

# Mystical 351

## Chapter 351: Resolve 1

"Fuu..."

"Fuu ..."

"Fuu ....."

Aquarius gasped for air as she unleashed four successive lightning movement tactics. They were pre-stored in the tactics chain of her ability, and used for escaping directly.

She was completely alone now, without any subordinates. She wasn't very concerned with that at the moment though.

Just as her body halted, several Red Eyed Giant Wolves reappeared in the woods in front of her. Each of these giant wolves were about a man's height and their bodies were covered in festering wounds; on a normal Giant Wolf, it would have been on the verge of keeling over.

"Damn it! They're Vanderman's Rotten Giant Wolves!!" She paled as she sensed countless wolves around her, "The Green Vine Sphere! This is definitely the Green Vine Sphere! Only the Green Vine Sphere can control these experimental bodies scattered outside!"

She took two steps back, feeling a familiar howling again in the back, which was the roar of Rotten Giant Wolves.

The number of these wolves was overwhelming; this was obviously planned.

"I've got everything out! Don't be so aggressive!" Aquarius called out.

Suddenly she spun to her left, and flung herself to the ground.

Krakk ! !

A huge hole was ripped out from the ground, and a large bite mark remained where she'd been standing. The beast had ferociously bitten a large patch of ground and quickly retreated, leaving behind a crater two meters wide.

Aquarius' heart pounded wildly as she vigilantly observed her surroundings. Her subordinates has been left far behind when she'd used a few lightning movements.

She ground her teeth.

"As long as you help me delay that man, I will help settle everything else on your end... please last a little longer ..."

As she stood up, she was unusually embarrassed.

Her dress was streaked with soil, and soil was also streaked in her hair.

She thought for a moment, while she lightly dusted dirt off the back of her dress.

A silver light streaked out and landed in front of her, shapeshifting into a dark green Python. On each side of the python's head was a pair of white feathered wings, which was rather strange.

"Get rid of the guy in the ground!" She mentally ordered.

The giant python immediately drilled downwards, disappearing into the ground.

Awoo!

A Rotten Giant Wolf leapt towards Aquarius unexpectedly, bringing a foul stench as it attempted to bite at Aquarius' neck.

At the same time, another Rotten Giant Wolf rushed over from behind; more than ten Wolves were rushing forward at the same time from the surrounding dense forest.

Roar! ! !

A frenzied roar bellowed from Aquarius' location. At the same time a wave of yellow energy blasted forth.

More than ten Rotten Giant Wolves were blown back by the shockwave and tumbled to the ground, where after struggling several times, they soon melted into puddles of pus.

Once again, a dozen Rotten Giant Wolves rushed at her from the forest.

Just as Aquarius thought to move, she'd been cornered by the giant wolves.

Garen leisurely strolled out of the woods, watching the rotten giant wolves surround Aquarius.

The Green Vine Sphere could control up to more than two hundred Rotten Giant Wolves; these experimental bodies were merely ordinary wolves covered in spores. Their power could only be considered a Type 1 totem beast, which wasn't very strong. They were disposable though, which improved their feasibility.

Noticing that Aquarius had been completely surrounded by the Giant Wolves, the underground Dual-Headed Salamander was blocked by the winged python released by Aquarius, and both were tangled together. Garen was surprised.

"What about your derivator? Or your other totems? Why did you not bring them out?" He clapped his hands, a signal for the large pack of wolves to disband and disperse.

At the center, Aquarius looked dishevelled. The escape techniques stored in the tactic chains within her cuffs had all been used up. she glared at Garen.

"It's impossible for you to be Acacia! Who are you, and why do you hold so much animosity against me?"

Garen chuckled.

"Did we not meet once long ago? I was Cia, how could you forget all of that? Cia, who wrote those love poems dedicated to you."

The Green Vine Sphere was able to control more than two hundred Rotten Giant Wolves, which Garen intended to be used as a general measure. The Dual-Headed Salamander had actually been suppressed by a strange python, which astonished Garen.

That strange python was obviously the opponent's only Form 3 totem.

At this moment, Aquarius was in despair. All her Type 2 totems had just got through a war and were pretty much exhausted, leaving only her strongest green python, and her only Form 3 double-winged python, coupled with a tactics chains. These were all the means left to her, but in front of this man, it barely made a difference.

Her Form 3 double-winged python was currently being suppressed, and there were still several dangerous presences lurking close by, she could feel it.

Aquarius had had a keen sense of danger since an early age. This sense of danger had saved her too many times, so when she saw that dark robed man, she knew that her opponent had laid down a huge ambush and so she decisively abandoned her subordinates. She escaped alone using four consecutive lightning movements, which consumed almost all of her totems' power. Even after fleeing hundreds of kilometers away, she still couldn't shake this man off.

She faintly felt that this was her first time meeting this man.

The scenario ahead of her felt exactly the same as before; a scary opponent whom she could not escape from no matter how hard she tried. The same tall man was toying with her with an amused gaze.

"Keabo!! You are Keabo!!" She suddenly shouted loudly. "You dare attack me! My father will not forgive this! Never!"

Garen was stunned, as he did not expect that she would make such outlandish exclamations.

"Who is Keabo?" Before he even managed to open his mouth to ask the question, Aquarius had turned and fled, through the crevices in the trees towards the lake.

He raised his hand.

Jii!

A Deep Swamp Croc suddenly leapt out and tackled Aquarius. She tumbled to the ground and rolled over.

The woman panted for a while before attempting to stand up. The layer of green totem light around hers was splattered with viscous black mud. As though it had been on glass instead, the mud slowly slid off back onto the ground.

"What are you trying to do ?!" She stood still as she glowered at Garen.

Garen slowly walked towards her.

"I have to thank you for the supplies that you brought me. You're from the elite department at Vandermann Manor aren't you?"

"So what? You're dead meat once they find out about this!" Aquarius spat hatefully, her voice faltering. "This time, the elite department is led by an actual Lieutenant General again and he has a strong

backing. You still have time to retreat, and I will explain to the superiors that this was a misunderstanding."

"Retreat?" Garen could not help but chuckle. "Aquarius, I thought you were an intelligent woman, I didn't expect that at such a crucial moment, you actually became so witless."

He suddenly spun about and delivered a side kick.

Bam!

His right leg blurred into a gray shadow and jabbed at Aquarius' waist.

Aquarius tumbled like a gourd as she rolled on the ground a dozen times and crashed into a big tree. A large slab of bark fell from the impact of her collision. Leaves drifted from the tree's branches like rain.

Aquarius had been protected by her Totem's Light hence she wasn't severely injured, and quickly stood back up.

Her hair was slovenly and her eyes were locked on the ground while she paid attention to Garen, in fear that he'd pull out tricks once more.

"Trying to summon your Form 3 totem?" Garen smiled. "Unfortunately ... my little baby is keeping it busy. It should be a while before a winner can be decided."

"What the hell do you want?!" Aquarius withdrew and backed herself to the tree's trunk. "My father is a Brigadier General in the Obscuro Society, he can give you money! He can give you anything you want! As long as you take me hostage, you can do a direct exchange!"

"That's not what I need, I only want you." Garen shook his head. Unexpectedly, he heard a woman's muffled shriek from the right.

He looked around, he unexpectedly saw another Aquarius being tackled by the Deep Swamp Croc.

Meanwhile, the Aquarius standing in front of the trunk gradually vanished.

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"Oh? An illusion?" Garen had a stern face. "You sure have a lot of tricks up your sleeve. One simple lieutenant colonel almost fooled me."

His eyes opened wide, his iris suddenly glowed red and a circle of bloody symbols in his eyes flashed.

Aquarius shuddered under Garen's glower. Her totem light suddenly dimmed and her defensive capabilities decreased sharply, by more than half.

Aquarius' face paled. She spun about and bolted as fast as she could, similar to a frightened hare, into the bushes behind her.

Yet Garen was faster; his figure blurred into a gray shadow and he blocked her path with ease. He then stretched out his left hand and brushed gently against Aquarius' forehead.

His palm and her Totem's Light touched lightly.

Kacha!

The totem's light suddenly shattered like glass into black and green fragments as it dissipated into thin air.

The weak rays weakened Aquarius' Totem's Light even further. As Garen was carrying the Green Vine Sphere, all his attacks carried the Totem's Light properties. Soon, Aquarius' Totem's Light was completely shattered.

Bang bang! ! Aquarius was violently flung and her body bounced off the ground several times before crashing into a large green boulder. Her battered body tumbled aside.

She lay on the ground covered in moss and grass, her face swollen. As she was unable to stand back up, the impact must injured some part of her back.

"Don't ... Please don't kill me ... I don't want to die!!" Aquarius futilely attempted to get up several times, and a suppressed sob was leaking into her voice. "Don't ... Don't kill me .... My father is a brigadier!"

Garen stopped in front of her, and he gazed at the sniffing and sobbing woman. She had completely lost all semblance to her previous bewitching appearance, and was now a mere human.

"For the person who led the elite department and led to Vanderman's death in his own manor, it's much too late to be speaking of this." He said lightly.

Aquarius, who wanted to push up her body, was still unable to lift herself.

"Don't kill me, I can do a lot of favours for you ... A ton of them!!" She wailed and shrunk backwards, trying to maintain her distance from Garen.

As Garen looked upwards and gazed at the gray sky, he suddenly felt some inexplicable emotions.

"Didn't you like me? I can be your lover! or your slave! Don't kill me, don't ..." Aquarius incoherently spoke.

Garen stood in front of her, quietly observing.

Poof!

Aquarius suddenly coughed up blood, her chest had been dyed red in an instant. Her face carried an blank look, as though she had no clue what had happened. She raised her hand and stared at the blood coating it.



Poof!

Yet another spurt of blood.

"No!! I don't want to die!!"

She wailed loudly.

Jii! Jii! Jii !!

Soon, wounds appeared all over Aquarius, and blood streamed out as though it was from a morbid fountain.

"Mum ... Dad .... Uwaa .. where are you?" Aquarius cried aloud, she began to grope about with her hand aimlessly, her pretty almond eyes had almost completely dissolved, and she could not see anything; both her eyes had turned black.

"Mum ... Waa ..."

Garen stood silently in front of her as he watched her blood-streaked body. She was still searching with her hands on the ground, sobbing.

"The deepest feelings surface only in their most desperate moments." He tightened his dark robe and turned away.

Bam! ! !

A blast rang from behind him. Aquarius' body exploded into a bloody mist, and her blood splattered the surrounding trees and grass, dying the vicinity red.

Chapter 352: Resolve 2

Sitting within the caravan's carriage, Garen quietly calculated the formula in front of him, lines of tiny alphanumeric formulas flowed from the tip of his pen, neatly written on a sheet of white paper.

The wagon's wheels rolled slowly, its creak blending with the rustling sound of writing.

The morning light shimmered in from the window, and illuminated some of the darker parts within the carriage.

They'd arrived at a safe zone; outside the carriage was the heavily armored white horse cavalry that had escorted them. These cavalryman were led by a Form 1 Totem User, whose head was held high and his chest bulged as he rode on horseback in white armor. The handsome man displayed an aura of pride and bravery.

Garen glanced away from the side of the cavalry.

"We're about to reach the West Farm defense line right?" he murmured.

Angel shrugged as she sat opposite him, carefully moving her injured shoulder to answer the question.

"Even the patrol cavalry has appeared, we're definitely closer. According to the map, we should arrive in the afternoon." She paused, "Leila talked to them for a while, and she asked a few questions regarding the defensive lines."

"Give me the details."

"The West Farm defensive line is mainly patrolled by totem users leading elite soldiers, and an outpost and fortress is built every two hundred kilometers for the stationing of totem users. Each fortress is run by a lieutenant-class totem user, with at least ten Form 2 totem users stationed. Almost all of humanity's most elite troops are stationed on this line of defense," Angel explained while she removed the bandage from her shoulder.

"After they learnt of the fall of Vanderman Manor, the cavalrymen were also shocked. The Vanderman Manor was interdependent with the stronghold here and was one of the 68 front-line strongholds. Now

that it had been destroyed, they need to look into recalibrating their defensive lines, and wait for reinforcement troops. "Angel clenched her teeth, peeled the bandage off and swiped a cotton swab dipped in alcohol to sterilize the wound.

"I heard ... Ughh ... I heard that not only was the Vanderman Manor destroyed, in the nearby Thousand Cranes Manor, nobody survived. This is possibly be a large move by the Obscuro Society" She endured the pain and re-wrapped her new bandage.

