

The Nameless 471

Chapter 471 Black Jade

The truth was that Queen Acacia felt very much responsible for this, seeing that she had been the catalyst for them leaving in the first place.

But, that was a memory she didn't want to have to revisit... Not now.

That said, she still felt guilty about accelerating her husband's mental illness. He had pushed himself so hard for her benefit. Now, though, there was a solution right in front of them. And, as fate would have it, it came in the form of their son in law – a son in law Kawa had a very good impression of.

"Husband. Dyon's soul strength is no less than the Higher Essence stage. That I'm certain of."

King Belmont nodded. "It's likely even higher than that since he can hide it from us so well. Even when he was going all out against Kawa when he thought she was a danger to them, he still kept the leak of his soul power restrained. Despite his personality, it seems this boy is quite cautious."

King Acacia paused. "So, that's how he reacted to you so well?... How is something like that even possible?..."

The four of them looked at each other. They had each thought of an answer. But, they each knew very well that if they said those words, they would be severely punished.

Knowing this, Kawa shook her head. "You never finished explaining the story behind the sword."

"Ah..." King Acacia looked off in the distance. He couldn't help but sigh as he watched his daughter so diligently and lovingly tend to Dyon's wound and bandages. "I don't think describing it as just a sword is appropriate. But, I have no idea how he gained the approval of such a weapon..."

If Dyon thought back to the time he found his black-jade sword, he too would have had shivers down his spine.

At the time, the sword had every intention of killing him. In fact, it had pierced toward Dyon so powerfully and with such killing intent that it had even projected Dyon's death to him. There was a moment where Dyon really felt that he was dead. Had it not been for his soul strength, he would have likely had a mental break down.

But, there was something else Dyon's soul had given him that day: affinity for weapons. Unbeknownst to even King Acacia, it would likely be harder to find a weapon that wouldn't accept Dyon than it would be to become a Transcendent expert. And that was simply because of his weapon's hall manifestation.

"I'm not sure if the child has realized this yet," King Acacia continued, "but that weapon has the ability to change form. Whether that be its size or essence. And, most glaringly, it can hide its power. It's just that a Spiritual level weapon is as far as its willing to belittle itself. The fact it allowed Dyon to hide its power even further is... I don't know..."

During Dyon's fight outside the legacy world, he had used his Demon Emperor's Will body technique. However, at the time, he hadn't mastered the perfect form. As such, he expanded to a 3-meter-tall version of himself. But, the surprising part was that his sword had grown with him.

Dyon had assumed that this was his fault. Because he didn't have enough strength, the sword was suppressing itself to be with him.

Although Dyon was partially correct, he wasn't entirely so. The sword didn't have to increase in size to increase its power output. It had only done so to suit Dyon's increased size and maintain proportions. No other weapon had the ability to do such a thing. Or, more accurately, very few did.

"In the past, as you might know, the 25th White Mother married into the Demon Qilin family.

"Because of the lineage of the Celestial Deer was so robust and profound, this marriage was wholeheartedly accepted by the Demon Qilins. At the time, the Celestial Deer Sect was the most powerful sect in this quadrant. Well, it was among the most powerful, but was normally accepted as the best due to its array alchemists.

"In fact, the 25th White Mother's husband jumped over many obstacles to marry her. Despite being a half step to supreme level beast, much like the 25th White Mother, the celestial deer had once been favoured as supreme beasts themselves. It was only that their blood was beginning to dilute with each

passing generation. Because of this, they fell from the ranks of supreme beasts and into the ranks of the transcendent beasts.

“However, there was only an infinitesimally small disparity between them and that next level. The lineages necessary to once again become supreme beasts were still being held in their blood. It was just that it was so diluted that it required more and more talent with each passing generation to reach that level. So, the solution that the Celestial Deer Clan, not sect, found was to marry their best and brightest to beasts capable of birthing children that could break through this barrier for them so they could once again become supreme beasts.

“As you might guess, the Demon Qilin clan wasn’t the best option. Not by a long shot. Despite not being Supreme beasts anymore, there were many other supreme beast level clans willing to marry into the celestial deer clan because their affiliated sect was that powerful. To have the backing of the celestial deer sect was something to be proud of.

“But, the 25th White Mother fell for the first in line genius of the demon qilin clan and he decided that he’d fight for her, so that’s what he did.

“His competitors weren’t few. There were countless beast races willing to fight and claw for this opportunity. There was no doubt that it was a bloody battle and one where many tears were shed. Who knew how many geniuses fell just for the chance at this union.

“However, among those that participated... none were more powerful than the Black Jade Dragons.”

“Black Jade dragons?” King Belmont’s eyes flashed. “The Daiyu...”

Chapter 472 Weapon

King Acacia looked off toward Dyon. The sword still hung loosely from his hand, even as he was oblivious to the story behind it.

Queen Acacia was starting to understand the direction the story was going. After all, although she hadn’t known about the weapon, she was very clear on the enmity between the Daiyu and the Celestial Deer Sect. It was just that she hadn’t expected it to reach so far back.

But then she suddenly thought of something she hadn’t been able to connect until just now.

"If what you say is correct, husband, and the enmity between the Celestial Deer Sect and the Daiyu started over marriage and not their clash of philosophy... How was this even allowed? Qilins and Dragons are all under a single banner. They thrive together as a mix of transcendent and supreme beasts. Shouldn't they be together?..."

Kawa didn't pull this ideology out of thin air. Kitsune's were divided into thirteen distinct factions, and yet they were still together as one. The same should have been true of Qilins and Dragons. They both originated from the same tight knit blood lines. Usually their decisions should have come together. So, why then were the Black Jade dragons allowed to war against a sect one of their own had married into? That should have brought backlash from the other Dragon and Qilin clans. Especially since that alliance should have benefited them all as a whole, no matter which of them married the 25th White Mother..

A sad expression appeared on Kawa's features as she really thought about what she said. Were the Kitsune really so united?... If they were, how would her husband ever be in such a state?

Seeing how his wife almost immediately regretted her words, King Acacia thought nothing of it. Instead, he lovingly covered her hand with his. How often had he let her know that he would do it all again a hundred times over? But, it seemed to still weigh on her heart.

"It's because of this that this weapon is even here now." King Acacia continued. "Because of their culture, the Drago-Qilin universes place emphasis on your own strength. Because they're so promiscuous, family lineage takes a backseat to acute power. So, the demon qilin was given a chance to prove himself.

