

Once Human 231

Chapter 231

Moments slowly passed as tense atmosphere calmed down, the fear which haunted Jian Si for a short period of time vanished and all she could see now is a dying man . She cautiously inspected the gold ring but found nothing special about it, she couldn't understand why would Arthur get worked up about this instead of the other one .

She looked closer only to see a very minuscule engraving, it was none other than Lucy's name being written there yet its significance is higher than all the treasures Arthur has in Zodiac's ring .

Jian Si also understood the meaning of ring once she read the name, she didn't know who exactly this Lucy was to Arthur, but it was definitely an important person for him to get so angry .

Having followed the way of the murdering, most of her emotions if not all of them were abandoned as it the only way to reach the peak mastery of the sword .

Surprisingly, Cold Sword didn't argue back, she simply threw the two rings near Arthur without saying a word . He was startled by her actions as he didn't expect the spoiled and an easily angered brat to act like this, nonetheless, he didn't say anything and merely watched her, waiting to see what's she going to do .

The girl, as eccentric as before, stared at Arthur without saying anything for more than three minutes, which made him feel uncomfortable as every time she's around, the atmosphere becomes awkward and a bit gloomy .

"... I can spare your life, if you accept a request of mine . "

Listening to her, Arthur couldn't help but roll his eyes in annoyance, this girl doesn't understand that he's not willing to cooperate with her .

Fortunately, four minutes or so were enough for much of his Nether Energy and Health to recover . His torn off limbs have started regrowing and were almost halfway to complete recovery . The chains also followed, wrapping around the arms tightly, suppressing his physical body .

Jian Si noticed such changes but didn't seem to care at all as if everything was within her grasp . Arthur had recovered enough Health and Energy to deal with her, that's what made him unafraid of her .

"Are you deaf or what? I'm not accepting any requests . "

Jian Si was still not angry, she sheathed her sword and put it on her back then replied

"I wish to let you live but you are being uncooperative, it's just a request . "

"And I wish I could give you a proper beating to teach you proper manners... is wish time over now?"

Cold Sword couldn't handle the 'verbal abuse' she was suffering, with a flushed face and a shaky finger that was pointed at him, she retorted

"Y-"

Before she could finish, a shadowy figure emerged from the clustered trees that were piled up on each other .

It had a skeletal body and a creepy appearance, with a dark armor and a woman's body on its back, it dashed near Arthur, awaiting for his next orders .

This was none other than the Death Knight he sent earlier to retrieve the Dryad's corpse . It is pretty strong but it was lacking compared to Jian Si, so Arthur didn't bother sending it to its demise .

Jian Si was momentarily alerted so her attention shifted from Arthur to Death Knight for a short moment, Arthur made use of this distraction to use his threads and try to immobilize her .

His Enigma Abilities didn't require any form of Energy to be used but they do require focus, which he was lacking for the time being, which is why the speed of threads was not what he expected .

Cold Sword swiftly dodged the thin threads and used her hand to slash at the Death Knight . Her hand was strengthened with sharp Sword Energy so the slash wasn't a simple one, it was similar to a wind blade, invisible and deadly .

Being only at the Heavenly Realm, the Death Knight would not survive an attack from a Divine Peak being, however, before it struck the undead, the slash struck the Dark Barrier that Arthur conjured the moment he regained some of his focus .

Jian Si knew how strong her previous attack was so she started regretting not killing him or at least immobilizing him in some way, however, it's too late for that and all she could do was glare at him with dagger-eyes .

"Ignorant, foolish... I have told you several times to kill me yet you hesitated for a reason that I don't know of, neither do I want to know it . A request, was it? I'm quite curious right now, why don't you tell me that request?"

Just as he finished talking, one of his hands, the one which started growing first, was forcefully lifted then clenched .

This caused a dark cube to appear, trapping both of them inside . This further damaged Arthur's declining Mental Health, making him cough more blood and his face turn paler than it already was . He purposely used this out of all the abilities so that she can't escape and with the dark cube here, he was safe and sound even for her .

The only way she'll be able to harm him right now is going all out, which she probably wouldn't do .

"Now now, we have all the time of the world, why don't we continue our conversation?"

Jian Si looked around her, only seeing the darkness of the cube, she begrudgingly withdrew her raging Sword Energy, which cut all the area around her due to her surfacing rage .

She knew that he didn't mean to harm her else he would have killed her and not just trapped her inside, yet despite all of that, she couldn't see him in a positive way, something about him annoyed her and made her usually calm self really angry and frustrated .

"Y-you backstabbing bastard!"

With her lacking knowledge in insults and her rising anger, Jian Si couldn't even insult him in a proper way, which made the heavily breathing Arthur burst out in laughter, causing aching pain to surface yet again .

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"Hahahah I'm beginning to doubt the rumors I heard . You've traveled a lot and seen many things, as I said, it's kill or be killed . It's like the law of the jungle, the strong prevail while the weak suffer and die, there's no backstabbing in fights, no unfairness or no honor, as far as I'm concerned . "

"Y-you should be ashamed, for a sword-practicer to resort to such underhanded means!"

Still not giving up on her badmouthing, she continued spouting nonsense that Arthur didn't give a rat's ass about .

"Ah? I never said I was a sword-practicer . It's not because I wield a sword that I'm one, it just so happens that my strongest weapon is a sword and that my mastery in swordsmanship is decent . "

Not all that Arthur said was true, but half of it was . He considers himself a sword user but doesn't the follow the rules of these users, the code of honor or whatsoever .

Totally different from her usually expressionless face, Jian Si seemed to be out of it as if she was about to pounce at him and rip him to shreds but held herself back . Recklessly attacking would do her no good and she knew that she can't win in a battle of words, he was way more experienced than her, which made her feel kind of helpless .

Arthur tried moving his new hands but an agonizing headache assaulted him, his body was recovering at a fast speed and his Health would be back to full soon enough, however, to recover from the Mental injuries would take several days, if not more .

Furthermore, his usage of the Mini Heavenly Arrow and the Dark Cube further deepened his mental wounds, however, he was forced to act as such lest he would have perished, if not by the old man's hand then it would certainly have been due to this crazy girl's doing .

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"I just wanted to know who's your teacher, the one who taught you swordsmanship . "

'This lass knows nothing but swords, can't say if she's crazy or just blindly devoted to swords... nevermind, she's crazy . '

Arthur didn't expect such a request . He thought she'll ask him something unreasonable, but it's surprisingly such a question . If answering is what he needs to get rid of her then he wouldn't mind replying, it's not like it's a secret that must be kept to himself .

"Teacher? I have no such, all my skills are self-taught . "

"Impossible!"

With disbelief and anger, Jian Si snapped at him again, not believing such words . Even her skills were learned from ancient books that accumulated dust in the library, very few people would be able to

invent a new style of swordsmanship or special moves, moreover, most of these people are legendary figures that are looked up to by all sword user .

Arthur may be extremely strong but she couldn't believe that he taught himself everything, it's just illogical .

"Nothing is impossible in this world . It's not because you can't do it that others can't too, teachers only lead the way, it's up to the students to create their own style as no sword style is the same . "

Arthur's knowledge about swordsmanship isn't vast, his skills were learned by possessing people and it just entered his mind and automatically allowed him to wield swords flawlessly . It's one of the many benefits of his race and the system .

"Then where did you come from? What your original world?"

"That's none of your business . "

The first answer wasn't satisfying or what she sought . She wanted to know his world to visit it and see if there is a special sword school or a famous sect . She started suspecting that he wasn't willing to answer honestly from the very beginning but the problem was, Arthur wasn't lying in the first answer, as for the second one, he never would tell a stranger that he came from Astria .

Being a small world with very few clans and sects and no Gods residing in it, if someone like her goes there, she'll create havoc and unnecessary problems .

Astria is fine as it is, with only a few skirmishes and it'll surely become more peaceful as the war ended and the Holy Church was more or less eradicated .

"Let me see your sword . "

"No . "

"What's your name?"

"I don't have a name . "

...

This continued for five minutes before Jian Si finally stopped, she knew that she'll get nothing out of him . He didn't answer anything except the first one, which infuriated her but she didn't show the usual anger or frustration as she wanted to show a positive attitude mayhap he changes his mind and agrees to something .

