

Mystical 751

Chapter 751

A few days later...

The Blood Breeds had sent people to every corner without holding back, in search of Dahm and Hochman's whereabouts. However, there were no traces of Death Apostles.

The Holy Fist Palace was hindered by their outdated and deficient intelligence fields. They did not know the exact whereabouts of the Death Apostles and could only wait silently while secretly dispatching manpower and reinforcements. The obstructions by the Blood Breeds resulted in a great reduction of their strength.

Both sides had clashed with each other in a few cities many times. However, they had restrained themselves from creating large-scale conflicts and only confined themselves to localized standoffs.

The weather in America gradually entered spring. During this time, Ninox, who had just returned from Grano, had finally brought Raffaele and a few of her other relatives back. They entered the village residence at the foot of a mountain near Holy Fist Palace.

"This is Holy Fist Palace?" Raffaele raised her head and looked at the lofty snowy white mountain. It was impossible to see the mountain peak as large clusters of white clouds were clustered together, forming a sea of clouds that obstructed her vision while they drifted around the mountainside.

The person who was walking in front and guiding them answered frantically.

"Yes, this is the headquarters of Holy Fist Palace. It is also the Temple of the Waterbird Fist and Shooting Shadow Fist."

All three guides were fully dressed in black robes. Ninox wore the same outfit and walked in the center before turning her head and smiling at Raffaele after hearing what she had asked.

“Master already knows that you’re here and has prepared the banquet at the mountain top already. The next mountain path will probably require a climb of at least two hours. Of course, we will be using a cable car near the top of the mountain for part of the journey to make it more relaxing.”

“Isn’t there a public road that leads up the mountain here?” Raffaele felt slightly doubtful. She had to climb the mountain alone while the rest were left in the village at the foot of the mountain.

“We had planned to construct one initially but decided against that to preserve the original appearance of the mountain. Moreover, climbing up this mountain on foot also served as a form of training for many martial arts practitioners. This training is beneficial towards both the mind and body. Therefore, no one has bothered to repair the road anymore,” replied Ninox while smiling.

The line of people continued to move forward while walking along the mountain path. Throughout their journey, they would occasionally encounter martial arts practitioners who were going down the mountain.

Most of them were young people that were being led by a specially assigned leader. They were all dressed in black robes that made them resemble religious pilgrims with pious expressions on their faces.

They could occasionally see single martial artists. These people would have determined looks on their withered faces. Moreover, their skinny bodies would be covered in torn clothes while their faces would be sunken and yellow, making them look extremely poor. They would continue inching up the mountain while facing greater heights and colder thinner air without a single sign of cowardice on their faces.

Fortunately, the mountain path was clearly broadened already. It was seven to eight meters wide and neat white steps were built there as well. A few white semi-circular stone pavilions were built within a certain distance from each other, allowing people to rest there.

Along the way, Raffaele looked as if her mind was secretly frightened.

These martial artists were all normal humans who did not have the force fields of Blood Breeds or Witches around their bodies. However, they continued to display determined expressions despite clearly being normal humans.

It was rumored that although Holy Fist Palace had only been built for a few years, incredibly sincere disciples had already appeared. One could only imagine the importance of this powerful organization in the hearts of the human martial arts practitioners.

“These are ascetics. After the recent World Fistfighting Exchange Assembly at Holy Fist Palace, Master’s reputation as the World Fistfighting Master began to spread. As the only remaining great martial arts master, many ascetic martial artists would come over to humbly seek his teachings,” Ninox explained. “According to the rules of Holy Fist Palace, ascetics who are able to hike up Holy Fist Mountain on foot and reach Holy Fist Palace without any supplies will be qualified to take a free examination to enter the palace.”

“Isn’t this actually very simple? There are only two mountainous paths that will only take a few hours to climb up. A regular person would be able to hike up the mountain on foot as long as they were slightly more robust than normal,” Raffaele was rather puzzled.

“If only it were that simple. Walk this way.” Ninox guided Raffaele to the left, away from the path of the ascetics before walking on a different road that seemed more leveled. On the road, they could see many people climbing down the mountain, making the stream of people much denser than before. Most of these people seemed to possess exuberant spirits and ample vigor. They were outfitted with various ornaments and equipment. Some of them even had the faint smell of blood wafting from their bodies.

When they saw how Ninox and the others were dressed, most of the people who were walking down the mountain gave way immediately. They saluted them faintly and waited for the group to pass as a sign of their respect before continuing their journey.

“This place is the real mountain path that leads upwards. Meanwhile, the ascetics travel forward on the road that we were using earlier,” Ninox only replied after returning the salutes of others.

“Are there any differences?” asked Raffaele in a slightly curious tone.

“Of course there are differences, big ones in fact,” Ninox smiled. “Watchmen are placed along the path of the ascetics at certain distance intervals. They are elderly disciples who are participating in voluntarily ascetic practices within Holy Fist Palace. They will test the ascetics after a specific distance. Furthermore, some of these tests are unbelievably dangerous and even life-threatening. For instance, one of the tests requires them to walk a distance of two meters along a precipice that is only the width of a palm. The slightest mistake will send them falling into an abyss. This is a test of courage and carefulness while there are others that will test one’s willpower,” a desolate but respectful look appeared on Ninox’s face.

One of the guides beside her could not help but interrupt.

“Those who are able to pass the tests and arrive at Holy Fist Palace are definitely outstanding elites. They will usually be instantly promoted as official members who are free to choose to enter any of the three great departments that consist of the combat club, Nighthawks, or the Holy Fist Palace headquarters.”

“That’s amazing, right?” Raffaele was slightly intrigued. As a Sun Witch, she had always been unconcerned about the powers of normal people. However, after seeing the proud look on the other person’s face while she was speaking currently, she was unable to control her mouth and asked the question suddenly.

“Of course!”

That person was a girl who possessed a competitive temperament.

“Only the two great marshalls and the Four Major Generals are qualified to practice the Royal Fist Technique. Its powers are completely beyond your imagination!”

Raffaele smiled but was slightly unconvinced. Although she had heard that Holy Fist Palace was indeed very powerful, those rumors were only based on the great strength of the Holy Fist. Was it really possible that he managed to cultivate subordinates that were equally strong within a few short years? She did not believe it.

However, her expression froze quickly when she saw a few familiar figures walking down the mountain.

They were the Blood Breed witnesses that she had once met at the Witches meeting. They were previously members of the Light Party and one of them was an old Middle-level Blood Breed woman. She was currently walking down the mountain with a calm expression on her face. Apparently, the other woman did not recognize her as Raffaele had initially belonged to the Lower level. The difference between them was too great and they did not have any chance to socialize at all.

As she watched the old woman stroll down the mountain slowly, the shock in Raffaele's heart increased suddenly.

Soon, she saw more Blood Breeds that were emitting Middle and Lower level Qi while walking down the mountain. They were speaking casually and happily with a few people who looked like completely unassuming regular humans. Apparently, they were all on equal footing.

This caused her small mouth to gape open slightly.

Ninox and the others looked at her while faint feelings of pride and dignity flashed through their minds.

The line of people quickened their footsteps and climbed up the mountain hurriedly. They soon arrived at the location of the cable car. After providing the proof, they clambered into the cable cars before traveling up the mountain along the sturdy steel cords speedily.

When the steel cords passed through the sea of clouds, the entire stretch of whiteness around them made it impossible to see the edges.

An intrigued expression flashed in Raffaele's eyes.

"How beautiful..."

"Of course," Ninox smiled.

Time ticked by before the cable car approached the Holy Fist Palace quickly. The lofty and huge white building gradually became bigger while a large cylindrical passage spouted white gas that resembled water outwards continuously.

"What is that, the thing that is coming out?" Raffaele pointed towards the white gas and asked.

"A specialized gas. It's a type of gas that is extracted from the insides of the mountain. Since the temperature here is too low, the difference between the temperature of the water inside is too great,

forming this white gas that gushes out. In reality, it is merely a normal ventilation installation,” answered Ninox patiently.

As the steel cords approached slowly, a few other cars in front of them that traveled downwards along the steel cords had appeared.

There was a person in a thick coat who was with a few of his subordinates. There was a somewhat uncomfortable look on his face as he sat in the cable car.

Raffaele glanced at one of the people before feeling her heart jump suddenly when a brutal Qi radiated from their bodies naturally. He glanced over unexpectedly and it seemed as if a ray of white light flashed in his eyes suddenly when he looked over.

Raffaele’s mind was shocked and she lowered her head immediately. She had gained a new understanding of the strength of Holy Fist Palace.

The convoy got down from the car and entered the palace while being guided by the people in charge. They passed through various areas before entering the inner cavity of the mountain.

Half an hour later, Raffaele was finally taken into an area that was filled with little warm water fountains everywhere.

A familiar figure was standing in front of a bright stone hall there, waiting for her.

Ninox took her into the stone hall and stopped walking before leaving quietly. Once she had entered the stone hall, the stone door behind Raffaele was quietly closed, and she was alone in the room with Garen.

There was a large wall of floor-length glass on the other side of the white stone hall. It was possible to see the endless sea of white clouds there, making it seem as if one was standing up high in the clouds.

"Long time no see, Raffaele," the figure turned around and looked at her calmly. The person was wearing a mask on his face, but Raffaele was able to recognize his voice and tone immediately as the same Garen that she'd once known.

"Yes, long time no see. How many years has it been since we last met?" Raffaele walked towards a chair beside Garen and sat down.

It looked as if he was still stuck in his old ways. He still looked like a regular person from the past. However, she understood that his current self was far from the simple identity that he'd once possessed in the beginning. Perhaps he never had never been simple from the start.

"Almost a year and two months," answered Garen casually. "Since you've come all this way, you should rest properly here. There will be people who are in charge of going down the mountain to buy anything you need. You could even go to the little village at the foot of the mountain if you want."

"Are Uncle Emmer and little sister Vivien there?" Emotions stirred inside Raffaele's eyes slightly.

"They're both in the little village at the bottom of the mountain," Garen did not conceal anything.

"I'll go and be with them then," said Raffaele while lowering her head and biting her lip. "Frankly, I'm not in the position to say this, but the things between us ended quietly a long time ago, right?"

"Who knows?" Garen chuckled before lifting her chin gently. "Stay with my family for me. It's inconvenient for me to accompany them constantly now, and you're the only one who can help me."

"Don't do this," anger flashed in Raffaele's eyes before she pushed Garen's hand away. "I don't like actions like that. They make me feel very disrespected."

"Alright," Garen was slightly shocked. Only then did he remember that Raffaele had finally become one of the leaders of the Witches. "Okay, you should go and rest for a while first. I still have things to sort out."

“Okay,” Raffaele turned around and walked out of the main door of the stone hall quickly with slightly flushed cheeks.

Suddenly, she felt her waist tighten as her waist was embraced by Garen from behind. Next, a slightly warm feeling began to creep up her neck.

“Don’t worry, I will take care of everything,” Garen’s voice echoed behind her.

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Raffaele’s entire body turned numb and her cheeks became red at once. A look of uncertainty flashed in her eyes before turning into a firm expression immediately.

“I know.”

Her voice sounded like the buzz of a mosquito when she replied and she broke free of Garen’s embrace suddenly before she pushed the door open and left.

She shut the stone door behind her.

Raffaele was led towards her own room by one of the people in charge.

Behind the young female guide, she hung her head while somewhat heavy feelings filled her mind.

“For the mission of the Witch King Mother... Lion Mother... Protected me so that I can finish this task successfully...” countless complicated ideas drifted through her mind continuously.

As she regulated and controlled her own consciousness, she slowly sank into a state of half confusion and could only follow the young woman and walk forward instinctively.

While she remained in this state, a faint voice echoed throughout her mind suddenly.

“Hong Ji, you did extremely well and without raising Garen’s suspicions.”

“Witch King Mother?!” joy stirred within Raffaele’s heart suddenly before her mind shouted out internally.

“Don’t worry, although that person is extremely powerful, he is still not an undefeatable Death Apostle. As long as he is not a Death Apostle, he will definitely have flaws. You merely need to wait for the right opportunity and be more patient... Patience...” that voice disappeared slowly.

Raffaele finally knew that the Lion Mother had left when her mind regained consciousness in a somewhat frustrated manner suddenly. She was one of the forty-five Witch Lion Mother’s daughters who had been chosen as members of this plan, and the most important member as well.

Once she thought of her mission, Hong Ji became even more determined at once.

When she thought of the possibility of having to go up against a few innocent subordinates who were merely normal people, an unbearable feeling bubbled up inside her heart. However, it was immediately suppressed forcefully.

