

Mystical 221

Chapter 221: Clarity 1

Garen noticed that the runes on the rune blade moves on their own. Flamingo's was the same, his sword having red runes. It's not something logic can explain.

Even though the rune blade wasn't able to deal enough damage to seriously hurt him, it was enough to break his skin. With just that, he didn't dare to underestimate the white blade.

"White Eagle, can I have a look at your sword?" Garen asked calmly.

White Eagle flinched and looked at Garen, at the same time, he stole a look at Dale Quicksilver and hesitated.

"Sure."

He handed over his blade to Garen.

Holding it, Garen started to scrutinize the blade.

Northern Territory

Somewhere deep within the fog

In the middle of the jungle formed with black statues.

Sylphalan half-kneeled on the ground, breathing heavily, one of his hands pressed on the ground while the other on his heart.

Lub-dub! Lub-dub!

His heartbeat, as loud as drums, echoed throughout the jungle of stone statues.

Sylphalan bit his lower lip, the hand on his heart clutching at his shirt and his chest. The drilling heart ache he had was impacting his ability to focus, even his vision started to blur.

"Still okay?" Flamingo walked out from behind a black statue. He wore a set of red clothing, the Sword of the Sprite sheathed by his side. He looked clean, like a ball of pure fire, not even his feet seemed to have any dust on them.

"Yeah..." Sylphalan struggled while standing up, but he managed a murmur. "Leave if the time comes, I suspect I wouldn't be able to control myself."

Flamingo kept quiet.

"Don't force yourself."

"I know. But after suppressing it for so long, I really need to let it loose once in awhile." Sylphalan answered.

"I really can't tell if your choices then were right or wrong." Flamingo sighed helplessly then slowly stepped backward into the thick fog until his silhouette was completely gone.

Somewhere out there, footsteps approached hurried.

"He was hiding in here! Sylphalan, this time I will make sure you die!"

"Murderer! I finally can avenge my father today!" "Be careful of the others from Immortal Palace! Ace, tell everyone to be alert!" "Yessir!"

Sounds of people were approaching Sylphalan quickly. Numerous valiant auras surrounded Sylphalan.

All these people were elites, among them, at least four to five were able to unleash their Auras that were as strong as some of the top level Grandmasters of Combat, weaker to Duskdune Shura by a little. They were all here to seek revenge from Immortal Palace. Because of his strength, some of them were also trying to eliminate Sylphalan so they can have a chance of grabbing the Black Smoke Pot for themselves.

Lub-dub!

Sylphalan palpitated once more. His brows were slowly knitting together, veins popped up on his skin, congregating toward the center of his brows.

Hoof...

Sylphalan stood up, two bumps appearing on his armpits.

Garen examined the blade carefully. The rune blade in his hands were not very different from normal swords. No flowing runes, no special powers, as if it really was a normal longsword.

"Incredible..." He returned the rune blade to White Eagle. He wasn't able to see anything, but some of the patterns on the sword was really fascinating.

The sky had already darkened by this point, moonlight spilled down from above, its shape blurred by the layer of fog.

"Mr. Garen." Dale Quicksilver finally returned to Garen's side. "I think I know where the Clown King is."

"Oh?" Garen looked at him with interest. "Are you sure?"

"Yes." Dale Quicksilver nodded.

"Tell me, where is he hiding?" Garen stared at him attentively. He tried sensing everyone here including the Three Major Generals, everyone seemed normal to him.

"Clown King didn't hide, he disguised." Dale Quicksilver answered with confidence.

"Disguised?" Si Lan and King of Nightmares moved close to listen to the analysis.

"Yes, his disguise is pretty flawless, normal people wouldn't be able to tell." Dale Quicksilver stated calmly. "Don't you think the situation here feels a little odd?"

"Oh?" Garen was finally aware, about an hour ago, all the parties looked a little weird, something in them looked strange.

He looked around, focusing on each group as his gaze passed.

The Werewolves gathered around, talking about something inaudible.

The three Weisman Major Generals sat together not far away, eyes closed.

The Demon Hunters were fixing up something, looking busy.

The other smaller teams were also doing their own thing in their corner.

"Can you point him out directly?" Garen turned his attention back to Garen.

"Of course."

Dale scanned at the other people around, his gaze steady and calm. "The real Clown King was hiding among the obscure group over there." He looked at the crowd of unknown people in the corner. "Gate Master Garen, please take my signal when approaching him, or else he would be able to run away again!"

"Of course." Garen nodded.

"Good." Dale Quicksilver stared at the unknown group and raised his arm, as if to point out the target. "The real Clown King is... Seize White Eagle!"

He yelled and rushed behind Garen.

No one was able to react in that instant.

White Eagle paled, his rune blade slashed at Dale Quicksilver, creating a fan-shaped aura.

Phoosh!

A strong draft toward the blade made him miss his aim.

The draft was Garen's misty breath!

He leaped up, grabbing at the rune blade with one hand and at White Eagle's neck with the other. His stance was like a fierce tiger hunting a sheep, bringing about chilly wind.

White Eagle yelped and retreated as he sheathed his sword. His lightly-stepping toes were even faster than Garen. He somersaulted in the air, evading Garen's pounce.

"You again! Dale Quicksilver! I wanted to give you a chance, you deathseeker! I will kill you today!"

"Let's see how you kill someone who's under my protection!" Garen said coolly.

"No one had ever survived Clown King's assassination!" The Clown King landed and pulled at his own face, tearing off a mask and revealing a man with strange makeup on his face.

Garen was going to attack when he suddenly heard Dale Quicksilver grunt. He turned back.

Detective Dale was pressing on his right arm, his face slightly green. That's an obvious indication he was poisoned. The scarlet wound on his arm was definitely inflicted right before.

"Damn you!" Garen roared with fury.

Crack!

His stomp made a hole on the ground as he shot himself toward the Clown King like an arrow. His right hand aimed at Clown King's throat, pushing an invisible force to arrive before he did.

As the invisible force closed into Clown King's throat, another force shot out from the side, bumping into Garen's arm, making him miss his mark.

Boom!

Garen's attack hit a stone statue, crushing it like a bean curd and slicing a huge chunk off it. Pieces of stone hit the ground, creating tiny craters all over.

Even the pieces were so loaded with power from the missed attack, giving everyone else who witnessed it a chill.

Clown King shuddered. If it wasn't for his savior, he would've been sliced in half with that attack.

Garen was furious. That attack could have killed the Clown King before he figured out his style of combat. Catching him by surprise and killing him would've rendered him unable to use any of his tricks, like the clowns before.

If it wasn't for the third person who bumped into his arm.

He glared at the Clown King as he escaped like a threatened bunny. Feeling dissatisfied, he turned toward the one who parried his attack.

"You!" His eyes went wide, shocked.

Not only him, Andrela and King of Nightmares also felt surprised by the turn of events. They thought Garen would be able to finish the Clown King by himself. After all, however strong the Clown King was, he was still weaker than Duskdune Shura. Fighting him face-to-face would be easy, they weren't expecting this turn of tides.

"We'll go after him..." Andrela stood up with his hand on his sword, but he couldn't finish his sentence.

King of Nightmares also looked serious as they looked around.

The Werewolves, the Demon Hunters, and the Three Major Generals of Weisman were all standing up, facing them, slowly encircling them.

Clown King laughed shrilly, looking at them from afar.

"Weisman's Generals had already planned from the start to eliminate you elites from the Confederation. Temporary alliance? Talking terms and conditions? You idiots!"

The Glorious Chancer crossed his arms in front of his chest, standing still.

"White Peacock, if you agree to join the Weisman, then I won't have to ruin my reputation after all these years building it for you."

Garen turned a deaf ear to him, his gaze slowly becoming mild as he looked at the one blocking him.

"I only thought you'll make a move later, I didn't expect you to carry it out so soon..."

He had already expected this situation. The Weisman's were never trustworthy, he only thought they would carry it out so early.

The person in front looked at Garen calmly.

"To me, you were the biggest threat in this race. Give up, you no longer have any chance of getting it."

"Palosa, do you really think you can stop me?" Garen ripped off his shirt readily, revealing his fair sculpted upper body.

"Don't forget, I'm the First Divine Warrior." Palosa also ripped off his shirt, revealing his skin tight black martial arts clothes.

The one blocking Garen from pursuing was Palosa who separated with them earlier. Garen didn't know what agreement he had with Clown King, compelling him to save Clown King.

"Boring."

Garen slowly clasped his hands together as if praying to a Buddha statue. As his palms met, a transparent bubble of air slowly circulated around him.

"Since my mastery of the Divine Statue Technique, I haven't been using my full strength. Palosa... don't let me down."

His eyes widened, and his hands stabbed forward.

"Divine Statue, West Phoenix Fist!"

Caw!

As Garen punched, a set of large wings appeared on his back. Those were wings as large as a Phoenix's. Shapeless and colorless, the wings extended out toward Palosa in synchrony with Garen's piercing hands.

Chapter 222: Clarity 2

This was the fighting style he had come up after gathering all sorts of secret techniques and merging them with the physical fighting style of the Golden Statue Technique, a style that was most suitable for him. East King Hand and West Phoenix Fist were among the most essential moves.

Garen understood that regular attacks were meaningless when facing an opponent like Palosa, so he decided to just use his strongest moves.

Putting his palms together, piercing straight ahead.

The huge phoenix wings behind him were formed from aura, pressing down on the opponent's acupressure points from both sides as it created a huge impact in an instant, forcing the opponent to take the hit head-on. This was an ultra-powerful lethal attack combining acupressure, aura, and killing moves!

Garen's hands were straight as an arrow as he rushed forth, like the sharpest drill, aiming for Palosa's chest.

If this move made contact, he just had to split his palms apart and the victim would be instantly torn into two. It was the same result as the East King Hand.

If the East King Hand used great speed and power to compress invisible air currents into killing a person, then the West Phoenix Fist was the essence of all of Garen's skills.

Palosa's right arm grabbed forth, while his left hand quickly touched a few points on his body.

With a tearing sound, his arm suddenly expanded greatly. It was surrounded by a swarm of countless currents of black aura, crawling around his arm like bugs.

"Secret technique, Snake Scale Arm!"

In a split second, those transparent phoenix wings collided abruptly into the black aura. A huge aura current erupted in all directions at the same time.

Boom!

The earth gave a mighty tremor, making everyone's feet and the rest of their bodies numb.

Some of the stone statues that had been knocked around in the previous fighting fell to the ground with a crash, stone shards going everywhere.

Andrela took a few large strides forward, and was back by the general from Weisman with the black chest hair.

"Looking like you guys really do plan to help the Clown King stop us." Andrela casually slices with his sword a few times, his eyes staring intently at the general before him.

"Unfortunately, compared to the Clown King, you guys are the bigger threat. After we're done with you, we'll naturally go settle the clown." The general chuckled.

"Settle us? With just you guys?" Andrela laughed coldly. "Although I don't know how the Clown King got you guys together, Garen's power is not something you lot can imagine. The King of Nightmares has also long since ceased to be the Nightmare that you know."

"Cut the crap, it still comes down to true power." The general with black chest hair didn't mince any more words, pulling out a pair of black handguns and twirling them with a swoosh.

The one in front of Nightmare is the female leader of the demon hunters, Elysha.

"King of Nightmares, you are indeed very strong, but I'm only here to keep you occupied. As soon as those two are done, your death will be imminent." Demon Hunter Elysha laughed coldly.

"Are you joking?" Nightmare yawned.

"What do you think?" Elysha pulled out a black lace belt from her pocket, and actually blindfolded herself. "Your hypnotic power is 80% reliant on sight. Unfortunately, I'm strongest when I'm not using my eyes..."

"Oh?" Nightmare got slightly more serious. Elysha was one of the strongest Demon Hunters, the strongest of her generation. That wasn't a title you got by bluffing.

But how many of those who managed to get to Smoke Island were small fry, anyway? They all had impressive abilities and resumes. To really find out who was stronger, the only way was with face-to-face battles.

Foom!

