

S vs Rebirth 761

Chapter 761 Same Plan

After having their dinner and washing their bodies, Noel and Anna returned to their room. They had been quite tense this whole time due to the bet they had.

"Are you ready to lose?" Noel smirked as if he had prepared a plan to mess with her.

"I think you should be the one to prepare for it." Anna snorted. "There is no rule regarding sabotaging your opponent."

"What chivalry? If chivalry can be applied to every single person in the world, no one will be called cunning." Noel snorted.

"If you think you can pull ahead of me by training during the whole night, then you're wrong." Anna stepped forward, entering the room.

"No. You're the one who can't train tonight!" Noel wasn't afraid of her.

Once they stepped into the bedroom, they stopped for a moment, waiting for the signal to start their plan.

"We will use this." Noel took out a coin. "Once it drops to the ground, we will begin."

"Bring it on!" Anna slapped the back of his hand, causing the coin to fly into the air for three seconds before falling down.

The few seconds the coin took to fall down felt so long.

Cling!

But once they heard the clicking sound from the ground, they immediately jumped forth, heading straight to the cabinet that separated their beds.

"Huh?" Noel widened his eyes when grabbing the cabinets. Anna also had the same confusion.

They looked at each other and asked the same thing, "What are you doing?!"

They weren't the type who explained first and took action later. Instead, they moved the cabinets first, making each other realize their intention.

There wasn't a single word coming out of their mouth. After moving the cabinet away, both Noel and Anna ended up pushing their beds toward each other.

Clack!

The clashing sound of wooden frames made them realize that they had the same intention.

"You... What are you thinking? Are you trying to sleep on the same bed as me?!" Anna shouted while glaring at Noel.

"I should be the one asking you! Are you trying to ruin my reputation?!"

They ignored the fact that they were moving their beds toward each other and tried to blame the opposite party.

Unfortunately, it seemed that their plan was the same.

Anna did this for the sake of distracting Noel. If she somehow managed to stop Noel from practicing here and even force him to leave, it would be a huge win. But sleeping like this would definitely hit her reputation and even break some taboos among noble rules.

Her only excuse was, "I sleep on my bed; you sleep on your bed. If you dare to cross the line, then it means that you're the one who is lustful. Even if it joins together, it doesn't change the fact that we're sleeping on our own bed!"

On the other hand, Noel never cared about this in the first place. After all, he had lost his status after his parents were executed. Since there was nothing to be destroyed, then he didn't have to care about it.

He said, "How disgusting. A noble dares to use her status to sleep with a commoner!"

"You are openly admitting your commoner status right now just because you think it's right! Do you think anyone will care about that now?!" Anna snorted.

"Of course. If you dare to do it, I can tell it to your future husband, causing a scandal to ruin your reputation!"

"You dare? Your reputation will be hit as well!"

"Haha, you can blame society for that. There are a lot of nobles having multiple wives!"

"I don't care. You are not the type who will have more than one wife to me!" Anna snorted.

"You're just spouting a random excuse right now!" Noel harrumphed.

Noel and Anna glared at each other. Their words made less and less sense.

In the end, both of them stood on their beds, looking at each other.

"Hmph. If I can't marry someone else because you are trying to ruin my reputation, I can simply make you marry me!" Anna snorted.

"What? You can't. I'm going to rebuild the Ardagan Family. So, you won't be able to use your power to force that marriage!"

"I can do it right now!" Anna smiled evilly. "You are still a commoner right now. It's not weird for a noble to force a marriage to a commoner. You can say it's to elevate your status. You should be thankful to me."

"You dare? In the past, I might not have enough power to fight you. But right now, I can defeat you!"

"You are still weaker than me! If you lose, how about you call yourself Noel Stargaze?" Anna looked down at him to tease him.

Normally, the bride would be marrying into the groom's family. But that only happened when both parties had similar power or status. In the case of a commoner and a noble, the commoner was bound to marry into the noble family to elevate their status.

In that case, Noel had to change his name and follow her family name.

"In that case, we can fight right now and see whether you're strong enough to defeat me or not." Noel harrumphed.

"Sure. I have a True Spirit Body with me. Once I defeat you, you won't be able to do anything."

"You said I'm smarter than you. Once I marry into your family, I'm definitely ruining your family from the inside." Noel gritted his teeth, not wanting to lose.

Anna couldn't reply to that one because that was what she admitted a long time ago.

Both of them didn't seem to be backing down.

But once they calmed down for a moment, they realized that their bickering had gone to the way where the situation ended up with them marrying each other, whether she entered his family or the other way around.

"..." Noel and Anna fell silent. They never admitted it openly, but whenever they thought about it, they truly couldn't find someone who could be said to be equal to them other than the one in front of them.

"Say..." Noel opened his mouth with a tired expression.

"Yeah. Let's stop it." Anna sighed, feeling embarrassed that she got so worked up about this.

Chapter 762 Confrontation

'Hu... I shouldn't get too worked up. I am supposed to be older than Noel right now...' Anna took a deep breath, trying to calm her heart down. 'I don't know why but whenever I argue with this guy, I can't help but get a bit too excited. I should act more mature...'

'It's probably because I have been too emotionless in the past due to the brainwashing that I haven't got the chance to let go of all my pent-up emotion... And only by bickering like this can I let go of all my frustration.'

'No, no. Why did I make an excuse? I simply have to act like my age.' Anna tried to calm down, but whenever she saw Noel's calm and collected face made her feel slightly annoyed. Noel was supposed to be younger than her, but because of her competitiveness, she thought of his maturity as a little competition in her heart.

She had been like this a lot of times whenever she was with Noel. 'How do I put this in words? I feel like I can become my true self when I'm with him like this?'

Anna had changed a lot from the past her. And Noel was the one who brought that change. It might be because of it that she trusted Noel so much that it was fine to let him see this side of her.

Anna let out a long sigh, thinking this had gotten a bit out of control.

Meanwhile, Noel also had his own thoughts about her. 'I hated her in the past. I hated her for trying to kill my parents and even almost killed me. But when she told me about that alternate world, I couldn't help but wonder what the other me thought about her.'