Although she didn't want to admit it, she admired Arthur . . . or strong sword users in general, her goal is to reach the peak of swordsmanship and to encounter people like him is what drives her to venture outside of her sect . The only thing she hated about him is his provocative words, arrogant attitude, and unceasing mocking, which drives the high and mighty Cold Sword into craziness .

Arthur's body was finally healed, devoid of any ugly injuries but his Health didn't recover entirely, it needs way more time than five minutes .

Fortunately, he became able to do simple movements so he retrieved simple clothes to cover some of the naked parts of his body and got up, after a small struggle . Standing up and walking became doable but it's really difficult, it even stressed his Mental Health, however, he didn't have the time to worry about that . He needs to leave this place as many people would start roaming all over the area, curiosity is a terrifying thing, after all .

Jian Si also noticed that the grey-haired man was about to leave, she can't do anything to stop him, he looked healthy but his sluggish and slow movements indicated his serious condition .

Remembering his powerful sword techniques and how devastated this land became due to his fight with the old man, she blurted out something she didn't imagine she would say .

"Then make me your student!"

Unfortunately for her, she was met with an immediate rejection from him, who waved his hands at her dismissively while answering

"No way, it's way too troublesome and a waste of time . I didn't come here to become a teacher for some spoiled brat who has anger management issues..."

Jian Si ignored the badmouthing and remained stubborn, not willing to let go of this chance . She knew that if he were to go now, who knows when they will cross paths again .

"You just need to teach me your style of swordsmanship!"

"That, in itself, is what I'm talking about . It's nothing but a waste of time, go ask your elders or someone else . It's babysitting rather than teaching . "

Unable to handle his provocative words, she angrily stomped the ground, shaking it and creating a small crater under her foot .

"See, that's what I'm talking about . You're getting angry over little things, that's what kids do..."

Jian Si but her lips and angrily glared at him, she clenched her fists and said

"Fine then! If you make me your student, I won't become angry anymore . "

As if she made a forbidden oath, the expressionless looking girl showed a rare proud expression, expecting Arthur to finally accept, but the reality was different and it's her bad luck that led her to ask someone such as Arthur...

Arthur removed the dark cube which was trapping them and glanced at the dark-haired girl, who started following him . He pondered for a few moments then said

"I can let you become my student on three conditions . "

The girl nodded in response so Arthur resumed talking

"One, this matter will be kept a secret . You never met me, you never saw, you never talked to me, long story short, I never existed, alright?"

Jian Si didn't have a reason to object such condition so she remained silent, indicating her approval .

"Second, no questions about me . I don't have a name, an origin, comrades... nothing!"

Arthur didn't wait for her to accept before he named the third condition

"Third, I teach you whatever I want to whenever I want . I tell you to go East, you go East, I tell you to do this or that, you do it, without pointless questions . "

Cold Sword seemed unsatisfied about the third one but she didn't disapprove or utter a single word, just nodding her head obediently, completely different from her usually unruly nature .

Strong sword users are scarce and this world doesn't have many swords sect, to begin with, so she really didn't want to miss such an opportunity . It's not like she was planning to remain as his students forever, she had confidence that she'll surpass him in the not so distant future .

Now that her rambling ended, Arthur clapped his hands and pointed at the old man's hand, ordering

"Here's your first order, you fetch that corpse . "

Jian Si begrudgingly followed his instructions, retrieving the lifeless body . She felt like a servant or a dog rather than a student, she wanted to beat him but held herself, reminding herself that he'll surely teach her something that her murdering sword lacked, something that'll allow her to breakthrough to the God Realm .

Arthur didn't want to waste such a previous body, it was still whole, more or less, so he should be able to get the stats and a decent amount of Mental Power . The only reason he agreed to Jian Si's request is because her help would be precious right now, and that will assure him that she'll not suddenly attack him, because that's what she's good at, apparently .

As for teaching her, well he obviously wasn't in the mood to do it, he's busy with his current goals and doesn't have time to be a teacher but it doesn't mean he'll not show her his sword style or just give her a few precious books that contain notes of some ancient sword users .

He softly caressed the golden ring as he looked at his map, seeing a few red dots heading his way . He didn't use his sense and the map, which costs nothing, is his only way of seeing what's around him .

Jian Si noticed their presence once they were in her sense's range, she coldly looked at their direction, ready to act if they were hostile, which they probably are since they are marked as red dots on Arthur's map .

Speaking of which, she was a red dot too but soon changed into a green one once her killing intent toward him disappeared, the System basically judges the enmity based on how much hostility they bear toward the user .

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Ehrendil spotted a dark cube in the far distance, almost hidden by the ravaged trees and clustered boulders . He immediately headed with a few generals to see what's happening . As one of the people who were present when their Earth Spirit was stolen, he definitely knew that whoever is controlling the dark cube is, without a doubt, the same person who infiltrated their headquarters and did as he pleased, robbing their guardian .

This was a humiliation even his usually calm brother, Tarathiel, couldn't bear, so they vowed to hunt this rat and kill him, after they retrieve the Earth Spirit, of course .

With boiling blood and a bit of cautiousness, Ehrendil flew towards the dark cube but once they were some distance away, it suddenly vanished into thin air, startling the generals who were more afraid than him due to the ominous aura caused by the aftereffect of the Dark Magic .

Being a God, Ehrendil was more resistant to it but he still felt uncomfortable, however, such a feeling made him certain of his suspicions .

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Soon enough, the two groups met, on one side were two people, one was a grey-haired man and accompanying him was a girl with an expressionless face and a large sword on her back . The other side encompassed four individuals, one was Ehrendil and the remaining three were generals under him, all at the Divine Realm .

Ehrendil paid little attention to Cold Sword and looked at Arthur, he didn't try to hide his killing intent, indicating that he's not here to talk . However, his focus was soon shifted to Jian Si as his underling whispered a few words into his ears, made him realize how unlucky he was .

Arthur glanced at the group which blocked their way then he took another turn, intentionally avoiding them .

Fighting Ehrendil is barely doable but he was certain that emerging victorious is impossible, he would be able to fight equally against the God for a short time before he collapses . He was still feeling dizzy and it's only thanks to his high recovery that he's managed to walk properly .

"Stop right there!"

Despite the presence of Jian Si, Ehrendil still planned to take down Arthur, it's his first time seeing this man but apart from him, there's no other suspect and it couldn't be Cold Sword who created that much chaos in their headquarters, she was strong but not enough to steal the Earth Spirit . Moreover, being an infamous individual in the Green-Leaf world, a lot of people know about her and her techniques, she definitely wasn't the one who used that dark cube, or so speculated the desert gargoyle .

He never talked with the girl so he couldn't understand why she was looking at him like that, eyes full of killing intent, as far as Ehrendil knew, Jian Si never created trouble for people who didn't bother her . She's the vengeful type but only to those who purposely provoke her and his previous words were only directed at the grey-haired man .

"Hm? Is there something you need?"

Arthur spoke with a calm tone, showing that he wasn't fazed by the Godly aura being unleashed by Ehrendil, who unsuccessfully tried to pressure him .

"Yes, I need you to come with us . "

Whilst nonchalantly shrugging his shoulders, Arthur retorted

"I'm afraid that's not going to happen, I have some business to take care of . Maybe another time..."

Arthur didn't wait for a response as he continued walking with Jian Si behind him . As per his expectations, things didn't go as smoothly as Ehrendil wasn't going to let him go this easily . It's unfortunate that his true appearance was seen but that doesn't matter since he can change it as in the blink of an eye .

A wall of earth rose from the ground, forcing them to stop walking as it blocked their front, rendering them unable to advance any further . Jian Si took this as a sign so she unhesitatingly retrieved her sword and cut the wall in pieces without any effort, she then directed her previously accumulated anger on those targets, who all had pale faces except for the God .

"Please wait a moment, Miss Jian . We only have business with this man, by no means do we want to obstruct your way, you're free to go . "

Ehrendil spoke politely, not wanting to offend her . He can deal with her but the consequences would be disastrous, if he were to injure her, her backing would turn his tribe into a bloodbath, provoking one of the strongest powers in this world is not something he wished, but he still couldn't let Arthur escape a third time .