Garen's right claw pressed onto Palosa's arms, his sharp fingernails digging deep into Palosa's arm muscles.

"Secret Technique, Shadow Fist!" Palosa's arms suddenly became blurry, almost as though he grew another pair of arms, abruptly appearing in front of Palosa's chest."

"Divine Statue, Red Palm!" Garen had absolutely no intention of dodging, the corners of his lips turning cruel. His left palm pressed towards Palosa, the palm completely red, glowing and smooth like a jade. Even the veins, muscles and bones were slightly visible.

Foom!!

There was yet another blunt noise, and the two were blasted apart, each of them taking a few steps back.

A charred black handprint appeared on Palosa's chest, blood leaking out of his mouth and nose. His fingers quickly pressed a few more dots onto his body, and a small cube-shaped swelling on his chest vanished in a trace. His expression improved a lot with that.

"Once more!" Garen threw caution to the windows, rushing forth once more. His feet stomped down hard on the floor, boom boom boom! Madly charging forward like a behemoth, his enormous legs smashed into the floor hard, like stone pillars.

Each step brought with it extremely heavy tremors.

Compared to Palosa, the two handprints on Garen's chest were merely surface deep, and had barely caused any damage at all.

The two of them collided into each other once more, both of them using brute force and aiming to kill, without holding anything back. After Palosa's meditative retreat, he had managed to regain the power he had at his peak. And Garen had also progressed beyond the level of power he had when they first fought.

With every time they made contact, they created an intense explosion of aura. The powerful gusts of wind kept blowing in all directions, compressing the air with high pressure and creating fierce bursting noises, as though they were lighting firecrackers.

Bam!

Before Palosa could catch his breath, Garen's palm landed on his shoulder. He retreated more than ten steps back, his fingers hastily using the secret technique to rapidly heal his injury. Then he pounced at Garen once more, without the slightest pause.

It had only been a few seconds since they began fighting, but the stone forest was already in shatters. Nobody could interfere.

Forcing Palosa back with one hit of his palm, Garen rushed forward, and grabbed both of Palosa's arms with his hands.

"Let's see you regenerate again after I tear apart your limbs!" The battle had drawn on some of the viciousness in him. The Divine Statue Technique's extreme endurance allowed him to function at full strength for a few days and nights. Right now, he was practically a humanoid mecha, who knew no weariness. He could even instantly recover from injuries. After all, the Divine Statue Technique had always been known for its extreme regenerative power.

A series of hits, all of them taken head-on, was a bit too much for even Palosa.

Pom! He pushed apart the hands grabbing him and stumbled before taking yet another palm blow. Another mouthful of blood leaked out of his lips. But at the same time, he landed a kick on Garen's abdomen.

However, it was obvious that his opponent was planning to take a hit for a hit. Seeing how energetic Garen was, it seemed that he had improved a great deal more since last time. Even the attacks that landed on his body were stiff, the power unable to spread.

"Do it!!" Polsa suddenly roared.

Shocked for a moment, Garen abruptly felt a great gust of wind rushing towards him mercilessly, hitting him in the middle of his back.

Pomm!!

Garen's whole body was pushed a few steps forward, before his legs dug themselves into the ground and steadied him. He had no time to think, because there were five terrifyingly threatening presences coming at him from all four directions, as well as from above his head.

Other than Palosa, the other four were each at least as strong as Duskdune Shura, while the strongest among them was almost equal to Palosa.

These five elite fighters all came at him at once.

It felt to Garen as though all the air around him had been sucked away, and he was standing in a vacuum. The skin on his body, face and arms were all rippling with the force of that immense wind.

Looking from above, Garen was standing alone in the middle, while Holy Fist Palosa, The Glorious Chancer, the Werewolf Bedega, and the Clown King were coming from all four sides.

Above him was the last Weisman general, holding a spear like a tuning fork as he aimed for Garen's head from above.

The five enormous auras merged and mashed together, all aiming for Garen in the center.

"Palosa!! You have fallen!!"

Garen howled with mad laughter, holding his arms wide.

A pale shade of platinum began to spread rapidly across his skin, as though he had been plated in platinum. The result had an indescribable sense of sacredness and purity.

Platinum aura gathered around him in an instant. Countless currents of platinum aura gathered together, slowly becoming a strange image!

It was a huge platinum face, Garen's own face!!

Baroom!!!

The platinum aura abruptly erupted!

Northern Territory

The whole Northern Territory was covered with blood and corpses. There was almost no one left alone. Only the central region.

In the center, amidst a wasteland of gore, Sylphalan stood quietly among the corpses, his face covered with splattered blood.

His body was emitting an unspeakably terrifying black aura, just like viscous black tar, covering the entire area and turning it into a dark hell.

On his brow, countless veins had gathered and formed a strange symbol like an eye. It was as though he had grown a third eye.

The God of Spear, Mare was kneeling not far away from him, the short spear in his hand having been broken in two. There was a large hole in his shoulder, so much so that the white fog behind his shoulder was almost visible.

The King of the North Pole was deathly pale, lying unconscious on the floor nearby. There were pieces of metal shrapnel all around him, probably something from an airplane.

The King of the Gun, Nikon had been broken into two, his eyes wide at the injustice of his death.

Boom!!!

Amidst a thick fog in the distance, a beam of platinum aura burst toward the sky.

Throughout the whole island, every living creature's spirit responded with a jolt.

Sylphalan looked in the direction of the distant south, and it was as though he could see Garen's face.

"Aura Solidification..." In that instant, it was as though he saw that unbeatable figure from his youth.
"Big Brother..."

He pointed his finger at the sky.

Boom!!!

A surge of black aura suddenly formed a pillar, shooting into the sky and becoming an enormous face. It wasn't his, but that of a gentle and beautiful woman.

For a moment two huge faces from the North and South stared at each other across the distance.

Garen stood quietly in the same place as before, platinum aura emanating from his body and dying the entire central area white.

He stood alone in the center, his platinum-colored skin clear and eye-catching, as though he was the only God in all the world.

The three generals, Palosa, and the Clown King were all forced down by the platinum aura. Each of them were injured to some extent in the blow just now, drastically reducing their power. Just then they were being held down by the aura and fought against it desperately, but to no avail. All they could do was struggle in the tiny area of their own aura.

Garen looked into the distant North. In the sky there, a black face was looking at his direction.

"Aura Solidification... Sylphalan..."

Chapter 223: Appear 1

"A level of power where one is able to use aura to influence the currents. It's a peak level that Palosa only achieved in his heyday, when all his personalities were one."

Andrela stood with Nightmare, looking at Garen's wild aura covering the sky as he explained softly.

"That is the legendary highest level of a martial artist. In ancient times, such a person was called the King of the Century! Garen... he has finally achieved this level!!"

"King of the Century..." Nightmare looked up at the platinum aura pillar, a similar expression of awe and shock on his face. This aura was as limitless as the sea, and just one touch brought with it an overwhelming sense of enormity and infinity. It was almost enough to make one get onto their knees.

"To think that martial arts could really reach such a level..." He had never believed that martial arts could go so far. With the accelerated advent of firearms, the fall of fighting arts was all but certain.

And right now, Garen's eruption truly showed him the end of this road.

The black night sky was practically lit up by the platinum aura. The white light pierced through the fog, as though it was truly sunlight shining across the island.

But it wasn't really light, just an illusion of the nervous system caused by sensing that aura.

Everybody watched the two auras in the sky over the island, shocked. That was the level of the legendary Aura Solidification, the level known as the King of the Century!

All those people representing the different powers around him retreated backwards one after the other, trying to escape being enveloped by that platinum aura. They had to retreat up to several hundred meters before they could escape the range of the aura.

Within the range of that aura, it was a matter of Garen's will for anyone to immediately end up just like those five elite fighters. It was akin to being caught in a cage.

Garen pulled his gaze back, and looked around him.

The five elite fighters were all constrained for now, and had no chance of escape.

With one wave of his hand, the platinum aura was abruptly pulled back, distilling into a huge platinum divine statue behind him.

At the same time, the statue suddenly reached out its arms and grabbed the Clown King.

The enormous platinum arms got hold of the Clown King with a rush of violent aura.

"No!!" The Clown King screamed. With a loud pomp, thick blue mist erupted and hid the giant platinum hands within its depths.

Wherever the fog touched, thick layers of blue ice formed on the spot. It was extremely strange. Some of the grass between the crevices were affected, and quickly became a puddle of blue liquid.

Boom!!

Another burst of flames exploded from inside the blue fog.

The giant hands vanished, as did the fog flames. All that remained where the Clown King had been was a pile of minced meat.

But Garen frowned slightly. An intense eruption of the platinum aura could indeed hold everyone down, but such an eruption couldn't last long, and took a heavy toll on his spirit.

As soon as he withdrew his aura, the other four presences pounced at him ferociously.

The Glorious Chan and the Werewolf Bedega came at him from the front, one of the wielding a blade while the other had sharp claws shining red. The air rippled with the rush of wild and violent aura. The giant whale and black wolf formed by their respective also bore their fangs at the platinum statue madly.

At the same time, there were two more equally powerful presences and currents from others behind him.

Garen snorted coldly, and ignored them all.

"Divine Statue, Ten Thousand Mammoth Trample!!" He crossed his arms, and faced the two in front of him directly. The invisible aura emanated from him in waves, the roar of trumpeting mammoths rising from the air.

Bam!!!

His arms collided with the blade and claws, producing a sound loud enough to make one's teeth ache.

A large amount of platinum aura broke through the Glorious Chan's and the Werewolf leader's aura without mercy, piercing straight through like a sharp knife. Both of them coughed blood as they quickly fell back, their faces turning from white to red rapidly.

There were also two dull noises behind Garen. The impact of their hit made him jolt slightly, but he ignored that as well, pouncing forward.

Smack!

His hands curled into claws and he grabbed the Werewolf leader's throat, the platinum aura putting an end to all future resistance in an instant. Although it was just a moment, that was already enough.

Ker-chak!

The bones in his throat were shattered with a light pinch. Bedega held his throat tightly and retreated, falling to his knees.

Garen's expression remained unchanged, his right palm glowing like red jade. He turned it backhand, and met with Palosa's palm in the middle of the latter's sneak attack.

His left palm slammed into the Glorious Chan's shoulder, as fast as lightning. He had also taken advantage of the second after his opponent's aura had been broken through, and the opponent fell into a temporary moment of numbness.

Bang-bang-bang-bang!!!

It was one palm against the Glorious Chan's shoulder, but there were four sounds of impact.

With every sound, the Glorious Chan's shoulder sunk some more. By the fourth sound, the entire left side of his body had been utterly destroyed.

In the end, he fell a few steps back in a daze, his eyes quickly losing all light before he collapsed onto the ground.

"Big brother!!!" A roar of grief came from behind Garen.

Garen's face was emotionless as he turned around quickly. One more palm hit.

It went up directly against the sharp tip of something like a tuning fork.

Clang!!!

The tuning fork vibrated intensely, neither the sharp tip nor the palm giving way. The Wesiman general in front of him had an expression of madness, all the skin on his body as red as a cooked lobster. It was

evident that he had used some secret technique to increase his power exponentially in the shortest amount of time.

Garen was just about to retreat and escape. Just then, there was another 'boom' and a huge wave of power, forcing him to remain where he stood.

He tilted his head slightly to look back, and saw Palosa huffing through his moustache, one palm on Garen's back as his expression remained calm.

"It's over." A sharp voice came from the air above him.

Garen looked up abruptly, his pupil dilating. A flowery figure was falling on him rapidly from above.

It was the Clown King!!

He held a rune blade in his hand as he pierced straight down. Little bits of black light danced on the sharp tip of the rune blade.

It was that little of black light that gave Garen a sense of immense threat. From the corner of his eye, he suddenly saw something tied onto the hilt of the rune blade.

It was a bundle of purple explosives!

And at the same time, another general as well as the Demon Hunter leader Elysha rushed over at the same time. One held a sword and the other a gun, neither of them pausing for even a second.

"Save him!!!"

Andrela and Nightmare jolted at the same time, and rushed over from each side.