'She must have been horrible and killed a lot of people. Yet, she told me that the other me tried to help her. Why?'

'I couldn't understand what the other me thought of her. However, I do admit that she is special. My talent was bad before I met Ardagan. Only thanks to Ardagan could I reach this level.'

'On the one hand, my inferiority might be the one causing me to be agitated whenever I bickered with her. On the other hand, I think I've lost all that hatred. She might have been horrible in the past, but the current her is extremely different. She is...'

It felt like a coincidence that before Noel could think of an answer, Anna actually asked, "Say, Noel... If you receive the chance to peek into the alternate world, what would you do?"

"Hmm?" Noel tilted his head in confusion. "Do you mean if I have the chance to be like you?"

"Yes." Anna nodded.

Noel thought for a moment and said, "I don't really care about that!"

"Huh?" Anna was startled by the answer. "Why? If you got this kind of knowledge, wouldn't that give you a chance to reverse everything and even create a future you desire?"

"Is that so? That sounds tempting." Noel nodded in understanding.

"Then—"

Noel waved his hand, stopping her. "Listen to this story. There is a son who kills his father. That son is being condemned by the whole village. Do you think the son is a bad guy or not? If he can choose to return to the past and fix his mistake, will he do it?"

"That's obvious. He should return to the past. This way, he won't be condemned by the whole village and won't have to bear the mistake."

"In that case, what if the son kills the father because the latter is beating him and his mother every single day? And that murder is only the reaction of the boy to survive and protect his beloved mother?"

"That's..." Anna looked down, not being able to answer.

"I have made a lot of mistakes in the past. Just thinking about it makes me so embarrassed that I want to dig a hole to hide. However, that's what defines me. My past has created the current me, and my future is the one that shapes my path." Noel pointed at himself while smiling. "But the present me is the one making a decision. Whether it's right or not, I will make a decision where I will continue to move on. There will surely be some regrets, but I'm not going to run away!"

"Not running away?" Anna contemplated. It felt like Noel was saying she had been running away from her mistake. But this chance was actually given by him as if he wanted her to do just that. This made her confused.

She recalled the story and tried to change it a bit. "In that case, how about after killing the father, the boy ends up regretting it? However, no matter what he does, he won't be able to bring back his father. The only thing he can do is to atone for his mistake. He continued working hard for the next ten years and solved all kinds of disasters. Do you think the boy has atoned for his sins?"

Noel shook his head, answering it with another question. "If I said yes, would the boy stop solving the disasters?"

"That's..." Anna fell silent. If the boy stopped, the disasters would strike and cause more misery.

"What I hate is the boy who kills his father. However, what I like is the boy who solves numerous disasters. Sin is sin; merit is merit. It won't be washed away no matter what you do. That's why if I truly can reject that chance, then I would rather not go through it. If people will come for my life, then I shall confront them head-on. If people will come to thank me, then I shall welcome them with a hug."

"!!!" Anna widened her eyes in shock. All the people she killed in the past would continue to haunt her. Even if she returned to the past, that memory would continue to linger in her mind. She had been changing the future for the better. But as he said, would she stop if he acknowledged her deeds?

What Noel gave her was not the chance to redo her life and fix her mistakes. Instead, he gave her the opportunity to do what her past life couldn't do. They were not the same. And the question was, what could she do? What made Noel give that chance to her? In other words, the reasons why she had this chance... the only thing she could do. It would be a hard path for her, but she had to find it.

Anna couldn't help but smile. "A truce?"

"Peace agreement." Noel smiled back.

Chapter 763 Knot

Noel and Anna continued working on their control. Now that they had reached an agreement, they began to observe each other and explain what they found.

Anna found multiple mistakes in Noel's control and fixed them for him. Meanwhile, Noel also had his own different perspective that even Anna just figured out.

Instead of fighting against each other, they ended up working together to hasten their progress.

However, Noel still couldn't forget how Anna expressed her concern. It seemed that Anna thought her life in the alternate world was real, impacting her behavior. The Noel in that world should have done a lot for her as if trying to change her.

In the end, they couldn't achieve anything before getting betrayed. It seemed that Anna was burdened by the fact that she killed a lot of people in that world. Most of those people didn't deserve death.

Hence, when Anna received all that memory, her mind underwent an abrupt change. She realized that she had done everything wrong and tried to fix it to atone for her sins.

And one of the objectives should be changing him so that they don't have to fight anymore and end up getting betrayed.

He completely understood her concern. And all the pieces of information she had revealed were quite similar to that alternate world.

Noel couldn't help but feel a bit curious regarding this matter. On the one hand, Anna considered it an alternate world. On the other hand, she spoke like she had completely experienced that world.

Of course, he understood that receiving a memory of that world, especially if that memory came from birth to her death, would definitely feel real and affect her personality. But Noel felt like this matter wasn't as simple as that.

Noel occasionally took a peek at her, thinking about this matter. Like how Anna believed that they could go further if they joined hands, Noel also recognized that the only one who could probably stand beside him on that path was Anna.

This made him in a dilemma. Noel considered Anna his friend, or even more than just a friend. However, Noel still couldn't see Anna romantically despite spouting everything regarding his woman, marriage, and so on. In fact, this was also the reason why he never thought much about other women in his life.

He had certainly overcome his trauma, but if he thought about the continuation of the Ardagan Family, he couldn't help but think about the effect of Ardagan.

As he learned from Ardagan, he wouldn't be able to produce more than one heir. In addition, his goal would definitely cause his wife to be sad.

Hence, he had to be careful when he picked someone to be his wife.

Still, there was something bothering him. The Noel from that alternate world seemed to be doing his best to change Anna.

It felt like the Noel in that world wished to mend their relationship and eventually work together.

So, Noel couldn't help but wonder if the Noel in that world had fallen for Anna.

Whenever he thought about it, he could only pinch the bridge of his nose, feeling troubled by that thought.

And due to this thought, his progress became a bit slower. On the other hand, Anna had resolved one of the biggest hurdles in her heart, causing her to tackle the current training with a clear mind.

...

Two days later.

