

The Nameless 1071

Chapter 1071: Shattered

Elder Ricci, although his injury forced him to fall from the 2nd grade ranks into the 4th, he was once a genuine 2nd grade expert. As for Elder Nova, he was a legitimate 2nd grade expert right now, making him the most powerful local of this 98th quadrant.

That said, the reasons Elder Ricci looked toward Elder Nova were different from the reasons Elder Nova looked toward Elder Ricci.

While Elder Ricci had a shocked expression on his face that stemmed from him thinking he had no equal in this universe, Elder Nova's expression was more playful, as though he was teasing the former.

One had to understand that becoming a 2nd grade celestial wasn't easy. The both of them would count as talents worthy of being groomed even for quadrants ranked in the 30s and 40s. They would also be invaluable assets to quadrants ranked in the 20s as well. It wasn't until you reached the 10s that 2nd grade experts became ubiquitous.

These two had no business appearing in a 98th ranked quadrant.

In the end, Elder Ricci spoke first. "I was born in this universe, however, unlike others, I risked my life in the tower for hundreds of years instead of coming back. It was there I met my blood brothers and my wife who helped me along my journey.

"The reason I was able to become a 2nd grade celestial is because one of my rewards when I took my Marquis trials was a pill that healed my crippled soul. It was only because of that healing that I then felt confident enough to take my Duke, and then my King trials. Although it took me centuries to complete those King trials, the rewards I received were more than enough to propel me forward.

"I never had any intention of coming back because I planned to settle in with my wife's clan. However, my wife was taken from me and I became heavily injured. So, I had no choice but to come back home."

Although Elder Ricci was describing his life story, he seemed abnormally cold and distant, as though it wasn't his story at all. It was obvious to anyone listening that he was completely detached and unwilling to remember the past.

However, that was only until he heard the words Dyon responded with.

"Swear allegiance to me and I can promise that not only will you have your wife in your arms within two months – should she be alive, of course – but you'll also be healed completely in that time."

The former Master trembled in the air. Even Violet couldn't help but look up with a shocked expression on her face.

The Ricci family was once among the four up and coming families, which was why Elder Ricci was able to cripple his soul at his birth and thus avoid detection from The Cathedral.

However, due to the intense competition, while Elder Ricci was away, his family was eaten up by the vicious families in its surroundings.

When he finally came back with his daughter, it was already too late to do anything. That said, even if he could have, it was unlikely that Elder Ricci would have acted.

Why? Because he blamed his family for its stupidity. Had his soul not been crippled, he would have never advanced to sainthood at the mere 11th essence gathering stage.

If he had advanced to the 12th stage first, he would have at least had a chance to become a first-grade celestial instead of a mere 2nd grade one.

Had he been a mighty first grade celestial, saving his wife wouldn't have been a dream. He could have actually done it.

So, Elder Ricci resented his family as much as Donari resented his. Except, unlike Donari who now had a chance to reach the 12th essence gathering stage, Elder Ricci's opportunity was gone.

But, now, someone had relit that hope. He no longer cared about becoming a legendary first grade celestial, as long as his wife could be saved, he was willing to die right here if need be.

His emotions swirled out of control, causing everyone below to be shocked as they watched a once mighty celestial who could sweep through their universe uncontested breakdown to the point of tears.

He didn't for a moment believe that Dyon couldn't accomplish what he said he would. Although Dyon's strength was nowhere near enough to fight against that clan alone, with his soul strength, infiltrating and saving just one person should be easy. In fact, that clan might happily hand his wife over as long as Dyon exposed his identity just so that they wouldn't become the enemy of a True God.

"You?" Although the former master tried to control his emotions, the tears wouldn't stop.

Unlike others, he was perfectly aware of the ways of the martial world. Dyon had plenty of ways to force him to submit that didn't require him going on this dangerous mission. One of which included simply imprisoning Violet.

If Dyon decided to do that, how could this weakened former master stop him? He would have no choice but to listen to Dyon for the sake of his daughter's life.

Yet, Dyon directly went for the choice that would make him loyal willingly. It made his personality as a leader clear for all to see.

At that moment, a pill appeared in Dyon's hand. It was none other than the very last of three top tier healing pills that he had. Despite its value, he directly tossed it to Violet's father.

"Take it. I want you to show everyone the strength of the soul path. I want them to understand that had it not been for a genius alchemist of the soul path, it would have been impossible for your power to restore itself."

The former master's eyes burned with passion as he took the pill with little hesitation.

The crowd could only hold their breath as they watched a shocking scene take place.

Marco Ricci, who had been pale and skinny beyond compare began to radiate outward with a domineering aura.

His frame began to slowly fill out as his eyes brightened. His chest that was still partially caved in from Dyon's fist crackled and shifted, once more becoming whole. Even his wills began to imperceptibly flicker in and out of existence, causing his pitiful third intent stage sword qi to climb upward, entering the fourth, fifth, then finally sixth stage.

His aura gained the sharp visage of swordsman and his hunched back once more became straight.

The former master could even feel his shattered meridians once more re-forging themselves, become stronger and sturdier than ever before.

His cultivation that had fallen from the middle celestial ranks to the lower began to climb once more, and although he didn't manage to once again reach the middle stage, he did reach the peak of the 3rd celestial stage, making him only a step away from gaining his former power. With a few months of cultivation, it was almost guaranteed that he would once more improve.

The only person who wasn't surprised was Dyon. After all, he knew that the pill was created to help lower celestials recover in an instant. It could even fully heal Dyon who had a celestial body in a mere moment. Plus, it was ridiculously expensive. If it couldn't help the former master out, it was truly be too wasteful.

However, what didn't surprise anyone was when the master fell to his knees in the sky, bowing his head to Dyon to show his utmost appreciation. Although he wanted to beg Dyon to also heal his long time friend Aldo, his skin was nowhere near thick enough to do this.

Dyon sighed and helped Elder Ricci up. "I don't do things for free." He suddenly said. "Your friend wouldn't have been injured had he not attacked me, so he must pay the price for that. If he wants to be healed, he needs to give something of equivalent value."

Although Elder Ricci bitterly smiled at this, he couldn't say anything in response. For him to be healed, he swore allegiance, but how could the heir of an Emperor God Clan do the same? In the end, he could only let it be.

After everything was handled, everyone's gaze couldn't help but turn toward Elder Nova. Just what was his story? Could it be similar to Elder Ricci's? Dyon's gaze was no exception.

Under everyone's questioning gaze, Elder Ricci's smile never faded... Instead, his aura began to climb, shattering through the middle celestial barrier... to the higher... then the peak... all before Dyon's concealment array shattered to pieces as the momentum of a dao formation expert was birthed into the world...

Chapter 1072: Tug of War

Dyon's expression immediately became very serious. Even with his soul, it seemed he wasn't able to see something a dao formation expert wanted to hide. If that wasn't the case, he would have seen Elder Nova's true cultivation long ago.

'He's too close to me.' Dyon's mind went into overdrive. He didn't have the time to confirm whether or not Elder Nova was an enemy. For all he knew, Elder Nova was a man left behind by the Energy Path to ensure that Soul Rending Peak never rose again.

It made perfect sense too. If Elder Nova was meant to be a guardian for Soul Rending Peak, why would he be stationed at Unseen Peak?

It had to be remembered that Slaughter Peak was the Peak controlled by the Caedes family. That was why it so easily fell under the control of The Cathedral.

However, Unseen Peak was the Peak formerly controlled by the Jafari family.

Who was the family most resilient to the new order? Which family was most likely to trigger the rise of Soul Rending Peak? Was it not the Jafari family? The very same family that seemingly had a vague connection to Dyon's grand teacher?

Wouldn't it be smartest to send someone to monitor them?

On top of all of that, even if Dyon was willing to ignore all of that and think of Elder Nova as a friend anyway, why would he have allowed the Jafari family to be destroyed? He was stationed in Jafari clan territory, yet did nothing when The Cathedral and The Caedes family finally decided to get rid of them? Too many things didn't add up.

Dyon knew that if Elder Nova was an enemy, he'd have no chance to survive if he let him have the initiative. He had to take advantage of the moment when he was still over confidently showing off his steady rise in power.

At that moment, Dyon threw out all of his master's rules, pushing everything he had to the utmost limit.

The aura of a dao formation expert was completely unable to lock him down like it could have before. An added ability of his Presence was this very attribute, giving him leeway to stare down arrogantly even against the most vicious opponents.