“Holy Fist Palace is the source of all chaos and Holy Fist Garen is the origin of Holy Fist Palace. This is to ensure that the order of the world returns to conformity... Everything that I do is for order...”

When she thought of this, sacred splendor appeared in the depths of her eyes once again.

“Now all I have to do now is to observe the internal situation of Holy Fist Palace for a while, as it’s best to clarify all the divisions of strength and forces. After that, I’ll go to the foot of the mountain again...” a plan formed in her heart quickly.

Inside the stone hall

Garen stood beside one of the stone pillars that was next to the fountain in the center with a calm expression on his face. A Blood Breed subordinate in black clothes was currently standing beside him and reporting the situation quietly.

“...investigated all of the related areas and searched high and low in all of the places where it could possibly exist. As of now, we have not received any information on Marshall Dahm,” the male Blood Breed covered his face, making it impossible to see his expression while he reported everything in a low voice.

“The reporting division confirmed that they lost him three days ago? What about Caesar?” Garen’s eyebrows were slightly furrowed.

“Since Sir Caesar had to arrange for follow-up tasks to wrap everything up, he was unable to return earlier. The hidden members have been arranged to escort Marshall Dahm, but no one expected that they would encounter an ambush along the way. The members have gone missing. Judging from the traces that were left on the site, it seems like this was the doing of the Blood Breeds. However, we were still unable to determine Marshall Dahm’s whereabouts despite using every method we know. I’m extremely sorry!” said the male Blood Breed with his head lowered.

“Dahm...” Garen pondered casually. “He should have a mask with him now. The probability of the Blood Breed’s actions is very likely.”

“That is indeed true. Moreover, the key point is that our strength networks are only covering the American territories. Meanwhile, the other territories are still being influenced and occupied by the forces of the Blood Breeds. This makes it impossible for us to conduct grand scale searches.”

“You can go back down first,” Garen nodded.

The male Blood Breed exited the stone hall respectfully, leaving Garen there alone.

‘The actions of the Blood Breeds are extremely arrogant...’ Black Sethe’s voice drifted over.

“Not the Blood Breeds,” Garen answered simply.

‘Oh? How do you know? If it wasn’t the Blood Breeds, who else would dare to ambush a high-level expert like Dahm?’ Black Sethe could not really understand how Garen was able to come up with such a conclusion.

“I naturally have my own ways. But I’m certain that it’s not the Blood Breeds.” Garen walked towards the front of the floor-length glass and looked out at the endless sea of white clouds. His gaze seemed to penetrate the boundless distance while looking on in an unknown direction.

Within a concealed valley in America

Huff...

Huff...

Huff...

Something sounded like the heavy breathing of a wild beast. It also sounded like the violent panting of an exhausted fierce predator.

Dahm sat leaning against a little green moss-covered ravine inside the valley. He’d covered himself with large piles of broken tree branches and leaves to the best of his ability before stretching out his four limbs and body.

Both of his eyes were bloodshot and he seemed unusually thin and sallow, as though he’d been unable to rest for a long time.

Within the lush green forest around him, muffled noises and movements would echo through occasionally. These noises were enough to force him to turn his head around quickly while looking behind himself with an unusually worried expression on his face.

It was true that he'd had no chance to rest.

After obtaining the mask, he had been ambushed by people on the way back. All of his escorts had been killed and he'd used all of his strength to fight the enemy off before escaping quickly. Next, his opponent started to chase him quickly. While he was being pursued, he could feel that his opponent was clearly closing the gap between them. When he ran towards a place with more people, his opponent would follow him closely behind suddenly before clashing with him violently. They fought until he was forced to flee into more remote areas.

They were forcing him into no man's land!

Dahm sank both of his feet inside the undergrowth and mud inside the ravine. His body was covered in bits of grass and little insects while there were countless gashes on his clothes. His entire body seemed incomparably sallow, making him look completely unlike his usual elegant Marshall's demeanor.

After three consecutive days of being pursued and attacked, the high state of anxiety that he was currently in due to lack of proper rest caused him to become as easily startled as a bird by the slightest noise. His body had weakened as well. He was initially able to release the first star and use the Waterbird Fist's Final Profound, Flight of the Evil Phoenix that he was unable to control all along. However, he had overused his body, and his current lack of rest made it difficult for him to heal. His bodily deficiencies were also becoming even worse.

"Don't tell me I'm going to die here?!" unwillingness flashed in Dahm's eyes.

At this moment, the distinct noise of footsteps could be heard faintly in the forest. The noise started off slowly and paused for a while before it detected that he was here. Suddenly, the noise quickened at once and approached him instantly.

"You can't escape anymore!" a determined gaze flashed in Dahm's eyes. "You may lose all chances of resisting if you keep escaping!"

He tried to relax his body as much as he could. He tried his best to accumulate all the energy in his body despite being unable to rest for a long time while waiting quietly for his enemy and pursuer to approach him quickly.

500 meters... 400 meters... 300 meters... 100 meters...

Crash!

A tree branch and leaves were torn down at once before a familiar figure appeared before Dahm's eyes.

"Hochman!!" Dahm yelled out suddenly. "It was actually... It was actually you!!!" he gritted his teeth in anger. His body had tensed up immediately even though he had just relaxed it moments ago. Intense hatred flashed in his eyes.

Hochman's face was calm and he'd just changed into a black suit and beautiful black leather shoes. He looked like a regular but successful man who was planning to attend a banquet. However, his attire was clearly abnormal and strange while standing in a forest in a canyon.

He glanced casually at Dahm who was in an extremely awkward position.

"How pitiful. To think that you would fall into such a state, Dahm. You've truly embarrassed Master now."

"I knew it was you...!!" Dahm's entire body trembled with rage. All this while, he would be pursued by the other person whenever he wanted to rest. Every time he thought of stopping, his opponent would approach him immediately, making it impossible for him to rest. He could never understand how someone was able to grasp his whereabouts so accurately. But in hindsight, he realized that it could only be Hochman, who was able to use the Qi connection between both of their Soul Primers to locate him.

Dahm himself was currently unimaginably weak. He was unable to do the same thing, but it was clear that Hochman had his own ways.

Both of them were practitioners of one of the two sides of the Waterbird Fist respectively. The Negative Waterbird Fist and Positive Waterbird Fist could only become the Two-Faced Waterbird Fist when it was combined. Unlike the other similar branches, the techniques that these two men were practicing were the strongest among the Waterbird Fists and were also the practicing pathways with the greatest power.

Garen had once mentioned to just the two of them that although the strength of their Fist Techniques was extremely powerful, they would naturally lose a lot as well. Strength could only be obtained by paying prices that were unimaginable to normal humans. Therefore, only one person could survive between the users of the Negative and Positive Fist Techniques. The one who survived would be able to resume the fusion of the Fist Techniques and advance it to peak levels.

As for the extent of the peak level powers, even Garen himself was unaware of what that truly meant. Since this pathway was merely a road formed by a theory that he had deduced, the true powers that it could achieve were something that he himself as the advancer of the Waterbird Fist did not know either.

"This is truly a rare opportunity... Don't you think so, Dahm?" Hochman adjusted his glasses and walked towards Dahm slowly. "Perfecting the Waterbird Fist is the final goal that you and I should be pursuing."

"You won't get away with this..." said Dahm furiously.

"Who knows?" Hochman spread both of his hands while a smile appeared on his face. "Actually, I've always been very thankful to Master for giving us a chance to improve. He was right. The results that one wishes to accomplish can only be achieved if an equivalent contribution is made. Just look at Quentin, Xander, and the others. They're currently still at Middle levels and can never achieve Upper levels. Moreover, they are forced to struggle bitterly whenever they face just one Upper-level Blood Breed. Why is that?"

He paused before his smile widened.

"Because their contributions towards their martial arts were not great enough!"

Dahm could only grit his teeth in response.

Hochman glanced at him casually.

“The way of our Waterbird Fist of the Holy Fist Palace is also a holy path for Fist Techniques. In reality, although other people are unaware of this, should we just remain unaware as well? The supposed holy paths are actually just demonic paths. Aren’t we just practicing demonic techniques? How would we be able to progress so quickly otherwise?”

“The demonic technique adheres to the survival of the fittest as its main principle. Dahm...” his eyes turned fierce at once. “I’m stronger than you. Therefore, you’re only destined to be my stepping stone... These things were already predestined.”

“If you kill me, you won’t meet a happy ending! Besides that, don’t you want the mask?!” although Dahm already knew that it was impossible for him to escape by sheer luck, a final ray of hope flashed in his eyes.

“I’ll form the holy path after I kill you. As for the mask, it was naturally snatched by the Blood Breeds, or perhaps already destroyed.” Hochman smiled before a dull crashing noise could be heard below his feet as he charged towards Dahm like a rocket. His arm expanded suddenly and became thicker and darker as if it was completely shrouded in countless dark blue veins.

His ferocious Qi was moved by this punch as though all the air around him had been absorbed into his fist.

The entire forest darkened slightly when it was affected by the frantic flow of air.

“Go peacefully! I will take care of your household properly!”

Boom!!!

Chapter 753: Bureau 1

Kasha!!

A flash of lightning streaked across the sky.

It illuminated the hall of Holy Fist Palace and it glowed as bright as snow for a second.

Garen stood in the dark hall. Unconsciously, he had already been standing here for the entire afternoon.

For an unknown reason, he was constantly disturbed by an extremely agitated feeling recently. Although he used the duration of an entire afternoon this time, he was still unable to find the root and cause of this irritation. Perhaps it was caused by practicing the Holy Phoenix Scriptures. In the end, he always felt that his emotional fluctuations were decreasing and his feelings were becoming colder. In the past, there were many things that would stir his emotions but now he only felt indifference.

Kasha!

The lightning struck again and illuminated the hall in blues and whites immediately.

Garen stood in the large hall alone while the flash of lightning caused a long shadow to form behind him instantly.

“This world...” he looked at the endless sea of clouds outside the window. “It’s rejecting me.”

‘You’ve felt it?’ Black Sethe’s weak voice could be heard occasionally. ‘You passed through the Mother Stream accidentally. Moreover, your original plan was not to come here and your arrival in this world was merely a mistake.’

“This world does not possess any form of consciousness. How did this phenomenon occur?” Garen could not understand.

‘Yes... Most worlds do not possess consciousness but each world has a different state. They resemble the various different types of plants,’ explained Black Sethe softly, ‘but the Holy Phoenix Scriptures that you practice are scriptures that are heartless and lack character. Their goal is to heighten one’s spirit to its limits which require a large number of energy sources from the outside world. This is actually equivalent to plundering the world. Any actions that absorb energy from the outside world to strengthen oneself will naturally cause chain reactions. This is due to the changes that occur when the cycle of equilibrium is destroyed.’

Garen remained silent for a moment before nodding his head faintly.

“I know what you mean. It is similar to how certain beasts of prey in a mountain forest require more food when they become stronger suddenly. When the mountain forest is unable to satisfy their needs, they are forced to widen their range which will ultimately destroy the natural cycle of equilibrium in their surroundings.”

‘To be more precise, absorbing too much energy without producing an equal amount in return. It is similar to the deformed and distorted cancer cells in the human body that rob energy that is originally used for other functions. This causes faults and the destruction of the natural cycle before serious environmental changes are finally produced. These changes have also been detected by the creatures in certain areas of this world, and they are currently taking action,’ Black Sethe explained. ‘This was also caused by the Holy Phoenix Scriptures’ overly extreme true intentions.’

“Looks like this is the source of my agitation,” Garen nodded. “My five senses and instincts have become sharper, making it possible for me to detect the threats that I am about to encounter in the future...”

‘Your powers are getting even stronger and their influence towards their surroundings will naturally become greater as well. This is unavoidable and amplified effects like these will form traces that will make it easier for others to observe and grasp. Initially, you were not like this. However, the Holy Phoenix Scriptures were too strong and their plundering techniques were too extreme. Therefore, the changes in your surroundings were intensified,’ answered Black Sethe casually.

Garen did not speak anymore and merely looked out of the window silently into the sea of white fluffy clouds below.

Kachak!!

There was a flash of lightning.

Large sheets of rain cascaded downwards and left yarn-like traces when it was stirred by the wind.

Dahm's entire body was covered in fresh blood while the base of his back was pressed against the icy cold green mountain wall. He glared daggers at Hochman who stood on the opposite side of him not far away.

Both of them stood under the heavy rain without the intention of shielding themselves from it at all.