Anna opened her eyes right before sunset. When she looked at her hands and moved to her entire body, she realized that she had done it.

She had managed to create an outer layer that looked like skin all around her body. However, her control could only maintain it for three seconds before it disappeared.

"..." Anna fell silent while taking a glance at Noel. Noel had covered his body, but his head still looked like a helmet. If this continued, he should be able to achieve it right before they fell asleep.

However, looking at his progress ended up making her feel slightly ashamed. After all, Noel was the reason why she managed to clear this hurdle so quickly.

In the end, Anna closed her eyes once again. This time, she enveloped her body and inflated the head so that it looked like she hadn't completed her training.

It seemed that she was planning to make it look like she had lost this battle to thank Noel for the answer.

Old Ru might not be around them, but Damian, Dimitri, and Nicole were watching them the whole time, including how Anna behaved.

"Huh? Why did Anna do something like that?" Nicole frowned.

"Can't you see that she is in love with him?" Damian smirked.

"If I'm not wrong, Anna and Master often make a little competition. It seems that Anna is planning to let Master win." Dimitri frowned. "I don't know what happens between each other, but their relationship has become weirder ever since we reached that camping site."

"Hmm?" Nicole scratched the back of her head. "I thought that Anna hated the Ardagan Family to the bone and wanted to eliminate them to remove future threats."

"That was what I thought as well to the point where I wanted to humble her. But she had definitely changed." Dimitri shook his head helplessly, remembering the fights they had in the past.

"Don't you think something will happen since they are sleeping in the same room?" Damian smirked, teasing Nicole and Dimitri since they were Anna and Noel's guardians.

Surprisingly, Nicole didn't give any reaction as if she had given her approval. Noel had two spirits and was the heir of the Ardagan Family. So, there was no objection from her, especially after seeing Noel was this capable.

As for Dimitri, he claimed, "Those two actually joined their beds together."

"How did you know?"

"I'm a butler, you remember? I thought about tidying up their beds and cleaning up their room. But once I saw it, I couldn't help but nail those beds together so that they couldn't separate anymore." Dimitri looked calm and collected, but Nicole and Damian could sense that he was proud of it.

Chapter 764 Observation

"Are you serious?" Nicole's eyebrows twitched. "I mean, do you not have any objections regarding their relationship? As much as I don't want to admit it, Anna was kind of... horrible in the past."

"You said it yourself. It was in the past." Dimitri shook his head helplessly. "Everyone could change. If I don't give them a chance just because of what happened in the past, then that person might not be able to change anymore. Besides, there are not a lot of people who can stand on equal ground with my master."

"In this kingdom alone, there are only two women who can be considered worthy to be my master's wife. One of them is Anna, while the other is the Sword Arbiter's daughter, Sword Princess Zera. However, I can't wrap my head around an Arbiter, especially that old man, so I think Anna is the best candidate."

"Of course, there is also a candidate from neighboring countries..." Dimitri glanced at Damian. "...such as the rumored hidden genius princess, the second princess of the Greenwood Kingdom, Princess Livia. And her biggest contender should be the Prime Minister's daughter, a business genius."

"..." Damian fell silent for a moment. "You surely have prepared for all of this, haven't you? How much have you investigated?"

"I don't understand what you mean. I am simply thinking about the Ardagan Family's future in my mind. Seeking the wife for the master is the butler's job, you know." Dimitri looked away.

"If I tell you to cooperate with me for matchmaking, what will you do?" Damian asked with a nonchalant expression, but the question seemed to be extremely important.

"I would definitely cooperate unless my master tells me otherwise."

"..." Damian and Dimitri looked at each other as if they were trying to negotiate. However, Damian ended up sighing, saying, "He is simply too much. I'm just afraid that he will end up causing a disaster instead."

"Are you cursing my master?" Dimitri squinted his eyes.

"Of course not." Damian shrugged.

"Hello, you guys. Why are you talking like Anna is irrelevant? You talk like Anna will end up marrying him. Shouldn't you question whether Anna wants him or not? Don't you know that Anna is extremely beautiful and powerful? There are a lot of people wanting to marry her." Nicole raised her hand, interrupting them.

Damian and Dimitri only looked at her like she was a fool.

"What are you talking about? We are already aware of her reputation. But her action here has shown enough that she is at least interested in him. Their movements are in sync, so what do you want to say?" Damian tilted his head in confusion.

"That's right. Even if she has a lot of suitors, does it really matter if she isn't planning to accept them? I've heard that a lot of those guys are scared because of her eccentric behavior in the past." Dimitri nodded in agreement.

"Why do I feel like I'm the one being bullied?" Nicole let out a sigh. "Then, let's change the topic. What do you think about the skill they are learning right now?"

Dimitri thought for a moment and said, "It's quite a peculiar technique. Instead of relying on the Spirit Abilities, that technique is actually forcing us to learn how to control Spiritual Energy in its purest form."

Damian agreed with him. "Normally, the control is divided into two categories: Soft and Hard Approaches. However, it's simply controlling the ability according to the purpose. Meanwhile, this

technique controls the Spiritual Energy itself. If we infuse our element or Spirit Ability, there is a chance..."

Dimitri nodded. "Yeah. There is a chance that a sword wave can be used as something else, like a barrier or something. Of course, it's not good to use an offensive ability as a defensive one, but if you put up your guard, this ability allows you to maximize it. In other words, the purpose of this ability is to bring the full potential of the ability that can't be exerted in its original form."

"That sounds extremely powerful. Does that make the trip worth it?" Nicole asked, especially Damian, who came from another country.

"Of course. I've been trying to do the same, but it's harder than I expected. Still, if I continue observing them and try to replicate them, it should be enough to increase my overall abilities. If a person like Dimitri uses it, he won't have to be afraid of a Spirit Transcendence anymore. Bringing this information alone is worth multiple trips."

"I don't really care about the Muivell Kingdom. But if my master wants to spread the knowledge, I'll respect his will. Either way, it's enough if it makes him stronger." Dimitri shook his head.

"Fair point. Why don't you just move to the Greenwood Kingdom? We'll definitely take care of you." Damian smirked.

"Shut up."