Dyon's wings burst from his back, radiating outward with a fierce golden light. The eight of them flapped with an unprecedented strength even as Dyon's Demon Emperor's Will climbed to the first stage of the second act.

In an instant, Dyon's power multiplied by sixteen times. His skin reddened and his robes burst apart into a fiery rage of flames.

Just when Elder Nova was just beginning to notice that something might be wrong, a scene that could shock the world occurred.

The skies began to tremble as the earth below shattered.

What could only be described as an ancient land descended, hovering just below Dyon's feet.

The piece of land couldn't have stretched more than a dozen or so meters in every direction. In fact, it was dried and cracked, with a completely unappealing appearance.

Yet, it gave off a dangerous, primordial aura that made those that faced it tremble in terror.

Dyon's manifestation appeared in the air, taking their breaths away.

He had matured along with Dyon, his handsome, chiseled features presented to the world in an untouchable light. The disdain in its eyes was clear for all to see, even when faced with the power of a dao formation expert, it was completely fearless.

At that moment, Elder Nova who hadn't felt any suppression whatsoever suddenly felt that his power had dipped by almost 5%, causing his eyes to widen in shock.

However, just as he was still trying to figure out what was going on, three orbs of light appeared before Dyon.

These were none other than secret weapon of Soul Rending Peak. Dyon had taken one from Elder Bowa, the other he snatched off of the Mother's corpse, and the last he took from the former master, Elder Ricci.

When Elder Bowa used this formation against Dyon, he directly gained the power of a middle celestial despite because a lower celestial with not even a single meridian filled completely and having terrible soul talent, so much so that he could barely utilize the formation effectively.

That wasn't all either. The central power of this formation was located within Soul Rending Peak itself. That meant that the power diminished the further from the sect you traveled, yet they were able to give Elder Bowa that large of a boost despite being in an asteroid belt located millions of miles away!

Now, not only was Dyon less than ten miles from Soul Rending Peak, his soul talent far outstripped Elder Bowa's to the point where he could control all three remaining formation cores at once!

The instant those three formation cores appeared, the suppression Elder Nova was experiencing increased from barely 5% to almost 20%!

The moment Dyon activated all three formation cores at once, his stamina depleted to nearly 0. By all rights, he shouldn't have had any business continuing to use so many formation cores at once, but that was when the Energy Core began to spin viciously.

The pace Dyon lost soul energy at was being recovered so quickly that it was almost as though he hadn't lost any to begin with. Dyon's soul was so powerful and robust that it could withstand the Energy Core's pace.

There was no question that the mightiness of the treasures of the 33 heavens was about to make their presence known.

Dyon's aura continued to climb. With the help of the Soul Rending Peak formation cores, his momentum was no less than a peak celestial a mere step away from breaking into the dao formation realm.

However, he wasn't complacent.

For one, the gap between a dao formation expert and a peak celestial was so large that it bordered on being unfathomable. There was a reason it took so long to progress along the realm.

Secondly, Dyon had no idea what level Elder Nova had reached. His senses couldn't comprehend the dao formation stages at all. Unless a vastly stronger and a vastly weaker dao formation expert stood side by side, Dyon wouldn't have any hope of distinguishing their levels.

Even worse than all of this, Dyon's soul was under a ridiculous amount of strain. It was constantly being drained by the formation cores before being replenished by the energy core. That level of push and pull would have long since shattered anyone else's soul!

Dyon understood very well that he couldn't allow this state to continue. He would at best last half a minute, at worst, less than 10 seconds.

However, Dyon knew that he had to do this. Without the formation cores, he wouldn't be able to do what he needed to do: and that was to raise his soul to the dao formation levels!

Dyon roared into the skies, pushing his soul to the uppermost limited.

A barrier seemed to shatter at that moment as a second overwhelmingly mighty pressure took hold of Planet Cathedral.

A second dao formation expert!

At that moment, a temple appeared in the skies, exuding an ancient aura even more magnificent than the cracked land beneath Dyon's feat.

It was a four sided pyramid that was eerily reminiscent of an ancient Mayan temple. Each of its sides held a stair case, intricately designed to meticulous standards. Even without standing upon it, one could tell that climbing to the very top would be no simple task.

By this point, Elder Nova still hadn't had the time to react. So many things had happened, yet less than a fraction of a second had passed. Even when Dyon summoned the Aurora Steps, his expression was still slowly changing from his casual smile to a serious one.

However, he wouldn't get the opportunity to react. The moment the stairs appeared, yet another pull occurred on Dyon's soul, draining him quickly, albeit less quickly than the three formation cores.

The Energy Core was beginning to lose its tug of war. It wasn't that it couldn't pull in energy quicker, because it could. This was a treasure that sucked the primordial energy out of an entire universe in a split a second, how could it not meet the demands of a mere essence gatherer pretending to be a peak celestial?

The problem was that Dyon's soul couldn't handle a faster speed. He could already tell he was nearing his limits. But, for the sake of his life, his goals, his friends, and his family, he pushed himself even further.

Chapter 1073: Timeline

What a joke this could end up being. Dyon had no idea whether Elder Nova was friend or foe, yet he was so weak that he knew he didn't have the luxury of finding out first.

This experience completely washed away the superiority he felt having awakened his soul. For three days, he had felt like the King of all existence, only for him to come crashing down like this.

Dyon roared once more even as his skin began to pale considerably.

At that instant, Elder Nova who had already been suppressed by almost 20% felt a crushing weight land on his soul.

Shock colored his features as he coughed up mouthful after mouthful of blood. It seemed that Dyon had overestimated Elder Nova. Although his energy cultivation had already crossed into the dao formation realm, his soul was still at the celestial realm.

However, because Dyon had already mistaken his cultivation once, he didn't take a chance again, instead directly boosting his soul to the dao formation realm with the help of the formation cores.

The weight of a dao formation level soul on a celestial level one was absolutely devastating. Elder Nova couldn't move even a single finger. He could only watch as Dyon pulled out yet another earth-shattering treasure with a bitter expression on his face.

This was completely unlike when Dyon burned his soul against Elder Daiyu and Loki. At that time, his soul had just broken into sainthood, and was artificially raised to the dao formation stage. The gap was too large, making most of his cultivation hollow.

However, this time, Dyon's soul was already at the peak celestial realm and took a single step upward. The difference was like heaven and earth!

Back then, Loki and Elder Daiyu had only been unable to move. But, this time, Elder Nova directly took damage to his soul, coughing up mouthfuls of blood!

'It seems I shouldn't have underestimated the Legatee of the Celestial Deer Sect...' Was all Elder Nova had a chance to think as a brilliant array appeared before him.

It was intricately designed, laced with layers and gears as though it was a piece of godly machinery. It exuded an overbearing might, as though it could seal anything under the heavens!

That's exactly what it was, The Seal!

Dyon looked at Elder Nova's kneeling form. "SEAL!"

The Seal vibrated, trembling to life. Its gears turned and drained Dyon almost completely as it projected a divine light onto Elder Nova's forehead.

The last thing Dyon did before he completely ran out of energy and passed out was summon his Florence family manifestation, summoning a 70% clone to catch his body before he fell from the skies.

Dyon's clone sent his true body into the tower, and stood in the air, completely expressionless.

From beginning to end, not even a second had passed. The battle started and ended so quickly that the crowd below didn't even have time to run away, leaving them in an odd state of fear and attempted leaving, only for them to realize that everything was already over.

Seconds passed by without anyone saying anything. It was as though they were taking their time to comprehend what just happened.

Elder Nova's long-time rival and the very man Dyon made a bet with during the assessments was likely the most shocked. He was very clear on the fact that his rival had exuded the aura of a dao formation expert in that instant.

What hit his pride the most was that he was a mere saint. Even the fact that Elder Nova was equal to the former master was a huge hit to him, let alone the fact that he was actually a whole realm even above that!

Those who were there slowly started to understand what had happened, and those that didn't understand began to speak to those nearby them or eavesdropped on those around.

When they came to understand that Elder Nova was actually the hidden dao formation expert rumors had been fluttering around about for so long, they were endlessly shocked.

A small doorman from a mere Unseen Peak had such a lofty identity?!

Yet, that was when they suddenly realized something else. That same man with that same lofty identity was kneeling in the skies, coughing up blood and looking incredibly pitiful, while a boy of less than 34 years of age was responsible for his plight! That was too inconceivable!

Some vaguely understood that those mysterious things that Dyon brought out to attack with were amazing treasures, however, they had appeared and disappeared so quickly that they could hardly understand what it was they were seeing.