"However, this was a tall task. The Black Jade dragons were supreme level beasts with access to supreme level legacies. But, the demon qilins were a step below that, being only transcendent. And as such, they were capped in their capabilities.

"The demon qilin knew this, so he took a risk. Are you all aware of how the dragons and qilins came to be?" King Acacia asked.

King Belmont nodded, "Unlike us humanoid beings, meaning humans and elves and the like, beasts are often born of necessity. They fill in a need of universe. Our totem beast, the ice and fire phoenixes, are responsible for life and reincarnation. That is what they were birthed into existence for and that's the

role the fulfill. Even though they are now gone along with dark phoenixes due to their inner warring, their will is still very much alive.

“This role is also true of beasts like Kawa. Her Kitsune bloodline is specifically linked to the rivers and streams of the world. It’s a tranquility that her personality doesn’t exactly match.” King Belmont coughed, averting his gaze from his long-time friend.

Queen Acacia rolled her eyes, ignoring the statement and continuing, “Dragons though... They have an innate wildness and power. They’re meant to rule over everything. It’s not that they’re the most powerful. It’s just to say that the perfect dragon would be unmatched under the heavens.”

What Ri’s mother meant was something you had to have a nuanced understanding of. Just because a beast tribe was meant to represent something, doesn’t mean they could without any boundaries. Dragons were meant to be kings, but that didn’t always mean they could rule. By the same token, despite being masters of life and reincarnation, phoenixes were extinct.

Beasts were meant to maintain a natural balance. They were almost like footholds for laws that fundamentally connected with what the nature of things wanted to put into place. This was exactly why beasts could practically cultivate without any more effort than eating and sleeping entailed. They were already created to grow along a set path and only the greatest among them reached that peak height.

King Acacia nodded. “That peak level of sovereignty and reverence was something that only a few dragons and qilins in their long and storied history had matched. But, none were more polarizing and arrogant than the Dragon King.”

Big Red raised an eyebrow. “Such a simple name?”

His wife shook her head. “And ‘Big Red’ is what exactly?”

A light laughter filled the skybox, even King Acacia smiled.

“Like I said, he was arrogant. He was so sure that his life would place him among the legends and so sure that no one would surpass him, that he gave himself an easily replaceable name. And, even to now, no one has dared to name themselves as such.”

“But what is the significance of this Dragon King?” Big Red asked.

“Well, as his legend would attest to, he transcended. But, because of his arrogance, he absolutely abhorred the idea of anyone ever obtaining his faith seed. As you all know, dragons are promiscuous, and the Dragon King was no exception. So, the possible landing spots for his faith seed were far too numerous and would only increase as generations passed.

“However, he thought of a solution to this. On the day he transcended he sealed away his faith seed. The demon qilin, knowing he needed to become more powerful, had one goal. And that was to unseal the Dragon King’s faith seed and take it for himself.”

“You mean like Amethyst...” King Belmont inadvertently trained his gaze on Madeleine. Not able to stop himself from sighing.

King Acacia shook his head. “Not like Amethyst. She used the gates and a temple. But...

“The Dragon King used a weapon.”

Chapter 473 Feels Like..

“You don’t mean...” King Belmont nearly jumped in surprise. No wonder King Acacia had said that Dyon had no idea the kind of thing he had brought out. But, there was something off. Something like a Faith Seed... It should be much more obvious and much more powerful. The presence of a Spiritual level weapon was far below the type of presence a faith seed should have.

King Acacia sighed. “Like I said. The Dragon King was arrogant. The weapon acts as a seal not only for his faith seed itself, but also the power it wields. It’s just that his arrogance didn’t allow him to seal any more of his power than he did.”

From King Acacia’s explanation, anyone could tell just how eccentric such a personality was. The Dragon King didn’t want anyone seeking to use his power, but at the same time, he couldn’t stand the idea of anything attached to his being, being too weak. As such, he sealed himself away, but not completely. He wanted others to know that even in a weakened state, a mere piece of his cultivation was still at the level of a weapon others could only dream of having.

"But then... If he didn't want people to know about his faith seed, how did people come to know..." Big Red asked.

"This can't be blamed on the Dragon King. The reason Amethyst trusted the Belmont's in protecting her temple before it disappeared was because faith seeds cannot be hidden. Think about it, even death and reincarnation cannot erase a faith seed from existence.

"No matter how many times the seed is passed along from generation to generation, it will always manifest again. How can something like that ever be perfectly hidden?" King Acacia replied. "So, the Dragon King never bothered to hide the fact that he sealed his Faith Seed. What he did do was set up a trial, much like what I assume Amethyst did."

"Was someone like him really okay with basically being used?... A weapon is nothing more than a tool, after all..." Queen Acacia murmured.

Kawa was correct. All of this seemed highly counter productive. For someone so arrogant to want to be used as a weapon seemed odd.

King Acacia nodded. "This is exactly why the trial wasn't so simple as it seemed.

"Before the time of the demon qilin, many had tried to surpass the trial. But, the problem was different than you might assume... Every single one of them succeeded."

"What?" Big Red spoke out, trying to make sure he hadn't heard incorrectly.

"That's right." King Acacia confirmed. "The trial was a joke. Or, more accurately, it seemed to adjust its difficulty just enough that you would have to try your best but would succeed in the end regardless. If ten people took the trial, ten would pass. If a thousand people took it, a thousand would pass.

"So, you're probably wondering why the demon qilin would try this then. How would he prove himself by passing a trial anyone could? Well... The problem lied with the weapon.

“In a weapon to master relationship, there’s a soul bond. This is how it works with beast companions as well. For convenience, Kawa and I also have this soul bond. It allows us foresight into each other’s thoughts, information about each other’s whereabouts, and a connection few others can reach. Normally, the reason why this isn’t possible from human to human or elf to elf is that humans and elves don’t have a strong enough connection to the natural order of things. But, that’s a complex topic for another time.

“The problem with the Dragon King’s weapon was that it would take advantage of this soul bond to take hold of the relationship. A large part of the reason why the Dragon King’s legacy lives on even millions of years after his Transcendence is because he’s essentially forced his consciousness upon hundreds to thousands of hopeful warriors.