"Yes, news of the Iron Tank City incident has spread throughout the entire human safe zone. Not only the Grand Duke of Blackfield Dragonhawk, of hundreds of kingdoms in East Continent, thousands of cities of different sizes, only one hundred and eighty two cities survived and have now been divided into six safe areas. Do you know which are the six?" Angel spiritedly asked.

"Which six?" Garen smiled and calmly asked.

"You're calm," Angel glanced at him in surprise. "Iron Tank District, centered in Iron Tank city, is called black territory because it is protected by the Duke of the Blackfield, and the surrounding twelve cities were reconstructed around Iron Tank City."

"Then Prince Alexander of Glory City , brother to King of Ender and the eldest son of Prince Tangula, also known as the Black Prince, his glorious city is at the core, the surrounding ten cities are being rebuilt and they are forming a complete basin defense known as the dragonfield."

Angel sipped some water, then continued speaking.

"Another is Queen Jean Earnest, a peerless beauty once hailed as the never-withering flower. She is also an unexpectedly strong totem user. She's taken the Avision city as the core. Adjacent to Trinity, this city is reputed with the revival of fifteen cities. The queen is hailed as the queen of blood by unimaginative poets, and the area she protects is known as the Avision City."

"Those are only three safe areas, what are the rest?" Garen asked while calculating the formula.

"There is also the kingdoms of the three great powers forming the central safe zone: Kovitan, Canbria and Ender. Those three kingdoms combined with the capital as the core, establishing a huge security

zone .The Three Empire Defense Circle, as well as the Blackfield Dragonfield, Avison City and Iron Tank District are now the entire congregation of six safe havens for people in East Continents, the rest are nothing but wastelands, all of them mutants and wild creatures.

Garen smiled but did not speak; the so-called land of death was only the public view. In fact, Obscuro Society, as well as Terraflor Society's congregation spots were definitely not wastelands at all.

"A troubled world breeds heroes, I suppose this is true," Leila whispered around the side of her cup of coffee. "I also heard from a sister in the cavalry that there were a lot of powerful totem users coming from within the community."

"I also heard about that, it is rather lively around, we Kovitan have several famous totem users." Angel suddenly got interested.

They promptly ignored Garen, and chattered together on the side.

Garen shook his head and continued calculating his own model equations. With some classic books from Aquarius, his understanding and research on totems deepened.

In the process of sensing the Resonant Stone, he secretly combined it with the totem aspect in his system of knowledge, also with a trace of other gains.

As long as he managed to sipher study notes and academic books from Cia's father Vanderman while in the capital, he should be able to raise his research knowledge by several levels. He would then be able to unlock the secrets of the Crystal Derivator.

Regardless, the study done by Vanderman had reached a very deep level. Compared to other fields of study, it was the Grand Obscuro of Obscuro Society, the old senile people over at Terraflor, and even the three great empires' Three Departments. Each of these were decent but their research headed in different directions, which was the cause of the many problems attracted by Vanderman.

Garen believes that as long as he find the research knowledge, he would definitely find out the way to completely control the crystal derivator.

Most importantly though was the evolution of his Black-Striped White Tiger.

He dropped the pen and checked the Black-Striped White Tiger's condition in its storage device. On his left ring finger was a black crystal ring which also doubled as the Black-Striped White Tiger's storage device.

After the Black-Striped White Tiger had been released and it had gobbled up the patterned crystal in several bites, Garen returned it into the ring, in accordance with the rhythm of evolution.

Now he has to wait for five hours, until the crystal was completely digested and absorbed.

He took out his pocket watch and checked the time.

"Just five hours."

Ignoring the two chatting people on the side, Garen set his eyes straight on the totem pane below his vision.

'Black-Striped White Tiger: Form 1 totem, upgradable. Evolution success rate: 11%. Potential consumption point: 700%.

Ability: Tail whip, rupturing bite. '

Checking his potential points, after killing Aquarius and the rest of the low-level totem users, he now accumulated more than two hundred points.

According to Black-Striped White Tiger core totem evolution law, he needs to obtain more than 100 points for a large activation and evolution. The Black-Striped White Tiger could not undergo fragmented genetic evolution and could only continue to activate large fragments, which was also the reason for its high potential point consumption.

Garen did not hesitate, his eyes stared down at the Black-Striped White Tiger icon. Three seconds later.

The potential points were drained significantly, as though a flood had washed them away.

Within a few seconds, the potential points had dropped by hundreds of points.

Garen's face twitched in strong disapproval, as those potential points had been accumulated over a long time, in case of a few unsuccessful successions. Even though the potential points would be returned, some of them would be left in Black-Striped White Tiger.

"What a brilliant move! If you're still so lousy after evolution, don't blame me if I swap you out." Garen coldly steeled his resolve.

Finally, a full five seconds later, the Black-Striped White Tiger's icon slowly blurred, and Garen refocused his vision. If he didn't observe it so keenly, it would have to be done the same as before; the accumulation of 7 points at a time, which was a much slower process. That was incomparable to this process, which could complete his goals in a single attempt.

He now understood that the icon displayed the rate of evolutionary success, which was the highest gene fragment success rate. It also showed the potential consumption point of its display, which also happened to be the point of least potential consumption.

The amount of potential points rose by more than 120 points before it finally stopped.

The Black-Striped White Tiger icon blurred for some time, and quickly cleared up.

As it returned to the properties pane, it sharply rose again.

"A failure." Garron spat, and this time, he did not see any need for other crystals.

He calculated that he'd failed once and it consumed thirty-five potential points. This was extremely wasteful to him.

However, in order to start a big activation, it would require more than 120 points. He thought for a while before trying again.

The second time the Black-Striped White Tiger icon blurred, it cleared up faster than before, but there were no changes. Another 35 potential points had been wasted.

Garen had wasted 70 potential points, leaving him with only 130 potential points.

He persisted and tried once more.

The icon absorbed a large number of potential points, it started to blur, and then ...

It failed again.

Garen groaned; he was now in an extremely bad mood. Almost 100 potential points had been dumped, yet not even a ripple of water had changed, which worsened his increasing irritation towards Black-Striped White Tiger.

Originally he'd thought that he was talented and that this evolution would be viable. He had not expected that he'd have been overconfident in himself.

Black-Striped White Tiger had undergone multiple trials by researchers and they had not been able to find an evolutionary approach, what were the chances that he would discover an evolutionary approach so easily?

Seeing that he did not have enough points to attempt evolution again, Garen thought. "Since the Black-Striped White Tiger doesn't work, then I'll have to resort to another plan .. The replacement of the core totem, aside from five years buffer period, there has to be another way...."

Now that he'd learnt a lot on totem knowledge and research, he'd accumulated most of the preliminary knowledge for this area.

Black-Striped White Tiger was his failed choice, he'd spent so much potential points yet his attempts were all unsuccessful. Even if it did evolve into a Form 2 totem, how strong could it become? At most it could be comparable to a Form 3, but what about actually evolving it to Form 3?

After careful consideration, Garen decided to give up the Black-Striped White Tiger, realising that he'd been too sure of himself at the start.

"Contacting the core totem approach, aside from waiting for five years, there is the complete destruction of Black-Striped White Tiger." Garen narrowed his eyes and he had decided to replace the core totem.

Destroying the core totem was a very difficult decision.

Destroying just the totem's light of the core totem would injure the totem users as well, and their spirit would be affected. If the core totem was completely destroyed, especially if the five years adaptation period had not completed, the totem user would be strongly impacted and their body's integration with the core totem would be seriously traumatized.

Simply put, the current Garen would be gravely weakened by the core totem's destruction. Totem users were often weak, and the magnitude of this would cause 10% of people to die.

"It's the price I'll pay for choosing wrongly."

Chapter 353: Core 1

"However, the timing we'll change it to and what will we change is still a problem," Garen mulled while he remained seated.

An impossible plan lingered in his mind, and whether this plan would succeed depended on the research conclusions observed in this period of time.

"We'll wait for a bit and see. If that plan succeeds, it won't matter if it's the Black-Striped White Tiger or other cores, or whether there even is a core totem, because it will all be irrelevant."

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Five days later...

Alone within the carriage, Garen stood in front of the laboratory equipment, gently shaking a test tube filled with pale yellow liquid.

The midday sunlight shone in from the outside and gave the interior an ethereal glow.

Garen carefully returned the test tube to the test tube rack, pipetted a drop of red liquid from a second test tube and released it into the first one.

Shh...

Instantly, black smoke curled out of the test tube while an intoxicatingly sweet smell slowly saturated the air.

"Success..." Garen nodded in satisfaction. "The Dual Headed Salamander serum that I separated using the centrifuge can probably be ridden of its toxicity this time.

He picked up the pale yellow liquid-filled test tube and shook it in sync with the clock, as though his hand contained an unknown regular pattern.

Rolling up his sleeves, Garen exposed his right arm, picked up the syringe he had prepared earlier and equipped the needle. He began to suck the serum out of the test tube. Only when all of the pale yellow liquid had been sucked into the syringe did he take it out of the test tube, before flicking the needle tip.

Tch!

Garen's left hand pressed down the syringe plunger steadily as he pierced the needle directly into his vein at his wrist.

The needle was inserted into his bloodstream through his vein slowly, and the Dual Headed Salamander's serum sample flowed into Garen's blood. After a few moments, a strong rejection reaction suddenly occurred within Garen's body.

He tossed the syringe away and remained standing in his initial position, while all the blood vessels in his body began to swell up slightly.

On his neck, his veins swelled up endlessly, as green blood vessels began to slowly appear on his handsome face. Garen began to gasp for air, while beads of sweat started to cover his entire forehead.

"I've research the serums of various creatures, such as the Dual Headed Salamander's serum, wild creatures' serum, and the Petrifying White Dragon's serum. The wild creature totem's serum used to give off the strongest rejection until now, where that property now lies with the Silver Totem that I control. Moreover, out of my Silver Totems, the Petrifying White Dragon's blood toxicity is too strong, which means I can only choose the Dual Headed Salamander... I've diluted its concentration levels greatly, and also got rid of some of the toxic proteins, so the remaining serum is very weak now, and I should be able to succeed."

Garen grinded his teeth, feeling as though an inferno was rampaging within him.

The blood inside his body began to flow faster as it tried to expel the injected serum, but Garen suppressed this natural instinct.

The Peak State Secret Technique allowed him to control his own blood flow and physiological responses perfectly. He suppressed his body's rejection reaction, allowing the injected serum to enter his circulation system quickly.

The serum entered his blood and quickly became more diluted, and much lighter as well.

After more than ten minutes, Garen sighed in relief slowly, and opened his tightly shut eyes.

"The first step... went as expected, and it was a success." He clenched his fist and felt a tingling sensation throughout his whole body, a sign that the Dual Headed Salamander's serum had already assimilated into the circulation system of his body. This potent serum was like an incomparable poison to the

average person, but for a strong and healthy Secret Technique user like himself, the harm caused by the serum could be controlled to an extent.

"As long as this plan succeeds, I will become the core totem, and the core totem will be myself!" Garen glanced at his right hand, and unconsciously thought of the gigantic city troll that he had once seen.

He found out through his research that when silver creatures were controlled by the Derivator, the area that was actually being controlled was the brain. Meanwhile, the remaining areas would not be controlled at all. After conducting many experiments, he made a mad decision.

That mad decision was the test that he was attempting right now.

After stowing the equipment used for the injection and the other experiment tools securely, Garen slowly sat down at his favourite seat in the carriage. He closed his eyes to visualise the situation inside himself.

The blood continued to circulate inside him, and by now he could clearly feel that there were some signs of unknown changes happening inside his own body.

The blood vessels through which the serum had flowed through had begun giving off a layer of gentle light. This layer of light flashed softly and did not bring any attention to itself, making it barely noticeable.

Garen rested for a while until he felt that his body had returned to normal, before finally relaxing.

The human body is a balanced circulatory system in itself, but right now, he wanted to destroy this system, in order to build an even stronger circulation.

"Lord Garen, it's time for lunch," Lala called from outside.

The carriage troop had rushed a five-day journey and faced constant hurdles along the way, forcing the cavalry team to be replaced three times. After the three aristocrats joined their entourage, the head of

the cavalry team was switched to a form two totem user, showing the government's priorities on this matter.

"I'm coming," Garen stood up and exited the carriage.

After that, another six days passed.

In this period of time, after Garen had successfully performed an experiment with the serum, he began to regularly inject himself with the Dual Headed Salamander's serum once a day.