The only person who even remotely had the same level of thinking speed Dyon did, Elder Nova, was securely sealed, unable to tell the tale of what happened. Leaving the mystery completely unsolved.

The Seal was no less heaven defying in comparison to its counterparts. In fact, if it wasn't for it, it was unlikely that Dyon would have completed what he sought to do, no matter how many powerups he received.

Elder Daiyu, for example, who had fallen from the dao formation ranks, took Dyon's everything to injure, including burning his soul. Even if Dyon went all out, injuring even a high celestial would be almost impossible. In certain situations, even a middle celestial, if they were of the first grade, would take Dyon going all out to injure, nevermind kill.

Simply put, even if a dao formation expert sat, completely unguarded, killing them was nothing more than a dream if you were too weak.

Dyon's only hope was to take advantage of his stronger soul to place a contract seal on Elder Nova just like he had with the kitsune and Alidor.

However, it took his master a month to draw the contract seals for the kitsune, and they were mere saints. How could Dyon draw a contract seal capable of sealing a dao formation expert in the few seconds he had? Such a task should have been impossible.

That was where The Seal came in. At its absolute best, it could seal even the heavens, how could it care about a mere dao formation expert?

The moment Dyon's soul entered the dao formation realm, he poured almost all of his remaining soul strength into a contract seal, completely closing out Elder Nova's fate.

"Now I'll ask you again." Dyon's domineering aura didn't fade, even as a clone. "Who are you?!"

Elder Nova cough bitterly. "You didn't know who I was, yet you attacked so viciously?"

Dyon's gaze turned colder. He couldn't control the seal as a clone because the one restriction clones had was that they couldn't use soul techniques due to the fact they were birthed from the soul. If he could, he would definitely have started torturing Elder Nova for such a sarcastic response.

Elder Nova's eyes suddenly turned sinister as he stood quicker than anyone could react, turning his hand into a blade to attack Dyon's throat.

The former Master panicked. He had sworn allegiance to Dyon, so of course he wanted to protect him. If Dyon's clone died, then his real body would immediately become vulnerable. However, he wasn't anywhere near powerful enough to do anything.

However, Dyon's expression remained indifferent.

Before Elder Nova's attack could even fully form, he fell from the skies, holding his head and screaming out in pain.

To say Elder Nova was frustrated was an understatement.

The moment Dyon appeared, he immediately sensed the faint Celestial Bloodline within him. He understood very clearly that the only person who could have celestial deer blood within him as a human had to be the successor of the Celestial Deer Sect.

With his soul having reached the celestial level, of course he had divine sense. Coupled with the fact Dyon's soul was sealed at the time, there was no chance of anyone detecting that he was investigating Dyon's secrets.

Originally, he could have directly reported Dyon, or even killed Dyon. However, if he did so, wouldn't his thousands of years lying in wait go to waste? If they couldn't uproot the Celestial Deer Sect completely, it would make no difference if they killed Dyon. Maybe some time in the future, an even better successor would come along.

So, he went out of his way to befriend Dyon. Not only did he allow him to enter Unseen Peak with far greater ease than should have been possible, he even warned Dyon to not use the soul contract he was going to during the assessments.

From beginning to end, he even gave Dyon the impression that he was a hidden expert on purpose, so that Dyon would feel like he was hiding less.

When he revealed his dao formation cultivation just then, his plan was to pretend to be a hidden expert that protected Cathedral Universe. He wanted to tell Dyon the reason the Energy Path hadn't wiped out this universe yet was because they were wary of him, when in reality, this universe was nothing but bait. His mission here was uproot the last of the soul path...

But who would have known that Dyon would be so cautious? The worst part was that because of the seal placed on him, he lost the ability to lie about his origins. If he lied, his mind would be racked with the same amount of pain he felt when he attacked Dyon.

It turned out that Dyon's luck hadn't run out. If he had kept Elder Nova by his side, there was no thinking what kind of consequences that could have had...

What Dyon didn't know was that in an alternate timeline, those unimaginable consequences happened... In that timeline, Dyon hadn't met Evangeline yet, and because of that, his soul was still sealed... Because of this, he couldn't use his soul and thus couldn't use the formation cores or his 4 treasures of the 33 heavens... It wasn't that he was less intelligent in that timeline, but rather that he simply didn't have the means to deal with a dao formation expert... As a result, he had no choice but to pretend to trust Elder Nova, thinking that he'd string the elder along until he could understand his true motives or at least until his soul unsealed...

Unfortunately... In that timeline... It took 946 more years for Dyon's soul to unseal... Before Dyon could get the chance to expose Elder Nova for who he truly was, he paid a price too heavy to speak of...

Dyon's expression was incomparably serious after he tortured the story out of Elder Nova. He only slightly relaxed after learning that they didn't leave any other counter-measures behind.

However, how could Dyon's "good" mood possibly last? This was almost too much to take in all at once, even for him.

Chapter 1074: Complacent

"My allies were meant to come the day after the original date of the auction, which just so happens to be the day after tomorrow." Elder Nova sneered. "That old bat wouldn't have the courage to tell them that she changed the original date."

Dyon's foot flew forward, slamming against Elder Nova's chin before he buried his face into the dirt. Although Dyon didn't have the ability to harm a dao formation expert, he could definitely humiliate one that didn't have the ability to retaliate.

Elder Nova roar out like a ravenous beast, but that only sent a surge of pain through his body. He could only shiver in anger as Dyon grinded his face into the ground.

However, doing this didn't make Dyon feel any better.

According to the original plans of Soul Market, the auction was meant to be held tomorrow, it was just that the now dead "Mother" had moved the date up because she had a gut feeling.

The good news was that the "Mother", despite being right about her gut feeling, failed even after shifting the date up. The bad news was that she didn't have the courage to tell her bosses her shift in plans because she was afraid that that would reflect poorly on her.

Think about it, how could a mere Cathedral steal children from the remaining 99 other universes? How did they deploy teleportation formation in their territory without ever being found out?

The truth was that there was no need to be "found out" or "steal" because those of the Energy Path were in on the plan from the very beginning. In fact, they would have enacted the plan themselves if it wasn't for the fact they were using this universe as bait. They actually hoped that the existence of Soul Market would enrage the dregs of the Celestial Deer Sect to come out.

Those children stolen from their families were from impoverished areas with little to no protection. Those of the Energy Path would never give up their own children!

Dyon sneered. 'You all gave your core techniques to be learned by those poor soul slaves, I bet you never thought that those techniques would now fall into my hands.'

After a moment, the panicked expression that Elder Nova hoped to see never appeared on Dyon's face. Even as a clone, if you gave Dyon time to prepare, you were setting up your own downfall.

With the combination of the Soul Tome, the Energy Core, and the ridiculous amounts of soul energy in this universe, Dyon knew that his main body would recover in just a few hours.

Dyon realized that his encounter with Evangeline had given him more than he thought. He originally believed that it would take him months to recover, but suddenly, what should have taken months shrank to just a few hours.

It was at that moment that he had a thought that made his thought tremble.

When he had sex with Clara for the first time, they split the body kernel into yin and yang portions... The energy kernel, from Dyon's observation, also had yin and yang halves... So, the question was, what happened to the yin half of the soul kernel? It was impossible for it to be in Dyon's body, so who the hell had it?

'Could it be that Evangeline fused with the yin portion?...' Dyon's eyes flashed with an indiscernible light.

This line of thought added more questions than answers. If she had the yin portion, how did she receive it? Was she from Dyon's universe? Why hadn't he met her before then?

Although this line of thinking made Dyon even more confused, he had to think of this as the most likely possibility. His soul had received too much of a boost for him to ignore.

Half-step transcendent or not, Dyon didn't believe that was anyone in existence who could match his soul talent enough to boost it, yet Evangeline had. There was only one explanation for that.

Dyon thought of one more thing. If Evangeline was truly the wielder of the yin half, then it was likely she had sex with Dyon to help herself. After all, just as much as Dyon benefitted, she had to haveS as well.

Poor Dyon was still looking for reasons to explain away a half-step transcendent being in love with him. It seemed that the entity was correct, Dyon wasn't as arrogant as he pretended to be.

However, almost in sharp contradiction, Dyon's eyes still flashed. 'Don't think of escaping now that I have your primordial yin. If you dare think of another man, I'll spank you into submission. No one can touch a woman I've claimed, half-step transcendent or not.'

Dyon removed his foot from Elder Nova's face and picked him up, slapping his cheek as though it was an action of endearment.

"From now on, you're my henchmen. You'll watch from the sidelines as I destroy everything you and your people have built.

