

Mystical 561

Chapter 561: Fame 1

Bang!

A soldier fired his gun unintentionally.

The bullet hit the ground below Garen's feet, forming a little hole in the courtyard's wet soil.

Garen pinched the eyeball in his hand. The source of telekinetic abilities, the Omniscient Eye seemed to possess unusual magical powers. It struggled in Garen's hand and tried to escape but was caught in his tight grip.

A Grandmaster of Combat would possess an abnormally tenacious Life Force. There was once a master from Celestial Circle Gate whom Garen met before he became a Grandmaster of Combat but unfortunately forgot his name, and that fellow was able to struggle for a long time before dying even though he had been gravely injured. Currently, Jessian could still move to a certain extent despite his cracked head, but Garen was not surprised at all.

However, this was not important. The incident that truly surprised him was the fact that the gouged out eyeball was consciously struggling and clearly displaying signs of abnormalities.

His thoughts stirred slightly before a shroud of deep blue cold air covered the eyeball in his hand suddenly, before freezing it into an ice bead.

He glanced at his surroundings before fixing his gaze on Xiao Ying who was standing in the middle and stared at him blankly.

"Ying Er...?"

"Move!!" A loud roar could be heard suddenly before all of the surrounding soldiers pulled the triggers on their guns at once.

An exploding noise could be heard from the faraway mortar at once.

Moments later, all of the Ling army soldiers charged forward simultaneously.

Seemingly endless torrents of bullets and cannons were fired at the center of the courtyard frantically, as though the cost of ammunition was a small price to pay for their eradication.

Boom!!

Crashing noises rumbled throughout the center of the courtyard, causing humming noises to echo in everyone's ears while the gunpowder smoke, soil, and rubble flew about everywhere, blinding everyone's vision for a moment.

"Water."

A calm voice could be heard softly within the courtyard.

Suddenly, a gust of cool breeze blew outwards from the center of the courtyard. It was a slightly moist, light breeze that blew around silently like cold winds that brushed past the surface gently.

The Ling Army officer had retreated far away and was now looking on as the remaining Grandmasters of Combat were separated into different batches. One batch rushed over to retrieve Jessian's corpse before retreating, while the other batch had fled off to a distance of more ten meters long ago. Only a few of them were stupid enough to stick around and confront Demoness Lola.

A strange scene appeared at the moment when the breeze blew past.

Whoosh!!

At the same time, the gunshot and explosion noises ceased before all of the soldiers were suddenly covered in deep blue flames. They stood frozen in place but the flames did not burn their bodies.

Instead, a crystal clear layer of blue ice began to freeze over, covering them quickly, before forming more than ten blue ice sculptures.

Within the courtyard, almost ten soldiers, including a few Grandmasters of Combat were suddenly set on fire with the blue flames. They resembled blue torches that stood upright next to the walls and on the floor, while the deep blue flames illuminated the surrounding areas and cast them in blue light.

Gulp.

Demoness Lola's little face was now pale. She swallowed while her skin was illuminated in blue light by the flames. She took a look around and felt as if time had stopped for a moment.

Numerous bullets and cannonballs had formed holes of various sizes on the ground below Garen's feet. They were scattered everywhere, yet none had harmed his body.

Bang!!

Suddenly, countless ice sculptures cracked and formed colored crystal shards as they scattered on the ground.

The ice sculptures on the wall fell down and crashed on the ground. The ice sculptures in the courtyard collapsed one by one as well, forming blue ice shards that were tinged with blood.

Unlike regular people, the ten Grandmasters of Combat retained more than half of their bodies after the shards of blue flame ice disappeared. However, none of them showed any signs of life anymore.

Moments later, the only ones who survived within the courtyard were the officer in the yellow military uniform and the group of Southern Sky Gate members which stood in the middle.

Pfoo.

Both of the officer's legs were shaking before he fell on his knees at once. His face was pale and he was unable to speak as his lips could only tremble.

Garen returned his gaze indifferently.

"I'll let you decide what to do with him. Meanwhile, I'll control the military forces in this area."

Nora, Yue Jian, and two other people stood in front of Xiao Ying to shield her, while worried expressions were plastered on their faces.

"May I ask who you might be?" Old Yue Jian stood out and asked quietly.

Garen smiled and outstretched his hand while the blue ice crystals around him melted quickly into flowing blue water that gathered in his palm, before finally turning into a burning deep blue flame.

"Whose disciple are you? Ying Er? Yoda, the Eight-Arm Dragon King? Or Third Senior Brother Joshua?" He asked as he returned his palm. Although he had just done a shocking act, nothing was truly as shocking as the question that had just escaped his mouth.

"You... How do you know Teacher Yoda?" The old fellow stuttered slightly while an emotional look appeared in his eyes as if he had guessed something.

Garen tried to detect it carefully, before smiling strangely suddenly.

"Did you manage to learn some things from Celine and Su Lin?"

"Could it... Could it be that you...?!!" The old fellow took a step forward with an excited look on his face. Other than that person, no one else would know secrets like these!

"My name is Garen." Garen's gaze passed through the crowd and fell on Xiao Ying as he noticed that she was so much like... so much like Ying Er from the past.

It grew silent, but no one dared to stir.

The Southern Sky Gate members could only gulp as everything that they heard was too impossible to believe. They could not comprehend it at all for awhile.

There was no information regarding the existence of the legendary White Cloud Gate Master except in portraits and photos. He had disappeared for sixty years and after he had been hit by the nuclear bomb, everyone assumed that he died. Suddenly, this person had appeared and said that he was Garen. It was normal that no one would accept these as facts so easily.

But other than Garen, no one else would be able to freeze almost ten soldiers within a few moments while more than ten Grandmasters of Combat stood in front of him like helpless babies.

A master of this caliber had no need to trick them.

"After my battle with Cayduran, some strange troublesome incidents occurred. In short, it was a lucky coincidence that I did not die, but unfortunately, I could not return either, until now," said Garen nostalgically as he recalled the previous fight.

He realized that he was looking past the crowd and straight at Xiao Ying suddenly.

"Has Ying Er died?"

Xiao Ying lowered her head and bit her lip but did not answer.

Garen was speechless for a moment. His quest for unlimited power caused him to unknowingly involve the existence and emotions of the people around him. Time raced by and he lost everything that he once possessed. Even if he desired to return, he knew that he had lost his chance.

At East Continent's Southern Sky Gate, First Heavenly General Garen had appeared and killed fourteen first rate Grandmasters of Combat including Jessian, allowing the three provinces that were controlled by the Ling Army to fall into the hands of Southern Sky Gate.

This news traveled far and wide like a hurricane and spread throughout the entire East Continent quickly through the radios. It travelled across the ocean at the same time, and when the masters of Stonecliff Continent, Fivestar Continent, and Azure Continent received this news simultaneously, they could hardly believe it, and chose to send representatives to East Continent to verify the information, while some of the Grandmasters of Combat made the trip there personally.

The governments of the Three Great Countries made plans in secret. Although they were no movements on the surface, they had actually dispatched large groups of spies that traveled towards East Continent with members of Immortal Palace and Behemoth secretly.

The news regarding Young Divine Master's death in battle hit them like an earthquake. Other than Immortal Palace, Weisman Empire, Celestial Circle Gate, and Crimson Sand Sword Gate were also shocked by the news.

The entire Combat World fell into a state of shock, but the first ones to react were Celestial Circle Gate strongest Sword King Andrela.

Meanwhile, after Garen had integrated the army forces of the current three provinces, he gathered the members of White Cloud Gate and Southern Sky Gate. As Immortal Palace's public opinion throughout the years stated that Southern Sky Gate had become a group that gathered Demon Warriors, when Garen came into being, his original title of First Heavenly General was changed into Demon God-General.

After getting to know Xiao Ying, Garen waited in the provincial capital quietly for the arrival of Andrela and King of Nightmares. At the same time, he was also waiting for the invasion of Immortal Palace's Divine Master.

Night breeze blew past the top of a tall dark red tower.

Garen stood on the top of the tower and looked down at the night view of the entire provincial capital from afar.

Throughout the black ground, countless pale yellow lights illuminated the area like glittering stars. Some of them were lit up while others were extinguished, making them resembled a long river of light that flowed continuously.

Garen leaned against the sloped tower top while his black and gold-trimmed cloak bunched up around his body as the wind tousled it.

Xiao Ying knelt beside him and poured him a glass of alcohol in a little white porcelain cup slowly. After they got to know each other that day, Xiao Ying allowed herself to strip off her heavy responsibilities so that she could return to being a lively young girl again.

Garen thought of Ying Er whenever he saw her, allowing him to treat her with the same care. Meanwhile, the little girl warmed up to him as well, partially due to his youthful appearance that made it difficult for her to treat him as an elder.

Therefore, a strange relationship formed between them, as if they were both individuals with the same ranking.

"Gate Master, what are you thinking of? Is it something to do with Grandmother?" Xiao Ying put the wine pot down and glanced at Garen's side profile. The silver glow from the moonlight reflected across his face, making him look like the Moon God.

"I think of her a lot when I look at you." Garen raised the wine cup and sipped from it slowly while a strange feeling filled his heart. "Both of you are really too similar..."

"Are we?" Ying Er smiled. "Xiao Ying had heard Grandmother mention Big Bro Gate Master before as well."

She combed through her hair after it had been blown messily by the wind, and paused.

"It felt like a dream. I blinked and realized that my own big brother had transformed into an unimaginably strong person.' Those were Grandmother's exact words."

"To be honest, perhaps I was selfish in the end. I was only concerned about making myself stronger, but I forgot that I would be causing changes throughout the lives of the people around me and that these changes were not necessarily good ones," said Garen softly while he turned the wine cup in his hand and glanced at Xiao Ying guiltily. If Ying Er had remained as a normal person from the beginning to the end, perhaps her life would be happier. The burdens that Xiao Ying was forced to bear, would perhaps lessen as well.

"Grandmother Ying Er never blamed you," Xiao Ying replied with a smile. "I never blamed you either. Everyone has their own decision-making rights, and even normal people are allowed to grasp their own lives. I want to thank you for the changes that you caused in the beginning because they gave me the right to make my own choices."

"You're still so young..." Garen's gaze softened.

"We have a phrase here in the East Continent that goes: 'Intelligence comes first, regardless of age'," said Xiao Ying frankly.

She hesitated for a few moments.

"Xiao Ying has a strange question to ask, but I don't know if... I already know that this question is impolite."

"Ask away. However, I can't promise that I'll answer it," Garen winked with a smile.

Xiao Ying waited for a moment before raising her head and meeting Garen's eyes.

"Gate Master, can you... live forever without aging?"

Chapter 562: Fame 2

"Immortality?" Garen snickered, unable to hold back his laughter, "If you just look at my body, it's almost an example of immortality, but...." He suddenly remembered the Cthulhu King from Totem World, and his smile faded away.

"In this world, there is no true immortality. Even if the body does not die, the soul will eventually decay. You have to understand this."

He also thought of his first encounter with Demon Phoenix. That powerful woman who claimed to be immortal, in the end, was sealed until her brain went strange. Maybe it was due to her soul.

"What is truly eternal in this world? Considering all things in the world, even rocks will turn to dust, melted due to high temperature or eroded by acids. Gold can exist for thousands of years but is hardly able to withstand high temperature. Life and death cycle endlessly and reproduces nonstop. Seemingly long, but in the face of the entire universe, it might be that life and death only have a slightly longer expiration date."

"What about thoughts? When knowledge leaves its mark, it might get handed down longer than thousands of years?" Xiao Ying asked after thinking seriously.

"It's still within the cycle of reproduction of humans." Garen patted Xiao Ying's hair and gently pinched her cheeks while gazing at her lowered head and blushing face. "Don't ponder it so much, you're still in the period of enjoying your youth."

