

## The Nameless 1131

### Chapter 1131: Family Name

For obvious reasons, this set off chain reaction of finger pointing. And, unfortunately for those who sided with Soul Market, they were in the inferior position.

Still, this wasn't even the worst part. With the failure of the sub-arrays, they had lost their means of communication with their employers, which was an absolute worst-case scenario.

The last time these employers had come of their own volition was already more than a thousand years ago, who knew when or if they'd ever come again!

While their employers could afford to be negligent, they couldn't. If things went south, all of this would be blamed on them and their years of relaxation and comfort would come to an end. So, no matter how they felt, they all had to come.

As weird as it might sound for them all to refer to this one family as their employer, this was just the truth of the matter. Plus, when the details were laid out, it was just simpler to refer to them as an employer versus anything else...

For one, none of them knew which mysterious family this was outside of their business transaction. Two, none of them understood the motives of this family for crippling the soul path in such a way. And three, their performance was graded and compensated according to this grade. In fact, the strongest families and sects among them were those that had contributed the most during the war.

Before this employer appeared, the energy path of Soul Rend Quadrant was at a fierce disadvantage, and for good reason. It was only because of these subtle strings being pulled in the background that they managed to fight their way back up and eventually overthrow the soul path in a bloody war.

Still, it was a bit odd, was it not? How could they all still be so fearful of this mysterious employer despite not witnessing their deeds firsthand? Well, that was because only those of Soul Rend Quadrant understood just how powerful those of the soul path were... Yet, this employer destroyed them without sending a single warrior...

There's only one family name that needs to be mentioned for anyone and everyone to understand just how fear-inducing such a feat was. Just the fact that this family couldn't survive the machinations of this employer was enough...

It was a family that had existed for trillions of years, a family that stood among the founding fathers of not some random civilization, or city, or universe... They were among the founding fathers of cultivation itself.

This family name was one Dyon had come to learn was rooted with astounding foundation. And yet, they were almost completely wiped out by an invisible hand playing tricks under the cover of night.

This family was none other than the Jafari family.

...

"That's enough."

At that moment, the room fell into a deep silence. Those of both sides heeded the words of this man because he held the highest moral position here.

Not only had he not participated in soul market, it was also his very own younger brother that they had lost communication with.

He was the current head of the Nova family, and elder brother to Elder Nova.

Despite being the elder of the two, he looked like a 25-year-old man while Elder Nova looked closer to about 60. It was clear that his cultivation was far more profound than his younger brother's, but that didn't make him lose any familial love he had for Elder Nova.

Knowing this, did the previous elder have the right to continue complaining about money and resources when a man had potentially lost his brother?

"Forget the past and leave it be. We're here to move forward and find solutions. Those who should be blamed will be handle later.

"For now, we need to go over what we know.

"Firstly, whoever this enemy is has the ability to deal with or potentially kill my brother, or else this plan of theirs would never have succeeded. Although my younger brother is fairly weak in comparison to true dao formation experts, he is still considered as such and shouldn't be looked down upon. Therefore, take this seriously.

"Secondly, the enemy must be aware of who we are. For them to cut off our path to encroaching upon their gained territory can only mean that they were prepared for the trickle-down effects of their actions.

"The third point falls into two potential categories, however both of which are connected to the information we received about the gate's threshold falling to the essence level.

"The first possibility is that the enemy is fairly weak, likely meaning that they only barely managed to defeat my brother and are aware that they cannot face us outright.

"However, the second possibility is the more serious of the two. There is a possibility that this enemy does have the ability to deal with us, but is apprehensive not because of our power, but rather the power of the employer.

"I believe that we should move forward with the second possibility as our first assumption. We cannot afford to make anymore mistakes."

Many of the various elders, masters and family heads agreed. After all of this, what they needed was some very straight forward and barebones analysis.

However, many of the sharper individuals who understood the politics of their 99 universes knew that this wasn't over... And just like clockwork, the burly Master of the Profound Earth Sect chuckled lightly.

"I believe you're forgetting another possibility, don't you think, Head Nova?"

Head Nova's eyes sharpened as the temperature of the room seemed to drop several degrees.

"Forgive him for his crude words, Head Nova. But, you have to admit that he is right."

The tension in the room rose with the additional words of the Head of the Ceres family chimed in. Yet, he continued unperturbed.

"In these sorts of a situations, history matters. You have to remember why a man who comes from such an esteemed family and has such strength was chosen to act as a guard dog."

The more Head Ceres spoke, the more tension rose. It was obvious to everyone what was happening.

The Ceres family and the Profound Earth Sect both took part in the soul market profits while the Nova family did not. Obviously, this was a massive hit to their prestige...

Knowing this, how could they miss a chance to knock the Nova family down a peg?

"The Second Prince of your Nova family was caught attempting to rape the First Princess of the Sona family, resulting in her shame, her suicide attempt, and current coma. It is because of your prestige that he was sent to man a position usually headed by the weaker families and sects, turning a position that was often rotated amongst many individuals, to one manned by a single person."

The Head of the Sona family family clenched his jaw, but said nothing. He hated the second prince to his core, but he also hated Head Ceres for using his granddaughter's tragedy for the sake of his own political gain.

"A rapist, even in failure, is still one in my eyes. That said..." Head Ceres' eyes sharpened. "Just how convenient was it that his banishment perfectly coincided with the construction of the soul market?"

"What are you trying to say?" Head Nova finally spoke, a clear rumbling rage slowly erupting from the depths of his throat.

"You're intelligent." The Master of the Profound Earth Sect sneered. "I'm sure you understand already.

"Your younger brother's character is already clear to everyone here. Yet, he became the lone guard dog of such a weak universe? Was that really a punishment? Or was that just a helpful excuse for your Nova family to net all the profits for yourselves?

"To everyone here, your family is so noble, not even taking part in the oh so immoral soul market. But, what if you were the leaders of it all to begin with."

Those words were like an anvil being dropped in a calm lake. Regardless of their motives... Their words were reasonable.

Head Ceres put his hand out, stopping the Master Ore from continuing.

"There's no need for us to accuse the Nova family of such a thing. I for one believe in their righteousness. However, what I do not believe in is the righteousness of a rapist.

"The possibility that you've left out in protection for your younger brother is the possibility that he is the one behind all of this.

"Who would know who we are? Who would know how to stop the function of our arrays? Who would have reason to run from their post and take all the profits of soul market for himself?

"Wouldn't your brother know who we are? Wouldn't he be powerful enough to look down on that weak quadrant with impunity? Wouldn't he have reason to escape his sentence as guard dog after so many years?

"Tell us, is that not reasonable?"

## Chapter 1132: How?!

Head Nova's handsome, young features remained as neutral as ever, but there was no doubting the darkness in his eyes. To be blatantly smeared in front of the leaders of their 99 universes... No matter how level-headed a person normally was, they'd be pissed.

The worst part about it all was that Head Nova wouldn't put this potential possibility past his brother. To say that Elder Nova was a stain on the Nova family's name was an understatement... The sad reality of it all was that he was far more talented than Head Nova, yet never put his effort into what he should have.

This sort of analysis of Elder Nova's life would be shocking to many. This was an elder who humbled himself to acting as a doorman. Even Dyon would do a double take.

It had to be said that although he and Elder Nova were enemies, it was just that. Dyon may dislike Elder Nova for being a potential danger to him and who he cared for, but he didn't hate him. He didn't particularly have a reason to... Dyon wasn't so naïve as to believe that everyone should be his ally and that all people who weren't were terrible individuals. The world was rarely so black and white.

The truth was that anyone who knew how Elder Nova had lived that last few thousand years of his life would never assume this of his past...

In the end, Head Ceres and Master Ores didn't get the rise out of the Head Nova that they wanted.

"Thank you for your input. In my humble opinion, even when this third possibility is taken into account, the safest route to take is that of the second possibility. Meaning, we should assume that the enemy is not afraid of us, but is afraid of our employer.

"It is best for us all that my younger brother would make such a mistake, because at least then it won't affect the employer's plans of suppressing the soul path. Know that if you are correct, the Nova family will do everything in its power to bring our second prince to justice.

"However, should the second possibility be true, we have a true problem on our hands."

Head Nova calmly diffused the situation, causing the faces of his opposers to darken. It didn't take a genius to realize that Head Nova's words were akin to saying that their possibility hardly mattered, after all, at the end of it, Head Nova had still come to the correct conclusion.