There were potholes everywhere on the ground. The mud inside most of these was filled with red and yellow fresh blood. It was clear that these potholes had just been formed and were quickly being filled by rainwater.

The raindrops shook the surrounding leaves, branches, and undergrowth continuously while the wind gusted and howled. It sounded like the crying noises of a human or the ghostly howls of an animal.

"Give up."

The suit on Hochman's back was already soaked through. However, he remained emotionless and looked quietly at Dahm who was nearby. The raindrops rolled off his cheeks continuously and wet his hair, causing the strands to stick against his forehead closely.

They had already been fighting in the valley for an extremely long and continuous period of time. To prevent Dahm from counter-attacking with all of his might, or perhaps to ensure that he would win without any injuries, Hochman did not close in on him unnecessarily at all. Instead, he would chase Dahm step-by-step and step forward to clash with him occasionally. He was constantly keeping his opponent in a panicked state to exhaust him.

The effect of this was actually very satisfying. Currently, Dahm had almost exhausted all of his energy and was unwilling to even move. To preserve his energy, he was leaning against the side of the mountain. Being unable to restore his energy for a few days had caused him to deplete his resources and fall into a troubled state much earlier on.

"You don't even stand a chance anymore," said Hochman lightly.

"I was ambushed by you after I completed a mission. Master... Master will not forsake me..." said Dahm furiously. "You're ignoring the bigger picture and fighting a member of your own branch. Did you forget that the whereabouts of your cousin is still in my hands..."

"You're too naive..." Hochman laughed suddenly. "To think that you really believed that I truly liked my cousin?" He raised his head and looked at the color of the sky. "It's almost time."

He removed his glasses slowly and exposed his cold, sharp and narrow long eyes.

He combed his hair backward after removing his glasses to instantly form a clean and sharp slicked-back hairstyle. An indescribably imposing manner permeated from his body faintly.

"It's impossible for people not to have weaknesses, Dahm," a devilishly handsome smile appeared on Hochman's pale and chiseled face.

"End it."

He outstretched both of his hands and crossed all ten of his fingers to form a heart shape.

Boom!!

While the heavy rain continued to pour, his figure crashed through the sheets of rain suddenly. Only martial artists could notice that a large black aura had exploded suddenly around his entire body to form the black shadow of a terrifying dragon's head that roared as it charged towards Dahm.

"Clouded leopard!!"

Hochman let out a low growl as his entire body charged forward in the rain. He was currently stretched out like a cheetah that was dashing forward. The air and raindrops sputtered around when he tore through them. As his speed was extremely fast, he formed a long cavity in the middle of the heavy rain.

His Upper-level powers were being released all at once from the palms of both of Hochman's palms where they were gathered.

Bang!!!

Both of his hands sank into the mountainside deeply before the entire surface collapsed with a 'crash' after caving inwards.

Dahm was barely able to dodge this attack. However, he was still affected by the repercussions. The raindrops that were sent flying violently hit against his body painfully like bullets, forming a few more wounds.

"Bloody Night!!"

He roared loudly and threw out his last two silk strings. However, they were completely exposed amidst the rain and he was unable to hide them at all, making it easy for Hochman to evade them.

"Does God want me to die as well?!" Dahm staggered towards the left side and tottered into the rain. Feelings of dread filled his heart. His handphone and other electronics that were on him had been destroyed at the first moment. He was unable to ask for assistance as Hochman had intentionally driven away that chance as well.

"Don't tell me I'm really going to die here..." Behind him, Dahm could hear the sound of Hochman tearing through the air hurriedly. "Master..." the last image that floated up in his mind was the scene when Garen had first taught them the Waterbird Fist. The memories from that scene... That marked the starting point of his journey into the temple of martial arts.

"White Bear!"

A low roar echoed behind him.

Bang!!!

Dahm felt a pain in his chest. He had detected the whistling sound of tearing air behind him long ago. However, his physical body was unable to keep up with his consciousness anymore. He wanted to dodge but was struck in the middle of his back.

Pfoo...

He lowered his head and spat out a mouthful of fresh blood before kneeling into the rainy dark night with a 'thump'.

Bang!!

Another violent jolt of pain could be felt from his back when it was hit over where his heart was located. He was hit by yet another brutal punch before the immense pain passed through his muscles and bones. It hit his heart accurately and caused it to explode suddenly.

This was Hochman's prized hidden Waterbird strength that was able to detonate the insides of his opponent's body anytime. It was unlike Dahm's own exploding blood. Hochman's explosions were formed when he gathered his strength before releasing a one-hit killing blow.

"Goodbye... Dahm."

Hochman's voice echoed behind him.

Dahm's vision was blinded before darkening gradually. Everything began to darken before becoming blurry and turning black slowly until he was unable to see anything anymore. He could feel the strength in his body flowing away quickly while an empty feeling drifted in his mind.

"Am I going to die?"

He fell into darkness finally while the sound of the rain began to soften. Soon, he was unable to hear anything and his nose was unable to smell the scent of rain anymore.

Shh!!

A sensation that resembled the feeling of a deflating balloon was felt inside his body. Dahm felt as if he was losing something extremely important that was currently escaping and being removed quickly.

Gradually, his consciousness fell into complete darkness.

The roaring sound of thunder echoed in the sky.

Hochman stood beside Dahm's corpse quietly and looked at this man whom he'd once regarded as his best friend. His blood red aura flowed out of his body continuously before converging with his black aura.

The blood red aura resembled a bloody stream. It flowed out of the wound on Dahm's back continuously before crossing the ground and converging with the black shadow below his feet.

Strong and intense emotions flooded the depths of his body and heart endlessly.

Hochman outstretched his right hand. The flesh on his palm that was initially covered by terrifying blackened skin and muscles was currently shrouded in faint threads of blood that were crawling there. These bloody threads formed on the surface of his skin like a large red web that covered the entire surface of his body.

"Power... This kind of power... Hehehehe..."

Continuous feelings of fulfillment and power flooded Hochman's heart endlessly.

He could feel that the Qi of the Soul Primer in the depths of his spirit was continuously being nourished by this strength. Moreover, strange changes were gradually forming there.

The Qi of the Primer there was becoming stronger and more intense.

Boom!!

A crashing noise could be heard. No one knew if it was the sound of thunder or the sound of an explosion in his heart.

Hochman's entire body trembled suddenly. He could vaguely see a figure that was fully dressed in black muslin walking out of the rain suddenly.

"Who are you?" it was difficult to distinguish the other person's figure in the rain and they seemed almost transparent at times, giving off a strange illusory feeling.

"My identity is unimportant," answered the person in a soft voice. Their voice was neither masculine nor feminine, making it impossible to distinguish their sex. "The important thing is that you're currently in an extremely important phase."

"Oh?" Hochman kept his guard up.

Chapter 754

"There are abnormalities in your soul. These abnormalities bring strange changes... Let me help you."

Before they could finish speaking, the other person's figure disappeared abruptly. At the moment when their figure vanished, Hochman suddenly felt a pain in his own head.

Ahh!!!

He raised his head suddenly and roared furiously.

The immense pain surged through his body and caught him off guard. It felt as if a giant hammer had been suddenly smashed against his head. His five senses were completely affected by the violent burning pain all at once.

A tearing noise could be heard.

Hochman could hear the faint sound of something ripping. Next, a strange sense of freedom filled his mind.

“You’re free now...” a voice echoed in the rain.

Hochman lowered his head in a trance. He noticed that his own body had been restored to its normal state again as if everything that happened earlier was just an illusion.

Meanwhile, the strange feeling of constantly being controlled by Garen that was always hidden in the depths of his heart had disappeared completely now.

“I’m free?” he asked himself quietly.

He felt as if he had robbed something from Master. This unknown feeling was truly strange and indescribable. He was currently filled with a type of unprecedented power while the endless amounts of energy that formed a cycle inside his body made it feel as if he could crack the earth with one punch and break through any obstacle that hindered his path.

He crouched his body downwards and took the still-perfect mask from Dahm’s body quickly before keeping it close against his bosom.

“I can’t return anymore...” he murmured to himself softly before taking a final look at Dahm’s corpse. His figure flashed before he disappeared into the heavy rain instantly.

Holy Fist Palace

Garen suddenly felt a sharp pain ripping through his brain.

Woo...

He buried his face in his hands suddenly and stood in the middle of the large dark hall while being unable to suppress his cold sweat for a while.

“This is...?!”

The searing pain had arrived at a strange moment and had been unusually sudden as well.

He raised his head abruptly and looked in a direction that led to the outside of the palace.

“It’s the Soul Primer... Someone has escaped from my control! They ripped out a part of my Soul Primer and stole it!! Who was it??!!” his mind jolted with shock.

He closed his eyes and carefully detected the Qi of the Soul Primer that had flowed out of him at once.

The clusters of Qi seemed like galaxies of stars that were distributed throughout the dark and empty spaces in his mind. At this moment, out of the two largest stars that represented the Soul Primers, one of them had dimmed quickly while the other was shining brighter and even turning transparent quickly! It transmitted an unavoidable sense of separation.

“It’s Dahm and Hochman!” Garen’s mind froze at once. “Dahm is dead... Hochman absorbed the other pole of the Waterbird Fist’s aura... But how was he able to break away from the control of my Soul Primer? How could he rip through the Qi of my soul??!!”

‘Apparently, it was just as I had anticipated. You have trouble, Garen,’ said Black Sethe quietly.

Garen remained silent and did not speak. However, the waves of pain from his headaches caused the veins in his face to become even more obvious, making him look ferocious as well.

According to the principle, even though Hochman had absorbed and killed Dahm, it was still impossible for him to break free of Garen’s control. Though in hindsight, he had truly stolen a part of the Soul Primer’s Qi that belonged to him. Once he had appropriated it to himself, he was even able to successfully escape from Garen’s control of his spirit.

There were definitely external forces that were helping him!

“Who is it? Who’s helping him? Who could be able to help him?!” asked Garen quietly.

Losing this Soul Primer and its Qi would spell major trouble for him. Soul Primers instinctively had perfect characteristics. However, once part of it was ripped away, life-threatening flaws would show up in the soul. If he was unable to make up for it quickly, when an enemy of the same level used direct soul attacks against him, it was very likely that Garen would collapse completely within a short span of time in his current state.

‘You need to restore the wounds in our soul quickly! Otherwise, when Nadia appears, just one gaze of hers will be enough to kill you!!’ Black Sethe said seriously. ‘You cannot have the slightest flaw or obvious deficiency between experts. One misstep will be your downfall! This is truly fatal!’

“How could this world have measures that can counter against souls?!” Garen could feel that his headache was easing itself gradually. However, his face was still slightly uncomfortable.

‘Since this world is so huge, it would be very normal for various mystical creatures to appear. The important thing right now is that you need to find Hochman as soon as possible to get back the soul Qi that was ripped from you! For most people, perhaps this would merely be insignificant shrouds of soul Qi that would not be a great hindrance even if they lost it. However, to experts and peak level experts especially, whenever little holes appear in their imperfections, these seemingly tiny holes will be expanded endlessly,’ reminded Black Sethe in a low voice.

“I was careless...” Garen’s expression turned slightly ashen as this was the first time he had tasted such bitter regret. In this world, everything was going smoothly and he did not have any enemies at all. Even the Death Apostles were not worthy opponents in his eyes as most of them were merely cockroaches that could not be killed easily. All of his energy was directed towards Nadia as Nadia was his only true adversary. However, someone had inflicted a heavy hit upon him now!

‘Souls are extremely important towards all life forms. Even the Qi of the Soul Primer that you released could produce a military influence that causes you and your subordinates to become strong together. Not to mention that there are many other mystical properties and effects that we have yet to discover. This is definitely not an aspect that we can overlook.’

Garen remained silent. He thought of the years that he'd spent continuously separating shrouds of soul Qi. If all of this Qi was ripped by others violently... His once powerful soul would probably be suppressed into a state of everlasting weakness...

When he thought of this, Garen turned around suddenly and walked out of the main door.

He had to bring all of the parts of his Soul Primer that had been separated as soon as possible. Although this would cause a great loss throughout the strength of his subordinates, he was unable to be preoccupied with so many things now!

Dahm had died in battle while Hochman deserted him and fled! The repercussions that were caused by this incident would be very severe!

