

## The Nameless 2181

### Chapter 2181: Time

The old man's logic was simple. Dyon was a mortal. It was impossible for him to have transcended and still retain his mortal body. Even those who managed to perfect their mortal bodies on the mortal plane were simply gifted high level immortal bodies in return. They would retain their constitutions, but they would ultimately still be immortals.

Such transcents were incredibly well respected. They didn't face the same stigma mortals and lower level transcents did.

"... I would have sensed it already if she transcended. This means that she hasn't."

"What did you just say?!"

The old man's calm demeanor cracked. The weight of such words was far more than they seemed. They all but confirmed that Dyon was a transcendent. But how the hell could a transcendent have a mortal body?!

"... They said that the mortal plane was weakening... But it shouldn't be to the point that a mortal could cross over so easily... This boy could be what they call an Overlord..." The old man's gaze burned with passion."

"... What is that grandpa?"

"They're mortals who have the strength of immortals in certain facets... If this boy is a comprehension facet Overlord... I –"

The old man's aura became like a bloody haze. He completely forgot to restrain himself, causing his family and Amethyst to collapse around him.

He had been stuck at a step from the Immortal Law realm for too long. He could never understand how mere mortals could comprehend Laws before even many immortals did, but if Dyon was a transcendent mortal and so powerful, it was clear the legends of these Overlords were real.

"... Let him go to see the world core after the competition."

"But —" Patriarch Nightwell wanted to say more but didn't dare to continue to speak on the topic seeing his father's gaze from the ground.

"... I should go speak with a few old friends."

The old man clasped his hands behind his back, walking away.

\*\*

"Hey! What do you think you're doing!"

Several guards rushed to blocked the entrance of a tower so tall one could only look straight up to see its peak even from a hundred meters away.

However, a moment later, a golden paperweight tore through the air, knocking them out of the way, blasting through the tower's double doors, and landing with a loud boom on the marbled floors.

Dyon strolled into the alchemy guild, his footsteps light.

"I've come to recruit this alchemy guild beneath my banner. I'll be back here in exactly one hour. I expect to find your guild head waiting for me when I get back."

Dyon directly left the paperweight on the ground as he turned to leave. It was as though he didn't know his voice had boomed across the city, covering thousands of miles in an instant. He didn't even try to hide his movements in the slightest.

Then he entered the city, selling off his Emyrean Grade herbs for an obscene price, then buying every kind of Venerable Grade Herb he could find.

Taking his time, he eventually returned to find his paperweight still on the ground and a group of old men waiting for him.

...

"Oh!" Dyon was pleasantly surprised. "I have to say, I didn't expect any one of you to show up. For that, I apologize. I wouldn't have been late if I knew."

The lips of the group of old men twitched. They couldn't tell if Dyon was being serious or not, but he seemed to be being sincere. But, that only made the situation all the more incredulous.

He had expected them not to appear? Then what would he have done had they not? What kind of havoc would he have caused?

"Young Venerable Sacharro, it is our obligation to respond to the call of the Golden Cauldrons. As long as Cauldron Two or One do not appear here, you have free reign over us. It is not a simple matter of your own prestige – though you deserve it – it is also a matter of Pill Sword Mountain's face."

There was nothing demeaning about being called young Venerable by these group of old men. Dyon could tell that they were all Emyreans. In this small world, just one of them appearing would be cause for a large procession, let alone eight of them being here like this.

The minimum realm one had to enter to become an Emyrean, by Dyon's estimations, was the Immortal Celestial Realm. So, it was suffice to say that their standings were high. The mere act of them respectfully calling Dyon 'young Venerable' instead of 'kid' or 'brat' was already a large show of respect for them.

Seeing this, Dyon's stance softened. He really had been expecting to have to run through a brick wall. But, it seemed Pill Sword Mountain's prestige was even greater than he thought.

It was as they said: ignorance was bliss. Those of the desert bubble world were too far disconnected from society to realize how dangerous it had been playing with Dyon's life like that. But, though this Dark Flame bubble world was still relatively low rung, they were ingrained enough in the secular world to know better.

Dyon obviously knew, then, that this wasn't respect for him, but rather respect for Pill Sword Mountain. But, regardless of the reason, he wasn't the kind of person to spit in the face of someone doing their best. There was no need to disrespect these old men. In fact, if they proved themselves to not be hiding their true intentions, he wouldn't mind helping them out a bit.

After a few moments of thought, Dyon nodded.

"My requirements are not large. I only need a pill room to stay in."

The Emphyreans looked at each other, unable to hide their shock. They had been prepared for their resources to be gutted and to be demeaned by this young mortal, yet he had caused all of this commotion for a room to board in?

Dyon shrugged. "The Nightwell Clan annoyed me, I don't feel like staying with them anymore."

## Chapter 2182: Save

The old men pursed their lips, unsure of how to respond. Finally, it was the one that seemed to lead them and the same old man who spoke before who stepped forward.

"In that case, I will lead you to one of our best pill rooms, young Venerable Sacharro. I am the Head of our Dark Flame Tower Guild. You can call me Old Baron or Emphyrean Baron."

"I see. It's nice to meet you Emphyrean Baron. I won't be imposing on you for long."

Baron seemed incredibly satisfied with the name Dyon chose to call him. But, if he knew that Dyon chose this title because he viewed 'old' as a term of endearment for friends and not because he respected Baron, it's unknown how he would feel.

Dyon only called his grand teacher and the Dragon King by that title. He didn't feel like using it on an unknown Emphyrean like this, at least not in the context of calling out to a friend.

Setting this aside, Dyon truly kept to his word. He disappeared into his pill room without another word. It likely wouldn't be a long while until they saw them again.

As for Dyon himself, he was focused entirely focused on his task. Whether the Nightwell Clan allowed him to enter their world core or not was irrelevant to him. One way or another, he'd make his way there. He didn't believe there was anyone who could stop him from sneaking in if he really wanted to. At least not in this place.