It felt like Head Nova had clapped at their monkey dance, only to ignore it all and move on with important matters. This one moment reminded them all why the Nova family stood above them all. Although their 99 universes couldn't compare with their employer, in terms of raw power, they were comparable to a top 30 quadrant even without the help of the tower to cultivate their youth. Therefore, the Nova family's prowess couldn't be understated.

Seeing that everyone agreed with his analysis, Head Nova nodded and moved forward.

"For now, we have to be cautious. In preparation for this day, we maintained control over 48 of the 49 key towers, however, due to the fact we purposely allowed them to maintain rights as the key wielder, all of that is null and void.

"This may seem unfortunate on the surface, but it actually works out better for us this way. We can concentrate our attack on a single gate and toward a single tower."

Head Ceres and Master Ore could only watch as Head Nova once more took control of the meeting.

There was a total of six inhabited planet in Universe Cathedral. One for each of the five Sub-Peaks, and the last for Soul Rending Peak.

By extension of this fact, there were also 6 gate entrances, with the epistemic tower holding gate being found on Planet Cathedral, the home of Soul Rending Peak.

Originally, the plan of the 99 universes and their employer was to leave Universe Cathedral as bait. To the outside world, the 98th quadrant was incredibly weak, and Universe Cathedral was a testament to this.

To that end, the key wielder of the quadrant was left in the hands of the Peaks. However, in recognition that something like this might occur, the 99 universes controlled 48 of the 49 key towers – 8 from each

of the 5 sub-peak gates, and 8 of the 9 key towers, not including the epistemic tower, of the Soul Rending Peak gate.

The reason owning 8 of 8 key towers didn't allow them control over the cultivation threshold was because the rules of the gate changed when there was an owner of the Epistemic Tower Key. The other gates became all but irrelevant in front of the key wielder.

Of course, this power was limited to those 6 gates only as they shared a universe with the main gate.

Thus, the goal of the 99 universes was simple. As long as they conquered the epistemic tower, the key wielder would lose their strength, and then they could finally gain an accurate understanding of just what they were facing.

"It's very possible that this key wielder plans to raise the cultivation barrier once we send our younger generation in. If that's the case, we could be setting up our youth to be massacred." Head Nova explained calmly.

Head Nova knew very well that this might be a trap, but he was ready.

"Here are some of my thoughts for how to deal with this..."

...

Dyon stared at the family heads as they seemed prepared to fight tooth and nail to stop him.

Truth be told, even Granny Celest was feeling conflicted. Their ancient blood reserves really were a lifeline that even she didn't know if she'd be willing to give up.

Of course, she knew that Dyon planned on leaving the deer blood alone and taking payment from the other families, but something about it still made her uncomfortable. Still, she was quite aware that this was because of her innate nature as a Celestial Deer. She was simply too giving... It was to the point where these family heads thought they could bully her grandson even in her presence.



Dyon's head slightly tilted as though he was watching something amusing.

"Under normal circumstances, your thoughts would be correct." Dyon said slowly, still smiling. "After all, you mighty dao formation experts have true domains. You must believe that if you go all out, you can cancel my ability to manipulate the laws of this space, no?"

The three heads frowned, but said nothing in response to Dyon's words. It was clear that he was correct, so what was the point in explaining more? They were just surprised that a mere essence gatherer knew so much about the dao formation realm. Something like this was very rare.

What they didn't know was that earlier in his cultivation days, Dyon sometimes spent days on end studying various cultivation techniques. This was because at one time, he had planned to create his own energy cultivation technique tailored specifically toward himself. In order to do this, he needed not only an understanding of where he was currently, but where he'd be in the future.

Obviously, it was arrogant beyond belief to assume that you'd become a dao formation expert. After all, the numbers were so far out of one's favor that if a million cultivators began with that goal in mind right now, there was a high probability that not even one would succeed.

It may seem like there were "a lot" of dao formation experts, but that could be attested to Dyon's bad luck and their long lifespans.

This aside, Dyon ended up giving up on the idea of creating his own cultivation technique because he stumbled upon [Inner World: Sanctuary], a technique his grand teacher swore was the greatest ever created. That said, the knowledge he gained remained.

"I'm sure you're all aware why this Mystical World is so sturdy in comparison to others, right? Why is it that it could face the attacks of a half-step transcendent so confidently? Why is it that it's so powerful that I as a mere essence gatherer can suppress you all?"

Dyon's sly smile made the three family heads grow increasingly uncomfortable. Why was he so confident?

Their demeanor as leaders of the generation was slowly crumbling. Everything this young man did made them feel like he was toying with them.

At that point, they couldn't help remember the kneeling Elder Nova. Suddenly, a thought entered their minds that made them tremble in terror.

Dyon obviously hadn't subdued this man within the Mystical World... They had never seen this Elder Nova before. So, how the hell had he done it? How had he subdued a dao formation expert as an essence gatherer? How?!

#### Chapter 1133: Dislike

Dyon continued as though he couldn't see their shift in attitude. "The reason this Mystical World is so amazing is because it's built with a treasure of the 33 heavens as its core. With a treasure that even a transcendent would pine after, it's no wonder that this world is so amazing.

"The Life Stone is able to use its creation characteristics to solidify the laws the Mystical World is built upon, making it almost as powerful as an Independent World and giving the one who controls the Master Symbol the power of a God.

"Still... That's only one treasure of the 33 heavens, no? I wonder... Just how much more effective would my suppression of you all be if I added another treasure of the same caliber? Hm? What if I add two?" Dyon's grin grew slyer, to the three heads, he looked no different than a devil. "What about three? I wonder, what would your true domains mean in the face of that?"

The three heads grew tense. Maybe if they were in the right frame of mind, they'd find Dyon's words ridiculous. Even one treasure of the 33 heavens was impossible to find, even for the greatest clans and sects, how could one boy have three?

However, Granny Celest's white eyes glowed at Dyon's words... Because she knew very well that The Seal was an heirloom of their Celestial Deer Clan for countless epochs. Maybe Dyon was exaggerating about having three treasures of such a level, but at the moment, just The Seal in concert with the Master Symbol would be enough to deal with these three hundreds of times over.

... If only Granny Celest knew that Dyon was exaggerating about the number three in the slightest.

Suddenly, Dyon laughed uproariously, keeling over and clutching his stomach.

"Look at you all, how ridiculous. I really must have scared you for you to believe my words so easily this time around." Dyon wiped the tears from his eyes. It had been a long time since he had just goofed off like this, it was exactly what he needed.

"Of course, I have methods of dealing with you all, but there's no need to use them. Not only will you step aside and not dare to speak a single word of discontent, you'll do so with a smile on your faces."

The three clan heads boiled with rage at Dyon's words, how dare he humiliate them like this?

However, in the next instant they froze in place as two comedically adorable voices sounded out.

"Who do you think you are looking down on my big brother Dyon!" Little Yang's pristinely white fur shimmered and stood tall, conveying her unhappiness.

"Hmph." Little Yin loved to pretend to be arrogant as though he was a little emperor, but he clearly didn't like seeing his choice being doubted by the likes of these has-beens.

Granny Celest's eyes widened as everyone's eyes trained on the two little hamsters on Dyon's left and right shoulder.

Head Tudo trembled. 'I questioned the ability of a chosen to lead?'

Even as old as she was, she seemed to age a hundred years more as she slumped under the weight of her black, obsidian shell. If it wasn't for her two Apprentice Scholars catching her and mustering every bit of their strength to keep her upright, she would have been crushed under the billion jin weight.

Dyon's eyes sharpened as he flashed forward, utilizing the Master Symbol to move at too fast a speed for anyone to react.

His palm slammed into Head Tudo's forehead, stealthily sending a stream of sealing power to lock her consciousness away. Of course, he could only do this with the help of The Seal.

"You!"

"What are you doing?!"

The Apprentice Scholars forgot everything about the appearance of the Celestial Hamsters after seeing their family head treated in this way. But, in the end, it was Head Tigris and Head Simia that held them back, each with complicated looks on their faces.

"Thank you." They both said simultaneously.

Dyon didn't say anything else and simply walked away with Granny Celest and the two saintesses. He had nothing else to do here. It was only Little Yang and Little Yin who wiggled their little butts and stuck out their small tongues in protest, as though they needed to make absolutely sure that everyone knew how displeased they were.

After Dyon was gone, the two Apprentice Scholars shivered with rage, still clearly not having calmed down.

"Does he think he can treat us like this just because he was chosen?"