"Yes..." Xiao Ying had never enjoyed such a warm and relaxing sense of security. Ever since she was young, Ying Er had always been strict with her, and there had never been any gentle touches like just now. After the sudden changes in her life, although her adoptive parents treated her in a good way, she still had to live in fear every day. With the pressure from Southern Sky Gate, there was never a moment of rest.

In her enjoyment, she moved closer towards Garen. Her complexion was turning redder by the minute. Sneaking a glimpse at Garen, he was looking down beneath the spire. He seemed to have found something interesting as his eyes revealed his amusement.

Suddenly, a blurred white figure flashed by, landing a short distance from Garen's side. That figure had a long sword at the waist, a handsome appearance, a gray beard covering at his chin and a pair of eyes dazzling like the brightest stars under the moonlight.

Xiao Ying had never seen anyone with eyes that could seemingly emit light with glimmers of silver.

That man's short white hair was fluttering about in the wind, yet his eyes were only on the leaning Garen.

"It's been sixteen years, you have also grown old," Garen said.

That man's complexion turned weird.

"I think you have the least qualification to say that."

Garen touched his chin. It was smooth, indeed.

He smacked his lips. His body had Fire and Ice Spirit Evil Arts. Without any interference, his body aged slower than normal people.

"Where's Nightmare?"

Andreia's complexion turned dark. "Have you heard of Genetic Meltdown?"

Garen stiffened.

"After you disappeared for three years, she bled all over her body. I tried everything I could to save her." Andreia said calmly, "Maybe it's Heaven's punishment for recklessly modifying her body."

Garen also felt that King of Nightmares' body was strange. Such frequent changes to the body constitution would cause destabilization. Now that it happened, sure enough...

Andrela was calm as though he'd been talking about people unrelated to him.

"After her death, I immediately took over her forces and acted as though there is still King of Nightmares. This way, the Star Ring Door and Siren Group would be able to be preserved even more. Unfortunately, the Divine Master saw through that ruse. We fought three times. I was heavily injured and he only suffered small injuries. This time, he even went through a breakthrough."

"So intense?" Garen's eyebrows twitched.

"Compared to the old you, it was only one step away, but since you came back, I feel relieved now." Andrela finally showed a gentle smile.

"Rather than Divine Master, I have a much more important matter to discuss with you."

"Oh?"

Xiao Ying at the side stared with her eyes wide open. She could not guess the relationship between these two. They could be said to be good friends but when one member died, Garen showed no sadness, only slight dejection.

Garen pinched Xiao Ying's cheeks and smiled.

Since he met one of his old friends, some things should speed up. Especially after he saw Ying Er's grave, he'd become even more desperate.

"Since you are here, come out then. Playing hide-and-seek was not the style of Cayduran." He looked around, then stood up at the top of the spire, which was tens of meters tall.

He suddenly felt dispirited. With the power he had now, if he had to face against this world's top forces again, it would be like an adult beating up a kindergartener. The gap might perhaps be even larger.

Was it his fate to return here in order to beat up crying children?

With the sound of swishing wind, two more figures appeared at the spires opposite of him.

Under the night sky, there were two men wearing silver clothes outside the tower suspended in the air as though stepping on solid ground.

The two of them stood side-by-side. The man at the left had a weird appearance. The left half of his face appeared manly while his right half appeared feminine. He had a strong body yet he wore earrings and necklace that only females would wear. He also had his nails polished pink. When the wind blew over, there was a strong scent of perfume.

On the other hand, the man at the right side was unrecognizable. His face was marred by numerous burn scars. He only had one of his eyes open while the other seemed to be of no use.

With only a glimpse of this guy, Garen recognized him right away.

"Flamingo?" he exclaimed.

"It's me." The disfigured guy nodded slightly, "I didn't think it was really you, Garen." For masters standing at the top, the dispositions they were familiar with over the years, they could still recognize them easily. asdangixaw

His hand still hold that Sword of the Sprites. Under the moonlight, the crimson sword seemed to have a faint luster of silver.

"I can't believe you're still alive." Garen was angry; the scene of the graves of those sprites was still fresh in his memories.

He scanned the darkness below the tower. Those densely packed hidden figures were like torches in the dark, much too obvious to his senses.

"I'll give you guys a chance, all come at me."

"Arrogant!" The guy who was neither male nor female snapped.

"The so-called Divine Master is only this much?" Garen took a brief look at him. From the level of his strength, he was the strongest among them. To be stronger than Flamingo, then he could only be the Divine Master.

"Never imagine that after Sylphalan died, the successor is this kind of trash."

He clenched his right hand and blue mist wafted through his surroundings.

An ice blue crystal halberd slowly crystallized in his hand.

The halberd was the length of a person and covered in a myriad of fine and exquisite silver runes. A blue-black snake curled around the top, its slender body covered in countless hard scales just like a dragon crawling around.

Divine Master and Flamingo did not reply but the look on their face turned solemn. The pressure released by Garen was like the sea, centering on the eye of the storm and spreading the freezing energy outwards.

"Ancient Secret Martial Skills..." Divine Master whispered, his eyes dyed in the color of frenzy, "King of the Century...it's really the King of the Century!"

The solidification of aura involved real matter and not merely organisms. This realm was the legendary King of the Century. What Garen was doing right now was precisely that.

If they were using telekinesis to float in the air, then the act of Garen materializing weapon without the usage of telekinesis and rely solely on aura could only be aura solidification.

Hong!!

A silver halo emerged out of Divine Master surrounding his body and at the same time a fiery red halo also emerged out of Flamingo's body. The surroundings of the both were dyed in the color of silver and red respectively.

In the distance, the non-Grandmaster of Combat gunmen that were hiding in ambush suddenly grabbed their eyes. 'Pop, pop' sounds of eyeballs bursting appeared constantly. Among the screams and wails, the top executive of Weisman Empire threw a punch at the wall furiously but did not dare to look at the tower.

For Grandmaster of Combat of the realm of Divine Master, at the moment he released his aura, the sudden changes that came would cause anyone hostile towards him to be attacked.

"Even looking directly...is not possible..." the top executive bit his lower lip, unaware that it was bleeding.

There was no vibration in reality but in the eyes of Grandmaster of Combat that was spectating, it was as though the Heaven and Earth were shaking.

Ji!!

Above the tower, a huge fire peacock and a double-headed silvery white bird appeared. The two monsters flapped their wings and soared towards Garen who was standing at the tower.

Those were illusions created by auras. There was no actual physical damage but it could cause mental damage to living things.

The moment the red peacock and double-headed silvery white bird reached the tower, a line of blue silver lit up in front of them.

The arc-shaped line of fire flashed by. In a mere moment, it had struck countless times against the Flamingo and Divine Master's swords.

There was no resistance. Through the swords, the blue fire on the halberd spread and burned both of them.

Garen stored his halberd. In the Totem World, he had slain countless real monsters, not to mention monsters formed by auras.

He had originally thought that the Divine Master would have some surprise for him. In the end, there were no changes. He did not even bring out a tenth of his strength but the duo crumbled with just a touch.

The fusion power the Living Secret Technique displayed was like a living being. It lit up both of them and burned them like barrels of fuel.

Andrela and Xiao Ying were originally watching alertly at the side but the battle had ended in the blink of an eye. The two were stunned as though they were meeting Garen for the first time. Looking at the two blue flames burning brighter than ever, then looking at the calm look on Garen's face, they were utterly speechless.

Ding.

Suddenly, a silvery white ring fell from Divine Master.

Surprisingly, the ring was not melting under the raging fire. It rolled out of the fire and headed towards the bottom.

Garen waved his hand, sucking the ring onto his palm.

With a snap, the figure of Divine Master and Flamingo froze in the blue fire and shattered into countless blue fragments. The fragments were then blown away by the wind like droplets of rain.

Even the Crimson Sword of the Sprites turned into blue fragments.

The halberd in Garen's hand also shattered at the same time, turning into countless ice fragments and disappeared. He took a look at the ring in his hand. The figure of a double-headed bird was carved on it.

"So, it has always been in the hand of the Divine Master. This thing..." Andrela gave Garen a complicated look.

"What do you want to say?" Garen turned around to face him.

"Still remember the goal that we set?"

"You found a clue?" Garen felt curious.

"A clue that left me helpless, perhaps the way you are now may have a solution." Andrela smiled bitterly.

Chapter 563: Mother Stream 1

April 25th

Lord of Immortal Palace was killed in combat in Dongzhou by Demon God General Garen. Including Weisman Assault Team, Immortal Palace's Grandmaster of Combat elites and Elders, nearly half were annihilated.

Fifteen days later

Southern Sky Gate was renamed back to Southern Sky Holy Fist Gate. Garen summoned back all the disciples, rebuilt the place and restored the techniques to be inherited. White Cloud Gate returned back to White Dew Gate and Garen became White Dew Gate's Great Elder. Together with Celestial Circle Gate, Crimson Sand Sword, and Demon Gate, an alliance was formed. Together, they maintained the Combat Festival.

When the news spread out, the combat world was shaken. Numerous martial artists went to Immortal Palace to verify the authenticity.

Weisman Empire's higher-ups declared Garen as a terrorist, gathered the remaining forces in Immortal Palace and dispatched more than ten thousands of people to subjugate the Dongzhou's Southern Sky Holy Fist Gate.

The sky was clear.

From the endless blue sea, on the horizon, numerous white navy ships slowly appeared as tiny dots. Among the densely packed dots, a middle-aged man wearing black aristocratic clothes and a captain's hat was looking through his binoculars on the largest navy ship.

Huala!

The sea water crashed ashore against Garen's legs and droplets splashed around. He stood in the sea with the sea water passing by, remaining motionless.

Gazing at the emerging fleets of Weisman navy ships, Garen slowly raised his right hand.

Silently, a white fog materialized and spread through his surroundings. Within seconds, the fog grew thicker and larger and soon covered an area of several hundreds of meters.

Halberds crystallized and appeared from the mist repeatedly, suspended in mid-air with their tips aiming at the distant navy ships.

Boom!

Fiery red dots appeared among the navy ships. The dots flashed, and waves and jets of water splashed around Garen's position.

Peng Peng Peng Peng!!

The incessant bombardment appeared like rain, but strangely, in the area of fog surrounding Garen, every single shell that went in disappeared soundlessly, as though there was a bottomless abyss swallowing up everything.

Red dots lit up again on the navy ships. A second bombardment began.

"Go."

Out of nowhere, a crystalized halberd appeared in Garen's hand and he gently pointed it at the fleet.

Weng...

Countless crystal halberds trembled, as one by one, they were covered in bluish light.

Bang!!

At that instant, all the halberds disappeared. In the distance, numerous fireballs appeared above the sea.

Garen absentmindedly gazed at the sea of fire across the sea then turned around and walked away.

Between the rocks on the shore, the people from White Dew Gate and Southern Sky Holy Fist Gate, elders from Celestial Circle Gate and representatives from Crimson Sand Sword all kneeled down. Their faces showed passion, excitement, and amazement.

This kind of combat martial arts realm was not something a human could do. This was the highest realm that all martial artists coveted; using the force of an individual to crushed every single resistance.

Those numerous crystal halberds were like legends and myths coming to life, piercing through the heavens and crushed all the Weisman navy ships instantly.

Garen glanced at the crowd that kneeled down. In his heart, there was no delight in defeating the Weisman navy ships. He did not even see clearly that fleet of ships that came full of enthusiasm and had simply annihilated them dozens of miles away.

To him, it was only materializing tens of halberds through his Secret Techniques and throw those out. After that, he only needed to enjoy the spectacle of fireballs that appeared one by one.

Totally meaningless.

Back on the shore, he tuned out the passionate cheers from the crowd and turned his gaze at Andrela who was standing at the right.