The retired Patriarch of the Nightwell Clan probably knew by now through Crystella that Dyon was a Spiritual Sage. And, he probably believed he could make contingency plans to deal with that.

However, he would probably work under the assumption that Dyon was a first grade Spiritual Sage. This wasn't only because this seemed to be the most logical assumption, but also because if Dyon was any higher, even if he prepared, he would have no way of dealing with him.

And, unfortunately for the retired Patriarch, Dyon wasn't just a single level higher, he was several levels higher. It simply didn't matter what plans he made.

Due to the death of Kywen by still apparently unknown means to his Dimwell Clan, the event had actually been postponed, allowing Dyon much more time than he originally thought he would have to himself.

Why had Dyon bought up so many Venerable Grade Spiritual Herbs? Not only was it to imprint these herbs into his mind so that he could use [Simulating the Hands of a Deity] with them, but it was also to analyze their structure.

If he deepened his understanding enough, there would come a day where he could conjure Immortal grade pills from thin air as well...

Though it was still a shame. Had he known that this Dark Flame Tower would be so obedient, he wouldn't have had to waste his own funds.

...

"Why are you so sure that the Nightwell Clan is holding Amethyst against her will?" Saru asked curiously.

Usually, when Dyon was cultivating, Saru and Lilith would stay out of his way. They didn't like to unnecessarily distract him. However, when it came to Dyon working on his array alchemy, they didn't feel bad at all. It came so naturally to him that he almost seemed bored practicing, so there was almost no need to take it too seriously.

"That old bastard had some really weird eyes when he was looking at her." Dyon said noncommittally as he observed another heavenly herb closely. "It's just creepy watching an old fogie fall over himself for such a young woman."

Dyon knew that he was likely being unfair. When Amethyst transcended, the retired Patriarch was likely still a very young man. Unfortunately for him, though, his talent was lacking. And, though Amethyst was actually currently several levels weaker than he was, she still remained young because Phoenixes simply had this innate advantage.

It was probably killing the retired fogie that he was getting closer to death yet the woman he had grown by the side of was still as young as ever. He likely would lose his calm demeanor completely if he had heard Dyon's words just now.

"Stop being mysterious." Lilith said, nibbling away at a bit of exotic fruit. "Be more straight forward."

Dyon smiled. "The simple answer is that the Nightwell Clan underestimates me too much. That retired pervert probably thought that I was just shooting at the dark, when the truth is that I can plainly see the restrictions placed on her. Not only is her cultivation speed being sealed, but so is her range of movement.

"I'm not as good at seal theory as I am in formation theory, but from what I saw, if Amethyst attempted to leave the range of the Nightwell Clan mansion, her dantian would implode and even if she didn't die, she would become a cripple."

Lilith pouted. "She's so pitiful..."

"Are you going to help her?" Saru asked.

"Absolutely not." Dyon harrumphed. "She's lucky I didn't go all out to kill her like I did Lilianna back in the day. She only has Madeleine to thank for that. No one's who's tried to kill me has gotten away as cleanly as she had."

Lilith and Saru looked at each other before pinching at Dyon's love handles.

"Hey! Hey!" What'd I do?"

Dyon finally looked up from the flower-like herb in his hands. Its delicate pieces reminded Dyon of the Ice Petal's Dance fruit he had peeled for Ri on what could have been considered their first date. In fact, its touch had the same subtle coolness to it as well. Though, instead of being blue, it was a very pale green.

"Save her."

Dyon's lips pursed. "I tried to help her already, but she threw me through at least ten walls."

"How do you think a woman would react to sensing their Primordial Yin in an unknown man?" Lilith rebutted.

## Chapter 2183: Underground

"How the hell is that my fault? It was she who decided to leave her Faith Seed behind. No one forced her."

"How do you know that no one forced her?" Saru cut in. "If you don't perfect your mortal body, leaving behind your Faith Seed is an inevitable consequence. She spent her whole life fighting against the Ice and Fire Phoenixes for revenge for her parents, how could she have the time for such subtle and nuanced cultivation? With her talent, she even had to hold back from transcending for as long as she could.

"By the time the Heavens started forcefully rejecting her, it was already too late to do anything about her imperfect body."

"Plus," Lilith assaulted Dyon from the other side, "If her life was filled with fighting and blood, where would she find time for love? It's not like she's..."

Lilith's voice trailed off. What she wanted to say was that it wasn't like Amethyst was lucky enough to have the perfect husband all but decided for them like they did. But she felt it was best she didn't.

"Don't you see? It was never a choice to begin with. She tried her best to make it one by leaving her Faith Seed as an inheritance instead of allowing it to drift in reincarnation like others had, but even then, too much was out of her control." Saru quickly covered for Lilith.

"She may have eventually chosen Madeleine, but she most definitely didn't choose you." Lilith completed the tag team with a single line.

Dyon was left speechless. The two had completely opposing personalities. Saru clearly had far more rational ideas, while Lilith was focused on thoughts of love and emotion, but when they came together Dyon found it hard to refute.

"... That's still not an excuse to try and kill someone..." Dyon muttered to himself as though rejecting the idea of taking this loss.

"You've killed people for a lot less than 'taking' your virginity without your consent." Lilith rebutted. "Plus, you didn't even knock on her door. You just barged in and appeared before her like you owned the place, how could she not have made assumptions about you? Don't you have any manners?"

Dyon opened his mouth to refute but found that he really had nothing to say this time.

"Fine, fine." Dyon put his hands up in defeat, cradling the herb in one palm. "Not for her, but for the sake of you two and Madeleine, I'll help her out. If she pisses me off again, though, I'm not giving her a third chance."

Like this, three months went by in a flash and Crystella finally came to the Tower with news that her Clan had accepted his first request to see the world core and that the competition would be beginning soon.

\*\*

The underground world was bustling with people of all walks of life. This next few days were the only ones which allowed common folk to flood this haven for the rich and elite.

