Gravis' mind.

He remembered the Red King's laughter when Gravis had told him that he didn't want to have any children due to his goal to become powerful. The Red King had said that Gravis lacked some common information regarding that. He also said that he wanted to see Gravis' face when he finally realized the truth.

Involuntarily, the revelation of this new information had also answered a question that Gravis always had had. If the beasts killed and consumed each other this crazily and quickly to become powerful, then

how was it possible that there were still so many beasts left? The numbers of beasts should have been way lower.

Of course, all the weaker beasts still reproduced like crazy since they didn't have the mental faculties to resist their instincts, but what about the powerful beasts? Why would they have children?

This explained everything! This requirement to produce 1,000 beasts would do a lot for the beast population. Heaven couldn't possibly allow the beasts to die out like that. It needed to keep the new beasts coming without pause.

Gravis didn't want to think about this, but all the revelations just kept coming. This rule was the best way to keep the world populated. This way was incredibly effective. On top of that, the beasts wouldn't even really care much since they didn't care about their offspring in the first place. To them, this would be an annoyance and time-sink, at worst.

Gravis also remembered the conversation he had with his father. His father had said that Gravis would count as a beast in this world and that there was a rule that might make Gravis decide against going to a natural world.

Back then, his father had shown a similar look to the Empress'. He knew the rule, but he had refused to tell it to Gravis. Back then, Gravis had no idea what rule could possibly make him decide against pursuing supreme power.

Finally, the truth reared its ugly head.

The hidden rule of the world had been exposed.

If Gravis wanted to become more powerful, he needed to have children.

And if Gravis ever wanted to achieve supreme power...

He would be required to leave his children behind and leave this world without them.

Gravis was required to create powerful emotional bonds and then sever them!

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

#### **Chapter 467: Bargaining**

The Empress sighed, something she had done a couple of times in the last five minutes. For these last five minutes, Gravis had just stared into space. In the beginning, the Empress thought that Gravis was looking at her, but his eyes were unfocused, which made her realize that he was just looking aimlessly into space.

The Empress wasn't stupid, and even though she hadn't felt this feeling called love before, she could still empathize with it. She thought that, for Gravis, accepting this situation probably felt akin to having heard that he had to stop his path to power. Because of that, the Empress could empathize with Gravis.

"I'm sorry, Empress," Gravis said after these five minutes. Surprisingly, his voice sounded stalwart. "I need some time for myself. I will talk to you later, okay?"

The Empress nodded. "It's alright. You're now part of my Empire. Take all the time you need. My breeders are allowed to visit my Mountain of Pride whenever they want," she explained.

Gravis nodded. "Thank you."

Then, he left the Mountain of Pride as he flew in a random direction. After a couple of kilometers, Gravis stopped. When he stopped, he just frowned as he looked at the floor with clenched fists. Then, he looked at the sky with burning eyes.

Who had decided this rule?

Obviously, it was Heaven, and Heaven was a sentient being. It had a goal in achieving all of these things, and rules allowed it to reach these things. Yet, if there were a better way to reach its goal, then changing its own rules wouldn't be a problem. Heaven had decided the rules, and it could also change them.

What, just because everyone else also had to follow these rules made all of this fair? That's not how the world worked! Rules were always decided by a more powerful party and were used to achieve some goal.

For mortals, these rules mostly existed to allow them to live together, but that wasn't the case for cultivators. Heaven had its goal in making these rules, and just because it was more powerful right now, Gravis was supposed to just accept these rules? Hell no!

Rules could be inherently unjust and unfair, even if everyone had to follow them. Saying that a rule was fair just because everyone was in the same boat only showed the person's weak will.

Gravis wasn't a beast. He was a human! Humans had a completely different relationship with their children than beasts. If Gravis weren't a human, he wouldn't have any issues with this rule. After all, his whole personality would be different.

Yet, since Gravis was a human, this rule became a major problem. The fact that this rule was a problem in the first place already showed that something wasn't quite right here.

So, even though every other beast had to follow this rule didn't mean that it was fair to put Gravis through this rule too! Gravis was sure that he could convince Heaven to change this rule in regards to him.

Gravis had a bargaining chip. His bargaining chip was his potential and his inherent advantage against Heaven. Heaven might ignore all these other beasts since they would never be able to kill it, but Gravis was different. He had the power to kill Heaven! After all, he had done it once already.