In a complex mood, Andrela looked at this once-best friend of his. That kind of overwhelming strength that could not be concealed had already left the realm of martial artist and reached the point of a legend. At his peak, he knew himself that settling this fleet of navy ships was no big deal but when there were numerous elites from Immortal Palace on board, it became a different matter, not to mention there were even hidden masters from Weisman Empire and customized heavy artillery in the hands of specialized Grandmasters of Combat. Not even he could resolve all of that.

They looked at each other and nodded simultaneously.

After a few simple sentences, the figures of Garen accompanied by Andrela disappeared on the shore.

After this battle, the alliance had an all-new experience on the terrifying combat strength of Garen. Some people who had conflicting views about him had let go altogether. Any and all sorts of undercurrents that emerged died down completely. In the face of absolute strength, everything else paled in comparison. Any schemes would be crushed effortlessly.

A few days later...

Endless seawater with no land in sight splashed around, while seagulls soared up in the sky and sunlight glittered off the surface of the sea.

Garen and Andrela were boarding a small blue boat with a white trail behind it heading towards the same place as the seagulls.

One was sitting at the front and the other at the back with their hair tousled by the wind.

Some time ago, the sea wind had begun sounding like the weeping of a lady.

"There's a small island in front. The islanders all called it the Sea Demon Island, and the island is surrounded by winds that are harsh and piercing on the ears. Normal people have no way of approaching it." Andrela introduced while controlling the boat.

"The island has caves that are like honeycombs on the mountain. When the sea wind blows, it creates a sound like how we whistle. Maybe because a special frequency was created, those piercing sounds can mislead senses. If you lose concentration, you will lose your way."

Garen turned serious. The sensation from Living Secret Technique made him become slightly alert.

Standing up, he stared far ahead across the sea.

A U-shaped green island appeared on the sea in front.

Seagulls flocked around on the island. On the desolate yellowish green beach, not a trace of humans could be seen.

"That's the Sea Demon Island." Andrela also stood up. Both of them looked at the island.

"More than ten years ago, under certain circumstances, I heard rumors about this island. The descriptions of this island's environment and topography resembled a hidden sacred place that I found in a book from a religion."

"Hidden sacred place?"

"That's right." Andrela slightly recounted, "In the record, this Sea Demon Island was once one of the places the Ancient Endor's Mother Stream runs through."

"Mother Stream? You are talking about the origin of streams described in the legend?" Garen recalled.

In the legend, all the Ancient Endor's origin of life and great warlocks such as Mother Earth would return into the embrace of the Mother Stream when their life depleted.

"Yes, that Mother Stream." Andrela nodded. "After years of researching, guess what I found?" There was yearning in his eyes but mostly helplessness.

"No way, did you found that Mother Stream?" Garen was stunned, "On this island? A place surrounded by the sea?!" He felt it a bit unbelievable, this place was in the middle of a sea a few days away from Dongzhou and considered a place where no one cared. Now, someone told him that there was a river on this island and it was the legendary Mother Stream, the origin of life.

"Wait until you take a look at this Mother Stream, then you will understand." Andrela smiled bitterly.

The both of them no longer spoke and waited in silence for the little boat to reach there, nearer and nearer.

The sight of the yellowish green beach was getting clearer.

After about half an hour later, the little boat stopped in a crevice between some rocks on the island. Garen froze a big chunk of ice and stoppered the crevice to stop the boat from getting washed away by the sea.

The two of them stepped down from the boat on the island.

The area of shallow water was of crystal clear blue. It could be seen that in the water, there were blue lights reflected on the ripples.

Shells, marine fish, black reefs, translucent shrimps, and crabs were vibrant all around.

Garen stepped on the soft sand beach and picked up a white conch wrapped in seaweed. To his surprise, a few white tentacles came out of the opening of the conch and started struggling around.

"The organisms here is a little weird, take note," Andrela whispered after tying the rope on the boat.

Standing on the island's beach, in front of them was a lush green forest.

From the direction of the shore into the island, the trees became even more closely compacted with their colors getting darker from light green to dark green. This showed the distribution of the plants on the island

Standing on the beach, the weeping sounds of the wind became even clearer and even sounded demonic.

Garen wrinkled his eyebrows; for him, the sounds had started become piercing.

For the normal people or even average Grandmaster of Combat, this might be the limit for them. Heading in any further would become dangerous for them.

For him and Andrela who had reached the level they stood at now, even the most vulnerable eardrums would have a certain degree of enhancement, not to mention their internal organs which were a lot tougher than the normal people. This little bit of sound was no different from listening to a radio.

Wearing black tight-fitting cloaks, both of them headed deeper into the island.

Andrela led the way as he was the most familiar with this island. He led Garen on a barely discernible forest trail and advanced into the dense jungle.

The forest felt slightly hot and humid. Whether it's the top, bottom, left or right, all around them were plants. Some plants grew crooked to the left and right, barring their way and were snapped by the both of them.

From the gaps that could be seen, there were small insects that flew here and there, among which some of them had a blood-sucking ability and were buzzing around.

A mixture of sour scent with the fresh scent of the plants was in the warm and humid air, making the whole thing quite strange.

Following the trail and winding left and right, the terrain was getting lower as though they were walking into a humongous basin.

In the forest, excluding the chirping of birds and the sounds of unknown animals, there were only the swishing sounds of both of them traveling through the forest.

After some time, a yellow mountain was revealed before them and a small dark cave was nestled among the vines climbing around.

Andrela stopped in front of the cave.

"It's here." He whispered.

"We're going in?"

Chapter 564: Mother Stream 2

"No, not exactly in there. If it wasn't by accident, no one would have thought to enter from that passage." Andrela smiled mysteriously and led the way into the cave. Garen hurriedly followed along.

Soon after he had advanced into the cave for some distance, he stopped. He no longer moved after standing beside a spring.

"It's here. I'll lead the way, you follow."

Once he finished speaking, he jumped straight into the spring.

Water soon splashed around the spring with a width longer than a meter.

Garen was confused but he also jumped into the spring.

The moment he entered the spring, something soft and warm covered his whole body as though soaking in a hot spring.

Strangely, the temperature of the spring was not high, only about the temperature of the sea.

Bubbles floated up. Through the cloudy blue water, Garen saw that Andrela was waving a bright green glow stick at him at the bottom.

He hurriedly swam like a fish in order to keep up. After training for so long at the sea, water became a second nature to him. He swam at a moderate pace behind Andrela.

The two of them had already swum in the spring longer than ten minutes yet they were still heading further down. The surroundings of the spring were dark and it was still extending as though there was no bottom.

Finally, the tunnel in front of them made a horizontal turn and no longer went deeper.

After a while, another passage that turned upwards appeared.

The whole spring was a U-shaped passage, just like the shape of the island.

Following the passage upwards, the two of them could not help but swim faster.

Huala!

Inside a small dark cavern, two heads emerged out of an oval spring at a corner.

With a loud splash, two dark figures leaped out of the water and landed firmly by the side of the spring.

Garen snapped his fingers and a freezing white mist circled around both their cloaks and soon dissipated.

All the moisture in their cloaks became ice and with a gentle shake, all the ice fell off on the ground.

The water on both of them had dried instantly.

"This is already out of the scope of Secret Techniques." Andrela sighed.

Garen smiled without replying and only silently scanned the cavern.

"This is the place where the Mother Stream ran through, the only point where Mother Stream can be seen" Andrela sighed, "You definitely cannot imagine what Mother Stream looks like."

"In this cavern?" Garen was piqued by curiosity. What did the legendary Mother Stream look like in reality? He could not guess.

"Follow me."

Andrela walked ahead, away from the spring towards one of the cavern's stone wall.

Garen only noticed when he came near, the stone wall was, in fact, a hole that got blocked. The stone piece that blocked the hole was too similar to the surrounding with no apparent flaws. If no one checked properly, there was no way to know that there was a hole here.

He also noticed that on the ground at the left side of the stone piece laid a pile of white bones. It did not seem to belong to humans. It was more like lizards' bones put together but there was no rotten smell that drifted out.

"I lived here for five years. Previously, creatures similar to lizards lived in the spring but it was all eaten by me." Andrela shrugged and placed all ten of his fingers on the stone piece and pulled outwards.

With the rumbling sound of rolling stone, the stone piece moved out of the way and a hole with the height of a person was immediately revealed.

Andrela did not go in. He only stood by the entrance quietly peering inside, his eyes showing a trace of obsession.

A green light from inside the hole was also reflected on it.

Garen could not help but hold his breath, similarly stunned by the amazing scene inside the hole.

A large cavern was connected to this hole on the other side.

Inside was a stream running from left to right with no sound whatsoever. No matter it was the sound of water, the flow of air or creatures swimming inside it, there was none.

It was a stream dozens of meters wide.

It was no normal stream water but some sort of glowing green fluid. It gushed out from a gray vortex on the left and rushed into a gray vortex on the right.

The light from the stream glowed, dyeing both of them green.

The hole they were at was located high up in the large cavern, just like one of the many holes of a beehive.

"This is the Mother Stream..." Andrela muttered.

"How are you so sure?" Garen finally snapped out of it. He could see such a spectacle in the Secret Technique World, but even if he had been through all sorts of thing, he still felt that it was incredible.

"It's that I'm sure...once you get closer you will understand." Andrela smiled bitterly.

Slightly puzzled, Garen went inside the cavern.

Only a step, a gentle and warm aura covered him and expelled gently.

"This is ...aura!!??" He looked at Andrela, startled.

"That's right." Andrela nodded. "Aura is a product of Spirit. In the Ancient Ender civilization, it was also called Power of Life. In the legend, Mother Stream flows out from an unknown void into another unknown void. It contains infinite Power of Life. This is why even if this stream is not the Mother Stream, it is at least a branch of it. There is no other explanation which I could find from the records."

Garen suddenly thought of something and adjusted his vision.

Closing his eyes and opening it once again, the glowing green stream in front of him disappear. There was nothing in this large cavern except a vague flow of gentle air. He totally hid all the aura in his body, using the eyes of ordinary people to observe.

Sure enough, the whole Mother Stream was unable to be seen. The location where the Mother Stream situated was originally a dried up river with nothing inside it and both sides were blocked.

"I see, the Mother Stream in the legend can only be seen by the chosen ones. No wonder it was explained like that." Garen nodded. Releasing his aura, the green light filled his vision again.

"You also discovered it." Andrela nodded. "I have examined it from various perspectives and basically confirmed that this is the Mother Stream."

Garen did not reply and went silent.

"What are you planning to do?"

Andrela smiled bitterly.

"I don't have any plans. I can't even get near it, what else can I plan?"

"You lived here for five years, there should at least be some results."

"This is natural." Andrela nodded, "I looked up all the information on Mother Stream. Whether it be myth legends or folk tales, none was spared. Pieced together, I had a thought."

He leaned against the wall and explained while gazing at the Mother Stream.

"Mother Stream, also known as Stream of Life was said to contain a secret. Rumors had it that ancient warlocks nearing their death walked into the embrace of Mother Stream. There must be some meaning to it."

He took out a silver ring carved with a double-headed bird.

"I found out that all the warlocks who entered the Mother Stream would wear an accessory made of silver stone. I don't know the reason."

"This is a ring made of the silver stone?" Garen also took out the double-headed ring he got from Divine Master.

"Yes. I don't know who got their hands on this material and made double-headed rings out of it. These might be the last two accessories made from silver stone in this world." Andrela regretfully said.

"I guess that when the warlocks lost all hope, they gambled everything they have to have the one last chance."

"What chance?"

"The chance to reach a higher level."

Andrela said in low voice.