But it was obviously too late.

Garen's raised face could already feel the sharpness of the rune blade, and the feeling of the tip piercing through his brow.

Suddenly, he smiled mildly.

Opened his mouth and exhaled.

Clang!!

A pillar of white air erupted into the sky, hitting the middle of the rune blade. The blade broke accordingly, the tip flying to the side and passing through the Weisman general's forehead before sinking into a black stone statue with a whoosh. A string of bright red blood followed in its wake.

The Clown King's smile froze in a second. He suddenly remembered how he had shown Garen the rune blade before, and his body fell to the ground in accordance with gravity despite himself.

"East King Hand!!"

Garen roared, invisible aura appearing around his body and looking almost solid. Behind him, Palosa was forced back by more than ten steps.

Ripp!!

The Clown King's body was directly torn apart by Garen's hands, scattering onto the black stone surface. There was not even a complete bone to be found, everything was shredded by that mad power.

In that moment, everyone stopped whatever they were doing. Even Andrela and Nightmare, who had been rushing here, stopped in their tracks and stared at the minced gore on the floor, feeling slightly nauseous. Their gazes on Garen were different too, as though they were seeing him for the first time.

"And I thought I had become his match, to think..." Nightmare bit his lip unhappily. "Is this the limit of martial arts? That's too much!"

Andrela, on the other hand, was struck speechless. Only his knuckles on the sword hilt were white.

Arooo!!! Arooo!! Arooo!!!!!!

The howls of grieving wolves came from the distance. It was the werewolves mourning the death of their leader. They didn't rush forth, choosing instead to retreat in twos and threes.

Palosa's back was against the stone statue as he looked at Garen calmly, a hint of the end in his eyes. He glanced at everyone around them

Elysha and the Weisman general who had rushed over earlier also stopped in their tracks, standing on the spot and afraid to come any closer.

Of all the other elite fighters remaining, all of them had been utterly destroyed in that second. The Glorious Chan, the other general, the Werewolf Bedega, the Clown King. In exchange for those four lives, all they had accomplished was a little scrape on Garen's brow.

"I thought you had just recently achieved this level and couldn't steady yourself. Looks like I was wrong." He suddenly heaved a heavy sigh. "There are two keys, how about we take one each? There's no more reason to fight."

He glanced at Andrela and Nightmare. "Those two over there have no intention of fighting for the keys, right?"

Garen was also watching him calmly. From before until now, this old man's expression hadn't changed much. It was obvious he still had a trump card hidden. Even when he ganged up on Garen with the others earlier, he hadn't truly brought out all of his power.

"Take three of my palm hits. If you're still alive after that, I'll pretend that ganging up just now didn't happen," he said suddenly.

Palosa wasn't surprised in the least. He merely took a deep breath, his expression turning unprecedentedly solemn. "Three hits? How arrogant of you! But according to your condition and power right now, you do have the right to say something like that. I accept!"

He had initially planned to use all the elite fighters here against Garen at once. Even if they couldn't kill him, they should be able to fatally injure him. To think the opposite happened, and they forced such a terrifying power out of him.

Once one attained this level of martial arts, it was another transformation in itself. For those who did not deserve to touch fighters of that level, it was a miracle that they managed to hurt Garen at all.

Palosa's thoughts were in a whirl, but he slowly opened his legs to stand steady. "To think that the trump card I had prepared for Sylphalan would have no choice but to be used on you in advance..."

He held out three fingers, his thumb, pointer and middle fingers.

Those three fingers abruptly pressed onto the center of his brow and both of his temples.

Smack! After a small sound.

Palosa put his hand down again, a huge amount of pure white aura erupting around him. The large aura rippled and crashed like sea waves, quickly forming a huge white bird.

Screee!!!

The giant bird made a strange sound. In terms of height, it was actually equal to Garen's platinum statue.

Palosa's eyes turned completely white, so that not a trace of his pupils could be seen. The clothes on his body were torn apart by his rapidly expanding muscles, his height increasing from 180cm to more than two meters. His whole body had the perfect proportions and lines.

Phew!!!

He exhaled slowly, two pillars of white air bursting out of his nostrils and smashing into the ground, even leaving two small dents there.

"The three personas have become one, is it?" Garen finally turned serious. Seeing that Palosa's aura was actually as tall as his, it was obvious that as he was right now, he had the right to fight Garen face-on.

"To be able to perfect a simple Assassination Fist to such an extent. Palosa, you are truly the number one!" Garen curled one hand into a claw, and closed the other hand into a fist before pointing it at the air, his legs in a forward stance. It was as though his whole body was holding up an unbelievably heavy, extremely huge object.

"Take my first hit." Garen rushed forward soundlessly. The platinum statue's fists also became white currents, twisting around his arms and forming two platinum spikes from his palms.

Chapter 224: Appear 2

Smack!

His right palm lightly knocked against Palosa's raised palms. There wasn't any intense explosion, and neither was there a ferocious all-encompassing impact of aura.

There was just two spikes of aura darting forward like poisonous snakes, and then flashing back like lightning, leaving everything exactly like before.

Similarly, Garen shot back in an instant, landing on an empty spot ten meters away.

"The second hit!"

Without pausing, he dashed forward once more.

Exactly like the previous palm hit, he once more struck against Palosa's palm lightly.

"Shape Sever Finger!!" Palosa roared, his fingers dotting Garen's palm like raindrops. The moment each finger touched his hand, it flashed with a hint of grey-green.

The two separated once more, and both fell silent.

"The last hit!" Garen leapt forward, the platinum statue abruptly merging with him to become one. His entire body was edged with a platinum light.

"Southern Fists."

He leapt lightly and landed in front of Palosa, both his palms pressing forward soundlessly.

Boom!!

In that split second, a great platinum aura burst out around Garen's figure, the aura and the currents mixing together to form countless sharp knives flying at Palosa from all directions.

Pom!! Dang-dang-dang!!

Palosa took ten steps back. Each step formed a deep imprint on the ground.

Garen pulled back his fists and stood.

"Go." The flush in Garen's face was gone in a moment, and he walked towards Andrela and Nightmare.

"Then he...?" Nightmare looked at Palosa in confusion.

But Andrela tugged at his clothes, and said no more. The three of them took the two key-shaped black stone pieces, and gave them to Dale Quicksilver and the others who had been waiting for safekeeping. Together, they walked towards another clean spot in the stone forest.

Palosa stood in the same spot quietly, looking at his hands with a melancholy smile.

The truth was, as soon as he used this form, the result had been decided.

"In the end... I was just afraid of the loneliness..." He shook his head and laughed. His body erupted in a series of explosions.

Bang-bang-bang-bang!!

It was as though someone lit firecrackers inside his body. His skin and muscles began turning from round and full to dried-out husks, as though he had stood in the wind for countless years in the blink of an eye.

His previously flushed face rapidly began to dry out at a visible rate, like thousand-year-old tree bark. His tall body also shrunk quickly, his whole person morphing from a powerful warrior into an ancient mummy in a moment.

He leaned onto a broken statue slowly, his gaze going across the gray mist, as though he saw himself in his most glorious days.

Suddenly, Sylphalan's mad face appeared in front of his eyes.

He paused for a moment, and understood.

"So I had lost, all the way back then..."

A light breeze blew past, and there was no longer anybody by the stone statue. Only a heap of clothes, falling onto a mound of white sand.

On the edge of the largest stone statue in the Southern Territory.

There were two figures like the Central Area's stone statues in the North Territory. The ruins could both be opened by keys, and once the entrance was open, naturally everyone could go in. But only those with keys truly had the right to use the Black Smoke Pot.

The fog dissipated, and time passed.

The fog gradually changed from grey to black, and then from black to grey-white, and finally from grey-white to completely white.

Garen sat cross-legged in the middle of the forest of stone statues, his eyes closed. There was a vertical gash on his chin where he was hit by Palosa's final explosion.

The Divine Statue Technique's natural healing powers quickly closed up and healed the wound, leaving only a thin red line.

After merging his three personas into one, every move of Palosa's was equal to unleashing a secret technique. Before he knew it, he had sustained a certain number of internal wounds. The Divine Statue Technique was crazy enough to be called a legendary divine technique, but even after he perfected it, Palosa could still harm him. Compared to his condition when he was fine after taking Palosa head-on, this was as different as heaven and earth!

"Too bad... I'll have one less opponent in this world..." At Garen's level, there were far too few people who could really catch his eye. And this one trip to Smoke Island, cost them so many elite martial fighters...

Suddenly, he heard footsteps and voices from deep within the mist.

Garen opened his eyes slowly, and saw Nightmare and Andrela bringing along Dale Quicksilver, Miss Si Lan and co. White Eagle was there too, looking unusually unkempt. The group also brought with them an unconscious boy and girl.

"Found them?" Garen stood up.

"Your injuries are fine now?" Nightmare looked intrigued to see Garen stand up. Getting closer, he tapped Garen's chest with his scallion-like fingers. "You were breathtakingly fierce just now, do you wanna play a game with Big Sister here? ~~I just love you fierce types~~"

Garen was exasperated as he watched Andrela drag Nightmare away. Even now, it was hard for him to get used to Nightmare's fetishes sometimes.

"Alright, stop fooling around. How much more time until we open the ruins?"

Dale Quicksilver looked at his watch, "Twenty more minutes."

"Then do you want to come with us?" Garen glanced at Dale Quicksilver, Si Lan and co.

Quicksilver shook his head. "Sorry, my daughter, White Eagle and the others need to rest properly. And the poison in my body... is a little complicated..."

"I wasn't careful enough," Garen said apologetically. "Even though you warned me."

"It's alright, luckily I've encountered this poison before, so it's not too bad." Dale Quicksilver smiled openly. "Next, if you guys want to obtain the right to use the Black Smoke Pot, you will have to face the Northern Territory's Immortal Palace. With our level of power, we'll only become your burdens if we get involved. So it's best for us to stay away."

Garen understood that he was right, and so he nodded.

"If you need any help, you can come find our White Cloud Gate."

"Much thanks!" Dale Quicksilver nodded solemnly.

Then it was White Eagle, and the appraisal expert Yoke, who each came up to thank him.

Miss Si Lan took one step forward, and actually blushed for once.

"Thank you for saving me... uhm... your body is really nice..." She said that before realizing what it was she said, and ran off in a hurry. It was a far cry from her usual cool and collected demeanour.

"Your body is really nice~~" Nightmare repeated in a strange voice. "She's fallen for you, y'know~~"

Garen was utterly speechless. Looking at his naked upper body, he had no idea what kind of expression he should wear.

After bidding them farewell, Detective Dale and his group gradually disappeared into the fog, until their footsteps vanished completely.

"Let's begin."

Taking a deep breath, the three of them stood in front of the stone statue in a triangular formation, in order to respond quickly to threats from all sides.

Garen took a black stone key from his pocket, and inserted it into a small keyhole on the statue's abdomen. It turned easily.

There was clattering of gears from inside the statue, and the noise grew steadily louder into a crescendo. From inside the statue, it quickly spread to the ground underneath its feet.

For a moment, it was as though the whole forest of stone statues had erupted into a cacophony of clattering.

Brrr...

Suddenly, the entire south end of the island started to sway gently, light tremors rippling through the earth's surface.

Garen, Nightmare and Andrela watched the black stone statue quietly. It was a black statue of a human who had one hand raised and the other on the ground, which shook for a while and then fell still.

"The Southern Territory's key has been activated, now it's up to the Northern Territory," Andreala said softly. "There's no mistaking the time. It has to be when the moon is full, but not necessarily at night. It's late in the afternoon now, almost evening, so we should be able to see the moon outside."

Garen nodded.

As soon as they finished speaking, some more intense tremors came from behind them without warning.

The ground in front of them slowly split apart to reveal a black underground tunnel. The tunnel was square and made of black stone, with many scars and dents on the walls inside. There were even bones scattered on the floor.

As soon as it opened, a stench of rot rushed out from within.

All three of them maintained their expressions. After retrieving the key, Garen glanced at the underground tunnel.