"Your life is no longer your own. Your thoughts are no longer your own. Your dreams, your ambitions, your hopes... None of them are yours.

"The moment you made me your enemy was the day you made the worst decision of your life."

Dyon's eyes blazed. Heaven's blessings seemed to shimmer and twinkle on his caramel skin, giving him the presence of a God.

The crowd couldn't help but acknowledge that Dyon was born to rule.

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The first thing Dyon did was give key wielding responsibilities to Donari.

Originally, he didn't plan to do this. He actually wanted to give the key to his little brother, Zaire, so that he too could become a God level figure. After all, he didn't want his little brother to live in his shadow. Zaire had the talent to stand shoulder to shoulder with Dyon, he was absolutely certain of it.

However, Dyon was forced to change his plans. The abilities of the key wielder was something Dyon needed immediately.

From his interrogation of Elder Nova, Dyon learned that the Epistemic Tower Gate of the Soul Rend Quadrant was actually a Dao Gate and the only reason that campaigns weren't prevalent in this universe was because the Energy Path didn't bother to attack.

On the outside looking in, it seemed as though the other universes were too weak to think about campaigning, when the truth was that they were too powerful to even waste their time. After all, Cathedral Universe was meant to be bait.

If this continued, it was obvious the kind of trouble this would bring. So, to save future troubles, Dyon immediately had Donari shift all six connecting gates, one to each planet, into essence gates. This way, if they dared to attack, Dyon could single-handedly wipe out all of their forces alone.

Dyon's thinking was simple. Without the gates, travelling between universes would take years, not to mention a ridiculous amount of resources.

The moment those of the Energy Path realized they were sending their younger generation to their deaths, they would stop using the gates.

For obvious reasons, they wouldn't be able to use the tower either. Not only did they not have access to the tower with the gate being a death zone.

There was also a second layer of protection Donari provided. Unlike Virvor, Donari had never taken a trial. This meant that the fog barrier would protect their 98th quadrant for as long as he didn't.

It was very important to Dyon that the fog barrier remained, even more so than before. The realization the Elder Nova was a spy put his guard on high-alert. He couldn't be complacent with his fail-safes.

This feeling became even more fierce when Dyon learned from Elder Nova that there should have been a dao formation expert stationed in his home universe as well.

After hearing this, Dyon couldn't help but burst into a cold sweat. This was because he could still remember when he arrogantly proclaimed his identity after stopping Madeleine's wedding. If that dao formation expert had decided to act, Dyon's life would have ended, just like that.

As for what happened to that expert? Dyon wasn't entirely sure, but he had some ideas... Many of which revolved around Madeleine's parents and the fact they too were dao formation experts... If he was correct, it seemed that he'd have to thank them when next he saw them.

In all likelihood, that dao formation expert was long dead. Luckily, it was impossible to communicate easily between quadrants, so even Elder Nova had no idea that that expert had been compromised.

'I've been too complacent...' Dyon's fists tightened as laid out the rest of his plans.

Chapter 1075: Gave Up

Although he had dealt with the gate, there was still one more way his enemies could easily come here: the master key teleportation arrays.

There were 30 arrays total, each of which had 10 subsidiary teleportation hubs according to the information the hamster twins gave Dyon, this meant that there were 330 arrays in total, more than enough to cover the wide expanse of this quadrant.

The good news was that the 23rd White Mother was very clever. The master key arrays only functioned when stationed in this universe. Because of this, all 30 master key arrays were in Dyon's possession.

However, the subsidiary arrays could be deployed anywhere, which meant that those of the Energy Path could directly teleport here if they so chose.

That said... If it was that easy, would the master key arrays truly be master keys? What a joke it would be if they couldn't control their own subsidiary arrays.

The reason why Elder Nova sneered when he told Dyon that they would be here the day after tomorrow was because he knew that the master key arrays were planet level arrays. He also received news that Dyon was a mere comet level expert. In his mind, Dyon had no ability to control the arrays because of this.

Unfortunately, he clearly showed off his ignorance of the soul path.

When the kitsune tried to stop Dyon and Ri from teleporting out of Central City, didn't Dyon manipulate a high-level array then?

The space the tower's inner world covered was unimaginable, it could even be compared to the size of an entire quadrant, maybe even larger. Yet, those arrays could teleport you to any location within the inner world.

What did that mean? It meant that Dyon had already manipulated a planet level array! So, what was the difference? Why could Dyon manipulate it then, but not when he needed to change the location symbols when he needed to at Soul Market?

The answer was obvious. When Dyon "manipulated" the array in Central City, all he needed to do was connect the dim portions to the lit portions. He didn't need to understand the symbols, he just needed common sense.

This time, shutting off the function of the subsidiary arrays was simply doing the exact opposite.

Elder Nova could only watch pale faced as Dyon completely diffused what could have been a disaster the moment his true body awakened.

At the moment, Dyon's main body was quite pale faced. Although the danger was resolved for now, he knew that he had less than 6 months before the gates opened. In addition, even after he repelled the essence gatherers they sent, to travel to a nearby universe could take as little as three to five years... Dyon was racking his brain to figure out how the hell he would gain the power to fight dao formation experts in just three years.

Since he woke up, he sent his 70% clone off to the master's palace to begin chipping away at the ridiculous number of techniques he needed to master.

Truth was, now that Dyon's soul had been improved to the peak celestial level, he should have been able to create a stronger clone.

One had to remember that according to his previous restrictions, before he had even broken into sainthood with his soul, he was supposed to be able to create a 75% once every other day that could survive for a week, in addition to two 50% clones, once a day, that could last for two weeks.

Yet, somehow, his best clone had dropped to a 70%, while it could last for three days at the most.

Well, it couldn't be forgotten that the Elvin Tomes didn't just describe how to awaken particular manifestations, they also treated these manifestations as techniques. How could Dyon, despite having invested no time whatsoever in the last nearly 30 years practicing any of these techniques, improve in them? It was a miracle that his clone percentage only dropped by 5%. If it was anyone else, it would have been more.

Luckily for Dyon, manifestation techniques like those found in the Elvin Tomes weren't ranked. Meaning one couldn't label them as "common" or "divine" because its level relied solely on one's understand of the manifestation.

This was good news for Dyon because the Florence family technique would drastically cut down the time he needed to master those techniques.

For example, Dyon could create an infinite number of 10% clones as long as he had the soul strength to sustain them. Despite only having 10% of his power, they had all of his comprehension because of Dyon's self-created split mind's technique. As of now, Dyon could easily split his mind ten thousand ways without any drop off in his cognitive abilities.

However, there were a few things Dyon's master was very angry with Dyon about.

"How could you use my and your martial uncle's blood essences to catalyze the Florence family technique? Reckless! Wouldn't you have gotten our affinities if you simply took the time to integrate with our blood essence?"

Dyon could only scratch the back of his head at his master's scolding.

Back during his first campaign, Dyon took the remaining 95% of his master and his martial uncle's blood essence to form two humanoid manifestations using the auxiliary ability of the Florence family technique.

To make a long story short, at the time, without anyone to properly guide him, Dyon assumed that since he had the demon sage's blood essence, his master's blood essence as well as his martial uncle's blood essence were both going to waste. So, instead of wasting them away, he used them as a catalyst to improve his affinity for wills.

As a result, Dyon gained a spiked affinity for wind, celestial and crystal wills from his master. On the other hand, he gained a spiked affinity for fire, demonic and darkness type wills from his martial uncle.

In truth, these gained affinities helped him very much, but his master still wasn't happy.

In the end, she could only sigh. She knew that Dyon had made a massive mistake, but how could she blame him? At the time, he was a kid who nothing of the martial world, so he did what he thought was right. It was her fault as a master for not being there.

"I'll explain so understand for the future." Dyon's master's tone softened considerably. She even came out in spirit form to lightly pat Dyon's cheek. "Although we couldn't provide as much strength to your body as the Demon Sage could, my and my husband's bloodlines are very special.

"You saw personally how heaven defying celestial blood was. It could force a pill into existence that had no business coming together at all. In fact, this could be said to be one of my bloodline's lesser abilities because it's a secret that I found myself after I had already died.

"As for your martial uncle's bloodline, you've already partially tapped into one of its abilities. Although you thought that it was rage that increased your battle prowess, the secret of the demon qilin bloodline is its ability to turn any emotion into power. Even the will to battle, or killing intent can raise your battle prowess.

"Demon qilins can essentially burn their blood essence with much less consequences than others. While a normal person burning their blood essence will experience a drop in cultivation, maybe even death. A demon qilin will only be bedridden for several weeks to months. A demon qilin would have to go severely overboard to kill themselves by burning their blood essence.