"The legend of warlocks ended with a legendary expedition. For unknown reasons, they went to war with powerful invaders from another world. Finally, both sides suffered great losses. Various gods fell. I found out that whenever great warlocks suffered grievous injuries, someone would put them into the Mother Stream to have their injuries healed. Then, they would enter into battles again."

He paused for a while.

"Later, the enemies found out about it. They used some sort of means to stop the healing abilities of the Mother Stream. Maybe this is the original way the Mother Stream should be. It was a Pyrrhic victory. Not long after, both sides disappear from history."

"Your speculations are very detailed but this is all built on the fact that all the myth and legends are true." Garen nodded.

"I tried to eliminate any interference to the best extent, sorting out all the data and compiling them. This final result should not have too many distortions." Andrela shook his head.

"Mother Stream..." Garen looked at the running stream emitting green light, feeling out of this world. This feeling of standing before and looking at something that should only exist in legends, normal people would not be able to imagine it.

Imagine looking at the Egyptian pyramids from Earth. That kind of heavy feeling from looking at history enshrouds your mind and leave nothing else in your head.

"There must be a great secret hidden inside there. The warlocks have lifespans approaching thousand years and godlike powers. What is there on the level above them? There can only be immortality!" Andrela said seriously, then a bitter smile surfaced. "But I can't even get close to it."

He turned to look at Garen.

"What I can't do, maybe you can. Your strength already reached a level out of my imagination." His eyes contain hope and anticipation.

Garen looked at Mother Stream, uncertainty in his eyes.

Suddenly, he took a large step.

Pa!

His boots stepped firmly on the ground inside the cavern. A huge force slammed on his body intending to expel him.

This force was vast as the sea. Even the strength of Garen's Living Secret Technique barely held on.

His body was covered in freezing white mist and was about to retaliate.

Suddenly, his view passed through the Attribute Pane and his body stopped.

In the Attribute Pane, he saw an unexpected change.

Chapter 565: Mother Stream 3

All the attributes on the Attribute Pane began to turn blurry, as if covered by a translucent plastic.

This was something he had never encountered before!

This Attribute Pane was actually a mutation, resulting from a stimulation originating from himself. That was to say, the source of Attribute Pane was actually his own body. When this kind of thing happened, it was most likely due to a new and unprecedented stimulation to his body, to the extent of affecting the root of his special ability.

"What's the matter?" Andrela's voice came from his rear.

Garen immediately snapped out back to reality and took a step back.

Hu...

As if caressed by a gentle breeze, the blurry Attribute Pane became clear again.

Garen narrowed his eyes. He remained silent, but a trace of seriousness flashed past.

"The ring's changed!" Andrela's voice resounded again.

Garen turned his head, and saw that he was holding the silver stone ring with a feverish excitement on his face.

A string of inexplicable words appeared on the ring.

"Words from Ancient Ender, I recognized it." Garen had the attribute abilities. His powerful intelligence attribute allowed him to easily learn any language in the world. He learned the language of Ancient Ender from pieces of passages that he found. Together with his comprehensive analysis, he quickly found the key to mastering it.

At this moment, Garen also noticed that the ring he took from Divine Master had the same changes, but different words of the Ancient Ender language.

"The words from both the rings are different, come and take a look." Andrela handed his ring to Garen.

The rings combined together to form a complete sentence.

"From where all begins, to where all ends..." Garen muttered a line from the two rings.

"I see." Andrela turned serious, "The Mother Stream was also a symbol of rebirth! The beginning of life yet, also its end."

"There's still more...he who holds the silver stone, through the Mother Stream's baptism, shall welcome a new life." Garen said the line from the other ring.

Looking up, both of them saw surprise and excitement in each other's eyes.

This was an authentic relic left behind by ancient warlocks! To a certain extent, the Mother Stream and the changes on the rings proved that the legends of ancient warlocks were not merely fiction, and were probably true.

"I once saw on a document that Ancient Ender civilization had a ritual that allowed dying people to have a chance at life, taking with them a token from the underworld and passing through various tests, they may resurrect." Andrela said, "Now it seems that Ancient Ender civilization and warlocks are connected to each other."

Garen nodded.

"In other words, these two rings represent two chances of resurrection?"

"It's not so simple. Otherwise, those dying warlocks would not have provoked Mother Stream. You have to know that Mother Stream had the ability to break down anything, stopping people from entering the cycle of reincarnation." Andrela shook his head.

Garen could feel that these two rings were now emitting a strange radiation. This radiation combined with the power from Mother Stream actually reminded Garen of the Black Smoke Pot.

He suspected that the Black Smoke Pot was actually a large transfer device, created by warlocks using the power of Mother Stream.

There was only one thing different about them.

Standing near the Mother Stream, Garen sensed that although the power from the combination was similar to Black Smoke Pot, but the sense of direction they gave off was not stable enough. From his experience with the Black Smoke Pot's transfer, he could feel that the Mother Stream had the transfer ability and the rings acted as the compass.

However, the coordination from the rings seemed incomplete.

Both the rings pointed to different directions, and the coordinates on the ring were still changing.

Garen pondered for a moment while waiting for Andrela to calm down before speaking out his thoughts.

"My guess is that the Mother Stream is the source of power for the transfer, while the rings act as a conduit. Perhaps the legend is true, and we can have a chance at resurrection."

"You're sure?" Andrela's tone hinted at a different train of thought.

"That time when the volcano erupted, I was transferred far away by the Black Smoke Pot, and managed to return. The feeling from that time is similar to what I feel now." Garen explained, half-truthfully.

"But, I advise you to not jump into it recklessly. I barely survived that time."

Not just barely. When he transferred to Totem World, he had three layers of protection. The first layer was the Eternal Starry Night Pendant given by Old Man Gregor, carved with protection charms combined with his life force. It broke during his transmigration.

The second layer, his King of the Century's mighty body, strength, aura and Divine Statue Technique known for its defense and healing ability, the first Grandmaster of Combat in history to train a technique only possible in theory to the peak. It similarly crumbled during the transfer.

The third and the most mysterious layer, the reason he reincarnated, was also most probably due to this. The mysterious red attribute, or more precisely the innate ability that resided in his soul that was unknowingly activated, protecting him from receiving serious damage to his soul.

His journey back here was different. Escorted by the Door to Heaven, backed by the whole Totem World, together with strength of his body that exceeded his previous one, getting back here only resulted in some small injuries.

The Black Smoke Pot at that time was most probably a safe passage created and arranged by the warlocks, but even that 'safe' passage was perilous to Garen and the others.

Now, entering the Mother Stream was an act dangerous to even those warlocks. A danger feared by the warlocks, for Garen it was even more so, not to mention Andrela, who was far weaker than Garen.

Garen speculated that the Black Smoke Pot was also one of the things that warlocks found using the Mother Stream. Something far stabler than the Mother Stream itself. Even that degree of stability caused Garen's body to break down completely. If it weren't for his unique soul, perhaps nothing would be left behind.

If he used the Mother Stream...

"I'm going in to try." Andrela suddenly spoke.

For a moment, the cavern went totally silent. Garen wondered if he had misheard something. He turned to look at Andreia again, trying to see if his face showed any hint that he misspoke. Unfortunately, he found nothing.

"Are you insane!?"

Andreia had never shown a more passionate gaze. "I'm more than calm."

"Did you know how dangerous it is?!" Garen's voice sounded very serious. "That time when I was transferred by Black Smoke Pot, just a little bit more and there would be nothing left of me."

"I already have no chance of breaking through to the King of the Century realm..." Andreia's tone was very calm, "Rather than aging and withering away without any hope, I prefer to take this gamble. Even if I have a very low chance of making it out alive, I still won't give up!"

Garen experienced it himself, and he knew just how dangerous it was. If it weren't for his peculiar soul, he would not have made it during the transfer of Black Smoke Pot, much less so for this kind of unfamiliar exploration.

"Maybe there's another way."

"Do you believe it?" Andreia laughed, "In the blink of an eye, since the first time we met each other, so many years have gone by. You know my personality. Pursuing my own goal, I would move forward ceaselessly. Now that I see a glimmer of hope, I would not let slip out of my hand."

Garen frowned and did not pursue the matter anymore. When he first came here from Earth, it was all because of the mutation of his soul. The second time, he successfully went to Totem World, it was also because of his peculiar soul.

If he were replaced with Andreia...

Concerning the exploration of Mother Stream, Garen himself was also curious yet excited. Perhaps, after he did everything he wanted in this world and there was nothing left, he would choose to continue this path.

Although his Living Secret Technique had reached a terrifying level, because this world had no totem power, there was no way for him to change lifespans. At most, he would live for a hundred years or two, maybe longer, due to the attribute of his Secret Techniques, but in the end he could not escape death.

In fact, he was already at the age of between eighty to ninety years. Just like what Andrela said, rather than aging and withering away without any hope, he preferred to take a gamble. Maybe that way, he could grab hold of that hope.

"What are you going to do?" Garen stopped trying to push him.

"Get myself ready for anything. Then go in and grasp that glimmer of hope." Andrela's eyes almost lit up from the passion in them.

This time, even Garen was unsure if he himself could take on the Mother Stream's flow. The fluctuations that appeared on his Attribute Pane were still fresh in his mind. This meant that even the special talent in his soul might get affected greatly.

Although he had some confidence after transferring for three times, unless he was left with no choice, he would not enter the Mother Stream.

"Let's go back first. I'll have to prepare properly. The harvest this time is a lot greater than expected..." Andrela showed a fervor greater than before.

A few years after the battle at East Continent.

Southern Sky Holy Fist Gate was rebuilt and together with White Dew Gate, White Cloud Gate, Celestial Circle Gate, and Crimson Sand Sword. They formed the Five Gate Alliance, ruling over the entire combat

world of the East Continent. The power of the alliance spread like cobwebs, covering the entirety of the continent. Even military forces were ruled under the Alliance of the Five Clans.

The East Continent welcomed a brief period of peace.

At the same time, the leader of the alliance, Heavenly General Garen, led the top Grandmasters of Combat in the alliance to go around on friendly diplomatic visitations to various governments, and built friendly diplomatic ties.

Towards that Grandmaster of Combat with a terrifying strength that could annihilate the entire fleet of Weisman navy ships, the various governments displayed the friendliest welcome they could offer. Various resources and ambassadors flowed endlessly into the East Continent, bringing new blood and vigor to the entire East Continent.

The Combat Festival jointly organized by the Five Gate Alliance also became the top choice for the alliance and various countries to pick out elites.

Chapter 566: Mother Stream 4

The years continued to pass, and the alliance was now handled by the Garen's descendant, Xiao Ying. After taking out the Secret Techniques polished by Garen, this young genius Grandmaster of Combat successfully received the support of all the alliance members. Using the carrot and stick approach, members of the alliance grew in numbers and the prospect of development became better.

With the suggestion and support from part of the members, a large organization known as the Combat Association was built. It covered eighty to ninety percent of the world, and possessed the power to assess Grandmaster of Combat candidates, and the certificate that they handed out received worldwide recognition. Even the series of a martial artists' rank certificates became the qualifications of what employers seek in employing talent.

Xiao Ying became the first President of the Association. Her personal combat skills, under Garen's tutelage, further improved, and was now only slightly inferior to Andrela. In addition to her charisma, she also had a group of loyal martial artists by her back, cementing her foothold in the combat world.

Garen and Andrela slowly faded away from the view of the world. At the beginning, there were still some Grandmasters of Combat from the previous generation who remembered their legends. Later,

talented new generations emerged and powerful martial artists became famous, the both of them then gradually hid themselves behind the scenes.

In the past, when people mentioned a Grandmaster of Combat, the first thing that came to mind would be Garen and Andrela, and only then would Xiao Ying's name come up. Now, Xiao Ying's name would emerge first, only then would both their names be mentioned by some old generations.