Though many came for the entertainment, many more simply just wanted to take advantage of the dense qi this space had to offer. That said, there was still a fee to pay for entry. But, they all found it to be worth it.

There was a reason the three main families of this bubble world all had the same root in their names. They descended from a singular ancient family known as the Well Clan.

Many years ago, there world underwent a certain event that resulted in the birth of their current six stars and awakening a portion of their bloodlines that had been sealed from them in the past.

This was just one way the mortal and Immortal planes were different. In Dyon's world, witnessing the birth and death of new suns was impossible. The death of a sun meant the collapse of the solar system and thus meant the need for a Clan to move – if one ever lasted that long, that is.

However, on the Immortal Plane, there were many Clans that had existed for long enough to witness the rise and fall of several Suns. This Dark Flame bubble world might have been on the more exaggerated side of the spectrum, with six suns forming at once, but they were nonetheless still within the expectations of the Immortal Plane.

This aside, this event caused the bloodlines to be split down three branches.

The Night Branch gained power over the black-red flames of three of this world's stars. The Dark Branch gained power of the dark violet flames of the other three stars. And finally, the Dim bloodline branch gained weaker versions of both flames.

Over time, the Well Clan began to segregate amongst themselves, completing a cycle most human civilizations underwent. And, finally, they fully split down three lines, eventually becoming the three separate Clans they were today.

Still, these three Clans continued to follow the rules their Ancestors laid down in the past. Every ten million years, they would meet in this way to decide the controller of the world core.

Back when their Clans were one, this competition decided who would be the next Clan Patriarch. Every candidate would gather support for themselves and enter. It tested who had the greatest rallying power and eye for talent, and thus who would be most fit for the position as Head.

Today, the competition rules were practically the same, however this time, the candidates were chosen not by Patriarch hopefuls, but by the three Clans themselves.

In the past, commoners were allowed to observe the proceedings to see the majesty of the next generation's Patriarch and instill the natural fear and reverence commoners should have toward their rulers. And today, the purpose was pretty much still the same.

Though there was this complex history behind them, Dyon didn't know of it, nor did he care much about it. He simply lazily appeared at the event like he was asked to, Saru and Lilith both by his sides looking like the delicate flowers they were.

Chapter 2184: Maybe...

But, judging by how they verbally assaulted him those few weeks ago, they clearly still had their thorns.

After leading Dyon to the holdings of the Nightwell Clan, Crystella looked toward Dyon with a hesitating gaze.

The event was held in a massive arena, already filled to the brim with people of all shapes and sizes. The noise was quite deafening even for an immortal.

The holdings of each Clan was held even further underground. Crystella had to lead Dyon down a long hidden corridor connected to the Nightwell Mansion to bring him here. Apparently, this was a tradition they adopted so that they could keep their trump card members hidden until the final moments. Though, if the other Clans had any sort of competence, they should have solid clues before the event began.

"... Can you... Maybe ... Please wear something different...?" Crystella finally managed to eek out her words. She had expected Dyon to lash out at her, but all she received were the giggles of Saru and Lilith in return.

"I-I'm sorry, I shouldn't have asked..." Crystella muttered to herself, turning away to lead Dyon through the final doors.

Dyon sighed. "It's fine. I guess since I'm not just representing myself, I have to do at least this much. But don't expect me to dress up to take a look at your world core."

A flash of golden light caused Crystella to look back, only to find that the dignified man in white robes had returned. The golden branch with a singular leaf attached to his lapel was especially eye catching.

His tall frame, his wide shoulders, his enticing arrogance and confidence –

Crystella cut off her own thoughts, blushing profusely as she hurriedly turned away, her heartbeat and rushing blood sounding like the rev of an engine to her ears. She hadn't noticed that Dyon was so tall before... He was even taller than her father...

Taking deep breaths, she finally opened the door, leading the rest of the way.

The members of the Nightwell Clan looked toward the new arrivals all at once. There were only about a dozen present, but to a normal person, it would feel as though the whole world had turned its attention toward them.

However, who exactly was Dyon? He was a man who could rule the mortal plane with a fist before even reaching his 300th birthday. The gazes of those from this small Clan didn't even faze him.

"Let's save the elitist commentary, shall we? I'll be going first."

Dyon walked past them and up a not-so-subtle flight of stairs.

The bright lights of the arena shone down on him, his two women by his sides. They were no doubt the only three mortals in this underground world.

...

Dyon's appearance was stunning to say the least. A mortal appearing in such a place was unheard of. The very announcer who had been doing his best to raise the expectations of the crowd – to great success, one might add – was also stunned.

It made sense. The upper echelon of this world – the three families and the Dark Flame Tower – were aware of Dyon's existence. But to the everyday commoner, they had never heard of him.

The only ones who didn't seem surprised by this turn of events were the members of the Darkwell and Dimwell family. There were three of them each, preparing for the first competition. Though it had yet to be announced, they were already aware of the task about to be set before them. In fact, Dyon was the only one not aware.

This truth wasn't due to cheating of the parts of these families, but rather Dyon's own negligence or, rather, uncaring attitude. Had he not blown off the Nightwell Clan, they likely would have been spending this time explaining it all to him. But, he came here directly instead.

The announcer coughed, feeling the enthusiasm of the crowd wavering. Why had no one informed him about this?

'... They must be?'

The announcer's gaze lit up. Noticing the clear aesthetic beauty of Dyon and his two companions, he felt that he had 'understood' what was happening. He recovered quickly, a bright smile beaming.

'It makes sense, those nobles wouldn't lower themselves to explaining something like this to me. Their use is obvious.'

"Ah! It seems our Three Great Clans have brought out a special present for us all! A pleasant surprise indeed!"

The eyes of the announcer met Dyon's. The disdain within was clear, but he was also nudging toward Dyon to get started on the pre-competition entertainment. He himself was quite eager to see it as well.

