

Mana 911

Chapter 911 - A Lich Shall Cleanse the Valleys!

While Noah tried to tear apart the defenses of a Nine-Tailed Fox Race Royal that had forged tens of millions of Galaxies, his pets and subordinates were moving with vigor against the Sages and Great Sages of the Stardew Valleys.

They were introduced to the terrifying racial abilities of new races and their own unique skills, but their sheer numbers made it so that the forces of the Stardew Valleys were on the losing side!

There were only 18 Great Sages apart from Prince Ebner, and Noah's Summons alone accounted for tens of Great Sages.

This meant that after the enemy Great Sages were matched, there were many Great Sages from Noah's camp that had no enemy of equal standing to stop them!

This was where the bloodiest scenes of the battle occurred, where Tiamat's figures as Chaos Dragons could be seen tearing through the Sages of the other Supreme Bloodlines and leaving behind a trail of blood and gore.

The enormous Galaxy Devouring Serpents coiled across the skies as they threatened to swallow the whole world, their jaws releasing a horrendous pressure that swallowed over 5 Sages instantly, the moment his jaws closing these Sages perishing as an explosion of Cores and Dao Crystals appeared right after!

The explosion of loot...was something that many of Noah's subordinates sought after as in a certain region, a black Dragon that was Barbatos was leading a Small Legion of Abyssal Undead at the rank of Entities against 2 Sages and 24 Entities.

Near her, the ferocious roar of a Fire Dragon could be heard boisterously, this roar coming from Morgana who had just ripped apart a Sage as her body palpated with an aura of destruction!

When she saw the loot spilling out of the enemy Sage, the eyes of Morgana shine brightly as it was a first for her as a resident of the Dark Universe.

"I can finally join the ranks of cheaters!"

Her indiscernible cry reverberated out as across the Stardew Valleys, it was the might of the Dragon Race reigning Supreme everywhere one looked!

Within the Sky Summit below, the beings within that had stepped on Dragons or massacred them for meals in the past thousands of years felt their hearts trembling, turning to their sides where they saw the eyes of the same Dragons they bullied over the years.

As all the Great Sages and Sages were congregated in the skies above them, many of the locations across Stardew Valleys only had Entities or a few Sages of the Supreme Bloodlines left.

But this also meant the rebellion of some Dragons would be stopped as a few were even unfortunately killed in the locations that had still held Sages and multiple Entities!

To further prevent this and aid the many Dragons spread across Stardew Valleys, Noah had cast a skill that bloomed in the middle of the obsidian city below them while he faced Prince Ebner in the skies.

It was from a skill tree he found to be loving more and more, a skill tree that he had taken to the Galactic Filament Realm!

"Hellooo..."

RUMBLE!

An eerie greeting erupted out in the middle of the city where an Entity of the Nine-Tailed Fox Race was about to reap the life of a GALAXY Rank Dragon.

The Entity felt chills over its body when it heard the Hello, not even being able to turn around when the hand of a skeleton pierced through its non transformed c.h.e.s.t and plucked out its heart with ease!

The bones of the skeleton actually shimmered with the illusory light of Galaxies, a terrifying aura of another Great Sage spreading from the middle of the City as the Nether Lich Emperor was called forth.

"Come forth, my children! We have the task of cleansing the many Summits of Stardew Valleys..."

THRUM!

His descending staff that touched the ground caused the eruption of horrendous aura to rise, where those within the city were shocked to find that this Undead Lich at the level of Galactic Filament...was summoning Undead Sages.

Sages!

To understand this, we have to glance at the shocking skill tree that was elevated to the Galactic Filament Realm!

GALACTIC FILAMENT [Arch Lich Ra'Zan]...>>>[Galaxy Consuming Nether Lich Emperor] >>>[Galactic Nether Lich Emperor] :: ... Abilities include [Summon Undead]...>>>[Galactic Undead](5/5), [Abyssal Nether Necrolords](5/5), [Aura of the Nether Lich](5/5), [Soul Reaper](5/5), [Sweet Release of Death](5/5) >>> [Authority of the Galactic Lich](5/5), [Deathly Soul Flames](5/5), [Sagely Necrolords](5/5), [Domain of the Undead Emperor](5/5)

A skill tree brought to the Galactic Filament level, with the new skills being [Authority of the Galactic Lich], [Deathly Soul Flames], [Sagely Necrolords], and [Domain of the Undead Emperor].

Out of all these, the most pertinent ones right now were [Authority of the Galactic Lich] and [Sagely Necrolords]!

[Authority of the Galactic Lich] :: As a creature that rules over Galactic Filaments in the Necrotic Universe, the Nether Lich Emperor can call forth the Undead Entities bound by death that are roaming within the Necrotic Universe.

Yes.

These were the two most ridiculous abilities that the Nether Lich Emperor had received after being brought to the Galactic Filament Realm!

It was also why Noah had summoned it onto the Summit below, its mission being to call forth the ridiculous 100 Sage Necrolords as their goal was to spread across the Stardew Valleys to cleanse all the lands and free all Dragons!

It also wouldn't hurt that the tens of thousands of Undead within the Legion...were now all at the levels of Entities.

"Kekekekeke!"

The chilling clatter of pristine teeth on the skull of the Nether Lich rang out as its eyes blazed with soul flames, watching the glorious scene of 100 Sagely Necrolords erupting from the cracks in space and shooting out like missiles across all directions, the sight of thousands of Abyssal Undead Entities that would form a horrendous Undead Legion catching its eyes as the flames within blazed powerfully!

Even the nearby saved Dragon felt a chill run down its body as while the Dragons were elected alone, they pulled away from the maniacal Lich and the forming Undead Legion that had begun to go rampant on their enemies.

"Kekekekeke!!!"

The chilling laughter of a horrendous lich began to spread across the Stardew Valleys, vowing in its heart to cleanse them to its Master's satisfaction!

Chapter 912 - Absurd!

The overarching battle was being overseen by Noah from all angles as even while he faced a terrifying being that had forged tens of millions of galaxies, he still made sure to check everything was going as it should have for his subordinates and those around him!

When he confirmed that the Great Sages of the Supreme Bloodline Races were battling with his Animus Summons and their Clones, with his Witch Slaves and Primal Spirits moving to reinforce his subordinates and lend support wherever it was required...he finally placed his full focus on the terrific Prince Ebner.

BOOM!