"He's with me, so bug off . "

Receiving such a rude response from Cold Sword angered Ehrendil as he's a respect God but he that wasn't what infuriated him the most, the thing he didn't want to hear the most is that Arthur was with her . They may be traveling together but that doesn't mean he's with her . Having her back him off complicated thing for the desert gargoyles, she was literally forcing their hand and pushing them to attack her .

"He's a wanted criminal who trespassed in our territory, we would like to bring him with us for a thorough investigation and if he's innocent, we'll let him go . "

Ehrendil insisted, causing the girl to become more irritated . She rushed at the group of gargoyles with fast speed and swung her longsword, creating a red hurricane that sent all the generals flying dozens of meters away, even Ehrendil was pushed back a few steps, which made his face flush red with embarrassment and anger .

He didn't dare raise a hand against her, he didn't want his tribe to meet its doom by his hands, which is why he didn't retaliate when she attacked .

Unfortunately, not all the generals under him were as wise as he was . Two of them, who couldn't handle the shame of being sent flying but a young girl, got up and charged at her, intending to subdue her .

Despite knowing her real strength and background, they didn't hesitate for they thought Ehrendil will back them up and with a God accompanying them, they didn't to fear this prodigy .

Wanting something to release her anger on, Jian Si welcome these two with a fierce swing of her longsword .

The sword clashed with the spear of the general, shattering instantaneously and cutting off his head mercilessly .

The other general was scared out of his wits when he saw the large disparity in their strength, which he didn't expect . They were all at the Peak of the Divine Realm, so he thought there may be a chance but the monstrous power she just demonstrated, showed him how foolish he really was .

It was too late for regret, his opponent was Jian Si, who wasn't a person who goes easy on their enemies . Before he could retreat, the black sword penetrated his abdomen, then it went up, cut in half from the stomach all the way to his head .

The poor gargoyle died a miserable death, not even able to scream desperately or cry for help .

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As for Ehrendil, he was smart enough to act whilst she was distracted . He wasn't going to attack her despite seeing her slaughter his generals, however, that wasn't the same thing for Arthur, who was completely defenseless right now .

In but a moment, Ehrendil appeared next to Arthur, with his hand forming a claw, intending to kill him . Bringing Arthur with him isn't possible with Jian Si present, so the best choice is to kill him and be done with it .

The claw flashed with a yellow light, sending small beams of light that landed on the earth surrounding Arthur . Just as the hand was going to reach Arthur, a long flying sword came straight at Ehrendil, it was like a red tornado ravaging everything in its way, plus, its speed was unimaginable .

Ehrendil snorted and changed the direction of his claw, clashing it with the sword . A ringing sound resounded due to the collision and from out of nowhere, Jian Si appeared at the right side of Ehrendil, she was barehanded but once she raised her hand, the longsword which was being pushed back by Ehrendil suddenly appeared in her hand, ready to be swung again .

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Ehrendil could only react at the swinging sword by retreating back, out of its range . He could deflect it but his techniques are all aggressive and the girl would be injured, which is something he isn't brave enough to do .

If she were to be the least bit injured, that's enough reason for her backing to devour his tribe, there is also the option of silencing her so that nobody knows but such a choice isn't a wise one because he was seen by many people when he saw leaving the city in search of Arthur .

"The situation is getting out of hand, don't you think so, Ehrendil?"

Arthur spoke to the distressed Ehrendil, making the latter glare at him angrily and say

"So it's YOU!"

Ehrendil flew straight at Arthur again, intending to finish him but he was interrupted by Jian Si, who blocked his way yet again .

"Miss Jian, I do not want to hurt you, please move away or face the consequences!"

"Hmpf! I'd like to see you try . "

The girl wasn't the least bit fazed by the God, for a person with a background like hers, she has an abundance of life-saving treasures, however, she was confident in beating him even without them .

The pressure emanating from Ehrendil increasing, he tried to overwhelm her and force her to back off but from her the stubborn and serious look on her face, he knew that it was futile .

The tension remained for a whole minute with the two sides at a stand-off before Ehrendil let out a helpless sigh and retreated . He signaled for the two remaining generals to follow him then he left the area as if nothing happened .

'Having is a powerful background is seriously useful...'

Arthur lamented on his fate, he was always forced to fight as he couldn't scare his enemies with his background since he came from a low-Realm . Ehrendil wasn't going to drop this matter, he would certainly strike when Jian Si is gone, but at that time, he would have recovered and would fear the gargoyles no more .

The two resumed walking, Arthur didn't give any words of thanks or praise for Jian Si as if it was her job to protect him, not the other way around .

Arthur intended to head to the city, it was by far the safest place since Amidel invited him earlier and no powerful enemies could bypass the Kang Sovereign and attack him directly .

Moreover, he already got the necessary Spatial Mastery to travel to Earth, all he needed was its coordinates, which is something easy to acquire .

Each world has its unique coordinates, including Earth . Most Realms were interconnected by Spatial Tunnels excluding the abandoned or destroyed ones .

Arthur suspected that the Earth is situated in the System's universe, and to obtain its coordinates, he needs to visit the forgotten continent on Astria, which was mentioned several times by Zodiac .

Astria was definitely in the X-TR 500 Universe, and it was also one of the abandoned worlds, which is why there is a severe lack of visitors from other worlds .

The forgotten continent, which is in the North-West of the Demon Continent is supposedly protected by a powerful illusion formation causing it to be untraceable by outside sources .

Zodiac didn't mention how to get in, but knowing its location is enough for Arthur, he was confident in finding an appropriate way to enter .

The mythical being, Zodiac, never wrote any details about the forgotten continent but he mentioned more than one time, which intrigued Arthur .

It was said that there is an ancient library in the continent, through it, almost anything can be found . This is why Arthur decided to first get his hands on a Spatial Master then visit the continent, it's better to get rid of the difficult thing first .

The two of them walked for a while until they reached a remote area, Jian Si created a small cave for them to rest, or more accurately, for her teacher to rest as he never ceased coughing blood since a while ago .

Arthur needed a lot of rest but he pushed himself to resist the urge to fall unconscious, he still didn't trust the girl one bit, no matter if she's his student or not .

What's even worse, the chains which became more comfortable a while ago, started making it difficult for him to move, they became heavy and became tighter .

With the cave sealed with some kind of artifact Jian Si took out, the two of them sat inside, where there are some lights coming from light crystals that could be bought anywhere in this world .

"Teacher, what are these chains?"

Jian Si inspected the chains from afar since Arthur chose to stay as far away from her as possible . They walked for two hours so his Health was almost back to full, same thing for his Mana and Nether Energy .

Despite the infinite Stamina, he was feeling an overwhelming exhaustion and for the first time in very, very long time, he yearned for a good night's sleep .

Unfortunately, it wasn't possible, not with a crazy girl near him and the aching pain that was agonizing his mind .

As he leaned on a big boulder, his body felt numb and even opening his eyes became rather difficult, his eyes lids heavy, his body soaking with sweat and reeking with the scent of blood . He expected some kind of backlash, however, it was far worse than he predicted .

Nonetheless, for such a tiring fight and to slay a Sovereign, it's normal for him to suffer this much, he was only at the Divine Realm .

He even dropped to the 3rd Grade after using a lot of skills that cost permanent Mental Power, mainly [Blood For Blood] .

"If you accepted the deal, you would not have ended like this . Although it's a Sovereign, it's not a powerful one, not something to struggle with that much... if I had all my powers, then killing him in a few seconds is easily doable . "

The Earth Spirit talked to Arthur, with a prideful tone . He was disappointed to not be able to get the Dimensional stone, he was also a bit fearful of Arthur's potential . He witnessed the battle from beginning to end and never did he see a Demon this strange and powerful .

He had seen legendary Gods beat Sovereign with a wave of their hands, but for a Divine being to beat a Sovereign, he never heard or saw anything like that until today .

This forced to act him tonight, waiting for Arthur to be at his weakest state so he can escape the chains and his consciousness .

The night passed slowly, Arthur ignored the personal questions Jian Si would ask every few minutes . After a while, she gave up and started cultivating, as for him, he closed his eyes and tried to rest .

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Meditation wasn't possible albeit its extremely useful proprieties, his mind felt as if it's going to explode and he felt that the condition of his body was worsening rather than recovering .

'What's happening?'