He normally wouldn't spare a mortal a glance, but he had been forced to due to the awkward situation. But he was extremely surprised to see just how enticing Saru and Lilith were. It made him wonder if there were other mortals who looked like this that he was missing out on.

Dyon raised an eyebrow, wondering what the hell this announcer was going on about. Why was he giving him that look exactly?

Dyon frowned seeing the announcer's gaze leave him and sweep over Saru and Lilith continuously.

With a snap of his fingers, a blazing fiery array appeared by the announcer's head.

"[Nether]."

A spear spun out from the floating formation, blasting the announcer's head into a rain of flesh and blood.

"See what I mean?" Lilith muttered. "Much less..."

In fact, she felt that Dyon was getting more and more murderous. Or rather, his patience and tolerance seemed far lower than it had been in the past. As though he found many things to be far beneath him now. And, she oddly felt that it didn't affect her feelings for him at all.

The fifth [Judgement] spun like a red pillar of flame before Dyon put it out without much effort.

The six participants opposing Dyon had expressions that turned steely.

"Why did you do that? Regardless of how low his standing was, he was still a member of my Dimwell Clan."

#### Chapter 2185: Baron

All of them wore red robes, just like Crystella, Tedric and Kywen had. However, these robes had various shades of their own along with small bits of embroidery.

Dyon had found out through Crystella's miscellaneous words that the level of embroidery on their robes was actually related to their world core. The closer one could approach it, the more embroidery they earned. It was no wonder the old fogie had robes that looked more gold than red.

The Darkwell Clan had almost maroon robes. The Dimwell Clan had an even slightly darker shade. As for the Nightwell Clan, theirs were red with black accents, not that Dyon wore them.

Dyon finished his walk to the only empty side of a triangular platform. He was inwardly amused by the setup, it reminded him of a gameshow from his mortal world.

"I'm representing the Nightwell Clan right now." Dyon said casually. "I wonder how they would feel if they knew a member of your Clan to their representatives as entertainment. He should be thanking me. If not for my actions, his ending would have been even worse."

"Maybe in his next life, he'll learn to control his gaze a bit better."

The expression of the Dimwell member who spoke darkened further.

He felt that Dyon was making fun of him. Everyone knew that Immortals couldn't reincarnate, only the pitiful existences of mortals could be reused and recycled. At least, that was how Immortals framed the matter. Their lives were worth far more, so of course they couldn't just restart if they wanted to.

The fact that those words had come out of Dyon's mouth almost made it seem like he was implying that they were inferior precisely due to the fact they were immortal and didn't have a next life waiting for them.

Never in his life had he run across such a thing. A mortal... Looking down on him?!

His gaze blazed with fighting intent. He would crush this mortal where he stood!

In the end, Dyon's words were so effective that even the Nightwell Clan couldn't refute them. They had no choice but to pause the event for a moment, clean up the mess, and send in another announcer...

This time however, it was a Judge. Guild Head Baron.

Emphyrean Baron cleared his throat beneath the silence of the crowd who apparently was still at a loss for how they should be reacting. A part of them wanted to sound a loud chorus of boos, but Dyon's previous words struck a nerve with them. What if the Nightwell Clan took offense?

Thinking to this point, they didn't dare to say a word. They only silently put their support behind the others.

"We've decided that it would be more convenient if I, as one of the judges of this competition, took the reins from here. As is tradition, there will be six rounds, each of which will tackle a different topic. Three of these rounds will test the foundation of your Clans' secondary profession and the final three will test your Clans' battle prowess.

"Each round will be judged on points. The first three rounds will give 10 to first place, 5 to second place, and 0 to last place. The next two rounds will work on the same system. However, the final round, the highly anticipated Extermination Round, will reward 1 point for any single victory and will continue until every Clan no longer has any to send up."

Clearly Empyrean Baron wasn't here to entertain, because he got straight to the point and didn't embellish his words. He even directly spoke of the later rounds, completely dispelling all anticipation the crowd had for them.

That said, when he mentioned the Extermination Round, the fire was lit in the crowd once more. It was clear that this final round held a grand place in their hearts despite its simplicity.

This, however, had nothing to do with Dyon. His only task was to get the Nightwell Clan 30 points then be on his way. He wasn't interested in fighting battles for them. Even if they asked, he would refuse.

"This first round will be... talismans.

"In a moment, 16 blanks will appear before you. You are tasked with working with your partners to create a defensive formation of ten metrics wide. The bare minimum requirement is that it defend against 3 full powered assaults from a Higher Immortal Essence expert. You must use all 16 blanks. You have 3 days."

A 'metric' wasn't exactly a unit of measurement, though it could be considered one. In colloquial terms, a metric represents a single layer of a formation. Ten metrics obviously referred to 10 layers. How large those layers were would obviously depend, which is exactly why it wasn't a true unit of measurement.

This said, the closer and more tightly bound a layer was in relation to another, the more powerful a formation would be. Though who could make a multi-layered formation seem to have just one were the absolute best.

The true difficulty of this task, however, was the forced use of all 16 blanks and the fact there had to be 10 layers.

The Heavens had particular numbers that it liked. Said numbers, when incorporated into formations, made them extremely powerful. While, other numbers made the formation fragile. It was the same reason why humans found groups of 3 to be more pleasing than 4, and so on.

The Heavens especially loved numbers like 3, 9, and multiples of them – with a particular emphasis on multiples of both. However, 10 and 16 were especially jarring. Crafting a formation around these numbers was like trying to jam a key into the wrong keyhole. It was borderline impossible, and all the more amusing since Dyon hadn't gotten around to testing himself in drawing talismans yet. He didn't know why he had to have so many firsts during such important events.

But, even still, 3 days was simply far too long. This competition would bore him to death if every round took so long. What a bother.

#### Chapter 2186: Stunned

When Baron finished speaking, the talismans appeared. They seemed to be higher quality than the ones Crystella had been using, so it seemed the three Clans had splurged a bit on this competition.

"I don't like this." Crystella's mother frowned as she observed the projection from the underground.