For the first time since the Half-a-Step Great Sage sliver of soul he defeated 2 months ago, he was battling with a being that could not be taken down instantly as the Prince displayed a great variety of illusory skills paired with heavily offensive abilities!

The Prince was even further boosted by the <Illusory Prison of the Nine Tailed Monarch> that granted him powerful boosts to his power as Noah only found himself locking Ebner down with his clones after a few minutes, the terrifying Ruination Galaxy Spirit Bombs he continued to throw out finally tearing apart the defenses of this creature enough that its illusions were working less and less.

"Who are you, really?"

BOOM!

As they fought, the Prince's voice rang out while evading the deadly jaws of multiple Abyssal Black Tyrant Dragons trying to rip him apart, his heart feeling heavy as he found he wasn't obtaining any advantages even after minutes passed since the battle began!

RUMBLE!

But the only reply he received was the fastest and most terrifying of the Tyrant Dragons which was Noah's own body that was lined up with the brilliant runic lines that was the Blue Slime- the jaws of this Tyrant Dragon releasing a Dragon's Breath that was made up of Ruination Galaxy Spirit Bombs that hit the real body of Prince Ebner head on.

"Impudent!"

WAA!

The Prince came out from the attack with his fur losing some of its l.u.s.ter, the essence of many Daos around his body swirling crazily as the tens of millions of Galaxies within his origin pumped out a tremendous amount of force.

"I have Monarchs and Ancestors at the level of Paragons behind me, would a creature like you dare to wage war against them? You think you can survive in this Universe with the Paragons of my Race hunting you down?!"

BOOM!

"Even now, they have already been alerted to this attack as the nearest Monarchs within this Planet of Consanguinity are already making their way to the Stardew Valleys, whatever formation or treasure you used to isolate this place being broken soon enough!"

The voice of the Prince rang out majestically as the nine tails behind his body weaved with stupendous attacks, each one releasing soul scorching flames that smashed against Noah's constant unstable galaxies.

Yet his voice that was filled with a domineering tone had gradually been ground down as he was now mentioning his Ancestors and the powerful forces behind him!

At these words, Noah's eyes squinted as his voice reverberated from all 10 bodies inside the <Illusory Prison of the Nine Tailed Monarch>.

"Then to make sure no surprises occur, you're telling me to wrap this battle up and kill everyone right away..."

...!

"You fuc-!"

RUUMBLE!

The Prince's wrath had flared up as he was about to curse the being in front of him on how he had arrived at such a conclusion after hearing his words, but this was when the auras of 7 more Great Sages instantly teleported into the <Illusory Prison of the Nine Tailed Monarch> that nobody should be able to get in or out of.

It was the original bodies of the 7 Animus Summons that had been ripping apart Sages and Entities outside!

"Merge."

...!

Essence overflowed as the starry eyes of Prince Ebner watched on to see 7 of Noah's Tyrant Dragon clones turn into streaks of light that merged with the 7 Animus Summons, and then these 7 Animus Summons turned into wondrous streak of lights to go on to merge with the only Obsidian-blue Tyrant Dragon!

THRUM!

A horrendous aura then began to erupt as it seemed to exceed even the pressure that the Prince that had forged tens of millions of Galaxies released, a pressure that was only made possible with multiple Great Sages joined together and gave their many boosts and power over to a single body.

It was the coming together of multiple Great Sages unto Noah's single body!

OOOOOOH!

A bellow that caused the very skies to tear erupted out, the <Illusory Prison of the Nine-Tailed Monarch> shaking as the aura of the Abyssal Black Tyrant Dragon that had begun shining gloriously within was rising rapidly, the size of the dragon beginning to expand just as fast.

The aura caused the many eyes of powerful beings outstretched in the skies of the Stardew Valleys to turn towards the golden crimson prison that was 2 miles long in the skies, their eyes shockingly catching the image of a multicolored dragon expanding within this cage that was shaking as if it could break at any moment!

A roar reverberated out as on the body of the enormous Abyssal Black Tyrant Dragon, another pair of wings resplendently formed to create a dragon with 4 shimmering wings- 2 with black flames raging atop them and another 2 that shone with golden scorching flames.

CRACK!

These wings spreading out was the last straw for the <Illusory Prison of the Nine Tailed Monarch>, this wondrous ability that the Prince utilized a Bloodline Treasure to call forth shattering into innumerable pieces as the body of an ever-expanding dragon became clearly visible to all!

The Summons that had gone to merge into Noah's Tyrant Dragon form...had granted him a stellar draconic armor that covered every single scale, even his head being covered by an armament that only showed the blazing beams of light released from his eyes!

ROAAR!

He bellowed out gloriously as his figure actually reached over 3 miles, occupying the skies tyrannically as many beings nearly went breathless at his sight.

An enormous dragon that was over 3 miles long- that was nearly 5000 meters... It was an absurd scene that was only overshadowed by its sheer majesty!

With his glorious four pairs of wings dancing with flames and his enormous body that shone with a multicolored dragon armor, those with the bloodline of dragons in the Sky Summit and those watching his shocking figure from far away slumped to the ground, their eyes fervently looking to the skies!

"Dragon Emperor..."

"Ancestor...!"

THRUUM!

Chapter 913 - A Monarch Arrives!

"Dragon Emperor..."

Dragon Emperor.

It was a term reserved for the strongest of Dragons right below the Dragon Empress, right below the Queen Dowager that was the Progenitor of Dragons.

It was a title that one could not grant themselves, but one that had to be given by others!

Across the Stardew Valleys, many eyes turned towards a magisterial 3 miles long armored dragon that released a pressure that announced itself to be the strongest out of all the beings within the Valleys.

Stronger than a Great Sage with a million forged galaxies! Stronger than even the domineering aura of Prince Ebner with tens of millions of forged Galaxies.

The dragons stretched across the valleys looked towards this majestic figure as their blood boiled, and they couldn't help but cry out towards it!

This was because the blood of Tiamat who was their Progenitor was infused in Noah at this moment, all dragons looking towards him as the Ancestor that had come to save them from tyranny.

"Dragon Emperor...!"

They cried out reverently towards the majestic figure in the skies as they and many others were shown a scene they would never forget throughout their entire lives.

It was the figure of this enormous dragon opening its jaws to swallow a Nine-Tailed Fox that pulsed with the light of tens of millions of Galaxies!

...!