While those two were arguing, Noel and Anna seemed to have woken up from their meditation.

They immediately returned to the house. After dinner, Noel continued his training since he was just one step away from completing the training.

To avoid alerting Noel, Anna also did the same training while making it look like she was struggling with it.

In another three hours, Noel finally managed to complete the training by wrapping his body with a thin layer of Spiritual Energy.

Even his training task was completed since it only required him to last for one second.

"Hahaha! I've finally completed the training!" Noel immediately stood up, proudly claiming.

"!!!" Anna widened her eyes in shock and said with a gasp. "What? How?"

"Hehe. It must be because of my talent." Noel harrumphed.

"Kh." Anna gritted her teeth, looking very frustrated. "I was just a bit away from it."

"Since you lose, you better prepare to say something against your will." Noel smirked evilly.

Anna looked unwilling, but she ended up snorting, "Hmph. Try it. I don't care."

"Alright then. You have to say this." Noel took out a piece of paper containing two words. "Say it!"

Anna read the words written on it out loud without putting much thought into it. But those words suddenly caused him to think about it. After all, those two words were, "I win."

"Huh?" Anna soon noticed the meaning and raised her head, looking at Noel's face, which had completely become serious as if he had realized that she was merely pretending.

Chapter 765 Punishment?

"Huh?" Anna looked at Noel, who was glaring at him with a grim expression. It seemed that he had already known about it the whole time. Anna made an awkward smile, trying to play dumb. "Why are you telling me to say those words?"

Noel's expression became cold. "Are you seriously asking that question?"

"..." Anna felt like Noel would become more pissed if she continued doing this. She thought for a moment and asked, "Since when did you figure it out?"

"From the very start. It was my fault for having my thoughts getting distracted, so it would be weird if you were later than me. That was why when I reached the last stage, I kept a portion of my attention to check on you."

Anna made an awkward smile. Their competitiveness might be high, but their fairness seemed to be beyond it. Just like how Anna wanted to concede the win to him, Noel also didn't like to win without his own effort.

"Then, are you sure you're going to say the words I'm going to tell you?" Anna asked.

Noel looked away with a distorted expression.

"You look so annoyed." Anna's eyebrows twitched. "If you don't like it, why would you even bother to make me the winner again?"

"I don't want to say those words, but I hate unfairness even more. This is not a battle of wits where trickery can be applied. So, since I've lost, I'll follow it through." Noel sighed.

"In that case, let me think about it first. What kind of thing do I want you to say..." Anna looked up for a few minutes before grabbing a paper and writing down her order. "Say this."

When Noel picked up the paper, his expression was distorted.

"Are you kidding me?"

"It's your fault. I've let you win, so you should've taken it if you don't want to do it." Anna shrugged while looking away.

Noel gritted his teeth. Since he had given her the right once again, he had to go through it. He burned the paper with his flame and started unbuttoning his shirt.

"Eh?" Anna widened her eyes in shock. "Why are you unbuttoning your shirt?"

They were sitting in front of each other, but somehow Noel made his way to her bed while taking off his shirt.

"What's wrong?" Noel smiled as he approached her.

Anna didn't know what Noel was planning to do. In fact, this was the first time she experienced something like this.

Noel was right before her, and their bodies were only separated by a few centimeters. She couldn't help but try to move back, but Noel didn't let her go.

He grabbed her hands while asking, "What's wrong? Why are you backing down?"

"I am supposed to be the one asking you. What are you doing?!" Anna became even flustered. Her cheeks reddened.

"I'm simply following your instructions." Noel smirked. Since you told me to say it, then I should act like it as well.

"You—" Anna wanted to stop him, but Noel's face was right before her. With his hands holding her, she couldn't move away anymore. Her face was completely red, while Noel's eyes were so gentle that she even felt some affection reflected on them.

"I am Noel Stargaze. So, shouldn't I act like I'm one?" Noel smirked, "Madam. You don't have to run anymore."

Anna's body trembled. This was beyond her imagination. She never thought Noel could act this affectionately.

Her muscles tensed up as her brain froze. She was ready for what Noel was planning to do because, surprisingly, she didn't feel any repulsive feelings.

But in that instant, a wide evil grin appeared on Noel's face. The smile was filled with salt as even a dense person would feel the insult behind it.

She realized that Noel had once again tricked her.

"You... You..." Anna had a hard time speaking, both angry and flustered.

"What do you mean? I have said everything you want me to say, but the bet doesn't specify that I can't do anything nor say something different from those lines." Noel smirked. "I don't know what you've seen from that alternate world, but shouldn't you be more mature because of those experiences? I guess it's not really affecting your mental age. You are too innocent in this after all. Hahahaha!"

Noel stepped back while laughing out loud. Even if he lost the bet, he still won the war. Anna was so flustered that she couldn't even talk back.

Anna looked down as her expression darkened. Her body was shaking because of the shame.

Meanwhile, Noel was putting on his shirt back with a big smile on his face.

"You!" Anna grabbed his shoulders in shame, pushing him down. "You bastard. I'm going to make you pay! We're going to bet once more. We'll see who comes first in the next stage of training. Whoever wins can order the other party to do and say anything they want!"

Noel harrumphed. "Do you think I'm afraid of you?"

Obviously, the training task that increased his sensitivity would be the main boost that would allow him to win this competition. However, Anna seemed to be serious about winning this time, no matter what she had to do.

"Just wait. I'm going to make you do this and that while saying those words! I'm going to repay all this shame!" Anna bit her lips.

"Fine? So, can you get off me now?" Noel asked.

"!!!" Anna realized that their position was something that shouldn't be talked about among nobles. In fact, it would lead to the point where this would lead to a big scandal.

Anna hurriedly released him and stepped back. She wanted to say something, but she ended up clutching her head, never thinking she was bold enough to do such a thing. "Aaaahhh. You sly fox, I'm definitely going to make you suffer this humiliation!"

"You won't be able to do it because I'll win this time." Noel harrumphed.

Chapter 766 Competition

The next day.

Noel and Anna stood on the field. They were demonstrating the result of their training.