"This is the final battle, where only one will emerge the victor. Do you two still want to go in?"

Nightmare took a step back. "I haven't lived enough, and it's not my wish to fight Sylphalan to the death. My only enemy is Flamingo, this has gone beyond my safety parameters." They pouted. "Faced with monsters like you guys, elite fighters just one level lower can't do much anymore. I'd rather not join the party."

Andrela gripped his sword hilt tightly.

"I'm with you. I'm here to transcend my limits anyway, so I can't back out halfway."

"Have you truly decided?" Garen looked at him calmly.

Pom!

Nightmare caught Andrela, who had passed out.

"He's decided, he's not going. We'll go back first and wait for you, have fun." She smiled brightly and waved Garen good-bye. And then Nightmare picked Andrela up and ran straight away, vanishing into the thick fog before long.

Garen's eye twitched a few times, and he was rendered speechless.

Then he turned around to look at the pitch black corridor in front of him.

The tremors had finally stopped. The island was silent for a moment, and then suddenly gave a huge jolt.

Boom!!!

Waves of fog started to roil, gathering in between the north and south, forming a large thin ring of white clouds.

All the smoke and fog above Smoke Island disappeared in a second, revealing the clear evening sky.

Through the cloud ring, rays of twilight red sun shone past the stone forest to land on Garen's body.

He looked up in the direction of the area between north and south, to see an enormous black statue of a person standing there.

The statue had one hand pointed towards the sky and the other touching the earth. There was a small smile on its lips. But most surprising was how there was a gap between the top of its forehead and its hair, just like the viewing platform on top of the Statue of Liberty.

The stone statue, standing at several thousand meters tall, was like a huge miracle that had withstood the test of time, standing proudly in the exact centre of the entire Smoke Island.

Garen touched the book pendant hanging in front of his chest, and stared at the middle of the statue's head. Vaguely, he could see a tall figure standing there.

Without any doubt whatsoever, Garen just knew, that was Sylphalan.

He pinched his pendant, and jumped into the tunnel.

Chapter 225: Final Battle 1

Clang.. Clang... clang...

The chiming of a clock sounded slowly, coming from somewhere unknown.

Garen dashed down the pitch-black corridor. The path in front of him was retreating rapidly, and the bones on the ground had been crushed underfoot. As he turned a corner, some of the powdered ashes was wiped off his clothes.

He didn't pause at all, following the uphill-slanting tunnel as he advanced.

Smack.

Leather boots stopped in their tracks, Nightmare glanced back while supporting Andrela.

In the dim evening sunlight, it was as though the huge stone statue had been plated in a layer of red-gold light.

The heavy clanging of a clock came from the top of the stone statue.

"How majestic," Nightmare murmured. "Garen, don't you die now..."

By the beach, Weisman's general with the black chest hair was waiting for the rapidly-approaching military ship. He turned back at the same time as Demon Hunter Elysha, to look at the black humanoid statue towering over the island.

There were only about a dozen Demon Hunter left, and there weren't that many Weisman soldiers left either.

"It's the final competition... To think that the twilight bells have already sounded... Truly a battle to look forward to." The general's gaze was full of thoughts. "Too bad... Those two idiots will never hear it again. I told them living like they did was a surefire to not live long, but no one listened."

Elysha touched a scar that had remained on her face, a wound she had gotten in the mixed brawl.

"The Glorious Chan is dead, too. Aren't you sad at all, General Milo?"

"Sad? It's good he died, now my family is the sole dominating force. Once I get back, I'll swallow two other clans! Hehe!!" The general with the black chest hair cheered up instantly. Suddenly, he saw the army ship approaching.

"Hey!!"

He rushed over and waved, yelling loudly.

"I'm here!! Cute little Sally!!"

Northern Territory.

Amidst the pile of bloody bodies, the God of Spear Mare helped up the King of the North Pole.

"Big doofus, you okay?" He slapped the King of the North Pole twice, hard.

The latter opened his eyes slowly.

"Not yet dead..."

"So this what makes a main force, your skin sure is thick." Mare sighed. When they had teamed up against the Immortal Palace's Sylphalan earlier, this King of the North Pole was the quickest to jump into the fray, and naturally was injured the most as well.

But as expected of the man known as the Polar Bear, his body was so strong it didn't seem human. He took four direct hits from Sylphalan, and could actually still talk normally.

Just then, the distant clock chimes reached them from above.

"It's the twilight bells, the last battle has begun. Wanna go look?" Mare looked up at the top of the huge stone statue.

"I can't... That guy is basically a monster, if I go I'll just be asking for a quick death," The King of the North King snorted, and replied weakly.

"It's alright, there's another monster over in the Southern Territory. We shouldn't even think of the Black Smoke Pot anymore, but no matter what we can't let the Immortal Palace get away with the spoils," Mare said quietly.

"It's alright... Hmph, no one who got hit by my Three-day Arctic Needles can live past three days!" The King of the North Pole laughed coldly.

"No one from the Immortal Palace is normal," Mare emphasized."

"Ugh... Fine, but I guarantee they definitely don't have the strength to bother us right now. Why else would the two of us still be standing here safely?" The King of the North Pole said unhappily. "I advise you to just stay here obediently and wait for their reinforcements to fetch us. You'll just waste your energy struggling blindly."

Mare shook his head.

"I have a reason I must go..."

"Then it's up to you." The King of the North Pole snorted again twice, and sat in a corner alone. He began to rest, and checked his injuries. "Alright, your wife is still okay, right? If you lost your pathetic little life... I've been watching your wife for a long time, you know that. Don't blame me later for not considering our friendship."

Mare was appalled.

"I say, it's one thing for you not to help. But who takes advantage like that?"

"Either way I don't care, you just go ahead. Don't forget to make a sound before you die, I'll go get your wife immediately." The King of the North Pole was too lazy to bother with him.

Mare applied some medicine to the wound on his shoulder, and tied a few rounds around it with the bandages he had prepared to compress the muscles and close the wound. His brow was already covered in sweat. Seeing the King of the North Pole resting with his eyes closed in a corner by himself, he shook his head speechlessly. Turning around quietly, he jumped into the pitch-black underground tunnel, disappearing into the darkness quickly.

The King of the North Pole waited for a moment. When there was no more sound, he opened his eyes.

"You actually went. Haih! I say, have you really gotten tired of living?" He turned around to glance at the direction of the stone forest, where he vaguely heard noises approaching. After a moment's hesitation, he clenched his teeth.

"Gah! You suicidal maniac! You'll be the death of me!"

He also jumped into the pitch-black tunnel, sinking into the darkness.

Flamingo leaned on the stone statue, looking at the dried-up old man dressed all in black in front of him quietly.

"That guy ran off?"

The old man nodded. "First I got hit by the Three-day Arctic Needle, and then that guy succeeded in landing a sneak attack on me. But he was pierced by Sylphalan's sword, too, so his injuries shouldn't be any lighter than mine." He bent his back slightly. There was a gory knife wound on his abdomen, and it kept dripping blood.

Flamingo raised his head to look at the top of the giant black statue.

"Sylphalan went up already. That guy should still be hiding, waiting for his chance. I plan on going back now, what do you want to do?"

The old man was mildly surprised. "You're not going to help?"

Flamingo shook his head.

"No, and there's no need anymore."

Something seemed to occur to the old man, and his expression changed. "I'll go with you."

Flamingo turned around and walked towards outskirts of the stone forest. There was a puddle of red-black blood on the spot where he had previously stood.

The old man in black hurried to follow him.

On top of the stone statue, Sylphalan's long figure seemed almost inhumanly beautiful. He was holding a long red sword upside-down, quietly watching Garen as the latter rushed up the slope.

Going up the tunnel's stone steps, Garen gradually slowed his pace, and looked up at Sylphalan, who was standing at the tunnel's entrance.

This was the man that had been involved with him from the very start. Right now, he was wearing a long silk black robe. It made a striking contrast against his pale white skin.

The strong winds kept blowing past them, sending Sylphalan's long black hair flying to the left. His black robes also rustled in the wind.

"Garen..."

He raised his right hand in front of him, and splayed open his fingers. A simple book necklance was lying quietly in his palm.

"The Eternal Starry Night, it's still with you, right?"

Garen steadied his step, pressing the necklace in front of his chest in his hand.

"If I remember correctly, didn't you take it away from me in the first place?"

"I didn't take the necklace, but something else..." Sylphalan turned around to leave the tunnel entrance open, walking to the edge of the platform. The maelstrom blew his long, watersilk-like hair into a constant dance.

Garen walked out of the tunnel slowly. The tunnel was built inside the stone statue, slanting upwards to the statue's head, and the exit opened up to the platform on top of the head.

On the very top of the huge black stone statue, on the platform in the gap there, Sylphalan and Garen stood about a dozen meters away from each other.

The whole black platform was about a hundred meters wide. It was oval-shaped, and was surrounded by black stone guardrail. Some parts of the rail had already been damaged and fell off. There were minute words and symbols carved everywhere, on the floor, the walls, the ceiling. As though the breath of a whole other civilization was recorded here.

The distant chiming kept coming from above them. It was heavy and ancient, carrying with it waves of faint echoes.

The evening sunlight shone inside, landing by their feet. The whole platform in the gap was lit up, a bright golden-red.

Garen stares at Sylphalan's back, walking around him to reach the guardrail. He looked down.

Underneath the guardrail, a sea of white clouds formed a white garland, turning around the stone statue slowly in a circle. Underneath the gaps in the ring of clouds, many tiny black dots were boarding a boat by the edge of the island, one after the other. Some ships were leaving, others were drawing near.

A wisp of white cloud floated past Garen. He reached out his hand, and lightly grabbed the vapor.

The cloud vapor actually twirled around his hand and remained there, like a white translucent silk ribbon."

Garen's fingers were like the petals of a flower freshly bloomed. Spinning it around naturally, softly and delicately, without a hint of hardness. He actually managed to keep the cloud wisps there, unable to escape.

"Northern-style Cloud Capturing Hand."

Garen flicked his finger. Psst!

The white cloud vapor transformed into a strand of white silk, shooting at Sylphalan. Soundlessly.

The white string reached a meter of Sylphalan, and stopped abruptly. It was as though it rammed into an invisible wall. Then it exploded without warning into tiny white shards, fading away.

"I remember that the last time I met you, you were far from this level you are now." There was a strange smile on Sylphalan's face. "Do you hear the clock chimes above us? Those are the twilight bells, signifying that the first stage of the Black Smoke Pot's activation."

"The first stage?" Garen looked at him with narrowed eyes, waiting for the rest.

"That's right, there are two stages to the Black Smoke Pot." Sylphalan put his hand on the guardrail, a glimmer of reminiscence in his eyes. "The last time the Black Smoke Pot activated, I heard the chimes of the twilight bells. As for the second stage, in fact it has already begun. From the moment we entered here, it has begun."

"Oh?"

A layer of platinum slowly formed on the surface of Garen's skin.

"That is, only one living person can remain here." Sylphalan smiled, carefree, and slowly waved the Sword of the Sprites that he held in hand.

Garen's right palm made a grab downwards, and absorbed wisps of the white cloud vapor around him.

The strands of white clouds gathered like white thread, gathering under his palm from all direction. Finally, they formed a white cloud ball in the middle of his palm.

"When it comes to martial arts, who on this earth could be stronger than you and me? To think that despite that, the two of us will have to decide on a victor here." He walked towards Sylphalan slowly, each step carrying the majesty of a tiger stalking or dragon's prowl. It was soundless, traceless, but it was as though the whole stone statue and the floor were trembling.

"This has nothing to do with the Black Smoke Pot. The truth is, we've waited very long for this battle." Sylphalan held up his long sword horizontally in front of him, tracing his finger lightly across the blade. The entire blade gradually began to glow a blood-like red.

He tossed the blade lightly, and a strand of red thread floated off of it slowly, severing the guardrail on the right without so much as a sound.

"Let's start... Right here, let's end it all."

The Sword of the Sprites slanted diagonally downwards, pointing at the ground.