His body gradually began to accept the toxicity of the serum, and under Garen's control, the rejection reactions stopped as well, showing that his body had naturally adapted to the serum, and had quickly balanced itself simultaneously.

Garen did not waste extra attention on matters regarding the core totem. Instead, he repeatedly conditioned his body. After all, the situation concerning the Black-Striped White Tiger could not be rushed, and required him to wait patiently.

As for the Kovitan kingdom, they had finally arrived.

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The wheels on the carriage spun smoothly.

Garen sat in the driver's seat and looked towards the faraway lands in front of him while the evening sunlight began to bask on his body, gilding him in golden rays.

On Garen's left shoulder perched an owl with ashen feathers. The owl was over half a meter long, and its sharp claws tightened and loosened around Garen's arm from time to time whenever it shifted its lower body.

This owl was the totem of Hunting Group member Ansa, but was merely an insignificant form two totem. Since its form one body was the easiest low-level state to evolve, it was evolved to form two. However, it only had one ability, which was its night vision observation. Although all owls possessed night vision abilities, this owl's ability was slightly stronger, allowing it to see places that were especially dark.

Even though this grey owl was not especially useful, its claws were still unusually sharp.

Garen allowed Ansa to let the owl out so that he could play with it. These lesser ability totems did not consume a large amount of points when released, and were excellent to use for training purposes. Ansa did not object to this at all.

At the back of the front carriage, Angel sat at the end, holding up one knee, and playing with a black dagger in her hand. She looked disinterestedly at Garen as he played with the grey-feathered owl.

This expression had been plastered on her face for two whole days already, because Garen was utterly boring.

No one noticed that while the owl had stuck its claws into Garen's arm and perched there, there was not a hint of totem light emitting from his arm.

Garen teased the owl while observing the changes that had occurred in his body.

He got rid of his totem light and placed the Green Vine Sphere inside the carriage. Afterwards, he made sure that he was alone and that there were no other creatures close by, so that he could come into contact with the totem beast like this. His predicted result had been spot on.

His own body had already achieved its own totem light attributes.

He analysed this carefully, and realised that it was probably because of a certain reason.

"If a totem user is covered in their totem light for a long period of time, their own bodies will eventually go through the same situation as mine. They will produce a resistance towards the totem light. The only

difference is that I used my Secret Technique and the serum to speed up the process. The short-term two-in-one process caused by Spiritualization was probably the key element that quickened this process. However, I'm not the same as them..."

Garen stroked the owl's smooth but slightly hard feathers, while he drifted off into deep thought.

"Regarding my current body, when compared to a totem, it probably has strength comparable to a form one totem right now. This excludes the totem light, the Green Vine Sphere, the Troll Grip, and only refers to my flesh body."

Garen swayed his hand gently to shake off the owl, prompting it to fly away.

"The first step is easy, I just need to have the blood controlling ability, strong physical fitness, plus a refined and toxin-free serum, in order to achieve this level. However, the second step will be much more troublesome," Garen continued to ponder.

While researching the Crystal Derivator and the Resonance Stone, he had managed to improve the feasibility of his previous plan to near perfection. Regardless if it was the empowering measures of the Obscuro Society or the specialized principle vibration of the Resonance Stone, as long as those things were combined with Garen's plethora of knowledge and theory systems from both Earth and the Secret Technique world, the plans of the first step would be completed without a hitch.

Garen had never really prioritized the nurturing of core totems from the beginning; he had always been preparing this plan. Now, he had finally finished the first step.

Currently, his core totem, the Black-Striped White Tiger was not working, and Garen had finally decided that he would give up on it, and focus on completing his plan instead.

The goal of this plan was to allow his flesh body to be transformed completely so that it would possess Silver Totem characteristics, while remaining uncontrollable by others. This thought came to him while constantly chatting with Leila, and had slowly expanded from there.

He tapped his skin lightly, and realised that his strength was now almost on par with the totem light of a form one totem, except that it was of a slightly weaker grade.

The supposed form one totems were actually creatures who were covered by a layer of totem light on the surface. Most of the form one totems were like that, except that the strength of the totem light was decided by the totem itself.

Regarding the newfound totem light traits that he had acquired, Garen was not surprised at all. The Obscuro Society research knowledge that Leila brought along, as well as the bits of Vanderman's research information he had acquired from the mansion had all mentioned this kind of supposed occurrences.

These occurrences referred to the traits that allowed living creatures to carry the totem light. All of these originated from the empowering process. However, the empowering process was an abnormal process, and Vanderman chose to perform this process on foreign bodies to provide them to people.

Meanwhile, the direction that Garen chose to follow, was the one that all researchers had always hoped to succeed in.

Indeed, it was to use the totem power to strengthen one's own body.

This required a sufficiently strong flesh body, and it was a shame that no one in this world, including the normal people and those who belonged to the Master-level, had a body that was as strong as his own.

Chapter 354: Core 2

Through Garen's personal experience, he realised that for this process, a strong body was necessary, but a person's control of their own blood circulation was even more important.

During his conversations with Leila, he had often mentioned that using Totem Light to strengthen a person's body was always the end goal that the Obscuro Society members were working hard to achieve. Unfortunately, it had never resulted in a positive conclusion, and the Silver Totems were merely the products of a surprise accident.

Sitting in the middle of the carriage trope, Garen was unable to keep his thoughts from drifting. His current research information was lacking, and he lacked the confidence to complete his plan and carry it out fully. He had to wait until he received Vanderman's information and gained access to the Royal

Library before he could grasp the theories properly. However, the necessary preparations for the second step were almost done, except...

Garen's thoughts returned to his current state of reluctance and physical aching. If he really managed to complete the second step of the plan, he would be able to reach a new and unprecedented point of progress.

But this came at a cost, and it was something that he found difficult to accept.

The strongest part of the Dual Headed Salamander is its heart. It is parasitical, strong, and possesses great specialized abilities, making it the core source of its power. Its extremely powerful heart was the key for the second step of the plan that Garen was about to conduct. However, this would mean losing an army-type Form Three Totem subordinate.

The carriage trope travelled through a monotonous stretch of rolling hills that had bare, rocky mountains on both sides. Gravel and large, cracked stones that blocked the road were scattered all over the ground.

The chilling wind gusted throughout the hills with a whistling noise, and the blinding sunlight did nothing to increase the temperature.

The cavalry team rode on the left side of the troop, clad in thick grey cloaks. They rode with their bodies bent forward against the wind, while their cloaks made flapping noises as they billowed around their bodies.

The wind continued to whistle loudly, forcing the captain of the cavalry team to shout over the noise. However, as his voice was completely deafened by the sound of the wind, he decided to just ride towards Garen and make hand signals, pointing towards the front.

Garen glanced in the direction that the captain pointed towards, and rode towards the front. In the mountainous areas in front, ashen-coloured stone steps sloped upwards towards the mountain's peak.

The road of stone steps was like an grey snake whose head could not be seen, climbing up the surface of the mountain quietly, slithering and twisting around it.



The stone steps ascended into a bank of misty clouds, making it impossible to see where they ended. Both sides of the stone steps were surrounded by dark grey trees and ashen stones. It was unbelievably steep, and there were deformed pine trees growing out of certain places.

The strong winds forced Garen to squint, and as he looked from left to right, he realised that he could not see the tops of any of the mountains on both sides, while bare grey rocks could be seen everywhere.

The captain of the cavalry team was a middle-aged woman emitting an aura of fearlessness. She wore a helmet and was clad in full-bodied red armor. She got off her horse and strided towards them.

"This road leads all the way up, and once you reach the peak, the Kingdom will be there. We're at the fork now, and you'll be able to see the main road in a bit, where there will be more people. Please be careful, all of you. I won't escort you any further, as there are checkpoints up ahead." The cavalry team captain had to shout loudly to be heard clearly.

Garen nodded, signalling that he understood.

The captain continued, saying: "This road is a small trail that we patrol, and the fastest way to reach the Kingdom. You'll need to pass through three more checkpoints along the way. Since you'll need to pay a toll later, do you have gold leaves on you? If you don't have any I can lend you a few."

"We have some," nodded Garen.

"That's good. My name is Kenna, and I'm the 19th branch captain of the Kingdom's third defense line. If you face any problems, feel free to look for me. I can assist you with any minor troubles you may face," said the captain loudly.

"Thank you very much." Garen understood that the captain was trying to build rapport with them. After all, Andel and the other aristocrats with him were definitely not impersonators, and if they were coming to the Kingdom at this time, it was assured that there were people in the Kingdom looking after them. Thus, it was a good opportunity to gain extra connections.

The cavalry team captain rode away on her horse and turned her team around to leave.

The carriage troop continued to move forwards while Garen gathered everyone together in the largest carriage.

He waited until everyone had arrived before closing the carriage door, and temporarily stopping the carriage against the wall for a break.

"What are you planning to do next?" Garen looked at Andel. "Are you going over to your uncle's place?"

"Mm-hmm, Big Sis Hathaway and I both have relatives in the Kingdom; my uncle used to be the junior garrison squad leader. Meanwhile, Big Sis Hathaway's younger sister works in the Kingdom's archives," Andel replied calmly.

"You're not coming with me?" Hathaway furrowed her eyebrows. She immediately forgot her unmarried status, before looking at Garen with the same gaze she reserved for her elders. "I'm going to visit the Royal Guards for a while. In the Kingdom, we all have allocated lodgings. Right now you're not safe yet, so it's better if you move together with us." She could tell that Garen was planning to leave again.

Garen smiled. "Father has estates in the Kingdom as well, except that they aren't in the urban district areas. They're in more remote places instead where the environment is much quieter, which suits me better. I've already made preparations to go live there." He currently possessed a large number of Silver Totems, and was too afraid to take them into the Kingdom. He spent the entire journey here hiding them from the patrol teams, and was now physically and mentally exhausted.

Both the Dual Headed Salamander and the Petrifying White Dragon were too large. As for the Deep Swamp Croc, if it wasn't for the West Farm's sparse population and light defenses, as well as the cavalry team's lack of warning signals, its tracks would have been noticed a long time ago.

Fortunately, the members of the patrol team were neither high leveled Totem Users nor researchers and could not tell the difference between Silver Totems and Primitive Totems, which allowed them to muddle through. This way, Garen could just make his Totems hide their Totem Light to the best of their abilities.

He had Three Petrifying White Dragons and one Dual Headed Salamander with him, all of which were high leveled Totems, but only the Dual Headed Salamander was brought along. The rest were left in the outer line of defense, because he did not dare to bring them inside.

He was convinced that in a larger kingdom, the number of strong individuals who could recognize Silver Totems would definitely be higher. Thus, it was better for him to lie low.

As for the Totem Light on his body, he did not dare to cover it, and only covered the Black-Striped White Tiger's Totem Light.

"Father left some things in his house in the Kingdom, so I'm going there to take a look. Angel and the others, what are you planning to do next?"

"I'm going to the War Guild to catch up on the news. I want to see if I can find some good quests to earn some nurturing resources," said Angel indifferently.

Meanwhile Leila, who was standing on the other side, quietly said: "I have relatives in the Kingdom but I haven't seen them for years, so I don't know if I'll be able to find them."

"Regarding the special resources for nurturing, I've prepared them for you already, and right now all you need is a large quantity of normal resources. This is fine as well. Just take it as a form of training," Garen nodded in agreement. "As the heir to the Trejons family, I'll need an audience with His Majesty the Emperor. This is the compulsory procedure for the local aristocratic lords. Also, I think I'll be able to meet Prynne and the others soon."

"So we'll be separating here?" Angel raised her eyebrows.

"Yes."

Garen took a pen and quickly jotted down his address on a piece of paper, tore it off and handed it to Angel, before writing another note and giving it to Hathaway.

"The Trejons family has a household manager in the Kingdom as well. Big Bro Maxilan, Big Sis Edney, please contact my household members in the Kingdom, and add up all the household assets and strength that the entire household currently possesses."

"No problem," Edney nodded assuredly.

Maxilan hesitated for a moment. "We don't know whether news regarding the old man has travelled to the Kingdom. The two masters Barr and Baphje..."

"It probably hasn't," Garen shook his head. "If not, we would not have been received with such courtesy even when we had yet to return. This is still the initial aristocratic special treatment. Meanwhile, whether or not the two masters have returned is still a problem. This situation should be left as it is for the time being, I will handle it."

He pondered for a moment. This trip to the Kingdom was done hurriedly with many restrictions, and while a large amount of his strength was not allowed to be brought inside, Garen still had a goal in mind.