Gravis would never accept this rule! He was a human, not a beast! He didn't care that every other beast had to follow these rules!

"Heaven," Gravis said with fiery eyes, "I'm a human, not a beast. You know that. The highest Heaven also watches, and it also knows that I'm a human. This rule shouldn't apply to me," Gravis said.

"Of course," Gravis continued, "I won't be hypocritical and demand the rewards while ignoring the repercussions. I'm fine with you not granting me this extra Law or giving me any other advantage that beasts have over humans. Humans have their own rules, and I'm fine with following those."

"You can take the control over my body size away. This is also something that I can only do because I am inside a beast's body. I'm fine with you taking away all of these things."

"I'm a human!" Gravis shouted. "I only inhabit the body of a beast, and you know that! In comparison to the lower Heaven I have killed, you haven't shown any bad conduct so far. You have kept yourself out of my life, and I have no reason to go against you."

"I know that not all Heavens are the same. Just like people, different Heavens have different personalities. I won't just go against you because of something that one of your colleagues has done to me. Keep your rules and rewards for beasts away from me, and I will leave this world without doing anything to you or your world in the future," Gravis said.

"But," Gravis said as his voice transformed into bottomless rage, "if you force me to go through this ordeal, I won't leave this world until you are dead!"

Gravis waited for a minute, but no answer came.

Then, Gravis released a sigh. "I hope you won't make the same mistake as your colleague. I'm not a beast, and these rules or rewards shouldn't take me into account anyway. I'm simply a human cultivating in your world, so treat me like one."

After that last sentence, Gravis looked around until he found an uninhabited mountain. The Empire was gigantic, and Gravis could probably inhabit anything he wanted with his status. Yet, Gravis would rectify this issue regarding his status soon.

Gravis hated hypocrisy, and if he took advantage of his status as a breeder while not fulfilling his duties, he would be ashamed of himself. Yet, right now, he simply couldn't care less. This whole thing had infuriated him to no end. He needed some time to himself to get his emotions in order.

After digging a hole into the mountain, Gravis sat down and closed his eyes. He took in deep breaths to calm down. He didn't need to breathe with his power, but taking deep breaths still helped in calming his mind.

'I won't follow these rules!' Gravis thought. 'Even if I lose the ability to control my size and everything else that a beast can do, I won't mind. Even if I become an oddity in this world and need to fight against everyone, I still won't accept these rules!'

'Heaven has a goal, and I see the effectiveness of its rules. Without this rule, there wouldn't be nearly as many beasts. Yet, I'm not a beast. I'm fine with giving up all the advantages. Heaven isn't stupid, and it knows that it would be a horrible decision to endanger its own life and world for a mere three newborn Divine Beasts.'

Over two days passed in which Gravis simply tried to get his emotions in order. Yet, even if he was absolutely sure that Heaven wouldn't enforce its rules upon him, there was still his nervousness deep inside him. There was always a chance that this Heaven was another idiot like the lower Heaven.

Holding supreme power over a whole world for who knew how many years sometimes made people and beasts blind to danger and reason. Additionally, such supreme power might also change their beliefs until they thought they were infallible, and everything they did was just and right. Gravis hoped that this Heaven hadn't lost its eye-filled head while trying to shove it as far up its own ass as possible.

Yet, even while thinking all these thoughts, he still felt a deep feeling of suppression. He had felt this feeling back when the Red King appeared and during his time in the Red Kingdom. Surprisingly, even though Gravis was basically forced to follow the Empire's rules, he didn't feel a feeling of suppression from the Empress.

The rules of the Empire made sense, and Gravis had no problems in following them. Additionally, he could always leave if he decided. Yet, this feeling of having this horrible rule dangle over his head made Gravis feel as suppressed as nearly never before.

The only time when he had felt this suppressed was when he had newly arrived in the lower world. Back then, the lower Heaven had tried everything in its power to kill him while he had been nearly helpless. Now, he had the power to bargain with Heaven, at least.

Sadly, this didn't make the situation easier to accept. Gravis still felt like a stronger power was forcing him to go through something he didn't want.

Gravis hated this feeling of being suppressed!

He hated it so much!

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

#### **Chapter 468: Outlet**

Gravis remained inside his newly dug hole for over a week. Even though he believed that this Heaven wouldn't be so stupid, his mind still went through a ton of hypothetical scenarios in which he was forced to have children.