The color on Prince Ebner's face had all but drained when the Tyrant Dragon became 10 times his size and entirely exceeded him in terms of pressure, and the loss of the boosts of the <Illusory Prison of the Nine Tailed Monarch> made him even more vulnerable.

BOOOM...RIIIP!

The skies tumbled and cracked as his disheveled figure was revealed right after, the mending skies showing the scene of his head filled with fur that had lost its l.u.s.ter glance towards the Tyrant Dragon.

But all that the eyes of the Nine-Tailed Fox saw...was an enormous opened jaw with glimmering sharp teeth.

All that everyone looking towards the scene saw...was the gaping jaws of a dragon over a trembling fox, the tyrannical jaw closing down as time seemed to slow, the scene very clearly becoming etched onto all of their minds!

SNAP!

The jaws closed shut in the skies as the glimmering Nine-Tailed Fox...was no more.

...!

A Great Sage Prince of the Nine-Tailed Fox Race with tens of millions of forged Galaxies...perished into the maws of a Tyrannical Dragon Emperor!

THUMP!

It was the majesty of dragons when their progenitor was not assisted and their race enslaved, the majesty of apex predators devouring their prey!

"Dragon Emperor!"

OOOOOH!

Bellows rang out from all around as in the skies, Noah's huge figure felt the body of the Prince ravaged and destroyed by the essence of Ruination within his jaws as whatever else remained on him...a gorgeous red light that was [Memory Plunder] covered the dead creature as Noah absorbed all of its memories.

His eyes that shot out horrendous beams of light then turned below him where the clones of his Animus Summons held down the Great Sages and Sages that had arrived with the dead Ebner, his voice reverberating out with immense grandeur!

"Wrap it up!"

RUMBLE!

A single word, but it was a word that spelled death for many as with the death of the most powerful being from the Supreme Bloodlines that was within the Stardew Valleys, Noah's enormous body moved unhindered to aid his subordinates and summons against the remaining Great Sages and Sages that were already in a dire situation.

OOOOOH!

After all of this ended...Noah had a plan for what he would do with the Dragons within the Stardew Valleys that stood on the enormous Planet of Consanguinity, a planet that held powerful experts from the Supreme Bloodlines!

As Noah's forces moved to decimate the remaining enemies within the Stardew Valleys, the outside of this region was tumultuous as a great deal of powerful beings surrounded a portion of the 1 light year that Noah entirely swallowed with his [Life Realm].

To them, it seemed like an impenetrable green-blue barrier that could not be torn down no matter what attacks they released against it!

The face of a Great Sage from the White Tiger Race became grim as he spoke out to the surrounding Great Sages and Sages.

"The last message from Prince Ebner was that the situation was grimmer than we expected. If we do not break through the barrier soon, I fear..."

"Stop such talk! It is Prince Ebner we are talking about here. He mentioned the enemies were only Great Sages, he can hold them down until Monarch Odo arrives."

The voice of the Great Sage was cut off by a curvaceous woman that had the ears of a fox, her face filled with pride as she talked about the Prince!

"Master Odo...you are sure the message was sent to hi-"

Before the words of the Great Sage could finish, a domineering aura descended right in front of them- a being clad in a white robe appearing soundlessly in front of the barrier.

"I am here."

THRUM!

With these words, the pristine robe draping over this being danced wildly as his body glimmered with an innumerable number of manifested galaxies!

Their number towered over 50 Billion Galaxies as this being...was a Monarch!

Chapter 914 - A Monarch Shatters an Unbreakable Realm!

The Primordial Cosmos stretched out over vast distances, with the innumerable number of creatures within all having their own unique abilities and powers.

Noah had collected a large number of unique abilities himself, but there were many beings that lived for tens or hundreds of thousands of years stretched out across the Cosmos that had their own unique abilities!

As he traversed the many Universes and Cosmos, he would gradually come across these beings and expand what he knew about what was truly unique and absolute!

Within the Stardew Valleys, Noah's enormous figure of an armored Abyssal Black Tyrant Dragon swallowed another Great Sage, the scenes around him seemingly moving in slow motion as his mind entered a unique state.

He saw his Summons ripping apart the remaining Sages and Great Sages from the enemy Bloodline Races, as well as his subordinates domineeringly doing the same while collecting loot with fervor.

He saw the glimpse of the Undead Legion that had stretched out millions of miles to cover much of the Stardew Valleys as the rebellion of Dragons continued unhindered!

He saw all of these scenes as they were uniquely collected together, the wondrous state he was in only then becoming clear in his mind as he saw that around his Origin, a magisterial golden light had begun to surround it.

The wondrous essence of Destiny was extremely dense within this light, a large amount of information being sent to him that surpassed what this Grand Dao should be able to give!

Noah did not know it at this moment, but this was the effect of the boons [Increased Universal Fortune] and [Golden Destiny] that were given to him when he became an Architect of the Dao!

Such beings were extremely special existences, where no matter what path they took in life- it eventually led to an incredible future!

Such beings could turn the most dangerous situations into golden opportunities, and death was a very hard thing to come for them unless something shockingly unexpected happened.

Noah didn't have the full knowledge of this yet, only putting the [Increased Universal Fortune] and [Golden Destiny] effects in the back of his mind.

He could not find out the full extent of what they granted him, but their effects silently manifested at this moment as Noah was given a shocking amount of information through the Dao of Destiny, his vibrant eyes turning to the skies as he seemed to see across the millions of miles of his Life Realm...and see the shocking figure of a Monarch that had arrived out there!

THRUM!

When his mind came to a second later, his voice rang out majestically across the plains.

"Finish everything and collect the creatures of the Dragon Race...we have to go!"

RUMBLE!

The golden light of destiny had told him many things, his actions changing as he moved towards a path that prevented casualties he did not think could appear even after he deployed a Life Realm where nobody could enter or leave.

Monarch Odo stared at the barrier of the Realm that covered the entirety of the Stardew Valleys as his face became exceedingly cold.

His eyes shone with starry light as a horrendous aura erupted from him, the panicked Sages and Great Sages moving back from this horrendous pressure as they saw the figure of Odo...to simply for a fist!

A fist that then went towards the barrier they could not get past or crack, a fist that carried with it a terrifying force that could shred apart an average Great Sage in seconds!

Behind this fist and behind the figure of Monarch Odo, the illusion of billions of Galaxies was displayed, all of them seemingly interconnected as they pulsed with light, all of their strength going towards Odo's small body and into the outstretched fist that smashed onto the barrier of the Realm.