These years, both Garen and Andrela were hiding their identities, and relied on Xiao Ying's huge backings to collect things like antiques and treasures from all over the world.

This way, the Potential points that Garen gathered, numbered in the hundreds. This was already the limit, and Andrela on the other hand secretly gathered a few articles that emitted strong telekinetic waves in preparation of entering the Mother Stream.

The both of them stepped onto all kinds of ancient ruins and mysterious lands. Especially after Xiao Ying's position stabilized, they let go completely and went around searching for various information and treasures.

Over time, Andrela's condition started to decline. He finally made up his mind, it was time to enter the Mother Stream.

During these years, Garen basically had no more lingerings left.

After all, Xiao Ying was no baby. With the gradual rise in her position and power, she became increasingly infatuated with the power she held. Different from the pure and lovely Ying Er, Garen no longer saw any trace of Ying Er in her.

This world no longer hold anything worthy of his affection. Of the old friends that he knew, only Andrela remained.

Now, he also chose to enter Mother Stream, betting on this one last chance.

Garen decided that he would accompany him. If there was one person in this world that had the highest probability of surviving the Mother Stream, that person could only be him. No one knew better than him, that terrifying danger and crisis of travelling through space and time was something that was unimaginable by normal people.

After nearly ten years had past, inside the underground cave, standing beside the hole looking over the Mother Stream.

Garen and Andrela had done all the preparations they could.

"You don't need to take the risk with me." Andrela turn to look at Garen.

"I don't have any regrets left. Besides, with my previous experience, we might be able to increase our chances for survival." Garen smiled and replied. "Furthermore, haven't we made it clear; the two rings are pointing at different directions? When we go in, we will go our separate ways. Then, we'll only have ourselves to depend on."

At this point in life, these two only had one last thing left to pursue.

Dreams.

Garen did not know what Andrela's dream was, but somehow he was reminded of Cayduran, and Totem World's Hellgate. Dreams were their only motivation and goal.

Now, he felt that he was quite similar to them.

There was no affection for the world, the only hope they had was moving forward, and maybe one day they might be able to achieve their dreams.

Food and wine, women and power, everything was now at their fingertips. 'The grass was always greener on the other side', perhaps this phrase was the most apt for them now.

In his heart, Garen mocked himself.

He looked at Andrela in front of him.

There were more than ten pairs of bracelets on his arms, all of them were various relics from mysterious ruins with unknown functions. He drew his face with tattoos from Ancient Ender civilization, wore a shirt made of 5-coloured feathers, and his trousers in silver and in his hand was a skull cane.

What made him even more speechless was that on all of his fingers and toes were full of different kinds of rings, his nose had two rings and he punched a hole on his chin and hung a chain of either bird or pheasant bones...

"This is what I found in all the records, the strongest form from Ancient Ender. Are you sure you don't want to make the same preparations?" Andrela looked at Garen.

He shook his head.

Garen looked at his getup, speechless.

"Alright then, if you got into trouble, don't blame me for not warning you." Andrela shrugged, looking at the hole that still had the same repulsive force and settled down his mind. "Are you ready?"

"Yeah."

Garen simply wore a white suit, in his right hand was the double-headed bird ring, his golden hair smoothly flowing down. There were no more preparations to be done.

In fact, what he relied on was the hundreds of Potential point he had absorbed.

This thing was the source that could heal his injuries.

The cavern rippled with bright green light dancing across its surfaces.

Andrela was the first to go in.

Suddenly, he trembled, obviously meeting with that huge force of resistance.

This time was different from last time. He was prepared and took out a black key, only to toss it forward.

Dang.

When the metal key hit the stone wall, that sound rang out.

The sound continued ringing, and strangely, that huge repulsion force soon weakened.

"Quick!"

Andrela rushed to the key, picked it up and toss it once more forward.

Garen followed him and heard the sound again. The repulsion force weakened again.

This key was something they dug out from a ruin in Azure Continent. According to Garen, this key contained a strange power, and when they tested it, surprisingly it could weakened the repulsion force emitted by Mother Stream.

Using the key, the both of them jumped through the hole and landed on the edge of the Mother Stream.

The key keep ringing. Again and again, the repulsion force from the Mother Stream was diverted, forming a cavity around them. However, the force inside the key was also fading rapidly. The closer they were to the Mother Stream, the ringing became shorter.

"Quick! The key can't hold on any longer!" Andrela rushed.

Garen also knew how the situation was deteriorating, nodded towards Andrela. The key was then thrown violently, one last time, at the ground in front of them.

Dang!!!

In this last ringing, the key was riddled with cracks all over its body.

Garen calmly jumped towards the Mother Stream. On his right side, Andrela did the same.

Splash!

Both jumped into the green torrent at nearly the same time. Before they could even see the bubbles, they were instantly overwhelmed by the green stream and disappeared.

In the instant Garen jumped into the Mother Stream, Garen was unusually calm. His soul did not felt any danger, but his body was weakening rapidly.

He looked around with his eyes wide open. His sight was filled with endless green, as though he had submerged in the green stream. Obviously, he had only jumped into the stream, but he could not see the surface above. It was as though he was at the bottom of the sea.

As though he was in a green space instead of a stream.

Andrela was to his right, not far away. His whole body was stiff, but his eyes showed his pain and struggle.

The various decorations on his body were disappearing fast. The same thing was happening to his body, just like corrosion caused by acid, dissolving and becoming a part of Mother Stream.

Andrela seemed to have seen Garen. He looked at him, his eyes showing no regrets other than his unwillingness.

Garen helplessly looked at his old friend dissolve in the Mother Stream. A pale blue soul appeared, then melted into the stream without a trace.

Facing the mysterious mighty Mother Stream, a Star Ring king among swordsmen like Andrela, who stood at the peak of Grandmaster of Combat, only endured a little longer than the common small fry.

Garen felt no sadness. Witnessing death over and over again, the him now was no longer the person who had just experienced reincarnation.

His body now was still considered intact, only that the Potential points he amassed were descending like a rocket. Soon, it would be his body.

The Living Secret Technique was holding back the decomposition effect from Mother Stream. Perhaps the Living Secret Technique and the Mother Stream had some similarities, and the decomposition power on him was not as severe. However, with this kind of consumption, in at most ten minutes, his body would disintegrate like Andrela.

Time was ticking.

Garen felt as though the ring was connected to a string, taking his body along the flow of the Mother Stream towards an unknown destination.

The Potential points were exhausted to nothing. The rest would depend on the Living Secret Technique.

The secret technique was strong, but in the face of the decomposition of Mother Stream, it was nothing.

Garen's fingers and toes were the first to disintegrate. An extreme pain soon travelled through his nerves to signal his brain. He was indifferent to it, but without the protection from secret technique, the most vulnerable part of his body, the eyes and eardrums soon disintegrated.

His sight was plunged into total darkness, and his hearing was no longer able to function. Even the nerves on his skin could only feel endless pain.

Chapter 567: Newborn 1

His nose couldn't smell anything, he wanted to shut his mouth, but he noticed that his lips were gone, even his tongue was rapidly disintegrating.

Not long later, Garen had lost all sense of feeling, his sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste, and even his sense of pain, it was all gone.

He had originally planned to give Andreia a hand, but he would've never expected to be caught in such a predicament. The power of the Mother Stream was too overwhelming, making it hard for even him to last for more than a few moments.

He felt as if he were floating in an endless abyss, there was nothing around him, he could not feel anything. It felt like the space the totem of the Nine-Headed Hydra existed in at the beginning, an empty abyss.

Garen knew this was his soul's visualization of his senses, he guessed, his physical body might have already been completely disintegrated, leaving only his soul intact.

Even the strength of his Living Secret Technique had been dissipated by the overwhelming force of the Mother Stream. However, that seed, the seed that contained the Northern Trident Frost-Fire True Water Evil Technique and his soul, used the protection from the soul and was floating right in front of Garen, perfectly unscathed.

Inside this dark abyss, the seed was the only source of light, silently floating in the center, emitting a soft blue glow.

As time waned on, Garen could only observe this soul seed to occupy himself.

It might've been a month, two months. A year, or even two.

He could no longer keep count. He counted the seconds up to the billions, and as he lost count, he started all over again. This process he repeated numerous times.

However, in all this time, he at least managed to confirm one key point.

His soul managed to resist the decomposition capabilities of the Mother Stream, or rather, the immense amount of force exerted while traveling through space and time.

Even after his body was disintegrated ages ago, there was no sign of any damage or harm to his soul. Even though the physical strength of the Living Secret Technique has completely been dissipated, the seed was still here.

The increased soul limit due to Cthulhu's Origin earlier was still present, and all his abilities related to his soul still remain.

Not only did the soul seed contain the Living Secret Technique seed, after being absorbed by Garen, it eventually assimilated Garen's style of martial arts, evolving into his personal point of origin.

The physical strength was only half of the capabilities of the Living Secret Technique seed, but the seed's inert power is the foundation of the Living Secret Technique.

Under the Mother Stream's decomposition, his physical body had been completely disintegrated, but Garen used the Frost-Fire True Water Evil Technique to condense most of his strength, deep within his soul and put up multiple layers of barriers on the exterior.

He didn't know much about sealing, but only creating barriers of simple defenses by repeatedly wrapping the seed in his strength. Although his soul had already offered a temporary form of protection, he thought it was better to be safe than sorry.

He noticed that, as time went on, the Life Technique seed was slowly changing as well, slowly becoming more and more condensed, small, and bright. As compared to physical strength, the strength of the soul seed was not tangible, it could only affect matter through a physical body, hence the parts of it that could affect matter had slowly been disintegrated by the Mother Stream.

What remained was this abstract, intangible power.

Garen calls this the Soul Strength. From his observations and analyses, he discovered that although Soul Strength could not directly affect matter, it could change one's physical body through things like neurons, and then, use one's physical body to affect matter. In addition, the soul seed seems to have another form of functionality, but Garen had not yet figured out the secret behind it.

As for the exploration of the soul, even if he obtained a few items from the Cthulhu King, he was still as insignificant as a weak ant.

In reality, all living things had souls, in other words, without them, we would just be a conjugation of multiple organisms.

Soul Strength was the embodiment of our consciousness, memory, and spirit, our unique form of existence.

But as time passed on, Garen was starting to feel that his soul was beginning to weaken.

Without the support of a physical body, the soul, in its rootless state, no matter how strong, will slowly start to weaken.

"How much time has passed?"

His consciousness was floating in this abyss, surrounded by nothing, only darkness.

In the center of this abyss laid the soul seed, emitting a mesmerizing blue halo, like a beautiful crystal or gem.

All of a sudden, he felt some sort of vibration.

Sound!

In the outside world that he had no knowledge of, under the dark blue water of the Mother Stream, the stone and silver Vector Ring had due to its impure material, after being submerged in the Mother Stream for such a long time, finally cracked. It's originally clear, streamline path suddenly slanted towards an unknown direction.

The glowing red light emitted by Garen's soul could also be seen to be flowing towards the new unknown direction.

Garen started hearing some sounds, as if people were speaking.

The voices seem to be muffled and unclear, it also seems to be in an unfamiliar language to him, somewhat like German, but with a slightly faster pace.

That's when it hit him, his senses had returned to him.

His hearing has recovered, so had his sense of touch, but his sight and smell remained unchanged.

He felt like he was curled up in a tight space, surrounded by warmth, as if he was being submerged in water. He could also feel a youthful heartbeat nearby.

As time slowly passed by, his senses started to become clearer. An interesting phenomenon has also occurred - it seems as if he had shrunk a bit in size.

Or rather, not shrunk, but more like he had gone into a sort of embryonic state.

While his eyes were still sealed shut, he felt oxygen and other essential nutrients being pumped in through his belly button. The abnormal act of breathing through one's stomach seemed to have amused Garen a bit.