"Nothing to do with the Black Smoke Pot."

Garen raised his palm suddenly, and pushed forward!!

Baroom!!!!

A clap of dull thunder exploded in the sky.

In the gap on top of the statue, a great deal of cloud vapor erupted abruptly with the red light, forming a halo of red and white that slowly drifted apart.

An unknown air spread from the top of the statue. It was colorless and shapeless, gushing into the sky.

The sky darkened in an instant. Countless dark clouds gathered, growing thicker, growing darker. The whole island began to shake slowly, the pebbles on the ground jumping and trembling. A large amount of smoke wafted out of the crevices in the ground, forming a lot of white vapor, drowning the whole giant stone statue in its midst.

Chapter 226: Final Battle 2

On top of the stone statue.

Garen and Sylphalan collided into each other madly.

The palm and the sword met head-on again and again. Each collision sent a large quantity of white vapor and red light flying everywhere. They rain down on the surrounding walls and onto the ground, constantly creating new and uneven holes.

"Divine Statue, East King Hand!!"

A platinum divine statue appeared suddenly behind Garen, and rushed into his body in an instant, the two of them merging into one. Carrying with it an incomparable platinum light, his hand stirred the cloud vapor around them, and his palm grabbed straight for Sylphalan's head.

Psst!

Sylphalan's body leaned back, Garen's clawed fingers brushing just past him. A moment later, a red light lit up from behind him, just like a peacock displaying its plume. The red light then became countless red threads, aiming to pierce Garen.

The red threads shot out from all directions, and for a moment everywhere the eye could see had been surrounded.

"Crimson Moon Shadow." Sylphalan somersaulted away, his fingers pointed at Garen. All the red threads instantly shot towards Garen.

"Ten Thousand Mammoth Trample!!" Garen jolted his arms, and a circle of transparent shockwaves spread around him, blowing away most of the red threads. The few remaining threads pierced his body and made the hissing noise of cutting metal. In the end, all that remained were several white marks.

He leapt across to Sylphalan again, the platinum aura completely gathered onto his body, without any wastage whatsoever.

With his current condition, if the opponent was anyone but Sylphalan, all they would see would be his shadow. The seemingly overwhelming difference in power could have struck fear in their hearts.

This was the highest level of this world's martial arts, when the aura and the human body merged into one. People called it King of the Century!

Similarly, Sylphalan was also covered in black light now, like a sun during the eclipse. His aura stuck close to his body, the two becoming one.

As the two fought madly, the stone statue also began to shake intensely. Each meeting between the two of them was like a bomb explosion.

Boooooom!!!

Inside the entrance to the tunnel, a thin black shadow was quietly making his way to the stone statue's peak.

"Go on, keep fighting... Hehe, when the two of you have beaten each other, be it the Black Smoke Pot or the Eternal Starry Night, all of it will be mine!" He couldn't help but laugh in his deep voice.

The intense tremors kept coming from the tunnel's stone walls, growing stronger and heavier.

"The opponent this time is far stronger than last time. Sylphalan, your time has finally come." The black shadow reached out his hand to touch the stone wall, laughing coldly. Suddenly, he sensed something amiss.

"Wait, why are the tremors growing stronger?!"

He stopped in his tracks, and turned his head to look. Unbelievably, there was a hint of red firelight in the pitch-black tunnel.

"That is... a bomb!!???" His eyes widened abruptly. "No... No!!! Sylphalan, you madman!!!!" He started screeching madly, his whole body rushing towards the tunnel ahead of him.

The God of Spear Mare stood quietly in front of the tunnel, looking at the part of the tunnel that had collapsed after the explosives went off. For a moment there, he didn't know if he should advance or retreat.

"Go back."

The King of the North Pole walked out from behind him.

"Sylphalan is a madman. In order to make sure no one disturbed this final battle, he went ahead and bombed up the whole tunnel."

Mare gripped his fist tightly. Wordlessly, he turned around and walked away.

"Where are you going?" The King of the North Pole looked at him, confused.

"..." Mare did not reply. He just walked faster, disappearing down the tunnel in the direction he had come.

On the beach

Andrela sat cross-legged on the ground, his long sword stuck in the sand beside him. He was looking up blankly, staring at the dark and dull sky.

Black flower petals fell slowly from the sky, dancing and twirling, sprinkling his sword, his clothes, even his face.

A snow of black flower petals had descended on the entire island.

"What... is this?"

Andrela reached his hand out to pinch one of the petals, but it disintegrated into powder in his hand.

Nightmare was standing right beside him, and caught a petal lightly, trying to keep it intact.

"I don't know, but I got a bad feeling about this. Let's get away from here as soon as possible."

"Wait for Garen to return, then we can go together." Andrela was unmoved.

Pom!!

Nightmare lifted up the unconscious Andrela.

"You won't listen even if I tell you. Why don't you think of what kind of level Garen has reached. Even if he survives, you might not."

She took one last look at the red and white cloud vapor erupting constantly from the top of the statue.

"Garen, don't die."

The island shook vigorously, and black snow fell from the sky.

The petal snow completely engulfed the entire Smoke Island.

Baroom!!

A large flurry of red flames erupted from the stone statue's waist area. At the same time, a large of black fog sprayed out.

The whole giant stone statue began to tilt slowly. The upper half began to slant gradually, breaking apart, and sliding towards the island.

At the same time, there was the rumble of thunder in the sky, as though weeping for the destruction of the giant stone statue.

On the stone statue's peak.

Garen and Sylphalan were face to face, the red threads and white clouds between the two of them morphing into two blurry shadows. Countless red threads and white shadows knocked into each other, turning into countless red and white shards, spraying and scattering to the sides.

The statue's whole head also began to tilt and shake vigorously.

The platform in the gap slowly tilted to the right.

Boom!

Garen's back crashed into a portion of the wall, and completely decimated that part of the wall with a crash. It left a huge hole, allowing them to see the roiling black sky outside.

"Divine Statue Return!!" His eyes glared suddenly, his whole body engorging explosively. His muscles expanded rapidly, and many platinum lines appeared on his body, forming several strange and distorted natural images and symbols.

"Sylphalan! Die!!" he roared, his hair standing on end. His palm expanded until they were like plantain fans, attacking Sylphalan from both sides. It was like a huge platinum giant grabbing a dwarf with both his hands.

The soundwaves from the loud roar complemented the pulsing of all the muscles in his body, creating a strange but intense tremor that made his body increase even further. In the end, he had enlarged until he was two and a half meters.

Before the move hit him, Sylphalan already felt sharp winds attacking him like knives, cutting into the skin on his face.

Both his ears felt the two huge pressure coming on both sides at the same time, as though two behemoths were charging at once, and he was temporarily dazed. This power was more than twice as strong as Garen had been just now.

Sylphalan didn't retreat. Instead, he advanced, a small calm smile on his lips.

Creak...

With that tiny sound, countless black veins started surfacing on the skin of his face, like countless insects and worms. All of them gathered to the center of his brow, forming an eye-shaped lump.

He reached out his hand and swept the blade of his sword. In an instant, there was a flash of red light.

"Sovereign Sword!"

He thrust his sword at Garen's face, seemingly unaware of Garen's palms coming from both sides.

The Sword of the Sprites was as blinding as the setting sun, instantly radiating an intense and burning hot light.

Clang!!

The chime of the clock went long and far.

Garen's hands hit nothing but air, as did Sylphalan's sword rays. Both of them switched positions.

In a split second, it was as though all sound had ceased. There was only the long lament of the ancient clock.

Another chime rang out.

Clang!!

Garen's hands grabbed the long red sword, the white vapor and red threads of light tangling up and colliding with each other. The whole space was covered with shaved black stone shards. The black light around Sylphalan's body strengthened, and he held the sword with both hands.

The last chime of the clock.

Clang!!!

Sylphalan gave up on the sword and used his hands instead, pointing one finger at Garen's chest. The tip of that finger sank deep into Garen's skin. Garen couldn't avoid it in time, and stared down at his own chest.

In that moment, both of them froze completely.

Barrooom!!!!

The head of the stone statue exploded in a ball of red flame.

The ground underneath the platform was torn apart by the intense explosion, and countless black shards flew out from the flames as charred shrapnel. Both of them were entirely engulfed.

The whole top half of the giant statue collapsed, and smashed onto the island floor, creating a splash of smoke and ash in its wake.

Boom!!!

Where the statue fell, a pillar of black smoke rose into the sky. It blew the infinite black petal rain in all directions, growing thicker as it went.

Ground Zero1

Garen gripped Sylphalan's arm tightly. He was beginning to vomit blood-- dark red, almost coagulated chunks.

The two stood facing each other. Sylphalan's whole right arm had gone through Garen's chest, protruding from his back.

As for Sylphalan himself, blood-colored cracks had formed along his right arm and shoulder. Like the hairline cracks on a piece of porcelain that would fall apart with the slightest touch.

Oddly, the cracks were still spreading towards his head.

Blood started to ooze slowly out of Sylphalan's body, but it was barely visible on the black coat. The only proof of his injuries was the blood dripping down his leg.

Barroom!!

There was the rumble of thunder in the sky.

The two of them were currently standing on the forehead of the giant statue. Beneath them was a steep cliff, that opened up to a valley of bright red, blinding hot lava ten thousand feet below.

A large body of lava was spraying and splashing. Worse of all, it was rising, slowly but determinedly.

The place the stone statue had fallen turned out to be the mouth of a huge volcano. The whole volcano mouth was round and over a thousand meters in diameter, forming a giant cylindrical abyss.

Wafts of thick black smoke sprayed out of this exit, scattering volcano ash that looked like black petals. They floated down and scattered everywhere.

The top half of the giant stone statue had fallen beside the mouth of the volcano, and its head was suspended in the middle. Heatwave after heatwave rose and roasted it.

The red-hot light had dyed the entire stone statue completely red. Even the two people standing on it had become scarlet.

"Divine Statue... Return!!!" Garen roared abruptly, all the platinum aura around his body exploding away. It became a platinum round disc that spun in the air above his head. This huge attack stampeded towards Sylphalan viciously.

"Omniscient Eye!!!" Sylphalan also roared, the lump on his brow splitting open. A ray of sharp yet shapeless telekinesis shot out like a blade, ramming towards the platinum attack.

Boom!!

The two shapeless powers collided. Sylphalan flew back, falling into the mouth of the volcano. His right hand grabbed the side of the stone statue, but somehow, his hand was suddenly suspended in mid-air before he pulled it back.

He suddenly looked slightly lost and calm, as though his thoughts had flown off into the distance somewhere

Smack!

Garen's hand grabbed his right hand, and kept him hanging off the cliff.

Some small pebbles tumbled off the edge and fell into the red-hot lava, melting into nothing in an instant.

"Do you really want to die that badly?" Garen looked at Sylphalan with clenched teeth.

"Don't you think... the scarlet flames... are really pretty?" Sylphalan smiled. For some reason, his smile looked slightly lost.

Woo...

All of a sudden, a piercing cry came from the clouds in the sky.

Garen looked up. It was the sound of an airplane gliding through the air.

Smack!

Suddenly, Sylphalan broke free of his grip. Lying horizontally, he fell quietly into the abyss. His coat beat about in the wind, making him look a black swallow that had fallen into a sea of red.

"What a beautiful scarlet..." he murmured, looking at the red light on his body. And then he looked at Garen, who was staring at him with widened eyes from the cliffside.

In that moment, Garen's face overlapped with that handsome, charismatic and confident face from the past.

"Big brother... To think, I could never walk out of your shadow, even until the very end..."

Soundlessly, Sylphalan fell quietly into the lava. He was engulfed completely, leaving not a single trace, just like the rocks that had fallen before him.

"You little...!!!" Garen gripped his fists tightly, his teeth clenching together with a loud clack. All the muscles in his body were trembling.

His hand touched the right side of his neck. The bloody red gash there was clear as day, and it had been inflicted with ease by that Omniscient Eye just now. If Sylphalan had used that move from the start...