Out of nowhere, an imaginable pain assaulted him, making veins pop out and his skin turn red . Arthur did nothing, he didn't even cry in pain, his hand held into the golden ring as he closed his eyes, waiting for this pain to pass .

It was a heart-wrenching pain but for Arthur, it was nothing compared to the pain he felt from the loneliness, being apart from Lucy and Saly is more painful than this .

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As Arthur was suffering, his consciousness wasn't as silent as it usually is . The clustered chains that were trapping the Earth Spirit started crackling and twirling, trying to seal whatever was inside and force it to quiet down .

The Death Seals Arthur cast on the Earth Spirit began breaking one by one at an incredible speed, as if they were unable to lock the ever-so increasing power of the entity inside .

The large earth knight moved at last after being sealed here for what seemed like an eternity for him . His body started moving, grabbing the chains around his body and pulling them with great force .

At first, they were as immovable and heavy as mountains yet after a few tries, they finally moved . It took great effort to physically move them so the Earth Spirit shot a yellow symbol from his eyes . The symbol had the word 'Break' it struck the clustered chains and shattered countless of them but this was still futile since every broken chain will cause two more to take its place .

'Hmpf!'

This continued for a long time until the knight finally managed to completely free one of its arms . From the huge cluster of black chains, there was a long arm that stretched out of them, belonging to the spirit .

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A rusty-looking bronze sword appeared in the hand, the knight was content that the first step worked . Surprisingly, he didn't use the blade to strike the chains binding him, instead, he fiercely waved the bronze sword at Arthur's soul, precisely at the thick chains surrounding it .

A misty yellow fog flew at the big blob of light, trying to cut the main chains, the root of what was sealing the Earth Spirit .

Unfortunately for him, once the misty fog approached the chains, the first thing to act was the strange cube that was rotating above the soul .

The ARK appeared in front of the mist, the cube increased in size and transformed into a half-open sphere that trapped all the misty fog, leaving nothing outside, then as if nothing occurred, it returned to its original position, slowly rotating .

The Earth Spirit had already seen the strange cube and the orb but he didn't think much of them . He thought they were some precious soul-protecting artifacts but those won't work if the assailants are residing the target's soul already, just like him .

The turn of events surprised the spirit and irritated, he swung the sword again, sending a denser yellow fog, however, the results were exactly the same . The cube would turn into a sphere that surrounds the fog and trap it inside then it will shrink to its normal appearance .

The Spirit could feel nothing from the cube, no form of energy or danger, it wasn't hostile against him and merely protected Arthur's soul .

Since attacking the main chains didn't work, the earth spirit shifted his focus back to the ones trapping him, he slashed the sword at the chains cutting countless of them and shattering numerous Death Seals but it still wasn't working as those cut would be instantaneously replaced .

"Damnable chains! You won't be able to stop me from escaping!"

The freed arm of the Spirit let go of the bronze sword, which dispersed into a yellow light and vanished, then the hand opened into a palm emanating a crazy amount of yellow light .

The starry sky of the consciousness was wholly illuminated by this light, even Arthur's soul, which was the main source of light in this place, was negligible in comparison to the bright light being emitted by the Spirit's palm .

With Arthur's current state, his connection with his consciousness was almost cut off so he wasn't able to feel what's happening right now . This is what motivated the Earth Spirit to act as it is a golden opportunity .

If he were in his peak state, Arthur would be able to enter his consciousness and easily seal the freed arm back, however, the reality was different and the situation was dire .

If the Spirit were to escape and roam free inside his consciousness, the consequences would be fatal and he would be killed easily, especially when he's this weakened already .

'Spear of Terros!'

A spear made out of dirt and rocks appeared, it didn't look powerful but its sheer size was mind-numbing .

It was more than ten times the size of the spirit, who originally has a frame way bigger than normal humans .

The spear's sharp point was directed at the clustered chains, the bright palm was clenched into a fist, causing the humongous spear to strike the chains .

Once struck, the chains vibrated and crackled loudly but after a few moments, they were unable to hold any longer and shattered, creating a large hole enough for the Earth Knight to get out . He still had few chains around his body but they were few and far between and weren't enough to immobilize him, as far the Death Seals, they have long since been shattered, all of them .

Delighted that he was finally out, the Earth Spirit stretched his other hand and was about to get out when a thin and long white chain made out of pure light penetrated his abdomen, pushing him back into that hole and nailing him with the other chains .

The white chains disappeared right after but the damage it had done to the knight was by no means small . Obviously, the Earth Spirit was shocked by this, he looked up to the source of the white chain only to see a bright figure .

With a golden sheath on his waist, a majestic silver armor that suited his role as a knight and a helmet protecting his head, it was none other than Curtis, the knight that had his soul merged with Arthur's .

"Who are you! You do not belong here!"

Curtis looked at the angry Earth Spirit with calm eyes, he unsheathed his sword and said

"Earth Spirit, I have always respected your Race . However, it's a real shame to see a Spirit trespassing in someone else's consciousness, trying to engulf it... what happened to the Spirit Race to stoop so low and resort to such means... *sigh*"

The Earth Spirit was momentarily startled but he soon calmed down and gazed at Curtis with cautiousness . Hearing talk sympathetically, he snorted and retorted

"Hmpf! What do you know about us to run your mouth like that!"

"I know many things . For example, how to extinguish your root and erase you from existence . "

Once he heard that, the Spirit started laughing loudly, as if he heard the biggest joke in his life

"Hahahaha this is th-"

Before he could finish, Curtis spat a mantra that floated in front of him . It flashed with five colors and was something incomprehensible, only understandable by the one who spat it and the Spirit, who stared at it, totally flabbergasted .

"Y-you... who exactly are you!"

"My identity doesn't matter . This area is my domain and I'm its guardian, you better be obedient and not cause a ruckus . "

Curtis sheathed his sword and vanished, leaving the Earth Spirit fearful and dumbfounded . The only thing that snapped him out of his daze are the last words of Curtis

"Remember well, I have more than one way to finish you . This is Arthur's consciousness and not your playground, Earth Spirit . "

The Spirit remained silent for a long while before he obediently went back to the hole where the clustered chains were repairing themselves and wrapping around him, sealing him inside yet again...

"Damnable chains! You won't be able to stop me from escaping!"

The freed arm of the Spirit let go of the bronze sword, which dispersed into a yellow light and vanished, then the hand opened into a palm emanating a crazy amount of yellow light .

Chapter 236

"Teacher, why are you hiding your true Realm?"

When the pain finally subdued by a bit and only the Mental Exhaustion remained, Arthur breathed a sigh of relief and was planning for a bit more then depart but Jian Si was as resilient as ever, questioning him after cultivating for ten hours straight .

Arthur suffered a ten-hour long pain and it is one the worst nights he experienced since his reincarnation .

"What did I say about personal questions? Are you actually dumb or what?"

This time, Cold Sword didn't glare at him or anything of the sort, she just closed her eyes again and returned to cultivating . Her plan to consistently ask him similar questions until he gives up, however, it doesn't seem to be working too well as nothing was answered . She was feeling irritated but she didn't show it lest he changes his mind, which may be an unfortunate thing for her as she'll be the one getting the short end of the stick since he has nothing to lose .

...

In the blink of an eye, three more hours passed, the agonizing pain has almost disappeared so Arthur decided it's time to depart to the city . He couldn't overuse powerful skills but he can more or less defend himself if they were attacked .

"Let's go . "

He retrieved the body of the woman he used inside the tomb, possessed it with great effort then changed in a more appropriate attire . The chains were well-hidden, there were no signs of injuries except the slightly pale face due to possessing a corpse when he's still mentally injured . Amidel and co knew the woman and not his real appearance, moreover, the Kang Family leader saw him fight with the old man so he would recognize him if he went with his real appearance .

When he finished dealing with his appearance, he took out the Dark Cloud, he hopped on it and left, without waiting for Jian Si, who looked at him with a strange look, she literally saw Arthur transform into a black whirlpool which soon became a woman . She was curious about how he changes appearance, even the aura seemed different, which was all thanks to the Ethereal state that Arthur just activated .

Secret techniques that change this appearance this much are priceless and scarce in the world, even in all the Cloud Sea universe, so the girl speculated that he may be from a very powerful background, possibly from a High-Realm .

Not getting her countless questions answered and seeing him leave just like that, she harrumphed and followed right after .