Every time he thought about having to abandon his children, he gritted his teeth. What kind of cruel and bullshit rule was this? Forcing a human to have children against their consent was incredibly cruel. Gravis was absolutely sure that there was no such rule for humans.

If such a rule existed for humans, there wouldn't be nearly as many powerful cultivators. Gravis was sure that the vast majority of humans wouldn't choose to have 1,000 children to become more powerful. If someone decided to do that, everyone, including Gravis, would believe them to be selfish and cold-hearted.

His father and mother had given everything to Gravis and his siblings. His parents took the wishes of their children into account and supported them on their path. Someone that didn't want to risk their life would be able to live a long and painless life with the power of an Immortal Emperor. Someone who wanted to cultivate would get the best possible start.

Gravis felt the care that his parents felt for their children, and Gravis couldn't imagine himself being any different. If he ever had children, he would give them all his support. Yet, that would make it incredibly difficult for him to continue on his path to power. He couldn't imagine leaving his new family behind.

Additionally, Gravis couldn't just lie to his children. What if one of them asked him why he decided to have children in the first place? Was he supposed to tell them that they only exist because he wanted to become more powerful? Hearing something like that would hurt a child immensely. Gravis would never want to hurt his children like this.

On top of that, Gravis felt no love or physical attraction to any beast, including the Empress. So what if the Empress had a human-like upper body? She wasn't a human. She was a beast, and Gravis had no intention of bedding a beast, no matter how similar it was to a human.

What if his children asked him about his relationship with their mother? Was he just supposed to tell them that they only existed because the Empress allowed him to reach a new Realm while having as few children as possible?

These thoughts disgusted Gravis to no end. Gravis would only want children if he found his life partner. He wanted a family, not some randomly scattered people or beasts that shared his blood. He couldn't call something like that a family.

Everything about this situation frustrated and enraged Gravis to no end. He couldn't imagine having to decide between his goal in life and family. Additionally, he wouldn't know what he would do if-

"Leave, peasant! This is my mountain!" a powerful voice suddenly appeared as it resonated throughout the mountain, taking Gravis out of his thoughts. Immediately, his rage exploded as it found an outlet.

BANG!

Gravis didn't even bother to leave through the hole and just charged through the top of the mountain. Then, he looked at the offending beast. It was a 500-meter-long, blue crocodile. It was a level five Lord.

The crocodile was taken aback by Gravis' rage-filled eyes. Yes, it had called him a peasant, but that didn't warrant such an extreme response, did it?

"You, me," Gravis said slowly as he pointed at the crocodile and then at himself. "Life and death fight. Do you accept?" Gravis asked with an icy voice. He had a belly full of anger, but he never forgot the rules. The other party had to accept before he could kill them.

The crocodile was surprised when it heard that. Did this pathetic level three Lord just ask it for a life and death battle because it had called him a peasant? This beast was only a level three Lord! It was normal that more powerful beasts occupied better territories. Also, this mountain had been its residence anyway. Did this weak beast know nothing about how the world worked?

The crocodile scoffed. "Don't throw your life away," it said. "I'll overlook your dis-

"Do you accept or not?" Gravis interrupted it.

The crocodile was quite surprised about Gravis' interruption. It had never seen such a weak beast talking to it like that.

"Calm down," a third voice said as a newcomer seemingly appeared out of nowhere. It was a green monkey, not even two meters tall. Gravis looked at the green monkey and wasn't able to feel its power, which meant that this monkey was a level five King, at least.

"Elder," the crocodile said with respect. "I am within my right to accept this challenge and execute this weak level three Lord, but I've held myself back. I'm here as an envoy, and I don't want to hurt our relationship. Please, keep your beasts under control. If this happened in my Kingdom, I would have killed this beast already."

The monkey looked at the crocodile and nodded. "Thank you for that. Let me introduce you. This," the monkey said as he gestured towards Gravis, "is the Empress' new breeder. He has only been here for a little over a week, so he doesn't know the workings of our Empire very well."

The crocodile nodded a couple of times. "I see. Then, that's-"

"Do you accept or not?" Gravis interrupted both of them again with his rage-filled voice. He didn't break any rules. He was fully within his right to issue a challenge for a life and death battle. He was furious right now, and he needed to vent!

The monkey furrowed his brows. "Listen," the monkey transmitted to Gravis so that the crocodile didn't hear him. "I'm not doing this because of his pathetic status but because of his power. I know that you must have exceptional Battle-Strength to become a breeder, but this crocodile is also powerful."