“That said, the demon qilin still tried his luck. As one might expect, he was ridiculed as a wishful thinker. Many in the Drago-Qilin alliance wrote him off as a dead man and began to prepare to choose the best suitor for the 25th White Mother among the Black Jade Dragons – who, at the time, had three geniuses that were of very similar stature, talent and potential.

“However, the demon qilin had one thing that no other attempter had before: The love of a Celestial Deer.”

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Down below, as King Acacia was speaking, the second round was raging onward. Zaltarish and his elder sister, Akash, were a part of this round, and they seemed to be doing well.

To the side, Dyon still held his sword in his hand as Ri and Madeleine tended to him.

But suddenly, something odd happened.

It had been years since Dyon had even thought of his jet-black sword. In fact, the most time he had ever spent with it was likely right now. In their previous interactions, it was strapped to his back. And, he had only used it to fight a single time. Neither were occasions like this one.

Dyon felt the sword shift in his palm, causing him to look down in confusion.

Ri and Madeleine, seemingly noticing the oddity, looked down as well.

What the three of them saw was a slowly warping sword. It began to shrink from its six-foot-long length.

5 feet. 3 feet. 1 foot.

The blade completely disappeared.

Then, the handle began to warp as well. Its foot-long length twisted around Dyon's wrist, sliding around his fingers and almost becoming a liquid in the process.

Soon, a black band sat on Dyon's wrist. It was at least 3 inches wide and fit snugly, as though it was perfectly customized for Dyon.

However, that wasn't the most shocking part...

Dyon suddenly felt as though an entirely new world had been opened up to him. Where before, it was difficult for him to sense energy cultivation energies, it was almost too easy now. Where before he could hardly sense the Demon Sage blood within him, it was almost too easy now. Dyon's body had undergone a qualitative change. If he had to guess what it felt like, he would describe it in just a few words.

'This must be what having a constitution feels like...'

Chapter 474 Just Wait

Dyon looked down at his wrist, astonished. "So, this is the true you..."

Madeleine, having seen Dyon use this weapon before, was the more astonished of her and Ri. She had never heard of a Spiritual level weapon changing form. In fact, she had never heard of any weapon changing form at all.

"What is it?" She asked.

Dyon shook his head, still surprised by all the information being filtered into him. It wasn't just about the history of the Dragon King, but also the world that was just opened up around him.

The truth was that even with the set of meridians his grand teacher gave him, his energy cultivation was still poor. The meridians were no different or any more special than any other set of meridians. The only thing that made them stand out was that they were perfectly tempered and opened by Gama energy. This tempering allowed Dyon to be more powerful even compared to other peak first grade experts, but it didn't improve his ability to energy cultivate. This was why he repressed his cultivation..

Dyon fully understood just how difficult his energy cultivation technique was. When his grand teacher called it the best in existence, he wasn't exaggerating. But, the problem with using the best method was that it often came with the best difficulties – as ironic as that may sound.

[Inner World: Sanctuary], Dyon's energy cultivation technique, was perfectly tailored to fight in a world made for wills. In the future, when Dyon needed to conquer universes, that would often mean entering the domain of others. This would put him, as the aggressor, in a disadvantage position. Why? Because the ruling experts or clans would have a monopoly on the wills in that universe. If Dyon suddenly stepped into a universe that didn't allow him to use his wills to their fullest extent, wouldn't he be handicapping himself?

In the past, experts leaped over this hurdle using two methods. The first was to make sure that your ubiquitous wills were powerful. These were wills available in large quantities in any universe. Simple wills such as wind, fire, water, etc.

The second method was to be completely overbearing. To be so much more powerful that any suppression of your more powerful wills didn't mean anything.

However, this energy cultivation method provided a third solution. Why allow yourself to be suppressed at all? By using your meridians as a map to construct your own inner world, you could maintain your wills in peak condition no matter where you were. In addition, it also came with the added benefit of allowing much more energy storage than any other energy cultivation method – aside for a select few like Ri's void cultivation method.

That said, imagine the difficulty of constructing your own world. Now imagine the difficulty of constructing that own world, when your energy cultivation talent was so poor?...

The first and second steps of [Inner World: Sanctuary] were the same as any other cultivation method – with the caveat that its foundation stage was much more thorough than many others. But, its third stage, the beginning of the Essence Gathering stage, was entirely different animal... If Dyon was correct, had he entered that stage without the Dragon King's help, it would have taken him centuries to construct his world – maybe even more than a millennia.

That in itself wasn't the problem, though... The real problem was what sacrifices were necessary to construct this world. In that time, Dyon wouldn't be able to use his wills, his soul strength, or his energy cultivation. He would only have access to his body's strength while everything was diverted to the creation of this world.

The truth was that it was only because his soul was involved that creating that world would only take centuries. His soul's prowess was able to make up for his lack of energy cultivation talent. But, even still, it would take that long...

However, this treasure he had just stumbled upon changed everything. Coupling the boost in his energy cultivation talent with his ridiculous soul talent, it would only take five years – ten years at the most! That cut down the time needed for his world construction by fractions of the original value.

In addition, if Dyon hibernated during that length of time, he could ensure that the time needed would be closer to five years than ten years.

This made Dyon sigh a breath of relief. He had been warring with himself recently about this. He had even spoken to Ri and Madeleine about it. To them, they would rather deal with centuries of Dyon being weak by their side, than a less amount of time with him hibernating. But, if the time was significantly shorter, even they might find it to be worth it.

Dyon suddenly grinned, picking up Ri and Madeleine in his arms and twirling them around happily. He didn't seem to care about the gazes of jealousy he was receiving.

In the distance, though. There was another character watching this scene angrily that Dyon had long since erased from his mind. He didn't think this person was relevant anymore, but maybe that was a mistake...

Evelyn Niveus. The first in line genius of the Niveus God Sect – a sect that only accepted women with God and Heaven level constitutions and was previously Delia's home.

She was currently stewing in her anger. Because she knew she was too weak to compete in the overall rankings, she, much like Ava, had chosen to partake in the Meridian Formation rankings. However, who would have thought that she as a first in line genius would lose to a girl two years younger than her?

She sat at second place. And, just when she thought she could watch Dyon fail miserably to make her feel better, he had broken out and outshone her yet again.

'Breathe, this is all because of a calculated sacrifice.'