Seeing the supposed wisdom embodiments acting like this was truly too surprising for the other attendants. They were supposed to be the least likely to lose their temper like this.

The two family heads shook their heads.

"When your family head wakes up, she'll educate you on just how stupid your actions were then." Head Simia said. "Even if he wanted you all to strip naked and service him, you should do so without blinking an eye. If he wanted you to castrate yourselves, you should do so with a smile on your face. If this was

the Celestial Era, even looking at a normal chosen inappropriately was grounds for losing your life... Not to mention a chosen of the royal bloodline.

"Plus, none of that even considers the fact that had it not been for his movement, your family head would be dead. You're Apprentice Scholars yet you can't recognize the imminent collapse of a Dao Heart? How could you let an essence gatherer understand the signs before you?"

The greater your cultivation, the more important your dao heart became. Obviously, the absolute extreme of this was the transcendent realm where dao hearts were directly linked to one's lifespan.

In her old age, Head Tudo could definitely not withstand such backlash. Dyon's act of sealing her consciousness was akin to saving her life.

The moment the two Apprentice Scholars understood this, they paled, immediately understanding that they were in the wrong.

For someone of Head Tudo's caliber, to have spent her entire life forging her temperament and disposition, not to mention placing knowledge and wisdom above all, yet make such a mistake so late in her life... It was no wonder her dao heart nearly crumbled. She felt as though her whole life was wasted.

When it mattered the most, Head Tudo had allowed her own anger toward Dyon's comments about their cowardice to blind her to the truth.

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"Little Dyon, I know that they've done wrong. But..." Granny Celest couldn't help but say this, hoping that Dyon would show some leniency. After seeing Dyon go out of his way to save Head Tudo, she understood that he wasn't a rigid person.

It may have seemed simple, but judging by Dyon's heavy breathing and irregular soul energy flow, it took a lot out of him to seal the consciousness of a dao formation expert, even with the help of the Master Symbol.

Simply put, he didn't have to do what he did, especially not for a person like Head Tudo.

Dyon smiled. "I'm actually very selfish. I only saved her life so that it would be impossible to blame me for her death. I've seen many shameless people in my life, and I have no doubt that they'd take advantage."

Granny Celest remained silent as she looked at Dyon's side profile. She could tell that he was lying, but she didn't bother to call him out on it.

As if someone like Dyon would care about shameless people. He'd just kill them so he wouldn't have to listen to their incessant whining.

"Don't worry, Granny Celest. I have something far better than your ancient blood reserves. In fact, I have two ways that probably work better than the methods you've been using." Dyon smiled mysteriously.

Granny Celest's eyes widened. Maybe if it was previously, she'd knock this grandson of hers in the back of the head for exaggerating. But, after seeing him toy with three dao formation experts, she didn't have the heart to do so.

"Forget about that for now." Dyon's eyes warmed considerably. "It's a problem that hasn't been fixed for millions of years, it could stand to stay unsolved for a few more days.

"How about you come out, Master? Don't you want to see your mom after so long?"

Chapter 1134: Maybe...?

Later that day, Dyon stood with a room that exuded an ancient feeling almost too difficult to describe.

After his Master finally worked up the courage to see her mother again, there was an eruption of emotion that Dyon felt he needed to take a step back from. He didn't dwell on the feeling for too long, but at the very least, he was happy that his Master could see her mother once more.

"To think the Celestial Beasts have fallen so far." Little Yin's immature voice echoed through the colossal room, a slight childish sadness within them.

It had to be said that Little Yin and Little Yang weren't of this era. As Celestial Hamsters, even though they didn't tell Dyon, they knew very well when they were first laid: The Celestial Era.

It was for reasons pertaining to the traditions of the Celestial Hamster, the two were unable to hatch until just recently.

Simply put, the celestial blood within the twins, if compared to the current celestial beasts, was like comparing a raging sun to a small pit of fire.

When the twins had heard of the ancient blood reserves, they had thought that maybe this place would at least have blood comparable to their own. Or, if not that, maybe at least close. After all, it was asking too much to match a royal lineage like theirs.

However, the reality was truly too pitiful. This blood reserve that the celestial beasts put so much hope in, even willing to put their lives on the line to protect, wouldn't even be good enough to come from servants of the Celestial Era... It wasn't even good enough to come from slaves of those servants either...

In the eyes of the twins, even common grade beasts from the Celestial Era had greater bloodlines than this.

The room itself was in another space entirely, similar to the Elvin Tombs. It was commonplace for longstanding civilizations to have separate worlds house their most prized possessions. For example, the Daiyu were able to call out their ancestor to fight Dyon because of this as well.

However, unlike the Elvin Tombs, it wasn't protected by an ancient game. That said, it hardly made the room any less imposing.

A massive dome of grey hung overhead as a singular narrow path stretched forward before sparsely splintering outward from time to time.

Below this pathway was what Dyon could only describe as a sea of black liquid.

The liquid was completely still, but emitted an odd scent Dyon couldn't put his finger on... It smelt nothing like the blood he knew it was, but rather like refreshing spring waters, which was odd considering its less than appetizing color.

The room was far too large for Dyon to get an accurate gauge of its sides. But, with his divine sense, he could faintly see the outline of various beasts on its side.

It wasn't that the room matched Dyon's divine sense in size, but rather that the aura given off by the blood distorted Dyon's vision.

However, that didn't take away from the fact that the room still stretched hundreds of kilometers in every direction...

"If they have this much blood... Just what is the issue?..." Dyon frowned, not entirely understanding.

"This is regular blood, not blood essence. That's the difference." Little Yang explained. "The return you receive on blood essence is two-fold. Not only do you receive the previous owner's talent, you also receive their cultivation.

"However, regular blood is different. Although you do receive both talent and cultivation as well, the expected return per given amount is far less.

"If a celestial gave you their blood essence, even if you were a mortal before hand, as long as you took it slowly and progressed, when you reached 100% integration, you'd too become a celestial.

"However, if that same celestial gave you normal blood, you'd be lucky to become a meridian formation expert. And, over time, your cultivation would fall as well."

Dyon suddenly understood. The root of becoming a body cultivator wasn't just about tempering your existing blood, it was about tempering your blood source.



One had to remember that the body experienced constant turnover. Skin, blood, bone, organ, cells of all kinds were constantly swapped.

So, what would happen if you simply replaced your own blood with someone else's blood?

Eventually, your bone marrow would once more start making blood cells tailored to your original talent level, which would result in the power boost you received slowly fading away.

However, blood essence was different. It was capable of fundamentally changing the quality of not just your blood, but the quality of your blood source as well.

"The only way to make regular blood like this viable, without constantly having to repeat the procedure, would be to use specialized blood manipulation techniques." Little Yin picked up where her brother left off.

"Still, as you might expect, the return on these techniques is also pitifully low. For example, if one wanted to upgrade their talent from the fourth grade to the third grade using this blood specifically, it would take the amount found in a relatively large lake... You're talking quadrillions of liters...

"The amount they have here is relative to about ten or so oceans worth, which, yes, is much more than a lake... But, since it takes so much just to advance to the third grade, just how much do you think it would take to reach the second grade? What about the first?

"If they wanted to help a single beast reach the peak of what celestial beasts once were, even this entire vat wouldn't be enough."

'I wonder... Is this efficiency more or less with the tower?'

Of course, the reason Dyon was interested in this blood wasn't only because it had great effects for his body, but also because of the second-floor formation that Evangeline unlocked for him.

According to the tower spirit, the formation was similar to the first floor formation, except for beasts. It even allowed the use of regular blood instead of blood essence.

However, listening to the explanation of the twins, Dyon became much less excited about it.

'Maybe?...' Dyon's mind went into overdrive.

'What would happen if I infused Primordial Energy into this regular blood? Is it too late? Or could it still improve?'

Primordial Energy was something that Dyon had an obscene amount of. Although he still didn't understand just how it happened, the Energy Core, as though it was programmed, took with it the Primordial Energy of the entire universe before it left with Dyon.

This was, obviously, something Dyon chose not to dwell on. He didn't like speculating about things he didn't have enough information to figure out, and this was one of those things.

Still, that didn't change the fact that he had more of that ancient energy than he could use in his entire lifetime. After all, that Primordial energy didn't just represent all of the energy for that given time... To suck in the entire energy of a universe meant taking in all of the energy it prepared for its entire lifetime, which amounted to trillions upon trillions of years worth.

Just that thought alone proved how heaven defying the Energy Core was...