"I know that you can probably fight two levels above yourself, but this crocodile has also comprehended a Law. I don't want you to throw your life away," the monkey transmitted.

Meanwhile, the crocodile was taken aback again. It knew that Gravis must be powerful to become a breeder, but wasn't he taking it a little too lightly? If this happened outside the Empire, the crocodile would have already killed this beast.

The crocodile looked at the monkey with a complicated look. It really didn't want to cause any trouble, but it was becoming harder to resist.

"Listen," the monkey said as he turned to Gravis. This time, he spoke instead of using a voice transmission so that the crocodile could hear their conversation. "This mountain is reserved for visiting envoys. The envoy is in his rights to demand that you leave-"

"I don't care," Gravis interrupted again. "Power is everything, and if he's more powerful than me, then I will die today. If I'm more powerful, then what right does he have to force me to move?"

Both of them were quite shocked by Gravis' unceremonious interruption. It was one thing to interrupt the crocodile, but interrupting the elder was a whole different thing.

The monkey scoffed and turned his eyes away from Gravis. He only wanted to help Gravis since he was a breeder of the Empress. Yet, Gravis had thrown his goodwill away.

Then, the monkey turned to the crocodile. "Issuing a challenge for a life and death battle is within the rules. Accepting this challenge won't draw any ill-will from us towards your Kingdom. It's your decision."

When the crocodile heard that, it smirked. It knew that Gravis had to be powerful since he was able to become a breeder, but the crocodile wasn't an average level five Lord either. It could fight Half-Step Kings!

Additionally, the crocodile wasn't even eligible to become a candidate for this position. Some small bits of envy and resentment were buried inside it since Gravis had something that it couldn't even hope to achieve.

Yet, power was everything, and the crocodile was more powerful than Gravis. His status didn't matter at all right now. Today, it would kill one of the illustrious breeders.

"Then, I'm sorry, but I will accept the challenge," the crocodile said.

The monkey nodded. "I will bear witness to this challenge. Follow me to the fighting grounds. As soon as you enter, no beast is allowed to exit the fighting grounds until the other one is dead."

Gravis remained silent as he looked at the crocodile with rage-filled eyes. The monkey had noticed these eyes and shook his head in disappointment. Such a reckless and emotional beast managed to become a breeder? What had the Empress thought when she had decided to accept him?

The beasts of the Empire had been informed about a new breeder, but they hadn't been informed about Gravis' power. As far as they knew, Gravis was just as powerful as all the other breeders. That was why the monkey had tried to help Gravis. After all, due to the crocodile's power, this would be a fight with a three-level-difference for Gravis. A breeder was powerful but not that powerful.

The monkey turned around and flew away while the crocodile and Gravis followed. The crocodile threw some smug gazes at Gravis, while Gravis only looked forward in rage. He almost couldn't control his anger right now. He just wanted to kill something right now!

Meanwhile, beside the Mountain of Pride, the Grand Elder was looking in their direction.

Then, he sighed.

"It has only been a week," he said helplessly to himself.

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

#### **Chapter 469: Water Movement**

After some minutes, the group arrived beside some sort of arena. In comparison to the last one, this arena wasn't nearly as big or ostentatious. The last arena had a size of about 50 kilometers, while this one only was 30 kilometers wide.

Additionally, the ground wasn't made of some powerful ore. The ground inside the arena was just normal earth, as far as Gravis could tell. Some Earth Movers probably repaired the arena after every use. The only thing not made out of earth were the walls that surrounded the arena, which were instead made out of some King Rank ore.

Yet, even though Gravis realized all these things, he didn't care about them. Right now, he was completely focused on his own emotions. This whole situation with this stupid rule had frustrated and enraged him to no end, and he wanted nothing more than to just vent right now. It was just the crocodile's bad luck that it had decided to provoke him during this sensitive period.

Was it fair to vent all his emotions onto a beast he didn't know?

It depends.

If Gravis simply attacked someone like this, one could argue that Gravis had no right to attack them. Yet, by issuing a challenge, the decision fell back onto the crocodile's back. By declining, Gravis wouldn't be able to do anything to it without getting killed by some elder.

The crocodile had accepted the duel, which conveniently transformed Gravis' venting of rage into some life and death tempering. The reason why life and death tempering took place wasn't important. Beasts fought and killed each other all the time to become more powerful.

BANG!