"Good." Old Ru nodded, satisfied. "To think you would be able to do it within such a short period, even I'm impressed. Still, it's too far from the usable level. So, for the next training..."

Old Ru pointed at Noel. "Now that you have managed to control your Spiritual Energy all around your body, concentrating it in one spot should be possible, right?"

"Yes." Noel nodded.

"Then, try to gather the Spiritual Energy in your hand."

Noel raised his hand and enveloped it with a thin layer of Spiritual Energy.

"Raise the output."

Noel poured more and more, inflating the layer and making it look like a glove.

"That's the level. Your task today is to inflate the layer until that level. But while doing so, you are going to touch her." Old Ru stated while pointing at Anna.

"Touch her?" Noel looked at him with a disgusted face.

"I'm not talking about that." Old Ru shook his head. "Instead, I want both of you to extend your hands and feet so that you touch each other. Noel will be inflating the energy and Anna is going to match it. This will test your reaction speed and train your speed in controlling your Spiritual Energy. And because your control only allows you to maintain it for a few seconds, you have to match the energy until your control deteriorates.

"Once you've lost your control, the other party will be the one attacking this time. Understood?"

Noel and Anna looked at each other. They couldn't help but remember what would happen if they failed to match it. The burst of Spiritual Energy would definitely blow them away.

Anna thought this was a way to avenge the shame she suffered yesterday. She would definitely make Noel suffer here. Meanwhile, Noel also had his evil thoughts in this training.

Noel and Anna had evil smiles on their face as if indirectly telling each other that they should prepare for what was coming.

'Youth, huh?' Old Ru shook his head helplessly. 'Despite trying to best each other and making all sorts of competitions, these two have a pseudo boundary to the point where I don't know whether these two are a couple or not. No, why haven't they become a thing already? Either way, it's good that they come together since the training will be much easier that way. Their little competitiveness will definitely speed up the progress.'

Old Ru decided not to say anything about their relationship. They could be said to be best friends, but the boundary was so thin that one would definitely mistake their relationship.

Before leaving them alone, Old Ru reminded them. "One more thing. I think you already know this, but you can continue the practice anywhere you want, including your room. In fact, that's the reason why you're staying in one room. However, you have to remember one thing... You two better not destroy anything in my house."

"..." The smile on the two youths' faces disappeared as Old Ru's cold voice sent chills down their spines. "Yes, Sir."

"Good. You may start. I'll observe you for an hour or so. Then, you can do the rest."

Noel and Anna nodded. They faced each other before sitting down on the ground. They extended their hands and feet so that they touched each other.

Then, both of them started closing their eyes, trying to feel the Spiritual Energy.

Noel took a deep breath as he first wrapped his entire body with the layer of Spiritual Energy first. After that, he began to shift the amount of energy to his right foot, inflating the amount of energy.

Before, one hundred percent energy was used to wrap his body. But after the change, he poured only seventy percent of the total energy into his body while the remaining thirty percent was used to power up his right foot.

"!!!" Anna immediately sensed the change in Spiritual Energy. She had circulated her Spiritual Energy, so she hurriedly proceeded to shift the energy to match Noel's level of energy.

But by rushing it to avoid getting blown away, she poured a little too much, causing the balance of Spiritual Energy to change.

In that instant, Anna's energy began to overwhelm Noel's energy, releasing a small shock wave that knocked his foot back.

"Ah!" Noel gritted his teeth while opening his eyes. His body got stretched a bit because of the shock wave.

"Oops. That was unintentional." Anna made an awkward smile.

"No, that must be intentional." Noel glared at her.

"In that case, Anna is the one losing. Remember, you have to match the other party's energy completely." Old Ru smirked and took out an ink. "By the way, this is an ink and a brush. The ink can be washed away with simple water, so you don't have to worry. You can give one stroke to the loser. This should be perfect for your little competition, right?!"

"!!!" Anna gasped. "Wait. That one doesn't count!"

"Shut up! Just accept your fate." Noel didn't wait as he grabbed the brush. He held her hand so that she couldn't escape. Then, he made a straight line on her right eyebrow as though he wanted to draw glasses.

"Kh. Let's start again! It's my turn." Anna hurriedly concentrated, trying to pay him back. Anna poured some Spiritual Energy into her left hand this time.

Noel didn't want to lose, so he hurriedly matched it. But because of the competition, he got distracted a bit and ended up rushing, causing the balance to shift.

Anna got pushed back, but a smile appeared on her face. "This time, it's your turn."

She didn't hesitate to grab the brush and make a line on his cheek. "I'm going to make you a cat today!"

"Just try it!" Noel glared at her. He was starting again.

The training might look distracting, but the desire to not want to get the punishment would make them strive to improve. And their little competition was what made this type of training even more effective.

Old Ru was just smiling on the side, watching their interaction before eventually leaving those two alone.

Chapter 767 Second Phase

"Hahahaha! You are extremely funny right now!" Anna laughed out loud while pointing at Noel. The dusk had arrived and they were about to return and continue their training in their room.

So, they took one last look at each other, appreciating the work they had created.

Anna couldn't contain herself when she saw everything she had painted on Noel's face and body. They had been trying to outsmart each other, causing the Spiritual Energy manipulation to become even more ridiculous.

But the reason why Old Ru suggested this method was actually because of their competitiveness. They had been battling each other in Spiritual Energy control at a far higher level than what Noel could do if he was only with Dimitri or Damian.

The reason why Anna couldn't contain her laugh was because Noel's forehead had "Cute" written on it. "I am" was written on his right cheek, and "weak" was written on the other cheek. There were even some cat whiskers on it.

But because there were too many things to write, they moved toward arms and legs to compensate for it. On Noel's left hand, Anna had put "I love Master Anna." On his right hand, Anna made a drawing of him prostrating in front of her, but only with a stickman figure since she couldn't draw.

It was humiliating for Noel. Even though he tried his best to match her movement, he failed at least more than three hundred times today.

Of course, Anna also lost the same number. As a result, Noel had paid her back. He had written Ugly, Stupid, and Bad on her face alongside glasses and a black eye. On her hands, there were words such as "Not wife materials" and "Single for life" on her as if he was cursing that her bad behavior would cause her to lose the opportunity to marry someone in this life.