"You might think this ability is useless because of your Demon Emperor's Will technique's ability to boost your strength by 16 times. You might also think you don't need another strength boosting technique, but you'd be wrong. The demon qilin bloodline is more than just a strength boost, it has the bloodline manipulation techniques you need to increase your body's grade.

"In addition, whenever a Demon Qilin burns their blood essence, instead of their cultivation dropping, it increases. The more savage battles you fight, the more entrenched in war you become, the more powerful you become.

"The last ability of the demon qilin is hidden in that statement. The burning of your blood essence and surviving that pain, while also fighting continuous battles and wars, helps forge a very special kind of dao heart.

"You've already learned of the importance of a firm dao heart. While a faulty dao heart can completely destroy your battle prowess like Patia-Neva when his ice will fell from the 9th intent stage to the 1st will level, a strong dao heart can vastly improve your battle prowess.

"The most coveted secret of the demon qilin clan, the Demon Heart... That's what you gave up."

Chapter 1076: Either

Dyon sighed listening to his master's explanation.

He had heard of the value of cultivating a dao heart before. Actually, the sovereign path technique that the Dragon King taught him, [Will of Heart].

The technique itself fell under the cultivation category. Essentially, by absorbing comprehension of wills that didn't match your own, you could thus strengthen your dao path, making your sovereign path firmer.

Usually, absorbing the comprehension of someone that wasn't yourself was suicide. That was because it could cause cultivation deviation. But, [Will of Heart] took advantage of this to strengthen the dao heart as though it was a muscle.

Of course, Dyon hadn't had the opportunity to practice this technique just yet because his wills had only just unlocked. Plus, the Dragon King couldn't have chosen a worse time to introduce the technique to him because at that time, he was in the middle of fighting Loki.

Long story, short, Dyon wasn't a newbie to the idea of cultivating your dao heart. It was just unfortunate that he had ruined an opportunity.

One had to understand that in order to catalyze the creation of those humanoid manifestations, Dyon had to burn the blood essence. There was no "reversing" possible. It was a shame indeed.

"However..." Dyon's Master started with a playful glint in her eye. "Every pitfall can lead to an opportunity.

"If you had simply absorbed our blood essence, you'd be capped to the level we reached in our lives. Progressing forward would be next to impossible. Although both me and your martial uncle could be considered top level geniuses, we simply died too early in our lives. We had only just managed to step into the dao formation realm before our bodies lost their life force."

Dyon's eyes brightened. "And?..."

"Have those manifestations appear." The 25th White Mother said with a smile.

Dyon nodded.

With a thought, his humanoid manifestation appeared in the skies, sending an oppressive energy over the whole of Soul Rending Peak that made everyone look up and into the skies.

Before, Dyon's manifestation had only appeared for a split second, so they had barely been able to register it. But, now? They almost couldn't withstand the impulse to kneel.

It stood arrogantly, half of its back covered in four pristine white wings emitting an aura of absolute purity, while the other half shifted to a wholly demonic aura, shining with a black metallic light.

Originally, when Dyon formed those two humanoid manifestations, they fused with his main manifestation, causing various changes.

With a thought, its white wings glowed, looking absolutely holy.

A second shadow began to form. As though it was an angel standing on a shoulder, it slowly separated from the arrogant manifestation.

It smiled down amiably, seemingly happy it could make an appearance. Usually, it was fused with Dyon's main manifestation and could only make subtle impressions on the battlefield. But, now, Dyon had finally let it free.

It looked identical to Dyon, except there were some clear differences.

It had a coat of white and golden fur that covered its body, except for its chest, torso and face that remained bare, every inch of its body was matted with this holy fur.

Unlike Dyon, its hair was long and white with shimmering golden lights. It waved in the air as though it wasn't just a mere manifestation, but a human being.

Although it didn't have wings, it didn't seem any less angelic.

At that moment, a completely contrasting aura appeared just as Dyon's black wings radiated outward with a demonic fog and a third shadow appeared.

This manifestation also looked identical to Dyon except for its own quirks.

Its hair was long and a complete jet black, all while radiating a bloody red. Its eyes matched this aura, looking as though it had been dyed with the lives of its enemies.

Instead of fur, its body was covered in sharp, black scales that seemed to pulse with a life of their own.

It, too, didn't have any wings. But, its aura wasn't any less frightening.

The 25th White Mother smiled. "These manifestations are a part of you, but you've neglected them. You understand what the highest form of manifestation is, right?"

Dyon's eyes widened with a realization.

However, before he could speak it, he coughed violently, causing his manifestations to flicker out of existence. His already pale face became even paler in that moment as he wiped the blood from his lips.

Dyon's master had on a worried expression. "You need a few more days to completely recover from your battle." She stroked Dyon's hair, comforting him. Although she was a spirit, she could project her energy outward to make it feel as though she was really there. "I didn't have time to praise you before, but I really am proud of you. You perfectly adapted to a troublesome situation and handled it without flaw. Although there are more troubles coming in the future, I believe that you will face them well.

"Though." She said seriously. "I want you to remember that being too stubborn is no good. If you have to run, run."

Dyon nodded seriously, hanging onto his master's every word.

Dyon understood what he had to do.

When he burned the blood essence to forge a manifestation for himself, it was the equivalent of giving up all of the power his master and his martial uncle had cultivated in their lives. However, that burning was the equivalent of blacksmith hammering away at a piece of ore to only leave its truest essence behind.

Even if Dyon absorbed 100% of their blood essences, it would always be a borrowed power. The disconnect would be even more fierce since Dyon was a human and not a beast.

This was a problem Dyon was facing with the Demon Sage as well. Despite the Demon Sage most definitely having been a first-grade body cultivator in his life, Dyon's use of his blood essence was only at the mere fourth grade level.

However, this sort of disconnect paled in comparison to the one he would have faced with the blood essence of two beasts. While the situation with the Demon Sage had hope to be rectified in the future, it would be almost impossible to do the same with beast blood.

This was why Dyon's master said that his mistake actually gave him a greater opportunity. Even his master was shocked by his degree of luck.

The Florence family technique seemed the most lack luster among the three ancient families, but that was only to the misinformed.

While the Mathilde family became war Gods, capable of seeing through the flaws and shattering techniques with a thought. And the Acacia family was capable of absorbing the life force and energies of their enemies. The Florence family technique actually had the ability to create talent!

By using appropriate catalysts, anyone who mastered the Florence family technique would be able to gain abilities that weren't normally their own. Dyon, who at the time, had little affinity for anything, was able to learn skills he had no business learning to incredibly high levels because of this technique.

On top of that, it could be argued that Dyon was using a pitifully small portion of the Florence family technique's potential.

What did this all mean? It meant that those two manifestations, one representative and the essence of celestial blood and the other representative of demon qilin blood had become Dyon's abilities.

What was the highest form of a manifestation? Was it not when the manifestation was mastered to such a high degree that it became a part of your body?

Exactly like how Dyon's wings etched themselves into his body, allowing them to be used even when his soul was sealed, Dyon had to master these two manifestations to the very same level.

When that happened, Dyon would not only be able to gain two new forms, but he would gain the abilities of the Celestial Deer and Demon Qilin as though he was born a beast.

This wasn't all either.

The process of burning the blood essence had left nothing but the absolute core of both of these bloodlines. This meant that the purity of bloodline Dyon had the chance to gain was identical to the most ancient Celestial Deer or Demon Qilin.

Tracing one's blood back to their ancestors was something all beasts would stake their lives to achieve. Yet, the Florence family technique actually allowed Dyon to do so! How heaven defying was that?!

Chapter 1077: Intruder

Of course, what Dyon's master knew that he didn't was that Dyon was incredibly lucky.

Even if one had the Florence family technique, where the hell would they get the sheer amount of blood essence Dyon had? Let alone the blood essence of two incredible ancient family lines.

For one, Dyon had the only original copy of the technique to begin with.

Secondly, One couldn't accomplish what Dyon had with just a single drop of blood essence. If one tried to catalyze blood essence to reach these same results with a mere drop, there would be no suspense. The blood would have been wasted and the manifestation wouldn't form.

All of this didn't even mention the fact that it was impossible to take blood essence by force.

Essentially, Dyon might be the only person in existence who could achieve this result. His good karma was simply overwhelming.