Evelyn had a God Level constitution. In fact, it was in the top 10. Although it wasn't as powerful as Delia's or Ri's or Madeleine's, if Evelyn was placed in any other universe, she would be an unprecedented genius. But, she had given up her virginity to her fiancé – now husband. And because she had been cultivating a technique that required chastity, it had ruined her entire foundation. The mere fact she was still powerful enough to place second was a testament to how truly talented she was.

However, she wasn't stupid. She had done all of this for the benefit of her future, and there was no future in this universe. All she needed was a cultivation cleansing pill and she could start over. And, because she had stolen Delia's pill, she would cultivate even faster with a fully awakened constitution.

That said, she still wanted revenge.

'Just wait.' She thought to herself. 'My husband will come claim me soon. We'll see how long you can smile for.'

Chapter 475 Same Thing

"What do you mean he had the love of a celestial deer? Did the 25th White Mother help him?" Queen Acacia asked.

King Acacia nodded. "In a way, yes. Have you all never wondered why despite the fact celestial will is so rare, even across all of the universes, that it still isn't classified as a supreme law?"

This was indeed an oddity to them.

Usually, a supreme law was assigned as such based on its complexity, power and by proxy, its rarity. After all, if it was very complex and powerful, it would without a doubt also be rare. It was even weirder because celestial will originated from peak supreme level beasts – the celestial deer. Although they had fallen from those past heights, that didn't belittle the origins of the will itself.

However, celestial will was never classified as such. In fact, Dyon was aware that despite its potent levels of purity, celestial will was actually second to another unnamed will when it came to purification. Many thought that this was the reason why it wasn't labeled as a supreme law. After all, a supreme law should be in a category by itself. There was a reason space will wasn't a supreme law, and that was because void will existed..

But, those who thought this would be wrong.

"The reason that celestial will isn't known as a supreme law is because it takes a special type of person to raise it to such a level."

King Belmont scrunched his brows, he didn't seem to agree. "Why would there be such a restriction. There are plenty of supreme laws that are restricted to certain people. For example, our neighbors, the Uidah. We had many battles with them in our youth. Over that time, we came to understand that their Ethereal Permeation was a supreme law, albeit even the best of them only reached the 5th or 6th level of it.

"That aside, the Uidah have a special blood line that allows them to learn ethereal permeation. No matter how often we battled them or studied them, we were never able to learn such a will. But, isn't ethereal permeation still known as a supreme law?"

"You aren't wrong," King Acacia continued, "but, it doesn't apply exactly as you'd assume. Celestial will and ethereal permeation are similar in a few ways. For example, they are both exceedingly difficult to learn. If you don't have a person willing to give you a kernel of it and don't have the affinity or genius for it, you will likely never learn it."

King Belmont and the rest of them nodded. They all assumed that Ri and Madeleine learned celestial will because Dyon was of course willing to diligently guide them. They also knew that with Madeleine's

constitution, it was no wonder that she raised it to the levels it was at. After all, her constitution was purity incarnate and her personality matched it to perfection.

It was also fairly obvious that as the primary and only disciple of the 25th White Mother, that Dyon would have been guided by her. In fact, they even sensed her essence blood within him.

“However, that is where the similarities stop. If someone is willing to guide you in ethereal permeation, you too can come to understand the first level. It’s just that no one of the Uidah clan would ever do such a thing for an outsider – that, and it’s punishable by death to do so.

“But the difference is that when guided for ethereal permeation, you come out with the entire supreme law. However, when you are guided in celestial will, whether you can manifest it into its true supreme law status or not depends on you and no one else.”

A sudden realization came over those listening. Celestial will could be learned by anyone. Just like anyone can learn any will. But, what separated it from others was that a set affinity was needed to bring it to its optimal level.

“Celestial Will is special. And the people who can make it shine at its full capacity are even more so.” King Acacia continued.

“So, the 25th White Mother could?” Big Red asked.

Surprisingly, King Acacia shook his head no. “No. She couldn’t. Or, what I should say is that she only could for a brief moment in her life and she never reached that peak level again.”

Confusion colored their faces. What kind of break through was it that could be rescinded, just like that? Why was this celestial will so fickle?

King Acacia sighed. “What I’m trying to say is that there was only one moment of perfection in the 25th White Mother’s life that led her to having the perfect mental state.

“When the demon qilin needed her most, the White Mother was willing to give up her life for him. She had no regrets or qualms, in fact, she believed herself to have reached the peak of what it meant to live.

“There was nothing else that was important besides the moment between the two of them. Everything else seemed insignificant.

“The clash of their clans, the raging suitors, the demon qilin’s competition, the views of their parents and ancestors. Nothing mattered.

“In that one moment between the two of them, the Celestial Deer bloodline reached supreme levels for but an instant. And in that instant, her celestial will became a supreme law.”

“Just what happened?...” Queen Acacia whispered.

“The same thing that always happened. The same thing that had every time before repeated itself without missing a single step.

“The demon qilin passed the trial with ease. In fact, his trial was slightly more difficult than the norm because he was already talented to begin with – and as you all know, the trial adjusted just enough to make it a difficult task, but not beyond completing.

“But, when the demon qilin finally got the sword in his hand, he lost himself. He was no longer himself – but had become the Dragon King reincarnated yet again.”

Chapter 476 Until...

King Acacia sighed. “The demon qilin’s gamble failed. He had thought that his one chance to win over his competitors was to use the talent of the Dragon King. But, the Dragon King ended up making use of him.”

King Acacia began to recount the happenings.

It seemed that having taken over the body of yet another person, the Dragon King once again began to assert why he was the best.

The problem was that there was nothing the Dragon King hated more than peace and unity. Or, more accurately, he didn't want peace or unity unless it meant that he was the ruler of all things and things went his way. However, being in the body of the demon qilin, he obviously didn't have the power to do such a thing – not yet anyway.

So, he bided his time, pretending to be the demon qilin. Surprisingly, despite being arrogant, the Dragon King was also intelligent. He didn't mind pretending to be something he wasn't for the sake of his survival. After all, if people found out that he was here to sow chaos yet again, they'd kill his host and send him back to the body of his weapon..

The truth was that the real Dragon King had already ascended. But, as Dyon's grand teacher would attest, being ascended only meant constant warring between factions. The Dragon King loved conflict, but only if it meant he had a clear path to victory. It was like he wanted the game mode on difficult, but not impossible. And, when you were stuck in an all-out war against those equally as talented as you, that was exactly what the game mode was on – impossible.