BOOOOM!

An absurd impact reverberated out as raging spatial winds erupted, the Sages in the surroundings being pushed further back as only the Great Sages could remain unhindered!

Yet when the scene cleared, their eyes shone brilliantly as they saw...cracks had begun to spread across the barrier they thought to be unbreakable.

...!

Similar to how Noah's enemies in the past had skills that locked down an entire area where nobody should have been able to leave and Noah could still freely teleport in and out...this type of scene played out where the unbreakable life realm was actually about to be broken.

This would release a shocking being at the level of a Monarch into the Stardew Valleys, and yet a sudden light of Destiny covered Noah as it told him what he should do.

The Monarch had no knowledge of this as his eyes were endlessly cold, the light of innumerable galaxies backing him as he threw another fist onto the cracking barrier of a Realm!

With the Stardew Valleys, a shocking scene had occurred as just when the battle was becoming wrapped up with the forces of Dragons obtaining victory, the voice of the Dragon Emperor reverberated out for all of the Dragon Race to move, enormous golden portals beginning to appear across the 1 light year region of the Stardew Valleys that Noah's forces had covered.

Through his summons that had shot forth from all directions, his own clones, and the Undead Legion that the Nether Lich Emperor had spread throughout...Noah used them as conduits to erect the [Universal Gateway]s of his Pocket Universe, in many locations!

One could shockingly come across the scene of a myriad of creatures from the dragon race flying towards these portals, their blood heeding a command they could not deny as Noah used Tiamat's fused bloodline authority for himself!

This caused for a mass exodus of the Dragon Race to occur in the Stardew Valleys where they reigned supreme over a hundred thousand years ago, leaving it to an unknown land under the command of their Ancestor.

It was also around this same time that above the skies of the Stardew Valleys, a resounding sound as if glass had shattered reverberated out- the unbreakable realm that Noah had created...becoming decimated under the attacks of a Monarch!

Chapter 915 - Deus Ex Machina!

RUUUMBLE!

The skies shook as it had seemingly shattered and was falling onto the ground, Noah's eyes turning to the highest point in the skies where the central point of impact that had caused the boundary of the Realm to shatter was!

There, the terrifying aura of a being could be felt, this aura feeling like a billowing storm that descended down unto the Stardew Valleys like waves!

Even though he had received information from the golden light of destiny, the process of this monstrous being that was a Monarch appearing was much too fast.

Noah had a myriad of thoughts go through his mind as he released the merged form, some of the clones that were merged with his Summons turning into streaks of light that shot towards the direction in the skies where an aura of a Monarch vibrated without any fear!

At the same time, his voice reverberated to all his subordinates and summons.

"Take your main bodies back into the Pocket Universe, only leave your clones to finish aiding the remaining numbers of Dragons."

RUMBLE!

His words were passed as his will was followed, the figures of the Emperor Penguin, Morgana, and many others passing through the golden gates that led into Noah's pocket Universe as the twinkling figures of hundreds of thousands of dragons from all across the Stardew Valleys followed them.

The Monarch that had shattered the boundary of the Realm spread his aura out and saw this while scene, his face becoming exceedingly cold as he saw nearly all of the Great Sages from the Nine-Tailed Fox Race and other Bloodline Races within the Stardew Valleys had already perished!

"Who dared?!"

THRUM!

His voice caused voids to form in the clear skies as a myriad of beings from the Bloodline Races appeared behind him, wondering just who had been so bold as to kill the Prince of the Fox Race along with all those stationed within the Stardew Valleys.

His searching eyes did not have to look long as they felt the aura of four Great Sages in the form of Abyssal Black Tyrant Dragons shoot across the skies towards him, their eyes releasing bright beams of light as the one at the forefront bellowed out towards a genuine Monarch.

"I dared!"

Shock spread out as the many beings behind the Monarch were shocked to hear someone actually reply to the question of Monarch Odo!

What should have happened was for the enemy to quake in fear as they began to run, but they saw that four Draconic Great Sages that looked exactly the same were rushing fearlessly towards the Monarch while claiming responsibility.

The enemies weren't following the script!

Far from the skies where his four Clones were about to come in contact with a Monarch, Noah himself remained below as he saw the progress of many dragons being teleported into his Pocket Universe.

The process was nearly complete as his eyes gazed above, sharing his sight with his clones as a voice passed through his mind!

[I don't think we can handle an enemy at the Rank of a Monarch yet, Master. Do you plan to use my newly unlocked feature?]

The voice of the Cosmic Treasure Ruination flowed into his mind as he shook his head, briefly thinking of the feature that had unlocked next after he had refined and branded the treasure with his origin and soul in the past weeks!

It was a truly deadly feature that had only become accessible in the past few days- the one that was known as [Ruination Primordial Clone]! But he shook his head at this idea because in the face of this Monarch, the light of Destiny told him something else!

He looked like a devilishly handsome middle aged man as bountiful red hair danced down to his shoulders, his eyes extremely sharp as they focused on Noah's clones

"Ebner?"

His voice was calm as it reverberated out, seemingly trying to confirm something as the front most Tyrant Dragon replied.

"Shattered his origin and soul some minutes back, his meat didn't taste too good."

"..."

Noah's reply blew the minds of many beings as they looked towards his draconic clones in shock, the starry eyes of Monarch Odo releasing a powerful light as he nodded, his lips moving slowly as he did not another word, but cast a skill!

[Nine-Tailed Hellfire Crucible].

...

RUUUUMBLE!

A world shaking aura erupted out from a Monarch casting his skill, the very color of the sky changing as it turned crimson. A second later, an enormous crimson Crucible materialized in the skies below the Monarch as it stretched out for over 10 miles, this Crucible taking the entire area Noah's clones were in as they appeared within it!

WAA!

The formed Crucible took root in the skies as it began to burn with flames, 9 legs that looked like the tails of a Fox holding it up majestically.

"Perish and be refined by the flames of the Hellfire Crucible."

His voice was extremely calm as it resounded out, the figures of Tyrant Dragons within the Crucible changing their expressions as Noah felt... an overpowering and all consuming force descending from all sides threatening to crush his clones to oblivion!

The eyes of the main body far away from this location shone as he observed even with the vibrant Dao essence wrapping around the bodies of the clones, it didn't seem like they could last under a single skill of this monarch for even half a minute!

At this juncture, he nodded while following the path he had seen when the golden light of destiny descended around him.