"A victory like this... You just handed it to me!?!?" Garen felt an unprecedented sense of shame and unhappiness. This was the final battle he had looked forward to all this time, and yet his opponent just threw the match?

Woo!!!

A piercing wail came from the sky.

In that moment, an intense sense of danger rose in his heart.

"You want me to die?!!"

His whole body was expanding vigorously, the platinum aura surrounding his body expanding madly in all directions.

In between his mad howling, Garen raised his fists and swung them at the sky. Behind him, a huge platinum statue burst into form, and raised its fists at the same time, swinging them through the air.

A soundless bolt of lightning. A black mushroom cloud rose from the ground, the intense radiation spreading in all directions with abandon.

Translator's Thoughts

J_Squared J_Squared

Lit. the place [they] fell

Chapter 227: Reincarnate 1

Radiation blanketed every inch of the sky, raining in from all directions.

After the explosion settled, the aftershock came seconds later. An impossibly bright flash blinded everyone within the proximity.

Most had already escaped to their boats just outside the Smoke Island. Those who were looking at the Smoke Island were blinded by the light and were no longer see anything but darkness afterwards.

On a white boat.

The King of Nightmares and Andrela were standing quietly at the edge of the ship as they looked at the mushroom cloud rising in the distance. Both of them had a rather ugly expression on their faces.

Although the both of them had avoided being blinded by the explosion with their inhuman reactions, it was not because of this that they bore the ugly expressions in their faces.

Andrela gripped the handrail with both of his hands, so tightly that his fingerprints were faintly imprinted onto the metal.

"It's a nuclear bomb... It's definitely the people from Weisman!!"

"That was a small one, I heard that their experiment had succeeded not long ago, but I hadn't expected it to be put to the test this soon..." The King of Nightmares stared at the shockwave travelling from the mushroom cloud and said. "Their motive wasn't to kill the people on the island. They were trying to the eruption of the giant volcano on Smoke Island!"

Boom!!

The boats out at sea were like paper boats following shockwave, rocking about, risking capsize at any minute.

Navy personnel started to stabilize the boats and ignite the engine to accumulate distance from the island.

The mushroom cloud refused to dissipate, sending a column of black smoke soaring into the sky.

Boom!!

It was another vibrating roar. Red halation emerged from the sky above Smoke Island.

The halation spread out and rained down in all directions. To shock, what fell was in fact red and black lava!

lava rained down everywhere, large amounts of viscous liquid swiftly flooded the whole island, turning the island fire red.

Blankets of black volcanic ash spread out and covered the sky, spreading out thousands kilometers into the horizon.

The few boats that were too close to the island were overturned by a rogue wave. Still others were caught in the rain of lava, and were either broken in half or engulfed in flames.

The boat that carried the King of Nightmares and Andrela was hit by a swathe of lava in the middle, and broke in two.

The sound of screams were completely drowned in the seemingly ceaseless roar of the eruption.

Light from the sun in the sky was completely snuffed out by the thick smoke and volcanic ash. It was impossible to tell between night and day.

The blue surface of the sea was completely covered with volcanic ash and black debris, resembling a blue handkerchief littered and stained with blank ink.

Boats engulfed in flame were small red dots floating on the sea, glowing faint red embers of fire.

The King of Nightmares and Andrela, each with a person on their backs, immediately swam away from the range of destruction of the volcano.

Even so, the toxic smoke emitting from volcano kept invading their lungs. They all knew in their hearts that no matter how strong Garen was, he might not have survived such a terrifying natural disaster.

Majority of the experts were caught in the disaster, unable to escape in time. Only one in ten had managed to get out of range. Weisman's objective had finally been achieved.

They managed to kill most of the high level masters from all over the world. It was an ideal condition to use the latest technology they had on hand.

In but a fraction of a second, the world had incorrigibly changed.

Black...

Everything in front of him was pitch black...

The last memory Garen had was of him releasing all of his anger, sending his fist at the bomb in the sky.

He knew the objective of the enemy was to ignite the volcano.

Smoke Island was practically the world's largest volcano, as most of the volcano's structure was under the ocean. Its volume was shockingly immense. The entire Smoke Island was actually the volcano's crater, and was of the incessant mist on the island. This was a sign that it had been on the cusp of an eruption.

As the gigantic volcano erupted, the small, neighbouring countries were affected. The air pollution caused by it would severely alter the structure of the planet.

Garen thought that Weisman had underestimated the volcano's destructive power and scale, and had decided to act in such a reckless manner.

However, none of this mattered anymore. What's important now was the question of his current situation.

He wanted to move his body, but realized that he no longer had the concept of limbs. It was as if his body was in a deep sleep, and his brain was not fully awake and thrown into chaos.

His surrounding was pitch black; there was nothing to see.

In his last moments when his body was disintegrated, he could still feel the immense pain just from recalling this fresh memory. He clearly remembered his body completely melted by the intense heat.

In the instant the volcano erupted, it felt like the earth was in rage, and Smoke Island, which was the crater, unleashed a limitless amount of white and gold magma. The thousand-degree lava had completely melted him instantly.

In actuality, he had a feeling that he wouldn't be able to escape the moment he saw the bomb.

If it was just an ordinary, powerful bomb, he had no reason to be afraid as he was confident in his resistance to heat. As long as it wasn't core temperature, the most he would be affected by was the debris and shockwave from the explosion.

However, it wasn't just any bomb, it was a nuclear bomb. Although it hadn't been fully developed yet, it was still a nuclear bomb. Furthermore, the issue was not this but that Smoke Island was a giant volcano on the verge of eruption.

The nuclear bomb was nothing but a catalyst.

The eruption of the volcano was the one that did him in.

He was defenseless against the instantaneous high temperature impact and was completely engulfed in it.

"Never in my dreams had I thought of such an ending."

Garen recalled silently in the dark. Sylphalan and he himself were the strongest people in that world.

If Sylphalan had not sought death at the last second and kept on fighting, both of them might have ended in a draw. Practically, with his Divine Statue Technique, immense aura, and his abundant essence were already at an appalling level.

Sylphalan was no different. He had a terrifying explosive force and lethal attacks. Even Garen had a tough time against him. The only thing he lacked against him was his recovery.

Everything was decided the moment Sylphalan gave in to Garen. In a battle between two equals, the result was obvious the moment one party gave in to the other.

Garen understood everything in the darkness.

The world would no longer be a world revolving martial arts any longer. The realm of his martial art was at the peak and there was no room for any more improvements.

The next world should be similar to Earth, the firearm era. The level of his martial arts could only be describe as perfection.

It was pure darkness in all directions.

"Death may be the ending for some people. Clearly that's not the case for me."

He was alone in the dark. He was a shapeless object without the concept of a body.

Garen didn't know how long he had been floating in the darkness.

A day... two days...

A year... Two years...

He didn't know how long he had been there. As time passed, he counted up to millions and there was still nothing happening.

Gradually, he was back to the beginning of transmigration and his thinking gradually stalled as he travelled through the universe.

After some time, suddenly he passed by some sort of mist, and saw a ray of light at the bottom.

Far away in the darkness, a dark blue nebula slowly appeared, and he got closer and closer and the nebula became bigger and bigger.

Within this nebula laid a planet painted in dark blue. Suddenly, innumerable images flashed past his mind, like a million rays of light shining in his direction.

Garen saw everything clearly as he looked at the images. It was a series of events that happened on the planet, the changes it had been through.

It was as if a movie was playing right in front of his eyes.

He Suddenly felt his body burning up.

He looked down and saw that a quaint book-like pendant was floating beside his body. It was the Eternal Starry Night Pendant that he had been wearing.

Unfortunately this necklace, which effect was unknown, was already lined with innumerable crack lines. The once gleaming surface had become dull, as if it was about to disappear.

A familiar faint red symbol appeared just below Garen's vision.

'Unknown force has been fully depleted... the travel is about to stop. Do you want to enter the nearest planet?'

Garen was stunned. The Eternal Starry Night Pendant was the source of his travel through the universe.

He immediately answered with swift reaction.

"Yes!"

Suddenly, his talent and abilities were transferred, and he felt his body guided by numerous thin red beams. He was then pulled by the beams to the planet at an incredible pace. A few flash and jumps, but he was nowhere closer to the planet.

His target planet was the one that he had glimpsed earlier.

The planet got bigger and clearer with each second. As Garen turned his head around and looked back, a similar blue planet had already become a small dot and blended itself in with the other stars in the sky.

"I will return..."

"Pew!! The speed had increased even further.

He felt a jolt in his brain and completely lost consciousness. The Eternal Starry Night Pendant let out a and was broken into millions of pieces as it scattered among the universe.

Night.

There was a young man, probably in his early twenties, busy writing something in a brightly lit room.

He was sitting at the copper red study desk, holding onto a white quill, occasionally dipping it inside black ink and writing something onto the paper after giving some thought.

The faint yellow light radiated by the candle reflected brightly off his hair onto his fair and handsome face.

'Sun Calendar. Year 3567, twentieth of the fourth month. I had once met Aquarius from Walton. Oh my goodness! This is the third time in my life that I have been burnt by her beauty. She is too beautiful... So

beautiful that she is as pure as a lily and as white as a moon. As beautiful as... As beautiful as..." The youngster stopped writing and started to think carefully of his next praise.

"Ah!~~~~" He suddenly released a long sigh as he pressed his chest with one hand. "Oh the beautiful Aquarius, I shall be your fated prince!!"

Ugh...

A faint footsteps could be heard just outside the door.

"Little Giles! You're eavesdropping on me writing my poem again!! Stand still!!" The youngster threw his pen down and rushed outside the door. It was completely dark outside as he saw a small human figure rushing down to the first floor as he disappeared into the darkness.

Chapter 228: Reincarnate 2

The young man gently closed the door and went back to his study desk.

He knew that his reputation wasn't good in his household, but that wouldn't stop him from achieving his dream.

He had truly fallen head over heels for Miss Aquarius since the day he met her. He would give anything! Even his life!

As he thought of this, he suddenly felt that he was possessed by an ancient poet and had instantly entered the realm of a great poet who would sacrifice his body for love. He was drunk on the feeling of inspiration.

"I wonder what happened with the document Miss Aquarius wanted me to take from her father." He suddenly recalled with bliss. Miss Aquarius would definitely be extremely moved when she saw the tremendous effort that he had invested in her. She would eventually fall in love with him deeply, throw everything behind, leave this world together and become the perfect romantic love story.

Knock knock.

Someone had gently knocked onto the door.

"Cia, have you slept?" A clear female voice came through the door.

"Big Sister Sofea, is that you? Please come in, the door isn't locked." The young Cia immediately stood up with a hint of happiness on his face.

The door clicked and was pushed open.

A tall beautiful girl came into the room.

"How many times do I have to tell you! Call me big sister Hathaway!" The girl had golden hair tied in a ponytail. Her skin was fair, face as sharp as knife and she gave off a British, glamorous vibe.

"Okay.... Big Sister Hathaway." Cia nodded his head. "Oh right, Why are you here at such a late hour? Do you need anything from me?"

The girl walked a full circle of the room and eventually set her gaze onto the white paper on the study desk. "Where's the Astronomical Edict I gave you last time?"

Cia was stunned and shook his head as he smiled innocently. "What Astronomical Edict? What are you talking about big sister? When did I ever taken anything from you?"

Hathaway squinted her eyes and stared at her most beloved younger cousin.

"Brother, I won't say a word if you use the Astronomical Edict for yourself. However, if someone had egged you on..."

She had risked her life for the royal family to obtain two Astronomical Edicts. This was the culmination of 10 years of hard work. She had been taking care of Cia, the only male child in the whole household, since young, and he had been loved by many since young.

She didn't mind giving her one Astronomical Edict. However, if it was someone who had instigated it...

"No one instigated me." Cia kept shaking his head. His reaction was an immediate denial. "I didn't take something called the Astronomical Edict! Big sister you have to believe me!"

Hathaway was quiet for a moment and reached out her hand to caress Cia's hair.

"Whatever. I don't get to use that thing anyway. Please don't do it anymore."