Dyon wasn't actually meant to take Saru and Lilith on with him, they had others of their own prepared in case Dyon was fool's gold. On top of this, seeing Dyon with other women pissed Mistress Nightwell off. If it wasn't for the importance this event held, she would have already blasted Dyon into a cloud of blood.

Dyon's actions were beyond reckless, but there was something about his gaze when he stepped by them that made their minds go blank for a moment. They had realized that Dyon had no intention of leaving Saru and Lilith behind, nor did he apparently feel like storing them in that spatial treasure Crystella mentioned he had.

However, what was even more infuriating was the fact Dyon sent a single glance toward the 16 talismans and completely ignored them.

A flash of gold pulsed to his back before he fell back into a comfortable couch as though he was already exhausted. The Nightwell Clan could only watch on, speechless.

"Is this really what I came here to watch?!"

An older man with dark grey eyes swung his sleeve in a huff. He was the Spiritual Sage of the Nightwell Clan and the only Spiritual Sage of their bubble world. Everyone called him Sage Ademar.

However, he wasn't a member of the Nightwell Clan. He was only a Spiritual Sage they managed to hire from the Spirit Sage Association. He was incredibly irritable and even more difficult to handle.

But this time, a strong pressure suppressed him before he could say more.

"I've been very tolerant, Sage Ademar. We've already paid you quite well just to be here. Take it as free payment for having to do nothing and be quiet."

Everyone looked over shocked as the usually amiable retired Patriarch sent down these words from his throne.

Sage Ademar was stunned silent.

He had always used his profession to throw his weight around. Spiritual Sages were simply far too rare. But, he was under no illusions that he was a match for the retired Patriarch. He happened to be talented in the sensing soul path, but he wasn't very powerful himself.

The old fogie might not dare to kill him, but teaching him a lesson really would not be a problem.

Plus, the retired Patriarch was right. He had already been paid. In fact, what he was doing now was easier than what he had been tasked to do. He had honestly just been looking for an excuse to leave without standing here and watching such a thing.

In the end, he fell silent, his jaw setting.

"Focus on yourself!"

In the arena, Tedric's voice filled the ears of the representative for his Darkwell Clan.

"But...!"

"No buts. Focus on your task at hand. Don't pay attention to anything he does, and don't waste your time antagonizing him."

Hearing these staunch words, the Darkwell Clan representatives had no choice but to put their heads down and begin discussing among one another. Soon after them, the Dimwell Clan also followed suit, their leader only sending one last glare toward Dyon who was chatting with Saru and Lilith.

"I thought you hadn't ever drawn a talisman before, should you at least start?" Lilith asked innocently.

Dyon all but rolled his eyes at her words. It wasn't because he disdained her question, but rather because he knew she wasn't really asking. She had only said those words so that others would hear her.

Dyon gave a 'I know what you're trying to do' glance toward this mischievous woman.

The tempers of the two other groups flared once more, their concentrated auras growing.

Dyon went back to observing the heavenly herb in his hand, allowing the time to tick by.

Without the commentary of the announcer, the competition turned quite stale. There simply weren't enough of the commoners who understood what was happening.

Realizing that things couldn't continue like this, or else people would stop paying for entry, come the second day, the announcer was replaced. However, maybe out of fear for what happened to the last one, this announcer refused to say anything about what the crowd really wanted him to talk about: Dyon.

Dyon became like a massive elephant in this otherwise impossible large arena, while the man himself seemed to not have any idea about what was happening.

Eventually, the third day came and half it passed by.

By now, everyone realized that Dyon was working alone. From time to time, Saru would ask him a question about the announcer's commentary and he would answer, making it clear that their knowledge in the matter was incredibly shallow. Just what was the Nightwell Clan thinking?

"Ah, that's how it works." Dyon suddenly said, perking up.

"Pft..." Lilith stifled a giggle. "There's only 30 minutes left, maybe you should do something."

"Oh, is there? I meant to leave an hour..." Dyon muttered.

It seems he got too caught in his most recent heavenly herb. Even the other two groups had finished, it seems.

"You said that the Heavens don't like the number 10 and 16, what are you going to do about it, then?" Lilith asked, continuing to goad him.

"Fuck the Heavens, what has it ever done for me? I'm too lazy to bother about it." Dyon said lazily. "If it doesn't like 10 and 16, I'll make it like 10 and 16. There's something about the number 9 I especially hate."

Before others could react to his words, Dyon's soul qi rushed forth like a high tide, swallowing the arena that covered dozens of miles.

Sage Ademar was stunned. He realized at that moment that Dyon's soul strength was far beyond his own.

The 16 talismans on the long table shot upward, hovering around Dyon.

#### Chapter 2187: Disappointing

"The reason the Heavens don't like numbers aside from three and nine is that they act as strong pillars. There's no stronger simple structure than a triangle, and no stronger large structure than a collection of triangles.

"But those rules are written using the fundamental runes of this world." Dyon shrugged. "I'll just use the fundamental runes of another world that happens to love even numbers... especially the number 4 and multiples of it... Damned four horsemen..."

The talismans snaked through the air, rushing toward the delicate lines of gold Dyon practically embroidered into the air itself. It felt like the inner mechanisms of a clock were swirling around them... beautiful ticking and intricate pieces, turning gears, the way each small change affected each and every other part...

The talismans collapsed together along with the swirls of gold, coming together like beautiful pieces of origami.

The first five talismans formed the first five layers. In groups of two, the next eight talismans formed the next four layers. And finally, the last barrier was formed of three talismans, rounding it out with a perfect 16.

They all but fused into one. Whereas the barriers that surrounded the other groups were several feet thick, reaching over three meters, Dyon's own was just 6 inches thick. The layers could hardly be perceived.

"Tsk." Dyon muttered. "If I had an extra 30 minutes... Disappointing."

Normally, for a competition, the audience might be on the edge of their seats, eager to see who had come out on top. But somehow, they were all already aware of the answer.