Suddenly, the 25th White Mother giggled. "You should call your little wives over here. Time is of the essence and you know that the best way to heal a soul is dual cultivation. Entering the Mystical World isn't the same as going for a stroll. There's a reason there are such great rewards on the 18th tier."

Dyon shook his head. He didn't like using his wives for cultivation, let alone calling them just to heal himself.

"The meeting got cut short earlier..." Dyon said slightly weakly. "I haven't put everything in order yet."

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For the second time, everyone gathered together once again. After Dyon's main body had fallen unconscious a few days prior, his clone had immediately ended the meeting to put together some fail-safes, including giving the key to Donari.

This time, however, the meeting was held in the core pavilion. In case anything went wrong again, Dyon wanted to rely on the formations here.

The atmosphere was completely different though. Dyon sat in the middle of the two pillars on a makeshift defensive formation. To his right, Elder Nova was kneeling with his forehead flush against the ground. To his left, Elder Ricci stood tall like a loyal guard, not embarrassed in the least. What did he have to be embarrassed about? The Master he followed forced a dao formation expert into submission.

However, the solemn atmosphere was suddenly cut through by the sound of a delicate and worried voice calling out. "Let me through! Dyon? Where are you?!"

Dyon's serious expression faded to surprise when he heard that familiar voice.

At that moment, a world-shaking beauty wearing silver robes pushed through the crowd. It was clear she had a temper because she immediately pushed everyone away with her wind will when she decided they weren't moving fast enough.

At first, some wanted to stop her to make a good impression on Dyon, but when they saw the level of beauty the "intruder" had, they found it hard to attack. Even the women couldn't help but blush and self-reflect.

In the end, the beauty dashed forward, completely unimpeded.

She dashed forward with blinding speed, reaching the still shocked Dyon in an instant.

Her delicate hands lightly cupped Dyon's cheeks, lifting his face up before turning it side to side as though to check if he was still alive.

Dyon bitterly chuckled. He had to say that he wasn't feeling the best, but it wasn't as though he was on his death bed.

"You idiot!" The beauty berated. "Which bastard did this to you?!"

Dyon smiled, sending his gaze over to the kneeling Elder Nova.

Seeing this, the temper of the beauty flared, her cold, grey eyes sparking with rage. However, her expression quickly changed to shock as she noticed that this kneeling man had power she couldn't see through.

That said, her rage didn't subside in the least. "Little Wind!" Her delicate voice called out into the skies.

Under everyone's shocked gaze, a majestic bird swept down from the skies.

Its silver feathers looked carved of metal, shining under the morning sun like a goddess of the skies. Yet, its most distinctive feature were its long three tails that looked almost like metallic scorpion tails. No one dared to take this bird lightly even for a moment despite the fact its wingspan could have been more than a foot and a half in length. Even so, its tails were already more than two meters in length each.

While others wouldn't recognize this bird, Dyon's master was pleasantly surprised.

'A three tailed silver-back falcon. What a great find!' She said enthusiastically.

It was clear that this bird couldn't have hatched more than a couple days ago, or its size wouldn't be so small.

Dyon had little interaction with beasts because they were so rare on his home planet. Other than the Elves who raised some spiritual beasts of their own and the Focus island crescent, there weren't many places on Earth that had beasts to speak of.

This was a product of the weak energy which was the fault of the entity. High ranking beasts simply couldn't be born in that environment, let alone raised into adulthood.

If it wasn't for Dyon's third trial, he might believe that only transcendent and supreme level beasts existed in the martial world.

However, to the rest of the martial world, beasts were quite prevalent. Common, Earth and Heaven level beasts were great cultivation resources and could also act as great beast partners. It was for this reason that the Beast Taming profession existed.

In the martial world, having a supreme or even transcendent level beast companion was almost impossible. They were too human-like and had their own complex societies. Imagine the thought of making a Dragon a pet... That wouldn't go well at all.

So, the very best beast companion a person could have according to normal convention was a Peak Heaven Beast. After all, they had a 10% chance of breaking into the dao formation realm and could follow one for their whole lives!

The three tailed silver-back falcon, although not being a Peak Heaven Beast, was a lower heaven beast. More than enough to make many salivate with greed. If an egg was placed in an auction, the dollar amount would definitely be counted in dao stones, easily equating to hundreds of millions of celestial stones.

Yet, this beast had clearly signed a contract with this beauty and was...

"What?!"

The crowd couldn't believe what they were seeing. Some erupted into laughter instantly while others began to feel sorry for Elder Nova. A mighty dao formation expert really shouldn't be treated like this.

Little Wind perched itself onto Elder Nova head and began to chirp triumphantly as it relieved itself on the elder's head. It wasn't long before Elder Nova was trembling in rage, causing the profane white liquid in his hair to drip down and into his mouth.

"Hmph." The beauty harrumphed. With a wave of her hand, a throne appeared beside Dyon and she sat down, still very clearly in a bad mood.

Violet's father had wanted to say something, but seeing Dyon's helpless expression, he could only be silent.

Anyone who was paying attention could see just how intelligent this beauty was. The moment she noticed that Elder Nova was too powerful, instead of vainly trying to hurt him, she directly changed her tactics to humiliation seamlessly. In fact, her methods could be considered to be even more cruel than Dyon's.

Then, she sat down like an elegant queen as though none of this had anything to do with her. Even when the beautiful bird wiggled its little butt and flew up to land on the head of her throne, the beauty didn't react at all.

Dyon chuckled lightly. "When you see her, treat it as if you are seeing me. Her word is law, even if it contradicts something I've said before. She is my wife. Clara Sacharro."

Chapter 1078: Expelled

Dyon sent a questioning gaze over toward Donari who pretended to not notice.

Anyone who understood how the gates worked knew that it was impossible for a non-member of a quadrant to freely enter the fog barrier. The only way was if you had the permission of someone who was ranked Duke or above, who also, obviously, was a citizen of the quadrant.

Clearly, the 98th quadrant didn't have any Duke or above title holders other than Violet's father and the well-loved Legatee of Soul Rending Peak, Donari's cousin.

However, Violet's father had already continued to the celestial floors and was actually quickly approaching the age limit for that floor as well. At the same time, Donari's cousin, Kernick Caedes, was well past the age limit of the saint floors and had failed to progress to the celestial floors.

Long story short, since neither of them could enter the saint floors, obviously they couldn't give Clara permission. That only left Donari.

Dyon sighed and forgot about it. He didn't want Clara to come here because it was too dangerous. Despite her soul and body being powerful, she was still an essence gatherer.

Luckily, the Jade Queen Bee's honey had improved her meridians to the 6th grade, slightly speeding up her cultivation speed. But, it would take decades more before she reached the 3rd grade standard, which was what set true geniuses apart from others.

What intrigued Dyon, though, was that his meridians were still at the 7th grade despite taking the honey just as frequently as Clara – a single drop a day.

'It seems that awakening my constitutions could speed up that process... I'll have to make a decision on that soon then... Maybe the time could be drastically cut down?'

This aside, Clara didn't have something like the Demon Sage's essence. So, although her body had already broken into the saint stage, it was still far too weak to protect her here, especially while suppressed.

The best thing she had were her souls and her will, not to mention her array alchemy, but not much else. There was a reason many said soul cultivation couldn't be directly inferred into battle power despite how useful they were for wills. Not everyone could create arrays as quickly as Dyon because not everyone could withstand the strain of the split mind's technique, nor the stamina drain.

At least within the gates, Clara would only have to deal with members of the younger generation.

In the end, Dyon could only push these to the back of his mind. With him here, he wouldn't allow anyone to harm a single hair on her head.

"I'm about to make some changes that will no doubt anger many of you." Dyon began.

Murmurs spread through the crowd.

This was already different from other rulers. Many would either be too timid to change status quo, or too domineering to care about the festering hatred in their subjects. This was an... interesting approach.

"However, what you have to understand is that this is for the benefit of you all.

"Soul Rending Peak has been rotting from the inside out for too long now. In as little as three years, maybe even less, a major calamity will befall this land.

"I don't say this to scare you, nor am I saying this to act as though I am some sort of prophet." Dyon pointed to the side toward the shit stained Elder Nova. "Many of you don't understand what happened a few days ago, and, strictly speaking, it's not necessary for you to. All you need to understand is that this man is an enemy and he has allies."

A cold breeze blew through the crowd.

What did the allies of a dao formation expert look like? Wouldn't they be dao formation experts too? Didn't that mean they were all doomed?

Clara's expression grew serious as well.

A few days ago, she had distinctly felt Dyon's soul undergo massive changes. In the beginning, she was happy because that meant Dyon's soul had been unsealed. But then, a few days more passed and she felt as though Dyon's soul was mere moments away from collapsing!