One was sitting on a Dark Cloud and the other behind, standing on a large flying sword, the duo headed for the city with a decent speed .

They met a lot of cultivators roaming the area, either leaving the city or curiously checking the destroyed land .

North-West of the city, there existed a forest that was no more . A jet black land, consumed by Dark Magic, withered plants and an enormous abyss that spanned for several hundred kilometers . It's as if a big meteor had crashed here, extinguishing all lives and corrupting the land .

Very soon, Jian Si and Arthur arrived at the city gates, they were stopped by the guards which quickly let them in when they saw the black-haired girl, who is rather famous in every corner of the world .

Even for people who never saw her, they're able to recognize her almost immediately by the covered sword on her back, the expressionless face and the murderous aura emanating from her .

It didn't take long before they arrived before the Kang Castle, where they were stopped by the guards yet again . Before the guards went to check, three figures arrived with one of them welcoming them with a friendly smile .

It was none other than the Kang siblings and Swain, who looked at Jian Si with a piercing glare . The girl stared back at him, unfazed by the bloodthirst he was directing at her, after a while, she looked away, not wanting to bother with him .

"Welcome back, Miss . "

As enthusiastic as ever, Kithel welcome Arthur with a polite bow . He glanced at Jian Si and waved his hand in greeting, clearly not as respectful as he is toward Arthur . Jian Si didn't mind and only remained silent, just like usual, which was something the young man didn't mind at all since his eyes were locked onto Arthur, creeping the latter a lot .

"Yes, I'm back . "

"Hey hey, why is your cultivation lower?"

Emily glared at Arthur suspiciously, still not having a positive opinion about him . She immediately that the woman who her brother was attracted to was different than usual, not only did was she weaker, her face was pale .

"It's nothing, I was poisoned and had to use a lot of Blood Essence to get rid of it, it's nothing special . "

The little girl didn't quite believe Arthur but she didn't insist, she stared at him with a weird look as if she thought that all his words were lies .

As for Kithel, he looked at the woman with a worried look and said

"Poisoned? We have a good alchemist, maybe he can see what's the problem . "

"It's nothing, I'm alright right now, I just need a bit of rest, that's all . "

"Then, please let me guide you to your room . "

At this point, Kithel was no different than a servant or a guide, but it's not like he minded that . As long as he passed time with Arthur then he'll be content .

"That's not necessary, I'll stay with Swain . "

'Since when does a master stay in the same room as his servant?'

That's what Kithel wanted to say but he restrained himself, he let out a helpless smile and proceeded in leading both the red-haired youth and the woman to their room . His father wanted to talk with Arthur but that could be scheduled after he had rested .

Jian Si also followed them but Kithel didn't pay too much attention to her, she was a woman so he didn't consider her as much as love rival as Swain, which is rather funny since Arthur's servant and the two of them were men, however, the young man didn't know that, fortunately...

If he were to know that Arthur is a man, or that he's already married, the look on his face would be hilarious, or so thought Arthur .

Soon enough, Kithel and Emily led them to Swain's room then they departed after Swain refused to hang out with the little girl, saying that he needs to talk with his master first .

With a pouting face and an angry stomp, the girl left with her brother, who was also unwilling to part with Arthur .

"A man has never seen such a shameless girl, where are thou going?"

Swain stopped Jian Si from entering the room, not bothering to hide his killing intent . He noticed the poor state of his master and the dangerous killing intent around her so he thought that she's partially evolved .

He was certain that a person of her strong can't reduce Arthur to this poor state but her coming with him is suspicious .

"I go wherever I want . "

Cold Sword saw this youth a couple of times and knew he was dangerous but seeing his young appearance, she guessed that he's younger, so she became angry when a kid was talking rudely to her .

Arthur could badmouth her all day yet she won't retort since he's good with words and he's way stronger than her, moreover, he became her teacher recently, however, for such a kid to disrespect her too crossed her limits .

If not for the presence of Arthur, who forbade her of acting recklessly and angrily attacking anyone who annoys her, she would have cut this red-haired youth into pieces .

"She's not an enemy, do not mind her . "

Hearing Arthur talk, Swain nodded and did a low bow to Jian Si, as if welcoming her .

"Master, who were these guys?"

Swain dived into the main problem, wanting to know who wanted to eliminate Arthur to the point of sending a Sovereign and a small group of Peak Gods .

"I don't know exactly . They mentioned the Holy Echelon, do you know anything about them?"

The two pupils of the youth pulsed with a dim red-light before it soon disappeared .

"The Holy Echelon, The Holy Order . Righteous Knights of light, just and pure, always helping the weak and purify the evil, that how they proclaim themselves to be . They are a strong power in The Cloud Sea universe and their power even stretch to the other two universes, although it's lacking compared to the mainland . "

Jian Si joined the conversation out of nowhere and said

"I've heard about them too, they participate in taking important decisions in the council yet they don't help when a crisis arrives . They oppose every faction associated with any form of evil energy and slaughter them all while giving the world a simple excuse, the opinions about them are varied but as far as I have seen, most people fear them but do not respect or admire their causes . "

Arthur has always hated such people, on Astria it was also the same . The Holy Church must've been part of them a long time ago until Astria became an abandoned world .

"The Holy Order managed the political power, as for the Holy Echelon, it represents the military strength, where the real strength of the Holy Dominion lies . "

Arthur remembered the old man and his strong strength and techniques then said

"Then, that old man must be from the Holy Echelon . "

Swain nodded in confirmation and said

"Most likely . I don't know how they managed to locate you but if they did once, they can do it twice . Fortunately, it'll take some time before they do so, not until they're sure of the death of the group they previously sent to hunt you . "

Chapter 237

Arthur and Swain talked about a few more things while the girl waited at the side, listening to them and trying to figure something out but it was useless since they were speaking in a general way, saying no names or anything that she can take a hint from .

It wasn't until Swain mentioned a certain name that her interest was lit up .

"Master, if Miss Lucy sees you with a girl, she'll be angry . "

Lucy is known for excessive jealousy, if Arthur talks to another woman then she'll immediately become jealous . He'll not only be ditched, she would also treat that woman with hate, as if she will kill her just for talking to her husband .

So what Swain said was totally true, if Lucy saw him with another woman, it'll be his funeral followed right after by Jian Si's .

Cold Sword was stubborn, so was Lucy, if the two met and with Lucy's provocative attitude toward other women around her husband, a fight would surely break out .

Just thinking about it made Arthur sweat, still, he would prefer Lucy being her and getting angry over her being absent and not being able to talk to her .

"Hahaha I bet she will, but do not worry, she's just my student . "

Although he was still not content with Jian Si's presence, Swain nodded and nervously said

"Master, please don't involve me when that happens, a man doesn't want to suffer from Miss Lucy's wrath . "

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Lucy never met him, but they'll surely meet and knowing that he's Arthur servant and he let this happen, he'll suffer from her scolding some way or another .

In fact, Swain was happy that he wasn't a female lest Lucy kills him, she wouldn't let another female residing with Arthur all day long, protecting him and talking to him more than her .

Although Lucy is overprotective and easily gets jealous, Arthur loved that side of her since she becomes pretty cute when she's pouting and angry, but that only applies to him, for other people, they would only see her as a cold-blooded woman with an indifferent attitude and an expressionless face .

On the side, Jian Si held back her urge to ask about Lucy as she knows she won't be answered, but she had some speculations from their previous talk .

Arthur reminisced about Lucy for a short time before he looked at Jian Si and shook his head as if denying something .

Although they were a bit similar, he felt no attraction whatsoever to this girl or any other women, excluding Lucy, of course .

Jian Si was a beauty but her murderous aura made everybody else see her as a slaughtering monster, not as a beautiful girl .

Arthur could see the girl's beauty, that didn't change his opinion about her . They say appearance doesn't matter but that not entirely true, for most people, at least .

To say that he wasn't attracted to Lucy's beauty would be a big lie, but the reason he fell for her isn't her exterior appearance but what's inside, the pain she felt, the suffering she endured and the connected fates they had .

She was a person who experienced tragedies like him, someone who could understand his thoughts more than any person in this world, he really could not think of a life without her .

"You want me to teach you, right?"