'Are you thinking of retrieving all of your Primers back? You don't need to do that,' said Black Sethe. 'Army level Primers like yours cannot simply be torn at any moment as they require specific timings. Among your subordinates, only Dahm and Hochman had the power to alter time while the others could not. Moreover, the consumption that is caused when one rips it is extremely great! This is something that was done on the soul level and could not be completed easily. Furthermore, the effects of the soul and Qi towards the physical body cannot overlap with one another. Losing one of them is equivalent to losing a hundred. Losses like these are negligible against the total strength of the soul itself. Only gaps and splits that are formed within perfect states and realms are the most troublesome.'

'However, although it will not be affected, or perhaps the probability of the effects will be very low, I still suggest that you remove everyone from the inside of the palace and check them once over. You need to pay close attention to those who display unusual states!' Black Sethe suggested.

"Right now, the most important thing is to capture Hochman and bring him back," Garen pushed the main door open and walked out of the stone hall briskly. The disciples who were standing guard outside the door bowed their heads and looked at him with respectful gazes while he walked towards the student's practice hall.

Dahm's death and Hochman's betrayal meant that Holy Fist Palace had lost two of its main Upper-level members at the same time. This affected Holy Fist Palace greatly, forcing him to make the necessary arrangements quickly before solving the problem of the torn souls later.

He would only be able to fully restore his lost soul and Qi by killing Hochman and remedying the flaws in his soul.

Raffaele stood quietly in the doorway of the hidden room inside the palace. There was no one else in her surroundings and the sole patrol guard had just passed by to survey the cracks and gaps. There were a total of fifteen hidden rooms like this within Holy Fist Palace. She had already examined ten separate ones as her goal was to find the Sleepless Faces masks that were kept in Holy Fist Palace. There were about six of these masks that were collected in Holy Fist Palace and were definitely concealed in specific hidden places. Once she found it, she could quickly create a fake mask using the Witchcraft that Witch King Mother had prepared. This would allow her to take the real mask away quietly.

After pushing open the stone door that led to the hidden room gently, Raffaele walked inside silently and scanned the area quickly. Other than the necessary items such as the bright candlesticks, tables, chairs, and other furniture, the room was devoid of other objects.

She removed a little white ornament that was used as a decoration from her own skirt quickly and shook it gently before a faint white light was released from the ornament suddenly, passing through the insides of the hidden room at once.

“The same thing again...” Raffaele’s gaze darkened slightly while she prepared herself to leave dejectedly.

Suddenly, the white ornament lit up again suddenly before shining directly on the wall on the opposite side of the door to the hidden room.

“This is?!!” Raffaele’s eyes narrowed when she realized that the magical probing tool that had been given to her by the Witch King Mother would not react for no reason.

She walked over quickly while the white light from the ornament in her hand reflected against the wall in a translucent state like glass. She could see the situation on the other side of the wall through it.

She could see a cylindrical, average-sized cavity inside the wall where a book seemed to be placed there. The book was thick and had a hard black cover.

For an unknown reason, this book gave Raffaele a strange and indescribable feeling. It felt as if she was not looking at a book but a sentient living creature instead.

“This thing... It’s definitely Garen’s most prized possession!” Raffaele gritted her teeth and turned her hand before removing a piece of thin red cardboard from the side pocket of her skirt. Clusters of strange symbols that seemed to be handwritten in blood covered its surface.

There were a total of three pieces of cardboard that were similar to this one. They were specialized magical tools that were equipped with short-term transmission functions. One of these precious magical tools could only be created with the heavy price of a sacrifice. Currently, the raw materials to create this item had depleted earlier on. They were only five pieces of this left which were all in the Lion Mother’s hands. In order to counter Garen now, the Witch King Mother, Lion Mother was willing to give her three of these items at once so that Raffaele could deliver these treasures to her from Holy Fist Palace.

“To be able to conceal it in such a hidden place...” she reached her hand out and pressed it against the wall before beginning to check for a switch there carefully. She just needed to remove the object and place it on the cardboard. Next, she would need to activate it gently so that it could be delivered instantly.

After probing for some time, she soon discovered a section of the wall that was slightly smoother and cleaner than the other areas. She outstretched her hand and dug it out gently before a little ring was removed from the wall suddenly.

She pulled it with all of her strength.

A faint buzzing noise could be heard before a large rectangular shaped stone block immediately protruded from the wall automatically. A cylindrical metallic pillar was embedded in the middle of the stone block. There was a ring that could be pulled on the pillar.

Raffaele walked forward and checked if there were any switches around the ring carefully. When she had determined that she was correct, she prepared herself to extend her finger and grip the ring.

Woo...! Woo...!

Suddenly, the sound of an alarm could be heard clearly throughout the entire Holy Fist Palace. In only a few seconds, all of the training scholars, disciples, external trainers, and Middle and Upper-level members were all rushing towards the biggest training hall in the center of the palace.

While the sound of close footsteps echoed, groups of internal palace members in black and white uniforms passed by the hidden room frantically.

The main door of the hidden room had been resealed long ago but Raffaele had exited the hidden room without anyone noticing. She currently stood in the doorway, looking as if she had just happened to be passing by.

“What happened?” Raffaele pulled over an internal palace member disciple whom she had met earlier.

“It’s definitely a serious problem. Otherwise, Holy Fist Master would not have sounded the emergency assembly command!” the person answered frantically with a solemn look on their face. “Come with us to the training hall in the center if you want to know more.”

“Serious problem?” Raffaele’s heart stirred. She glanced at the corners and surroundings of the palace where white monitors and surveillance cameras had extended out suddenly and were beeping there. These surveillance cameras were almost the same color as the walls, making it extremely difficult to distinguish them. It was obvious that they had all of the security systems were activated immediately because of the critical state.

She congratulated herself unconsciously. If she had hesitated earlier and left slightly later, she would definitely have been detected by the monitors. At that time, it would have been impossible for her to escape as she was a member of the enemy camp.

Without much time to think, she merely nodded.

“Show me the way, we’ll go together!”

The other person nodded and pulled Raffaele along before rejoining his team in front. The footsteps of groups of people who were running echoed throughout the corridor behind him.

Inside the white round arch-type stone hall

White cylindrical stone pillars stood upright throughout the area while steel chains hung from the center. Dark green chains that were thick but nimble matched the simple style of the large stone brick floors. They gave off an unsophisticated but rough look that felt barbaric yet divine.

Each of the stone bricks on the ground was actually a large brick that was more than three meters wide. Perhaps it was unfitting to call them bricks anymore, as they were more like a typical large rock.

Groups of scholars and internal palace members flowed through the area in one direction like streams that met at a lake. They gathered inside the hall here from entrances of different sizes before quickly forming three square formations with different uniform colors of white, black, and red.

Bright light cascaded inside from all four stone walls, shrinking everyone’s shadows to a position that was below their feet and shining so that there were no blind spots.

Soon, almost all of the members were present.

Garen sat on the highest seat in the stone hall. There were two empty black high-back chairs below right below the level of his arms. Below that were the seats of the Four Major Generals while rows of seats were specially set up on the right. The ones who sat there were the other high-level important diplomats who were temporarily stationed here. Besides that, there were a few other generals and high-level leaders of organizations. Rod and his older brother were currently chatting in low voices with another director and leader of an organization, who seemed as if he had just gotten into his seat.

The Four Major Generals sat down quickly while the crowd of Middle and Upper-level internal palace members and the other external members below them took their seats in the lower rows according to the ranks of their posts.

Meanwhile, a few of the higher level members of the Lightless Alliance who were constantly stationed here entered the room as well. They were arranged to be seated in the VIP seats on the right side of the hall at the same level as the Four Major Generals.

As the number of people increased, the stadium-sized hall finally quietened down gradually, displaying the members' exceptional discipline. When most of the people there became silent, the VIPs who were whispering to each other quietened gradually as well before their gazes were focused on Garen who was seated in the highest position.

Garen was fully dressed in black clothes while his long golden hair cascaded down his shoulders. His body sat upright on the seat like a large mountain, giving off a terrifying imposing feeling. His expression was cold as if he was thinking of something troublesome.

The atmosphere was somewhat heavy for a while.

When the final member entered, the whistling alarm noises finally stopped.

The entire hall finally fell into a state of complete silence.

There was a moment of silence while Garen waited for everyone's concentration to be focused on him before he began to open his mouth slowly.

"I am about to issue some unfortunate news here today."

The initially heavy atmosphere suddenly became even more tense when that sentence was spoken. Everyone focused their attention on Garen unconsciously. Even the VIPs who were being absent-minded earlier had now sat up slightly straighter with stern looks on their faces.

Raffaele had also been seated in the VIP section. She glanced at Garen who was seated at a high position quietly while an abnormally powerful force spiraled around that man's entire body. The air around his seat seemed as if it was sticky together densely. Although he was seated there alone, his force field was apparently suppressing the momentum of everyone in the hall!

It was worth mentioning that there were almost a thousand people here!

While fearful feelings were trembling in her heart, she heard Garen continuing to speak.

"One of the two great Marshalls, the Bloody Marshall Dahm was unfortunately killed in battle outside."

At first, the entire hall fell silent at once. It was a deathly type of silence as everyone was convinced that they had misheard or that Garen was merely joking.

Moments later, the attention of the crowd of a thousand people had fully focused on Garen again.

"None of you misheard me," said Garen casually. "I wasn't joking either. Dahm has died in battle."

His voice trailed off. The first person to react was Dahm's underling in red clothes, who was also his division subordinate and a member who was born to his own clan.

The next ones who responded were the superiors from the VIP section who had the most interactions with Dahm. The others were the scholars and disciples who had learned the Royal Fist Technique from Dahm.

Boom!!

The entire hall seethed with shock and hubbub instantly.

Dahm had died in battle! An individual who possessed peak standards had actually died in battle outside?

Who could kill him? An Upper-level? Maybe a Death Apostle? Was it possible that the Blood Breeds had officially launched a full-scale ambush attack against Holy Fist Palace?

Everyone was making assumptions. For an expert who possessed an Upper-level strength to die in battle, neither Blood Breeds nor Witches would be able to endure such pain, much less a new member of Holy Fist Palace.

"I haven't finished speaking," Garen waited until everyone had digested the news somewhat before he opened his mouth again. "The main reason that Dahm died in battle has nothing to do with the encirclement of the Blood Breeds."

His gaze scanned the entire hall and everyone who felt it lowered their heads unconsciously.

"He was killed by his fellow Marshall Hochman. Hochman has currently betrayed and fled Holy Fist Palace."

Boom!!!

When he finished speaking this time, an even louder uproar exploded through the hall. Everyone looked at him with widened eyes and gaping mouths when they realized that their minds were unable to keep up with these changes.

Other than Holy Fist Garen and Tu Lan, the other two strongest Marshalls in Holy Fist Palace had disappeared completely. One of them was dead while the other had fled?! This was simply the latest piece of sensational news. If a reporter was on the scene, they would be able to sell so many copies of the newspaper at the first instant that everyone else would be green-eyed with envy.

It was worth mentioning that among the regular humans, Holy Fist Palace was currently the highest ranking force against the Blood Breeds that most people paid attention to. Furthermore, it was also the assembly point of the hope of all of humanity.

The current question was, how would they sort it out?

That was the first reaction that anyone would have when they heard the news at the first moment.

“My decision is to release commands for a counterattack on all fronts from now on. We will put up wanted signs for the Boxing Overlord Marshall Hochman and set a confirmed reward of one million euros for anyone who is able to provide information regarding his whereabouts. Those who are able to injure or kill him will be rewarded with ten million euros. Furthermore, I will personally guide them in the ways of the Fist Techniques once and increase their lifespan by two years. If someone is able to defeat him, I will personally teach them the refined meaning of the Royal Fist Technique before adding ten years to their lives.”

Garen’s voice sounded like thunder that echoed throughout the inside of the hall endlessly.

“Regardless of whichever methods you use and whatever measures you take, you must find him! Kill him!”

Murderous intentions that resembled dark clouds rose up in both of Garen’s eyes. These murderous intentions crept around the room and made it difficult for the thousands of people inside the stone hall to breathe. Everyone was secretly terrified of his wrath.

Scorching hot flames burned in the eyes of the Four Major Generals. They were the only ones who understood the severity of Garen’s words. It was obvious that Hochman had not simply killed Dahm. Instead, he had done something to anger Garen as well. Under these circumstances, if he was able to achieve his goal, his position in Master’s eyes would surely be increased by a large degree. Master Garen had spent many years helping both of these Marshals increase in ranks from earlier on. He would only need to work a little harder to find new people to fill in these new ranks.

Although they merely possessed Middle-level powers and were far from the two great Marshals, victory and defeat were not merely decided by strength many times. Otherwise, everyone would be able to discover the strongest person within the realm easily, and what need would there be for them to compete in training then?