It was a path that he didn't even know existed, but his eyes could see such intense golden brilliance at the end of it that he could not help but take it!

His words came out silently as he was the only one to hear them, casting an ability he had not cast for a long while.

[Deus Ex Machina].

Essence silently erupted from Noah's main body and spread throughout, his attention still on the clones experiencing the shocking offensive power of a Monarch that released an AOE attack that covered the nearby surrounding miles!

Chapter 916 - An Influence Above a Paragon!

Tests have to be done every now and then to fully understand things, and Noah was doing just this when he sent four clones far above him where a Monarch had appeared.

He wanted to know- exactly how much was the gap in strength?!

Each of the clones carried with them horrendous percentages as their strength was comparable to Great Sages that had already forged tens of millions of Galaxies, but he found that the power of a Monarch was inviolable as within seconds of the aoe skill that was termed [Nine-Tailed Hellfire Crucible] being cast, the defenses of the four clones were being ground down faster than they could regenerate!

Even as the essence of many Daos rumbled out to cast defensive barriers, it was no use as the horrifying pressure of the Hellfire Crucible called forth ground the defenses of the draconic clones as a second later...they were turned into mists of blood.

THRUM!

Such a scene caused Noah's eyes to shine brightly, 4 clones being taken out of commission as he didn't truly make any losses, but it brought to attention the fact that within his arsenal, aside from [Plot Armor] and the ability he had just cast, he didn't truly have an overpowered defensive skill to withstand powerful enemies!

"Such trash!"

BOOM!

The voice of the Monarch resounded out after he ground down the bodies of 4 clones, his aura spreading out to cover the entirety of the Stardew Valleys as his gaze came to lock upon...Noah's main body that held blue runic lines all over.

His fearsome body then began to shoot towards Noah, his eyes filled with a wrathful light that seemed to say the next ones to die would be in an even more painful manner!

Yet Noah's figure wasn't the least bit bothered as at this moment, the Nether Lich Emperor that had its Legion spread throughout the Stardew Valleys sent him a message that all the dragons had crossed through the Universal Gateways established throughout.

His subordinates and summons...had also collected all the loot they needed as they were already back in the Pocket Universe! The events all coincidentally fell into place just seconds after he cast [Deus Ex Machina]!

As Noah looked towards the light that was a Monarch rushing towards his position though, he remained still as the light of destiny told him the effects of [Deus Ex Machina] were just getting started.

He was truly curious of the feeling he found these past minutes, and wanted to understand just what he was being led to. His life wasn't in any danger with the ability of Deus Ex Machina active, and he still had

[Save Point] and [Plot Armor] to utilize if he wished! But he wanted to pierce through the mysteries of what the Grand Dao of Destiny was trying to tell him!

WAA!

The wrathful Monarch arrived towards his position in a matter of seconds, his eyes dancing with flames of anger as he glanced upon Noah.

"So it is you."

His voice was extremely heavy as Noah felt the surrounding space constrict and become locked down.

"Who sent you? Your reply determines whether you die quickly or excruciatingly slowly." With a domineering tone, Monarch Odo spoke out as essence burst from his, ready to move at any moment.

Yet he found that his opponent was only curiously staring towards him, looking over at the illusion of billions of galaxies that stood behind the force that the Monarch released!

Odo saw the being in front of him did not even bother to talk, his eyes falling with disappointment as he found he could not give an answer to the Royals of the Nine-Tailed Fox Race on exactly why one of their Princes had fallen within the Stardew Valleys.

"An excruciatingly slow death it is then."

RUMBLE!

His roiling essence coagulated to begin forming a terribly powerful Hellfire Crucible Noah had seen before, this Crucible seemingly ready to come to life and extinguish any beings within it when suddenly...the whole of Stardew Valleys came to a halt.

...!

Not just the Stardew Valleys, but the entire Planet of Consanguinity that was the size of a galaxy...everything seemingly came to a halt!

Even Monarch Odo was brought to a halt as after a second passed, everything resume again.

Yet the expression of the Monarch rapidly changed and turned ashen, the light coming back to his eyes as he looked around him to find...empty skies.

The location where a certain obsidian-blue Tyrant Dragon had been...was entirely empty as if he had never been there!

No spatial fluctuations, no essence that dealt with the void or space- nothing! The enemy he was about to eradicate seemingly just disappeared as if he had never been there in the first place.

The heart of Monarch Odo trembled as when faced with this terrifying situation, a shocking thought passed through his mind.

'That...was a power above a Monarch! Was it a Paragon, or a....!'

...!

Monarch Odo's eyes became heavy as he could hear his thumping heart beat, his face extremely cold as he voiced out towards the Great Sages and Sages that had come with him far above in the skies, neither of them being any wiser on what had just happened as to them, Monarch Odo had just disappeared from their sight to take care of the enemies below and now his voice was just ringing out again.

"Scour the Stardew Valleys for the enemies and kill any that remain on sight!"

His command was heard as many powerful forces thundered down into the Stardew Valleys, but they would find to their shock that no enemies could be found across the 1 Light year region...as well as no dragons throughout the Stardew Valleys!

Just as reinforcements had arrived to provide aid, the battle had long since concluded as enemies left with what they came for, leaving behind only bombshells that would be spread to the higher ups of the Supreme Bloodline Races.

One of these bombshells would come from Monarch Odo...who experienced something that he knew could not be done by a Monarch or even a Paragon, but something even more monstrous!

Chapter 917 - It's so big...

In an unknown location.

Noah's main body experienced something unique as one second he was looking towards a wrathful Monarch, and then the next second he was being shuttled through a spatial channel!

Multicolored lights flashed around him as Noah felt himself arriving in a new area after just a few seconds, his eyes brightening up as his Origin trembled excitedly, the essence of Destiny within budding out as it nearly overflowed!

The pathway that had opened up and caused the light of destiny to wrap around him in the past minutes...was this.

His eyes and aura spread out to look around him as he found himself standing on top of things that looked like clouds...clouds that stretched for miles everywhere he looked!

Miles above these pristine white clouds...were even more of the same clouds as both top and bottom were filled with mystical clouds swaying gently. It looked like a paradisiacal land that was unsullied by the presence of anyone as within it, essence was boundless as rivers of multiple colors freely flowed in the surroundings.

It was an extremely unique space as Noah's eyes turned towards the only being his senses had caught within this space aside from him.