She panicked, understandably. Even Ri almost underwent cultivation deviation and suffered some backlash while she was forming her pseudo-domain in closed door training.

However, there was nothing they could do because they had no way of entering the 98th quadrant.

It wasn't until after Dyon awoke that he used the chain Clara forged for him to communicate with his wives and calm their worries. But, it would still take a few more weeks for Ri to recover, which made Dyon feel terrible.

Still, he insisted that they remain in the tower because it was too dangerous here. Who would have known that Donari would be such a busy body and try to use his connection with Dyon to get Clara to forge him some weapons while Dyon was dealing with other matters?

It was too bad for him that he mistook Clara for some soft-hearted lady who would do whatever her husband bid her to do.

"I can promise you all that I won't stake your lives in vain."

Dyon's words helped the crowd relax. Albeit, only a small amount.

"However, while I won't expect you to fight opponents far stronger than you, I do expect absolute loyalty.

"That said, expecting such a thing would be ridiculous. Although I could seal you all like Elder Nova, I won't. What I will do is take steps toward building that loyalty."

Just as the crowd was relaxing, Dyon said something completely contradictory. "Starting today, you're all expelled of your status as disciples of the six peaks."

A wave of shock, helplessness and even anger overwhelmed the crowd.

When they heard that Dyon could gain control over them like he did Elder Nova, they were shaken. If a mighty dao formation expert was forced to bend a knee in front of Dyon, what the hell did they count for?

It was only after Dyon said he wouldn't that they breathed a sigh of relief, but before they could fully relax, they were hit with another sledgehammer. How the hell were they meant to deal with this?

To them, their sects were their whole futures. It was their bet to gain a longer life as well as a prosperous future. If they were kicked out, they'd lose cultivation resources they couldn't find anywhere else.

Go into the tower and fight for them? What a joke, they were so pitifully weak that they could barely beat out the 99th and 100th ranked quadrants. And, for all they knew, those quadrants were dragons lying in wait just like the Celestial Deer Quadrant!

They were the weakest of the weak wherever they went. Their only chance at gaining a footing in life was here, yet it was being ripped away from them. How could they not feel angered and frustrated?

Violet, who was in the crowd, also felt helpless.

The arrival of Clara was like a final nail in her ego. In fact, when she saw how Clara treated those who wronged Dyon, she felt a wave of fear overwhelm her. Now, she couldn't help but feel just as helpless as the rest of the crowd.

Dyon didn't seem perturbed by their reactions though. With a wave of his hand, the Master Symbol appeared.

It was a small, silver metal piece. But, simply touching it made one feel as though their soul was trembling on the verge of collapse.

The truth was that Violet's father wasn't even qualified to touch the symbol. For years it had remained unmoved, tucked within the center of Soul Rending Peak. Even Dyon almost died when he first reached for it.

Although he was far weaker than any true master before, his soul talent was too overwhelming for the symbol to ignore.

The moment the symbol appeared, those disciples and elders of Soul Rending Peak felt their souls tremble as something inexplicable was taken away from them. They couldn't explain it exactly... But they couldn't help but feel empty on the inside.

It was clear to them all that they had just been expelled from the sect. Even Donari wasn't an exception.

Members of the five sub peaks were removed just as easily from their positions. It was clear that the master of Soul Rending Peak lorded over them all.

Chapter 1079: Spineless

"Kernick Caedes." Dyon suddenly said. "Come forward."

A tall young man with soft features stepped forward. His hair was the very same magenta hair that was the staple of the Caedes family, but it didn't seem to give him the same murderous intent.

This young man was none other than only Duke of the quadrant and former key wielder and Legatee of Soul Rending Peak.

It was a shame. Although he was well liked, he had his key stripped of him by Lilith. Then, just now, he had his Legatee responsibilities stripped by Dyon. It felt like everything he had worked toward his entire life was taken from him to be worn by someone else, and these people also happened to be his betters, making him feel incredibly stifled. No matter how much of a good soul he was, how could he not feel anger?

Seeing the young man, Dyon looked him in the eye. "How do you feel about my arrangements? My giving your younger cousin your key? My stripping you of Legatee responsibilities?"

The former Legatee stared at Dyon for a long time. Those around him couldn't help but feel bad for him. Although Soul Rending Peak was incredibly corrupt, one of the few bright spots was this young man here.

Many could remember how hard he fought to push himself to enter the celestial floors. Hundreds of years of strife just for that single goal...

Many wondered why he tried so hard. After all, in the past few thousand years, the only one to succeed was their Master at the time. There was no shame in failing.

Yet, Kernick insisted that he wanted to pave a brighter path for their future. It was his responsibility as their Legatee, how could he not go all out?

Still, despite his heart and determination, he failed. Although he had managed to step into the 9th saint stage and had the potential to become a 4th grade celestial because of it, it was far from enough for the tower...

In the end, he could only come back in failure and train hard to succeed the master. However, now that Dyon was here, even that was taken from him. The martial world was too cruel.

Finally, Kernick sighed. "I'm unresigned."

Dyon's eyes twinkled with an odd light. "Unresigned?"

"I'm too weak to defeat you. I was too weak to defeat Lilith. As of right now, I don't deserve to succeed the former Master. Nor am I deserving of being our key wielder. My little cousin is in fact more talented than me... But, my story isn't finished yet. So, I'm unresigned."

Dyon smiled. Although Kernick wasn't arrogant, he still had the pride of a Legatee. Dyon could appreciate that.

"Good! You qualify to be an outer disciple of Soul Rending Peak."

Kernick's lip twitched.

Outer disciple? Why did he even make it sound like it was a great honor? What the hell?

Dyon didn't explain, instead, he called the next person. Kernick only barely registered that the empty hole in his heart was filled. "Donari!"

Donari came up quickly, still having a slightly guilty expression on his face.

Dyon rolled his eyes, but didn't say anything. "Outer disciple!"

The crowd was shocked. Donari was only qualified to be an outer disciple as well? He had an Earth level constitution! His potential was endless!

Not every place had abundant constitutions like Dyon's home universe. If an Earth level constitution appeared, especially one with the ability to level up like Donari's, any of the quadrants ranked below 30th would scramble to add this disciple.

However, how could Dyon care about mere Earth level constitutions? He could forge one out of this air back when his soul was barely at the 5th stage in the Queen Fairy Pill.

Although that constitution was ranked far below Donari's and not every Earth level constitution could be forged so easily, the truth still remained.

Donari wanted to protest, but he soon found that he didn't have the right to.

"Elder Ricci!" Dyon called out Violet's father. "Working Disciple Elder!"

The crowd went into yet another uproar.

Everyone understood the disciple rankings. Working disciple, outer disciple, inner disciple, core disciple and finally, legatee disciples.

For every disciple ranking, there was the equivalent elder ranking. The trouble was that working elders were no more than glorified janitors meant to hand out tasks to working disciples trying their best to become outer disciples. Yet, the former Master could only be regulated to this role?! He was a second-grade celestial! A genius many quadrants would fight for!

The former Master looked at Dyon seriously before saying something that shocked them all. "You don't need to place me in an elder role, I'm willing to be a disciple! I have much to learn!" He said seriously.

Dyon smiled. "Good! Disciple Marco Ricci, Inner Disciple!"

The crowd sighed in relief. They felt that if Dyon made the former master an outer disciple a riot would have started. If a second-grade celestial couldn't become an inner disciple, what chance did they stand?

They thought Dyon's standards were too high, when Dyon actually believed he was being kindhearted.

His sect was a place that should be teeming with dao formation experts in the future. How could a mere celestial be an elder of note? He refused to lax the standards any more.

"Sophia!" Dyon suddenly said a name many didn't recognize. However, Violet did. It was the very same girl Dyon saved from the brink of death.

A simply dressed girl made her way forward. Although she had been captured by soul market, because of how recent it was, she was in much better condition than the other soul slaves and thus woke up far earlier.

Dyon scanned her for a moment before smiling at her shy expression. "Outer disciple!"

Many were shocked. Who was this girl? And how the hell did she earn the same rating as Donari and Kernick?!

Dyon didn't seem to notice the reaction of the crowd. He continued to call out names and organize disciples appropriately. With his divine sense, even with his injury, he could see through these warriors easily, so he could grade them accordingly.

The minimum requirements for becoming an outer disciple of Soul Rending Peak was twofold. The first was to have at least a first-grade innate soul. The second was to have completed the meridian formation stage to perfection.