Tu Lan stood in the shadows of the hall and exchanged gazes with Quentin and Xander of the Four Major Generals. Both of them were in charge of one information branch respectively. One of them was responsible for the strength networks in the external combat club, though both possessed networks of strong forces. During the recent period of time, as Quentin and Xander were both occupied in learning the Fantasy Fist, they had become good friends with Tu Lan and Ninox when their interactions had increased. Of course, Tu Lan would never treat herself as their senior...

Then, the few of them exchanged glances. All three of them had reasonably good relationships with one another. When they heard about Garen's reward, all of their hearts were stirred immediately. The other rewards were good, but the prize of additional life force was an unquenchable and unattainable desire of numerous outsiders.

This was an opportunity to lengthen their lifespan and improve their bodily functions without any harmful side effects! The eyes of a few old high-level organization leaders had lit up while their minds now burned with a passion.

Money, martial arts knowledge, and life. A combination of these three things had stirred the desires of everyone in the hall as it encompassed the deepest yearnings of the majority.

This was the first time Garen had mentioned the opportunity to add ten years worth of life force. The maximum amount was only five years in the past. However, he had now increased it to ten years in one go. This was equivalent to extending one's lifespan by ten years. Especially for older individuals, the ability to live for another decade was simply a dream that could wake them up with a smile.

When the sound of his voice trailed off after the final sentence, he was met with an enthusiastic response at once that came from the seats of the VIPs and the Four Major Generals.

"Master, we're willing to form an alliance and cooperate with Master Tu Lan to move forward and attack!" Quentin stood up suddenly. It was obvious that she was secretly inspired by Tu Lan.

Tu Lan played a subtle role in Holy Fist Palace. She was higher than the Marshalls but lower than Garen. No one objected to the rumor that she was the second strongest person in the palace. However, the outsiders knew that she had betrayed the Blood Breeds to come over. They did not trust her very much while only a few superiors were aware that Tu Lan probably only remained respectfully because she was tired of being cowed in the beginning. However, she had truly learned to love the practice of Secret Techniques now and her fear towards Garen gradually turned into awe. After she had slaughtered Blood Breeds whom she once recognized as her own people, it did not matter that she gave her reputation away as she had already joined Holy Fist Palace fully.

With Tu Lan there to perform the task, Garen was able to relax slightly. However, Hochman had absorbed Dahm's Primer now and no one knew which stage he had grown into. Moreover, if that external force appeared again...

“Alright, but you’ll need to inform me right away if you receive any news of his whereabouts.”

“Understood!” Quentin and Xander smiled happily and withdrew quickly. It was obvious that they were acting swiftly before going to prepare to leave and collect information immediately.

Garen narrowed both of his eyes. That external force could apparently grasp the movements of Hochman and the others accurately. It was likely that they had an extensive intelligence network. Therefore, they would definitely have a source that informed them about the movements of the troops within his Holy Fist Palace as well. Furthermore, he was unsure whether the strength of Tu Lan and the other two people were enough to suppress Hochman.

It looked like he still needed to take action personally...

Chapter 756

Boom!!!

On top of a snowy mountain peak somewhere in Iceland, chunks of snow exploded like bombs and scattered snow everywhere. Looking from afar, an entire right chunk of the snow peak had been blown away, looking similar to a sugarcane that was bitten off.

The top half of the mountain crashed down and fell onto a plateau below, causing the ground to tremble.

The sky was clear without a single cloud but the sunlight did not provide much warmth. The sunlight shone on the exploded part of the mountain peak. There was a dark cave there.

There was a hint of green smoke coming out of the cave. That green smoke swirled around at the entrance of the cave and before it quickly dispersed as though it was a living thing.

Cough cough cough...

A slight coughing sound came from the cave. It seemed to belong to an old man’s voice.

A moment later, an old figure with a white beard slowly walked out of the cave. He was leaning on a thick white cane and dressed in shabby clothes made from hides and skins. It seemed to be a patchwork of many different kinds of animal hides. There was a necklace made from shrunken human skulls hanging on his chest, giving off a primitive impression.

“Finally got out...” the old man groused. His face was lined with wrinkles like the bark of a tree. His hair and beard were a mess like the mane of a lion, totally unkempt.

He put his free hand by his mouth and blew.

Piiii!!!

A sharp whistle sound traveled through the cold wind.

After some time, a black dot was flying in the sky in the distance.

The black dot gradually came closer until its appearance was revealed. It was a big black hawk that had a wingspan of over four meters without a tinge of other colors. In the eyes of the black hawk was the strange old man at the bottom. It gave off a loud screech and flew down towards the old man.

A shadow flashed by and the old man was sitting on the back of the black hawk before it had even completely flown down. Then, one man and one hawk flew away from the place.

A few days later, the Lightless Alliance that was growing in numbers sent out a message. One of their three leaders, AG, had finally come out in spring and successfully made a breakthrough to a new realm. Originally, AG was an Upper Level but after the breakthrough, he could only be a Death Apostle.

The Lightless Alliance, which only had two Death Apostle class experts in the ranked one Holy Fist Palace, now had another one. The Alliance had now become more powerful, to an extent that it was comparable to the Blood Breeds and Witches.

Especially the Witches which had now become the weakest among them. AG, who represented the wizards, had had a breakthrough. Did it mean that the wizards who disappeared from history had returned once more? No one was clear.

However, the one point that everyone understood was that Lightless Alliance had become more powerful. Supernatural powers combined with the powers of ordinary people. More and more humans, under the leadership of Holy Fist Palace, were constantly training in fist techniques. Every second and every moment that passed by meant the expansion of Holy Fist Palace and Lightless Alliance.

In this situation, the Blood Breeds had no choice but to make a move.

Deep in the Blood Alliance Headquarters

In the crimson underground, a number of huge spheres similar to glass balls floated in mid-air while moving around.

All the Death Apostle Blood Breeds except for Ashen were gathered here, occupying each of the glass spheres.

Wellington, Scarlet Moon, the female death apostle, the mysterious blonde man, and the last one was the Lion Mother. The Lion Mother's real body seemed to be elsewhere, but she had projected through the sphere what appeared to be a virtual image standing in the sphere.

The five of them opened their eyes and looked at each other in the sphere.

"The hidden piece is in. The next step should follow the plan," Lion Mother was the first one to speak. "The world has become more and more chaotic. If it is not put back on the right track, I'm afraid there will be unpredictable severe consequences." While she was speaking, she still had a gentle and compassionate look on her face.

“Based on my recent observation, I felt that the original plan should be slightly altered,” someone gave a different opinion. It was the only female Death Apostle. She slightly frowned and stared at Lion Mother.

“I feel that, with Garen’s personality, even if we used his parents and relatives to threaten him, the most we can achieve is to perish together with him. Besides letting him cast aside any worries, there are no other uses.”

“Why do you say that? We can use his family to exchange for the benefits we need,” Wellington said. He was now developing new family descendants so his consumption was very large. Until now, his face was still greenish, evidence of his large blood consumption.

“Though there is that kind of scenario, according to my analysis on Garen’s past, this person was, on the surface, protective of his family but deep down he was an absolutely indifferent and rational person. I expect that threatening him using his family will not yield a good enough result worth sacrificing our hidden piece which we took so much care to insert,” the female Death Apostle retorted.

“Indeed, with Garen’s personality, he will likely go straight down to fighting us to the death. Even if we kill his family, it will only fuel the fire in his heart for vengeance. In the end, it will be a war that consumes both sides with nothing to gain except damage. In comparison, the Holy Fist Palace has a huge number of humans to back them up and their speed in restoring their power and forces far outstrip us. This not worth it,” Wellington also shook his head slightly and said.

“Say, Scarlet Moon, isn’t there someone on your side that has a very good relationship with Garen’s family? Is there a chance?” he looked at Scarlet Moon and said.

“I will not use such a despicable move,” Scarlet Moon said. He looked at him indifferently and closed his eyes, refusing to say anymore.

“Stodgy!” Wellington curse at him.

“I also agree with this view. Garen’s personality is not the kind that succumbs to threats easily. The most we can get out of this is a war to the bitter end. It will only remove his last worries,” the mysterious blonde man nodded in agreement, “My suggestion is that the hidden piece refrains from taking any action for now, so as not to expose themselves. They will be able to display the largest effect at the critical time.”

"I agree," Wellington nodded and said.

"This is fine too," Lion Mother nodded and agreed to this method.

Swish swish swish....

In the bushes that stood as tall as a man, several figures flashed by. They were all dressed in black and almost blended into the darkness of the night, like ferocious nighthawks.

At the front, there was a scarlet figure running with all its might. The speed of the scarlet figure was not slow, but the distance with its pursuers at the back was getting shorter and shorter.

When the distance was less than three hundred meters away, the scarlet figure came to a sudden halt and turned around. The moonlight revealed a cold and handsome man's face. It was the person who had killed Dahm and successfully escaped, Hochman.

"Found me out so soon?" Hochman murmured at the few shadows behind him expressionlessly.

After killing Dahm, he put on a mask and escaped since he was sure to become a wanted man in the Lightless Alliance. With the large network that Holy Fist Palace had and the mysterious means of the Dark Colors Witches. Even if he had a breakthrough, he was tracked down without realization.

"Hochman! Die!!"

Several shadows flashed around him at that moment, just like petals of a black flower, and withdrew four sharp knives that were stabbed towards his waist from all directions.

"Nighthawk?" Hochman narrowed both his eyes and recognized the secret technique they used. It was Nighthawk's improved version of Shooting Shadow Secret Technique. This secret technique of the Holy

Fist Palace was the most involved in their outside work as it was specialized in high speed for assassination purpose. In order to achieve victory, they would use any methods available to them. These people who dared to come out to pursue him was obviously fierce and not scared of death.

The blade was absolutely untouchable because it was hundred percent coated in poison. One touch would spell his death.

“Die!”

Flicking both his hands, Hochman sent out one transparent wind punch after another in all directions and caused the blade to bend.

Peng!

He kicked the belly of one of the dark shadows and made him shoot out like a cannonball. How many forces did Holy Fist Palace send out to kill him? He intended to leave one alive for interrogation purposes.

Just then, he looked at the eyes of the four men wearing masks. There was no desire for survival reflected in the remaining three people.

“This is bad!”

Just as this thought appeared in his mind, he heard three bursting sounds accompanied by extremely hot waves.

Boom!!!!

Around Hochman, red and white flames burst out from the three figures. These fiery flame tongues surrounded Hochman.

The flames had a diameter that was more than six meters and their colors were strange. Looking from afar, they were divided into three layers of colors. The inside was white gold, the middle was pure white and the outermost was pale red in color.

The huge shock turned into ripples and spread out. Looking from far away, the figure of Hochman and the three people could not be seen as they were completely wrapped in flames.

The surrounding grassland quickly turned yellow and withered before turning charred and then into ashes with sparkles on them. They were blown away by the shockwaves and some glued themselves to the surrounding grass, quickly starting another fire.

The flame lasted a few seconds before it slowly disappeared, leaving a huge pit behind. It was more than ten meters large and there was smoke inside.

Peng!

A dark shadow suddenly dashed out of the deep pit and flew into the distance, leaving behind afterimages.

Hochman felt his body boiling and his clothes were almost completely burned. There were large patches of burns on his body. The original handsome face had become unrecognizable and more than half of his hair had burned away.

This was the combined power of the modern science and secret techniques. Three death soldiers with special explosives blew up themselves together. The power it brought was such that even a Death Apostle class like Hochman would receive grievous injuries in a moment of carelessness. After all, he did not have the kind of terrifying physique like Garen.

Even then, the charred skin on Hochman was rapidly healing with a speed that was visible to the naked eyes.

“Such ruthlessness!” Hochman endured the pain and sped away. Even if he was a Death Apostle class, the Holy Fist Palace was not an ordinary force. There was still a real Death Apostle, Tu Lan, there. Not only that, apart from their life force that was close to immortal, the actual gap in strength between the

upper level and them was not that large. He was not a secret technique expert that was specialized in speed, hence if he was surrounded with a range of technology to delay and interfere with him, not even he could escape.

“Surrender quietly, Hochman!” a voice came from far away. It seemed to be one of the top Nighthawk members. He could not remember clearly but it was not important right now. What was important was the shrill sound on top of his head.

Swish!!

A dark shadow suddenly flew over his head and Hochman felt a sudden threat from the sky. Looking up quickly, two torpedo-like white missiles flew at him with a shrill sound.