It was a woman wearing a modest white dress, with hair as dark as the night cascading down her shoulders, her eyes even darker as they seemed capable of swallowing anything they landed on.

Her fair white skin shimmered in the clear light of this space as she seemed to have an unnatural glow on her, her face holding a perplexed expression while she looked towards Noah!

This perplexion and confusion seemed to gradually lift up as she stared towards Noah, her eyes gradually brightening up as an enchanting smile capable of causing the downfall of galaxies erupted on her face.

"It's you!"

...!

The shocking words were the first thing that left this woman's mouth as they seemed like the words of someone that found something they had been looking for for quite a while!

Noah kept his Draconic Form as he unsummoned the blue slime, the blue runic lines on his body disappearing as he looked towards the result of Deus Ex Machina- towards the being that had taken him from the Stardew Valleys of the Planet of Consanguinity and brought him to this unknown location!

"I never thought I'd actually find you within the Animus Universe, much less for you to be battling the bloodline races..."

She had a light smile as she spoke, every word from her dripping with allure as when Noah looked at her, he could not even catch a glimpse of an aura as she seemed like someone without an ounce of power.

Yet his intuition told him that he should not raise his hand towards this being at any point unless he wanted to utilize his [Save Point] and be sent back to 1 month ago!

"You're very reckless, you know? If my attention had not been brought to you and another one of those old geezers found you first, you'd be hunted down with even more ferocity than even the Universal Emperor Slime you're contracted to..."

...!

The figure of the drop dead gorgeous woman that didn't release even an ounce of power said this with shining eyes as she observed Noah's shocked expression, her expression turning teasing as she continued.

"Oh, are you wondering how I know? How I even found you and brought you here?"

Every question she asked, Noah wanted to nod to as he continued to observe this shocking figure, not at all worries about his life as he wanted to obtain as much information as possible, with him already knowing the terrifying level of power that this being carried as he was conversing with his Cosmic Treasure as he listened to her!

"It is of course due to your Universal Fortune!"

RUMBLE!

Like a thunderbolt from the skies, her fair lips moved as her words thundered down.

"Your Universal Fortune that surrounds you...it's so big!"

...!

Noah's eyes constricted at these words as his memories went towards the boons of the title of Architect of the Dao he had obtained not too long ago. It seemed he had missed something as the mentioned Golden Destiny and Universal Fortune...could actually be seen by certain individuals!

"It's bigger than a lot of the ones I've come across, I truly don't know how you did it..." As she spoke, she took light steps towards Noah, her eyes seemingly carrying immense interest towards him as they looked at his enormous draconic form.

Noah looked towards this being as many thoughts crossed his mind, asking what he wanted to know of the most as he opened his mouth towards her for the first time.

"The Universal Fortune...?"

"Hmm? Oh, yes. It's a sort of authority that Universal Realm Hegemonies use as they try to increase their power, the larger amount of it meaning the greater their chances of moving forward. Across the Primordial Cosmos, the innumerable number of beings born each carry their own universal fortune- those being able to see the Fortune of others observing thin small golden lines as the maximum amount of fortune any creature below the Universal Realm can have."

"Over the hundreds of thousands of years, I've observed the Fortunes of many- where I've even seen the Fortune of a Universal Hegemony that amounted to an enormous golden cloud hanging over them. But you...your fortune is blinding as it is like a tower stretching for miles...it's much too big that it even surpasses some Universal Hegemonies!"

THRUUUM!

Her eyes shone with a gorgeous splendor as she said this, Noah's mind buzzing as he brought himself to utter calm before he sighed. He felt like he needed a pause button as it seemed he had jumped ahead without getting rid of the basics. His voice reverberated across the paradisiacal space that had rivers of essence freely floating about.

"Let's take a step back here. If I may ask, you are...?"

His calm voice entered the woman's ears as she smiled brightly.

"Me? I'm the one that birthed the Dao of Summoning you've been using this whole time."

RUMBLE!

Her white dress and dark hair glimmered brightly as she gave a small curtsy, her voice continuing to ring out.

"Valentina Aurelius, at your service."

...!

Chapter 918 - The Architect of the Dao of Summoning!

"Valentina Aurelius, at your service."

...!

The curtsy from a woman of such a level was a terrifying thing to receive, Noah affirming his thoughts as he truly looked towards this being again.

Her dark hair and eyes shimmered as liquid essence floated near them, Noah fully looking at this expert that should be at the Universal Realm!

Not even an average Universal Realm Hegemony, but one that had actually been capable enough to birth a Dao that she applied to a whole Universe!

Noah thought carefully about how he could be standing in front of her right now, the culprits of course being Deus Ex Machina as well as...the [Increased Universal Fortune] that the Universal Realm expert, Valentina, had mentioned.

As he stared at the shocking figure that had revealed her identity, his eyes scanned her up and down as it truly didn't match with the image he had in mind of a powerful Universal Realm expert that could birth Daos!

She saw his expression as she seemed to read his thoughts, her alluring voice coming out with a smile.

"Oh? Are you wondering about my personality? Do you think someone like me should be cold and domineering?"

RUMBLE!

With these words her figure exploded with might as her face became expressionless, becoming icy cold as she grew over 1000 meters in size, coldly staring down towards Noah.

"That I should gaze upon everything with immense pride and arrogance and think I am above all?"

...!

Her body then shrank down to 2 meters as her playful smiling expression returned.

"I could do all that, and I have taken many faces and personalities over the hundreds of thousands of years. But...I always come back to the personality of the girl I was when I began rising through the Realms of power, of the girl that looked towards every fantastical thing around her in wonder."

Her hair danced lightly with her reduction in size, settling down to reveal the ridiculously beautiful face and eyes that could swallow everything they saw. Noah looked at her closely as his voice rang out again.

"The creator of the Dao of Summoning...how exactly did I pop up in your radar?"

His question was one that caused the eyes of the expert to shine brightly, her smile only becoming wider as she replied.

"The one that creates the Dao is closely intertwined with it, capable of knowing a decent amount about the beings that utilize it. Of course, there are too many creatures utilizing the Dao as one usually never pays attention to every single one, but it is easy to pay attention to the anomalies that arise."

"For me...the anomaly was the Dao of Summoning being utilized by a creature that controlled the destiny of an entire Universe, where I found my Universal Fortune densely increasing due to such a shocking reality!"

...!