"... Innate aurora..." Were the only words the announcer managed to say.

The difference was simply too stark. Less than a fraction of the time to finish in a result more than ten times better. To make matters worse, it was clear that he still wasn't satisfied.

However, they took Dyon's attitude as him mocking them. If he really cared so much, he would have put more time aside. Clearly, he simply wasn't taking them seriously.

The leader of the Dimwell Clan had a savage pulse trembling along his forehead. His head really seemed like it might burst at any moment. By the time the formation testers made their way down, it really did seem like he was bordering on losing his cool.

Up on the judges' platform.

"He didn't try to find a method of circumventing the number problem. How is that even possible?"

The beard of the formation guild's head trembled. Even he felt that the competition task was a bit difficult. You could probably spend months calculating and deriving the formulations you'd need to build such an array. Doing so in 30 minutes was inconceivable.

Any other time, the formation guild head would simply think that Dyon was acting and that he had been thinking of the problem the entire time. But, even if he bothered with such thoughts... so what? Even if he had, hadn't the result spoken for themselves? Whether he was acting or not, did it even matter?

Empyrean Baron's gaze narrowed. He too didn't quite understand how to interpret this. His understanding of formations was quite high, but still several levels beneath the formation guild's head.

The audience itself was almost numb to the test phase. No, it was more accurate to say that they were numb for even the following two rounds. Whether it was the repair of a treasure task in round two, or the pill concoction with missing ingredients task of round three, neither was even close.

On the third round, instead of waiting like he had during the first two, Dyon actually started immediately. Concocting the pill with missing ingredients in just moments and turning to leave without

waiting for the results. Maybe it was only now that they realized that Dyon wasn't a talisman inscriptionist, nor was he a weapon's smith... He was an alchemist.

"I believe I've done what was asked of me. I'll be taking my reward now."

"There's still three rounds left." Patriarch Nightwell responded coldly.

"Not my problem. I have no intension of putting myself in harm's way for your family. I only agreed to help you with these rounds and guaranteed you first place. Deal with the rest yourself. If you can't do that, you don't deserve to hold the crown in this realm anyway, and I'll just go and make a deal with the other two families."

Dyon's deadpan gaze swept over the Patriarch.

"I don't remember agreeing to such a thing. And, I don't plan on having anyone lead you there until this competition is over."

Dyon almost yawned at the response as though he was expecting it.

"Did you daughter forget to tell you? I'm a Spiritual Sage, I could have found your world core whenever I wanted. Your help is unneeded. You can consider it a courtesy that I haven't already gone ahead without your permission. If you want to retract that permission..." A fierce glint lit in Dyon's eyes. "... I promise you that I still have the ability to ensure you lose this. Try me."

Dyon swept his shoulder past the Clan Patriarch. It suddenly became very obvious to them all that Dyon was the taller of the two.

The truth was that Crystella hadn't forgotten to tell them. It was just that the Patriarch either made a mistake, or didn't believe that Dyon would dare to do such a thing. But by the time he gathered himself, Dyon really had left.

To make matters worse, Patriarch Nightwell, who was very much used to having his family on his side, looked around to see several displeased gazes. However, they weren't aim toward Dyon, but rather toward him. It really was pretty unseemly what he had just tried to do.

"Hmph."

The Patriarch looked away defiantly, unwilling to admit to anything.

\*\*

"Is it alright to antagonize them like that?" Saru asked.

Dyon shrugged. "At this point, it doesn't matter anymore. Their Patriarch is too stupid to hide the truth, I can read him like a book. They're already planning something."

"They are?"

Chapter 2188: Come With Me

"Probably." Dyon didn't explain. "But it doesn't matter regardless. We would make an enemy out of them taking Amethyst out anyway. I'm also not a fan of people who try to take control of me."

By this point, Saru and Lilith felt that maybe they were a bit emotional in convincing Dyon to save Amethyst. But it was already too late to change Dyon's mind. It was rare enough for him to do so in the first place. Now that he had once, he wouldn't do it again.

"Unfortunately for them... Allowing me to see their world core is the biggest mistake they could have possibly made. I've been priming for three months already and the final three rounds will take years to complete. If they believe that they'll be facing the same me who entered when this competition ends, they'll be sorely mistaken."

Immortals were powerful, but their concept of time was far too skewed. To them, this time was a blink of an eye. They couldn't wrap their minds around someone improving vastly so quickly. And that... would be their downfall.

"Come with me."

Amethyst frowned at Dyon's words.

"You..."

"Just, stop." Dyon waved a hand, not wanting to hear it. "If it wasn't for a few others, I'd leave you here to rot. I don't have the patience for this. While that old perv still believes he's infallible, you're coming with me."

Dyon grabbed Amethyst's wrist and sent her into his Inner World.

The retired patriarch probably believed that he didn't have to personally guard Amethyst due to the seal he had on her. Even if Dyon was willing to save her, Amethyst wouldn't be willing to leave for fear of her life.

In addition to this, no matter how talented Dyon was, he didn't believe that Dyon was capable of dealing with an Empyrean level Seal.

Even beyond this, the relationship between Dyon and Amethyst wasn't exactly good. Would Dyon really risk himself to save her?

Unfortunately for the retired Patriarch, Dyon's abilities weren't within his realm of understanding. A better seal might be able to skip over the loophole that was Dyon's inner world. However, the depth of legacy of the Dark Flame bubble world was clearly too shallow. Either that, or whoever it was the old pervert commissioned wasn't all that great.

The moment Amethyst entered his Inner World, the seal on her person became useless. Now, Dyon could take his time to get rid of it. After all, he was the God in his own world.

Dyon casually strolled into the Nightwell Mansion then casually strolled out. No one even realized Amethyst was gone.

It could only be said that even if they acknowledged Dyon in some facets, they still ultimately saw him as a mortal that was beneath them. And for that, they would pay a price.