Much like Dyon's grand teacher, he enjoyed projecting his mind to the lower the planes of existence and asserting himself again. As such, the demon qilin was the perfect opportunity.

Covertly, he began to sow discord. He slowly revealed his talent and raised himself up in the demon qilin clan before asserting that they should have more power in the alliance. All the while, he was also proving himself to be one of the better candidates for marriage with the 25th White Mother. But, with the life span of martial artists – and beasts especially – no one was in a hurry to marry her off. So, the Dragon King had plenty of time.

Soon, wars began to break out. They were small at first, just between lesser transcendent level beasts – something the upper echelons would never pay attention to. But, soon, it began to grow in scale. And, it seemed that only one clan was winning time and time again: The Demon Qilins.

Many didn't understand what was happening and why their once peaceful alliance was breaking apart. But, the more astute began to connect events back to the demon qilin's wish to conquer the Dragon King's weapon. The problem was that by now, the Dragon King had already cultivated the demon qilin into a formidable mid level dao expert.

That in and of itself wasn't so impressive – the cultivation level, that is. After all, these were peak level existences. Even half step to transcendent, although rare, did exist. What was a mere mid level dao expert to them? But, that was only if you were referring to a normal dao expert...

Not only had the Dragon King made the demon qilin and peak first grade expert, the cultivation methods, wills and techniques were all so far past what they had access to, that even those peak experts didn't dare take him lightly.

The Dragon King came from a time even millions of years before even that day and age. The knowledge he had was untouchable. And, when you consider the insights to cultivation he had as a transcendent, it was like inputting cheat codes to a game you had already played hundreds to even thousands of times.

By the time everyone realized that the Dragon King had won yet again and was about to rule them all, the 25th White Mother was already in despair at having lost the love of her life. What was the use in having his body if the person inside wasn't the same?

But, what she also knew was that the Dragon King couldn't be allowed to rule again.

The Dragon King had a habit of taking multiple wives, but he would always have one trophy wife. Usually, he chose the most esteemed and talented woman of that generation and would swap her out as long as someone better was born or came along. In that generation, it just so happened that the 25th White Mother was the best there was. There was a beauty beyond words and a talent the Celestial Deers hadn't seen in millennia. So, the Dragon King wanted her.

Having no need to hide his identity anymore, he proposed marriage to the Celestial Deer Sect, something they had little to no choice but to accept.

On their wedding night, the 25th White Mother resigned herself. She had no intention of losing her virginity to a man that only looked like her love – not without a price. At the same time, she didn't want to leave this world without ensuring that he regained himself – even if that meant it would be in her absence.

"As you all know," King Acacia continued, "there are two wills that celestial deer excel in more than nearly anyone else. The first is celestial will. And the second, is the not as rare, but very powerful, crystal will.

“Crystal will is meant to amplify and celestial will works to purify. The 25th White Mother devised a plan to use the celestial will infused with a celestial deer’s virginity, coupled with a crystal encasement technique to amplify its effect to the extreme...” King Acacia took a deep breath.

“The problem with this crystal encasement technique is that the 25th White Mother just wasn’t powerful enough to seal the Dragon King. If she was, this would never have been a problem to begin with. So, she had to make a sacrifice. For the sake of saving who she saw as her true husband, she planned to use her life force to fuel the technique. Something that would without a doubt lead to her death.”

They all remained silent. This was truly a sacrifice etched with deep unselfishness. If she became the wife of the Dragon King, her life would be prosperous. After all, he was the most powerful man in the universe at that point. What worried would she ever have? It wasn’t as though the Dragon King was a cruel man, he only sought power. Even if he replaced her in the future, he would never treat her poorly.

The 25th White mother had seen all of this. But, she still chose to give up her life because she knew there was at least one person that wouldn’t be able to ever be at ease... her love... The demon qilin.

“But, before she could sacrifice herself, something amazing happened.” King Acacia continued, “In the instant she lost her virginity and she prepared herself to give up her life, her celestial will broke through the barrier and became a supreme law.

“In that instant, her celestial will, which was already at the 9th level of an intent, one with dao, suddenly became a supreme law... One cannot fathom the level a supreme law of that level brings. We had enough issues with ethereal permeation and it was only at the lower will levels. The Dragon King’s consciousness didn’t stand a chance and was completely cleansed from the demon qilin.

“After that, the Dragon King’s weapon was sealed away in the Celestial Deer Sect’s vault, never to be touched again.”

King Belmont, Acacia, Big Red and their wives looked off into the distance, all towards one young man happily spinning with his wives in his arms.

“Until now...”

Chapter 477 Death Bracket

“Dyon!” Ri, still being spun around in Dyon’s arms finally called out, blushing profusely.

Dyon finally settled his wives down, but the grin on his face hadn’t disappeared.

“What are you so happy about?” Ri asked, patting down the wrinkles in her dress – clearly exasperated.

Madeleine giggled. If Dyon was happy, she was happy.

“If what I feel is correct,” Dyon secretly messaged with using his wind will, “then it might only take me about ten years instead of the centuries it would have before.”.

“You mean?” The two of them looked down at Dyon’s wrist. Was that weapon really so spectacular?

In typical fashion, they had already understood why Dyon’s master’s memories had no information on the weapon. It without a doubt had to do with the destruction of the Celestial Deer Sect.

Ri and Madeleine smiled. They knew how taxing it would have been on Dyon’s psyche to not be able to protect them. If that feeling was extended for centuries, who knows if their husband would have come out the same on the other end. But, if it was only such a short time, then even Dyon would find it acceptable. After all, they could spend all of that time cultivating in the Epistemic Tower. They wouldn’t have to challenge other universes until Dyon was ready.

Suddenly, though, their smiles froze into bitter ones. Looking past Dyon, the second bracket had just concluded. Akash, who was ranked within the top 80, managed to keep her spot and move on. Zaltarish had also managed to replace the top 100 ranker and take his place in the final rounds. However, what left Ri and Madeleine feeling bitter was the fact their names were set for the 3rd bracket.

On the surface, this was good. The fact they were together meant there was less pressure. If Planet Deimos wanted to work together against them, they would have to split their forces. But, what wasn’t so good was the list of names aside from them.

The truth was that there was little to no one who could rival Madeleine outside of the top 20. Even when she fought Ri, she was handicapped. After all, one of her most powerful wills was sealed.