They had been clashing since the morning and it was truly an enjoyable and frustrating time. Due to their lack of control, they ended up taking some rest to consolidate it during their competition.

Without them realizing it, the battle that was supposed to last only for three seconds had increased drastically. In the last battle, Noel managed to block Anna's advance for almost a minute.

Old Ru had told them that they had to keep up with the control for at least thirty minutes to be able to use it in battle. But due to this competition, it seemed that they would be able to achieve their objective in less than a month.

Even Old Ru wouldn't expect something like this.

"Shut up, you ugly." Noel snorted. "No wonder you still haven't had an engagement, your bad personality remains."

"What is this? My cute Noel is trying to argue or something?" Anna smirked, teasing Noel.

"I am not arguing. I am simply telling you that there won't be anyone who will be with you. In fact, besides me, have you even got close to another man?" Noel snorted.

"Eh?" Anna widened her eyes in amusement. "Are you sayi—"

Before she finished her words, Noel suddenly injected Spiritual Energy and pushed her back due to the imbalance.

"You lost!" Noel harrumphed and grabbed the brush.

"What?! We have finished our training for the day! Why did you attack me again?!" Anna gritted her teeth and tried to grab the brush, but Noel skillfully avoided it and made a last long stroke on her hand.

"What?! It's time for me to pay—" Anna wanted to channel her Spiritual Energy, but Noel had retracted his hands and feet away.

"We're done here." Noel stood up, acting as if nothing happened.

"What? You cheater! You made one more turn than me!" Anna gritted her teeth and tried to grab Noel's hand, trying to do the same.

But Noel hurriedly waved his hand, knocking her hand back.

"!!!" Noel and Anna looked at each other for a second. After that, Anna tried to grab Noel's hands with all her strength, but Noel kept repelling her and even moving toward the house.

"You bastard. Is this how a noble act? You can't even be fair!" Anna kept chasing him.

"I'm a commoner, not a noble!"

They kept clashing until they reached the house where Old Ru made them promise that nothing should happen in the house other than in their room.

And it seemed that Noel had taken the victory for today, albeit with a little bit of cheating.

Anna was glaring at him the whole time, not liking how he had attacked her earlier.

Of course, the fight continued the moment they returned to their room. Noel tried to stop her, but it was impossible since they were in an enclosed space. In addition, it was better to train whenever they had time for it.

In the end, they continued their battle until they fell asleep with all those markers on their bodies.

Both of them might not realize it, but their relationship had changed a little bit ever since the previous incident at the campsite. However, the subtle change was very obvious. Of course, Dimitri and Nicole didn't have any intention of stopping them.

It was the first time Nicole saw Anna being that happy when she trained and played with someone else. And Dimitri was gratified that there was at least someone who could make Noel relax. While they were observing how they trained, they continued to support them so that they didn't have to do anything other than train, eat, and sleep.

This was how they acted most of the time. Eventually, they reached the state where they managed to last for an hour within one week.

And Old Ru gathered them again as it was time to move to the next stage.

"It seems that you two have got your fun." Old Ru smiled, looking at Noel and Anna, who appeared tired from fighting each other.

"We still have a lot of energy to spare." Noel and Anna said the same thing.

"Of course. It's time to continue to the next stage. You are to infuse your element into your energy. This is going to be a bit more intense, so start off slow."

Chapter 768 Reason

"Before that, can I ask something?" Noel raised his hand.

"Sure."

"There is something bothering me. It feels like we've been progressing extremely fast. Originally, we were planning to stay for four months and expected that we would return without the full training..."

"Are you asking why you can progress this fast? It's pretty simple. The rivalry between you two is sparking the competitiveness you have in your heart. This is the reason why I put you in one room... Though, it seems that you haven't used the items inside the room at all."

"What do you mean?" Noel tilted his head in confusion.

"I was preparing only one set of items, because I thought you would be infusing your energy into that item, preventing your partner from using it."

"!!!" Noel and Anna gasped, realizing what they had been missing so far. Not only the item but even the bed might also be possible.

If they could somehow do it, they would definitely annoy the other.

"However, that's not possible anymore." Old Ru smiled, stopping them. "Once you begin infusing your elements, it's going to be destroyed by your elements."

"That's..." Noel and Anna exchanged looks. It seemed they had reached a tacit understanding. But that was the fact that they wouldn't back down.

"We can just infuse pure Spiritual Energy in it. This will definitely help with the second training." Noel explained.

"That's right. We could do the third training in the field while the second training in the house. This way, we can utilize our time effectively." Anna nodded in understanding.

"Hahaha." Old Ru laughed and teased them. "Even though you always bicker with each other, there is a time you are agreeing with something, huh?"

"..." Noel and Anna looked away, not admitting it.

"Alright. This old man won't be teasing you two anymore." Old Ru raised his finger. "I don't mind how you use your time during the night as long as you don't harm the house."

"Still, you haven't answered my question. No, you misinterpreted my question." Noel waved his hand, stopping him. "Although I don't want to admit it since it makes me look arrogant, our current pace should be enough to complete all the training while having some time to spare, right?"

"Ah, I understand what you want to ask." Old Ru nodded. "The third phase of the training is elemental training. The fourth phase is battle. The last phase is a test. If I look at your current speed, you should be able to complete the training within two months. Are you wondering what you can do in the remaining two months?"

"Yes." Noel nodded. On the one hand, since he had fulfilled the objective, he would return. On the other hand, it would be such a waste to return just like that.

Anna also agreed with Noel. She felt their time could be used more effectively.

"In that case, you can hunt the demons around here and take their crystals. You are currently Spirit Masters. Although you've gotten quite strong, your Spiritual Energy Reserve is not at the level where you can reach Spirit Grandmasters within a short period of time."

"In this region, there are a lot of powerful monsters, especially Peak Level Demons and even Superior Demons. You can hunt them and increase your Spiritual Energy Reserve. This way, by the time you reach your home, you should be at the peak of Spirit Master. After consolidating your power, it won't be weird for you to reach the Spirit Grandmaster Stage."