Gravis hit the middle of the arena with quite some force, destroying a lot of earth in the process. He only looked towards his empty front with rage-filled eyes. As soon as the crocodile would enter the arena, he would be able to vent some of his frustration.

"Go in," the monkey said to the crocodile. "As soon as you enter the arena, you can't exit without killing him."

The crocodile only smirked. "I'm looking forward to the fight. I know that all breeders can fight against beasts two levels higher than them. I'm not so arrogant to think that this battle will be easy, but that's even better. I've been through a lot of difficult fights in my life, and I enjoy the challenge."

Gravis grew more impatient as he waited for the crocodile. This whole thing was taking too long!

After lowering its head a little bit towards the monkey, the crocodile flew forward into the arena with a leisurely pace. After some seconds, it reached the middle of the arena, in front of Gravis, and softly landed on the ground.

"Today will-"

BANG!

Gravis' feet exploded with lightning as he accelerated with insane speeds. He hadn't used that technique in a long while since his Lightning Transformation was just faster in general.

The crocodile hadn't been ready at all, and just when it wanted to evade, a powerful pressure appeared and pressed into it, slowing it down by around 20%. Due to that miscalculation, it messed up its timing.

BANG!

Gravis punched the crocodile's snout with his fist, lightning violently exploding out of it. The snout of the crocodile broke, and it got shot towards the distance for several kilometers.

Gravis' lightning had already reached 393% of its initial power when he had become a level three Lord. In relation to the general power of a level three Lord, his lightning was only 7% weaker than the power of a level four Lord.

Gravis had moved his centers of power around crazily during all of this. He made his body weaker and lightning stronger to accelerate as fast as possible. Then, he moved everything into his Spirit to make his Will-Aura as powerful as possible. Lastly, he distributed his power into his body and lightning to increase the power of his attack.

So, even though Gravis was only a level three Lord, this attack was still easily powerful enough to injure a level five Lord. After this attack, Gravis simply looked at the crocodile, which was still flying away from him due to his punch.

Meanwhile, the eyes of the watching monkey widened in shock. That was some incredible acceleration for a level three Lord! Additionally, the attack had broken the crocodile's snout in many places.

Near the Mountain of Pride, the white ape also nodded in praise. Gravis hadn't been able to display his full power during the earlier battles a week ago, which made his specific Battle-Strength still a mystery to the white ape and the Empress. The white ape looked forward to seeing more of Gravis' power.

Instead of following up with another attack, Gravis just waited for the crocodile.

After some seconds, the crocodile managed to regain its bearings after the initial shock. Then, it grew furious. It quickly stood up again and looked at Gravis with burning rage.

Gravis looked back from a distance. "Normally, I would have already killed you with a more powerful attack," Gravis said coldly, "but today, you're not tempering for me. You're just an outlet for my rage. I don't want to kill you with a single attack. Come!" Gravis shouted.

What Gravis had said had been the truth. If he so wanted, he could have unloaded a pre-loaded Lightning Crescent into its face. If he had done that, the crocodile would have died already.

Underestimating one's enemy was the biggest mistake one could make in a fight. Many people and beasts had died to Gravis because of that reason, and if Gravis so wanted, the crocodile would have become one of them already.

When the crocodile heard that, it grew even angrier. Not only has this puny level three Lord destroyed its snout, but this little shit was looking down on it! Yet, the crocodile realized that Gravis was powerful. Now, it would use everything in its power to kill him!

Whoosh!

The crocodile flew into the air, but for some reason, its flight looked different from how other beasts flew. Other beasts always hovered in the air like there was some invisible, moving platform underneath them.

Meanwhile, the crocodile's body was bobbing up and down slightly, with its feet and tail distorting some air around them. By all intents and purposes, the crocodile looked like it was submerged in water, not air.

The distortion around its feet and tail reminded Gravis of small currents of water. It was like the air was behaving like water around the crocodile. Gravis was absolutely sure that this was the doing of that Law that the crocodile had comprehended. He remembered that the monkey had said that the crocodile knew a Law.

Whoosh!

The crocodile shot forward at insane speeds. Its speed was even faster than an average level five Lord Divine Beast. Thanks to Gravis' Spirit Sense, he was able to take note of all the peculiarities while the crocodile shot forward.

The air around it only behaved like water behind its feet, arms, and tail. The front of its appendages and body had no sign of these currents. Gravis immediately realized how the crocodile could become that fast.