That aside, Dyon knew that Primordial Energy was the key factor in the twins hatching. Not only that, but according to the entity, even the First White Mother believed that it was the key returning their bloodline back to its origins.

There was no need for Dyon to waste time learning Ethereal Permeation because he had all the Primordial Energy a person could ever ask for.

Dyon slowly walked along the path, scanning the walls from afar.

What surprised him was that there were beasts etched into the wall he hadn't expected to find. Of course, there was the vat of deer blood with the likeness of a deer etched above it... There was an ape,

and a tiger, and a turtle, but there were other more shocking and vivid images that seemed to exude more powerful auras from their blood.

Nearer the end of the world, there was a fox etched to the left. However, it looked very different from kitsune.

While his mother in law's true form was no larger than two palm lengths, this fox was as large and imposing as his master's true form.

### Chapter 1135: Celestial

Dyon could still remember when he first entered the Celestial Deer Sect ruins. After the mischievous and newly born Little Black was caught by him, the imposing aura of his master appeared in the sky like a heavenly deity.

Her true form had been hundreds of meters long, and the tufts of swirling gold fur amid the soft white made Dyon feel incomparably relaxed despite his certainty that she could kill him with a thought.

The fox etched into the wall was very similar. Despite having only a single tail, it seemed far above what a kitsune could match.

Dyon had always wondered why the kitsune were a head of a mere 30th ranked quadrant while dragons controlled the 2nd ranked. Were they not both supreme level beasts?

But, seeing how lacking they were in comparison to this Celestial Fox... Dyon suddenly understood.

Still, the aura continued to grow more imposing as Dyon walked.

To the right, there was a mastiff, with a mane as thick as a lion and a momentum as fierce as a dragon.

Just like its celestial beast relatives, it was entirely bathed in white fur that exuded a palpable pride. Dyon almost felt as though the depictions were becoming more and more life-like.

Even further along were the first two birds Dyon had seen among the Celestial beasts.

To the left was a prideful bird that held its head high above all as its beautiful shimmering feathers fanned outward... A Celestial Peacock.

To the right was a bird emitting a killing intent that made Dyon's heart skip a beat. Unlike the Peacock, it seemed to fly through the skies, its wings spreading majestically... A Celestial Falcon.

Suddenly, as Dyon lifted his foot to proceed forward, he felt a roar pierce through the skies causing his head to snap forward. His heart beat quickened, feeling the air thicken to the point where it felt as though his every move was taken in water.

'A Celestial Lion...'

After witnessing such fantastical creatures of the martial world, whether it be the multi-tailed kitsune, or the mighty qilins, or the prideful dragons, to see such... normal creatures depicted in such a grandiose light... It was truly an odd cognitive dissonance.

Still, there were two creatures left, one of which carried such a magnificent aura that Dyon felt his analysis of these beasts as "normal" was more stupid than anything else.

It almost looked like a dragon, glistening with beautiful scales as it soared through the skies. However, Dyon was absolute certain that it was a fish... But since when were fish so imposing? So awe inspiring?

Its fins, all eight of them, were more like the delicate, crystalline wings slicing through the air completely unimpeded... A Celestial Kun Peng...

...

In the end, Dyon had to rely on his Presence to make it through the throng of pressure and reach the smallest vat of them all. This was, of course, the Celestial Hamster vat.

Although it was small in comparison to the oceans of blood the other celestial beasts had, that was because much like kitsune, Celestial Hamsters didn't grow very large. Still, maybe the strongest aura in this inner world was located here, in a small bowl-shaped vessel the size of a lake.

"There shouldn't be such differences in aura..." Little Yang mumbled. "I think the reason it was more difficult to get here is because this blood is older, therefore it's less diluted through the generations."

Dyon nodded in understanding.

Over the years, due to necessity, the ancient reserves have been swapped out. But, obviously, a celestial beast could only absorb blood from its own lineage. This meant that those celestial beasts that disappeared first would have the greatest aura, not because they were stronger in their prime, but because no one had used their more ancient blood.

Essentially, while the Celestial Kun Peng and the Celestial Lion both had the strongest momentum, it was sadly because they had gone extinct first...

'This world is not almost as strong as an Independent World... It is an independent world. It seems that coming in here would have been dangerous had I not first exposed my connection to Little Yang and Yin.'

Although Mystical Worlds and Legacy Worlds were powerful in their own right, they still needed help. Without the existence of the world itself as they knew it, it would be impossible for these two kinds of worlds to exist.

Why was it that Mystical Worlds and Legacy Worlds had specific locations within the real world? It was because they were tailored to reality. If this world ceased to exist, so would they.

However, Independent Worlds were a step above. Even if every other plane of existence was destroyed in a catastrophe, it would continue to exist.

For the Celestial Beasts to own such a world... It truly did their heritage justice.

This aside, the reality of the matter was that celestial hamster blood was likely the least useful to Dyon. Although he had heard the twins speak of their combat bloodline, they had also said that only the royals among them could ever access it. Obviously, this blood here wasn't that of their royal line. It was still too weak.

However, Dyon suddenly had a vision...

'If I could raise a litter of hamsters or rodents of the like... Their usefulness for scouting would be incredible...'

Even if these rodents gained only a single percent of the true ability of the Celestial Hamsters, it would still give them inconceivable usefulness in reconnaissance missions.

"... What do you think? Would tempering lesser rodent bloodlines give them your abilities? They don't need to gain everything, just stealth and adequate intelligence."

The twins blinked in thought. "It depends on just how heaven defying the tower's formation is... However, judging by the history of the tower... It shouldn't disappoint you." Little Yin finally said.

"The history?" Dyon's eyes brightened. Why hadn't he thought to ask them about it before? Of course they'd know.

"It's very long." Little Yang interjected. "It gave me a headache trying to sort through it all. But the short of it is that it's a treasure that fell from the immortal plane. It was created as a response to the on-going war up there to be the perfect war machine. It falls just short of the treasures of the 33 heavens probably only because it's the newest."

"The immortal plane? I can understand that the trials are still so simple because their difficulty was set by the Demon Sage... The original tower probably didn't have trials to begin with. But, why would it have saint, celestial and dao formation puppets?"

"Your understanding of the immortal plane is too shallow. Saint energy, celestial energy, and enigmatic energy are just far weaker versions of their immortal qi counterparts. The puppets were originally

created to house immortal versions of those energies, but those mechanisms have been restricted by the mortal plane. As such, they've all taken a step down to only recognize the mortal qi versions of themselves."

Dyon frowned. "That's ridiculous."

"Maybe so, but a machine of the immortal plane isn't meant to be here in the first place. You're lucky it hasn't imploded."

"Stop being mean to big brother Dyon," Little Yin chastised her elder brother. "The reason it works like this is because immortal qi is the fusion of mortal qi with an infusion of origin source essence."

"The puppets are designed to absorb immortal qi, then depending on the grade of their filtration system, siphon away the energy they are capable of using and discarding the rest."

"On the mortal plane, this filtration system is still working in full gear, but the difference is that it can no longer retain that extra bit of origin source that put its power on a completely different level. Unless you can adjust an immortal level array, it'll stay that way."

"Oh!" Dyon suddenly understood. "That's far less ridiculous," Dyon smiled, giving Little Yin a fruit he had picked up on the 7th tier. It looked no different from a strawberry, but it was actually a lower level celestial fruit!

Had Dyon spent some more time on the tiers instead of blazing through them, he probably would have found many more high-grade vegetation. After all, the beasts here had to survive off of something.

Little Yang pouted. "Where's mine! I'm sorry!"

Dyon and Little Yin giggled, but in the end, they gave a fruit to Little Yang anyway.

"Alright, there's no need to take this blood away since I have the key to enter this place from anywhere. Since we don't have long, I'll leave the experiments for later."

"It'll be fun to blow off some steam by bullying some essence gatherer juniors."

## Chapter 1136

Two days had passed since Dyon's walk through the celestial beast vats. In just a few moments, the gates would open to what he assumed would be the very first campaign war to take place here in a long while.

Although Dyon said that he'd do it alone, many insisted on coming.

It wasn't that they thought they could help Dyon, such a thought would be ridiculous. After all, Dyon was capable of fighting celestials without losing out even with his essence gathering energy cultivation. Such a war would be too easy for him. It was rather that Dyon had brought something back to the 98th quadrant that hadn't existed in a long time...: Pride.

This made Dyon inwardly smile. Even if these thoughts weren't shared by everyone, the fact that at least some felt this way meant that they were headed in the right direction.