"I really didn't take it!" Cia was still denying it.

He didn't really understand what the Astronomical Edict represented and of how important that item was. To her cousin, that item was her reward and proof of her lifetime of hardwork. It was considered an ultimate pardon, an escape no matter how serious the crime was.

"Also, you lost two manors during your gambling session, didn't you?" Hathaway changed the topic. "Do you know how valuable those two manors were!? This is especially so for the manor in Varian. You have lost them just like that."

"I will win them back sooner or later!" Cia answered hatefully and immediately feared his cousin the moment he saw his cousin's angry face.

When he was ten years old, he was bitten by a strange poisonous snake. It was Big Sister Hathaway who saved him with a mysterious antidote from an unknown source. When Hathaway found out that her cousin was poisoned, she disappeared for a day or two without leaving word behind. The ever so healthy and resilient girl came back with a severely injured body, her strength having decreased tremendously. She resigned from the Royal Knights and enrolled into the Royal Department to become a Lieutenant.

The Astronomical Edict was actually her reward for her contributions and hard work as a Royal Knight. Now that Cia had taken away one of her Astronomical Edicts, he started to feel bad for her.

"I will make up to you some day, sister..." He replied softly.

Hathaway released all her anger the moment she saw her brother's ignorance towards his recklessness.

"I don't want your compensation! You have to understand the danger of gambling!! How much of the family wealth have you lost for these past few years!? You have lost so much of uncle's fortune! If you keep going down this path, no matter how wealthy your family is, you will definitely lose everything!"

Her voice was getting louder and louder as she felt more and more angry towards him.

"Sis... You have to believe me! I will definitely win back everything!" Cia replied immediately.

"Are you still thinking of gambling!?" Hathaway couldn't resist anymore and slapped Cia's face with all of her might.

Slap!

Both Cia and Hathaway were stunned.

Acacia was the only male child from his family and was pampered by everyone in the household. Even his father Sissas was reluctant to hit him.

And it was the first time Hathaway couldn't hold herself back and gave him a slap.

At that instant, both of them were rooted.

"So what!! Isn't it just a piece of Astronomical Edict that I took? How dare you hit me!!??" Cia's cheek was completely red. He soared his chest and continued. "Let me tell you something Sofea Hathaway! No matter how much I have lost, it is my family's problem! All these wealth belongs to me in the future. How much I have lost is none of your business!? I have the successor of the Trejons Household! You are nothing but a Royal Family's Lieutenant. What right do you have to control me!?"

"You!!!" Hathaway was completely furious to the point where she was completely speechless as she pointed at Acacia with her finger.

Never in her dreams could she imagine that the cousin she had pampered for her whole life would say such hurtful words to her.

Sadness, disappointment and rage were bursting and blending in her heart at that moment.

Without any hesitation, Hathaway turned around and left the room and slammed the door.

Acacia was clasping his left face as he gently tapped his cheek.

Hiss...

"It's so painful!" He took a few steps back and reached out his hand to take a red medicinal oil from the book racks. He applied onto his face, and it was very effective in reducing swelling.

He suddenly recalled that this item was gifted to him from Hathaway.

"I will never use anything she gives me ever again! Never!!" He grabbed the glass bottle containing the red medicinal oil and threw it onto the ground with all his strength.

Splash!

The small bottle shattered into millions of pieces on the ground, the red medicinal oil was spilt across the floor.

"Even Father has never even hit me before!!" Acacia was walking back and forth in the room in a rage. The sky outside was overcast with the faint rumbling of thunder. It seemed like it was about to rain.

Kacha!!

Suddenly, thunder cracked loudly above his head.

Shocked, he stepped onto the red oil and slipped. He immediately fell backwards and onto the ground.

Thud!!

By chance, the back of his brain landed on a sharp piece of broken glass.

In an instant, his body arched upwards and his eyes rolled, and he gradually stop breathing after a few moments of struggling.

At this very moment, A ray of white light came into the room from the square window.

The white ray, which was in a shape of a butterfly was as big as a fist, passed through the tightly shut window and circled the room in a delicate manner.

It soon noticed Acacia laying still on the floor.

With a click, the white ray disappeared and diffused into Acacia's forehead.

After a while, Acacia who was laying down on the floor opened his eyes. His vision was a complete blur, as if he just woke up from a long sleep.

He slowly got up from the floor, only to realize that he had been laying in a pile of faint, red-stained wooden flooring with glass shards strewn everywhere. It was very uncomfortable as the glasses were prickling his butt.

He touched the back of his back and noticed that his hair was rather cold, and there was a blood clot as well. The injury had completely healed.

Cia stood up and looked around his surrounding.

"I guess... I'm in a different location now..."

He took a deep breath and gently gripped his fist and what he sensed was a weakness that he had never felt before.

He felt chills all over his body, which was most probably due to him laying on the floor for a long period of time.

Ah chiu!

He couldn't help himself but to sneeze. As he sneezed, the snot started dripping out from his nose.

"Who am I...?" He kept griping his fists tightly and released it afterwards.

"I am Acacia... No! .. I am Garen Lombard!!"

His vision started to clear up and and he started to feel an anger that he had never experienced before.

Knock knock knock.

"Master,can I come in and clear up the room now?" The female servant asked carefully from outside of the room. She had been waiting outside for a long time. She was probably waiting for her master to cool down before she dared to come in and clean up. She would be scolded by Acacia and her salary would be partially deducted if she came in the wrong time.

"Forget about it! You should leave first. I don't want to see anyone at the moment!"

Garen shouted as he copied what Acacia would say from his memory. It was a sentence that was most frequently used by Acacia. Hence, all he needed to do was to follow his words.

It was a language that resembled Portuguese. Garen was slightly familiar with the language's overall structure from Acacia's memory.

Afterwards, he started to recollect his disorganized memories in his brain.

Although Acacia's memories went all the way back to twenty years, most of them was forgotten. However, as it was very difficult to digest everything, he had no choice but to read the main contents of the memory.

This world was similar to the last one, both of which was of primarily western culture. However, this world had barely just entered the steam era and was far behind compared to the previous world in terms of technological advancement.

While this world's overall structure was ruled under a dictatorship, the country's property had already started blooming.

This body originally belong to a person called Acacia Trejons. He still had a long surname after that and he was the only successor in the Trejons Household.

This whole planet was separated into two major continents, namely the East Continent and West Continent. There were many island countries in between these two major continents.

The East Continent had hundreds of countries, and the Great Kovetan Kingdom was one of the three strongest countries in this continent.

Kovetan had a total of thirty two districts. This body's family household had established their presence in some areas of the Lush Forest district which was located in the south of the country.

Among the Trejons Household, there were only five main members in this generation. They were Acacia's parents, Acacia himself, his cousin Sofea Hathaway and her sister, Danielle Hathaway.

Acacia had never once stepped out of the Lush Green District his entire life.

His household was located in the center, and the surrounding cities were all within his activities' range.

Chapter 229: Reason 1

Looking through Acacia's life, he realised that he was a gambling addict, a pervert and slow-witted. He didn't even realize that he was completely exploited by a girl called Aquarius. All his family wealth that was rather important was 'sold' to Aquarius in order to get into her good graces.

Garen took a deep breath as he looked at the countless unfortunate encounters of this body. Although looking at Garen from the previous life and his own life on earth, Luo Jing had an above average intelligence; this body was definitely in the lead in terms of idiocy.

"Alright... Let's look at the current stats."

He concentrated his mind and started to examine his body's status in detail.

The familiar faint red ability words appeared just below his vision.

'Strength 0.8, Agility 0.8, Vitality 0.7, Intelligence 0.4, Potential 1872%, Possesses unknown natural endowment.

Secret Technique -- Divine Statue Technique, Ten Thousand Mammoth Battle Skills.

Full recovery in 377 days (1 year).'

Garen furrowed his eyebrows slightly.

"Recovery requires a year? Also, why is this body's attribution so useless? What does it mean by possessing an unknown natural endowment?"

The Ability remained mute, which was rather obvious considering the memory did not have enough information.

He continued to look at the last symbol.

Naturally, the meaning of this symbol swiftly appeared in his mind.

‘The primary potential has yet to be lost due to an unknown source of protection during the transmigration. Hence, all statuses will slowly recover through the adaptation of the soul.’

"Unknown source? Is that the Eternal Starry Night Pendant?" Garen thought. "The primary potential has yet to be lost. Does that mean I have to learn the secret techniques from scratch if it weren't for the pendant?"

He recalled that he had depended on himself during his first transmigration. Perhaps there was some electrical energy involved, but that electrical energy was very minor.

Suddenly, he noticed another weird symbol appearing at the end of the his ability pane.

It wasn't faint red in color but dark red, which had appeared for the very first time.

He focused his attention onto the symbol.

‘Discovered an unknown message. Do you wish to receive it?’

‘Discovered an unknown image message. Do you wish to receive it?’

‘Initiating automatic protection of the memories during transmigration. Begin recording of the unknown image...’

'An unknown fluctuation in space time has occurred... Energy source has been shattered. The fluctuation has stopped. Playback recorded messages?'

Four messages came into Garen's memory in an instant.

It was obvious that all of his memories would be disintegrated during his travel in space time without the protection of this ability.

He had a small epiphany, an enlightenment started to swell up from his heart.

The red debris from the bottle had kickstarted his abilities, and he could achieve a strength that was unimaginable in this world as his secret martial techniques had been merged with his energy spirit.

This was also the reason why he could recalled this transmigration instantly. The last time he transmigrated, he could only recall a portion of it.

"What is this recording thing..." Garen suddenly recalled the lights on the planet as he was travelling through the space time.

He opened the window and quickly cleaned up the room. The room reeked with the odour of the medicinal oil, and its stain was virtually un-cleanable.

He had no choice but to open the window to allow some fresh, cold air to enter.

Since there was still a long time before he fully recovered, he took out a chair, sat down and quietly recalled the light he saw during his transmigration.

It was a ray of almighty light of an unknown color. Even as Garen started to recall it, he was still unable to make out the color of the light.

It was like a three dimensional object appearing in a two dimensional space. He was able to instantly understand the two dimensional image, which was voluminous but had no obvious content. It was a feeling so strange that he couldn't get used to it.

He believed that he could find a way to return to the previous world, or even the one before it, if he could fully understand the nature of this ability.

All in all, he had many concerns that had yet to be solved in two of the previous worlds that he was in.

He laid against the chair and started to sort out his thoughts.

"How was I able to see that light? Why didn't I see it during my first transmigration, then? Was it an effect of the advancement of my abilities? How was I able to find a habitable planet in such a short amount of time, especially when there were so many planets out there? It felt like I was guided here by something."

He recalled the scene during his transmigration.

It was as if there was a force guiding him to this planet as he flew here at an incredible velocity.

During his first transmigration, he floated in the universe for a very long time, as he passed by countless, inhabitable planet before reaching Garen's planet.

No matter how he looked at it, it was much faster than before.

He finally set his vision onto the symbol at the end of his abilities pane.

"Looks like I should be able to find some clues on the recorded unknown image message."

'Do you want to play back the recorded message?'

The symbol asked again.

"Yes."

Garen answered with absolute certainty.

Silently, a huge amount of information gushed into his brain.

Ah...

He lowered his head and gripped it with his hands, as all he could feel was his brain in complete chaos. This came with an incredible headache, where he felt like his brain was about to split into two with an axe, stuffed in between with a large chunk of something, before being sewn back up again.

The light that appeared from the planet instantly appeared in his memories.

The sceneries kept passing by in his brain one after another.

The wars, conflicts and misfortunes.

The succession of political power, the changes of the world and the loss of power.

It was the light of the past. It was the light of history that showed the major historical events of this planet.

He accidentally received this information during his transmigration when he was still light-years away.

An endless stream of information entered Garen's mind instantly.

The Terraflor Society, Obscuro Society, Totem, Luminarist, the fall of the royal power, the country's recessions, the changes of the planet...

A myriad of scenarios swiftly appeared in Garen's mind.

Soon, the images connected together and became a complete structure...