Water was many times denser than air and therefore also had a lot more resistance. If a mortal flailed their arms and legs in the air, they would only make some very minor headway in their desired direction. It was difficult to push themselves forward with only air resistance.

Water was different in the sense that a mortal could easily swim in it and move forward. The human might not be as fast as on land, but they could definitely swim faster in the water than they could "swim" in the air.

By making the air behind the crocodile act like water, it could use the higher resistance to push itself forward. Additionally, since the front of its body still behaved like normal air, the crocodile gained the positive aspect of water movement while ignoring the negative aspects. This allowed it to become this fast.

Gravis was sure that this Law had something to do with water movement. Laws were able to alter the world around the user. He might not have seen a Law that had been used like this, but it made sense.

Luckily, the crocodile had been far away, which gave Gravis enough time to react. If it had been closer, he might not have been able to react to such insane speeds.

The crocodile quickly reached Gravis.

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

#### **Chapter 470: No Use**

Instead of evading, Gravis simply waited until the crocodile came closer.

'Twice, already,' he thought. 'I could have killed you again with a Lightning Crescent just now. You can't even distract me properly,' he thought with frustration.

The crocodile was not using its most effective weapon against Gravis, which would be its element. By shooting some compressed water beams or some icicles at him, he would be forced to defend himself or evade. Sadly, the crocodile only charged at him to bite him.

Yet, the crocodile couldn't be faulted for this line of thinking. It was a Divine Beast, and it was two levels higher than Gravis. Theoretically, its body should be around 32 times more powerful than Gravis' body. Therefore, in its mind, its body would be the most powerful weapon against him.

Sadly, that was wrong. Gravis' whole fighting style and attacks were designed for close combat. With his weaker lightning, he would need to spend a lot more Energy to injure the crocodile from a distance.

Additionally, due to the level difference, his lightning wouldn't be fast enough to make the crocodile unable to react. By fighting from a distance, the crocodile would become way more troublesome.

The light vanished around Gravis as the crocodile's maw engulfed him. A crocodile's mouth was the most powerful part of its body, and a bite could crush nearly everything. On top of that, only its snout was broken, which meant that its lower jaw remained uninjured.

While all of this had been going on, Gravis had readied several things inside his Spirit Space. He had become incredibly good at forging, and he could make some small alterations to his equipment in a split second.

Whoop!

Four things appeared around Gravis. At first glance, these things looked like sabers with some kind of platform attached to their hilts. If one looked closer, they would realize that these platforms were shields that had been fused to the hilts of the sabers.

Two of these things were above Gravis, while the two other things were below him. Then, Gravis placed his hands and feet on the backside of the shields so that the sabers pointed away from him.

SHING! BANG!

The jaw snapped shut. The crocodile's own power and Gravis' resistance made the sabers dig deeply into the crocodile's mouth. One had to remember that Gravis was around 40 meters tall currently, with his equipment perfectly fitting his size. The crocodile was bigger with a length of 500 meters, but a saber with a length of around 20 meters would still hurt it incredibly.

The four sabers pushed through the crocodile's lower and upper jaw until they broke out of the other side. Yet, the power of its bite hadn't been exhausted. Its bite continued pushing down until it hit the shields.

A crocodile's bite was powerful, but it was only able to make use of the muscles in its head and neck. Meanwhile, by standing upright, Gravis was making use of his entire body. Additionally, the bite had been weakened by forcing the sabers into the crocodile's flesh.

Gravis felt some of his bones crack, but such an injury was nothing for a Lord. He managed to resist the bite until it fully stopped.

Meanwhile, the crocodile was shocked by the incredible pain it felt right now. These sabers had come out of nowhere, and it hadn't been able to stop its attack in time.

BANG!

Gravis' hands and legs exploded with lightning, which made the crocodile open its destroyed mouth. After that, Gravis easily flew out of its opened mouth and looked at it with cold eyes. "You're not even a challenge," he said coldly.

He wanted to distract himself by fighting a beast, but this crocodile had made one wrong decision after the other. Gravis wanted to lose himself in the excitement of a fight, but he felt nothing right now.

Theoretically, the crocodile had enough power to become a threat to him, but its shitty decision-making ruined everything.

The crocodile tried to close its mouth, but it became hard with these sabers stabbing through its jaws. Its most powerful weapon had been destroyed, which made it nervous.

BANG! BANG!