The Kovitan Emperor, Avic Sisman would probably be stabbed during this period of time. The remaining Obscuro Society members in the Kovitan Empire had all gathered in the Kingdom, and the fact that they gave up on the Silver Totems power meant that they did not just come here for a relaxing holiday.

The stabbing resulted in collapse of the entire Kovitan Empire, and the successful blaming of the Black Prince. What Garen planned to do was to gain more profit from this misfortune.

Beckstone from the Terraflor Society absolutely loathed him, and once the Obscuro Society members realised that he was impersonating Jess, it would definitely lead to a huge problem. Right now these two giants were in a hostile state, and the Royal Alliance of Luminarists was Garen's only place of belonging. Regardless of the identity of his father Vanderman in this current world, or the territory where his household had always stood, all were condemned to return to the Royal Alliance of Luminarists.

The current Royal Alliance of Luminarists was still extremely strong and had not reached a state of weakness, even in the confusion caused by various Aberration Creatures attacking them while they were unprepared. Garen was unclear about the bottom line of the Obscuro Society, but the enemy knew him well and that had caused a serious loss. The three departments were not a force to be reckoned with as strong individuals and experts were abundant. This great war had lasted a duration of many years, and if

not for the awakening of Hellgate, the Obscuro Society would not have been able to overthrow the Royal Alliance of Luminarists.

Beckstone had decided to slowly go through many things to increase his growth during this period of time. What Garen planned to do was to release his power, a little bit at a time, during his growth in this era.

The Obscuro Society and Royal Alliance of Luminarists were both large powers in this era, and Beckstone's growth was a result that was carefully planned by the Terraflor Society. Almost every step included an abundance of profit-seeking opportunities.

However, to reap these benefits required one to possess a significant amount of strength beforehand.

The Royal Alliance of Luminarists was naturally the best choice. Since they were going to split sooner or later, and Garen thought that he might as well keep some of their strength for himself.

Once he had separated from the rest, Garen made his way to the mansion that Vanderman had left in the outskirts, and stayed there.

There had always been a caretaker looking after the mansion, and the maids had cleaned it until it was entirely spotless. This made it possible for him to live there immediately, saving him a lot of trouble.

The Kingdom was built as a large city situated on mountainous peaks. All of the buildings were dark grey and round, and built on the peaks of three tall mountains, forming three Kingdom cities.

The three cities depended on each other but were also independent, and in the middle was a lofty cliff covered in a sea of white clouds.

The three cities were connected by a chain bridge and stone bridge respectively on top of an ashen coloured hill, looking as though three floating buildings had been embedded into the mountain tops.

The mansion where Garen resided was outside the three cities, situated on a wasteland outside the entry point.

There were a total of twelve roads leading into the Kingdom, and this mansion that was called 'Blue Bay' was situated near one of the roads. It was inaccessible to the people in the surroundings, and situated at the bottom of the first empire of the three cities. Further down was a barren mountainous wall that shielded the back of the empire.

Chapter 355: Mad Plan 1

Night time

In the first empire, a large cluster of dark grey buildings were lit up with countless lamps, as though the mountain's peak was covered in an abundance of candles.

The area at the bottom with the dimmest candlelight was on top of a straight, lofty stone wall.

An ashen coloured mansion was embedded in the middle of the stone wall, and a small straight lane on the left was the only road that led to the outside world.

It looked like someone had dug a hole in the stone wall and built a manor in the empty space, with a balcony railing that could only be seen from the precipice.

A tall man with short blonde hair rested his hands on the railing and leaned on it as he stood on the balcony quietly, watching the sea of white fog below him. The gusting wind blew towards him, causing his hair to be mussed up continuously. The white pajamas he wore were also blown backwards.

He swirled the blue alcohol in his hands, and took a small sip.

"The request for an audience has been sent in, so I'll just have to wait for His Majesty to summon me. The Green Vine Sphere in my hands cannot be kept for much longer, and the people from the Royal Alliance of Luminarists will definitely want to acquire it. The type of benefits that I will be able to obtain all depend on my gaining abilities now. Avic Sisman is a wise young leader, and ever since he ascended the throne, the Kovitan Empire has been flourishing, and it's steadily becoming the strongest power in the continent. A person like this will definitely give me a favourable answer but if I don't sort this out properly, the other researchers will be worried."

Garen drank his alcohol and pondered silently.

"I don't know when Beckstone will arrive here, but I know that this is an important place where he has to reach. Historically, after the incident at Vanderman's manor, he only arrived at the Kovitan Empire one year later. Sequentially, that huge incident occurred, but he did not get injured in that situation. This time, he'd been badly beaten up by me, so the timeline is not very clear anymore..."

Garen shook his cup again, and finished the remainder of his alcohol in one gulp. The taste of the icy grape wine swirled around his mouth and on his tongue, before sliding down his throat. It tasted light and very sweet, just like grape juice that had been spiked with some alcohol.

"The other thing would be my bodily changes."

Garen bowed his head and looked at his arms, noticing that the topmost layer of skin had begun to give off a light blue shade.

Regarding the changes of his own body, Garen had been preparing himself for this for a long time, and had even calculated the times he used the Derivator. This kind of transformation was similar to the Obscuro Society's Empowerment, except that it was considered as an Empowerment that was not controlled by a Derivator, and the process was also different.

Garen was going in the direction of optimizing his own body structure, while the Obscuro Society was trying to use the Totem Light to transform their own bodies directly. They were unable to face the rejection reaction, so they simply chose to prioritise the Totem Light in a process that involved outside contamination and virus attacks.

Meanwhile, Garen's choice involved the main body absorbing the Totem Light, and it was a process that required his own body to produce an adaptive evolution in itself. Both of them had different natures.

The former required the 'virus' that the Derivator used to control Totem Light. The latter would control everything by themselves, however the difficulty would increase exponentially. In Garen's case, his physical body was extremely powerful, and greatly exceeded the expectations of the researchers in this world.

The first step of the transformation gave Garen's body the characteristics of Totem Light, but needed refinement to be steadier. The second step of the transformation required him to attempt to exceed his limits completely.

The reason why he could not increase his Attribution Points was due to his physical body reaching its limit, hence it was unable to increase any further. But what would happen if he increased the limits of his physical body? Would a newer, higher tier limit emerge?

That was Garen's current plan.

If he exceeded the limit, he would be able to obtain the ability to use his Potential Points to increase his Attributes once again. He had found a way to carry out this step a long time ago, but he'd only been able to implement it thoroughly after Leila had passed on many of the Obscuro Society's core skills to him.

The act of transforming himself into a Core Totem was a mad thought in itself. Countless talented Luminarists from the Obscuro Society had died while researching in this direction, causing many future researchers to avoid this area and conduct their research without using outside sources.

Their biggest hardship was that they lacked control over their own bodies, which led them to think of using Crystal Derivators as an exterior form of control.

However, Garen was different. The first step was a success, which made him certain that this was the direction and path that were the most suitable for him.

"The requirements for the second step of the transformation have all been met. The derivation theories have also been understood, so I can begin my experiments tonight," Garen released the cup in front of him lightly, and let it fall into the sea of white clouds. "I hope for the best."

He turned around and walked out of the balcony.

The wine cup plunged into the clouds before disappearing soundlessly.



Behind the balcony was a spacious hall, and the dim table lamp there swayed gently. It was a candle enclosed by a cylindrical white cloth, and each of the four walls were adorned with a similar lamp.

On the wooden floor, a long rectangular wooden desk was placed exactly in the center, with two wicker chairs arranged beside it. The table and chairs were the same shade of brown, with a tinge of red.

Garen sat down on one of the chairs and picked up a pile of manuscripts that had been placed on the table. He picked up a pen and began editing and checking them.

After checking for a while, he put away the manuscripts, got up and walked towards the wall on the right. There was a white cabinet placed high on the wall, with two used, black coffee cups balanced on top.

Garen shifted the coffee cups and began brushing against the walls, before his palm pressed against something softly.

Ka-chak.

A square switch sunk into the wall, and the entire wall slowly split along a 'Z'-shaped crack and opened inwards, revealing a dark passageway.

The arched passageway sloped downwards towards the right into the darkness.

Garen picked up the manuscripts and walked inside as though he was going down spiral stairs that wound towards the right. He walked on for an unknown span of time.

Within the dark passageway, the area in front of him was unexpectedly illuminated by white light.

It was a half-opened metal door.

Garen walked towards the front of the metal door, pushed it open gently, and walked inside.

The door suddenly opened wide, revealing a large, round stone hall.

The stone hall appeared unusually rough, and the stone wall had uneven marks. The entire stone hall was the size of a football field with only a little light illuminating the area, revealing specks of white dust on the ashen stone wall.

Garen walked through the metal door, and the position where he now stood at happened to be at the extreme right corner. He looked at the center of the area from a distance and noticed a black shadow collapsed there, as its soft breathing noises echoed within the stone hall.

On the four walls, only four lamps had been lit up, and the light from them was only enough to light up the four corners of the large hall, making it abnormally dim.

He took one of the lamps down from the wall, held it in his hand, and walked towards the center of the hall briskly.

The air in the hall was cool and felt as though a light breeze was blowing through, bringing a pungent rotten smell with it.

Garen walked across the solid yet uneven floor towards the center of the stone hall, and stood in front of the black shadow.

As the lamp cast light upon the black shadow, half of its large body was exposed.

The two necks and heads of the Dual Headed Salamander came into view.

Its ten meter long body was prostrated on the ground as though in deep sleep, while saliva leaked from the corners of both its mouths. It was the source of the disgusting stench.

Garen placed the wall lamp on the floor, reached his hand out to knock on the Dual Headed Salamander but received no response.

"This dosage should be sufficient."

He murmured quietly, before walking towards the middle of the Salamander's body, where various strange instruments had been arranged on the floor beside.

There was an oddly-shaped glass container and a square cabinet with a red dot that would light up occasionally. Furthermore, a large plate holding multiple purple crystal rods soaking in blood, and a surgical package containing various metal appliances.

Garen took a small sharp knife out of the surgical package and sterilised it with the flame of the lamp. With his other hand, he picked up a black towel that had been soaked in alcohol.

He walked towards the Dual Headed Salamander's abdomen, used the towel to wipe its abdominal scales unceremoniously. He then discarded the towel and grasping the scalpel in both hands, he stabbed downwards abruptly.

Tch!!

The scalpel was unable to penetrate its scales, but managed to pierce into the Salamander's skin.

Garen turned his head upwards and glanced at the Salamander, noticing that the giant beast had already opened its eyes and was glaring at him now with unblinking brown-yellow pupils.

"Don't move," Garen commanded the Dual Headed Salamander, as he held the scalpel down and sliced through quickly.

With his abnormal strength, the blade made a tearing noise as it was tugged across, before it sliced through the Dual Headed Salamander's abdomen and cut it open.

A meter-long wound was suddenly opened, exposing the blood-red coloured muscle within.

Garen switched to a longer, larger knife, sterilised it with alcohol and wiped it clean. Following that, he stabbed into the wound crudely once more.

Skree...

Finally, the Dual Headed Salamander could not hold back its cries anymore.

Garen separated the flesh towards the bottom with his meter long, large knife, and tore the flesh apart fully, exposing its steaming abdominal cavity.

Blood trickled down its scales and dripped on the floor, filling up one of the indentations in the floor like a creek before forming a small round puddle.

Garen discarded the large knife and used both of his hands to press against the corners of the wound, before looking into the abdominal cavity where it was pitch-black, as a pungent rotten stench continuously wafted out from inside.

He used both of his hands to tear and widen the wound, before picking up the lamp and entering its body.

The inside of its abdomen was an oval-shaped flesh cavity with inner walls of smooth white muscles covered in continuously moving blood vessels.

In the center, a large heart was thumping and beating continuously. This heart, which was larger than the size of an average person, was connected to a large amount of blood vessels that resembled red coloured spider webs of varying thicknesses.

Garen avoided the blood vessels carefully by stepping on the soft abdominal walls, and walked towards the heart.

The steamy, rotten smell from his surroundings assaulted his nose continuously, while Garen bent forwards and avoided two forearm-sized blood vessels that were blocking his path. He crawled towards the front of the heart.

He put the lamp down and took out a small black dagger. Holding it in his right hand, he sliced the corner of its heart open in one swift movement.

Tch!

A small piece of heart muscle detached from the large heart, together with a large pool of blood.