However, only four people met this requirement sadly, and one of them was the former Master. The good news was that many more met the standard, it was just that their souls were injured and needed to be healed.

Marco just barely met the requirements for inner disciple which required a peak 1st grade innate soul and either 12th stage sainthood or 2nd grade celestial realm cultivation.

Of course, Dyon's requirements were different from other sects. For example, Madeleine's required stepping into the celestial realm as a first-grade expert to become a core disciple, but Madeleine was already an inner disciple as a 10th stage saint years ago.

Because Dyon had yet to set up appropriate steps, he couldn't account for battle prowess differences like this, so he could only use crude methods until he refurbished the methods left behind by the original Soul Rending Peak.

For those who didn't meet those requirements, Dyon gave them two choices: the first was to receive a targeted cultivation cleansing pill that would bring them back to the meridian formation stage, or, to be allocated among the sub peaks.

For obvious reasons, many chose the latter option.

As for the sub peaks, there was no innate soul requirements, however, Dyon directly made them all working disciples.

The point of the sub peaks was to raise warriors who might not be talented in the soul path, but willing to cultivate anyway. How could Dyon give resources to those without the determination to re-cultivate? They weren't worthy.

When Dyon received the master symbol, he learned that the core teachings of the peaks were left intact. This wasn't too surprising considering its mystic level technique remained. Clearly everything was well protected just like the core teachings of the Celestial Deer Sect.

Knowing this, he couldn't hand these core teachings to spineless cowards.

Although these people were disappointed, Dyon appeased them with various things that made them salivate. To Dyon, these things were meaningless, but to them, they were holy treasures.

Chapter 1080: Low Profile

"All working disciples of sub peaks will be rewarded with 12th stage common level weapons."

The once disappointed working disciples shivered. 12th stage common weapons? These were things that only the inner disciples of Soul Rending Peak could touch! Even their Legatees would only have practitioner level weapons!

"In addition, you'll receive 50 profound stones a month, 10 top-grade essence condensing pills, and the ability to rent 1 common level technique, of any grade, at a time."

The heart beats of the working disciples quickened.

50 profound stones? That was 500 common stones! A month?! Most of them would be hard pressed to see 10 common stones in a year! Much of the currency of Soul Rend Quadrant was in bronze, silver and gold coins because their cultivation resources were that scarce. Yet, they were receiving this sort of allowance?!

For context, 1 gold coin was 100 silver coins which was 10000 bronze coins. It took ten million gold coins to buy a single common stone! What Dyon was doing was the equivalent of pissing away money!

However, when they heard the other two conditions, they nearly passed out.

10 essence condensing pills? A single one was worth a whole profound stone, and that was if it was low-grade!

A low-grade pill was barely passable and had 30-49% purity. A mid-grade pill was much more expensive and had 50-69% purity. A high-grade pill was yet another step above, and astronomically more expensive at 70-89% purity. Yet, a top-grade pill blew them all out of the water at 90-100%!

Even if it was a mere essence condensing pill which could be forged by a practitioner level alchemist, at the top grade, any powerful family would be willing to buy in bulk using saint stones!

They were invaluable at the foundation, meridian formation and essence gathering speed. A top-grade pill could increase cultivation speed by as much as 10x and were the only grade, along with high grade, effective for essence gatherers!

Still, maybe the most attractive offer was that of common level techniques of any grade. The idea of being able to rent a Peak Common Level technique completely washed away their previous dissatisfaction. If they could receive these sorts of benefits at the bottom rung, it was clear that this sect's future was far grander than they could imagine... Maybe they should just be happy with their current position...?

Dyon saw this change in their expression, and although he was disappointed in their lack of resolve, he expected it. However, he still left one exit for them.

"For the next year, your positions are locked. However, after this year, the methods of improving your ranks will become available to you. Should you seek more, you can always take these tests to become outer, inner, core and even legatee disciples. For each increase in rank, the benefits are five times more, so prepare well."

Dyon waved his hand and minded them no more.

"For working disciples of Soul Rending Peak, you'll each be provided with one 1st stage practitioner weapon of your choice. In addition, you'll receive 500 profound stones, 50 top-grade essence condensing pills, and 5 top-grade saint condensing pills a month. Plus, 1 Earth grade cultivation technique and the ability to rent 3 common level technique of any grade at a time."

The eyes of those who took the chance on giving up their cultivation blazed with happiness. With so many essence condensing pills, they were confident in perfecting the meridian formation realm and moving forward, as long as they saved their saint condensing pills, moving through the saint realm would be far easier as well!

What sect could withstand such a cost? Handing out top-grade pills like candy? Even the top three quadrants could only do this for their core and legatee disciples. This was because to concoct a top-grade pill of a certain level, one had to be far above that level, usually. For example, only a Master could concoct a top-grade common level pill, so on and so forth.

To be able to give such benefits to working disciples? It was unheard of! Even the value of an Earth grade cultivation technique was unfathomable! Only the top 30 quadrants would definitely have one, with only a chance of the top 50 doing so! That was not to mention the fact that they would be heavily guarded!

"Once you've perfected the meridian formation stage and reach the 10th essence gathering stage, you'll directly be promoted into the outer sect if you do so in a year. If you take more than a year, you'll have to take the trial to advance." Dyon shifted his gaze from them and moved onto the three outer disciples who were now eager after seeing the benefits.

"For outer disciples, you'll each receive a 1st stage master level weapon. You'll receive 1 saint stone, 100 top-grade essence condensing pills and 10 top-grade saint condensing pills a month. In addition, you'll be granted 1 Earth grade energy cultivation technique and 1 Earth grade soul cultivation technique as well as the ability to access common level techniques freely and rent 1 Earth grade technique at a time up to the middle levels. Unless your soul reaches a certain level, you won't be allowed to progress to inner disciple."

Dyon smiled, appreciating their reactions as he turned to Violet's father. "Inner disciples will receive a 1st stage grandmaster level weapon. By the month, you'll be granted 10 saint stones and 5 top-grade celestial condensing pills. This will be in addition to two heaven grade cultivation techniques, one for energy and one for the soul. Finally, you'll be able to freely access common level techniques along with renting three Earth grade techniques up to the Peak level at a time."

The disciples felt their blood boil. Although Dyon made it clear that they would have to sign contracts to take part in these benefits, they didn't care. After all, the only stipulation of the contract was to never share the techniques they learned with non-disciples. This was standard for every sect in existence.

Dyon didn't even ask them to never betray the sect. He placed no restrictions on their loyalty at all, which intrigued many of them. But, Dyon had his own plans.

"Former elders." After dealing with all of the disciples, Dyon finally made his way to the former elders.

Unlike the disciples, many of them were well on in age. Because of this, they didn't have the ability to bank on their futures like the youth did...

Although Violet's father chose the disciple path, he was a genius. Plus, he was only 3000 or so years old with more than 7000 years of life left as a celestial. He could be considered to be at the start of his life, unlike them as old fogies. Even the former core elders of Soul Rending Peak understood this and couldn't help but lower their heads in shame.

Dyon sighed. "Unfortunately, none of you have the qualifications to be even working elders of Soul Rending Peak. And, you have long since left the proper time frame to be disciples."

Many elders trembled and seemed to age even more, but they knew that Dyon was right.

"However, I won't abandon you all. Your current state is due to the former Soul Rending Peak failing you all, collapsing and allowing a disgusting ideology to fester and spread.

"First, you remaining former core elders." Dyon turned his gaze to the four wrinkled old men and women. "Elder Fiona, you'll become the working disciple elder of Holy Peak. Elder Yadamere, you'll be the working disciple elder of Gliding Peak. Elder Maranda, you'll be the working disciple elder of Blooming Peak. Elder Gabriel, you'll be the working disciple elder of Unseen Peak."

The former core elders were pleasantly surprised. They were all 5th grade celestials who hadn't even managed to fill a single meridian completely with celestial energy. They could vaguely feel that they didn't even deserve to be working disciple elders of even the sub peaks, but it seemed Dyon took pity on them. They couldn't help but be grateful.

Of course, Dyon understood people very well. If Dyon had started with this command, these elders would have likely been very angry. But, by starting with the mentally weaker disciples first, it set a clear precedent that they were helpless to argue against. It could be said that without the amiable Kernick, this process would have been far more difficult.

Giving these elders a higher position than they deserved was just another step in that plan.

"Family Head Caedes!" Dyon's call startled Donari's father. But, maybe the most scared individual hearing that name being called was Arthurian who had been keeping a very low profile since Dyon came back.