Music will was something that Madeleine based much of her combat on. Before she earned Amethyst's faith seed, all of Madeleine's attacks were a combination of celestial will and music will – usually with music will amplifying the former. So, when she had that stripped from her, her combat prowess dropped to Ri's level.

That wasn't to say Ri was weak, of course. After all, Ri was still a meridian formation expert and Madeleine had long since stepped into the Essence Gathering level. This was because Ri had restarted her cultivation twice and she was also two years younger than Madeleine.

The problem was that Dyon's enemies also knew this... So, they faced a dilemma. In a system where only one expert per rank tier was allowed into a bracket, how could you possibly pressure someone as powerful as Madeleine? And the answer they found, ironically connected to the "True Top Ten".

Because Dyon's name had been smeared, the top ten was actually taken to be as the top eleven. But, the problem with this system was that it resulted in one less top 20 member and one more top 100 member. This meant that no matter what, there would be at least one or two groups that did not follow the normal rules.

Knowing this... The 'organizers' took full advantage.

Suddenly, the booming voice of Elder Den filled the stadium. "As you all know, there's been an imbalance caused in the bracket due to some unforeseen cheaters."

Elder Den wanted to sneer, but the response of the crowd shocked him.

Boos rained down at Elder Den's words. Curses began being flung at how rigged and biased the Cavositas 'Clown' Clan was. The crowd had clearly had enough of being manipulated and were tired of being seen as stupid. They had seen for themselves how powerful Dyon was, even if he did cheat, it wasn't so blatant a difference between him and the top ten for the Cavositas to keep revolving the matches around his mistake – a mistake they didn't even have proof of.

Hearing his clan being called a clown clan, Elder Den broke out into a mix of a cold sweat and anger. If he lost control of the crowd, especially like this, he'd be dealt with just like the previous announcer. He had to quickly remedy the situation.

“Please, Please, Understand. By unforeseen cheaters I only meant those who mislead others into falsely assumed the great Demon Sage was a cheater. Unfortunately, we cannot undo what has been done and the tournament must move forward!”

Seeing that this appeased the crowd a bit, Elder Den seemed to breathe a sigh of relief. But, Dyon wasn't taking this so lightly, because he too had seen the names on the list. Regardless of what they said, they were clearly still plotting. And they had brought his wives into the situation.

All of Dyon's previous happiness disappeared as his fists clenched.

“Because of the imbalance of the brackets, and to make up for our mistakes, we've decided to spice things up a bit. We won't insult your intelligence by saying that this was the most efficient way to do things, but, what we will say is that this is the most interesting way to do things.”

The interest of the crowd was clearly piqued. They were only in this for entertainment after all, if these new rules gave them more entertainment, they'd be quick to forgive.

“It's clear that we've made a few mistakes.” Elder Den continued. “So, it's become even clearer that there may be those ranked highly that simply don't deserve their spots.

“To counter balance this, we've decided to pit those high rankers against each other much sooner.”

Cheers erupted in the stands. Pit them against each other? Did this mean they were going to get top 100 caliber battles sooner?

Elder Den sneered. “I introduce you to our Death Bracket.”

Chapter 478 Set Fire

“Worry not,” Elder Den continued, “in consideration of the brave warriors who will be undergoing this final test, we will make sure to hold this as our last bracket. We only introduce it now to build up anticipation and allow those participating time to prepare.”

By now, Queen Acacia was boiling in anger. She had previously seen Dyon's signal to allow him to handle it, but how could he possibly handle this one? They were essentially sending off her daughter to die!

The crowd though, could care less. This twist was something they found entertaining and Elder Den's explanation was good enough for them to accept. Although, in reality, the explanation meant little to them.

"Don't be mad," Madeleine said with a smile, looking up at Dyon, "we would have had to fight them anyway..."

Dyon took deep breaths, trying to calm his breathing..

Calling this a death bracket left the title with little exaggeration. The Cavositas had decided that to solve the imbalance of rankers per bracket, they would flood a single bracket with every remaining top 30 ranker – come the final round.

Essentially, of the remaining seven top 20 rankers, every one of them would participate. This of course excluded Iris, who had been defeated by Dyon in the first bracket, and the top 20 ranker that participated in the second bracket along with Akash and Zaltarish. In addition to that, Ri just so happened to conveniently be the final top 30 ranker left to complete the brackets, and as such, was also placed into this death bracket.

This shouldn't have been a big deal, in reality. This was because if there were so many powerful foes at the top, there shouldn't have been a need for them to fight each other. Just by leisurely challenging non-rankers, they could have made it into the final nine.

However, there-in lied a problem... This wouldn't have been a death bracket unless there was actual competition, so the Cavositas played a very underhanded trick. As an "apology" to those who were eliminated by Dyon, that should very well be in the top 100 finalists, they were allowing those who had failed in previous rounds to participate.

In the end, the death bracket was organized to place all rankers on the stage. Unlike in previous brackets, the stage rulers were put in place rather than volunteered for. But, maybe the worst change was that stage wielders would no longer have the right to priority challenges. Instead, as they again tried

to mask as an “apology”, only those not ruling a stage would be allowed to challenge – challenges that couldn’t be ignored.

Many of the following bracket parameters were the same. However, instead of top 20 rankers getting 10pts, it was number 12 on the rankings that received 10pts. Then number 13 would receive 9pts. And, finally, Madeleine received 4pts as the 7th lowest ranking ranker, and Ri received 3pts as the 8th lowest ranking ranker. In this bracket, there were no other rankers unless they lost in other brackets and chose to participate. But, even then, they would only be given 1pt.

“Belmont, are you just going to allow this?” Kawa’s bestial aura was already threatening to tear the skybox apart. If it wasn’t for the fact she was restraining herself, everyone’s attention would without a doubt be on her.

King Belmont sighed. “The worst part about being a king is that you never have as much power as you think you do. I’m a monarch, but if I unilaterally make decisions, it will shake the balance. We’ve spent so many years making the Ragnor think that we care very little for things outside of cultivation, it wouldn’t be good to alert them of our power now.

“The only reason I didn’t stop Edrym from doing his little display when he arrived is because we’re all aware that his cultivation has fallen to the first celestial level. That isn’t something the Ragnor Patriarch would put in his eyes.

“You should know that the Cavositas never act unless with the approval of the Ragnor. It’s not just the Geb God Clan boy that’s seeking to prove himself, they’re only using that as an excuse to deal with Dyon. Like I said multiple times before, he’s dangerous.”