Through the information he gathered with his limited senses, he estimated that he reincarnated due to his special soul talents. He most likely has been turned into a baby, a baby that was still inside his pregnant mother.

From outside the stomach, he could vaguely make out a male and a female voice, both which were very gentle, and also a small boy's voice. Sometimes he would hear yelling, although he didn't understand the language, he could discern the excitement present in the voices.

Garen's curled up body silently started to form a vital energy and blood regulatory system while within his mother's stomach. The baby's vital energy and blood roadmap started to develop in accordance with the Frost-Fire True Water Evil Technique. Under the manipulation of his soul, a series of complex and precise actions start to take place.

Since his old body that was thoroughly trained in the Secret Techniques was disintegrated, and this current body has barely started to develop, naturally, he'd want to strengthen this body as early as possible.

A baby's body is extremely fragile, but fortunately, he had the Living Secret Technique's immense regenerative properties, which further sped up the maturing of this body.

However, Garen was still puzzled about one thing; the Northern Trident Frost-Fire True Water Evil Technique, such an overwhelmingly powerful Living Secret Skill, just where exactly did this power originate from?

Normally, secret techniques use the nutrients from food to develop vital energy, then through enhancing one's vital energy and blood, improve oneself. However, the Living Secret Technique is different, it seemed like it could create a whole new, complex and precise regulatory system within a living organism's body, almost as if it was a structure formed from countless seals, images, and solids.

These structures are naturally formed through a practitioner's accumulated daily training. While a single image can bear no significance, when you accumulate them up to a certain threshold, there would be some sort of mystical reaction.

At the start of his embryonic stage, Garen started using his soul to clearly observe the formation process of the Living Secret Technique within his body every step of the way. Since the structure of his body was simple as most organs haven't fully developed yet, logically, this was the ideal time to observe the formation of the Living Secret Technique. However, after observing it halfway, even Garen's strong soul started feeling tired. From the dense and complex blood capillaries roadmap of the Living Secret Technique, to its effects and changes on other things like the endocrine system, even Garen started to get a headache from the overload of information.

The effects of the formation of the Living Secret Technique at the beginning was very minor, it was barely even noticeable at first, as it was only simple changes made towards the vital energy and blood. But as time passed, maybe after a month or so, Garen started to feel the difference.

The changes in his body under the influence from the formation of the Living Secret Technique slowly became more and more noticeable.

This change was leaning towards the Living Secret Technique, making the physical body more compatible with the Living Secret Technique's potential, in turn strengthening it. With that, it also further sped up the changes in the body, as the strengthening reinforced the influence of the technique on the body.

This sort of mutual reinforcement made the changes come faster and faster.

"No wonder the Living Secret Technique is in the form of a seed. It functions just like a seed, starting slowly, then rapidly growing." Garen thought in realization.

However, the question still remains. Where did the power of the Living Secret Technique originate from?

From his close observation, when forming the Living Secret Technique, the baby's body seemed to have produced a special energy out of nowhere.

It's almost as if a person started drawing complex non-repeating symbols and images at random, and these images increased to a scary degree, suddenly creating a faint source of energy. This energy, though weak, started to reinforce the imagery, creating even stronger energy.

Although this statement may sound absurd, it was the conclusion that Garen managed to arrive at through his observations.

This was exactly how the Living Secret Technique worked, this influential power seemed to have been created mysteriously, as if it was miraculously created from nothing, completely ignoring the Law of the Conservation of Energy.

His infant body, under these changes, has also become strong and healthy, presenting an appropriate condition for the Living Secret Technique.

Finally, the day he had been waiting for was finally here.

Garren suddenly felt that his body was being forced out by a pushing pressure. From the outside, he started to hear encouraging words, accompanied by a lady's cries of pain.

The squeezing force exerted on him started to felt stronger and stronger.

It felt as if his entire body was being squeezed through a cramped but elastic canal, moving towards a distinct direction.

He knew he was about to be born into the world.

Garen had a complicated range of emotions he felt at the time. He lived through three lifetimes, but now he was once again reborn from a stranger's stomach. This lady had once again given him a physical body, given him a new life.

Chapter 568: Newborn 2

This complicated feeling made him feel a sense of lamentation, but at the same time, happiness.

His happiness comes from the fact that he was finally able to escape the dark days of his past. As for his lamentation, he didn't know himself where that feeling originated from.

As the squeezing force became even stronger, Garen just kept moving through the path in front of him.

With the combination of both parties' efforts, finally, he felt a breeze of fresh air caress his skin. It felt like a tingly, stinging sensation.

He was promptly carried up by a pair of large hands, and was slowly wiped with a warm, damp towel. As the friction from the towel increased, the pain became more and more distinct. His skin was way too sensitive, even a soft and gentle rub would cause an intense pain.

As his umbilical cord still on his belly was swiftly cut off, that further intensified his pain, making Garen scream in pain.

Just as he opened his mouth and tensed up his throat, the amniotic fluid in his mouth came spraying out, dripping into a small basin.

Wa!!!!

The deafening cry of a newborn baby immediately filled the room.

He finally opened his eyes, his light blue eyes, after such a long time, could finally see the real world again. At that exact moment, he felt an indescribable sensation.

This world was filled with livelihood, all of this was real. The rays of light and color gave him a sensory overload, and touched his heart in an indescribable manner.

From the dark days of being locked in a prison, from God knows how long ago, to the exact moment of seeing light again.

Garen felt a sudden rekindling of hope towards this world, he wanted to feel this moved for eternity, forever and ever...

In the pure white hospital room, he saw the person who was carrying him, a nurse in blue uniform wearing a white surgical mask. She had a pair of black eyes and thick eyebrows, although her face did not look pretty with numerous pale yellow freckles, in his eyes, this nurse was the embodiment of joy and warmth.

The nurse opened her mouth and said a few words, then gently placed him in a crib next to the bed. Inside the crib was radiating a sense of warmth, almost as if it was an incubator.

The crib walls were made of clear glass, so he was able to see the bed through the glass. A lady with blonde and curly hair was lying on the bed, even though she could not be considered as a pretty person, she seemed gentle, looking lovingly at the crib.

"This is a newborn." Garen opened his mouth, but due to the fact that his vocal cords weren't developed yet, all that could be heard was a child crying.

As he slowly crawled up from the crib, moving on the soft white cloth, he slapped the glass wall of the crib. That smooth and cool sensation of the glass had him mesmerized.

In one swift motion, the nurse's big hands rubbed some fragrant white powder all over his skin, then wrapping him once again, keeping him warm as she gently picked him up from the crib and moved him to his bed beside his mother.

His mother gently touched his cheeks and softly uttered a few words. The warmth radiating from her eyes enveloped Garen with a sense of gentleness.

Time flew.

Garen was only born a month ago, and his infant body was still weak. As his brain had not been fully developed yet, it was still not able to support overly complex or clear conscious, thinking.

Thus, he spent most of his time suckling, sleeping, and pooping.

This embarrassing way of life made Garen, once the high and mighty leader of the White Cloud Gate and the Heavenly General of the Southern Holy Fist Gate, utterly lose his sense of self-esteem.

It's would be fine if it were just being breastfed, but having to have someone change his diaper, that was the most humiliating thing he could experience in his lifetime! An utter disgrace!!

Garen always had a strong sense of resistance when it came to changing his diapers. Unfortunately for him, even though his infant body was strengthened by the Living Secret Technique as compared to other babies, the functionality of the Living Secret Technique was still minute at the beginning, and only gets strong later on.

As such, regardless of how strong his soul or secret techniques may be, the foundations of this current body were still too weak, making him no different from an actual baby. There was no use in resisting.

Without physical matter, the soul has no way of affecting reality, that was merely natural law.

So, no matter how embarrassing this way of living was, he had no choice but to continue as is.

If he were to look past this issue, everything has been going well for him. His body was becoming stronger and stronger, even if he were caught in a cold breeze he wouldn't catch a cold or fall ill. His facial features were also rapidly developing, and his brain was also improving at a healthy rate. His originally fragile bones have started to become more and more sturdy, slowly allowing his body to support him crawling around.

This was only after approximately a month's growth.

Garen was originally planning to re-train his Frost-Fire True Water Evil Technique, but his soul seed's evil techniques could only do so much for the development of the body at this stage.

There wasn't much else there was to change, even if one completely followed the training for the art of the Evil Techniques, it would still have some effects, but definitely not significantly drastic changes. Hence, he started trying out different secret technique training methods. He found out that most secret techniques to enhance special abilities have all lost their functionality. On the other hand, some low-level secret techniques, due to only enhancing the vital energy and blood regulation in the practitioner's body, were able to show decent results.

As for the Living Secret Technique, it overall only had made small improvements to the body, nothing else.

In actuality, since Garen was born, he felt there was something off about this world.

It wasn't the fundamental construction of this world, but rather the environment of this world, it felt as if the Earth, the Secret Technique World, the Totem World, all of them seem to be slightly different.

Especially when he tried out his secret techniques, in his memory, there were easily hundreds of secret techniques that he knew, but when trying them out, he noticed that at a microscopic level, when his blood cells generate friction, or rather when matter generates friction, the amount of heat created was slightly smaller.

To put it simply, the degree of heat generated from friction was definitely smaller as compared to his past three worlds.

As the strongest Grandmaster of Combat, 6th form totem user that with a God-like existence in the Totem World, he definitely has the experience and expertise to notice even these minuscule changes.

However, this world seemed out of place to him.

Friction causes heat, this was one of the most basic concepts of the Laws of Conservation of Energy, if this had changed... It can only mean one of two things: the matter itself had been changed, or the blood cells in his body had been changed.

After two more months, Garen finally developed enough strength, he took his own diaper and started rubbing it on surrounding objects. After being grabbed and swaddled numerous times by his bearded father, he finally arrived at a conclusion to his little experiment.

It was not an issue with his own body, it was this entire world...

Not only that, there were also minor changes to the laws of physics that he once knew. This led Garen to come up with a few hypotheses.

He might be in a whole other universe right now.

Even he found this hypothesis laughable. This might also possibly be the effect caused by a change in the planet itself, but this could only be confirmed at a later stage.

Even if he managed to confirm this fact, what could he do? At this point, he was merely a baby, there was no meaning in pondering about the universe and the wider scale of things, but rather he should focus more on the development of his body and find a suitable gate of secret techniques to start his training in.

In his countless attempts trying out the secret techniques, Garen kept using his attributes ability to check his rate of growth. He also started to observe the environment surrounding this newborn's family.

As for the issue of language, Garen, who was fluent in more than 10 languages, was easily able to figure out the cadence and linguistic form of the language. Even though his body had not yet matured, just based on an infant's level of intellectual maturity, he was still able to swiftly grasp foundations of the native language.

His name was decided on the 2nd week, at that point Garen was able to make some simple audible syllables, so he kept repeating the 2 syllables "Ga-ren". After frustratingly declining every new name his parents came up with, they finally saw how insistent Garen was about this name, hence deciding on the name. The name was, of course, "Garen".

The environment of this world, or rather this planet, was normal. It was at the technological level of the Earth, as well as its degree of civilization, but this family seemed to be a bit special.

His father, Emmer Thomas, was a University Professor, he was gentle and wise, a pacifist, had a bushy beard and glasses, and had a soft personality. For the sake of his ecology research, he brought his family to live in seclusion in a small, remote town.

His mother, Trish Jeff, was a Psychologist. She was one of those people who applied her psychological training in her daily life. She was kind and understanding, but had an independent personality and a strong personal stance. She could be extremely kind, but when she got angry, she will be strict and harsh.