Gravis exploded forward again, and his fist exploded onto the crocodile's lower jaw, breaking it too. The crocodile had been too distracted with its horrible circumstances right now and had lost its concentration.

The crocodile flew into the distance again, but this time, Gravis chased. Instead of venting his rage, he was only becoming more frustrated.

This was supposed to be a challenge! Gravis wanted to distract himself, but this idiotic crocodile was too inexperienced. He had no idea how someone as inexperienced as this crocodile managed to comprehend a Law.

His disgust for the crocodile grew since it wasn't able to distract him.

In order to chase the crocodile as quickly as possible, Gravis transformed into lightning, making the eyes of the white ape and monkey widen. They hadn't seen that yet.

Gravis quickly reached the crocodile with his speed and materialized on top of the still flying crocodile.

BANG!

A kick filled with lightning exploded onto its back, forcing the crocodile to create a crater below it, but Gravis wasn't done.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

He charged into the hole and punched and kicked it everywhere, lightning exploding every time he hit it. Its bones broke while its flesh split apart with burns. It was becoming more and more injured as time passed.

SSSSSS!

Multiple beams of compressed water appeared around Gravis, which quickly shot at him. Even though Gravis was angry, he was smart enough not to forget that his opponent could still kill him. His Will-Aura appeared and broke the will upon the water, making it impossible for the crocodile to control the water after it had been shot out.

Then, Gravis evaded most of the water beams, thanks to his involuntary evasion training against the Golden Dragon. One of the beams penetrated his right chest, but the beam hadn't been wide enough to create a big hole. The crocodile had probably intended to cut him apart with these beams, but it hadn't expected to lose control over its own element like this.

BANG! BANG! BANG

Gravis rained more punches onto the crocodile's body, injuring it more and more. Of course, the crocodile also tried to hit him with more water, but Gravis was already too close to it. Additionally, the constant flurry of punches and kicks made it hard for the crocodile to think rationally.

Right now, it only tried everything in its power to get Gravis away from it. It couldn't run since Gravis' attacks had pushed both of them deep into the earth. Charging through the earth wouldn't allow it to become fast enough to get away in time.

After more attacks, the crocodile's eyes widened in rage and panic. Then, it turned its mouth as quickly as possible to Gravis and opened it wide.

BZZZ!

Yet, Gravis immediately transformed into lightning and circled to the other side of its body. He had seen the last-ditch attack of a Divine Beast already, and he wouldn't fall for it again. At his new location, the crocodile couldn't point its mouth at him.

By now, Gravis realized that punching the crocodile didn't help with his rage. Actually, it made his rage even increase. Deep inside, he knew that this was pointless. Punching this crocodile didn't help with his situation at all.

It changed nothing!

He still had this stupid rule hanging above his head, no matter how much he punched the crocodile. Gravis quickly realized how pointless this whole thing was.

"Fuck this," he said to himself.

SHING! BOOOOOM!

Gravis summoned one of his sabers and unloaded the pre-loaded Lightning Crescent into the crocodile's head. All the earth surrounding them got reduced into dust, while the earth further away got thrown into the distance due to the shockwave.

The explosion vanished quickly, and only a massive crater was left behind. The lightning quickly entered Gravis' body, and he jumped out of the crater. His body was already beginning to evolve, but he couldn't care less right now.

"This doesn't change anything!" he grumbled to himself as he walked away from the crater. "I still don't know if Heaven has accepted my bargain or not, and I can't stand not knowing the results!"

Gravis said all this, not caring who overheard him. Right now, his whole concentration was on his current situation.

"I need to know for sure," Gravis said to himself as he stopped. Then, he turned to the monkey, who was still looking at him.

"I want to join the war against the sea beasts," he commented.

Right now, Gravis knew that his Will-Aura wasn't powerful enough to contend with a level one King. This meant that he needed to reach the power of a level five Lord by only eating level five Lords, and according to his calculations, he would need to eat over twenty of them.

The war would surely involve a lot of powerful Lords, and getting his food there would surely be more efficient than asking one level five Lord after the other inside the Empire to fight him.

Gravis needed to know what Heaven had decided. Remaining in this form of limbo only grated on his nerves. He had to become a level five Lord as quickly as possible and then fight level one Kings to become a King.

Only then would he know what Heaven had decided for him.

Gravis absolutely hated that some more powerful being could decide his future, but there was nothing he could do right now. He first needed to get clarity on the issue.

After that, he could plan his future.