Noel thought for a moment as if he was assessing the pros and cons of that schedule. Meanwhile, Anna asked a question. "By the way, you told us that you would like to ask us something after you finish training us..."

"Oh." Old Ru had observed them and made a decision. It seemed that they had come here knowing about it as well. So, he decided to reveal his request. "My request is simple. I hope that you don't take my grandson away."

"Hmm?!" Noel raised his eyebrows while Anna made a wry smile.

"As I said, something that must happen will happen unless you change your perspective. Within that calculation, your arrival here should be something that must happen. Once I think about it, I've come to realize that my grandson will be on it as well." Old Ru explained.

"That's..." Anna scratched the back of her head. "Since you've made such a request, I don't think it's right to hide it from you. Actually, your grandson is extremely talented in swords and can become the Sword Saint's disciple. I don't know if you know about him though."

"The Sword Saint... is it the one from one thousand years ago?"

"Do you know him?"

"There were legends about him even in my kingdom. Back then, both human kingdoms and my kingdoms were still connected, you know. I don't know much about the past, but I know who you're talking about."

"Then..." Anna's expression brightened.

"My grandson is indeed talented. However, I don't think I want to let you bring him away for two reasons. Now that you have changed your perspective, I don't think letting him leave is a good option. You can consider this as a price for taking my lesson. As for the second reason, I'm just worried about his safety." Old Ru smiled.

Noel and Anna looked down, thinking about it. They could somehow understand that because there were a lot of changes happening all around the kingdom, the situation would be unpredictable. Even with Anna's knowledge, it might still be hard to protect themselves.

Still, it was a shame that the Sword Saint couldn't find a successor.

"Sir—" Noel wanted to suggest that he left the inheritance here so that his grandson could receive it, but Old Ru shook his head. It seemed that he didn't want both of them to be connected to his grandson more than this.

So, Noel could only respect his choice. "I understand. I'm sorry for all this inconvenience."

"No, it's fine. Rather than that, how about we begin the training?"

Noel and Anna nodded.

Chapter 769 Third Phase

Noel and Anna closed their eyes and focused on channeling their energy to each other.

Noel was the first one to concentrate his Spiritual Energy on his right hand. This time, he didn't push the energy or something to knock Anna back. Instead, he waited for Anna to match it.

Due to the previous training, they had quite a mastery in handling this power. So, Anna easily matched the amount of Spiritual Energy on his right hand.

After that, Noel said, "I'll begin."

"Go on." Anna nodded.

As soon as he got the confirmation, Noel began to infuse ice elements into his palm. He didn't dare to use the fire element because the Undying Flame might burn Anna. Even if the other party was confident in repelling it and Old Ru was here, one single incident might leave a permanent mark on her skin.

Even with their competition, Noel would make sure that no harm was done to Anna.

The blue Spiritual Energy gradually moved to the hand, emitting a chilling wind.

Anna furrowed her eyebrows, asking, "Are you not going to use your fire? Do you think I don't have the ability to fight that stronger element?"

"Not at all. Is it wrong that I'm concerned about your well-being?"

"..." After hearing that reply, Anna couldn't help but fall silent. She let out a sigh and said, "In that case..."

Anna started sending forth her lightning element to match the amount of ice element.

As expected, since there were two elements coming from two different people, they would begin to clash the moment they encountered each other.

The lightning was trying to shatter the ice, while the latter decreased the temperature drastically to freeze the lightning itself.

However, they heard Old Ru warning them, "Proceed even more slowly. The lightning will become the river basin while the ice would melt and become the water flowing through that river."

Anna followed his instruction. She tried to disperse the lightning evenly and tried not to fight back. Because of that, she had to reverse the lightning current, following the ice element current.

Noel soon found that the resistance was gone, allowing his ice element to continue.

"Here I go." He warned Anna as she began infusing more energy to push the ice element.

Anna felt the chilling ice element and hurriedly reinforced her skin with another layer of Spiritual Energy. Surprisingly, the ice element flowed smoothly on her arm and was about to reach her body.

"Remember. Don't let the energy penetrate your body. Element can only be countered by element and Spiritual Energy can only be handled by Spiritual Energy. Disperse your lightning to protect your body from the chill and let the Spiritual Energy guide it." Old Ru instructed.

Anna hurriedly covered her entire body and face with a thin layer of lightning element. As Old Ru said, this would act as a tube where the ice element flowed. At the same time, she used Spiritual Energy to guide the fuel of the ice element, which was Noel's Spiritual Energy, forward.

Carefully and slowly, Anna moved the ice element across her body until it reached the other shoulder.

Once it passed her body, everything went even smoother.

Anna only needed to match the amount of Spiritual Energy of the one flowing on her body. Then, Noel did the same to receive his energy back.

"Take this back," said Anna while checking whether Noel had matched her Spiritual Energy or not. If he hadn't done it, she would have had to slow down the flow.

However, Anna was quite shocked by Noel's recent improvement. The more he trained, the faster his progress speed became. It felt like he got constant enlightenment.

It was quite surprising that his perception was already at the same level as hers. If this continued, it wouldn't be long before he surpassed her.

But for the time being, Anna wanted to complete this circulation first.

The moment the ice element returned to his hand, Noel immediately reabsorbed it back into his body.

"Hu..." Noel felt relieved that the process was smooth without any problems.

They gradually opened their eyes, staring at each other.

"It's smooth, right?" Noel asked.

"Yeah. It's kind of cold though."

"But it will be the same for your lightning. I might get electrocuted, or the spark will jolt my body and give me some sensation of pain." Noel shrugged.

"Fair enough."

Old Ru smiled and clapped his hands. "Good. Both of you have done well even though this is only your first time. You have allowed your energy to enter her body and return it back to the original owner."

Noel and Anna's eyebrows twitched as they complained about the same thing. "Why did you make it sound lewd?"

"Did I?" Old Ru chuckled. "In any case, this is what you're going to expect from this training. You will circulate your energy in succession. If you become the master of your energy, you will be able to protect your body without feeling anything.