Because the Dao of Summoning was closely intertwined to Noah rising in power, his strength exploding out when he began traversing the Dao from the techniques given to him in the Nexus Galaxy by Anastasia...all the things that Noah was able to access from using this Dao did not just benefit him, but also the being that birthed it!

Noah recalled the words under the [Architect of the Dao] as he arrived at this juncture.

<Architect of the Dao> :: A title given to those that have birthed their own Dao. It allows for the Architect to benefit from all those that utilize their Dao, where depending on how it is used to affect the Destinies of living creatures- they can gain Increased Comprehension and Assimilation of all other studied Daos, Increased Universal Fortune, and Golden Destiny. If the birthed Dao Utilization is expanded to the scale of a Universe and fully comprehended by the majority of powerhouses, the Architect gains ●●●●● ●●●●● ●●●●●...

Reading the definition again, Noah realized that Valentia was able to benefit greatly from his actions- where aside from himself, he even spread this dao for all his subordinates to also utilize. That was the strongest experts of a Universe increasing their strength through this single dao, the one that birthed it having an explosive increase in Universal Fortune and turning their eyes towards them.

"From this, I was able to further find out more anomalies when I focused on the being blessing me with such dense Universal Fortune, and you can imagine my shock when I find out he can not only contract with double the normal amount of summons, but that he even had the Universal Emperor Slime that had been the last of its species to be in the Animus Universe."

...!

"But no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't locate what Universe you were in or how to find you- which was extremely vexing, mind you. It meant I had to wait for hundreds of thousands of years for you to rise up in strength before you were even capable of crossing Universal Barriers, and that you'd somehow end up coming to the Animus Universe or that I'd find a way to locate you after some time. After all...with Universal Fortune, many things are made possible!"

"But here you are...I actually didn't have to wait a large number of years and through our connected Fortunes, I was able to find you just as you stepped into this Universe. Wondrous, don't you think?"

Her words were all that Noah could focus on as he nodded while getting to the crux of the mystery that got him where he was right now.

"This Universal Fortune..."

"Yes, something that only Universal Realm Hegemonies that have created a Dao should have in such large quantities and quality, and yet someone like you at the level of Galactic Filament has such a dense amount of it...peculiar, don't you think?"

RUMBLE!

The figure in a white dress spoke with a smile that could collapse nations as she continued.

"Either you're a creature that is just anomalous in the entire Cosmos, or if I didn't know any better I would say you've birthed your own Dao. Which is not something that should even be possible or in any way be true, right?"

...!

With a smile that seemed to be innocently asking for something, the Universal Realm Hegemony laid out a shocking question.

Chapter 919 - A Hidden Battle Between Universal Hegemonies!

"It's definitely because I'm an anomaly. After all, only Universal Realm Hegemonies such as yourself can birth Daos, right?"

Valentina's eyes became curved as her smile deepened, her fair hands clapping as she nodded!

"Right, right! An anomaly that helped me increase my Universal Fortune when I needed it the most...and the one that my Destiny is telling me to side with for aid of my victory in the Animus Universe."

RUMBLE!

"Your victory? What challenge could a being like you be facing in the Animus Universe that I can do anything against?" Noah's eyes constricted at the rapidly advancing page of this woman as he asked.

"To understand this, you have to understand something about the Animus Universe...as well as Universal Realm Hegemonies and what they do to increase their power..."

In the latter stages of power, everything came down to the Dao. After a being was capable enough to forge their own Universe, their next goal was to be able to birth a Dao! That was the only way they could move forward in strength, the avenue of manufacturing their own Daos granting them huge boosts and access to a special power that no other creatures could touch.

That special power was [Universal Fortune] and [Golden Destiny]!

"With the creation of the Dao of Summoning and me being such a genius to make it applicable to the creatures of the entire Animus Universe, I elevated my strength quite a bit in the ranks of Universal Hegemonies, you know?"

A mere lesser dao that allowed willing beings in the Animus Universe to become contracted by those living with the same universe or those outside of it...it was a Dao that was extremely useful and actually loved by those in the early stages of power, granting them a huge boost and protection if they had the talent to summon powerful creatures.

This mere Dao was one that greatly increased Valentina's power and standing, putting her on track to be one of the more powerful beings within the Primordial Cosmos!

"But of course, when you have someone shining too brightly...you always have others becoming jealous and wanting a piece of it. This is where my problem came. A universal Hegemony looking at my feats and all I had achieved...and deciding to have a piece of it himself."

RUMBLE!

The smile was wiped away from her face when she talked about this, her eyes becoming exceedingly cold as the entire space they were in seemingly darkened and became cloudy!

"Over a hundred thousand years ago, one of the most powerful Universal Realm Hegemonies decided to descend onto this Animus Universe, seeing my success with the Dao of Summoning and thinking there was something unique with this place- he chose to settle in and began to extend his influence while spreading his own Dao."

...!

"It's actually connected to the powerful identity of a Dragon you're contracted to, the one that you just had the battle for, I'm assuming? That old geezer entered the Animus Universe and extended his influence onto the Bloodline Races, a few of them agreeing to him as he gave them his own designed Dao- the Grand Dao of Slaughter! The events of the fall of the Supreme Race of Dragons began here as the most important edict of his Dao was carried out...senseless Slaughter."

Noah's heart shook as Tiamat's words were affirmed, the hand of the Universal expert that she said was behind everything becoming clear!

"5 of the Bloodline Races had fallen to his influence, and by the time I began to influence the others, the Progenitor of Dragons that held great talent and had even been lucky enough to step on the path of a Cosmic Dao- a Paragon of unparalleled strength...this being fell to the betrayal of the 5 Races as since then, Slaughter has continued to permeate throughout the Animus Universe."

The face of the Universal expert actually seemed pitiful, Noah shaking himself out of this feeling as he continued to focus!

"I've been working to deepen my influence on the remaining Bloodline Races and stop Slaughter from advancing throughout over the years, but it was a losing battle as the majority of the powerful forces of the Universe had already fallen under the hands of that geezer. My Universal Fortune began to wane as my advances slowed, and I didn't know what I could do for a long time...that is until there was a burst to my fortune due to a certain someone, until now...Destiny tells me you are the key."

RUMBLE!

Her gaze returned to being cheerful again as she walked towards Noah's large draconic body, her hands landing on his obsidian scales as she continued!

"Will you be able to step up to the task? One of the most powerful old men of this Primordial Cosmos decided to bully a poor little girl like me when he saw the good thing I had going in the Animus Universe."