There was also Garen's blood-related brother, Jason Thomas. This lad was 4 years old this year and had on numerous occasions tried to poke Garen with a stick while he was resting in the crib. He had a cheeky personality, at the start, he would be beaten up by their mother Trish every few days. Now that she was recovering on her maternal break, she was going to him daily. Luckily, under his father's gentle guidance and persuasive education, he spent every day undergoing ideological education. With the combined efforts from both sides, even taking up Jason's playtime, he finally realized his mistakes and apologized to his parents in tears. He promised to be a good boy from then on and turn over a new leaf, no longer harassing his younger brother, resolving this entire issue.

The Thomas household lived in a remote location in North America, isolated from the rest of the world and surrounded by woods. The air over here was fresh, and definitely made for a great retirement home.

Apparently, in this world, there was also an America. He learned this information while eavesdropping on his parents' conversations, but he had no other information on this. However, the description feels quite similar to his original world, but there was still no word on the existence of oriental and eastern nations like China.

The small town they were living in was miles away from the city, as in, up to 1000 kilometers miles away. It was the very definition of being in isolation. The name of the town was Grano.

After vaguely getting a feel for his surroundings, Garen returned his focus to regaining his potential and strength.

Remembering the last crisis in the Totem World, he started to suspect that this might be due to the change in the surrounding environment, causing secret techniques to lose their compatibility. The

weakening of the Living Secret Technique might also be attributed to the limitations of the environment. Luckily his soul seed wasn't get affected, and functioned like a perpetual motion machine, slowly emitting influential nutrients deep within his soul as if it were slowly increasing Garen's soul limit.

One's soul limit was the deciding factor about the maximum attribute point cap one's body could achieve at a genetic level.

In the Secret Technique World, he was able to increase his attribute point to multiple times that of an average individual; whilst in the Totem world, he was able to manipulate his body and absorb the consciousness of the Nine-Headed Hydra, increasing his attributes up to 10+ points.

To put it simply, it was precisely his soul limit that decided the final strength he can achieve.

Originally thinking that the soul seed was no longer of any use to him, finding out that the soul seed could raise his soul limit made Garen burst with joy.

If he could increase his attribute limit to 100 points, he would attain unimaginable power.

Unfortunately, the evil technique of this soul seed worked very slowly. According to his calculations, Garen estimated that it would require at least a year to raise just one attribute point.

As the attributes got stronger, the potential points required were also higher, this was an issue that Garen hadn't found a solution to as of yet. However, this world looked nothing out of the ordinary, and seemed that there weren't any unnatural powers present in this world. There were only average people around.

Since there weren't any risky factors, he decided to temporarily take time to decide on his actions. Without the existence of unnatural powers, the source of potential points would be another problem.

Chapter 569: Youth 1

In a small bedroom with a yellow wooden floor.

A small blue-eyed baby was in a cradle, barely standing with one hand holding the wooden support, looking out the windows at the branches swaying in the wind. Outside the window, there was a giant ash tree, swaying with each gust of wind. On the branches, two palm-sized sparrows were cheerfully chirping about.

The still hairless Garen was just staring at the sparrows, clad with nothing but a towel wrapped around his butt and holding on to a small leather ball, he looked on in a state of distractedness. He was still considering his options for secret techniques.

"From the list of secret techniques I have learned, after sorting them out according to their functionality and then attempting to integrate them into this body, only 53 secret techniques remain. Then, from these 53 gates' secret techniques, sorting them up by their typings, taking into account their strengths and their compatibility with this body, there would only be 13 gates left."

Garen frowned while rubbing his chin.

"There are essentially a few different methods of secret technique selection. One, based on their special effects, the effects after training in these sets of techniques where one would be able to produce special effects like the Red Jade Palm or the Toxic Sand Palm. Two, based on their base advantage, wherein after training in these sets of techniques, one's speed, vitality, defense, attack and other stats can attain special enhancements. Three, based on balance, these types of techniques have no extremities, and unleashes the overall potential of the body, gives one longevity and significantly enhances one's spiritual strength."

"The Living Secret Technique had naturally turned from the first type to the third type, and it has now become a technique purely for one's health. The only bad thing about this is that it works very slowly, due to the fact that it had to spread out its potency evenly to all attributes, naturally slowing it down."

Garen was looking through the 13 gates of secret techniques he had narrowed down.

"Due to the changes in my body caused by the Frost-Fire True Water Evil Technique, it's still best for me to train in Ice-type abilities. I might as well just pick base on special effects. Being able to still use secret techniques in another world should probably still be counted in the categories that are derived from physical laws of this world."

"Within the 13 gates of secret techniques, there were only 2 under the special effects type, the Black Claw of Sethe and Andelina's Capture. The Black Claw of Sethe has 4 levels, it's an Ice-Poison attribute secret technique, after every level, the Ice-Poison attribute would be strengthened. As for Andelina's Capture, although it may sound like a technique to capture targets, in reality, it's a technique that creates multiple ice needles, creating a wall of Ice Spikes."

After a bit of hesitation, Garen still picked the Black Claw of Sethe.

Squeak...

The room door opened, his mother Trish walked in dressed in a white blouse and gently started helping Garen change his diaper. The 4-year-old Jason was standing at the side, watching with a strange sense of amusement glowing from his face.

Bonk....

Garen threw the ball in his hand without any hesitation, hitting Jason right in the face.

Wah!!!

The cheeky boy escaped the room in tears.

"Jason, Jason! Stop!" Their mother Trish shouted.

"Oh heavens, what a little devil you are, being able to bully your older brother even at this age, I can't even imagine what you'd do in the future." Trish furiously glared as she pinched Garen's cheeks. After rapidly changing his diapers, she ran off to chase after Jason.

Thus, Garen was once again alone in the room.

He was still standing in the white cradle, continuing on with his previous thoughts

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"All of these secret techniques I have narrowed down, they're all at absurdly high-leveled secret techniques, with power comparable to even the heavenly figures. Even for the Black Claw of Sethe, it's still not secret technique completely compatible with this body yet, I still need to train in order to understand the details of it. Maybe I can combine it with some concepts from other secret techniques."

He started brainstorming again.

As time slowly passed, Garen lived his life in this boring manner, with his mother Trish beside him, reading the latest International Journal of Psychology on her laptop whilst taking care of Garen who rarely cried or threw tantrums.

Usually, when Garen cried once, it means he was hungry. When he cried twice, it meant that he needs to use the potty, and when he cried thrice, it means that the swaddle wrapped around him felt uncomfortable. As compared to the neighbor's kid, Serin, who was born a few months earlier, this saved Garen's parents a lot of hassle.

However, this kind of boring routine lifestyle was absolute torture for Garen. Luckily, after a few more months, his father Emmer made a set of early education resources, planning on starting Garen's early learning.

"Don't you think it's too early? Don't babies usually only start learning phonemes at the age of 2 or 3?" Trish said while folding Garen's baby clothes.

"Have you ever seen a baby crawling at a month old?" Emmer countered while looking through the prepared materials and resources.

"But I asked one of my friends who was a child specialist, she said that usually a baby should only start engaging in early language education at a few years old. If we start off too early, they will just forget what they learned as they grow up."

"Have you ever seen a baby crawling at a month old?" Emmer asked as he picked up one of the selected books and skimmed through its contents.

"Doing this may lead to the kid being placed under too much pressure, his attention span is still small, he's only four years old after all!" Trish said in front of Emmer, with her arms crossed.

"Have you ever seen a baby crawling at a month old?" Emmer raised his voice and put down the book he was holding. "I suspect that our child is a prodigy!" He exclaimed seriously.

"Alright, alright. Every parent would want to believe their child is a prodigy, or was a prodigy." Trish helplessly sat down.

"Then, let's try it out." Emmer placed the prepared education materials in front of Garen, the cover page was filled with fancy colourful images.

"Let's start with the basic phonemes, then the alphabet." Emmer planned everything deliberately, his previous experience with Jason made him feel confident in his plans.

Garen opened his eyes wide, he felt that he shouldn't be too extraordinary, it would be better if he pretended to be a bit more "normal" for now.

"The first alphabet, 'a...'" Emmer opened his mouth at Garen.

"..."

"a..."

"..."

As such, the pair continued to stare intently at each other.

His mother Trish stood up, speechless, and walked out. After a short moment, she returned with another baby, swaddled in a red blanket and placed her into the cradle as well.

"This is the neighboring Serin, her mother just went outstation. Mr Walter needed people for the Public Security Team, so she asked us to take care of her child for a couple of days."

Lil' Serin was about a couple months older than Garen, and after being placed in the cradle, all she did was sit, motionless, staring curiously at Garen with her jet black eyes.

"If you're gonna teach Garen, you might as well teach both of them." Trish said, then walked off to read her theses.

"'a...' Repeat after me, 'a...'" Emmer didn't give up on his attempt.

"..."

"Come on, look at me, look into your dad's eyes, you're a prodigy, you're a prodigy, you're a prodigy you're a prodigy youareprodigygyouareprodigy..." Emmer's expectations started to crumble.

"k."

Emmer suddenly jolted in excitement.

"No, not 'k', it's 'a...', look at my mouth shape."

"k..."

Garen followed his mouth shape, but for some weird reason the sound that came out was still "k..."

"Oh my God!! Trish!! Trish!!" His dad was a broken man, he threw the book down and went over to call his wife.

Garen uninterestedly shook his head, then turned his head to look at Serin.

At this age, the baby would still be bald, like him, and distinct facial features would not have been developed yet, so he couldn't tell what she would look like in the future.

"I guess it'd be better for me to focus on my secret techniques..."

He once again placed his attention back on his secret techniques and attribute abilities.

Looking at his attributes:

"Garen Thomas: Strength 0.2, Agility 0.2, Vitality 0.3, Intelligence 0.4, Potential 0%."

"How poor..." he helplessly sighed. What about his Skill Pane?

"Soul Type: Northern Frost-Fire True Water Evil Technique -- 1 attribute point limit increase per year. Innate Vitality change leaning towards Frost-Steel types."

"Secret Techniques: None"

After that, the list ended.

This body didn't have any skills, and all his potential points were exhausted in the Mother Stream.

Well, since he already picked a secret technique, Garen started to focus his energy on his first introductory training of the secret techniques.

The Black Claw of Sethe had 4 levels, the first level required very specific commands, postures, and mental concentration, combined to precisely manipulate one's vital energy and blood. Only then will one be initiated into the secret technique.

However, for Garen, having to go through all that trouble, his soul's strongest strength was that it was his body's vital energy and blood through neurons. This was actually a specialty of a Grandmaster of Combat - Aura.

After concentrating energy into an aura, the soul would gain authority to use said aura to manipulate the body. In other words, a soul's strength could only be utilized through auras, otherwise it was no different than that of the average individual, using their soul as a form of consciousness to control their thoughts and replicate everyday actions, unable to control one's body with extreme precision.

"The first level of the Black Claw of Sethe can train and improve one's heart, slowly improving the blood typing. This requires one to absorb the cold at 12 midnight every night when the temperature is at its lowest. This is to get the body used to the cold, so it does not harm the body. With proper special vital energy and blood regulation, one can achieve the manipulation of vital energy and blood, without harming the body in the process." Garen thought to himself in a logical manner.

"Usually this requires a lot of strengthening from things like medication, but since my body has already been changed by evil techniques, this bit of cold won't even bother me. All I need to do now is to accordingly absorb the cold everyday at 12 midnight."

After making that decision, Garen started to lie down to get some rest, completely ignoring Serin who was right next to him. This was his first introduction into the secret techniques, and would set a foundation for his skills in the future. He had to be extremely careful, after all, he was still only a few months old, his body must still be insanely weak.

After awakening from his sleep in the afternoon, his mother Trish came in to feed him some milk. However, he still felt hungry, so she gave him 2 more bottles of Camel's milk, only then was Garen satisfied and went back to bed.