Arthur's words excited Jian Si, who was eagerly waiting for him to teach her his style, maybe she could learn a thing or two or even gain an enlightenment . His style wasn't entirely like hers but it was similar, in more than a way, so it's beneficial for her if she experiences it in a closer look .

The girl nodded her head in confirmation so Arthur resumed

"It's easy, you just have to injure him . One time is enough . "

He pointed at the quiet Swain, who stood near the door, guarding with his eyes closed .

Confused at first, the girl looked at the short youth with a frown then she retorted

"How does fighting him will help me? I can kill him in a few moves . "

Arthur grinned and replied:

"Hohoho, kill him in a few moves . Did you hear that, Swain?"

"A may says, nothing is more dangerous in this world than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity . "

There was nothing to be said about this remark, Swain doesn't even take Jian Si seriously . She may be strong for someone her age and amongst all the talented juniors, however, she pales in comparison to him .

He originates from the Book of the Damned, not only that, he's the fusion of the golem and the book, his strength is unfathomable and if he were to go all-out, he would be able to defeat Peak Gods .

"Hmpf! A kid dares to act arrogantly before me! It's a waste of time to fight you . "

Still calm and unaffected by being called a kid, Swain didn't bother retorting, he merely smiled and remained silent .

Seeing that Jian Si was getting heated up, Arthur said

"I didn't force you to come here . This is just a test, I can't make anyone my student, if you can't even pass this test, then don't bother coming back here . Actions speak louder than words, you say you can kill him in a few moves, if so, then go ahead and do so . "

Jian Si resolutely held her sword, ready to attack only to be stopped by Arthur, who reprimanded her

"Are you crazy? This is a room and not arena, go find somewhere else to fight, I need to rest . "

Cold Sword bit her lips, she couldn't even count how many times she had been insulted today, it's definitely a first for a person like her .

Swain held the opened the door and waited for her leave first . The girl snorted and left with her longsword in hand, as for the youth, he bowed at Arthur and left .

When the room became empty, Arthur laid on the large bed and closed his eyes, not even entering meditation . He had a strong urge to sleep, the mental exhaustion weighed on his mind and his numb limbs made his movements rather sluggish .

With Lucy's picture in his mind, and the sound of his daughter's laugh, he entered a deep sleep .

...

Swain and Jian Si soon found a large courtyard inside the Kang Castle . The guards were already informed about the new guests so they didn't bother them, only standing guard and doing their job .

With some distance separating the two parties, they stood opposed to each other . Jian Si held the longsword, ready to swing at the youth, as for Swain, he neither took a weapon nor did he even open his eyes, clearly not taking this fight seriously .

"A man doesn't have all day, thou may begin . "

He raised his hand, indicating for her to attack, which she did right away . With a thick murderous aura and an overwhelming momentum, she leaped at him similar to a tiger hunting its helpless prey .

The black sword came diving down at the youth from above, who in response only raised his right hand to meet the incoming attack .

A red aura enveloped the sword, adding to its bloodthirst and increasing its power, however, this attack which can eradicate a Divine Being was easily stopped by Swain's hand .

The bare hand collided with the sword, absorbing the Energy and force behind it, rendering it weak . He then waved his right hand, pushing the sword and its user away from him .

"Thou said a few moves? A few moves it shall be, then . "

The youth suddenly appeared in front of Jian Si, who was still trying to stabilize her body due to being pushed by the opponent's hand .

The right hand, which had absorbed the previous attack's energy, had transformed into an old rotten hand that emitted thick blood aura and a dangerous Death Energy . The palm hit the girl, sending her flying until she crashed into a far away wall, surprising the spectating guards .

Chapter 238

When Arthur opened his eyes from his deep sleep, he felt unusually refreshed . His body felt unburdened and his mind was free from the stress and exhaustion he was feeling before sleeping . He dreamed of nothing, just complete darkness yet no nightmares occurred, which was a fortunate thing .

His body obeyed his every command, no more sluggishness or numbness, he could move freely, he totally recovered from the fight against the Sovereign, which made him delighted and a bit relaxed since in this state, he wouldn't be afraid of sudden enemy attacks .

He sat cross-legged to do a more thorough check, he needed to make sure there were no lingering wounds that that did not fully recover, after all, the backlash he suffered from the overuse of skills and the injuries he sustained against the old man were not something that could be easily recovered from, or so thought Arthur .

Surprisingly, his body was unscathed, in a flawless state . In fact, he felt energetic and in high-spirits, as if a heavy weight has been lifted off his shoulders .

Arthur speculated that he had slept for more than he expected, that's the only reason that explains why his body was healthy again, nonetheless, this was a joyous matter, so he didn't bother thinking about it too much .

He retrieved the lifeless body of the old man and proceeded to possess it as the stats he'll gain from the deceased elder would be by no means a meager amount .

He transformed into a small black whirlpool that soon entered the old man's body and took control over it, taking its previous stats, skills, and talent .

You have Successfully possessed Rozak (Race: Human) .

You have gained a new skill[Passive][Holy Resistance]: +50% .

The Dark Magic of the user overpowers the Holy Magic : -25% Holy Resistance .

You have gained a new skill[Active][Holy Arts: Sixth Chapter: Golden Nova]: Summons a temporary Holy Entity that aids the user in battle .

The entity's stats are 120% stronger than the user

Cost: 300m Mental Power .

Cooldown: 1 minute .

WARNING: There is a chance that the summoned entity will attack the user .

You have gained a new skill...

...

As usual, Arthur ended up gaining all the skills and techniques of the old man, including his precious stats . The chains around his body became hot for a couple of seconds before they returned to normal, this must've been due to the sudden increase in stats .

As he felt the immense strength surging him, Arthur eagerly opened his Status Window to see the improvement .

TITLE: MEAT GRINDER / SEEKER OF KNOWLEDGE / ONE WITH THE SWORD / ARK HOLDER / LIVE WITH HONOR, DIE WITH GLORY

--

Level: ??

Class: Dark ARK Parasite

Realm: Divine Realm 3rd Grade

-

Strength: 725 . 5M

Intelligence: 877 . 1M

Agility: 701 . 2M

Wisdom: 827M

Vitality: 599 . 7M

Dexterity: 584 . 9M

-

Health: 850 . 7M // Health Regen: 282490/s

Nether Energy: 900 . 4M // Nether Energy Regen: 299512/s

Mana: 781 . 1M // Mana Regen: 345571/s

Stamina: Infinite /Stamina Regen: ???

Creation: 273

Attack: 889M (+65% Damage)

Defense: 698M (+25% Damage Reduction)

Magic Defense: 218 . 4M

Soul Defense: 5,000

--

Enigma abilities : Telekinesis / Ancient Threads / Sixth sense / ARK(Activated)

Mental Power: 6999

Elemental Resistances(+)

Fire: 100%

Darkness: 100%

Wind: 35%

Water: 75%

Earth: 75%

Light/holy: 30%

Shadow: 30%

Lightning: 100%

Ice: 30%

Death Count: 1 (2 more to obtain 'Unbound')

Possessions (472,012)

Races:

Humans (282,991)

Demons (84,997)

Beasts (+)(101,528)

Unique Beasts (2498)

Mythical beings (1)

Arthur was delighted when he saw the new stats, the old man apparently had a high amount of Intelligence and Wisdom, as expected of a Holy Magic user . From the way he fought and his long-ranged attacks, Arthur had already guessed that he resembled a mage more than a melee fighter, which is why the stats related to the physical body didn't increase as much as the other two .

Nonetheless, the power-up was a joyous event, if he could fight the Sovereign again, he was certain that he could put up a better fight, without resorting to forbidden skills that drop his Realm .

However, he wasn't completely sure of victory, sure, his stats increased as the whole power of the old man belonged to him, but these were only numbers, it all depends on the fighters and the way you fight, how you use the skills and when .

He already possessed the body of the Peak God which he managed to grab in the middle of the battle, as for the remaining ones, they were both invalid .

From the number of stats he gained, Arthur speculated that Sovereigns do not rely on stats, they do not have the system, neither do they have as much stats as he expected in the past .

They rely on their high Mental Power and their strong skills, moreover, they are able to fuse with their God Spirit, which is strong just by itself .

It's a shame that Arthur only gains a small percentage of the Mental Power of the corpses he possesses, which is why he only leveled up to the Peak of the Divine Realm, unable to break through to the God Realm .