\*\*

The world core of the Dark Flame bubble world had an entrance on the Nightwell Clan's property. It was actually more accurate to say that the world core itself was on the property of whoever it was who won their once-every-ten-

million-year contest.

This place was the Ancestral home of the former Well Clan and had now been the property of the Nightwell Clan for several generations.

In reality, this could mostly be attested to the Night bloodline they were born with. They had greater destructive power in comparison to the other two bloodlines. As a result, it was rare for them to lose the final three rounds. And, the times they did were the results of either the Dimwell or Darkwell Clans managing to entice experts from other bubble worlds to their sides.

Dyon crossed the mansion next to undetected. There was actually incredibly strong security around the entrance itself, but it was ultimately a matter of seeing through and exploiting flaws in the protective formation.

Even before the evolution of his eyes, such a feat wouldn't have been a problem with his Immortal Sense. But now, he didn't even need to consciously activate it. His gaze saw through the visible and invisible as though he was looking upon it from a god's vantage point on high. He didn't even alert a single guard before he crossed over.

He was sure that they would have let him through by virtue of his deal with the Nightwell Clan, but Dyon had a feeling that he shouldn't let them know he was here. This way, when they realized that Amethyst

was gone, they would believe he had run away. But, they'd never expect him to be at the very heart of their Clan. Such a thing might very well buy him time he wouldn't otherwise have.

He didn't have illusions of suddenly being able to defeat the retired Patriarch in a few years. However, he was certain that after he reached a certain level of strength, he wouldn't have to worry about the old pervert either way.

Still, there was something Dyon hadn't expected, though. The world core... was exceptionally violent.

Fumes of black-red and dark violet whipped around like the peels of burning hydrogen curling from the surface of a sun. The laws were incredibly unstable, forcing even the fundamental runes into a state of absolute chaos. To make matters worse, Dyon's Immortal Sense, when it was released in this place, caused him to suffer a sheering pain to his soul, something that astonished him to no end.

After a few moments of silence, Dyon suddenly understood.

This was what real world cores looked like. He had gotten exceptionally lucky with the desert bubble world. It was only now he understood just what the reason behind creating that underground space was...

Whoever created the red star of the desert bubble world was actually training. They had formed the red star to perfectly counterbalance the blue star as a way to affirm their own dao and deepen their comprehension.

And, the fact of the matter was that whoever it was had succeeded in grand fashion. They left behind the red star not for some future grand purpose, but rather because they had no use for it any longer... He had been wrong. That person had a great understanding of fundamental runes!

Chapter 2189: Where is She?!

The creation of the volcanic ore and mist glass was just a byproduct this person likely wouldn't have even cared about!

'Whoever that person was... Is an absolute genius... Maybe even beyond me...'

This was the first time in Dyon's life he had ever had a thought even remotely close to admitting his inferiority. And it was at that moment he also grinned.

'Your method of training, I like it. I think I'll take it for myself. And, I'll surpass you.'

\*\*

"WHERE IS SHE?!"

A roar tore through the Nightwell Mansion. It had already been 15 years since Dyon walked away from them all. But, it was only now that the retired Patriarch learned of Amethyst's disappearance.

This may sound like an outrageously long time, but this was simply the truth of the final three rounds. Aside from the final round, which was the quicker of them, the first two each took several year long campaigns to complete.

The fourth round required gaining military merits against the Void Beasts that called the Void Space between bubble worlds their home. Defeating just one Void Beast took a large team and years of planning and traps, so one can imagine how difficult succeeding enough to gain real merits would take.

The fifth round was even more time intensive, requiring the conquering of a named world. To earn a name, a bubble world had to have at least one Immortal Celestial. In addition, only youths younger than ten million years old could participate in this competition to ensure that every person could only participate a single time in their lifetimes.

In truth, the fact that the old pervert only took 15 years to notice could only be considered Dyon's bad luck. Under normal conditions, even 50 years wouldn't be enough. The trouble was that Crystella was the greatest genius to appear in the world for countless generations, she had nearly set a record in fastest time to complete the first two rounds.

Because of her performance, the Nightwell Clan had essentially already sealed their victory, making the third round nothing but a dance of tradition.

Realizing this, the old, retired Patriarch was in a good mood and decided to pay a visit to Amethyst before the round even concluded, only to find that she was gone, and no one could tell him where she went or even how long she had been gone for!

"I – I ... --"

The retired Patriarch's palm shattered the maidservant's head into a rain of bone, blood and brain matter.

His gaze practically fumed with fury.

"BOY!"

The old pervert suddenly remembered the words Dyon had said the first time he came to this mansion. He had said something about releasing Amethyst. But then it seemed that the violet haired beauty had pissed him off, so he forgot about it entirely.

Back then, the retired Patriarch's heart had skipped a beat. But, his expression hadn't changed even a moment. The truth behind his and Amethyst's relationship wasn't something even his family knew. Only his late wife was aware, and she was obviously very unhappy about it.

However, despite how she felt, she had never told a soul. So, how could a mortal boy know the truth?

But, the old pervert had concluded that Dyon was simply probing him, so he had forgotten about the matter, especially since Dyon didn't make a big fuss about it despite it being his second request. In fact, he had only seemed to care about his first request.

The old Patriarch's body flashed and disappeared, reappearing within the core of the machine.

The entrance to the world core loomed before him. It was a grand open space surrounded by the white floating runes of a massive formation as large as a city.

"Sir Berolt!"

The moment the guards of the world core saw their retired Patriarch, they saluted. These men were the elite of the elites, so they were alert to almost everything. Slacking off wasn't something that you'd find them doing. So, of course they were already aware of their leader Berolt's rage.

"Did that boy enter through here?"

Under normal circumstances, the retired Patriarch would likely exchange some words of pleasantries with these loyal men, but today, he didn't have the patience.

"Boy?" The men looked at each other. "No one has entered the world core in more than 60 years, sir!"