Truth be told, he hadn't placed much hope in them. He had assumed that they were simply too far gone. After years of accepting the reality of their inferiority, it wasn't an easy thing to just flip a switch and change. But, it seemed that some were still willing to fight.

However, what Dyon didn't expect was for Violet's mother, Giralda, to ask if it was possible to raise the gate threshold to include saints.

Having not seen the Dragon Princess in a few days, it seemed as though her prideful and flawless exterior had taken a heavy hit.

Giralda had endured centuries of humiliation yet had still been capable of holding her head high above everyone else. But, somehow, something that had occurred in just a few days shattered all of that. Seeing her almost willing to beg and plead, Dyon's heart couldn't help but bleed a bit.



His disgust toward Violet involuntarily deepened. If he had a chance to see his own mother again, he knew damn well that he'd do everything in his power to make sure her smile never faded. Yet, here was Violet, granted the same opportunity, but still using it to cause pain.

It didn't take much for Dyon to understand just why Giralda wanted the threshold raised. She hoped that maybe in the heat of battle, Violet would remember what it truly meant to be a dragon and change. Maybe then the pain in Giralda's heart would disappear.

After coming back, Giralda had thought everything would be okay. Although she was worried about how Marco would treat Ryu, that ended up being a non-issue. It seemed that the former Master was actually quite happy to treat Ryu as though he was his own son, doing everything in his power to make sure that his wife knew that he would never blame her.

However, the problem that had been nagging at the back of Giralda's mind, one she had tried her best to ignore, ended up being the problem that brought her world crashing down.

Dyon didn't know exactly what happened, nor did he pry into it. If it wasn't for Giralda and Marco, he wouldn't care about the situation at all. He wasn't very fond of helping those that didn't deserve help.

In the end, though, Dyon could only gently decline Giralda's request. It wasn't just because of his disdain for Violet, but rather that it would affect his plans. Who knows how the army would react to the threshold change? If they sent millions of pseudo-celestials, it would be too much for even Dyon to handle alone. After all, Pseudo-Celestials were still categorized as saints.

"I understand..." Giralda said in a weak voice unbecoming of her bloodline. "I know that my daughter did you wrong, but don't blame her, please. It's my fault."

Dyon wanted to respond, but he couldn't find the words to. He could only watch Giralda float away from the gate entrance.

'Parents really do hold a weight on their shoulders that I can't understand... I wonder?...' Dyon couldn't help but think back to how angered he had been during his first encounter with Madeleine's parents.

To this day, even though Dyon knew the truth, and he knew that Madeleine was more than intelligent enough to understand it herself, no one had ever come out and said it.

Now that those very same two, Amell and Nora, had disappeared once again to who knows where, he suddenly felt compelled to understand their story... And just why they abandoned his Madeleine.

Dyon shook his head. 'I can't be thinking about these things right now.'

If enough ants swarmed an elephant, that elephant was definitely die. That was the truth of the world.

Although essence gatherers were far below Dyon, they could very well have tricks up their sleeves that he had to account for. He couldn't let his guard down.

Suddenly, a heavy hand slapped Dyon's shoulder.

"You gotta leave some of them alone for us." Donari grinned, his magenta-red hair flailing in the wind as the portal slowly began to form between the two large pillars.

Dyon chuckled, looking back at the few who decided to come. There were only about 50 of them, and Dyon doubted that they'd be able to defeat even a single opposing warrior, but he memorized all of their faces. If he wanted to build a kingdom, these were the people who were most important.

'I won't let any of them die.' Dyon swore to himself.

Suddenly, the air shifted as two hundred thousand large white lilies appeared in the skies, each producing a warrior. Except, this time, they didn't all share Dyon's face.

Dyon's hand reached for his forehead, pulling downward as a silver-gold mask appeared out of thin air, only for it to slowly morph into the face of a relatively normal looking man.

"Let's go."

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"Those old fogies are always being so serious." A young woman with delicate, immature features pouted. She couldn't have been more than 18 or 19 years old, but her disposition was definitely much younger than that.

After going through so many mass teleportations, only to be told they had to fight against such a weak quadrant, these pampered geniuses couldn't help but feel discontented. It had already taken them days to get over that nauseous feeling.

"Take this seriously, Tove." A young man who looked to be in his low 20s spoke sternly. Despite his size and look, he too was no more than 18. The difference was that he was the youngest grandson of Head Nova, so he had no choice but to take on a stoic personality to live up to his family's status.

As for the young girl, she was from a relatively weak family compared to the rest, but her talent was such that many of the upper echelon families had long since been courting her for marriage.

Almost as if on cue, several male voices hopped in to defend the delicate belle that was Tove from the young Nova Prince's "vicious" words. However, Tove's glare sent them all falling back. It was clear she was more intent on listening to Prince Nova's words than that of the others.

"Get ready. We'll be teleporting directly to the Epistemic Tower the moment the portal opens. We set this formation up long ago for this day, so let's hope for a swift victory. If we're lucky, we won't have to face any enemies at all." The young prince let the words thrown at him roll off his shoulders.

"Who died and made you leader?" A short but stocky young man muttered, clearly unhappy. It seemed he hadn't inherited his grandfather's massive, three-meter-tall figure, making him look more like a dwarf than anything else. Still, his understanding of the Profound Earth Sect's core teachings, given his level, were the best of his generation.

Tove rolled her eyes. "Were your ears stuffed with rocks? He was named leader just 5 minutes ago you're your memory really so bad? Unless, you're wishing death upon your own grandfather?" Tove feigned shock. "Oh my, I wonder how he'd react to that?"

The stocky youth's face hardened and for a moment, he really did look like he was made of rocks.

At that moment, the innocent giggling of a relatively quiet little girl broke the tension of atmosphere.

Still, she was so embarrassed to have suddenly become the center of attention that she quickly hid behind Tove, gripping onto the hems of her skirt.

Tove couldn't help but shake her head and smile wryly. This little girl was the youngest princess of the Sona family which matched families like the Ceres and Nova family, not to mention the Profound Earth Sect, in prestige. Yet she clung to the robes of a relative commoner like her.

No one, not even the rock-like stocky youth had the heart to get angry at her, so the arguments simply came to an end with a thankful smile from Prince Nova.

"Let's go."

The moment the portal appeared, the few hundred thousand of them stepped through, immediately clenching their teleportation arrays and crushing them the instant the gate's landscape came into view.

Chapter 1137: Dammit

"Form up! Align yourselves with your respective families and sects, it'll be more efficient to fight along side those whose abilities you understand." Prince Nova's voice carried over the battlefield.

From Prince Nova's understanding, there were about 40 or so various clans and sects within their 99 universes, none of whom were allowed to control more than one or two universes at once. As a result, even the best clans and sects among them could only be categorized as low-level King God Clans/Sects.

Still, it was because there were so many of them that Prince Nova's plan of action was the best. There hadn't been nearly enough time to gain a thorough understanding of everyone, so he could only hope for the best and rely on their trump cards.

As for this gate, it had a much different environment than what Dyon might be accustomed to.

In Dyon's home universe, the main gate was a combination of mountainous regions coupled with valleys. The only exception was the immediate area around the Epistemic Tower that was surrounded by a thick forest that led to a massive several kilometer deep drop off. Of course, this didn't mention the fact that the surrounding area was also laden with spatial traps that could rip someone apart from the faintest of touches.

The Golden Flame Quadrant's main gate was far livelier. Filled with vibrant colors and flames, not to mention various creatures. The only reason it didn't seem so was because the largest fight took place at the Purple Flame Tower which was surrounded by a poisonous fog.

Simply put, the liveliness of a gate was dependent on the universe it was capable of drawing its energy from during its "maintenance periods" and the dangers surrounding their various towers.

Obviously, the Universe Cathedral was filled with not only vast amount of energy, but soul energy, specifically. This made the gates it was attached to seem to breathe with a life of its own. It was almost a shame to battle here.

However, in this peaceful, luscious green land, there were hidden dangers everywhere. Because soul energy was filled with vibrant life force, the vegetation of this gate were almost entirely sentient... In the end, the seemingly beautiful forests around them were akin to gorgeous sirens, beckoning them to crash their boats.

Still, Prince Nova looked toward the looming, thick black pillar in the distance with determination in his eyes. He had always wanted to pit his genius against those titled genius of the Epistemic Tower... Maybe this would finally be his excuse to.

...

Dyon stood with his eyes closed at the edge of the portal. He too had entered a lush forest, but unlike those of the 99 universes, he was at the edge of the gate.