Garen quickly retrieved the chunk of heart muscle and immediately looked at the Dual Headed Salamander's wound. He noticed that it was beginning to repair itself at a rate observable with the naked eye. This type of terrifying regenerative abilities seemed to have affected the abdominal wound as well, as both sides of the wound were beginning to meld together.

Garen heard a closing sound behind him, and was shocked for a moment, before he turned back hastily and exited the abdominal cavity.

A crashing sound was heard as he dived out of the wound, his entire body stained red by blood.

"Cough cough..." His mouth and nose were saturated with the rotten stench from the abdominal cavity. Garen took a few deep breaths and saw that the Dual Headed Salamander's abdominal wounds had completely healed.

However, the Salamander's spirits seemed down, and possibly due to the injuries its heart had just suffered; its eyelids were drooping and almost closed, and it lay there listlessly.

Garen had no time to care for it. Instead, he held the heart muscle carefully in his hands, and placed it into a small crystal bottle that he had prepared earlier.

"This bottle of nutritional fluids should be able to maintain it for a while."

He covered the bottle and shook the light yellow fluids inside. He could see that this piece of heart muscle contained a specialized frequency that allowed it to naturally beat even though it had been detached from the heart.

"The source of all the secrets regarding the Dual Headed Salamander's can be found in its heart. Its heart possesses strong hematopoietic abilities, unlike most living creatures which rely on bone marrow to produce blood," said Garen as he finally understood.

#### Chapter 356: Mad Plan 2

He waited patiently while the blood from the heart muscle seeped into the fluids in the bottle, dying the interior of the small bottle a dark red. Only then did he twist the bottle cap open, used a pair of forceps to retrieve the heart muscle and put it inside another bottle filled with the same type of fluids.

The Dual Headed Salamander's heart muscle possessed extremely high vitality, and over time it remained bright red without any sign of decay.

After Garen transferred the heart muscle, he walked towards the other side of the room where a pile of equipment and apparatus had been placed in a corner, and picked up a small cage covered with black cloth.

Suddenly, piercing squeaks were roused from the cage.

The black cloth on top of the cage was pulled off to reveal more than ten aberration mice with ashen coloured fur.

All of these mice had red eyes, and were frantically running around in the cage without stopping. Two of the mice even jumped up and tried to bite Garen's hand, but were obstructed by the cage each time.

Garen opened the small door of the cage and shot his right hand in quickly, catching one of the mice and closing the small door.

It was time to proceed with the second test of the plan.

He anesthetized the little grey mouse and sliced its abdominal cavity open, before removing a identically shaped and sized piece of flesh from both the Salamander's heart muscle and the mouse's heart. He planted the Salamander's heart muscle carefully into the mouse's heart muscle.

The experiment was proceeding smoothly, and the heart muscle had been successfully implanted.

Next, Garen sewed up the wound and placed the little grey mouse in a cage by itself for observation.

The mouse that received a new heart muscle implant now seemed like it was dying. After the anaesthetic effect wore off, it began moving again, but its four paws could not stop shaking. It was only able to crawl a few steps forward before its whole body began to shiver.

Garen used the purple crystal rod that had been dipped in a blended blood mixture to feed the mouse.

This was a medicinal blood concoction tailored for the rejection reaction, and it had to be fed using a crystal rod to avoid adverse side effects.

After drinking a few drops of the blood concoction, the mouse finally calmed down again.

Garen crouched down beside the cage and took out his notebook to begin recording his experiment observations.

Bang!!

Suddenly a loud noise rang from the cage, as the mouse within suddenly exploded into a cloud of bloody mist, while slivers of its flesh and bone splattered everywhere.

Garen put his pen down.

"The first experimental mouse, failed."

After that, he continued with the second mouse.

Another 'bang' sounded, and the cage was filled with blood and bits of flesh once again.

Garen's expression was unchanging as he continued with the third mouse, proceeding with the same heart muscle transplant again.

This mouse turned out better. Because he'd reduced the transplanted amount, the mouse appeared to be entirely normal, except that it was more energetic. It looked like this was the effect of the heart muscle.

Garen recorded the current ratio.

A few days passed, and he continued to stay in the underground space that Vanderman had dug out under of the manor. Not only were there instruments and containers here, there were also various experiment manuscripts and recorded data.

Garen studied every single piece of information.

Vanderman Trejons was a genius, a genius in his field of research.

He invented various techniques that even Totem Users had never dreamed of, and most of them were techniques that the Obscuro Society had tried to acquire using other methods. Although he had yet to achieve the level of a Crystal Derivator, he was already very close

While Garen flipped through the manuscripts, not only did he find research on the Green Vine Sphere, he also found various techniques such as organ transplantation, in vitro reproduction, and Totem power separation, amongst others.

Using these manuscripts and research information helped Garen's theoretical knowledge to increase rapidly. Regarding the entire research system, he had also gained a deeper understanding.

\*\*\*\*\*



Pap.

Garen placed the cup of black tea on the table, picked up a manuscript and read it intently. The rows of experimental data were like sacred cheat codes in his eyes, and were incredibly precious to him.

The table in the hall was piled with tall stacks of manuscripts and books that all contained copious amounts of officially released analysis, tests, results, and discussions.

Garen was unsure of the amount of data he had processed in the past few days. All of these were still elementary level, and Vanderman's manuscripts filled up three underground rooms in total, which were arranged by difficulty and date respectively, and progressively increased, indicating that his research constantly went deeper.

Currently, what Garen was studying was merely the manuscripts and books from the first room. Right now, he was only able to understand the things from the first room as well.

Hours and minutes ticked by, as ashen rays glimmered from the balcony. Lala, dressed in her white servant's skirt, walked in and took the empty coffee and tea cups, before placing some ready-made snacks on an empty space near the manuscripts.

She glanced at the manuscripts on the table. The data was completely foreign to her, and although she recognized the individual words inside, she could no longer comprehend them once they were strung together with a variety of terminological pronouns, which seemed extremely deep to her.

"Your afternoon tea cakes and cherry milkshake are here."

Lala murmured the sentence, and as she had expected, did not receive a reply. She shook her head and turned around to walk out before noticing that the fireplace was full of charcoal ashes again. She went to dispose of them while she was still in the room, as it would be troublesome once the rubbish truck had left.

Garen flipped through the manuscripts and read them attentively, subconsciously picking up a piece of cake and shoving it into his mouth.

Suddenly, his gaze shifted towards a moving red dot.

A thought stirred in his head as he steered his gaze towards the bottom quickly and looked towards his Skill Pane.

‘Biological engineering: Elementary level. (Theoretical framework has been established completely, Three phases overall, elementary, intermediate, advanced)’

Regarding his initial beginner-level biological engineering, after he had read all the experiment information and a large number of subject books, it had finally advanced to the elementary level. However, this was not the most important part. The most important part was that his Overall Framework had finally been established, which would allow him to use his Potential Points to speed up the learning process.

Putting the manuscripts down, Garen glanced at the back of his hand, and noticed that pale red lines were beginning to tinge the skin there, resembling strawberry milk of the highest quality.

"The Salamander's blood is finally showing some effects."

After a long period of injecting dragon's blood serum, Garen felt that his body had finally shown some changes and was no longer the same as before. There were no changes in his Attribute Pane, but that may have been because his abilities had yet to achieve proper quantitative change levels.

Garen returned to his thoughts and let go of the manuscripts. He was unwilling to proceed with such slow-paced research, because his Overall Framework system had been fully established. His theories were also sufficient, and all he needed was a large amount of experimental practice.

On the contrary, his advanced mathematics had recently been upgraded and had exceeded his biological engineering greatly; he had achieved the highest level. Furthermore, while he was researching the Resonance Stone, Garen had also discovered one of its hidden key principles.

The research progress of the Resonance Stone had gone through a tremendous upgrade, and Garen seemed to have figured out the transfer model of the resonance. It felt like he'd awoken the same

obsession as when he first learned the Secret Techniques; once more, he was enduring sleepless nights as he immersed himself into his research.

After acquiring Vanderman's various techniques, Garen immediately began researching the organ transplant procedures of this world. Compared to the other techniques, organ transplantations and other techniques were extremely mature skills.

The experiments conducted on the little grey mice during these few days, made Garen reminisce to the time when he first entered university and conducted experiments on creatures in the experiment labs.

"Tonight will be the crucial time for my self experiment. If I'm not careful and a problem occurs, it will definitely cause severe injuries," mused Garen. He put down the manuscripts in his hands and picked up a pen to begin checking the plans on his paper again.

Transforming a physical body into a Totem worked when the dragon blood serum was in effect, but once the injections stopped, would return to its original state quickly. Garen had thought of this mad plan early on.

If he could possess a heart as strong as the Dual Headed Salamander, his limits could then be exceeded once again.

But how would he get such a strong heart?

After perusing various sources of information and experiment data, as well as the organ transplantation techniques he had received from Vanderman, a mad thought appeared in Garen's mind.

He could transplant a strong creature's organ into his own body and use the resonance principle to absorb the original organ's energy vitality. It seemed like a viable decision.

Thus, he began to experiment on the Dual Headed Salamander's heart muscles, transplanting it from time to time to note various side effects and dangerous reactions. He then prepared relieving medicines, and adjusting the different dosages.

The mouse that had received a successful heart muscle transplant now possessed the characteristics of Totem Light. Its body had also undergone changes of a certain degree, and was currently much stronger and more muscular than it was initially. Its strength and speed were now two times of that of a regular grey mouse.

This gave Garen some hope.

However, the mortality rate was still quite high, at about 70%. This was the main reason why he was hesitant to make his next move.

It was just as he'd predicted. The organ transplantation technique would produce a large amount of blood during the heart muscle transplantation. Meanwhile, as the nutrients were being absorbed, the produced blood would continuously mix into the test subject's body.

The Dual Headed Salamander's heart naturally possessed haemopoietic abilities, and this was the key reason why Garen had chosen it.

If the transplantation succeeded, Garen assumed that his own flesh body would possess abilities similar to a Totem, and the Totem Light would no longer be an obstacle to himself. Meanwhile, with the Dual Headed Salamander's strong haemopoietic abilities, his physical limits would probably be increased slowly as well.

"But I'm not worried about the 'if's', I'm only worried about the 'what if's'. Although I'm an ultimate Secret Technique User and fighter, my vitality has reached its limits, and I don't know what I should do about this transplant surgery. To think of completing this heart and heart muscle transplant, the difficulty required..."

"Once I've been anaesthetized, I won't be able to command anything. But if I don't use anaesthesia, the tremendous pain will cause the blood in my body to flow faster, causing spasm reactions. Even if I was able to endure the pain of the surgery, a successful transplantation would still be difficult to achieve."

But once he succeeded, Garen inferred that similar to the outcome of the little grey mouse's transplantation, he would be able to achieve a permanent Totem Light effect, which may exceed his physical limits at the same time.

By then, he would become a Core Totem himself, and the Core Totem would be him. Moreover, he would be able to use his Potential Points to increase his own Attributes. When that time came, minor side effects would not matter at all.

While Garen was hesitating, his gaze glanced slightly towards the shadow of Lala in the next room.

Lala had already been fully empowered by him, and two days ago he had tried to use his Potential Points to evolve Lala. Regretfully, Empowered Human Totems seemed to not have any abilities that could be evolved, and this cemented Garen's thoughts to transplant his own organs.

"Is there a type of medicine that can be used to only make humans lose their sense of pain, without worrying about muscle spasms, increasing blood flow or other natural reactions?" Garen queried mentally.

Suddenly, both of his eyes gleamed, as though he had concocted an idea.

"I remember Reylan once mentioned that the Obscuro Society was also conducting these kinds of experiments. Some of the higher-leveled ones attempted to empower their own bodies, but as they were unable to trust others, decided to find a type of medicine that could get rid of their sense of pain instead, which would enable them to perform surgery on themselves. This type of medicine is commonly used on the battlefield, to make the soldiers forget their suffering, and should probably be found with the pharmacists in the Royal Alliance of Luminarists. The only problem is that it has stronger side effects, but it is definitely something that will yield good results. Maybe I could use the Green Vine Sphere to propose my requests at the same time."

Chapter 357: Audience and Surgery 1

After thorough consideration, Garen devoured his dinner and requested Lala to enquire about His Majesty the Emperor's reply. He then buried his head in the books and manuscripts once more, in which information about the practices and experiments had been recorded.

During the following days, the imperial palace officer stationed at the checkpoint still had no messages to relay.

Garen went to the capital to stroll around for a few rounds, but the streets remained eerily quiet except for a few passersby. The capital was governed by military law, and the entry and exit checkpoints all

required troublesome licenses that had to be reviewed, because of materials that were under a unified management. The entire area was empty and quiet.