Lionel lightly snorted in the corner before going back to meditating. In his eyes, Madeleine should be his and his father was being much too lenient. Even knowing how dangerous the origins of this boy were, King Belmont was still willing to test him. That made Lionel angry despite the fact he didn’t show it.

“Don’t give me bullshit about how dangerous my son in law is.” Kawa responded. She wanted to continue, but that was as much as she dared to say. Anymore and even she didn’t know if she could hold off the action of the treaty.

To Kawa, much of the superstition around mortals was baseless drivel. In fact, there was a reason why even in all his anger, King Belmont, despite knowing the truth, didn't use Dyon's mortal status against him – although he did call him a commoner, or, more accurately, he agreed to Lionel calling him a commoner.

The truth was that Dyon wasn't the one who was dangerous. It was the bastard who sealed the mortals in the first place that was dangerous. Some so powerful that even celestial experts like them, and former dao formation experts like Elder Daiyu, could do nothing in the face of his treaty.

But, who cared how dangerous that entity was? Were they not trying to find a way to fight him right now? Did King Belmont not want Madeleine's virginity for his son as a way to bolster their clan's power to then fight this entity? Was their goal of sending their young talent to the Epistemic Tower not set in place in order to groom the future to be able to fight this entity?

So, what was this nonsense about how dangerous Dyon was or wasn't? With or without Dyon, they would be diving head first into the danger anyway!

King Belmont sighed. "I understand, Kawa."

He too understood this. This was why he had been willing to give Dyon a chance to prove himself – he didn't need Kawa to remind him.

"That said, we can't shelter them if we hope that they'll supersede our accomplishments. Look at Dyon, despite his boiling anger, he still has every intention of letting the two of them fight.

"The more I watch him, the more I understand how he grasped the hearts of my two god daughters.

"He'll let his rage sit and simmer, but he also wants them to be great in their own right. Then, when the time is ripe, he'll unleash that rage, and set fire to his enemies."

Chapter 479 Final

So, Dyon stood and watched as the brackets raged on. Nothing too outrageous happened from bracket three to eight.

Thor and Vidar made the Ragnor look strong and capable as usual. Thor with his stoic and firm martial arts and Vidar with his savage and often tasteless torturing of his opponents.

Caedlum treated these rounds no differently than he had the previous few. He used no weapon, preferring to use his fists as his main tool for combat. His red skin seemed to glow with every punch he through as he effortlessly glided his body through his fights with an elegant ease. However, this elegance was very clearly backed by powerful and robust bursts of energy, giving his style a shift from hard to soft and a snappiness that made him unpredictable.

Delia, who Dyon had been the most worried about in the non-death brackets, seemed to have the easiest time. Dyon could tell that she was being targeted by some Planet Deimos rankers, but they had been much too low tier to handle her. Something had fundamentally changed about Delia, and although Dyon didn't know exactly what it was, he was happy that it seemed like it was for the better.

Surprisingly, the reason Dyon had been the most worried never manifested itself. He had been apprehensive not because he doubted Delia, but more so because from what Ri and Madeleine told him, she had had her psyche attacked by an elder during her last fight. However, it seemed that that elder was either being held at bay or had forgotten about Delia. There was also the possibility that they were biding their time for something else... But, Dyon didn't want to think about that too much. All he could do was keep Delia by his side.

That said, although things weren't too out of the ordinary, there were some odd occurrences. For one, a few top rankers never challenged during their brackets. This led to the top 9 accumulating 108 points and excluding them from moving onwards.

It had gone under the radar for the first few, but after the third time, Dyon realized that something was wrong..

"They're stacking the deck," Dyon said softly. He was proven even more correct after the occurrences stopped at three. Why? Because if you excluded Madeleine and Ri from the death bracket rankers... There just so happened to be three top nine spots remaining.

Ri and Madeleine, though, were much more care free. They didn't seem to mind. While Dyon felt like his arrogance had brought trouble to his loved ones again, Ri and Madeleine felt different. To them, they didn't want Dyon to have to lower his head to anyone. They had been more angry than even Dyon was when his named was being smeared. So, how could they possibly trade a bit of safety for their

husband's pride? They would rather face the dangers with him. And, should anything happen to them, they knew fully well that he wouldn't rest until those responsible paid.

"Ri, I understand the sentimental value of the sword your mother left you, but would you like another one? I have plenty of Spiritual swords you could use." Dyon asked.

The truth was he had a whole armory of transcendent level weapons. In his first visit to the Celestial Deer Sect, he had found a special door using his innate aura that led him to their most valuable possession.

An ancient God clan like the celestial deer sect, who had experts as powerful as half step to transcendence, wouldn't have a lack of Spiritual level weapons. In fact, considering the demon sage had a supreme level tower, it was almost disappointing that the celestial deer sect, as an array alchemy sect, didn't have even more powerful weapons.

But, the truth was that even for them, supreme level weapons were a bit much. That said, Dyon's spatial ring and the Dragon King's weapon likely surpassed even that grade.

Ri's hand flashed as a sword appeared. It was normal in every way. In fact, it was the lowest of the common level weapons. Ri had always hung onto it because it was the first gift her mother had ever given her. Because she missed her mother, she refused to switch – she wanted it to act as a piece of the mom she remembered.

But, her mother was back now.

Kawa Acacia seemed to notice when Ri took out the sword nearly immediately. Tears welled up in her eyes as her sharp eyes trailed along the length of its common metal body.

As a martial expert, she could see the amount of work Ri had put in with this weapon. She saw the chips on its body and the wear of its handle. She even saw evidence of it being repaired again and again.

"Little Alex..." Kawa whispered. King Acacia lightly held onto his wife's hand. "You'd handicap yourself like this?..."

If Queen Acacia knew that Ri had fought for months on end with this weapon as her only protector, words would not be able to express her level of guilt. Without doing so intentionally, she had placed a cap on her daughter's potential.

Why did Ri insist on learning the sword? Because Kawa was a swordswoman. Why did Ri insist on learning ice will? Because it was Kawa's best will. Why did Ri fall in love with Dyon so easily? Because her mother told her it was okay to trust anyone who could survive in the cave she left behind.

Kawa's impact on Ri's life was more than she knew.

"Little Alex," Kawa's voice made her way to Ri's ears, causing her to pause, "release your shackles..."