Still, he wasn't too worried about it. His divine sense reached out 100 000km and a single gate was half that size. Considering the fact the Epistemic Tower was located at the very center of the gate, even if Dyon's divine sense was a quarter of what it was now, he'd still have them within his range.

'Hm... So they did have a method for quickly reaching the tower.'

This was a slight problem. One had to remember that after Dyon conquered the Epistemic Tower of his universe, the "danger zone", meaning the field of spatial tears, disappeared, making the area much safer. Obviously, the same thing was true of this universe that had Donari as their key wielder currently.

Now, Dyon was 20 000 or so km away while his opponents had a near cakewalk to the tower.

Exactly like an ordinary tower, Prince Nova would only have to enter and reach the top floor to become the new key wielder.

This "top floor" obviously didn't refer to the room filled with statues that stood above the dao formation floors. There were two separate facets of the Epistemic Tower. One was tied to the inner world, while the other involved the outer world.

The inner world referred to the saint, celestial and dao floors. As for the outer world, it was they that contained the various training rooms that Delia and Eli stayed in. The outer world was also where Dyon fought his final battle with Alidor. In addition, this outer world was also where you'd find the everchanging statue on the first floor with the ten trial gates pertaining to the old man's 5 heaven defying powers.

To conquer the tower, Prince Nova would only have to climb the stairs of the outer world. When he reached the top floor, the key wielder would be summoned.

However, the key wielder would also face a punishment for allowing this to happen. The laws of the tower would come into effect and knock them down a small cultivation realm below the challenger, or a full cultivation realm. The punishment would be decided based on which was most devastating to the key wielder.

As things currently stood, Donari couldn't even defeat Prince Nova at full strength, let alone with a punishment.

That said...

Dyon smiled.

The only reason the punishment of the Key Wielder was so severe was because the powers they held were too great to allow for such incompetence.

Since Dyon could use his key wielding abilities to teleport millions of Uidah to another gate entirely, why couldn't Donari use his abilities to teleport them a few thousand kilometers?

'No need to rush... Let's play a little game first.'

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Days later, Prince Nova, Princess Sona, Tove, the young prince of the Profound Earth Sect, and deathly quiet and cold Prince Ceres who hadn't spoken a word, were all heaving for breath.

Prince Nova's frown deepened. 'It can't be like this... Someone is toying with us...'

His heart shivered at the thought. Who could manipulate a gate like this?

It wasn't as though Prince Nova was a complete rookie in regards to gates. Although they weren't allowed to attack this Universe Cathedral, and also weren't allowed to conquer each other's universes at the request of their employer, they still had friendly competitions using their gates.

Often times, since they couldn't war with one another due to the rules, disputes would be decided by the younger generation within the gates. So, to say Prince Nova was familiar with campaigning, even though he was only 18, was definitely an understatement.

Plus, their ages weren't a reflection of their talent either. None of the five of them had begun cultivating before 12 years old. This was because their meridian maturation fruits were only at this level, they couldn't compare to the greatest clans and sects.

Still, to reach the pseudo-saint stage at such a young age, it was a glowing endorsement of them all. Yet, they, who should be the pinnacle of this gate, were actually so fatigued and injured without having even seen their enemy yet?

Prince Nova grit his teeth. 'Grandfather was correct. The enemy was prepared to deal with us... But they won't listen to me if I call for retreat now... I only have a gut feeling.'

From tens of thousands of miles away, Dyon watched this scene with a light smile on his face.

Truth be told, he didn't want to fight these kids. The best-case scenario was for them to retreat of their own accord. However, it seemed that their perseverance was quite high.

For the past few days, Dyon had been agitating the sentient vegetation. Although using wills at this distance was incredibly taxing, not to mention substantially weakened them, Dyon had his own methods.

Sometimes he would use soft wind will to carry the scent of the approaching army toward carnivorous plants. Other times he would start small forest fires using fire will to direct hordes of enemies toward them. And he had yet other methods that included using death will to agitate various beasts... It wasn't enough to kill them, but there was nothing like the scent of death to light a fire under a beast.

The distance from the starting position of the 99 universes army and the epistemic tower was supposed to be no more than 100km, yet it felt like they were traversing a universe. They couldn't even rest properly before more ambushes would assault them.

'Dammit.' Prince Nova grit his teeth.

Little did he know how right he was. Dyon was having too much fun playing God.



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While Dyon was toying with some juniors, those he had brought with him weren't sitting idly either.

Chapter 1138: You..

For the moment, Dyon didn't tell Donari about his abilities as a key wielder, so they all believed they had to slowly make their way forward. In line with that, Dyon let them do most of the fighting along with his clones, of course.

It made sense that Donari didn't understand the full scope of his abilities, after all, he didn't exactly earn the key in a normal way. He would have to enter the top floor of the outer tower for him to learn their full scope.

Truth be told, Dyon's clones were too powerful under normal circumstances to find a challenge here. It was only because Dyon purposely lowered their percent from 15, to under 1% of his current power. Dyon thought that he might as well get some training in while dealing with the monotonous task. After all, campaigns lasted anywhere from three to six months depending on the quadrant, universe, gate, and amount of maintenance needed.

That said, the most rigorous part about Dyon's training wasn't his clones, but his use of his divine sense. Not only was it taxing to continuously keep tabs on a stretch of land 20 000 km away, controlling his wills at that distance was nothing more than a pipe dream.

Normally, Dyon's range would be limited to a couple dozen kilometers at the most. However, that only referred to the end point where his wills would have any meaningful impact. At past that distance, his wills were weaker than even a level 1 will.

Still, Dyon found that manipulating such weak wills, especially at this distance, gave him a unique view... He was forced to understand the essence of the will to a deeper level so as to make the best use of their weakened versions. It was similar to how Dyon often decided to use wills at a lower level than his absolute limit, except this was far more profound.

It was unfortunate that his Master wasn't here to confirm his suspicions, but, it seemed that not only was using divine sense to evoke wills useful in combat, it was also great for increasing control. Dyon felt that his progress in the past few weeks was akin to months of practice before.

Dyon didn't blame his master for not thinking of this method, though. After all, the secret was written in the [Dao of Array Alchemy]. If everyone knew its uses, it wouldn't be much a legend, now would it.

Now, Dyon felt like he could manipulate third level intents with the proficiency of a pseudo-dao formation expert which was unprecedented in and of itself. Still, he had his soul to thank for that.

Just like this, another two months passed, making it just a few days away from three months since they had entered the gate.

Dyon couldn't help but be impressed by the perseverance the kids showed. He could count on his two hands the number of hours of rest he had allowed them in the past nearly three months, yet they kept trudging forward.

'It's all because of him, huh...!' Dyon's divine sense trained on Prince Nova with a bit of admiration gleaming in his eye.

Their group would have collapsed a dozen separate times had he not held them together.

Although they were practically children leading the way, that didn't mean there weren't older, less talented individuals among them. In fact, there were plenty of those well over 20 and 30 years of age making up their ranks, many of whom saw it fit to attempt to undermine Prince Nova's authority.

If it was Dyon, especially after those voices of discontent caused some irredeemable deaths, he would have simply killed them. But, this Prince Nova took a far calmer, more naïve approach than he would. Still, Dyon couldn't knock it because it was working.

By now, they were just a kilometer or so away from the tower. The fact it took them 3 months to travel just 90 or so kilometers as martial artists – a distance even a mortal would be able to cross in a couple days of walking – was a testament to the challenge Dyon had given them.

'I'll remember your faces for when I conquer your universes,' Dyon thought with a slight smile.

"Alright!" Dyon hopped up from his spot of meditation, looking around to see the haggard Donari and the rest of the disciples.

Dyon felt a little bad looking at how tired they were, especially when he saw the petite Sophia covered in sweat and blood.

They too had barely moved a hundred kilometers and faced the same trials and tribulations as the 99 universe army. However, it was due to Dyon pushing them like this that they broke their limits again and again. They might hate him now, but they'd come to appreciate it later.

As expected, Dyon received more than a little anger in return after he explained the key wielding abilities to Donari, but he simply chuckled it away.

Soon, they had teleported across the gate...

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Prince Nova and his allies dragged their feet. After pushing themselves to the limit for three months, it was no surprise that they were each at the end of their ropes. But, thinking about just how important their mission was, turning back was simply not an option...

Seeing the end of the forest ahead, the light in their eyes was once more rekindled. Maybe they could actually get some rest this time around.