Until the sixth day.

Finally, the audit for an audience was accepted, and His Majesty the King had decided to summon him, but only for a duration of ten minutes.

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Sitting within the white carriage passing through the checkpoint, Garen did not pull the curtains open. Instead, he sat in the middle of the carriage quietly, concentrating with his eyes closed.

The front and back of the carriage were accompanied by other carriages, and inside those carriages were other local aristocrats that were here to have an audience with the king just like himself. If it was not for the Green Vine Sphere, Garen assumed that as a local lord who had lost his power and influence, there was no way that he would have been able to receive an audience with the king.

He sat inside the carriage and carefully considered the exchanges and requests that he wanted to bring up during the audience with the king. Giving the Green Vine Sphere over was something that he had thought about properly before this. Out of the three emperors, the Kovitan Emperor had the strongest ambition and the best attitude. Hence, passing it to him would probably yield the highest profits.

However, there was another problem that would be troublesome to solve: the stabbing of the Kovitan Emperor by the Obscuro Society. Their actions would be successful this time, and he needed to warn His Majesty, but...

Warning him immediately was definitely out of the question; if an outsider aristocrat appeared out of the blue and told the king to his face that his wife was a spy without any proof, any sentence would be considered light in comparison to being convicted and jailed in a death sentence prison for false accusation.

Moreover, even if he managed to successfully uncover them, there would come a time when he would face the exposure of his own identity, and the Obscuro Society would definitely retaliate by going after his head. Even the Royal Alliance of Luminarists might not be able to protect him then.

He spent the entire journey pondering, and did not notice when the carriage had stopped. The sound of music echoed distantly behind him, and it sounded like it was coming from a violin or some other string-type instrument.

"You should get down now," the guard who was also the driver reminded him.

Garen pulled the carriage door open and jumped out of the carriage. He stood at the end of a quiet street, and in front of him stood a black, pencil shaped stone door. The large stone door was half opened, and on the inside, it lead to a spacious corridor that stretched into an open air garden far away.

A row of guards on duty stood to the left side of the corridor, and all of them were clad from head to toe in black armor, which made them look strong and solemn.

The music that Garen had heard earlier was coming from a large black fort on his left. It could still be heard faintly, from the area where the royal palace hall was located.

"Let's go." The dispatched officer was a tall, handsome young man who wore a white wig on his head, and a red waistcoat over his white undershirt. He glanced past Garen, before turning around and walking out of the corridor first.

Garen noticed that the aristocrats who disembarked from the remaining two carriages did not stop at this entrance, but went to the other two entry points instead.

"Aren't they coming to have an audience with His Majesty as well?"

The handsome man glanced at Garen.

"You should be honoured that His Majesty decided to summon only you today. The others were summoned by Her Royal Highness the Princess."

Garen nodded and followed the man as he walked through the corridor.

The two man walked briskly through the black corridor. The entire corridor was slightly more than seven meters tall and wide, and unusually broad, and as they walked across the smooth black stone floors, the sound of soft, crisp footsteps could be heard.

They passed through the corridor and walked into the front of the open air garden.

The garden was blooming with an abundance of fresh red, yellow, and white flowers. Most of them were white, and the white ones were giant flowers the size of washbasins. A group of girls in resplendent clothes were chatting noisily in the flower garden. No one knew what they were chatting about, but they seemed unusually happy. Some of the girls were even sitting on top of the giant washbasin sized white flowers, and it was amazing that none of them fell on the floor.

When the girls saw the handsome man who was leading the way, they waved at him enthusiastically, showing signs of familiarity.

The man answered them politely, and seemed to be unusually calm against the girls' ambiguous gazes.

Garen followed behind him. Even though his current Acacia body was just as handsome, in comparison to the man, he was still somewhat lacking. He was immediately overlooked by the girls.

Compared to the man's bright, eye-catching clothes, Garen's grey robes were not worth looking at in the slightest.

After they passed through the flower garden, they ended up at another long cloister.

He did not know how far they'd walked before they arrived in front of a five meter tall black door.

"You can just wait here. About half an hour later, His Majesty will arrive. Remember, you have only ten minutes," reminded the handsome man briskly, before he turned around and left.



Garen did not mind. During this chaotic period, he could see that there were lots of people who wished to have an audience with the king.

He waited in front of the main door quietly. On the left side of the cloister stood guards in full-bodied black armor. Unlike the others, these guards were clad in armor that was significantly heavier and held black guns in their hands as they stood against the wall like sculptures.

About twenty minutes later, a well-built, middle-aged man walked over in long strides. He was wearing pure white tights with silver inserts in the borders, with a white cloak billowing behind him. He held a golden whip in his hand, as if he had just returned from horse riding.

Wherever he walked passed, all of the guards on duty would kneel down on one knee.

This man's age was not older than thirty years, and a smile was present on his face. He had a mild-looking expression and a black beard covered his chin and connected to his sideburns, making it difficult to differentiate between his beard and his hair. His back was slightly hunched, but he walked steadily. His appearance was neither handsome nor particularly majestic, making him seem like a normal passerby that one would encounter on the streets.

Garen knelt down on one knee immediately. He had seen a black and white picture of the king before he arrived, and recognized that this man was the Kovitan Emperor Avic Sisman.

"Your Majesty," Garen bowed his head and looked away from the king's face as a sign of courtesy.

King Avic was followed by a group of people who seemed like they were preparing to enter the room with him to discuss important matters.

"Come in."

Avic answered gently, and entered the main door that had been opened by the guards.

Garen stood up and followed him into the room.

Inside the brightly lit room, the walls were engraved with intricate and beautiful golden floral decorations, while a large floor-length painting was plastered against the wall on the opposite side of the main door. It was a painting of Avic standing on the palace balcony with a sword in his hand.

A few rows of yellow wooden sofas were arranged in an arc shape in the middle of the room. There were also two rectangular shaped bookshelves on the right, both of which were filled with various books with gold-rimmed borders.

"Have a seat." Avic seemed like a regular host who was attending to a guest in his house, as he pointed towards the sofa.

Garen looked at the other people and realised that none of them entered the room, except for Avic and himself who had just walked inside.

The people who had followed them bowed and curtsied outside the door, before closing the door carefully.

Only then did Garen sit down quietly, on Avic's right hand side.

"The trust you have in the Royal Alliance of Luminarists and the Kovitan Empire signifies the trust in myself, Avic. Regarding the tragedy that befell Viscount Vanderman, when I heard of it, my heart grieved and I despaired. Your father contributed a great amount of effort and time into his research, but his treatment and attitudes towards the people were unnecessarily brutal at times. The impact caused by these incidents were horrifying. You understand what I mean, right?" Avic brought up the main subject immediately. He was not a Totem User and merely a normal person, but to be able to run such a vast empire meant that he naturally possessed his own expertise and abilities.

"I understand," Garen nodded. "Honestly, my requests are very simple. I wish to visit the Royal Databank to find some information that I need. At the same time, I would like to request Your Majesty for access to the pharmacy to find some medicine that I need.

"Are you still a Form one Totem User?" Avic asked suddenly.

"Yes." Garen was surprised at Avic's sudden change of topics, but he answered immediately anyway.

"Would you like a better Core Totem? Or a stronger Secondary Totem? You have an interest towards medicine, so you should go to the Secret Service. They have more content regarding those topics over there," replied Avic with a gentle smile.

"Secret Service?"

"That's right. Although the interior strength of our Kovitan Empire may not be considered powerful, and may actually be extremely weak, it would not be difficult to allow you to become part of it. Inside, the pharmaceutical knowledge that you're interested in and the various techniques... Well... I've heard that the moment you arrived at the capital, you spent all of your time holed up in your manor without going anywhere else, right? Well, that place has the techniques that you're so interested about."

Garen hesitated. He was unclear about what the Secret Service was actually like, but he'd heard about the three departments of the Royal Alliance of Luminarists a long time ago. Each of these three departments were managed by different countries but they worked with each other, and their powers were intertwined, meaning that each country possessed varying amounts of power.

"Honestly, our Kovitan Empire sits at the most important position in the national departments. We are not considered weak in the Geometry Service, but since the Secret Service remains in the domain of Daniela, it is better for us not to infiltrate. You know as well that the three departments are represented by interest groups of aristocrats from various countries. Inside the Secret Service, Earl Senda is our only representative that possesses some influence."

"But even if I joined, it would not cause any effect, right?" Garen asked hesitantly.

"Of course it wouldn't be just you alone. Nothing can be accomplished overnight, because everything needs a development process," Avic answered with a smile. "A research-type Forger joining their ranks would definitely be a huge support for Earl Senda."

"Your Majesty gives me too much credit," Garen quickly bowed his head humbly.

"Your father contributed an immense deal towards the Kovitan Empire, and by right I should be rewarding you greatly. However, the unfortunate part is that the news about the cruel experiments performed by the Trejons household have been spread everywhere," Avic answered softly. "Regarding your previous requests, I promise to grant all of them to you. As an extra reward, I will personally present you with the inheritance to nurture the Black Storm Doves. I hope you will not mind that."

"Black Storm Doves?!" Garen was shocked. This was the name of a Form three Totem, and this type of Form three Totem was one that he had heard of before. A Form three Totem that would be able to cause a storm, was a rare Form three Totem that did not prioritise body evolution, yet could cause strong tornadoes and were truly terrifying. This kind of inherited power was usually only passed down within royal families, and was extremely precious.

This inheritance could truly be something that he could depend on, and would help him rebuild an even more powerful Trejons household.

Garen was undeniably shocked by Avic's generous gifts.

"Thank you very much, Your Majesty."

"Good, our time is almost over. There will be a masquerade party at the palace later. If you're interested, you can go over to the etiquette officer and choose a mask. I need to go change my clothes now," Avic said while smiling.

Chapter 358: Audience and Surgery 2

Garen quickly retrieved the Green Vine Sphere, and respectfully handed it in.

Avic took it.

"Not bad. Go and have a good rest. You can directly report to me if anything happens. Let me give you a warrant which would allow you to directly retrieve what I've promised from the Royal Treasury." He quickly wrote a warrant, tore it and passed it to Garen. He then bowed his head to examine the Green Vine Sphere.

Garen took the warrant, bowed, and walked out the study.

After exiting the study, he wiped beads of sweat off his forehead.

In the study, there were multiple strong, colossal energies lurking in the dark, forcing pressure on him. Once something was amiss, there was a possibility he would be instantly destroyed. He couldn't assess the extent of strength of the energies, but they definitely were not below third form.

As this was a matter of national safety, it was natural that there were exceptional powers on guard.

This was the gathering point of the strongest forces throughout the whole of Kovitan, the capital. A large majority of the Obscuro Society's generals were gathered here as well. The power of the Elemental Generals wouldn't be considered very strong here.

Moreover, Garen did not bring along the three Petrifying White Dragons. They were too far away to help. If a skirmish happened, he certainly wouldn't be able to escape.

This fact made him miss the martial arts world that he was previously in. Martial arts was real individual strength. It wouldn't be diminished by being apart. A person's strength also wouldn't be heavily reduced because of damage to totems.

He shook his head as he enquired of the herald at the door, who respectfully brought him towards the royal treasury.

According to his plan, by combining Vanderman's technique with part of Obscuro's principle modification techniques, he would have to face a huge risk in the transplant process. Even if he could perfectly control blood flow and had immensely strong vitals, it wouldn't make a difference. The other difficulty would be that in order to adapt thoroughly, he had to be on the same frequency with the Dual Headed Salamander.

Luckily, after Garen's experimentation, he had preliminarily identified one of the most effective methods.

He followed the herald directly to the royal treasury. After the chemist in charge asked of Garen's request, he was given twelve tubes of glory potions and a tube of light potion, which recovers large amounts of totem light.

All of these were crafted by top chemists and stored for over a hundred years, concentrating them for much stronger effects. Especially the light potion. There was a totem user who diluted the potion and distributed it to five hundred other totem users. All of them managed to fully recover their totem light within half a day.

Once a totem user's totem light was exhausted, it would affect transfusion to the totem, causing injury to both the totem user and the totem. The light potion, which could quickly recover and repair totems, was considered a rare totem recovery method.

Garen was preparing for emergencies, where he could use it to quickly recover his totem light. If he got hurt, at least this could be used for self-preservation.

On the other hand, the glory potion was something that he wanted. It could completely lull all pains. It allowed people to soldier on without fear of life and death, or in other words, act as an advanced stimulant. As the glory potion did not have any side effects, it wouldn't cause harm to people compared to other stimulants. Hence, it could be used again and again compared to low level stimulants.