"If I'm not wrong, you have used an ability to cut the Spiritual Energy, right?" Old Ru turned to Noel.

"Yes." Noel nodded. "How about using it to cut her lightning?"

Noel glanced at Anna, wondering if she was up for it.

"Here I go." Anna turned out to have stood up, looking very eager to do it. As soon as Noel stood up and raised his stance, Anna pointed her finger at him and shot out a lightning bolt.

Noel sliced the bolt of lightning in half easily with his Spirit Weaponry.

"Excellent. Now, shoot that lightning bolt at me." Old Ru nodded.

Anna followed his instruction and released the same lightning bolt.

Old Ru extended his hand and accepted the lightning bolt through the same technique. In that instant, the lightning bolt circled around his arm and gradually moved to his body as if it was trying to explore a new place.

It moved fast and played around happily before Old Ru released it into the air through the other hand. However, one thing was clear. Old Ru could actually control Anna's lightning even though he didn't have that element.

"Did you see it?" Old Ru smiled.

Chapter 770 History

"Did you see it?" Old Ru smirked. "Once you master this technique, you are able to repel or even shift the direction of your opponent's attack to some extent. Cutting it is good, but I think redirecting it is not losing either in terms of its usage."

Noel and Anna nodded in agreement. Noel had always wanted to use the Everchanging Emotion Sword Style with his Spirit Weaponry. By turning it into a blunt weapon, he could hit it back. However, there was something fundamentally different in this ability.

The Spirit Weaponry was only allowed to control the opponent's ability to some extent and it was only limited to his weapon. On the other hand, this ability would allow him to do it with all parts of his body. He could kick, he could grab it and throw it back, or he could even slap it away.

Depending on his needs, he could choose whether to use the Spirit Weaponry or this circulation method.

"You are going to train to match each other's energy and element to a certain extent. In fact..." Old Ru grabbed two branches on the ground and tossed them.

Noel and Anna caught them with confused expressions.

"Try to sense the Spiritual Energy hidden in that branch and match it."

Noel and Anna immediately closed their eyes. It was a very subtle energy hidden deep inside the branch.

Before coming here, they wouldn't have noticed something like this. It seemed that their training so far had trained their sensitivity to Spiritual Energy as well.

Once they felt the faint sensation, they began to channel their Spiritual Energy, matching the amount of Spiritual Energy the branch had.

Surprisingly, the branch reacted to their Spiritual Energy as if it was alive. It felt like their energy was connected to each other.

"Then, pour more energy into the branch."

Noel and Anna did it. And to their surprise, the fusion energy was getting bigger.

"This is the difference between what you've been doing until now and this training. In the past, you could easily coat the branch with your energy, but that's only limited by wrapping your energy on top of the branch."

"The durability will only be limited to the strength of your Spiritual Energy. On the other hand, with this ability, you will be able to connect with the branch and strengthen the branch itself. This way, you have the durability of your Spiritual Energy and the improved strength of that branch, making it sturdier. This is why even I can stop Noel's sword with just a normal branch. If I'm not wrong, that sword of yours is special, right?"

"Yes." Noel nodded with a serious expression. It was surprising that a branch could stop a living spirit, but he finally understood the reason.

"Because the branch isn't connected to a spirit, it doesn't have an element. However, your living opponents might have elements, thus the reason for our current training."

Anna gasped. "But if this is the case, can't we just train with other objects instead of each other?"

"There are two reasons. If it's with an individual, the Spiritual Energy can easily be detected and with your competitiveness, the amount of energy can change easily depending on your mood and intention, making the training more effective. As for the second reason, I don't like destroying objects, especially trees or something. In the past, I trained like this with trees or any objects in my surroundings, only to know a harsh truth."

"A harsh truth?" Noel raised his eyebrows, getting interested in the topic.

"Yes. When I was traveling, I found a certain facility where I witnessed the record of the past civilization. The past civilization was flourishing, all people could go to school... making their ten years old child as smart as the current noble... The people could do everything, whether during the day or night, as the city would remain bright all time. It was a wonderful civilization."

Anna and Noel were amused. They had heard about the glory of the past civilization, but they had never witnessed the real thing. They couldn't help but wonder how amazing it was.

"However, it didn't come without a price." Old Ru shook his head helplessly. "The day of prosperity doesn't last very long. The population is booming, but there is only a portion of land that can be turned into farms. They cut forests and do all kinds of activities, causing floods and even increasing the temperature."

"The increase in temperature causes farming to become harder. As a result, the food supply decreases. People start dying, and the world has become a harsh world where only the strong survive. In the end, people fight for the remaining resources."

"Whether it's a blessing or a curse, that's also when the demons appeared in this world. They caused all destruction. The previous civilizations united in the name of common enemies and fought back, but the demons destroyed all important facilities and even infiltrated their military, destroying everything. The humans gradually lost their power to fight back and began to flee."

"It was then the Spirit made their appearance, trying to help the world. The humans began to have the strength to fight back, but because they were still experimenting with their new power, they got pushed back and gradually reached this stability. Out of ten billion people, only one percent was predicted to remain alive."

"!!!" They gasped. This was the first time they heard about such a detailed story. They never expected there to be such a story about the previous civilization.

However, Noel's focus was on another thing. "Still, it was impossible to wipe out all ten billion people altogether. Just like the humans or your kingdom, there might be survivors all over the world. And to host ten billion people, the world must be huge."

"Yeah. Though, I don't know how huge it is." Old Ru shook his head helplessly.

Noel clenched his fists. He somehow felt excited about it. Different people, different places, different cultures.

"But if they cut forests, does that mean the trees..." Anna furrowed her eyebrows.

"Yes. The appearance of Spiritual Energy has strengthened the land and sped up the recovery process, allowing us to have this kind of environment right now. Still, I have to say that if we end up destroying our environment like the past civilization, even with Spiritual Energy, we will only repeat the same mistake."

Anna looked down, understanding why Old Ru was very reserved in using trees or all objects in the environment for their training.

Seeing their serious expressions couldn't help but make him smile as he tried to change the topic. "In any case, you have to continue with your training. Once you get used to it, you two will fight each other with the concept. Understood?"