He obtained a few powerful skills that belonged to the Holy Arts, they cost a lot and his control over the Holy Attribute isn't perfect so he decided to put them to the aside unless he faces an enemy who uses an attribute that is weak against Holy Magic, nevertheless, it's better to have the Holy Arts as it is one more thing he can use in times of desperation, it's never bad to add increase his already large arsenal of skills .

After doing a thorough look at the skills he gained, he took out Sol'khin's cane to test it out . Whenever he powers up by a lot, he always takes it out for a test . It's a mysterious cane he found near Zodiak's body .

The origin and use of this cane had always been something that intrigued Arthur, no matter what he tried, he couldn't activate it, even the system didn't mention its uses, it just displayed its name .

First, he tried injecting some Mana into it but nothing happened . Nether Energy didn't have any effect too, so he tried Dark Mana, he used one million Dark Mana in one fell swoop .

At last, he felt a slight connection so he put ten times more Dark Mana, an almost nonexistent purple light was emitted from the skeletal head at the top of it .

Arthur yet again added a bigger amount of Dark Mana, however, nothing occurred . Besides that small purple light that could barely be seen, there was no reaction from the cane .

Even the light would disappear after a few seconds if he doesn't keep a constant supply of Dark Mana . Arthur didn't waste much time on it, he stored away the cane for another time since it requires an absurd amount of Dark Mana to use, or so he guessed .

Furthermore, he's not entirely safe here, he just woke up and recovered to his peak state, he doesn't want to waste all his Dark Mana to see what are the uses of this cane, at least not in this time and place .

The next thing he did was check the storage rings he got from the Spatial Master and the Sovereign . There was also the woman accompanying the old man, the one he possessed earlier .

...

Ten minutes later, Arthur was smirking as he held two weird stones in his hand . They were two Dimensional Stones he found in the Master's storage . There was a bunch of pills and miscellaneous stuff that he didn't inspect thoroughly as they were of no use for him .

He also found a decent amount of Green and Red Spirit Stones from the Peak God's storage . The only ring he wasn't able to open was the Sovereign's . Whenever he injected Mana to inspect it, he was met with some sort of a formation that blocked his Sense and Nether Energy .

Seeing this obstruction, Arthur pointed his index finger at the ring and shot a streak of black lightning from it . Demonic Lightning is efficient in dealing with illusion, barriers, formations, and arrays . As long as his Intelligence was high enough, everything is breakable .

Plus, with over 850m Intelligence, not being to break through the formation protecting what's inside the wrong is illogical .

Small thread-like black lightning streaks twirled around the silver ring similar to a snake trying to suffocate its prey . In a few seconds, the ring became jet black, covered by the Demonic Lightning, Arthur saw no results so he added the intensity .

This time, he pointed his palm and shot a thick bolt of lightning . In nature, the Demonic Lightning does no physical damage even if it hit a normal object, so he wasn't afraid of destroying the room, nonetheless, he used this much lightning because he needed to open this ring .

A Sovereign is a powerful and respectable entity, surely that ring contains desirable treasures and artifacts that may be useful for him in future fights .

Chapter 239

Finally, after spending a whole minute bombarding the black ring with thick bolts of Demonic Lightning, a sound similar to broken lock was heard . Arthur dispersed the lightning and injected Nether Energy inside, trying to see if it's open or not .

As he had guessed, the Demonic Lightning did its job marvelously, shattering whatever formation was protecting the storage ring .

Soon, his consciousness delved deep into the ring, seeing what's inside and having free will to do anything with the objects residing within it .

Arthur hoped he would find other Dimensional Stones, however, it wasn't that easy to obtain them . The only reason the Spatial Master had two of them was due to his old age and his nonstop traveling, which allowed him to venture in all kinds of environments and worlds, making him able to get his hands on such precious stones .

As expected of a Sovereign, his storage ring had the largest space from all the storages Arthur had seen since his reincarnation, except for Zodiac's, of course .

Zodiac's storage ring was unimaginably big, to the point of making one's mind totally numb . It's too vast and has countless things, stuff that Arthur didn't understand their uses even with the System's help .

Inside Rozak's ring, there were a few books about the Holy Arts . There was even a book mentioning how to train the 8th Chapter of the Holy Arts, a skill Arthur hasn't obtained, as for the rest? They were useless to him since he gained the old man's skills thanks to his Racial ability .

Nonetheless, he wasn't going to throw them away, they'll be stored in his sect yet to be made library . He had an immense variety of techniques, to just let them accumulate dust in his storage would be a waste so he decided to give them to Anastassia, who'll take care of them and put them on display for the disciples, so they become more motivated to obtain them .

Some techniques will be kept in secret and only for important individuals of the sect, but these are few and far between . Arthur didn't want to be stingy and he wanted to build a good home for his daughter and wife, moreover, he doesn't have a use for most of his treasures, so it's better to keep them in the treasury of the MoonStar Sect .

Amongst all the things Rozak had, Arthur found an emblem that probably indicated his Rank . It was still active as it emanated a small white light and had a dense amount of Holy Magic stored inside .

'I could certainly use this . '

With the body of the old man and this emblem, he would be able to cover his tracks for quite a while before he's discovered . The bodies inside the storage won't rot yet Arthur still used his Ice Magic to freeze the whole corpse . The old man is injured but if he were to possess him, he would be able to heal those wounds in a short time .

Just like the other two rings, he found artifacts and various Holy-related weapons and after a bit more searching, he found a special inner armor that was very useful .

It could be worn under the robe or a normal armor and it's exactly what Arthur needed . He had a few armors in his storage but most of them were weak and would be destroyed with one blow from Gods .

Vindicator of Wonders(3rd Grade Heavenly Rank): +10% Defense / +1% Dexterity

Special effect: +5% Holy Resistance

The items that add a percentage of the stats are very rare . Moreover, if this inner armor could be upgraded, its effect will increase too . 10% may not seem a lot, but Arthur's defense is sky high, around the 700 million, so 10% is more or less 70m . That's more than any armor Arthur got, what more, it's comfortable and is not a heavy armor, which is a bonus for Arthur, who doesn't like a full suit of heavy armor covering from head to toe .

...

Arthur wore the armor and it fit perfectly in the woman's body . The amount of Holy Resistance it added was meager, however, it's still better than nothing, even if it reduces 1% of the incoming attack, Arthur would still wear it .

When everything was thoroughly checked, his condition in its peak and his mind no longer burdened, Arthur prepared to leave the luxurious room, which he had been asleep in for god knows how long, when someone barged into the room with a sour mood and an annoyed expression .

It was none other than Jian Si, who had a disheveled appearance, messy hair and dust all over her white face, she was visibly injured but nothing too serious .

"If it weren't for your absorption ability, I would have killed you a thousand times!"

Jian Si protested, clearly displeased about what happened moments ago .

Swain soon entered the room, he was unscathed and in a particularly good mood, he looked at the girl and retorted

"Ever heard of 'Win without boasting . Lose without excuse'?"

In response to him, the girl snorted and looked away only to see a mature woman standing in front of her . She was too angry and preoccupied with the previous battle that she didn't notice her teacher, who had finally woken up .

Unlike the crazy girl, Swain immediately noticed Arthur as he previously felt it when his master woke up from the ten-day long sleep .

"It seems you two are getting along, that's good to see . "

The girl snorted, sat in a nearby chair and crossed her arms, still in a bad mood .

"Hmpf! I managed to injure him more than one time, so I passed the test . "

Arthur looked at Swain to confirm what she said only to see the latter shrugging and raising in helplessness while adding

"A man has never seen such a suicidal girl . She managed to injure me at the fifth fight . "

Arthur nodded and retrieved Makaze from his storage, throwing him at the startled Jian Si, who unconsciously cut the sharp blade .

The dark katana wasn't very pleased in being held by another person, it vibrated intensely with dark flames on its edges .

"As promised, I'll be your teacher for a while, but I have urgent matters in this period, so maybe another time . Nevertheless, I'll show my swordstyle and you can inspect my blade but be careful, it isn't the docile type . "

Makaze is rather aggressive to everyone but Arthur, even Lucy can only hold it and not wield it and that's only thanks to the Soul bind .

Arthur looked at the curious Jian Si, who tried her best to hold the katana and didn't let go despite the unwilling Makaze .