Berolt's frown sunk in as his expression darkened. All of these men were Immortal Celestials, and all of them were absolutely loyal. Even if one was a traitor, it was impossible for them all to be. The only explanation was that they were telling the truth.

His already fuming gaze practically turned a blood red. He was almost certain that Dyon had escaped the moment he snatched Amethyst away. The boy was probably long gone by now, and Amethyst might very well be dead. However, he wasn't certain. He would have felt it if the seal detonated or was broken, but he hadn't felt anything.

The old patriarch's jaw set.

'Wait... traveling through the void is impossible for someone as weak as him without an escort. And, it takes an Empyrean at worst to draw a teleportation talisman matrix, but those are strictly regulated by us. He may very well still be on this world, or he's used one of the stationary teleportation matrices to leave, which means he can be tracked.'

"Get me information about every teleportation event in the last 15 years! Immediately!"

"But —"

"IMMEDIATELY!"

The guards could only begin to scramble. They weren't ever supposed to leave their posts unless someone came in as a replacement, but what choice did they have now?

None of them had any idea that Dyon was lost in a sea of scorching gases that tore through the layers of his skin with each passing moment. It was as though they were whipping him from every direction and wouldn't be satisfied until he was left as nothing but bone.

However, he had already crossed the first of seven tiers and was about to enter the eighth, a place where only Berolt himself had been in the last several billion years of their existence.

Chapter 2190: Tovias

Dyon's mind slowly churned.

If one compared the state this hidden world core space was in now compared to 15 years ago, it would be easy to realize that it was now even more dangerous and violent, the exact opposite of what Dyon had been going for.

However, Dyon didn't seem to have much of a reaction to this. He quietly floated through the miasma of hot gases, his skin and flesh being eaten away at, without so much as a change in expression.

This was maybe the most difficult thing Dyon had to do in his life. Not only was the Dark Flame bubble world's core far more powerful than that of the desert bubble world, but in order to balance it, Dyon needed to tread a path of his martial way he was never really fond of.

The way of this Dark Flame world was far more in line with Dyon's tendencies. Darkness... fire... emotions of rage, arrogance, oppressiveness...

However, if he wanted to balance this world core out with his own creation, he needed to be the opposite of these things. He had to tend toward the light, to dive into the world of water and ice, to tap into emotions of love, calmness, and humility.

Maybe if it was a world with a different tendency, Dyon would have already succeeded. But, even on the 20th year, Dyon still floated through the 8th tier, his progress as slow as an ant's.

\*\*

The mood of the retired Patriarch had become steadily worse over the past several years. No one had seen his innocent smile in just as long and he seemed to have aged countless years in such a short span of time.

His gaze seemed clouded by a perpetual red. Even his own granddaughter couldn't bear being in the same room as him for too long.

"If I knew this would happen, I would have killed that boy the moment I laid eyes on him!" Patriarch Nightwell grit his teeth.

He and his wife sat in their room, a bed that hadn't been used in centuries a distance from the round table they sat around.

They both held gloomy expressions. Their Nightwell Clan should have been happy after securing control of the world core for another ten million years. But, the atmosphere felt as though they had lost.

To be outmaneuvered by a mortal was a hard pill to swallow. It made it worse that they had this very mortal to thank for the victory that they should be enjoying. He gave them happiness, and he snatched it away as though he was the Immortal and they were the mortals.

If that wasn't already bad enough, their daughter seemed to very clearly be on his side.

"Have we really not found him yet?"

"He must have used some profound camouflage technique. Even after going through all of the teleportations in the last 15 years, we haven't found anything that matched him.

"We had to start going through them one by one, checking for odd energy fluctuations. That alone took three years, but we still didn't find anything. So, we had to broaden the range of the search, checking for shipments with high energy fluctuations and vitality that might fall into the range of humans.

"There were easily thousands of times that number in comparison to simple teleportations, so even now we haven't found a thing even 15 years later. It's a complete embarrassment. The old man even killed some of our most loyal guards in his rage."

"Forget it, he won't be able to hide eventually." Mistress Nighthwell's visage twisted with killing intent. "He'll eventually fall and then my baby can clear her mind of such nonsense. If this little mortal impedes the path of her Dao Heart... I'll tear him to shreds no matter what the consequences!"

"We don't have time to deal with this any longer. The youths who participated in the final three rounds and performed well enough to enter the world core trial have almost finished healing from their wounds. We need to appropriately accommodate them or else they will look down on our Nighthwell Clan."

Though they controlled the world core, they still had the obligation to share some of its benefits with others. The youths that placed in the top 3 of each Clan were allowed to enter the world core to temper their daos and earn the embroidery on their robes. They couldn't allow the gloomy atmosphere of their Nighthwell Mansion to be exposed in such a way, or it would impact their prestige.

Even if it didn't have immediate effects, down the road it could become a weakness their enemies could grasp.

"Are they coming as well?" Mistress Nighthwell retracted her murderous gaze, replacing it with a hint of apprehension.

"They always will. We are not powerful enough to stop them, so we must acquiesce."

"Sharing the truths of our world core with outsiders has never sat right with me. And, they will take the opportunity to harass our little girl as well. I won't hold back my temper if I see such shamelessness again!"

"Just endure." Patriarch Nightwell said plainly. "If father breaks through, we'll have some leeway. Even if he doesn't, Little Crystella will definitely succeed in breaking down that barrier one day. This won't be the state of affairs forever. The Nightwell Clan will reclaim our Well Ancestor's pride."

...

"... Did we hear you clearly, Tier 3 General Tovias...?"

"I don't like repeating myself. There's been a draft for this Star Segment. The Spiritual Sages have predicted a Surge is coming. Your Dark Flame bubble world will take part in this.

"The draft list has already been sent to you in advance. It was taken directly from only those who have registered to the Void Army. This is part of the job."

Patriarch Nightwell's expression turned downcast.

He had been preparing to receive youths from a rival bubble world just today, but he had never expected that their arrival to come with this sort of news.