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Boom!!

The missiles exploded with a large shockwave and Hochman was blown away, rolling around on the ground.

Soon, there were shrill sounds once again and a few missiles raced down from the sky like meteors.

After a few mechanical sounds, the second wave of missiles automatically burst into more than ten warheads. They aimed for Hochman, including all of the possible places he could dodge.

Peng peng peng peng!!...

Amidst a series of explosions, Hochman kept dodging at a very high speed. The sparks from the explosion of missiles stuck to his body and kept burning. The fact that he could not even extinguish them spoke of his current disheveled condition. He quickly took off his cloak and hid from the warheads in the sky using the surrounding bushes.

“Lock!”

Suddenly, the roar of a female rang out.

As the sound of the roar swept past, a huge invisible force fell and pressed down on Hochman.

Roar!!

At this moment, Hochman shook his arms and the roar of a beast came from his shadow. He broke free from the invisible force and avoided the third wave of missiles in the nick of time.

Holy Fist Palace Tactical Hall.

Garen's eyes swept over the sand table in front of him. He was listening to the expert's explanation calmly with an expressionless face.

The white sand table displayed a map of the entire Earth, forming a miniature Earth. On top of it, some important places were marked clearly with bright red dots.

Garen's line of sight fell on the miniature Earth. The planet of this world was also named as Earth.

There were three red dots flashing on the Asia and Europe region. These represented the Holy Fist Palace's confrontations with the Blood Breeds within these two regions.

The rest of the regions in Asia, Africa and America were relatively calm. However, there were patches of red in some places in Asia like red oil, indicating that these places were also in conflict with the Blood Breeds, just that the scale was much smaller.

"In Asia, the red regions represent requests for support but the level of skirmishes are small and Headquarter has sent reinforcements there. Together with the local forces, there will be no problem in keeping the situation under our control." the Intelligence Department's personnel giving the explanation

was a cool beauty wearing a black uniform with flesh-colored stockings. She was currently quickly going over the general situation for Garen with a serious expression.

“According to the latest news from our Intelligence Department, our focus is on the flashing red points, especially Europe where the Blood Breeds are deeply rooted. Their initiative to attack us is most likely a cover to attract our attention from something,” the female official said.

“What about the pursuers’ team?” Garen asked.

“They’ve caught up but Hochman is very tenacious. We’ve sent four bombers and a team of Special Forces with full cooperation from the Palace’s fighters and support from Dark Color witches.”

“Are there any other problems?”

“No, all other locations have enough support. The only thing the Holy Fist Palace has to do is to make up for their lack of Special Forces combat personnel. The Blood Breeds are only strong in special warfare. The local forces can still hold their own when facing them head-on in the battlefield. Taking out their speed and hypnosis, the so-called Blood Breeds only have slightly thicker skin and longer lifespan,” the female official said confidently.

“Who’s the current base commander in America?” Garen’s fingers gently tapped the America region on the miniature Earth.

“It’s United States’ Army’s Lieutenant Strong that’s responsible for dispatching troops.”

“Ask him to make preparations, as the Blood Breeds will protect Hochman,” Garen said.

“Are you saying the Blood Breed’s large movement is a cover for Hochman, forcing us to dispatch a large number of forces to guard against them?” the female official frowned.

“It is possible.”

Garen took a final glance at the miniature Earth. The flashing red dots and regions were still eye-catching.

“Let the mobile team get ready to move out.”

“Yes, sir!”

One week later....

The border of Canada, United States.

Hochman was running for his life. Above him came the sound of combat aircraft. Previously, an army from Canada had retreated after some discussion. Apparently, this operation to search and destroy received permission even across the border.

During this one week, Hochman had experienced, for the first time, the feelings of those who were hunted down by him in the past, along with Dahm’s experience.

He was continuously hunted and bombarded by the army, one group after another, and no matter where he fled, his position would be swiftly tracked down. The combination of satellite positioning and witchcraft did not allow him to find a place to hide and rest, forcing him to run forward without pause.

When he was hungry, he could only hunt and kill wild animals and eat their meat raw. When he was thirsty, he could only drink blood most of the time. There was no chance of grilling meat and boiling soup.

If he had not mastered the Water Bird Fist and invoked some strange and mysterious change in his body, he would have collapsed long ago.

“Hold on, just hold on a little bit more....” after one week of no rest while constantly being pursued, even Hochman had reached his limit. He forced open his eyelids that were about to shut any moment and rolled away on the spot. Behind him, an air-to-ground missile exploded... or was it some sort of anti-aircraft weapon?

These days, he was getting used to the continuous stream of army weapons with great power. The clothes on his body had become rags, the hair all over his body had been burnt off, his skin was blackened and there were burns everywhere. It was all thanks to these weapons.

Even though his physique had become very special, enduring all the attacks up till now had rapidly weakened his recovery rate.

However, from the moment he made the decision to kill Dahm, he had anticipated this kind of consequences. He had always suspected that the reason he was hunted down was not due to killing Dahm but to the appearance of the mysterious person, who had snatched something from his teacher, hence allowing Hochman to escape his control.

Nonetheless, he had decided to snatch the mask, and such a result was naturally within his consideration. He had arranged for subordinates that were absolutely loyal to him to secretly contact the Blood Breeds. The Blood Breeds should have taken some kind of action.

Both legs mechanically moved at a fast pace while doing all sorts of evasive actions. Behind him, Gatling guns swept over the ground, causing mud to splash around.

Hochman was unmoved and sped forward. At the end of the bushes was a dark and damp jungle where the light was dim. It was the best place to escape his pursuers.

As long as he entered the jungle, the pursuers would have a hard time to chase after him. This fact made Hochman felt relieved.

But at this moment, a familiar figure suddenly appeared before the jungle.

Pa pa pa!

A series of searchlights formed a blinding beam of light and instantly enveloped Hochman in the middle, forming a huge square.

The dazzling light temporarily blinded his sight.

“Hochman, don’t struggle anymore,” the person in front of the jungle had a good proportion. She wore a red silk cheongsam which revealed her long, curved legs in stockings. Her red hair cascaded downwards and her beautiful face gave off a cold feeling.

The combination of her charming and cold temperament gave off an inexplicably strong and fierce aura.

Especially that pair of apricot-red eyes, which exuded a crystalline beauty under the reflection of the white searchlights.

“Quentin,” Hochman suddenly stopped and stood in the center of the searchlights. His face was haggard and his original handsome countenance was nowhere to be seen. Even his voice was hoarse as he had not drunk water for a long time.

“You have never won against me. Get out of my way, I don’t want to kill you.”

A hint of contempt flashed through Quentin’s eyes.

“The current you is not in top condition.”

“You really want to go against me?” the only spot on Hochman’s body which could be considered clean was his eyes. He stared at Quentin warily, though the whites of his eyes were bloodshot.

“Not me, but us,” Quentin smiled. Immediately, a person walked out from the jungle behind, wearing a white uniform upon which the word “Holy” was sewn into the chest. It was the standard clothing of the Holy Fist Palace.

The person had spiky hair, his body was taut with muscles and the shape of his body was similar to a bear. Even so, the steps he took were silent, which was oddly contradictory.

"Xander..." Hochman recognized that person with one glance. He was one of the most powerful combatants in the Combat Club's first batch; one of the Four Major Generals, Xander.

"Hochman, why did you betray us?" Xander asked coldly.

"Betray? This is not betrayal," Hochman laughed. "I am not willing to stay under other people for eternity, and my life is not destined to be used as someone else's lapdog!"

"You fool!" Xander said coldly. "Teacher had delegated all the authorities to us, especially you and General Dahm! I didn't expect that you were still not satisfied. Did you think you could replace Teacher's position?"

"Why can't I?" Hochman grinned. He suddenly disappeared while being surrounded by searchlights and rushed towards Quentin and Xander.

Boom!!!

Just then, a flame pillar burst out from the ground into the sky in front of Quentin and Xander. The flame pillar had blocked Hochman's path.

"Kill him!!" Quentin shouted while pulling Xander and retreating.

In the jungle behind, flame tongues lit up his surroundings and countless bullets flew towards Hochman. All these bullets had undergone a special process using heavy metal as materials. As long as the bullets penetrated the body, it could cause heavy metal poisoning. Some of the bullets even carried explosives which could explode and deal heavier damage after piercing the target.

After a short time, the bushes of the jungle were smashed to pieces and some places were soon lit on fire.

In the storm of bullets, Hochman dodged left and right and impressively, not many bullets had hit him. After a few evasive moves, he leaped towards Quentin and Xander.

“Let me!”

Xander was not afraid and stepped forward.

With a standard horse stance, he unleashed a punch.

Peng!!!

Fist against fist. Hochman and Xander both trembled. One flew back and tumbled to the ground while the other retreated a few steps with a red complexion.

“Again!!” Xander roared and rushed forward bringing a burst of wind with him, like a tiger that was descending down the mountain.

At this time, the surrounding ambushing gunmen had automatically stopped their actions, awaiting the results of the brawl.

Xander rushed forward aggressively and from his waist, he delivered punches one after another like cannonballs. Fierce explosive forces were unleashed without restraint. The muscles all over his body had also twisted and tightened like wire.

The steel-like fists were launched towards Hochman one-by-one but they were countered with the same force by Hochman. The current Hochman had reached his limit. He could not even let out aura to suppress his opponent. In his struggle, he could only barely exchange punches with Xander. Yet it was in this way that more and more internal injuries were accumulated.

The one week without rest was filled with explosions that could come from anywhere at any time as well as various means of attack that ranged from concealed poison needles to long-range sniper attacks, and carpet bombing to napalm bombs.

The slightest slip of attention would lead to attacks from various high-tech weapons until he was confirmed dead.

Any intention of getting close and killing off the pursuers would be detected by the Dark Colors Witches and experts from Holy Fist Palace. They would quickly retreat and activate debuffs with various slowing effects to deny him any chance of closing in on them. They would only attack him from afar.

Under these conditions, he'd struggled and yet managed to kill off two mixed groups of witches and Holy Fist Palace experts. However, even more of them appeared. Squads of death soldiers had emerged; a lot of them were criminals on death row that were released just to get close to him and detonate themselves.

He felt as if enemies were everywhere. During this period of time, the thing that made Hochman most alarmed were not those experts from Holy Fist Palace or the witches from Dark Colors, it was those ordinary people.

They used various tricks and deceptions to design traps, landmines, animals injected with toxic poison, hallucinogenic gas and all kinds of powerful army weapons on him.

In this kind of situation, nevermind him, even all those veteran death apostle leveled Blood Breeds would feel a headache with all these troubles.

Previously, Hochman had almost eaten a rat that was injected with toxic poison. On the surface, there was nothing wrong with the rat but it was a poison was slow in showing effects.

"Die! Hochman!" Xander fought wildly. All the veins on his face were bulging and he was even laughing loudly. He tapped at a few points on his chest.

“Polaris Fierce Arts!!”

Boom!!

A surge of air burst out as Xander activated his secret techniques.

Xander grew and expanded by a fold and smashed his thick arms towards Hochman. The momentum was similar to a large hammer trying to smash him to a pulp.

Hochman hurriedly raised both his arms and slashed towards his surroundings.

“Profound. Dual Blade!!”

Two snapping sounds occurred. His knife hands sliced and melded two invisible air blades to form a perfect ring. The upper part of the ring went for Xander’s face whereas the lower part flew towards Xander’s legs.

This was the original Waterbird Fist Profound’s Dual Blade.

Even if it was the currently exhausted Hochman who activated the secret techniques, the slashes still had the sharpness of a real blade.

Clang!!!

Too late to change their techniques, their attacks clashed against each other.

Xander’s arms destroyed the upper half of the air blade and hammered down on Hochman’s shoulders. The huge impact crashed down and the sound of breaking bones was heard.

At the same time, both of Xander’s legs were unable to dodge the air slash and were hit directly, tearing through his pants and left two bloody wounds.

Ah!!!!

Xander howled and quickly retreated while staggering. One of the subordinates quickly grabbed hold of him. His body reverted to normal, but his thigh had been cut deeply into by a finger's length, almost cutting off his legs completely.

On the other hand, Hochman simply shifted his shoulders and set back his bones. Temporarily, it would not affect his actions.

He half-kneeled on the ground and coldly stared at Quentin.

"Just the two of you won't be able to kill me," he said.

"What if I join in?"

A lazy female voice sounded behind Hochman.

He jerked his head back and his pupils immediately shrank.

Armored vehicles sped down the highway. The streetlights flashed past one by one, almost connecting to form a neon yellow rope.