After obtaining what he came for and a permit to enter the Royal Databank, Garen also received a black, hexagon insignia from Avic. He then took his leave from the palace.

As for the Black Storm Doves inheritance, after going through sorting, it would be sent to Garen's manor within two days.

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Under bright yellow light.

As he carefully applied a special type of grease on both of his hands, Garen looked at the death row inmate lying before him. This was already the fifteenth death row inmate to be used for his transplant experiments.

He'd used his family's wealth to bribe the warden of Kingdom Prison to obtain the bodies of twenty death row inmates every month.

For the past two months, he'd consistently practiced with the Dual Head Salamander's cardiac transplant, becoming more and more skilled at it. At the same time, he'd experimented on his own body by transplanting small amounts of myocardium into his body. However, this always triggered strong rejection from his body.

Under the effects of medication and the cleansing effect of Dragon Blood, Garen meditated with his martial arts and was gradually able to connect with the transplanted myocardium. He slowly understood the process that he had to go through.

As a whole, it gave him a newfound understanding towards the transplant procedures.

"A very successful surgery." Garen wiped off the disinfectant grease on his hands with a wet towel. "This is the fifth. If things go according to plan, my heart will be much stronger than the average person's. I will become abnormally energetic and there might even be further changes to my body. All of the effects should be positive, since I have decent impurity cleaning skills."

Glancing at the inmate's expanding and relaxing chest, it was certain that she was no longer in danger.

As he left the operating table, Garen habitually looked at his attribute pane.

There was a huge increase to his potential points. Within these couple of months, his potential points had gradually increased to more than three hundred points. It was obviously caused by the Petrifying White Dragon's relentless hunts. In the beginning, Garen still had interest in his increase in potential points, but soon he grew completely numb. The potential points were constantly increasing, but he had no place to use them.

The limits of the body determined that he couldn't use them to level up his body. Yet at the same time, he felt it wasn't worth it to use them to upgrade silver totems.

"What's up boss?" As he left the lab, Garen saw a white-haired man waiting for him outside the door.

The man was called Komodo, initially a death row inmate. After the successful experiment, he decided to follow Garen as a token of thanks for giving him a second chance in life. Naturally, Garen did not fully trust an inmate's loyalty, but he wasn't too worried after the empowerment.

Komodo volunteered to be empowered, and currently acted as Garen's right hand man in his underground lab.

Komodo had a strong physique. Compared to others who would be considered tall at 1.8 meters, he was two meters tall. The flesh all over his body was tanned, and he had scars everywhere. His right wrist was chopped off in a battle, and currently in its place was a retractable alloy blade.

"Very successful. This inmate is really strong. Although she's a female, you can rarely find such a strong body even among men. She might be on par with you." As Garen briefly explained, he strode towards the biggest underground cave.

Vanderman's lab was huge. This was the originally the Kingdom's air raid shelter, but it had been deserted. The lab only occupied a corner of the vast underground air raid shelter.

"This is the third success this month. Boss, you are getting more and more skilled." Komodo smiled. "But Boss, am I really able to injure the monsters out there?" There was doubt in him.

"Of course." Garen turned a corner. "Didn't you try?"

"No."

"Go try it when you're free. After i finish with my experimentations, I'll appeal for your pardon. I am a nobleman. I should have the authority to keep the lives of a few inmates." Garen promised.

"Thank you boss!!" Komodo was delighted.

"Have you prepared the various equipments?"



"Yes, it is ready. The nutrient pool has been refilled as well. This time I switched to the biggest one. Miss Lala has been complaining that the expenditures have been too huge. The family's finances are becoming a little tight." Komodo replied immediately.

"Let's officially begin tonight." Garen pushed open the door of the biggest underground cave, and entered.

Komodo followed behind. Right in front of their eyes was a gigantic creature crouching in the biggest nutrient pool.

The giant salamander had two heads and his huge body was like a hill. It quietly laid in the pool, and every breath created a mild breeze in the cave.

Although he has seen the creature multiple times, Komodo's legs still shook. Although he was still delighted by the promise, he still couldn't resist the immense threat of the creature.

Komodo consciously went to check the oil level of the lamp on the wall, as an opportunity to keep a distance from the creature.

Garen went towards the dual headed salamander instead and raised his head to look at the giant creature.

"Tonight might be a new beginning for me.." Garen gently stroked the salamander's skin.

He had been relentlessly pursuing the combination of martial arts and totems. From the ancient notes about Endor and his baffling arrival at this world, there was definitely some form of connection between martial arts and totems.

He took out his pocket watch and looked at the time 4:23pm.

He left the pocket watch on the table. Garen immersed his two hands into white disinfectant liquid. The liquid was like boiling soup but Garen's expression remained steady.

He removed his hands when they turned slightly red, then dried his hands. He diluted the glory potion according to proportion.

The surgery wasn't difficult. The difficult part was controlling blood flow after the transplant. Immense accuracy was required. Even for an apex martial artist like Garen, he had to put in a lot of effort for the transplant.

The person receiving the transplant had to have strong endurance. He had to endure pain that would kill a normal human. Moreover, without precise control of blood flow, the most the inmates could obtain from a successful experiment was a stronger physique and totem-natured change in strength. It wouldn't have much change on their actual power.

For normal people it might be worthless. But for Garen, with the ability to increase his body's limit through potential points in addition to having the skills to control the resonance stone, he could definitely surpass the limits of his body.

Moreover by relying on the pinnacle of martial arts, he had grasped the principles of the resonance stone. He estimated that even the Obscuro Society's people could not reach this level in resonance stone techniques.

Martial artists really had strong senses.

According to procedures, Garen started to adjust his blood flow and body state, then closed his eyes to rest.

Once the surgery was a success, the array of martial arts from the previous world would be of use. At the same time, a new path would be opened.

He recalled the legends of the warlocks he had heard of in the previous world. Although the warlocks of the fairy tales appeared exorbitantly strong, a huge chunk of them could be distorted as the stories were passed on. But there were some among them that seemed to possess the power of totem users.

Thinking about it now, the martial art world and the totem world seemed to have an association with each other.

"Tonight will determine our success..."

Tonight's transplant would determine whether martial arts and totems could combine perfectly.

Chapter 359: Transplant 1

Kovitan's Palace

King Avic sat sideways on the throne with his face rested on one hand, as he looked at the reporting ministers and noblemen. Boredom and disinterest was written all over his face.

"... to date, there is a severe resource shortage throughout the empire. There is no food supply and we are relying on the surrounding warehouses. This will not last for long. I suggest building terraces in the surrounding hills. If we do not execute this plan as soon as possible, we will face severe consequences." The agriculture minister was a short white-bearded man. Although he had a wrinkled figure, his voice was full of energy.

"I oppose!" The military minister stood up to speak. He was a middle-aged fierce looking man. "The uses of weaponry totems are incredibly varied. If we continue like that, we will have depleted all our stored resources within a few years. Our primary mission should be forming squads to secure new resource points. Not doing that will cause us to be unable to withstand the attacks of monsters and all will be for naught."

"Is there a possibility to take the flesh of the foreign creatures as meat?" The industrial minister suggested. "I've heard that there were totem users who directly ate the flesh of the creatures, but there weren't any problems."

"We can give this a shot." Avic tapped the armrest of his throne with his fingers. "Health department, do some tests and get back to me with the results within a month."

"Yes, your majesty." The health minister bowed his head.

"Your majesty, Dragonfield Black Prince will be arriving at the kingdom's capital in two months. What level of protocol should we greet him with?" The protocol minister asked.

"Protocol?" Avic furrowed his brows. "The black prince established Dragonfield. In this era of chaos, his position should be only slightly weaker than mine. Welcoming him excessively would be detrimental, but it wouldn't be polite to take him lightly as well. Greet him according to the Foreign Prince Protocol. As long as he has not ascended the throne, he is not the King of Dragonfield."

He paused. "The Black Prince's visit will heavily facilitate the alliance between Dragonfield and Kovitan. Although Dragonwell used to be Kovitan's vassal state, it is different now. Ministers, please be attentive towards your behavior."

Following after that were the daily trivial discussions. There were some faults with the kingdom's drainage system which required funding. The repair of the air defence network totem needed more resources and workers. There were a few children of nobles who got into fights on the streets and what should be done about it.

The more Avic listened, the more he frowned. Gazing at the chaotic meeting hall, he took up his golden scepter beside the throne, and exited through the right.

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Garen sat to the side of the dual headed salamander. He set up a table and a chair beside the nutrient pool. As he was waiting for time to pass, he was organizing the reports on his desk.

The flickering of light from the lampshade caused the shadows on his face to shake.

He carefully looked at the asset statistics in his hand.

Out of all of Trejon household's foreign businesses and their two manors, only twelve farms were still operating. The majority of their wineries, bands and mines were unable to operate because of the creatures. As they were located out of West Farm's line of defense, giving them up was the only option.

In the kingdom, other than the manor he was staying in, there were three other bungalows and a long closed down totem repair shop.

Because of his recent heavy spending, he sold off some of his family businesses. Two out of the three bungalows were sold, leaving only one bungalow and the totem repair shop, which was not worth much.

Military resources were currently being heavily controlled by the government. Hence, nothing could be sold in the shop and its only value was the land.

Lala, who acted as a maid, was the one governing the assets. She made everything concise and neat.

Not only were the assets were in a depressing state, the family guard too was dismal.

Maxilan and Edney led the family guard. The household initially had two second form totem users and fifteen first form totem users. These forces had independently nurtured over the years. The battle at Vanderman's manor had heavily depleted the forces; some of them had ran away, while only a minority who felt a sense of belonging to the Trejon's household had remained.

Their current forces were only made up of ten first form totem users. Led by Maxilan and Edney respectively, they took part in the kingdom's defence circle patrol mission for some hard-earned money. Only on the weekends did they return to the manor to report to Garen.

Instead, it was the Hunting Group who managed to enlist in different departments in the war guild once they reached the capital. Because of their alliance with Garen, they became the biggest influence in the Trejon's household apart from Garen.

Garen placed the family status reports at a side, and finally looked at the two invitations at the bottom. The two invitations were from Earl Baxy and Viscount Lavel.

The Trejon's household had a certain level of network and kinship in the capital. The noblemen often had abnormally complicated marriage relationships. Earl Baxy's wife was Vanderman's cousin's sister's

daughter. One of their daughters had married to Vanderman, becoming his second wife. Both parties maintained a close relationship.

Viscount Lavel was Vanderman's brother's adopted son, who'd managed to climb the social ladder with the family's support. His roots were in the Royal Luminarist Academy, where he was one of the vice chancellors. There were rumors about his intimacy with the Royal family's third princess, and there would be a wedding soon.

"These are the typical nobleman households." Garen's head hurt as he thought about these family relationships. The nobleman circle was not big. In order to preserve the noble bloodline, marriages would often be between one another, or with royalty of other kingdoms. Because of this, there would be relationships between noblemen everywhere, like a spider web. By tracing the Trejon's bloodline, there could even be a connection with the king.

"Complicated network." Garen thought for a moment, and threw the invitation aside.

After thoroughly clarifying all the matters, Garen lifted his watch and looked at the time, 5:12pm.

Calmly, he stood up and walked towards the edge of the nutrient pool. He crouched down and tapped lightly.

Piak!

With a crisp sound, a stone on the edge of the pool slowly lit up.

At the same time, a total four white lights coming from four stones illuminated around the round-shaped nutrient pool.

In a flash, straight white beams shot out from the tip of the rocks. They met in the air above the pool and merged into a single point.

The beams fluctuated slightly, letting out a hissing electrical sound, and illuminated the whole underground cave.

The dual headed salamander opened its eyes and looked up. The glaring white light narrowed its eyes. It moved its body slightly, then returned to its calm state.

He laid out the transplant apparatus on the table and started to use disinfectant grease to sterilize them. Then he got ready the diluted glory potion and anti-inflammatory drugs, gauze, bandages, suture needles and other instruments that may be of use.

The preparations were complete.

With his eyes shut, he stood still on the ground. As he meditated, he slowly operated his Divine Statue Technique. According to the subtle sense of the resonance stone, he carefully sensed the dual headed salamander's frequency.

In the process of sensing the resonance stone, Garen realized that in fact all beings, including all plants and humans, had their own unique resonance frequency. Only by finding that resonance frequency could numerous unimaginable key functions be realized.