Ri smiled, nodding firmly. "Dyon, can you turn this sword into something for me?"

"Of course," Dyon's eyes softened, "what do you want?"

"Make it the belt that holds my new sword." Ri's smile was brilliant and blinding.

Dyon placed his hands on either one of Ri and Madeleine's shoulders before his eyes flashed with a deep purple gold.

In an instant, everything around them changed.

Madeleine's dress was once again her long white qipao – a Spiritual level treasure. Her purple hair flowed and her eyes were just as deep and sharp.

Ri dressed in a silver and crystal lined armor, resized to her perfectly. It transitioned into robust white leather that clung tightly to her curves, sculpting around her immaculately. But, her most standout feature was the new belt around her waist.

It was a striking silver of interlaced chain, reflecting the sunlight to perfection. Its center held was looked like a miniature Ice Petal's Dance fruit that doubled as a buckle. That said, it was the 3ft sword to her waist that shined.

It had a frosty white handle wrapped in a soft but comfortable leather. But, when Ri pulled it out, its blade erupted in a dense darkness, adjusting to her affinity immediately.

Queen Acacia's eyes widened. "Edrym... Alex, she..."

"She's not a River type Kitsune..." King Acacia finished.

But, there was nothing the couple could do. It was clear that Ri wasn't surprised by this. They had been away for too long. That said, what they were about to find out was that their daughters wasn't so simple as just not being a river type kitsune... She was the peak most of all Void Kitsune.

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"The time for the final bracket has come!" Elder Den's voice boomed before his eyes trained on a certain triplet family. "Please come to the stage, rankers." His eyes narrowed with an almost unconcealed glee as a sneer colored his features

Chapter 480 Feel Free

Dyon sat silently, watching as Ri and Madeleine proudly stepped onto the stages.

Suddenly, a piercing and rumbling voice entered his ears. "Watch carefully. Let your anger stew. I want to defeat you at your peak so I'll be sure to tell my juniors to slowly tear your wives apart."

Dyon didn't need to look to figure out who this rumbling voice was from. It was clearly Femi Geb.

But, he kept his emotions locked within himself. How often had he tried to allow Ri and Madeleine to grow on their own? He had trusted them during his first campaign. It was time to do so again.

That said, this Femi character would die. And he would die a horrible death.

Almost immediately, their plan was put into motion. There in no time, there was a line of eager challengers waiting – and it was no secret to anyone that most stood before Ri and Madeleine..

However, the crowd didn't think anything of it. After all, Ri and Madeleine were 7th and 8th ranked. Seeing as there was no 9th for this bracket, they were the weakest by rank. To the crowd, it only made sense that they had the most challengers.

Madeleine calmly took out her lyre. She remembered the day that Dyon had first gifted this to her – it was the same day she had decided that she always wanted him by her side.

In response, her first opponent stepped onto the ring. He was a no-name and completely unranked, but Madeleine hadn't expected anything different. After all, they likely wanted to tire her first.

That said, the weapon he took out made it clear that he had ever intention of going all out.

On Ri's platform, she too prepared herself as her first opponent stepped onto the stage. Because she was ranked last, it was likely that even more challengers would come to her. But, she was ready.

Madeleine's opponent laughed, looking at her weapon. "My senior brother told me that I should have a nice time playing with you. But, from what I see, your husband seems to favor one of his wives more. Her weapon is clearly much better than yours."

Ri's opponent laughed. "It seems he's quite selfish. He probably favors whoever the newer wife is. I wonder how long it'll take him to forget you too."

They were clearly trying to agitate Madeleine and Ri, grasping onto whatever they could to make them spend more energy than they needed to. Ri and Madeleine knew this, so they didn't say anything.

Ri knew very well that Dyon loved them both equally. The fact he hadn't offered Madeleine a Spiritual weapon only meant one thing.

Dyon raised himself in the air, lording over proceedings. With a wave of his hand, the array he had long since placed on Madeleine's lyre shattered.

A resplendent glow filled the arena as Madeleine smiled and plucked the first string.

In a flood of white light, Madeleine's music will tore through its bottleneck, ascending to an intent in the an instant.

Her opponent felt his legs weaken as all the strength seemed to leave his body. The soothing nature of Madeleine's music filled the arena and it also quite subtly boosted Ri too, but not too much less they be accused of cheating.

The words of Ri's opponent were caught in his throat. He had just said nonsense about how Dyon favoured one over the other, but it was very clear that he had provided them both with high level weapons. Although he couldn't tell of what level, it was clear enough that what he had said was completely ridiculous.

Ri didn't bother to transform as she flashed forward, she wanted to maintain her stamina at its peak for the longest time possible. Well, the truth was that with Ri's cultivation, it was almost a joke for them to want to tire her out. Who could match a void kitsune in stamina? It was ridiculous.

Ri's sword felt like an extension of her hand. Without her previous handicap, she could flood her energy into her weapon without reserve. Her once crude and clunky sword play became fierce and ferocious.

Her bestial aura flashed as a growl escaped her delicate lips and her canines flashed.

Madeleine's opponents fell to his knees, his ears bleeding. The tune that was so sweet to everyone else was nothing but a death sentence to him. From beginning to end, Madeleine had not moved a single inch even as Ri's sword cleaved downwards.

The first matches lasted but an instant. In the time it took, none of the other rankers had even accepted challenges yet. There was not a single pair of eyes not focused on either Ri or Madeleine.

And then, Ri's opponent too collapsed to his knees. A clear line of blood ran down the center of his face as shock colored his features. He hadn't even been able to see his demise. All he felt was an endless abyss of darkness and the feeling of everything being torn from him. He hadn't even had the time to comprehend the fact that he had been cut in two.

Dyon watched this scene, an anger still boiling in his heart. Ri didn't mind killing, but he knew fully well that this was Madeleine's first. She had never taken it so far before, but she, just like he had thought, realized that there was only one clean way out of this mess.

The most important people in Madeleine's life were Ri, Delia and Dyon. Although she avoided killing whenever possible, she never turned away from it. When Dyon killed, she supported him. And now, in order to prevent those most important people in her life from suffering, she too killed.

Dyon's voice rumbled through the arena, a clear and deep anger reverberating as his music intent stomped on the hearts of those who had queued and eager to challenge Ri and Madeleine.

"You can challenge my wives if you like." He said faintly. "But know it'll mean your death."