Sun Calendar Year 3570 of the 10th month, there was a major uprising in the east continent.

The Kovitan Empire was the second to fall.

The countless images portrayed just a part of the history.

There were many powerful empires in this world, with the emperors using cold weapons and outdated firepower to rule the world.

However, hidden in the fabric of reality, there was a group called the Luminarist. They hold the power of the totem.

Luminarists, who used white silver to forge their totems, were professional experts with extraordinary abilities. They were the specialised members who could create totems, and was considered a rare talent. The world revolved around the Luminarist, who hid in the fringes of society and held true power and influence. The Luminarists were separated into two sects, each having their own ideals. They were the Seraph Light and Phantom Light Sects respectively.

When the Luminarist moved, the world moved with them.

The Seraph Light, who represented purity, and the Phantom Light, who represented evil were the two separates forces in this world. These two sects had their own respective ideals. The Seraph Light's ideal was peace whereas the Phantom Light's ideal was of survival of the fittest. These were the main differences in their leadership. On one hand, one used their strengths for peace, while the other used their strength to further themselves. These were the differences between the sects. These also represented two different political systems: democracy and dictatorship.

The society that represented the Seraph Light was the Terraflor Society.

On the other hand, the society that represented the Phantom Light was the Obscuro Society.

Both sects were standing at the pinnacle of the totem world and had been battling against each other for a long time.

Among them, one who had triggered the change of the world was a young man named Beckstone and his partners. They were the successors of the Terraflor Society, which represented the Seraph Light, and would become the strongest society of the Seraph Light in the future.

Garen finally slightly understood a few key connections after he completely laid out the information structure.

"Simply put, this was the history of how Beckstone and his companions battled and eventually won against the Obscuro Society of the Phantom Light..."

"It's obvious that this happened in the uprising era, where dictatorship started to fall. However, this body is currently living in the era where dictatorship is still stable, and there were not even one uprising reported thus far. If what I saw was real..."

Suddenly, he recalled the recorded message he had just seen earlier.

At the last sentence of the record: Unknown fluctuation in the space time continuum has occurred...

"Theoretically speaking, the distance between two habitable planets which were from different solar systems should have been light-years apart from one another. If this theory is true, going back into time isn't impossible..." He speculated.

"If it was really a backward flow in time, then the scenario that I have saw should probably be the future events of the planet."

"This means that when I was lightyears away from this planet, I received an unknown light, and saw the events of this planet. However, as I travelled through lightyears of distance in an instant, I have arrived to this planet's era where the uprising occurs?"

He managed to clear up his train of thoughts. This was the only logical explanation that that could mould all of the clues together.

"Assuming that this hypothesis is true, the Phantom Light will lose, causing the Obscuro Society to collapse and the world will adopt the capitalist social system. This means that the Seraph Light has obtained victory. Judging from the looks of it, Beckstone is the legendary brave and spirited man, who is also the main character? He's a person who came at the right moment. Even without him, world would still change, and a second Beckstone would have arrived to take his place. Such was the world's desire..."

"The most troublesome thing isn't this at the moment..." Garen frowned. "Based on Acacia's memories, his father Vanderman is an upper class aristocrat of the Kovitan Empire and he has rather strong influence and authority. Furthermore, he had another identity, which is a Luminarist of the Obscuro Society. He is still an independent Luminarist and hasn't completely entered the Obscuro Society yet."

"This situation looks dire..." He face was rather gloomy. "If all of the future events are true... This body's father, Vanderman who is the protector of the dictatorship, is a common Luminarist of the Phantom Light. Based on the images, Vanderman is one of the fated Phantom Light members who will be destroyed together with the Phantom Light by Beckstone..."

Chapter 230: Reason 2

The current identity that Garen had reincarnated into was Acacia, the son of a Luminarist whose life was wanted by both the Seraph Light and Phantom Light. His father Vanderman was a Luminarist with average strength. He had occupied a place but he was fated to die from either sect as he did not listen to the Obscuro Society's command, and because of the crimes he committed in the past. His household's land was also fated to be seized and his family members killed, so that the rebel bases could be built here.

"It's still too early to think of these. I need to see if my predictions are true." Garen stood up, walked towards the window and looked outside into the distance.

"If they are, judging from the current timeline, the news of the uprising's failure in the valley should come soon. After that, there would gradually be difficulties to collect tenant rent."

Garen let the cold air breeze on his face and golden hair. It cleared his mind a little as the cold air cooled down his overworked brain.

"We'll see. If what I saw from the message is true, I will have to start planning early."

This body's father, Vanderman was a self-willed man. The only person he was kind to was his son, and he viewed him as the successor of the family. It was unfortunate that he had abducted a few young boys and girls as materials for his experiment to research the special abilities of the Phantom Light. Among abducted children, there was a girl named Leanna -- Beckstone's childhood first love.

Leanna was dead. This meant that there shall be a hateful grudge, an unforgivable resentment.

On the other hand, Vanderman complied with the Obscuro Society's orders in appearance, but opposed it in his heart in order to sustain his status and identity. However, he did not listen to most of the orders and dissatisfaction eventually accumulated. He was eventually killed by an elite from the Obscuro Society as he invented rather interesting special abilities.

"It's not that surprising if all of this is true... If this goes on, I wonder how many Luminarists like Vanderman would lose their lives..." Garen gazed into the distance outside the window.

A faint yellow line formed by the yellow dots were moving slowly, faintly, in the dark forest far away.

There were torches held by the patrol group from another household nearby this area.

Bam!!

Suddenly, the group of yellow dots ground to a halt as a clear gunshot travelled through the surrounding. A faint sound of a small deer was mixed among the gunshot.

Garen could heard laughters from the group that was far away. They seemed to be quite happy.

"It's another wild deer! We're very lucky! Haha..." The sound travelled faintly from afar.

The group soon disappeared from his vision.

The mountain opposite of his window had no more movement after that.

Garen shifted his sight to his surroundings.

He was currently standing on the second floor of a double story house which was made out of wood. This wooden house was just a small portion of a big manor.

There were at least ten buildings of different sizes and arrangements in the manor, all of them painted in white.

Acacia, his father and a female housekeeper lived together in this building. There were at least ten female servants, grooms, gardeners and chefs who lived in this manor as well. The whole manor was as big as two soccer fields and one would be lost easily as the routes were wrapped around from one end to the other.

The building he was currently in was placed at the rightmost corner of the manor.

Acacia was the kind of person that was very frightened of his father. Although Vanderman had never beaten him before, his deep and dense aura made Acacia not want to stay near him for any long period of time. He would immediately flee after his usual greeting routine.

He even chose the place that would be the furthest away from the center of the manors, all to stray further away from his father.

His cousin Sofea Hathaway and Little Giles, who often came to play were present today. Little Giles was the son of Vanderman's favourite student. Hence, Sofea and little Giles would often visit his father Vanderman.

Garen listened to his surroundings carefully and could faintly hear Little Giles speaking loudly from afar. It was obvious that this kid was playing with the dogs again as he could also heard the dogs barking.

He could also hear the servant's' footsteps passing by during their night patrol.

This manor was located deep in the mountain, and it felt like it had been isolated from rest of the world. They had their own vegetable garden, farm, livestock sheds and even a small self sustaining town at the foot of the mountain.

His father Vanderman kept lurking in his manor all day long and no one knew what he was up to. He didn't go out to socialise and he would occasionally attend classes in the royal academy as he was a professor there. Other than that, he had done nothing else for the past five years.

On the other hand, Acacia often attended the balls and parties nearby. His cousin would occasionally visit him as well.

There was only one way to communicate between the manor and the outside world: Every once in a while the female housekeeper would go out to collect rental, tax and sell some local specialties. She would come back with daily necessities and some condiments after that.

He tidied his messy hair and peeled off the blood clot at the back of his head painfully.

He sat back onto the study desk as he had a better understanding of his surrounding environment.

"I should focus on the so called Luminarists of this world. I wonder how strong the Luminarists are, with their totems as their weapons..."

He gently held his fist, and he could feel that his body was slowly recovering. Although it was very slow, it was much better than when he had just woken up.

"Currently, the strongest Luminarists are the president of the Obscuro Society, Ghost Gate and the leader of the Terraflor Society, Sisley. The images have information of their battle..." Garen felt strange that most of these images looked like Beckstone's perspective during his adventure. All the major events were recorded clearly from the beginning until the defeat of Ghost Gate of the Obscuro Society.

The remaining information related to the Luminarists was completely recorded down.

He didn't know what kind of other capabilities his abilities possessed but the current main concern was not this.

He started to skim for every event that was recorded down in the message. The images kept flashing by in his mind. Time flew...

"Found it!!" He suddenly stopped at a portion of the message. Two commoner figures appeared in front of his mind.

"There were at least ten records of the battle between Luminarists in the forest near the Trejons Household land in the Lush Forest district. The most recent battle... was between a person called the Emin of the Seraph Light and Clyde of the Phantom Light." Garen examined this portion of the record in detail only to find out that they were Luminarist with below average strength and hence had very weak abilities. Thus, the scenario was very cloudy and nothing could be seen clearly. When he opened the message, there were stripes of colorful lines similar to that of a television without a strong signal. The recorded images from the abilities were all mixed together and nothing could be made out of them.

"Let me look at the time... To be precise... It was after the event of rental difficulties and... before the uprising by the valley, which is in two days time."

Garen picked out the most recent battle in the record.

The image messages recorded by his abilities were so detailed that Garen took a long time to sort out the most recent details in his timeline.

"The lowest tier of a Luminarists. Let's compare their strength with secret techniques and see how strong they really are."

Garen took a deep breath, got up and laid onto the big soft bed. He covered himself with the white blanket as he felt a sense of drowsiness settling upon him.

From the war in the previous world, to the transmigration, up to the sorting of his memories... his nerves had been under stress for all of them. Since he had a clear grasp of the situation he was in and there was no danger nearby, he could finally relax.

"Acacia is dead. From now on, I am the new Acacia..." Garen laid on the bed and thought, as he felt his brand new and unfamiliar body.

After a while, he drifted into his dreams...

He was back to Smoke Island, right before he punched the nuclear bomb.

In that instant, the nuclear bomb beamed out a ray of bright light and the mega volcano erupted below him. His body was disintegrated instantly.

The powerful eruption shot his very last piece of consciousness up into the sky.

In Garen's dream, the eruption of the mega volcano looked like a giant black smoke pot as he turned his head around and flew away from the planet.

"So this was the legendary Black Smoke Pot..." Garen finally understood. "Then what's the deal with the legend stating that it could be used to communicate with the dead? Also, how does the ancient endo's culture discovered the mystery of the volcano and they even build so many stone statues on top of it. Furthermore, I didn't even see any trace of corpses until the very end."

"The Black Smoke Pot that is able to go beyond the limits... I guess no one had succeeded since history began..." Garen thought.

Was it a rumor that became a legend or a legend that became a rumor. No one will ever know.

However, one thing was certain. It was not a coincidence that he was able to arrive to this planet. He would most likely not be able to reach this planet if not for the volcano's assistance.

The strangest part was that he had leaped countless light-years.

"The last time Smoke Island erupted was most likely a very long time ago. Is it possible that the totem's power and the so called Luminarists on this planet are the relics that were left behind by the mages from the previous world? Or maybe there are some form of connections in between?"

Garen suddenly thought of this possibility in his dream.

The legends of the mages from the previous world were not uncommon. In that strong and advanced era, there was always a possibility that strange phenomena would occur.

Chirp... Chirp...

Garen opened his eyes as the golden rays showered his blanket. Sunlight passed through the window's and reflected off the dust floating in the room.

There were two pigeons chirping loudly just outside the window.

"Where am I?" Garen looked up at the unfamiliar ceiling as he was not able to react in time.

He sat up and felt a warm sensation as he let the sunlight shining freely on the back of his hand.

Soon, everything in his brain clicked.

"I am now Acacia... I am no longer Garen Lombard or Luo Jing." He had a strange look on his face as he was inside an unfamiliar, weak body. He was not used to anything at all.