In the past few days, he had sensed many times, finally able to faintly grasp the dual headed salamander's unique frequency. This was the frequency of the vibration of its life force. The dual head salamander's life force vibration seemed to be in sync with its heartbeat. But in fact, every heartbeat was completely different from the subtle vibrations. One beat contains thirty five totally different vibration frequencies.

These thirty five frequencies combined to form a unified vibration. There was no interference between the frequencies. All of them were independently clear and distinct.

Some of the vibrations had big frequencies, close to the rate of a heartbeat. Some of them were small, they could beat up to a thousand times in one heartbeat.

As Garen quietly sensed the thirty five different vibrations, he gradually stopped operating the Divine Statue Technique. After a moment, he abruptly opened his eyes.

Taking the surgical band from the table, he plugged in the necessary surgical apparatus. He strapped the band to his arm by winding a few loops. Garen directly walked into the surgical pool which was surrounded by white beams.

At the same time in the underground cave, Komodo quickly turned and leave according to Garen's previous orders. If he continue to stayed there, there might be danger. Furthermore, as there were preset defence tactics, there was no need for an outsider's protection.

He bowed towards Garen's direction from a distance, then quickly turned and left the underground cave.

Garen drew his surgical knife and carved a deep wound on the dual headed salamander's abdomen. Scarlet blood instantly flowed out from the wound and dripped into the nutrient pool. It dissolved into the white nutrient liquid.

Shriekk!!

Garen applied force, slashing the knife from top to bottom, opening a wound at the salamander's abdomen. The length of the wound was more than a man's height.

He put down the knife and held the edge of the wounds with both his hands, and gave it a fierce tug. The wound completely tore open and he squeezed his whole body in.

In the fishy and stuffy salamander belly, the huge, heavy beating sound of the heart filled his ears. The sound of beating was abnormally muted.

Garen passed the arteries and veins with familiarity, and once again arrived at the heart, which was about a man's height.

He withdrew a tube of diluted glory potion from his surgical band. After filling a syringe with it, he injected it into the salamander's arteries.

He then withdrew another tube, and injected it into his carotid artery.



As he injected the cool potion into his neck, there was a faint sense of excitement in Garen's heart. It was as if his senses were abnormally alert, much more than usual.

He felt numbness spreading throughout his body. It was as if there was a thick layer of stratum corneum on his skin. He completely lost his sense of touch.

Garen stood still for a couple of minutes, waiting for the effects of the drug to kick in.

After he was sure that the drug was in full effect, he then took up the surgical knife and made gentle cuts on the surface of the salamander's heart.

A dual headed salamander's heart had unique hematopoietic abilities. It was a unique, machine-like biological tissue, which was a humongous source of life, endurance and strength for the salamander's gigantic body.

Garen carefully removed some flesh on the surface of the heart. The removed flesh was around the size of a man's head.

Chapter 360: Transplant 2

He slowly released a wave of white gold aura, carefully sensing the structure of the dual headed salamander's heart. Then he started to make tiny carvings on the piece of flesh with a small knife.

Only the dual headed salamander's powerful life force and strong regenerative abilities helped it to withstand such severe damage. Any other being would have died at its first heart injury.

The knife carefully carved at the entrance and exits of the arteries and veins. For some of the internal places that couldn't be contacted, he applied force with his martial arts to empty the flesh.

Garen closed his eyes, not looking at the piece of flesh in his hand. He relied on the white gold aura for sensing and to be his eyes for the surgery.

Heavy amounts of blood flowed through his fingers, due to large amounts of torn flesh stuck between them. As time passed by, some of the blood coagulated on the surface of his hands, forming a thick layer of scab.

Garen wasn't sure if the plan would succeed. He intended to create a smaller heart with the tissues of the dual headed salamander's heart, then transplant it into his body. Without doubt, it was a whimsical thought.

The Obscuro Society had provided the guidance in technique, while martial arts and the resonance stone had cleared the path forward.

After multiple experimentations on humans and animals, it was clear to Garen that even without following the resonance steps, there was still a chance of survival after the transplant. Without a doubt, that was his biggest safety net.

The heart in his hand was gradually coming into form.

Shortly, Garen's hands gradually stopped moving. He took out a tube of ointment and applied a uniform layer on the inside and outside of the formed heart. This ointment stopped the growth of wounds. He'd experimented many times with it previously and the effect was decent. A few experiments on the inmates had succeeded because of the ointment.

As the heart stopped showing signs of regeneration, Garen crossed his legs and sat down. He took off the surgical band and placed it on the floor. He had an astonishing degree of control of his body's blood flow.

With a shock throughout his body, the clothes on his body tore into shreds and flew apart.

Garen sat naked on the flesh-like ground. He lifted the surgical knife with one hand and plunged it into his chest.

He followed his ribline and slit across his chest. A bloody wound tore open across his chest, like a bloody, ferocious mouth.

No blood was flowing out. His elite-level martial arts and white gold aura was controlling his arteries, preventing blood from leaking out.

At the instant the wound was slit open, the blood on the surface of the wound quickly coagulated, plugging the wound.

As carefully visualized internally, he placed the salamander's heart into the right side of his chest, symmetrical to his original heart.

Next was the vascular graft, quickly moving every blood vessel from the original heart to the new one.

Garen's was incredibly strong in martial arts. His trained body could be commanded easily. Connecting his heart was much easier than the rest.

Under the effects of the glory potion, there was no sense of pain. Garen skillfully began to move the blood vessels. After moving an artery, he would move the corresponding veins. Then, he would control his blood flow to start circulating through the newly stitched blood vessels.

Due to his superhuman regenerative abilities, every stitched blood vessel would quickly condense together.

The process was much easier than Garen expected. The Divine Statue Technique's self healing abilities allowed him to easily complete the stitching perfectly.

Every blood vessel from the original heart was moved over to connect to the new heart.

Garen was in deep focus, as though he was performing surgery on others instead. Without looking at his two hands, he quickly and accurately made stitches on his chest.

Not even a drop of blood from his body had been wasted.

As minutes and seconds passed, beads of sweat gradually appeared on Garen's forehead. His hands were also becoming more skillful and fast.

The heart wasn't linked to many blood vessels - only eight of them. But due to the structural change, it affected the smaller arterioles and venules. Some of them weren't long enough and he had to move the salamander's heart to compromise.

As the transplant progressed, the position of the salamander's heart gradually moved towards the left side of his chest, closing in on the original heart.

As the beads of sweat on his face increased, some of them trickled down his temple.

The fifteen minutes that had passed wasn't a long time, but the transplant felt like years.

Finally, Garen lightly stitched the last vein. The salamander's heart had completely replaced the original heart at the left thoracic cavity.

However, there were no signs of beating. The body's blood flow was completely reliant on Garen's martial arts techniques, and his life force was depleting.

For an average person, once the heart stops beating, he would go into shock and the brain would stagnate, causing him to lose his sanity. But Garen was a zenith-level martial artist, hence he could rely on his aura that he accumulated daily to promote blood flow. In the meantime, he squeezed the salamander's heart lightly to imitate the pumping of the heart.

It heavily reduced the depletion of aura. However, it was still depleting quickly.

After Garen's multiple surgeries on the inmates, he knew that this was the most important stage. He quickly raised his head and slit opened a passage on the salamander's gigantic heart with his surgical knife. His whole body then entered into the heart.

The passage quickly stitched back together, leaving only a small trickle of blood.

As he immersed himself into the dragon's blood, an incredibly strong fishy smell surrounded his skin and body from all sides.

If he hadn't been injecting himself with dragon blood serum for a long time and had formed some resistance, he would've been poisoned to death in a short while.

The salamander's heart beat non stop. The loud, continuous beat indicated its strong life force.

The strong beat caused the heart in Garen's chest to mildly beat, similar to its rhythm.

In the atrium and ventricle of the heart, blood flowed in and out, creating a huge spiral. It caught Garen's body and held him in the center.

The salamander's heart structure was totally different from a man's heart. It had one atrium on the left and one ventricle on the right, forming two equally large spaces. It was like two balls that were closed to each other.

Garen curled his body as he was suspended in the center of the heart.

He could only see red as he opened his eyes. His nose and mouth were filled with blood, preventing him from breathing.

According to the plan, Garen quietly meditated, sensing the resonance of the dual headed salamander's life force. He controlled the strength of his totem and started to imitate the dual headed salamander's resonance frequency.

As the salamander's heart agitated him, Garen barely held onto his senses. As he was immersed in the resonance frequency, he had to arrive at the same frequency in order to activate the transplanted heart.

Under the same frequency, high energy units would transfer energy to low energy units. This was a unique form of energy transfer. Garen previously learnt this on Earth, but he applied on his current world to transfer energy.

Whether it's the salamander's heart or the resonance stone's nest, both seemed to be operating on this principle. It was only their frequency that was abnormally complicated.

Using his strong martial arts, Garen accurately manipulated his blood flow and totem force to slowly beat in time with the salamander's heart.

As time passed by, Garen's body was fully coated in blood.

He closed off his five senses, completely forgetting the flow of time as he immersed himself completely into the resonance frequency.

This form of resonance frequency was undoubtedly as difficult as a miracle to the totem users of this world. However, to Garen who has reached the zenith of martial arts, it was merely about controlling his own body. Martial artists had stepped onto this field while they controlled the usage of forces a long time ago. This resonance was just relatively harder.

Gradually, he fell into a deep state of semi-consciousness. The dragon blood continuously replenished him with nutrients and oxygen, while also taking away metabolic waste.

Garen was like a fetus in the womb, sinking slowly towards the deepest realm of consciousness as he synchronized with the resonance. He lost track of time. One hour passed, then two hours, five hours, one day, two days....

Garen was completely unaware until the resonance became a natural habit. It was initially the dragon heart which propelled the resonance, but now he'd finally achieved complete harmony with it.

He completely entered a deep state of slumber.

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The sky was blood red.

Garen stood alone on the edge of a barren cliff. Below was a deserted city with broken walls and old towers with no sign of population. A layer of mist blanketed the silent city.

"Sheesh!!!!"

Garen raised his head and opened his mouth to let out a deafening scream.

He realized he was no longer human, but a gigantic, black-scaled dual headed salamander.

He couldn't control his body. It was as though he merely a bystander within in the dual headed salamander's body, observing the surroundings.

Between the two heads, only one had vision. The other was merely decor.

The dual headed salamander's body wouldn't have been considered huge. At only three metres tall, it could be only considered as a youth.

He turned around and stomped his feet on the ground as he walked towards the back of the cliff.

Behind the cliff was a black building. It was completely empty, without even a shadow within. The cold wind gusting through the holes of the building made some whimpering noises.

Among the buildings, a tall black clock tower stood silently in the middle of the dead town.

The dual headed salamander stared at the clock tower. It was in extreme hunger. Hunger pangs continuously arose from its stomach, clouding its mind.

"Food...food..." Garen felt that this was the only single thought in the dual headed salamander's mind. It kept on repeating over and over again.

Step by step, it heavily plodded towards the back of the cliff. It was heading towards the black city on the slope.

Garen's thinking ability felt numbed. All he could do was silently stare through the dual headed salamander's vision.

It squeezed into a huge black metal door in the city. The door was carved with fine patterns, and had two heavy metal rings.

Entering the black metal door, there was a quiet, black plaza right in front. On the right hand side was a leafless tree. Its countless leafless branches stretched out into the sky, looking dry and desperate.

The dual headed salamander hungrily walked forward until it reached the foot of the tree. It sniffed at the trunk. The trunk gave off a dry and liquidless smell.

It was an unusual feeling. Garen felt that the salamander could actually smell the smell of water.

The salamander finally could not control itself. It reached over and landed a big bite on the trunk of the tree.

Crack.

Bitter. Waterless. After reluctantly swallowing it, the salamander felt even hungrier.

He gave up on the tree and walked towards the buildings, which looked like a temple area. They were all in black without any colors. Under the faint red sunlight, it gave off a strange feeling.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Suddenly, heavy footsteps were heard from outside.



It was as if a gigantic creature was walking around in the temple area.

Their heavy footsteps could be heard from thousands of metres away.

The dual headed salamander fearfully stopped. It hesitated on the plaza. It wanted to enter but didn't dare to move forward.

However, it could no longer hold in its hunger. He raised his head and looked at the giant, ten-metre tall black metal door with black-reddish rust stains. One of its heads strongly pushed opened the door.

Creak....

Whooo....

Garen abruptly opened his eyes.

The only thing he could see was red. He had finally regained consciousness.