In the evening, his father Emmer came in once again, thinking of attempting his early education once again. But as he noticed that Garen sound asleep, he quietly left him to wash his diapers.

His mother Trish was in the room, occasionally checking if Lil' Serin had wet the bed. Most of her time was spent on reading the theses written in her journal. As for Lil' Jason, he was squatting in the living room completely focused on his cartoons.

As the night fell, the sky through the window slowly turned from white to gray, then slowly darker, and finally turning pitch black, with countless stars spread all over the night sky.

This room was on the second floor, and visible from it was a small town road, where a couple of cars would occasionally pass by. Yellow and white headlights kept flashing on the ceiling as each car passed through. The faint bickering of children also came in through the window, along with the cries of dogs and cats.

Trish surfed the web under the desk lamp, up till late at night, before washing up and going to bed with his husband.

After the two eventually fell asleep, Garen suddenly opened his eyes, waking up in the cradle.

He crawled out from his swaddle, looked over at Serin who was still next to him. That girl was still sleeping soundly.

The clock on the wall neared twelve o'clock.

Garen's upper body was completely naked, wearing only a diaper, he was sitting at the edge of the cradle, slowly awaiting the designated time.

In the darkness, the only source of light was the streetlight from outside the window, shining dimly on the ceiling.

Outside, a car drove past. Garen could hear the muffled sound of the car radio, and a young couple cheerfully bantering.

Garen was sitting in the cradle, putting his hands together to form some complicated hand signs, which looked like an unruly tree branch in the shape of an "L", but also somewhat like an "A".

His body was seated in a cross-legged position, with one eye open and the other shut.

As every minute and every second passed, Garen maintained his posture, motionless, like a statue. However, in actual fact, his hand signs were changing with each of his heartbeats

Dong... Dong... Dong...

Midnight had come.

Garen's heart suddenly vibrated, then stopped for an instant, before starting to beat at a steady, but even faster pace.

He concentrated his aura and controlled the regulation of his body's vital energy and blood carefully and precisely.

"Level 1 of the Black Claw of Sethe - Heart of Frost"

On the skill pane, the secret techniques tab finally changed from "none", a complicated light red symbol started to form, its shape looking similar to Garen's first hand sign, in the shape of an "L", but also somewhat like an "A".

"Secret Techniques:

The Black Claw of Sethe -- LV1 Heart of Frost 1%(1/4)"

He stayed in this position for a few more minutes. Garen then quickly recovered from his training, and felt sore all over. Looking at his skill pane, he can't help but let out a small grin.

Chapter 570: Youth 2

"1% huh, getting 1% improvement just from the 1st training, that's not bad." After all, all the secret techniques he picked out of his expert memory were not just any random simple secret technique. If they weren't one discovered by the ancients, it would be a high-leveled secret technique developed by the major gates in the world of Wushu.

Not only that, all of the selected secret techniques had a common trait; they are all secret techniques that Garen could not "see through". At his level of expertise, an average secret technique could be effortlessly mimicked by him, even without training. Only secret techniques that were at an extremely high level or self-pioneered in a field that Garen had no experience in could not be "seen through" by him.

The Black Claw of Sethe was what he accidentally discovered from his travels with Andrela when he returned to the Secret Technique World. It was one of the 20 gates of secret techniques that made Garen hit a brick wall when trying to mimic.

Based on his own experience, he tweaked some minor details of it to improve the overall effect of it, but even then, he was still excited to witness the tangible effects of this skill.

This secret technique should at least be a God-tier level advanced secret technique, since even with his expertise he still couldn't see through its secrets, the effect must be well above average.

After finishing his 1st training, Garen didn't dare to be greedy. No matter how good the food was, eating excessively would still lead to indigestion. Everything must be done in moderation.

After cleaning up a bit, he lied down and went back to bed.

As the days passed, Garen continued his routine of eating, drinking, sleeping, training, then repeat.

This dull and mechanical lifestyle, along with having to pretend to be a baby in light of his dad's early education, he had to find ways to seek pleasure in this miserable life. His only joy in this lifestyle was trying to play with Lil' Serin, who was occasionally brought over, or just bullying his brother Jason Thomas.

His mother Trish would occasionally be busy with a website for posting her theses. This was her primary source of income, for a good thesis, every time someone bought, downloaded or read it, she would get a large portion of the earnings.

His father also recruited a new research student recently, every day he went out with this young lady, running around, claiming it was in the name of research.

Garen couldn't believe his mother was worried about his father getting along with that beautiful young lady. In fact, she was completely calm about it.

This household was still calm as usual.

Garen steadily practiced the Black Claw of Sethe every day, and had consistent improvement, with almost a 1% improvement every day. He felt that the rate of growth really was absurdly quick, it must have had something to do with this modified body being extremely compatible with this gate of secret techniques.

According to the records on this Secret Technique, finishing level 1 would at least take 10 years.

However, at his rate of growth, he only needed slightly more than 100 days to complete the level 1 foundation training. He was truly a genius of geniuses.

In such a peaceful environment with no threats or safety issues, even Garen started to become fully immersed in his training.

About three months swiftly passed.

Lil' Serin, who was occasionally brought over, had also learned how to crawl, making intelligible sounds while frolicking in the crib.

In comparison, Garen was already able to stand up steadily in the cradle and walk on two feet. He also started to grow blonde hair like his mother's.

A blue-eyed blonde, with skin as white as milk. Except for his dislike of speaking, Garen was no different from a normal baby. His pretending was largely based on Lil' Serin's actions, who should be slightly older than him, thus he should be considered normal.

His mother also found an early education cartoon from somewhere and played it on loop in Garen's room every day.

Garen was also living quite the carefree life, no one was paying much attention to him, so he could focus completely on his internal body. Whenever there seemed to be a problem with a part of his body, he could immediately use his aura to manipulate his vital energy and blood to regulate the area. As a top-level Grandmaster of Combat, he had no problems in completely understanding the structure and inner mechanisms of his body.

His life was very relaxing, occasionally having his parents' friends or neighbors coming over to pay a visit. Garen was also occasionally brought outside to get some fresh air and sunshine. This allowed him to gain some information about the town.

The whole town is in the shape of a gigantic circle, surrounded by luscious greenery. In the middle of it all was a town center. Every night, there would be a gathering among the seniors of the town to banter or play cards and chess.

The town was deep in the woods, and it was said to be the originally built up by the natives. However, due to external influence and the advancement of technology, the scale of the town kept expanding. Now it was a small town with a population size in the millions.

The town had a church, with the Reverend Father and the Mayor being the most respected people in this town, every major decision would be made by them. The town also has a Public Security Team, in charge of the security of the town and also to drive out the wildlife from the forest that entered the town.

Garen also discovered that most of the townspeople were hunters or lumberjacks, and most of them also had their own land and use to farm their own grain and vegetables for food. There was also a beach nearby with a decently sized fishing market, and the fishermen often sent some seafood over to the town for sale. Occasionally, there would also be tourists who came here to visit. It was even considered a decent source of income.

To put it simply, this seemed like a Heaven on Earth, everyone living here was content and law-abiding, while foreign businesses attempting to enter for profit were all driven out by the locals.

The townspeople locals, permanent residents, and foreigners who were brought back by locals, like wives who married in. This included doctors, lawyers, restaurant owners, teachers and all sorts of other professions, creating the unique structure and exclusivity of this town.

Garen's was reborn into the Thomas household, who were considered quite well-known within this area. After all, it was a university professor and a psychologist who decided to move into this small town to settle down. In the eyes of the townspeople, this was major news.

Many people wanted to speak to this group of intellectuals, hoping some of their geni would rub off on them.

Every year before Christmas, they would also receive countless gifts.

Garen was still unsure about this world, but not only did it contain America, it also had holidays like Christmas. He even heard a few mentions of England and other terms.

This made him wonder if he had returned to Earth.

However, there was once his parents left him alone, he immediately seized the opportunity to use his mother's laptop, pretending to randomly press stuff, while searching for information like the world map.

To his surprise, he found a map of this world. It looked similar to Earth, but at the same time, there were major differences.

The area of the 5 continents were much larger than Earth's, the sea as well, it was almost 2 times the size of the Earth. Just as he was staring at the map in shock, Trish walked back in.

"Don't go so near, there's radiation." Trish quickly took away the laptop in fear of harming the child's eyes.

Garen was placed back into the cradle, allowing his mother to freely change his diaper while he was thinking intently.

After all, he was quite free every day. A baby's energy seems to be limitless with no place to expend it on. Except for his Black Claw of Sethe - LV1 Heart of Frost training every night, he had nothing else to do.

"Putting all information together, this world might be a planet similar to Earth but in a parallel universe, but I have no idea why the planet would be so much bigger in size."

Garen refused to believe that there would be 2 planets with so many similarities within one universe, and there was also the matter of the laws of physics being different in this world. He started to confirm his suspicion.

"This world and this universe, might not even be my original universe anymore..."

He felt that continuing on doing nothing would be too boring, so he sneakily took the laptop and started to look up more information about this alternate earth.

As compared to the pile of early education resources his dad had found, doing self-learning online courses was much faster.

Kindergarten, primary school, lower-secondary school, he swiftly breezed through these courses. All he needed to do was vaguely skim through it, his soul's memory could remember every image it saw with just a glance.

However, as he was about to start his upper-secondary school course, his parents confiscated the laptop with the reason being they were afraid him using it too much would affect his sight and health.

Even though he had just been playing around with the laptop for a couple of days.

As such, his boring life continued on. Soon, Garen was already 2 years old.

From the cradle to his first running steps, to being able to dress, eat and use the toilet all by himself, the 2-year-old Garen was exhibiting terrifying early maturation and independence. He never threw tantrums, and was not a picky eater. Coupled with his glowing blonde hair, milk-white skin and big blue eyes, he became a hot topic around the town.

A lot of his parents friends liked to come visit and play with Lil' Garen.

Garen also started to show his talents in speaking, at 2 years old, while other children were childishly speaking, his sentences seemed to be deliberate, complex and well-structured, all whilst still being fluent in his expression.

Even his height was just slightly shorter than his 6-year-old brother Jason. Jason's face was filled with acne and he was filled with energy every day. He spent his time causing trouble, whilst his brother Garen preferred to read quietly or listening to music. The two formed a stark contrast.

Obviously, the younger Garen naturally became the favorite of his parents. This seemed to cause a mental imbalance in Jason.

Whoosh...

With one swift swipe, Jason took all the lollipops given by the neighbors into his pockets, then cheekily walked over to Garen looking at him.

"All the lollipops the Uncle Walter gave us belongs to me!" he loudly exclaimed.

"Idiot."

Garen expressionlessly said as he walked past his brother.

Jason stood there motionlessly, as if he was struck by lightning. After a long while, he looked over in the direction his brother left.

"Garen how dare you insult me! I'm your brother! Let me come punish you right now!"

He shouted as he charged over towards Garen.

Two minutes later...

"Mama..." Jason left Garen's room in tears, running towards their parents' room.

"How many times has it been? He still had no improvements..." Garen said condescendingly while shaking his head.

On the surface, his current body's seemed to be comparable to a 5 or 6 year old boy, but in reality, his body has far exceeded that of a child, all his stats are already almost at 0.8, almost at an adult's level of strength.

This was one of the advantages of the Heart of Frost, all of his organs had an abnormal, but steady pace of growth, becoming stronger and stronger, effectively working with the Living Secret Technique's constant modification of the blood cells and his heart.

He did not know how long these kinds of modifications will require, but with the effects of the Heart of Frost, his heart has started to show signs of frosting. This sense of cold usually concentrated in his chest, but it would occasionally split and move through the bloodstream.

Once the modification of his heart is complete, this 1st level would have completely reached its peak, then it would be time for him to start his training for the next level.