Garen sat in the first armored vehicle, looking at a laptop displaying a map with the latest information from the Intelligence Department.

The map still used red dots and red patches to indicate the extent of threats in different regions.

There were two drivers and the one dispatched to give an analysis of the map was a black male officer.

“Hochman has been surrounded in this area. Lady Tu Lan together with Generals Quentin and Xander have been dispatched there. They should have reached there by now. Of course, in order to catch our target alive and successfully retrieve the mask, our tactics are based on the objective of making our target fatigued and incapacitating him. Looks like the effects are quite good and we have successfully reduced Hochman’s combat capability significantly.”

“How significant?”

“His current combat power should barely be Upper Level, but in a situation where he still has to watch out for attacks from the surroundings, he should be at his weakest,” the officer answered.

“One week without rest and he still has so much strength. This is truly a surprise...” Garen held his chin and muttered.

He had a hunch that the hunt for Hochman this time to retrieve back his Soul Primer would lead him to the mysterious man that got Hochman to tear off the Soul Primer. What kind of person was able to do all these? He was feeling quite anxious.

‘Be careful. I got a bad feeling about this,’ Black Sethe’s voice sounded weakly.

“This is a conspiracy. From the moment my Soul Primer was torn off, I have no choice but to take action myself,” Garen said.

Black Sethe went silent. He knew what Garen said was not wrong.

If he did not reclaim the Soul Primer, he would have a fatal flaw. If he wanted to reclaim his Soul Primer, he had to kill Hochman himself. He only had these two choices, and there was no way around it.

Looking at the road and streetlights outside the window, Garen began to calm down himself and adjust his state.

At the sixth hour after Garen left the Holy Fist Palace.

The Blood Union sent out a large number of Blood Breeds armed with guns and other kinds of weapons to attack the Holy Fist Palace and its allies.

In just two hours' time, the scale had escalated to an all-out war. A large number of casualties had occurred among both humans and Blood Breeds. The army had been dispatched, but the number of casualties still soared. The Blood Breeds deployed by the Blood Union numbered at least in the three digits, and their objective was to attack all the branches of Holy Fist Palace.

This represented that the Blood Union and Holy Fist Palace was officially going to war. The battlefield was mainly concentrated in America and the news reported it as terrorists waging their holy war and the army taking action against them.

The Dark Colors Witches Association was currently fighting against the traditional witches, but the strange thing was that the Death Apostle level members did not come out.

Tu Lan stood quietly behind Hochman. She wore a crisp white blouse matched with a pair of slightly washed out black jeans. Her long red hair was tied behind her head in a ponytail style, giving off an ordinary calm feeling.

However, it was this kind of calm temperament that made Hochman's heartbeat stop for a second.

Although he had mentally prepared for this, when he was really faced with this terrifying Death Apostle Blood Breed that also wielded Fantasy Fist, he still felt an uncertain peril.

"You guys really overestimate me... Even Lady Tu Lan herself has come out..." Hochman gave a dry laugh.

“After combining with General Dahm’s yin nature Waterbird Fist, your fist technique should have reached an unimaginable level right? Looks like it has broken through to the Upper level,” Tu Lan’s expression showed indifference as she beckoned with her index finger. “I too broke through not long ago. Let’s both have a fair fight. The others will not do anything. How about it?”

Fair fight?

Hochman almost blew his top. He looked at the injuries all over his body. Right after he broke through the Waterbird Fist and reached the Death Apostle level, he had been chased down all over the place without any time for him to stabilize. After a week without rest, he’d then fought against Xander who stimulated his potential, adding to his injuries. He would be considered lucky if he had even half of his combat strength left. Now, he had to fight with a Death Apostle at the peak of her strength? He felt like the world had completely gone mad.

Tu Lan gave a smile.

“You don’t agree? Let me tell you a piece of news. The Holy Fist Master is on his way here. If you don’t grab your chance now, it will be too late to have a fair fight later.”

“The mask is with me. You guys don’t want it?” Hochman suddenly asked, taking out the eerie mask from his tattered clothes.

At this moment, Hochman’s expression showed surprise and his gaze moved to the mask in his hand.

Not just him, even Quentin, Xander, Tu Lan and other subordinates and soldiers’ gazes had all gathered on the eerie Sleepless Faces Mask.

Weng....

The mask trembled and the mouth part of the mask slightly opened.

“What is this...what’s going on?!” Hochman felt that he’d almost lost his grip on the mask. His other hand also grabbed on to the mask, finally suppressing its trembling.

“That is the mask’s resonance.”

Screams suddenly came from the jungle. The screams belonged to the soldiers lying in ambush.

At the same time, a clear male voice sounded from the forest. A man’s figure suddenly appeared behind Quentin and Xander.

“The mask’s resonance... The twelve masks, they are finally coming together....” another female voice suddenly sounded.

Without Tu Lan realizing, the enchanting figure of a beautiful woman walked out from the bushes on the right side of the crowd.

With the guns’ mechanical sounds, Tu Lan, Quentin, and Xander, together with all the subordinates they’d brought, aimed their guns at the people that had abruptly appeared.

The captain had a bad feeling. He looked at Commander Quentin and waited for her instructions. The soldiers here were specially selected Special Forces. Even in the face of such a bizarre situation, they did not take any reckless actions and waited for the commander’s instructions while suppressing their unease.

Quentin instinctively felt something dangerous enveloping all the people here. She looked at the current strongest person at this place, Tu Lan.

“Blood Union...” Tu Lan instantly recognized the scarlet Blood Union symbol on both of them. She also recognized both of them.

This kind of strength and this kind of atmosphere only appeared on a few people in the Blood Union. The only possibility was.....

“Death Apostles.....How did they appear here of all places?!” Tu Lan’s heart sank.

“That person was right, it’s here,” the female Death Apostle piped up. “How do we resolve this now?”

“No hurry, let’s wait a bit longer...” the blond male Death Apostle smiled. It was as though they did not notice that the surrounding gun muzzles were all aimed at them. “Garen will arrive soon...”

Compared to the tattered Death Apostle level Hochman, their identity as Blood Breed Death Apostles with immortal characteristics made them invincible. On the other hand, though Hochman had survival and combat abilities on the level of a Death Apostle, he was still a human. He still lacked the Blood Breed Death Apostle’s most powerful ability—immortality.

Chapter 759: Trump Card 1

Boom!

Thunder rolled in the night sky, accompanied by a flash of lightning. The grassland below was illuminated for an instant, turning it snow white.

This grassland was located somewhere at the border of Canada, and the United States was completely deserted now. Even the people at the nearest villages and towns had been relocated by the government’s army beforehand. There was not a single soul for hundreds of kilometers.

A gust of wind passed by. The grass which stood higher than a person’s knee waved in the breeze and produced swishing sounds.

On the grassland only tens of meters away from a jungle surrounded by mountains and hills, the grass there was currently ignited, brightening up the surrounding sky.

The flames spread with the wind, burning up towards the distant grassland.

A bunch of people was standing on the burnt grassland.

Hochman was surrounded by the people and soldiers from Holy Fist Palace. Quentin and Xander were staying focussed in order to deal with anything that might happen and Tu Lan was scanning the periphery.

Outside the crowd from Holy Fist Palace was a man and a woman leading another bunch of people. These people were all Blood Breeds and Vampires dressed in black with black cloth covering their faces, leaving their blood-red eyes exposed.

The atmosphere grew tenser.

“Tu Lan, why are you siding with the Holy Fist Palace when you should be a Death Apostle?” the handsome blonde man covered in black spoke.

“I just feel that compared to the Blood Union, the Holy Fist Palace was more suited for me. This is where I can pursue my goals,” Tu Lan answered seriously.

She did not lie. Only by staying at the Holy Fist Palace was she able to receive Garen’s Soul Primer, and at the same time, she had the freedom to train in Fantasy Fist and other Secret Techniques which gave her a new goal to pursue. As compared to the boring past where she simply ate and enjoyed life, this was far meaningful.

After tasting the pleasure of constantly getting stronger in the Holy Fist Palace, she would rather die than going back to her former life in Blood Union.

Now, she was also a Death Apostle, the same as the other side, she had the right to make her own choices.

“Are you really going to be standing on the side of the Holy Fist Palace?” the man frowned.

“Herein lies my goals, my dreams, not at the Blood Union,” Tu Lan confirmed. “Maybe I was unwilling yet forced to at the start, but it’s different now.”

“What a pity....” the female Death Apostle shook her head slightly. The number of Blood Breeds and Vampires in their surroundings were increasing.

However, the same was happening for the common soldiers on the Holy Fist Palace side.

Bomber aircraft and fighter jets were flying across the sky above them and the sound of helicopters grew nearer.

The Blood Union and Holy Fist Palace were both mobilizing troops on a large scale. The forces gathering in this small area were increasing in numbers and strength.

“Although it’s a little hasty, today is the day that Holy Fist Palace’s myth is broken,” the female Death Apostle looked up at the helicopters in the sky. A red light flashed by in her eyes.

Suddenly, a helicopter turned and violently crashed into the side of another helicopter.

Boom!!

Both helicopters crashed together and exploded, turning into a ball of flames.

In an instant, countless messages were spread through their communication channel and instructions for them to retreat were conveyed. The aircraft pilots quickly fled the area in horror.

Tu Lan observed their actions coldly without any sign of doing anything. She had guessed that the other party’s intention was to use Holy Fist Palace’s top members as bait with Hochman and the mask in his possession to lure Garen to personally come and rescue them.

Apparently, they had prepared something to deal with Garen.

At the same time, Tu Lan had the utmost confidence in Garen. As long as the Fist Saint came, any predicaments would not be able to stop him from advancing.

Hochman did not expect that things would develop up to this point. Without meaning to, he seemed to have become the trigger for war between the Blood Union and Holy Fist Palace.

He gripped the mask tightly and tried to restore his strength as much as he could. Unfortunately, he had pushed himself too much and he had not sufficiently replenished food and water, causing the recovery rate of his body to slow down. He could only barely prevent his internal injuries from worsening while stopping the bleeding.

“Now the mask is the only trump card for my survival...”

He could sense that whether from Holy Fist Palace or Blood Union, there were several lines of sight on the mask in his hand. Obviously, both sides had the intention to snatch the mask.

Swish Swish!

Suddenly, two more figures appeared beside the male and female Death Apostles. They were Wellington and Scarlet Moon.

One was dressed up in a white suit and the other looked as though he had traveled far and wide. He did not have the demeanor of a Blood Breed.

“Mongo, Marianne, everyone is here,” Wellington’s sight coldly swept the surrounding, “I’ll like to see how Garen can escape this time!” his expression was calm but the words he uttered gave off the feeling that he was gnashing his teeth. Apparently, he was still holding the grudge from the time he was beaten black and blue.

“Don’t worry, we won’t let Garen return this time,” the blond handsome man said and smiled, “Holy Fist Palace, in the end, is short-lived, and today will be the day it’ll be wiped out.”

“Don’t be careless, Mongo,” Scarlet Moon gave him a look, then closed his eyes to meditate.

The other two no longer said any more words and closed their eyes to prepare.

The pressure given off by the four Death Apostles was like the ocean pressing down on all the people here, making it hard for them to breathe.

Tu Lan secretly activated the Fantasy Fist and signaled for everyone to get close to her before inching towards the weakest link in the circle of Blood Breeds.

Strangely, the Blood Breeds did not seem to have any intention of stopping them.

Tu Lan suddenly looked at the trembling mask and immediately understood.

“These Blood Breeds must have brought all the masks they’ve acquired here. They must have some sort of special skill to activate the resonance between the masks. If the mask was used as the bargaining chip, there is no need to worry that Master would not appear.”

“What do we do now?” Quentin and Xander whispered.

“Prepare to respond to any changes, as long as Master is here, everything will be alright,” Tu Lan said.

Half an hour soon passed by, the people from Blood Union remain unperturbed, showing their patience.

Just then, a great tremor came from the distance.

It was as if something was shaking violently but soon the tremor had quickly vanished.

“Here he is!” Scarlet Moon turned his head and looked at the horizon. At the gap between the hills, black armored vehicles were heading in this direction.

The vehicles came to a stop far away. It seemed the other side knew that the average person had little effect in this kind of fight.

With the opening sound of the car door, a tall masked man came down from the car. This man also had blonde hair but his eyes were not blood red. It was a clear dark blue.

The man's attire was from the Holy Fist Palace. It was black with white edge embroidered with the word 'Holy' both at right chest and his back.