After ten days, the dark blade also recovered from the fight, it was no longer weakened and seemed to be as healthy as its master .

"Master, a lot of things happened when you were resting . The Fate has been decided and the disaster is unavoidable . "

Swain talked with a serious tone, different from his usual uncaring attitude .

"What do you mean?"

"The day you started resting, exactly at midnight, a tiger howl reverberated in the whole world, alarming all its inhabitants . "

Arthur frowned and asked

"A tiger? Did a sleeping beast awaken after my fight with that Sovereign?"

Swain shook his head and answered with a bitterness

"Unfortunately, it is far worse . After exactly a day from the tiger howl, a screech similar to a phoenix resounded in all corners of the world, and it's not just this middle-Realm, but in all the Realm and planets .

This, however, was but the beginning... on the third day, same time, a deep growl that brought creepy chills with it was heard . The fourth and final day, a mighty dragon cry freaked all the population of the universe . "

Arthur was also surprised by this turn of events, especially when he heard that these sounds were heard in all the words . Whoever was doing this must be a powerful and mighty individual .

Swain paused for a split second before he continued talking

"These are signs, the same ones as ten thousand years ago . The catastrophe that befell on this Universe, the same one that caused rivers of blood, never before seen destruction and chaos that angered the Heavens and opposed fate . "

Chapter 240

'The Catastrophe?'

Arthur didn't expect to hear about it so soon . He read and heard about it on Astria, the four Divine Beasts which attacked the small world and caused a lot of destruction but not enough to push all the races into extinction .

Zodiak mentioned that every world was attacked, but the power of the four Divine Beasts in every Realm varied . It depends on who's residing in that world, it's like an automatically prepared system that fixes the power of the invaders to match the overall power of the world .

For example, the Underworld, which could barely be considered a Medium-Realm is called a High-Realm because the behemoth is living there, and its strength is enough to raise the rank of the Realm . Moreover, when the catastrophe fell upon it, the strength of the Divine Beasts was unimaginable, far stronger than what attacked normal Medium-Realms .

It isn't a confirmed speculation, but Zodiak guessed that the existence of one strong being in a small world could potentially raise the power of the beasts .

So, for example, if a Sovereign is residing on Astria when it occurs, the power of the Divine Beasts that attack it will be drastically increased to match the Sovereign, if not stronger .

When he thought of this, Arthur started worrying . Astria has no strong individuals, however, it has something unique, something that could cause its destruction .

It was none other than the young World Tree that Zodiak hid there . He doesn't know how powerful it is, but the Divine Beasts will surely not be easy to deal with, which made him feel a sense of urgency and uneasiness .

"When will it happen?"

"Many confirmed that'll happen in three months but... a man is sure that in two months, those beasts will start their invasion . "

Arthur frowned and questioned again

"Two months? Why are you so sure?"

"A man can see the shadow of Death cloaking this land . It is even possible that this time will be different and the defending party will be the one losing . "

The origin of the Divine Beasts has always been a mystery, they just arrived from nowhere and started destroying and killing everybody, the weak were not spared and strong who tried resisting ended up perishing in the end too .

There are many strong planets and Realms which were unscathed by this attack, however, that's only thanks to the union of the strong factions and the ancient and powerful individuals that participated in that fight .

The Divine Planet is a good example, the biggest planet in the Cloud Sea Universe and the most powerful in terms of factions . It remained undamaged by the attack, which only lasted a few hours before the Divine Beasts were either pushed off or killed .

Astria, on the other side, wasn't so lucky . One of the reasons the Forgotten continent wasn't remembered anymore is because of that event, the beasts focused on that continent specifically, it was even forcefully pushed away from the rest, rendering it absent from the history books of Astria and long forgotten by its inhabitants as only a few old beings have knowledge of it .

"Master, the strings of fate have changed, we must improvise . "

Swain knew how his master thought, Astria is Lucy's original home and his too . Despite the fact that she had a tragic childhood there, she still held affection toward it as it's a place where she met Arthur .

He was also wasn't willing to let the Divine Beasts rampage there, his sect and friends were there .

The problem was, he doesn't know if they'll attack the four big lands or the forgotten continent, it'll be better if they focused on the latter, but that's just wishful thinking from his part .

"What are our chances against them?"

Arthur asked Swain, who seemed to be knowledgeable about these Divine Beasts .

"Hard to tell... a man reckons that we're, by far, weaker than them . It wouldn't even be a fight since they'll be really strong due to... you know what . "

'World Tree *sigh*'

"I can ask some of the elders of my sect to help you . "

Jian Si, who stopped inspecting Makaze and focused on their conversation, spoke after hearing that . In response, Arthur shook his head and retorted

"No need, having strangers come to my home is more dangerous . "

Surprisingly, Swain didn't agree with Arthur this time .

"Master, a man thinks that we could use all the help we can get... they are no mere beasts, even a single one of them is disgustingly strong, much less the four together . "

"No, we'll deal with it ourselves . "

Arthur was still against getting external help . Astria is a cast out world and it has many mysteries . If they discover the World Tree and its true origin, it would really be a disaster to the whole world and at that time, even he, won't be able to stop all the strong individuals who will raid his home, after all, he's but one person .

"But Master..."

"Enough!"

Arthur shouted at Swain, making him stop insisting and bow politely . The red-haired youth closed his eyes and remained standing next to Arthur, like an obedient servant .

He looked at Jian Si and ordered

"You, study those notes in meantime and go back to your sect . "

He retrieved a dozen or so notes and books which have useful things about swordsmanship which could help her breakthrough to the God Realm .

Jian Si showed an unwilling expression as if she wasn't pleased with his decision . She didn't think much of the catastrophe as the Green-Leaf world is the strongest Medium-Realm in all the Universe and it's incredibly big so there is very little chance that her sect will suffer, it'll only send a few elders to aid those in need .

Before she could think of something to say to make him change his mind, Arthur took out two paintings he drew before coming to this world, he showed them to Jian Si and added:

"These are two people I'm looking out . You're going to help me find them, the boy is your senior brother, he's my first student . "

Syth wasn't an official student of Arthur as he only trained him a few times, however, he considered that kid a student of his, he was diligent and hard-working, what's more, he was talented in wielding swords .

As for his sister, although they had some grudges at first, she properly apologized to him and Lucy especially . She wasn't a bad person, she was a princess so she became a bit arrogant but after what happened with Arthur, she became quite docile and obedient .

These two siblings were the only people he needs to look for, they disappeared when the Emperor's castle was raided by Bucama's underlings . They were missing ever since and apparently, they weren't abducted by the factions in this wasteland else they would have been found by Gutcha, who has a wide network across all this area yet he found no information about them, not even a little clue .

"Hmpf! I only respect those stronger than myself!"

Cold Sword became even more irritated when she discovered that she had a senior brother . She wasn't the person to bow to those weaker than her .

"It's true that he's weaker than you, much weaker, in fact . Nonetheless, he came before you and he's considered your Senior . If you want to remain as my student, you better get rid of that high and mighty attitude, I hate it . "

Jian Si gritted her teeth and didn't retort, mainly because she'll burst out in anger if she started talking .

"Did anything happen while I was asleep?"

"Except the signs of the incoming doom, nothing too important . Though, Kang Amidel wishes to talk to you . "

Arthur nodded and prepared to leave when Jian Si couldn't hold it any longer, she grabbed his shoulder and said

"Wait! You didn't even show me your sword style . You promised me, right?"

Arthur shrugged her hands off and said in a cold tone

"Firstly, don't ever touch me again . Secondly, I promised to show you but I didn't specify when, so you'll have to wait . I have much more important matters to take care of . "

The girl's face flushed red, he showed a disgusted expression when she touched him which angered her . It's as if he was touched by some filth and not a prodigious person like her, it was really a shameful matter .

She guessed that he must have a problem with all people, then again, he doesn't act like this with Kithel or Emily, but the truth she doesn't know is that Arthur doesn't want to touch or be touched by other women . It's not like Lucy, who literally can't touch men except for him, but he just finds it unpleasant and disgusting, moreover, he doesn't want to hurt Lucy, although she wasn't here right now .

She hates it when other women touch him so he promised to try and not touch them while she's absent and he'll uphold this promise the best he can .