However, reality was too cruel... Because the first thing Prince Nova saw when he looked past the final tree was an army of 200 000.

Dyon smiled lightly while looking at their flustered faces. As he expected, because they never had a key wielder of their own, how could they know about the abilities of the key wielder? Such information would have gotten lost throughout their generations. After all, it had been a long time since the situation of Soul Rending Quadrant was normal.

That said, what Dyon felt was a smile of appreciation toward talent, the youths found to a mocking one.

"You..." Prince Nova whispered under his breath, but he kept his thoughts to himself.

He had wanted to blame Dyon for their troubles, but when he checked the front man's cultivation, it was even lower than his own. After all, Dyon was a 12th stage essence gatherer, but Prince Nova was already a Pseudo-Saint. It was difficult for him to give credit to someone he thought was weaker than him.

"Form up!" Prince Nova roared. He didn't know why the enemy wasn't taking advantage of their disarray, but he knew he couldn't miss this opportunity.

Technically speaking, their strategic advantage couldn't be understated.

To Dyon's back, there was a massive cliff reaching more than a kilometer downward, while to their back, there was a forest.

This was to be expected, every Epistemic Tower Gate was identical at its center, meaning there was a massive circular hole that the pillar like tower resided in and a forest that surrounded it all. It was just that this forest was far more dangerous than Dyon's home universe's.

Still, Dyon didn't do anything as the 99 universe army scrambled to form a semblance of a formation.

'Hm... The martial world's military tactics still leave a lot to be desired, but it seems that they are far better than the Uidah. But... Not good enough.'

Obviously Dyon wasn't worried about the terrain disadvantage or else he wouldn't have had Donari teleport them here. It may be true that the enemy could retreat and they couldn't, but... Did he really need to retreat? In fact, looking at these haggard teenagers, he felt kind of bad.

Dyon looked back toward the 50 disciples that had followed him. "You guys just rest here, there's no reason to come. I don't plan on massacring them."

"But!" Donari wanted to protect but Dyon gave him a stern gaze that made him swallow his words.

Dyon stepped forward, stretching out his limbs. After months of focusing on his wills, he hadn't exercised his body in a while.

Unfortunately, since he didn't want to kill these youngsters, he also couldn't show them his full power. However, that hardly mattered.

With a step, he flashed forward, followed by 200 000 clones.

Prince Nova's face hardened. 'Is this timing a coincidence? Did I make a mistake?'

He had thought that his opponent was making a mistake by not attacking them immediately, but somehow they were even more disorganized than when they started. Because of Prince Nova's hasty order to form up, everyone was scrambling. At least beforehand they were all facing the same direction, now they couldn't even boast that fact. However, Prince Nova could only watch as his disorderly army was rammed with thousands of enemies.

Chapter 1139: Retreat

The moment the armies clashed, Prince Nova felt that something was off, but he couldn't exactly put his finger on it. Even worse than that, he didn't have the time to think about it because the 50 or so warriors that hadn't charged were making him nervous.

'Why aren't they charging? Are they planning something? Should I use our trump cards now? Or after they make their move?' Prince Nova grit his teeth as Dyon appeared before him, a slight smile playing his features.

"Who are you people?" Prince Nova changed tactics. If they weren't going to succeed today, at the very least, he'd try to bring something useful back.

Dyon couldn't help but chuckle. He knew that this young leader was definitely very confused right now so this was likely his only course of action.

"I'm more interested in who you are." Dyon answered slyly, meeting Prince Nova's fists with his own.

Feeling the weight of Dyon's punch, Prince Nova's eyes narrowed. 'Body cultivators? They're all body cultivators!'

His mind went into overdrive. Wasn't his father worried about the resurgence of the Soul Path? But all of these people were of the Body Path? Could it be that this had nothing to do with the successor of the celestial deer and soul rending sects?

Prince Nova grit his teeth. 'It feels like I'm hitting a steel wall!'

The young prince was pushed back again and again. Every time they clashed it seemed that he was so close to figuring out the limits of his opponent, but Dyon would then raise his level by another half notch, forcing him back again. It was almost more frustrating than if Dyon was just a powerhouse he had no chance of defeating.

'Is it even worth it to fight this fight? If they really are unaffiliated by the Soul Path then it doesn't matter, does it?' Prince Nova's frown deepened. 'No. I need to make sure.'

Dyon's eyes flashed with an odd light when he noticed Prince Nova's shift in demeanor. In the next moment, the Prince brought out something that made Dyon eyes widen.

"Now!" Prince Nova roared.

The five geniuses, including Tove, Princess Sona, Prince Ore and Prince Ceres, all brought out globes of light Dyon was all too familiar with.

They were the formation cores of Soul Rending Peak!

...

Dyon's eyes narrowed slightly as their auras rose. Obviously, since even Dyon wouldn't be able to bridge the gap between a celestial and a pseudo-saint with only a single formation core, he wasn't worried about their boost in power. What he was apprehensive about was what other tricks they could have up their sleeves.

With a single thought, Dyon leaped backward. He didn't want to give the impression that he knew what Prince Nova's trump card was, or else most of this would be for naught.

The aura of the five youngsters soared, breaching sainthood barrier and shattering it.

As expected, the gate didn't react to this change. It seemed it understood the difference between true saint cultivation, and this fake one. Dyon had to admit he was impressed with his grand teacher for building such an intricate world.

'It seems that these people weren't too stupid in laying down their bait after all...' Dyon thought to himself.

In the beginning, Dyon felt that the 99 universes were a little too... 'giving' in their bait. They left so many useful things behind for Dyon in Soul Rending Peak that it was almost too good to be true.

Of course, things like the Master Symbol and the entrance to the Mystical World would never be deciphered by them. But, other things like Mystic Level technique and the Formation Cores were undoubtedly extremely valuable.

However, it seemed that the reality was that they only left behind things they were comfortable with leaving... In fact, technically speaking, they only left one formation core with Soul Rending Peak, the other two that Dyon received came from their people.

'Hm... Master isn't here so I can't ask her about what else is missing from Soul Rending Peak. I'll have to take inventory when I go back...'

While Dyon's mind was going on overdrive, so was Prince Nova's.

'They seem like body cultivators, but grandfather said that there was a good chance they knew about us since they destroyed the master arrays. How would those of the Body Path know about the importance of those arrays and the danger it could pose to them?'

The more Prince Nova thought, the surer that there was more than what met the eye to this story. However, his mind was blown away once more when his fists collided with Dyon's.

By all rights, after raising his cultivation to the saint realm, he should have completely destroyed his opponent, but Dyon was handling him just as easily as before!

Dyon grinned. "This trump card of yours is amazing. I had thought that this would be a thankless task, but to think you'd deliver something so great to me."

Prince Nova's expression remained hardened. He didn't even notice the slight bits of sealing energy entering his arm.

"Don't be like that. Can't you tell the difference between us now? The only reason I haven't killed you is because I'm quite interested in just who you people are... Could you be related to that Elder Nova fellow?"

Prince Nova froze, resulting in a palm strike from Dyon landing squarely on his chest.

"Axel!" Tove's delicate voice called out after seeing the young prince being flung away, however she was being tied down by several clones at once and wasn't in any position to help.

"Ah!" Dyon spoke in mock understanding while applying even more pressure onto the teen. "So you are related to that fellow?"

Blood seeped from Prince Nova's mouth as he glared at Dyon. "What did you do to my grand uncle?!"

Dyon's brows arched in surprise. "Do to him? Other than giving him his own piece of the pie, we haven't done anything to him. Ah, such a shame. To think that the people he had warned us about were his own family." Dyon chuckled. "What a cruel man he is."



Dyon didn't say much else other than that. If he led the story too much, or if he gave too many details, it would seem fabricated. All he had to do was say just enough to set Prince Nova down the path he wanted.

This was the reason for this elaborate scheme. It was the reason why he had changed the appearances of all of his clones and even his own appearance. It was the reason he didn't reveal his soul's prowess. It was the reason he had justifications to not kill these kids aside from his own conscience.

He needed them to believe that Elder Nova was the traitor. He needed them to believe that he was a member of the Body Path and that they were only here to take advantage of Soul Market at the coaxing of Elder Nova.

Dyon's greatest weapon wasn't his soul or his body, nor was it his wills. It was his mind.