A thin and wrinkled little old man also got down together with him, holding a cane and wearing tattered clothes. He seemed as though a gust of wind could blow him away.

This man was AG who had just come out from the vehicle. He had just received the news about the war between Holy Fist Palace and the Blood Union and had hurriedly come. Not only him, there were also the experts from Lightless Alliance. The leader of Dark Colors Witches Association, Nasira was hiding in the vicinity, ready to lead her people to fight. They were preparing a very strong magic circle to act as support.

As soon as the two got off, the armored vehicles immediately evacuated. Apparently, they did not plan to stay behind on the battlefield. These armored vehicles looked tough and hard but when facing opponents on the level of Death Apostle, particularly the veteran Death Apostles, they could only be massacred. Their ability to control humans had reached the level where as long as their glance swept overhead, humans were likely to fall under their control.

If they did not hold back from acting against the people from the Holy Fist Palace, most likely Quentin, Xander, and the others would not have been able to wait until Garen's arrival and would've been forced to commit suicide under their control.

The rain finally spilled down following the sound of thunder, giving off a depressing ambiance.

The night sky turned darker and the moon was hidden by thick clouds. The aircraft no longer flew in the air. Under this kind of weather, low altitude flight carried a very big risk and their effects in this fight were next to nothing.

Soon, a large number of human forces also received the orders to retreat. In such a battle, their bullets were not able to do anything to the veteran Death Apostles. Whatever missiles they had had difficulty in pinpointing their locations. The chances of damaging their allies were higher, and so it was better to withdraw their own people and plan their next move.

Garen and AG looked at the four Death Apostles from the Blood Union. He also saw Tu Lan, Quentin and the others in the encirclement and Hochman with the mask in his hand in the middle.

“The situation is a little complicated.”

“What are you going to do?” AG asked calmly.

“What the Blood Breeds want was just an opportunity to fight a battle to the death with me. They want me to willingly fight them. Without resorting to such means, they won’t get what they want,” Garen said. “The mask and the besieged people are used to threaten me. Of course, they may also covet the mask.”

He clapped his hands and two figures appeared behind him. They were both males wearing the white Holy Fist Palace’s attires. The two men carried a black sealed metal box and came behind him.

With a snap sound, the box opened. Inside were all the masks that Garen had collected up-to-date. One by one the masks stacked together and were constantly trembling. The trembling was not strong but strangely, the lips of the masks were slightly open and they were getting larger until they eventually became black holes that looked like they were howling. Even the mask that Garen was wearing was no exception.

“Sleepless Faces...the Blood Breeds must have brought all their masks here. Adding the mask in Hochman’s hands, altogether there are twelve masks,” Garen calmly said.

He looked at the potential points in his Attribute pane.

‘Strength 7. Agility 7. Vitality 10. Intelligence 12. Potential 33124%. Soul Limit 30.’

The two masks that had just arrived in his hands, gathered by Tu Lan herself, had provided him with a lot of potential points. Now that he had gotten himself more than three hundred potential points, he could upgrade his attributes by another margin. However, he hesitated and did not use them immediately.

Chapter 760: Trump Card 2

Recently, he had looked back upon his past transmigrations. If potential points were the energy to be used as consumption for his body, then the experiences he needed to amass to form a Soul Seed were the potential points he used to upgrade his body to the limit, which were converted to energy for his soul and stored. This was a gathering process that was extreme to the limit, but this was also the only way for him to reach a higher realm.

There were two more important reasons as to why he did not immediately boost his attributes.

If he activated the Fifth Star and reached the highest limit for his attributes, then he would need to consume a large amount of life force. The little bit of vigor that Slaughtering Hands provided were nowhere enough. Once his life force was damaged, he could achieve a similar effect as restoration through supplementing his vitality with potential points.

Another point was that when he activated the Fifth Star, no matter how high the basic quality of his body was, the current highest limit for his body was at an average of 30 points. Since it could not increase, then it was much more useful as resources for recovery.

After the dispute in his heart, he looked up at the Death Apostles in the opposite.

“Let’s go, we’re going to meet some of the most powerful people in the Blood Union.”

AG grinned.

“This should be the century’s highest summit meeting...”

He quickly followed.

The night wind caused the rain to come down in sheets. The drizzle was like slanted lines pelting the people below.

Even so, no one dared to speak loudly at this moment.

Garen and AG walked closer and closer and finally stood on a hill, looking down on the Death Apostles.

This was an arrogant attitude but the Death Apostles did not show any displeasure at this. To think that the Death Apostles who were used to being arrogant in their daily lives were now being looked down on by Garen, yet incredibly, these proud Death Apostles did not show any unpleasantness on their faces. Instead, their expressions slowly calmed down and seemed even steadier.

The Blood Breeds opened up the encirclement and the people from Holy Fist Palace quickly got out and gathered behind Garen and AG. Upon Garen's orders, even Tu Lan evacuated this place.

Very quickly, there were only the four Death Apostles, Garen and AG left staring at one another in the rain.

The only spectator left on the scene was Hochman, clutching the mask in his hands.

His body was stiff from being sandwiched between two great pressuring auras. The mask in his hand was still trembling as though it was trying to escape.

"The twelve masks are here," the Death Apostle, Mongo spoke. "You did come for the masks." He stared at Garen's eyes on top of the hill without averting his gaze.

Yet, Garen looked indifferent to his words.

"Since you guys have spent so much effort in baiting me here, whatever means you have, use them all."

Pa.

He stepped forward.

Countless shadows emerged from his feet. As though there were countless tentacles or tails spreading down the hill, they soon covered the area where the Death Apostles stood.

The rain was blown away by the impact of the shadows. The shadows were swaying, giving off a demonic feeling.

Weng...

Suddenly, the Death Apostle Mongo stepped forward. The ground where the four stood began to shake.

The earth was rent and countless cracks appeared. Lavas slowly gushed out from the cracks and formed ruddy glowing rivers.

Under the intense shaking, a blood-red longsword made its appearance.

The long sword was two meters long with a bloody eye etched on both the blade and the hilt. The blade was covered in black threads weaving into black roses.

Mongo smiled and reached for the hilt.

At this moment, the remaining three Death Apostles turned into lava and gathered on the sword in his hand, forming three rings that constantly revolved slowly around the sword.

“Final Holy Technique....Red Light Sky.”

Mongo raised the sword, with its tip pointing towards the sky.

Boom!!

With the sound of an explosion, a red bolt of lightning came crashing down on the hill where Garen and AG stood.

An intense red light shone and nothing could be made out for an instant.

Not even Garen could have expected that this attack would come from the sky.

Countless strands of red lightning wound around Garen and stabbed at his skin like swords. AG was pushed away by him at the first sign of danger.

Chi Chi Chi!

Suddenly, a white ring accompanied by dark shadows appeared around Garen and instantly broke through the red lightning.

After the lightning dispersed, Garen stood there unharmed with his left hand stretched out. The transparent wind was swirling on his hand. It was a special skill that used high-speed vibrations together with aura.

This was a godly secret technique.

The original Waterbird Fist Profound Dual Blade.

Although they were the same Dual Blade, the effects produced by Garen and Hochman was as different as heaven and earth.

“Red Light Sky... It’s finally presentable...” Garen slightly shook his hand and the cyclone around his hand flew out and expanded in mid-air, increasing its rotary speed and turning into a whirlwind of countless sharp air blades.

Clang!

Mongo waved the red sword and dispersed the air blades.

He leaped forward, heading towards Garen with his body almost parallel to the ground.

Surprisingly, Mongo did not concern himself with the fact that his final technique had been blocked. His body turned into a red line and appeared in front of Garen like a red streak of lightning with the tip of his sword pointed towards Garen's abdomen. A dark red liquid-like flame wavered along the blade of the sword.

Garen stretched out his right hand and was about to block it before his instincts warned him of a crisis. Knowing that one hand alone could not handle the incoming attack, his left hand also stretched out.

"First Star!!"

Peng!!!

With a dull sound, a shockwave, revealed by the rain, spread out, accompanied by aura. Hochman, who was hiding nearby, took the brunt of the shockwave and coughed up a mouthful of blood. He flew and smashed into a hill, sinking into it. The mask also flew out of his grip and it headed straight for the masks in Garen's box.

When Garen and Mongo confronted each other, Mongo did not show any expressions. With the red sword in his hand, his speed, power and combat mentality seemed to have been increased by several times, and even the recovery rate of his body had reached a horrifying point. He could still fight like this under the area that was suppressed by the Dragonshadow aura.

In this close combat battle, he waved the red sword and drew trails of bloody lines, fighting on equal foot with Garen who had activated the First Star.

In the fight between these two people, shockwaves rippled and the sound of thunder constantly shook the ground. If there were ordinary people here, just the sound of thunder could cripple their minds.

As time went by, Garen slightly gained the upper hand. His current strength was still slightly stronger than the opponent. After activating the First Star, he had fourteen points which were a terrifying level of power for the Death Apostle.

Boom!

Mongo received a hit and flew out. His face was pale and his chest was slightly sunken. Apparently, his chest had taken a punch.

While in mid-air, he crushed a red ball on the sword.

With a poof, the red orb burst open and turned into countless red dots of light, gathering on his body. At this moment, his body glowed red. It wasn't truly a glow, but just a reflection of light from the sword upon his body which had turned bloody, as though he was a corpse that had been skinned. Looking from afar, it was as though his body was glowing.

The strength of the sacred weapon summoned by the four Death Apostles, Red Light Sky, did not lie in improving the overall combat capability but converting the supply of blood essence of the sword wielder into an eerie attack.

At the moment when the red ball was broken, a little bit of dark golden light appeared on Mongo's sword blade. That light was only the size of a thumb and looked insignificant, but it gave off an extremely dangerous feeling.

He fell on a hill with a crashing sound and with both legs on the ground, he kicked off and charged towards Garen once again.

With this high-speed movement, Garen's speed was not as fast as him and he had just gotten out of a crater. Facing this slash, the blade appeared instantly in front of Garen's face and was about to stab into his head.

"Second Star....." Garen's both hands moved to stop the blade.

At this moment, there was a sudden pain in his head; a terrifying and massive mental force burst out from behind him. When the attack first made its appearance, it instantly appeared in his mind as though it was destined to hit when it appeared.

This familiar feeling....

An unprecedented sense of crisis suddenly appeared in his heart but Garen remained unmoved.

Since he knew there was an ambush, would he come here without making any preparation?

"Finally came out...." almost at the same moment when he was hit by the mental attack, Garen widened his eyes. A golden light flashed by in his pupils.

"Holy Phoenix!!"

The cries of a bird sounded and charged into a shadow behind him.

"Unlimited Holy Cry!"

There was a giggle and the figure of a slender girl flew out instantly from the shadow, landing a short distance away. She still wore the same short black skirt and black stockings. Her black hair fluttered and her face which was white as jade gave off an evil and mischievous feeling.

The mental attack of Holy Phoenix charged at her but was blocked by an invisible barrier. The two offset each other and produced a strong turbulence.

"Long time no see, Garen," Nadia opened her right hand and a large slender long sword appeared in her hand. The large sword was dyed in blood as though it had just been used to kill.

At this moment, a dark golden light flashed.

Garen's pupils contracted. Before him, the dark golden light on Mongo's blade flew out and fiercely stabbed towards his forehead.

'This is not a power that belongs to this world!! Dodge!!' Black Sethe's anxious voice sounded beside his ears, but it was too late.

Garen watched as the dark golden color flew towards him and hit in between his eyebrows.

The only thing he could do was to muster all the power in his body. The terrifying aura of the Fifth Star burst out.

Without a sound, a circle of black nine-headed Dragonshadow burst out with Garen at the center. The immense Dragonshadow aura surged and Mongo flew away like a fired cannonball, looking as though he had been hit by a giant truck.

Countless Dragonshadow gave off silent roars and instantly occupied an area spanning hundreds of meters in the rain.

Nadia smiled and looked at the Dragonshadow in the sky without making a move. The frenzied aura blew her long hair to the right. Gently stretching out her hand, she seemed to want to touch the Dragonshadow that passed by her side, her eyes showing a tinge of nostalgia.

"Only I, the Nine-Headed Dragon Queen, understood the will of Dragon King the best," Looking at the dark figures in the sky, her lips curled into a smile. "Garen, you're finished."

Just then, the ground beneath her feet swelled and an unimaginably powerful suction force came out of nowhere, aiming for Nadia.

A large gray-black hand that was tens of meters wide rushed out from the ground and grabbed at Nadia.