Her expression seemed like a pitiful animal that had to be protected, but of course Noah knew better as he remained silent while listening to her story!

Her voice continued to ring out when she saw Noah did not reply.

"Of course, it's only natural that I give the champion who will aid me a great deal of things. We can start with knowledge...and of course how we can take care of the blazing golden beacon of light that is your Universal Fortune. The beacon of light that if any other Universal Realm Hegemony saw it...I can't imagine what those desperate geezers would do to you in trying to understand your mysteries..."

RUMBLE!

The words of the Universal Realm Hegemony only became more and more shocking as time passed, Noah going over everything as he thought of the biggest enemy behind everything- the Universal Realm expert that spread his influence to the 5 Supreme Bloodline Races.

The one behind the massacre of the Dragon Race that even continued to this day, the one who was also the enemy of the powerful being that was standing in front of him...

At this juncture, was there even a need to deny the help of a Universal Realm Hegemony?!

"Oh! My Universal Fortune increased yet again, did you make a decision on something?"

"..."

The mysterious and terrifying expert voiced out happily while clapping her hands, the meeting of two beings extremely far apart in levels and power continuing to take place as it did not bode well for certain beings!

Chapter 920 - The Request of a Universal Hegemony! I

"From what I know, Universal Hegemonies cannot act against those of the lower levels or even fight against each other unless absolutely necessary..."

Noah's voice rang out lightly as the Universal expert he faced replied quickly.

"They cannot directly act, but they can influence others greatly! Similar to how the Old Geezer influenced the Bloodline Races to start a Slaughter a hundred thousand years, or similar to how I influenced the little Monarch you were facing- I didn't directly act against him, I merely caused a spatial displacement that just happened to bring a special someone over here- and even then, it neared the extent of what I could do without triggering the Oath that I agreed to long ago."

"Of course, if the majesty of a Universal Hegemony is ever disrespected with them being attacked by a lower ranking being, they can act freely to wipe out the offender. This is a rule that not many know, and it was placed to make sure that the authority of Hegemonies was never disrespected! So unless you go out of your way to stupidly attack a Universal Realm Hegemony...they won't truly be able to land a finger on you."

...!

Her words were filled with information as Noah nodded, his eyes focusing on her she continued.

"Seeing as how our goals are going towards the same direction and sensing the increase in my Universal Fortune, I know you've made your decision. Would you do this lady the honor of talking to me in your true form?"

RUMBLE!

A light smile could be seen on Valentina's face at these words, Noah looking towards her sharply as he questioned!

"Why wouldn't this be my true form?"

"Among the information I could glean from the being affecting an entire Universe while utilizing my birthed Dao...was the fact that he was human. Which makes it even more interesting to see you now as a genuine dragon..."

Her words were tinged with teasing as Noah merely nodded his head while sighing. This expert in front of him could not act against him, and was even proposing help! The results of Deus Ex Machina were stupendous as they had actually introduced Noah to a Universal Realm Hegemony helper!

His essence coiled around his body as he utilized his Birthed Lesser Dao of Subterfuge to shake away the false form and return to his original body as Noah!

Unruly.

That was the word that crossed Valentina's mind when she saw Noah's true form for the first time!

When she compared it to the majesty of the dragon...the human form actually seemed to release an aura a notch higher, the true body of a being always revealing who they truly were.

As her eyes locked on the eyes of the being in front of her, she could sense such immense confidence and calmness when staring towards her that she wondered just who was the Universal Realm expert between them!

Even when he found out her identity and knew her Realm of power, this being had barely batted an eye as he only continued nonchalantly!

'What exactly gives you such confidence? What other secrets do you keep within that domineering exterior?'

Valentina's thoughts were many as there were truly too many things about the being in front of her she didn't know about.

"Noah Osmont."

RUMBLE!

Short and sweet, the meeting between two unlikely beings fully beginning as Valentina nodded with shining eyes.

"Osmont...very well! I'll start with the gesture of good will first. Here is the first technique that all Universal experts master to hide just how much Universal Fortune they hold, as such knowledge is immense power!"

WAA!

Waves of essence freely flowed out from Valentina as a bright multicolored Crystal formed in front of her, Noah recognizing this crystal as it was extremely similar to other Inheritance Crystals he had come across in the past!

It flew towards him as he grasped it in his hands, the crystal shining brightly as the light within it began to be absorbed by him until not an ounce remained and it shattered into particles of light.

<<Unfathomable Light of Destiny and Fortune>> :: An ability very few beings have the chance of utilizing. With it, one can observe the Universal Fortune and Destiny of those around them. It also allows the user to mask their Destiny from others and shield their Universal Fortune from prying eyes.

A fairly simple skill, but one with shocking capabilities! Noah activated it right away as his body began to vibrate with light!

"It might take you a few days to master, so we can use that time to get you familiar with-"

...!

Valentina's eyes constricted as she saw the vibrant and towering Universal Fortune swirling around Noah to tremble before disappearing entirely a second later, his eyes looking over his body up and down as he seemed like any normal being at this moment!

"You..." Valentina had a surprised expression at this being mastering a skill in seconds, seeing the eyes of this being land on her as they shone with bright golden light.

This was Noah utilizing the skill on her!

When Noah did activate <<Unfathomable Light of Destiny and Fortune>> while looking at Valentina, his eyes were finally able to see a wondrous sight for the first time- it was the sight of golden lines surrounding the small figure of Valentina, these golden lines coming together to cause a raging storm of Fortune that swirled around the body of this being and stretched out multiple meters!

RUMBLE!

A second later, Noah watched as the swirling storm of Fortune quickly faded away, the voice of Valentina ringing out.

"I have a tad bit more Fortune than most other Universal Hegemonies due to my work with the Dao of Summoning. Many dangers turn into opportunities as my advances forward have been faster than others...and the problem I've been facing the past tens of thousands of years, I've now met a champion that can help me resolve it!"

Her face curiously looked at Noah who continued to exceed her expectations, clapping her hands as the clouds below them and the skies above trembled vigorously.

"Let's get started. The Holy Lands of the Supreme Bloodlines, the Bloody Battlefields Galaxy Cl.u.s.ters, the Bloodline Races that can be your allies...we have much to discuss and plan on how exactly we can break the Influence of a Universal Hegemony!"

RUMBLE!

The clouds and skies roiled as they formed into something majestic, Noah receiving a calling from a terrifying expert as a stupendous adventure lay before him!