The moment Elder Nova revealed himself as a dao formation expert, he had suspected him of being an enemy. However, it was deeper than that... Why would a dao formation expert be the one left to guard here? And, if he was left to guard, why was he residing in Unseen Peak instead of Soul Rending Peak? If he wanted to bait the successor, shouldn't he had been waiting at the main peak? Or at the very least travelling between them all? Or, better yet, staying in the shadows?

Then, even after pegging Dyon and exposing him, Elder Nova didn't report this back immediately. Instead, he waited and wanted to ingratiate himself with Dyon... Why?

This all pointed to one thing: Elder Nova's relation with the 99 universes wasn't harmonious.

"You're a liar!" Prince Nova's almost childish voice roared through the battlefield.

Dyon pretended to be taken aback. However, his mind was thinking differently. 'It seems Elder Nova's prestige, at least within the Nova family, hasn't diminished. This boy should have been too young to even be alive when Elder Nova was still among them, which means someone older and of much higher standing still believes in that old man.'

'It doesn't matter though.' Dyon smiled to himself. 'Even if the Nova family doesn't believe it, the others will. It wasn't as though I hid my voice when I spoke. For Elder Nova to be booted out despite having the backing of the Nova family means that there are other, equally powerful families who wanted him out.'

'In addition, the Nova family might still believe me because they have no idea how much Elder Nova's resentments have been built up. For all they know, this is his final 'fuck you' to them for abandoning him.'

'I've done enough to buy me some time. It's time to end this.'

However, just as Dyon thought this, Prince Nova had already made a decisive decision. Ignoring the rest of the trump cards he had, he roared across the battlefield.

"Retreat. Retreat now!"

#### Chapter 1140: Kneeling

The next few weeks were a blur, but to keep up appearances, Dyon couldn't allow them to escape so easily, nor could he allow them to leave without casualties. Plus, Dyon had no intention of letting them keep treasures he saw as his own. Since they had revealed the existence of the formation cores, they could forget about leaving with them.

In the end, Dyon forced them into a corner where they had no choice but to decide between the formation cores and their lives. And, like the smart individual he knew Prince Nova was, he made the right decision in discarding them.

As a thank you, Dyon gave them injuries that would leave them bedridden for months.

Although for the youngsters it was a nightmare, Dyon himself was living out a great fantasy. He felt like he was a hidden master with cruel tactics but a kind heart. It was as though he had teleported into one of those old kung fu movies.

'I think Master's sadistic side is rubbing off on me.' Dyon thought with a grin. 'Maybe I should find me a worthy disciple to vent out this fantasy properly.'

Hearing his thoughts, somewhere an unborn child still in his/her dad's testicles shuddered in fear.

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"Master, there's no need for you to come with me. I'll be back after I deal with a few things." Dyon smiled, trying his best to soothe his nagging master.

Even in spirit form, she had no need of Dyon to sustain her life force because the Mystical World almost had too much of this energy to spare. So, as long as she was here, Dyon never had to worry about her spirit dissipating. In fact, he encouraged the other spirits to stay here as well while promising the Princess of Beauty that he would bring Madeleine to her soon.

Truth be told, the nine spirits breathed a sigh of relief. Everyday they spent in Dyon's Mind's Eye was like another day in prison. The scariest thing in the world to them was that baby turned meditating toddler.

Dyon couldn't blame them, of course. His soul had "tried" to kill them so many times that he had lost count by now.

Granny Celest watched with a smile as she lazily reclined by a calm river. It had been a long time since she felt so relaxed. Knowing that her daughter had a chance to live again felt amazing.

"Don't forget to bring my other grandson too, Little Dyon. This old lady can only live for such simple things." She chided softly.

Hearing her mother's words, Esmeralda's eyes also glistened over. She too very much wanted to see her son.

Dyon nodded. "I'm certain that Little Zaire is a big shot by now."

He had a lot of confidence in that little brother of his. Zaire's overall talent was impressive by any standards.

Although Dyon said that Zaire was a 7-year-old essence gatherer, how old was Zaire really during the World Tournament? He was two years old.

Zaire might have looked like a seven or eight-year-old, but that was because he stayed in his beast form in order to become Little Lyla's 'elder brother'. After reaching that age, he limited the amount of time he spent in his beast form in order to grow up alongside his little sister. But, in strict terms, Lyla was Zaire's elder sister, not the vice versa.

Truth be told, the cultivation of beasts and humans were different. A newly born beast often times could contend with fully grown adult humans. However, the reason Zaire's cultivation speed was so impressive was because he followed both the beast and human path, meaning he was restricted by the same rules humans were.

Still, despite following the most difficult path he could, he became an essence gatherer two years from his birth. Who knew how much he had improved by now?

"Are you planning to go the Drago-Qilin lands?" Esmeralda's expression became stern.

"Of course, if my little brother can, I wouldn't be much of a big brother if I didn't, no?"

Esmeralda shook her head. "You have the Dragon King's aura on you, it's very different. Dragons are too prideful to bully the young, so I'm certain all obstacles Little Zaire meets will be within his abilities to deal with. However, if they believe that you're the Dragon King in a youth's body, it will be a completely different ordeal.

"That Giralda girl hasn't noticed yet, but that's only because of two reasons. Firstly, she suppressed her dragon bloodline to hide her heritage thus dulling her senses, which was why her hair and eyes became relatively normal. Secondly, she's dealing with quite a bit of emotional distress if what you've told me about her daughter is true.

"Now that she's come to know you semi-personally, it's less likely that she'll immediately attack you and might actually be inclined to listen to your story, but you can't say the same for other dragons or qilins. Remember, beasts have weak senses and often rely on their instincts. That's why Head Tudo could make such a terrible analysis of you. They won't be able to see the subtle difference between someone who is possessed and someone who isn't. They'll be blinded by the dangerous aura the Dragon King gives off."

"It'll be alright." Dyon reassured his Master. "I can just use The Seal to lock away the Dragon King's aura. It'll be a bit taxing on my soul energy, but I have plenty to spare. Plus, I don't plan on going there just yet, I have to go to the Sapientia Quadrant first, then I should probably help the Belmonts drive their enemies away. My in-laws are still in that universe, after all."

"That said, the Drago-Qilin lands is a destination I must go to. My little sister and brother are there, it's about time I brought them home. The Calming Spring is just a secondary matter..."

...

After spending a few hours with his Master and Granny Celest, Dyon turned to leave. But, before he could, he was stopped by some unexpected visitors.

Beforehand, Dyon had been within the territory of the Celestial Deer. Their homes in the Mystical World were simple, but elegant. Due to the late arrival of the Celestial Turtle and Ape clans, some rearrangement of the 18th tier was necessary, but each clan still had thousands of acres to themselves and never encroached on each other's lands.

So, as expected, Dyon was never bothered when he set foot into the Celestial Deer Clan and often teleported directly in and out of it without bothering to explore other areas. However, today he had planned on plucking some spiritual fruits for the road and maybe taking some celestial meat along with him, only for him to walk out to find nine kneeling figures.

Dyon blinked before looking to Granny Celest and his master who were seeing him out. "How long have they been here?..."

Esmeralda turned her nose up, clearly discontent with how these nine had treated her disciple. "Almost five months now. Even before you entered the gate."

'Five months?' Dyon was inwardly surprised. It wasn't that he ignored them, he legitimately had no idea that they were here.

Although that length of time was nothing to martial warriors of their caliber, it still showed a level of sincerity that impressed Dyon at least to some extent. After all, they had no idea when Dyon would allow them to stand.

However, Dyon had already that even if they did exactly what they were doing now, they'd never have a place in his kingdom.

There was a reason he waited until the last moment to reveal the twins. With his intelligence, how could he not know how the Celestial Beasts would react to the reappearance of the supposedly extinct celestial hamsters? It would have ended this conflict before it even began.

That said, would that have truly changed their temperaments? Even if they bowed their heads to Dyon, what about when Dyon was gone? Would they rebel against the next human head just because of their own innate biases?

He didn't want people like this following him. Dyon wasn't naïve enough to believe that everyone he accepted would be good natured, but he sure as hell wouldn't knowingly accept anyone with a black heart.

The worst thing you could do in life was abandon an ally. There were plenty of terrible things in the world, but little could match betrayal of loyalty. Yet, this was exactly what these beasts were responsible for.

People had died. Wives lost their husbands. Daughters lost their fathers. Dreams and aspirations were torn apart. And yet these three family heads had only been worried about their own petty survival.

Could this even count as survival anyway? Hiding away in this beautiful Mystical World may seem great, but it was nothing but a prison.

Dyon looked up from the kneeling celestial beasts to find many watching this scene from afar.